

Press Release May 2012

‘Support and Aspiration’: a vision for SEN that must work together to meet the needs of all pupils and improve their life chances

Pearson Assessment welcomes the publication of *Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability – progress and next steps*.

The report which responds to bills outlined in the Queen’s speech last week brings together the findings from a series of consultations that have taken place since the Green Papers publication in March. It aims to address the proposals set out on early identification and assessment, giving parents control, learning and achievement, preparation for adulthood and the creation of integrated services for families.

Amongst these proposals a commitment to ensuring children’s special education needs are picked up at an early stage and supported with the relevant interventions was welcome by Pearson Assessment, the leading publisher of standardised assessments for professionals working across education, health and psychology settings.

Chris Hall, Managing Director for Pearson Assessment responded:

“Within each of the areas outlined in today’s report, there are proposals that are making positive strides towards creating a system for special educational needs and disabilities that is current and fit for purpose.”

“We hope, as the new Children’s and Families Bill takes shape, that a system that meets the needs of all pupils in SEN and mainstream school settings will continue to evolve, and that any attempt to simplify the assessment process will not be to the detriment of hidden or underlying special education needs. As further information becomes available we will work with schools and colleges to evaluate how we can best support their assessment needs.”

In addition, the inclusion of early language development has been particularly welcomed by a number of parties, and reflects the impact which materials including Universally Speaking, sponsored by Pearson Assessment for the national year of communication campaign, have made. Further highlights in the report, include a commitment to training additional SENCOs whose role within schools is invaluable, the extension of support for young people up to the age of 25 and a drive towards and integrated service provision.

Chris Hall continues:

“Support and aspiration makes important steps towards bringing together health and educational services. References to ‘No health without mental health’ and the announcement that the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) program will be extended to children and young people is significant. It is an important part of Pearson Assessment’s development with regards to our author relationships with Dr. Aaron Temkin Beck, M.D. and Dr. Judith S. Beck Ph.D., whose work specialises in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy; and as we build upon our legacy of assessments which include the *Beck Youth Inventories*™ - *Second Edition For Children and Adolescents (BYI-II)*.”

“A more integrated health and educational system has the potential to give parents more choice, and for establishments to share best practice, which together should lead to more successful outcomes for children and young people.”

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For more information, please contact Simone Gilson, Marketing Communications Manager, on 0207 010 2880 or email simone.gilson@pearson.com

Notes for editors

About Pearson Assessment

- Pearson Assessment is the world's largest commercial developer and distributor of educational assessments and psychological testing materials with a 90 year history of commitment to researching and developing products to a reliable high standard.
- Pearson Assessment is dedicated to the pursuit of professional excellence, leadership, and growth through acquisition, development, publication, and the maintenance of quality assessment tools in order to anticipate and meet the needs of its customers.
- Drawing on our knowledge and capabilities, we are dedicated to creating proven standardised assessments and interventions that transform lives and help professionals in education, health services and other areas to provide the best possible diagnosis and care.
- For more information, visit www.pearsonclinical.co.uk or follow @PsychCorpUK on twitter.