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| **Preparing for Adulthood regional network** | | | | |
| **Date:** | 21st May 2025 | | | |
| **Chairs:** | **Amanda Percy – Portsmouth City Council, Simon Brown – Chichester College** | | | |
| **Venue:** | Teams | | | |
| **Attendees:** | | | | |
| Julie Pointer | | Sabrina Codrington | Leeann King | Shalon Smith |
| Amanda Percy | | Deborah Copeland | Louise Scott | Sophie Davies |
| Simon Brown | | Daniel Spiers | Malcolm Reeve | Sonia Dayal |
| Sheelagh Sullivan | | Janice Heath | Paul Morrison | Jo Dixon |
| Carly Knowler | | Ibrahim Ali |  |  |
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| **Notes** | | | | |
| **1.** **Introductions & Welcome**  Amanda Percy, Simon Brown, and Julie Pointer welcomed attendees. Julie introduced herself and her role in the Southeast region, focusing on supported internships and preparing for adulthood (PfA). | | | | |
| **2. Sector Updates**  Internships Work - Internships Work Programme received a one-year extension from the Department for Education (DfE) for 25/26 until June 26.  • Funding reduced to £21,000 per local authority.  • Continued support for pilot sites (Surrey and Hampshire).  • Regional support, employer engagement and job coach training to continue.  **•** Regional Data shared, (see slides): 850 young people in supported internships; 288 secured paid employment; 238 job coaches active.  **National Programmes updates**  **•** Whole School SEND and RISE programmes continue. Malcom Reeve presented a brief overview of WSS priorities for the next financial year.  • Free support available for local authorities needing help with PfA through the RISE programme.  • Change Programme updates pending; focus expected on inclusion in mainstream education. | | | | |
| **3. Access to Work (AtW) Challenges**  Widespread concern over delays and limitations in AtW funding. Concerns that this will impact on future success of supported internships.  • 26-week cap on support is problematic for providers and young people.  • Some providers are declining new interns due to funding uncertainty.  • Proposal to draft a collective paper to escalate concerns to DfE and MPs.  **Action**  Julie Pointer and Amanda Percy to coordinate this effort with interested attendees. | | | | |
| **4. Post-16 Provision Crisis**  Significant shortage of post-16 places across the Southeast.  Increased demand due to:  • Rising numbers of EHCPs.  • Stricter entry requirements.  • Lack of in-year growth funding.  • More young people opting for FE over HE.  Concerns that young people are being placed on unsuitable courses or becomingNEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).  Risk of reverting to using untrained TAs instead of professional job coaches. | | | | |
| **5. Alternative Provision (AP) & EOTAS**  Growing reliance on Alternative Provision and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) packages.  Quality assurance reviews reveal many AP providers are not meeting standards.  Local authorities are removing subpar providers from frameworks.  Concerns about sustainability, progression tracking, and long-term outcomes. | | | | |
| 6. **Strategic Suggestions**  • Use of PFA outcomes from Year 6 onwards to embed future planning early, Portsmouth.  • Proposal to invite Christine Lenehan to a future meeting to discuss national strategy and funding.  • Emphasis on maintaining the integrity of PfA principles despite systemic pressures. | | | | |
| **Actions & Next Steps**  **• Draft a paper on Access to Work issues with real-world data and human impact stories.**  **• Share the paper with DfE, MPs, and Directors of Children’s Services.**  **• Continue developing the AP to Post-16 transition toolkit, and look at what ordinarily available provision might look like in FE.**  **• Explore innovative funding models and provision development strategies.**  **• Maintain quality assurance and advocate for professional job coaching.** | | | | |
| **AOB**   * **Julie advised that she will try and update the PfA network element of the SESLIP website so that any resources shared can be saved there. A reminder that the link is** [**here**](https://www.seslip.co.uk/preparing-for-adulthood-forum/) | | | | |
| **Next Meeting:**  TBC | | | | |