



<b>Access to Education Group</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2025
<b>Chair:</b>	Ming Zhang (Wokingham)
<b>Venue:</b>	Teams
<b>Attendees:</b> Jon Willcocks & Pauline Martin Ellis (Hants), Katy Daly & Annette Borg (BFC), Gavin Thomas (BHCC), Sarah Speedie (ESCC), James Fowler (Bucks), Cathy Shaw (M Keynes), Neil Stevenson (Portsmouth), Katy Daly (Bracknell), Danielle Jenkins & Jesse Alderton (Kent), Clare Raffaelli & Rosie Gossage (RBWM), Anjali Sidhu (Slough), Carole Vernon (Wokingham), Maria Langford & Katie Johnson (Surrey), Zoe Snow (Southampton), Chris Owen.	
Apologies: Vidy Narayan (ESCC), Eliza Johnson (Southampton), Colin Mayo (MKC), Melissa Perry (W Berks), Fiona Hostler (Reading).	
<b>Notes</b>	
<b>Actions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate s19 proposed regional position on children with an EHCP to SE SEND leaders and aim for regional agreement.</li> <li>• Dashboard data: s19 to not include those excluded (day 6 provision). CO to work with BHCC colleagues for an exemplar table of s19 data request before January census.</li> <li>• Autumn Dashboard to be circulated as soon as available (CO to send reminders to any not yet submitted data).</li> <li>• Topics for meetings in January (EHE) and March (exclusion / suspension) have been agreed.</li> </ul>	
<b>1. Welcome and Introductions</b>	
Matters arising:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiting to hear from LGCSO about formal launch of their guide for practitioners</li> <li>• S19: shared policy from Gloucestershire well-received; Education Directors support joint position for those with an EHCP.</li> <li>• Clarification that A2E Group notes are published on SESLIP website; only once reviewed (and amended if necessary) at the subsequent group meeting.</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Attendance targeted support: focus on severely absent</b>	
Colleagues from Hampshire shared a presentation offering a summary of insights from reviewing their data and an overview of arrangements for targeted support with schools. Plus current challenges.	
<u>Questions:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent do LAs adopt a twin-track approach to severe absent (SA) and persistent absent (PA) or greater focus on one or other?</li> <li>• General direction: PA reducing and SA static, or small increase; how does this compare with others?</li> </ul>	
<u>Themes:</u>	
<u>Severe absence and link with SEND:</u> often reflecting mistrust of school system and greater demand for adjustments for their child; increasing numbers keeping their child away from mainstream school seeking another provision. Solution for these families often SEND assessment rather than enforcement.	
<u>Panels as enablers of timely decision-making:</u> several described establishment of multi-agency panels that include severely absent pupils within their scope; where work well these harness external support and multi-agency decision-making.	
<u>Mobilisation of children's services colleagues:</u> for pupils where greater risk profile, establishing a consistent approach across teams / professionals and lead professional approach is key to changing patterns of severe absence.	



### 3. S19 practice sharing group and AP task-and-finish group

- Group A (policy & decisions): shared statement to be discussed with SEND strategic leaders; CO to work with group members on drafting one or two case studies and further exemplar policy statements.
- Group B (finance & partnership with schools): focus on policy commitment to financial recoupment; 4 education directors are meeting on 13-11 to given a strategic steer to the direction for this group.
- AP Task-and-Finish Group: launch meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> Nov: focus on QA of non-school AP and cross-border working. Members from: BFC, ESCC, Hampshire, Kent, Portsmouth, Reading & Wokingham.

### 4. EHE – CME Dashboard

- Collecting and reporting s19 numbers: clarification to not include those who are day-6 excludees and those with an EHCP who have EOTAS as their education placement. Broadly, all at census where there is a decision to fund from s19.
- Request to produce an example table for these data prior to the Jan census request.

### 5. AOB / Updates

For a future meetings:

- March: Exclusions and suspensions theme

#### Agenda Items for Next meeting:

- January: focus on strategies and support for families who EHE
  - What direction are the numbers going in?
- Clarify s19 data request for dashboard .

#### Next Meetings:

*Future meetings: 21<sup>st</sup> Jan (2pm); 5<sup>th</sup> Mar (10am); 28<sup>th</sup> Apr (10am); 25<sup>th</sup> June (10am); 15<sup>th</sup> Sept (10am)*

