

Date: 27/02/2019  
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All Schools and Settings

Dear colleagues

I am very much looking forward to working with you over the coming weeks whilst I am seconded to the Inclusion Service to lead the process underpinning high needs funding. I have begun working with colleagues this week and have already met with members of Schools Forum to discuss ways forward. I am therefore able to share with you the quality assurance (QA) process; the timescales involved and invite you to be part of the QA panel. It is essential that we work together in partnership to promote informed and transparent decisions which will ensure pupils receive the funding required to meet their needs.

We will begin re-moderating evidence from mainstream schools as soon as possible in the week beginning Monday 4 March 2019. To ensure equity and parity we envisage 6 weeks will be needed to consider all cases. We aim therefore that mainstream schools will be informed of final decisions by the start of the summer term 2019. Timescales must be realistic if we are to ensure the system is robust and fair.

Evidence from schools will be considered by the QA panel, based on the different banding descriptors. Membership of the panel will consist of colleagues from the Schools Forum and working group (Gill Mitchell, Dawn Carman-Jones and Michelle Hughes); colleagues from special schools; Joy Settle (known to many school leaders as an experienced SEND professional, currently working for the LA within the Virtual School) and colleagues from primary and secondary schools and settings who are able to support us. This letter invites expressions of interest from headteachers and SENDCos. Members of the panel will work in pairs to consider the evidence submitted. An additional layer of QA will be completed where cases need further scrutiny. This final layer may also trigger a visit to a school from myself and a member of the panel to allow for further discussion of the evidence submitted.

Please be assured the process has been designed to ensure all cases receive the time and attention they need and deserve. It is also designed to promote improved efficiency and sustainability going forward.

As previously mentioned, we would welcome professionals working in primary and secondary schools and settings to join us as part of the QA panel. If you are able to offer a minimum of 1 day a week from Wednesday 6 March 2019 for a period of 6 weeks, then please send an email to [Izzy.Connell@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Izzy.Connell@suffolk.gov.uk) by **12:00pm Monday 4 March 2019**. We are able to provide supply cover @ £210 per day for each colleague. Within your email please offer dates you may be available. I will then consider all returns and plan accordingly.

In addition to the above I will also send another communication via Suffolk Headlines very soon, inviting colleagues to observe the QA process. Although we cannot provide supply cover to be an observer, we hope this will offer an opportunity for headteachers and SENDCos to see how the process works and to ask questions which will inform and support future planning.

Many thanks for your attention and look forward to working with you.

Izzy Connell

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Izzy Connell". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned below the printed name.

Inclusion Services