

Behaviour experts to support schools with poor discipline

Heads and behaviour leads from some of England's highest performing schools and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) have today been confirmed as mentors and trainers in the Department's £10 million Behaviour Hubs programme.

Designed to support schools struggling with poor discipline, training through the Behaviour Hubs for the first group of participating schools will commence from the start of the summer term, at a time when a minority of pupils may need extra support from their schools to re-engage with education following the pandemic.

The lead schools and MATs will work closely with the schools they are supporting to diagnose what could be improved, develop and launch new behaviour approaches and policies and provide ongoing mentoring and support.

The lead schools selected have shown that good discipline overwhelmingly results in the best Ofsted ratings and overall outcomes for their students, and have demonstrated their capacity to support other schools to achieve the same.

Lead schools will advise their counterparts on issues ranging from setting clear expectations to eliminate low-level disruption in classrooms that is so damaging to teachers and other pupils, to more systematic approaches to maintaining order and discipline across the school, such as forbidding the use of mobile phones and maintaining quiet corridors.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Behaviour and discipline are the cornerstone to so much of what defines this country's most successful schools.

Whether it's supporting some of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged children with the routines and structures needed to help them fulfil their potential, or helping prepare young people for the expectations of the workplace, parents and teachers know that orderly and disciplined classrooms are best.

That is why I will always support schools taking a firm approach, for example taking action to tackle the scourge of ever-present mobile phones – because I know the positive impact it will have on students' wellbeing and attainment.

Perryfields Primary Pupil Referral Unit is one of the 22 schools and two multi academy trusts from secondary, primary, special and alternative provision selected as leads in the Behaviour Hubs programme.

Peter Hines, Headteacher of Perryfields Primary PRU:

The team at Perryfields Primary PRU is immensely proud of the work that it does to improve the life chances of young people in Worcestershire. We are delighted to have the opportunity to widen the impact of this work by being a lead school in the Behaviour Hubs programme.

We want to share with other schools how we have created the behaviour culture at Perryfields which is underpinned by exceedingly high expectations and a belief that all pupils matter so each and every one of them can be set on a pathway to fulfil their aspirations and potential. We look forward to working with colleagues across the country to share our passion for making a difference and improving young people's education and life chances.

Schools taking part in the programme will also have access to training on common problems and effective approaches led by Tom Bennett, founder and director of ResearchED, and the Department's lead behaviour adviser and his team of behaviour advisers. There will be open days at lead schools to observe good systems and approaches in action as well as hub networking events and online forums for schools to share experiences.

Tom Bennett, Lead Behaviour advisor to the Department said:

It's been a real honour to recruit some of the best schools in the country to offer their support to other schools who want to refocus on behaviour and culture. Every school can, with assistance, be safe, calm places where everyone is treated with dignity, and students and staff can learn and flourish together.

We know that some schools are further towards that ideal than others, and many more that can, and only need direction from those who have walked the path before them.

The Hubs project is designed to start reasonably modestly, build a model that works, and then expand into a size and shape that supports more schools that need it. This has the capacity to make a real and substantial difference to the lives of futures of many thousands of children and families and I cannot wait to see it develop.

Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner for England said:

Good behaviour is really important in enabling all children to learn and be happy at school.

I welcome this package of support for schools which have

experienced challenges in this area, especially given the extra strains caused by the pandemic, helping children to get back on track and thrive – not just academically, but socially too.

Leora Cruddas, Chief Executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, said:

Good standards of behaviour in a school are essential to the safety and success of all pupils. Every child has the right to go to a school where they feel safe and able to learn.

Establishing and sustaining a culture of good behaviour can be challenging. CST welcomes the appointment of exemplary schools and trusts with strong cultures of good behaviour. This will enable the system to share the strongest educational philosophies and practices.

The programme will run on a termly basis, with lead schools and MATs forming hubs with a different two supported schools each term. The programme will expand next year, with further lead schools and MATs appointed to support more schools to help reach the target of 500 supported schools over the three-year programme.

[Government unveils new support for disabled jobseekers](#)

The government will boost the number of specialist advisers dedicated to helping disabled jobseekers to secure and stay in work, with an additional 315 Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) roles to be in jobcentres across the UK by May 2021.

This comes as the number of Disability Confident employers in the UK reaches a record breaking 20,000 this week, as more businesses joined the likes of Microsoft, Sainsbury's and Network Rail, who already lead the way as inclusive employers.

Minister for Disabled People, Justin Tomlinson, said:

We are committed to seeing 1 million more disabled people in work by 2027 and as we recover from the pandemic we are redoubling our efforts to boost the support for disabled jobseekers.

I know this is a challenging time, but we will be building on the record disability employment we have seen by protecting, supporting and creating jobs for disabled people.

I know personally how valuable a diverse and inclusive workforce can be, so it is fantastic to see employers across Britain signed up to government programmes like Disability Confident. I would encourage other organisations, big or small, to follow their example and support disabled people to unlock their full potential.

The recruitment drive builds on the 13,500 new Work Coaches taken on by the department over the past 9 months to support Britain's recovery effort.

The additional Disability Employment Advisers roles will start to be filled internally from this month, bringing total numbers to 1,115 once the process is complete.

DEAs cover every jobcentre in the country and work alongside Work Coaches, specialising in finding the right support to help clients who have a disability or health condition into work.

With the UK government's Plan for Jobs underpinned by the Access to Work scheme, people with disabilities are already benefitting. The scheme, now available to those who work from home, includes grants worth up to £62,900 and can cover the cost of the workplace adjustments that disabled people need to do their jobs, including sign language interpreters, as well as services such as mental health support.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

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News story

We have an exciting new vacancy and are looking for someone to join our publications team.



Your duties will include:

- Editing MAIB investigation reports, and other published material, within set timescales and to the highest standard;
- Maintaining the MAIB's writing style guide and ensuring it is used consistently by colleagues;
- Editing internal documents, including reorganising content and identifying grammatical and contextual errors where necessary;
- Liaising with the inspectorate on sometimes technical or sensitive material;
- Working with the publication team to ensure a good overall service is maintained;
- Working to short deadlines and fast turnaround times;
- Reporting to the Publications Manager and assisting her with updating templates and maintaining internal guidelines.

For further information about this position and how to apply see [Civil Service Jobs, Technical Editor, Ref: 109958](#).

Closing date: Monday 3 May 2021.

Published 7 April 2021

[Stockton becomes first north-east council to join Local Land Charges Register](#)

From today (Wednesday 7 April), anyone requiring local land charges (LLC) searches in the local authority area of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will need to get them from HM Land Registry rather than going directly to the council.

Beccy Brown, Director of HR, Legal and Communications at Stockton-on-Tees

Borough Council, said:

We are pleased to be the first local authority in North East England to migrate our local land charges register to HM Land Registry. The migration has provided an opportunity to make our processes more efficient, improve the quality of our data and modernise the service, so that we can improve the service for our residents and customers.

Mark Kelso, Programme Director for HM Land Registry's Local Land Charges Programme, said:

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is the latest local authority to offer its customers access to HM Land Registry's LLC Register. It is even more important at this time that public services can be accessed digitally and instantly and we are pleased to be able to contribute to that. We are working hard with local authorities like Stockton-on-Tees to ensure customers can obtain the information they need quickly, with Spelthorne Borough Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council joining the service over the next few months.

Local land charges searches are normally required in the property-buying process. Most local land charges are restrictions or prohibitions on the use of the property such as planning permissions or listed buildings. The local land charges search will reveal whether a property is subject to a charge which then informs a buyer's decision to buy a property or parcel of land.

HM Land Registry is working in partnership with local authorities to migrate their local land charges data to a central, digital register as part of a phased approach. Once migrated, anyone will be able to get instant online search results using the [Search for local land charges](#) service.

HM Land Registry's business customers can use their existing portal and Business Gateway channels or their usual search providers to access local land charges data for those local authorities which have migrated.

Customers will need to continue to submit CON29 enquiries to the local authority.

For an overview of the service, watch [our short video](#).

For more information, read about the [Local Land Charges Programme](#).

Neurodiversity in the workplace

Catherine Bean, a Fast Stream social researcher at the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is a member of the Analysis Function Diversity and Inclusion working group, and co-chair of the ONS Neurodiversity Support group. Here Catherine tells us what life is like for her working in ONS;

“You probably can’t tell by looking at me, but my brain works very differently to yours. If you were to meet me, you’d probably notice that I’m short and my hair is in a bob. You might notice that I don’t often make eye contact. But you won’t see that I’m also extremely sensitive to bright lights and loud noises, I often miss conversational cues, and I’m hopeless at reading body language. Like around 700,000 people in the UK, I am autistic.

This isn’t an apology or an explanation for my ‘faults’; I’m proud to be autistic. I think autism makes me a strong analyst, and an asset to teams I’ve worked in. I love coding and problem solving, and I’m good at it too. I feel very fortunate to work in the Civil Service, and proud of the encouragement I’ve had here as an autistic person to succeed in my career.

I am part of the neurodivergent community, a group of people whose brain is wired a bit differently to the ‘average’ person (someone who is neurotypical). Neurodivergent people can be autistic like me, or have ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or a range of other Neurodivergent experiences. As a co-chair of the ONS Neurodiversity Support group, and a member of the Analysis Function Diversity and Inclusion working group, I want to share how teams can best support their neurodivergent members.

Valuing the contributions of neurodivergent people and having different neurodivergent experiences represented is known as neurodiversity. Neurodiversity is an important and often overlooked aspect to diversity at work; but we bring huge strengths to our organisations, and there’s a lot that can be done to be more inclusive of our needs. The working world supports neurotypical people by default, and often neurodivergent people are left to advocate on our own behalf to get reasonable adjustments. Without good support, neurodivergent people like me may not progress in our organisations or may even leave jobs altogether.

If you’re not sure what I mean, think about the modern office. Nearly everywhere I’ve worked, most teams hot desk. As an autistic person I find this stressful; not knowing where I’ll sit can put my whole day out of step. This might sound baffling to some, but changes in my environment impact me more than most. To counter this, I like to have a reserved seat. Without being mindful of neurodivergent colleagues’ needs, you may unknowingly add extra stress to their days.

So, how can you create an inclusive environment and encourage neurodiversity?

As an analyst, I spend a lot of my day working at a screen. Inclusive

technology is vital. Specialised technology to adjust for different ways of reading is incredibly useful, like colour filters for screens. I use dark mode on apps to reduce visual strain, and most coding environments support this functionality.

Additionally, managers must be mindful of different ways of working and communicating. Not everyone's ideal working hours are nine to five; some people find they are more productive in the evenings or early mornings. Some people may find written summaries of meetings essential or might need to have a verbal conversation after receiving tasks via email to properly process the information. Some may need tasks explained more literally than others. Many neurodivergent people have [Workplace Adjustment Passports](#) that travel through their Civil Service career with them. This gives information about their workplace adjustments to ease transitions between jobs. Crucially, managers shouldn't feel unable to talk about neurodiversity! When conversations are initiated by managers about working more inclusively, the burden is taken off individuals. Employees may not know the full extent of resources available to them, so it's important for managers to be proactive in helping their teams succeed.

The past year has shifted how we communicate, and remote working has become the norm. To make online meetings more inclusive, make sure long meetings include breaks, minimise the use of the chat function as this can be distracting, and don't always expect people to use their cameras.

These adjustments aren't all specific to being neurodivergent, but instead suit a wide range of needs. The [curb-cut effect](#) shows that by making positive changes to support disadvantaged members of society (in this case, making dipped curbs to allow wheelchair users to more easily cross the street), the whole of society benefits. Dipped (or 'cut') curbs also support parents with pushchairs, tourists with suitcases and people on bikes. In the workplace, flexible working hours, which work well if you have fatigue problems (a common condition alongside being neurodivergent), can suit early birds and night owls, working parents and those with medical appointments and caring responsibilities. Being supportive of diversity in the workplace has positive impacts for everybody.

The best advice I can give is to have conversations with your colleagues to understand how work can work best for everyone. Make sure that everyone's thoughts and opinions are listened to. You may find there are better ways of working that you hadn't even considered, or the answers to problems you didn't even know existed. A more diverse workplace means more innovation, more problem solving, and a better Civil Service. So, what are you waiting for? Start talking today!"

Catherine