

We're really pleased to finally be able to share some official contact news with you as our contract with the Department for Education has now been signed and published.

Contact awarded funding to help improve parent and young people involvement in SEND services in England

We are delighted to let you know that the Department for Education (DfE) has awarded Contact and partners the [National Network of Parent Carer Forums \(NNPCF\)](#), [Council for Disabled Children](#) and [KIDS](#), a new contract to make sure parent carers, children and young people are involved in the delivery of SEND services and provision in England and have access to information advice and support.

The DfE funding means that over the next three years Contact will continue to work with 152 [parent carer forums](#) in England to make sure their voices are heard at a local, regional and national level. The new contract which started last month, also enables us to continue our support offer to families with disabled children through our [online information](#) and [national helpline](#).

The Council for Disabled Children will continue to support the Information, Advice and Support Network and will, alongside KIDS be supporting children and young people's participation in local, regional and national policy and practice.

Gail Walshe, Contact's director of participation says: "It's great that The DfE continues to recognise the importance of having parent carers, children and young people at the heart of shaping disabled children's services, the invaluable support of our online and helpline advice service and local SEND Information, Advice and Support Services (SENDIASS). Contact has acted as the delivery partner to the DfE to support parent carer forums since 2008. Our new contract enables us to build on this and to also reach even more parent carers with our high-quality impartial information and advice. We look forward to working jointly with our consortium partners to improve the links between parent carer and children and young people's forums so that more children and young people have an active voice in decision-making in their local areas."

Contact will lead the work carried out by the consortium in this new contract which aims to:

- Empower children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and their parents and carers to make informed choices about the services available to them and support them to influence SEND policy at local, regional and national level so that services and provision are designed and delivered in a way that works for them
- Developing parent carer forum and children and young people's participation at a local level and improving their strategic participation in regional and national SEND policy and delivery
- Support the provision of high-quality information, advice and support for families whose children have SEND, including through a national helpline
- Provide training, development and support to Local SENDIASS and
- Administer grants to 152 parent carer forums across England.

Children and Families Minister Will Quince said: "Contact and their partners do fantastic work to make sure parent carers and young people are directly involved in how local SEND services work for them.



“This new government contract and grant funding, of over £17 million for three years, will support Contact’s work and make sure parents and young people’s voices continue to be heard at a local, regional and national level.

“Together we can make sure that all parents and carers, regardless of their child’s needs, have access to the advice and support they need to better succeed in life.”

We’re looking forward to continuing to work with you all for the next 3 years and to supporting the development of strategic participation in SEND services and information, advice and support.