



Interview Schedule for Education Professionals

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Draft Interview Schedule: Education Professionals

Once again, thank you so much for being involved in this research. As you will have read in the information letter, we are doing some research on the impact of the changes in post-16 education for autistic young people in England since the introduction of the Children and Families Act 2014.

During these interviews, we want to hear about **your** experience of the reforms and post-16 education for autistic young people. We want to understand your experience of giving support and helping young people have their say and achieve better outcomes so that we can get the bigger picture about the impact the Children and Families Act (2014) has made.

The interview is split into 3 main themes of help and support, having a say and getting better outcomes. There will be time at the end to discuss anything you feel we haven't covered or share anything that you wanted to say.

Just before we start, I was wondering whether it would be OK to record the discussion? This is just so I have an accurate record of what you say, as I find it really hard to write everything down quickly! The recording will only be listened to by myself and other members of our research team. After the interview, it will be transcribed – we'll take out any information that could identify you – and then we'll delete it.

Also, if you want to stop the interview at any point, you can do that without giving me a reason. And if there are any questions that you'd rather not answer, that's fine too.

Do you have any questions before we start?

OK, let's start.

ABOUT YOU...

To start with, we would like to ask you some questions about you and your current role.

1. What is your current role?
2. How long have you been there?
3. What kinds of children/ young people do you work with? (i.e. autism specialist, mainstream etc.)

TOPIC ONE: HELP AND SUPPORT

I'm going to start by asking you some questions about the skills you have, or want to have, to support your autistic pupils in school and the kind of training you have received in autism and education.

1. Can you tell me a little bit about any autism specific training you have had...

- What kind of training have you received?
- Was there anything particularly good about it? Why was that good?
- Was there anything that could have been improved? How?
- Who organised the training? (*i.e. you or your employer*)

2. Do you feel equipped to be able to provide the best help and support for autistic young people?

- What would make you feel better equipped?
- What do you think about the training your staff have received? Are they equipped? (for headteachers)
- If you aren't able to provide specific knowledge/support are you able to signpost pupils in the right direction? Do you know who to signpost to?

As part of the reforms following the Children and Families Act (2014), Education Health and Care Plans came into place. As part of the plans, professionals from education, health and social care backgrounds are supposed to work in partnership, in order to better support young people with special educational needs.

4. How does this partnership work for you?

- Is the partnership successful for you? (*i.e. does it help you?*)
- Do you think the partnership is successful/ works for the young people?
- What could be done to improve this partnership?

Section F of the Education Health and Care Plan sets out an agenda for special educational provisions that need to be carried out in order to assist the individual in their learning and development. These are any provisions that have the effect of educating or training a young person and can include things like additional supervision/assistance, speech and language therapy sessions and a distraction free learning environment.

5. Do you feel that you are able to provide the support set out in Education, Health and Care Plans?

- If no, why?
- Could anything be done to make you feel better able?

TOPIC TWO: HAVING A SAY

Something that is really emphasised in the Children and Families Act (2014) is that young people must have a say in their education and the support that they get. I just wanted to ask you a few questions about how you support young, autistic children to have their say in their education and have their voices heard.

- 1. Can you tell me a little bit about how you support your autistic students to have a say in their education?**
 - What works well? What doesn't work so well?
 - How could it be improved?
 - How do you learn about your students views?
 - If a student shares their views with you, how do you work with them to provide the right support?
 - Do you ask students for feedback on what is going well or not so well? Is this useful?

TOPIC THREE: ACHIEVING BETTER OUTCOMES

As part of this research, we are also interested in the outcomes of young autistic people following their education and how education professionals support them in achieving the best outcome possible.

- 1. Would you mind telling me a little bit about what options/ pathways are available to autistic young people?**
 - Do you feel well educated on all of the possible options?
 - What do you think of the options available?
 - Are there any good things about the system? Any not so good things? How could it be improved?

- 2. There is a lot of emphasis on outcomes, getting 'better outcomes' and reaching targets etc. but what do you think is a good outcome for a young autistic person?**
 - Why is that?

- 3. How do you support your autistic pupils to achieve their own, individual goals?**
 - Do you feel that you have received enough training/support on how to do this?
 - What works well? What doesn't work so well? How can this be improved?

QUESTION TIME AND THANK YOU

This is the end of the interview! Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts with me. Before you go, do you have any questions for me?

Once we have finished interviewing everyone, we will try to put everything together and write a report and we'll send this to you.

In the meantime, if you have any further questions or would like to contact me for anything else, feel free to drop me an email or give me a call.

Thanks again.