

EDUCATOR SECTOR NEWS – MAY 2016

SEC ED

Mental health and LAC: Concerns over the mental health of looked-after students were raised in a report this month, claiming that a “significant number” of local authorities and health services are failing to identify mental health issues when young people coming into care. – Full CAHMS report can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/1Y2v6n1>

Focus on enrichment: Discussion of enrichment programs was raised, with an interesting article entitled ‘Focusing on Skills for life’. This linked well with our vision, highlighting the fact that an enrichment program can drive the promotion of employability skills, academic attainment and general life skills, and provide young people with opportunities to expand and develop their interests. The article highlighted the need to show schools the benefits of a good program - how it links with Ofsted criteria, fosters enjoyment of school, and a community spirit.

TES

Out of school activities improve attainment: Outdoor activities have been shown to help improve attainment in maths at a primary level. The study looked at 6400 children. No link was found between outdoor activities and improvements in English and science.

Tech helps teachers spot pupils’ mental health issues: New online screening tools have been produced to help teachers diagnose mental health issues. Young people can be assessed at regular intervals during their school journey, and teachers can then flag any concerns, hoping to act as early intervention and prevent more serious mental health issues later in life.

1,500 schools ‘very socially selective’: Research suggests that many disadvantaged students are missing out on primary school spaces because of difficulties with applications and lengthy admissions criteria.

How the apprenticeship levy is gambling with FE’s future: New apprenticeship policies are causing concern in the FE sector, with worries that it will put some providers out of business. The levy itself will require all employers in the UK, with a bill over £3 million each year, to make an investment in apprenticeships.

Sector must show that it cares about young carers: Although awareness of the difficulties facing young carers has grown over the last few years, there is still a demand for FE providers to improve the support available. A suggestion of more flexible hours and access to apprenticeships and traineeships was given as a solution.

Teachers ‘act as mental health workers’: Many teachers regularly support young people through mental health problems, often with little or no training in this area.

What parents with children with SEND want you to know: Detailed article with a school bias, outlining the basic needs of SEND and how we can improve delivery of programmes to support their needs.

JOURNAL OF ADVENTURE EDUCATION AND OUTDOOR LEARNING

Improving school attendance: can participation in outdoor learning influence attendance for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties?

Alan Price

The paper highlighted the importance of reducing exclusion and increasing attendance, but was also aware of the many contributing factors affecting attendance. The research conducted was a very small trial, so may not be a true representation. However, the study is part of a larger research study, and the results were positive and suggested

students were more likely to engage with school on the days when the outdoor learning programme was running. Further research is needed on a larger scale.

INSTITUTE OF OUTDOOR LEARNING

The institute is still working with the National Trust on their pilot scheme to develop commercial outdoor activity on their land. They have raised the issues of sustainability and impact. Local consultations are being undertaken to enable institute members to influence the outcomes of the pilot.

COUNCIL FOR LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

100th LOtC Mark was awarded in March. An exciting milestone for LOtC Mark, which celebrates the fantastic practice happening and the huge impact which this has on young people.

New campaign to be launched to increase the number of young people accessing residential experiences and improve the quality of residential provision, called Learning Away. Kim Sommerville has joined CLOtC as campaign coordinator.

LOtC have produced a detailed response to the latest white paper from the Department of Education. They are largely positive and show that many aspects of the paper are met with LOtC.

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

'Educational Excellence Everywhere' white paper: The most controversial aspect of which is the compulsory academisation which is being discussed widely throughout the education sector. While forced academisation is not going ahead in all cases, there will still be a drive towards this outcome, focusing on local authorities who "can no longer viably support its remaining schools". Funding for NCS has been increased, with the government providing £1 billion over the next 4 years, with the aim that "by 2021, it will cover 60% of all 16 year-olds, becoming the largest programme of its kind in Europe. [Educational Excellence Everywhere PDF](#)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Alzheimer's Society – Exercise and Physical activity: Publication links outdoor activity to a reduced risk of Alzheimer's in later life. https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=1764

The Guardian – Children should learn mainly through play until age of eight, says Lego: Toy company Lego have funded research into educational development, which states that educational development can be hindered by early formal schooling. <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/mar/15/children-learn-play-age-eight-lego?>

The Guardian - Higher education white paper: the big changes: Response to the 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' with regard to HE. Concerns over the potential for Universities to become teaching only, and lose the research element. <http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2016/may/16/higher-education-white-paper-the-big-changes>