



Targeted Support: Policy Brief

Please note that this brief aims to outline the policy objectives the Department for Education is looking for projects to respond to in their applications. Whilst it is specific in terms of what the Department for Education is looking for, we are open to different, innovative approaches to how you achieve this.

We are specifically interested to hear from organisations who are looking to develop, implement and test new ways to provide targeted support for children just within the statutory children's social care system. We have outlined below some guidance on what we mean by the term 'targeted support', the areas of particular interest to us, and the key criteria that will be used to evaluate the expressions of interest for this topic.

What do we mean by the term 'targeted support' in the context of this Targeted Funding Opportunity?

The concept of targeted support was set out in the Government's [Putting Children First](#) paper (July 2016). We are particularly interested in investigating and building the evidence base for what works for particular cohorts of children already within the statutory children's social care system. We want to investigate the most effective approaches to reducing the need for more intensive forms of intervention at a later stage. We are particularly interested in hearing about:

- Innovative new ways of providing targeted support to children who are assessed by social workers twice within a 12-month period but do not, either time, receive a statutory service under s17 of the Children Act 1989. There are 158,060 children nationally whose needs are considered serious enough to warrant a social work assessment, but do not go on to become 'in need'. A smaller subset of these children go through the same process twice within a short period of time. We want to test new models of providing support to these children to mitigate the risk that they will re-enter the children's social care system at a later stage with more severe needs. This group includes disabled children and we would be keen to test targeted support that acknowledges both their disability and the nature and level of any risk of harm they may be facing.
- Interventions for children who are 'in need' as defined by s17 of the Children Act 1989 for extended periods, particularly for low level, persistent neglect. We want to test different approaches for helping children in these circumstances in order to understand the sort of interventions that are most effective in providing help for them and their families and preventing their needs escalating.
- Improved, proportionate assessments to ensure that the needs of disabled children are met to reduce the risk of them needing to move into residential care, and to provide targeted interventions that deliver sustained support for these children and their families. We want to minimise the need for long-term residential provision (residential care or residential special schools) or admission to specialist hospitals, including assessment and treatment units, particularly following crisis points. We are particularly interested in approaches that target those children and young people who are part of the Transforming Care cohort: those with learning disabilities, autism or both, and with behaviour that challenges and/or a mental health condition.



What areas are in scope for targeted support proposals?

Examples of areas we are interested in include, but are not limited to, those that test one or more of the following features:

- Specific interventions to address issues for children just within the children's social care system which, without the provision of targeted support, might later lead to escalated needs and require more intensive intervention.
- Intensive interventions which successfully address the underlying needs of children who are within the children in need space for extended periods of time.
- Interventions that support disabled children and their families who, without the provision of targeted support, may reach crisis point and require far more intensive interventions at a later point.
- Approaches that address systemic barriers to cross-agency working, including looking at which workforce cultures and structures best deliver targeted support for children just within the children's social care system.
- Specific interventions to address the needs of particular age cohorts, for example: adolescents.
- Proposals which look to create better transitions between and across different services and agencies, including between children's and adults' services.
- Alternative ways of using and supporting the use of personal budgets and other funding mechanisms (e.g, Integrated Personal Commissioning) to support children and families effectively.
- Provision of effective 'step-down' targeted service provision for children within scope.

What areas are out of scope for targeted support proposals?

- Traditional, established 'early help' approaches. As set out in *Putting Children First*, targeted support is distinct from these approaches and focuses on children already within the statutory children's social care system.
- Traditional service provision for children in need. We are interested in testing new, targeted approaches to providing support for cohorts of children within scope.

Examples of the outcomes that we would hope to see delivered include:

- More effective resolution of the underlying issues affecting children in need, leading to reduced escalation of issues requiring more intensive forms of intervention.
- Reductions in the number of children referred and assessed more than twice without the provision of a statutory service.
- Reductions in the need for residential special school placements, or specialist hospital admissions.
- Reductions in the number of children who become looked after as a result of their special educational need or disability.

Submission requirements

Applicants should use the detail provided in this brief when completing their EOI to ensure they are addressing the problems and challenges outlined and that their EOI meets the policy objectives for this targeted funding opportunity. In addition, applicants should refer to the Innovation Programme's assessment criteria when completing their EOI which can be found in the ['How to get involved'](#) document.



All applications must be submitted by 3pm, 31st January 2017 to CS.INNOVATIONPROGRAMME@education.gsi.gov.uk using the [EOI form](#) provided alongside this brief.

Please hold in your diary the 27th February 2017 in Manchester for a workshop to develop your solution should your EOI be successful.