
PRESS RELEASE

www.afaeducation.org

Achievement for All

St Anne's House, Oxford Square, Newbury,
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28th November 2016

New initiative launched to transform the lives of young offenders

A ground-breaking new online training programme is being launched which aims to provide the essential support to the many young people with special educational needs (SEN) who are in custody and also those at risk of offending, helping them achieve better outcomes (well-being, education and employment) and substantially reduce their risk of offending or reoffending.

The online learning platform will provide free training and support to every professional in the Youth Justice System to improve practice, reduce offending by young people and improve their educational outcomes.

Funded by the Department for Education, the programme is being delivered by national education charity [Achievement for All](http://www.afaeducation.org) (AfA), in partnership with the [Association of Youth Offending Team Managers](http://www.aym.org.uk) (AYM) and [Manchester Metropolitan University](http://www.mmu.ac.uk) (MMU).

Marius Frank, Director at Achievement for All, said: "We have developed a series of innovative modules which sit on a new online learning platform called the Youth Justice SEND Bubble. The modules have been written by frontline professionals for frontline professionals. There is nothing stronger than peer-to-peer learning. It captures the passion and commitment of dedicated professionals, shares existing best practice and develops consistency across the YJS in England."

Young people with a special educational need are five times more likely to enter the youth justice system, with 18% of sentenced young people in custody having a statement of special educational needs.¹ Additional research shows that up to 90% of young offenders have below average speech, language and communication skills, with up to 67% having language skills which are 'poor or very poor'.²

The majority of these young people have been excluded from school at some point and as a result, have never had their conditions properly diagnosed or addressed. Many of them also suffer family breakdown, trauma, abusive relationships or poverty.

Marius continued: "Rather than be punished, these young people need to be helped, their needs identified and met, and their life chances transformed. Investing in effective early intervention work

¹ 2011 Support and Aspiration: A New Approach to Special Educational Need and Disability, Department for Education

² Bryan K Freer J and Furlong C (2007) Language and communication difficulties in juvenile offenders International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders, Vol. 42, No. 5, Pages 505-520.

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will also save considerable costs to communities and to government further down the line: it is a win-win solution."

The Youth Justice SEND Bubble will be launched at the [Youth Justice Convention](#) in Milton Keynes on 30th November 2016. The online modules are free to access and offer a comprehensive learning environment on legislation, practice and special education needs in the YJS. It is for staff in youth offending, secure estate, health and care, and local authority SEN teams.

Notes to Editors

The Youth Justice SEND Bubble will be launched at the Youth Justice Convention, ArenaMK, Stadium Way W, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK1 1ST on 30th November 2016.

Achievement for All, Manchester Metropolitan University and Association of Youth Offending Team Managers will be holding a [seminar at 11am](#) to discuss the latest research, demonstrate views from young people themselves, and explain how teams can benefit from this innovative free resource.

For more information on the Youth Justice SEND Project and the Youth Justice SEND Bubble, contact: Email: YouthJusticeSEND@afaeducation.org or Tel: 01635 285 321.

About Achievement for All (AfA)

- The Bubble is Achievement for All's online learning portal which hosts modules and research for teaching professionals on the AfA programme.
- Achievement for All is a movement focused on educational change; building a world in which all children are seen as having potential, and where every child is enabled to be the best that they can be regardless of background, challenge or need.
- Achievement for All programmes have worked with staff in 3700 schools, colleges and early years settings across England and Wales.
- The charity is the leading provider of improved outcomes in reading, writing and maths for the lowest achieving 20% of children and young people.
- Achievement for All uses a unique direct deliver model and a team of highly skilled coaches.
- Each programme is tailored to meet the needs of the individual school/setting and is delivered in partnership with the leadership team, teachers/staff, parents, pupils and support professionals. It has been developed in collaboration with the sector and is supported by the Department for Education.
- The charity's latest Impact Report demonstrates that over 100,000 vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, including those identified with special educational needs and disabilities, in schools and settings working with Achievement for All, continue to make faster

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progress in reading, writing and maths than their counterparts in other schools. Many are making as good or better progress than the national expected levels of progress for all pupils.

- Further information can be found at www.afaeducation.org or by contacting gemma.lowtoo@afaeducation.org

About Association of Youth Offending Team Managers (AYM)

- AYM is the National Association in England for Heads of Youth Offending Services and those within a management position with YOTs. Over 80% of YOTs in England are AYM members.
- Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are at the very heart of the youth justice system, operating in the community, within the secure estate, and post-custody. They have pivotal links with professionals in Local Authorities, Health and Social Care teams, education providers in the secure estate, and most importantly, young offenders, and their Parents and Carers.
- The AYM gives the partnership a profound in-depth knowledge and understanding of the challenges facing young people with SEND in the criminal justice system, and the professionals who work with them. There is no better placed organisations to rapidly establish a networked community of professional dialogue, peer-to-peer sharing, learning and practice development.
- AYM has an elected regional representative for each area of England and would use these regional links to secure participation across the professional sectors.
- For more information, contact Phil Sutton AYM Project Officer Phil.sutton@aym.org.uk

About Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU)

- Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) are a large scale provider of Masters-level CPD with particular expertise in areas such as dyslexia and autism; running one of the largest SENCO training programmes for English Local Authorities.
- MMU has significant research experience in inclusive education, through its Centre for Inclusive Education and Disability Studies linked with educational psychologists with experience in the Youth Justice System and secure estate.
- Their Education and Social Research Institute is rated in the top 20 in the UK (in the REF 2014 with 85% of research impact rated 'world leading' or 'internationally excellent' along with 67% of research outputs).
- The Greater Manchester Youth Justice University Partnership, in which they are a leading member, is a unique collaboration for knowledge exchange between YOS practitioners and university researchers in the Manchester Centre for Youth Studies, aiming to become a beacon region for innovation and excellence, demonstrating strong outcomes for children and young people.
- The research team have extensive experience of service evaluation in the youth justice sector, together with innovative approaches to engaging young people.



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- For more information, contact Peter Hick Principal Lecturer, Inclusive Education
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