

Improving outcomes for children, young people, and families: a National Prospectus

22 November 2010

Department for
Education

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Summary

Introduction

The aim of this prospectus is to provide a clear and coherent picture of the key activities that the Department for Education (DfE) wishes to fund directly at national level through organisations working with children, young people, parents and families, with a particular emphasis on early intervention and supporting the most disadvantaged.

This prospectus sets out a bidding process for voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises and other organisations bidding on a 'not for profit' basis for grant funded activities which have national significance.

This bidding process is part of a wider range of funding opportunities. A number of contracted services are likely to be procured in due course through separate formal tender processes. Brief details of these are set out in this document. In addition, there are likely to be other funding opportunities as a result of developing policies, e.g. the forthcoming SEN and Disability Green Paper.

We would like to invite organisations to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) for grant funding, for two years, to support the delivery of key national priorities for children, young people and families in line with the Coalition

Government's structural reform priorities which were published in the *DfE Business Plan 2011-2015* (November 2010). The specific priority areas for grant funding are explained later in this document.

The deadline for submitting EOIs to the Department is by 12 noon on 9th December 2010. Organisations which are shortlisted, following assessment of the EOI against the selection criteria, will subsequently be invited to submit full bids. We are using a two stage process because we know this process will be highly competitive. An EOI round means that fewer organisations will be involved in writing full bids, and that organisations unsuccessful at the first stage will know quickly. We will aim to announce the results from the competition by 25 February 2011 (see timetable for key stages of the process).

Context

Through the Government's commitment to build the 'Big Society', the voluntary and community sector in particular, will continue to play a significant role in delivering and improving services for children, young people and families.

We want to create the conditions where organisations can grow and achieve their aims. Our vision is to create a vigorous and responsive voluntary and community sector, freed up from dependency on direct central government grant-based funding

where organisations can compete in open markets for services and diversify their sources of income, including for example, accessing funding through the new Early Intervention Grant to local authorities or services commissioned by schools; the Education Endowment Fund to which bids will be invited; the National Citizen Service, and the Big Society Bank <http://www.civilsociety.co.uk>, which will grow the social investment market and make it easier for social entrepreneurs to access capital.

However, we recognise that transition to these new delivery arrangements may be potentially difficult for some organisations. Central and local government share a commitment to work closely with the sector to help meet the challenges and take advantage of the new opportunities. While the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector cannot be immune from reductions in public expenditure, the 2010 Spending Review (SR) announced that Government will support capacity building for the sector, including the creation of a new Transition Fund of £100 million to provide short term support for organisations enabling them to achieve much greater involvement in the running of public services. DfE will seek to complement this programme of capacity building, through working with key sector partners and other organisations to promote the creation and expansion, where appropriate, of mutuals, co-operatives, charities, social enterprises and community interest companies.

The Department will also explore ways of drawing in other sources of investment from the private sector, working with social intermediaries, venture philanthropists and other partners to help voluntary and community organisations to become sustainable.

The Government is consulting with the voluntary and community sector on future support arrangements through *Building a Stronger Civil Society*, which was launched by the Office for Civil Society in October 2010 and is due to end on 6 January 2011. The Department is also working closely with organisations which are represented on the DfE's Third Sector Group and the Children's Inter-agency Group to help inform and shape the new funding arrangements from April 2011.

Timetable

We are mindful of the need to communicate our funding plans to the sector as quickly as possible so that organisations can prepare accordingly.

We intend to manage the bidding process for grants on a common timetable as far as possible so that there is transparency about what is to be funded by DfE at national level and also ensure that the results from each key stage of the exercise are communicated to the sector in a coherent way.

Set out below is the proposed overall timetable for organisations interested in bidding for grant funding. This is intended as a guide and, whilst the Department does not intend to depart from the timetable, it reserves the right to do so at any time. Information relating to likely future DfE contracts is set out on page 22.

Bidding guidance published	22 November 2010
<u>Stage 1</u> – Deadline for expressions of interest to be received by DfE	Noon 9 December 2010
Sift completed and bidders informed	22 December 2010
<u>Stage 2</u> - Full bids invited from successful EOI applications	22 December 2010
Deadline for organisations to submit full bids to DfE	31 January 2011
Detailed assessment of	25 February

full bids completed and applicants notified	2011
Delivery plans developed and agreed with successful applicants	March 2011
Funded activity begins	April 2011

Stage 1: EOI Applications should be sent by email to:

dfefunding@education.gsi.gov.uk

You must make sure that your EOI application reaches the DfE mailbox above by 12 noon on 9th December. DfE will not consider applications received after this deadline.

If you require further information about the application process, please email your query to:

enquiries.dfefunding@education.gsi.gov.uk

We will not respond to individual enquiries but will regularly update the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document which is available on the DfE website (see pages 23-25 for more details).

FUNDING

All grant funding through this current process will be for a maximum of two years with the expectation that organisations will progressively develop alternative sources of funding to become self-sustaining.

High Level Funding Criteria

We are seeking applications for high profile activities of national significance:

- Which are most efficiently delivered on a national basis; **or**
- Where the market is currently under-developed and provision is required, and/or national action is needed to ensure progress already made is not lost; **and**
- Which fall within one of the agreed priority delivery areas for grant funding or one of the areas in which we are seeking a strategic partner; **and**
- Where organisations applying for grants can clearly demonstrate the potential to move towards a more sustainable financial footing in the future and demonstrate how they will engage users in the design and delivery of their activities and services; **and**
- Which are evidenced-based and

can clearly demonstrate making the best use of public funding.

We are **not** seeking to fund research related activity, pilots, innovation projects or small scale projects, services or activities which we would expect to be commissioned locally.

This prospectus focuses on 2 key areas as follows:

- Grant funding to support key national priorities, which will include an element of capacity building for successful applicants (see pages 8-17); and
- Grant funding for a new strategic partner programme – to help drive transformational change across the sector through the development of capacity and capability of smaller organisations (see pages 18-21).

It also refers to the likely future procurement of some key national services for children, young people and families under separate tendering processes in due course (see page 22).

The Department will also explore ways of developing new investment models for the VCS, through attracting private sector funding, specifically targeted at early intervention work and aligning this with the outcomes of the *Graham Allen Review*. This will include exploring the feasibility of developing new Social Impact Bonds which offer a way for the Department to pay on

outcomes and potentially leverage in expertise from the private sector. We will provide further details on this in the new year.

The exact number and size of grants in each theme, or for each strategic partner, will depend on the range and quality of bids received.

Grants will be awarded for revenue funding only i.e. we will only fund the direct costs of delivery, along with support for capacity building. Capital expenditure (e.g. building work) will not be eligible.

We expect successful organisations to quickly be able to demonstrate progress in establishing alternative funding streams to become self-sustaining.

Joint or consortium bids are encouraged but all bids will be considered equally on their merits.

Capacity Building

Government wishes to support sustainable, entrepreneurial voluntary and community organisations competing in open markets to deliver services.

It is not the Government's role to define the purposes of individual organisations or set a vision for the sector as a whole. That comes from the sector itself. The primary responsibility for improvement and securing the necessary support

therefore rests with individual organisations.

Organisations which receive direct DfE grant funding will need to demonstrate their capacity to move towards financial self sufficiency. For those organisations which are successful at stage one of this process, the Department will therefore consider **additional grant funding** (as a percentage of the overall DfE grant funding awarded to individual organisations) to help meet the costs of planned business transformation work.

Organisations which are successful at stage one of the process will be invited, at the second stage, to set out the funding that they think they will require for capacity building to support their business transformation plan. Clearly, the level of capacity building will vary depending on the needs of the organisation, but we would envisage that DfE support could be in the region of between 10-15% of the total DfE grant funding for year one, and between 5-10% of total DfE grant funding in year two.

DfE Grant Funding Priorities

The Department has identified the following themes as key national priorities for grant funding:

Theme 1: Families and Relationships

Theme 2: Early Years and Childcare

Theme 3: Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities

Theme 4: Children in Care

Theme 5: Child protection and safeguarding

Theme 6: Young People

Organisations are eligible to bid for grants in more than one theme. Each theme will however require a separate application form to be emailed separately (see section on the application process pages 23-25).

This section provides a brief overview of the activities that DfE wishes to support. More detailed guidance for each theme will be published at stage 2 of the application process.

Theme 1 – Families and Relationships

Summary

Families are at the heart of a healthy society and it is adults that create the climate in the family. Whole family support to the most vulnerable families through early intervention is critical to prevent poor outcomes for children, young people and their families and can unlock social mobility. We want to support family services demonstrating the greatest positive impact in ensuring help is available to prevent problems escalating; to improve access to family services within the community (including through Sure Start Children's Centres, schools and health settings); and to ensure families are able to draw on relationship support services both to build relationship quality and support families through relationship distress and breakdown. The Coalition Government's Programme for Government included a commitment to put funding for relationship support on a stable footing.

What we wish to support

- **Developing the capacity and expertise of local providers of evidence-based interventions (including parenting programmes) for high need**

families: including families with multiple problems, families accessing Sure Start Children's Centres, families of offenders, families with drug, alcohol and mental health problems and young carers. This will include:

- Providing innovative and cost effective approaches to early intervention that ensure universal and specialist services reach those in greatest need and reduce the need for more intensive and costly interventions;
- Encouraging greater collaboration between specialist organisations to provide innovative solutions and best practice resources;
- Providing access to expertise for professionals and volunteers in proven interventions;
- Developing models for encouraging volunteering, community and peer support in disadvantaged communities; and
- Developing specialist areas of voluntary sector capacity, particularly in response to service redesign and the introduction of community budgets and local pooling arrangements.

▪ **National relationship support services:** work to encourage couples to take up preventative support to develop and sustain their relationship and, where relationship breakdown does occur, to put in place effective parenting arrangements so that any negative impacts for children are minimised. This will include:

- Public policy work to lead cultural change (with a focus on effecting a step change in attitudes towards relationships and normalising relationship help-seeking). We would welcome work on developing the case and models for private sector support (both as employers and as part of corporate social responsibility);
- Evaluation of effective practice to build the evidence-base of effective (including cost effective) interventions; and
- Innovative approaches to relationship support - including provision of relationship support which meets the needs of those lower-income families who might struggle to pay and who are at most risk from breakdown.

- **Training of key practitioners, particularly in Sure Start Children’s Centres, to recognise and respond appropriately to relationship distress in order to minimise any negative impacts for children.** We are seeking proposals which develop the skills of staff, particularly those working in Sure Start Children’s Centres, to respond to adult couple relationship issues. We want to build on effective practice in this area and would wish to focus this resource in areas of disadvantage.
- **Accreditation and national support for child contact centres.** We wish to ensure that child contact centres, particularly those working with the court population, provide safe and supportive services for the families they work with. We are looking for a national organisation which can accredit centres reaching the necessary standard and promote improvement in the sector.

Proposed funding arrangements

The Department expects to fund only a limited number of bids to deliver the activities listed above.

Grants will be for two years from April 2011. Further announcements on how we will put funding for relationship support on a stable footing in line with the commitment in the Coalition Government’s Programme for Government will be made in due

course. Organisations will be expected as part of their proposals to set out clear plans for establishing alternative funding arrangements and longer term sustainability during the period of the grant. Organisations can bid to deliver one or more of the above activities but should identify costs separately.

Theme 2 – Early Years and Childcare

Summary

We want to improve outcomes for all children, particularly those from disadvantaged families both by placing Sure Start Children’s Centres at the heart of a co-ordinated drive to intervene early, and by ensuring that every child receives high quality early education and childcare. To that end we will support national activity to: (i) promote participation in early learning by disadvantaged families and children with disabilities; (ii) develop childminder networks; (iii) develop peer to peer support among local authorities and early years providers to increase the quality of early years provision; (iv) improve business skills among early learning providers; (v) promote the contribution of the wider community to early learning and childcare; (vi) improve leadership and voluntary sector involvement in Sure Start Children’s Centres; and, (vii) provide high

quality learning opportunities either side of the school day.

What we wish to support

- **Promoting participation in early learning by disadvantaged families and children with disabilities:** including through sector-led learning for local authorities and providers about engaging disadvantaged families and the role that Sure Start Children's Centres can play; and portage home visiting service for pre-school children with additional support needs.
- **Developing childminder networks:** to improve choice for parents and support childminders to increase the quality of their work.
- **Developing peer to peer support among local authorities and early years providers to increase the quality of early years provision:** funding will also be made available for: promoting any improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage following the current Tickell review; developing the culture of safeguarding in early years settings; and, promoting healthy food in early years settings.
- **Improving business skills among early learning providers:** by supporting providers in the early years and childcare sector to improve their business skills to help achieve greater efficiency and support a diverse market.
- **Promoting the contribution of the wider community to early learning and childcare:** through: parent to parent support and advice; support for less formal and unregulated childcare like mother and toddler groups; and, increased volunteering.
- **Improving leadership and voluntary sector involvement in Sure Start Children's Centres:** support for leaders to think innovatively how limited resources are used most cost-effectively to reach families in greatest need through evidence-based early intervention approaches and programmes.
- **Providing high quality learning opportunities either side of the school day:** by providing resources to support before and after school settings to: increase the range of quality learning opportunities; develop and promote quality assurance; embed sustainable extra-curricular activities; and promote partnerships between VCS organisations and schools to deliver extra curricular activities.

Proposed funding arrangements

The Department expects to fund only a limited number of bids to deliver the activities listed above.

Grants will be for two years from April 2011. Organisations will be expected as part of their proposals to set out clear plans for establishing alternative funding arrangements and longer term sustainability during the period of the grant. Organisations can bid to deliver one or more of the above activities but should identify costs separately.

Theme 3 – Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities

Summary

We want to improve support for disabled children, those with special educational needs and their families by funding national activity to: (i) improve access to specialist expertise for parents and professionals in relation to specific impairments – this includes, but is not limited to, autism, dyslexia, emotional and behavioural difficulties, visual impairments, and communication difficulties; and (ii) a support and training service for schools to help disabled children and children with SEN access the curriculum.

What we wish to support

- **Improving access to specialist expertise for parents and professionals in relation to specific impairments:** this is likely to include, but is not limited to:

- Providing direct advice and information to parents to support them in understanding, and making choices about, special needs and disability provision;
- Providing examples of best practice and professional guidance to support schools in developing policies and practices to address the needs of children and young people with particular impairments;
- Developing and implementing a competencies framework to support workforce development; both by informing the content of training and by supporting teachers and schools in identifying training needs; and
- Working across the voluntary sector and with other relevant stakeholders to develop a common view to support the development of national and local policies and ensure that guidance on best practice reflects the developing international base of evidence.

- **Providing a support and training service for schools to help disabled children and children with special educational needs**

access the curriculum: this includes conversion of text into accessible formats for visually impaired and dyslexic pupils.

Proposed funding arrangements

The Department expects to fund only a limited number of bids to deliver the activities listed above.

Grants will be for two years from April 2011. Organisations will be expected as part of their proposals to set out clear plans for establishing alternative funding arrangements and longer term sustainability during the period of the grant. Organisations can bid to deliver one or more of the above activities but should identify costs separately.

Details of likely future contracted services relating to SEN and Disability are set out on page 21. There may also be potential future funding for activities/services as a result of the forthcoming SEN and Disability Green Paper.

Joint or consortium bids are encouraged but all bids will be considered equally on their merits.

Theme 4 - Children in Care

Summary

We want to raise the aspirations and outcomes of children in care by funding national activity to: (i) increase the number of children adopted and reduce delays; (ii) increase the number of foster carers and the quality of care; (iii) support local authorities' corporate parenting and the development of Children in Care Councils to drive change in the care system; (iv) improve advocacy services for children in care; (v) strengthen the voice of children in care; (vi) improve care leavers employability opportunities; and (vii) increase the number of local authorities using Family Group Conferences.

What we wish to support

- **Increase the number of children adopted and reduce delays:** by encouraging more people to come forward to become adoptive parents; developing and disseminating evidence based on "what works" to managers and front line practitioners; and providing on going support and advice to adoptive parents.

- **Increasing the number of foster carers and the quality of care:** by encouraging more people to come forward to become foster carers and supporting them to provide high quality support to children, particularly those with challenging behaviour.
- **Supporting local authorities' corporate parenting and the development of Children in Care Councils to drive change in the care system:** by providing guidance and support to young people and local authorities in developing practice which improves corporate parenting and Children in Care Councils – including for example through the training of young people and local councillors.
- **Improving advocacy services for children in care:** by supporting a national advocacy support service for looked after children and young disabled children, to help them to manage change and respond to challenges in their lives.
- **Strengthening the voice of children in care:** by supporting them to create better public awareness and improve the perception of living in care, including for example by giving them a voice via their own website and magazine and supporting young people's engagement with the All Parliamentary Group for Children in Care.
- **Improving care leavers employability opportunities:** by supporting and developing partnership working between employers, local authorities and young people in and leaving care including through a peer to peer learning and support network, including for example engagement and support to employers providing work opportunities.
- **Increasing the number of local authorities using Family Group Conferences:** by the development of an Accreditation Programme for Family Group Conference services, including quality assurance standards.

Proposed funding arrangements

The Department expects to fund only a limited number of bids to deliver the activities listed above.

Grants will be for two years from April 2011. Organisations will be expected as part of their proposals to set out clear plans for establishing alternative funding arrangements and longer term sustainability during the period of the grant. Organisations can bid to deliver one or more of the above activities but should identify costs separately.

Theme 5 – Child protection and Safeguarding

Summary

We want to improve arrangements for protecting children from harm by supporting national activity to: (i) improve front-line practice in child protection and safeguarding; (ii) increase innovation in child protection services and support for children who are subject to, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; (iii) improve learning and support within and across child protection services; and (iv) develop improved multi-agency approaches to child protection.

What we wish to support

- **Improving front-line practice in child protection and safeguarding:** Child protection work, at its heart, involves forming relationships with children, their family members and others, working to provide flexible and sensitive responses that match the wide variety of needs and circumstances that are presented. We are interested in proposals that consider how social workers and all those involved in child protection can be assisted in making appropriate evidence-based assessments and interventions that will be more likely to protect vulnerable children.
- **Developing innovation in child protection services and support for children who are subject to, or at risk of, abuse or neglect:** The nature of child protection work means that professional practice must be open to variety, both in understanding what help is needed but also in any response to it. We are interested in innovations that reflect that the most effective means of working with families and vulnerable children is to try to provide the type of professional expertise that meets the breadth and depth of their needs.
- **Improving learning and support within and across child protection services:** The complexity of the social work task, the emotional and intellectual demands on professionals making highly complex and emotionally charged decisions concerning the lives of children and young people, and the need for this work to be housed within an explicit space for critical reflection is central to good child protection services. We are interested in opportunities that will help child protection work be better informed and sustainably improved as a result of practitioners learning from practice.
- **Developing improved multi-agency approaches to child protection:** Professionals in universal services cannot and should not replace the function of social work, but they do need to be able to understand, engage and think

professionally about the children, young people and families they are working with. We are interested in proposals that would develop a greater range of expertise in early years settings, schools and other universal services in support of vulnerable children, young people and families.

Proposed funding arrangements

The Department expects to fund only a limited number of bids to deliver the activities listed above.

Grants will be for two years from April 2011. Organisations will be expected as part of their proposals to set out clear plans for establishing alternative funding arrangements and longer term sustainability during the period of the grant. Organisations can bid to deliver one or more of the above activities but should identify costs separately.

Theme 6 – Young People

Summary

We want to support young people by funding activity to: (i) enable early intervention to increase participation and improve the achievement of disadvantaged young people; and (ii) provide intensive, strongly targeted, high quality ‘wrap around’ support for the most marginalised young people.

What we wish to support

- **Early interventions to increase participation and improve the achievements of disadvantaged young people:** to test approaches to addressing underlying issues that can act as barriers to the achievement of successful outcomes by providing vulnerable and disadvantaged young people with targeted, personalised support which prevents the emergence of subsequent problems, (e.g. teenage pregnancies, crime and anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, disengagement from education and training and unemployment).
- **Intensive, strongly targeted, high quality ‘wrap around’ support for the most marginalised young people:** to re-engage marginalised young people with a view to developing evidence of what is cost-effective in achieving better outcomes so that effective practice can be replicated (including by other organisations) more widely.

Proposed funding arrangements

The Department expects to fund only a limited number of bids to deliver the activities listed above.

Grants will be for two years from April 2011. Organisations will be expected as part of their proposals to set out clear plans for establishing alternative

funding arrangements and longer term sustainability during the period of the grant. To ensure that an organisation's proposals to find alternative funding are realistic the funding available will be limited to 25% of 2009-10 turnover.

Organisations can bid to deliver one or more of the above activities but should identify costs separately.

The market for the delivery of youth services is underdeveloped. Our aim is to fund activity that will inform provision more widely by improving understanding of the impact of high quality early and heavily targeted interventions on young people's outcomes. Successful organisations will therefore be expected to set out clear plans for providing externally validated evidence of the impact of their approaches on the outcomes of young people valued by the potential future funders.

New Strategic Partner Programme

Summary

The Department is seeking to invest in a strategic relationship with a small number of strategic voluntary and community organisations operating at national level across services for children, young people and families. These organisations will play an important role in helping to drive transformational change across the sector to help organisations prepare effectively for the future. We will work closely with other Government Departments to explore the potential for a joined up approach to strategic partner arrangements in future. Organisations wishing to express interest in becoming a strategic partner should therefore set out how in their strategic partner role they can make links across the whole government agenda.

What we wish to support

The new Strategic Partner Programme aims to invest in a small number of strategic partners from April 2011 who will work collaboratively with the Department to:

- Advise and inform the Department about key issues that impact on voluntary and community sector

organisations working with children, young people and families;

- Develop capability and capacity in the voluntary and community sector; and
- Provide robust and systematic dissemination methods for information, policy developments and key programmes enabling voluntary and community sector organisations to engage in the delivery of improved outcomes for children, young people and families.

Given the wide ranging role, the Department is particularly seeking a partnership or consortia approach. The lead and accountable body for the partnership or consortia must be clear in the application.

Only one application will be successful under each of the following areas (although there is scope for combining the proposed overarching strategic role for children, young people and family services with one or more of the other strategic partner roles):

- Family services
- Young people
- SEN and Disability
- Early Years and Childcare
- Overarching strategic role for children, young people and family services

Each of the areas will cover children in care and safeguarding issues as necessary.

Grants will be available for a maximum of two years. The exact size of the awards will vary according to the ambition of the proposal.

Expectations of Strategic Partners

One of the defining features of the programme is the explicit expectation that all of the strategic partners will work co-operatively and collaboratively together, and with the Department in partnership towards mutually agreed outcomes.

In particular we are expecting strategic partners to:

- Facilitate communication between the Department for Education and voluntary and community sector organisations delivering services for children, young people and families;
- Contribute evidence based specialist expertise drawing on experience within the voluntary and community sector to influence and shape national policy development as a 'critical friend';
- Support synergy with other Government Departments and statutory organisations;
- Draw on direct access to grass roots communities and families, represent the interests and views of

children, young people and families, and a diverse range of small, medium and large voluntary and community sector organisations including those representing and addressing the needs of the BME community;

- Work in partnership to facilitate local service delivery by sharing advice, guidance and good practice, focused on the use of evidenced based interventions with the aim of improving outcomes and reducing inequalities;
- Provide advice and support on how national and local service providers can move towards self-sustaining services, through collaborative working, improved signposting of national services and networks, effectively accessing the commissioning of local services, and generating alternative income streams; and
- Encourage and facilitate greater collaborative working at national and local level.

We would expect successful applicants to the Strategic Partner Programme to demonstrate their capability and commitment to:

- Work collaboratively with other organisations in the sector at local, regional and national level to embed the reform programme;
- Support the development and capacity of organisations in the sector including smaller organisations at a local level;

- Have a track record of working at a strategic level informing and advocating on behalf of the sector to Government or other statutory sector agencies; and
- Have a well developed understanding of delivering key services to children, young people and families and of the roles that voluntary and community sector organisations have to play in improving outcomes for local communities.

Applications are invited under the following five areas:

Families Services

Specifics

The successful strategic partner will be expected to encourage greater innovation, both in how services are funded and delivered, identify gaps in market provision, and ensure that there is sufficient national capacity and capability to help the Department facilitate stability in local markets. In particular through:

- Encouraging greater collaboration with specialist organisations to provide innovative solutions, specialist/technical advice and best practice resources in responding to market failure, including peer to peer support;
- Promoting a step-change in leadership at both national and local level and developing a skilled workforce, trained to work closely with parents and families and other professionals within early years, schools and health settings; and
- Promoting localism within families services (including volunteering) by harnessing the skills and knowledge of the sector to encourage reform and streamlining of services and an increased role for families in shaping the provision and delivery of local services.

Young People

Specifics

The successful strategic partner will be expected to:

- Support front line professionals to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence that they need to identify and support effectively young people at risk of poor outcomes, such as teenage pregnancy, youth crime, substance misuse and poor emotional health & well-being; and
- Help to build the capacity of youth sector voluntary and community organisations so that they are more innovative and entrepreneurial and are better placed to meet the emerging demands of commissioners.

The Department will be prepared to consider providing financial support for the consolidation and/or merger of existing “umbrella” youth organisations.

SEN and Disability

Specifics

The successful strategic partner will be expected to:

- Provide expert professional advice and access to a network of contacts with professional expertise to help national policy development for disabled children and children with special educational needs;
- Provide strategic intelligence to the Department around the local delivery of services for disabled children and children with special educational needs;
- Conduct research on areas defined by the Department; and
- Help to facilitate communications with the disabled children and special educational needs sectors.

Early years and childcare

Specifics

The successful strategic partner will be expected to:

- Provide expert advice that draws on the views of the whole of the early years sector, including Sure Start Children's Centres, childminders and early learning providers in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors; and
- Promote and advise on evidence-based approaches to early intervention and to joining up the early years sector as a whole,

which will achieve greater cost effectiveness and ensure a seamless journey for children and their families from birth to 5, and then smooth progression into the school years.

Overarching strategic role for children, young people and family services

It is our intention to ensure that the Strategic Partner Programme, while delivering on specific outcomes for parts of the sector, is also able to bring together and strengthen the sector as a whole. Accordingly, we would like to invite expressions of interest to establish a strategic partner which is able to:

- represent and convene the sector as a whole; ensuring strategic links between the voluntary/not-for-profit sector and the local and national state and private sector;
- progress shared issues across and on behalf of the sector; and
- build the capacity of the sector to engage in national policy developments.

We would welcome expressions of interest which combine this role with one or more of the other strategic partner roles.

Contracted Services

The Department has identified the following areas where it is likely to invite expressions of interest (through a Pre Qualification Questionnaire- PQQ) to contract for national services through separate formal tender processes in due course. Further details on tendering will be available at a later date. Organisations cannot bid to deliver these services through the grant funding competition.

Family and Relationship Support Services

Summary

The Department is likely to invite bids for a range of family services that are delivered online and through telephone helplines.

What we are likely to wish to buy

- Support for families via online and helpline services for a range of groups and on a range of issues to be decided, but which might include: parenting and family advice; school issues; early learning and childcare; children's law; children on the edge of care; single parents; mental health; SEN and disability; family law; and relationship support.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability

Summary

The Department is likely to invite bids to provide support to help facilitate local parental choice and control over services for disabled children and children with SEN.

What we are likely to wish to buy

- Support for the delivery of short breaks (respite) for families of disabled children;
- Support to embed parent participation at a local level through parent forums;
- Support for better coordination of services for disabled children and their families; including gathering and facilitating effective practice;
- Support for better transition of young disabled people into education, employment and independent living;
- Support to schools and local authorities to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEN by improving access, aspiration and achievement; and
- Support for the delivery of local Parent Partnership services.

Grant Application Process

The application process for grants is open and competitive and will involve two stages:

Stage 1 – Expressions of interest: at which point we will expect outline bids to address the assessment criteria (see below).

Stage 2 – Full Bids: short-listed organisations will be expected to submit a detailed proposal that meets our objectives which can demonstrate the organisation's capacity to deliver the outcome effectively and clearly set out how it will achieve financial sustainability in the longer-term.

We are using a two stage process because we know this process will be highly competitive. An EOI round means that fewer organisations will be involved in writing full bids, and that organisations unsuccessful at the first stage will know quickly.

How to Apply

Eligible organisations are invited to submit an initial Expression of Interest (EOI) using the EOI form provided at Annex A **by noon on Thursday 9 December 2010**. If you wish to bid for funding in more than one of the DfE themes, a separate EOI will need to be completed for each bid (and emailed

separately). If you wish to bid for funding as a new strategic partner, you should use the EOI form provided at Annex B.

We aim to notify short listed organisations by Wednesday 22

December and invite them to submit a full proposal. The deadline for receipt of full proposals is noon on Monday 31 January 2011. Following a rapid development and planning stage, delivery will begin for successful organisations during April 2011.

If you meet the criteria for DfE funding and you believe you have a sufficiently ambitious proposal(s), you should complete the EOI form(s), downloadable from:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/policiesandprocedures/procurement/a0037/current-contracts-advertised-by-the-department> and send it by email to:

dfefunding@education.gsi.gov.uk

Assessment Process

Applications will be assessed by relevant policy and programme areas across the Department. We will be advising Ministers at each key stage on which proposals best meet the criteria and priorities and will make the biggest impact to children, young people and families in England.

Organisations should be aware that not all applications that meet the criteria will be funded. This is a

competitive process for high profile activities of national significance with a limited budget.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document has been produced to help organisations with their EOI application – this can be found on the DfE website above. This will be updated regularly throughout the bidding process to reflect any issues that may be raised about the process and our response to them. If you have any queries about the application process you should send them by email to:

enquiries.dfefunding@education.gov.uk

The enquiry email box will close on noon Monday 6 December and all responses will be posted by 5pm Tuesday 7 December.

Expression of Interest (EOIs) – Assessment Criteria for Grant Funding for DfE Themes

EOIs will be assessed against the following 4 criteria (with corresponding weightings):

Criteria	Weighting
(1) Capacity to quickly start delivering large scale programmes/ activities of national significance for children, young people or families e.g. evidence will be required that the necessary infrastructure (i.e. staffing, premises, technologies, etc) to deliver identified DfE priorities is in place.	5
(2) Experience of working closely with key stakeholders at national level including central government to design and deliver key priorities for children, young people or families.	3
(3) Proven track record of delivering reform and securing cost effective and improved outcomes for children, young people or families - including evidence of engaging users in the design of services.	7
(4) Clear and effective strategy to achieve financial sustainability and capability to secure funding from other sources in year 2 of DfE grant funding i.e. evidenced through track record of diversifying sources of income.	5

We will assess applications on the information provided in the EOI. Each criterion will be scored (by multiplying the above weightings with the rating scale below) to achieve an overall total EOI bid score.

0	No evidence/response
1	Poor response. Very little evidence of appropriate capability, experience or expertise.
2	Unsatisfactory. Some evidence of appropriate capability, experience or expertise. Meets requirements in some areas but with important omissions.
3	Satisfactory. Reasonable evidence of appropriate capability, experience or expertise. Meets requirements in many areas but not all.
4	Very Good. Detailed evidence provided of appropriate capability, experience or expertise.
5	Excellent. Very strong evidence of appropriate capability, experience, or expertise.

If the proposals are to be delivered by consortia/partnerships then the consortium/partnership should be able to demonstrate its robustness, preferably through a history of partnership working.

Applications are welcome from:

Non-governmental organisations that are value-driven and which principally reinvest their surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural

objectives, including private organisations bidding on a ‘not for profit’ basis.

Expression of Interest (EOIs) – Assessment Criteria for the new Strategic Partnership programme

EOIs will be assessed against the following criteria:

- | |
|---|
| (1) Proven track record of working at a strategic level informing and advocating on behalf of the sector to Government or other statutory sector agencies and capacity to make links across the whole Government agenda. |
| (2) Understanding of delivering key services to children, young people and families and of the roles that voluntary and community sector organisations have to play in improving outcomes for local communities – including evidence of engaging users in the design of services. |
| (3) Strategic representation of voluntary and community sector organisations working directly with children, young people or families. |
| (4) Proven track record of working in partnership to support the development and capacity of a diverse range of smaller organisations across the sector. |

Scoring of each of these criteria will be on the basis of using the 0-5 point scale as set out above for assessing grant funding for DfE themes. All criteria carry equal weighting.