



nasen

Helping Everyone Achieve

IMPACT REPORT 2021/22

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A word from Annamarie Hassall MBE

Chief Executive of nasen (the National Association for Special Educational Needs) and Chair of Whole School SEND

It's an honour to introduce nasen's inaugural Impact Report in this, our thirtieth anniversary year – my first at the helm of the charity.

Our progress in 2021/22 has been underpinned by a strategic focus on increasing our reach. Nationally, we made the courageous decision to remove the financial barrier to joining nasen, making membership free for all in the UK. Our membership in October 2022 stood at over seventy thousand, a growing collaboration of practitioners, of SENCOs, teachers, leaders and governors. I'm proud to say that growth means we have members in all regions in England, no fewer than 59% of schools. The official launch of nasen International in 2021/22 connected professionals across the world, reaching out to promote inclusion, striving for an equitable education in the UK and globally.

Increasing reach is more important now than ever, given the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ever-increasing number of children identified with SEND. In 2021/22 approximately 1.5 million children and young people in England were identified with SEN, that's 16.6% of all pupils. If the rate of increase over the past five years continues into the next five years, over a fifth of all learners in schools, colleges and settings will require support for SEND needs by 2026.

Too many children and young people with SEND are being let down because their needs are misunderstood or unmet, and the results can be disastrous for their emotional well-being, their educational outcomes, likelihood of employment, and long-term life prospects. If we are to afford all children and young people the equitable experience and opportunities they deserve, our mission – to equip every educator with the skills and tools they need to deliver truly inclusive practice, so all children and young people thrive – has never been so pressing or so needed.



Our focus in 2022/23 will be on extending collaborations, authentically, including the wider workforce of professionals in health, in social care, in local communities and regions. We will promote evidence-informed practice, encourage innovation, disseminate research alongside practice. Our efforts will not be limited by geography as we seek to include all those who share our mission. In doing so we will increase our reach, support the workforce, and the sector nationally and internationally, and put the lived experience of children and young people with SEND at the heart of all we do. Our work will not end until we live in a world where learning is meaningful and accessible for every child and young person. Together, we can spark positive, inclusive change for all children and young people, in every country and continent of the world.



Annamarie Hassall MBE
CEO, nasen and Chair of Whole School SEND

Our Mission, Vision and Strategic Priorities

Our Vision

That the educational experience for learners with SEND will be consistently as good as it is for learners without SEND.

Our Mission

To support and develop the education workforce.

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure that the education workforce is fully equipped to meet the needs of *all* learners, including learners with SEND by:
 - Providing information, training and resources to develop the education workforce.
 - Delivering programmes, initiatives and services that support the education workforce.
- Be the champion, friend and protector of children and young people with SEND and all those who support them.
- Act as a conduit between SEND sector influencers and the education workforce.

Strategic Priorities

Our strategy continues to be shaped by the 5-year plan which was published in 2020 and featured 5 key areas of focus:



MEMBERSHIP

Increasing our reach and representing a broader proportion of the sector by removing membership fees.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Providing a programme of continuing professional development, accredited training and conferences to support the workforce.



COLLABORATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

Fostering a sense of shared purpose and belonging by putting lived experience at the heart of our work.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Developing nasen's influence on policy and practice as a result of sector-leading thought leadership and research.



CHAMPION, FRIEND AND PROTECTOR

Listening to and representing our members, working with the wider sector and ensuring the wellbeing of our team.

nasen in Numbers

Since making membership free for all in January 2021, 13,500 members have reactivated their existing nasen membership. Between April 2021 and March 2022 we more than doubled our membership through new sign-ups.

MEMBERSHIP REPRESENTED IN

59%

SCHOOLS ACROSS ENGLAND
AS AT OCTOBER 2022



30

YEARS
SUPPORTING
THE EDUCATION
WORKFORCE



TRAINING DELIVERED
IN OVER

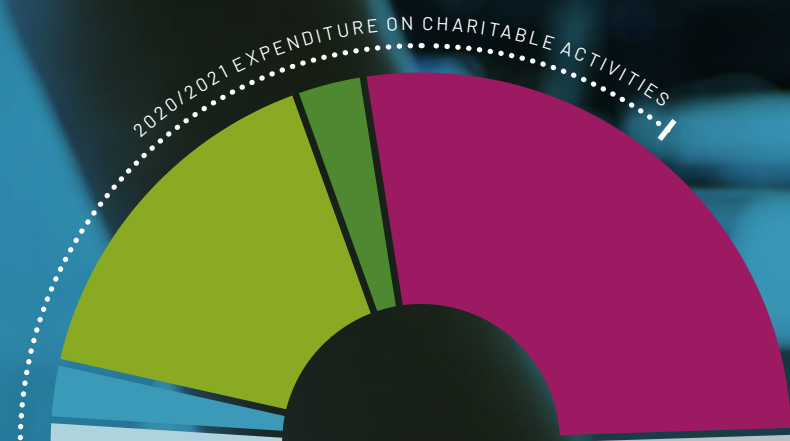
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COUNTRIES

31% are teachers, teaching assistants, support staff
or early years practitioners and not a SENCO

25% of our members are SENCOs

15% are in a leadership role and not a SENCO



43%

ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE ON
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES FROM
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS IN 2021/22

- 2% MEMBERSHIP
- 5% PUBLICATIONS
AND JOURNALS
- 32% TRAINING

- 6% EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS
- 55% CONSULTANCY
- 1% OTHER



OVER

10,000

DELEGATES ACCESSED SEND
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT (CPD)
THROUGH OUR DfE FUNDED
WEBINAR PROGRAMME

Shaping our Theory of Change

Making a difference for those with SEND is at nasen's core. It is predominantly achieved through working tirelessly to unite and support the SEND workforce in education.

During 2021/22 we refined our methodology and tools to shape our delivery; including developing a common language to articulate our purpose and impact. We have also further strengthened our approach to evidencing the impact, outcomes, and outputs of our activities. Together these improvements are shaping nasen's Theory of Change.

We know that if we are to reimagine education so that every learner is included, we need to deliver systemic, scalable changes to attitudes and practices that together remove barriers, raise awareness, and break down stigma about SEND. Further, it is our belief that education provides the foundation for a more inclusive and equitable society. We aim to influence society and, thereby, create a world where all children and young people feel they belong.

We want to ensure that everyone, including children and young people with SEND, achieve their potential at school, and lead happy, healthy, and fulfilled lives over which they have choices and control. We will achieve this long-term outcome by delivering change through:

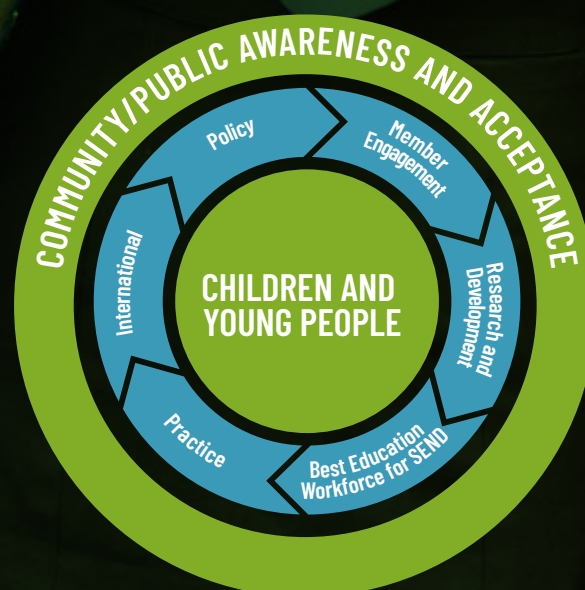
- Empowering children and young people, including the workforce that supports them, through intentional collaboration and co-production.
- Championing changemakers and opening minds through influencing policy and practice both in the UK and internationally.

- Building and sharing information and evidence which will improve knowledge and facilitate quality workforce development.

Our approach is reinforced through recurrent engagement with the nasen membership.

The result of nasen's activities and collaboration is that children and young people with SEND will be increasingly:

- Understood better, leading to stronger learning relationships, and a greater sense of belonging.
- Included by design, such that the educational experience improves for all children and young people.
- Able to thrive at school; then go on to lead happy, healthy, and fulfilled lives.



A Road to Inclusion

SHARE EXPERTISE & RESOURCES

Promote cooperation, flexibility and shared understanding



CO-PRODUCE WITH FAMILIES

Consider how family choices and values challenge or support segregation



LEARN FROM PEERS

Recognise the process involved in shifting towards inclusion



CONSULT COMMUNITIES

Encourage local input and ownership of policies



CHAMPION CHANGEMAKERS

Support other actors to collaborate, and play their part in changes



THINK UNIVERSAL

Ensure all children have a relevant and accessible education



EMPOWER THE WORKFORCE

Involve all students, teachers and school leaders



WIDEN UNDERSTANDING ON INCLUSION

Achieve equitable education at every level



Strategic Aim Membership

The key focus for 2021/22 was to broaden our membership base, increase our reach, and represent a larger proportion of the sector.



Meeting this objective required bold and brave action: the removal of membership fees. This loss of income to nasen had always been part of our long-term plan: if we are to reach a greater proportion of the workforce so that we can do more and do better for children and young people with SEND, we must be prepared to invest and remove all possible barriers.

“..it is vital that all SENCoS have a membership to nasen. The wealth of information and resources is endless. It is a go to... a must have when in this role in a school. Thank you nasen.

“ ..nasen is helping me develop my confidence within my role.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021/22:

- Our 2023 target of recruiting at least one member in 50% of all schools in England was achieved 12 months ahead of time with nasen membership spanning over 50% of schools by March 2022.
- We were delighted to be able to open the doors to nasen Live once again in September 2021, and our first face-to-face event since the pandemic proved to be an unmissable opportunity for members to learn about the latest sector developments and reinforce inclusive practice.



Strategic Aim Workforce Development

In the last year, we've continued to deliver a structured programme of continuing professional development, accredited training and conferences to support the SEND workforce.

Our information, training, consultancy, and resources ensure that all those we work with in the UK and across the globe receive the most up-to-date knowledge and support required to effect progress towards a society that is inclusive by design.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021/22:

- We successfully delivered a fourth year of the SEND School's Workforce contract delivered by the Whole School SEND (WSS) Consortium on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE). With over 25,000 members, **evidence shows that the WSS programme has contributed to widespread changes in practice and leadership of SEND, leading to more inclusive, high-quality teaching, a more inclusive ethos in settings, and earlier, more accurate identification of SEN.**

“Children are now receiving the right support at the right time.

- Our early years work saw us supporting local authorities in their development of a multi-agency strategic approach to SEND in the Early Years. 100% of delegates reported high levels of satisfaction and increased understanding. We also led 122 early years SENCOs on their journey to achieving the Early Years Level 3 SENCO Awards, in partnership with School Improvement Liverpool (SIL).

- In partnership with Microlink plc, we delivered the DfE's Assistive Technology (AT) pilot, building awareness and confidence in effective use of AT among teachers in 80 mainstream schools. Regarding the positive impact on pupils, 51% of the AT Champions stated that they felt most pupils' needs were being met after the training compared to just under 31% before the training.

“This was a brilliant project... every child with SEND in these settings has benefitted.

- In September 2021, the inception of nasen International saw us move to support even more children and young people through a comprehensive offer of universal and bespoke training opportunities for teachers and leaders in International and national schools overseas. **Training was delivered to participants in over 30 countries, with 100% of international trainees stating that they would recommend our courses to a colleague and over 98% of all attendees reporting increased knowledge and understanding.**



Strategic Aim

Collaboration and Co-Production

Because we achieve more when we work together, we continue to create opportunities to share knowledge, ideas and experience, and to increase the extent to which our resources, training, events and research is created, developed and delivered collaboratively. Consciously committed to co-production, we recognise that where lived experience is incorporated into our work, it adds depth, richness and authenticity, and helps foster a sense of shared purpose.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021/22:

- Our nasen team, with professional expertise and lived experience of SEND, supported the design and delivery of the LEGO Foundation's \$25 million Play for All (PfA) Accelerator initiative which offers entrepreneurs the opportunity to partner with the LEGO Foundation to create products and services that really make a difference to autistic children, children with ADHD, and their families. We delivered training on participatory design, neurodiversity and inclusive design, coproduction and impact evaluation for the organisations taking part in the initiative which had a **global reach of 84.5 million people in the health, entertainment, education and care sectors.**
- We supported the Office for National Statistics' qualitative research into the school experiences of children and young people with SEND. The nasen team trained researchers **to support more effective engagement with children and young people with complex needs** to ensure their voices and perspectives are better represented in research and policy. Additionally, we recruited an expert youth panel of 12 learners from a variety of settings, whose insights at planning stage informed the methods and processes used.
- Our young ambassador, Marcus Wilton, and patron and GB Paralympic Champion Danielle Brown MBE took centre stage and presented their lived experience of SEND at the 2021 Dubai Expo Inclusion Summit hosted by nasen. Marcus's presentation led to a nasen-facilitated meeting between Marcus and the Minister for Children and Young People in Whitehall.

“Working with nasen on training materials and consultancy projects has made me feel that my neurodivergent voice has the ability to change professional viewpoints and projects for better inclusion. Not only this, but I have felt confident being myself at work and this has led to my pursuing other lived experience opportunities.”



Strategic Aim Thought Leadership

Our approach is rooted in evidence, thought leadership and research. As such we contribute to the formation of policy and practice and maintain a strong presence in journals and news publications, remaining a respected voice at the forefront of the sector.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021/22:

- We continued to deliver a structured, peer-to-peer evaluation of SEND provision alongside partners at the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), despite adjusting timelines to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. Our large-scale WSS randomised control trial funded by the Education Endowment Foundation, evaluated by Manchester Metropolitan University adapted activity due to the pandemic. The scale of the trial – involving up to 60,000 pupils in 157 secondary schools across England – and the light it will shed into how the pandemic has impacted children and young people, has the potential to provide the education and research sector with highly-significant insights and inform policy-making.

“nasen changed the way that our company see SEND.”

- Our work with Bath Spa University and the University of Birmingham to understand how the workforce accesses SEND CPD yielded robust data that will inform future workforce development.
- Further afield, nasen International conducted an independent review into the quality of inclusion within Jersey. A team

of 10 reviewers set about capturing **over a thousand stakeholder voices in relation to the 5 key themes: putting children first; gaining clarity; change making; co-construction; and visibility. The resulting 50 recommendations were all accepted, leading to comprehensive change in legislation, policy, provision and practice.**

“The training completely changed our mindset.”

- We hosted a virtual Summit on the global education stage at Dubai Expo, for international ministers, officials, development organisations and educators. nasen also attended virtual conferences and led online training in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, **reaching over a thousand teachers, challenging misconceptions and driving a change in belief and culture around inclusion.**
- We were named as a strategic partner to support SEND export opportunities in the DfE and Department for International Trade's (DIT's) International Education Strategy Update 2021, working with the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) and British Council to promote British expertise in SEND.



Strategic Aim

Champion, Protector and Friend

We care passionately about our work, and we know that our members are as dedicated as we are to helping others thrive. We listen carefully, we represent the voice of our members at all levels, and we are honest and brave when we need to speak out on their behalf. Looking inward, we protect our people, who play integral roles in delivering our ambitions.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021/22:

- In hosting the National SEND Reference Group, we provided a trusted space for the sector and government departments to come together, discuss policy proposals, and receive feedback directly from key representatives from the specialist sector, from professional associations and membership organisations.

“You are bridging that gap between SEND in mainstream and special education. Thank you!”

- We played a key role in funding and support for the sector-led National SEND Forum and collaborated with others in sector-led forums such as the Special Education Consortium.
- We joined forces with others from the sector and policy officials from DfE and Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), forming a Ministerial Round Table group, representing the voice of our membership, ensuring that was reflected in briefings to government.

- In addition to sector collaboration, we forged relationships between nasen and the Minister of Children and Families, and key government officials.

“..for me as a SENCo, nasen provides a really important focus point which I can refer to.”

- Our relationships with parent-facing and parent support organisations have been important during this uncertain year. Trusted conversations regularly take place with Contact and with the National Network of Parent Carer Forums.

“I need one brilliant place to go and nasen is it!”

- We closed the year poised and ready to deliver a series of carefully planned events and associated guidance to help members respond to the SEND Review consultation, which launched on 29 March.

Our Values



WE PULL TOGETHER

We collaborate with partners, external stakeholders and colleagues. As teams and individuals, we are accountable for our work, understand each team's role, and when to lean in.



WE DO THE RIGHT THING

Despite pressures of time and money, we do the right thing, informed by our stakeholders and driven by our values.



WE ARE INCLUSIVE

Inclusion is our purpose. We overtly discuss processes and behaviours which could be exclusionary and adapt them to become more inclusive.



WE HAVE A LEARNING MINDSET

Our knowledge and understanding enables us to advocate, influence and make change happen. We champion continuing professional development at all levels of the organisation. We have the freedom and courage to test new approaches, and to learn from mistakes when they happen.



WE ARE PASSIONATE AND PROACTIVE

Because our work is important, we take the initiative when we are clear about the need.



WE ARE TRUSTED

We are trusted because we listen and respond to the needs of our stakeholders. Working in partnership, we create a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts. Internally, trust manifests itself in distributed leadership and empowerment.



WE ARE PEOPLE-CENTRED

People are at the centre of our work. We put ourselves in the shoes of those we serve as we take every step on the journey to inclusion.



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