

**For Immediate Release – 11.08.21**

## **Annamarie Hassall MBE appointed CEO of leading education charity, nasen**

**nasen (the National Association for Special Educational Needs) has today (11.08.21) confirmed that Annamarie Hassall MBE, Strategic Director of the National Children's Bureau (NCB), is to become CEO at the end of September following a national search.**

nasen's board of trustees is delighted to confirm that Annamarie Hassall will take over from departing CEO, Professor Adam Boddison, leading the organisation and its growing community of over 35,000 members through an exciting period of unparalleled growth and transition – both in the UK and worldwide.

nasen is the leading charity that exists to support and champion those working with, and for, children and young people with SEND and learning differences. Its vision is to achieve an educational experience for learners with SEND that is consistently as good as it is for learners without SEND (equity for all).

Annamarie brings with her four decades of experience in children's services, with a career that started in children's residential and social care. She then worked as an early years specialist in local government before moving to an advisory role for the Department for Education (DfE), followed by the private sector, where she successfully delivered national programmes on behalf of government.

From her current role at NCB, Annamarie brings a wealth of expertise in transformational change, working closely with ministers, DfE, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Public Health England and wider stakeholders. In 2011, she received an MBE for her dedication to working with children and families, including her work with children and young people with SEND.

Speaking about her new role, Annamarie Hassall said: "I am delighted and honoured to have been appointed to nasen as their new CEO. I am excited to have the opportunity to play a key role within this leading charity in the education and SEND sector, driving the organisation forward, and building on the success of outgoing CEO, Professor Adam Boddison. I am deeply passionate about tackling the barriers in accessing high-quality education, and committed to ensuring that teachers, educators and practitioners have the skills and resources they require to enable inclusion, providing specialist support where needed.

"We are at a pivotal moment in education and SEND. The sector is acutely aware of the disproportionate impact of pandemic-related disruptions to education, and the resulting impact on our ability to intervene early, meeting the needs of children and young people.

“Joining nasen to lead on the development of the next long-term strategy, especially as the organisation begins marking its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, presents a well-timed opportunity to engage staff, trustees, members and partners, along with system leaders across education, health and social care.

“Over decades, the charity has widened its outreach significantly, becoming a beacon of support throughout the UK – and, increasingly, worldwide. Working together, we will set the direction for an exciting future. I am particularly looking forward to attending nasen Live 2021 this September – one of the nation’s first face-to-face SEND conferences since the pandemic hit – with its specific focus on Inclusion Beyond COVID.”

Elaine Simpson, nasen’s Chair of Trustees, added: “On behalf of the Trustees and the wider team at nasen, I congratulate Annamarie on her appointment as nasen’s new CEO. Annamarie was an outstanding candidate, and we are really excited to work with her as she brings a wealth of knowledge, experience and expertise to nasen’s work at this crucial time.

“I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Adam Boddison for his incredible contribution as CEO over the past six years. His work leaves a lasting legacy in the sector as we continue to see significant growth in membership numbers and impact. In Annamarie we have found an exceptional successor who will ensure our work continues to go from strength to strength.”

Professor Adam Boddison, nasen’s outgoing CEO, who is taking up a new role as CEO of the Association for Project Management, said: “Annamarie’s appointment is excellent news for nasen and for the wider education and SEND sector; a sector that she has been deeply embedded in for the last four decades.

“We are thrilled to have attracted such a strong group of candidates for the role. It is an indication of just how far nasen has come in recent years. Moving forwards, it gives me great confidence to know the team will be in such good hands. I am confident that nasen will continue to flourish under Annamarie’s leadership.”

nasen has broadened its support for the education and SEND sector with new services and resources in recent years. Its free membership network, leading campaigns, and trusted experience, CPD and training are empowering a generation of knowledgeable and effective leaders and practitioners – transforming outcomes for the learners they serve day in, day out.

nasen’s search for a new CEO was managed exclusively by Saxton Bamfylde.

For further information, and to join nasen’s growing membership community, visit [www.nasen.org.uk/membership](http://www.nasen.org.uk/membership) or follow [@nasen\\_org](https://twitter.com/nasen_org) on Twitter

**Ends**

## Further Information

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## Notes to Editors

- nasen is the National Association for Special Educational Needs – a charitable organisation that exists to support and champion those working with, and for, children and young people with SEND and learning differences
- nasen seeks to ensure that all education practitioners across early years, schools, post-16 and wider settings are given the information and support required so that children and young people, particularly those with SEND and learning differences, can thrive
- From SENCOs to senior leaders, teachers to TAs, local authorities to leadership boards and beyond, nasen works to ensure that every part of the education workforce is equipped to understand, identify and support those with SEND and learning differences
- For 30 years nasen has worked in partnership with over 35,000 members across over 8,000 schools and settings
- nasen is committed to ensuring that their expertise in SEND is available to every school and setting in the UK
- Rooted in research and evidence-informed best practice, nasen provides free resources and support while offering structured programmes of professional development, accredited training and conferences as well as a package of SEND services throughout the UK and internationally
- Their work spans the delivery of international programmes of support through to direct, ‘on the ground’ engagement with schools and settings in the UK through the DfE-funded, Whole School SEND consortium and wider project and programmes
- For further information, visit [www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk)
- Follow nasen on Twitter [@nasen\\_org](https://twitter.com/nasen_org), Facebook [@nasen.org](https://www.facebook.com/nasen.org) or LinkedIn [@the-national-association-for-special-educational-needs-nasen](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-national-association-for-special-educational-needs-nasen)