



Damian Hinds

MP for East Hampshire

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Damian Hinds Champions East Hants Excellence in Special Education Needs

As the Government's Green Paper on Special Educational Needs continues to be discussed and consulted upon, Damian Hinds has called for more focus to be placed on helping young people with disabilities prepare for adulthood and the workplace and cited the great work already being done in this area in East Hampshire.

In the process of feeding into the Department for Education's consultation, Damian has had several meetings with SEN coordinators, teachers, carers, parents and young people and brought the results to Ministers.

In a recent meeting of the Education Select Committee, Damian highlighted to Sarah Teather, the Minister responsible for SEN policy, the need provide better support for young disabled people as they transition from childhood to adulthood, singling out for praise the work done in East Hampshire by Treloar's College and the Kingsley Organisation.

Speaking to the Minister, Damian Hinds said
"In terms of preparation for adulthood, it strikes me that a lot of the most valuable stuff that goes on comes from the voluntary and independent sector.

In my constituency, for example, we have the leading non-maintained special school, Treloar School and College, which runs something called Future Fest, introducing young people to the whole range of work and activities that they can do after leaving, and to independent living advice and benefits... It also does a fantastic work placement programme, which we would like to be bigger. We would like more employers to come in, but Treloar's probably does it just as well as anybody else.

There is another local organisation called the Kingsley Organisation, which runs a very good brokerage service, helping people manage their budgets, direct payments and so on."

Damian went on to ask the Minister what role the Government thought it could play in supporting and championing such leading work.

Since then he is continuing to press for better coordinated support to help in the transition period to adulthood for those with disabilities including supporting this week's Ten Minute Rule Bill calling for greater support for those with Autism and for adult social services to formally contact the young person and their carer before adulthood is reached, so that such young people get the continuity that they deserve.

Treloar School and College Principal Amanda Quincey said
"Preparing young people with disabilities for adulthood is a fundamental part of Treloar's work and should be an essential element of the Green Paper on Special Educational Needs.

The paper provides some encouraging proposals but we must ensure that there is a focus on providing continuity of services and a smooth transition from school and college life into adulthood, and where appropriate, the workplace.”

Helen Dayson, Chief Executive of the Kingsley Organisation said

“Transition to adulthood is fraught with difficulties but disabled young people have additional barriers to overcome not least societal attitudes which often place a ceiling on potential. There need to be greater post formal educational opportunities both specialist and secular enabling young disabled people access to ongoing personal development including both work related training and social experiences.”

ENDS

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