

## pdnet Governance Structure

### Vision statement

Our vision is for children and young people with physical disability to achieve as much as other learners at every phase of education, from Early Years Foundation Stage to Post-16 studies.

**Three principles underpin pdnet work. We believe that:**

1. Diversity should be valued, respected and enabled within the education system.
2. With the right support and knowledge, children and young people with a physical disability can achieve as much as other children.
3. Learners with a physical disability are equally entitled to take an active part in a broad education - one that is stimulating and enables them to reach their individual potential to engage in society as active citizens, as independently as possible, with friends of their choice.

### What is pdnet?

pdnet is a free to join, national network that provides professionals in education with support in promoting positive outcomes for children and young people with a physical disability. We have a strong commitment to developing and sharing effective educational practice and pedagogy for learners with physical disability. Members are drawn from both the mainstream and special education sectors across all age phases.

Formerly known as the National Network of Advisory Teachers for Physically Impaired Learners (NNATPIP), pdnet was founded by the sector in 1999 and has provided professional support to the formulation and development of policy in this area at a local and national level.

pdnet is supported by a mature and robust partnership with the School Development Support Agency.

### pdnet purpose

The purpose of the pdnet is to improve the education for children and young people with physical disability. We want these children and young people to:

- be fully included in their school/learning community
- actively access and take part in high quality learning activities with their peers
- thrive and enjoy learning
- develop knowledge and skills so they can go on to lead fulfilled lives as adults
- be empowered, confident and able to function as independently as possible

In order to achieve this pdnet works to develop an effective, national infrastructure which provides a voice, resources, CPD and high quality accredited training that enables those working within the sector to:

- feel confident they have the knowledge and skills to support learners with physical disability and can directly contribute to improved outcomes, transitions and achievement for learners with physical disability across all age phases
- feel supported and know how to access information, CPD opportunities and support within the sector
- develop as reflective practitioners empowered to seek and create solutions, supported by training opportunities and peer support
- identify and disseminate effective practice in responding to the educational needs of children and young people with PD through training and further development of pdnet Effective Practice resources including pdnet standards for Early Years, Schools and Post 16
- disseminate information regarding evidence-based best-practice
- ensure that full and proper engagement of stakeholders and learners with physical disability informs the work of pdnet

## Why do we need pdnet?

### To support the 35,000 learners in schools with PD

It is estimated that there are over 34,765 learners with physical disability (DfE, 2018) in the education system. This equates to 3% of the national SEND population. pdnet survey (2016) identified that the majority of CYP with PD are educated within the mainstream sector( 89%) with children with more complex needs or learning difficulties attending specialist settings and schools. Feedback from children and young people with physical disability indicates that they feel that they “need to feel safe and protected” whilst they learn, (Source - information collected independently by ‘Big Brum’ following work with over 60 learners with PD).

### To provide a national infrastructure that helps schools to access support

Information from pdnet survey also highlights that the national picture of support for CYP with PD is fragmented with inequitable access to support services. Transition arrangements from children’s to adult services are inconsistent and experienced by many as inadequate.

### To promote effective practice

There is a lack of evidence and information regarding service models and practice that maximises opportunities for children and young people with physical disability, whilst supporting them to achieve greater independence and positive outcomes.

### To offer and signpost specialist training

There are no specialist accredited training opportunities or progression routes within the sector

### To inform policy makers

Substantial public funds are invested in the education of children and young people with PD spectrum. It is important that these funds are used wisely and have maximum impact. To enable this policy makers and service commissioners require independent and good quality information and advice.

## Governance Structure Overview

1. pdnet National Committee
2. Project Executive Board
3. Expert Advisory Board
4. Additional working and reference groups
5. The role of the SDSA

## The pdnet National Committee

The remit of the pdnet national committee is to determine the vision, values, strategic direction and specific work streams of the organisation. It also works to:

- Develop, strengthen and promote the work of pdnet regional groups
- Act as ambassadors for pdnet
- Provide leadership for pdnet work streams as required

**Timescale and frequency of meetings:** termly

## 2. The Project Executive Board

The National Committee will convene a Project Executive Board as required to provide governance for any funded projects and their associated work streams.

The pdnet Project Executive Board will support and hold the Project Manager to account for the effective delivery of the strategy and specific work streams. The pdnet executive board will support the Project Manager in working with funding organisations and ensure that pdnet strategy and specific work streams are informed by the input of the Expert Advisory Board and other relevant stakeholders.

**The role of the pdnet Project Executive Board is to:**

- Support the development of and approve the strategic plan for pdnet and monitor the performance against plan and agreed KPIs
- Approve the pdnet work streams policies and oversee their implementation
- Monitor performance against budget
- Support the Project manager
- Act as Ambassadors for pdnet
- Support the pdnet national Chair/Project manager in reporting to and negotiating with the Department of Education (DfE) and other key funders and stakeholders
- Appoint the Expert Advisory Board

**Timescale and frequency of meetings:** meetings of the pdnet Executive board will take place every two months with additional meetings if necessary.

### 3. Expert Advisory Board

The National Committee will convene an Expert Advisory Board to provide specialist expertise and advice to support the work of the organisation and ensure effective practice is maintained throughout. In particular, they will provide support for funded projects as managed by the Project Executive Board.

#### Role and Responsibilities

The Expert Advisory Board is established to represent the views and serve as a voice/champion for the key sectors they have been chosen to represent (see membership table below). They provide guidance to projects and drive the vision, values and strategic direction of specific work streams and monitor delivery. They offer guidance and act as a critical friend to support and promote the objectives and activities relating to funded contracts. They provide professional expertise to support the project team by working collaboratively as a strategic group and acting as ambassadors by promoting the pdnet to wider networks as a platform for collaboration.

#### In particular, the Expert Advisory Board responsibilities are:

- To advise the contract holder (SDSA) on how best to fulfil the requirements and objectives within the agreed timescale and budget
- To identify a pool of professionals to commission work to deliver parts of the contract
- To review the work of the project team to ensure KPIs are achieved and on a timely basis

**Timescale and frequency of meetings:** meetings will take place quarterly. Additional meetings will be held as necessary.

Name	Organisation	Specialism
Jane Carter <i>EAB Chair</i>	Warwickshire County Council	pdnet National Committee Vice Chair, LA Representative, NAHT and pdnet Project Team
Zara Bowden	NNCPF	Parent/carer
Harry Dicks	Treloars and NAHT SEND	Special School 0-25
Jon Sawford & Joanna Fashan	Whizz Kidz	Voluntary Sector
Martin Littler	Inclusive Technology	IT Specialism
Clare Howard	Natspec	FE/ Post 16
Peter Chilvers	SDSA	Contract Holder/pdnet Project Team
Di Caesar	Gloucestershire County Council	pdnet National Committee Chair, pdnet Project Manager, LA representative

## 4. Additional Working and Reference Groups

The National Committee will convene additional sub-groups as required to provide advice and support on specific areas. These will be formed as appropriate to;

- provide expert advice and guidance to inform specific tasks or development work
- provide a breadth and depth of experience in relation to physical disability and use that expertise to help the pdnet improve education experiences and outcomes for CYP with PD
- develop training, resources and examples of good practice to support the sector working with CYP with PD
- be actively involved and credible within the physical disability sector

They will report to the Project manager as necessary. Meetings of will take place as necessary. Individuals outside of the governance structures with specific areas of expertise may be appointed to these as agreed by the Project Executive Board.

pdnet members will be invited to take part in specific tasks via pdnet website, feedback from pdnet events or based on professional knowledge or skills.

## 5. The Role of the SDSA as pdnet partner

The SDSA is a not-for-profit organisation that provides support to schools and children's service organisations. It has supported pdnet, and previously NNATPIP, as part of its corporate social responsibility since 2005 and provides business support, project co-ordination and a legal entity through which pdnet can deliver traded and contractual activity.

The SDSA will act as the contract holder on behalf of pdnet with the Department for Education or other funding bodies and will manage the contract accordingly.

**Agreed:**

**Review date:**