

HOSS FORUM UPDATE - October 2018

The **Heads of Sensory Support Services (HOSS) Forum** is facilitated by DfE through Mailman, a web based mailing list manager. The moderator function for the HoSS forum sits with NatSIP and we hope that, as far as subscribers to the HoSS list are concerned, the forum functions well. There have been challenges this year as the mailman server is old and can struggle at times. GDPR has also posed some issues and occasionally forum members are finding themselves unexpectedly unsubscribed! NatSIP has been working with the other SEND organisations who run similar fora, through DfE webmail, for their communities. This has been very beneficial when tackling technical issues. There are suggestions that DfE might be looking to move the email fora on to a new site linked to the SEND Gateway. As the HoSS forum members mostly represent Local Authority SI services, and the information we circulate is not necessarily all directed at the schools' SEND workforce, you may have a view on this?

We have currently **267 members** (30 less than last year and there have been many changes within that total) on the forum and many of you participate in the discussions on line. Messages posted to the forum, via email, are automatically sent to all members. The value of the forum lies in the ease and openness with which individual Heads of Service can ask questions about working practice, developments in the field etc, and share information and experience. The forum should inform strategic planning and development for SI services. This is something that we have generally been good at as a strong professional group over the years and, in times of ever increasing change and challenge, is especially important and helpful now. Please remember that there is a function on the forum to research past posts and responses and you are encouraged to make use of this – although updates are necessary sometimes there is much rich information in the past exchanges held in the archives. The HoSS Forum is well used considering that we represent a low incidence SEND. It is not intended to advertise job vacancies or other commercial publicity and please continue to avoid this. Members of the forum also need to be aware of the public nature of exchanges and ensure that they are not compromising their organisations when they "reply to all".

Who can join the Forum?

Hoss is an e-mailing list forum for Heads of VI, HI and MSI Support Services, and others with management responsibilities in this aspect of specialist work. The purpose is to share ideas and information. It is not appropriate that every team member of a SI service is listed on the forum. The Head of Service can circulate the information as required.

How to join the Forum

The process for joining – and you still can - is to go to the forum's information page:

<http://lists.education.gov.uk/mailman/listinfo/hoss>

and complete the 'Subscribing to hoss' section

How to use the Forum

Once approved you will automatically be sent copies of all emails subsequently posted to the forum and can read and respond if you wish to do so. You can post a message yourself by sending an email, with attachments if appropriate, to:

hoss@lists.education.gov.uk

All previous messages can also be accessed in an archive at:

<http://lists.education.gov.uk/mailman/private/hoss/>

Please continue to use the HOSS Forum and help to maintain it as a lively and important professional vehicle for interchange of ideas and information.

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