



# The Student Information Sharing Initiative (SISI)

Update, March 2016

## Draft Proposals

The feedback received on the draft roadmap has allowed the SISI team to progress at a faster pace than expected. We now hope to be circulating a draft report for feedback with the next project update in **early May**, and will be requesting comment before the beginning of June. This will be a comprehensive report on what we have done to date, and where we envisage the programme going.

## Feedback From School Visits

As reported in the last SISI update, business analysts have been visiting schools to investigate how data and systems are being used at the chalkface.

A lot of real-world data on how schools work was collected during these visits, and will be used to make sure that SISI is responsive to the needs of those who handle student data daily.

Two business analysts who visited the schools to hear their initial impressions of how data is being used at a school level across the country:

### **You spent the last few weeks visiting schools of all shapes and sizes around the country -What was one thing that really hit home with you?**

FF - It really hit home how hard people have to work. It's astounding the amount of labour goes into school administration, and most of that is manipulation of data – everyone is working on it – teachers, deans, DPs and administrators. Taking an example like attendance data – this data is being collected on some level, but to use it correctly can eat into man hours for some schools.

It was also incredibly useful to see how schools are using their IT infrastructure and data – these visits will really inform how we go forward with SISI.

JG – I was amazed by the amount of time it can take a school and a transferring student to be fully engaged with each other. A lack of data can lead to unsupported and ultimately unengaged students. It can take up to 7 weeks for a student to be up-to-date, and learning at their appropriate rate and level. The feedback we got from school leaders showed us that these gaps can happen at the most basic levels – like knowing whether a student needs glasses or not!

### **You have both mentioned data as a key issue. What problems did you observe with data flow in schools?**

FF – The transfer of data between schools is the primary pain point I observed. Students can't receive the best possible support if there are gaps in their history.

JG – To follow up on that point, if a child has RTLB support or a special education intervention in 'School A' and then transfers to 'School B', we found that School B cannot easily find out the relevant information it needs to support the child, there seems to be no centralised record for what interventions have taken place.

We were finding that even when School B gets RTLB support, the intervention process is quite often started from the beginning again, attempting for a second time all the things which may or may not have worked previously.

**If data flows in schools are improved, what immediate benefits will it create for School Leaders and Teachers?**

FF – Instantly, better supports for students, and earlier supports for achievement. And, of course, it will make their administrative burden smaller!

JG – Some small steps could free up an enormous amount of resources. Schools could redirect the time they have gained to where it is needed the most, supporting their students.