

Retain SEND alumni

Once you have SEND alumni volunteers on board you will want to keep them. Here are 8 tips for how to do this.



Make the alumni's visit stress free

Focus on making sure they are booked into the school/college properly, that they are expected, that there is someone to meet them and take them to where they need to be.



Invite alumni to events and celebrations

Make it part of your routine, that when there are formal or informal celebrations, they receive an invitation. Giving them a reserved seat for example. Treating them like dignitaries will add to their feeling of being valued. If holding breakfast networking events etc. invite them along.



Show your appreciation

This might be a quick e-mail or phone call. It might be an annual, seasonal greeting or a postcard. Official recognitions of the contribution they have made (e.g. formal letters/certificates) have been shown to help in retaining alumni too so build this into your planning and follow up process. Building an online library of blogposts, announcements or videos can also communicate that your SEND alumni volunteers are important to your work.



Have a key contact

Have a nominated SEND alumni contact who leads communication and responses to enquiries.



Think about a social group

This might be on Facebook or it might be a formal annual event or anywhere in between. This is something you could do as a cluster of schools so that the group is big enough to provide networking support for alumni members. You might be able to recruit a member of your alumni to run this group.



Ask for feedback

Make this accessible, in the form of an online or paper survey using accessible icons or tick boxes. All of this will make them feel valued and it will allow you to assess your impact.



Keep a database

It is obvious but worth stating that if you do not have their contact details you cannot stay in touch. When collecting and holding these details you will need to provide a privacy statement, so the data is compliant with GDPR.



Tell them that you want them back

Tell them what they contribute and why it is important to your school/college that they stay involved.