

Arrangements for Monitoring and Review of SEN Policy and Provision

The 1996 Education Act places a strong and clear obligation on schools and LEAs to monitor and review their policies and provision for children with special educational needs.

The LEA/School Code of Practice (2001) places a duty on LEAs to monitor and review their schools provision and performance.

Timescales of some aspects of monitoring and reviewing are pre-determined (eg OfSTED inspections, and Annual Reports to Parents by Governors and School Self-Reviews). Other mechanisms for review can be built into existing timetables and patterns of meeting. There is a need to plan a review mechanism in advance in order to ensure that appropriate reviews occur and are built into existing planning cycles and workloads.

1. School Based

There are several areas on which schools can focus when reviewing their SEN provision. LEA guidance on preparing a school self-review is contained in the document 'Guidance for SEN Co-ordinators: Preparing Information for the School's Self-Review'.

What to include in the review:

- The school's policy document;
- The way in which the school is organised to meet SEN;
- The organisation of the curriculum, particularly aspects such as differentiation, match, access.
- Identification of Special Needs;
- Assessment and record keeping;
- The progress, achievement and attainment of individual children identified as having SEN and their response to the curriculum, their relationships within school and the suitability of school routines;
- The extent to which individualised programmes and statements match needs;
- Process of school review;
- The resources available, in particular deployment of teachers and support staff, equipment and modified teaching materials;
- The extent to which parents are involved in the planning and review of the

programme and in the curriculum at home and at school;

- Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating special needs provision in the school; and
- Review of the cost effectiveness of the provision.

Such a review will contribute to the governing body's annual report to parents about the implementation of its policy on special educational needs. This report must include:

- The success of the SEN policy covering identification, assessment, provision, monitoring and record keeping and the use of outside support services and agencies;
- Significant changes in policy;
- Any consultation with the LEA and others; and
- How resources have been allocated to and amongst children with special educational needs over the year.

Who to involve

When carrying out a review, schools will find it helpful to involve a number of people both inside and outside the school.

A suggested list includes:

- Governors;
- Parents;

- Headteacher;
- SEN co-ordinator;
- Head of faculty, year, department;
- Class teachers/form teachers;
- Subject teachers;
- Support staff;
- Advisers;
- Advisory teachers;
- Educational psychologist; and
- Colleagues from linked schools, special and mainstream.

Processes to use

There are several ways in which a review might be undertaken and this is likely to include some of the following:

- Form a core group from the list above to undertake the review;
- Staff meetings;
- INSET days and other professional development activities;
- Classroom observation;
- Analysis of documents and records;
- Case meetings;
- Discussion with pupils;
- Discussion with outside specialists;
- School development planning;
- Audit of resources;
- Audit of provision;
- Questionnaires and letters; and
- Guidance on benchmarking (local, regional, national). In order to assess effective and efficient use of resources.

2. LEA based

The LEA's function in the review process is to use Best Value principles to focus on those aspects of SEN for which it is responsible. These are:

- LEA SEN policy, procedures and related documents; and
- LEA provisions to meet SEN.

This encompasses a review of the LEA administrative support services, the deployment of specialist support services and a review of special schools and resourced provisions.

Aspects which might be included are:

- Best Value and OfSTED Recommendations;
- An overview of the relationship between legislation, policy documents, National Curriculum and the provision actually

made within schools and by the LEA generally;

- Implementation of the code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and the school based stages of assessment.
- A review of the management of statutory assessment. This would include decisions to initiate statutory assessment, the nature and quality of advice provided and monitoring the timescale for statement completion;
- Development and analysis of performance data, eg numbers of pupils with statements, numbers of statemented children in mainstream schools etc;
- Consistency of decision making about the level of provision to meet needs as defined in statements, numbers of statemented children in mainstream schools etc;
- Consistency of decision making about level of provision to meet needs as defined in statements;
- An assessment of annual reviews, focusing particularly on the quality of school based procedures, the nature of the outcomes and the role of the LEA both in relation to whether provision made has enabled individual pupils to progress and in relation to procedures adopted;
- Review of LEA schools, resources and provisions for SEN;
- Monitoring the overall SEN budget, prioritising resources according to need. Looking at the balance of funds between those monies held centrally for pupil assessment and support, delegated through the LMS formula and through devolved funds; and
- A review of the in-service training programme related to special educational needs.

Who to involve

Included in this review process could be:

- Education committee members;
- Education Department Senior Management Team;
- SEN Group;
- Advisory and Inspection Services;
- Educational Psychology Service;

- Special Needs Support Service;
- Representatives of schools;
- Finance Department;
- Non-maintained sector;
- Other agencies (Health, Social Services, EYDCP);
- Parents; and
- Parent Partnership service.

The LEA has a duty to monitor and evaluate their schools' provision and performance including SEN.

Processes to use

These could include reviewing:

- School inspection reports;
- School self-review reports and meetings;
- Governors' annual reports to parents;
- Specific consultation meetings with schools;
- Professional development through meetings, courses and school based work;
- Discussion with school personnel during visits;
- Discussion and correspondence with parents;
- Discussion with Governing Bodies;
- Meetings of key officers;
- LEA records, information and data; and
- Papers to and discussion at Education Committee meetings.

The LEA has a number of specific arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate its own procedures and the provision it makes for pupils with special educational needs within the authority.

These include:

- Data collection and analysis and self evaluation by the SEN group;
- The SEN Development Plan;
- The Devolution Monitoring Group;
- Annual monitoring of spending of that part of the SEN budget allocated by formula directly to schools;
- The SEN Inset Planning Group;
- Annual monitoring of spending of the part of the Standards Fund allocated directly to schools;
- The SENSS Advisory Group;
- The Secondary Headteachers' Behaviour Working Group;
- The WPRSS Management Group;

- The SEN Co-ordinators Annual Self-review Document;
- The SEN Moderation Panel; and
- The Behaviour Support Plan Review Group.

Inclusion Now!

Wakefield LEA is constantly evaluating all practice in schools and a major issue at the centre of Wakefield's provision is one of Inclusion and of enabling school's to strive towards inclusive practices. Inclusion Now is at the heart of the process of evaluating inclusive practices and provides a framework for school self-evaluation. It is a process whereby schools should be "Aspirational in building their capacity to educate all pupils from their local community" (J Winter Introduction to Inclusion Now!). The framework provides ways of self-evaluation in order to assist schools in formulating judgements about good practice and to identify areas in which the school can move forward as part of a long-term process. Schools should include Inclusion Now into their cycle of school improvement and as such it should be incorporated into the School Development Plan or School Improvement Plan. All schools are entitled to an Inclusion review once every four years.

A multi-disciplinary team undertakes the review in school. A set protocol is in place on action before, during and after the practical reviews. A final report is produced usually within 3 weeks of the inclusion review. Following this an Action Plan is produced which assists the school in moving forward with, support in order to take the next steps towards Inclusion.

The Inclusion Now! process is described in the document Inclusion Now! A School Self Evaluation and Monitoring Framework for Inclusion, written and compiled by: Dr Lynda Mitchell, Inclusion Adviser, Mrs Jacqui Armstrong-Rush, Inclusion Consultant and Mrs Angie Morley, Inclusion Consultant and others.