

# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities newsletter

Autumn 2009

## Contents

Achievement for All	2
Progression Guidance 2009–10	3
Transition Support Programme	3
School Improvement Partners and pupil referral units	4
Improving the attendance of pupils with SEND	4
Disability Equality Schemes (DES) and schools	4
The Lamb Inquiry – SEN and Parental Confidence: Update	5
The Inclusion Development Programme	5
The Rose Review: Implications for the Inclusion Development Programme	6
SEND regional hubs	7



## Message from the National Director

Welcome to the autumn 2009 newsletter for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The SEND programme aims to:

- Support you to accelerate progress, improve outcomes, including wider outcomes, and narrow gaps between pupils identified with special educational needs and those that are not.
- Improve the confidence of parents in the education of children and young people identified with SEND.

This newsletter looks at the implementation of the Achievement for All project which is being piloted in ten local authorities (LAs) and 460 schools. The project builds on the learning from the Making Good Progress pilot which focuses on modelling effective practice in improving progress and outcomes. There is clear evidence that parental engagement with learning is critical to positive outcomes in education. Achievement for All seeks to improve this through the development of 'structured conversations' between teachers and parents.

There are also details of a new resource, *Guidance on the Attendance of Pupils with Special Educational Needs* for schools and LAs to help improve the attendance of children and young people with SEND. We are all too aware that such pupils are disproportionately represented in the attendance statistics. This needs our attention as children cannot make the progress we all hope for if they are not in school or only attend sporadically. This new guidance aims to address this successfully.

Phase 2 of the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) that focuses on the autism spectrum is now available on the National Strategies web area for all phases and there is increasing evidence that Phase 1 materials on dyslexia and speech, language and communication needs are helping to improve the skills and confidence of schools' workforces. We are currently developing Phase 3 of the IDP programme on behavioural, emotional and social difficulty (BESD), due for publication in spring 2010.

There is also new guidance this term for School Improvement Partners (SIPs), SIP managers and those concerned with the leadership of Pupil Referral Units or short stay schools. *Guidance to School Improvement Partners Deployed to Pupil Referral Units* (DCSF ref: 00825-2009BKT-EN) will be available on the National Strategies web area later this term.

New *Progression Guidance* for 2009–10 has been published with an accompanying e-learning resource also available. For the first time we have assembled data on the progress of children and young people with SEND from Pre-National Curriculum Level 1 (P1) to GCSE level. The guidance will help to support the target setting process and, more critically, reflect on progress and outcomes in core subjects.

Also included in this newsletter is this term is an update on the progress of the Lamb Inquiry into the confidence of parents in the special educational needs (SEN) framework as well as an article focusing on the very significant Transition Support Programme.

Finally, I would like to highlight the forthcoming publication, *Disability Equality Scheme in Schools*. It is a straightforward self-evaluation resource for schools to help ensure that they are fully meeting the requirements for Disability Equality Schemes.

**Chris Beek, National Director,  
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

## Achievement for All

The Achievement for All project has now been launched in ten pilot authorities across England. While children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Years 1, 5, 7, and 10 are the target group over the two years of the project, the overall aim is to improve the outcomes for all learners within an inclusive environment.

Achievement for All has three key aims:

- To improve the achievement and progress of children and young people with SEND.
- To improve the engagement of parents of children and young people with SEND with their schools.
- To improve the wider outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

In order to achieve these aims, there are three main strands to the project:

1. Assessment tracking and intervention.
2. Structured conversation with parents.
3. Provision for developing wider outcomes.

Part of the success of the Achievement for All project will be measured through the positive relationship parents have with their child's school. Strand 2 of the project, the structured conversation with parents, is designed to support this outcome. Local authority (LA) project leaders along with 40 teachers in each of the pilot authorities will have received expert training through the University of East London by the end of November 2009. Training will then be cascaded to key teachers by the end of the autumn term to enable schools to undertake three such conversations with parents of children in the target groups over the school year. The conversations will typically last up to an hour and follow a framework which requires the school and parents to jointly agree targets for the child.

Online forums have been set up for LA project and school leaders. Please note that these forums are only available to schools within the project.

A website is being developed for general access to information about Assessment for All. Full details will be posted when this is finalised before the end of term.

## Progression Guidance 2009–10

The *Progression Guidance 2009–10* (DCSF ref: 00553-2009BKT-EN) and associated materials were successfully launched earlier this term with immense interest from a wide range of national and local organisations.

This was really popular with 97.6 per cent of local authorities (LAs) ordering the booklet and a significant percentage downloading the accompanying data sets. Evidence also shows that increasing numbers of LAs are disseminating the **Progression Guidance Professional Development course** which supports users in the effective use of data to evaluate the progress of low attaining pupils.

Many LAs, national and local organisations have held successful events, supported by the National Strategies SEND Team, to disseminate the materials to School Improvement Partners, headteachers, Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) and other interested groups.

Feedback from these events suggests that the *Progression Guidance* has been well received and helps to support LAs and schools to analyse the attainment and progress of pupils working below national expectations, including those working at the P levels.

Progression and Narrowing the Gaps is on almost every LA's agenda due to the work of the SEND hubs and the Strand 2 leads for progression. The SEND hubs promote partnership working and local solutions to key SEND issues. Progression is an important element of the work of the hubs where they share information and develop practice. Highlights of work this term include the following:

- Improving the collection and analysis of data for low attainers.
- The development of target setting guidance for pupils working within the P scales.
- Reinvigorating the assessment and moderation of P scales and lower National Curriculum levels.
- Closer alignment of SEND/inclusion services and school improvement in order to narrow gaps.

- Further development of provision mapping and use of 'Value for Money' principles to evaluate the impact of provision on outcomes for learners.

Progression is an entitlement for all pupils whatever their age or prior attainment. The *Progression Guidance* is proving to be a useful tool in maximising the learning potential of pupils working below national expectations.

## Transition Support Programme

The government review 'Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better support for families (2007)' found that more work was needed to improve coordination and effectiveness of local services for disabled young people in transition to adult life.

The Transition Support Programme (TSP) aims to improve national standards of transition services for disabled young people by March 2011. The National Strategies will work with the Council for Disabled Children, Child Health and Maternity Partnership, DCSF and Department for Health in the delivery of the TSP. This work goes beyond a purely 'local authority and schools' focus, broadening to Local Strategic Partnerships in developing effective transition support practice in the local area.

The National Strategies TSP team works with 42 local areas identified through self-evaluation to be in need of intensive support. These local areas have a development plan and are on track to achieve significant improvement by the end of the TSP. Progress will be tested by a second self-evaluation exercise to be completed by the end of November 2009. The outcomes will then determine the nature of support in the third year of the TSP.

The SEND regional hubs are actively engaged in supporting all 152 local areas in networking and sharing good transition support practice. The TSP is included within Strand 3 of the SEND Hub programme 2009–10 with £25,000 available per hub to support this work.

For more information about the National Strategies' support for Transition Support Programme please email

[david.dickinson@nationalstrategies.co.uk](mailto:david.dickinson@nationalstrategies.co.uk)

## School Improvement Partners and pupil referral units

The National Strategies has been supporting School Improvement Partners (SIPs) deployed to pupil referral units (PRUs) through its programme of continuing professional development. *Guidance to School Improvement Partners Deployed to Pupil Referral Units* (DCSF ref: 00825-2009BKT-EN) draws the focus of this work together and is presented in two parts:

- Part 1 includes prompts to be considered and addressed by the SIP when deployed to a PRU together with a sample SIP report for a PRU.
- Part 2 (DVD-ROM) contains a range of resources including two interviews with Sir Alan Steer, source materials and additional guidance which SIPs and others may find useful.

This will be available later this term on the National Strategies web area. The guidance is primarily designed to assist SIPs deployed to PRUs in England. It may also serve as a useful prompt for discussion between SIPs, headteachers, management committees, parents and local authorities (LAs). This guidance aims to challenge and stimulate SIP thinking and engagement when deployed to a PRU.

## Improving the attendance of pupils with SEND

New guidance has been produced to help support headteachers, governors, school and children's services attendance leaders and all personnel working with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) pupils in special and mainstream schools. *Guidance on the attendance of pupils with special educational needs* (DCSF ref: 00068-2009PDF-EN-01) is aimed at helping all schools to improve levels of attendance while reducing the number of pupils with SEND who have persistent absence.

Data from the school census in January 2009 shows a disproportionate number of pupils with SEND and/or disabilities with persistent absence from school. This is the case in both mainstream and special schools. Attendance strategies in special schools and for pupils with SEND in mainstream schools should have the same focus, challenge, stretching targets and expectations as for all other schools and pupils. This will involve the development and implementation of ways of addressing particular challenges.

A focus on school attendance for pupils with SEND requires schools and local authorities to consider a number of issues that can help them plan actions to promote high attendance at both whole-school and individual-pupil level. The new guidance considers those challenges and offers potential solutions. A seminar for LA attendance and SEND leaders took place in November 2009 in all regions of the country as part of the National Strategies programme of network meetings.

Alongside strategies focused on attendance specifically, schools should view poor attendance of pupils with SEND as a possible manifestation of their frustration at not making good progress, and consider how teaching and learning for these pupils might be improved in ways that enable them to:

- make more progress
- have improved feelings of self-worth and of purposeful engagement with all the school has to offer.

This should form part of the school's overall monitoring and evaluation of provision for pupils with SEND. In particular, this should include monitoring the impact of interventions on pupil progress, and considering which alternative interventions might have more impact, should insufficient progress be made with outcomes or attendance.

## Disability Equality Schemes (DES) and schools

The National Strategies Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team has produced a leaflet designed to help schools ensure that their Disability Equality Scheme (DES) meets the key

requirements. Available on the National Strategies web area, it provides pointers for developing a school DES and further information.

It is a quick and easy way for schools to check what the main requirements are, and whether they have met them in their DES. They will need to follow the link to a more detailed self-evaluation resource where they find they need more analysis.

In summer term 2009, the National Strategies SEND team piloted the DES self-evaluation resource with 150 schools.

The resource is based on a grid with three headings: requirement, evidence and comments/actions, and enables schools to evaluate whether they have the evidence to demonstrate the extent to which they meet each requirement. If not it enables them to plan appropriate actions.

## The Lamb Inquiry – SEN and Parental Confidence: Update

The final Lamb Report is now scheduled for publication later this term. This follows on from an exchange of correspondence between Brian Lamb and the Secretary of State for Education, Ed Balls in September 2009. Further information on the [Lamb Inquiry](#) along with related documents can be found on the DCSF website.

Two areas were highlighted, the first being around the evidence (arising from National Strategies) that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are eight times as likely as their peers to be excluded. Lamb recommended that this needs to be addressed urgently and that these issues should be integrated with the Department's overall approach to behaviour issues. It is likely that requirements on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are firmly embedded in the strategy and any statutory guidance to implement Alan Steer's recommendations for the Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships. The Partnerships are likely to be charged with reducing the over-representation of disabled pupils and pupils with SEN in exclusions from school.

The second area involved local authority projects around ways of working with parents that can improve parental confidence in the system of assessment and provision at both the statutory and pre-statutory stages. Over the past year, eight local authorities have worked closely with parents and involved them in a range of different ways, with positive outcomes. Lamb notes that the transparency and openness of the procedures are crucial to parents' confidence in the system and is recommending further pilots.

## The Inclusion Development Programme

The Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) is a cross-phase programme designed to increase the confidence and skills of teachers and teaching assistants to more fully meet the needs of children and young people with a range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The programme is designed to give all staff working with children and young people a foundation level knowledge (FLK) in the following areas:

- Dyslexia (published and disseminated 2008)
- Speech, language and communication needs (published and disseminated 2008)
- Autism (published and disseminated 2009)
- Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (to be published and disseminated 2010)

A suite of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) IDP materials cover similar areas and are aligned with the EYFS framework.

The IDP is now in its 3rd phase with the materials *Supporting Pupils with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties* due to be published in March 2010.

The key messages within each resource stress the importance of consolidating any new knowledge with what we already know about quality first teaching and the important role of the leadership team. Links have been made throughout to existing National Strategies and DCSF materials.

## SEND hubs

Ten regional hubs of effective practice in SEND have been established as part of the Government's wider strategy to improve outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities. One of the strands (Strand A) is to disseminate and embed the approaches set down in the IDP and to support local implementation and evaluate impact. Impact results from the first year were collected through self-evaluations, case studies and local authority visits from National Strategies senior regional advisers.

The evidence from *Supporting Pupils with Dyslexia and Speech, Language and Communication Needs*, suggests that the IDP has had a positive impact on improving the skills and knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants in these areas.

'Staff have a greater awareness of the needs of pupils with dyslexia and now have improved their skill base to address those needs.'

'The IDP has brought together the resources and services within the school and made them accessible to everybody. It is brilliant!'

## Self-evaluations

1,783 self-evaluations were completed ('before' and 'after'), gathered from a wide range of individuals in schools who had completed IDP related activities. The results indicate a substantial reduction in the number of staff rating themselves at 'focusing' and a substantial increase in the number of staff rating themselves at 'enhancing'. Please see the following table of results:

	Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
Before IDP related activities	37%	37%	20%	6%
After IDP related activities	6%	29%	38%	27%

# The Rose Review: Implications for the Inclusion Development Programme

The National Strategies' Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) resource: *Supporting Pupils with Dyslexia* will be refreshed in 2010 to take account of Recommendation 4 in Sir Jim Rose's report, *Identifying and Teaching Children and Young people with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties* (DCSF-00659-2009) which says:

“ The National Strategies should refresh the dyslexia IDP materials in the light of this review. The materials should continue to be promoted for serving and trainee teachers, and other members of the workforce involved with teaching literacy, such as teaching assistants. ”

A short update will be added to the existing resource to highlight key recommendations from the report. Completion is due for early 2010. Following this we will provide a more comprehensive update which will align the resource to Sir Jim Rose's recommendations. This will be available on the National Strategies' web area in spring 2011.

Sir Jim Rose's report on the identification and teaching of children and young people with dyslexia and literacy difficulties clearly articulated the need for teachers to have an awareness of dyslexia and literacy difficulties and the skills and knowledge to effectively support children with them. The Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) aims to provide all teachers, teaching assistants and trainee teachers with the foundation level knowledge that they will need to make adjustments to their quality first teaching in increasing access to the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

“ The first step in identifying that children may have dyslexia is to notice those making poor progress in comparison with their typically developing peers, despite high quality Wave 1 teaching’ ”

(see Recommendation 8)

The report emphasises the responsibility of local authorities to work with schools to ensure that they have good monitoring arrangements in ascertaining that Wave 1 teaching is of the highest quality, especially in teaching word recognition and language comprehension skills in keeping with the ‘Simple View of Reading’.

The IDP is one of a number of approaches that the DCSF has approved to support schools so that they can improve the early identification of pupils with dyslexia and literacy difficulties and provide appropriate interventions and learning experiences to ensure continued progress.

All of Jim Rose’s recommendations have been endorsed by the DCSF, including commissioning an online course enabling teachers to develop skills and knowledge in providing literacy interventions. This will give teachers in every school access to advanced skills in tackling children’s literacy difficulties.

The DCSF is also currently funding around 4,000 teachers to train in specialist dyslexia teaching over 2010–11. They envisage that appropriately qualified specialist teachers will work with classroom teachers and Special Educational Needs Coordinators to assess a child’s literacy difficulties and response to intervention. They will also provide support directly to those children with the severest dyslexic difficulties.

The Training Development Agency for Schools is currently developing a scheme for funding teachers to undertake appropriately accredited specialist training from next year. In the interim, the Department has commissioned the **Dyslexia-Specific Learning Difficulties Trust** to deliver interim funding arrangements.

The IDP is a suite of materials which focus on the adjustments that teachers can make to their quality first teaching to more fully meet the needs of pupils with dyslexia, speech, language and communication needs and autism. The IDP

resource *Supporting pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties* will be available in late March 2010. These are cross-phase resources. There is also an IDP for the Early years Foundation Stage.

The Inclusion Development resources are available online from the **Special educational needs** section of the National Strategies web area.

## SEND regional hubs

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) regional hubs continue apace with work developing with great enthusiasm in ten regions in three key strand areas:

- Strand 1: Inclusion Development Programme
- Strand 2: Developing and applying progression guidance/narrowing the gaps
- Strand 3: Developing parental confidence in the SEND system, supporting transition and improving provision development

Strand leads from the ten hubs feedback and are updated through national strand leads meetings which keep a close contact between DCSF and National Strategies and colleagues in local authorities (LAs).

Hubs are supporting the dissemination to LAs of phase 2 (Autism Spectrum) of the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) and continue to gather impact data on phase 1 of IDP. 1,783 completed self-evaluations were gathered and 44 case studies posted on the ‘What works well’ website. They are also feeding in to the development of phase 3 materials on Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD).

Newly published progression guidance has been disseminated to hubs and LAs are being supported in planning their dissemination of it to schools.

Details of the new Achievement for All initiative are being channelled to all LAs via the hubs.

Currently hubs are disseminating guidance on compliance with the statutory framework for special educational needs and are being used to consult on guidance on producing quality statements.

An end of year evaluation protocol has been agreed between DCSF, regional hub leads and National Strategies and this guides the data that hubs are gathering to assess the impact of the programme. There has been liaison with Warwick University to ensure that this work supports and complements broader work commissioned by DCSF to evaluate the impact of key DCSF SEN initiatives.

DCSF has decided to extend and develop the Hub programme to 2010–11 and six of the ten lead LAs have already accepted the invitation to continue to lead the work.

## Disclaimer

The Department for Children, Schools and Families wishes to make it clear that the Department and its agents accept no responsibility for the actual content of any materials suggested as information sources in this publication, whether these are in the form of printed publications or on a website.

In these materials icons, logos, software products and websites are used for contextual and practical reasons. Their use should not be interpreted as an endorsement of particular companies or their products.

The websites referred to in these materials existed at the time of going to print.

Please check all website references carefully to see if they have changed and substitute other references where appropriate.

Audience: Local authorities and headteachers

Date of issue: 12-2009

Ref: **00750-2009DWO-EN-07**

Copies of this publication may be available from:  
**[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)**

You can download this publication and obtain further information at:  
**[www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk)**

© Crown copyright 2009

Published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families

Extracts from this document may be reproduced for non-commercial research, education or training purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged as Crown copyright, the publication title is specified, it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context.

**The permission to reproduce Crown copyright protected material does not extend to any material in this publication which is identified as being the copyright of a third party.**

For any other use please contact  
[licensing@opsi.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@opsi.gov.uk)  
[www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/index.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/index.htm)