

Special Educational Needs and Disability

Update 25

October 2008



The work of John Bercow, Brian Lamb and Sir Jim Rose: How does it all fit together?

Feedback received in response to the July SEND Update asked how the work on various aspects of SEN provision, led by John Bercow, Brian Lamb and Sir Jim Rose actually fit together.

The Children's Plan identified two key important priorities for children with SEN: narrowing gaps in outcomes between children with SEN and disabilities and their peers; and, through this, increasing parental confidence in services being provided. The three reviews together seek to respond to these priorities. The work of John Bercow and Sir Jim Rose are looking at the critical life skill of communication - whether it's through speech and language, or reading and writing – and the difficulties some children face.

John Bercow's report into services for children with speech, language and communication needs, published in July, identified five key themes: communication is crucial; early identification and intervention are essential in order to avoid poor outcomes; a continuum of services, designed around the family, is needed; joint working is critical; and the current system is characterised by high variability and a lack of equity. He made forty recommendations which Ministers have broadly welcomed. The Department is currently preparing an action plan responding in full to each recommendation which will be published later in the year.

As the Children's Plan recognises, we need to find ways of improving provision and outcomes for children and young people with dyslexia. This is why, in May the Secretary of State asked Sir Jim Rose to make recommendations on the identification and teaching of children with dyslexia. Jim will also consider how best to take forward the commitment in the Children's Plan to establish a pilot scheme in which children with dyslexia will receive Reading Recovery support or one-to-one tuition from specialist dyslexia teachers.

We recognise that for parents of children with dyslexia - and associated specific learning difficulties such as dyspraxia and dyscalculia - concern can quickly turn to anxiety as, for example, difficulties with learning to read become an entrenched and increasingly serious obstacle to learning across the whole curriculum. So, to improve parental confidence and outcomes, it is crucial to ensure that if a child has a difficulty, the right help is provided to support him or her in overcoming barriers to achieving his or her full potential.

The Children's Plan also recognised the importance of improving parental confidence in the system for assessing and providing statements of SEN, and so **Brian Lamb**, the Chair of the Special Educational Consortium, was invited to chair an Inquiry which is investigating a range of ways in which parental confidence in the SEN assessment process might be improved.

The Lamb Inquiry has been asked to:

- consider a range of ways in which parental confidence in the SEN assessment process might be increased;
- commission and evaluate innovative projects in these areas;
- draw on the evidence of other work currently commissioned by the Department; and
- take into account the evidence of the submissions to the two Select Committee Reports in 2006 and 2007.

In looking at SEN assessment issues, the Lamb Inquiry is taking account of different special educational needs and disabilities and is making specific links with both the Bercow Review and the work on dyslexia being taken forward by Jim Rose.

Further information can be found at:

- www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/
- www.dcsf.gov.uk/bercowreview
- www.dcsf.gov.uk/jimroseanddyslexia/
- www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/

SEN Regional Hubs of Effective Practice

As part of a two year programme running to March 2010, DCSF has announced an allocation of Standards Funds support for 10 SEN regional hubs in England, each with a lead local authority (two in the case of London). Each hub lead local authority will receive £145,000 in 2008-09. The lead authorities for the hubs are:

East: Cambridgeshire	North West: Liverpool
East Midlands: Leicestershire	South East: Hampshire
London North: Newham	South West: Somerset
London South: Tower Hamlets	West Midlands: Solihull
North East: North Tyneside	Yorkshire & Humberside: Leeds

The hubs will disseminate best practice and support the interface between local authorities, the DCSF and the National Strategies. They will help support the delivery of the Government's strategic aims to

improve outcomes for children and young people with SEN and disabilities.

The hubs will support three major national priorities over 2008-10:

- Disseminating and embedding of approaches in the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) – hubs will have a major role in supporting local implementation and evaluating impact.
- Applying DCSF 'Planning and Developing SEN Provision' guidance (published May 2007), alongside new guidance on the 'Education of Children and Young People Experiencing Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties' – so that local authorities have robust plans in place to support the development of a flexible range of provision.
- Developing the role of combined School Improvement and SEN Consultants, to support the development, dissemination and embedding of guidance and practice with a particular focus on narrowing attainment gaps.

Narrowing the Gap

The Children's Plan, published last December, contained a commitment that the Department would work with schools and local authorities to ensure that every child with SEN and disabilities gets an education that allows them to achieve their full potential. As more children with SEN achieve their full potential, we should see a narrowing of the gap between the attainment of children with SEN and their peers. Whilst some children with SEN have a potential that is different to that of many other children, this is not the case for most children with SEN. The purpose of providing support to children with SEN is to remove barriers to their achievement.

On 11 September, the Department published statistics on the current gap – please see SFR38/2007 on the following website: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000759/index.shtml>

The figures show a continuing large attainment gap, in the context that results are improving year on year both for those children who are identified with SEN, and those who are not so identified. Local authorities and schools will want to consider their own attainment gap and consider how best to use the significant additional investment in SEN to improve outcomes. Some new training materials and resources packs for LAs and schools are set out in the 'Resources section' of this update.

Quality Standards for SEN Support and Outreach Services

DCSF has issued guidance aimed at all those offering SEN support and outreach services, including local authorities, school clusters and special schools, early years settings and other provision.

The generic standards, produced jointly by the South East and South West Regional Partnerships, are not intended to be mandatory. Rather they offer some common markers against

which service providers might assess and evaluate provision either delivered directly, or commissioned, to help improve consistency.

The standards are designed to help lead to improved outcomes for children and young people with SEN and disabilities, against the backdrop of the five Every Child Matters outcomes, and the core offer standards set out as part of the Government's Aiming High for Disabled Children's programme.

The standards can be accessed and downloaded free of charge at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/senqualitystandards. Copies can also be ordered from DCSF Publications (telephone 0845 6022260) quoting reference 00582-2008DOM-EN.

Tackling Bullying of Children with SEN and Disabilities and Implementing Schools' Disability Equality Duty

Reports from the Children's Commissioner, the National Autistic Society and Mencap show that children with SEN and disabilities are more likely to be bullied than their peers. A 2007 Mencap survey found that 8 out of 10 respondents had been bullied, and 6 out of 10 had been physically hurt. In May, we published guidance on *Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities*. Copies can be downloaded from www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications. Hard copies can be ordered from the same website, or by phoning 0845 602 2260 – quoting reference 00372-2008BKT-EN.

Our guidance explains that tackling this unacceptable behaviour forms part of schools' statutory responsibilities to promote disability equality and to eliminate disability discrimination. Part of each school's Disability Equality Duty is to eliminate disability-based harassment.

We have also placed a summary of schools' statutory disability discrimination duties on the following website:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=12900>

More detailed advice and guidance can be found on: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/disability/disabilityandthedda/>



Progression Guidance Project 2008-9

The National Strategies in partnership with the DCSF are developing guidance on progression for pupils with SEN/LDD. The project is designed to:

- provide guidance on what is good progress for pupils with SEN/LDD;
- develop the capacity of the current online pupil progress tracking system (RAISEonline); and
- develop training materials.

For any further information or to share any examples of effective and innovative practice please contact Pauline Pitman pauline.pitman@nationalstrategies.co.uk or Jenny Digges jenny.digges@nationalstrategies.co.uk

Resources

- **The SEN/AEN Value for Money Self Evaluation Resource Pack:**

The Resource Pack for schools has been developed over the past year by the National Strategies and the Audit Commission. To help schools determine if their spending on SEN is offering value for money and making real improvements to outcomes, the Audit Commission and the National Strategies published an interactive website earlier this year. It can be accessed on <http://www.sen-aen.audit-commission.gov.uk/>

- **The P scales** focused area of the National Strategies website gives guidance on the use of P scales to improve outcomes for SEN pupils. Schools must now use P scales to report the attainment of all pupils identified as having SEN who are working below National Curriculum Level 1. The area

includes links and references to existing resources to support the use and moderation of P scales for whole school planning and assessment, in both special and mainstream schools.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/secondary/keystage3/issues/focus/pscales

- **The Inclusion Development Programme:** (Dyslexia and Speech, Language and Communication Needs) is available to LAs and schools. This resource aims to increase the confidence and skills of teachers in meeting the needs of high incidence SEN. It is intended as a key resource to support Quality First Wave 1 teaching and should be accessible for all teachers and not the sole responsibility of the SENCO. It can be accessed via the website;

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/features/inclusion/sen/>

- **New Areas of the National Strategies SEN/LDD Website:** The National Strategies have added 3 new areas to the SEN/LDD focused area of the website. Schools and LAs may find the knowledge and information banks contained there a useful supplement to other materials to support capacity-building in relation to SEN/LDD. The three new areas are:

SEN/LDD Teaching and Learning

SEN/LDD Statutory Framework

SEN/LDD Attainment and Progress

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/features/inclusion/sen/>

Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)



If your school has not already ordered your school's copy of our guidance pack *'Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in Schools and Early Years Settings – a training resource for schools and local authorities'* we still have some available. This guidance outlines schools' and local authorities' responsibilities in relation to the DDA and

also provides support and advice to schools in the development and implementation of these duties. Copies of this guidance can be ordered from Prolog by e-mailing dcsf@prolog.uk.com or by phoning 0845 60 222 60. It should be pointed out however that only one pack can be allocated to each school.

Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme - Update

Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC), launched in May 2007, is the government's transformation programme for disabled children's services, jointly delivered by DCSF and the Department of Health (DH).

The AHDC programme aims to deliver:

- **Service improvement** – The programme is supported by substantial new funding over the years 2008/9 to 2010/11. This includes DCSF funding of £370m for short breaks, £19m for transition support, £35m for accessible childcare pilots and £5m for parent participation.

- **System change** – AHDC has also introduced measures designed to make the system work better. It introduces a core offer setting out expected standards of service and a disability indicator to measure the experience of parents with disabled children.

For those who need a quick catch-up on the AHDC agenda, you can download and order programme summaries from here

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ahdc/.

These summaries are particularly good for professionals who want to get up to speed.

For more information about the AHDC programme visit www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ahdc/ or email

ahdc.implementation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

Recent AHDC Programme Developments Include:

● Parent Participation Grants Programme Launched

As part of the AHDC programme the Government committed £5 million to support parent involvement over the next three years. For further information visit the Together for Disabled Children website at www.togetherfdc.org

● National Indicator – Proposed Survey Methodology Published

The Disabled Children's Services Indicator (National Indicator Set 54) will assess parents' general experience of services for disabled children aged 0 – 19 and the extent to which services for disabled children are delivered according to the core offer standards. The National Centre for Social Research has now completed their report, which

makes recommendations on the form and methodology for measuring the indicator. This report was published by the DCSF on 25 September. For more information visit www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/ahdc/coreoffer/

● Childcare Pilot Launch

On 5 September the Department hosted the first meeting of the National Learning Set for the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare (DCATCH) programme. Nine of the local authorities from the first wave of pilots attended. For more information on the childcare pilots visit the www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/ahdc/childcare/

● Short Breaks Implementation Guidance

DCSF and Department of Health have issued joint AHDC short breaks implementation guidance for Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and local authorities. The guidance is to support LA and PCT professionals to improve local short breaks provision. For further information visit <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00319>

Forthcoming AHDC Announcements

There will be a host of programme announcements in the coming weeks and the Every Child Matters website now has an email alert function that will keep you up-to-date with key announcements from the AHDC programme. You can sign up to the email alerts here www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ahdc/

Future announcements will include:

- Launch of the Child Health Strategy
- Publication and launch of a consultation on the National Framework for Assessing Children's Continuing Care
- Launch of the Individual Budgets scoping report
- Launch of the Transition Support Programme and the announcement of the coordinating body.



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Your Comments

We welcome your comments. Please send them to SEN and Disability Division, Department for Children Families and Schools, 1E, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BT. email sen.update@dcf.gov.uk



Publications

Copies of the Department for Children, Families and Schools publications mentioned are available from the Publications Centre, tel 0845 602 2260, fax 0845 603 3360, email dcf@prolog.uk.com