A cartoon illustration of a young boy on the left and a young girl on the right, both smiling and holding a large banner. The boy is wearing an orange shirt and blue pants, and the girl is wearing a purple dress. The banner is divided into two horizontal sections: a green top section and a blue bottom section. The text is written in white on these sections.

Breaking the link
between special
educational needs
and low attainment

Everyone's business



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Foreword

by the Secretary of State for Children,
Schools and Families



"Under the 1944 Education Act, children with special educational needs.....were considered to be 'uneducable' and pupils were labelled into categories such as 'maladjusted' or 'educationally sub-normal' and given 'special educational treatment' in separate schools."

House of Commons Education and Skills Committee.

Special Educational Needs. Third Report of Session 2005-06. Volume I

The days when children with special educational needs (SEN) were treated as second-class citizens are long gone. Today we believe that every child needs to fulfill their potential and that this must apply just as much to children with SEN as to everyone else. This principle is enshrined throughout our educational system. We have committed unprecedented funding to support children with SEN. Every school has significantly improved.

It is very encouraging that the proportions of children with SEN achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C including both English and maths has doubled between 2006 and 2009; but the gap in attainment between children with SEN and their peers is still large. At age 11, whereas the great majority of children without SEN nowadays achieve national expectations, only about one third of those with SEN do so. If the key gaps in attainment between children with SEN and their peers at ages 11 and 16 were to narrow by even 10 percentage points, this country would move to become one of the highest performing education systems in the world. And, of course, these children's life chances would be hugely improved too.

So there is much more to do. While many children with SEN enjoy regular attendance at school, exclusion rates remain high. And crucially, while many parents of children with SEN are happy with the education system, too many remain dissatisfied. Responding to these concerns, we made two commitments in the Children's Plan: to improve outcomes and provision for children with SEN, and to increase parental confidence that children's individual needs are being met. To achieve this we have drawn on the best expertise available.

In 2008, I invited Brian Lamb to look at how parental confidence in the SEN system could be improved. After a thorough investigation, he made recommendations for change in four key areas – children's outcomes at the heart of the system, a stronger voice for parents, a system with a greater focus on children's needs, and a more accountable system that delivers better services. I accepted these recommendations in full, leading to the publication of a full implementation plan. Also in 2008, I asked Sir Jim Rose to make recommendations on the identification and teaching of children with dyslexia and literacy difficulties. We are taking forward his recommendations and investing in course places for an additional 4,000 specialist dyslexia teachers.

Today, Toby Salt's review is published into the supply of teachers to meet the needs of children with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD). I have accepted all his recommendations and we will publish an implementation plan based on his recommendations in March 2010.

Meanwhile, the best local authorities, early years settings and schools already demonstrate good practice focused on positive outcomes for children with SEN. Teachers and support staff are confident in using strategies that ensure progress. Parents feel they are listened to. Exclusions are kept low and children have access to extended services.

Achieving this cultural change across all areas is a challenge for headteachers and senior school staff. Under the new Ofsted framework, evidence of positive outcomes for vulnerable groups will be required for a school to be judged as outstanding, and this cannot happen without determined and inspirational leadership. Improving standards for children with SEN also requires the attention of local leaders across the range of support services from early years until the school-leaving age and beyond.

To help us achieve this, we set out in the 2009 Schools White Paper a series of major policy developments to build the 21st century school system. Most of these developments directly benefit children with SEN and improve their prospects for good progress and achievement. They include the twin Pupil and Parent Guarantees of excellent personalised education; schools working increasingly in partnership; the National Challenge guarantee of minimum standards in all mainstream secondary schools; the promise of catch-up help in the primary phase; one-to-one tuition for every child who is behind in Key Stage 2 or at the start of secondary school; and a revised accountability system.

I am delighted that this document shares the good work of so many schools and local authorities that already ensure high aspirations, progress and attainment for children with SEN. Together we can ensure that every child succeeds and fulfills their true potential.



Ed Balls

Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families

5 March 2010

Chapter 1:

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This document is part of the Breaking the Link series published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), which started with a document on disadvantage and low attainment published in March 2009. Its purpose is to raise awareness and influence attitudes of school headteachers, senior leadership teams and heads of school improvement. Its secondary audience is the wider group of teachers, local authority professionals and other staff who support children with special educational needs (SEN).
2. The Lamb Inquiry final report outlined that 'children who have a learning difficulty or disability that requires additional support, more than is normally offered in a classroom, have SEN', and said that schools have to do their best to meet the needs of their pupils with SEN, calling on external advice and support if necessary.¹ With early years settings and local authorities, schools are required to have regard to the SEN Code of Practice, which provides advice on carrying out statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs, including a definition of the different levels of intervention and categories of need.
3. School Action is the level of intervention for a child identified with SEN where the school feels able to meet their needs; and School Action Plus is the level of intervention for a child where the school requires external support (e.g. from an educational psychologist or speech and language therapist) to meet the needs of the child. The needs of some children are such that the local authority sets out the support that is required in a statement. The local authority is required by law to ensure that this support is then provided.
4. The categories of special educational needs cover a wide spectrum. Some children with SEN will have complex needs – such as those with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) or severe learning difficulties (SLD) – and therefore require intensive or long-term support. Others may require only temporary interventions to address learning difficulties that can be overcome. This document recognises the breadth of the spectrum covered, and stresses the need for identification of SEN to be individual, and followed by interventions that are tailored to meet the particular needs of a child. This is important as 'SEN' is often used as a catch-all term to describe children with additional learning needs, which can mask the truly wide spectrum of needs that exist.
5. Policy and practice for children with SEN is an integral component of the Children's Plan commitment to improved school outcomes for every child. Addressing the needs of this large group cannot be treated separately or as a bolt-on to wider school improvement policies. SEN policies are closely integrated with the wider commitments set out in the Schools White Paper to deliver minimum standards, improved support, and broader measures of accountability; and in particular, to deliver the Pupil and Parent Guarantees of excellent, personalised education.

6. Similarly, improvements for children with SEN cannot take place in isolation of the Every Child Matters agenda. With an acknowledgement that young people spend one fifth of their childhood at school, an alignment with developments in early years and childcare, health and wellbeing and family policy are key to ensuring positive outcomes for this vulnerable group of children.

Chapter summary

2: The evidence

This chapter reviews evidence showing substantial improvements in overall standards achieved in English schools in recent years. From this base it analyses the attainment and progress of children identified with SEN, both absolutely and relative to children without SEN. It considers the opportunities for further gains for children with SEN, based on the success of some schools in raising aspirations and achievement for children with SEN.

3: How does the identification of SEN relate to children's progress?

This chapter highlights differing practice in how SEN is identified in local authorities and schools. The variation revealed is striking – from over 70 per cent in some schools, to below five per cent in others. Variation might be due to differing application of the SEN Code of Practice (e.g. use of School Action, School Action Plus and statement) and differing interpretation of the categories of needs (e.g. Severe Learning Difficulties and Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties). Due to this local variation, age and prior attainment are the best factors to measure pupil progress and set targets. Ofsted reveal excellent practice in both high- and low-identifying schools, so the key point is that SEN identification must always serve the child. When schools use early identification to determine evidence-based interventions required to meet children's needs – with effective tracking systems in place – the chances of maintaining high trajectories of progress are greatly enhanced.

4: Breaking the link in every school and area – what works well

This chapter considers what works well for local authorities and schools in improving outcomes for children with SEN. Key principles and guidance are suggested in areas of collaboration, leadership, teaching strategies, engaging parents, and wider wellbeing e.g. anti-bullying. The chapter finishes by showing that there are substantial additional resources already provided to meet the costs of SEN provision, but that there needs to be a greater focus on how effectively these are used to improve outcomes.

8 Breaking the link between special educational needs and low attainment

5: Breaking the link – excellent practice already exists

This chapter highlights best practice by local authorities and schools in ensuring good outcomes for their vulnerable groups. High expectations followed by effective assessment and well-targeted interventions (such as use of one-to-one tuition) which are then tracked, can maximise the progress of children with SEN. When parents are involved in their child's learning, outcomes are more positive. When wider outcomes are taken into account, so that children with SEN can enjoy extended services or attend school more frequently, they are also more likely to make good progress. The Government is committed to building on these principles through the Achievement for All pilot, which started in September 2009 based on findings from the Lamb Inquiry. An interim evaluation will be available from June 2010 showing the progress that has been made in the 10 participating local authorities.

Terminology

This document uses interchangeably the terms 'children', 'pupils' and 'young people' with SEN – because it is covering a wide age range from 3-19 and discussing educational needs both within the school and in their lives outside school. The document also refers to a range of sources which use different terms. Likewise, this document may use 'parents' to include 'carers' and 'families'.

Sometimes children with SEN will also be disabled, which can be indicated with the acronym 'SEND'. This document refers to 'SEN' since this is the term used in National Statistics and data collection. Most of the issues identified in the document will apply equally to disabled children and it should be read as such. From January 2011, disability data will also be collected in the School census.

Finally, while data and analysis in this document may refer to 'children with SEN' or display general trends in data, there is no intention to claim that all children with SEN form one common group with exactly the same needs. There are national patterns to be outlined, but this document also seeks to highlight the wide spectrum of special educational needs, local variation in the identification of SEN and the fact that every child has certain needs to be met.

Chapter 2:

The evidence

Standards have risen overall

1. Over recent years, school standards in England have risen steadily and substantially at all Key Stages and in all main subjects of the curriculum.
 - a. In 2009, 80 per cent of 11 year-olds achieved at least level 4 (national expectations) in English, and 79 per cent in mathematics, whereas in 1997 these figures were 63 per cent and 62 per cent. This means that some 98,000 more 11 year-olds achieved the target level for their age in English, and a similar number in mathematics.
 - b. There is a similar picture for secondary schools. In 1997, an estimated 43 per cent of pupils at the end of KS4 achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C (5AC), and an estimated 33 per cent achieved the tougher measure including both English and maths (5ACEM). By 2009, these figures had risen to 70 per cent and 51 per cent respectively, with the result that the numbers of pupils achieving these levels last year were 160,000 and 100,000 larger than in 1997.
 - c. These improvements have been steady and constant; there has been no three year period in the last two decades in which standards have not risen at both KS2 and KS4.

Standards have improved for children with special educational needs (SEN)

2. These are the national averages of school attainment, measured across the whole cohort of over 600,000 young people every year. But it masks some uncomfortable truths about the relative underperformance of the very large proportion of school-aged children: **21 per cent, or 1.7 million** – who are currently identified as having special educational needs.
3. These children have a wide range of needs, short and long term, severe and less so. Children identified with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) or severe learning difficulties (SLD) will find it difficult or maybe even impossible to reach the national expectations in school standards. Still, these children should expect that their identified learning difficulties will be met through special educational provision, and that this extra support will give them as good a chance as any other child of fulfilling their potential. This may not mean 5ACEM, but it should mean good progress relative to their starting point, which can then be celebrated.
4. But for other children with particular impairments or difficulties e.g. hearing or visual impairments, the interventions put in place should minimise any impact on attainment. Learning difficulties can be mitigated with adaptations – perhaps the use of physical devices or suitable teaching styles – to ensure that a child is not unfairly hampered in their learning. Some children may have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) that when well-managed, do not have an adverse effect on attainment. Many children with different types of SEN are able to achieve well and high expectations will ensure that SEN identification is not a barrier to success – a theme we return to in Chapter 3.

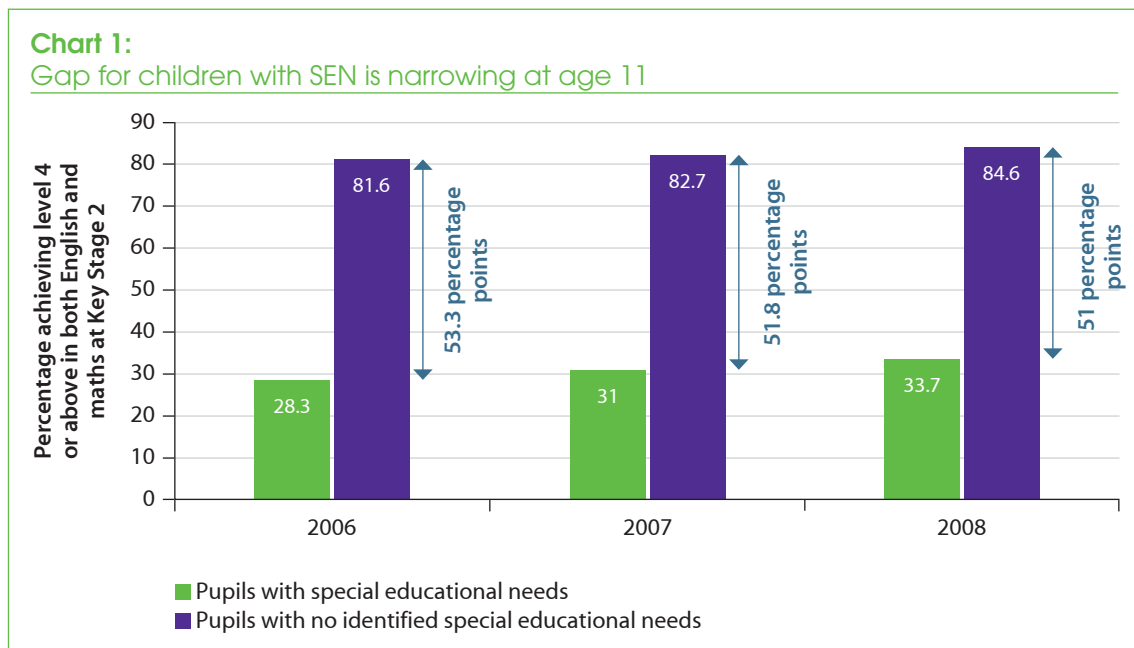
10 Breaking the link between special educational needs and low attainment

5. The good news is that outcomes for children with SEN at age 16 have improved. In particular the proportions of children with SEN achieving the national benchmarks of 5AC and 5ACEM have both doubled, even within the short period between 2006 and 2009. This means that in 2009 some 30,000 more children in England with identified SEN achieved 5AC, and 13,000 more achieved 5ACEM, than did so just three years earlier. These children have considerably better chances of going on to complete courses of further and higher education, getting higher level training opportunities and securing good long-term employment.

Relative gaps are beginning to narrow

6. But these large rises for children with SEN were from a low base. There remain large gaps in the outcomes achieved by children with SEN compared to the cohort as a whole. Whereas in 2009, 50.7 per cent of all eligible pupils achieved 5ACEM, only 16.5 per cent of those with SEN did so. And at age 11, whereas the great majority of children without SEN nowadays achieve national expectations, only about one third of those with SEN do so.²

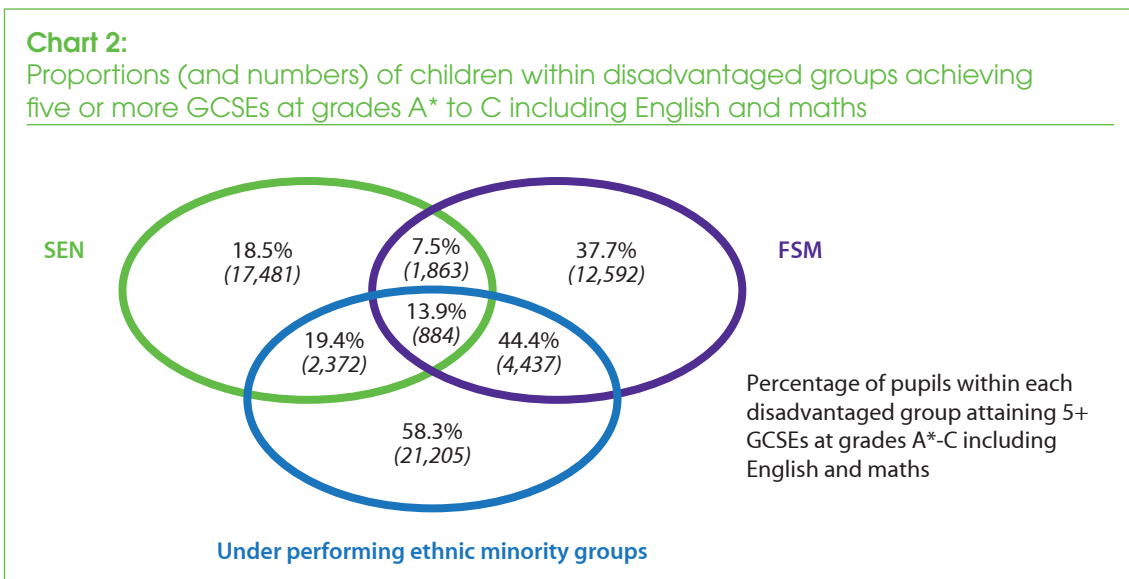
7. The attainment gaps for children with SEN are not yet narrowing as much as some other gaps – notably the gap for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.³ Indeed, the SEN gap at KS4 (5ACEM) widened over the last three years, from 43.3 to 45.6 percentage points. However as Chart 1 shows, the good news is that **at KS2 the gap has started to narrow**, from 53.3 to 51.0 percentage points.⁴



8. The rest of this chapter looks more closely at the cohort of children with SEN, and the evidence about what works best in meeting their needs. It offers the analytical base for discussion of good practice (Chapters 4 and 5) in schools and local authorities which are successfully narrowing the gaps for children with SEN.

Interaction effects for children from disadvantaged backgrounds

9. Children from a disadvantaged background – notably those eligible for free school meals (FSM) or from an underperforming ethnic group⁵ – are much more likely to be identified as having SEN. Around 40 per cent of pupils eligible for FSM at KS4 are identified as having SEN – double the rate of their non-FSM peers. Similarly one third of children from underperforming ethnic groups are identified with SEN, which is higher than the rate for children from other ethnic groups. At least one per cent of children have all three of these characteristics associated with underachievement. As Chart 2 shows, it is the combination of disadvantage and SEN which is most challenging for a child’s prospects of reaching national expectations.



10. The sum of the percentages in each circle of the Venn diagram is the proportion of that disadvantaged group – in the KS4 cohort – who achieved 5ACEM in 2009. Where a percentage appears in an overlap between two (or all three) circles, this shows that they were members of both (or all three) disadvantaged groups. For example, only 7.5 per cent of FSM children with SEN achieved 5ACEM. This shows the very strong correlation between having SEN, being from a low income family and not reaching national expectations.

12 Breaking the link between special educational needs and low attainment

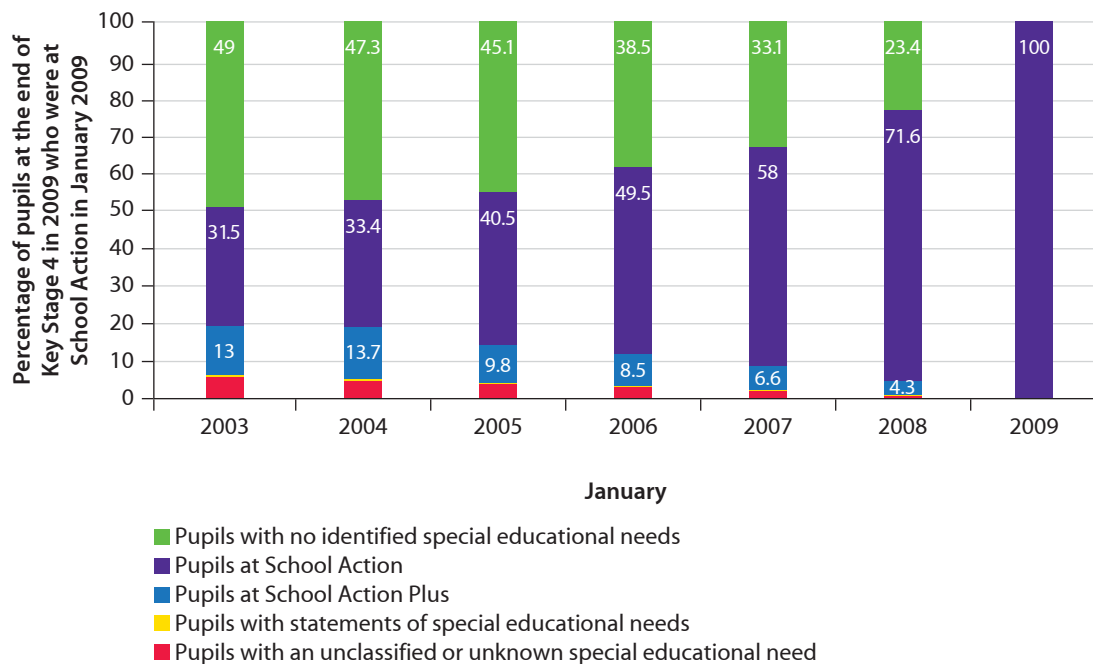
Numbers of children with SEN

11. At this point it is important to return to the sheer scale of the numbers of children identified with SEN. At any moment, one in every five school children in England is identified as having SEN; 150,000 in an age cohort. But even this seriously understates the issue because between the ages 6-16, at least **one in every three children** is identified at one time or another as having SEN.

12. Half of all these children – some 900,000 in total – are identified only at School Action level, meaning that they do not have specific needs requiring intervention of external specialist help. Chart 3, which tracks the same pupils from 2009 backwards, shows that almost half of children identified at the end of KS4 at School Action had no identified SEN six years previously.

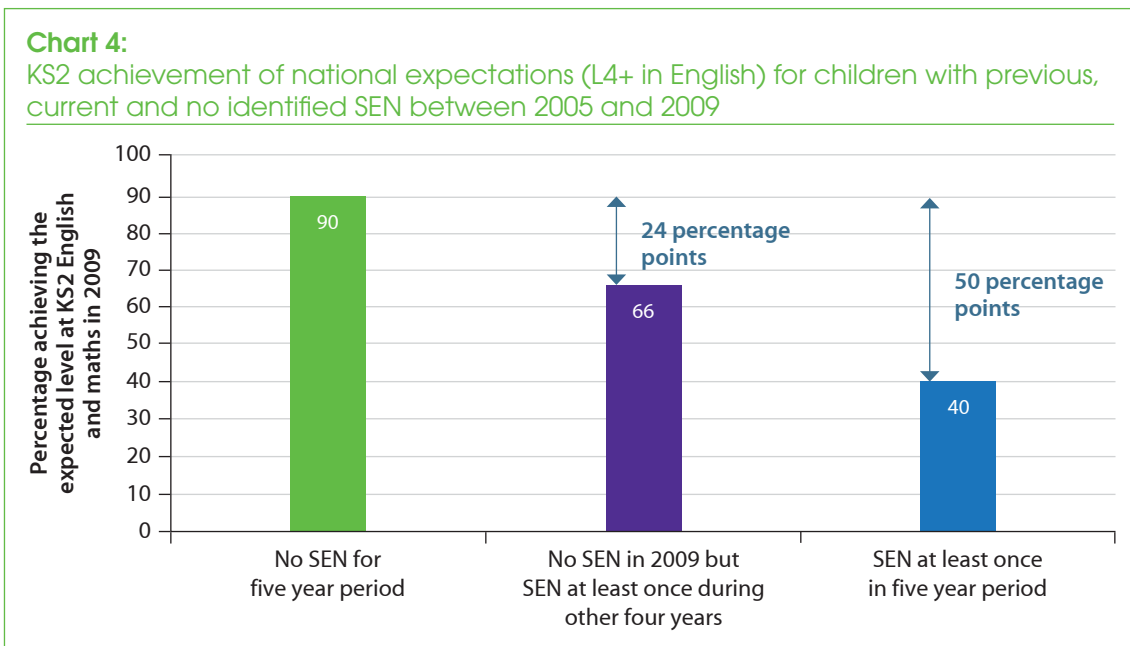
Chart 3:

Children with SEN (School Action) in 2009, and their earlier SEN identification



13. Chart 3 could suggest that the School Action level of intervention is used too readily or too late, as nearly a quarter of children at School Action at the end of KS4 had not been identified with SEN a year earlier. But the degree of movement can be a positive feature, enabling a child with SEN to have their needs effectively addressed, perhaps moving from School Action Plus to School Action. Other data shows that many children at School Action at the start of KS3 move out of the SEN category permanently by the end of KS4.

14. There can be a positive effect when this movement is evident. Children previously, but no longer, identified with SEN attain better, both at KS2 and KS4, than children currently identified with SEN. As the arrows in Chart 4 show, their attainment gap at KS2 to children that have never been identified with SEN is 24 percentage points, half that for children currently with SEN (50 percentage points).

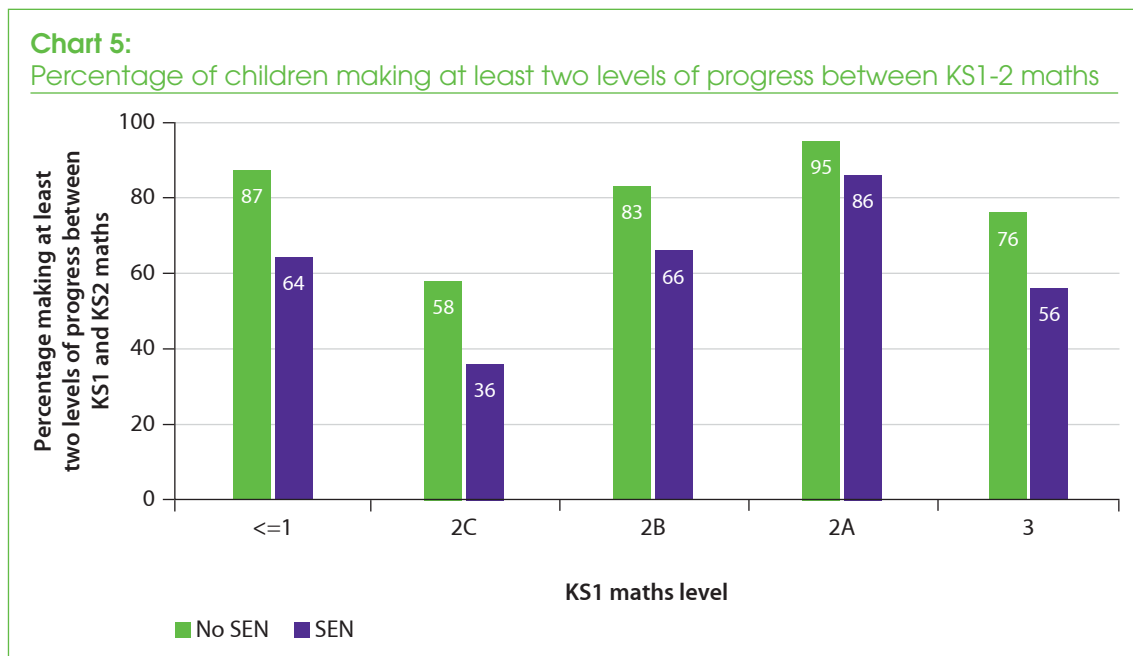


15. This smaller gap shows that children no longer identified with SEN do catch up with their peers. However, the persistence of a fairly large gap emphasises how important it is that SEN identification is always dynamic, up to date and responsive to the child's changing needs.

14 Breaking the link between special educational needs and low attainment

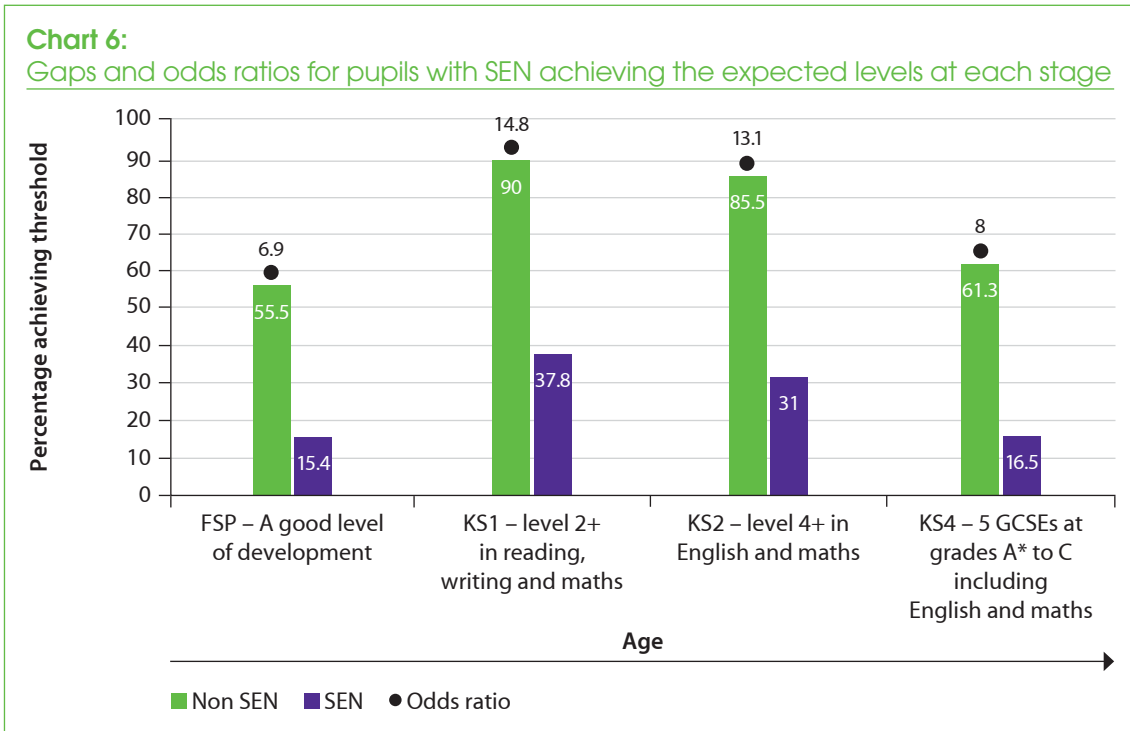
Making good progress

16. So far this analysis has focused on **attainment** at the end of a Key Stage. But just as important – arguably more so, for children with SEN – is their rate of **progress** within each Key Stage. If the approaches set out in the SEN Code of Practice were being implemented as intended, then the identification of a learning difficulty would result in higher visibility and where necessary intervention, leading to rates of progress as high as the cohort average, even if final attainment remained lower.



17. Again there is encouraging data. Chart 5 shows that the progress gap for children with SEN is smaller than the attainment one. In progress terms that gap is of the order of 20 percentage points (primary level KS1-2 maths), whereas in attainment it is around 50 percentage points (KS2 maths and English). This illustrates a key point in this analysis: when there are high expectations for a child identified with SEN who is given support appropriate to their needs, they should make good progress, even if their starting point was lower, and even if the end point is lower, than for the average of children without SEN.

18. The impact of these progress and attainment gaps is perhaps most clearly shown in Chart 6, which indicates that gaps between the attainment of children with and without SEN range from 40 to 55 percentage points.⁶ When these gaps are expressed as the comparative odds of success, (see the symbols placed on top of each largest bar), the odds for a child with SEN achieving key national thresholds are between seven and 15 times less than the rest of the cohort, from early years through to age 16.



19. Clearly, we must not consider any reduction in rates of progress and attainment for children without SEN. Therefore, a narrowing of the gap must be achieved by focusing even more sharply on early identification and intervention for children identified with SEN at each stage – from early years right through to age 18 and beyond.

Conclusion from the evidence

20. Overall, this analysis of the rich database of available evidence clearly demonstrates that children with learning difficulties do face additional barriers to learning. However, the purpose of the special educational provision that they receive is to tackle these barriers. The data shows that more needs to be done to narrow the attainment and progress gaps, but that the latter is currently more encouraging. As the next chapter will argue, SEN identification should trigger a determination to maintain high aspirations and expectations for progress, and then lead to sustained action to achieve them.

Chapter 3: How does the identification of special educational needs relate to children's progress?

Introduction

1. This chapter highlights wide variation in the way that special educational needs (SEN) are identified and addressed in local authorities and schools – variation in whether a child is so identified at all, the level of intervention according to the SEN Code of Practice, the type of school in which a child is placed, and the nature of support and intervention. In part this variation is a proper reflection of a diverse range of needs. Nevertheless, the variation that is revealed is striking. While the national average of school children identified with SEN is around 20 per cent, this rises to **70 per cent or above** in some mainstream schools, and down to below 10 per cent in others.

2. Some level of variation is of course justified, since every school's intake is different. But where children in schools with very different profiles of SEN identification have apparently quite similar levels of prior attainment, it raises questions about the consistency with which the SEN Code of Practice criteria are being applied. The Government has required Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) in all schools to be qualified teachers, and for those new to the role to undertake nationally accredited training leading to a National Award. This should mean better skilled leaders of SEN in schools and more consistent professional practice in this area. The cardinal principles are that SEN identification must:

- a. reflect the child's actual needs arising from correct application of the definitions in the Code;
- b. signal a clear intention by the school to address those special educational needs, set high aspirations and take the action needed to achieve them.

3. In other words, identifying a child as having SEN should not be confused with recording that the child is underperforming or not meeting their potential. The latter may signal a need for a vigorous implementation of whole-school or whole-class personalised teaching and learning, followed up with whatever catch-up or keep-up interventions are appropriate to enable the child to return quickly to the level of the class. Identification of SEN ought in most cases to go beyond merely being behind national expectations – it should mean being behind because of clear learning difficulties or disabilities which need to be actively addressed through special educational provision.

4. In short, the identification of SEN should be seen as a challenge to all concerned – to put in the extra resources and effort so that even the minority of pupils maintain **good** progress relative to their starting point – and not as a justification for assuming and accepting **slow** progress.

5. As the Progression Guidance 2009-10 outlined, local variability means that the starting point for comparisons of progress and for setting targets should not be the different levels of intervention in the SEN code of practice, the type of special educational need, or the school in which a child is placed. Rather, **age and prior attainment** form the most objective basis for measuring progress and setting targets.⁷

6. As the end of the chapter outlines, the best schools understand the importance of **high expectations**, use of accurate data and early intervention to ensure good progress. A focus on how to overcome barriers to learning rather than ‘labels’ is more likely to enable children with SEN to fulfil their potential.

Variation in the identification of SEN by area of residence

7. When identification of SEN is mapped out across the country, the local variance in practice is revealed. Higher percentages of children identified with SEN are illustrated with dark purple in Chart 7.

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Chart 7:
Prevalence of children with SEN in maintained schools by area of residence

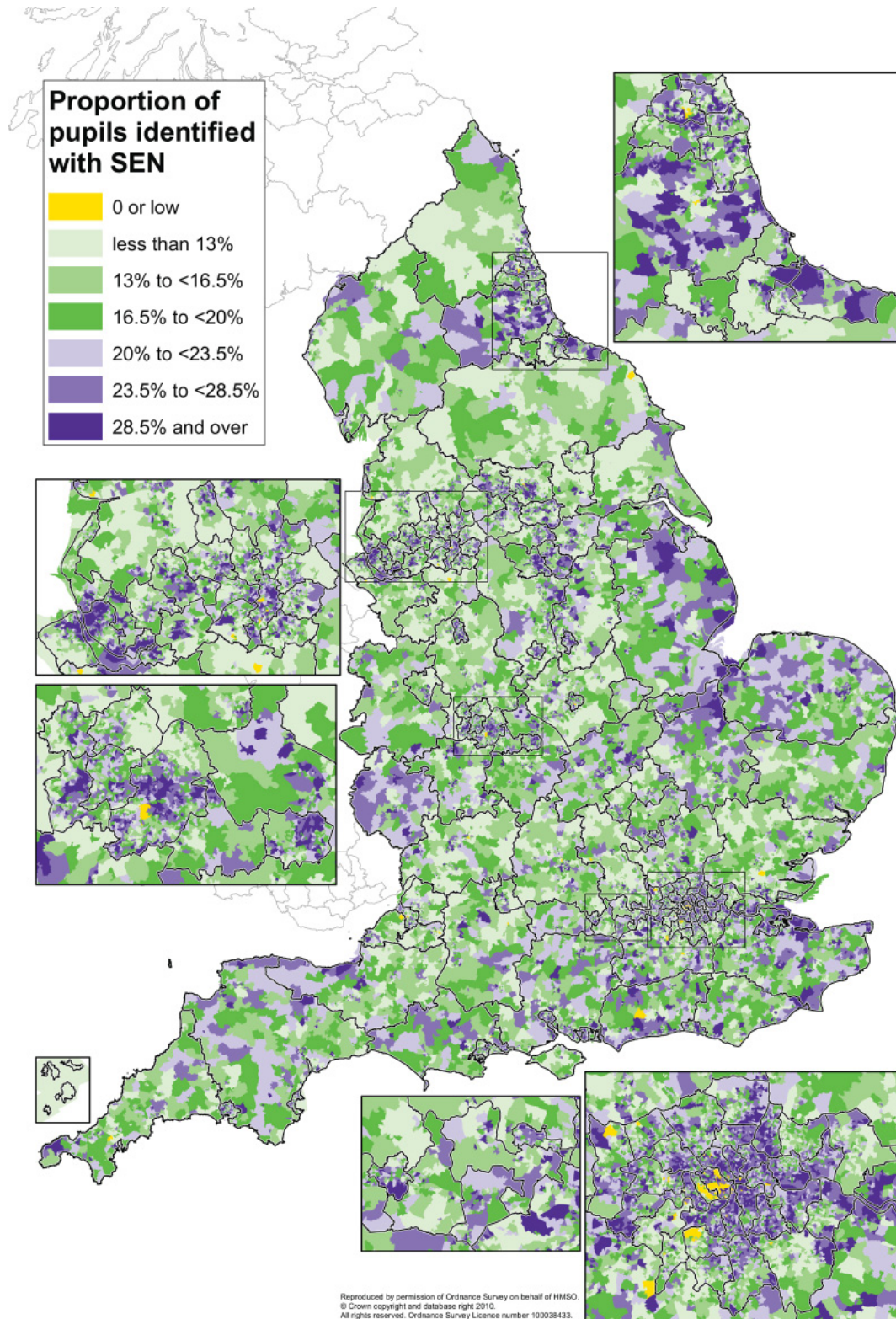


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8. Chapter 2 revealed the overlap between economic disadvantage and identification of SEN and it may be that this influences the trends shown above. But Chart 7 does show high concentrations of children with SEN in every region. Ensuring good progress for children with SEN is a shared goal for local authorities, early years settings, and schools.

Levels of intervention

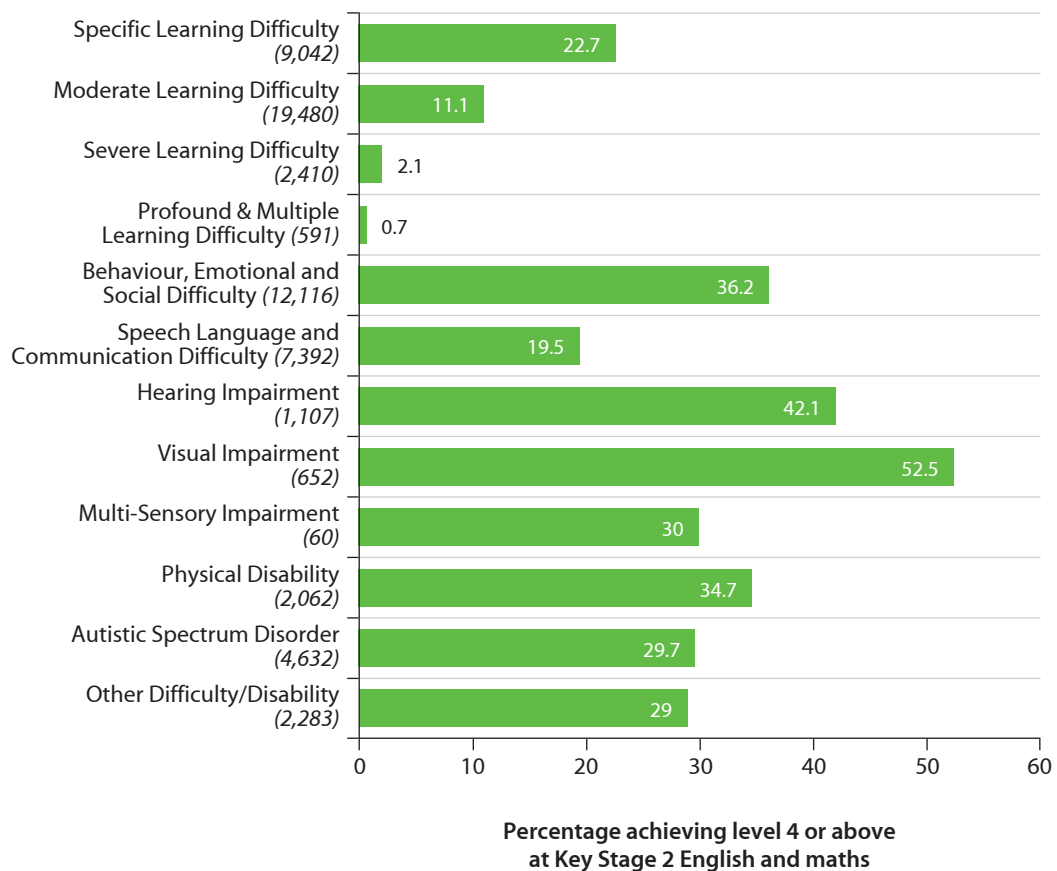
9. Every child has a right to an education that takes account of their individual characteristics, including learning difficulties and disabilities. In many early years settings and schools, children with SEN achieve good rates of progress if there are interventions to meet their needs.

10. There are three graduated levels of intervention outlined in the SEN Code of Practice: School Action, School Action Plus and statements.⁸ As with identifying SEN, judgements about which of these levels a child should be at vary between schools and local authorities. Schools with a skilled workforce and strong systems for personalising learning for all their pupils may not identify a child with SEN at all; other schools may have a child with similar needs at School Action or School Action Plus.

11. Nationally, **over half of children** identified with SEN are at the School Action level of intervention. Schools should expect the special educational provision that they put in place to address these children's learning difficulties, leading to better progress. Good outcomes are also possible for children that require additional provision – at School Action Plus or statement level – on which data is collected by primary type of need.⁹

Chart 8:

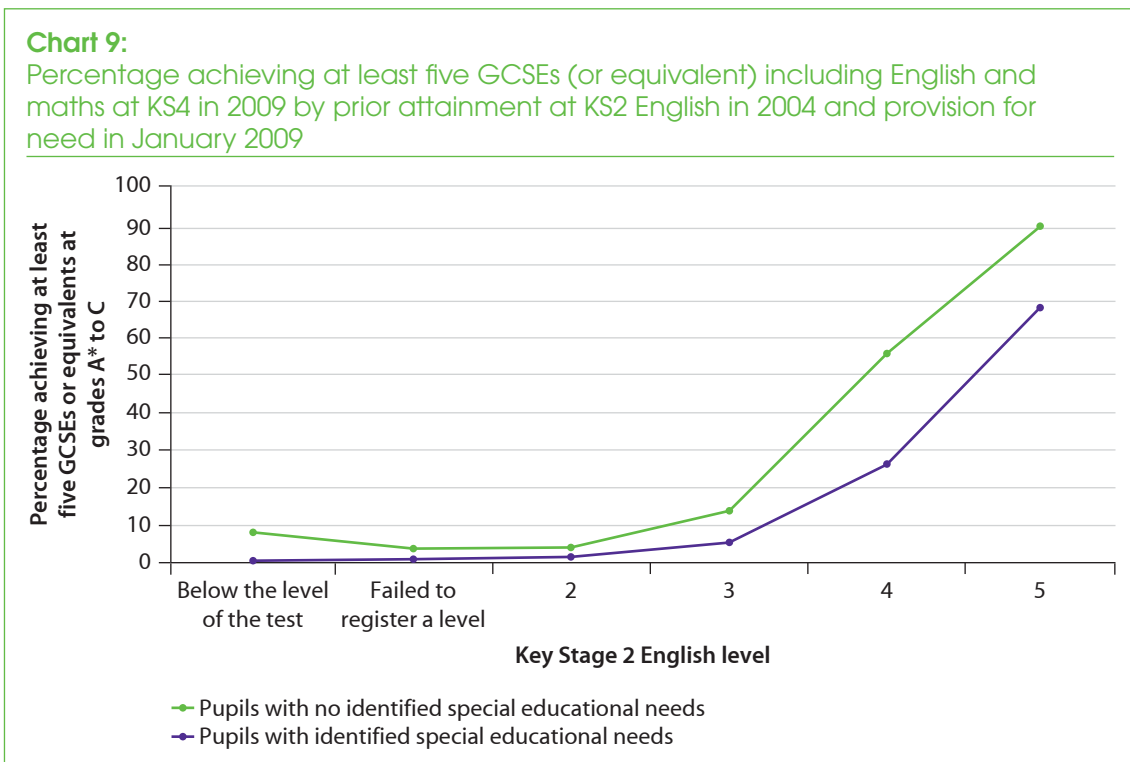
Percentage of children at School Action Plus or with statements achieving national expectations at KS2 English and maths



A broad continuum of needs

12. Chart 8 shows relatively low attainment levels from the 591 children identified with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) at KS2 in 2009. It is expected that these children, or those with severe learning difficulties (SLD), will find it more difficult or maybe even impossible to reach the same attainment levels as their peers. But there are children with particular impairments or difficulties – such as those with hearing or visual impairments or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) – where the provision of specialist support, accessible materials and physical adaptations should minimise any impact on their attainment. With such a **broad continuum of needs**, it is not right to use children with severe or complex needs as representative of the cohort of all children with SEN and conclude that most children with SEN cannot achieve well.

13. The majority of children with SEN are working within the National Curriculum, where two levels of progress within a Key Stage is a realistic and achievable goal. National data shows that prior attainment is a good predictor of later outcomes – with results at one Key Stage helping to predict the trajectory that you might expect later. For most children with SEN who have lower attainment, the special educational provision they receive should accelerate their progress, as it should be based on evidence of what is effective. Chart 9 shows that for some children with SEN this is happening, but the gap (particularly where the starting point is high) shows that there is still some way to go to ensure the special educational provision that all children with SEN receive is accelerating progress.



14. Due to the broad continuum of special educational needs, good progress should be defined for every child. Some starting the Key Stage well below their peers may not reach age-related national expectations. For the small group of learners working at lower P-levels, which come before national curriculum levels, 5 A*-C grades at GCSE is not a realistic or helpful goal.¹⁰ But it is crucial that appropriately high expectations are still in place for these children to make progress **relative to their starting point**. Ofsted (2004) found that without high expectations for the lowest attaining pupils, improvement in provision for children with SEN and in the standards they reach will be slow.¹¹

Type of school

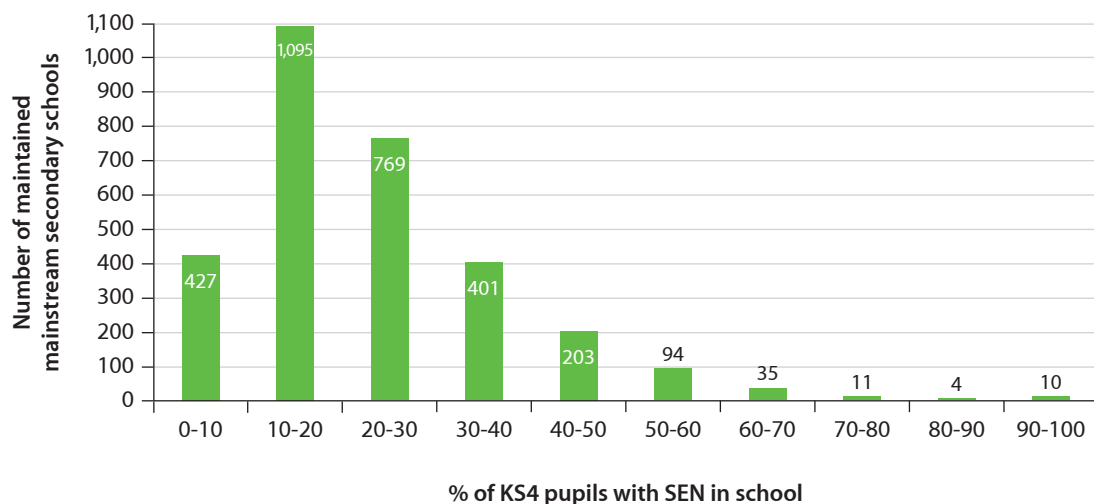
15. Good progress, attainment and high aspirations for children with SEN can be found **in any setting**. Inclusion is not about place, but about how a child with SEN is helped to learn and take part in school life. Ofsted (2006) found that the most important factor in determining outcomes for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities was not the type, but the quality of provision.¹² The best practice in schools indicates that when personalised learning is part of the culture of a whole school approach to curriculum development, the systems for assessing, planning and teaching match the needs of all pupils, reducing the need to define children according to categories of need.¹³

Variation in the identification of SEN by school

16. Variation in the identification of SEN may occur depending on whether or not a school considers the provision they put in place to overcome or mitigate learning difficulties is 'special' education, rather than part of a personalised approach that all children receive.¹⁴ As Chart 10 shows, many maintained mainstream schools identify less than 20 per cent of children with SEN, but this can rise to 70 per cent or more.

Chart 10:

High variance in identification of SEN between schools (KS4 2009)



17. Chart 10 reveals that some schools identify very high numbers of children with SEN. In these cases, it would presumably be hard to demonstrate how provision for every child with SEN remains 'special', different or additional. Lower educational expectations of children from other disadvantaged groups, such as Looked After Children (LAC) or those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), may make it easier to identify the same children with SEN. With **very high** identification, there is a risk that lower expectations will become reinforced or that SEN will seem inextricably linked to other issues – more of an excuse than a challenge to action. In that case, SEN identification may not have really served the child's interests.

18. Of course, there is an alternative view. The schools with high identification rates of SEN might be adopting whole-school strategies to make everyone aware of high numbers of children with SEN, establishing that it is a priority for the school, leading to learning environments that remove barriers to achievement. In this case, identification of SEN may have triggered efforts to overcome learning difficulties and ensure that children are on a faster trajectory of progress.

A focus on progress

19. Ofsted's review of outstanding primary schools in challenging circumstances suggests that while rates of SEN identification may vary considerably, focusing on good progress is more important. At the time of inspection, Cotmanhay Infant School in Derbyshire had identified 52 per cent of children with SEN, but St John School in Lambeth had identified only 4.7 per cent – over ten times less. On entry to these schools, children had very low attainment, but both schools ensured that children made outstanding progress. Cotmanhay celebrates their achievements and different cultures, has a constant emphasis on tracking **each individual child's progress**, and ensures that staff are committed to raising standards. St John addresses concerns in Nursery and Reception years, uses additional resources to ensure that the **basics are taught well from an early age** and that progress can be made throughout the primary years.¹⁵

20. The Progression Guidance is being used to set ambitious targets for children working below age-related expectations, but it can also be used by schools to support children with other learning difficulties. Many schools and local authorities have found that the guidance is a useful way to ensure a shared understanding about the **importance of accurate data** usage and assessment to inform teaching and learning. National Strategies have also set out a framework to ensure that use of data in schools can impact on disadvantaged groups of children such as those with SEN.¹⁶ The next chapter looks at many more strategies that work well for schools and local authorities successful in improving outcomes for children with SEN.

Chapter 4:

Breaking the link in every school and area – what works well

Introduction

1. Breaking the link between special educational needs and low attainment means making a consistent effort to narrow the gap in standards between children with SEN and their peers, that the data analysis in Chapter 2 revealed. As Chapter 3 argued, it also means that identification of SEN should bring additional support to help a child make good progress relative to their starting point, and never be used as a justification for low expectations.
2. The best schools and local authorities are driven in their desire to break the cycle of low aspirations that can prevent children with SEN from making good progress or reaching national levels of attainment. This chapter sets out the key things that work well, points to additional guidance and support, and outlines national developments that may support local authorities and schools. As the table below shows, there are parallels with the strategy that has been developed and trialled for children from low-income families, including the Extra Mile project.¹⁷

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Why is the attainment of children with SEN lower than their peers?	
Some symptoms and issues	Possible school and LA responses
Inconsistent approaches to identification	Strategic local planning that includes parents and schools; early intervention; use of children's centres to ensure that professionals work together in the early years; clear focus on progress relative to age and starting point of the child.
Gaps are too often an 'invisible issue'	Leaders – e.g. local authority officers, early years consultants, school improvement partners, school governors and headteachers – raise awareness and understanding of SEN and inclusion.
Assumptions and low aspirations	Positive role-models set high expectations; celebration of success; data is used to set aspirational targets that drive improvement.
Confidence and skills of teaching staff and other professionals	CPD opportunities; use of learning resources; targeted deployment of specialist and support staff; strong links between early years practitioners, school teachers, SENCOs and senior leaders.
Low prior attainment at Early Years Foundation Stage or Key Stages	Early identification and progress monitoring from an early age; data analysis and assessment informs teaching and learning; targeted support programmes focused on good progress, such as one-to-one tuition.
Parental engagement	Support for the home learning environment from the early years through parenting support; continued through schools and local authorities listening to parental needs, providing clear information and working closely with local parent services; use of technology to support home learning.
Poorer wellbeing and wider outcomes	Anti-bullying work embedded as part of whole-school strategy; exclusions of children with SEN reduced; behaviour and attendance partnerships and strategies such as SEAL/TAHMs; extended services suitable for children with SEN.
Access to qualifications	SENCOs working with teachers, exam officers and other local professionals; new flexible qualifications with accredited learning available for young people with SEN.

Local planning and collaboration

1. Increasingly, localities are establishing community-based multi-disciplinary teams to provide **early intervention**, working from children's centres and schools as hubs. There is also growing interest in delivering early intervention through accredited programmes. A consultation will be underway this year to help Children's Trust Boards to consider improvements to their early intervention arrangements, working to develop new Children and Young People's Plans. Long-term consideration is also needed to see how early intervention can be more systematic, evidence based and cost effective.¹⁸
2. Early intervention relies on professionals who listen to children, are alert to emerging needs, carry out good assessments, refer children to the right services, or themselves give direct help. It also means effective communication between early years settings, other agencies and schools to ensure **smooth transition arrangements** for children at four or five years of age.
3. Ofsted have found it unacceptable that different groups of pupils with similar needs can receive different levels of support depending on where they live. And despite agreement in many quarters that collaboration and partnership working between mainstream and special schools is advantageous – in terms of resources, facilities and expertise – Ofsted have found that effective, equal partnerships are not always commonplace.¹⁹
4. The Lamb Inquiry found examples of schools working in partnership to bring together specialist provision to support children with SEN. The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO) is collecting evidence of good practice where **clusters of schools** are commissioning services for children with SEN. These will be shared to help local authorities and schools adopt similar approaches, adding to a collection of validated effective local practice that is already available.²⁰
5. The implementation plan for the Lamb Inquiry will ensure that support will be available for local authorities throughout 2010 to give parents and the community greater involvement in **local strategic planning** processes. Guidance and training will be available from March 2010 to support local authority staff, with a focus on key requirements in the legislative framework and good communication with parents. National Strategies will provide guidance and training on writing quality statements in July 2010. The National College will incorporate modules on SEN into training for leadership of children's services. All of these initiatives will look to ensure that local authorities are not too far removed from how SEN services are delivered when responsibility and funding is delegated to schools.²¹

Early years workforce

6. The early years workforce is increasingly well equipped to support children with SEN. Quality and care improvement programmes are available for practitioners, leaders and managers to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – a framework within which to track children’s development, enabling problems to be **identified early** and individual progress to be monitored for all children. Guidance and support materials are available on the National Strategies website.²²

7. The Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) is available to support both early years settings and schools, aimed at increasing the confidence and expertise of mainstream practitioners in meeting common special educational needs. Web-based materials are available which include teaching and learning resources, models of good practice for multi-disciplinary teams and sources of specialist advice. Some resources are intended to support leadership teams and headteachers in planning to raise the attainment of pupils with SEN as part of the school improvement cycle.²³

School workforce

Leadership

8. Children and young people with SEN thrive in schools where they feel actively involved and welcome. Guidance for school leaders explains how an **inclusive culture** can help to narrow gaps in attainment between disadvantaged groups and their peers. This warns against the emergence of shadow cultures – groups of people that label some children as less able, undeserving or lacking commitment- which can create further disadvantage and low expectations. The best school leaders expect all staff and pupils to respect, understand and believe in an inclusive vision.²⁴

9. The importance of effective leadership in improving outcomes for children with SEN was emphasised by the National College in recent work that developed a framework of four key strands to enable leaders to create a more inclusive school:

- A shared **vision** based on a strong moral purpose that promotes shared understanding and aspirational targets.
- A **committed** leader that believes in professional development, leading by example with drive, determination, tireless energy and the ability to commit others to the vision.
- A leader that **communicates** effectively, using emotional intelligence, flexible approaches and an appreciation of the expertise and initiative of others.
- An effective leader builds **collaborative** cultures and processes that connect the school to the wider community.

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10. These four key strands for leadership were detailed in guidance for school leaders involved in the Achievement for All pilot that started in September 2009.²⁵ This guidance has been well received and may also be helpful to other school leaders developing their support for vulnerable groups in line with the new Ofsted framework.²⁶ The National College will continue to promote inclusive leadership through key programmes, such as the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH).²⁷

Teaching

11. Many teachers want more support and training so that they can develop the baseline level of confidence and competence needed for identifying and supporting children with SEN. The Becoming a Teacher study asked a cohort of newly qualified teachers in their first year in post what additional training or professional development they felt that they would need over the next 12 months. Out of a total of 2,258 respondents, 13 per cent cited the 'ability to work with pupils with special educational needs (SEN)/inclusion', the third most frequently given response.²⁸

12. Teaching children with SEN is already part of the standards for reaching Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).²⁹ But as the Lamb Inquiry found, training must be effective if newly qualified teachers are to feel adequately prepared to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties or disabilities.³⁰ Ofsted have outlined the factors that contribute to effective teacher training, with advice for practitioners, local authorities and schools.³¹ Resources are also available through the Teacher Training Resource Bank, which will be expanded by the Teaching and Development Agency (TDA) to provide more research and evidence on SEN.³²

13. The Lamb Inquiry found that the use of **specialist** staff and resources can be effective for improving outcomes of children with SEN, allowing issues to be identified at an earlier stage and teachers to address parents' concerns about their child's special educational needs. As a result, teachers with specialist SEN skills may increasingly be working across clusters of schools. Over 150 teachers will be supported in gaining specialist qualifications in teaching children with sensory impairments. Following Jim Rose's report on Identifying and Teaching Children and Young People with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties there will be 4000 places for teachers to undertake specialist training from 2011.³³ And an independent report by Toby Salt into the Supply of Teachers to Meet the Needs of Children with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) will be available in March 2010.³⁴

14. Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) have a **key strategic role** to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEN are considered throughout a school, working to develop an inclusive ethos, analyse pupil progress and co-ordinate liaison with parents and external agencies. The role is now available only to qualified teachers, with SENCOs new to the role supported by nationally approved training that equips them to lead teaching and learning.³⁵ SENCOs should increasingly be able to develop a team approach with teachers and other staff when identifying children with SEN, setting targets, assessing the impact of special educational interventions, and ensuring young people with SEN can access qualifications.³⁶ Schools might also consider SENCOs as part of the senior leadership team, which can raise the profile of inclusive practices and lead to better understanding for all staff about the actions required to improve outcomes for children with SEN.

Support staff

15. The Lamb Inquiry found that the culture and organisation of too many schools is still to focus the best teachers on those children with the highest abilities.³⁷ The final report stated that for disabled children and children with SEN, there is evidence of significant amounts of teaching assistant time being used as a substitute for teacher time.

16. Ofsted (2006) found that pupils in mainstream schools where support from teaching assistants (TAs) was the main type of provision were less likely to make good academic progress than those who had access to specialist teaching in those schools.³⁸ The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff (DISS) study found that TAs appeared to be the principal means by which teachers ensured that children with SEN or low ability received differentiated input, but an unintended consequence of this could be that the supported child was isolated from the teacher and their peers.³⁹

17. However, targeted deployment of support staff can contribute to improved outcomes for children with SEN, particularly when staff have been **well trained and work closely with teachers**. Ofsted (2010) found that in the best schools, Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) understand teaching content and agree criteria for measuring pupil progress with teachers.⁴⁰ One finding from an EPPI systematic review was that TAs delivering targeted support for literacy to individuals or small groups could have a positive impact on pupils' progress. In the majority of studies which showed a positive impact, the TA was usually brought in from outside the school specifically to deliver the intervention.⁴¹

18. TDA guidance will be disseminated by September 2010 to provide school leaders and teachers with examples of how they might best deploy support staff to meet the needs of all pupils, including children with SEN. The Lamb Inquiry recommended that this guidance focuses on improved outcomes and independence for children with SEN.

Strategies to ensure progress

Early years

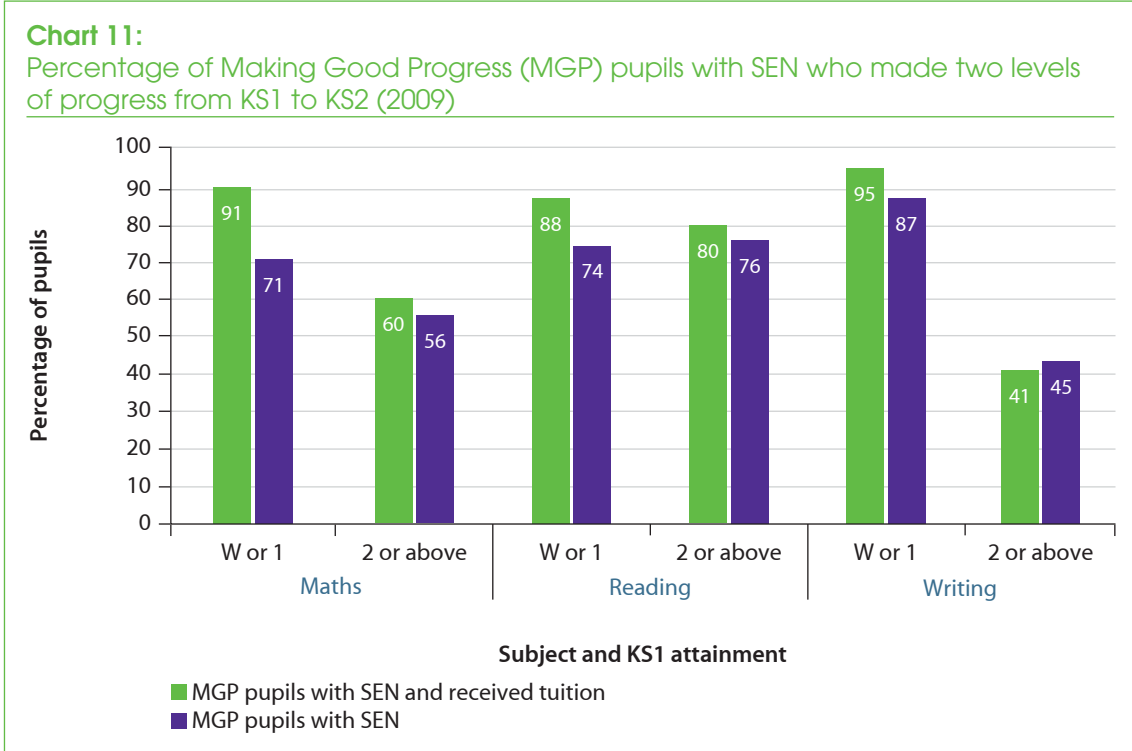
19. Children's centres, which bring together the expertise of health and early years professionals, have the potential to enable children with SEN aged 0-5 to make good progress, and to enable their parents or carers to have easy access to specialist advice and support. The **Early Support Programme** has been developed to ensure that families with children who have development needs receive integrated, tailored support. And this is now being complemented by the national roll out of learning from the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare project, which can raise achievement by helping disabled children access early years settings.

20. The **early years foundation stage profile** (EYFSP) can be used to track children's development, monitor individual progress and ensure early identification of learning difficulties. Support to overcome communication difficulties is important for ensuring that the problems faced by many children do not develop into, or come to be understood as, SEN. Targeted support is available for children up to the age of five through **Every Child A Talker**, which will be rolled out to all local authorities from April 2010.⁴²

School

21. By 2010-11, the **Every Child a Reader** and Every Child Counts programmes will each reach 30,000 children. These programmes encourage teachers to use strategies such as Quality First Teaching and the waves model of intervention, which can help all children to make good progress, including those with learning difficulties. School leaders may be interested in materials developed by the National Strategies which offer more detail.⁴³

22. The **Making Good Progress (MGP)** pilot also ensured development of strategies and interventions that schools can use to ensure pupil progress, including good tracking of pupil data and one-to-one tuition.⁴⁴ 83 per cent of headteachers involved in the MGP pilot felt that it contributed to improved rates of progression, as shown in the final report.⁴⁵ Chart 11 shows that the impact of the pilot has been notable for children with SEN, with a high percentage of children making the expected two levels of progress. Figures are high across all areas of the chart, but it is particularly encouraging that **one-to-one tuition boosted the progress of children with SEN** in all but one area.



23. Chart 11 shows that many children with SEN can make two levels of progress during a Key Stage. But of course, some children with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) or severe learning difficulties (SLD) will find this more difficult or even impossible. Here, the Progression Guidance can be helpful for setting suitable targets relative to the age and starting point of a child, which might focus on progress at sub-levels or P-scales.⁴⁶

14-19 education

24. The strategy for reforming 14-19 year-old education is designed to promote achievement and value success, enabling all children and young people to fulfil their potential. With an opportunity to remain in education or training until at least 18 years of age and with a range of qualification choices, children with SEN will have **more time to make good progress**.⁴⁷

25. The Surrey Foundation Learning collaborative is a diverse group of 12 special schools working together with a mainstream school and a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) to develop and deliver personalised programmes for 14-16 year-old learners. By implementing a learning plan template to support ongoing progress reviews, making joint decisions on qualifications and liaising with 16+ providers, these schools have ensured real progression opportunities for their children and young people.⁴⁸

Parents and families

26. A recent survey highlighted that most parents (91 per cent) felt confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development. However, the survey also identified lower levels of confidence and higher frustration amongst certain groups of parents, including those whose children have SEN.⁴⁹

27. It is important that schools work in partnership with all parents, but this is especially true for parents of children with SEN who may find it difficult to engage in their child's learning. Some parents may find that they lack the skills, confidence or resources to meet their child's special educational needs within the home environment, which could have a significant impact – according to Harris and Goodall, parental support of **learning within the home environment** makes the maximum difference to achievement.⁵⁰ Some parents may not have had good experiences at school themselves, or they might find it difficult to interpret technical details of attainment and progress.

28. The Pupil and Parent Guarantees, which focus on the entitlements and the responsibilities of pupils and parents, will help to ensure that all parents and pupils, including those with SEN, know what they can expect from schools. The Guarantees also spell out what schools can expect from parents and pupils in terms of their responsibilities to support schools. A consultation closing in April 2010 seeks views on whether the requirements for pupils, parents, schools and local authorities are clear and understandable, whether all the 'musts' and 'shoulds' detailed in the guarantees are correct and whether the responsibilities and entitlements for schools, pupils and parents are correctly balanced.⁵¹

29. Following the Lamb Inquiry and subsequent implementation plan, improving the system for parents of children with SEN has become an even greater priority for national and local action.⁵² This will partly be achieved through the National Parent Partnership Network, providing training in education law for all parent partnership services (PPS) from July 2010. National Strategies will support local authorities to ensure that PPS are appropriately deployed.

30. Parents will have access to independent support available through a dedicated national advice line from April 2010. The helpline will initially be part of a suite of support provided through the 'Family Information Direct' telephone helplines. Also from April 2010, National Strategies will publish materials designed to help all parents **understand the progress their child is making**. These materials will explain what children are able to do at different National Curriculum levels and offer suggestions for how parents can support their child's learning. From May 2010, Becta will produce guidance and resources showing the most effective means for developing online reporting to parents of children with SEN.

31. Parents should increasingly feel that they are equal partners with schools and local authorities, and that their views are heard during regular face-to-face conversations. Case studies from the Lamb Inquiry will be available by Summer 2010 showing some of the best available practice. And as part of the Achievement for All pilot that started in September 2009, local authorities and schools are holding structured conversations based on four stages (explore, focus, plan and review) to listen and respond to parental views. Early signs from this approach look promising, as shown by the case studies in Chapter 5.

Pupil wellbeing and wider outcomes

32. Children with SEN are more likely than others to experience poor and declining wellbeing through middle childhood and adolescence.⁵³ This can be the result of several factors, but one persistent trend is bullying. A 2007 Mencap survey found that eight out of ten respondents had been bullied and six out of ten had been physically hurt. In another survey, the percentage of pupils with a learning difficulty who admitted that they had been bullied was 61.4 per cent, compared to 48.0 per cent of all pupils surveyed.⁵⁴

33. There is guidance for headteachers and governors on embedding **anti-bullying work** as part of whole-school strategy. This outlines the preventive work required so that all children, parents and school staff understand what is meant by bullying. This is important because some children with SEN may need help to recognise or report bullying.⁵⁵ A DVD resource called *Make Them Go Away* is available for use in schools, concluding: 'together we can stamp it out'.⁵⁶

34 Breaking the link between special educational needs and low attainment

34. The Anti-Bullying Alliance has outlined many effective approaches to address bullying behaviour, best used within a whole school approach for maximum effectiveness.⁵⁷ They will also lead a project to identify best practice in tackling SEN-related bullying with case studies and briefing for school leaders, local authorities and families available by December 2010.

Exclusions, behaviour and attendance

35. Since 1997, the number of children with SEN who have been permanently excluded has fallen dramatically. **Exclusions of children with SEN have dropped** by 320 (or 5.2 per cent) to 5,780 for permanent exclusions and dropped by 14,190 (or 5.5 per cent) to 241,710 for fixed period exclusions.

36. Unfortunately, these figures are still high. Children with SEN account for 71 per cent of all permanent exclusions and 59 per cent of fixed period exclusions from secondary school. They are also eight times more likely to be permanently excluded than the rest of the school population.

37. High exclusions rates of children with SEN are not inevitable. Ofsted (2009) found that outstanding primary schools make exclusions so rare as to be exceptional, using a range of approaches including nurture rooms, work with inclusion or SEN staff and occasionally specialist advice, and liaison with families. The report outlined that outstanding schools see the main key to improving behaviour in engaging a child through expert teaching and fascinating learning.⁵⁸

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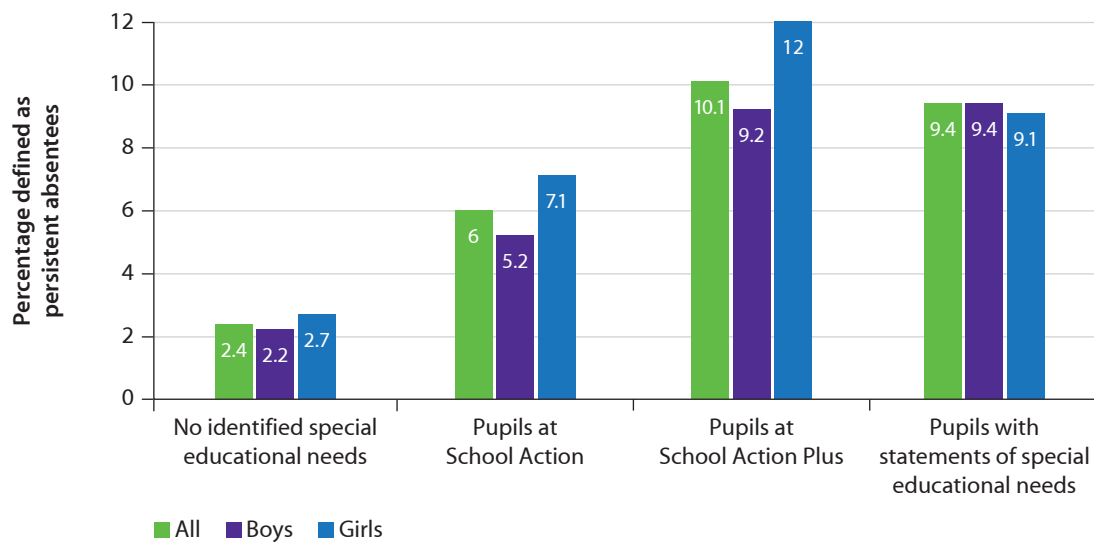


38. National Strategies will carry out termly reviews to support the third of local authorities where exclusions of children with SEN are highest. Revisions to the statutory exclusions guidance will also begin in September 2010 to increase the role of governing bodies in this area. And new guidance will be published this year for Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships, asking them to address the over-representation of children with SEN that are excluded.⁵⁹

39. Regarding attendance, it is positive that between Autumn 2008 and Spring 2009 the percentage of children with persistent absence in maintained secondary schools fell for the third year to 5.6 per cent.⁶⁰ But as Chart 12 shows, children with SEN are still more likely to be persistently absent from school, especially true for girls at School Action Plus. There is guidance to support headteachers, governors and children’s services attendance leaders to **improve levels of attendance** and reduce the number of pupils with SEN who are persistently absent.⁶¹

Chart 12:

Persistent absentees as a proportion of total enrolments by gender and level of intervention (2007/08)



Extended services

40. Extended services are central to realising the vision of the 21st century schools system, and with all schools expected to provide access to extended services by 2010, the challenge for school leaders will be to ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of children and their parents are aware and make use of this offer. This is important because effective, extra-curricular activities are an excellent way to promote attendance, team work and high aspirations.

41. Schools and local authorities monitoring and evaluating the impact of extended services on the wellbeing and attainment of children with SEN will ensure that lessons learned can inform the development of those services over time. TDA's extended services Impact Evaluation Model is designed to assist schools in planning interventions and assessing their impact, whether for extended services or other initiatives intended to have an impact on children and young people.⁶²

42. Alongside use of this Model, there is a toolkit for governors which offers support for developing extended services that make an impact on standards, achievement and wellbeing.⁶³ Schools and local authorities might also celebrate their successes through case studies which demonstrate **personalised or unique approaches** to extended services for children with SEN. The best practice from special schools has been captured in a TDA resource that all schools might draw upon, in addition to the case studies found in Chapter 5.⁶⁴

43. The development of extended services can be interpreted more widely as extending inclusion, which means enabling disabled children and young people to **access** extended schools and children's centres. Guidance is available showing several examples where solutions have been developed to overcome common barriers such as attitudes, funding and transport.⁶⁵

44. Transport is frequently identified as the issue that most frustrates access to extended provision. Some local authorities are able to use taxis to provide flexibility for children with SEN. Others overcome the issue of transportation by promoting greater independence for children with SEN. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets runs an award-winning independent travel training scheme, which enables many children to travel to school independently or by using public transport.⁶⁶ One special school judged as outstanding by Ofsted won an award for promoting individual travel, providing this opportunity for over half of school pupils.⁶⁷

Funding and resources

45. Children with SEN require extra resources because of their extra needs. Our system does deliver such extra resources: a large proportion – roughly a third – of all recurrent school spending by schools and local authorities is spent on the one-fifth of children with SEN. This large differential demonstrates that the current funding system in England gives very high priority to children with SEN, whether in the high-cost or lower cost categories, and whether taught in special schools/units or mainstream settings.

46. There are also important issues of distribution – ensuring that the money is fairly allocated in accordance with need. The Government has recently concluded a review of school funding including distribution factors for deprivation and other additional costs, and a consultation document will be published shortly.⁶⁸

47. While resources to support pupils with SEN are clearly important, it is how this funding is spent that will largely determine its effectiveness. The most effective schools and local authorities start from a focus on high levels of progress for individual children with SEN. They then deploy their resources to achieve this – drawing in specialist support to meet specific needs, but also relying on whole-school approaches designed to drive up standards for all pupils below national expectations. Effective practice, supported by the resources that allow schools to tailor provision to pupil needs is key. In a 2006 report on inclusion, Ofsted found that ‘there was a misconception that the provision of additional resources was the key requirement for individual pupils, whereas the survey findings showed that key factors for good progress were: the involvement of a specialist teacher; good assessment; work tailored to challenge pupils sufficiently; and commitment from school leaders to ensure good progress for all pupils’.⁶⁹

48. Chapters 4 and 5 of this document set out the key policies and practices which tend to deliver cost-effective outcomes. Most are integral to effective policies of personalisation for all pupils – but the evidence suggests that they will be particularly effective for pupils with SEN. One of the case studies in Chapter 5 highlights a school which used a short burst of one-to-one tuition to help a pupil with SEN get back on trajectory, perhaps more cost-effectively than a much longer period of time with a dedicated teaching or learning support assistant.

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49. There are a number of steps underway to develop understanding of what works best and is cost effective for pupils with SEN not currently making fast enough progress:

- a. The Training and Development Agency (TDA) will develop training modules to increase the level of 'advanced' skills around the five main SEN areas, based on evidence of the most effective teaching and learning approaches.⁷⁰
- b. The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) is delivering a £550,000 project to develop special schools as leaders in teaching and learning practice for children with the most complex learning difficulties. This includes research into the most effective teaching and learning strategies for children with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- c. The Inside Knowledge programme of school to school learning visits, which will begin in September 2010, is expected to include a structured offer of visits hosted by schools willing to share their own experience in managing their budgets flexibly to maximise pupil outcomes.
- d. An updated version of the Audit Commission's SEN Value for money resource pack – a seven-stage model covering budgets and spend, needs assessment, provision and evaluation.⁷¹

50. Summarising the points above: resourcing is of critical importance to the outcomes of children with SEN. There is substantial incremental funding for SEN already in the system. It needs to be integrated with mainstream provision for teaching and learning and not seen as a bolt-on. Schools and LAs with the most effective practice use their whole resources flexibly to deliver good progress for **all** their pupils with SEN.

Chapter 5:

Breaking the link – excellent practice already exists

Introduction

1. Some local authorities and schools are excellent at ensuring good outcomes for their vulnerable groups. This chapter provides a range of case studies which show evidence of improving progress and attainment, raised aspirations or wider outcomes for disadvantaged children. Some interventions are explicitly for children with SEN – others are designed to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups of children more generally. The table below pulls together common themes from the case studies.

High expectations for good progress	There is evidence of attainment levels or progress that is outstanding. There are interventions to raise attainment levels for an individual, or a whole school approach that ensures children with SEN make good progress or attainment in line with their peers.
Assessment, tracking and early intervention	Data collection is accurate so that targets for good progress can be set. The progress that children make is measured and closely tracked. Early interventions are adopted on an evidenced basis.
Engaging parents of children with SEN	Parents of children with SEN are more confident and more aware of their child's learning. Parent-school conversations are more regular. Learning strategies are also used at home.
Extended services and pupil wellbeing	Extra-curricular activities are personalised. They improve the wellbeing of vulnerable groups of children. They support progress in early years settings, school classrooms and beyond. Surveys or tracking data are used to demonstrate positive impact.
Raising visibility and awareness through leadership	School leaders ensure that staff are aware of vulnerable pupils and the interventions required. They create an inclusive vision and culture. They understand responsibility and accountability, and lead by example. The importance of accurate data usage is well-known.
Targeted support in basics	Teachers, specialist and support staff with the right skills are deployed in appropriate settings to support children with SEN. Well established strategies are used when needed. Further assessment is carried out to judge the impact of the support measures.

2. Some of the case studies that follow are from the Achievement for All (AfA) project, which supports schools in 10 local authorities to develop sustainable solutions to meet the needs of children with SEN in Years 1, 5, 7 and 10. AfA started in September 2009 bringing together current programmes already underway and building on the good practice that many local authorities and schools already model as they move towards approaches which focus on outcomes rather than processes. The school senior leadership team have overall responsibility for the strategic planning of AfA, but they focus on a framework which has clearly influenced the table above – assessment, tracking and intervention; structured conversations with an emphasis on listening to parents; and provision for developing wider outcomes.
3. Other case studies come from schools and local authorities using the Progression Guidance, schools judged as outstanding by Ofsted, and schools from the Extra Mile project, which focuses particularly on the cultural barrier of low aspirations and scepticism about education that prevents some pupils from succeeding at school.

High expectations for good progress

Savile Park Primary School, Calderdale, Achievement for All Guidance for Schools extract

David had been identified at School Action Plus with severe Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD). He was bullying and dominating with peers and had extremely low self esteem. Previous interventions included use of learning mentor, art therapist, social groups, and behaviour management strategies but without success.

David had been assessed at level 1 in English at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 5, David began one-to-one tuition with a very experienced teacher. Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) analysis was used with him to discuss the work to be targeted. The work set was not only centred around David's academic needs, but also his personal interests. APP sheets were used to discuss and show the strengths David had and then where to work next.

The work has led to a significant increase in David's self confidence. His behaviour has improved slightly and he has avoided exclusion. Most dramatic though, was the academic progress. David, from having level 1 in each subject at the end of Key Stage 1 and no evidence of progress in Year 5, achieved a 4b in writing and a 5c in reading. The school recognises that there were many other interventions that also had an impact on David's progress, but that careful assessment and tracking using APP, one-to-one tuition and involving David in setting his own targets were hugely effective strategies.

Lampton, Hounslow, Ofsted outstanding secondary school

Students enter Lampton school in Year 7 with standards that are generally in line with those found nationally, although there is significant variation between year groups. Progress is consistently outstanding during Key Stage 3. In 2007, students' GCSE grades were just above national averages, which represented good progress from the starting points of that cohort. Standards for Year 11 pupils were raised further in 2008 partly due to improved tracking, student mentoring and challenging targets.

School leadership is proactive – the very small number of departments where achievement is not as high are supported and challenged to improve. Any disaffected students have had their needs met by an ever-evolving curriculum and currently students are on target to reach higher standards on a wider range of vocational courses. The highly effective unit for speech and communication along with well targeted in class support means that vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with their peers.

Much time is spent at Lampton ensuring that lessons are consistently good or better. Teachers work to a common lesson format, and collaboratively produced, high-quality teaching plans and materials are on the school's intranet. There is a strong prevailing culture and new teachers are expected to fit in. Staff speak of new teachers being 'Lamptonised'.

Lent Rise Combined, Buckinghamshire, Ofsted outstanding primary school

Judged as outstanding in 2007, Lent Rise has more pupils identified with learning difficulties than are found in most schools. Pupils appreciate the help they are given by staff and the steps the school takes to ensure their safety. Staff are like-minded in their pursuit of excellence and are very analytical of their performance. Very capable teaching assistants play their part, particularly in supporting those with learning difficulties. Much of the school's success is founded upon excellent lesson planning, exemplary use of assessment information and close work with outside agencies.

Children enter Reception with attainment that overall is below national expectations. Over half of the children have not received formal education before starting at Lent Rise. All children make excellent progress as a result of outstanding teaching and a stimulating curriculum. By the end of the Foundation Stage, performance is above expectations, and pupils continue to make outstanding progress throughout the school. By the end of Year 6 they are reaching exceptionally high standards.

In 2009 at KS2, of the 58 pupils eligible for testing, 12.1 per cent were identified at School Action and 17.2 per cent were identified with a statement or at School Action Plus. The results were exceptional, with 97 per cent of all pupils reaching level 4 in English and 97 per cent of all pupils achieving the same level in maths. Progress between KS1 and KS2 was excellent too – 93 per cent of pupils making the expected level in English and 97 per cent in maths. Clearly, children with SEN were supported to achieve along with their peers.

Assessment, tracking and early intervention

Alec Hunter High School, Essex, Achievement for All

School data indicated that the number of new Year 7 students at School Action and School Action Plus with low literacy and numeracy levels had increased from the previous year. The school identified 67 children with SEN in Year 7 and 41 children with SEN in Year 10, predominantly at School Action.

The school has an effective tracking and monitoring system to measure many aspects of progress for children with SEN. For attainment, teacher assessments and predicted grades are logged, with a colour coded spreadsheet to enable instant assessment of progress. A report proforma has been developed to record outcomes and targets, and information is disseminated to key staff. The Achievement for All (AfA) support manager has developed individual target cards for Year 7 students to carry round, in order to support teaching and learning in every class.

Key information from conversations with parents is captured with a reporting proforma. Staff are aware of the importance of reporting and tracking, with AfA data placed on a shared computer area for other staff to access. The school is exploring results following structured conversations with parents to review how they can better conduct meetings about children's Individual Education Plans.

The school will use attendance and behaviour data to identify their most vulnerable students. Data tracking has revealed fluctuations in eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) across different year groups – in Year 10 the number drops significantly. The school will explore future possibilities to increase school data on eligibility for FSM, possibly via a free computer scheme.

Dorothy Goodman Special School, Leicestershire, Progression Guidance

The school has undertaken excellent work using an Excel spreadsheet based on the Progression Guidance. The spreadsheet uses benchmarking to set proposed targets, which the senior leadership team use as a basis for discussion with staff. This is then edited as appropriate, as staff enter assessment outcomes termly. The spreadsheet displays charts which show the progress children are making towards their targets, automatically flagging up any concerns. Senior Leaders then have the information required to conduct termly meetings with staff about school pupils. The spreadsheet can also be used to produce an analysis of performance at the end of the Key Stage.

William Ford Junior, Barking and Dagenham, Ofsted outstanding primary school

Considerable time has been invested at this school to ensure that teachers in all year groups can assign a National Curriculum level to pupils' work accurately. Substantial time has also been taken to ensure that teachers understand what is needed to move pupils to the next level: 'If it is a 3b, how do we get to a 3a?' Pupils' progress is analysed carefully. Every teacher meets the headteacher termly to discuss the progress of each pupil in detail. Comprehensive notes are made.

Meetings are used to review progress, set targets for the coming term and decide how each child is going to be helped to meet or exceed her or his targets. Where necessary, individual pupils receive additional support or the curriculum is modified for them. For example, the classes of one year group were grouped by ability in English for six weeks to allow teachers to reinforce pupils' understanding of sentence construction.

Engaging parents of children with SEN

Saltburn Primary School, Redcar and Cleveland, Achievement for All

Before the Achievement for All (AfA) project, pupil M was identified as an unhappy child who did not enjoy literacy or maths lessons. But a structured conversation between the school and pupil's mother found that pupil M was confident when reading to his younger brother at home. The school used this information to establish pupil M as a reading mentor for a younger pupil in Year 3. A target was also agreed with the parent to progress learning at home.

Both school and parent have agreed that these interventions have had a positive impact on pupil M, who is now acting as a supportive, enthusiastic role model with greater self-esteem. After approximately four months, pupil M has moved from National Curriculum level 2a in reading and writing, to 3c. In maths, pupil M has moved from level 2b, to 2a.

There are plans to widen the intervention – pupil M will take part in a summer programme called Brain Based learning, with pupils from other local schools. A second structured conversation with the parent will look to celebrate progress and plan for its continuation.

Hodgeclough Schools, Oldham, Achievement for All

Parents received letters about the Achievement for All project and were then invited to attend a one-to-one meeting with a class teacher to discuss aspects of their child's learning and social development. All teachers were trained for this, either by the local authority or school.

All but one parent from both year groups attended these sessions – a total of 95 per cent. The school was particularly pleased with attendance from one parent, who had never previously attended a meeting to discuss their child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Verbal feedback from parents was very positive, stating that they felt more involved and empowered. They felt that a longer conversation based on listening was more useful than the usual 10-15 minute IEP meeting, where actions that the school had already planned were normally outlined by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator or class teacher.

Following the conversations, parents and teachers are in more frequent contact. One parent has asked if they can volunteer at the school. Involvement in after-school activities are being monitored, and those pupils with SEN who have registered an interest are given priority places. The school recognises that ordinarily, some of these children would have failed to hand letters to parents or return permission slips to the school.

Teachers have found that these conversations with parents enable them to plan for and monitor certain behaviours. The school has decided to train all teachers in the summer term and plans to use a similar format for pupils who are gifted and talented.

Linden Lodge, Wandsworth, Ofsted outstanding special school

One child has been in the school since reception. When she started at Linden Lodge she displayed challenging and unco-operative behaviour, which included dropping to the floor, and repetitive and attention-seeking behaviours. The school's approach involved two key strategies: to improve communication by enabling her to understand what others were expecting and to ensure consistency between home and school.

A baseline assessment was completed and targets for improvement set. Therapists were fully involved in the programme, which included issues relating to eating and use of the toilet. The girl was given a timetable, with tasks broken into very small steps and supported by objects of reference. The plan was regularly reviewed and progress discussed with the girl's parents, often on the telephone. Some basic Makaton signs were used initially, although the use of these has been reviewed and reduced as the girl has become more verbal. Parents and the grandmother were invited to the school to observe her behaviour. A video was made of how her behaviour was managed at school and given to her parents. As a result similar strategies have been adopted at home. She has made considerable progress and is now beginning to access Braille.

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Extended services and pupil wellbeing

Kingsgate Primary School, Camden, Achievement for All

In September 2008, a Year 5 class was identified as having low scores in the Pupil Attitudes to School and Self (PASS) Survey. In particular, there were low scores in the 'Feelings about School' section that measures pupils' sense of well being, comfort and safety in school. A significant proportion of children in this class have been identified with SEN.

Sessions were run by a team made of Class Teacher, Learning Mentor and Teaching Assistant. Through drama, games and discussion the pupils explored issues such as the need for rules and laws, what might happen without them and how individuals respond to and feel about rules.

The end of year PASS survey results showed a 30 per cent improvement in response to questions on 'Feelings about School' and an improvement in outcomes across all categories. All except one child have made at least two sub levels of progress in reading and mathematics during a five month period. In writing, all made at least one sub level and most made two or three.

Wright Robinson College, Manchester, Extra Mile school

At Wright Robinson College, the Transition Team works in partnership with Key Stage 3 and Year 7 pastoral teams to provide the best possible start for each Year 7 cohort and to offer support throughout their first year at school. The team is led by an experienced teacher who is Transition Manager and is supported by a Transition Administrator. The Transition Team now consist of eight Transition Learning Co-ordinators who are responsible for delivering their subject specialism during the transition phase. A Transition Learning Mentor is also part of the team and works with vulnerable pupils in Years 6 and 7. Individual and group mentoring sessions, combined with a 'Lunchtime Club' are used to raise the self esteem of pupils who have been identified as socially or emotionally vulnerable. Some of these pupils will be identified with SEN, but it is important that the intervention is for all vulnerable pupils.

Lee Chapel Primary School, Essex, Achievement for All

Lee Chapel is a two-form entry primary school with 439 pupils on roll and 52 children on roll in the school's Nursery. 67 per cent of pupils come from the immediate area of owner-occupied and local authority social housing. 33 per cent of children come from out of the catchment.

The Achievement for All project has led to lunchtime and after-school one-to-one coaching sessions in place for all targeted pupils with SEN. The school has found this systematically building on pupils' prior attainment and effectively targeting gaps in their learning. Over-learning of key concepts is helping to raise pupil's self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities. All Year 1 and most Year 5 target pupils are far more engaged in their learning and are keen to attend additional sessions.

There has been 100 per cent take-up of before-school, lunchtime and after-school intervention activities and support, impacting positively on pupil progress and achievement. The school has measured a reduction in the incidence of bullying involving pupils with SEN. There have been measurable improvements in attendance rates of pupils with SEN.

Barriers to learning and next-step targets for all fourteen Year 1 and twelve Year 5 targeted pupils with SEN have been identified and comprehensive Individual Educational Plans (IEP) are in place to address individual pupils' identified next step targets. Year 1 pupils with SEN are making accelerated progress towards IEP targets and raised levels of attainment. Year 5 pupils with SEN are supported to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum and as a result make accelerated progress and raised levels of attainment.

Parents are aware of the importance of their expected contribution towards agreed plans and are supported to achieve these agreed objectives through family learning activities in school and across the Local Delivery Group.

Raising visibility and awareness through leadership

Cardinal Newman Catholic School, Coventry, Achievement for All

The senior leadership team believe in Achievement for All (AfA), have raised the profile of inclusion and lead by example. Almost all senior leaders have volunteered to be key teachers in the project, which has influenced the views of many other staff.

The school project leader has focused on identification of students with SEN by reviewing available provision and the SEN Code of Practice. As a result, 19 students in Year 10 are no longer identified with SEN.

The school has recognised that further monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning for children with SEN should be a priority. In collaboration with other AfA secondary schools, finer progress measures are being developed for students in Year 10 who may make progress within only one or two GCSE grades over two years. The SENCO will meet Heads of Department on a regular basis. Lesson observations will focus on the inclusion of children with SEN.

The senior leadership team has also put effective strategies in place to ensure that conversations with parents are manageable. Each key teacher is responsible for a maximum of five students. As a result, the SENCO has had more time to listen to parents. Clearer targets were set following conversations and feedback will be gathered from parents during the next term.

John Burns, Lambeth, Ofsted outstanding primary school

When the headteacher was appointed to John Burns, the school was very small; classes were not full and it was relatively low-achieving. Behaviour was poor, with much shouting by pupils and staff.

The headteacher took on a significant teaching commitment herself to demonstrate good practice to all staff. The headteacher and senior staff personally mentored and coached staff. They demonstrated calm behaviour and had clear expectations about the way to behave, banning shouting by staff and pupils. Staff underperformance issues were tackled and some staff left once they realised what the new expectations were. Opportunities arose to appoint new staff. The school was able to choose carefully, bringing in colleagues who were enthused by an inclusive vision and culture of high expectations.

St. Michael's Primary School, Camden, Achievement for All

Senior management and teaching staff work together as a team to raise awareness of SEN, by developing guidance on inclusion, mentoring and management of key teachers and communication with parents. They ensure that every member of staff's voice is heard using INSET days, professional development meetings and a Brainstorm Wall.

Half of all pupils are at the early stages of learning English, but staff have become more confident to address children's particular learning needs. Accurate and effective provision mapping has been undertaken across the school, resulting in improved progress. Attendance has improved, and parents have been more active in school life.

The whole-school's commitment to the principles of Achievement for All was a direct factor in the overall judgment of 'outstanding' for inclusion given by Ofsted in December 2009. They found that children with SEN are more engaged at school because they are given work which appeals especially to them.

Targeted support in basics

Rushcrof Primary, Oldham, Achievement for All

Rushcrof School created a mix of approaches – taken from the Communication, Language and Literacy Development and Every Child a Reader programmes – and individualised the approach for children identified with SEN. The school purchased new books focused on phonics and fast paced, visual and kinaesthetic cues.

After 10 weeks, pupils with SEN and their peers were reassessed. Pupils receiving one-to-one support all progressed more than their peers in class who had traditional support. The children's reading ages improved. Importantly, pupils acknowledged their own abilities as 'readers'. They now attempted to spell words phonetically and produced more writing.

As a result of these findings, the school is altering their approach to supporting children with SEN in the classroom. They are encouraging all children to write independently, training teaching assistants to stop scribing for pupils. The school is training everyone in phonics and using progressive records to measure progress.

Staff also noted that children with SEN were more confident and happier as a result. They were not in trouble at playtimes and were not having as many accidents around school. Several of the children have won writer of the week award in school. This has led to more positive peer perceptions of them.

Plashet, Newham, Ofsted outstanding secondary school

At Plashet School, provision for students with limited English skills is well developed. If two months' cross-curricular monitoring in a child's first term indicates underachievement, then a first language, ICT-based assessment is used to establish the level and focus of the support needed. Well established strategies include a joint SEN/ English as an Additional Language (EAL) programme focusing on phonics. An AQA adult literacy course is offered as an option in Years 10 and 11. Students who enter the school in Year 10 may follow an accredited course in their community language. Members of the EAL department monitor pupils in Year 7 for two weeks at the start of the year, then feed their observations into the next school development meeting to inform decisions about planning. They introduce teachers to the relevant data and give very direct and personal feedback about students' capabilities and particular needs.

Ormesby Primary School, Redcar and Cleveland, Achievement for All

Pupil J is a recently adopted child who moved to the local area in September 2009. J had little notion of formal education; he could not recognise his name, hold a pencil properly, or remain calm in the classroom.

J joined a group of other children that worked with a teacher and teaching assistant for seven weeks to improve literacy skills. Parents worked alongside their children using a multisensory approach to learning. Tasks included learning the alphabet, writing poems, and creating music to support syllabification. J's parents came and supported him during the sessions which lasted 90 minutes each.

Pupil J's parents are delighted at the improvement in his concentration. His class teacher has noticed a significant improvement – pupil J can now write his name, holds his pencil correctly, and has a growing vocabulary.

Formal assessments will now be carried out to support these initial findings. The teacher running the interventions will liaise with pupil J's class teacher to plan next stages. J's parents will be asked to work with him at a Story Telling Week – both will complete a questionnaire later on. There will be a final small group session to give J a certificate, and a whole-school assembly to celebrate achievements. Displays of art work, poems and books will be shown in the lower school for all to see.

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Annex A:

Glossary

5AC or 5ACEM: Five A*-C grades at GCSE level, with or without the additional requirement of English and maths. The latter form the basis for national expectations of school pupils at 16 years of age. GCSE is short for General Certificate of Secondary Education – the exams taken by most UK pupils of school-leaving age, equivalent to level 2 in the National Qualifications Framework. Widely available to all 14-19 year-old pupils, although there is no lower or upper age limit.

Continuing professional development (CPD): Continuing professional development consists of reflective activity designed to improve an individual's attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills. It supports individual needs and improves professional practice. Sources of CPD may be within school, school networks, or other external expertise.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP): An assessment of children's achievement at the end of the academic year in which they become five years old.

English as an Additional Language (EAL): English as an additional language (EAL) is the expression used in the UK to refer to the teaching of English to speakers of other languages. The term bilingual is also commonly used to describe EAL pupils.

Every Child a Reader (ECAR): Every Child a Reader is a collaboration between charitable trusts, the business sector and government. The initiative funds highly-skilled Reading Recovery teachers in inner-city schools, to provide intensive help to children most in need. The vision is that every child who needs early literacy support receives it and that the numbers of children experiencing long term literacy difficulties are dramatically reduced.

Free School Meals (FSM): A meal that is provided to a child or young person during a school break that is paid for out of Government funding. For a child to qualify for a FSM, their parent or carer must be receiving particular eligible benefits as stated by Government.

Individual Education Plan (IEP): An IEP builds on the curriculum that a child with learning difficulties or disabilities is following and is designed to set out the strategies being used to meet each child's identified needs.

Inclusion Development Programme (IDP): The IDP draws upon existing materials, guidance and resources to ensure that practitioners can easily draw on existing research and pedagogy in terms of 'what works' for all children when planning for children with SEN.

Looked After Children (LAC): The term 'looked after' includes all children being looked after by a local authority (LA); those subject to a care order under section 31 of the Children Act 1989; and those looked after on a voluntary basis through an agreement with their parents under section 20 of that Act.

Key Stage 1 (KS1): Key Stage 1 is the stage of the National Curriculum between ages 5 and 7 years. Pupils at Key Stage 2 generally sit their KS1 tests aged 7.

Key Stage 2 (KS2): Key Stage 2 refers to the stage of the National Curriculum for pupils aged between 8 and 11 years. Pupils at Key Stage 2 generally sit their KS2 tests aged 11.

Key Stage 4 (KS4): Key Stage 4 refers to the stage of the National Curriculum for pupils aged between 14 and 16 years. Pupils at Key Stage 2 generally sit their KS4 exams aged 16.

Mainstream school: A publicly funded school which is for all pupils, not just those with special educational needs. A mainstream school is usually a maintained school, although it could also be an independent school (City Technology College, city college for technology of the arts, or academy).

Maintained school: A publicly funded school maintained by a local authority which provides education free of charge to pupils.

Makaton: Makaton is a unique language programme which may be used as either a systematic multi-modal approach for the teaching of communication, language and literacy skills, or a source of highly functional vocabulary for both the person with communication needs and their interactive partners.

National Indicator (NI) Set: A set of 188 indicators that the Government uses to monitor the performance of local authorities and local partnerships. The methodology used to calculate National Indicator 104 'the achievement gap between SEN and non-SEN pupils at Key Stage 2' is different from other Key Stage 2 SEN data published by the DCSF. National Indicator 104 is calculated by taking the SEN status at the beginning of the Key Stage as opposed to taking the SEN status from the January in which the child sits their tests, which is used in all other published figures. These two sources of data are not comparable.

National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH): The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) is the mandatory qualification for headship. The programme is underpinned by the National Standards for Headteachers.

National Pupil Database (NPD): The NPD is a continuous database that holds the tests and examination results at each Key Stage for all pupils at maintained and independent schools in England who partake in the tests/exams. It also includes pupil and school characteristics for maintained schools only.

Odds ratios for SEN data: The odds of an SEN pupil achieving the expected standard for their age in comparison to a pupil not identified with SEN.

P-Scales and P-Levels: The P scales are differentiated performance criteria. They outline attainment for pupils working below level 1 of the National Curriculum and describe some of the important skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils may gain from programmes of study. The P scales use eight performance levels to illustrate the learning that leads to National Curriculum level 1, with P-levels 1-3 showing earliest levels of general attainment and P-levels 4-8 showing subject-related attainment.

Parent partnership services (PPS): Parent Partnership Services (PPS) are statutory services offering information advice and support to parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs. PPS are also able to put parents in touch with other local and national organisations.

PPS have a role in making sure that parents' views are heard and understood and that these views inform local policy and practice. PPS are based with a voluntary organisation, with the Local Authority (LA) or Children's Trust.

PASS survey: The Pupil Attitude to Self and School (PASS) Rating Scale was developed over eight years in collaboration with three U.K. universities and piloted with more than 100 schools to measure specific aspects of children's attitudes towards themselves as learners and their attitudes towards school.

Persistent absentees: Are defined as pupils aged between 5 and 15 years who miss 20 per cent or more available sessions during the academic year,

Pupil Referral Unit: A school established and maintained by a local authority under section 19 (2) of the Education Act 1996. It provides education for pupils who would not otherwise receive suitable education because of illness, exclusion or any other reason.

Qualified Teacher Standards (QTS): Qualified teacher status (QTS) is the accreditation that enables you to teach in state-maintained and special schools in England and Wales. Anyone who wants to teach in a state-maintained school in England or Wales needs to gain qualified teacher status.

School Action: When a class or subject teacher identifies that a pupil has special educational needs and gives help that is extra to or different from that provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum.

School Action Plus: When the teacher and the SENCO are given advice or support from outside specialists (the specialist teacher, an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist or other health professionals). Extra or different help to that provided through School Action can then be put in place.

SEN Code of Practice: The SEN Code of Practice gives practical guidance on the discharge of functions under Part IV of the Education Act 1996 to local authorities, the governing bodies of maintained schools and settings in receipt of government funding to provide early education – and to those who help them, including the health services and social services. It also provides general practical guidance to such settings about the provision of nursery education to children with SEN. All these parties are required to have regard to this Code.

Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL): There are a number of ways schools can develop the social and emotional skills of pupils. However, within the UK, the DCSF has particularly promoted social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) as the national voluntary programme designed to develop the social and emotional skills of all pupils through a whole-school approach; focused learning opportunities; continuing professional development for the whole school staff.

Special educational needs (SEN): Pupils have special educational needs if they have learning difficulties that need special educational provision. They have learning difficulties if they find it much harder to learn than most pupils of the same age or they have disabilities that make it much more difficult for them in school.

Special school: A school that is just for pupils with statements of special educational needs.

Statement of special educational needs: A statement specifies the special educational provision that a pupil should have and the type of school the child should attend. Local authorities have a duty to arrange the provision specified and the governing body of a maintained school specified in the statement has a duty to admit the pupil if it is named in the statement.

Statistical First Release (SFR): The DCSF publishes National Statistics in Statistical First Releases.

Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TAHMS): (TaMHS) is a three-year pathfinder programme aimed at supporting the development of innovative models of therapeutic and holistic mental health support in schools for children and young people aged 5-13 at risk of, and/or experiencing, mental health problems; and their families.

Teaching assistant (TA): Teaching assistants work under the guidance/supervision of the classroom teacher. They may support an individual or a group of pupils and some have a specialism e.g. English as an additional language, the creative arts or special education needs.

Type of need: Primary (i.e. the main) and secondary type of need are recorded for all pupils in maintained schools that are at School Action Plus or with statements. The 12 types of need that are referred to in this publication are as follows:

1. specific learning difficulty (SpLD)
2. moderate learning difficulty (MLD)
3. severe learning difficulty (SLD)
4. profound and multiple learning difficulty (PMLD)
5. behaviour, emotional and social difficulty (BESD)
6. speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)
7. hearing impairment (HI)
8. visual impairment (VI)
9. multi-sensory impairment (MSI)
10. physical difficulty (PD)
11. autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)
12. other difficulty/disability

Annex B:

Chart Index

Chart 1: Gap for children with SEN is narrowing at age 11

Chart 2: Proportions (and numbers) of children within disadvantaged groups achieving 5ACEM

Chart 3: Children with SEN (School Action) in 2009, and their earlier SEN identification

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Chart 5: Percentage of children making at least two levels of progress between KS1-2 maths

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Chart 7: Prevalence of children with SEN in maintained schools by area of residence

Chart 8: Percentage of children at School Action Plus or with statements achieving national expectations at KS2 English and maths

Chart 9: Percentage achieving at least five GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and maths at KS4 in 2009 by prior attainment at KS2 English in 2004 and provision for need in January 2009

Chart 10: High variance in identification of SEN between schools (KS4 2009)

Chart 11: Percentage of Making Good Progress (MGP) pupils with SEN who made two levels of progress from KS1 to KS2 (2009)

Chart 12: Persistent absentees as a proportion of total enrolments by gender and level of intervention (2007/08)

Endnotes

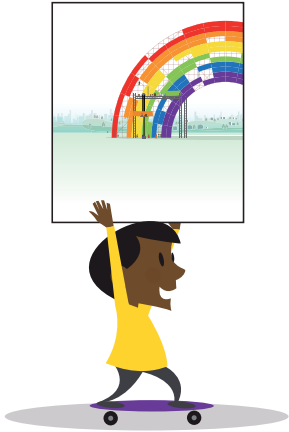
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