CAPITA
STRATEGIC CHILDREN'S SERVICES

# Children's Plan One-Year-On SEN Commitments: Information for Parents of Children and Young People with SEN and Disabilities

## Final Report

April 2009

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# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Background

The Lamb Inquiry has identified the provision of easily understandable, accurate and trustworthy information as an important factor in building parent confidence. The DCSF commissioned Capita SCS to work with the Lamb Inquiry team to investigate this area further.

The DCSF asked the consultancy team of Anthony Mugan, Roger Bushell and John Barker to:

- Analyse the current SEN and disability requirements;
- Assess how well they meet the needs of parents and wider stakeholders;
- Canvass the views of providers of the information, including issues about compliance with existing duties;
- Consider any implications for information on SEN and disability of proposed changes to information provided for parents more generally;
- Generate and evaluate options for ensuring that information better meets the needs of stakeholders and advise on what should be published, balancing the views of users and providers and the need to focus on outcomes;
- Advise on the design and format of information;
- Prepare an implementation plan for the options adopted.

## 1.2 Context

### *1.2.1 The Wider Context*

This report focuses specifically on information for parents in relation to SEN and disability. However, it is also important to consider a number of key themes that emerge from the wider policy context for schools and Children's Services (e.g. The Children's' Plan, DCSF 2007a):

- The drive to improve outcomes and wellbeing across all Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes for vulnerable and underachieving groups, including children and young people (CYP) with SEN. A particular focus is upon:
  - Wellbeing, including safety and emotional and physical health;
  - Prevention and early identification and intervention to enhance life chances;
  - Progress and narrowing attainment gaps;
  - Commissioning services, based on analysis of need and performance evaluation;
  - Integrating data on outcomes for children and young people.

These themes are reinforced by proposals to:

- Clarify the role of schools in promoting the well-being of their pupils;
- Streamline monitoring, inspection and reporting arrangements for schools and local authorities, including developments in reporting information to parents e.g. Report Cards for schools and on-line reporting.

Research undertaken by NFER on behalf of the Narrowing the Gap programme (NFER 2008) identified children with SEN as a group that achieves poorer outcomes than its peers. The research also reported important gaps in data collected for children with SEN and inconsistencies in the way in which SEN is defined and identified.

Aiming High for Disabled Children sets out developments to improve outcomes for disabled CYP, that are reflected in the Children's Plan and the NHS Operating Framework. This includes a Core Offer, which sets out expectations for informing and involving disabled children and their families as their needs are assessed and in the provision of services. The Core Offer covers:

- Information and Transparency;
- Assessment;
- Participation and Feedback.

The core offer expects that:

*"The information provided should be tailored to the individual needs of children and their parents and be readily accessible in a range of formats." (*DCSF (2008) Duty to provide information, advice and assistance; guidance for local authorities Childcare Act 2006 (para 6.2)).

From 2010 a new National Indicator (NI) 54 will measure parents' satisfaction with the delivery of the core offer. An earlier project, to support the implementation of the SEN (Information) Act 2008, recommended that the scope of NI 54 be extended to include services for children and young people with SEN.

The DCSF has remitted to the Children's Workforce Development Council the refresh of the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge required by the Children and Young People's Workforce. The 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF 2008) identifies, among a number of priorities for the refresh, the need to identify and address *any gaps, including in relation to working with parents (fathers and mothers) and carers.*

### *1.2.2 Information Provision to Parents: Background*

The statutory duty for schools and LAs to publish information for parents with regard to SEN and Disabilities is set out in:

- The Education (Special Educational Needs) (Information) (England), Regulations, 1999, with regard to information schools need to publish (see Annex A of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice at: http://www.teachernet.gov.u/docbank/indec.cfm?id=3724);
- The Special Educational Needs (Provision of Information by Local Education Authorities) (England), Regulations 2001, with regards to information Local Authorities need to publish (See Annex A of the SEN Code of Practice at the website reference above);
- In guidance on the Disability Equality Duty (see http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=10822).

All public bodies are required to publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES), setting out how they meet the general duty of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 provides the statutory basis for Parent Partnership Services and places a general to duty on LAs to:

- Arrange for the parents of any child in their area with SEN to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to those needs;
- Take such steps as it considers appropriate for making services known to:
  - The parents of children in their area;
  - The head teachers and proprietors of schools in their area;
  - Such other persons they consider "appropriate".

Family Information Services also have a range of duties for the provision of information to parents, including aspects of SEN and disability related information.

### 1.3 Our Approach

The project was commissioned in late January 2009.

Consultation undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders, including members of the Lamb Inquiry Reference Group, parents and other agencies, helped to shape initial proposals. These were tested rigorously with interested parties and form the basis of the formal recommendations contained within this report.

### 1.4 Analysis of Current Information Requirements

Statutory information requirements relate primarily to information on policies and procedures, placing less emphasis on outcomes or outputs. Guidance on Disability Equality Schemes (DES) makes frequent reference to data analysis of curriculum provision, facilities and outcomes. However, the guidance is not statutory and restricts itself to the contents of the scheme.

It is also important to note that:

- Some legislation deals only with SEN, rather than both SEN and disability (or more widely, with underachieving groups);
- Some legislation appears dated, e.g. the 1999 regulations which require publication in hard copy only;
- A number of organisations have a statutory duty to provide information, but not all of them are similarly required to help parents access, understand and/or apply the information.

### 1.5 Summary of Results of Consultation

The main issues to emerge from the initial consultation were that:

- Parents need information:
    - ➢ To help them understand their child's needs and to make sure that they get the support that they need;
    - ➢ That is easy to find, easy to understand and trustworthy.
- Parents need to know what they can expect from their child's school and what support is provided by the local authority;
- Many parents are interested in wider information on outcomes achieved by their children;
- Parents would like to have someone who they know well, who knows their child well and whom they trust to help them find out what they need to know.

### 1.6 Recommendations and Outline Implementation Timeline

There are important parallels between these recommendations and the information requirements of the Core Offer for disabled learners.

The recommendations are categorised under the headings

- ***General information***, which addresses the availability, accessibility, transparency and usefulness of general policy level information

- ***Tailored Personal Information***, which looks at how information can be made more directly relevant for parents and their children, and also support an increased focus on outcomes
- ***Information on the performance of the system***, which essentially considers how SEN information might feature in wider accountability information.

The draft recommendations are listed in **Annex 7.**

The final recommendations and an initial outline implementation schedule are described below. The detail of changes from the draft proposals is in Chapter 9.

| No | Recommendation | Note | Lead | Timeline |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Principle** | | | | |
| 1 | The *Core Offer* for disabled children and young people should be extended to cover both SEN and disabled children and young people. | This should include parents' entitlements with regard to information; i.e. other recommendations should be reflected within it.<br>The process of development should include specific consideration of which current information requirements could be ceased. | DCSF | Initial consultation to gather views on content: September 2009 – December 2009<br>Draft Developed: January 2010 – February 2010<br>Consultation on draft: March 2010 – June 2010<br>Publication: September 2010 |
| **General information** | | | | |
| N.B. Recommendations 2-6 below would require review and amendment to current information requirements on Local Authorities and schools. | | | | |
| 2 | Statutory guidance should:<br>a) Strongly encourage a 'one stop shop' approach for Local Authorities to develop a single portal website for all SEN and disability information in each LA, including PCT information.<br>b) Be accompanied by examples of best practice in web structures and design, including specific examples of good practice in relation to SEN and disabilities.<br>c) Encourage fuller use of signposting to relevant national sources of information on websites and other key documents, to minimise duplication.<br>d) Include best practice examples of LAs raising the awareness of available information resources amongst | Guidance to include the use of physical drop-in centre(s) and traditional media as well as new technology. The portal would normally be expected to be offered within a wider portal site for Children's Services information for families, bringing together information from across the full range of services and provision. This might often be a role for the Family Information Service | DCSF / Becta | Guidance drafted: May 2009-December 2009<br>Consultation on guidance: January 2010 – April 2010.<br>Final guidance published: September 2010<br>Dissemination programme through ongoing relevant communication channels to DCSs, SEN leads and IT leads<br>(E.g. SEN hubs, RIG meetings etc): From September 2010. |

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|  | staff working with parents. | (FIS), but should be seen as a strategic function for the Local Authority. |  |  |
| 3 | Regulations for information published by schools to be updated to include a requirement for information to be published on relevant websites. This should include the Local Authority's main portal site for information on SEN and disabilities. |  | DCSF | Include in 2010 legislative programme<br>Requirement to come into force from April 2012 |
| 4 | Schools should make available a summary guidance booklet on provision and procedures for SEN and disabled children in their school, which signposts more detailed sources of information. An exemplar of such a booklet should be produced nationally. | LAs should assist schools by incorporating relevant sources of local information in local examples | DCSF | National example booklet drafted: January – April 2010.<br>Consultation on draft: May – July 2010.<br>Example made available to schools and LAs: October 2010.<br>Statutory guidance to suggest that schools should have such booklet available to parents from September 2011. |
| 5 | Local Authority publications for parents should be written to Plain English standards |  | DCSF | Include in 2010 legislative programme<br>Requirement to come into force from April 2012 |
| 6 | Identify, develop further and disseminate best practice examples of documentation setting out the resource split between LAs and schools for SEN funding. | This should include best practice of LAs working with schools in their development and implementation. | DCSF / National Strategies SEN Advisory Team | National Strategies SEN Advisory Team to review current best practice: May 2009 – October 2009.<br>Develop draft best practice exemplars: November 2009 – February 2010<br>Consult on best practice exemplars: March 2010 – May 2010.<br>Publication of best practice exemplars, including dissemination through SEN hubs and other relevant forums: From September 2010. |
| **Tailored, personal information** |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Review the total resourced capacity of Parent Partnership Services in each area to meet | This should include the capacity to support parents | DCSF | National Strategies SEN Advisory Team to review current provision: April |

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| | the support needs of parents of children on the SEN register in accessing and making use of specific information relevant to individual needs | who have children at School Action and School Action Plus. | | 2010 – March 2011.<br>DCSF to develop guidelines on best practice and commissioning relevant services: April 2011 – December 2011. |
| 8 | Ensure that the refresh of the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge* that the DCSF has remitted to CWDC to undertake in 2009-10, takes account of the information needs of parents and carers of children with SEN and disability. | A particular focus of the refresh is on gaps in relation to working with parents and carers | DCSF / CWDC | Outcome of consultation with key stakeholders by December 2009<br>Refreshed Common Core by March 2010<br>Communication Campaign to raise profile of the Common Core April 2010 |
| 9 | Explore ways of sharing information on provision arrangements, for children on the SEN register, with parents. | | Lamb Inquiry / National Strategies SEN Advisory Team | Review results of pilot projects and other related models: September 2009<br>Determine next steps by September 2009 |
| 10 | For Annual Reviews to include explicit consideration of how the parents' information needs may have changed, and where this information could be obtained | I.e. This would be mostly signposting rather than school staff necessarily providing information. | DCSF | Incorporate into SEN Core Offer (Recommendation 1) |
| 11 | Subject to the results of the SEN Progression Pilot:<br>a) schools and LAs to be provided with benchmarked information on likely future outcomes in attainment in the core subjects for pupils working within the P scales;<br>b) explore ways of sharing this information with parents | This should include a range of possibilities (e.g. upper quartile as well as median). This should only apply, where suitable comparative data is available. | DCSF | From September 2009 |
| 12 | For DCSF to develop parental access to digests of information on recent developments and best practice. | This should include open acknowledgement of the limits of current knowledge. | DCSF | Commission an organisation to maintain relevant, up to date content.<br>Commissioning: by April 2010<br>Initial on-line resource available from September 2011 (updated on a regular basis) |
| **Information on the performance of the system** | | | | |
| 13 | Consult on inclusion of text from OFSTED report regarding quality of SEN provision in Report Cards. | | DCSF / OFSTED | Scoping of precise design: May 2009 – September 2009 |

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| | | | | Scoping of implications for structure of text in OFSTED reports September 2009 – January 2010<br>Implementation in line with Report Card Implementation |
| 14 | Develop NI 54 to cover all SEN children and young people in addition to disabled children and young people | | DCSF / Audit Commission | Consult on new proposed indicator as part of the annual review of National Indicators by the Audit Commission: 2009 – 2010<br>Scope methodology (possibly commissioning an external agency to develop this) 2010 – 2011<br>New indicator in place: 2012 (subject to detailed methodological requirements). |
| 15 | For the OFSTED review of the SEN statutory framework to include consideration of the relative weight given to parental confidence in inspection processes of schools and Local Authorities | | OFSTED | To be set in relation to the OFSTED review. |

## 2. Introduction

The Lamb Inquiry has been convened to advise on ways to strengthen parent confidence in the SEN system. The DCSF commissioned Capita SCS to support the Inquiry by considering how information can contribute to parent confidence, help them ensure that their children receive the support they need and help increase the focus on outcomes.

The DCSF asked the consultancy team to:

- Analyse the current SEN and disability requirements;
- Assess how well they meet the needs of parents and wider stakeholders;
- Canvass the views of providers of the information, including issues about compliance with existing duties;
- Consider any implications for information on SEN and disability of proposed changes to information provided for parents more generally;
- Generate and evaluate options for ensuring that information better meets the needs of stakeholders and advise on what should be published - balancing the views of users and providers and the need to focus on outcomes;
- Advise on the design and format of information;
- Prepare an implementation plan for the options adopted.

This is the Final Report of the consultancy team to the Inquiry. It brings together the findings of the two phases of consultation and makes recommendations to improve the provision of information to parents. The report also proposes an outline implementation schedule.

## 3. Context

### 3.1 The Wider Context

This report focuses specifically on information for parents on SEN and disability. Its recommendations, however, need to be consistent with, and contribute to the wider developments in schools and Children's Services that are ongoing (e.g. The Children's Plan, DCSF 2007a). A number of key themes emerge from a consideration of the policy context:

- The drive to improve outcomes and wellbeing across all Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes for vulnerable and underachieving groups, including children and young people with SEN (e.g. The Children's Plan, DCSF 2007a; PSA Targets 10 and 11), with a particular focus on:
  - Wellbeing, including perceptions of personal safety and emotional and physical health;
  - Prevention and early identification and intervention to enhance future life chances;
  - Progress and narrowing attainment gaps, wherever possible;
  - Commissioning services, based on robust analysis of need and evaluation of performance;
  - Integrating data on outcomes for children and young people.

These themes are reinforced by proposals to:

- Clarify the role of schools in promoting the well-being of their pupils;
- Streamline monitoring, inspection and reporting arrangements for schools and local authority services for children. This includes a number of developments in reporting information to parents, including the proposed Report Cards for schools and on-line reporting.

Research undertaken by NFER on behalf of the Narrowing the Gap programme (NFER, 2008) has already quantified the differences in outcomes for SEN and disabled learners, and identified important gaps in data collected for children with SEN against each of the 5 outcomes. This challenge is compounded by inconsistencies in the way in which SEN is defined and identified.

Aiming High for Disabled Children sets out a range of developments aimed at improving outcomes for disabled children and young people, reflected in the Children's Plan and the NHS Operating Framework. This includes a Core Offer, which sets out expectations for how disabled children and their families will be informed and involved as their needs are assessed and the necessary services are delivered. The Core Offer covers:

- Information and Transparency
- Assessment
- Participation and Feedback

Fuller details of the Aiming Higher programme and a link to the Core Offer can be found at:
http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/ahdc/

In relation to information and transparency the Core Offer expects that:
*"The information provided should be tailored to the individual needs of children and their parents and be readily accessible in a range of formats."* (DCSF (2008) Duty to provide information, advice and assistance; guidance for local authorities Childcare Act 2006 (para 6.2).)

Disabled children, young people and their families can expect information which is:

- *Accessible:* using everyday language, alternative formats, the internet and community languages as necessary;
- *Available:* "to hand" without delay in places where families with children routinely go, including schools and colleges, health centres and GP surgeries and Sure Start Children's Centres;
- *Relevant and Accurate:* appropriate for every stage of a child's life and up-to-date with what is actually provided;
- *Joined-up:* co-ordinated across local authorities, schools and colleges, PCTs, NHS provider trusts and the voluntary and independent sector;
- *User-focussed:* always focussing on the desired outcome i.e. families know where, and how, to get help and support;
- Families should be asked how they wish to receive information and then to receive it in that way. Some families will need help to make best use of available information. As children and young people mature, information should be targeted at them as far as possible using methods most suitable for this age group.

The Core Offer sets out that disabled children, young people and families can expect information which covers:

- Access to universal as well as specialist services;
- Voluntary and independent sector as well as statutory services;
- Health and local authority children's services (including schools and colleges), adult social services as well as housing, leisure, transport, welfare rights and employment related services;
- Key transition points, in particular the transition from children's to adult services.

Disabled children, young people and their families can expect transparency about:

- How *overall resources are decided* and have changed over time;
- How *resources are allocated*, with criteria based on need, which are fair, understandable, and take account of the impact of disability;
- The purpose of an *assessment*, the process which will take place, the time it may take and the possible outcomes;
- How *services work together* to promote good outcomes, for example, care pathways for children with specific conditions, multi-agency involvement in statutory assessment of SEN and appropriate support for transition to adulthood;
- How *services are commissioned*. This should be on the basis of a rigorous, up-to-date, published needs analysis of the local population of disabled children, with an integrated inter-agency plan to meet the support needs of families;
- How *the Local Authority*, *the PCT* and their partners work together, through Children's Trust arrangements;
- How the *Children and Young People's Plan* (CYPP) is produced and how communities can influence the Plan;
- How the CYPP delivers the statutory requirements regarding *disability equality;*
- How *feedback* is sought, analysed, reported and acted upon;
- The *quality* of local services, including performance measures and inspection reports;
- How their *legal entitlements* are being met and how to *complain* if necessary.

A new National Indicator (NI 54) is being introduced to measure the level of satisfaction of parents with the delivery of the core offer. In an earlier report, considering the implementation of the SEN (Information) Act 2008, Capita SCS recommended that the scope of NI 54 should be extended to cover parents of children and young people with SEN.

The DCSF has asked the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) to refresh the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge required by all members of the Children and Young People's Workforce in 2009-10. The 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy sets the scope for the refresh as being:

- Are there any gaps in the content, including in relation to working with parents (fathers and mothers) and carers? How can they be measured and filled?
- Which parts of the Children and Young People's Workforce currently make no use of the Common Core? What can be done to move towards universal usage?
- How can the Common Core be fully embedded in initial training (such as initial teacher training and social work degree routes)?
- How far does the Common Core support models of joint working across the whole Children and Young People's Workforce?

An output from the initial research and consultation phase of the refresh is expected to be:

- A report setting out what fathers, mothers and carers want from those who provide help and support with suggestions for how this can be achieved through the refresh of the Common Core and its supporting documentation.

### 3.2 Confidence in Public Services

Annex 4 contains a review of the literature on confidence in public services compiled by Lindy and Nick Peacey of the University of the London Institute of Education. Some of the main points are:

- Confidence and related terms, such as trust or satisfaction, are often seen within some sort of hierarchy relating to evidence (e.g. Hart 2000).
  - *Confidence*: having trust in something based on strong evidence;
  - *Trust*: based on limited evidence;
  - *Faith*: requires no evidence, unquestioning acceptance;
  - *Satisfaction*: something is adequate, acceptable, fulfils needs.
- 'Satisfaction with services' is far more frequently explored in the literature than 'confidence in services':
- Levels of expectation of a service may influence levels of confidence. High expectations that are not met, or low expectations that are exceeded may lead to decreases or increases of confidence (James 2009);
- The basic nature of the relationship between parents and professionals (or service providers and consumers) has changed fundamentally. The previous relationship model of expert professional and ignorant lay-person is no longer relevant Professionals have one sort of knowledge, the patient, client or parent has expert knowledge of their situation. Parents value being listened to and being able to give their perspectives. This wider sociological change is of significance in understanding parental expectations of services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities;
- Developing trust in a service is harder than achieving trust in a product, as services are about personal interactions, and therefore involve personal rather than economic trust. The culture of services delivering SEN and disability services will therefore be important to parental confidence;

- It is possible to distinguish between three related aspects that influence public confidence:
    - The source of information, (perceptions of authority, trustworthiness etc);
    - The perceived quality of the information (e.g. accuracy, relevance, accessibility, ease of use etc);
    - The method of delivery of information. (e.g. helpfulness of source, preferences for different formats, volume, clarity, transparency in process, potential for a two way dialogue etc).

Research suggests that in the move from confidence to dis/satisfaction, the experience of a service or school needs to include:

- Appropriate and timely recognition of a child's needs by professionals (Harrington et al 2006, Roulstone and Ayre, 2008);
- Knowledge and understanding of staff about a child's difficulties and needs the willingness of the service/school to listen to their views and respond flexibly (Parsons et al 2009);
- Parental beliefs, e.g. about alternative treatments, are important for their confidence in a professional's approach to concerns about a child. (Harrington et al 2006);
- Moves, where necessary, on to specialist resources are appropriate and the more specialised services are available (Roulstone and Ayre, 2008).

These points need to be based within the context of parents' expectations of service standards (which are of an increasingly high standard of service, across all aspects of society). Contradiction or confirmation of expectations, through an individual's own experience of a service, will affect their confidence in it (James 2009, ONS 2005).

## 3.3 Information Provision to Parents

### *3.3.1 Background*

Early findings of the Lamb Inquiry have identified concerns regarding parental confidence in the SEN system and in the availability, usefulness and transparency of information for parents of children and young people (CYP) with SEN and disabilities.

The regulatory basis for the requirements on schools and LAs to publish information for parents with regard to SEN and Disabilities is set out in:

- The Education (Special Educational Needs) (Information) (England), Regulations, 1999, with regard to information schools need to publish (see Annex A of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice at: http://www.teachernet.gov.u/docbank/indec.cfm?id=3724);
- The Special Educational Needs (Provision of Information by Local Education Authorities) (England), Regulations 2001, with regards to information Local Authorities need to publish (See Annex A of the SEN Code of Practice at the website reference above);
- In guidance on the Disability Equality Duty (see http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=10822).

All public bodies, including schools, are required to publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES), setting out how the school meets its general duty with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

Parent Partnership Services became statutory when the SEN and Disability Act 2001 amended the 1996 Education Act (adding section 332A) to include a general duty for the LA:

- “To arrange for the parents of any child in their area with SEN to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to those needs;
- To take such steps as it considers appropriate for making services known to:
  - The parents of children in their area;
  - The head teachers and proprietors of schools in their area;
  - Such other persons they consider appropriate”.

Family Information Services also have a range of duties for the provision of information to parents, including information on:

- The provision of childcare which is suitable for disabled children
- Other services or facilities, or publications, which may be of particular benefit to the parents of disabled children or young persons or to disabled children or young persons.
  (Childcare Act 2006 s.12)

### *3.3.2 Information from Schools*

The requirements for schools to publish information in relation to SEN are set out in the schedules to the 1999 Act for SEN, and are broken down into requirements on:

- All maintained schools;
- All maintained special schools;
- Special schools in hospitals.

The information required is largely policy and procedural in nature. It is described in more detail in Annex 6, but in summary is:

*All maintained schools:*

- Basic information about provision;
- Policies for identification, assessment and provision for SEN pupils;
- Staffing policies and partnership working.

*All Special Schools:*

There is considerable similarity in the requirements on Special Schools and all Maintained Schools.

- Basic information on provision;
- Staffing policies and partnership working.

*Special Schools in Hospitals:*

The range required is more limited, but also contains some additional elements, including:

- How the contents of a statement are ascertained and made known to staff (Note: this is specific to Hospital Special Schools);
- Arrangements for continuity of educational provision, differentiated where necessary between long and short stay patients (Note: this is specific to Hospital Special Schools).

*Publication*

The information should be in a single document provided free of charge to parents (including prospective parents), the LA and the District Health Authority (and their successor bodies) who request a copy either at the school or by post.

The information can be published by the LA on behalf of the school; however there is no requirement for schools to publish information on web sites or via other electronic media.

As public bodies, all schools are required to publish a Disability Equality Scheme, setting out how the school meets its general duty with regard to the DDA.

### *3.3.3 Information from Local Authorities*

The requirements set out in the 2001 Act are described in detail in Annex 6, and can be summarised as:

- What provision should be met from school budget shares, and what from centrally retained funding (Action and Action Plus);
- Broad policy aims and actions being taken regarding provision for SEN learners;
- General arrangements for:
  - Identifying, assessing and auditing, planning, monitoring and reviewing provision for children with SEN;
  - Monitoring admissions;
  - Making and maintaining statements (including any local protocols);
  - Supporting schools re SEN provision;
  - Securing training and support for staff working with SEN learners in their area.

The above information needs to be reviewed and updated by the LA.

*Publication:*

The information needs to be published, free of charge, by:

- Providing a written copy to any health authority or social services authority the LA believes has an interest;
- Making it available on the internet;
- Providing a written copy to any person on request (Note the overlap with the provision from health and social care).

### *3.3.4 Family Information Services*

In 2008 Local Authorities acquired an extended information duty, building on the earlier requirement to provide information on childcare services and extending this to cover a range of information parents may need. This is usually delivered through a Family Information Service (FIS), or equivalent, and the extended information duty covers children up to their 20th birthday.

The recent evaluation of Family Information Services (DFCS, 2009) commented that 'FISs are required to provide information about whether particular childcare is suitable for disabled children, and about services, facilities and publications which may be of particular benefit to disabled children, young people or their parents.'

The study found that; 'All case study FISs were providing information for parents of disabled and SEN children about childcare' but 'Not all case study FISs were providing information *about services and facilities* for parents of disabled and SEN children.'

### *3.3.5 Parent Partnership Services*

Parent Partnership Services (PPSs) have a more targeted role than FISs, providing specialised support for families in relation to SEN and disabilities (or commissioning this support from other organisations). The provision of such services became statutory when the SEN and Disability Act 2001 amended the 1996 Education Act (adding section 332A) to include a general duty for the LA:

- To arrange for the parents of any child in their area with SEN to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to those needs;
- To take such steps as it considers appropriate for making services known to:
    - The parents of children in their area;
    - The head teachers and proprietors of schools in their area;
    - Such other persons they consider "appropriate".

At first sight the apparent overlap between Parent Partnership Services roles and the extended information duty of Family Information Services may be a potential source of duplication of effort or possible confusion. In practice, however, FISs seem more suited to being a 'universal' information provider of general information, whilst Parent Partnership Services' role is in providing more personalised and individually tailored support.

The National benchmarking of Parent Partnership Services (National Association website) and the Evaluation for DCSF in 2006 suggest a wide range of resource levels available per capita to PPSs in different areas of the country and a wide range of contact levels with the relevant population in different areas. i.e. the capacity of PPSs may currently be a key constraint on access to tailored advice and information support.

# 4. Our Approach

## 4.1 Background and Project Overview

The project set out to identify the views of parents, information providers and other relevant stakeholders in terms of

- How easy it is for parents to access the information they need, and practical issues that might make this difficult;
- Ways in which both parental confidence and a focus on outcomes can be improved through developments in information provision.

The project had two broad phases:

- Research and initial consultation;
- Testing / consulting on draft proposals.

The stakeholders consulted in this project are listed in **Annex 2**

## 4.2 Research and Initial Consultation

This phase consisted of:

- Baseline review of current information requirements and background information;
- Consultation with the Lamb Inquiry Reference Group;
- Consultation survey of parents, commissioned through voluntary sector organisations (through the Reference Group);
- Interviews with a sample of Local Authority, Parent Partnership and health sector professionals;
- Interviews with DCSF and other public sector bodies, including the National Strategies SEN Advisory Team;
- Focus group activities with relevant organisations (through the Lamb Reference Group) and with parents.

The questionnaires used with stakeholders, including the questions used in telephone interviews and the surveys used to gather views from parents and other members of voluntary sector organisations are included in **Annex 1.**

The consultation with parents aimed to capture views on:

- The extent to which parents felt they could locate the information they needed;
- The extent to which information was useful and accessible;
- The types of information, and types of formats parents found most useful;
- What additional information parents would most value.

Information providers were asked about

- Barriers to compliance with information publication regulations and means of overcoming them;
- What developments to information provision could enhance parental confidence, transparency and a focus on outcomes;
- How publication formats could be developed to improve the accessibility and usefulness of information.

### 4.3 Testing of Proposals

Following approval of the draft proposals for further consultation by the Steering Group, organisations consulted in the initial consultation phase (see Annex 2) were again asked to assist in distributing and collating a survey to assess their members' views on the proposals.

In addition there were:

- Focus group activities of a wide cross section of organisations through an extended Reference Group meeting and the Expert Adviser Group to the Lamb Inquiry;
- Parents whose children had recently entered the SEN system were consulted through a focus group activity facilitated by an LA;
- Members of the team were available to attend specific meetings at the request of organisations to discuss the proposals;
- A member of the Inquiry Reference Group interviewed two young people with physical disabilities.

During this phase a draft outline implementation schedule was developed and subjected to initial testing with relevant organisations.

## 5. Commentary on Current Information Requirements

The information requirements are essentially related to policies and procedures, not outcomes or outputs. Although guidance on the Disability Equality Scheme contains numerous references to data analysis of provision, facilities and outcomes, this is guidance on the contents of the scheme, rather than a requirement.

Some legislation deals only with SEN, rather than both SEN and disability related information.

The legislation in places appears dated in terms of publication requirements (particularly the 1999 regulations which require only paper copies). The potential of interactive on-line technology and other delivery media is not considered in the legislation.

Support for parents in accessing, understanding or applying information is considered in regulations affecting LAs (for Parent Partnership Services and Family Information Services), but is not considered in either the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Information) (England), Regulations, 1999 or the Special Educational Needs (Provision of Information by Local Education Authorities) (England), Regulations 2001.

## 6. Results of Initial Consultation

### 6.1 Introduction

Consultation with parents and a wide range of other stakeholders, including LA officers, teachers and SENCOs, specialist services and representative voluntary sector organisations, focused upon the information needs of parents of children with SEN/disability with particular reference to the way in which information can:

- Help build their confidence in themselves, professionals and the SEN/disability support system as a whole;
- Promote the well-being of their children.

**Annex 5** provides data tables summarising the responses to the consultation.

The views of those consulted on the information needs of parents fall into three broad categories:

- Nature of Information, e.g. transparency, trustworthiness, impartiality, accessibility;
- Information about their child and her/his needs, including reports that are clear, easily understood and offer practical advice for parents and professionals alike, e.g.:
  - What are her/his needs and what are the implications for the future?
  - What needs to happen to ensure that they are met?
- Information about the system and how best to ensure that their child's needs are met, e.g.:
  - What services are available?
  - What do they do?
  - How can they help me?
  - What have I a right to expect from my child's school?
  - What are the school options, including specialist/special provision?

Another frequently expressed view was that, although it is important to ensure that a wide range of information is widely and easily available to parents of children with SEN/disability, using all reasonable channels and methods, their principal need is for the support of trusted and supportive practitioners who:

- Are well informed, able to help parents understand what they need to know at any particular stage in their child's development and, where necessary, to interpret the information that they are given;
- Honest – clear and open about the limits of their knowledge and prepared to seek further guidance where necessary;
- Trustworthy and, where necessary, independent;
- Recognize that information flows both ways – parents can provide vital information as well.

Wide recognition that many parents do not have confidence in the information they receive, or the system as a whole, suggests that, all too frequently, these basic information needs are not met. Particular barriers were identified as including:

- A common lack of clarity, understanding and/or agreement about relative roles and responsibilities for resourcing provision to meet the child's needs;
- Practitioners' understanding of the requirements, the resources involved and the level of priority assigned to the task;

- A concern to “gate keep” access to scarce resources/specialist provision;
- A desire to maximise flexibility and avoid being required to specify precisely, e.g. how resources are to be used.

Responses from individual stakeholder groups are detailed below.

### 6.2 Parents

There were 116 responses received by the end of February for inclusion in this analysis, covering 124 children. An additional 81 responses received during March have been included in this analysis, giving a total of 197 respondents.

Key issues emerging are:

- Ease of locating information (e.g. need for a clearer source for introductory information; clearer locus of responsibility for information and its co-ordination);
- Ease of use of information;
- Usefulness of information;
- Extent to which information is tailored to individual needs – clear way for information service to be escalated;
- Concerns over multiple providers of information;
- Concerns over clarity / transparency of use of resources;
- Concern that information flows should be two way (parents views strongly inform interventions /support);
- Wide variety of publication formats preferred (including traditional methods and face to face communication);
- Considerable interest in personal information support / advice; need for out-of-hours service;
- Interest in wide range of outcomes – relevant to specific child /young person;
- Little interest in policy level information.
- Comments suggested that the quality of support for accessing / making use of information from individual professionals was regarded as highly variable.

### 6.3 Information Providers

Staff from five Local Authorities were interviewed, including officers from SEN teams, and health officials, together with staff from local Parent Partnership Services.

Key themes emerging were:

- Basic compliance with regulations was not seen as being a largely problematic – general view that ease of locating and making use of information was a bigger challenge;
- Clarity of resource allocation was seen as a key factor, and a number of Local Authorities are developing detailed approaches to resource and provision mapping and are sharing this information with parents;
- The importance of face-to-face communication was stressed by many respondents. ‘Personal contact is the beginning and end of confidence’ ;
- Sense that there is much duplication of effort in schools’ development of Disability Equality Schemes;

- Use of ‘Plain English’ and similar approaches to making documents readable mentioned by some;
- One stop shop approaches to advice and guidance mentioned was being developed / in place to varying extents;
- Use of parent support workers (often parents with children with similar SEN / disabilities) mentioned as one approach;
- Close liaison with Parent Partnership and clear signposting to mediation services;
- The encouragement of direct contact with parents if there were concerns;
- There was considerable interest in progression data, and a sense that parents would welcome information on likely future outcomes (e.g. Employment, Education and Training, entry to Further Education, etc);
- Whilst *Team Around the Child* approaches are still in the early stage of development, a number of respondents felt there were implications for the Lead Professional role re: signposting sources of information;
- A number of respondent identified possible overlap between SEN and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) processes;
- Parent Partnership representatives often mentioned parents’ concern over duplication of information to agencies (e.g. addresses);
- While there was not a body of support for substantial diminution of current requirements, some of the General Information recommendations provide an opportunity to review and, potentially streamline, schools’ and local authorities’ existing requirements. A number of respondents felt that any major reductions in information requirements would be counter-productive in circumstances where confidence is already low.

### 6.4 Other Respondents

DCSF

- Report cards: It was felt possible to consider including text summary re. SEN provision (e.g. from OfSTED) and/or specific numeric result (e.g. around ‘closing the gap’), but there would be an issue here would be statistical validity of the measure. Consideration would also need to be given to weightings and the extent to which any measure would contribute to the overall score;
- On-line reporting – no consideration given yet to detail of SEN reporting. Some discussion around utilising this for reporting progression data;
- Parent Held Record was under development at the time of the initial consultation, but this pilot was subsequently halted.

Birmingham University

- Many LA websites not W3C compliant (i.e. meeting the accessibility standard of the World Wide Web Consortium). Few use higher levels of accessibility;
- Site structures often complex to navigate – hard to locate information relevant to specific needs;
- Site maintenance / out of date information common.

NASEN[1]

- Reinforced many of the issues set out above;
- LAs’ school prospectuses at key transition points often do not contain information about special school or specialist mainstream resourced provision.

[1] NASEN consists of approximately 5,000 members consisting mostly of SENCOs (majority group), LA staff, including educational psychologists, Speech and language therapists, other teachers.

AFASIC

- Reinforced many of the issues set out above;
- Take as their starting point the proposition that parents of children with SEN/Speech and Language Difficulties need the system to work for them in the same way that it does for other children without additional needs - many of the specific needs of children with SEN/disability and their parents should be addressed through the wider ECM agenda, e.g. Common Assessment Framework, Team Around the Child, (Budget Holding) Lead Professional, etc.;
- Proposed a “Life Pathway” (or ‘information pathway’, based upon the pathway set out in the National Service Framework for Autism) as a template on which to map/personalize parents’ information requirements at key points in their child’s development, e.g. transition points – Annex 3 provides an early illustration of their thinking;
- Confidence in Parent Partnership Services is often derived for the level of independence with which they are able to operate.

### 6.5 Summary of Key Messages

The main areas for development identified include:

- The ease of locating information, its accessibility and ease of use;
- The extent to which information is relevant for individual needs;
- Transparency of information, particularly clarity of resource allocations / provision for SEN and disabled learners.

## 7. Draft Recommendations

There are important parallels between these recommendations and the information requirements of the Core Offer for disabled learners.

The draft recommendations were categorised under the headings

- *General information*, which addresses the availability, accessibility, transparency and usefulness of general policy level information;
- *Tailored Personal Information*, which looks at how information can be made more directly relevant for parents and also more directly support an increased focus on outcomes;
- *Information on the performance of the system*, which essentially considers how SEN information might feature in wider accountability information.

The draft recommendations are set out in **Annex 7.**

# 8. Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

## 8.1 Our Approach

Following approval of the draft recommendations for consultation by the project's Steering Group on the 11th March 2009, a second phase of consultation, testing the draft recommendations was carried out, ending on the 3rd April. This consisted of:

- A parental survey, distributed through voluntary sector members of the Lamb Inquiry Reference Group and a Parent Partnership Service;
- A survey / telephone interviews with Local Authorities, Parent Partnership Services and Health Service staff consulted in the first consultation phase;
- Telephone interviews and meetings with DCSF and OFSTED officials in relation to the Report Card;
- Discussion with members of the NAS/UWT SEN Advisory Committee;
- Telephone interviews with Becta officials with regards to proposals relating to web sites and other ICT related proposals;
- Focus groups of parents, including one of parents mainly new to the SEN system;
- Consultation with the Lamb Inquiry Reference Group and Expert Adviser Group.

Consultation with children and young people had been arranged via two Local Authorities but this could not be undertaken due to local difficulties in arrangements, leading to only a very small sample of children and young people's views.

The questionnaires and structured activities used can be found in **Annex 1.**

## 8.2 Results of the Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

### *8.2.1 Parents' Views*

A total of 249 responses were received from parents. The bulk of these responses were gathered via voluntary sector organisations. Two focus groups were used: one consisted of parents who had been, or were considering, an appeal to SEND Tribunal; the other was of parents of children in the Early Years who had only recently been identified with SEN.

Overall the group whose children had only recently been identified with SEN was more optimistic than the average (although the sample size was too small to draw firm conclusions), whilst the group that had appealed to the SEND Tribunal was more pessimistic concerning the impact of these proposals than the overall average for the survey.

All the draft recommendations received support. The strongest support (>80% answering that the recommendation would make 'a lot of difference') was for recommendations related to:

- Support for staff in relation to what information is available;
- Clarity of support to be provided by the LA, the school or other agencies;
- A focus on parents information needs at key transition points.

Lowest support was for:

- The provision of benchmarked information on how children's progress compares to other similar children nationally. Even here, though 47.8% of respondents felt this would make a lot of difference, and three quarters of respondents (73.9%) felt it would make at least some difference;

- 57.8% of respondents felt that the recommendation to make NI 54 cover SEN as well as disabled CYP would make a lot of difference and over 90% felt it would make at least some difference.

Other draft recommendations had between 65% and 78% of respondents reporting that they felt they would make a lot of difference.

In terms of those respondents who felt that specific recommendations would either make matters worse or produce no change, the proposal for the provision of benchmarked information on children's progress had the least favourable response, with 17.3% replying that it would make no difference and 3.6% feeling that this would make things worse. The next least favourable response on these measures was for the proposal for parents to have access to information on 'what works'. This proposal had 6.4% of respondents saying it would make no difference, and 1.6% saying it would make things worse.

Overall therefore, the strongest support from parents was in relation to recommendations that would improve the ease of access to, the transparency of and support for the use of current information, with less strong support (although still a majority regarding them as beneficial) for recommendations relating to the provision of quantitative data on both the performance of children and the system as a whole. This could be summarised as a desire for greater personalisation of SEN and disability services, or perhaps as a desire for a cultural change towards a more consumer focused / customer service driven approach.

As one respondent described it; 'what parents want is for the system to work for their children the way it does for everyone else'.

### *8.2.2 Feedback from Information Providers*

Feedback was received from six organisations, and was largely positive.

- The concept of the Core Offer was generally supported, although one respondent queried if there was any evidence of actual impact on parental confidence in relation to disability services;
- The concept of a portal model for SEN and disability information on web sites was strongly supported, as was the proposal to require schools' information to be published through the portal, as well as to be available by traditional means. One respondent highlighted the need to include PCT information within the same structure;
- Several respondents commented that a leaflet might not be sufficient for the range of information that would be needed (recommendation for schools to have such a leaflet available for parents), with a general view that a small booklet would be more practical, and durable. There was however general support for the basic concept of this recommendation;
- A number of respondents highlighted that utilising national sources of information (both for policies and procedures and, perhaps especially for information on 'what works') could present considerable practical challenges. These would particularly be in relation to identifying which material to include / exclude and keeping this up to date;
- A number of respondents commented that Parent Partnership Services should not provide support to LA / school staff as they could lose perceived

independence, and therefore credibility, if they did so, or related comments such as the need for personalisation being more acute in parents' dealings with services other than Parent Partnerships;

- A number of respondents, whilst supporting increased clarity of information for parents on provision, questioned the short-term practicality of rolling out detailed provision mapping models. One respondent did not support the concept, feeling it ran counter to delegation of resources;
- Most respondents favoured sharing summary information on provision / approaches used with parents rather than detailed provision maps (partly on grounds of complexity). Most respondents favoured linking this to desired outcomes but strongly felt that this should include a holistic view of outcomes (e.g. including self esteem, independence etc) and not simply be related to academic outcomes;
- A focus on considering parents' changing information needs at key transition points was preferred to one including this within Annual Reviews;
- Concerns were expressed at the workload implications of school staff being expected to be aware of the full range of SEN information. A signposting approach to services such as Parent Partnerships was preferred, although the proposed developments in the Children's Workforce Common Core might also have relevance here;
- Most respondents highlighted concerns over the effect of benchmarked information on outcomes for pupils who were working at very low levels of attainment, perhaps especially for those with degenerative or life threatening conditions. For these pupils other outcomes were often felt to be more immediately of significance and a focus on academic attainment / progress within the P scales potentially counter-productive. One respondent pointed out that such data may be most relevant for schools in aiding self evaluation;
- Whilst there was general support for the concept of including text from OFSTED reports in Report Cards, a specific concern was raised about the extent to which other services, especially health were reflected in this (although the Report Card would actually be specifically relating to services provided by / through the school). Some practical issues concerning the design / comprehensiveness of the relevant piece of text were raised.

### 8.3 Discussion

Overall the following key messages come out of the consultation on the draft recommendations:

- There is most support for recommendations relating to improving access to information and helping parents make use of this information for their specific requirements;
- A strong message to emerge was the need to ensure that final proposals should reduce duplication and not increase the workload, e.g. on teachers and should be consistent with the Workforce Agreement;
- Although there was less general support from parents for measures to assess the overall performance of the system, there was a clear majority feeling this would be beneficial. It is felt important that evidence of service quality is collated. This would be to provide objective evidence of service development and the future impact of the proposed Core Offer, and to have easier access to relevant information to parents who may be considering a choice of school, through Report Cards;
- Some specific recommendations have clear difficulties. In particular:

- The development of provision mapping is at a relatively early stage and a more extended piloting of such models would be required to assess their practicality, including how such information could be shared with parents;
- The provision of benchmarked information on attainment and future progress might be counter productive in some cases, for example children with life threatening or degenerative conditions. Concerns were also expressed that this could lower expectations in some cases;
- Whilst there may be some specific additional applications to text messaging or on-line reporting for SEN and disabled learners, compared to other pupils, these were felt to be relatively specific and context sensitive (some parents may not want to feel ‘tethered’ electronically to the school, and practical concerns over using such technology for any legal aspect of the SEN process were widespread).

## 9. Final Recommendations, Outline Implementation Timeline and Compliance

### 9.1 Changes from the draft recommendations

As a result of feedback during the consultation the following changes have been made to the draft recommendations.

- Reference to PCT information has been included in the recommendations relating to information content on web sites;
- A number of recommendations relating to guidance have been amalgamated;
- The recommendation relating to staff awareness of available information has been deleted, as this did not have a clear enough focus and presented potential workload implications;
- The term ‘booklet’ has been used instead of ‘leaflet’ in the recommendation that schools should have a clear introductory leaflet / booklet for parents;
- The recommendation on reviewing the capacity of Parent Partnership Services has been adjusted to more clearly describe the recommendation’s intent;
- The recommendation for publications for parents to be in Plain English has been adjusted to refer specifically to LA publications, to reduce workload implications / duplication;
- The development of provision mapping is changed to recommend an extended pilot of such models and the three draft recommendations relating to this area have been amalgamated;
- The recommendation to require the sharing of benchmarked performance data for all pupils on the SEN register, including those working at the P scales, has been deleted and replaced with one requiring this information be provided to schools and Local Authorities only;
- The recommendation to include space to record all ECM outcomes within a Parent Held Record has been deleted as this pilot project is not proceeding at this time;
- The recommendation relating to guidance on the use of technology such as text messaging has been deleted;
- The recommendation relating to additional capacity in ICT framework agreements for website accessibility has been deleted as specialist advice suggested sufficient free resources existed;
- Whilst the initial consultation gave a clear response from information providers, that current information requirements should not be deleted, as this would be counter-productive in terms of parental perceptions. The second stage consultation included a number of responses that recommended a further consideration of this question. The development of the Core Offer would offer such an opportunity;
- Additional recommendations have been added to: reflect the opportunity provided by the refresh of the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge required by the Children’s Workforce to address the information needs of parents and carers, including those of children with SEN or disability; and to seek to strengthen the information aspects of the Lead Professional role and the Team around the Child.

## 9.2 Final Recommendations

The final recommendations are:

| No. | Recommendation | Note | Lead | Timeline |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Principle** | | | | |
| 1 | The *Core Offer* for disabled children and young people should be extended to cover both SEN and disabled children and young people. | This should include parents' entitlements with regard to information; i.e. other recommendations should be reflected within it.<br>The process of development should include specific consideration of which current information requirements could be ended. | DCSF | Initial consultation to gather views on content: September 2009 – December 2009<br>Draft Developed: January 2010 – February 2010<br>Consultation on draft: March 2010 – June 2010<br>Publication: September 2010 |
| **General information** | | | | |
| N.B. Recommendations 2-6 below would require review and amendment to current information requirements on Local Authorities and schools. | | | | |
| 2 | Statutory guidance should:<br>a) Strongly encourage a 'one stop shop' approach for Local Authorities to develop a single portal website for all SEN and disability information in each LA, including PCT information.<br>b) Be accompanied by examples of best practice in web structures and design, including specific examples of good practice in relation to SEN and disabilities.<br>c) Encourage fuller use of signposting to relevant national sources of information on websites and other key documents, to minimise duplication.<br>d) Include best practice examples of LAs raising the awareness of available information resources amongst staff working with parents. | Guidance to include the use of physical drop-in centre(s) and traditional media as well as new technology. The portal would normally be expected to be offered within a wider portal site for Children's Services information for families, bringing together information from across the full range of services and provision. This might often be a role for the Family Information Service (FIS), but should be seen as a strategic function for the Local Authority. | DCSF / Becta | Guidance drafted: May 2009 – December 2009<br>Consultation on guidance: January 2010 – April 2010.<br>Final guidance published: September 2010<br>Dissemination programme through ongoing relevant communication channels to DCSs, SEN leads and IT leads<br>(E.g. SEN hubs, RIG meetings etc): From September 2010. |
| 3 | Regulations for information published by schools to be updated to include a requirement for information to be published on relevant websites. This should include | | DCSF | Include in 2010 legislative programme<br>Requirement to come into force from April 2012 |

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| | the Local Authority's main portal site for information on SEN and disabilities. | | | |
| 4 | Schools should make available a summary guidance booklet on provision and procedures for SEN and disabled children in their school, which signposts more detailed sources of information. An exemplar of such a booklet should be produced nationally. | LAs should assist schools by incorporating relevant sources of local information in local examples | DCSF | National example booklet drafted: January – April 2010.<br>Consultation on draft: May – July 2010.<br>Example made available to schools and LAs: October 2010.<br>Statutory guidance to suggest that schools should have such booklet available to parents from September 2011. |
| 5 | Local Authority publications for parents should be written to Plain English standards | | DCSF | Include in 2010 legislative programme<br>Requirement to come into force from April 2012 |
| 6 | Identify, develop further and disseminate best practice examples of documentation setting out the resource split between LAs and schools for SEN funding. | This should include best practice of LAs working with schools in their development and implementation. | DCSF / National Strategies SEN Advisory Team | National Strategies SEN Advisory Team to review current best practice: May 2009 – October 2009.<br>Develop draft best practice exemplars: November 2009 – February 2010<br>Consult on best practice exemplars: March 2010 – May 2010.<br>Publication of best practice exemplars, including dissemination through SEN hubs and other relevant forums: From September 2010. |
| **Tailored, personal information** | | | | |
| 7 | Review the total resourced capacity of Parent Partnership Services in each area to meet the support needs of parents of children on the SEN register in accessing and making use of specific information relevant to individual needs | This should include the capacity to support parents who have children at School Action and School Action Plus | DCSF | National Strategies SEN Advisory Team to review current provision: April 2010-March 2011.<br>DCSF to develop guidelines on best practice and commissioning relevant services: April 2011 – December 2011. |
| 8 | Ensure that the refresh of the *Common Core of Skills and* | A particular focus of the refresh is on | DCSF / CWDC | Outcome of consultation with key stakeholders by |

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| | *Knowledge* that the DCSF has remitted to CWDC to undertake in 2009-10, takes account of the information needs of parents and carers of children with SEN and disability. | gaps in relation to working with parents and carers | | December 2009<br>Refreshed Common Core by March 2010<br>Communication Campaign to raise profile of the Common Core April 2010 |
| 9 | Explore ways of sharing information on provision arrangements, for children on the SEN register, with parents. | | Lamb Inquiry / National Strategies SEN Advisory Team | Review results of pilot projects and other related models: September 2009<br>Determine next steps by September 2009. |
| 10 | For Annual Reviews to include explicit consideration of how the parents' information needs may have changed, and where this information could be obtained | i.e. This would be mostly signposting rather than school staff necessarily providing information. | DCSF | Incorporate into SEN Core Offer (recommendation 1) |
| 11 | Subject to the results of the SEN Progression Pilot:<br>a) schools and LAs to be provided with benchmarked information on likely future outcomes in attainment in the core subjects for pupils working within the P scales;<br>b) explore ways of sharing this information with parents | This should include a range of possibilities (e.g. upper quartile as well as median). This should only apply, where suitable comparative data is available. | DCSF | From September 2009 |
| 12 | For DCSF to develop parental access to digests of information on recent developments and best practice. | This should include open acknowledgement of the limits of current knowledge. | DCSF | Commission an organisation to maintain relevant, up to date content.<br>Commissioning: by April 2010<br>Initial on-line resource available from September 2011 (updated on a regular basis) |
| **Information on the performance of the system** | | | | |
| 13 | Consult on inclusion of text from OFSTED report regarding quality of SEN provision in Report Cards. | | DCSF / OFSTED | Scoping of precise design: May 2009 – September 2009<br>Scoping of implications for structure of text in OFSTED reports September 2009 – January 2010<br>Implementation in line with Report Card Implementation. |
| 14 | Develop NI 54 to cover all SEN | | DCSF / | Consult on new |

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| | children and young people in addition to disabled children and young people | | Audit Commission | proposed indicator as part of the annual review of National Indicators by the Audit Commission: 2009-10<br>Scope methodology (possibly commissioning an external agency to develop this) 2010 – 2011<br>New indicator in place: 2012 (subject to detailed methodological requirements) |
| 15 | For the OFSTED review of the SEN statutory framework to include consideration of the relative weight given to parental confidence in inspection processes of schools and Local Authorities | | OFSTED | To be set in relation to the OFSTED review. |

### 9.3 Compliance

Consultees identified the principal barriers to compliance with current information regulations as resulting primarily from the sometimes complex and onerous nature of existing requirements, i.e.:

- A failure to understand fully what is required;
- Resource implications associated with, e.g.:
  - Creating and maintaining web content (sometimes duplicated or spread across different websites);
  - Interpreting/translating often complex policy documents to render them more easily accessible to parents and carers, including those for whom English is an additional language;
  - Publishing material in parent-friendly forms.
- Creating clarity and/or agreement between local authorities and schools on the allocation of resources and their respective accountability for making provision for children with SEN/disability is often difficult; 'the vocabulary of description is deficient' as one respondent described it..

Overcoming each of these barriers will be important to improving parental confidence, and the recommendations above attempt to address these, and other related issues..

There is also little to suggest that existing arrangements for inspection and regulation are strongly focused on information requirements, to identify and hold to account failure to comply. We therefore recommend that the OFSTED review of SEN includes consideration of the relative weighting given to confidence of parents in provision for SEN and disabilities, including the provision of information.

Improvements in the availability, transparency and clarity of information are intended to help begin a process of improving parental confidence in services. Through increasing transparency and personalisation this may itself positively impact on compliance, within a system that becomes more widely trusted by children and young people and their families as having their best interests at its heart with a strong emphasis on routine, clear provision of information to parents. This should:

- Highlight information that is of critical importance to parents;
- Be understood and approved by those responsible for providing it;
- Promote effective partnership working between parents and practitioners;
- Provide important feedback on the performance of the SEN system to support its continuous improvement and enable it to be simply but rigorously held to account.

Our approach to compliance is therefore to:

- Set out in one place, in clear terms, what information (and other) expectations parents should have (the Core Offer, Recommendation 1);
- Recommend a national indicator, based on the new NI 54, which will measure satisfaction with the delivery of the Core Offer. The currently proposed survey model for NI 54 includes subsections measuring satisfaction with different aspects of the Core Offer;
- Address the difficulties many parents have of locating information and of finding information that is relevant to their specific requirements. We recommend significant developments to Local Authority web sites in particular the development of a portal model, together with a number of recommendations aimed at more personalised support for parents in locating and using information;
- Recommend a number of fundamental steps to address concerns over clarity of the resource split between LAs and schools.
- The proposals in relation to Report Cards will help the focus on provision for SEN and disabled children and young people from schools.

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## Annex 1: Questionnaires Used

In addition to the standard sets of questions listed below, a number of individually tailored questionnaires / structured activities were used with focus groups and for some interviews with specialist agencies.

### A1.1 Initial Consultation

#### *A1.1.1 Parent Questionnaire*

The questions asked of parents were:

Background information (optional).

***We will only use this information to assess if we have a representative range of responses***

For those children who have SEN / disabilities please state:
Children’s age

What is the nature of your child’s (or children’s) Special Educational Need or disability?

Their ethnicity

Whether they are male or female

Whether you are male or female:

***Questions on information***

How easy has it been for you find the information you need about support for your child / children? (please tick)

a) Very easy
b) Reasonably easy
c) Quite hard
d) Very hard

Add any further comment here:

Which ways do you prefer to receive information easily when you want it? (E.g. leaflets, websites, telephone, text, email, face-to-face)

Which ways to receive information do you think give you more useful information?

Which information have you found the hardest to find?

Are there examples of formats or types of information that you have found particularly unhelpful or hard to use?

What types information do you / would you find most useful. Please number the following in order (1 being the most important to you):

Information on:

- Policies and procedures
- How your child is progressing academically
- How your child is progressing in independence / self esteem
- Information around your child’s health
- Information on behaviour / experience of bullying
- Information on services
- Information on activities / facilities (e.g. sports centres, clubs etc.)
- Other – PLEASE DESCRIBE

Please describe an occasion when you wanted information about SEN/Disability services for your child:

- where you tried to get it from?
- whether you received useful information?
- how easy was it?

Please use this space to expand on any aspects of the types of information, or the formats it is provided in that you would find useful.

### *A1.1.2 Interviews with Information Providers*

The Questions asked of Information Providers were:

I. Are there any factors that might make it difficult for some organisations to publish all the information required in the 2001 (LAs) and 1999 (schools) Acts re: SEN?

II. Are there any factors that might make it difficult for some organisations to meet the requirements of publication of Disability Equality Schemes?

III. How might any such barriers be overcome?

IV. Could other types of information help improve parental confidence?
Some examples might include:
   a. Clearer guidance on policies and procedures?
   b. More assistance with identifying services that may be appropriate for their child?
   c. More information on outcomes (if so, which)?

V. Could some types of information help support improved outcomes or wellbeing?

VI. Could developments in publication / reporting formats such as the Report Card, on-line reporting to parents, text messaging etc. help in providing access to information in ways that:
   a. parents may find more useful or straightforward
   b. information providers may find less burdensome

VII. Could some current information requirements be stopped without harming outcomes or parental confidence?

VIII. Do you have any additional comments?

## A1.2 Consultation on Draft Proposals

### *A1.2.1 Parents' Questionnaire*

The questions asked of parents on the initial proposal were (extracted from a larger background document)

***Making information easier to find***

***1. All public documents that parents need about SEN / disabilities should be available through one web site for each Local Authority area (as well as on paper).***

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

2. ***There should be a clear, short, leaflet in every school which describes how services for SEN / disabilities work and tells you where to get more detailed information.***

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

3. ***All professionals working with children should be aware of what information parents should have, and where to get it***.

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

Do you have other ideas or comments on ***Making information easier to find?***

***Making information more relevant for your needs***

***4. Each time there is a big change (e.g. such as receiving a diagnosis, moving schools etc) the professionals working with you and your child should consider what specific information you need, and help you get it***

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

5. ***If your child has a Statement, their Annual Review should discuss whether you need any further information, and where to get it***.

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

Do you have other ideas or comments on **Making information more relevant for your needs?**

***Making information about support for your child clearer***

***6. You should be given a clear description of what support will be provided by the school, the Local Authority or other agencies.***

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

7. ***You should have a clear description of how it is hoped your child will progress at school, and what provision is being made to achieve this.***

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

***8. You should have clear information on how your child's progress compares to similar children nationally***

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

9. ***Information should be put together, and made available to you, on 'what works' for children with different special needs and disabilities.***

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

Do you have other ideas or comments on **Making information about support for your child clearer?**

***Information on how well services are doing***

***10. Parents should be asked their views regularly about how well services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities are doing and the results published.***

How much improvement would this make? ……………………………

(answer 1-4, where 1 = A big improvement; 2 = Some improvement
3 = No change 4 = Make things worse)

Do you have other ideas or comments on **Information on how well services are doing?**

### *A1.2.2 Survey of Information Providers on Draft Proposals*

The questions asked of information providers (and related organisations) were (extracted from a larger briefing note).

#### *A1.2.2.1 General Information*

*Ease of locating general information*

i. The *Core Offer* for disabled children and young people should be extended to cover SEN and disabled children and young people

*Do you agree with this proposal*: Yes / No / Partially

Comment

ii. Guidance should strongly encourage a 'one stop shop' approach for Local Authorities to develop a single portal website for all SEN and disability information in each LA. Guidance to include the use of physical drop in centre(s) (e.g. in Libraries, Children's Centres etc) and traditional media as well as new technology. The portal would normally be within a wider portal site for Children's Services information for families, bringing together information from across the full range of services and provision. This might often be a role for the Family Information Service, but should be seen as a strategic function for the Local Authority.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

iii. Guidance and exemplification of best practice in web structures and design, including specific examples of good practice in relation to SEN and disabilities to be further developed and publicised by Becta.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

iv. Schools should make available a simple guidance leaflet on provision and procedures for SEN and disabled children in their school, which signposts more detailed sources of information. An example of such a leaflet should be produced nationally, and LAs should assist schools by providing local examples, incorporating relevant sources of local information.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

v. Regulations for information published by schools to be updated to include a requirement for information to be published on relevant websites. This should include the Local Authority's main portal site for information on SEN and disabilities.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

vi. Guidance for LAs / FISs to include signposting to relevant national sources of information on websites and other key documents.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

*Accessibility of information*

vii. DCSF and Becta to review the extent to which national framework agreements for LAs contain sufficient capacity for specialised technical support re: accessibility of websites and translation services for minority languages.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

viii. Publications for parents should be written to Plain English standards, or similar standard.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially
Comment

*Relevance of on-line resources*

ix. LAs should review the extent to which Parent Partnerships are able to support parents and staff working with parents and children (e.g. SENCOs, Lead Professionals etc) in accessing specific information relevant to individual needs and make use of this in developing individual support. (i.e. personalise the material).

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

x. Guidance for LAs on raising the awareness of available resources amongst staff working with parents to be produced nationally.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

*Clarity of resource allocation between schools and LA.*

xi. National Strategies SEN Advisory Team to be tasked with developing / identifying best practice examples, including best practice in LAs working with schools in their development and implementation.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

#### *A1.2.2.2 Tailored individual information*

*Clarity of resource allocations at individual level*

xii. Subject to results of pilot projects, roll out Individual Pupil Resource Allocation type model to provide personalised provision mapping at School Action Plus and with for those with Statements.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

xiii. To commission further development of resource allocation models to include links to outcomes, to enable a clearer focus on outcomes and to assist schools and LAs in evaluating the impact of interventions.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

xiv. Require provision mapping for children and young people at School Action Plus and with Statements to be shared with parents.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

xv. For Annual Reviews to include explicit consideration of how the parents' information needs may have changed, and where this information could be obtained (i.e. signposting rather than necessarily providing information). It might be possible to base this on the 'life pathways' concept as a structure to support identification of parents information needs at different times.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

*Personalised support for accessing relevant information*

xvi. Schools to be supported through specific guidance in utilising on-line reporting and / or text messaging, where relevant for real time communication with parents of children and young people with SEN and / or disabilities (e.g. with behavioural issues, health issues etc).

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

*Provide information on current and possible future outcomes*

xvii. All children on the SEN register, of compulsory school age, to be provided with benchmarked information on likely future outcomes in attainment in the core subjects, where comparative data is available. This would currently be from the age of seven (from KS1 outcomes projected to KS2, to KS4).

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

xviii. Record individual data across all ECM outcome indicators that are at individual level in the Parent Held Record and for this data to be explicitly considered, in discussion with parents in Annual Reviews

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

xix. For DCSF to develop parental access to information on 'what works' re: interventions (e.g. on TDA Teacher Training

Resource website,), with access and interpretation perhaps facilitated by Parent Partnerships.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

*Information on the performance of services*

xx. Consult on inclusion of text from OFSTED report regarding quality of SEN provision in Report Cards.

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

xxi. Develop NI 54 to cover SEN children and young people in addition to disabled children and young people

*Do you agree with this proposal* : Yes / No / Partially

Comment

### A1.2.3 Consultation Exercise with NAS/UWT SEN Advisory Committee

For each group of proposals:

- Will these proposals improve parental confidence?
- Will they improve focus on outcomes?
- Will they add unduly to school's (and, within that, teachers' or other specific staff groups) workloads?
- How can the proposals be improved? Should there be additional proposals and should any be deleted?

## Annex 2: Organisations Consulted

Organisations consulted were:

AFASIC
Becta
Blackburn with Darwen Local Authority
Communication Matters
Contact a Family
DCSF (specifically in relation to on-line reporting and Report Cards)
Durham Local Authority
NASEN
NASUWT
OFSTED
Partners in Policy Making
RNIB
UBICEF RRSA
Scope
Sheffield Local Authority
Sheffield Parent Partnership
Somerset Local Authority
Trafford Local Authority
Trafford Complex Health and Disabilities Team
Treehouse
Wolverhampton Local Authority

Together with other members of the Lamb Reference Group and the members of the Expert Adviser Group.

## Annex 3 'Life Pathways' or 'Information Pathways' Model by AFASIC

Below is an early illustration of the conceptual model for a life / information pathway suggested by AFASIC.

| | **General** - all children. Involvement with general professionals only. | **Intermediate -** children where a concern expressed or mild/transient need(s) identified. Specialists may be involved briefly or on an advisory basis. | **High Level of Need** - children who need direct involvement of at least one specialist. All professionals involved (general and specialist) to be part of team, together with child and parents. Child to receive personalised and tailored programme of intervention/ support co-ordinated by 'lead professional'. Some children may require tertiary referrals/highly specialised placements - possibly an additional Category? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Info for Child** | - what happens next<br>- what they can expect to learn<br>- how to make the most of this stage<br>Info likely to be mainly in leaflets, but also through meetings/discussions etc. Info delivered by/through general professionals | - what intervention is being offered<br>- why it is being offered<br>- what it is working on<br>- how it will help child<br>- how child can practice and derive most benefit from intervention. Info likely to be delivered by general | Similar info to intermediate level. Child needs so far as possible to part of 'the team'. Info to be delivered primarily through team discussions under direction of lead professional, reinforced as and when appropriate |

# Annex 4: Confidence in Public Services: Evidence from studies and articles on confidence in public services

**March 2009**

**Lindy Peacey and Nick Peacey**

## Introduction

This brief review of the evidence has been compiled in response to a request from the Capita team working on information issues within the Lamb Inquiry. It makes no claims to being comprehensive but has been sufficiently detailed to allow some certainty that the most significant issues have been picked up.

## Definitions: confidence and allied terms

Most authors use confidence and related terms, explicitly or implicitly, within some sort of hierarchy relating to evidence. This seems often to be based on the work of Hart (Hart 2000).

Confidence: having trust in something based on strong evidence [but not necessarily experienced first hand?]
Trust: based on limited evidence
Faith: requires no evidence, unquestioning acceptance
Satisfaction: something is adequate, acceptable, fulfils needs [possible only through personal experience?]
'Satisfaction with services' is far more frequently explored in the literature than 'confidence in services'.
'Confidence' is also explored in some very specific ways in 'service literature'. For example, in studies related to the police, it is frequently discussed largely in terms of community and diversity.

## Who are the public for these services and what do they expect?

The knowledge and expectations of service users may influence their interpretation and understanding of the service. For example, levels of expectation of a service may influence levels of confidence. High expectations that are not met or low expectations that are exceeded may lead to decreases or increases of confidence (James 2009).
The Office of National Statistics (ONS 2005) notes that there are many different levels of understanding of statistics among the public (and their users who comprise different groups). An individual's existing knowledge of a subject or a service may affect their understanding and interpretation of information. This will affect their confidence in the provision and use of statistics.
The same survey (ONS 2005) noted that 56% of their respondents said they 'didn't trust other people very much'.

## Changing relationships between the public and services

Medical sociologists, for example, note that the previous relationship model of expert professional and ignorant lay person is no longer relevant and a consultation is now seen as a meeting between experts (eg. Tuckett et al 1985, cited in Nettleton 1995). Professionals have one sort of knowledge, the patient, client or parent has expert knowledge of their medical condition, their child, their personal history, etc. Parents value being listened to and being able to give their perspectives (Harrington 2006). They know what they have already tried to do. Once again, perceptions of this relationship, and the basis of the professional's authority, may affect users' attitudes to confidence in the service.

### The service and its 'brand'

The New Zealand Government (New Zealand Government 2007) has taken a 'branding' approach to build the confidence and trust in 'customers' who use services and information via its web portal. Their guidance states that any strategy must:

- reflect the values and principles of the government strategy
- specify how different components will be certified before being marketed under the brand 'New Zealand Government.'
- follow a simple easy-to-read Trust Charter.
- include a service level agreement between the NZ government portal and the agencies responsible for delivery of information via the portal.

Frost (2005) makes the observation that developing trust in a 'service brand' is less easy than achieving trust in a product brand. "Service brands are about personal interactions, and therefore involve personal rather than economic trust. For a service brand to be successful, everyone in the organization must be signed up to the brand." For this reason, many medical professions have codes of conduct and training to promote consistent practitioner standards.

A similar point might be made about the recent study of Family Information Services (DCSF 2009) which achieved a high rating for satisfaction. The FIS have a (relatively) straightforward task and this may assist their achievement of such satisfaction levels.

### The 'kitemark' as a guarantee of quality

In a similar approach to branding, the ONS has sought to develop a well-known 'kitemark' for official statistics and to provide more information on the quality and use of outputs (ONS 2005).

### The source, quality and delivery of information

ONS (2005) makes a clear distinction between the quality of information and the delivery of information. Quality of information may be good but the delivery not so good: ONS felt this was the situation in their case.

It may be helpful to distinguish further, between three related aspects that influence public confidence: the source of information, the perceived quality of the information and the method of delivery of information.

The source of information

- Issues of authority[1] and/or trust influence confidence in a source, typically, whether it is regarded as knowledgeable, authoritative and independent. Dealing

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[1] suggested definition of 'authority': influence based on recognised knowledge, expertise or reputation.

with those seen as knowledgeable professionals, eg those committed to evidence-based practice, experienced and well-trained, is valued. (Peacey 2006, DCSF 2007)

- Honesty in information givers is important. (SERSEN 2007, DCSF 2008). The perception that there are vested interests involved in giving information (leading to manipulation of information) and the perceived difficulty in collecting certain kinds of information (eg. certain statistics) will lead to distrust (ONS 2005). The involvement of service users in production can contribute to confidence in a publication (SERSEN 2007)
- The issue of authority needs to be related to Jenny Corbett's observations (Corbett, 1996) on the power relations involved in any discourse about special educational needs. For example, information from senior managers is likely to be seen as more authoritative than that from junior staff, or that from medical/psychological staff preferred over that of educational staff - for better or worse.
- Sources can also be unofficial and chance contacts, which may be seen as more accessible or trustworthy than official sources. Peacey (2006) found two parents whose best information about schools for their children came from a taxi driver and another parent met in a park.

Perceptions of front-line vs whole-service sources

A front-line source can be seen as trustworthy while a service is not trusted and vice versa. These factors are suggested as creating positive perceptions of services:

- Information that demonstrates that the service has a consistent record of success. 'Public are reassured that police are preventing and dealing with crime' (Thames Valley Police 2008)
- Knowing that a service is regularly involved in self-evaluation (DCSF 2008)
- Belief that there is no disparity between policy and everyday experience of families with disabled children (Parsons et al 2009).
- Knowing that the service has a charter and/or agreed standards of delivery and that these are inspected by an independent body (such as a regulator) (ONS 2005).
- The service should have knowledge of and good contact with other relevant services (DCSF 2007).
- Consumers have the opportunity to give feedback and contribute to further developments (SERSEN 20007).
- Links within the service can be made explicit by having clear contact details in the literature (SERSEN 2007, DCSF 2007)
- Confidence of others in the community 'Policing by consent requires the trust and confidence of their communities'(Thames Valley Police 2008)

## The quality of information

The DCSF study of parent partnership services suggests that the information they make available should be relevant, accurate, specific, clear, neutral, reviewed and updated (DCSF 2007).

SERSEN (2007) adds that information should be 'friendly', based on both local and national information, relate to different stages of a child's education and that publications should be dated and regularly reviewed.

## The delivery of information

- Many sources mention the importance of the effective communication of information with an emphasis on availability ('high visibility' in Metropolitan Police Service terms) and accessibility
- Individuals' perceived helpfulness (Metropolitan Police Service 2008) has a significant effect [a professional development issue]
- Different forms of delivery, such as face-to-face, telephone, website, etc. may need to be available to different individuals. (eg. DCSF 2009). Thames Valley Police (2008) emphasises a 'personalised' approach to policing.
- Written information may be perceived as too much, too little, not relevant to the moment or inappropriate. So it is often necessary to have several forms of information available and to be able to supplement this with responses to specific questions. The latter interaction often needs to be of a question-and-answer type to respond to specific difficulties, situations, and to continue over a period of time, etc (eg. SERSEN 2007). Often face-to-face meetings are the preferred channel for this, if possible with a known or recommended local person (who knows what is available in the area) (Peacey 2006).
- Transparency of information-giving procedures is valued (SERSEN 2007, DCSF 2008). This may include response times and published complaints procedures (Ofqual 2008).
- Systems need to allow ongoing interactions as new questions arise (SERSEN 2007). Parent Support Advisors, for example, are likely to be more easily accessible to parents than other school staff and have more time to help sort out concerns, although their limited expertise may be an issue (Lindsay 2007).

**The move from confidence to dis/satisfaction: the experience of a service or school**

- Appropriate and timely recognition of a child's needs by professionals is essential (Harrington et al 2006, Roulstone and Ayre, 2008)
- Knowledge and understanding of staff about a child's difficulties and needs the willingness of the service/school to listen to their views and respond flexibly are key issues (Parsons et al 2009)
- Parental beliefs eg about alternative treatments, are important for their confidence in a professional's approach to concerns about a child.
  'Physicians should inquire about parental beliefs about aetiology and treatments.' (Harrington et al 2006)
- Contradiction or confirmation of expectations, through an individual's own experience of a service, will [inevitably?] affect their confidence in it (James 2009, ONS 2005).
- Moves, where necessary, on to specialist resources are appropriate and the more specialised services are available (Roulstone and Ayre, 2008)

## Annex 5: Data from Consultations

### *A5.1 Initial Consultation*

*Responses*

A total of 197 completed parental questionnaires were received by the end of March 2009. 176 of these were via reference group organisations and the remainder from RNIB and NDCS. Most respondents were female.

**Table 1: Gender of respondent**

| | |
|---|---|
| Female | 174 |
| Male | 18 |
| Both parents | 1 |
| No answer | 4 |
| **Total** | **197** |

*Children's characteristics:*

156 (71%) of the children are male and 63 (29%) are female. (2 not stated)

53% of the children are of primary school age and 43% secondary school age. There are 12 in the pre-school age and 10 post-16.

There is a higher number of girls than boys in the pre-school age group but considerably higher numbers of boys than girls in all the other age groups.

There were 27 sibling groups all with SEN/disability.

While a majority of children were described by respondents as "White British" (64%), a wide range of other ethnic groups and mixed heritage are represented. (NB Respondents were able to use their own terminology – no classification was supplied.)

**Table 2: Age Group by Gender**

| | **M** | | **F** | | **Total** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| Pre-school | 6 | 4 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 6.8 |
| Primary | 63 | 40 | 26 | 41 | 90** | 40.7 |
| Secondary | 65 | 42 | 24 | 38 | 89 | 40.3 |
| Post 16 | 22 | 14 | 4 | 6 | 26 | 11.8 |
| No answer | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.5 |
| **TOTAL** | **156** | **100** | **63** | **100** | **221** | **100** |

* age group & gender not stated ** incl. 2 gender – no answer

**TABLE 3: Siblings Groups with SEN/Disability**

| | |
|---|---|
| Single child | 170 |
| Two siblings | 25 |
| Three siblings | 2 |
| **Total families** | **197** |
| **Total children** | **221** |

**Table 4: Children's Ethnicity**

| | No of children |
|---|---|
| Black African | 4 |
| British Asian | 1 |
| Black British | 1 |
| British | 24 |
| British / Maori | 1 |
| British Muslim | 1 |
| British Pakistani | 1 |
| Caribbean | 1 |
| Chinese | 1 |
| Dual heritage | 1 |
| English | 6 |
| English/European | 2 |
| English/White Caribbean | 1 |
| Jewish | 1 |
| No answer | 4 |
| Other Asian British | 1 |
| Pakistani Asian British | 1 |
| South African/English | 1 |
| UK/Turkish Cypriot | 1 |
| White | 11 |
| White/African | 1 |
| White/Arab | 1 |
| White/Asian | 1 |
| White British | 142 (64%) |
| White British/European | 1 |
| White British/Irish | 1 |
| White European | 5 |
| White, British, Jewish | 1 |
| White/Afro-caribbean | 1 |
| White/Black Caribbean | 2 |
| Total | 221 |

**Table 4: Child's Primary Need**

| First stated need | | Other stated needs |
|---|---|---|
| ASD (incl. 3 female) | 42 | (2+Aspergers; 2+ADHD; 2+ADHD+Dyspraxia;<br>2+Challenging behaviour; 1+LD; 1+modLD;<br>1+dyslexia; 1+ Speech & Language + Dyslexia;<br>1+visual impairment;1+LD;<br>1+ Lennox Gaustaut Syndrome) |
| Aspergers (incl 1. female) | 12 | (1+ASD; 1+ visual impairment & epilepsy;<br>1+Dyslexia; 1+Dyslexia & Dyspraxia;<br>1+Dyslexia & Dyscalculia) |
| Cerebral Palsy (incl 6 female) | 16 | (4+spastic quadriplegia;1+epilepsy;1+LD;<br>1+ Dual Sensory impairment/no expressive speech) |
| Downs syndrome | 11 | (1+ Multi sensory impaired |
| ADHD | 3 | (1+Aspergers; 1+Aspergers & Dyslexia<br>1+High functioning autism) |
| Deaf | 5 | (1+ language processing problems) |
| Blind/Visual | 16 | (1+congenital heart defect; 1+ADHD) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Deaf/Blind | 2 | (1+CHARGE syndrome/severe learning difficulties) |
| moderate hearing loss | 1 | |
| Severe LD | 4 | (1+ profoundly deaf & ADHD; 1+autism;1+deaf) |
| LD | 3 | (1+ASD & ADHD; 1+behaviour & autism) |
| Albinism | 3 | (3+ Nystagmus – siblings) |
| Multiple/profound | 4 | |
| Physical/Learning | 2 | |
| SEN | 3 | |
| Dyslexia | 68 | (6+Dyspraxia; 1+Dyspraxia+ADD; 1+ ADHD 1+Incontinence+Dyspraxia; +ADD+Aspergers;) |
| Dyspraxia | 8 | (1+Dyslexia; 1 + Social Communication Disorder; 1+ADHD; 1+ expressive language disorder+developmental delay) |
| Dyscalculia | 1 | (1+Dyslexia) |
| Tourrette's Syndrome | 1 | (1+Dyslexia+Anxiety Stress Disorder) |
| Specific language impairment | 1 | (+ severe epilepsy) |
| Speech and Language | 2 | (+ some motor; 1+ hearing)) |
| Auditory memory LD | 1 | |
| TSC/CP | 1 | |
| Partial sight | 2 | (1+nystagmus/periventricular lukomalacia/low muscle tone) |
| Visual/perceptual | 3 | (1+Dyslexia) |
| Care & Education | 1 | |
| Focus and concentration | 1 | |
| Polymicrogyria | 1 | |
| Total dependency | 1 | |
| Communication difficulties | 1 | |
| **Total stated** | **220** | |
| Not stated | 1 | |

**Table 5: Primary Need by Age Group**

| First stated need | Pre-school | Primary | Secondary | Post-16 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ASD | 1 | 24 | 12 | 3 | 40 |
| Aspergers | | 6 | 6 | | 12 |
| Cerebral Palsy | 2 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 18 |
| TSC/CP | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Downs syndrome | 7 | 4 | | | 11 |
| ADHD | | 1 | 2 | | 3 |
| Deaf | | 3 | 2 | | 5 |
| Moderate hearing loss | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Blind/Visual | 2 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 16 |
| Deaf/Blind | | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Partial sight | | | 2 | | 2 |
| Severe Learning Difficulties | | | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Learning Difficulties | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 3 |
| Auditory Memory LD | | | 1 | | 1 |
| SEN | | 1 | 2 | | 3 |
| Multiple/profound | | | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Albinism/Nystagmus | | | 3 | | 3 |
| Physical/Learning | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| Dyslexia | | 28 | 32 | 10 | 68 |
| Dyspraxia | | 1 | 5 | | 8 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dyscalculia | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Tourette’s syndrome | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Specific language impairment | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Speech and Language | 1 | 1 | | | 2 |
| Visual/perceptual | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 3 |
| Focus and concentration | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Care & Education | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Polymicrogyria | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Total dependency | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Communication difficulties | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Unknown | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Total | 15 | 89 | 91 | 26 | 221 |

*Responses to Questions on Information*

Q1. Can you find the information you need about support for your child easily?

| | **No.** | **%** |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 53 | 27 |
| Yes via professionals | 2 | 1 |
| Variable* | 9 | 5 |
| Mostly via word of mouth | 1 | 1 |
| No | 131 | 66 |
| No answer | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 197 | 100 |

* Sometimes, varies, etc

Q2. Which ways do you prefer to receive information **easily when you want it**?
(eg *leaflets, websites, telephone, text, email, face-to-face)

**First listed preferred way to receive information**

| **First listed** | **No.** | **%** |
|---|---|---|
| Face to Face | 47 | 23.9 |
| Email | 43 | 21.8 |
| Leaflets | 31 | 15.7 |
| Websites | 31 | 15.7 |
| All ways | 19 | 9.6 |
| Telephone | 10 | 5.1 |
| Texts | 3 | 1.5 |
| Letters | 3 | 1.5 |
| Written | 2 | 1.0 |
| All* except websites | 1 | 0.5 |
| All* except texts | 1 | 0.5 |
| All* except websites and texts | 1 | 0.5 |
| All* + Library | 1 | 0.5 |
| On request | 1 | 0.5 |
| One stop clinics (if existed) | 1 | 0.5 |
| Training courses | 1 | 0.5 |
| No answer | 1 | 0.5 |
| Total | 197 | 100.0 |

**Second listed by first listed** (where applicable)

| **First listed** | **2nd listed** | **No** | **%** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Face to Face (47) | Email | 13 | 28 |
| | None | 13 | 28 |
| | Telephone | 8 | 17 |
| | Websites | 5 | 11 |
| | Leaflets | 4 | 9 |
| | All other | 2 | 4 |
| | Home/school book | 1 | 2 |
| | Written | 1 | 2 |
| Email (43) | Websites | 13 | 30 |
| | None | 12 | 28 |
| | Telephone | 7 | 16 |
| | Face to face | 5 | 12 |
| | Leaflets | 4 | 9 |
| | Letters | 1 | 2 |
| | School meetings | 1 | 2 |
| Leaflets (31) | Websites | 15 | 48 |
| | Email | 7 | 23 |
| | None | 3 | 10 |
| | Face to face | 2 | 6 |
| | Telephone | 2 | 6 |
| | Letters | 1 | 3 |
| | Handouts | 1 | 3 |
| Websites (31) | Face to face | 12 | 39 |
| | Email | 11 | 35 |
| | Telephone | 4 | 13 |
| | Leaflets | 3 | 10 |
| | Wider advertising | 1 | 3 |
| Telephone (10) | Face to face | 3 | 30 |
| | Leaflets | 2 | 20 |
| | Websites | 3 | 30 |
| | Email | 1 | 10 |
| Texts (3) | Face to face | 1 | 33 |
| | Telephone | 1 | 33 |
| | Email | 1 | 33 |
| Letters (3) | Face to face | 2 | 67 |
| | Websites | 1 | 33 |
| Written (2) | Face to face | 2 | 100 |
| One stop clinics (if existed) | Helpline | 1 | 100 |
| Training courses | Email | 1 | 100 |

Observations:

- Some people are comfortable with variety of ways
- Face to face most popular but overall preference for written forms (paper or electronic) over oral
- Preference for electronic forms (websites/email)
- Low expectation of initial Face to Face information

Q3. Which ways to receive information do you think give you **more useful** information?

**First listed preferred way to receive information**

| **First listed** | **No.** | **%** |
|---|---|---|
| Face to Face | 61 | 31.0 |
| Websites | 32 | 16.2 |
| Email | 30 | 15.2 |
| Leaflets | 19 | 9.6 |
| All ways | 13 | 6.6 |
| Telephone | 10 | 5.1 |
| Other parents | 6 | 3.0 |
| Written | 6 | 3.0 |
| Training courses/workshops | 4 | 2.0 |
| Parent meetings/Consultations | 2 | 2.0 |
| Letters | 1 | 0.5 |
| School | 1 | 0.5 |
| Via social workers | 1 | 0.5 |
| Informed teacher | 1 | 0.5 |
| Solicitor | 1 | 0.5 |
| Independent websites | 1 | 0.5 |
| All except websites but incl. Braille | 1 | 0.5 |
| Ways suitable for parent with dyslexia | 1 | 0.5 |
| Very little available - no proactive information | 1 | 0.5 |
| No answer | 5 | |
| Total | 197 | 100.0 |

Observations:

- Face to face (oral) and emails/websites (written) provide detail
- Face to face, some websites and email offer interaction (ie Q & A)

**Second listed by first listed**

| **First listed** | **2nd listed** | **No** | **%** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Face to Face (61) | None | 37 | 61 |
| | Telephone | 5 | 8 |
| | Email | 5 | 8 |
| | Leaflets | 4 | 7 |
| | Websites | 3 | 5 |
| | Other parents | 3 | 5 |
| | Written | 2 | 3 |
| | Handouts | 1 | 2 |
| | Letters | 1 | 2 |
| Websites (32) | None | 16 | 50 |
| | Face to face | 5 | 16 |
| | Leaflets | 5 | 16 |
| | Email | 3 | 9 |
| | Other parents | 1 | 3 |
| | Course | 1 | 3 |
| | Telephone | 1 | 3 |
| Email (30) | None | 8 | 27 |
| | Websites | 6 | 20 |
| | Face to face | 5 | 17 |
| | Telephone | 4 | 13 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Leaflets | 3 | 10 |
| | Bulletins | 1 | 3 |
| | School meetings | 1 | 3 |
| Leaflets (19) | None | 8 | 42 |
| | Websites | 5 | 26 |
| | Face to face | 2 | 11 |
| | Telephone | 1 | 5 |
| | Email | 1 | 5 |
| | Handouts | 1 | 5 |
| | Handbooks | 1 | 5 |
| Telephone (10) | Face to face | 5 | 50 |
| | Email | 3 | 30 |
| | Telephone | 1 | 10 |
| | Websites | 1 | 10 |
| Other parents (6) | None | 2 | 33 |
| | Voluntary Orgs | 2 | 33 |
| | Legal | 1 | 16 |
| | Workshops | 1 | 16 |
| Written (6) | None | 4 | 67 |
| | Face to face | 2 | 33 |
| Training courses/Workshops (4) | None | 2 | 50 |
| | Information packs | 1 | 25 |
| | Email | 1 | 25 |
| Parent meetings/Consultations (2) | None | 2 | 100 |
| Letters | Telephone | 1 | 100 |
| Independent websites | Code of Practice | 1 | 100 |
| Via Social Workers | None | 1 | 100 |

Respondents much clearer preference for <u>useful</u> ways, many just a single way ("None" for "2$^{nd}$ listed" came top for second preference for all first preference types).

Q4 Which information have you found the hardest to find?

| **Type of information hard to find:** | **No.** | **%** |
|---|---|---|
| Educational entitlements and school provision | 32 | 21 |
| Several services/services generally/who does what | 27 | 18 |
| Assessment for special educational needs and Statementing | 17 | 11 |
| Support generally | 17 | 11 |
| Disability-specific advice and support/equipment | 15 | 10 |
| Funding and benefits | 10 | 7 |
| Usefulness of specific formats (1email;2websites;4face to face;1handbook) | 8 | 5 |
| Clubs and activities | 5 | 3 |
| Independent sources of help/services | 4 | 3 |
| Transition | 2 | 1 |
| Practical help | 2 | 1 |
| Rights and appeals (non-statement related) | 2 | 1 |
| Future residential provision | 2 | 1 |
| Health | 1 | 1 |
| Local support groups | 1 | 1 |
| Accessibility (venues) | 1 | 1 |
| One to one support at school - cover for leave | 1 | 1 |
| Feeding | 1 | 1 |
| Respite care | 1 | 1 |

|  |  |  |
|---|---|---|
| **Total responses** | **149** | 100 |

Q5 Are there examples of formats or types of information that you have found particularly unhelpful or hard to use?

| **Format /type of information found particularly unhelpful/hard to use** | **No. of responses** | **%** |
|---|---|---|
| Inappropriate or too general/simplistic | 11 | 10 |
| Websites (Content/accuracy/ease of use/use by visually impaired, dyslexic) | 10 | 9 |
| Jargon/legal or official language | 10 | 9 |
| Any information (ie lack of information) | 10 | 9 |
| Leaflets (Content/quality/accuracy/use by visually impaired) | 9 | 8 |
| Statement-related (Complexity, unhelpfulness or lack) | 8 | 7 |
| Volume of paper information | 6 | 6 |
| Professional reports (1 General; 4 Educational Psychologist) | 5 | 5 |
| Small fonts/print layout | 4 | 4 |
| Government/Benefit forms | 3 | 3 |
| Telephone advice | 3 | 3 |
| LA’s SEN Policy | 3 | 3 |
| Integrated information: in/out of area; all services | 2 | 2 |
| IEP Plan/Targets | 2 | 2 |
| SEN Code of Practice | 2 | 2 |
| Printed material – poor visual contrast/not dyslexia friendly | 2 | 2 |
| SATS results/school grades for underachieving child/child with problem | 2 | 2 |
| Unclear | 2 | 2 |
| Untrue | 2 | 2 |
| DDA information | 1 | 1 |
| Parent Partnership meetings very distant | 1 | 1 |
| DVD or CD (length) | 1 | 1 |
| HMRC website (VAT exemption) | 1 | 1 |
| School computer dyslexia diagnostic programme | 1 | 1 |
| School white boards | 1 | 1 |
| Parent consultations | 1 | 1 |
| Books | 1 | 1 |
| “Off the record” professional remarks | 1 | 1 |
| Oral information (Deaf respondent) | 1 | 1 |
| Information when no specific diagnosis | 1 | 1 |
| **Total Specific Responses** | **107(73%)** | **100** |
| No (ie no formats/types found unhelpful or hard to use) | 39 (27%) |  |
| Total Responses | 146 |  |

Q6 What types information do you / would you find most useful?

Some parents regarded all the types of information as of equal importance at least at some stage in their child’s development.

Most parents did rank the types of information and the child’s progress in developing independence and self-esteem was most important by 52/158 (33%) of parents and ranked highest overall amongst all the parents.

Parents of children with disabling and physical health conditions frequently ranked the child’s health as most important but overall academic progress and service information were ranked higher amongst the whole group of parents.

Policies and procedures were most important to only a few parents and were ranked last overall

**Type of information**

| | **Number ranked first** | **Number ranked last** | **Average ranking*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| How child is progressing in independence / self esteem | 52 | 4 | 2.60 |
| How child is progressing academically | 33 | 5 | 3.21 |
| Services | 20 | 5 | 3.83 |
| Child's health | 19 | 23 | 4.22 |
| Behaviour / experience of bullying | 7 | 26 | 4.52 |
| Policies and procedures | 14 | 46 | 4.93 |
| Activities / facilities | 5 | 45 | 5.13 |

* NB This is an estimate as a minority of respondents did not rank all items.

Q7 Describe an occasion when you wanted information.

**Difficulty in obtaining information**

| **Information Provider** | **Difficulty** | **No.** |
|---|---|---|
| **All local services/ professionals** | Lack of social and activities information | 3 |
| | How to get support with Statement | 2 |
| | Obtaining information due to lack of coordination | 1 |
| | Uncertainty due to unclear policy/procedure | 1 |
| | No central point for information | 1 |
| | Sympathy but no actual help | 1 |
| | Being told several different things | 1 |
| | Limited information and never visited | 1 |
| | Lack of out-of-hours service for full-time workers | 1 |
| | **Total** | **12** |
| **Local Authority** | Unhelpful/inadequate advice | 9 |
| | Long delay and chasing required | 8 |
| | No information response | 5 |
| | Lack of flexible response | 4 |
| | Difficult/unhelpful website | 4 |
| | Vague response | 1 |
| | **Total** | **31** |
| **School** | Poor information support | 12 |
| | Not informing parent | 10 |
| | Poor staff training/knowledge | 5 |
| | Unhelpful/unwilling to help | 4 |
| | Not accessibility aware | 3 |
| | Not understood | 1 |
| | Delay | 1 |
| | Difficult website | 1 |
| | **Total** | **37** |
| **SENCO** | Not informing parent | 6 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Not linking to other professionals | 1 |
| | Not ensuring parent aware of key process | 1 |
| | **Total** | **8** |
| **Voluntary Organisations** | Poor information support | 2 |
| | Telephone usually engaged; brief advice | 1 |
| | Advocates not available locally | 1 |
| | No response to email | 1 |
| | Summer schemes not arranged in time to arrange support | 1 |
| | **Total** | **6** |
| **Educational Psychologist** | Poor information support | 3 |
| | Not keeping appointment | 1 |
| | Not ensuring parent aware of key process | 1 |
| | **Total** | **5** |
| **Social Services/ Workers** | Limited support/availability | **4** |
| **NHS** | Misunderstanding and delay | 1 |
| | Lack of information | 1 |
| | Long delay and chasing required | 1 |
| | Incorrect information | 1 |
| | **Total** | **4** |
| **SENDIST** | Volume, complexity and dyslexia unfriendly paperwork | 1 |
| | Poor information support | 1 |
| | **Total** | **2** |
| **Parent Partnership Service** | Poor information support | 1 |
| **DWP** | Incorrect information and lack of response to inquiry | 1 |
| **CAMHS** | Lack of timely, correct information | 1 |
| | Unhelpful and out of time | 1 |
| **Partners course** | Useful but complex | 1 |
| **Garages** | Conflicting information on VAT free cars | 1 |

**TOTAL 115**

Q8 Parents' suggestions for improvements. (main points)

| **Type of improvement suggested** | **No.** |
|---|---|
| Disability-specific leaflets/guides | 13 |
| Independent source of advice | 10 |
| List of resources | 7 |
| Early information support when reason for difficulties unclear | 7 |
| Keyworker | 6 |
| Initial information pack (tailored) | 5 |
| Initial face to face contact | 5 |
| Integrated local information | 5 |
| Simpler, easier to access, systems/templates | 4 |
| Accessible formats | 4 |
| Clear, up-to-date, 'parent-friendly' information/websites | 4 |
| Transition information pack/DVD | 4 |
| Regular information on child's progress | 4 |
| Local information support at school | 4 |

| | |
|---|---|
| One website/local website | 3 |
| Support groups | 3 |
| Teacher training on commoner educational needs | 3 |
| Parents at meetings/reviews | 2 |
| Service and schools directory / online | 2 |
| Jargon-free | 2 |
| Clear funding information | 2 |
| Information for parents on how to support child into/at school | 2 |
| Information for all primary school parents on commoner educational needs | 2 |
| Telephone advice line | 1 |
| Use of mass media and ’soaps’ | 1 |
| Timely information | 1 |
| Folders for paperwork | 1 |
| Out of hours information | 1 |
| Lots of formats | 1 |
| Parents recognized as hub of information | 1 |
| Two-way information (with parent) | 1 |
| Online communities | 1 |
| Life stage workshops | 1 |
| Care plan | 1 |
| Quicker appointments | 1 |
| Holiday activities information | 1 |
| Good practice information for parents | 1 |
| Proactive information | 1 |
| School protocol of timeframes/targets for particular educational needs | 1 |
| Email parent consultation | 1 |
| More SENCO training | 1 |
| Termly progress meetings | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **121** |

## A5.2 Parents Responses to the Consultation on the Draft Proposals

| No | Proposal | A lot | % | A Bit | % | No Change | % | Make worse | % | No reply | Total responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | All professionals working with children should be aware of what information parents should have, and where to get it. | 217 | 87.1 | 27 | 10.8 | 4 | 1.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 249 |
| 6 | You should be given a clear description of what support will be provided by the school, the Local Authority or other agencies (Whether your child has a Statement or not). | 207 | 83.1 | 26 | 10.4 | 3 | 1.2 | 1 | 0.4 | 12 | 249 |
| 4 | Each time there is a big change (e.g. such as receiving a diagnosis, moving schools, etc) the professionals working with you and your child should consider what specific information you need and help you get it | 206 | 82.7 | 32 | 12.9 | 1 | 0.4 | 0 | 0.0 | 10 | 249 |
| 7 | You should have a clear description of how it is hoped your child will progress at school, and what provision is being made to achieve this. | 195 | 78.3 | 28 | 11.2 | 13 | 5.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 13 | 249 |
| 1 | All public documents that parents need about SEN / disabilities should be available through one web site for each Local Authority area (as well as on paper). | 188 | 75.5 | 52 | 20.9 | 6 | 2.4 | 1 | 0.4 | 2 | 249 |
| 2 | There should be a clear, short, leaflet available in every school which describes how services for SEN / disabilities work and tells you where to get more detailed information. | 180 | 72.3 | 60 | 24.1 | 8 | 3.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 249 |
| 5 | If your child has a Statement, their Annual Review should discuss whether you need any further information, and where to get it. | 164 | 65.9 | 49 | 19.7 | 14 | 5.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 22 | 249 |
| 9 | Information should be put together, and made available to you, on ‘what works’ for children with different special needs and disabilities. | 162 | 65.1 | 51 | 20.5 | 16 | 6.4 | 4 | 1.6 | 16 | 249 |
| 10 | Parents should be asked their views regularly about how well services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities are doing, and the results published. | 78 | 57.8 | 47 | 34.8 | 8 | 5.9 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 135* |
| 8 | You should have clear information on how your child’s progress compares to similar children nationally. | 119 | 47.8 | 65 | 26.1 | 43 | 17.3 | 9 | 3.6 | 13 | 249 |

* Question 10 omitted in error in Dyslexia networks online form

## Parents’ comments/suggestions for improvements

### Making information easier to find

| Type of improvement suggested | No. |
|---|---|
| A person | 7 |
| Integrated local information | 4 |
| School information pack | 3 |
| Training for teachers/SENCOs/SEN staff | 3 |
| Clear, up-to-date, ‘parent-friendly’ information | 2 |
| One stop shop | 2 |
| Parents meetings/seminars at school | 2 |
| Independent source of advice | 1 |
| List of resources | 1 |
| Accessible formats | 1 |
| Local information support at school | 1 |
| Support groups | 1 |
| Jargon-free | 1 |
| Lots of formats | 1 |
| Online communities | 1 |
| Stands for school events | 1 |
| Contacts lists at Annual Reviews | 1 |
| Services information with DLA claim pack | 1 |
| SENCO to distribute packs | 1 |
| Progress diagrams, with timescales | 1 |
| Libraries to have packs | 1 |
| School leaflet for all parents | 1 |
| Tailored initial information | 1 |
| Multi-disciplinary training incl. Health | 1 |
| Specific helplines | 1 |
| Early Years settings to have packs | 1 |
| Multiple languages | 1 |
| Posters in schools | 1 |
| Copies of documents before meetings | 1 |
| TV and newspaper adverts | 1 |
| Information at Citizens Advice Bureau | 1 |
| Information at GP surgeries | 1 |

### Making information more relevant for your needs

| Type of improvement suggested | No. |
|---|---|
| Clear and concise information | 3 |
| Local support groups/charities | 3 |
| Teachers/professionals up to date/able to signpost | 3 |
| Integrated information (health/education/etc) | 2 |
| Timely information | 2 |
| Parent access to child’s record/work for Annual Review/Minutes | 2 |
| Clearer more useable LA websites | 2 |
| Annual review 'Check list' – health/social/education/benefits – what to do | 2 |
| Sufficient time at Annual Review or separate Information session | 2 |
| Early assessment | 1 |
| Early access to information | 1 |
| Child specific | 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Support offered (ie request not essential) | 1 |
| Less paperwork, more talk | 1 |
| Better communication (Health consultant) | 1 |
| Up to date information | 1 |
| Explanation | 1 |
| Online forum | 1 |
| Parent-buddies | 1 |
| Making new school visits easier | 1 |
| One stop helpline | 1 |
| Parents included in professional information exchange | 1 |
| Qualified Teacher as SENCO (rather than TA) | 1 |
| LA responsible rather than school | 1 |
| Attendance of non-school staff at Annual Review | 1 |
| Email/text alerts to website changes | 1 |
| Get all professions relevant in one room! (with parents) | 1 |
| Information at diagnosis | 1 |
| Professional transparency | 1 |
| Websites rather than leaflets as more up to date | 1 |
| Funded parental courses | 1 |
| Cooperation between LAs when child moving | 1 |
| Training Connexions staff | 1 |
| Information on ‘alternative therapies’ | 1 |
| Searchable database of Special schools and units | 1 |
| Government funded parent support helplines | 1 |
| Any kind of advice or help | 1 |

**Making information about support for your child clearer.**

| **Type of improvement suggested** | **No.** |
|---|---|
| Recognition each child is different – (individual tailoring) | 15 |
| Clear plans/timetables of service | 3 |
| Other services/support that could help | 3 |
| Continuity of service/personnel (to achieve consistency) | 2 |
| Social/communication progress as well as just academic results | 2 |
| Qualifications/experience/training of teaching staff to meet specific needs | 2 |
| LA-wide forum (blog or monthly newsletter) | 1 |
| Multiple formats | 1 |
| Access to practices with better results | 1 |
| Sharing of good practice between schools (especially mainstream) | 1 |
| Include support for private school pupils | 1 |
| Detail of what child can expect and actually receives | 1 |
| Focus on progress and provision | 1 |
| Not displaying IEPs on walls | 1 |
| School honesty in the type of provision they can/will provide. | 1 |
| Non-comparative information to avoid possible negative effects | 1 |
| What to expect academically | 1 |
| More personal support at diagnosis | 1 |
| Comparative information *only* for children with same condition | 1 |
| Greater transparency on provision/Means of redress for non-provision | 1 |
| A single LA website | 1 |
| SEN Code of Practice provided | 1 |
| Use of absolute rather than vague language | 1 |
| Recognition of attainment systems inadequacy/vagueness (eg ‘p’ scales) | 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| How to assess one's child's performance, how it can improve and help needed | 1 |
| One place to find information | 1 |
| Any information on what support is available would be welcome | 1 |
| How to find information on secondary education provision | 1 |
| More parents workshops and school meetings | 1 |
| Integrated information (health/education/etc) | 1 |
| Homework books being a *two-way* process | 1 |
| Parents being informed who the SENCO is | 1 |
| What to do and what not to do, at home. | 1 |
| Full and frank discussion about what could work for my child | 1 |
| Independent monitoring of provision against Statements | 1 |
| Encouragement to accept provision | 1 |
| Schools required to liaise with parents/ inform on available support | 1 |
| Accurate information about a child's progress | 1 |
| School pack (comprehensive) | 1 |

**Information on how well services are doing**

| **Type of improvement suggested** | **No.** |
|---|---|
| Seek and take account of parent feedback – views and experience | 4 |
| LA staff training on SEN provision | 2 |
| Professionals taking responsibility | 2 |
| Information be passed between services/schools; across borders | 2 |
| Early intervention/information | 2 |
| Prefer resources be put into providing services | 2 |
| Qualifications/experience/training of teaching staff as OFSTED reports do not reflect school ability with SEN | 1 |
| Sharing of any good practices | 1 |
| Two organisations:one to assess child/issue Statements; one to fund | 1 |
| Services to be consistent | 1 |
| Honest information | 1 |
| Positive information | 1 |
| Team around the child is an excellent idea | 1 |
| Parent partnership helpful putting together information for statement | 1 |
| Not ignoring parental submissions to Annual Reviews | 1 |
| An ombudsman | 1 |
| Provision and need on a more equal footing | 1 |
| Information per local LA and not nationwide. | 1 |
| Legal requirement to make improvements/action recommendations | 1 |
| Assessment of parents views in sensible forums | 1 |
| Parents don't even know what services are available let alone how well they are doing! | 1 |
| Statistics don't always reflect individual experience! | 1 |
| Find way of protecting use of targets that measure a service that is using its resources to deliver rather fudging to make it look like it's delivering. | 1 |
| Need reassurance that services are being well-provided; More therapists. | 1 |
| Good to see how LAs compare on delivery of services/no of SENs/ Tribunals, etc. | 1 |

## Annex 6: Information Requirements From Schools and Local Authorities.

### *Information from Schools*

The requirements for schools to publish information in relation to SEN are set out in the schedules to the 1999 Act for SEN, and are broken down into requirements on:

- All maintained schools
- All maintained special schools
- Special schools in hospitals

The information required is largely policy and procedural in nature, and can be summarised as:

*All maintained schools:*

- Basic information about provision, including:
    - Governing Body objectives (re SEN learners)
    - How Governing Body policies contribute to meeting objectives
    - Name of person responsible for day to day coordination of SEN provision
    - Arrangements for co-ordinating provision
    - Admission arrangements (school action and action plus), if different from other pupils.
    - Any specialised provision
    - Facilities for SEN and disabled pupils.

- Policies for identification, assessment and provision for SEN pupils
    - How resources are allocated
    - How SEN is identified, needs determined and reviewed
    - Securing access to a balanced and broad curriculum
    - How SEN learners engage in activities of the school
    - How GB evaluates provision for SEN learners
    - Arrangements for handling complaints

- Staffing policies and partnership working
    - Arrangements for INSET re SEN
    - Use of external facilities, teachers and support services
    - The role of parents
    - Links to other schools and transition arrangements.
    - Links to child health, social care and education welfare, and any voluntary organisations working on behalf of children with SEN

*All Special Schools:*

There is considerable similarity in the requirements on Special Schools and all Maintained Schools.

- Basic information, including:
    - Governing Body objectives, and how policies contribute to achieving them
    - Type of SEN provision made at the school
    - Facilities at the school, including those to support disabled access.
    - Policies for assessment and provision of SEN (note not identification)

    - Allocation of resources
    - Access to a broad and balanced curriculum
    - How the Governing Body evaluates provision
    - Handling complaints

- Staffing policies and partnership working
    - Inset re: SEN
    - Use of teachers and facilities outside the school and links with support services
    - The role of parents
    - Links with other schools and transition arrangements
    - Links to child health, social care and education welfare, and any voluntary organisations working on behalf of children with SEN

*Special Schools in Hospitals:*

The range required is more limited, but also contains some additional elements:

- Name of person responsible for co-ordinating day to day provision for SEN learners
- How pupils with SEN are identified, their needs determined and reviewed
- Resource allocation
- How the contents of a statement are ascertained and made known to staff (Note: this is specific to Hospital Special Schools)
- Arrangements for continuity of educational provision, differentiated where necessary between long and short stay patients (Note: this is specific to Hospital Special Schools)
- Arrangements for accessing a broad and balanced curriculum
- Use of teachers and facilities outside the school, and links to support services

*Publication*
The information should be in a single document provided free of charge to parents (including prospective parents), the LA and the District Health Authority (and their successor bodies) who request a copy either at the school or by post.

The information can be published by the LA on behalf of the school, however there is no requirement for schools to publish information on web sites or via other electronic media.

As public bodies, all schools are required to publish a Disability Equality Scheme, setting out how the school meets its general duty with regard to the DDA

## ***Information from Local Authorities***

As public bodies, all Local Authorities are required to publish a Disability Equality Scheme, setting out how they meet the general duty with regard to the DDA.

The requirements set out in the 2001 Regulations can be summarised as:

- What provision should be met from school budget shares, and what from centrally retained funding (Action and Action Plus)
- Broad policy aims and actions being taken regarding provision for children with SEN re:
    - Promoting high standards

    - Encouraging participation in the school community and taking part in decisions about their education.
    - Sharing of good practice
    - Work with statutory and voluntary bodies
- General arrangements for:
    - Identifying children with SEN
    - Monitoring admissions
    - Assessing children's special educational needs, including any local protocols
    - Making and maintaining statements (including any local protocols)
    - Supporting schools re SEN provision
    - Auditing, planning, monitoring and reviewing provision (generally and with individual children).
- Securing training and support for staff working with SEN learners in their area

The above information needs to be reviewed and updated by the LA.

*Publication:*

The information needs to be published by:

- Providing a written copy to any health authority or social services authority the LA believes has an interest
- Making it available on the internet
- Providing a written copy to any person on request. (Note the overlap with the provision from health and social care.)

Any updates need to be provided to the health authority and social care authorities previously supplied with the information, by updating the website and by notifying maintained schools in the LA's area of the revisions (electronically or by post).

Publication should be free of charge.

## Annex 7: Draft Recommendations

| No. | Recommendation |
|---|---|
| **General information about SEN policies, procedures and services** | |
| ***General information should be easy to find*** | |
| 1 | Extend the *Core Offer* for disabled children and young people to cover SEN and disabled children and young people |
| 2 | Issue guidance to strongly encourage a ‘one stop shop’ approach for Local Authorities. The guidance should include:<br>• A single portal website for all SEN and disability information in each LA, normally within a wider portal site for Family Information, bringing together information from across the full range of services and provision. The use of al drop-in centre(s) (e.g. in Libraries, Children’s Centres etc);<br>• Traditional media as well as new technology. |
| 3 | Issue guidance and examples of best practice in web structures and designing relation to SEN and disabilities to be further developed and publicised by Becta. |
| 4 | Every school should provide a simple guidance leaflet on their provision and procedures for SEN and disabled children that signposts more detailed sources of information. An exemplar of such a leaflet should be produced nationally, and LAs should assist schools by providing local examples, incorporating relevant sources of local information. |
| 5 | Update regulations for information published by schools to include a requirement for information to be published on relevant websites. This should include the Local Authority’s main portal site for information on SEN and disabilities. |
| 6 | Review guidance for LAs / FISs to ensure full use is made of signposting to relevant national sources of information on websites and other key documents. |
| ***General information should be easy to understand*** | |
| 7 | DCSF and Becta should review the extent to which national framework agreements for LAs contain sufficient capacity for specialised technical support re: accessibility of websites and translation services for minority languages. |
| 8 | Write all publications for parents to Plain English standards |
| ***General information should be relevant*** | |
| 9 | LAs should raise awareness among their staff working with parents of available resources. |
| ***The allocation of resources between schools and LA should be clear and easy to understand*** | |
| 10 | National Strategies SEN Advisory Team should develop / identify and disseminate best practice examples in which local authorities describe clearly the resources available in schools and from the local authority for meeting SEN |
| **Information about parents’ own children** | |
| ***Parents should be told the support that the school will provide what support the local authority will provide*** | |
| 11 | Subject to results of pilot projects, roll out Individual Pupil Resource Allocation type model to provide personalised provision mapping at School Action Plus and with for those with Statements. |
| 12 | Commission further development of resource allocation models to include links to outcomes and to assist schools and LAs in evaluating the impact of interventions on outcomes. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 13 | Require provision mapping for children and young people at School Action Plus and with Statements to be shared with parents by schools. |
| ***Parents should be supported to find the information they need*** | |
| 14 | LAs should review the capacity of Parent Partnerships to help parents and staff working with parents and children (e.g. SENCOs, Lead Professionals etc) access specific information relevant to individual needs and make use of this in developing individual support. (i.e. personalise the material). |
| 15 | Develop an "Information Pathway" for parents to:<br>• Set out the information needs for children with SEN/disabilities and their parents at important points in their development and relevant to their particular needs;<br>• Help practitioners understand and meet parents' information needs;<br>• Makes clear the duties of services to meet parents' information needs. |
| 16 | Annual Reviews should to consider how parents' information needs may have changed and ensure that they are met |
| 17 | Becta should issue guidance to schools to help them develop the use of on-line reporting and / or text messaging for real time communication with parents of children and young people with SEN and / or disabilities (e.g. with behavioural issues, health issues etc). |
| ***Parents should be given information on current and possible future outcomes*** | |
| 18 | Parents of all children on the SEN register, of compulsory school age, should be provided with benchmarked information on likely future outcomes in attainment in the core subjects, where comparative data is available. This would currently be from the age of seven (from KS1 outcomes projected to KS2, to KS4). |
| 19 | The Parent Held Record should hold individual data across all ECM outcome indicators that are at individual level and this data should be discussed with parents at Annual Reviews |
| 20 | The DCSF should publish for parents information on 'what works' re: interventions (e.g. on TDA, Teacher Training Resource website), with access and interpretation perhaps facilitated by Parent Partnerships. |
| **Information on how well the SEN system is working:** | |
| 21 | Consult on inclusion of text from OFSTED report regarding quality of SEN provision in Report Cards. |
| 22 | Develop NI 54 to cover SEN children and young people in addition to disabled children and young people |