



Historical note: Special Educational Needs (SEN): the system, recent reports and reviews

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****This note describes a system of provision for children with SEN which is in the process of being withdrawn, and is maintained for reference purposes. For information on the SEN system introduced from September 2014, see the Library standard note, [The reformed system for children and young people with Special Educational Needs in England](#), SN/SP/7020****

The Coalition government has announced a review of special educational needs (SEN). This Standard Note gives a brief outline of the current SEN system and recent reports on SEN, and provides background on the Coalition government's review. The note relates to England only.

Library [Research Paper 09/95](#) and Library [Standard Note SN/SP/3375](#) provide background on the previous government's policies on SEN.

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1 Background

1.1 Outline of the SEN system

A child has special educational needs (SEN) if s/he has a learning difficulty which needs special educational provision to be made.¹ The legal responsibilities of LAs and schools towards children with SEN are contained in the *Education Act 1996*, as amended. Guidance on the duties of LAs and schools is set out in the statutory *Code of Practice on the Assessment and Identification of Special Educational Needs*.²

The Code of Practice sets out a graduated approach to SEN that recognises a continuum of SEN which may require increasing action by the school. This is referred to as School Action, and, for some children, where greater involvement of external specialists is needed, School Action Plus. The latter may lead to more formal arrangements for SEN provision through a statement of SEN (see below).

In the case of School Action the school should provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum and strategies. The Code of Practice notes that the triggers for intervention through School Action could be the teacher's or others' concern, underpinned by evidence, about a child who despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area of weakness
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas
- presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum³

At School Action Plus external support services provided by the LEA and by outside agencies can provide more specialist assessments that can inform the planning and measurement of a pupil's progress, and can give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials, and in some cases provide support for particular activities. The Code of Practice notes that the triggers for School Action Plus could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support under School Action, the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age
- continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills

¹ *Education Act 1996*, section 312

² DfES 2001: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=3724>

³ Paragraphs 5.44 and 6.51 of the Code

- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme
- has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.⁴

The SEN needs of the great majority of children will be met within mainstream settings through School Action or School Action Plus, without the LEA needing to make a statutory assessment. In some cases, however, the LEA will need to make a statutory assessment of SEN and consider whether or not to issue a statement of SEN.

A statement describes the child's needs and the special provision that must be made. The *Code of Practice* sets out the detailed procedures relating to the assessment and statements of SEN. The statement identifies all the child's SEN and the arrangements needed to meet those needs, either in a mainstream school, in a community special or foundation special school, a non-maintained school or through "education otherwise". Within two weeks of deciding to make a statement, the LA must send a proposed statement to parents. The statement is in six parts, as follows.

Part 1 Personal details, including the child's name and the name and address of parents.

Part 2 Details of the child's SEN in terms of his or her learning difficulties.

Part 3 Details of the special educational provision that should be made, including the long-term objectives to be achieved, and any arrangements for setting short-term targets and monitoring progress towards those targets.

Part 4 The type and name of the school where the SEN will be met, or the arrangements for education, other than in school.

Part 5 Details of all relevant non-educational needs, as agreed between the health services, social services or other agencies and the LA.

Part 6 How the non-educational provision required to meet the needs set out in Part 5 should be met, including the objectives of the provision and arrangements for monitoring progress in meeting these objectives.

Parents can say which school in the maintained sector they prefer their child to attend. Local authorities must meet the parents' preference unless:

- the school is unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or SEN;
- the placement would affect the efficient education of other children;
- the placement would affect the efficient use of resources.

Before naming a school in a statement, the local authority must consult the governing body of that school. A governing body must admit a pupil whose statement names their school.

⁴ Paragraphs 5.56 and 6.64 of the Code

Parents can make representations for a placement outside the maintained sector. However, if there is a suitable state school, the local authority has no legal duty to spend public money on a place at a non-maintained or independent school.

Within eight weeks of issuing the proposed statement, the local authority must serve the parents with a copy of the final statement. The process of making an assessment and statement should take no longer than 26 weeks. Each statement must be reviewed at least once a year.

The then DCSF produced [Special Educational Needs \(SEN\) – A guide for Parents and Carers](#) (revised 2009), which provided a simple account of the statutory assessment arrangements and statementing process.⁵ Since the guide was issued, the *Children, Schools and Families Act 2010* introduced provision for an additional right of appeal for parents where, following a review of a statement of SEN, the local authority decides not to make any changes.

1.2 Help for parents

In addition to the advice that schools can provide for parents, there are local Parent Partnership Services (PPS), which provide neutral information on SEN provisions for parents. All PPS, wherever they are based, are at 'arm's length' from the local authority and the services they provide are confidential and impartial. The [National Parent Partnership Network website](#) provides contact details for each local PPS, and further information.

Local authorities also operate local disagreement resolution services. This service is an informal way of trying to resolve disagreements between parents who have children with SEN, and the local authority and schools. As well as informal help for resolving disputes, parents may be able to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

The [First-tier Tribunal \(Special Educational Needs and Disability\)](#) is an independent body that hears appeals against decisions made by local authorities on SEN assessments and statements. It has issued a guide for parents on [How to Appeal an SEN Decision](#). This explains when parents can appeal to the Tribunal, and how to go about making an appeal.

It is advisable for a parent who is contemplating making an appeal to the Tribunal to seek specialist/legal advice (see the paragraph below on specialist organisations).

The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) may deal with certain complaints about local authority provision for children with SEN statements. Essentially the LGO is concerned with complaints about the SEN process - for example, where the LA has failed to follow the timescale for issuing a proposed statement of SEN or where the LA has failed to ensure that certain provision, as required in a child's statement, is provided. Further details about its remit are given in an [LGO factsheet](#) on the LGO SEN complaint handling service, which notes:

The law generally prevents the Ombudsman from investigating complaints for which a remedy is available through an appeal to a statutory tribunal. This means we cannot investigate a complaint when the matter can be dealt with through an appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) (SEND)

⁵ [http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/3755/4163_A5_SEN_GUIDE_WEB\[4\].pdf](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/3755/4163_A5_SEN_GUIDE_WEB[4].pdf)

The Independent Panel for Special Education Advice (IPSEA), which is a charitable body, provides advice to families who have children with special educational needs. Details are on its website at: <http://www.ipsea.org.uk/> The IPSEA advice line is: 0800 018 4016.

There is also the Advisory Centre for Education (ACE), and more specialist bodies that provide advice and support to particular groups of people with SEN.

2 Reports

2.1 Select Committee on Children, Schools and Families

In July 2006, the Select Committee on Children, Schools and Families reported on special educational needs, and highlighted strong concerns about parents' confidence in the SEN system. Library [Standard Note SN/SP/3375](#) provides background on the Committee's report and the Labour government's response to it.

2.2 Lamb Inquiry and the Labour government's response

Part of the Labour government's response to the issues raised by the Select Committee was to ask Brian Lamb, the chair of the Special Educational Consortium, to carry out an inquiry into how parental confidence in the SEN assessment process might be improved. A series of reports was published. These were made available on the former DCSF website at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/>

The Lamb report on the [Quality and clarity of statements](#), published in August 2009, said that in the statementing process there needed to be a much tighter focus on outcomes and a much more rigorous approach to setting out objectives in a statement. The objectives needed to relate both to attainment and to wider outcomes for children. The report referred to evidence showing that annual reviews were not conducted with sufficient rigour.

At that time, if the local authority proposed an amendment to a statement following an annual review, there was a parental right of appeal but there was no right of appeal if the local authority decided not to amend a statement following an annual or interim review. The report recommended that in such cases parents should be given a right of appeal. The Labour government accepted this, and the *Children, Schools and Families Act 2010* made provision for an additional right of appeal for parents where, following a review of a statement of SEN, the local authority decides not to make any changes.

A number of other serious weaknesses in the way statements are drawn up were identified. Further issues that the report said should be addressed included: the allocation of support assistant time; the need for children attending special schools to have statements that set out tailored provision rather than just a general description of what the school offers; and support for local authority staff in describing the provision to be made in a statement.

Another report by the Lamb Inquiry, [Inspection, accountability and school improvement](#), published in August 2009, noted that the systems for inspection, accountability and school improvement had historic and structural weaknesses on SEN and disability. In an earlier report (April 2009) Brian Lamb had recommended that all School Improvement Partners should receive training on SEN and disability. The August report focussed on the inspection of schools and local authorities. The report welcomed the introduction of the new Ofsted inspection framework, with its emphasis on the quality of education offered to vulnerable pupils including disabled pupils and pupils with SEN; however, the report said that further

measures were needed. Its recommendations include placing a specific duty on Ofsted to report on the quality of the education provided for disabled children and children with SEN.

The Secretary of State's response in a letter dated 3 August 2009 accepted the recommendations, and *Children, Schools and Families Act 2010* placed a specific duty on Ofsted to report on the quality of the education provided for disabled children and children with SEN.

On 16 December 2009, Brian Lamb submitted his *Final report* on SEN and parental confidence. This proposed a package of further measures to provide a clearer focus on outcomes for children with SEN, a stronger voice for parents, and a more strategic local approach with a more accountable system. The then Labour government's *response* was set out on 16 December 2009, and included a commitment to issue an implementation plan and more help for parents to obtain independent and expert advice. Labour's *Implementation Plan* was published on 24 February 2010.

2.3 Reports on specific aspects of SEN

The following notes recent major reports on specific aspects of SEN:

- *The SALT Review: Independent Review of Teacher Supply for Pupils with Severe, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (SLD and PMLD)*. This was chaired by Toby Salt and investigated teacher supply issues relating to children with Severe Learning Difficulties and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties. The focus of the Review was on the recruitment and retention of teachers, Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD).⁶
- The *Berrow Review of Services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs*.
- Sir Jim Rose's *Report on teaching children with literacy difficulties and dyslexia*; and,
- *Aiming High for disabled children: better support for families*.

2.4 The Ofsted SEN and Disability Review 2010

The Ofsted review of SEN, *Special educational needs and disability review – a statement is not enough*, which was commissioned by the Labour government, was published on 14 September 2010. The review evaluated how well the legislative framework had served children with SEN, and reported on a range of concerns about the current system. The review covered early years, compulsory education, 16 to 19 education, and the contribution of social care and health services.

The review found that just over one in five pupils – 1.7 million school-age children in England – are identified as having special educational needs. Since 2003, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs has slightly decreased from 3% to 2.7%, while the proportion identified as needing less intensive additional support at School Action or School Action Plus has increased from 14.0% in 2003 to 18.2% in 2010. The review said that that as many as half of all pupils identified for School Action would not have been identified as having special educational needs if schools had focused on improving teaching and learning for all, with individual goals for improvement.

⁶ <http://sen.ttrb.ac.uk/ViewArticle2.aspx?contentId=16375>

The review focused on the accuracy and appropriateness of identification and assessment across settings and areas; expectations about potential; access to good educational provision and other services tailored to meet their needs; improvements in opportunities; and the progress made in preparing disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs for the future.

Although the review found that the current system was working well for some children and young people, it found widespread weaknesses in the quality of what was provided for children with SEN and evidence that the way the current system was designed contributed to the problems:

The review found that, for some children and young people, the current system is working well. In some local areas, the identification of needs was well-managed and appropriate. In some of the best examples, the non-statutory Common Assessment Framework was being used effectively to coordinate the work of a number of different organisations around the needs of a single child. Some schools and other organisations were working together and focusing on the outcomes for the young person rather than simply on what services were being provided or on their own internal priorities. What consistently worked well was rigorous monitoring of the progress of individual children and young people, with quick intervention and thorough evaluation of its impact. High aspirations and a determination to enable young people to be as independent as possible led most reliably to the best educational achievement. However, this combination of effective identification and good-quality provision was not common. The review found both widespread weaknesses in the quality of what was provided for children with special educational needs and evidence that the way the system is currently designed contributes to these problems.⁷

Consistency in the identification of special educational needs was found to vary widely:

The review team found that, despite extensive statutory guidance, the consistency of the identification of special educational needs varied widely, not only between different local areas but also within them. Children and young people with similar needs were not being treated equitably and appropriately: the parental perception of inconsistency in this respect is well-founded. Across education, health services and social care, assessments were different and the thresholds for securing additional support were at widely varying levels. In some of the individual cases that inspectors saw, repeated and different assessments were a time-consuming obstacle to progress rather than a way for effective support to be provided. For children with the most obvious and severe needs, access to appropriate provision from a range of services was relatively quick and started at an early age. For young people aged between 16 and 19, identification of need and entitlement to additional provision varied across schools, colleges and post-16 training providers.⁸

Problems with the quality of provision at School Action and School Action Plus were highlighted:

The review team found that when a child was identified as having special educational needs at School Action level, this usually led to some additional help from within the school. When a child was identified as having special educational needs at School Action Plus, or especially with a statement, this usually led to the allocation of further additional resources from within and outside the school. However, inspectors found

⁷ [*Special educational needs and disability review – a statement is not enough*](#), Ofsted, September 2010, executive summary

⁸ *ibid.*

that this additional provision was often not of good quality and did not lead to significantly better outcomes for the child or young person. For pupils identified for support at School Action level, the additional provision was often making up for poor whole-class teaching or pastoral support. Even for pupils at School Action Plus level and with statements, the provision was often not meeting their needs effectively, either because it was not appropriate or not of good quality or both.⁹

The review emphasised that providing an SEN statement itself did not mean that a child's current needs were being met. No one model of provision - such as special schools, full inclusion in mainstream schools or specialist units - was found to work better than any other. It noted that the pattern of local services had often developed in an ad hoc way, based on what had happened in the past rather than from a strategic overview of what was needed locally.

The key implication of the review's findings was that any further changes to the system should focus not on tightening the processes of prescribing entitlement to services but, rather, on:

- improving the quality of assessment
- ensuring that where additional support is provided, it is effective
- improving teaching and pastoral support early on so that additional provision is not needed later
- developing specialist provision and services strategically so that they are available to maintained and independent schools, academies and colleges
- simplifying legislation so that the system is clearer for parents, schools and other education and training providers
- ensuring that schools do not identify pupils as having special educational needs when they simply need better teaching
- ensuring that accountability for those providing services focuses on the outcomes for the children and young people concerned.

The review noted that the legislation, guidance and systems surrounding special educational needs had become very complex over the last 30 years with the result that the system had become difficult for everyone, especially for parents and young people, to understand and navigate. Part of the problem was the incremental nature of the changes, and the review said that any further changes to legislation or guidance should not add incrementally to the current arrangements. Instead, changes should simplify arrangements and improve consistency across different services, and for children of different ages and levels of need. The review observed that the language of special educational needs had become highly contentious and confusing for both parents and professionals, and that the term 'special educational needs' was used too widely:

Around half the schools and early years provision visited used low attainment and relatively slow progress as their principal indicators of a special educational need. In nearly a fifth of these cases, there was very little further assessment. Inspectors saw schools that identified pupils as having special educational needs when, in fact, their needs were no different from those of most other pupils. They were underachieving but

⁹ *ibid.*

this was sometimes simply because the school's mainstream teaching provision was not good enough, and expectations of the pupils were too low. A conclusion that may be drawn from this is that some pupils are being wrongly identified as having special educational needs and that relatively expensive additional provision is being used to make up for poor day-to-day teaching and pastoral support. This can dilute the focus on overall school improvement and divert attention from those who do need a range of specialist support. In the case of children and young people who need complex and specialist support from health and other services to enable them to thrive and develop, the term 'educational needs' does not always accurately reflect their situation. Both these considerations suggest that we should not only move away from the current system of categorisation of needs but also start to think critically about the way terms are used.¹⁰

The review went on to make detailed recommendation on the assessment and identification of children with SEN; access to and quality of provision and evaluation and accountability.

3 Coalition government's proposals

The Coalition government's [programme for government](#), published shortly after assuming power stated:

We believe the most vulnerable children deserve the very highest quality of care. We will improve diagnostic assessment for schoolchildren, prevent the unnecessary closure of special schools, and remove the bias towards inclusion.¹¹

3.1 A green paper on SEN

A green paper on SEN is expected to be published later this year.¹² On 7 July 2010, speaking at an Every Disabled Child Matters event, Sarah Teather, the Children's Minister, said:

We want to make sure that the most vulnerable children get the best quality of support and care. Children with special educational needs and disabilities should have the same opportunities as their peers. The system needs to be more family friendly so that parents don't feel they have to battle to get the support their child needs.

That is why I will launch a Green Paper in the autumn to look at a wide range of issues for children with SEN and disabilities. Before then I will be looking at the results of the Ofsted review of SEN we are expecting later this summer¹³, in addition to the many reviews of SEN policy in recent years. I'll also be listening to the views of parents, teachers and organisations with an interest in this area.

The system needs to be far more transparent. We need to give parents more choice and involve them in the decision-making process. The Green Paper will also look at how to manage the transition beyond school so that young people over 16 can get the support they need.¹⁴

On 10 September 2010 the Minister invited views from everyone with an interest in SEN or disability. Responses will be considered as part of developing proposals for the forthcoming green paper. A Department for Education Press Notice said:

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Cabinet Office, [The Coalition: our programme for government](#), p29

¹² [DFE Business Plan 2011-2015](#), November 2010

¹³ N.B. see above

¹⁴ <http://www.education.gov.uk/news/news/sen-next-steps>

Ministers are considering how to ensure parents can send their child with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities to their preferred educational setting – whether that is a mainstream school, special school or an academy.

The plans were outlined today as Children's Minister Sarah Teather called on parents, charities, teachers and LAs to contribute to the Government's SEN Green Paper.

The Green Paper, to be published in the autumn, aims to improve radically the entire SEN system and will cover issues including school choice, early identification and assessment, funding and family support.

Ministers are considering a range of options, including how to

- give parents a choice of educational settings that can meet their child's needs
- transform funding for children with SEN and disabilities and their families, making the system more transparent and cost-effective while maintaining a high quality of service
- prevent the unnecessary closure of special schools, and involve parents in any decisions about the future of special schools
- support young people with SEN and disabilities post-16 to help them succeed after education
- improve diagnosis and assessment to identify children with additional needs earlier.¹⁵

Further details are set out in the [DFE paper calling for evidence](#). This outlines why the Government decided a green paper was needed:

2.1 Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities each have - like all children - unique gifts and their own particular contribution to make to society. They come from a range of backgrounds and experiences. Many are amongst the most vulnerable members of society, and each deserves the best possible chance to fulfil their potential. The right opportunities - in and outside of school - are really important to their happiness and future wellbeing.

2.2 Parents rightly have high aspirations for their children. The Government shares those aspirations. Some progress has been made in recent years, but too many children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are failed by the services designed to help them. In the current economic climate difficult decisions have to be made by everyone, and we must make the most effective use of recent substantial investment. All of us need to work together, with the available resources and expertise, to develop policies that work, and make the further improvements that children and families deserve.

2.3 Recent reviews have contributed to our understanding of the issues faced by children, young people and their families, and the services that support them, including:

- Brian Lamb (on parental confidence in provision for children with SEN and disabilities);

¹⁵ Dated 10 September 2010: <http://www.education.gov.uk/news/news/sen-greenpaper>

- Toby Salt (on provision for children with severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties);
- John Bercow MP (on meeting the needs of children with speech, language and communication difficulties);
- Sir Jim Rose (on teaching children with literacy difficulties and dyslexia) and
- Aiming High for disabled children (on better support for families).

We also have relevant recent reports from Ofsted and others.

We know that:

- children with SEN have been making progress in their learning, but improvements in attainment have been from a low base with significant gaps remaining between the attainment of pupils with SEN and their peers;
- whilst support for children has improved, the system is still complex to navigate, with different assessments at different times and for different reasons. We can do more to bring together education, health and social care to meet the needs of children and families, particularly where children have complex needs who may also have a statement of SEN;
- too many young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with SEN find it very difficult to make the transition from school to an adult life that is as independent and purposeful as possible; and
- some parents feel they don't have sufficient choice or confidence in the schools their children attend or the services they receive. They can feel they need to battle the system to get the support their child needs.¹⁶

The consultation paper noted the priorities for the green paper:

4.1 The Green Paper will consider how we can achieve:

- better educational outcomes and life chances for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities - from the early years through to the transition into adult life and employment;
- better early intervention to prevent problems later;
- greater choice for parents in the schools their children attend and the support and services they receive, whether in a mainstream or special school setting;
- public services centred on the needs of the family and child in the round, joining up support from education, social care and health, particularly for those with the most severe and complex needs and at key transitions; and
- streamlining assessment systems so that parents don't feel they have to struggle with the system to get the support they need.

The consultation closed on 15 October 2010. The SEN green paper is expected to be published in December 2010.¹⁷

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¹⁷ *DFE's Business plan 2011-2015*, November 2010

3.2 The schools white paper

On 24 November 2010, the Coalition government issued the schools white paper, *The Importance of Teaching*.¹⁸ This contains far-ranging proposals for school reform including teacher training. Many of the proposals in the white paper are relevant to SEN, for example:

2.6 So, we will:

Continue to raise the quality of new entrants to the teaching profession, by: ceasing to provide Department for Education funding for initial teacher training for those graduates who do not have at least a 2:2 degree, expanding Teach First: offering financial incentives to attract more of the very best graduates in shortage subjects into teaching; and enabling more talented career changers to become teachers.

Reform initial teacher training so that more training is on the job, and it focuses on key teaching skills including teaching early reading and mathematics, managing behaviour and responding to pupils' Special Educational Needs.

...

In relation to the academies programme and special schools, the white paper notes:

5.13 The complexity of funding issues in particular has meant that we have had to move more slowly with special schools. But in January 2011 we will invite special schools to apply to become Academies as well. We believe that this will be a major opportunity to transform provision for special needs, and the forthcoming Green Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disability will consider how to maximise the impact of these new freedoms for special schools.

On the role of local authorities and SEN, the white paper states:

5.40 The local authority role as a convenor of local services also means that they are best placed to act as the champion for vulnerable pupils in their area. In particular, they will continue to ensure that disabled children and those with Special Educational Needs can access high-quality provision that meets their needs, and they will continue to be responsible for funding provision for pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs. We will give local authorities more freedom to develop their own plans to support vulnerable children in their education. They will be free to develop new and innovative approaches to providing services and deploying resources.

Performance data and SEN is also commented on:

6.15 We are particularly concerned about the progress that the lowest-attaining 20 per cent of pupils make at school. Many of these pupils have additional learning needs, and we will consider how we could report their progress in the performance tables as part of the forthcoming Green Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disability.

Changes in the school inspection arrangements are proposed, with implications for SEN:

6.18 The current Ofsted framework inspects schools against 27 headings – many reflecting previous government initiatives. In place of this framework, Ofsted will consult on a new framework with a clear focus on just four things – pupil achievement, the quality of teaching, leadership and management, and the behaviour and safety of pupils. The new inspection framework will help to make sure that there is a better focus

¹⁸ *The Importance of Teaching*, DFE, Cm 7980, November 2010

on the needs of all pupils, including the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities.

6.19 This new framework will come into force in Autumn 2011, subject to legislation. It will allow inspectors to get back to spending more of their time observing lessons, giving a more reliable assessment of the quality of education children are receiving. The new framework will not require schools to have completed a self evaluation form, allowing governing bodies and head teachers to choose for themselves how to evaluate their work.

6.20 Ofsted and the Department will work together to make sure that we are setting the same expectations of schools. These will reflect the starting point of pupils at the school and expected levels of progress during schooling.

On the issue of teaching training and improving the quality of teaching, the white paper notes:

7.9 In the forthcoming Green Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disability, we will consider how to support the identification of excellence in teaching for pupils with Special Educational Needs (whether in special or mainstream schools) so that the strongest practice can be shared, including through Teaching Schools.

There are plans to reform school funding, and the white paper recognises the need to address issues associated with SEN funding:

8.15 Local authorities are ultimately responsible for making sure the needs of some of our most vulnerable pupils, who attract significant additional funding, are met – such as those with highly complex Special Educational Needs and those being educated outside mainstream education. We will ensure that considerations of possible reforms to the school funding system take into account the needs of this group of vulnerable pupils.

8.16 The forthcoming Green Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disability will explore proposals for funding high cost provision – including exploring questions of how to increase transparency in how decisions about funding and support are made and increasing collaboration between local authorities. In relation to the funding of alternative provision, subject to the success of trials of our proposed new approach, we would anticipate that in the longer term, money for alternative provision will go directly to schools.

Further information as it becomes available will be added the [DFE website](#).