



**Draft**

# **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy**

Hampshire Children's Services Department  
SEN Service

2008 - 2011



# Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

## I. Context

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy is a key element of Hampshire County Council's policy framework for supporting the needs of all children and young people between the ages of 0-19.

The policy reflects the corporate priorities of the County Council:

- Hampshire safer and more secure for all
- maximising well-being
- enhancing our quality of place.

The way the policy is implemented is further informed by the County Council's corporate values:

- removing barriers to opportunity and improving choice for all
- responding to the improvements that people say they want
- planning for and inventing the future
- encouraging partnerships, participation and contribution.

Hampshire County Council's policy statement for special educational needs was last revised in 2005, in response to The SEN and Disability Act 2001 and the publication of a revised SEN Code of Practice which updated the statutory framework and procedures for SEN. Subsequently, two major government initiatives have informed SEN policy and practice - the Government's ten year strategy for SEN: Removing Barriers to Achievement, and Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better support for families. Removing Barriers to Achievement provides an agenda for action on four fronts:

- early intervention
- removing barriers to learning
- raising expectations and achievement
- delivering improvements in partnership,

whilst Aiming High for Disabled Children identifies three priority areas to improve outcomes for children and young people with disabilities:

- empowering children, young people and their families in shaping local services
- providing responsive services and timely support, particularly at key transition points
- improving the quality and capacity of service provision.

It was a measure of the success of the existing policy that the local authority Joint Area Review (JAR) (2007) found that the provision for SEN in Hampshire schools and pre-school settings is very good; that children and young people make good progress in both special and mainstream schools and that the authority's monitoring of this is outstanding.

The statutory framework for SEN has not changed and the SEN Policy must therefore continue to respond to legal requirements with regard to assessment and provision. However, the policy must also be responsive to significant changes that are transforming children's services in response to Every Child Matters. There is a sharpened focus on the needs, aspirations and engagement of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and their families. This is evident in:

- the Children's Plan 2007
- Public Service Agreement 12, 'Improving the health and well being of children' - indicator 5, which highlights the parents' experience of services for disabled children
- Every Disabled Child Matters Local Authority Charter – Hampshire County Council is committed to the delivery of the Charter.

There is an emphasis across the public sector upon more collaborative and partnership working between local authorities and the Primary Care Trust (PCT), through the development of joint commissioning, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Children's Centres and multi agency engagement in the Early Support Programme from 0 - 5 and the Transition Support Programme into adulthood.

This revised policy is responsive to these changes whilst ensuring that the local authority (LA) fulfils the statutory duties required by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and sustains and improves its high standards of service delivery. The focus of this policy is upon the progress children and young people make from birth, in pre-school settings and in schools and through transition into adulthood and promotes their well-being, learning and achievement.

## 2. Principles

- all children and young people are valued equally and have the right to learn, achieve and participate fully in education and in the wider community regardless of their abilities and behaviours
- all children and young people are empowered so that their voice is heard and heeded in decisions made about themselves and about wider developments in service delivery
- all parents and carers are partners in meeting the needs of their children and in developing responsive and timely services
- all children and young people are entitled to have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that is differentiated to meet individual learning styles, recognizing personal strengths and needs
- all children and young people should receive an appropriate education in a mainstream school when reasonable adjustments can be made that take into consideration the needs of all learners
- all children and young people should be educated in schools as close to home as possible so as to maintain their place in the family and community
- Hampshire County Council aims to develop its own high quality provision to meet the special educational needs of all Hampshire pupils.
- the diversity of the needs of children and young people is recognised and met through a range of flexible, responsive and varied provision.

## 3. Aims and objectives

### 3.1 The quality of provision for children with special educational needs is maintained and improved wherever it is delivered, by:

- supporting schools and pre-school settings in their self evaluation of special educational needs and inclusion practices and monitoring the quality of all special educational needs provision
- supporting schools and pre-school settings in setting targets for children and young people with special

educational needs to ensure that progress is tracked and achievement identified and celebrated

- providing staff with training, support and opportunities to share good inclusive practice, so that they are confident in meeting the needs and securing the progress of all children and young people
- developing the capacity of governors to understand and meet the needs of children with special educational needs and remove barriers to access and participation
- providing elected members with the information they need to develop, monitor and review the provision and the progress of children and young people with special educational needs.

### **3.2 Inclusion is developed further by recognising that schools, pre-school settings and supporting services collectively provide for the needs of all children in the community, by:**

- providing education and support for more children with special educational needs in local maintained mainstream schools
- working with children, young people, parents/carers, headteachers, governors, education staff, colleges and voluntary and statutory agencies, to embed inclusive practices
- ensuring that the range of maintained schools (mainstream, mainstream with resourced provision and special schools) and pre-school settings across the county have the necessary skills, capacity and confidence to provide for the full range of children and young people with special educational needs
- identifying and addressing with other statutory and voluntary agencies any barriers to inclusion that prevent a child or young person's placement in a local maintained school
- matching levels of support as closely and effectively as possible to the identified needs of children and young people and the development of inclusive provision for them
- ensuring that special schools and resourced provision in mainstream schools continue to develop quality education for children and young people with the most severe and complex needs and a more flexible role in making provision and providing support services to children and staff in other settings in line with the strategy for developing the role of special schools

- taking opportunities to improve and develop provision for children and young people with special educational needs, through extended services cluster working, behaviour improvement partnerships, education improvement partnerships and wherever a school reorganization, new school or major capital investment is planned.

### **3.3 Effective assessment systems are operated as early as possible, in conjunction with other agencies, by:**

- providing early identification, assessment and intervention for pre school children with special educational needs, where possible within inclusive settings, and in partnership with other agencies
- encouraging parents/carers, pre-school settings and schools to work together to recognize and support children's special educational needs at the earliest stage, drawing on external advice where necessary, and using delegated resources flexibly to make appropriate provision
- ensuring that education services in liaison with other agencies, meet statutory obligations to children with special educational needs and their families within the prescribed timescales
- working with other agencies to implement the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as part of a coordinated and staged approach to early identification and intervention.

### **3.4 Resources are allocated and used efficiently, effectively and equitably by:**

- controlling, maintaining and improving the overall level of resourcing for special educational needs where necessary and when possible developing, monitoring and systematically reviewing existing maintained provision to achieve the best possible match between needs and resources
- maintaining and developing systems so that school and LA levels of funding are matched to children and young people's needs and understood by parents/carers, schools, governors and other agencies
- ensuring that consideration is given to children with special educational needs in the development of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to support their learning

- ensuring that children and young people with SEN and their families benefit from resources delegated to clusters and partnerships of schools to provide extended services
- ensuring that all services working with children and young people with SEN contribute appropriately to joint funding and pooled budget arrangements.

### **3.5 Partnerships with children, parents/carers and other stakeholders, work effectively, by:**

- consulting and involving children, young people, parents/carers, voluntary and statutory agencies in the strategic planning, policy development and service delivery of inclusive special educational needs provision in Hampshire
- providing integrated delivery of support for children, young people and their families through close collaboration with statutory and voluntary agencies and local/regional partnerships ensuring that advice and support is available for parents/carers and that they are informed about the SEN and Inclusion policies, special educational provision, the implementation of the SEN Code of Practice and statutory assessment processes
- maintaining and improving parental/carer satisfaction, as indicated by the number of appeals to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) and monitored by complaints procedures and evaluation systems
- making arrangements to ensure smooth transition when children begin schooling or transfer between schools
- working closely with families, colleges and other agencies including the Connexions Service, to plan transition arrangements towards further education, training and/or employment
- working closely with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and further education colleges to increase opportunities for young people with special educational needs to enjoy the benefits of a local college placement.

## **4. SEN Action Plan**

The SEN Action Plan is available to anyone on request and is maintained on a termly basis.

## **5. Related Hampshire County Council policies, plans and strategies**

In reading the Special Educational Needs Policy it is important that reference is also made to the following related Hampshire County Council documentation:

- Children and Young People's Plan
- Behaviour Support Policy
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Strategy
- Corporate Strategy
- Corporate Strategy for Lifelong Learning
- Accessibility Strategy
- SEN Early Years Strategy
- Maximizing Well-being in Education Policy
- The Every Disabled Child Matters Local Authority Charter.

## Glossary of terms

CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
ICT	Information Communication Technology
JAR	Joint Area Review
LA	Local Authority
PCT	Primary Care Trust
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENDIST	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Tribunal

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**[www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-parentpublications.htm](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-parentpublications.htm)**

For further information on this leaflet, please phone the SEN Service on 01962 846252 or email [enquiries.sen@hants.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries.sen@hants.gov.uk)

**This leaflet is available in large print – please contact the SEN Service on 01962 846252.**

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