



Policy Proposals Consultation Document

Every School a Good School

The Way Forward for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

August 2009



Department of
Education

www.deni.gov.uk

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Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Preface

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DE) VISION STATEMENT

'The Department of Education (DE) exists to ensure that every learner fulfils his or her full potential at each stage of development.'

In advancing towards this vision the Department commenced a review of special educational needs (SEN) and inclusion in April 2006 to address the bureaucracy attached to the current SEN framework, the increase in the number of children with SEN with or without a statement, and the inconsistencies and delays in assessment and provision, to name just a few issues. This consultation document sets out the Department's policy proposals which have emerged from that review.

There has already been extensive pre-consultation activity with the education, health, voluntary and statutory sectors and parents and children during the development of these policy proposals. This pre-consultation activity contributed to the draft policy proposals through the provision of many positive suggestions and ideas about ways the current support framework for children with SEN can be improved.

The review team continues to welcome views and ideas for improvement to the existing framework and the email address set up for this purpose still remains active: seninclusion@deni.gov.uk.

There will also be further opportunities for parents, carers, children, schools, teachers, voluntary and statutory groups and other interested parties to engage with the review team and receive further clarification regarding these policy proposals at a series of roadshows to be held during the public consultation.

The Department is now seeking comments on all aspects of these policy proposals. To assist you in providing comments, we have highlighted specific consultation points within this document, which are expanded upon in the response booklet. You are asked to consider and respond to the questions under each of the consultation points. Space is also provided for you to make comments on each of the specific consultation points. In addition, space is provided at the end of the booklet to allow you to record additional comments you wish to make.

Please fill in the booklet and return it to us by 31 October 2009.

In addition, an Equality Impact Assessment of the policy proposals is also available for comment.

You can read and download this Consultation Document, the Response Booklet and the associated Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) from our website at www.deni.gov.uk

In line with the Freedom of Information Act, we may publish the information you provide.

If you need extra copies of the documents contact us in the following ways.

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You can also get these documents in other formats, including in large print, in Braille, on computer disc, on audio cassette and in other languages. Please ask us if you need any of these.

Foreword

To treat everyone the same, we must treat them differently.

Helen Keller

A child's early years and time at school provide precious opportunities for learning. Opportunities missed at these times can have a major impact on a child's chances in later life. For this reason we are determined that children who need extra help receive the right support at the right time.

I wish to see a fully inclusive education system which welcomes the wide diversity already existing in our schools and which ensures that every learner is given an equal chance and that all children are provided with the necessary support to help them achieve their potential. For this reason I regard the policy proposals set out in this consultation document as an integral part of the Department's school improvement programme 'Every School A Good School' and raising standards agenda.

The current framework for identifying and assessing children with special educational needs brought a much needed focus to this important aspect of a child's development. This consultation document sets out our proposals to move to a stronger, more robust framework for supporting learning, which, regardless of geographical location, focuses on early intervention and collaborative working. These proposals also recognise that teachers and schools need to be fully supported through training and resources and the dissemination of best practice.

The proposals are based on the recognition that at any time, and for a number of reasons, many children will experience greater difficulties in learning or progressing than their peers. These children may have special educational needs (SEN), may have a disability or may be experiencing other social or personal circumstances which may prevent them fulfilling their educational potential. By introducing the overarching concept of additional educational needs we aim to support all children who face difficulties, whatever they may be and whenever they occur.

The emphasis within these proposals is therefore firmly placed on getting children the assistance they need as early as possible. Early identification and appropriate support interventions enable children to catch up with their classmates and, for those who need

support on a continuing basis, it means that help is available as early as possible, reducing the risk of long term underachievement and disaffection.

My wish is that parents and children feel confident that the system is there to help and support them and that education, health, social care and other professionals are working in partnership to deliver effective support. These proposals have therefore been developed by my Department in consultation with the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and reflect the vital importance of joined up working between all professionals in delivering the services for children who require additional support in learning. Specifically relating to the partnership between education and health and social care, we have worked closely with our colleagues in DHSSPS to ensure that the approach being taken, and the support structures being proposed are realistic and achievable. Both Departments are committed to improving interventions and outcomes for all children and young people.

While some of the members of the Executive have concerns about aspects of the recommendations from the Review, we have agreed to allow these proposals to be published for consultation in their entirety. In this way the Executive can obtain the views of members of the public on the broadest range of potential elements of new arrangements.

I look forward to hearing your views and comments on the proposals set out in this document. It is only by listening to, and taking account of, the views and comments of parents, pupils, professionals and others with an interest in this important area that we can achieve our aim and vision.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Caitriona Ruane".

CAITRÍONA RUANE MLA

Executive Summary

The Department of Education has undertaken a review of special educational needs (SEN) and inclusion for a number of reasons, including the bureaucracy of the current SEN framework, inconsistencies and delays in assessment and provision, associated rising cost of the provision for SEN, the year on year increase in the number of children issued with statements, and the need for clear accountability on resource utilisation.

This consultation document sets out the Department's policy proposals which have emerged from this review, in particular, this includes the establishment of a robust and accountable inclusive framework, which identifies the needs of all children whenever they occur, supports these needs, and promotes a culture that welcomes diversity. This framework is based on the premise of equality of opportunity for all and that starts with helping and supporting children to make the most of the learning opportunities their school years offer. Overall these policy proposals will result in a move to a more open, positive, flexible and inclusive model which recognises and delivers support for learning to those children who need it - when they need it. Annex A provides a summary table of these policy proposals, including the identified benefits.

These policy proposals, which are based on best practice already evident in a number of our schools, include many of the suggestions and ideas that the review team have received. The proposals aim to build on the strengths of the current Code of Practice of the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs 1998 while introducing a number of changes. DE plans to achieve this by:

- a) developing a comprehensive approach based on the inclusive concept of the continuum of provision for a diversity of need in different settings;
- b) introducing an overarching framework which minimises possible barriers to learning and contributes to the raising standards agenda;
- c) changing the sequential stages of 1-5 in the current Code of Practice to a new model which will consist of three strands:- Within School; Within School plus External Support (other schools/ESA/ MGs); Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs)
- d) placing a greater responsibility on all schools to provide for the early identification of the diversity of need, assessment, planning and delivery

of support programmes, and the monitoring of the subsequent progress of individual children who need support;

- e) developing further collaborative working and the sharing of existing good practice, skills and knowledge between and across schools;
- f) promoting the professional development of teachers and all other staff who are involved in meeting the additional needs of children;
- g) developing more effective partnerships between the Education and Skills Authority (ESA), Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), the proposed Regional Health and Social Care Board (hereafter referred to as the RHSCB), Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts and Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) through the establishment of multi-disciplinary groups (MGs);
- h) moving from statements to statutory co-ordinated support plans (CSPs) for those children with SEN who face complex or multi-barriers to learning;
- i) including all pre-school providers participating in the pre-school education expansion programme within the proposed revised framework;
- j) delegating more of the SEN funds currently held centrally by the ELBs to mainstream schools; and
- k) placing a statutory duty on ESA to ensure that schools are effectively meeting their responsibilities in addressing the removal of possible barriers to learning;
- l) Developing and introducing a revised Code of Practice to support the implementation of the revised framework.**

AN INCLUSIVE FRAMEWORK

Inclusion is not simply about where a child is taught; it is about the quality of a child's experience of school life, including both the formal and informal curriculum, in and beyond the classroom. These proposals are aimed at ensuring that every child is a valued and valuable member of the school community with equal access to the same opportunities and high quality education. These proposals are also firmly focussed on the role of the school in removing the barriers to learning.

There is sometimes a perception within schools that barriers to learning need to be 'fixed' (usually with additional support) to ensure that the child can 'fit' in with a school's way of working. Many educationalists are now coming to realise it is the school's duty to ensure that the child is supported and makes the necessary progress. We wish to move away from the in-child deficit model to a much wider approach in which additional educational need is a concept in which SEN is an integral element. The proposals aim to encourage schools and other educational settings to recognise the diversity of pupils within their population and accept responsibility to address their needs without recourse to external assistance except in the more complex cases.

LINKS WITH OTHER DE POLICIES

These policy proposals should not be viewed in isolation nor should they be perceived as an add-on for teachers; they will support, and be an integral part of, DE's overall school improvement programme (Every School a Good School). Our aim is to ensure that every learner is given a fair and equal chance and that all children are provided with the necessary support to help them achieve their potential.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION

The proposals place the emphasis firmly on getting children the assistance they need as early as possible. Early intervention means both offering support at the early stages of a child's development, for example, at pre-school and foundation stage, or as soon as difficulties are identified, for example, at the post primary stage. Earlier identification, timely assessment and appropriate intervention for those children who need it will also make better use of available resources without having to engage in the lengthy, time consuming and costly administrative process within the current statutory assessment and statementing route. In doing this, we envisage using the funding currently being spent on the statutory assessment process more cost effectively and where possible, re-directing administration costs to priority front line services and the delivery of appropriate intervention and support within the school setting.

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

Schools will be required to work collaboratively across and between all phases and sectors for the benefit of all children within their care. Schools will be able to avail of the support of other schools from within their learning communities as well as the broad spectrum of provision expected to be available in each locality, through the ELBs (ESA) and the proposed RHSCB which are planned, commissioned and co-ordinated around the needs of the child.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Special schools and special units attached to mainstream schools remain part of the provision to meet the diverse range of learning or disability barriers facing our children. Whilst the participation of a child in mainstream education is often appropriate, the severity or complexity of a child's needs must always be the factor for determining the educational setting that will best serve to improve outcomes. Special schools will therefore continue to play an important role in providing for the diverse needs of children with complex and multiple learning difficulties and, through the sharing of expertise, ensure mainstream schools are in a position to provide appropriate support for all children in their care.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The main thrust of these proposals are that each child receives the most appropriate support to effectively assist him or her in fulfilling his or her own potential/personal, development. Key to this will be the capacity of each school's workforce to meet the challenge of assuming responsibility for all their learners and to provide the relevant support necessary to achieve improved outcomes for the child without having to wait for external assessment or support (or to rely on the issue of a statement). The ability of teachers and schools to identify and provide relevant interventions to improve the outcomes for the child will be enhanced through the delivery of a training programme, firmly aimed at equipping the school workforce with the necessary knowledge and skills.

The proposals also aim to ensure that both the child and the school workforce gain maximum benefit from any external support provided by the education sector or from other agencies. These local and regional support services will promote and, also provide for, the dissemination and sharing of effective skills, training and best practice between teachers, classroom assistants and other school staff. Any external support will be time-bound, clearly focused on both the needs of the child, the school workforce and the desired outcomes before commencement of any support package.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH ALLIED HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PROFESSIONALS

This is the key to the successful delivery of a support service, which places the child firmly at the centre. This 'team around the child' approach values individual professional contributions; it allows for maximising the roles of the disciplines involved whilst ensuring specialist contributions are recognised. We fully realise the vital importance of an effective working partnership between education and health and social care. To this end, we are working closely with our colleagues in the health and social care sector to

strengthen and develop links, from a strategic level through to delivery, to gain shared commitment, and ensure that planning, assessment and delivery of therapies are timely and realistic.

It is anticipated that the key officials in ESA and the RHSCB, supported by Local Commissioning Groups (LCG), will take a lead in the planning and development of integrated trans-agency and trans-disciplinary services to support and facilitate identification, assessment and making additional support for children.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY GROUPS (MGS)

It is proposed that, in order to support the policies contained in this consultation document, a network of multi-disciplinary groups (MGs) should be established which are aligned to learning communities, and the local structures of ESA and the proposed RHSCB. Each local MG will consist of representatives from education and health and social care, for example, educational and clinical psychologists, speech and language therapists and ESA officers. The primary function of the MG will be to evaluate and determine the next steps for those children who have been identified as requiring multi-disciplinary support, over and above that which can be provided by the schools alone, and to ascertain which children actually require statutory assessment. Each MG will also play an important role in raising issues at a strategic level, for example, the prevalence or increase of difficulties children are experiencing. Another major role of the MGs will be to challenge the participating schools about the levels and effectiveness of the support they are providing for their pupils.

CO-ORDINATED SUPPORT PLANS (CSPS)

Under the current Code of Practice, a child with SEN may be issued with a statement of special educational needs as a result of statutory assessment. It is proposed that statements of SEN will be replaced by statutory co-ordinated support plans (CSPs). These will be introduced for those children with SEN who face complex or multi-barriers to learning. The 'co-ordinated' aspect relates to planned, joined up support services from both education and health and social care. Where support for a child can be provided entirely within the school, there should be no need for a CSP to be issued. However, there will be a need for greater emphasis on focused and targeted education plans for those children who require in-school interventions.

PRE-SCHOOL SETTINGS

The current Code of Practice only applies to statutory pre-school settings, for example, nursery schools and nursery units. In line with the emphasis on early identification

and intervention, we also propose, as a condition of their funding, that non-statutory, voluntary and private early education settings in receipt of funding through the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme should also work within any revised framework and supporting Code of Practice.

FUNDING

In order to develop the funding approaches necessary to underpin delivery of the policy aims, it is proposed to utilise the existing mechanisms for ongoing development and change to the Local Management of Schools (LMS) Common Funding Formula. It is anticipated that these will include providing specific allocations to schools or groups of schools or alternatively distribute the available additional funding through the LMS Common Funding Formula. Any such changes to the LMS Common Funding Formula would be subject to a process of consultation with schools prior to implementation.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The proposals are firmly based on improved accountability at all levels for the progress and outcomes of all children including those facing barriers to learning. DE will develop guidance (some of which may be statutory) and Regulations to support implementation of the proposed framework. These, along with published indicators, will be used to promote good practice at all levels and ensure geographical consistency in the early identification and meeting of the needs of pupils.

Part of the remit of the Review of SEN and Inclusion has been to look at the consistency of assessment, equality of access and the continuity and quality of provision across the 5 Education and Library Boards (ELBs). It will be equally important to ensure a level of consistency with the advent of a single ESA.

PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSALS

By necessity, transitional arrangements will be put in place to provide for a gradual or phased move from the current framework. The transitional arrangements will be implemented to ensure the continued delivery of appropriate support for those children and young people moving from the current system of statementing to the introduction of co-ordinated support plans (CSPs). In addition, the pace of change will need to be very closely linked to an extensive capacity building programme for teachers and schools, any RPA structural changes and the availability of resources. In the recent Budget, the Department (DE) has acquired funding for the commencement of finalised proposals. It should be noted, however, that full policy proposals can only be implemented as, and when, the resources become available in both education and social care sectors.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Department commenced a review of special educational needs (hereafter referred to as SEN) and inclusion in April 2006 to address the issues that have arisen over time with the current SEN framework. A brief outline of the existing Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs 1998 (hereafter referred to as the Code of Practice) is included in Annex B.

Context

- 1.2 The most recent figures available¹ show that there are now approximately 58,827 children and young people (hereafter referred to as child or children) with SEN, which is 17.7% of the total school population. During the last ten years there has been a steady increase in the number of pupils being referred for statutory assessment and in the main these referrals result in a statement of SEN. As a percentage of the total school population the number of pupils with statements has risen from 2.5% in 1996/7 to 3.9% in 2007 (see Annex C). Some 68% of the 12,973 of children with statements of SEN are currently placed in mainstream schools, or in units attached to mainstream schools, with the remainder attending special schools. In addition, our pupil population is also becoming more diverse, for example, the number of children with English as an additional language (EAL) has risen from 1,514 in 2003 to 5,665 in 2007, there are now 822 children from the Traveller community in full time education and over 1,000, who due to their family circumstances, fall into the looked after child (LAC) group. This changing pupil profile, combined with the capacity of the mainstream system to respond to it, the evidence of unmet need and the bureaucracy attached to the statementing process, led to the initiation of this review.
- 1.3 It is recognised that at any time, and for a number of reasons, many children will experience greater difficulties in learning and progressing than their peers. These children may have SEN, may have a disability or may be experiencing other social or personal circumstances which may present a barrier to learning. These barriers, and the additional needs they present, which may be either short or long term, will need to be taken into account if the children are to make the progress expected of them. The current SEN framework often identifies such children and supports them in their learning but there remains an inconsistency in assessment and levels of support across the five Education and Library Boards (ELBs). We

¹ Annual School Census 2007

want to establish a framework that, regardless of geographical location, ensures that the additional learning needs of children are identified and met.

- 1.4 The essence of the DE vision is 'to ensure that every learner fulfils his or her full potential'.² In advancing towards this vision, the education sector will improve outcomes for all, in particular, it will provide additional support to those who require it, when they need it, to realise their full potential. The concept of additional educational need has been fundamental in the development of these policy proposals. The underlying aim of these proposals is that all children are provided with the necessary support to help them work towards achieving their full potential with the onus placed firmly on the schools to provide for the diversity of need. The continuum of support will be under-pinned by the clear aim of endeavouring to provide the appropriate support for the child at the right time.
- 1.5 These policy proposals should not be viewed in isolation nor should they be perceived as an add-on for teachers. Not only do they suggest possible ways forward and areas for improvement within the current SEN framework, they also reflect and integrate with other DE policies and initiatives, for example,
- a) the proposed policy for school improvement: 'Every School A Good School';
 - b) the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy;
 - c) the developing Early Years Strategy;
 - d) the review of Initial Teacher Education (ITE);
 - e) the review of alternative education provision (AEP);
 - f) the establishment of an Inclusion and Diversity Service;
 - g) the expansion of the independent counselling service for post primary schools;
 - h) the education proposals in the DHSSPS consultation document "Care Matters in NI - A Bridge to a Better Future"³ which point to improved opportunities for looked after children (LAC); and
 - i) the Review of Irish Medium Education.

² *Vision: Strategic Plan for Education April 2006-March 2008*

³ *Care Matters in NI - A Bridge to a Better Future, DHSSPS March 2007 Chapter 7*

- 1.6 This Review is occurring at time of significant change for schools and other educational establishments and many of these changes will support the aspirations of these policy proposals. The Review of Public Administration (RPA) will result in the creation of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) which will ensure a more consistent approach to assessment, identification and provision practices. These proposals have been developed within the context of the single Education Authority (ESA). The Revised Curriculum (which commenced implementation in September 2007), and the new Curriculum Entitlement Framework will allow schools to provide a more flexible curriculum which will be more responsive to the increasingly diverse nature of their populations.
- 1.7 The Bain Report (2006)⁴ addressed the use of resources, the need for better strategic planning of the school's estate, and the need for improved sharing and collaboration. As part of the Entitlement Framework, support is being given to the development of local 'learning communities' involving increasing collaboration between schools. Similarly, these policy proposals also promote collaborative working among schools and other professionals working together to support children. With this in mind, and acknowledging that the designated roles and responsibilities of the new Regional Health and Social Care Board (RHSCB) are still evolving, these policy proposals advocate both regionally and locally commissioned services that are planned and delivered jointly by health and social care and education within the resources allocated.
- 1.8 In summary, these policy proposals aim to bring substantial benefits to children including the early identification of possible difficulties followed by the implementation of timely, appropriate and effective interventions. They will ensure that the school workforce (teachers, classroom assistants and other professionals) have the skills and confidence to deliver an effective programme of support for those pupils experiencing barriers to learning. By bringing services together, and ensuring that schools make inclusion an integral part of self-evaluation, the proposals will enable most children experiencing barriers to learning to get effective, well-targeted support without the need to go through a time-consuming statementing process.

⁴ *The Strategic Review of Education 2006*

2. THE REVIEW OF SEN AND INCLUSION

Why Change is Needed

- 2.1 The issues identified for examination in the current SEN framework included:
- a) the large percentage of children identified with SEN being educated in mainstream schools and the need to ensure that their needs are met effectively;
 - b) a year on year increase in the number of statemented pupils contributing to the rising cost of SEN provision (see Annex C);
 - c) the high levels of bureaucracy generated within schools and ELBs;
 - d) the existing Code of Practice not reflecting the changing and diverse needs of society at this time, for example, the increase in children presenting with social and emotional issues and mental health issues, or English as an additional language (EAL);
 - e) the challenge of meeting the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SENDO) legislation⁵;
 - f) teachers and schools perceiving themselves to be insufficiently skilled to support the increasing diversity of need with undue dependency on external support and resources;
 - g) the levels of transparent accountability relating to SEN resources and how they are used in schools;
 - h) the growing numbers of children with SEN requiring a placement with an alternative educational provider (AEP);
 - i) the inconsistency and delay in assessment, statementing and provision practices across the five ELBs;

⁵ *Special Education Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005*

- j) specific difficulties relating to the assessment of children attending Irish-medium schools and those children recently arrived from other countries whose main language is not English;
- k) the limitation of the current Code of Practice to only statutory provision in the pre-school sector;
- l) the inconsistencies in the language and terminology used by education and health and social care; and
- m) the lack of a joined up approach between the health, social care and education sectors in identifying and supporting children with additional needs.

Developing the Policy Proposals

2.2 In addressing these issues the review has focused on a number of key themes:

- a) arrangements for the identification and assessment of SEN, including links with Health and Social Care;
- b) the nature, quality, extent of provision and support relating to assessed needs for children with SEN;
- c) SEN information and advice, disputes and appeals;
- d) early intervention and pre-school SEN assessment and provision;
- e) capacity building for teachers, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), classrooms assistants (CAs) and principals;
- f) the role of special schools in providing support and advice to mainstream schools; and
- g) the inclusion of children with SEN and/or disability in a mainstream setting, including the impact of SENDO.

2.3 A Steering Group, made up of representatives from across the education sector was established to direct and oversee the Review (full membership is included in Annex E). The commencement of the Review was publicised and comments were invited via an email address: senandinclusionreview@deni.gov.uk. The

Review team also engaged in pre-consultation activity with a wide range of stakeholders including statutory and voluntary groups, parents, children and young people, education and health and social care professionals other service users and providers (see Annex G). This engagement took the form of a number of meetings and workshops where stakeholders were given the opportunity to discuss the issues and put forward their views.

2.4 Three Advisory Groups (see Annex F) were also established and focused on the following key areas:-

- Identification, Assessment, Provision and Support Processes;
- Early Identification and Pre-School SEN Provision; and
- Inclusion and Capacity Building.

2.5 The main suggestions which emerged from these meetings and workshops have contributed to these draft policy proposals through the provision of many positive suggestions and ideas about ways the current support framework for children with SEN can be improved. The main suggestions put forward were the need to ensure that:

- a) access to assessment and provision for children with SEN is consistent across the five ELBs;
- b) all teachers receive appropriate training to help with general issues relating to SEN; and
- c) each school promotes the inclusion of all children.

3. INCLUSION

What do we mean by inclusion?

- 3.1 Inclusion is not simply about the location or placement of a child. Inclusion means the participation of children in the curriculum and social life of their educational settings. Inclusive practices require us to think about the diverse needs of all children. For example, those with SEN, those whose first language is not English, those in alternative education provision (AEP), children from the Traveller community, looked after children (LAC), and those who need help with literacy and numeracy.
- 3.2 The current Code of Practice concentrates on children with SEN or a disability with emphasis placed on the weaknesses, problems and deficiencies faced by the child. There is general consensus that this process labels the child and is too often associated with negative connotations. The proposal is to move away from this, and, through the development of an inclusive framework, place clear emphasis on the mainstream and special sectors to develop quality provision tailored to the needs of individuals and groups of children.
- 3.3 What we aspire to is an inclusive education system in which the presumption is that children spend as much time as possible in a mainstream setting, however, this does not presuppose the integration of all children into a mainstream setting. For those with more complex needs, severe disability or behaviour, the important question is, 'What educational setting will best meet the child's needs and satisfy the wishes of the parents?' It is the case that a mainstream placement may not always be right for a child or, not right just yet. When a special school is right for a child, however, it will be important that the school has close links with neighbouring mainstream schools.

Barriers to learning

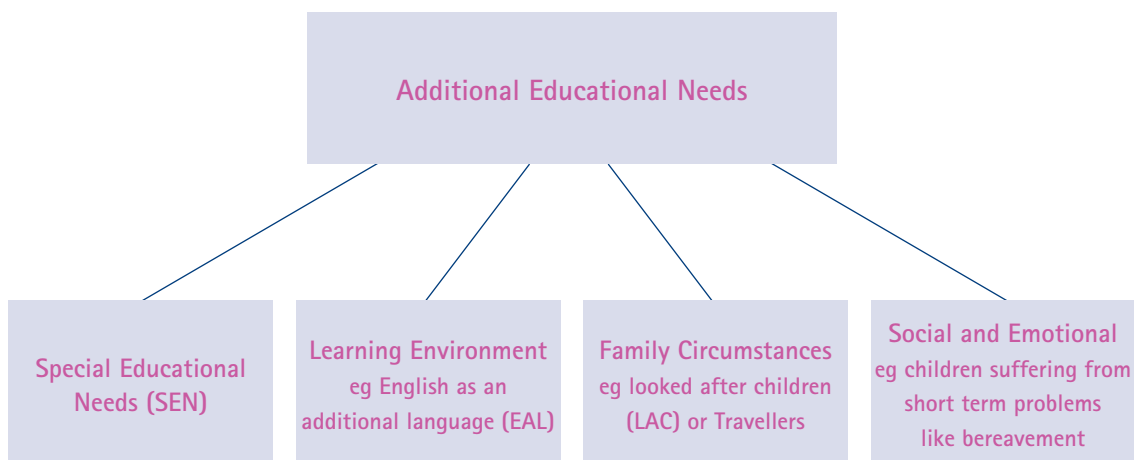
- 3.4 It is recognised that many children, at some time or other and for a number of reasons, will experience greater barriers to, or difficulties in, learning and progressing than their peers. A child may have SEN, may have a disability or may have other particular life or personal circumstances, either short or long term, which could give rise to barriers in learning.

3.5 A wide range of factors exist which may contribute to the need for additional support for some children. It is worth noting that the same factor may have a different impact on different children. For example, one child may find that difficulties at home may have an adverse impact upon his or her learning while another child, in apparently similar circumstances may experience a minimal impact on his or her learning.

3.6 These factors fall broadly into four overlapping themes;

- Children with SEN – for example, children with sensory , physical or medical conditions or syndromes, those encountering cognitive, learning, social, emotional and behavioural or communication difficulties as a consequence of a disability or health issue;
- Learning Environment – for example, children who have English as an additional language (EAL);
- Family Circumstances – for example, looked after children (LAC), school aged mothers (SAMs); young carers or those from the Traveller community; and
- Social and Emotional – for example, those who are suffering from bullying or who have recently suffered bereavement.

Diagram 1: Additional Educational Needs Themes



- 3.7 The proposals contained in this consultation document encompass a wider diversity of needs than simply the child with SEN. They recognise that any child who, for whatever reason faces a barrier to learning, may require additional support, short or long term, in order to learn and work to their full potential. **The proposal is to introduce a new inclusive model based on the concept of additional educational needs (AEN).** This concept already exists through the wider pastoral care available in schools, for example, the provision of a regional programme of support for school age mothers (SAMs).
- 3.8 It is worth noting that although the provision of additional support within this proposed framework will remain based on the individual needs of a child, schools will need to consider the class management and teaching strategies they employ in supporting the diverse learning needs of children within a class. The intention is that the support system in educational settings should be less about labels and less dependent on external intervention. The concept of additional educational need reflects the four overlapping themes: learning environment; family circumstances; SEN; and social and emotional factors. DE will seek to develop the capacity of schools (including pre-school providers with funded places) in order to respond to an increasing diversity of need. The range of responses or additional support provided will reflect the nature, circumstance, likely duration and severity of the need.

[See Consultation Point 1 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

4. POLICY PROPOSALS

Key Principles of the Policy Framework

- 4.1 These policy proposals are designed to be delivered within a framework that includes all those children who have a difficulty in accessing and benefiting from learning, whatever the reason or cause of that difficulty. The overall approach is not about labelling children or assuming that certain circumstances will give rise to difficulties in learning. Each child is an individual. Some needs will be temporary while others will present long term barriers to learning.
- 4.2 The key principles under-pinning these policy proposals are:-
- a) the continued promotion of an inclusive ethos as detailed in the supplement to the existing Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of SEN⁶;
 - b) a 'whole school' approach involving all staff at all levels;
 - c) an approach encompasses all children who face barriers to accessing and progressing in learning, whatever the reason;
 - d) provision of a continuum of support to meet a continuum of need;
 - e) quality intervention and provision tailored to the needs of individuals and groups of children and focused on improved outcomes for those facing barriers to learning;
 - f) schools and other educational establishments providing appropriate and timely support for the vast majority of their children with additional educational needs;
 - g) all learners, within all phases and key stages, are given the same degree of focus within the proposed policy;
 - h) all professionals, including teachers, have the skills and knowledge to allow early identification and intervention to facilitate improved outcomes;

⁶ *Supplement to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (September 2005)*

- i) promotion of greater collaborative working and sharing of information among schools;
- j) education and related health and social care professionals working together to support children;
- k) local and regional services being planned, commissioned and delivered jointly by health, social care and education;
- l) majority of funding being devolved to the lowest point of delivery possible; and
- m) knowledge, views, experience and involvement of parents and carers will play a vital part in the development and maintenance of any programme put in place to support their child.

What are the proposed changes?

4.3 These policy proposals, which are based on best practice already evident in a number of our schools, include many of the suggestions and ideas that the review team has received. The proposals aim to build on the strength of the current Code of Practice while introducing a number of measures which are outlined below. This list however is not exhaustive and further lower level proposals to support these key changes are highlighted throughout the document (in bold). In addition, a summary table of the proposals, including the benefits is included in Annex A.

The key changes are:

- a) developing a comprehensive approach based on the inclusive concept of the continuum of provision for a diversity of need in different settings;
- b) introducing an overarching framework which encompasses existing DE policy areas associated with school improvement and the minimisation of possible barriers to learning;
- c) changing the sequential stages of 1–5 in the current Code of Practice to a new model which will consist of three strands:– Within School; Within School plus External Support (other schools/ESA/ MGs); Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs);

- d) placing a greater responsibility on all schools to provide for the early identification of the diversity of need, assessment, planning and delivery of support programmes, and the monitoring of the subsequent progress of individual children who need support;
- e) developing further collaborative working and the sharing of existing good practice, skills and knowledge between and across schools;
- f) promoting the professional development of teachers and all other staff who are involved in meeting the additional needs of children;
- g) developing more effective partnerships between ESA, Department of Health and Social Service and Public Safety (DHSSPS), RHSCB and HSC Trusts and Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) through the establishment of multi- disciplinary groups (MGs);
- h) moving from statements of SEN to statutory co-ordinated support plans (CSPs) for those children with SEN who face complex or multi-barriers to learning;
- i) including all pre-school providers participating in the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme within the proposed revised framework;
- j) delegating more of the SEN funds currently held centrally by the ELBs to mainstream schools; and
- k) placing a responsibility on ESA to ensure that schools are effectively meeting their responsibilities in addressing the removal of possible barriers to learning;
- l) Developing and introducing a revised Code of Practice to support the implementation of the revised framework.

What do the proposed changes mean?

- 4.4 In broad terms these policy proposals will seek to ensure that all children who face barriers to learning will receive the right support at the right time to allow them to develop their own personality, skills and abilities to their fullest potential.
- 4.5 As responsibility transfers to schools it will be essential that resources also transfer. This transfer will, in turn, require increased accountability supported by effective and clear arrangements for monitoring and evaluating provision. Agreed quality indicators and protocols will provide a significant step forward in improving the coherence and robustness of the proposed new framework, and the confidence which all stakeholders can have in it.
- 4.6 Although the review recognises that a number of the key proposals will require significant additional resources and can only be implemented as and when resources are made available, many of the proposals are not dependent on additional resources. Their successful delivery will, however, be dependent on all those involved embracing and implementing the proposed framework, including the development of working partnerships and systems which foster information and expertise exchange more efficiently.
- For children and young people the proposals are intended to provide improved outcomes through earlier identification, assessment, removal of barriers and provision which is consistently and timely delivered through collaborative working within and across the education sector, with external support as and when appropriate.
 - For parents the proposals are intended to provide confidence and assurance that the barriers facing their children will be recognised and early steps taken to remove or minimise those barriers through a skilled and supportive workforce and greater partnership between parents and the school.
 - For teachers the proposals are aimed at providing strengthened skills and knowledge in identifying and addressing the diverse needs within their classrooms.
 - For school leaders the proposals are designed to ensure that they understand their pivotal role in improving and maintaining the provision for children facing barriers to learning.

- For schools and other educational establishments the proposals are designed to achieve increased collaboration and the sharing of skills, knowledge and resource across school clusters and, where appropriate, through strengthened support services.
- For ESA the proposals assign responsibility for the consistency and effective delivery of the policy.
- For DHSSPS the proposals intend to provide for closer collaboration with schools, ESA and DE in the identification, assessment and provision for those children who need it; the DHSSPS has already this as a theme in other policy areas.

[See Consultation Point 2 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

5. EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

- 5.1 It is widely accepted that early identification and assessment are crucial to providing appropriate intervention and laying the foundation for learning and progress. However, some children are reported as having to wait up to two years for an informal assessment at Stage 3 of the current Code of Practice (normally performed by an educational psychologist), and longer still for support. This is unacceptable. For many children, learning difficulties can be prevented or alleviated by thorough, early assessments of their performance followed by appropriate intervention strategies which alleviate the barriers to learning. Research indicates that proper assessment, diagnosis and provision at an early stage not only makes a real difference to life chances but may also result in lower spend in meeting that child's needs as he or she grows up.
- 5.2 These policy proposals recognise and promote diversity through an approach which identifies possible learning difficulties or barriers to learning of children and young people, whenever they occur. They also provide for the planning and implementation of appropriate strategies aimed at minimising possible barriers, promoting inclusion and ensuring the evaluation of the outcomes. This approach reflects the DE vision of every child realising their potential and being able to make the most of the learning opportunities offered throughout their time at school. **It is proposed that the current identification and assessment process will be improved by a strengthened and streamlined intervention process which places the emphasis firmly on schools and ESA to identify and provide for children who require additional educational support.**
- 5.3 Most children who are experiencing barriers to learning will have readily identifiable or short term needs which the school will be expected to address without the need for formal assessment. Schools will be expected to take the necessary steps to ensure that any possible barriers to learning are identified and the appropriate action taken (including reasonable adjustments). A move to formal assessment of a child's difficulties or disabilities will only be necessary when it has been clearly demonstrated that the in-school support programme has not been successful in meeting those needs. Schools will need to ensure that, for children whose first language is not English, lack of competence in the language used in school must not be equated with, or allowed to mask, possible learning difficulties.

- 5.4 **Under these proposals, the initial, lower level diagnostic testing will be carried out at school level by the proposed Learning Support Co-ordinator (LSC – see section 9) for those children who have been identified as possibly facing barriers to learning. As a result of this lower level testing, it is proposed that each school will be expected to draw up a personal learning plan (PLP) detailing specific outcomes to be achieved and the necessary adjustments and interventions required to ensure appropriate progress for the child concerned.** Implemented properly, the PLPs (which will replace the individual education plans within the current SEN framework) will direct teacher attention towards the setting and re-setting of clear, educationally relevant targets based on early identification and the monitoring of the pupil's response to the teaching/intervention provided by the school. The PLPs will be subject to regular review to ensure that any interventions employed are resulting in positive outcomes.
- 5.5 **It is proposed that an electronic based record relating to each individual child should be developed. This will include the PLP and will be tailored to record details of all relevant assessments completed by the school and other professionals thus facilitating increased sharing of information within schools and across the various agencies involved with providing support to a child. Restricted access will be incorporated where necessary.** Having details of the child's needs and intervention strategies to be employed will assist teachers in supporting and teaching that child. It will also allow other professionals to make informed decisions while avoiding unnecessary duplication of information and should therefore reduce the current levels of bureaucracy.

Example: Primary School A

Through a combination of teacher observations, referrals from pre-schools settings and the use of low-level diagnostic tests, the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning or behaviour are identified early and immediate programmes of support are established. The school has highlighted the support of children as a priority within its school development plan (SDP). The principal has invested considerable time and resources to ensure that all staff have developed the skills to provide appropriate programmes of support to address a wide range of children's difficulties.

[See Consultation Point 3 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

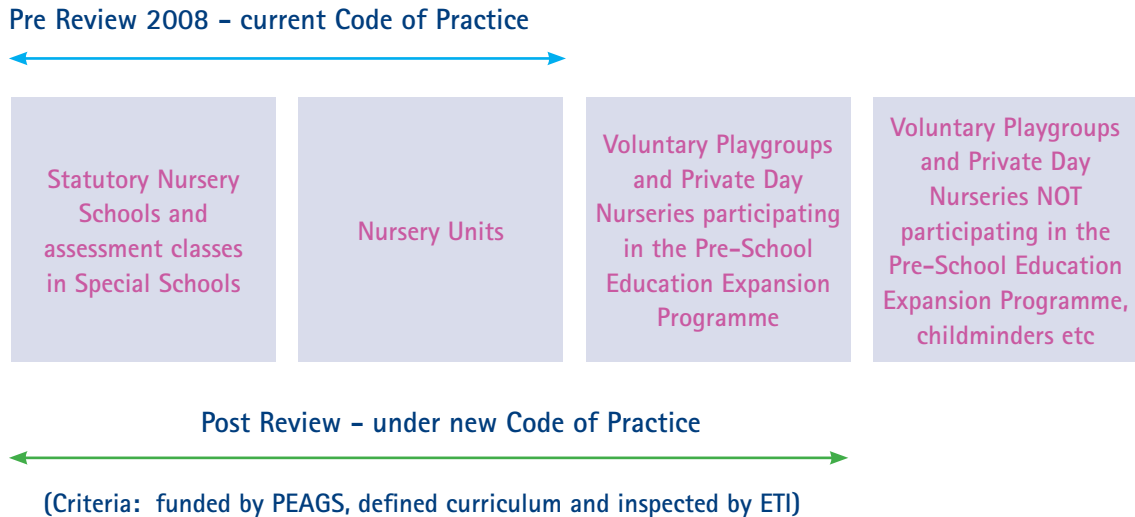
6. PRE-SCHOOL SETTINGS

- 6.1 Some children in pre-school provision will already have been identified as needing additional support, for example, children with physical disabilities, sensory impairments or severe learning difficulties. However, there will be others commencing pre-school provision with a range of previously unidentified additional support needs. Research carried out here⁷ shows that early intervention can prevent some vulnerable children developing additional needs that may later require statutory assessment and support. Early years staff, in partnership with parents, have a key role to play in identifying and providing support to these children. A recent Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) survey highlighted that, that "there is too much variability, across NI and among the various pre-school sectors, in the availability of expertise, funding and resources, and in the effectiveness of professional collaboration. For children within pre-school education, getting appropriate diagnosis and support at an early stage remains a lottery"⁸.
- 6.2 Statutory nursery schools, nursery classes and reception settings must have regard to the existing Code of Practice, however, non-statutory, voluntary and private early education centres/settings do not. **It is proposed, therefore, as a condition of their funding, that non-statutory, voluntary and private early education settings in receipt of funding through the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme should also work within any revised framework. These settings will also be able to avail of the full range of pupil support services provided by the ELBs/ESA, for example, educational welfare officers and behaviour support teams.**

⁷ *Effective Pre-school Provision in NI, A longitudinal study funded by the DE/DHSSPS and Social Steering Group, 1998-2004.*

⁸ *Special Educational Needs in the Pre-school Sector, ETI, 2007, p 39*

Diagram 2: Pre-school Proposals



- 6.3 While a range of training programmes will be provided, the review recognises that it would be unrealistic to expect all staff in voluntary/private pre-school settings to have the same level of knowledge or expertise of those in the statutory sector. **It is imperative, however, that members of staff in all the pre-school settings as defined above will have access to informed advice and expertise when they need it. It is therefore proposed that ELBs/ESA will establish and maintain a core of well-trained "early intervention officers" (EIOs) who will, as appropriate, support the initial assessment of those children facing barriers to learning.** These EIOs will also provide support for a group or cluster of pre-school settings which should result in a sharing of knowledge and skills transfer across and between the statutory and voluntary and private pre-school settings.

[See Consultation Point 4 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

7. PRIMARY AND POST PRIMARY

- 7.1 An increasing number of children (currently over 20%) are experiencing short or long term barriers to learning. Allowing these children, including those with literacy and numeracy difficulties, to continue to fail to reach acceptable standards will result in many ultimately failing to access full employment. Although many schools have developed the capacity of their staff to ensure the access and participation of all pupils, and have begun to work collaboratively with local schools and other agencies to provide a range of support, other schools have been less effective at removing or diminishing the barriers to learning and subsequent achievement. In the early 1990s the Jontiem World Conference concluded that "it is not our education systems that have a right to certain types of children; it is the school system that must adjust to meet the needs of all children".
- 7.2 While many children's needs will be identified in their pre-school years we recognise that there are some whose needs will only become apparent during the course of their school career whether at primary or post-primary level. We are committed to ensuring that schools work to identify and respond to children's difficulties as early as possible. For this approach to work, it is vital that staff in schools have the skills to recognise when a child has a barrier to learning, how to respond and when to seek advice. **The framework proposes that there will be greater collaboration and sharing of expertise and resources across local education establishments and agencies.**
- 7.3 Some difficulties in learning may be caused or exacerbated by the school's learning environment or adult/child relationships. The eradication of these barriers to learning will require the school principal and other members of the senior management team (SMT) monitoring and evaluating classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching styles and differentiation in order to decide how these can be developed further so that the child is enabled to learn effectively. The current interest in 'personalising' education rightly recognises the differences in children's rates of learning and the need to provide work that is matched to the ability of the child.

Nurture Groups

- 7.4 The rise in the numbers of young children presenting with a wide range of emotional and behavioural difficulties is of growing concern. Most children start school eager to learn, able to listen, willing to try new things, ready to share

and take turns; there are others, however, who are ill prepared for the demands of school and are unable to settle in class. In order to support these children, a small number of local primary schools have been operating in-situ nurture groups as an integral part of their whole school behaviour management policy. A nurture group provides a safe, nurturing environment with the emphasis on early intervention for children showing signs of emotional, behavioural or socialisation difficulties. These schools all report that they generally achieve the ultimate aim of a nurture group setting which is to provide the children with the necessary skills to cope with their full-time reintegration back into their mainstream class. **It is proposed that where the need is identified and certain conditions are fulfilled, ESA will establish a number of nurture groups in a range of primary schools.**

Example: Primary School B

This NG is comprised of 6-8 children who attend the class every day for 2-4 terms with increasing time spent back in their mainstream class. The two adults, a teacher and an assistant, provide a structured and predictable environment where the children can begin to learn within a home-like atmosphere; the low adult pupil ratio provides the children with increased adult attention. Although the main emphasis is on the development of social skills, during their time in the NG, the children follow, where possible, the same curriculum as their mainstream peers. The school reports that there has been a positive impact on the behaviour of the children, allowing them to access the curriculum alongside their peers. The school has tracked their former NG children who have now successfully transferred to post primary schools and most remain at a low risk of exclusion.

Education other than at school

- 7.5 A number of older children find themselves outside the school system in education other than at school (EOTAS). A majority of these young people have social, behavioural and emotional issues and many are placed in Alternative Education Provision (AEP). It is now estimated that over the course of a school year up to 1000 young people of post primary age may be permanently out of mainstream schools; more worryingly, pupils below the age of 14 and those with statements of SEN are now found in AEP. In many of these instances, the mainstream schools have abdicated their responsibility for the outcomes of these pupils. The aspiration should be that children are in school where at all possible

with the right support structures, with alternative provision only where this is the most appropriate solution for the individual young person. **It is proposed that before placement in an AEP setting, the school must demonstrate that every effort has been made to sustain the school placement through its own resources and the use of cooperative working with other local schools and agencies. It is also proposed that the school will take responsibility for the pupil and be accountable for future outcomes.**

[See Consultation Point 5 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

8. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 Increasingly over time, the implementation of the current SEN framework has resulted in an over-reliance on external support by schools to support pupils with SEN. Based on the many discussions held with teachers and principals, the review has established that it is the perception of many teachers and SENCOs that they are ill-equipped to deal with the increasing diversity of need in their schools; this view has also been confirmed in locally-based research⁹. It is important therefore that all teachers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills so that they are able to meet the challenge of having responsibility for all learners, whatever their individual needs. It is also important that parents have the confidence and are assured that their children's needs will be met effectively in school.
- 8.2 As DE's proposed new School Improvement Policy (set out in the document entitled 'Every School a Good School') points out, 'the quality of teaching and learning is the key to progress'. This SEN and Inclusion policy also acknowledges the importance of having a skilled teaching force that is able to recognise and support the children who are experiencing barriers to learning. It is timely that DE has also been carrying out a review of teacher education as the challenges faced by teachers in dealing with diversity of need within their classrooms is not separate to but is an important and integral aspect of teacher training. It will be important that any proposals emanating from the SEN and Inclusion review will be reflected in the outworking of the review of teacher education.
- 8.3 **It is proposed that providers of initial teacher education (ITE) consider how best to ensure that all beginning teachers have an awareness of differences, for example, that one teaching strategy will not necessarily fit all pupils, and that they have a practical understanding of how to adjust and tailor tasks to suit the ability of their pupils.**
- 8.4 It is also recognised that it will be necessary to provide appropriate continued professional development (CPD) of teachers in order to further develop teachers' skills and strategies for meeting the diversity of needs within their classes and, most importantly, sharpening the focus on the progress and outcomes made

⁹ *'SENCOs' Understanding of Dyslexia: Implications for the Identification of, and Support for, Children with Dyslexia in NI Primary Schools' (2006) Dr Marleen Collins*
'Implementing the Special Education Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005: Implications for Special Educational Needs Coordinators' (2007) Dr Brenda Montgomery (QUB)

by all children. It is important that each member of a school's workforce, for example, teachers, classroom assistants, principals and relevant members of Boards of Governors have an understanding of their roles within this proposed holistic framework. In order to achieve this, they will be provided with appropriate training to meet the requirements of their individual and shared roles. Principals and governors, for example, may require further support in developing their understanding of how to generate, collate, and then interpret, relevant data relating to the achievements of individual and groups of pupils. **It is therefore proposed that a targeted and integrated INSET/capacity building programme will be delivered to teachers and the wider school workforce.**

- 8.5 The implementation of this training and development strand will be additional to that currently provided by the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) and the Regional Training Unit (RTU) for the delivery of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This training, in the main, should be provided in situ and located within individual schools and the local community of schools. DE will also ensure that guidance and agreed quality indicators for those involved are developed in order to achieve greater consistency in the quality and effectiveness of the support provided by each school and educational establishment. In the future, ELB/ESA will be responsible for ensuring that mainstream teachers have the skills necessary to support the diversity of learners in their classroom through the provision of necessary training and relevant support.

[See Consultation Point 6 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

9. LEARNING SUPPORT COORDINATORS (LSCS)

- 9.1 Under the current Code of Practice, all mainstream schools are required to have a designated teacher (SENCO) with responsibility for day to day operations of the school's SEN policy, dealing with giving advice to teachers, liaising with parents, and co-ordinating SEN provision. In the larger schools, this SEN coordinator (SENCO) may also be the SEN teacher; in the smaller schools with fewer members of staff, the principal may often have to fulfil this role. Although SENCOs often play a key role supporting children, research and feed-back from the advisory groups have identified a number of issues relating to the role of SENCOs including lack of appropriate training, insufficient time carry out their duties effectively and low status within a school, for example, most are not members of the school's senior management team (SMT).
- 9.2 These policy proposals aim to provide a framework which ensures early identification and intervention to meet the needs of all children who may be experiencing barriers to learning. The co-ordinator's skills and knowledge base will therefore need to be strengthened, not just in order to advise, but to instigate initial assessment of learning difficulties and to ensure that appropriate interventions are delivered by the class teacher. **It is therefore proposed that the SENCO will be renamed as Learning Support Co-ordinator (LSC) to reflect this wider remit.**
- 9.3 **In addition it is proposed that all LSCs will receive appropriate professional development that enhances their managerial skills and their ability to co-ordinate school provision as well as their capability to carry out low level diagnostic testing and develop appropriate intervention strategies. Given the importance of the LSC's role within the school, it will therefore be important that they are provided with clear career pathways with access to an accredited professional qualification that would contain training relating to low-level assessment.**
- 9.4 It will also be important that principals and governors understand that they will need to ensure that LSCs are provided with sufficient non-teaching time to carry out their duties effectively and that their enhanced expertise is matched with appropriate time allocated to supporting teachers in addressing the needs of pupils. **It is also proposed that the LSC should always be part of the SMT. For smaller schools, the LSC role may be required to operate across a number of schools.**

Example: School C

The SENCO in school C demonstrates a good understanding of her role; she oversees the SEN programme effectively. There is good liaison between the SENCO and the class teachers to ensure progression and continuity in the children's learning. She has helped the teachers to develop effective strategies to enable them to support their pupils who experience difficulties.

[See Consultation Point 7 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

10. COORDINATED SUPPORT PLANS (CSP)

- 10.1 Under the current Code of Practice a child may be referred for statutory assessment which may or may not result in a statement of SEN (see Annex B). Within these proposals we are trying to take the focus off the statutory assessment process and the associated bureaucracy. The intention is to put the emphasis firmly on getting children the assistance they need as early as possible through the upskilling of the school workforce and the provision of child centred, coordinated support services, planned for and delivered by both education and health and social care.
- 10.2 There is often a misconception that provision of additional external resources is always necessary to ensure the progress of a child experiencing barriers to learning. The OFSTED 2006¹⁰ survey into inclusion reports that the key factors for progress are, in fact: the involvement of an experienced/qualified teacher; good assessment; work tailored to challenge pupils sufficiently; and commitment for school leaders to ensure good progress for all pupils.
- 10.3 The statutory assessment process itself can be lengthy and is costly to administer. Increasingly it has come to be perceived as a gateway to resources rather than a contribution to understanding the educational implications of a child's disability or difficulty. Emphasising the type of provision and quantity of support, for example the number of hours of support from a classroom assistant which might be allocated, does not on its own meet the children's needs. The key factors – the quality of the provision and outcomes for pupils – are not always examined sufficiently and rigorously; the absence of such considerations reduces the effectiveness of statements substantially. In addition, where mainstream classes include several children with statements, the combined effect of the individual statements, each specifying particular provision, can hinder the effective use of support across the whole class or the school.
- 10.4 **It is proposed that statutory statements of SEN will be replaced by a statutory co-ordinated support plans (CSP).** The aim of the CSP is to plan long term and strategically for the achievement of learning outcomes and to foster co-ordination across the range of services (multi-agency and multi-disciplinary) required to support this. **A CSP will include a greater emphasis on expected**

10 Inclusion: does it matter where pupils are taught? The Office for Standards in Education Children Services and Skills 2006

learning outcomes than is currently found in statements, and any named additional support should be linked directly with the expected learning outcomes. CSPs will be provided solely for those children with SEN who face complex or multiple barriers to learning which significantly, and adversely, affect (or could reasonably be expected to affect) their educational development in the long term and who require frequent access to a diversity of multi-agency services external to the school (for example, those provided by the health and social care sector and the ELB/ESA support services).

- 10.5 **It is also proposed that CSPs will be reviewed at more dynamic trigger points, for example, at the end of key stages, when the child is moving to another school or at the request of a parent or existing school.** This is a move away from the current statutory annual review process which is seen by many as being time-consuming and costly and, yet in most cases, does not result in any change in provision. In the event that a CSP identifies that adult assistance may be required, both the need of the child and the level, type and utilisation of adult assistance already available within the school will be a consideration in determining the type and deployment of adult assistance for example classroom assistance or assistant teacher.
- 10.6 Put simply, CSPs will provide individualised support strategies and resources for the small minority of children who need SEN provision that is 'additional to or different from' that which an enhanced mainstream school will be expected to provide. **Where support for a child can be provided entirely within the school, albeit with some help from local and/or special schools or advice from the local Multi-disciplinary Group (see section 12), or ELB/ESA personnel, there should be no need for a CSP to be issued.** However, it will be important for each school to place a greater emphasis on the provision of focussed, targeted and regularly reviewed Personal Learning Plans for those individual and groups of children who require such in-school interventions.

[See Consultation Point 8 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

11. TRANSITION POINTS

- 11.1 Throughout their school education all children experience changes of school including entry to pre-school, primary, secondary and post-school provision. Some may also experience changes at other times when they transfer to another school or have a break in their school education, for example, due to ill health.
- 11.2 At these times, the transfer of existing knowledge of the child's strengths and difficulties is essential, although this information will be subject to confidentiality requirements. **It is proposed that pre-school settings and schools should have effective arrangements in place, including the timely sharing of appropriate assessment and information relating to the child. These arrangements should ensure that an appropriate intervention programme can be developed and implemented as quickly and smoothly as possible.**
- 11.3 As children who have been identified as having additional needs approach the end of their school career, it is essential that there is sustained, prompt communication between them, their parents and all supporting agencies. There should be an explicit recognition of the strengths, abilities, wishes and needs of the child as well as identification of relevant support strategies which may be required to assist them in the transition from school to adult life.
- 11.4 Under the current Code of Practice, transition is a term used to refer to that time in child's life when plans are made to move from school to adult life. In 2002, an Inter Departmental Working Group (IDG) facilitated the collaboration between DE, DHSSPS and DEL in relation to the transition process for those children with statements of SEN aged 14 upwards¹¹. **The recommendations within this IDG report still remain valid**, in particular:
- a) the appointments of Transitions Co-ordinators to strengthen the transition planning process in school and provide a co-ordinated approach with other statutory agencies and advice givers;
 - b) the restructuring of DEL Careers Service to focus, as a priority, on young people aged 14-19 with statements of special needs by appointing Careers Managers and specialist Careers Advisers.

11 Report of the Transitions Inter-Departmental Working Group

- c) the development of publicity and information material for pupils and parents to ensure that pupils and parents are aware of the support available from the Transitions Service; and
 - d) the delivery, in schools, of Life Skills Training programmes to improve self help and independent living.
- 11.5 The role of the Specialist Careers Adviser, as set out in the IDG Transitions report is:
- a) on invitation from the school, to play an active role in the transition planning process in school;
 - b) to work in partnership with colleagues from other agencies in order to support clients' guidance needs;
 - c) to work pro-actively with young people to help them identify their needs, potential and assist them in the decision making process; and
 - d) to engage with the young person's wider social network (for example, family and friends) in order to gain insight into issues affecting progression.
- 11.6 Although many of the IDG's proposals are being progressed, anecdotal evidence would suggest that geographical inconsistencies in the level and value of the service provided may still occur and that there remains a need to develop improved communication/links between the transition officers from both health and social care and education services in leading and managing aspects of the transition process. In addition, there needs to be a greater degree of monitoring and evaluation of the planning and delivery of the education and health transitions support services in order to ensure that, regardless of a child's specific needs or where they live, they and their parents can avail of a quality, standardised service.
- 11.7 Within the current Code of Practice, access to the Transitions Support Services is only available to those pupils who have a statement. **It is proposed that, in addition to those with CSPs, any pupil with SEN should have the opportunity to access the Transitions Support Services.**

[See Consultation Point 9 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

12. DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

12.1 Working in partnership with others can offer many benefits. It can add richness to a child's experience and allow a wide range of children and parents' needs to be met. It can encourage professionals from different backgrounds to exchange skills, approaches and expertise according to identified needs. These policy proposals place great emphasis on the creation of collaborative working practices between schools as recommended within the Bain report (area-based planning) and between schools and other professionals working together to support children. **It is proposed that all schools will be expected to collaborate with other schools in their locality to make full and effective use of the knowledge and skills of the wider school cluster/learning community (see paragraph 12.6) and other support agencies.**

12.2 The policy proposes the development of partnerships:

- a) within schools and pre-school settings;
- b) across educational settings and learning communities;
- c) between mainstream and special schools;
- d) between ELB/ESA and proposed RHSCB;
- e) between DE and the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL);
- f) through the establishment of multi-disciplinary groups (MGs);
- g) with parents and carers;
- h) with children and young people; and
- i) with voluntary organisations.

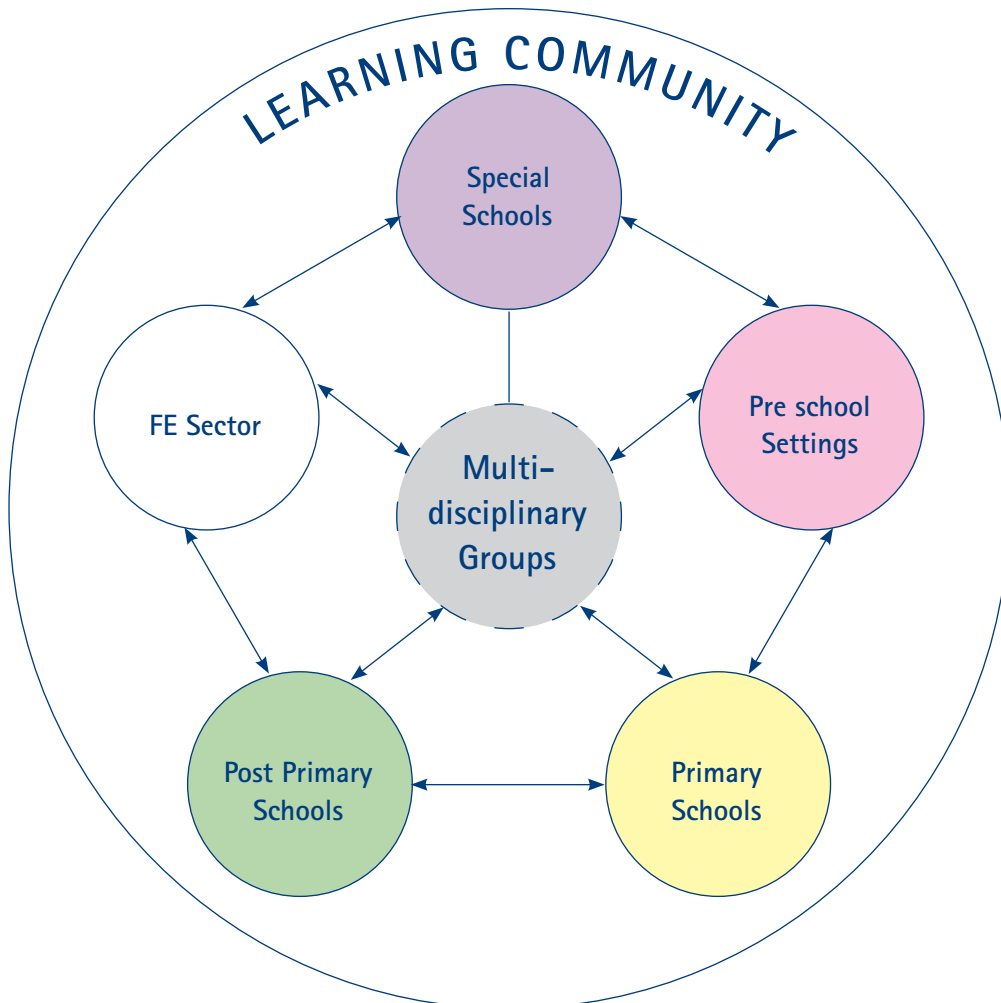
Partnerships within Schools and Pre-School Settings

- 12.3 **The policy proposal places the focus on a 'whole school' approach with all school staff working in partnership towards a shared goal of reducing the wide range of barriers to learning faced by some children through agreed strategies or measures.** This will be achieved through:
- a) clearly defined indicators for schools in terms of what they are expected to deliver and the inclusion of targeted areas of support in school development plans;
 - b) a whole school commitment to pupils who experience barriers to learning with the sharing of skills and knowledge amongst both teaching and non teaching staff;
 - c) clearly defined and targeted interventions which are time-bound and focussed on the learning difficulties of the child (children) which are understood by all;
 - d) the school principal, supported by the Board of Governors, having a key role in ensuring that their school is identifying, implementing and reviewing the measures taken to reduce the barriers and improve the outcomes for children; and
 - e) the appointment of a LSC who will also be a member of the senior management team.
- 12.4 Within any model of service delivery, the school's commitment to the support being offered is vital to the effectiveness and sustainability of improvements. We need to move to a support service which provides targeted services along with effective skills and knowledge training for teachers, classroom assistants and other school staff. Any support provided will need to be clearly time-bound, clearly focussed on the needs of the child and the teacher and with clearly defined goals set before commencement of the support package.
- 12.5 Where some teachers within a school are receiving external support, for example, to deal with challenging behaviour, then it would seem feasible that the school should be focussing on a whole school review of behavioural support during the set period. **It is therefore proposed that the school Senior Management team incorporates any targeted area of external support into their school development plan (SDP).**

Partnerships across Educational Settings and Learning Communities

- 12.6 These policy proposals support area-based planning (as recommended in the Bain Report) and promotes collaborative working, within and between educational settings and other professionals working together to support children and young people. Some schools have more experience, skills, knowledge or good practice in addressing the wide range of difficulties facing children. Within these proposals, the utilisation of such skills and the sharing of such good practice with other school settings within the local learning community are essential (see Diagram 3). The learning communities concept builds on that created to support the entitlement framework and extends across pre-schools, primaries, post primaries, further education colleges and special schools. In keeping with the creation of the concept of collaborative working, which applies across many of DE policy areas, all schools and other educational settings within a learning community will be required to collaborate and work in partnership (both mainstream and special) to identify and make full and effective use of the expertise, knowledge and skills of the wider school cluster/learning community.
- 12.7 Whilst maintaining their own autonomy, schools will be expected to willingly and actively participate in providing and receiving the benefit of expertise, skills and knowledge to other schools within their learning cluster. These clusters will be supported through the sharing of knowledge and electronic training resources via an ESA managed network. **It is proposed that, in addition to their delegated budget, consideration may be given to schools receiving financial and other incentives when they collaborate and share expertise and resources, in order to deliver improved provision for children with barriers to learning.**

Diagram 3: Learning Community



Partnerships between Mainstream and Special Schools

- 12.8 One of the keys to the success of the proposed model will be the continued sharing of expertise and resources across the sectors, with special schools, in particular, playing an important role within the overall framework. Staff with expertise in areas such as emotional and behavioural difficulties, communication and interaction and sensory and/or physical needs clearly have a role as providers of advice, support and training to colleagues in mainstream schools who are facing new challenges in meeting the needs of increasingly diverse school populations. **It is also proposed that opportunities should be created for special schools to achieve recognition as centres of expertise within learning communities and possibly on a regional wide basis in the provision of specialist outreach and training services.** Such a development has clear implications for policy makers in relation to short and long term-planning of all forms of resourcing and provision.

Partnerships between ESA and the proposed RHSCB

- 12.9 Under current legislation¹² ELBs have the statutory responsibility for identifying, assessing and meeting the educational needs of children with SEN for whom they are responsible. ELBs must seek the help of health and social services authorities. This includes seeking advice for the purpose of statutory assessment and in making provision for a child with SEN. However, there are exceptions within the current legislation which can, and do, result in delays in statutory assessment and shortfall in provision. The need for speech and language therapy is specified in some children's statements of SEN, this is as recommended and supplied by the Health and Social Care Trusts (HSC Trusts). There are however acknowledged difficulties, due mainly to the shortage of Speech and Language Therapists. To help cater for this in a few instances, ELBs have considered engaging speech and language therapists to meet their statutory obligations. DHSSPS does not encourage such practice as it raises issues such as governance, professional development and accountability.

Example of collaborative working between Education and Allied Health and Social Care Professionals:

Some other examples of good practice are to be found in the pre-school sector and in the post-primary sector as each moves towards extending provision to including a number of 'wrap round' services to support young people in their learning as envisaged in the concept of the children's centre, Sure Start programmes and the full-service school. In one post-primary school, for example, the principal recognised that in order for young people to be better placed to learn, he needed to work with families and the local community through appointing a family liaisons officer to address for example, mental health and behaviour issues. Sure Start has a particular focus on supporting the healthy development of disadvantaged children. In one project, for example, the multi-disciplinary and skilled staff offer an appropriate balance of provision encompassing health, play development, home support and parent participation.

¹² Education (NI) Order 1996

- 12.10 The current arrangements for the delivery of services for children and young people with learning disability are essentially discipline led reflecting the roles, responsibilities, organisation and structures of the Departments. The challenges faced by professionals in both the education and health and social care sectors in working together to meet the needs of children who face barriers to learning are well recognised by the Departments, the education and health and social care professionals and parents alike.
- 12.11 There is a recognised need for collaborative working and joined up co-ordinated services that are child centered. In 2007, DHSSPS and DE produced a report entitled "Standards and Guidance for Promoting Collaborative Working to Support Children with Special Needs." The purpose of this guidance is to promote collaborative working arrangements, at a local and regional level, to ensure that the education and therapy needs of children are met within the special school setting.
- 12.12 Whilst joined up thinking and delivery of services is happening, for example, the health multi-disciplinary teams created through the Children and Young People Funding Package (CYPFP), there is room for improvement. Poor co-ordination between education, health and social care leading to gaps in support, are just some of the issues identified in the feedback from education and health and social care professionals on the various SEN and inclusion advisory groups and in meetings with representatives from these multi-disciplinary teams. In addition, some parents raised this as an issue in their meetings with the Review team.
- 12.13 **These policy proposals focus on improved multi-disciplinary planning and working as the key to the successful delivery of a holistic support service which places the child firmly at the centre. It is proposed that this will be achieved by:**
- **more timely and effective means of identifying, assessing and delivering appropriate additional support to provide better outcomes for children and young people and in particular those with disability or health needs and social and emotional factors;**
 - **locally commissioned services that are jointly planned and delivered by health and social care and education which are child centred, easily accessible, effectively and consistently delivered across the North to those children who need them.**

- 12.14 This proposed joined 'team around the child' approach has significant benefits as it:
- a) reduces the time consuming process of both the child and parent having to outline their child's needs time and time again to a range of professionals;
 - b) allows for the best use of the roles of the disciplines involved whilst ensuring specialists' contributions are recognised as essential; and
 - c) removes potential for overlaps or gaps in provision.
- 12.15 This approach, however, demands clarity about the individual professional roles, responsibilities, standards and contributions. While a range of agencies may already be involved in identifying children's difficulties there needs to be more consistency in integrated working to support the needs of the children, particularly those with complex physical health-care needs. Joint planning and commissioning is vital. It is recognised that further low level costing will need to be carried out in relation to the delivery of a wrap-around service. There also needs to be an increased emphasis on the standardisation of information systems to better support collaboration between the various professionals.
- 12.16 A key focus of our proposals is to ensure children experiencing barriers to learning are identified as early as possible and provided with the appropriate support when they need it. This support could be educational, health and social care related or both. Most of these children should already fall within the scope of HSC Trusts and, as appropriate, are already being supported by targeted child care packages. The purpose of the new framework is to promote a more integrated approach both within schools and between the interface with education and health and social care colleagues when dealing with the range of barriers faced by children.
- 12.17 It is recognised that there are currently duties placed on education, the ELBs and health and social care. Given the criticality of cross-sector working, however, and in order to ensure the establishment of consistent partnership arrangements, it will be essential that the ELBs/ESA and the proposed RHSCB and the HSC Trusts are bound by further agreements (such as memoranda of understanding or service level agreements) to jointly and effectively plan, commission, deliver and monitor, within the resources allocated, a joined up education and health and social care service to children with barriers to learning. If these proposed agreements cannot deliver accessible and consistent support, then the respective departments may need to consider placing an appropriate statutory duty on the relevant organisations.

Partnerships between DE and DEL

- 12.18 Given the importance of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and the availability of the Disablement Advisory Service (DAS) in supporting children as they make the move from school to adult life, there continues to be a need for close working relationships between the education sector and DEL. While recognising the need for confidentiality, the availability of appropriate information gathered through the transition process, will help FE colleges and training providers to improve further the quality of training and education for all students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Multi-disciplinary Groups (MGs)

- 12.19 In order to make multi-disciplinary working the norm, and facilitate consistency of approach and support, we are proposing that a network of Multi-disciplinary groups (MGs) should be established which are aligned to learning communities, ESA and local HSC structures.
- 12.20 In principle, each local MG will be adequately represented with relevant and skilled education, health and social care professionals to provide for the active reflection and collaboration of all parties in determining the plan of action to remove or minimise the barriers children are facing. At different times, depending on which sub-group was meeting, there may be representatives from education and health and social care services, for example, educational and clinical psychologists, speech and language therapist, welfare officer and ESA personnel. This collaboration, and where possible, the co-location, of these professionals would ensure that each MG was in a strong position to provide an integrated, localised review of need and the co-ordinated delivery of support and services to the children and their families.
- 12.21 It is proposed that the primary function of the MG will be to evaluate and determine the next steps for those children who have been identified as requiring multi-disciplinary support over and above that which can be provided by the schools alone or to ascertain which children actually require statutory assessment. Each MG will apply agreed standard criteria and protocols to facilitate early identification and, as appropriate, early intervention and, in doing so, provide for consistency of delivery and equality. It is anticipated that each MG will foster and facilitate the development of effective support structures both between local schools within the learning community and across other MGs through the dissemination of good practice. Another proposed function of each MG will be the identification and raising of issues at a strategic level, for example, the prevalence or increase of difficulties children are experiencing.

- 12.22 Each MG will play an important role in the challenging of participating schools regarding the levels and effectiveness of the support they are providing for their pupils. The school will have to demonstrate to their local MG that they have made every effort to meet the child's needs through reasonable adjustments, for example, teaching methodology, the redeployment of their own resources and the effectiveness of any intervention on the child's progress before approaching their local MGs for further help and support. MGs will require schools to produce detailed objective evidence of the actions and reviews taken to support a pupil, for example, assessment carried out, the intervention programme implemented, and subsequent review and evaluation of progress made by the child. A sub-group within each MG, whose members will be nominated representatives from the ELB/ESA and from HSC organisations will determine, using agreed criteria and procedures, if and when a child will progress to the formal statutory assessment process which may lead to the provision of a CSP.
- 12.23 Schools will continue to retain the freedom to seek advice from other schools and the ELB/ESA support services at any time; indeed it will be a requirement that schools will have availed of existing expertise within their learning communities before referring a child to their local MG. Each MG, based on the evidence that the school would provide, may wish to enhance the strategies used by the school through the promotion of identified, good practice and support from other local schools, specific involvement from external, regional specialist services or other non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Each MG will also have the option to recommend and arrange dual-placements for a child within schools in the area.
- 12.24 The 2006 OFSTED report on extended services in schools and children's centres noted that a lead co-ordinator helps effective multi-agency working. It is proposed, therefore, that each MG would have a co-ordinator who will have the responsibility for dealing with any queries or referrals from schools, organising regular sub-group meetings and for drawing additional education and health and social care professionals together when necessary.
- 12.25 We recognise that the effective outworking of the proposed MGs and integrated service delivery will only be achieved through close co-operation between, and coordinated bidding by, DE, ELB/ESA and DHSSPS, RHSCB, and the HSC Trusts. We therefore propose that the number, location and staffing requirements of each MG will be the jointly determined by ELB/ESA and the proposed new RHSCB and HSC Trusts. This will be taken forward as part of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) or service level agreement (SLA) between the organisations which will take account of availability and optimum use of resources.

Partnerships with Parent/Carer

- 12.26 The sharing of information, knowledge and advice between the parent and the teaching and health and social care professionals is vital in ensuring that there is a common understanding of the nature of the barrier/s to learning. It is also an important factor in developing parental confidence that appropriate action or measures are being taken to address any identified needs and that their child is making progress.
- 12.27 The current guidance on working in partnership with parents/carers and children (as laid out in the Code of Practice and Supplement) identifies:
- a) the requirement on schools to discuss with a parent any concerns over barriers a child is facing and the action that the school is taking to reduce those barriers and to inform the parent/carers of local voluntary groups which may assist in understanding the nature of the barrier;
 - b) the provision of information and advice through a responsive and easily accessible service; and
 - c) the availability of the Dispute Avoidance and Resolutions Service (DARS).
- 12.28 **It is proposed that the current guidance as laid out in the Code of Practice and Supplement is more consistently and effectively delivered in partnerships between parents, schools, ELBs/ESA and other professionals.** The benefits of this collaborative approach are that it will ensure that parents will have an increased understanding of:
- a) their role in supporting their child;
 - b) what others will do to support their child (including schools and health and social care professionals)
 - c) the identification and assessment process and the roles and responsibilities within that process;
 - d) the levels of therapy provision offered; and
 - e) the Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) and their rights of appeal.

Partnerships with the Child

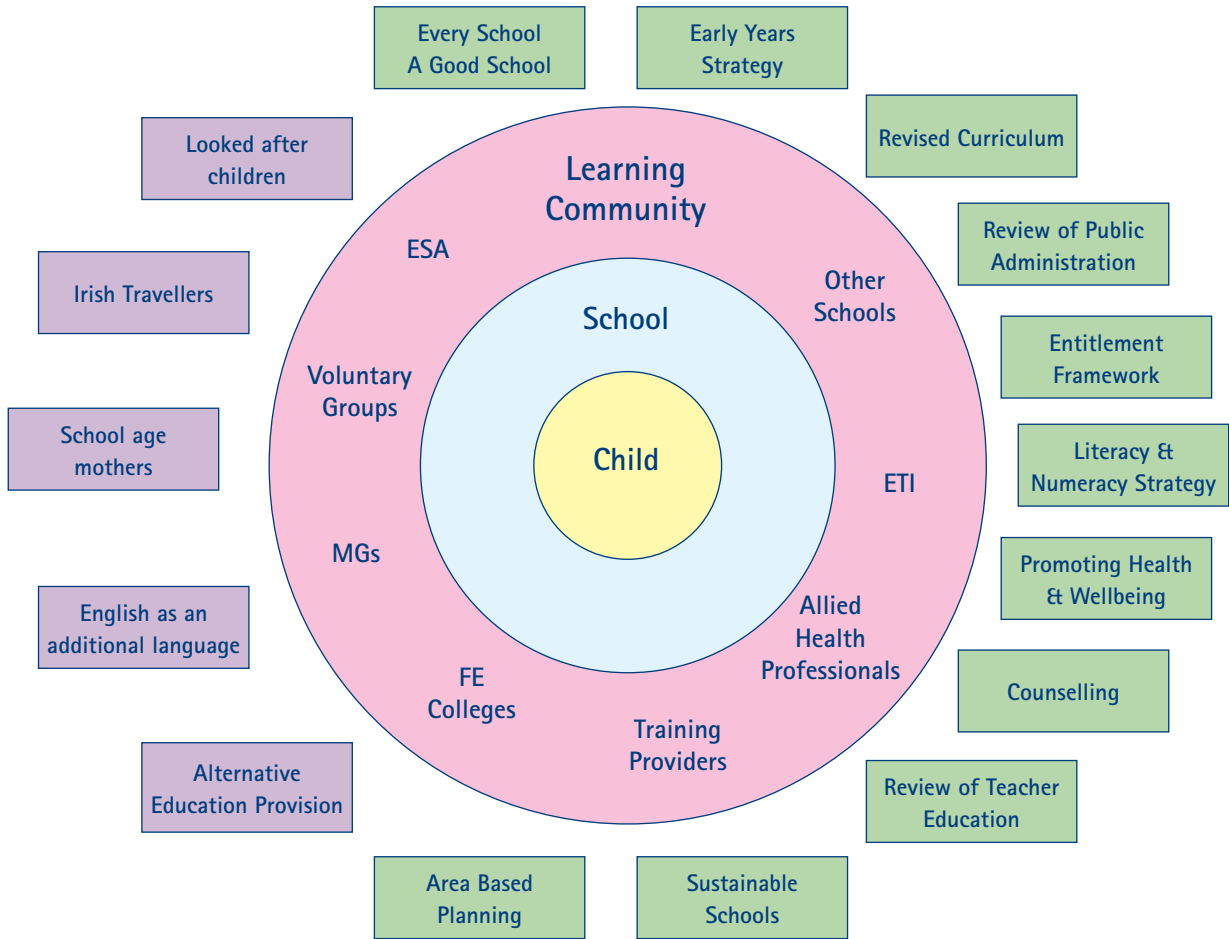
- 12.29 The current Code of Practice highlights the importance of children participating in all decisions about their education. This will continue to be an important element of the new approach. Schools and other bodies will be required to seek the views of the child and give due weight to those views according to the age, maturity and capability of the child in keeping with Articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Partnerships with the Voluntary Sector

- 12.30 The voluntary sector has a unique and important contribution to make in supporting parents and providing a range of services for parents. Schools, ELB/ESA and the proposed RHSCB and their support services should ensure that families have information on the full range of support services in the voluntary sector within their area. **In order that voluntary organisations can play an effective role, it is proposed that ELBs/ESA, the proposed RHSCB and schools should regularly involve, where appropriate, the voluntary sector in training courses and the exchange of relevant information.**

[See Consultation Point 10 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

Diagram 4: Inter-relationship of child, school, learning communities and DE policies



13. THE OUTWORKING OF THE PROPOSED MODEL

13.1 It is proposed the sequential stages of 1–5 in the current Code of Practice will be replaced by a new model which will consist of three strands:–

- **Within School**
- **Within School plus External Support (other schools/ESA/MGs)**
- **Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs).**

Within School

13.2 We propose to change the current focus and dependence on external support to strengthened and improved provision within schools. The schools will be responsible for the vast majority of their children's diverse needs within a funding allocation, with the support of guidance and indicators detailing the provision they will be expected to deliver. Initial diagnostic testing, if needed, will be carried out at school level (as proposed in paragraph 9.3, this will be by the LSC). The school will be expected to draw up a PLP (see paragraph 5.5 re PLP) which will be responsive to the needs of the child, flexible, prompt and subject to ongoing review. This school-based PLP will form a comprehensive record of any diagnostic testing, interventions commenced and the progress expected and achieved within a period of time. As proposed in paragraph 5.5 the PLP will form part of an electronic record maintained by the school in relation to the child. Ultimately early identification resulting in appropriate and effective teacher-led interventions will make a major contribution to overcoming difficulties at an early stage and should reduce the need for intensive and expensive compensatory measures later in the child's school career¹³.

13.3 It will be important that schools should not assume that an increase in a child's level of need, or time within a school, necessarily calls for increased level of resource (for example classroom assistance or peripatetic teacher) although this may sometimes be the case. As many mainstream schools have already

13 Making Lifelong Learning a Reality for All: background paper for the Conference on the European Ministers of Education, Heidelberg, 2 March 2007

demonstrated, the employment of more appropriate teaching strategies is often as effective or even more effective in ensuring that a child achieves the agreed outcomes and level of progress.

Within School plus External Support

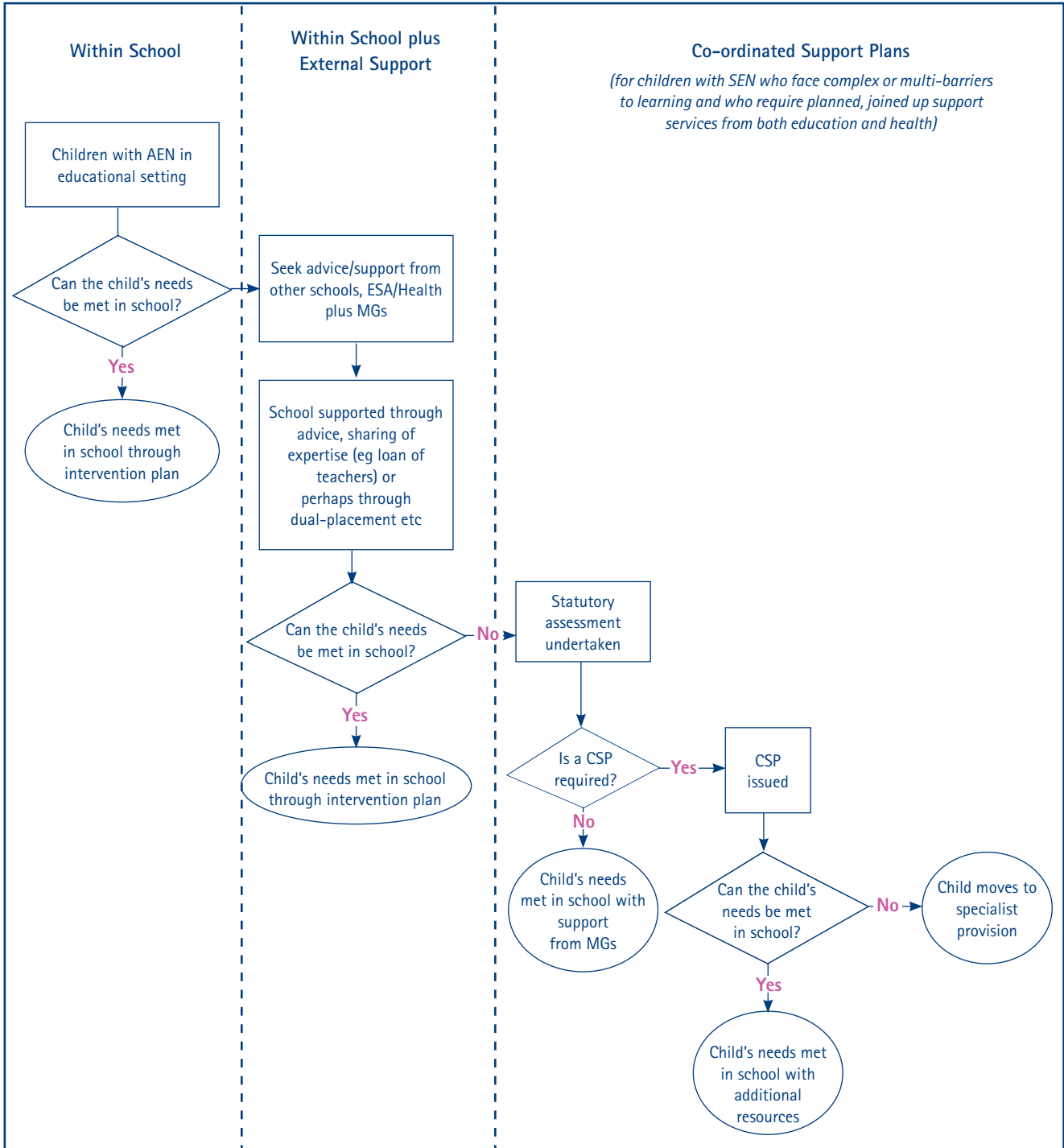
- 13.4 There may be times when a school may have taken relevant and purposeful in-house measures to identify and address the additional needs of the pupil but, after an ongoing cycle of assessment, setting targets, employing various strategies, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions. If the school conclude that the pupil is not making the progress expected, then the principal may wish to supplement the school interventions with advice or other external support,
- 13.5 This may take the form of support or sharing of expertise from other schools in the learning community, the local MG, or from the support services commissioned by ELBs/ESA or the proposed RHSCB. For example, where a school believes that its staff is unable to provide appropriate support for a child from within their own resources, it will be able to draw on;
- a) advice provided by other local schools including the special school sector; and/or
 - b) expertise of the local multi-agency group (MG) to evaluate and determine the next steps for the individual child and identify further interventions.
- 13.6 It is important to note, that before availing of any external support, the school must be able to demonstrate that it has taken appropriate and reasonable action to meet the child's needs but that the desired progress has not been achieved. The MG, in providing an evaluation of the support needs of the child, will consider:
- a) the relevant and purposeful measures taken by and within the school;
 - b) the ongoing monitoring and reviews carried out;
 - c) Advice from the relevant education, health and social care professionals giving consideration on additional external measures appropriate to the learning difficulty or disability or barriers which continue to impact a child's ability to make progress alongside their peers or against their own individual targets.

- 13.7 Whilst not exhaustive, the possible outcomes or routes following a referral from a school or a parent at this stage may include:-
- a) referral back to the school setting, in the event that meaningful and purposeful measures and ongoing review have not been taken in order to facilitate the support of the child's needs from within the school;
 - b) provision of additional strategies or advice;
 - c) appropriate planned interventions/change in provision from sources external to school;
 - d) availing of alternative programmes designed for groups of children identified as being at risk;
 - e) care and education packages for looked after children (LAC);
 - f) appropriate integrated interventions for children with mental health difficulties; or
 - g) initiation of statutory assessment for those children with complex or multiple needs.

Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs)

- 13.8 Only when a sub-group within each MG (whose members will be nominated representatives of both the ELBs/ESA and HSC Trusts) is satisfied that the school has exhausted its own resources, and can demonstrate that planned support programmes have not been successful, would the statutory assessment process (which may or may not result in the provision of a CSP) for a small number of children with SEN then commence. The school will be required to produce detailed objective evidence of the actions and reviews already taken to support a pupil, for example, assessment carried out, the intervention programme implemented, and subsequent review and evaluation of progress made by the child.
- 13.9 The statutory assessment will continue to be carried out by an educational psychologist. The ELBs/ESA will be responsible for the completion of this process and for the provision of any additional educational support deemed to be necessary.

Diagram 5: Possible Outworking of Proposed Framework



See Consultation Point 11 of the Consultation Response Booklet

14. RESOLUTION AND APPEAL MECHANISMS

- 14.1 Included in Annex B are the current informal and formal routes for resolution of a disagreement or appeal relating only to those children with SEN. It is proposed that these arrangements remain valid. However the Review supports the recommendations which have emerged from the February 2008 ETI Survey on Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS). In addition the remit for the formal SENDIST route would relate to co-ordinated support plans (CSP) rather than statements.

[See Consultation Point 12 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

15. FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

- 15.1 The current funding arrangements for schools via the Local Management of Schools (LMS) and funding allocated through the ELBs is included in Annex D. Within the context of the LMS model, the measures that are presently used and the methodology adopted in distributing additional resources under the targeting social need (TSN) factor of formula funding, will be an important focus of the review of the current Common Funding Formula arrangements. There will clearly be a need to ensure that the SEN and Inclusion Review informs and supports the ongoing work to refine the current formula funding arrangements; to ensure that the formula is able to reflect emerging policy developments.
- 15.2 Allocation of additional resources for children with statements in mainstream schools has been based on the individual needs of the child, ie in order to obtain the resource the school must demonstrate that the child in question has some form of special educational need; this usually necessitates the submission of an educational psychologist's report and the commencement of the statementing process. For pupils with a statement of SEN, funding for the specific provision set out in the statement must be provided. Many European countries, including Scotland, Austria, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden, have concluded that this pupil based budgeting is not advisable for pupils with milder forms of special needs and that a fixed part of the budget for SEN should be allocated to schools regardless of need, based on the assumption that every school has to have at least some facilities for pupils with special needs. The Department sees merit in this approach.
- 15.3 In order to support the model of continuum of support for a diversity of need, **it is proposed that there should be greater delegation to mainstream schools of the funding which is currently distributed by the 5 ELBs, and in the case of voluntary grammar and grant-maintained integrated schools, that funding which is currently distributed by DE.** As a result, schools would be expected to meet the vast majority of their pupils' additional needs from within a proposed increased funding allocation redeployed from the ELB/ESA central resources. In addition, schools will be encouraged, and resources assigned as appropriate, to adopt collaborative approaches where this allows them to obtain the services they need in a more efficient, responsive and cost-effective way. **It is proposed that each Board of Governors and Principal will be fully accountable to ELBs/ESA for both the quality of provision for children and for the effective use of allocated funding.** The benefits of this approach are that it would support early intervention and maximise the schools' flexibility in the use of their resources in meeting the needs of all pupils.

- 15.4 In order to develop the funding approaches necessary to underpin delivery of the policy aims, it is proposed to utilise the existing mechanisms for ongoing development and change to the LMS Common Funding Formula. Whilst the options for delivery of funding to schools will be for the LMS Steering Group, it is anticipated that they will include providing specific allocations to schools or alternatively distribute the available additional funding through the LMS Common Funding Formula. Any such changes to the LMS Common Funding Formula would be subject to a process of consultation with schools prior to implementation.
- 15.5 Some time ago a working party of representatives from the ELBs, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), special schools and DE, looked at the question of applying the LMS to special schools. After long and careful consideration, it was decided that it was impractical to do so because of the varied needs of children and the different amount of resources required to meet those needs. As a result, the total cost of special schools is currently met in its entirety by the ELBs as these schools remain outside the current LMS programme. The review now presents the opportunity to reassess this issue. Options for resourcing special schools include a separate LMS delegated funding arrangement with budgets determined on a formula basis. **It is proposed that a mechanism for funding of outreach services provided by special schools and ELBs/ESA to mainstream schools also needs to be developed.**

[See Consultation Point 13 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

16. MONITORING, REVIEW, EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 16.1 While inclusive education policies are designed to widen access to education and promote opportunities for all learners with additional needs to realise their potential, achieving such positive outcomes requires effective arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the provision. These proposals are therefore based on the premise of increased accountability at all levels.
- 16.2 The Department's ability to monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of these policy proposals and their implementation by the education sector, ELBs/ESA and other partners and agencies will be of paramount importance. Much work has already been carried to develop the Education Management System (EMS) across the 5 ELBs which includes a number of modules to support the administration of education and support for pupils. **It is proposed that ELBs/ESA further develops and expands upon the existing EMS system which has been implemented to differing degrees across the existing 5 ELBs.** The provision of such readily accessible, meaningful, accurate, up-to-date and consistent data will assist ESA in the operational delivery of this policy and will also play a major role in DE future strategic planning and policy development.
- 16.3 While DE would wish to encourage the delegation of more of the current funding to support early intervention and the development of inclusive practice within schools, we are aware that this must result in a better deal for children and parents, not a reduced entitlement. In order to ensure that parents are confident that their child is receiving the provision needed to over-come possible barriers to learning, whether or not they have a CSP, it will be important (especially as the funding will not be ring-fenced in order to allow schools flexibility and increased autonomy) that appropriate and transparent accountability arrangements are established to prevent possible 'resource drift'. **It is proposed that the Board of Governors and the Principal will therefore be accountable to the ELBs/ESA for both the quality of provision and for the effective use of allocated funding.**
- 16.4 Robust control mechanisms will be delivered through the setting of relevant and purposeful measures which schools will be required to take in assessing and meeting the needs of pupils who present with additional needs. Outside school, assessment of need will be controlled through locally based multi-agency integrated services applying agreed common criteria to assess the level of support required.

16.5 Part of the remit of the SEN and Inclusion Review team has been to look at the consistency of assessment, equality of access and the continuity and quality of provision across the 5 ELBs. With the advent of a single ESA, it will be equally important to ensure a level of consistency across the north of Ireland. There will be a need for considerable guidance (some of which may be statutory) and Regulations to support implementation of the proposed framework. We will develop and issue guidance to the system. This guidance will be used to promote good practice at all levels and will set out quality indicators (agreed with the health and social care sectors, where appropriate) for all involved, including the schools and support services, in order to achieve greater consistency in the quality and effectiveness of the support provided for a wide range of additional needs and, most importantly, ensure appropriate progress by the children. These agreed indicators will cover issues such as:

- a) the need for early identification and assessment;
- b) the effectiveness of intervention strategies employed;
- c) the monitoring of progress made by the child or young person; and
- d) the effective use of funding and resources.

We will ensure that these agreed quality indicators are made available to all educational establishments, ELBs/ESA and the proposed RHSCB.

[See Consultation Point 14 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

17. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Department of Education (DE)

- 17.1 DE has responsibility for developing and reviewing policies relating to supporting and safeguarding children who have SEN or who experience other barriers to learning. We will therefore design quality indicators for all involved, including schools, ELBs/ESA, and support services, in order to achieve greater consistency in the quality, availability and effectiveness of support, and the overall efficient use of resources. It will be essential that DE ensures that all future policies are compatible with the revised framework.
- 17.2 **The delivery of these policy proposals will require DE investment in:**
- a) **developing guidance and quality indicators for schools, support and out-reach services;**
 - b) **a cyclical training programme for principals, governors, LSCs and teachers to extend the capacity of mainstream schools to respond to diversity through the development of a coherent set of strategies to address the commonly occurring difficulties which children experience in school;**
 - c) **a review of the Common Funding Formula currently used for the Local Management of Schools (LMS); and**
 - d) **an information and communication strategy to ensure that parents understand, and have confidence in, the new framework and its ability to provide the support necessary for their child to make progress.**

The proposed Education and Skills Authority (ESA)

- 17.3 The new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) will be accountable to DE for the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. The Authority will have the responsibility for delivering the outworking of the proposed DE policy, by:
- a) providing a range of educational settings to cater for the diversity of need;
 - b) the establishment of appropriate support services, including the setting-up and maintenance of multi-disciplinary groups (MGs);

- c) ensuring a consistent level of service is provided throughout all educational settings;
- d) providing regional teams who have the skills needed to train and support teachers in pre-school, primary and post-primary schools, and who will help schools provide effective support to pupils;
- e) developing teaching resources for teachers and learning resources for pupils;
- f) the provision of INSET programmes for teachers, building on ITE through early professional development (EPD) and CPD;
- g) ensuring all schools have a trained LSC in place who can provide support to children and young people experiencing barriers to learning;
- h) making sure, through regularly monitoring, that the statistics and data relating to pupils in each school are accurate and up to date;
- i) regularly monitoring and auditing the in-school provision for those pupils who require support;
- j) establishing robust monitoring and evaluating procedures to ensure that funding has been used effectively;
- k) holding schools to account for the discharge of their functions and challenging them, where necessary; and
- l) regularly providing DE with detailed information relating to the above.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)

- 17.4 This proposed model needs to be viewed as an integral part of the government strategy for raising standards and, as such, will need to be under-pinned through greater co-operation between the various Departments and their agencies (such as the proposed RHSCB and the HSC Trusts) to secure more effective services through integrated service delivery.

- 17.5 On the basis of the proposals in paragraph 12.17, the health and social care sector, within available resources, will be responsible for ensuring:
- a) appropriate assessment and support by relevant health and social care professionals working in collaboration with the education sector;
 - b) there is improved provision of services for the children and their families through joint collaboration between the various agencies and the education sector.
- 17.6 Where appropriate, the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) and the ETI may carry out integrated approaches to inspection supported by joint protocols.

Multi-disciplinary Groups (MGs)

- 17.7 Each MG will have the responsibility for:
- a) assisting in problem solving, sharing multi-disciplinary professional expertise, facilitating joint working to improve the outcomes for children (with the schools within the learning community linked to the MG and also with other MGs); and
 - b) considering referrals from schools for support/resource for individual or groups of children through the application of agreed criteria in determining the appropriate level of support for the school.
- 17.8 In carrying out these functions the MG will be expected to achieve an appropriate balance between consultative work/consideration of the referrals, direct intervention/assessment of individual children and level of support appropriate to the school.

Mainstream schools and other educational establishments

- 17.9 The principals of schools and other educational establishments must accept responsibility for the educational outcomes for all children and young people on their registers. This will require the 'whole school' to take responsibility to provide for the diversity of need, not just specific teachers. School leaders will be responsible for developing a whole-school culture of inclusiveness in which there are high expectations and aspirations for all pupils. All staff will be required to

initiate early intervention through relevant and purposeful measures tailored to the needs of individuals and groups of children and so help them work towards achieving improved outcomes. Interventions should be part of a continuous and systematic cycle of planning, action and review within the educational establishment. Schools and educational establishments will be expected to operate within indicators (set in guidance issued by DE) for identifying and meeting the needs of pupils experiencing barriers to learning. They will be expected to adopt a graduated response, making full use of all available classroom and own school resources, and the sharing of expertise, both within school and across the learning community, before seeking external support.

- 17.10 To ensure full and effective use of external support and achieve maximum longer term benefit from a 'whole school' perspective, the schools will be expected to incorporate the targeted area of support into their school development plans. For example, where some teachers within a school are receiving support from the ELBs/ESA or proposed RHSCB support services to deal with a child or children exhibiting challenging behaviour, then the whole school should focus on a review of behavioural management strategies during the set period. This will ensure that any external support provided for an individual child will also have long term impact on the provision for all children in the school.
- 17.11 In helping children to achieve improved outcomes, each principal will be responsible for:
- placing a strong focus on addressing the barriers to learning;
 - assessing the level of need and putting in place timely and appropriate interventions, based on identified targets;
 - building the capacity of the workforce to address the diversity of need; and
 - initiating collaborative working practices with other schools and services, for example, through their local MG.
- 17.12 This will involve the principal, the SMT and the governors:
- ensuring that children's additional needs are identified, assessed and provided for and that they are not discriminated against because they have a disability (SEND0);

- identifying possible triggers that could result in a child being excluded or excluding themselves;
- investing in training to ensure that all staff (teachers, LSCs and classroom assistants) have the capabilities, skills and knowledge to meet the diverse needs of all children, including differentiating the curriculum;
- maintaining appropriate expertise within their schools at all times, taking into account staff turnover and changes in the nature of children who attend the school;
- actively participating and sharing expertise within their learning community;
- developing the effective use of all data and other information generated through on-going assessments to evaluate progress made by individual and groups of pupils; and
- enhancing their self-evaluation and accountability procedures.

17.13 Teachers will be responsible for:

- supporting all learners within their class whatever their individual needs to reach their potential (a critical factor in this will be in equipping all teachers with the professional knowledge and skills so they are able to meet this challenge).

17.14 The Board of Governors will be responsible to ELBs/ESA for:

- the delivery of quality provision through effective resource planning and mapping;
- effective monitoring of the educational outcomes achieved by all children; and
- accounting for the use of funding and resources allocated.

17.15 The vast majority of the above reflect good practice and will be an integral part of what good schools already do.

17.16 Key to the success of the proposed model will be the sharing of expertise and resources across the sectors. In particular special schools will play an important role within the overall framework. Opportunities should be created for some special schools to achieve recognition as centres for expertise in the provision of specialist outreach and training services.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI)

- 17.17 The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) will need to play an increased role in evaluating the effectiveness of inputs (use of all resources and funding) against outcomes (progress made by children). The ETI will regularly inspect schools and the ESA services to make sure they are delivering a high-quality service and normally publish reports within 16 weeks of the date of the inspection. If the report identifies major areas for development for any school in the education provided for children who have additional needs, a period of time will be set for improvements to be made. The length of time will depend on the issues identified, but will not normally be more than 18 months. If a follow-up inspection finds that progress is not satisfactory, ELBs/ESA will be told that the quality of education does not meet the set standards. It will be the school's responsibility, in conjunction with ELBs/ESA, to make sure that the necessary improvements are made.
- 17.18 The ETI will be responsible for:
- inspecting all aspects of provision for children and young people experiencing barriers to learning;
 - evaluating the effectiveness of any inputs (use of all resources and funding) against outcomes (progress made by children and young people); and
 - reporting on their considered findings to DE, ESA, the principal and teachers, the Board of Governors and parents.

Children's Services Directors

- 17.19 Collaboration is essential in bringing forward these policy proposals, which embrace disciplines from health, social services and education. Key to this collaboration will be the appointment of the key officials for Children's Services in both ELBs/ESA and the proposed RHSCB. Working collaboratively, they will take the lead in both regional and local strategic planning. This will involve the development of integrated multiagency and multidisciplinary services to facilitate the identification, assessment and the provision of appropriate support.

[See Consultation Point 15 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

18. PROPOSED PHASED INTRODUCTION OF THE POLICY

- 18.1 Strategically the implementation of these policy proposals will require a staged programme of activities or building blocks to prepare for and deliver the key elements of the proposed framework over a number of years. **It is proposed that this policy, therefore, will be implemented over a three year period and that it will support, and be an integral part of, the whole school improvement programme.** The implementation of these policy proposals through a staged strategic programme will ensure delivery of consistent and appropriate support for those children with additional educational needs with or without a CSP as well as introducing the new elements.
- 18.2 **Whilst detailed implementation plans have yet to be drawn up, it is proposed that the pace of the change must be very closely linked to the delivery of appropriate INSET for teachers and schools and to any structural or support services changes resulting from the creation of ESA.** A phased approach will also allow schools time to develop greater collaborative working practices and sharing of resources within their learning community.
- 18.3 Within this programme there are two key stages which will cover a range of activities and transitional arrangements:
- pre-implementation; and
 - implementation/transitional arrangements.

Pre-implementation – 2009/2010

- 18.4 Whilst not exhaustive, the key activities required to prepare for implementation of these policy proposals include the:
- a) development of school learning community arrangements and protocols;
 - b) development of school indicators for addressing the barriers to learning (within the overall school improvement programme);
 - c) possible pilots of the multi-disciplinary working arrangements, protocols, criteria for ESA/proposed RHSCB support services and teams; and of
 - d) LSC lower level diagnostic testing.

Implementation – 2010/2011

- 18.5 It is essential that there are clear and transparent arrangements for the transition from the current SEN framework to the one proposed within this consultation document. The strategic programme, which includes transitional arrangements, will facilitate the time and opportunity to build up and transfer of skills between professionals within and across the school sector and also within and across the ESA and proposed RHSCB support structures. The key activities at this time will include:
- a) provision of a skills programme for the existing school workforce and the revision of ITE modules to include mandatory elements in the skills to recognise when a child has a barrier to learning, how to respond to it and when to seek advice;
 - b) development and finalisation of school learning communities funding arrangements; and
 - c) finalisation and making operative any required legislation.

Introduction of Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs)

- 18.6 **The key activities for the proposed introduction of co-ordinated support plans (CSPs) include the following transitional arrangements:**
- a) **from the operative date of the new framework no new statements will be issued and any child undergoing statutory assessment will be considered in terms of whether a CSP is appropriate;**
 - b) **children who, immediately prior to the introduction of the proposed framework had a statement of SEN, will be deemed as having special educational needs;**
 - c) **to preserve the existing provision, the ELBs or ESA must, within 2 years of the operative date of the proposed new framework (and legislation); establish whether those children with a statement require a CSP. Until this time the ELBs or ESA must ensure that the provision being made for the child, as was contained in the statement, is no less than that made immediately prior to the operative date of the new framework. This means that, within this proposed 2 year period,**

there will be no change in provision being made for the child or young person with a statement until such time as the ELB or ESA establish that:

- the child requires a CSP;
 - the child does not require a CSP; or
 - there is a significant change in the child's additional support needs.
- d) where the ELB or ESA establishes that a CSP is required, they will prepare a plan that will contain the complex or multiple factors from which the additional needs arise; the educational objectives; the additional support required by the child and the persons who will provide the support.
- e) if it is decided, following assessment, that the child does not require a CSP, the transitional arrangements proposed (which will be supported by legislation) will allow for the provision made for him/her to be preserved as a minimum for a further 2 years from the date that the ELB or ESA makes that decision.

18.7 It is recognised that the full policy proposals can only be implemented as and when the necessary resources become available to both the education and health and social care sectors. The facilitation of a co-ordinated education and health and social care service which is effectively planned, commissioned, delivered and monitored, will probably require co-ordinated bids for resources to inform Programme for Government and the associated Budget.

[See Consultation Point 16 of the Consultation Response Booklet](#)

19. ASSESSMENTS IN RELATION TO HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND RURAL ISSUES

Human Rights

- 19.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 brought the European Convention on Human Rights into local law. Article 2 of Protocol 1, of The European Convention on Human Rights, states that nobody will be denied the right to education. Their right to this must be protected in a practical and effective way and has been taken into account during the development of this proposed policy.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 19.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998, has been carried out on the policy proposals contained in this consultation document. Section 75 requires all public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between
- people of different religious beliefs, political opinions, racial groups, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - men and women generally;
 - people with a disability and those without; and
 - people with dependants and those without.
- 19.3 The EQIA aimed at identifying whether, these policy proposals create differential impacts within any of the groups and, if any such impact is adverse, to consider:
- putting in place measures to make the adverse impact less severe; or
 - alternative policies which are better at promoting equal opportunities.
- 19.4 As a result of the EQIA the Department believes that the draft policy proposals will further improve and promote equal opportunities for all children who have additional educational needs (AEN), and in particular those children and young people with SEN. The Department's initial assessment is that these policy proposals will have a positive impact because they aim to bring substantial benefits to children through the early identification of possible

difficulties followed by the implementation of timely, appropriate and effective interventions. The proposals aim to ensure that the school workforce (teachers, classroom assistants and other professionals) are equipped with the skills and confidence to take ownership for improved outcomes through the delivery of an effective programme of support for those pupils experiencing barriers to learning. By bringing services together, and ensuring that schools make inclusion an integral part of self-evaluation, the proposals will enable most children experiencing barriers to learning to get effective, well-targeted support without the need to go through a time-consuming statutory assessment process. This policy will also strengthen collaborative working between the education and health and social care sectors, as well as between schools and communities, all of which will bring increased benefits for children and young people with SEN.

Rural Proofing

- 19.5 As required rural proofing has been carried out to make sure these policy proposals treat those in rural areas fairly and that the public services are accessible in a fair way, no matter where people live in the north of Ireland.
- 19.6 It is the Department's view that there is no differential impact on rural communities. On the contrary, it is considered that these policy proposals will have a significant positive impact on the lives of those children residing in rural areas. The essence of the Department's vision is to 'ensure that every learner fulfil his or her potential'. All children should have access to the curriculum. This is at the heart of these policy proposals which are aimed at minimizing or removing the barriers to learning faced by one fifth of our children – regardless of geographical location. For example, the key thrust of the proposals relates to earlier identification and intervention within a consistently delivered inclusive framework, the extension of this framework to pre-school settings in receipt of funding through the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme, joined up planning and delivery of health and social care and education services including locally based multi-disciplinary groups linked to learning communities and an integrated capacity building programme for the schools' workforce.

Further information on the both the EQIA and rural proofing is included in the Equality Impact Assessment on the Review of SEN and Inclusion Policy Proposals Document which can be accessed on our website address www.deni.gov.uk.

Summary Table of Recommendations and Identified Benefits from policy proposals

RECOMMENDATION	BENEFITS
<p>Section 3 INCLUSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of a new inclusive model based on the concept of Additional Educational Needs. - Additional Educational Needs – A diversity of needs set out under 4 overlapping themes; Family Circumstance; Learning Environment; Social and Emotional; Special Educational Needs (SEN). 	<p>The provision of a range of support for a wide range of need.</p> <p>Consistency and quality of provision regardless of geographical area.</p> <p>Recognises changing societal needs.</p> <p>Provides for equality of access.</p>
<p>Section 5 EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place a greater responsibility on all schools to provide for early identification of the diversity of need, assessment, planning and delivery of support programmes and the monitoring of the subsequent progress of individual children who need support; Develop further collaborative working and sharing of existing good practice, skills and knowledge between and across schools within learning communities; Promote the professional development of teachers and all other staff who are involved in meeting the additional needs of children; Introduction of Personal Learning Plans (PLP's) to detail specific outcomes to be achieved and the necessary adjustments and interventions required to ensure appropriate progress; PLP's subject to regular review to ensure that planned interventions employed result in positive outcomes; Develop an electronic based record to include PLP's and details of other relevant assessments completed by schools and other relevant professionals. 	<p>Early identification and assessment resulting in prevention/minimising possible longer term need.</p> <p>Consistency of support across schools.</p> <p>Increased skills and knowledge to deal with a wider diversity of need.</p> <p>More targeted intervention for children who need it.</p> <p>Increased monitoring to ensure intervention is effective is achieving targeted outcomes.</p> <p>Less bureaucracy through use of IT recording and sharing.</p>

Annex A

<p>Section 6 PRE-SCHOOL SETTINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a condition of funding, all non-statutory, voluntary and private settings in receipt of funding through the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme to fall within the revised Code of Practice resulting from the revised policy; ESA children services made available to the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme funded settings; ESA establish and maintain a core of well trained Early Identification Officers (EIOs) to provide appropriate support to individual groups or clusters of both statutory and Pre-School Education Expansion Programme funded pre-school settings. 	<p>Earlier intervention and assessment for a greater number of pre-school children.</p> <p>Improved equality of access for pre-school children.</p> <p>Increased access to ESA children support services.</p> <p>Pre-school settings have access to focussed, timely support.</p>
<p>Section 7 PRIMARY AND POST PRIMARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placing a duty on ESA to ensure that schools are effectively meeting their responsibilities in addressing the removal of possible barriers to learning; <p><u>Nurture Groups</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The creation of nurture groups within proposed learning community at primary school level (where need identified on fulfilment of set conditions) to meet the increasing wide range of emotional and behavioural difficulties. <p><u>Education Other Than at School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools must demonstrate to ESA that every effort has been made to put the right support structures in place through their own resources and use of co-operative working with other schools and agencies before consideration of AEP placement; In the event of an AEP placement, the school where the child is registered will retain responsibility and accountability for the pupil. 	<p>Encourages all schools to promote an ethos of inclusion and whole school responsibility for all children who face barriers to learning.</p> <p>Nurture groups provide for increased support for those children and young people who need it.</p> <p>Provides for a reduction in disaffected and marginalised children and young people. Keeps focus firmly on child and the level of support provided.</p>

<p>Section 8 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers to adjust courses to ensure that all beginning teachers have an awareness of differences and the practical understanding of how to tailor tasks to suit the ability of their pupils; Continuous professional development (CPD) to be provided to teachers to develop skills and strategies for meeting the diversity of needs within their classes while sharpening the focus on progress and outcomes; School workforce (BOG, principals, teachers and classroom assistants) to be provided with a clear understanding of their roles within the proposed inclusive holistic framework through awareness training; Provision of guidance and quality indicators (by ESA in conjunction with ETI) for schools and educational establishment. 	<p>Beginning teachers have a better understanding of dealing with diversity of need.</p> <p>Existing teachers equipped with increased skills and strategies to deal with diversity of need and ensure appropriate outcomes.</p> <p>School leaders and Boards of Governors are in an informed position and accept responsibility for delivery.</p> <p>Improved consistency in the quality and effectiveness of support regardless of geographical position or educational phase.</p>
<p>Section 9 LEARNING SUPPORT CO-ORDINATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) role extended to cover the wider additional educational need remit and renamed Learning Support Co-ordinator (LSC) to reflect this wider remit. LSCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to receive appropriate professional development; to carry out lower level diagnostic testing; included on senior management team (SMT); provided with clear career paths; and provided with sufficient non teaching time to carry out their responsibilities effectively. 	<p>Recognition of the importance of the LSC role.</p> <p>Raising professional status of the LSC.</p> <p>Enhanced managerial skills; ability to co-ordinate school provision.</p> <p>Earlier identification at school level of children's needs.</p> <p>Whole school responsible for raising the profile of SEN/AEN.</p>

<p>Section 10 CO-ORDINATED SUPPORT PLANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Statements replaced with statutory co-ordinated support plans (CSP); ● CSP solely for children with SEN who face complex or multiple barriers to learning which significantly, and adversely, affect their educational development in the long term and who require frequent access to a diversity of multi-agency services external to school; ● CSP will include the: complex or multiple factors from which the additional needs arise; the educational objectives; the additional support required; and the persons who will provide it; ● Review of CSP at key trigger points for example at Key Stages, transfer between phases, on request by a parent. 	<p>CSPs will be more focused on outcomes and progress than current statements. Children with complex or multiple needs will receive appropriate co-ordinated support involving a wide range of agencies. Removal of time consuming annual reviews which often result in no or little change. Application of agreed criteria relating to issue of a CSP will lead to more consistency and equality.</p>
<p>Section 11 TRANSITION POINTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommendations of the Inter-Departmental Transitions Working group remain valid, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appointment of Transitions Co-ordinators to strengthen the transition process for those children with statements of SEN aged 14 upwards and provide a co-ordinated approach with other statutory agencies and advice; - restructuring of DEL Careers Service to focus, as a priority on young people aged 14-19 with statements of SEN by appointing Careers Managers and Specialist Advisors; - the development of publicity and information material to ensure that pupils are aware of the support available from the Transition Service; and - delivery of Life Skill Training programmes to improve self help and independent living. Transition Support Services should be accessible to all children with SEN (not just those with a CSP). 	<p>A more effective and consistent transition process through inter departmental planning which supports and prepares pupils in their move to adulthood. More equitable transitions support service which supports the wider breadth of children with SEN.</p>

<p>Section 12 DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS</p> <p>Within school and pre-school settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of clearly defined indicators for schools setting out what they are expected to deliver and the inclusion of targeted areas of support in school development plans; • Fostering a 'whole school' commitment to pupils who experience barriers to learning with the sharing of skills and knowledge amongst both teaching and non teaching staff; • Clearly defined targeted interventions which are time bound and focussed on the learning difficulties of the child which are understood by all; • School principals supported by Board of Governors having a key role in ensuring that schools are identifying and reviewing the measures taken to reduce the barriers and improve the outcomes for children; • SMT incorporating any targeted area of support into their school development plan. <p>Across educational settings and learning communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools and other educational settings within a learning community will be required to collaborate and work in partnerships(both mainstream and special) to identify and make full and effective use of the expertise, knowledge and skills of the wider school cluster/community; • Schools may receive financial and other incentives when they collaborate and share expertise and resources. 	<p>Provides for whole school focus.</p> <p>Promotes collaborative planning and working within local area planning.</p> <p>Delivery of improved provision for children in the learning community.</p> <p>Advice, support and training to mainstream colleagues.</p> <p>Wider benefit to those children with learning difficulties/disabilities.</p> <p>Responsive, easily accessible and consistent support.</p> <p>Develops collaborative working.</p> <p>Child centred joined up co-ordinated services.</p> <p>Information to help colleges and training providers to improve the quality of training and education of students with learning difficulties/disability.</p> <p>In keeping with Articles 12 and 13 of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>
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<p>Between ESA and proposed RHSCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESA and the proposed RHSCB (and HSC Trusts) bound by agreements to jointly plan, commission, deliver and monitor a joined up education and health and social care service for children facing barriers to learning; • Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts to provide any therapeutic provision identified on the CSP; • ESA and the proposed RHSCB to establish multi-disciplinary groups (MGs) to ensure that joint education and HSC disciplinary working is consistently and effectively aligned with, and accountable to ESA and the proposed RHSCB and HSC Trusts. <p>Between DE and DEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of information through the transition process. <p>Parent/Carer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current requirements (as in the Code of Practice and its Supplement) to discuss with the parent any concerns about any barriers etc, provide information and advice and the availability of the DARS remains valid – only it is applied more consistently and effectively in partnership between parents, schools, ESA and other professionals. <p>Children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and other bodies will continue to be required to seek the views of the child and give due weight to those views according to age, maturity and capability of the child. <p>Voluntary organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools, ESA and proposed RHSCB structures ensure that families have information on the full range of support services in the voluntary sector within their area; • ESA and proposed RHSCB and schools should regularly involve, where appropriate, the voluntary sector in training courses and the exchange of information. 	<p>A more joined up, focused and systematic approach to assessment and provision.</p> <p>Right support is given when needed.</p> <p>Helps the smooth the transition process.</p> <p>Strengthens the links and improves the relationships between parents and schools/ESA/other professionals. In keeping with the current Code of Practice.</p>
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<p>Multi Disciplinary Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a network of multi-disciplinary groups aligned to learning communities, ESA and HSC Trusts; ● ESA and the proposed RHSCB jointly responsible for deciding the number, location and staffing requirements of MGs; ● Each MG would have a co-ordinator with the skills, knowledge and leadership to draw the relevant professionals together – posts funded jointly by ESA and proposed RHB; ● MG proposed role to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evaluate and determine next steps for those children requiring multi-disciplinary support, determine those children potentially requiring multi-disciplinary support over that which the school(s) can provide; - ascertain those children who require statutory assessment; - challenge the participating schools about the level and effectiveness of support (through consideration of objective evidence of actions and reviews taken by the schools); - raising strategic issues. 	<p>'Team around the child': Improved collaborative planning and working within learning communities. Joint awareness and knowledge about the child.</p>
<p>Section 13 OUTWORKING OF PROPOSED MODEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The sequential stages 1 to 5 of the current Code of Practice to be replaced by three strands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within school - Within School plus External Support (other school/ESA/MGs) - Co-ordinated support plans 	<p>A more effective and 'whole school' approach to supporting children facing barriers to learning.</p>

<p>Section 14 RESOLUTION AND APPEAL MECHANISMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arrangements for informal and formal appeals would remain unchanged. Informally, directly to school, ESA or through the Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS). Formally, through SENDIST. <p><i>The review team also reinforce the recommendations which have emerged from the ETI Report on DARS.</i></p>	<p>Already effective resolution and appeals mechanism still in place.</p>
<p>Section 15 FUNDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the LMS formula to cater for the proposed SEN and Inclusion policy including both mainstream and special schools through the existing mechanisms for ongoing development and change to the LMS formula; Each BOG and principal will be fully accountable to ESA for both the quality of provision for children and for the effective use of allocated funding. 	<p>Targeted resourcing based on the revised policy.</p>
<p>Section 16 MONITORING, REVIEW, EVALUATION & ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESA develops and expands upon the existing EMS system which has been implemented to differing degrees across the existing 5 ELBs. 	<p>Accessible, meaningful, accurate, up-to-date and consistent information to inform operational delivery by ESA and strategic planning by DE.</p>

<p>Section 17 PROPOSED PHASED INTRODUCTION OF POLICY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement the policy proposals over a 3 year period; ● link pace of change to the delivery of appropriate INSET for teachers and schools and any structural or support service changes arising from the creation of ESA; ● no new statements from operative date (any child undergoing statutory assessment being considered in terms of whether a CSP is appropriate); ● within 2 years from the operative date of the proposed framework ESA must determine whether the child with existing statement requires a CSP. <p>If ESA determine that a child, previously the subject of a statement, does not require a CSP, then ESA will preserve the provision for a further 2 years from the date ESA made the decision.</p>	<p>No "big bang" effect.</p>
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Annex B

Special Education Needs – General Background

Legislation

1. Under the Education (NI) Order 1996 and the Special Education Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005, (SEND0) the statutory responsibility for securing provision for pupils with special education needs (SEN) rests with the ELBs.
2. The legislative definition of "special education needs" is "a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made". A child has a "learning difficulty" if a) he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age, b) a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his age in ordinary schools, or c) he has not attained the lower limit of compulsory school age and is, or would be, if special educational provision were not made for him, likely to fall into categories a) or b) when he is of compulsory school age. The purpose of special educational provision is to remove or diminish the barriers to achievement, which children and young people may face, whether they are, for example, the classroom approach to learning or the physical nature of the learning environment.
3. The 1996 Order covers the rights and duties of:
 - parents;
 - schools;
 - the Department of Education (DE);
 - Education and Library Boards (ELBs);
 - health and social services boards; and
 - health and social care trusts (HSC Trusts).

4. The Order sets out arrangements for:
 - issuing a Code of Practice (CoP) to give practical guidance in relation to SEN;
 - the assessment of educational needs;
 - the issuing of a statement of SEN;
 - reviewing a statement of SEN;
 - appeals; and
 - the SEN tribunal.

5. Provision is matched to individual need. It may be made in special schools, special units attached to mainstream school or in mainstream classes. It may consist of home or hospital tuition, pre-school support or placement outside the north of Ireland. In the north of Ireland there are 48 special schools (including 3 hospital schools) and 170 special units attached to around 100 mainstream schools which cater for a wide range of special educational needs.

Code of Practice in the Identification and Assessment of Special Education Needs

6. The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Education Needs (introduced following the Education (NI) Order 1996) sets out a 5-stage approach to the process. Stages 1, 2 and 3 are school-based, although at Stage 3 support can be sought from external specialist services, including those provided from the ELB. At Stage 4 the ELB considers the need for a statutory assessment. The parents are notified and subsequently the ELB will seek parental and professional opinion to enable them to undertake the assessment. At Stage 5 the ELB decides whether the degree of the child's learning difficulty or disability, and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's SEN, requires it to determine the SEN provision through making a statement. If a statement is considered appropriate, the ELB has 18 weeks, subject to certain exceptions, to issue a proposed statement. DE requires Boards to achieve 100% of statements drafted within the 18 weeks statutory timeframe, subject only to the exemptions as outlined in the Code of Practice. The Department of Education does not have any role in the identification and assessment of children's special education needs, or any power to intervene in the process, which is intended to be conducted between parents, schools and ELBs.

Special Education Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005

7. The Special Education Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SENDO) amended the 1996 Order providing strengthened the rights of children with SEN to a mainstream education where a parent wants it and where it is not incompatible with the provision of the efficient education for other children; it also introduced new disability discrimination responsibilities.

Appeal Mechanisms for Parents

8. Under the current framework there are existing formal and informal arrangements for considering areas of disagreements relating to SEN. Informally, parents can pursue any concerns about their child's special education needs directly with the school or, in the event of ELB involvement directly with the ELB, for example, about a Board's decision: to not to make an assessment, not to issue a statement, amendments to a statement, or ceasing to maintain a statement.
9. In addition, parents can also make a referral to the voluntary independent Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) as a means of resolving difference between parents and schools or parents and Boards. The DARS, which was introduced as a result of the Special Education Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SENDO), aims to resolve differences quickly and in an informal manner (thereby removing the need for a parent to go to the SENDIST). An ETI survey was carried out in 2008 which confirms that DARS remains valid.
10. Formally, there is the Special Education Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) which hears appeals by parents against Board decisions including, for example decisions not to make a statutory assessment, not to make a statement, the content of the statement and claims of disability discrimination.

Annex C

SEN Statistics

Incidences of children with SEN

The proportion of pupils with SEN (at stages 1–5 of the Code of Practice), as a percentage of the total school population, is increasing each year, and has risen from 14.6% in 2003 to 17.7% in 2007.

Incidences of children with statements

The proportion of pupils with statements in the north of Ireland, as a percentage of the total school population, has shown a steady increase in recent years, from 1.6% in 1990/1 to 3.9% in 2007.

Table 1: Pupils in the UK with a Statement (as a % of the overall school population)

	03/04	04/05	05/06
England ¹⁴	3.0	2.9	2.9
Wales ¹⁵	3.3	3.3	3.2
Scotland	1.2 ¹⁶	2.0 ¹⁷	1.9 ¹⁸
NI ¹⁹	3.2	3.4	3.5

Note: For Scotland figures are for pupils with a Record of Need only and pupils with and an Individualised Educational Programme

¹⁴ *Special Educational Needs in England, January 2006 (SFR 23/2006 Office of National Statistics)*

¹⁵ *Pupils with Statements of SEN January 2006 (SDR 75/2006 Statistical Directorate, National Assembly for Wales)*

¹⁶ *Extracted from Statistical Bulletin: education series (Edn/B1/2004/1 Scottish Executive)*

¹⁷ *Extracted from Statistical Bulletin: education series (Edn/B1/2005/1 Scottish Executive)*

¹⁸ *Extracted from Statistical Bulletin: education series (Edn/B1/2006/1 Scottish Executive)*

¹⁹ *Department of Education - NI School Census*

Table 2: Pupils with a Statement as a % of overall school population by ELB

Board	03/04		04/05		05/06	
	Total Enrolment	Number with Statement	Total Enrolment	Number with Statement	Total Enrolment	Number with Statement
BELB	62,849	1,721 (2.7%)	61,400	1,674 (2.7%)	60,125	1,640 (2.7%)
WELB	63,558	1,798 (2.8%)	62,525	1,923 (3.1%)	61,420	2,005 (3.3%)
NEELB	76,112	2,113 (2.8%)	75,793	2,257 (3.0%)	75,166	2,362 (3.1%)
SEELB	67,781	3,036 (4.5)	66,944	3,205 (4.8%)	66,361	3,282 (4.9%)
SELB	76,246	2,328 (3.1%)	75,527	2,482 (3.3%)	75,121	2,672 (3.6%)
Total	346,546	10,996 (3.2%)	342,189	11,541 (3.4%)	338,193	11,961 (3.5%)

Table 3: Breakdown by Pupils at Stages 1–5 of the Code of Practice as a percentage of overall school population

Year	Enrolment	Stages 1–3	Stages 1–3 as % of Enrolment
2003	346,526	38,604	11.1%
2004	342,189	40,378	11.8%
2005	338,193	40,865	12.1%
2006	334,852	43,776	13.1%
2007	331,565	44,552	13.4%

Year	Enrolment	Stage 4	Stages 4 as % of Enrolment
2003	346,526	1,045	0.3%
2004	342,189	1,117	0.3%
2005	338,193	1,191	0.4%
2006	334,852	1,366	0.4%
2007	331,565	1,302	0.4%

Year	Enrolment	Stages 5	Stages 5 as % of Enrolment
2003	346,526	10,996	3.2%
2004	342,189	11,541	3.4%
2005	338,193	11,961	3.5%
2006	334,852	12,491	3.7%
2007	331,565	12,973	3.9%

Year	Enrolment	All Stages	All Stages as % of Enrolment
2003	346,526	50,645	14.6%
2004	342,189	53,036	15.5%
2005	338,193	54,017	15.9%
2006	334,852	57,633	17.2%
2007	331,565	58,827	17.7%

Annex D

Current Funding Arrangements

1. The level of funding for special education is determined by the ELBs as part of their annual decisions about the allocation of their block grant. In terms of SEN, the ELB's budget would be expected to cover:
 - a) ELB support for the provision for statemented and non-statemented (stage 3) children with SEN in mainstream schools, including those in special units;
 - b) special schools, including external placements; and
 - c) central costs for example educational psychology services, SEN peripatetic teachers, special education administration.

Local Management of Schools (LMS)

Mainstream Schools

2. Mainstream schools are funded by means of the Local Management of Schools (LMS) arrangements via the Common Funding Scheme. The Targeting Social Need component within the Scheme includes an element for addressing educational underachievement and low attainment – this is designed to assist schools in meeting the needs of those pupils who do not have a formal statement of special educational need, but who are nevertheless performing below the expected level for their age. It also contains a number of factors which seek to support certain types of additional educational need, such as additional funding provision for children for whom English is an additional language (EAL), children from the traveller community and children of Service personnel.
3. Pupils with statements of special educational need who are registered in mainstream classes attract the same per pupil funding as applicable to non-statemented pupils in grant-aided schools under the funding formula arrangements. In addition, the Funding Authority (the ELBs) will meet the additional costs required to fulfil the terms of the statement, for example, the

cost of classroom assistance, advisory, peripatetic or teaching support and/or equipment for statemented pupils.

Special Units

4. A Special Unit is a unit attached to a primary or post-primary school, which has been approved by the Department for the purposes of making special educational provision for pupils with statements of educational need. The relevant Education and Library Board (Board) determines the staffing of each unit and the associated costs are met outside the formula. Under Common Funding arrangements, schools with approved special units are allocated a lump sum for each unit (currently £3,000) and pupils with statements of educational need within these units attract lower per pupil funding than those in mainstream classes – reflecting the fact that the relevant Board meets the full cost of staffing in special units.

Special Schools

5. Special schools are not included in LMS arrangements. ELBs retain the major element of special school expenditure (staff salaries) as a centre cost although each school is allocated a delegated budget to cover non-staff items, eg electricity, heating.

Voluntary Grammar Schools (VGS) and Grant-Maintained Integrated Schools (GMIS)

6. DE funds voluntary grammar and grant maintained integrated schools directly and takes account of the numbers of statemented pupils in determining the level of resources to be made available to these schools. The ELBs, maintain responsibility for assessing the special needs of pupils in VGS and GMIS, placing a statemented child in these schools, monitoring compliance with the statement and the review process. DE will fund directly any necessary additional costs to schools in these sectors.

Annex E

Steering Group Membership

Dorothy Angus, Head of Equality, Inclusion and Pupil Support Division, Department of Education

Maureen Bennett, Assistant Chief Inspector, Education and Training Inspectorate, Department of Education (replaced **Paul McAlister**)

Maurice Crozier, Principal Educational Psychologist, NEELB

Catherine Daly, Head of Finance, Department of Education

Donal Flanagan, Chief Executive, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools

Aedin Geary, Principal, Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, Comhairle Na Gaelsolaíochta (CNaG)

Mike Gibson, Support for Learning Division, Scottish Executive

Katrina Godfrey, Head of Resource and Allocation Division, Department of Education

Stanton Sloan, Chief Executive, SEELB (replaced **Irene Knox**)

David Mehaffey, Principal, Fleming Fulton School

Roisin Marshall, Senior Development Officer, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) (replaced by Clíodhna Scott Wills)

Garry Matthewson, Principal, Holy Family Primary School

Irene Murphy, Head of Special Education Branch, Department of Education

Bernie Stuart, Mental Health and Disability, DHSSPS (replaced **Leslie Frew**)

Margot Wright, SENCO, Lisneal College

Annex F

List of Advisory Group Members

Capacity Building and Inclusion Advisory Group

Sean Barr	WELB
Delma Boggs	Holy Family Primary School
Pat Boyle	WELB
Rosie Browne	Strathearn College
Maureen Butler	Loughview Integrated PS
Maurice Crozier	NEELB
Peter Cunningham	Ceara SS
Mary Dorman	INTO
Bernie Dorrity	NEELB
Hilary Harrison	DHSSPS
Valerie Haugh	BELB
Nicola Heatley	SELB
Conrad Kirkwood	DHSSPS
Linda Lewis	Ballysally PS
Lois Little	Harberton SS
Sue Logan	Girls Model
Barry Macaulay	Royal National Institute for the Blind
Oonagh McCann	Dunfane PS
Jim McDaid	NITC
Philomena McDermott	WELB
Helen Miskelly	CCEA
Brenda Montgomery	SEELB
Gillian Montgomery	Homefirst
Diane Owens	CCEA
Anne Patience	BELB
Frank Quinn	St Mary's College
David Ryan	BELB
Andrew Sleeth	Integrated College Dungannon
Carol Walters	SEELB
Eileen Winters	Queens University Belfast

Identification and Assessment Advisory Group

Sean Barr	WELB
Mildred Bell	Homefirst
Delma Boggs	Holy Family PS
Pat Boyle	WELB
Rosie Browne	Strathearn College
Maureen Butler	Loughview IPS
Maurice Crozier	NEELB
Peter Cunningham	Ceara SS
Mary Dorman	INTO
Bernie Dorrity	NEELB
Jennifer Hanna	Lurgan Hospital
Hilary Harrison	DHSSPS
Valerie Haugh	BELB
Nicola Heatley	SELB
Anna Johnston	Loughview IPS
Conrad Kirkwood	DHSSPS
Linda Lewis	Ballysally PS
Lois Little	Harberton SS
Sue Logan	Girls Model Belfast
Oonagh McCann	Dunfane SS
Philomena McDermott	WELB
Helen Miskelly	CCEA
Gillian Montgomery	Homefirst
Diane Owens	CCEA
Anne Patience	BELB
David Ryan	BELB
Andrew Sleeth	Integrated College Dungannon
Hazel Winning	Homefirst
Eileen Winters	Queens University Belfast

Pre-School/Early Intervention Advisory Group

Joanne Barr	Dunclug Nursery
Elizabeth Barry	Homefirst
Mildred Bell	Homefirst
Delma Boggs	Holy Family PS
Wilma Browne	Kiddies Castle Playgroup
Kathleen Burns	St Terese's Nursery
Fiona Carr	Armagh Community Clinic
Mary Dorman	INTO. NITC
Bernie Dorrity	NEELB
Dr Carol Dunbar	Stranmillis College
Mabel Gillespie	Omagh Teachers Centre
Roger Goodliffe	NEELB
Jennifer Hanna	Lurgan Hospital
Hilary Harrison	DHSSPS
Joan Henderson	Education Training Inspectorate (ETI)
Lesley Hunter	Killard Special School
Mags Johnston	SELB
Caroline Karyannis	Regional Training Unit (RTU)
Conrad Kirkwood	DHSSPS
Linda Lewis	Ballysally PS
Lynn Lynch	CCEA
Janet McCann	NEELB
Carol McCluskey	Eglinton Community Nursery
Karen McElduff	SELB
Helen Miskelly	CCEA
Brenda Montgomery	SEELB
Gillian Montgomery	Homefirst
Mary O'Reilly	NIPPA
Dr Harry Rafferty	Queens University Belfast
Hazel Winning	Homefirst

Annex G

Engagement with Stakeholders

Afasic NI

Agencies in Consortium for Education and Training Ltd (ACET)

Autism NI

Bain Review Team

British Dyslexia Association

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)

Council for Catholic

Maintained Schools (CCMS)

Causeway Health and Social Services Trust

Comhairle Na Gaelsolaíochta (CNaG)

Chief Executives Association (Boards)

Children's Law Centre

Children and Young Persons Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Dyslexia and Dyspraxia Support Group

Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS)

Department of Education (branches)

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)

Education Skills Authority (ESA) (Gavin Boyd)

Education Psychologist Futures Group

Education and Training Inspectors (ETI)

ELB SEN Common Criteria Group

Ethnic Minority Advisory Service

General Teachers Council of NI (GTCNI)

Institute of Childcare Research

Institute of Child Education and Psychology (ICEP)
Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO)
Loughshore Education Centre
MENCAP
Middletown
National Autistic Society (NAS)
Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)
Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE)
NI Equality Commission (ECNI)
NI Higher Education Liaison Group
Northern Ireland Music Therapy Trust
NI Nurture Group Network
NIPPA – The Early Years Organisation
Parents and Young People
Parents Education as Autism Therapists (PEAT)
POBAL
Review of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Steering Group
Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)
Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID)
Review of Public Administration (RPA) Team
SENDIST
SPEAC
Special Schools' Conferences
Standing Conference for Primary and Secondary Education
Travellers Support Group
Triangle

Annex H

Glossary of Terms Used in the Document

AEN	Additional Educational Need
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
CA	Classroom Assistant
CASS	Curriculum Advisory and Support Service
CCEA	Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment
COP	Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CSP	Co-ordinated Support Plan
CYPFP	Children and Young Peoples Funding Package
DARS	Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DE	Department of Education
DEL	Department for Education and Learning
DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Personal Safety
EAL	English as an Additional Language
ELB	Education and Library Board
EPD	Early Professional Development
ESA	Education and Skills Authority
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
HSC	Health and Social Care
INSET	In-service Training
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LAC	Looked After Children
LMS	Local Management of Schools

LSC	Learning Support Co-ordinator
MDT	Multi-disciplinary Team
MG	Multi-disciplinary Group
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PLP	Personal Learning Plan
RHSCB	Regional Health and Social Care Board
RPA	Review of Public Administration
RTU	Regional Training Unit
SAMs	School Aged Mothers
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SENDIST	Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator
SENDO	Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005
SMT	Senior Management Team



Policy Proposals Consultation Document