



# SENCo Newsletter

Number 31 Spring / Summer 2014



News and information for Bristol SENCos and SEN staff

## In this issue:

- Code of Practice update
- EHCP updates
- Key working

Find back copies at:

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/children-and-young-people/senco-newsletters>  
and [www.tradingwithschools.org](http://www.tradingwithschools.org)



# Welcome...

## to the spring / summer edition!

Well, here we are again! The new national curriculum, the new Code of Practice, the new Children and Families Bill... just a few small changes around to keep us busy, then!

It seems a mighty long time since the green paper first appeared, and I think we'll all feel relieved when we can at last begin to get to grips with new ways of working. Many questions still exist about the new systems, responsibilities and accountabilities, and no doubt plenty more will arise along the way. This issue attempts to address some of the queries that you've raised, both in the problem page and the national and local news sections.

The newsletter link would normally have landed in your inbox well before this point in the term; we postponed publication in line with the delayed release of the final new Code of Practice (CoP), so apologies for its tardy arrival! Hopefully, the Code of Practice section will make up for the wait!

Meanwhile, July is fast approaching, and before we know it, the summer holidays will have arrived, so make sure you observe the three **Rs** rule during the break:

**Read the newsletter, Relax, and Rest up!**

Jane (LIS)

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# Local News and Updates

## Specialist Team News

More changes are afoot in the LA support services! We are sorry to say **goodbye to...**

Carmel Hand - manager of the Learning Improvement Service (LIS)

Nicky Hutchinson – Behaviour Improvement Service (BIS)

Carol Jones – SIO and interim service manager (TwS)

Hadassah Radway – manager of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS)

Anne Wright – senior SIO (SEN)

We will miss you all and wish you well in your new endeavours!

### We say a warm welcome to...

Miriam Hill, interim manager of inclusion services (BIS, EPS, LIS) - see page 34 where Miriam says hello.

### Congratulations to...

Annette Jones, who as well as overseeing the SEN Team, is now also interim service manager for additional learning needs in the education and skills directorate.

Suzanne O'Kelly, who for the last ten years has been inclusion manager for north Bristol, is currently acting as SEN team manager.

*Some teams may have lost valued members, but not their enthusiasm for working with you – we all look forward to seeing you in school soon.*

### Get in touch with your teams:

Behaviour Improvement Service (BIS): 0117 9031395

BIS helpline: [Inclusion.advice@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Inclusion.advice@bristol.gov.uk)

Educational Psychology Service: Salcombe House– 0117 9031653

Romney House – 0117 3533700

Learning Improvement Service: 0117 9031275



**CPD:** for course bookings, go to [www.tradingwithschools.org](http://www.tradingwithschools.org)

### Dates for your diary

**Code of Practice briefings:** 9 July (10.00-11.30 Rose Green Centre, 3.00-4.30 City Hall), 10 July (10.00- 11.30 Greenway Centre), 22 July (2.00-3.30 The Park Centre).

#### Inside I'm Hurting

Friday 26 September (special schools) and Friday 3 October (mainstream schools) at Engineers' House.

#### New SENCo Induction day

Tuesday 30 September at Bridge Learning Campus Professional Development Centre 9.30 – 3.15.

#### Raising Achievement in Maths

Wednesday 5 November 9.00 – 12.30. Half day session for maths co-ordinators and SLT members, facilitated by Oxford University Press. Venue: BAWA

**SENCo Conference 2015** Monday 9 March at BAWA.



# National News

It's now open, and during the next eighteen months **nasen** will develop the SEND gateway, using funds awarded by the DfE, to provide a national information hub and interactive SEND forum for education settings. <http://www.sendgateway.org.uk/>

Benefits include:

- Online forum facilities
- Online training facilities
- Engagement with teaching schools
- Resources available from one central platform
- Signposting for teachers to effective practical materials
- Engagement with VCS organisations already publishing resources for schools



## In Control awarded DfE funding

The charity In Control has been awarded grant funding for the next two years for a nationwide programme to improve outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities.

This will allow the charity to develop a 'user-led' approach to recording and measuring the outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families from their EHCP and linked personal budget. Families will be enabled to make their own judgements, and local authorities and their partners will be provided with a report setting out what works and what does not work locally set against national data.

## New publications



### Implementing a new 0 to 25 special educational needs system: further education (April 2014)

This departmental advice is for further education colleges, sixth-form colleges, 16 to 19 academies and post-16 special institutions. The advice explains the changes to the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system and what post-16 colleges and academies need to do to implement these changes.



### Supported internships for young people with learning difficulties (2013)

Advice for providers of supported internships for young people with learning difficulties which applies to maintained schools, local authorities, academies, independent and free schools, sixth-form and further education colleges.

### Special educational needs in England: January 2013 (updated May 2014)

This statistical first release (SFR) provides analyses on the characteristics of pupils by their provision of special educational needs (SEN), together with the assessment and placement of pupils with statements of SEN. It is based on pupil-level data collected via the school census and local authority-level data collected via the SEN2 survey. In January 2013, 229,390 pupils (2.8%) across all schools in England had statements of SEN. This percentage has remained unchanged for the past 5 years.



## Main findings

| School Action Plus                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Statement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLCN and MLD (soon to disappear as a category): 44.9%</li> <li>• Specific learning difficulty: 13.0%</li> <li>• 22.1% of pupils at SA+ have a secondary need</li> <li>• 32.5% of pupils at SA+ are eligible for free school meals FSM</li> <li>• Pupils with BESD are most likely to be eligible for FSM: 38.6%</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most frequent need: ASD (21.9%)</li> <li>• MLD: 15.5%</li> <li>• 41.1% of pupils with statements have a secondary need</li> <li>• 32.1% of pupils with statements are eligible for FSM</li> <li>• Pupils with BESD are most likely to be eligible for FSM: 43.4%</li> </ul> |

# The new SEND system

The story so far in 2014...

| March                                                                               | March-June                                                                                         | April                                                | May                                                                    | June                             | September                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Children and Families Bill passed by parliament: now the Children and Families Act. | Regulations related to the Act approved by parliament, including those regarding personal budgets. | Second consultation on draft Code of Practice (CoP). | Second consultation period on the new CoP ends – May 6 <sup>th</sup> . | New Code approved by parliament. | Children and Families Act comes into force. Joint Commissioning duty begins. EHC assessment and planning replaces current statementing system. |

## Implementation

Given the delays in approving the new CoP, it will be unrealistic for schools to try to implement all changes with immediate effect from September 2014; therefore, the new system will be phased in.

## The Local Offer

From September, all local authorities will be required to publish their SEN local offers. These will set out information and guidance for families and professionals about the range of provision families can access. In Bristol, all education settings have been sent the following documents for their attention and action:

- Local Offer Framework & Guidance including questions to consider with pupils and parents
- Local Joint Statement of school and local authority responsibilities for pupils with special educational needs and/or disability (advice).

Schools are also required to produce their own contributions to the local offer, specifying how pupils with SEN are identified, assessed and provided for. These school versions will expand on information published in the LA local offer. (*See next page for more information on the local offer.*)

From September, the Joint Commissioning duty will come into force. This necessitates joint planning between education, health and social care services and should be reflected in the local offer.

## The transition period

| September 2014                                                                                                                                                                        | By September 2016...                                       | By April 2018...                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| No new requests for statements or LDAs.<br>LAs publish plans for converting statements and LDAs to EHCPs.<br>Personal budgets offered with EHCPs.<br>Mediation arrangements in place. | All LDAs should be converted to EHCPs (where appropriate). | All statements should be converted to EHCPs (where appropriate). |

Ann Gross, DfE Director of Special Needs and Children's Services Strategy, has written to all local authorities in England. Her letter outlines funding allocations to meet LAs' additional costs for a new system of educational support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The funding allocations cover the 2014 to 2015 financial year, along with indicative amounts for 2015 to 2016.

National guidance will be published to ensure that LAs design consistent transfer arrangements.

Further details are available on the DfE website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ann-gross-writes-about-the-send-implementation-grant>



# EHCPs: Key Q and As

Everything you wanted to know but didn't know who to ask...!

## Q: What is an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)?

A: An EHCP is a legal document which will replace a statement of special educational need or learning difficulty assessment (Section 139A). An EHCP will describe a young person's needs, the provision required to meet those needs and the suitable educational placement. EHCPs must be person-centred, focusing on the needs and aspirations of the child or young person. EHCPs will continue into further education and training, and for some young people, will last until they are 25 years old. In addition, the plans will set out how services will work together to support outcomes.

## Q: Who will have an EHCP?

A: The Department for Education has stated that a child or young person who currently has a statement of SEN will have an EHCP. The guidance says that EHCPs should be issued when the LA considers that the special needs of the child cannot be reasonably provided for with the resources normally available to mainstream early years provision, school and post-16 institutions. As the Code of Practice currently stands, children and young people with primarily health or care needs will not be issued with a plan, unless these needs impact on their education.

## Q: Who compiles an EHCP?

A: A statement is written by an LA officer, whereas an EHCP is drafted with the family as partners. It is focused on outcomes and aspirations and takes into account not just the next steps in education but also health and care needs.

## Q: What does the legislation say?

A: The Children and Families Bill places duties on the health service in relation to children and young people with SEND. The health service must engage with the LA to create joint commissioning arrangements for the health and social care provision required for these young people. These arrangements need to set out what health provision is to be secured and who is responsible for securing it.

When creating an EHCP, the health service must cooperate with the LA by advising on the kind of health provision required by children and young people with SEN. This might include therapies, medical treatments and delivery of medications, nursing support, specialist equipment and continence supplies. The health service *must* ensure that the support set out in the EHCP is available.

The health service needs to appoint a designated health officer (DHO), whose role is to ensure that the clinical commissioning group (CCG) is meeting its statutory responsibilities for SEN.

## Q: What about children without an EHCP?

A: Currently, children without statements receive additional support within the School Action and School Action Plus stages. These stages will now be replaced with 'SEN Support'. This will be the support available in school for children in school who have special educational needs but do not have EHCPs.

## Q: What about EHCPs and personal budgets?

A: Families who have a child with an EHCP are entitled to request a personal budget. This will allow them to purchase the support identified in the plan directly, rather than relying on the local authority. Parents or young people will be able to choose whether to receive direct payments with which to buy services, or be supported by an agency who will manage the budget on their behalf.

## Q: What is the local offer?

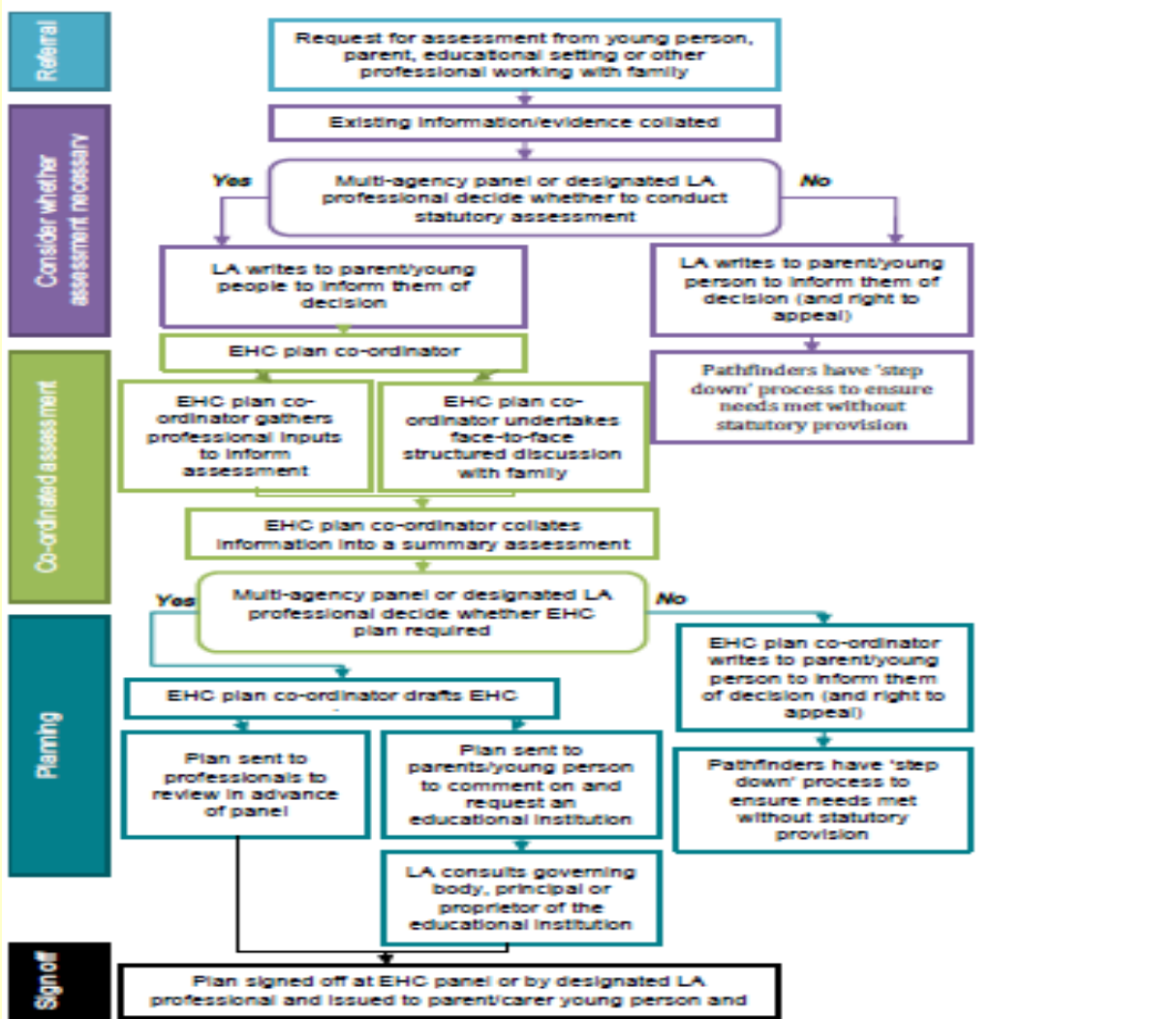
A: The LA is required to publish information about what provision will be available for children and young people with SEN aged 0-25 years. The local offer must include information about:

- Education, health and care provision for children and young people with SEND

- Arrangements for requesting an EHC needs assessment
- Other education provision
- Training provision
- Support for transition between phases of education and to prepare for adulthood
- Sources of information, advice and support in the LA area relating to SEN, including information provided under clause 32 of the Children and Families Bill, forums for parents and carers, support groups, childcare and leisure activities
- Arrangements for making complaints and resolving disagreements
- Under the new Code, LAs must involve children in planning decisions about which services for young people with SEN are needed. This includes planning and publishing the local offer. LAs must also involve parents in the planning and decision making processes.

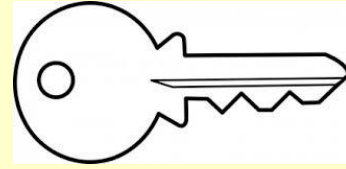
### EHCs – the planning pathway

Figure 1 The EHC planning pathway



Source: SQW

## EHCPs - Key findings



This report was produced as part of SQW's evaluation of the SEND Pathfinder Programme for the Department for Education. It focuses on the 'planning pathways' developed in five pathfinder areas, leading to a single, coordinated Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The key learning points, useful to other areas preparing for the SEND reforms were that:

- **Areas appear to be retaining their previous approaches to eligibility**, so those who were eligible for an SEN statement are expected to be eligible for an EHCP.
- **The largest change in eligibility is around 19-25 year olds**. As covered in the legislation, young people in this age band may now be eligible for support.
- The five pathfinder areas that contributed to the report had **developed similar EHC planning pathways which included common elements and sequencing**. The pathways included five stages: referral; considering if an assessment is required; co-ordinated assessment; planning and sign-off.
- **There are differing approaches to some key elements of the pathway** in terms of: the amount of information that is gathered at the referral stage; the extent of choice a family has over who will be their EHCP co-ordinator; whether the plan is written by a multi-disciplinary team established on a case-by-case basis (the Team Around the Child –TAC- approach) or drafted by the co-ordinator based on the assessment; how plans are signed-off and approved; and the step down process used for children and young people that were not felt to require an EHCP, which in some cases meant using the EHC planning template on a non-statutory basis as a means of extending the new way of working to all families.
- **The EHC planning pathway is different to the SEN statementing process**. There are three main points of difference: there is more emphasis on gathering information from across services at the point of referral; the family is much more involved through the co-ordinated assessment and planning stages, leading to a plan which is more outcome-focused and family centred.
- **There remain a number of challenges in implementing the EHC planning pathway**. Overcoming these challenges will be important to delivering the change envisaged, and pathfinders are identifying possible solutions. They focus around proper co-ordination/co-operation between agencies, and ensuring that the EHCP co-ordinator has sufficient time to deliver a meaningful plan for each family
- **The (new) family-centred way of working can lead to better quality plans**, as it enables professionals to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the child or young person.

*The LIS will work alongside SEN and EPS to develop good practice regarding EHCPs in the academic year 2014-15. More information will be winging its way to your inbox soon!*



# A brief guide to key working

## What is the aim of key working?

The overall aim of key working is to ensure the provision of holistic care and support to meet the individual needs of the child or young person and their family. Every child, young person and family who would benefit from key working support should have access to it.

## What is key working?

Key working is:

- ✚ A way of enabling effective support, underpinned by the Early Support principles, that helps build strong and resilient children, young people and families
- ✚ Defined by a set of functions
- ✚ Based on person centred thinking and partnership approaches to working
- ✚ Family focused as well as child or young person focused
- ✚ Underpinned by an approach that enables open, equality promoting and supportive relationships
- ✚ A way to facilitate the coordination of an integrated package of support for children, young people and families.



## Who is key working for?

Key working is for children and young people who have additional needs, from birth to adulthood and their families.

## What are the key working functions?

- ✚ Providing emotional and practical support as a part of a trusting relationship
- ✚ Enabling and empowering for decision making and the use of personal budgets
- ✚ Coordinating practitioners and services around the child, young person and family
- ✚ Being a single point of regular and consistent contact
- ✚ Facilitating multiagency meetings
- ✚ Supporting and facilitating a single planning and joint assessment process
- ✚ Identifying strengths and needs of family members
- ✚ Providing information and signposting
- ✚ Advocating on a child's, young person's and/or family's behalf
- ✚ Facilitating clinical and social care seamlessly, integrated with specialist and universal services in an equality promoting approach.

## Who can undertake key working?

The person providing key working support:

- ✚ May come from health, social care, education or the voluntary, community or private and independent sector (or it may be provided by the parent carers or young people themselves)
- ✚ Should be selected according to the specific needs of the child or young person and their families
- ✚ Is likely to be someone from the team working with the family, who is identified in discussion with the family, who has the skills, training, time and support to ensure that key working is effective and that the family are the pivotal part of all discussions and decision making

- ✚ May undertake all of the functions required by a family themselves, *or* they may facilitate some of the required functions to be fulfilled by other members of the team working in partnership with the family.

### **Does every family need every function all of the time?**

No - the level, intensity, frequency and number of the key working functions that children, young people and their family may require is determined by a number of things, including the complexity of the package of support and the family's resilience and support networks. This is likely to vary over time.

- ✚ **For families requiring a moderate level of support:** the person providing key working support may only deliver a few of the functions (for example, single point of contact; coordinating; empowering decision making). Key working is likely to be light touch, short term and just part of the way that a practitioner works.
- ✚ **For families requiring a high level of support, who require services from a number of agencies:** the person providing key working support is likely to ensure that more of the functions are undertaken at a higher level of intensity. In the early stages ensuring frequent and regular proactive contact may be essential, but the intensity should quickly reduce. The key working practitioner could be any member of the team around the family and should be the one who is 'best placed' in terms of the needs of the family and the individual's skills, capacity and relationships. After discussion with the family, the key working practitioner may undertake all of the required functions or facilitate another person from the team around the family to fulfil some of the functions (for example, someone else undertakes advocacy).
- ✚ **For families requiring an intensive level of support, who require services from a number of agencies, including extensive specialist input, and complex packages of support:** these families will probably have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan and access to a personal budget. The person providing key working is likely to need to ensure that most (possibly all) of the functions are undertaken, at a high level of intensity and possibly over an extended period of time. It is likely that the key working practitioner will come from a specialist service and could dedicate a significant amount of their time, at least in the early days or at times of crisis. After discussion with the family, the key working practitioner may undertake all of the required functions themselves or facilitate another person from the team around the family to fulfil some of the functions (for example, someone else facilitates clinical care).

### **What local structures need to be in place?**

To enable and support a key working approach, each area will need to consider:

- ✚ Accountability structures
- ✚ Joint commissioning
- ✚ Information sharing agreements
- ✚ Supervision and management
- ✚ Professional development
- ✚ Awareness raising.

**For more detail** on each of these areas, as well as more on the evidence that supports key working, please refer to the paper *Key working: improving outcomes for all - Evidence, provision, systems and structures*, available from: <http://ncb.org.uk/early-support/key-working>

## Helpful resources on SEN and disability policy

**The Council for Disabled Children is working as the Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Strategic Reform Partner to the Department for Education. As part of this role we are running a 'Countdown to Change programme,' developing and collating information highlighting key aspects of the SEN reforms, as outlined in the Children and Families Bill.**

**Below is a selection of free key resources produced by CDC and our partners highlighting different aspects of changes to SEN and disability policy.**

**You can find further information on the Children and Families Bill at**

**[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/childrenandfamiliesbill](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/childrenandfamiliesbill)**

**You can find further information on our work as Strategic Reform Partner at**

**[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/strategicreformpartner](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/strategicreformpartner).**

### **An overview of the Children and Families Bill**

1

This presentation gives an overview of the main clauses in the Bill, outlines the Government's amendments at Committee Stage in the House of Commons and highlights the key issues still being debated by Parliament. *Please note this presentation dates from June 2013, prior to the House of Lords debates.*

Download at

[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/childrenandfamiliesbilloverview](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/childrenandfamiliesbilloverview)

### **Timeline of SEN and Disability reform process**

2

A number of activities have taken place and will take place in the future as part of the government's reform to the SEN and disability system. This timetable outlines some of the key developments in this process.

Download at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sendreformoverview](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sendreformoverview)

### **Pathfinder Information packs**

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The Pathfinder Support Team is producing a set of Information Packs on a bi-monthly basis, which provides an overview of SEND Pathfinder learning, including emerging examples of good and interesting practice from across the SEND Pathfinder Programme. The packs cover the 6 core themes of SEND Pathfinder including personal budgets and the local offer.

View at [www.sendpathfinder.co.uk/infopacks](http://www.sendpathfinder.co.uk/infopacks)

4

### **Education Health and Care plans: a checklist**

This checklist brings together the statutory requirements for an Education, Health and Care assessment and plan, including content local authorities must include in a plan.

Download at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/ehcpchecklist](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/ehcpchecklist)

### **The SEN reforms: what schools need to know and what they need to do**

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This briefing is designed to give schools information about the changes in school funding and to help them prepare for the SEND reforms.

↓ Download at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/countdownforschools](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/countdownforschools)

### **The SEN reforms: what further education needs to know and what they need to do**

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This briefing is designed to support further education (FE) colleges and approved independent specialist providers in preparing for the SEND reforms.

↓ Download at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/countdownforfe](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/countdownforfe)

### **Slide pack on implementing the reforms to SEND**

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Produced by the Department for Education, these slides are for communicating with local areas about the SEND reforms. They include information on the legislation, pathfinder learning and next steps.

↓ Download at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/implementingthesendreforms](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/implementingthesendreforms)

### **FAQs on SEN and disability reforms**

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A collation of some of the most commonly asked questions about the reforms. View at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/childrenandfamiliesbillfaq](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/childrenandfamiliesbillfaq)

### **The CDC Digest**

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CDC produces a quarterly e-bulletin summarising the essential policy and practice news involving disabled children and young people, children with special educational needs and their families.

Download the latest copy at

↓ [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/cdcdigest](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/cdcdigest)

### **House of Lords Second Reading Briefing on the Children and Families Bill**

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The latest briefing produced by Every Disabled Child Matters campaign and the Special Educational Consortium summarizing the position of the SEN and disability sector on the Children and Families Bill.

↓ Download at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/HOLsecondreadingbriefing](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/HOLsecondreadingbriefing)

### **Support organisations**

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A number of organisations that have been funded by government to play a role in reforming and delivering services for disabled children, young people with special education needs and their families. CDC has mapped the work of these organisations so you can find out what support is available to your organisation locally.

View at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sendsupport](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sendsupport)

### **School funding changes and children with SEN in mainstream schools: a briefing for parents**

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This briefing provides information about the school funding changes and explains what you should do if a school or local authority proposes to change the special educational provision for your child.

Download at

[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/schoolfundingparentsbriefing](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/schoolfundingparentsbriefing)

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### **Young people's consultation on the Code of Practice**

CDC has produced two guides for young people who would like to know more about the draft Code of Practice and who would like to respond to the Government's consultation.

Download at [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/ypcopguide](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/ypcopguide)

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### **Overview of health reforms**

The 2012 Health and Social Care Act introduced significant reforms to the health system in England. This briefing, produced by our parent charity NCB, sets out the structure of the NHS, key levers for encouraging good practice and a summary of the agencies involved.

Download at [www.ncb.org.uk/media/713159/ncb\\_health\\_reforms\\_all.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/713159/ncb_health_reforms_all.pdf)

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These two mythbusting sheets are designed by the SEN Information Organisations Group to dispel some of the myths associated with the progress and implications of the Children & Families Bill. One focuses specifically on myths surrounding the transition from Statements to the new Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs), the other on general myths surrounding the Bill.

Download at

<http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/childrenandfamiliesbillmyths>

Download EHCP mythbusting at

<http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/childrenandfamiliesbillmyths-ehcps>

**This information sheet is available at**

[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sendreforminfosheet](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sendreforminfosheet)

## **News from the SEN Team**

### **Top-up**

The LA would like to thank all school staff who contributed to top-up over the 4 days at Parkview. Your contribution is greatly valued, and enhances the quality of LA decision making.

### **Statements and EHCPs**

All requests for statutory assessment from 1 September 2014 will be requests for an EHCP. The timescales will be shorter and the process will be different. Code of Practice briefings are being held on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> July, and the details are being sent to all school SENCOs. Existing statements need to change over to EHCPs over the next 3 years, with children at key stage transfer being prioritised.



# The new Code of Practice



## Straight from the horse's mouth...!

### These are the changes from the SEN Code of Practice (2001)...straight from the new Code!

- The Code of Practice (2014) covers the 0-25 age range and includes guidance relating to disabled children and young people as well as those with SEN
- There is a clearer focus on the participation of children and young people and parents in decision-making at individual and strategic levels
- There is a stronger focus on high aspirations and on improving outcomes for children and young people
- It includes guidance on the joint planning and commissioning of services to ensure close co-operation between education, health and social care
- It includes guidance on publishing a Local Offer of support for children and young people with SEN or disabilities
- There is new guidance for education and training settings on taking a graduated approach to identifying and supporting pupils and students with SEN (to replace School Action and School Action Plus)
- For children and young people with more complex needs a co-ordinated assessment process and the new 0-25 Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) replace statements and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs)
- There is a greater focus on support that enables those with SEN to succeed in their education and make a successful transition to adulthood
- Information is provided on relevant duties under the Equality Act 2010
- Information is provided on relevant provisions of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 .

### Other key points

- SEND will be identified more accurately and at an earlier stage
- Interventions will be evidence-based and focused on outcomes.

### Categories of SEN

The finalised categories defined in Section 6 are similar to those in the draft Code, the exception being the rewording to 'Social, emotional and mental health':

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

### The SENCO...

- Must be a qualified teacher
- Must be appropriately qualified
- Should help determine the strategic development of SEND policy and provision
- Should ensure that staff understand the principles of the Code and Equality Act (2010) requirements
- Promote a culture of high expectations
- Have knowledge of the budget
- Ensure that additional adults are deployed effectively
- Commission and quality assure services
- Monitor and evaluate provision and the impact on progress
- Support staff to deliver high quality teaching and learning experiences.

## What does this mean for special educational provision in schools?

**Section 6.3** begins with two key statements with implications for SENCOs and teaching staff:

**6.36** Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

**6.37** *High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.*

As well as holding the responsibility for the day-to-day running of SEN systems in school, the key role for SENCOs now is one of staff support. The Teachers' Standards clearly state that differentiating for all pupils is a teacher's duty and the review of progress of pupils with SEN is expected to be part of the performance management process.

### A single school stage of SEN

The School Action and School Action Plus stages, as anticipated, have been replaced by a single school stage: SEN Support. Schools will need to determine for themselves at which point efforts to differentiate and accelerate progress in the classroom are insufficient to meet a child's needs. There are staff discussions to be had! Pupil progress meetings will highlight concerns, but other procedures for raising concerns and identifying special needs should be formulated and agreed.

The **Assess-Plan-Do-Review** cycle described in the Code is nothing new to us. However, this may be a time to re-evaluate assessment processes in school. Information about a child may be drawn from several sources, including teacher records, pupil progress meetings and parents' and pupil views; however, **nasen** recommends taking a fresh look at assessments. Schools need a range of assessment tools to enable further clarification of the nature of a child's difficulties and the point(s) at which they may be experiencing barriers to learning. It's crucial that information derived from assessment informs plans for teaching, so SENCOs must ensure that results are communicated to teaching staff who then act upon them.

### So where do I start as a SENCO?

Panic not – the changes are expected to be phased in over a period of time, so when September 1<sup>st</sup> arrives, you won't be expected to have turned the SEN world in your school around.

### Top Tips for SENCOs

- Request some meeting time to explain the changes and implications to staff.
- Set up a meeting for parents to do the same.
- Set up a meeting with your SEN governor to explain the changes and what they will mean for your school.
- Register with the nasen SEND Gateway for up-to-date news and resources.
- Start reviewing your SEN policy – the nasen SEND Gateway will be useful here.
- Review your record keeping and review processes. If you follow the recommended provision mapping cycle this should be more than adequate to meet the new requirements.
- Make your staff aware of the Advanced Training Materials, and dust off those Inclusion Development Programme DVDs at the back of your staff room shelf!
- Set aside SEND 'surgery' dates for after school meetings with year group staff. SENCOs could reasonably liaise with one year group each week for time-limited, solution-focused meetings to help staff include pupils with SEND.

### AND REMEMBER...Rome wasn't built in a day!

SENCOs can contact the BIS and LIS for advice on strategies for the classroom. The teams can assist with behaviour, language, literacy, dyslexia, maths, motor skills (including fine motor skills and DCD) and the inclusion of children with Down syndrome. Contact the team on 0117 9031275 or email [Rachael.reeves@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Rachael.reeves@bristol.gov.uk).

## Personal Budgets Made Simple...ish!

Information courtesy of nasen



From September 2014, all parents of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (or statements) will be able to request a personal budget (PB). A PB is an amount of money identified by the local authority (LA) to deliver parts of the provision set out in an EHCP.

Families can request a PB when the EHCP is being drawn up or at an annual review, and LAs are duty bound to prepare a PB when requested.

### Where does the funding for a PB come from?

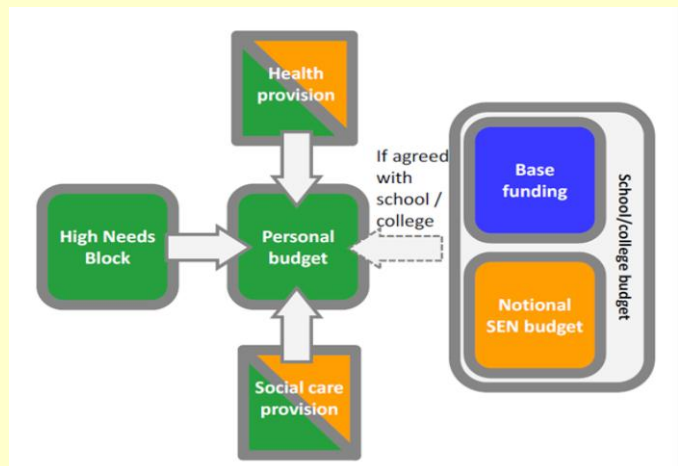
Base funding (£4,000- Element 1), notional SEN budget (£6,000 – Element 2) and high-needs block funding (Element 3 – top-up) enable schools and colleges to provide teaching and support arrangements for all of their pupils and students.

If the level of provision the school or college usually provides is insufficient to meet an individual's needs, additional monies:

- can **definitely** come from LA high-needs block funding (top-up)

and

- can **possibly** come from funding managed by a school or college, if the head or principal agrees.



A PB does not include funding for the school place; a PB is offered to the child or young person to further personalise provision to meet individual learning support needs.

**NB:** A PB can be provided by the school, but *only* if the school agrees. All parties *must* be in agreement before a PB can be delivered.

### How is a PB delivered to the child or young person?

There are four possible ways:

1. **Notional budget:** The individual does not receive the money directly. They are allocated a budget and participate fully in the care planning and decision making around how the money is spent.
2. **Actual budget held by a third party:** A different organisation holds the money and helps the individual decide how best to meet their EHC outcomes.
3. **Direct payments:** Money is transferred directly into the individual's bank account, which has been opened for the purpose, to meet the identified outcomes.
4. **OR** any combination of the above

More information to come soon...!



## New Training Courses from the LIS!

### Autumn 2014 Talking Partners@Secondary

A two-day training to enable practitioners to run a 10-week speaking and listening intervention for groups of three students.

Wednesday 12 November

Thursday 13 November

Cost: tbc

Time: tbc

Venue: tbc Please contact [Rachael.reeves@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Rachael.reeves@bristol.gov.uk) to register interest.

### Autumn 2014 Training for NQTs: supporting pupils with SEND in the classroom

A series of three workshops to enable newly qualified teachers and those in the early stages of their teaching careers to plan for and include pupils with SEND.

Wednesday 1 October / Wednesday 8 October / Wednesday 15 October:

Cost: £60 per workshop Time: 1:00 – 4:00 pm Venue: please see TwS catalogue for details

### Autumn 2014 Training for teaching assistants

A series of three workshops designed to enable TAs to effectively support pupils with SEND in the classroom.

Tuesday 21 October: Dyslexia awareness and supportive strategies

Tuesday 4 November: Supporting maths

Tuesday 11 November: Promoting independent working and differentiation

Cost: £60 per workshop Time: 1:00 – 3:00 pm Venue: to be confirmed

To book, please go to [www.tradingwithschools.org](http://www.tradingwithschools.org)  
For queries, please contact Rachael Reeves on 9031275

### Autism Outreach Team Training Courses

The ASD Outreach team is busy planning a training programme for schools for 2014 – 2015. More info to follow via email (if you don't think ASDOT have your correct email, please email [sara.goldhawk@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:sara.goldhawk@bristol.gov.uk))

We are delivering the AET (Autism Education Trust) Level 1, 2 & 3 training in conjunction with Fosseway School, Bath.

Email [AET@fossewayschool.com](mailto:AET@fossewayschool.com) for more information.

We will also have a detailed programme for 2014 – 2015 of workshops on a variety of subjects including:-

- Differentiating the curriculum to support pupils with ASD
- Using technology to support pupils with ASD
- Managing anxiety and anger
- Creating an ASD friendly school
- Developing the role of ASD Lead in your school

# Supporting SENCo Practice

## Problem page



If you have a query about any SENCo matter, contact the **Learning Improvement Service** on 9031275.

**Q: Can you explain some of the jargon that's arisen around the recent reforms?**

**A:** We'll do our best! Here are three new terms for starters:

- **Commissioning:** this has been defined as 'the process for deciding how to use the total resource available for families in order to improve outcomes in the most efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable way.
- **Decommissioning:** just when you thought you'd commissioned...! Decommissioning means planning or managing a reduction in a commissioned service, or terminating a contract.
- **Commissioner:** this is you, SENCOs! A commissioner is the person who carries out statutory decision-making and can act as an independent adviser to a governing body.

**Q: What is a Resource Allocation System (RAS) and how does it work?**

**A:** A RAS matches a particular level of need with a particular level of funding for a child or young person; in essence, a RAS will define the personal budget. This budget can be derived from an integrated funding stream: money drawn from education, health and social care. An integrated personal budget across education, health and social care is composed of these elements:

**Personal SEN budget (Top up funding - Element 3):** this is used to support a child or young person's learning.

**Personal social care budget:** allocated to a child or young person who needs additional support at home and when out and about in the community.

**Personal health budget:** allocated when a child or young person has a complex, long-term medical condition. Personal health budgets can also be used to help with the cost of equipment or other health services.

The charity In Control identifies three common elements of all resource allocation systems:

1. **Budget:** the identified funding to support a child of young person.
2. **Eligibility:** an explanation of what makes a child or young person eligible for funding.
3. **Purpose:** a clear description of the outcomes, identified through the assessment process that this funding must support.

In Control <http://www.in-control.org.uk> provide webinars (and recordings) on current issues, including the implementation of personal budgets.

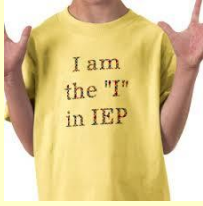
**Q: Will every child with an EHCP have a personal budget?**

**A:** No – personal budgets will not necessarily be allocated to every child or young person with an EHCP. Control of a personal budget is optional for families. Personal budgets will not be used for services which schools or colleges provide from their own budget as part of the local offer.

**Q: What happens if schools and parents disagree on the best use of a personal budget?**

**A:** The use of the personal budget has to be directly related to the EHCP: it must be used to support the projected outcomes written therein. Before an EHCP is finally issued, all parties need to agree how the budget will be used and managed.





## *To IEP or not to IEP, that is the question...!*

**The debate surrounding the value of IEPs continues as the new Code of Practice makes its entrance.**

We've reported on IEPs a few times in previous newsletters; with the increased use of data, many schools are now finding that setting separate IEP targets on top of individual curriculum targets is duplicating a job. The 2012 Teachers' Standards cite the setting of appropriate targets as a professional duty, and as the new Code emphasises, every teacher is a teacher of all pupils, including those with SEND. Is there then, a need for separate documents for pupils with SEND?

Some schools are using student passports, developed within the spirit of person-centred planning. A passport is written with, and from the point of view of, the student. A typical passport might include a photo and key information, a statement from the young person beginning 'I would like you to know that...', and subsequent information about what their difficulties are along with helpful strategies and list of additional support agencies and any access arrangements required. Discussion around each section of the passport should stimulate reflection on the part of the student; how do they learn best and what helps/hinders them? If parents are also involved, they can also share in this process.

In addition to curriculum target setting, you may decide that traditional IEPs may be of most use for a smaller number of children, possibly just those in receipt of High Needs Block funding. Certainly, curriculum target setting cannot cover all focus areas; students who complex needs will still require targets that address a range of areas such as fine motor skills or self-care.

Provision maps, with their requisite evaluation and exit criteria also offer alternative ways to track progress and measure success. Since the inception of the 2001 Code we have used IEPs as if they were a statutory requirement. However, during these years other methods to effectively support and monitor the progress of students with SEND have arisen and increased; we can now make decisions about IEPs, secure in the knowledge that if we choose not to continue their use other systems will serve the same purpose. Whatever form of target setting and tracking we use, perhaps the question to ask ourselves is how effectively will this process trigger teaching and learning?

## **Load 2 learn**

[Load2Learn](https://load2learn.org.uk) is an online resource delivered by Dyslexia Action and the RNIB, and funded by the Department for Education to help schools better support learners with dyslexia, or who are blind or partially sighted, or who have a disability.



If your school has a printed copy of a book, including text books, print-disabled students are entitled to an accessible copy of it under disability law.

Copies can be downloaded in various formats including Kindle, Word documents and pdf. Once a copy is downloaded, it can be used for all learners; for example, you could download four copies of Twilight and put them on all your school Kobos.

Downloading is easy: search for the title, select your preferred format, confirm it's for a person with a print disability and that's it!

<https://load2learn.org.uk>

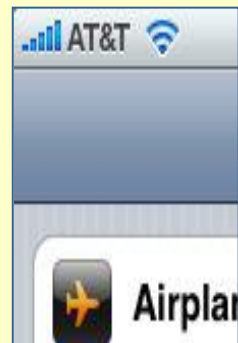
## Getting to grips with iPads – top tips!

Many schools have now purchased iPads or tablet computers, both of which can support learners with SEND in a variety of ways. It can take time to investigate all the amazing accessibility features of iPads and sift through the 30,000 available educational apps, so here we try to bring you the best of the basket.

### If you're completely new to iPads, start here...

#### Setting up in the classroom: using WiFi

To use WiFi, you'll need a micro router, which costs around £8.99. This can be used for up to five iPads which will all need to be used within fairly close range, as distance can affect internet reception.



#### Accessibility

The iPad has various features which enable learners with a range of needs (including vision impairment) to access text, etc...

**Zoom:** screen magnification

**Speak selection:** Learners can have an ebook or text highlighted and read to them.

**Speak auto-text:** This works like predictive text and will read aloud. There is a menu of voices to choose from. Go to **Settings** to select voice, language and speech rate.

**Larger type:** Adjust size in 'native apps': email, texts, reminders, calendars and notes.

**Increase contrast:** Useful for dyslexic and vision impaired learners.

**Guided access:** This can 'lock' a learner into an app, and prevent access to YouTube, etc...

**Switch control:** This can be used with a front facing camera for learners with physical disabilities (e.g. no arm movements). The camera can pick up the learner's head movements.

**Assistive touch:** This enables all gestures (a gesture is a finger press or swipe of and hand) to be done with one finger.

**Accessibility shortcut:** By triple clicking the home key, you can switch on the accessibility features without having to go the menus.

#### Apps

**OCR – Optical character recognition:** This app will read out handwriting on the board.

**Clicker:** A suite of four apps, which cost £7 each: Docs, WriteOnline, Books and Sentences.



**Clicker Apps** feature several ways to share files - pupils can print their work to any AirPrint compatible printer, email their files or connect to a Dropbox account. Cricksoft's most recent app updates mean that you can now also access a WebDAV file server from the apps.

Files stored on a WebDAV file server can be accessed from a wide variety of devices including Windows PCs, Macs, iPads, Android tablets and phones.

#### What is WebDAV?

**WebDAV** is a service that allows files to be shared over the Internet. When you connect to a **WebDAV** file server, you can open, edit and delete files as if they were on your device. Files stored on a **WebDAV** file server can be accessed from a wide variety of devices.

## iPad How-tos, News and Updates from Blindability

You cannot deny that tablet devices have become one of the must-have gadgets over the past few years. The Apple iPad is one of the best known tablets in the world. Launched in 2010, it has gone from strength to strength, improved with new hardware such as a rear facing camera and the brilliant Retina display. The operating system (iOS) has also come on leaps and bounds and now includes a huge range of different accessibility features for a vast number of people with disabilities.

For people with a visual impairment, Apple devices have been the 'must have' products. The iPhone, iPod Touch and the iPad all run the same operating system, and so have all the same accessibility features. The great thing is, once you know how to use one device, the others work in exactly the same way!

### Accessibility Features

The iPad accessibility features can be found under the Settings app. This is typically on the front page and looks like a number of cogs. Once in the app the page is split into two columns; the left side is the main menu and the left side allows you to make changes depending on what has been selected on the main menu.

Under the General heading in the main menu, look for Accessibility on the right hand side. Once selected you will be able to turn on, turn off and tweak all of the different accessibility features.

For those of us with a visual impairment there are lots of things to play around with! Here are the main three:

### VoiceOver

VoiceOver is Apple's own Screen Reader. If you are familiar with other screen reading technologies such as JAWS or SuperNova, you will have a good idea of what to expect. VoiceOver uses a high quality synthetic voice to guide you around the device and announce what is on the screen, what you have typed, what is in emails, eBooks and messages, what is displayed on the internet. It is a fantastic product, and best of all you don't have to pay any extra for it!

### Zoom

Zoom, as the name suggests, is a screen magnifier. You can magnify the screen so that only one app icon is shown. Magnification works in all apps and is great for low vision users. Again, this is included in the software.

### Invert Colours

Invert Colours allows you to flip the colours on the screen; this is great if you prefer to see white text on a black background but that is as far as it will allow you to take it. Essentially, it provides a negative of the image on the screen so there's no fancy yellow on black, green on red or blue on yellow that you see with many premium products.

Other things that can be changed in the Accessibility menu for visually impaired users include Large Text, Bold Text and Changing the Contrast.

### Accessibility Shortcut

If you want an easy way to turn on and off the accessibility features you can setup a shortcut using the home button (the only tactile button on the front of the device, it is at the bottom of the screen in the middle). Whilst in the Accessibility menu, scroll to the bottom and select accessibility shortcut (or if you have an older operating system it will say triple click home). Once in this item you can select any of the accessibility features that you can turn off and on; simply highlight them and a tick will appear to the side of it. All you need to do now is press the home button to get to the main screen and then press it again three times in quick succession. If you have selected only one item this will be switched on straight away, if you have selected more than one item there will be a menu box pop up in the middle of the screen, when you select one of the items in the list it will be turned on.

## Siri

Another useful feature that was introduced with the latest update was the ability to turn on the accessibility features using voice commands. The only downside is you need to be connected to the internet for it to work! Providing Siri is switched on in the settings menu you can press and hold the home button; once you hear two beeps you can say "Switch on VoiceOver" or "Switch on Zoom" and Siri, your personal assistant will turn it on for you! Siri is also useful for many other things from searching the internet, writing emails and messages, arranging appointments and even having a meaningless conversation about what to have for dinner!!

## Latest Software Update

To make sure you get the best out of the current accessibility features you should have iOS version 7.1.1. To check this, again go to the Settings app, select General and towards the top of the menu will be Software Update. If there is a number to the right hand side of this, there are updates to be installed. If not, it is still worth checking by pressing Software Update. If there is something to install it will prompt you, if not, a message will be displayed telling you the software is up to date.

## Microsoft Office on the iPad

Recently Microsoft announced that you can now get Word, Excel and PowerPoint on the iPad. You can find the apps in the App Store and they are all free to download. Once downloaded you will only be able to view a document, spreadsheet or presentation, it will not allow you to edit or create new items. To get full functionality you will need a subscription to Office 365. For personal users you can spend either £7.99 per month or £79.99 per year which will give you the latest version of Microsoft Office (Currently 2013 for Windows and 2011 for Mac) which can be installed onto 5 computers or Mac's, and 5 tablets. This essentially gives you 10 licences! Alternatively, you can spend £5.99 per month or £59.99 per year for the latest version of Microsoft Office which can be used on 1 Computer or Mac, and 1 tablet. Once you have this subscription you will be able to use the apps on the iPad to their full potential. If you are a Skype user, you will also get 60 minutes of free call time per month too!!

## Coming Soon from Apple

On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June Apple announced the launch of iOS8. This will be available for general release in the autumn. There has so far been no mention of any specific changes or additions to the Accessibility features; however, there are no plans to make any significant changes such as those seen with iOS7! One new feature that has been demonstrated is a way to bring all Apple products closer together. If you have an iPhone and iPad and/or Mac you will be able to answer your iPhone using your iPad or Mac, so if you have the phone on charge in the bedroom and are sitting downstairs with your iPad and it rings, you will be able to have your normal phone conversation through your iPad!

## Keep up to date

For more hints, tips, updates and reviews on products and apps for your iPad, please join our Facebook Page ([www.facebook.com/blindability](http://www.facebook.com/blindability)) or sign up to our Blog ([www.blindability.co.uk](http://www.blindability.co.uk))

*We welcome Matthew Carr of Blindability, a new contributor to the SENCO Newsletter.*





<http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>

We're all familiar with the **Sutton Trust Pupil Premium Toolkit**, which evaluates the effectiveness and value for money of various interventions and approaches. The Toolkit is now online at the Education Endowment Fund website, with a host of useful links. If you're considering new approaches to intervention or staff deployment, you'll find evidence, video clips, a pupil premium calculator and links to CPD as well as a download facility. In addition, there are helpful prompts and tips; see the examples below for those relating to developing metacognition and using effective feedback, the most effective classroom approaches.

### **Developing metacognition: what should I consider?**

- Teaching approaches which encourage learners to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning have very high potential, but require careful implementation.
- Have you planned how you will implement this approach?
- Have you taught pupils explicit strategies on how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning? Have you given them opportunities to use them with support and then independently?
- Teaching how to plan: have you asked pupils to identify the different ways that they could plan (general strategies) and then how best to approach a particular task (specific technique)?
- Teaching how to monitor: have you asked pupils to consider where the task might go wrong? Have you asked the pupils to identify the key steps for keeping the task on track?
- Teaching how to evaluate: have you asked pupils to consider how they would improve their approach to the task if they completed it again?

### **Effective feedback: what should I consider?**

Providing effective feedback is challenging. Research suggests that it should:

- be specific, accurate and clear (e.g. "It was good because you..." rather than just "correct");
- compare what a learner is doing right now with what they have done wrong before (e.g. "I can see you were focused on improving X as it is much better than last time's Y...");
- encourage and support further effort and be given sparingly so that it is meaningful;
- provide specific guidance on how to improve and not just tell students when they are wrong;
- be supported with effective professional development for teachers.
- Wider research suggests the feedback should be about complex or challenging tasks or goals as this is likely to emphasise the importance of effort and perseverance as well as be more valued by the pupils. Feedback can come from other peers as well as adults (see peer tutoring).
- Have you considered the challenge of implementing feedback effectively and consistently?
- What professional development requirements are likely to be necessary for success?



# Specialist Teachers' Section



## Access arrangements at KS2

### Additional time

Some children are automatically entitled to additional time. Schools do not need to complete an application for children who:

- have a statement of special educational needs - these children are allowed up to 25% additional time, except for the mental mathematics test and the spelling task
- use the braille or modified large print versions of the tests - up to 100% additional time is permitted

Additional time may be appropriate for children who:

- use additional time as part of normal classroom practice
- are working at the level of the key stage 2 tests
- use the standard versions of the tests

The process for applying for additional time has changed. You should read this guidance in full and consider the child's needs before completing the application form.

The new application process draws on teachers' knowledge of children and their ability to assess an individual child's needs. Applications must be made by teachers who have appropriate knowledge of the individual children for whom applications are being made.

Teachers must have evidence to justify their decisions regarding the use of additional time in case their school receives a monitoring visit. Schools that use additional time or any other access arrangement inappropriately will be subject to a maladministration investigation. This could lead to children's results being amended or annulled.

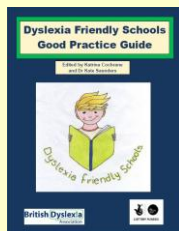
### The application process

Applications for additional time must be made via the 'Access arrangements' section of the NCA tools website. The access arrangements form asks up to nine questions about the child. The questions are provided on the following page, to help you prepare. If you have the necessary information to hand, the form should take less than 10 minutes to complete. Please note education psychology reports are not required as evidence.

You may feel that a child is working below the level of one test, but would be able to access another test with additional time. If this is the case, you should complete the application form for the test(s) the child will sit. You will be given guidance that is appropriate to the responses you have given.

Follow the link for the questions you'll be asked:

[http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/assessment/keystage2/ks2tests/b00231567/additional\\_time/at-questions](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/assessment/keystage2/ks2tests/b00231567/additional_time/at-questions)



**Recommended reading: Dyslexia Friendly Schools Good Practice Guide (BDA £15)** Along with contributions from eminent specialists, this book will enable specialist teachers, classroom teachers and teaching assistants to see the best strategies and ideas for working with dyslexic children. It will also enable policy makers, advisors and senior leadership teams in schools to adopt and embed Dyslexia Friendly good practice. There are chapters on the process of becoming a Dyslexia Friendly School, as well as help identifying children with dyslexia, and support for reading, spelling, writing, maths and teaching of foreign language extremely useful, as well as a very helpful as a dyscalculia checklist.



## NEW LIS service!

- Do you have pupils (Y3 and above) with persistent literacy difficulties?
- Have you tried evidenced-informed interventions with little success?
- Have you attended dyslexia awareness training and implemented the recommended strategies?

If you can answer 'yes' to all these questions and would like your pupils' difficulties investigated further, the LIS can help! Our AMBDA accredited consultants are now able to offer assessments for pupils of 7+ (Y3 and beyond) which will:

- identify any underlying difficulties with phonological awareness, memory and processing speed
- measure sight vocabulary and reading comprehension
- include recommendations for key teaching strategies and intervention methods.

For further information or to request an assessment, please contact the LIT on 9031275 or email [Alison.carmody@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Alison.carmody@bristol.gov.uk) , [jane.Lindsay@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:jane.Lindsay@bristol.gov.uk) or [c.wells@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:c.wells@bristol.gov.uk)

### LIS training for interventions and teaching strategies for pupils with dyslexia/literacy difficulties

| Intervention/CPD                                                                                | Teaches                                                                                                        | Suitable for                                                                                       | Training                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Direct Phonics                                                                                  | Letter sounds, segmentation and blending, HFWs for reading                                                     | Primary and secondary                                                                              | On school request                                                                                                                              |
| Four Day Programme                                                                              | Letter sounds, HFWs (reading and spelling),<br>Reading and writing simple sentences                            | Pupils who find difficulty learning letter sounds and HFWs<br><br>Entry: approx. 6 sounds and HFWs | On school request                                                                                                                              |
| Letters and Sounds                                                                              | Synthetic phonics: segmentation and blending                                                                   | Primary and secondary                                                                              | On school request                                                                                                                              |
| Dyslexia awareness                                                                              | Foundation level knowledge and supportive teaching strategies to address difficulties                          | Primary and secondary                                                                              | INSET and twilight sessions on school request<br><br>Regular dates in CPD calendar                                                             |
| Dyslexia and maths                                                                              | Awareness of common difficulties encountered by dyslexic pupils and supportive strategies                      | Primary and secondary                                                                              | On school request                                                                                                                              |
| Introduction to personalised teaching methods: using the Hickey Multisensory Language Programme | Sound discovery, letter formation and cursive script, segmentation and blending, reading and writing sentences | A specialist intervention for pupils with the greatest level of literacy difficulty                | 2 dates per year<br><br>1 day training<br><br>Participants must have attended LIT dyslexia awareness training. TAs MUST attend with a teacher. |
| Hearing children read                                                                           | How to run a structured reading session and develop reading and spelling from errors                           | Primary and secondary                                                                              | On school request                                                                                                                              |
| Study skills                                                                                    | A variety of study methods including SQ3R, note taking and revision techniques                                 | Secondary                                                                                          | On school request                                                                                                                              |
| Supporting dyslexic students in the classroom                                                   | Best practice in support strategies                                                                            | Secondary                                                                                          | Short INSET or twilight meeting on school request                                                                                              |

You may like to discuss the school language and literacy environment with a LIS consultant at your next core visit. Contact us on 9031275.



## *The dyslexia debate- myth, mystery or middle-class phenomenon?*

*Every so often, the debate around dyslexia rises up, and SENCOs will probably be aware of the latest exchanges between researchers regarding the existence of the condition. Such public disagreement between academics can leave schools feeling unsure how to respond to parental queries, and where that leaves them in terms of identification.*

The Bristol 'best practice guidelines', adapted from the former LA policy, state that dyslexia can be identified by school staff; an 'expert' isn't required to do this. Some schools have welcomed this freedom, as staff are pleased to be able to use their professional judgement; others however, remain wary, as dyslexia has become a powerful word, and a spurious notion still abounds that a 'diagnosis' must bring with it additional support and resources which schools can ill afford. Indeed, the use of the word 'diagnosis' rather than 'identification' suggests that dyslexia has been 'medicalised', and that in itself imbues the term with much greater weight than 'reading difficulty'. In addition, organisations with some influence have grown up around dyslexia, which do not exist for other conditions. These establishments now offer a great deal of information and training which demystifies dyslexia to some extent, but there can sometimes be an uneasy co-existence between them and the education system. Parents may pay for a private assessment and diagnosis but feel disappointed when the recommendations cannot be actualised at school because the child's level of need does not meet the criteria for school-based provision.

### **The latest debate**

The current argument has been somewhat misreported: it is not really a debate about whether dyslexia exists. What Professor Elliott of Durham University is actually questioning is '... whether children with dyslexia (as traditionally defined) respond differently to intervention from those with generalised learning problems.' The TES (1 March 2014) further reports Professor Elliott's views: 'He said that dyslexia treatments were identical to those for a range of reading difficulties, so a diagnosis had no educational value. He also claimed that middle-class parents were more likely to seek out the label of dyslexia, meaning that their children were more likely to receive specialist attention than those from poorer backgrounds.'

Maggie Snowling, professor of psychology at the University of York, insists that there is a distinct dyslexic subgroup, an opinion underpinned by the results of a recent reading intervention study where 74% of children made an average 8-9 month gain in reading age, but the remaining 26% made no gains at all.

### **Rose and Brooks**

So where does that leave us? Children whose progress in literacy was discrepant with their apparent academic ability were the only ones traditionally accorded the dyslexia label. However, the Rose Report from 2009 redefined the group which we term dyslexic: the expanded definition now includes all children who struggle to learn to read and spell. If we consider that the word dyslexia simply means difficulty with words, the wider grouping seems fitting and sensible. Rose describes dyslexia as existing on a continuum, so it is not surprising that the children at the furthest end may be resistant to intervention. Greg Brooks, author of 'What Works for Children with Literacy Difficulties' states that for the group of children with the most severe needs, success can remain elusive. None of this is at odds with the current issues; these latter children seem to constitute the subgroup referred to by Snowling, and we will all have encountered such children during our teaching experience.

### **So what's the advice for schools?**

It is probably most helpful to consider dyslexia as a literacy difficulty – after all, that's precisely what it is! It's important to explain the definition to parents but also to stress that whatever we call the difficulty, the important issue is how we address it. You may reach a point where various interventions and strategies have been employed but with little gain. At this juncture you may wish to gain additional insight into a child's specific needs, and this is where an assessment can prove useful. In the recent TES article, Professor Elliott asserts that: '...even if you do manage to identify your dyslexic subgroup, there's absolutely nothing that you do in terms of intervention as a result that would be different to what you would do for the other poor readers. There are no treatment implications of this diagnosis.'

At the Learning Improvement Service's dyslexia training sessions we always begin by saying there are no magic wand solutions. However, we acknowledge that when well-delivered, evidence-informed interventions have been employed and children still fail to progress, it's useful to investigate why this might be.

We can offer literacy difficulty assessments to investigate:

- reading (accuracy and comprehension)
- spelling
- phonological processing
- memory

We will then consider the child's strengths and areas of difficulty, and tailor recommendations accordingly for both intervention and the classroom. Wherever a child's profile fits along the continuum of dyslexia/literacy difficulty and whichever label we choose, well-founded advice to address individual needs can only work in a child's favour.

We'll leave the last word to John Rack, head of research at Dyslexia Action:

'...we don't accept the argument that it is wasteful to try to understand the different reasons why different people struggle...[it is] helpful for teachers who can plan the way they teach to overcome the particular blocks that are there.'

To read the full articles, click on the links:

Prof Elliott: <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6408597>  
[http://www.thepsychologist.org.uk/archive/archive\\_home.cfm?volumeID=18&editionID=130&ArticleID=959](http://www.thepsychologist.org.uk/archive/archive_home.cfm?volumeID=18&editionID=130&ArticleID=959)

Prof Snowling: <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=2131182>

Rose Review:

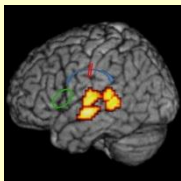
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/00659-2009DOM-EN.pdf>

What works for children and young people with literacy difficulties:

[http://www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk/widgets/GregBrooks/What\\_works\\_for\\_children\\_fourth\\_ed.pdf](http://www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk/widgets/GregBrooks/What_works_for_children_fourth_ed.pdf)

## *New research*

A new study from Belgium suggests that a faulty connection between the area of the brain which stores language sounds and the area which processes them may be responsible for dyslexia. MRI brain scans of 45 adults (23 with dyslexia, 22 without) who were asked to distinguish and sort sounds showed no difference, although the dyslexic adults took longer to complete tasks.



The researchers then examined how well the thirteen studied areas of the brain communicated with each other. Of these areas, twelve were associated with language and speech and one with vision. Both groups had normal connectivity between the hemispheres of the auditory cortex, the area associated with phoneme recognition. However, the dyslexic students showed weaker connections to Broca's area, which regulates the conversion of language to speech. This correlated with lower scores on non-word reading, verbal memory tasks and phoneme discrimination.

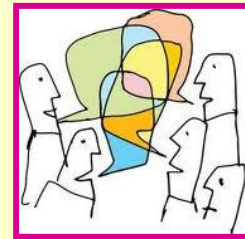
More research, including research with children, is needed to indicate whether therapeutic work can directly target discrete areas of the brain.

Read more at: <http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-dyslexia-brain-circuits-20131204,0,5176204.story#ixzz2uWOYFaOU>

### **Dyslexia SpLD Trust**

For information about dyslexia and the SEND reforms, visit <http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/7/news/304/dfe-confirms-new-fund-for-local-authorities-to-implement-the-send-reforms/>

## Speech, language and communication section



*With ministers stating that young children lack the necessary skills in 'words and numbers' needed to start primary education, it's a good time to review provision for language in schools. Many of you will have been inspired by Jean Gross's keynote speech and workshops at the SENCO conference and may be thinking about how best to provide a language-rich environment for all pupils. This article may help you reflect and plan ahead.*

### Why language?

Language supports children's ability to learn by enabling them to think in words; imagine trying to reason, discuss or solve problems without a good grasp of spoken language. Reading is built on oral language skills – a wide vocabulary enables children to 'tune in' to the sounds of language, leading to better progress in phonics and resultant decoding skills. A wide knowledge of words and sentence structure also helps children predict and read for meaning. Vocabulary at age 5 predicts how good a child's reading comprehension will be at 14, and also how many GCSE passes they are likely to achieve. In short, early language abilities are crucial for our later educational success.

### What can we do to help?

Start by reviewing your school provision and ask the following questions:

- How do we identify and plan for children's language needs?
- What support is available at Waves 1, 2 and 3?
- How confident and knowledgeable so staff feel about language development?

### Screening and identification

SpeechLink produce a set of online tools for infant, junior and secondary aged pupils for speech and language screening. Pupils' results are colour ranked:

- green (language at age-appropriate level)
- amber (school-based intervention needed)
- red (referral to a speech and language therapist recommended)



The programme supplies intervention strategies for children at the amber level.

The LIS recently facilitated an introductory SpeechLink seminar which was attended by 20 schools. Watch this space for further SpeechLink developments in Bristol.

The Afasic checklists can also be used to screen classes at key stages 1 and 2. These are available from Afasic and can also be found in the LDA publication 'How to identify and support children with speech and language difficulties'.

### Support at Wave 1

- Review the school language environment. Use the Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool from The Communication Trust (KS1) or the more detailed version for KS 1 and 2 available from the LIS.



- Audit staff knowledge and skills. Do all staff understand how language underpins children’s thinking, social and academic skills?
- Is every lesson a language lesson? Are all opportunities taken to support and develop children’s understanding and use of language?

**Resources for the classroom**

- Supply all staff with a copy of ‘What’s typical talk at primary/secondary?’
- Stock up that staff bookshelf with recommended publications:

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |    |    |                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Communication Cookbook</b><br>4 – 6 year olds<br>Publ: ICAN                      | <b>Developing Baseline Communication Skills</b><br>4 – 5 year olds<br>Publ: Winslow | <b>Speaking, Listening and Understanding</b><br>Y1 – Y2<br>Publ: Winslow            | <b>Understanding and Using Spoken Language</b><br>Y3 –Y4<br>Publ: Winslow                                              | <b>Speech, language and communication progression tools</b><br>The Tools highlight children's language skills at certain ages. Available from The Communication Trust<br><a href="http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/resources/resources-for-practitioners/">http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/resources/resources-for-practitioners/</a> |
|  |  |  |                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Talk Gym</b><br>A online resource for – 16 year olds (BT).                       | <b>Language for Learning in the Secondary School</b><br>(Nasen: publ David Fulton)  | <b>Time to Talk – Jean Gross</b><br>Publ: David Fulton                              | <b>Universally Speaking</b><br>Three ages and stages guides on children’s communication development<br>EY – secondary. | <b>Communicating Phonics</b><br>A guide to support teachers delivering and interpreting the phonics screening test to children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).<br><br>Download from The Communication Trust.                                                                                                                   |

**Support at Wave 2**

**Training available from the Learning Improvement Service:**

- Language INSET days (primary and secondary)
- Elklan accredited training (10 week courses on language and communication for teachers and TAs leading to level 2 and 3 qualifications)
- Language for Learning intervention: small group language development activities for YR

**Support at Wave 3**

**Training available from the Learning Improvement Service:**

- Talking Partners @ Primary (a 10 week intervention for groups of 3 children)
- Talking Partners@ Secondary (a 10 week intervention for groups of 3 children)
- What Happened? (a 10 week 1:1 or 1:2 intervention for years 1 - 3 to develop understanding of narrative)



## The Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool

As part of the 2012 Better Communication Research Programme, the Communication Trust produced the Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool.

Suitable for use in KS1, the Tool consists of observation checklists for the language learning environment, language learning opportunities and language learning interactions. The LIT has developed the language learning environment checklist for use at KS2, and can offer support at both key stages. LIT members, alongside SENCOs, have trialled the checklists across the primary age range and can help you develop the communication environment in your school.

Talk to us at your next core visit or email [LIT@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:LIT@bristol.gov.uk). We're looking forward to working with you!



### Calling all Communication Champions!

Do you have case studies to share?  
Are you desperate to disseminate best practice?

We always like to celebrate and share the good work that's happening in our Bristol schools, so please get in touch with the newsletter if you're developing speech, language and communication work in your school with great results! Email [jane.lindsay@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:jane.lindsay@bristol.gov.uk) or [tracey.nairn@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.nairn@bristol.gov.uk).

## SLCN at Transition: new resources



The transition from primary to secondary school marks an important stage in a child's school career and can be a challenging time for all children. *Moving On!*, developed by ICAN, supports all children to feel safe and secure by understanding their new environment, the changes to routine and teaching styles.

Two fictional teachers and two year 7 children guide the child through key information, top tips, and activities based on: getting to know the school, timetables, transport, friendships, concerns and key words and phrases.

Included in each pack is a set of passport reminder cards. Children may complete these cards with important information about their new school. A wallet is provided to keep the cards safe. This can also be used as a travel pass, cash card or lunch card holder.



Free sample: download a [Getting to and from school activity page](#) with [Passport reminder card](#). This activity helps children plan their school journey for themselves, remember what time school starts and how long the journey takes as well as giving many other helpful tips.

*Moving On! Student Activity Pack* can be used either on its own or in conjunction with the [teacher guide](#).

Save £25 by ordering a set of [10 Student Activity Packs with one Teacher Guide](#) for only £60.

# TALES FROM THE CITY

## The Four Day programme at Summerhill Infants

At the end of a core visit, Sara, Summerhill's SENCo, introduced me to a group of children who were working with Chris Walton, (Pupil Premium teacher), following the Four Day Programme literacy intervention. This programme was a new addition to the Summerhill battery, and is already proving a success. The children learn to read and write one new HFW and letter sound per week, both in isolation and sentence context. As well as meeting expectations during small group time, the children are also transferring their new skills back into class work. Congratulations to all of you!



## Reading at New Fosseway Special School

You may remember a previous newsletter article on New Fosseway's innovative practice in developing phonics. Since then, the school has been contacted by other settings in the country who are interested in replicating their assessment and teaching methods. Now, New Fosseway is extending the focus on reading, and have many exciting projects underway! These

include:

- Introducing reading bags and reading diaries
- Colour coding and grading books
- Book fairs and Roald Dahl day
- Introducing Bug Club and providing training for parents
- Trialling snappy phonics lessons
- Training for staff on hearing children read
- Making a successful bid to develop the library.

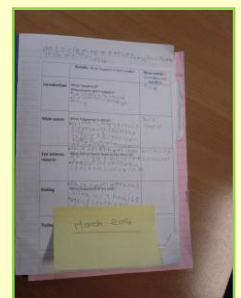
One class of older students are making encouraging progress through the extended use of the Dockside reading materials, and really enjoy their literacy work. Data tracking shows excellent progress, and expectations are high. We await the next instalment of New Fosseway's journey!



## Literacy support at Filton Avenue Junior

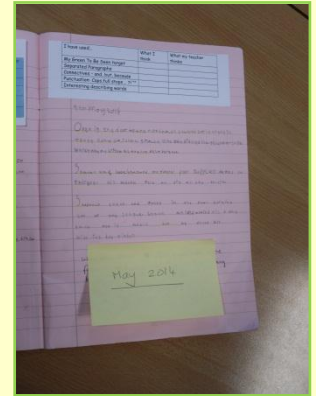
It's always rewarding for the LIS when we hear about school developments which occur as a result of our training. Two teaching assistants from Filton Avenue Juniors recently told us about the changes they'd instigated after a LIS dyslexia awareness day.

Tina Bailey and Kam Bennett were particularly struck by the training section on visual stress, and on their return to school,





decided to apply some strategies straight away. They assessed target pupils using the Visual Stress Assessment Pack from Crossbow, and ordered coloured overlays, coloured exercise books and lined paper, chunky pencils, pencil grips, matt laminate and blue pens. Read Write Inc assessments indicated gaps in children's phonic knowledge, giving Tina and Kam a clear starting point for teaching. This was all done well in time for SATs, and Tina and Kam ensured that all eligible pupils had extra time arranged. They delivered input to staff on simple changes they could make in the classroom, such as thinking about the best seating arrangements for dyslexic pupils and using a pastel background on the IWB. They now run a visual stress group, where children can investigate using coloured overlays, reading rulers and other methods to reduce print distortion. One year 6 pupil commented: 'It helps me to concentrate on my work because sometimes, without my overlay, my eyes hurt and I can't focus.'



Since their second training day, Tina and Kam began daily half hour teaching sessions, and as well as progress with literacy, have also noted an improvement in joined handwriting. Well done Filton Avenue Junior!

### Good practice in our midst: SENCo support at Begbrook Primary Academy



Under the new Code, responsibility for all children's progress falls firmly at the door of the class teacher. The SENCo's role will be to help develop staff skills so that all children can be effectively included in class. Caroline Clark, SENCo at Begbrook Primary Academy, has been putting this into practice. At pupil progress meetings, once pupils who are working below age related expectations (ARE) are identified, Caroline asks some key questions:

1. **Which specific skills are these children finding hard to develop?** If writing is being analysed, it may be that the child is struggling with constructing and writing sentences or spelling and punctuation.
2. **In terms of assessment, where are they? What do they need to do to move to the next level?**
3. **Which strategies and resources could support these pupils in class?**

Once a difficulty has been recognised, rather than planning an out of class intervention, the focus is very much on what could be done in class. Caroline describes this support: *'Sometimes this is as simple as providing table prompts for punctuation and word spacing, or support to build learning resilience. Children have been observed working in class and talked through what happens as they tackle*

*learning tasks. We are helping them recognise their own behaviours when approaching areas they are less confident in, and helping them develop ways to cope and get started. By encouraging children to talk through what happens and identify their own anxieties we can then help them understand the actions to take to help themselves e.g. brain breaks, helpful equipment, supportive friends.'*  
Thanks to Begbrook for sharing their good practice.

**Inclusion in Action**  
**Di Massey and Lou Greatrex report on the**  
**Personalised Learning Centre**  
**at Bristol Brunel Academy**



**Bristol Brunel Academy (BBA)** offers a broad, balanced curriculum in an inclusive environment. We recognise that some students will have emotional/behaviour difficulties; whilst we do not highlight these needs, we are aware that more support may be needed for this small cohort of young people. The Personalised Learning

Centre (PLC) caters for students that have these needs and works closely with senior management, heads of year, year mentors, learning facilitators, subject teachers, learning support assistants, various outside agencies and of course, parents and carers. The PLC has a permanently staffed workroom, plus two smaller rooms for office work or discussions with students/staff, or just more capacity when students need to be isolated. Named students can only use the area when their behaviour needs are causing their learning to suffer. Students who are part of the PLC family are monitored lesson by lesson, working towards weekly rewards or weekly reflection time. PLC students are identified through our safeguarding meetings, and student numbers should not exceed 25. This enables the staff to give a high level of support as and when the need arises.

The PLC aims to:

- Help students whose behaviours affect their learning
- Help to modify the way students behave in class so that the teacher can teach and they can learn
- Provide a high level support which is available to them through their school journey if needed
- Empower students to take ownership of their behaviour so they can understand the consequences of inappropriate actions
- Offer support and advice to staff
- Work closely with outside agencies and families in a supportive manner.

#### **How we identify and refer**

Students are identified as needing more support through:

- Primary school information which is available with transition from year 6
- Event logs
- Attitude to learning scores
- Information from HY/ AHY/outside agencies or family

If students have been through the behaviour monitoring process within their year and are still a cause for concern, they will be discussed at monthly safeguarding meetings. It is at these meetings that referrals to the PLC can be made.



All monitoring of the students is then done by the PLC, and the staff make weekly phone calls home. Communication between the support staff, teaching staff and PLC is constant and as intense as required. Personal Learning Plans and file keeping is done within the PLC, and some PLC students will have a personalised timetable.

It is important to have rules and expectations in the PLC that maintain boundaries that all children need, although they will need to be differentiated in the same way that work can be differentiated in class.



### PLC tier support

The PLC supports a range of students with emotional and behavioural difficulties within a tier structure. The tiers are carefully defined, with support ranging from offering a sanctuary for students in times of crisis to in-class support, to withdrawal from 50% of lesson time. The PLC vision is that every student can and will reach their full potential in an inclusive environment.

*Di Massey and Lou Greatrex*



*This term we say goodbye and thank you to these SENCOs who are either retiring or leaving the role. You will all be very much missed!*

Laura Connors - St Bernard's RC Primary  
 Barbara Cook – St John's Primary  
 Mavis John – Bristol Cathedral School  
 Nick Jump - Redland Green School  
 Kirsten Parton – Easton CE Primary  
 Frankie Payne – Easton CE Primary

Karen Sheppard - Blaise Primary  
 Laura Shore – Luckwell Primary  
 Fran Southway – Barton Hill  
 Sharon Degg - SENCO at St Annes Junior  
 Jenny Gledhill - Director of Inclusion St Annes Junior



*...and a warm welcome to these SENCOs who have taken up post during the year or are starting in September...*

Barbara Buggy – Fair Furlong Primary  
 Philippa Hodder – St John's Primary  
 Cheryl Jeans – Filton Avenue Infants  
 Kate Maynard – Stoke Park Primary  
 Ellie Morgan – Luckwell Primary

Peter Munsie – Redland Green school  
 Emma Robinson – Blaise Primary  
 Jenni Rylands – Henleaze Infants  
 Jo White – Elmfield School for the Deaf (primary)

### **We also say hello to Miriam Hill, who sends this message:**

"Since my arrival in Bristol in late April, to become the interim lead for inclusion within TwS, the sun has been shining. Or so it appears to me, after spending the last thirty years under the shade of the Pennine hills! I am extremely pleased to be here and am privileged to be working within a team of highly skilled, hugely experienced and professional individuals, who provide a fabulous service to schools and the local community. My journey through education: facilitating improved outcomes for people, young and old, has been my passion since I first started out as a drama teacher many years ago. I have travelled through many a curriculum area, along the sometimes, stony path of middle and senior school leadership, and onwards towards secondary school improvement in a number of local authorities, where I broadened my skill set and developed further expertise through local, regional and national initiatives. I have been an independent education professional now for almost five years and have undertaken challenging work within inclusion, leadership and management and school improvement during that time. My most recent interim role in this field was as Head of Inclusion and Behaviour in the London Borough of Redbridge. I look forward to a rewarding continuation of my voyage, here in the west country."

