

Children's Services Authority

Learning Inclusion Strategy

2005 – 2008

*A strategy for improving the provision arrangements for children with
special educational needs and disabilities in Torbay*

Introduction

Under the Education Act 1996, Torbay is required to keep under review the provision arrangements it makes for children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. This *Learning Inclusion Strategy* sets out the major activities for the next three years to improve services and support for such children and young people in Torbay.

The set of policy goals described in this document evolved during 2004/5 following consultation with various stakeholder groups, notably the *Learning Inclusion Forum for Torbay (LIFT)*, and has its roots in the ideas, recommendations and outcomes of the SEN Review, conducted by the Local Authority during the Spring and Summer 2004. The SEN Review considered a variety of data, identified trends and generated a wide range of ideas for improving services, some of which are reflected in the policy goals and strategic activities outlined below. Performance measures and indicators against which the impact of the strategy will be judged are also provided (which align closely with the new inspection frameworks for Children's Services and the content of national strategies).

The *Learning Inclusion Strategy* links with the Authority's wider strategic approaches for promoting equality and inclusion, enhancing the performance of schools and improving services for children, notably:

- Strategic Policy for Inclusion
- The Education Development Plan
- The Behaviour Support Plan
- The Accessibility Strategy
- Post-Ofsted/CSCI Action Plans

Where appropriate, regard has been given to the emerging *Children and Young People's Plan*, due to be finalised by April 2006.

National Context

The context within which the *Learning Inclusion Strategy* will operate is a dynamic one in terms of Government expectations, changing professional practice and pressures to provide specialist, often

exclusive, provisions for children with particular special needs and disabilities. The fundamental challenge for the Authority is to deploy its resources for children with SEN and Disabilities in a way that enables its policy goals to be achieved, while being judged efficient, effective and fair.

The *Every Child Matters: Delivering Change for Children* programme creates a new climate for the care of children and young people with SEN and Disabilities. Over the coming years, there will be renewed emphasis on:

- integrating services around children and young people;
- early identification and effective support for children and young people with additional needs; and
- greater participation of children and young people.

New working practices such as provision for pooling resources and the *Common Assessment Framework* will underpin these changes.

The *Change for Children* programme reflects the strategy for raising standards of support for children with SEN and Disabilities set out in the Government's Strategy for SEN – *Removing Barriers to Achievement*. As part of the development of its first *Children and Young People's Plan*, and with national strategies in mind, the Authority will need to review regularly its policies on SEN and Disabilities, and the support available, to ensure:

- effective delegation of resources to support early intervention and inclusion;
- reduced reliance on Statements of SEN;
- the making of appropriate provision;
- better specialist advice and support to schools and information to parents;
- a reduction in bureaucracy; and
- effective working with other authorities and SEN regional partnerships.

Standard 8 of the *National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services* is an integral part of the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme and relates to children and young people with disabilities and those

with complex health needs. The role of the Primary Care Trust will be critical to the achievement of this standard but it can only be delivered through effective joint working practices.

Among the many changes driven by central Government policy, the co-location of services in children's centres, extended schools and health settings, will mean more professionals working closely together, able to recognise the additional needs of individuals early and manage interventions effectively. This should encourage:

- ❑ more efficient use of practitioner time, through quicker accurate identification;
- ❑ earlier interventions, often within schools; and
- ❑ more effective targeting of specialist services for children that require (where they have complex needs) a lead professional linking multi-agency support.

Inclusion

Throughout this document, emphasis is placed on the inclusion of children with SEN and Disabilities. The term 'inclusion' often leads to confusion, since the same noun is also applied to a raft of policies designed to secure the full participation in society (social inclusion) of people deemed, for a variety of reasons, to be 'at risk'. Clearly, not all pupils with SEN and Disabilities are at risk of social exclusion, though some are; equally, not all children at risk of social exclusion have SEN or Disabilities.

The philosophy underpinning the concept of inclusion is broader than education itself. Inclusion is fundamentally an issue of equality of opportunity for all. The ultimate goal is to achieve a fully inclusive society where the current disadvantages experienced by people with 'special needs' are reduced by changes made to the fabric of our society. All children and young people should have opportunities to achieve their academic, social, emotional and physical potential and barriers to attainment should be overcome.

Educational contexts offer a logical starting point towards this goal by ensuring that the entitlement of those with SEN and Disabilities to access the educational curriculum alongside their peers is fulfilled.

In reality, this can only be achieved if learning, teaching and resourcing are sufficiently flexible to remove barriers and allow every child's full participation.

Within this document the term 'learning inclusion' has been adopted to cover all aspects of children's lives, from 0-19 years, related to their inclusion in educational activities that promote learning and well-being. It has also been used to draw a distinction with the concept of 'social inclusion'.

SEN and Disabilities Framework

The statutory framework for SEN and Disabilities leaves little doubt that the presumption of the law is that children with SEN and Disabilities should be educated in mainstream schools. The Education Act 1996, reinforced by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 makes this principle clear:

'Where a statement of special educational needs is maintained for a child, then he or she must be educated in a mainstream school, unless that is incompatible with the wishes of his or her parents, or the provision of efficient education for other children.'

At the core of learning inclusion is the assertion that 'special needs' is not a separate category. All children have needs; no child has the same needs at different stages of his or her development; all have equal right to have their needs met, in the form of educational provision that gives them a realistic chance of reaching their full potential, however defined. Viewed in this way, a Statement of SEN, for example, is not an outcome but an instrument, (though not the only means) for achieving the desired result.

Given the presumption in law that children with SEN and Disabilities should be educated in mainstream it is incumbent upon the Local Authority, together with schools, to explain how special provisions are organised and how funding is allocated to make this happen. In addition, it is equally important to communicate to stakeholders, which children in Torbay (if any) cannot be included in mainstream schools and how they are to be provided for in special schools and elsewhere.

What We Want to Achieve

Below are listed *Torbay's (Revised) SEN and Disabilities Policy* goals, derived from the Authority's *Strategic Policy for Inclusion*, the Government's strategy for *SEN Removing Barriers to Achievement* and the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*.

Intervention, Assessment & Review

Goal 1: To identify, assess and make provision for children with SEN and Disabilities at the earliest opportunity.

In law, children with SEN and Disabilities should have their needs met. The Local Authority, schools and others must work together to ensure the needs of such children are identified early.

Goal 2: To ensure that children with SEN and Disabilities access effective learning strategies and are able to achieve their full potential, however defined.

The Local Authority, schools and others must work together to identify strategies, resources and opportunities for children with SEN and Disabilities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding and be fully included learners.

Goal 3: To undertake statutory assessments and make Statements of SEN in an efficient, effective and fair manner.

Where the Authority is required to determine a child's special educational needs, Statements of SEN must be clear and detailed, made within prescribed time limits and reviewed in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice. In making statements, the Authority must remain mindful of the need for every child to have full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, including an appropriate curriculum for Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum.

Goal 4: To ensure the wishes of children with SEN and Disabilities, along with those of their parents, are taken into account when assessing need and making special educational provision.

The Authority intends to have in place 'parent in partnership' arrangements that include a comprehensive range of information, advice-giving and advocacy services for children and parents/carers. Through such services, parents/carers and children will be empowered to participate in SEN and other related decision-making processes, at individual planning and policy making levels.

Goal 5: To review regularly and evaluate interventions for children with special educational needs and disabilities in an objective and rigorous fashion.

The Authority will provide a balance of challenge and support to schools, early years settings and other agencies to enable them to be more effective in their approach to supporting children with SEN and Disabilities. Special provision arrangements will be assessed in terms of the quality of education provided and evaluated in terms of outcomes for individual and groups of children. Evaluation will also embrace the views of teachers, children and parents/carers.

Goal 6: To ensure transition arrangements for children with SEN and Disabilities are efficient and effective.

Some find transition difficult and schools need to have in place support arrangements to minimise any impact on children's achievements and participation.

Young people with SEN and Disabilities must be able to follow courses that build on their interests and aptitudes and lead to recognised qualifications. They also need to be actively involved in decisions about their education and options post-16, having real opportunities for progression, training and work. For some, movement from paediatric to adult health and social care services will coincide with changes in education and training arrangements.

Placements

Goal 7: To ensure all children with SEN and Disabilities have access to an appropriate education, including the National Curriculum, wherever appropriate in their local mainstream school.

Torbay aims to educate and provide for all children and young people in its maintained mainstream schools, wherever appropriate. Children and young people only attend a special school when it has been determined that their needs are so severe and complex that mainstream schools cannot provide the necessary support and learning opportunities they require.

Wherever possible, children will attend their local schools to ensure they have access to other opportunities available within their communities and to help minimise the risk of social exclusion in later life. For the small number of children whose needs cannot be catered for in mainstream schools every effort will be made to educate them in local special schools in order to maintain strong links with their parents/carers and home communities.

Goal 8: To minimise the overall number of children with SEN and Disabilities placed in special schools.

Where mainstream schooling is not considered appropriate for a child at a given time, such opportunity will continue to exist at every stage of his/her education.

Resources

Goal 9: To maximise the delegation of funds for SEN and Disabilities through the inclusion sub-formula arrangements, thus reducing reliance on individual Statements of SEN.

Along with schools reviewing their own resourcing priorities, the Authority will continually seek to maximise levels of delegated funds in line with national and local expectations for children with SEN and Disabilities. Increasing the level of delegated funding through the inclusion sub-formula will encourage a reduction in the overall number of Statements of SEN, as schools take more proactive measures to meet the needs of all children.

Torbay has far too many Statements of SEN for children placed in mainstream schools (see *Table 1*). Through more efficient and effective use of existing resources, the Authority is intent on reducing this number in line with the National average.

Over time, it is the Authority's intention to target resources to early intervention and preventative activities helping, again, to reduce the need and demand for Statements of SEN.

Key to achieving this goal will be the confidence that parents have in maintained mainstream schools catering for their children, without recourse to Statements of SEN. Evidence of closer monitoring of pupil progress, combined with targeted intervention where necessary to assist learning, will help to reassure parents.

Goal 10: To actively manage all resources so that more children with severe and complex SEN and Disabilities to be educated and supported locally.

It is anticipated that by shifting resources more children will be able to go to mainstream schools that previously would have gone to special schools in Torbay. In turn, by redirecting other resources to Torbay's special schools, children and young people that may have gone to non-Torbay provisions in the past will attend Torbay special schools, and other local provisions, in the future.

Authority	% Pupils with Statements in Mainstream Schools
Bournemouth	0.78
Brighton & Hove	1.61
Bury	2.10
Darlington	1.78
Dudley	0.93
Enfield	1.66
Hillingdon	1.80
Isle of Wight	2.40
Medway	1.61
Poole	0.82
S Gloucestershire	2.92
Stockton-on-Tees	1.11
Southend	1.14
Sutton	1.67
Swindon	1.35
Torbay	2.75
Warrington	1.89
York	1.68
Average	1.66

Table 1: Compares the number of Statements of SEN for pupils in mainstream across Torbay's statistical neighbours (source DfES 2005)

Goal 11: To pool resources with other agencies wherever it is efficient to do so, to achieve the best outcomes for children with SEN and Disabilities.

The Authority will encourage innovative and creative practices across agencies for children with SEN and Disabilities, facilitating the sharing of knowledge, skills and resources through formal and professional networks.

Goal 12: To establish across Torbay's mainstream schools and early years settings a range of enhanced provisions that enable all children to be educated locally where this is compatible with the education of others.

Over the next two-three years the Local Authority will implement agreed changes in the pattern of special provision in mainstream schools and encourage all its special schools to provide a comprehensive range of services for mainstream teachers and children with complex learning difficulties. In addition, the Authority will agree with its schools the range and level of advice and support required for both staff and children in inclusive settings from external, specialist services.

Goal 13: To introduce activity-led funding models for special provisions and Statements of SEN.

Schools continue to require high quality advice on how to make the best use of delegated funds to support children with SEN and Disabilities and the necessary tools to link expenditure to pupil outcomes. Activity-led funding supports this requirement by linking funding to specific interventions and provision for individual and groups of children with SEN and Disabilities.

Professional Development

Goal 14: Through training and professional development of staff to seek to remove barriers to children's learning, participation and achievement.

Training and development opportunities are seen as vital to increasing the confidence, knowledge and skills of staff in schools, early years settings and specialist children's services in meeting the needs of all children with SEN and Disabilities. It is

the Local Authority's belief that through the right training, strategies and support more children with SEN and Disabilities will be included successfully in mainstream schools.

Parents/Carers

Goal 15: To ensure parents/carers throughout Torbay have greater confidence in the ability of maintained schools to provide appropriately for children with SEN and Disabilities, whether or not they have a Statement of SEN.

The Local Authority plans to develop new arrangements for informing, advising and supporting parents/ carers of children with SEN and Disabilities and for these to be recognised as models of good practice. It is considered essential that parents/carers feel able to participate fully in the education of their children if confidence in the maintained sector is to increase. As a group, parents/carers must also contribute effectively to the development of policy and special provision throughout Torbay if they are to be considered true partners.

Early Years Settings, Schools and Specialist Services for Children

Goal 16: To support all early years settings and schools to develop an inclusive ethos for children with SEN and Disabilities.

All early years settings and schools throughout Torbay are expected to keep under review their values, mission and primary objectives to ensure they reflect and encourage an inclusive ethos. The behaviour and attitudes of all staff are recognised to be central to promoting a 'can do' culture, in which adults are flexible and responsive to the needs of individual children. Positive attitudes may be reflected in the way staff relate to all children, regardless of the challenges they present, and the creative ways in which teachers make necessary adaptations to the curriculum to support learning.

Goal 17: With schools, to examine ways of improving routine practices in meeting pupils' diverse needs in order to maximise outcomes for the most vulnerable.

Action We Will Take 2005-2008

All schools must review the effectiveness of their SEN provision, with the Local Authority and school improvement partners providing necessary support and challenge to encourage continual improvement.

Schools must have the confidence to innovate, given the necessary specialist support they require, to meet the needs of all pupils successfully and to take early and prompt action to help children who experience learning difficulties.

Schools need to develop robust strategies and systems for self evaluation that identifies pupils who are not making satisfactory achievement or attainment and quickly identify ways of addressing this.

Goal 18: To enable Torbay's special schools and enhanced provisions to provide a comprehensive range of outreach services for mainstream schools.

There is a growing national expectation that schools should be working together to support the inclusion of all children from their local communities, backed up by good quality specialist advice and support from local authority and health personnel, working in multi-disciplinary teams. Special schools while continuing to provide education for children with the most severe and complex needs, will, increasingly, be expected to share their specialist skills and knowledge to support inclusion in mainstream schools through a range of outreach services. The same will apply to designated enhanced provision throughout Torbay.

Goal 19: To establish multi-agency teams of specialist staff to support children with SEN and Disabilities, their schools and parents.

In the near future, integrated children's services and a local 'Children's Trust' will be realities in Torbay. The new arrangements will foster closer working partnerships between schools, specialist education, health and social care services necessary to support children with more complex emotional, learning and behavioural needs. Services will be organised around the needs of children and their families, with better information sharing and assessments leading to early intervention.

The *Learning Inclusion Strategy* outlines the way the goals of *Torbay's SEN and Disabilities Policy* will be achieved. The following activities have been arranged under five broad strategic themes. It is anticipated that all the stated activities will have been implemented, in part or in full, by the end of 2008.

Better Collaboration

This strategic theme covers a range of improvement activities that will encourage stakeholder participation in the planning and delivery of high quality services for children with SEN and Disabilities, their schools, parents and carers.

Early Years

1. For children under five, we will continue to develop a joint agency system for managing the common referral, assessment and planning for children with significant learning and developmental problems, building on the work of the *Team Around the Child* project for young children with complex disabilities.

Schools

2. Work will be undertaken to develop and broker protocols between schools and other service providers, regarding the identification, assessment, planning and interventions for children with SEN and Disabilities.
3. An agreed protocol between schools and the Local Authority regarding the re-integration of excluded pupils with Statements of SEN will be formulated and introduced. The protocol will include a definition of those children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties who will **not** be included in mainstream schools.
4. A formal infrastructure of support for SENCOs (and other key post holders in schools) will be established and maintained across Torbay to promote better inclusive practice.

5. Arrangements will be made to enable mainstream schools to purchase services from special schools and designated mainstream schools for pupils on their roll with special educational needs and disabilities, without the need for Statements of SEN.
6. For schools hosting a designated enhanced provision *service level agreements* will be established, linked to a new activity-led funding model for such provision.

Specialist Children's Services

7. We will maintain a single, major forum for children with SEN and Disabilities (Learning Inclusion Forum) supported by a network of stakeholder and task groups.
8. For families of children with SEN and Disabilities over five years of age a system of 'key worker/lead professional' support will be introduced, building on the work already undertaken by the *Team Around the Child* project.
9. Existing criteria used across specialist children's services for assessing individual needs will be reviewed with the expectation that these will be made more transparent for users and applied in a consistent manner.
10. Advisory and specialist support services will introduce a consistent model of working with maintained schools, including time allocation, to support the inclusion of children with SEN and Disabilities. Such support will be provided in the context of each school's self-review and improvement plan.
11. Local joint commissioning of services for children with the most complex and severe SEN and Disabilities will be revised.
12. The leadership and management of the Service for Pupils with Visual Impairment will be served by contractual arrangements made between Torbay and the West of England School, complementing local arrangements.

Central SEN & Disabilities Service

13. A comprehensive management information system will be put in place for reporting and projecting needs within the child population and to assist the building of capacity in schools, early years settings and specialist children's services to cater for such needs.
14. An Internet Web based service, supported by a named specialist, will be developed to enable efficient and speedy dissemination of national initiatives, grants and guidance relating to children with SEN and Disabilities.

Other

15. We will establish and maintain close working relationships with other local authorities and organisations throughout the South West region in order to share best practice and create new provisions for children with low incidence/high support needs.
16. In partnership with the Learning Support Council and Connexions, the Children's Services Directorate will review and improve local post-16 placements and arrangements for students with SEN and Disabilities, building on the work already completed through the 14-19 strategy.
17. In partnership with the voluntary sector, we will seek to improve support and advice for 'hard-to-reach' parents/carers of children with SEN and Disabilities.

Capacity Building

This theme covers a number of initiatives that aim to increase the range of special provision across Torbay schools and early years settings, to enable a wider range of children with SEN and Disabilities to attend mainstream schools.

Early Years

18. We will increase the proportion of SEN funds to promote proven preventative and early intervention activities for children under five years old.

19. We will review and, if necessary, extend the range of specialist services and provision in the early years that focus on the identification of learning difficulties and the prevention of special educational needs.

Schools

20. All schools will be supported in developing self evaluation, effective use of data and planning for high quality provision to ensure that the principles of inclusion are embedded in daily practice.

21. A set of expectations for all mainstream schools will be published regarding the special educational provisions they may make from delegated funds.

22. We will review and change the network of enhanced provisions in mainstream schools to cater for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. This will include re-designating the enhanced provision at Preston Primary School as a provision for KS1/2 children with an autistic spectrum disorder and that at Foxhole Primary School as a provision for KS1/2 children with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties.

23. Primary schools serving areas of high need will be encouraged and supported to establish 'nurture groups', linked to children's centres, to aid the socialisation of children and to prepare them for learning.

24. Alternative, collaborative and flexible KS4 curriculum arrangements, including college-based provision will be extended throughout Torbay for those children who present an array of emotional, motivational and behaviour difficulties in school.

25. In collaboration with mainstream schools and specialist support services for children, outreach services to be provided by special schools will be identified, together with a plan for implementation over a two-three year timeframe.

26. Where capacity allows, an outreach service will be established at St Margaret's School for KS1/2 children with hearing impairments.

27. The number of funded places at Combe Pafford Special School will be reduced to 150 on a planned and phased basis, with funds being recycled to provide enhanced provision in secondary schools for children with moderate learning difficulties.

28. Through internal re-organisation, Torbay Special School will provide a higher level of support at KS3 for children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties than originally planned when the school was established.

Specialist Children's Services

29. A new service to support families and be a point of contact for children with an autistic spectrum disorder will be established in Torbay.

30. An advisory teacher post (or a range of ASTs or equivalent) for children with an autistic spectrum disorder will be established.

31. In partnership with Health, the level of occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy and community nursing services for children will be reviewed and, where resources allow, increased in line with need within the child population.

Central SEN & Disabilities Service

32. We will increase the recycling of funds for SEN and Disabilities to school through the inclusion sub-formula, in line with measured reductions in the overall number of Statements of SEN.

33. A new activity-led funding model for children with Statements of SEN in mainstream schools will be introduced during 2006/7.

34. An activity-led funding model for enhanced provisions will be introduced during 2006/7.

Developing Competencies

Effective teaching for children with SEN and Disabilities shares most of the characteristics of effective teaching for all children. However, as schools and other settings become more inclusive, so teachers and teaching assistants must be able to respond to a wider range of needs in the classroom. This theme is concerned with schools, and others, embracing the focus for SEN and Disabilities within local and national strategies, creating professional development opportunities and establishing evidence-based practices.

Early Years

35. Guidance developed by experienced practitioners will be introduced to assist schools and early years settings in placing children at early years/school action and early years/school action plus.
36. In partnership with schools, the Early Years and Child Care Partnership and heads of specialist children's services, we will provide access to a graduated and accredited programme of professional development for teachers and support staff (including midday assistants and classroom assistants).

Schools

37. We will disseminate, through the local implementation of the Primary National Strategy (and other strategies), materials to support the development of children's language skills in the Foundation Stage, advice on interventions to help those who are falling behind their peers, materials on the early teaching of phonics and appropriate interventions for children who need help in developing social, emotional and behavioural skills.
38. High quality training and development opportunities will be made available for all teachers and school support staff on matters relating to the differentiation of the curriculum, classroom organisation for children with special needs, individual learning styles, behaviour and motivational management.
39. Centres of excellent practice will be identified and established as resource

bases for training and professional materials for teachers and support staff.

Specialist Children's Services

40. Arrangements will be made to ensure the Behaviour and Learning Support Service and Educational Psychology Service work systemically with staff in schools at the whole school or class levels to plan and evaluate intervention strategies for children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
41. A common assessment framework, and integrated processes, will be introduced across all specialist children's services serving those with SEN and Disabilities.
42. The work of specialist children's services will be focused on agreed priorities for promoting the inclusion of children with SEN and Disabilities (and other vulnerable groups).
43. A quality assurance system will be introduced for specialist children's services to ensure compliance with published service standards and to encourage continual improvements in the services provided for schools, children and families.
44. Opportunities will be created for staff, schools, specialist children's services and other agencies to identify, share and promote best inclusive practice throughout Torbay.

Authority

45. Data sharing protocols will be established between school improvement officers, advisers, the Authority's SEN section and specialist children's services.
46. Within the context of increased delegation of resources, the Authority will ensure a sufficient level of specialist support services that play a key role in supporting the development of inclusive practice.

Raising Confidence

The real test of the Authority's arrangements for children with SEN and Disabilities is that such children make better progress at school and that the risks

of social exclusion in later life are minimised. Equally important, however, is the confidence of parents/carers in the ability of maintained schools to cater appropriately for their children's special educational needs. The initiatives associated with this theme aim to ensure parents/carers are properly empowered to support their children and advocate effectively on their behalf.

Schools and Early Years

47. In partnership with schools, early years settings, the Health Service and parents/carers, we will develop a protocol for drug administration and intimate care needs, to be met by staff best placed to do so properly without undue complication and bureaucracy.

Authority

48. The Authority will review all statutory SEN processes to ensure parents/carers remain at the heart of decision-making for their child.
49. Categories used to define the primary needs of children will be reviewed to reflect severity and complexity of need, as well as type.
50. We will improve the range and accessibility of information available for parents/carers of children with SEN and Disabilities.
51. Services for parents/carers and children will be reconstructed to ensure advice and advocacy arrangements address their needs and help resolve their concerns.
52. Through forums, stakeholder groups and special events the Authority will proactively engage parents/carers in policy and provision developments for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
53. Improvements will be made to the quality of information, advice, guidance, preparation and support provided across agencies for children with SEN and Disabilities moving from child to adult-based services and employment.
54. We will put in place and maintain an 'arms-length' arrangement for

systematically gathering feedback from parents/carers and young people with special educational needs and disabilities about the quality of services provided by schools, early years settings and children's services.

55. The Authority will facilitate and sponsor parent awareness raising and training aimed at promoting the well-being of children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Challenge and Support

While the Authority has made significant improvements in managing SEN and Disabilities, there remains much to be done to ensure performance is amongst the best for small authorities throughout England. This theme is concerned with self-evaluation and the promulgation of best practice within schools, specialist children's services and the Authority as a whole.

Schools and Early Years

56. Together with schools and early years settings, we will determine and agree a SEN and Disabilities monitoring framework to be used by the School Review Group (SRG).
57. With schools (and early years providers) we will develop a self-review framework in line with Primary and Secondary National Strategies. The framework will include agreed standards, performance measures and triggers for external intervention and be embedded in a school self-evaluation process.
58. We will offer to assist each Governing Body with the monitoring, evaluation and review of their school's values, mission, primary objectives and policies to ensure these encourage an inclusive ethos.
59. At school level, we will provide support for Governing Bodies, head teachers and SENCOs to plan for special educational needs at a strategic level and to review arrangements in terms of outcomes for the children concerned.
60. Guidance will be provided to schools on how to manage competing priorities to allow teachers sufficient opportunity to

set appropriate targets for children with SEN and Disabilities and plan appropriate differentiated learning opportunities.

education for children with particular special educational needs.

Specialist Children's Services

61. All specialists within an integrated children's service (i.e. across the Local Authority, NHS and voluntary sector) will provide consultative services to mainstream schools in proportion to the number and severity of children with SEN and Disabilities.

Authority

62. Schools will be both supported and challenged by external advisers, consultants (including 'school improvement partners') and specialist staff regarding their inclusive practice and the arrangements made for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
63. We will develop and implement new guidance criteria for making statutory assessments in the context of increased SEN funding delegated to schools through the inclusion sub-formula.
64. We will make all proposed and final Statements of SEN in line with the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice, including statutory timescales.
65. Processes associated with the annual review of Statements of SEN will be revised, with particular emphasis on 'high risk' statements to avoid exclusions and the ceasing of statements where objectives have been achieved and progress maintained.
66. In the context of best practice guidance, we will introduce process and procedural changes to minimise the bureaucracy associated with special educational needs and disability while ensuring compliance with statutory obligations.

Other

67. We will establish a voluntary Torbay 'kite mark' system to identify schools (all phases) able to offer and meet published standards of inclusive

Monitoring and Evaluating the Strategy

Evaluating the success of the *Learning Inclusion Strategy* will be based on the progress made by Torbay in achieving the stated goals of its (Revised) SEN and Disabilities Policy, as judged by key stakeholders. In addition, progress and impact will be measured against the following key performance indicators:

- ❑ Attainment of pupils considered as having SEN (recorded at school action, school action plus and with statements) at the end of each key stage - this should rise progressively.
- ❑ The number of new Statements of SEN (absolute number and as a percentage of pupil population) - year on year comparisons are expected to fall consistently.
- ❑ The percentage of new statements with a special school place named – is predicted to rise and then fall.
- ❑ The percentage of pupils with Statements of SEN placed in special schools (including independent and non-maintained) – is expected to fall
- ❑ The percentage of new statements prepared within 18 weeks - will reach and remain within the top quartile performance for all local authorities.
- ❑ The ratio of referrals to the Parent Partnership Service (PPS) in relation to fte PPS staff – this is expected to rise.
- ❑ Appeals to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal, and the number upheld – these should remain at the current low level.
- ❑ The number of in-year Statements of SEN that are ceased – this is expected to rise progressively.
- ❑ The percentage of permanent exclusions in relation to the number of

pupils with Statements of SEN – the level is anticipated to fall in line with statistical neighbours.

- Total fte vacant permanent educational psychologist, specialist teachers, disability social worker and occupational therapist posts – these are expected to remain low when compared with statistical neighbours.
- User satisfaction as determined by surveys (primarily parents and children) – incremental improvement in satisfaction with services is anticipated.

For each performance indicator an annual target will be set and shared with schools and other stakeholders.