

# SEN STRATEGY

2006 - 2009

FINAL DRAFT

January 2006

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## INTRODUCTION

Special Educational Needs is one of the most difficult and challenging of local authorities' responsibilities, as recognised by both Ofsted and the Audit Commission.

This local authority through its strategy and through its key officers will endeavour to ensure that:

- Pre-schools and schools are more confident to meet the needs of all pupils successfully
- Special schools share their specialist skills and knowledge to support inclusion in mainstream schools through outreach provision
- Pre-schools and schools work together to support the inclusion of all children from their local community
- Multi-agency services and teams work together in order to ensure high quality co-ordinated advice and support is available at school and pre-school level.
- Children are at the heart of personalised learning and schools are adept at varying their pace and approach for pupils with SEN
- The information and data which is held on individual pupils is used effectively for planning, progress tracking and measure value-added

This strategy sets out the objectives to be achieved within the area of special educational needs over the next 3 years in order to ensure provision and resources for children and young people within special educational needs remain appropriate and focussed.

## NATIONAL CONTEXT

Special Educational Needs provision throughout the country is extremely variable and it is unlikely that local authorities will have the same types of provision and resource allocation. Despite the progress made nationally there is a recognition that too much still depends on where you live, which school you attend or on other factors such as family circumstances. The DfES in looking ahead, have identified 4 key indicators in determining whether their strategy, as set out in Removing Barriers to Achievement, has been successful.

- Children with SEN have their needs met as soon as they become apparent, without the need for a period of failure.
- Children with SEN feel valued members of their school community
- The barriers that divide mainstream and special schools have disappeared and all schools work in partnership with other services and the voluntary sector to meet the needs of local children.
- There is much greater consistency in the quality of provision that children with SEN receive in school and from the local authority, and parents are confident of this.

This area of educational provision has received considerable National scrutiny, through Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) and the audit commission. A significant number of these reports (Audit commission - Statutory assessment and statements in need of review? 2002) identify the tensions which exist between legislation which, on the one hand, increases the emphasis upon schools taking increased responsibility for meeting the needs of a wide range of pupils and upon the Local Authority (LA) to delegate funding to schools for this purpose; whilst on the other hand, holding the LA responsible for the provision which is made.

Services provided by all local authority services need to take account of the 'Every Child Matters Agenda' to ensure children and young people are appropriately supported in;

- Being Healthy,
- Staying Safe,
- Enjoying and Achieving,
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Wellbeing.

These are commonly referred to as 'the 5 outcomes' and will be the key drivers for Children's Service Authorities, in conjunction with the National Service Framework for children.

#### LOCAL CONTEXT

The LA developed its first comprehensive 3 year strategy for special educational needs in 2001 following extensive consultation. It set out across key themes, with a number of subsequent activities, the way in which provision and resources would be developed.

Review of progress related to these themes and actions has remained ongoing and was the subject of Ofsted Inspection in 2003. A progress matrix is set out in Annex A.

The 2001-2004 strategy was described as 'highly satisfactory' in the LEA Ofsted (2003) and special educational needs provision overall was described as satisfactory.

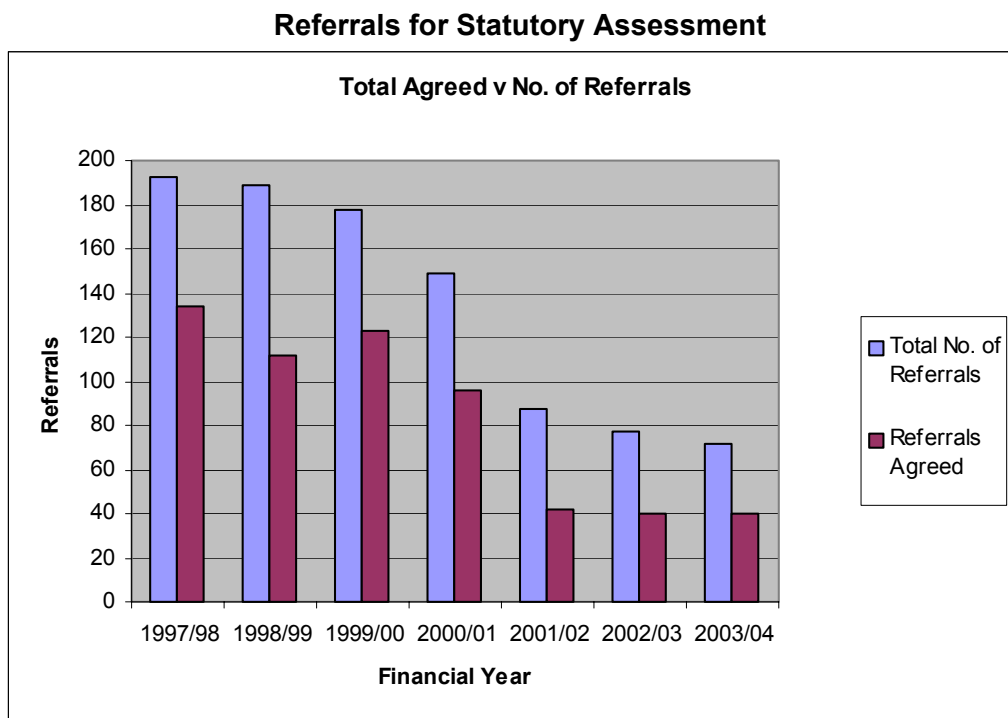
Provision for special educational needs is a whole community responsibility and not a matter purely for the central services of the Local Authority. Specialist provision and resource distribution has to be a partnership with parents, schools, officers of the local authority, elected members and other statutory and voluntary agencies.

This strategy sits within the context of the local preventative strategy, a new Children's Service Directorate, and the emerging Children and Young People's Plan.

The Local Preventative Strategy sets out in broad terms, a service delivery model which aspires to provide greater responsiveness to the individual needs of children, young people and their families and emulated the aspirations of Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004.

Within this Local Authority much has been achieved over the last 4 years and there is a greater sense of partnership working through seeking common solutions to complex and challenging difficulties. This does not mean however that solutions are always easy or without challenge. Increased delegation of resources to schools has had a significant impact upon the number of requests for statutory assessment; as schools are increasingly aware of the relationship between centrally managed school budget shares and individual school budgets (ISB). This is illustrated in the following

graph which shows evidence in the number of requests for statutory assessment reducing in line with increased delegation of resources to schools.



It is important that the positive developments which have taken place over the last 4 years continue to be built upon through further reduction in overall numbers of children and young people with a statement; increased local responsiveness to meeting children and young people's needs and enhanced high quality provision in a variety of forms.

This strategy takes account of the way in which the Local Authority fulfils its statutory powers and responsibilities, especially in relation to Children's Services and schools, as set out in the following key documents:

- The Local Preventative Strategy
- School Finance Regulations (England)
- The National Service Framework for children with Disability and Mental Health
- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act
- The Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs 2001
- Children Act 2004
- The Behaviour Support Plan
- Children and Young Persons Plan

The LA Ofsted Action Plan sets out a number of key themes with regard to special educational need and more broadly, the key issues for the authority to improve attainment generally and services to vulnerable groups more specifically. This is available at [www.eduwight.iow.gov.uk](http://www.eduwight.iow.gov.uk)

## KEY THEMES OF THIS STRATEGY

- Funding arrangements
- Provision and support
- Communication with key stakeholders
- Monitoring
- Multi agency teams and children's trust
- Training and development

## PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

In line with DfES considerations it is important for parents and children to have confidence in the quality and consistency of provision that children receive in school and from the local authority. In order to achieve this the authority will:

- Introduce a parental satisfaction survey with schools
- Explicitly monitor the way in which parents are dealt with when making an initial approach to a school for a school place
- Improve communication and access to information; particularly for parents
- Increase the monitoring and evaluation of special educational needs provision to a 2 yearly cycle and require greater accountability of the utilisation of resources within schools
- Monitor the number of SEN complaints to the local authority about schools and about the local authority including the development of an independent watchdog
- Develop 'cluster based' solutions through the development of multi-professional teams for more complex SEN issues through the authority's Inspectors, Consultants and Education Psychologists
- Ensure that special educational needs and disability issues are at the heart of Children's Centres, extended and full services schools developments
- Support the delivery of multi-agency services through school clusters to ensure responses are swift, targeted and duplication is reduced

## SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Review current arrangements for the distribution of funding for special education needs
- Utilise needs analysis returns to review the range of specialist provisions available with particular reference to:
  - Specific Learning Difficulties
  - Physical disability and Developmental Co-ordination Difficulties (DCD)
  - Autistic Spectrum Disorder
  - Sensory Impairment

- Communication Disorders
  - Behavioural, Emotional and Social difficulties
  - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
  - Mental health through the comprehensive CAMHS strategy
  - Medically related needs
  - Looked after Children and other vulnerable groups i.e. young teenage mothers
- Develop secure internet access for parents to view SEN processes
  - Establish cluster based multi-agency teams to respond and deliver services locally
  - With partner agencies as a part of the Children's Service Authority establish the principles for a Children's Trust – target date April 2006
  - Establish an Independent 'watchdog' regarding complaints about SEN and related issues; including parental satisfaction surveys and mystery shopper exercises
  - To provide on-going training and development opportunities for school staff; parents and other personnel regarding a range of SEN issues

In addition, the local authority wishes to strengthen its links with voluntary and community sectors; to promote further the work they undertake and publicise services they offer and which can be commissioned.

The local authority also wishes to sustain the positive and active work which has been undertaken to consult with young people on a range of issues in order their views can influence practice and be increasingly responsive to their needs. Strong links with the voluntary and community sector have been fundamental in progressing this work.

The Parent Partnership service actively promotes the involvement of parents as support for other parents; to facilitate consultation with the authorities and as 'critical friends' to enable a greater degree of reflection on practice. The authority is keen to maintain and support this approach and to incorporate this role with one of scrutiny and complaints.

#### Summary

This strategy is integral to achieving the five outcomes within the Every Child Matters framework. They contribute in particular to Being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving and to making a positive contribution.

These developments, whilst incorporating significant process elements, are proposed in order to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people either through improving current service delivery and provision, or revising and developing new delivery models.

Improved outcomes will be evident within those key judgements made through Annual Performance assessments and through joint Area Reviews and through locally developed indicators.

<b>1. Action Plan Theme: SEN – Funding Arrangements</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	Review funding arrangements for SEN in mainstream schools
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	To ensure distribution of resources is equitable based upon an agreed formula which equates to pupils needs
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	Post Ofsted Action Plan
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	Mainstream schools
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Current formula reviewed</li> <li>■ Modelling of alternative arrangements made explicit</li> <li>■ Agreed formula for distribution</li> <li>■ Reduced requests for statements (average 45-55 per year)</li> <li>■ Fewer requests for additional support</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Working group established – Jan 2005</li> <li>■ Modelling of alternatives – Mar 2005</li> <li>■ Presentation of Schools Forum –Nov 2005</li> <li>■ Governor and Headteacher presentation Sept – Nov 2005</li> <li>■ Schools Forum recommendations Nov 2005</li> <li>■ Implementation April 2006</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Head of Service Principal Educational Psychologist

<b>2a. Action Plan Theme: Review of Provision and Support – specialist provision</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	Ensure that a needs analysis is undertaken on at least an annual basis to facilitate planning of provision
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	To better meet the needs of children and young people who have SEN and disabilities
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	Local Preventative Strategy Post Ofsted Action Plan Youth Justice Forum Action Plan
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provision related to needs is better planned</li> <li>■ Reduced reliance on specialist residential placements through actual reduction in numbers</li> <li>■ Reduce number of tribunal cases with particular reference to children and young people who have speech, language, communication and ASD.</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Co-ordination of meetings regarding vulnerable groups (those at risk of offending or becoming excluded from mainstream services)– Dec 2005 and then 3 times per year</li> <li>■ Formulation of findings reported to Schools Forum at least annually</li> <li>■ Findings link to discussion regarding advice, support and provision – July 2006</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ IT data analysis</li> <li>■ Heads of Service</li> </ul>



<b>2b. Action Plan Theme: Review of Provision and Support – SEN transport</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	Undertake a review of arrangements with regard to transport for pupils with SEN particularly where the distance of travel is greater than the statutory walking distance
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	To better support the needs of children and young people who have SEN and disabilities and to aid transparency of decision making
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	Transport Policy
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A Risk assessment / eligibility scheme for SEN transport is developed.</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Draft risk assessment template produced Feb 2006</li> <li>■ Template piloted Feb- Mar 2006</li> <li>■ Effectiveness and costings determined July 2006</li> <li>■ Implemented fully if within budget Sept 2006</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Senior Education Officer/ Principal Educational Psychologist</li> <li>■ Education Officer SEN and Disability</li> </ul>

<b>3. a) Action Plan Theme: Communication and access to information</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	Continue to promote the SEN reference and Strategy group as a mechanism for information exchange and dissemination. Continue to support the Parent forum facilitated through parent partnership services.
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	To ensure schools, the local authority, voluntary/community sector and parents have access to information and can communicate directly with officers and other stakeholders.
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	Post Ofsted Action Plan Post Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI) Action Plan
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	All schools Local Authority Voluntary/Community sector Parents and Children
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Meetings held in accordance with the terms of reference of the group.</li> <li>■ Minutes available on the Local Authority website and Wightchyps website</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Meetings dates planned in advance</li> <li>■ Minutes agreed and publicised</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Head of Service Report to Commission and through QPMR as appropriate

<b>3. b) Action Plan Theme: Developing internet access to SEN processes</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	Determine an appropriate IT solution to enable parents to access, via the internet, the process elements following a referral for statutory assessment
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	To enable parents to use the internet to view the stage of progression regarding statutory assessment for their child through a secure system.
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	Post Ofsted Action Plan Post Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI) Action Plan
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	Parents/Carers
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Establishment of a secure system to allow parents to access the 'process record' following a referral for statutory assessment.</li> <li>■ To be established by; date to be determined</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Project brief developed by April 2006</li> <li>■ Feasibility report available September 2006</li> <li>■ Costings determined Oct/Nov 2006</li> <li>■ Recommendation paper to SMT Nov 2006</li> <li>■ Decision and Implementation date tbd.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Head of Service/ Service manager SMT Report to Commission

<b>4. a) Action Plan Theme: SEN Monitoring – Scrutiny and Complaints</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	Establish an independent 'watchdog' to scrutinise and monitor complaints regarding SEN procedures and processes
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	To ensure schools, the local authority and voluntary/community sector are held to account with regard to being 'inclusive and fair'
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	Post Ofsted Action Plan Post Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI) Action Plan
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	All schools Local Authority Voluntary/Community sector
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Establishment of an Independent 'watchdog' within Parent Partnership Service</li> <li>■ To be established by July 2006</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Appointment of Independent Reviewer</li> <li>■ Complaints scrutinised (termly)</li> <li>■ Data collated and analysed (monthly)</li> <li>■ Parental survey complete (Annually)</li> <li>■ 'Mystery shopper' exercise complete (annually)</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	SMT Report to Commission and through QPMR as appropriate

<b>4. b) Action Plan Theme: SEN Monitoring – Value for money</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Develop a refined SEN monitoring and Self Evaluation tool for schools and in order to undertake the statutory duties of the Local Authority in ensuring value for money.</li> <li>➤ Implement a monitoring tool to ensure schools meet Statutory processes.</li> <li>➤ Minutes of moderating and statement panel meetings to be revised and made routinely available to parents (this links with action plan 3b).</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	<p>To ensure schools are held to account with regard to the use of resources allocated for SEN.</p> <p>To ensure decision making processes are more transparent.</p>
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	<p>Post Ofsted Action Plan Post CSCI Action Plan</p>
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	<p>All schools Local Authority</p>
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Establishment of a revised scheme</li> <li>■ Pilot completed Mar 2006</li> <li>■ Fully established Sept 2006</li> <li>■ First year evaluation July 2007</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Draft scheme in place Oct 2005</li> <li>■ Final Draft Complete July 2006</li> <li>■ Pilot schools – Autumn term 2005</li> <li>■ Initial evaluation April 2006</li> <li>■ Fully Implemented Sept 2006</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	<p>Heads of service/ Service manager SEN &amp; Disability Senior Inspector (through Learning Consultants)</p>

<b>5. Action Plan Theme: SEN – Multi-agency Cluster Teams</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	Develop locally based multi-agency cluster teams
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	To deliver 'joined up' local services in order to improve information exchange, reduce duplication and provide more effective services for children and families.
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	Local Preventative Strategy
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	Existing teams within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Children's Services</li> <li>■ Health Authority including specialist CAMHS</li> </ul>
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ At least one multi-agency cluster team to be operational by December 2005</li> <li>■ Evidence of improved service delivery</li> <li>■ Fewer 'critical' cases emerging</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Development of a pilot within Sandown cluster to be developed by July 2006</li> <li>■ Cowes cluster panel to be established by Dec 2005</li> <li>■ Staff to be co-located identified – September - December 2006</li> <li>■ Infrastructure elements completed – Sept 2006 - January 2007</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Senior Management Team (SMT)

<b>6. Action Plan Theme: SEN – Children’s Trust</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	To ensure that services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs are embedded within the principle of a Children’s Trust
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	To enable a commonality of purpose with regard to the commissioning of services for children; particularly those who are vulnerable and with SEN
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	Local Preventative Strategy Post Ofsted Action Plan Post CSCI Action Plan
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All agencies and staff providing and delivering services for children on Isle of Wight</li> <li>■ Partner agencies in neighbouring authorities or within the region</li> </ul>
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Project Plan for development of a Children’s Trust</li> <li>■ Children’s Trust framework complete</li> <li>■ Services responsiveness to ‘5 outcomes’</li> <li>■ Improved delivery of 5 outcomes compared with statistical neighbours and national indicators and original baseline</li> <li>■ Qualitative feedback from children, young people and parents/carers</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Project Advisor appointed – April 2005</li> <li>■ Project Plan formulated – July 2005</li> <li>■ Key stakeholders agree proposals – December 2005</li> <li>■ Children’s Trust framework agreed – April 2006</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	SMT – Children’s Services Directorate Commission for children and school results. Cabinet member for children’s services Leads in partner agencies.

<b>7a. Action Plan Theme: SEN – Training and Development</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	To continue to develop a pro-active approach to training for a range of staff and parents about SEN and related issues.
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To maintain awareness of SEN issues including emerging themes</li> <li>■ To provide focussed training where a need is identified</li> <li>■ To ensure staff have access to contemporary information</li> <li>■ To provide ‘themed’ training events for parents and carers including the annual SEN information day.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Post Ofsted Action Plan</li> <li>■ Performance Review process</li> <li>■ Local Preventative Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Parents</li> <li>■ School staff</li> <li>■ Central Children’s Services staff</li> <li>■ Health Service staff</li> </ul>
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evidence of attendance at local (cluster-based) or central training events</li> <li>■ Feedback through evaluation of training is satisfactory or better</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All training events to be published in the training and development programme on a termly basis</li> <li>■ Themed events to be publicised through local media.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Principal Educational Psychologist</li> <li>■ Head of Thompson House Centre</li> <li>■ SEN Training Group</li> </ul>



<b>7b. Action Plan Theme: SEN – Training and Development</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	To develop a pro-active approach to training for specialists where there are known shortages.
<b>Purpose of the actions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To provide professional training opportunities where a need is identified</li> <li>■ To identify skill gaps within the workforce</li> <li>■ To identify qualifications within the Children's Workforce Framework to develop specific roles</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships with other plans:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Local Workforce Development Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Central Children's Services staff</li> </ul>
<b>Success Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Suitable candidates identified for supported training opportunities – funded through bursary arrangements.</li> <li>■ All specialist posts filled</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Activities with timings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Qualifications' framework to be developed across service areas eg EWOs</li> <li>■ Explore appropriate local providers for delivery of these qualifications</li> <li>■ Identify staff through performance management structure, with potential for development in shortage areas</li> <li>■ Development opportunities provided for targeted staff eg workshadowing, specific tasks</li> <li>■ Training opportunities to be published in the Training and Development programme</li> <li>■ Training opportunity to be advertised through internal systems.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Senior Officer, CPD</li> <li>■ SEN Training Group</li> <li>■ Service and Team managers</li> </ul>

**Review of ACTION PLANS 2001-2004**

**Development Plan – Services and Provision for Pupils with SEN**

**Priority 1: Strategic Development**

- An SEN Reference and Strategy Group is established which meets termly.
- A Best Value review of services was completed and presented to Children's Committee in March 2003
- Threshold criteria (SEN Matrix) for Special Needs have been developed and were implemented in September 2003. These were considered to be clear and helpful in the recent LEA OfSTED.
- A revised Information Document for parents was produced in 2002/03 and is available on Eduwight.
- A monitoring system for SEN was developed in consultation with schools and implemented in September 2002. This will need further refinement and schools will be monitored on a 2 yearly cycle from January 2006.
- Resourcing within Early Years has been defined and an SEN matrix which parallels the schools' matrix has been developed.
- A parental consultation group is convened on a regular basis ( 6 times per year) through Parent Partnership Services.

**Priority 2: Cognition and Learning**

- Special school re-organisation was completed in September 2003.
- Special School outreach provision was implemented in September 2003.
- An action plan has been developed in relation to the development of Specific Learning difficulties resource centres which has led to:
  - A Specific Learning Difficulties Centre being established at Lake Middle School, Somerton Middle School and Mayfield middle school.
  - A centre is planned for Newport (– subject to governor agreement and planning approval).

Priority 3: Behavioural, Emotional and Social Development

- Provision for pupils with behavioural difficulties has led to some restructuring of the support services. The Behaviour Support Plan reflects these changes and sets out the priorities for the next 3 years.
- The LEA has established a Re-integration Panel, receives monthly reports of any pupils permanently excluded, and holds a review meeting every six weeks regarding those pupils at risk.

Priority 4 Communication and Interaction

- A resource provision has been established at Carisbrooke High School, opened September 2003. This compliments the centres established at Love Lane primary school and Nodehill middle school.
- The authority now employs a number of speech and language therapists directly in order to provide targeted input to the resource centres and to mainstream school. Additional support workers work alongside these staff to assist in provide direct input for children and additional advice and support where appropriate.

Priority 5 Sensory and/or Physical Development

- Provision for pupils who are deaf has been reviewed and a service guide produced. Parents are given more informed choice regarding types of provision and communication approaches through the extension of the service to provide signing opportunities for young people, particularly BSL. A specialist Assistant post has been developed in order to support youngsters who require signed support.
- Outreach support from special schools has been available since September 2003, to support pupils with complex needs in mainstream school. In addition, an ICT technician is available to support the technological needs of pupils with a physical disability.
- Provision for pupils who have a visual impairment have been reviewed, an additional part time post created and a service guide produced.

Summary

A significant amount has been achieved within the area of special needs which was reflected in the recent Ofsted report. The authority invests **significant** resources to support children and young people with Special Needs – maximising upon this investment is important and we continue to need to look ahead in order to make the most effective provision possible within the constraints that affect all service budgets.

Tensions continue to exist within this area of work particularly in the light of competing demands for resources and between aspects of government legislation. The further development of provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities has to be taken forward in partnership with schools, also taking account of the broader needs of young people within the directorate.