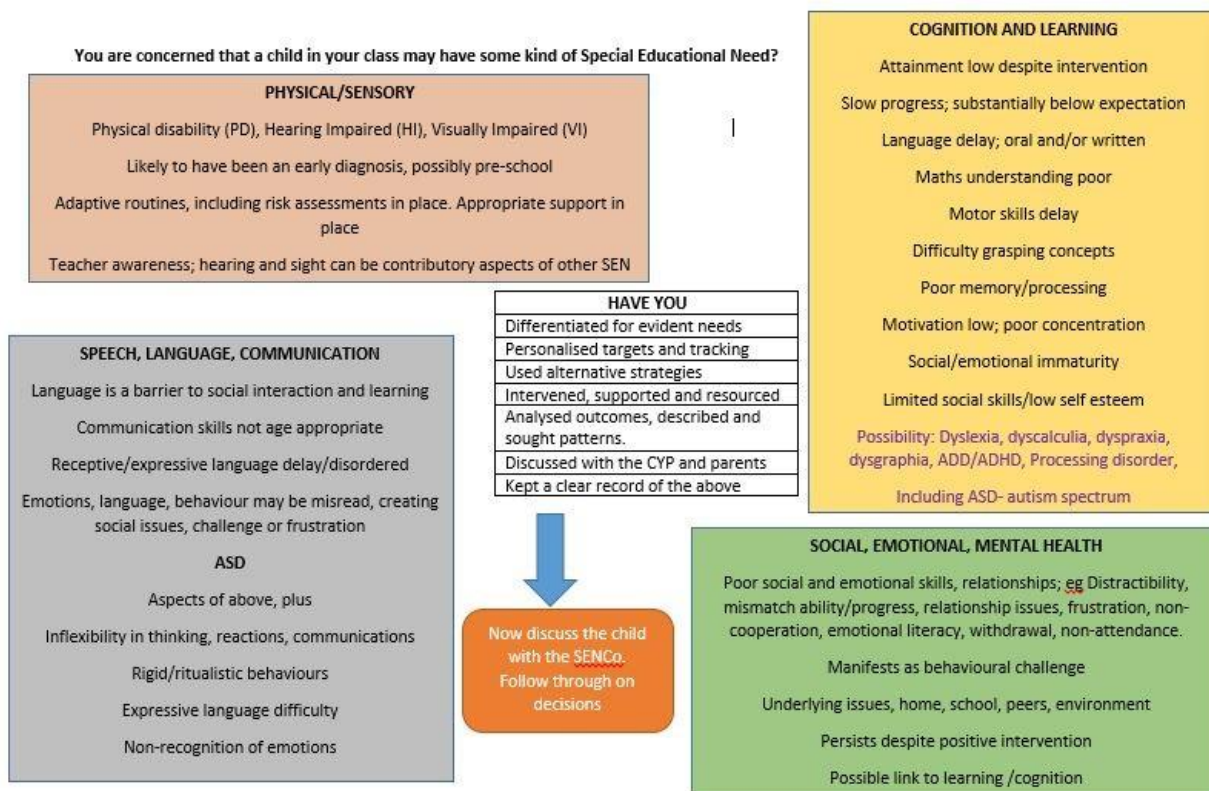


Practical SEND approaches



Developed by @ChrisChivers2

NB; Any areas of concern need to have firm evidence, as described in the central box.

Helping mainstream class teachers in their thinking about children whose needs are greater than their peers, with practical suggestions for keeping clear records that can become part of a greater case study, to support additional expertise.

Special Educational Needs (Disability) appears with regularity in my Twitter timeline, with, on one side, teachers saying how little training they have had to deal with that issue, as if it is a significantly separate aspect of teaching and on the other, those with some specialist background, in whose laps many of the problems are placed.

Changes to the organisation of SEND provision have been in train for the past few years, during which time I have blogged, as I have come across useful information. These blogs are archived within the contents list of the blog, but I have extracted (some of) them to make what I hope is a more holistic document here.

I have focused on issues as they affect mainstream school teachers. I have sought to develop a coherent, investigative approach that can fit with normal classroom practice, largely premised on the need to look, to

reflect and record concerns to inform deeper conversations. I am not looking to describe the range of individual needs that might be encountered. There are many expert colleagues who are much more able to offer insights into the specifics of individualised SEN(D).

SEN is the area of teaching and learning where teacher expertise may be challenged. This, in itself, is an indicator of potential need, but, for a teacher, can create a feeling of vulnerability. There is always the possibility of meeting a child whose needs fall outside previous experience; the truism that "you've met one child with autism, so you've met one child with autism" can exemplify many areas of SEN. General statements like, "x cannot read", are unhelpful to discussion. Investigating and sharing specifically what a child can and cannot do can lead to focused intervention, rather than general approaches. Leaving a child in a situation where they are clearly failing, are seen to be failing and know that this is the case, is destructive to the teacher and the child. Acknowledging specific issues and finding the specific means to address the issues demonstrates a positive approach for everyone to acknowledge.

There is no doubt that, when a teacher encounters a child who does not fit the "normal mould" that they are used to, that they may experience unease. However, although it is possible for changes to occur later in life, as a result of illness, or a degenerative situation that suddenly becomes apparent, it is unlikely that special needs will be unknown to some extent, relatively early in a child's life, at home and (pre)school. Concerns will have been raised, by parents or professionals, which hopefully have been followed up and investigated, so that, by the time a child enters school there may already be substantial information available.

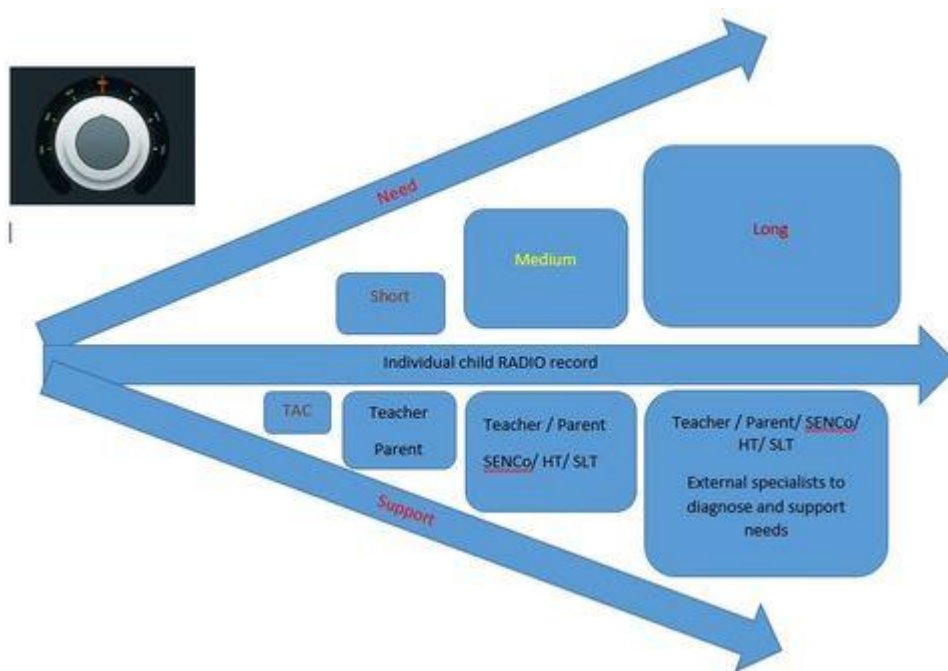
Inclusion is just doing your job

Inclusion is seeking to effectively teach each and every child who enters your classroom. They will be known from earlier records, from preschool and parents on entry to school. Therefore, from the early stages of their education journey, teachers can analyse, prepare and begin to plan what they think are appropriate challenges and support structures for known cases. Plans should be adaptable to developing needs with challenge and support altered to evidence. I would amplify the word challenge, as it is easy to fall into the trap of considering needs to be lower level than reality.

On entry into the formal learning situation, the staff eyes and ears are alert to issues, noting down things that are said and done, to ensure that future reflections can be based on pattern finding or evidence across a range of issues. Evidence finding is the bread and butter of teacher life, in terms of interactions, questioning, feedback, support and outcomes.

This was summarised in a pair of posts; [SEND Tic-Tac-Toe](#) (team including the child; in class decisions, team around the child; including parent(s) and in-house expertise; Team including external experts) and [SEN Radio?](#) (Record of Actions, Discussions and Decisions, Interventions and Outcomes) which propounded the ideas of fine tuning to need. Consolidating this into a case study can support the efforts of external professionals to provide appropriate advice and support. A lack of detailed information ensures that an investigation has to be put in place. [SEND Teachers as investigators](#)

In order to support classteacher thinking, especially about the details of some aspects of SEND, I pulled together a crib-sheet, [SEND 2014; possible class teacher Crib sheet](#) which proved popular, as a start point for planning, thinking and record keeping.



The journey to SEN decisions is likely to be a phased affair, especially with regard to learning issues and possibly over an extended timescale for many children, much to the frustration of parents and teachers. "Getting a handle" on the problem can be a case of investigation leading to diagnosis, prescription and checking out the potential for "recovery".

Unlike taking tablets, remediation is also embedded in relationships and these need to be carefully considered. Children know where they are in comparison with their peers. They can judge for themselves those who can and can also highlight that they can't, across a wide range of subjects. This can lead to diminished self-esteem, to go along with the understanding of a learning struggle. They know when they are being given easier things to do, so presenting challenge with a clear rationale is

important.

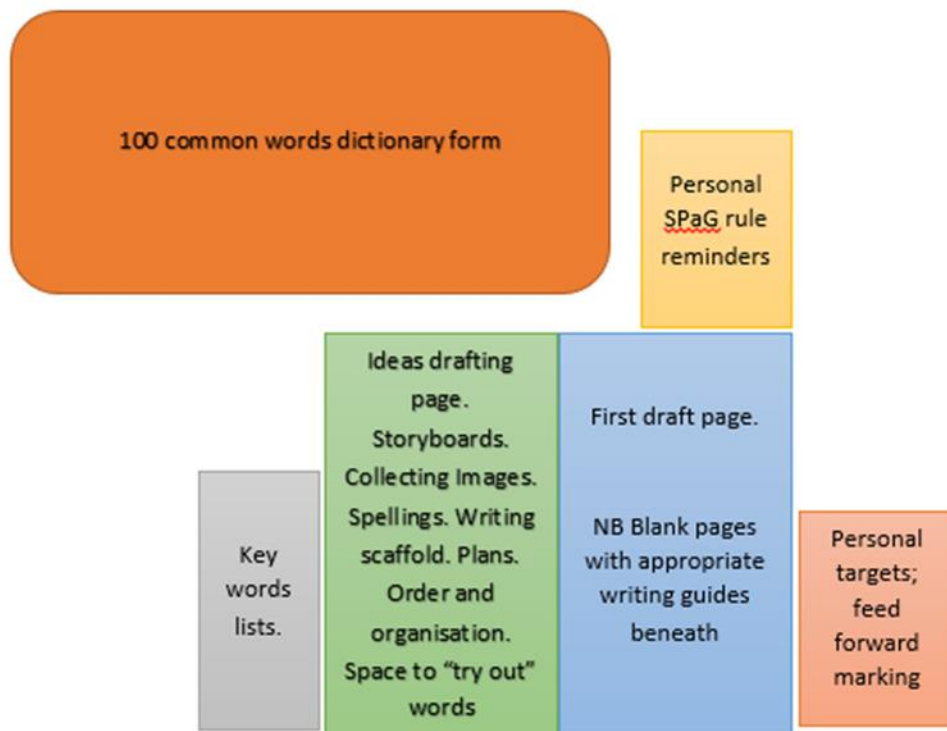
Allocating a teaching assistant can create a mutually dependent relationship, with a child's independence being limited by constant adult support. Equally, the TA role can be dependent on the child's continuing needs. It needs careful oversight and review.

The child's needs can challenge the teacher's expertise, especially in the earlier stages of their career, where they may not have had wide experience across several year groups, so can't understand where the child is on the development spectrum. Where this is the case, reference to teachers of earlier years can provide pedagogical and practical advice. In many ways, teaching standard 2, progress and outcomes, is THE key standard to support teacher understanding. What is the "normal" learning journey of children from early years through to year 6? Ok, I know this will never be linear, but there are developmental patterns which describe the possible jumps through aspects of the curriculum. Unpicking what progress "might be like", gives a background to raising concerns.

Keeping a track of all the different needs of children is currently significant, within the change National Curriculum, where cohort expectations have been articulated, with "labels" that will be allocated at the end of Key Stages that suggest that a child may not be at the expected standard, a euphemism for possible SEN. There is a need to ensure cohort coverage while at the same time looking at the areas where individuals might not be quite at the level required.

I would propose the use of Exercise books as personal organisers? as a means of keeping track of the two aspects, where lesson by lesson progress through the curriculum is evidenced, but flip-out sheets record the specifics of individual needs. The whole becomes a personal portfolio, from which year-based portfolios can be developed. They also allow clarity in formative and summative assessment, as well as reporting, because the evidence is available for all viewers.

Organisation of an exercise book to support writing development and aides memoire to learner and teacher



The 2014 SEND framework; reflections

Overview and implications

Writing up my notes from a couple of County briefings on the draft SEN framework, recently passed through Parliament, it struck me that notes on the website might help. There are other insights on line, which may provide greater detail on specific issues, so please keep browsing. **SEN change is becoming very important and will have significant impact in each classroom and on each classteacher.**

Applies to education until 25 years of age.

Early Years settings and Schools must have a designated and qualified SENCo, who can provide support and guidance to staff and parents. They will also act as a link between the school and external providers of specialist support.

There are four areas of SEN description in the new framework

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Mental and Emotional Health
- Sensory and/or Physical needs.

NB MLD and reference to behaviour have been removed.

“Behavioural difficulties do not necessarily mean that a child or young person (CYP) has a SEN and should not automatically lead to a pupil being registered as having SEN”.

Categories, such as **School Action and School Action+** are removed, with a single category of Additional Needs replacing. It is expected that the majority of children in mainstream education will have their needs met. In significant cases, the current Statement will be replaced by an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

The classteacher will be responsible for the progress of all children on their class register. This will be a consideration within Performance Management and possibly have a bearing on Performance Related Pay. The teacher knowledge of SEN should be a part of PM conversations. There may be a need for CPD for staff in this area.

There is **no mention of IEPs (Individual Education Plans)**, but early identification of SEN should be built into monitoring the progress of all children. Planning should take account of all needs. It has been interesting to note that the process of **analyse-plan-do review-record** is an underpinning statement within the policy, as it is an underpinning of the IQM scheme.

Regular reviews should be built in to practice, with meetings with parents expected, as now with IEPs. There is a focus on outcomes, which will also be a focus for Ofsted inspections.

High quality teaching is an expectation. Any judgement of SEN will be made against judgements of teaching. A child cannot have a judgement of SEN if teaching is inadequate. Advice should be actively sought from the SENCo and other internal experts to ensure that effective teaching approaches are used to help pupils make progress towards agreed outcomes.

The school SENCo role is a statutory duty upon a school. They are responsible for coordination of provision for children with SEN. Informing, identifying, monitoring, securing services, inclusion, training, record-keeping. They should be a qualified teacher, who, post 2009 holds the National award for SEN coordination, within 3 years of appointment.

“Where pupils continue to make inadequate progress despite high quality teaching targeted at their areas of need, the classteacher, working with

the SENCo, should assess whether the child has a significant learning difficulty. Where this is the case, there should be an agreement about the SEN support that is required to support the child.”

Note the emphasis on the classteacher, who is being seen as the first level of the descriptor of needs, supporting possible diagnosis with support.

SEN support in schools is described as graduated, based on analyse, plan, do review, record. It should involve parents in conversation at the earliest stages. Record keeping is essential, from the classroom plans to TA/teacher interventions. Plans should be shared effectively, so that parents can be partners.

Where there is a level of concern, after a series of interventions that, despite high quality provision, have not had demonstrable impact, **an application can be made for an Education, Health and Care Assessment**. The request can come from a parent, the young person, school, post-16 providers, and health or care professionals. The LA collates evidence and must secure EHC assessment if “opinion the child has or may have SEN.” Decision on assessment must be made within six weeks, with bodies asked for information responding asap within the six weeks. As now, the LA has to approach a wide range of external advisers; essential that these have been involved with the CYP before the assessment is requested, so that they can express a view. Will have regard to the four categories of SEN need.

Assessment should take a maximum of 20 weeks, as opposed to the 26 weeks currently. A parent will be informed within 16 weeks if an EHC plan not needed. If agreed, 15 days for agreement from YP/parents, then 15 days for the institution, before being quoted in the plan. There is a right to appeal at all stages.

The plan should be maintained and reviewed in the same way as a Statement currently. Health services specified supplied by the Clinical Commissioning Group or NHS. There is a feeling that the care needs flow from the 1989 Children’s Act.

The LA can cease a plan if no longer responsible for the child with SEN. The LA may deem a plan “no longer necessary”, if evidence of outcomes being achieved. The EHC plan ceases at the end of the academic year where a young person turns 25.

There is an option for a parent/YP to hold the Personal Budget, but this can be rejected under certain circumstances, judged by personal capability.

School SEN Information report

The setting should publish on the website a document outlining their approach to SEN identification and how needs are met. This will include:-

- Identifying and assessing SEN.
- Reviewing progress to agreed outcomes.
- Supporting CYP at points of transition and transfer, especially where vulnerable.
- Adaptations to the curriculum and specific programmes followed.
- Resources available to support specific needs.
- External expertise available and how it is secured.
- Assessing the effectiveness of SEN provision; reporting to Governors.
- Enabling CYP to access the whole experience, including extra-curricular and off-site experience.
- Supporting and improving emotional and social development and measures to prevent bullying.

Local offer

There is a duty on Local Authorities to identify, collate and disseminate information about locally available provision which can be accessed, through a clear website, by educational institution or CYP to support the CYP with SEN. It should be easy to access and navigate. Inevitably, this will vary from LA to LA, depending on the available, identified expertise.

Expertise available within a school setting should be included within the Local Offer to make best use of local expertise.

Funding

Schools will receive allocated resources to support additional needs which are not ring fenced. Within their budgets and available resources, schools must provide high quality appropriate support. Costs of special educational provision beyond a nationally prescribed threshold per CYP are met by the responsible local authority (currently £6000)

Admissions and Inclusion

- Assumption that the majority of CYP with SEN will be in mainstream education settings.
- A child with SEN but without an EHC plan must be educated in mainstream.
- CYP and parent preference should be met where possible.
- CYP with EHC plan and parent can apply for specific institution.
- Equality act 2010, prohibits discrimination against disable CYP in respect of admissions for reasons related to disability.

Next steps for legislation

Spring 2014 Royal Assent expected (subject to Parliament)

Transition arrangements to be clarified by DfE.

September 2014 implementation.

References

Kent and Lambeth Pathfinder meetings

Andre Imich SEN and disability adviser- DfE.

Part 2 SEN Changes, further reflections There are more questions than answers... and the more I find out, the less I know...

IQM's most viewed post in one weekend, was [a summary of the draft SEN proposals due to be implemented in September 2014.](#)

Inevitably, some questions were asked by colleagues, seeking clarity. Some I was able to answer, from recently acquired information. Others remain. Many questions are likely only to be asked when the bill becomes statutory and reflections on embedding the new system in practice becomes a reality.

I can see issues arising, for all participants, some due to the vagaries of the new legislation, some to the recognition that class teachers will be held accountable for progress of children with SEN in their class(es), some to internal systems, some down to concerned parents, some to external colleagues required to respond to the need for multi-agency meetings. Some issues will become visible over time, as the implications of the new curriculum and the need for a school assessment system emerge. The latter could become an issue in comparison with another school. A case of "my child with SEN is worse than yours".

Looking at some of these in isolation.

Teachers, in any education setting, have always had the requirement to ensure that they plan to meet the needs of the children in their class. However, the new SEN framework speaks in terms that may cause some concern. "*Interventions should not be used as a replacement for poor quality teaching*"; the room for manoeuvre, by SLT/SENCo/LA in consideration of SEN support within this statement, is huge. Equally, if it is the regular class practice for the children with SEN to work with a TA and the TA frequently plans and implements those plans, but a child makes/ or does not make progress, Performance Management of the

teacher might depend on those outcomes. Who's able to claim the progress or lack of it? Teachers will need to address any shortfall in their SEN knowledge urgently, as this will begin to form a part of a PM conversation.

There is an assumption that the majority of CYP with SEN will be in mainstream education settings and that a child with SEN but without an EHC (Education, Health and Care) plan must be educated in mainstream. These underlying assumptions will have significant bearing on school and class decision making.

IEPs have been a part of SEN practice for some time, although they are not mentioned in the draft framework. These have been well used in many cases, but equally they can be filed and shelved for the periods between reviews and targets reset by default. Class teacher record keeping will become a significant issue, particularly for vulnerable children. School Action and School Action plus categories are replaced by a single SEN category. With teachers being held more accountable, I can see a case for in-class individual case studies being developed, based on descriptions of what's been done in class and the outcomes, to support the school SENCo in fine-tuning decisions about need. The next steps, articulated in a Personalised Action Plan (**PAP-my words**), will be for the class teacher to implement, with intention and outcomes reported to SENCo, parents and SLT/Governors on a regular basis.

Inevitably, with PM and an Ofsted focus on SEN outcomes, classroom observations will have a focus on the needs of identified specific groups and individuals.

The combination of a number of PAP style interventions, will build a picture that supports a referral to an external "expert", eg an Ed Psych, which will, in turn result in further, fine-tuned PAPs.

Over time, evidence which can be presented for the replacement for a Statement, the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), will be developed.

It may sound like the status quo. There is, professionally, more at stake for class teachers in the new framework, but potentially even more for a child with SEN, whose teacher is unable to spot and investigate needs and with the skills and knowledge to address them.

Parents will need to know the outline and details of the new system, so this **will be an on-line statement of policy and practice**, with potentially hard copy alternatives to allow easy access reference material. Parent contact with class teachers are likely to be at a more detailed level, replacing some conversations which might have been conducted by

the SENCo.

Parents will also need to know the details of the Local Offer, the range of services available locally.

All school communication systems will need to be reviewed.

Supported discussions with parents may become the norm, with commensurate cost implications.

With Personal Budgets available within the EHC plan, parents may well need significant support in decision making about how best to use this, especially if they choose to be budget holders. **Internal Team Around the Child (TAC)** meetings are likely to become more frequent, as information is brought together, shared within collegiate expertise and decisions made about future plans. These could be Class teacher, TA, SENCo and HT with parents, sometimes supported by external expertise.

Like Statements, EHCPs will depend on the quality of information that shows regular, sustained intervention by appropriate staff, the (lack of) impact and a descriptor of the continuing, serious needs of the child.

SEN and Levels

Where the National system of levels has seemingly been abandoned for most year groups, with the requirement for schools to have their own system, it is not inconceivable that within this particular area lies further room for manoeuvre for decision makers, who will have to decide how robust the internal assessment system is to back up the decisions, how effectively they have been applied and their impact.

There will be a question of whether it measures one child's performance against peers effectively and whether it show that the need is significant, compared to their age group. This latter aspect, against National age group, is currently partly articulated by a child's level in comparison with peers, showing a level of developmental delay. Below level 1, there are "P" levels, which fine tune pre-level decisions.

Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) statements, or similar, have been a part of school assessment systems for some time. It might be assumed that they will disappear, along with levels, but the structure might just provide the vehicle for a fine-tuned internal assessment system, as it applies to children with SEN. Whether these statements are derived from yearness capabilities, is likely to be down to each school as it stands. There is, in my mind, a strong case for area moderation of systems, to ensure comparability.

The fine-tuned aspects of APP, although less helpful for whole class assessment, does provide a clarity to describing individual progression, especially for an early career teacher, who may be unsure of what to look for.

Behaviour as a category has been removed; *"Behavioural difficulties do not necessarily mean that a child or young person (CYP) has a SEN and should not automatically lead to a pupil being registered as having SEN".*

This statement, in itself, signals an intention, where , unless it can be demonstrated that a child's behaviour is a result of one of the SEN categories, just being "naughty" to some degree, does not count as SEN, so should not be passed to SENCo for remediation. A reminder of the four categories:-

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Mental and Emotional Health
- Sensory and/or Physical needs.

So, unless the behaviour is a result of one of these, the school behaviour management systems need to be invoked effectively at all levels.

School behaviour policies need to be revisited/revised in the light of the new legislation.

In conclusion: - Considering the implications of the impending changes should be a priority. Not doing so could leave a school, or class teachers vulnerable to challenge by parents of children with SEN. Understandable systems, clearly articulated within policies, available to everyone connected with the school and enacted by every member of staff need to be developed.

Specific changes from 2014 Framework.

Every teacher is seen as a teacher of individual needs, which often identify themselves as small concerns when a learner either exceeds or does not grasp what is being expected.

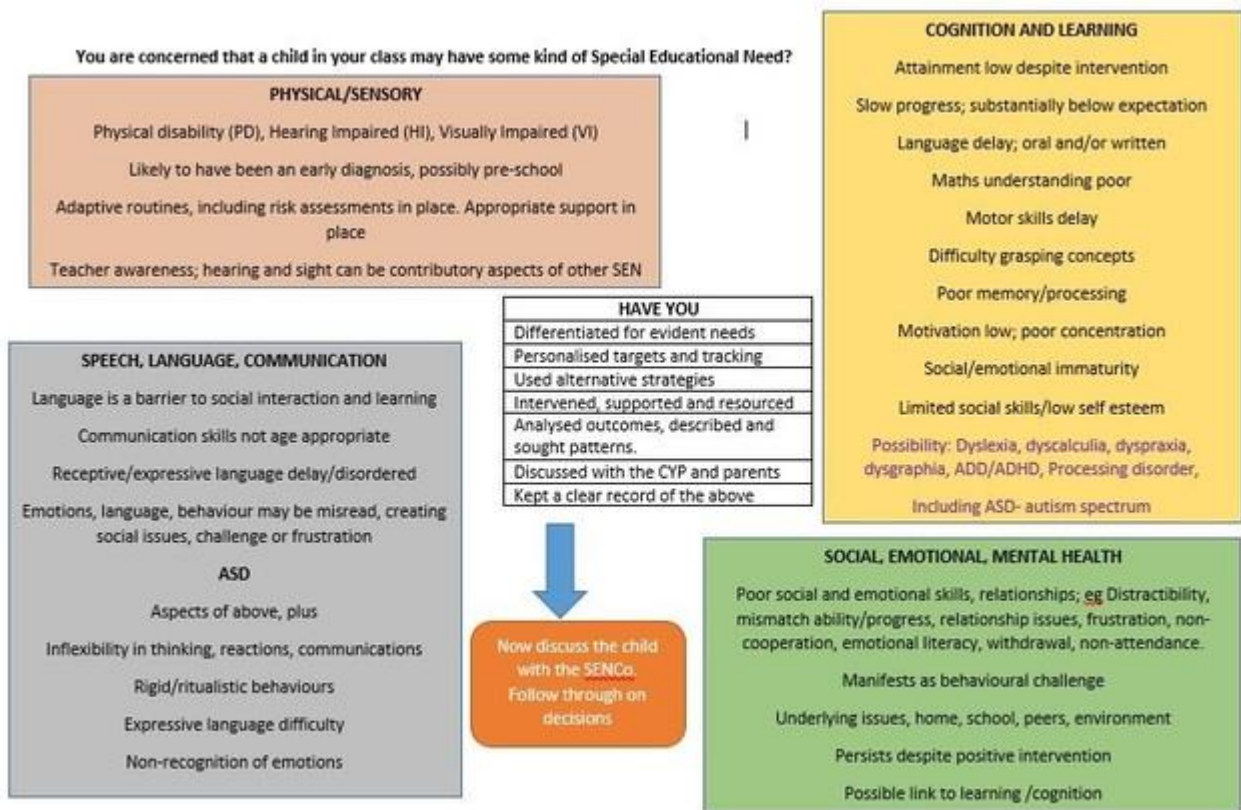
It has been intriguing me over the past few weeks as we've waited for the confirmed Code of Practice on SEND to be implemented from September 2014. There is an implication that the change will be managed over time, and, as far as the "sharp end" of SEND, where Children and Young People are in receipt of a current Statement of Special Educational Needs, or

perhaps are already in some kind of special provision, that may be the case. I can see that over the anticipated three year period, the annual reviews embedded in the statements will enable them to be changed to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) as they are reviewed, with emphasis on those approaching transition to another institution.

At a recent talk by a Hampshire senior inspector for SEND, there was a suggestion that **EHCPs will impact on between 1 and 2% of the school population**. A large number of these will already be in the system, so should be ok, as long as they have families capable of keeping the system on it's toes, or teachers able to act as an advocate in vulnerable cases.

That still leaves 98% of children in classrooms across the country. If, on the Government preferred scale of achievement, 85% of children are expected to leave Primary education with the equivalent of what was previously level 4b, **it leaves 13% of children above the EHCP threshold, but less than the expected level**. It is possible to speculate that they will have a range of individual, some special needs, within **Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning or Social, Mental and Emotional Health**. Sensory and/or Physical needs, I would suggest, are likely to have been picked up before formal education, so should already have the benefit of an EHCP/Statement. I would speculate further that the needs of a small number of those who achieve will occasionally be individualised, requiring specific interventions by adults.

Checklist of characteristics to look out for.



Developed by @ChrisChivers2

NB; Any areas of concern need to have firm evidence, as described in the central box.

So, out of a class of 30, it's possible to anticipate 6 children with learning needs of some kind, which, as cohorts are not equal, may vary from none to 15+. Each is an individual, requiring specific guidance, support and adaptation to enable them to keep up with their peers.

Keeping up with your peers is visible for three weeks of the year in the Tour de France, so is an apt analogy. The 150 best (depends on your choice) cyclists, working together in teams, seek to ensure that their leader, not necessarily the best of the bunch, has a chance to win the overall race after 3000 gruelling kilometres of racing. It is interesting watching the Peloton, or main pack, especially when hitting the worst of the mountains. Whereas on the flat, they are all seemingly capable of maintaining a reasonable place among the pack, but the hills and mountains drain the stamina, make muscles ache and provide such a challenge that even a winner of a stage can hit the wall and drop further behind.

The same can apply to learning. Going along on the flat is fine but learners need to encounter the hills, learn the techniques to keep going and then to develop the specialist skills needed to attempt the mountains. Children who encounter burn out are difficult to motivate to continue.

The 20% of learners who may have different degrees of individual needs have always existed in classrooms, and, despite the best

efforts of every pre-school teacher, are likely still to enter the school system. Their needs need to be carefully interrogated through what I have called in another post, a **Record of Actions, Discussions or Decisions, Interventions and Outcomes, or RADIO**.

Identification, intervention, discussion, adaptation, feedback are all teacher skills, outlined in the teaching standards 6 and 5, thinking on your feet and adapting to needs. These derive from teacher expectation, standards 2 and 4, where, hopefully, planning embeds the lesson narrative, for different groups, to an extent where the teacher can spot those whose "progress" is somehow not as anticipated, therefore requiring a short chat. These interactions, if regular and progressively deeper and concerning, might be the beginning of a pattern, which if left, becomes a learning deficit, requiring greater intervention.

The mantra for September 2014, in the brave new world of SEND should be "Anticipate and expect, then **Actions, Discussions or Decisions, Interventions and Outcomes**" to ensure that no child is allowed to slip.

It is worth remembering that a child cannot be deemed to have special educational needs if the teaching received is inadequate. This can apply to ineffective Teaching Assistant intervention also. SEND children need quality teacher time.

When is SEND?

I am sure that readers of my blog will wonder why I am asking such a question, but, after the recent SEND teachmeet in Oxford, I have been left wondering where we are heading in defining children as having Special Educational Needs.

There was quite a strong SEND school group represented, and who spoke during the meeting and I do follow a range of strong SEND advocates through Twitter.

It is clear, especially from Twitter exchanges, that the recent changes to SEND documentation was causing concern among the group, as reassessment of children with pre-existing statements was not always leading to expected outcomes.

Since the Warnock report in 1978 about the status of special educational needs and her definition that, during their educational lifetime, around 20% of children might exhibit some area of personal additional need, schools have had a duty to describe and cater for the needs of a group seen as potentially vulnerable if nothing was done to support them. Systems were set up around this group, by Local Authorities, to quality

assure the systems of referral and decisions.

My concern is those children who are in mainstream schools who might yet not have any specific diagnosis of need, but whose needs are regularly evident to class teachers.

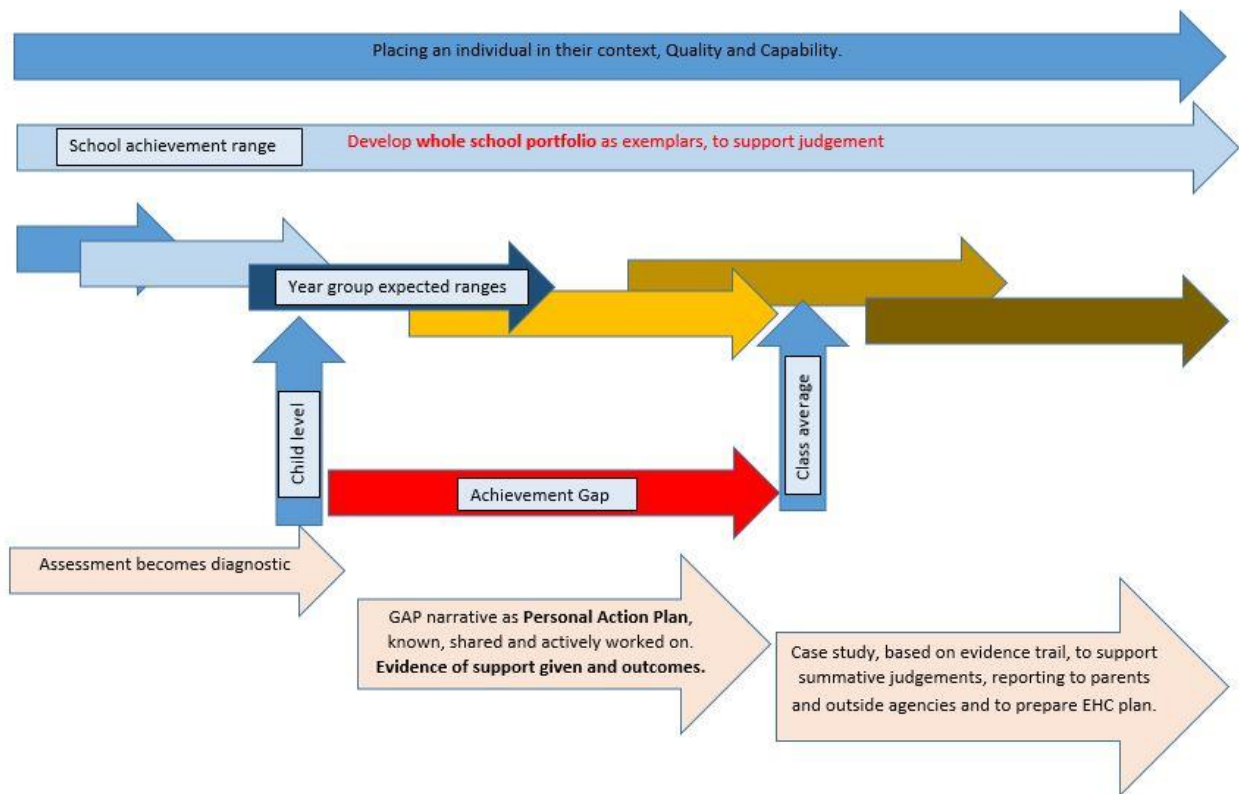
While locality could be a cause of issues, subject to available staffing, essentially a child described as having Special Needs in Cornwall, and with a Statement of Educational Needs applied, would be equivalent to a similar child in Newcastle. The constant across the authorities would have been the case studies developed by the school, in association with the available external experts, using the available tools to describe the child's lack of progress against the National Curriculum Level Descriptors which were common across all schools, even if some difference might be evident in interpretation. A case study portfolio of evidence of description of the learning and other behaviours, together with interrogation of outcomes and successive decisions and adaptations/fine tunings to evident need, would show how the child was performing compared to peers.

Where Levels and associated descriptors have been removed from September 2014, I am left wondering how schools are now seeking to describe their concerning or evident children with educational needs beyond their peers. If they are being tracked against the new National Curriculum, as there are only end of Key Stage descriptors, it will inevitably just be the programmes of study for the year group that will be available, with attendant descriptors of can or can't do...

Do teachers know what they are looking for? See the earlier crib sheet, which may provide a structure.

Do we wait until year end to describe a child as below their peers, suggesting a developing need, or perhaps after two years that they are well below their peers and might be on track to be "below National standard"? Will teachers undertake diagnostic assessments on children to explore their range of needs? Will they ensure that records cover the whole span of time and describe classroom adaptations used and support given to need? Will, over time, a Gap Analysis of needs emerge, that can describe the case to external experts, such as Ed Psych or Speech and Language Therapy or OT? Will the school be able to describe exactly where the child is in comparison with peers?

Are there systems within the school where expertise is regularly shared between colleagues that ensures that the vulnerable learners receive appropriate support and challenge, and not just through the class Teaching Assistants?



We still have P levels, which, in some discussions, seem to be the only currency available to describe SEND children. So a child who might formerly have been described as a level 1c,b,a, but be in year 4 or 5 and, as such, significantly behind peers, alerting the school to a need for a request for Statutory Assessment, may now have a weakened case, if the school system is not sufficiently robust. Panels judging the merits of a case may well be looking even more closely at the quality of the school evidence. So a child could get turned down through poor school records or judgements.

It can read as if there are potentially insecure systems in place within which insecure and vulnerable learners could be and may well be failed. The lack of National models has enabled localities to develop systems that appear to be causing concern at best.

Sadly it is the potentially vulnerable who may suffer, but it is a case of "Watch this space".

It could be a case of the law of unintended consequences at play.

SEN; Individual Needs.

Reflecting on the diagram in the last section, about the need for a detailed gap analysis.

It's been an interesting few days of pensive activity, starting with the draft SEN framework for September 2014 and considering the needs of schools and teachers to be able to work within the processes.

Inevitably, **the whole comes down to the needs of individual children**, how to make judgements about their ability, their progress and comparisons with peers. Teacher judgement is a mysterious beast, as it is likely to be composed of many facets, some deriving from their experience, some from research, some from moderation activities, but mostly from their internal meters, calibrated from a combination of the elements above. I have written at more length on [teacher judgement as formative assessment, based on a frame of reference](#). There are several other posts on the blog which look at aspects of levelness.

In any school context, there will be a range of achievement from low to high. Examples of work outcomes, **collated into an exemplar portfolio, can provide baselines against which progress can be measured**. A language, similar to levelness, is likely to be applied to describe the subtleties that contribute to a decision that progress has been made. A portfolio is a very good resource for newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school, or to a year group. If you have never seen a level 5 piece of work, or an A* piece, how would you know what it looked like and what to look for? It would also act as an exemplar to back up teacher judgements on transfer, if collated as a transfer magazine.

If children are doing well, as defined by the expected range of outcomes for a year group, teachers, parents and learners are likely to be happy, with positive feedback and guidance supporting the learners to continue and accept further challenge.



But if we look at child x, who might be in the lower reaches of attainment for the year group, a different scenario can evolve. If child x is lucky, the school will have systems in place that allow support and progression from the current ability. Differential challenge in class, coupled with targeted support and guidance can ensure that slippage is minimised.

What happens when child x starts to really fall behind peers, to a

point where a teacher and school suspect some additional needs exist?

The diagram above seeks to articulate steps that can be taken and which would fit within the requirements of the new SEN approach.

If a child falls behind others in a class or year group:-

- **Parents** should be aware at the earliest stages and be offered support and guidance to help at home.
- **The school SENCo** should be made aware of concerns and the ensuing professional dialogue may propose specific courses of action to be tried in the classroom.
- **Teacher thinking** should be captured on lesson plans, to demonstrate clearly adaptations to lessons and outcomes.
- **Marking work** (possibly on a photocopy) should become more diagnostic and more focused on specifics to support progress.
- **In-class available support**, from teacher and Teaching Assistant, should be available and deployed effectively.
- **A clear descriptor of the child**, based on some kind of SWOT analysis creates a background statement, a summary of the current position.
- Individual Education Plans (which are not mentioned in the new framework, but which often were inactive documents), could be replaced by some kind of **Personal Action Plans to be developed and enacted**, with reporting to parents and SENCo at specific intervals, within an internal Team Around the Child discussion.
- **External expertise** should be sought, should child x's needs exceed the school capacity to understand and cater for appropriately.
- As difficulties become greater or more obvious, the need for what was a Statement of Need, now to become an **Education, Health and Care Plan**, will be more clearly articulated in a Case Study, collating the available history of descriptors, intervention and outcomes.
- **An EHCP may, or may not be appropriate, decided by the LA**, and may, as now, specify the help that the school should provide. Either way, the process is cyclic, and should be based on excellent communication.

The argument is one of comparison, a child compared with peers. Where we have lost national levels and a requirement for a school to devise it's own, a lack of rigour could further handicap a child, if they should have an EHCP, but is unable to obtain one because the school system is weak.

There is a clear statement in the draft SEN framework 2014 that states that intervention should not be seen as a substitute for poor teaching. Extrapolated further, this could equally read that a child will not get an EHCP intervention to substitute for a poor school system.

Time to look at the whole system, including assessment and record keeping.

SEN; Fine tuning individual needs.

It took someone who must have been looking for the image above on my website, and another on Twitter, highlighting the Mencap report, detailed in the Independent, to start me thinking again about SEND; not that I haven't been doing so, but there have been other distractions, not least, supporting ITT students in learning the craft.

At the same time, in the Guardian, the Ofsted annual report showed that children in disadvantaged areas and from other heritages were outperforming English learners. I know that these children do not have special educational needs in the strict sense, but they do have **individual needs**, and that, to me is where the secret of success might lie. It is more a case of knowing the children's needs well, fine tuning challenge and expectation and supporting appropriately; **otherwise known as personalisation**, the opposite of much current education discourse. This approach also support children whose learning outcomes exceed their peers and whose needs are also not always met. This is a consequence of "teaching to the middle". Challenge at the different ends is often less appropriate.

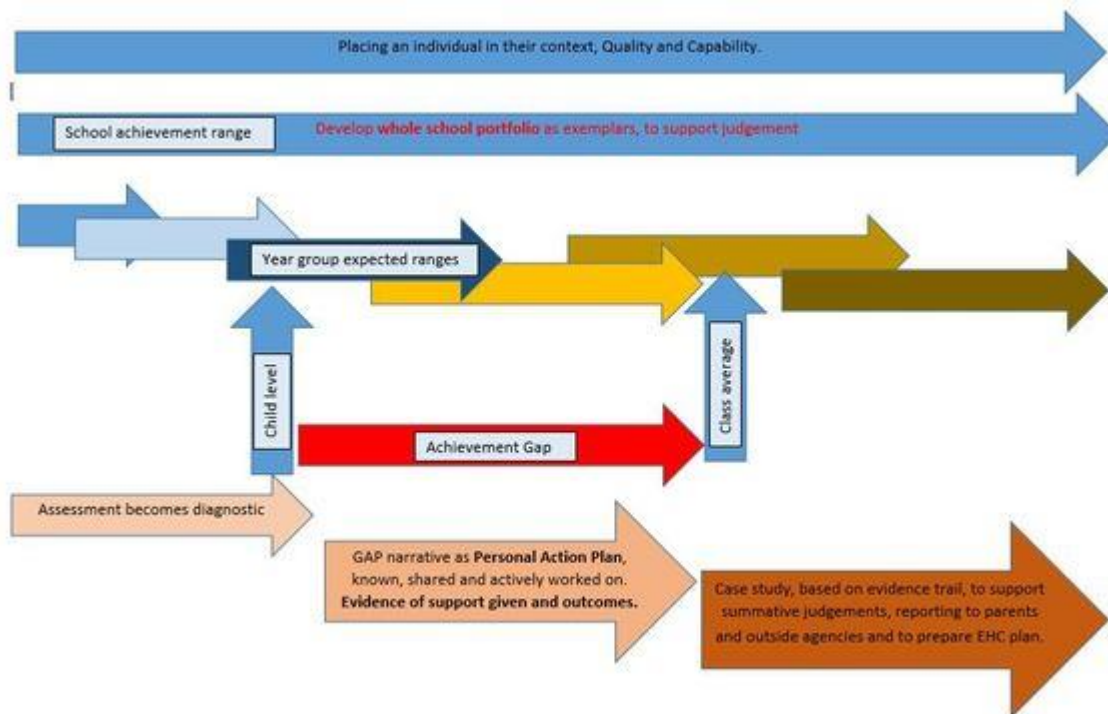
Also at the same time, various reports have suggested that children with special educational needs are largely working with teaching assistants and making less progress. The children with the greatest needs often work with the least qualified person, although I do know many Teaching Assistants whose specialist skills are greater than the class teachers, so not a completely black and white position.

I am beginning to consider that, with teaching and learning sometimes seeming to be in danger of describing itself in ever-narrower terms, more teacher-centred, the learner is being required to fit the system, rather than the system being designed to fit the learner. Should they not do so, they are in danger of being failed by the system that is supposed to secure the best possible outcomes.

What we are really talking about is the sharp end of teaching and learning, dealing with learners whose **individual** needs are quite specific and may, for some time be undiagnosed, although they should be capable of description. This latter point is the reason I developed the **crib sheet at the header of this post**; seeking to support the clear description of learning needs that might help the school SENCo to fine tune support, or to engage the necessary external expertise to offer insights into the

specific needs being displayed.

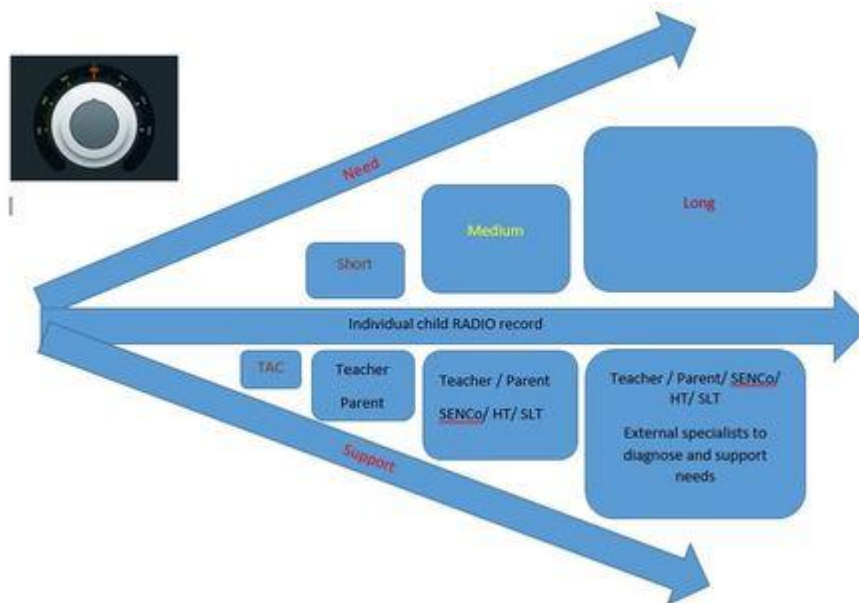
I have to reflect that the current incarnation of the National Curriculum, although designed to raise standards, especially in Primary education, if interpreted as a delivery model, could put these children at greater disadvantage, if they don't "get it". In other words, they are not keeping up with their peers. The situation is compounded, in my opinion, with a lack of clarity in assessment systems, which may well add another layer of confusion, in that, in the absence of a definite framework against which judgements are made, any aspect of subjectivity in teacher responses could exacerbate the feelings of failure from the learner finding learning a challenge.



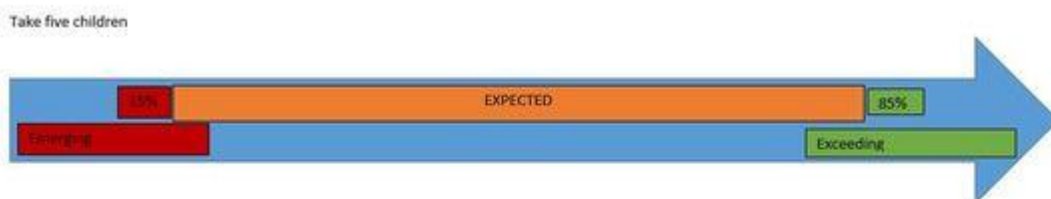
I have long been an advocate of exemplar portfolios, at a school level, to describe what progression might look like across all abilities of learner within the school. They are relatively easy to organise and provide the basis for moderation discussions, decisions about outcomes and also the potential for describing the next learning steps. That way, they become reference documents for early career teachers to build their judgements, as well as more experienced teachers to clarify their decision making. In a world "without levels", this seems to me an essential step. While there may be a desire to move away from the idea of "levels", there is still a need to be able to describe step-change, in order to support individuals in their progress.

If children's work books are organised as portfolios too, they provide the narrative for discussion, and decision making, especially when compared to the school outcomes. Schools need to create the basis for fine-tuned decisions, especially where they affect potentially vulnerable learners, for

whom a small group will have significant, long term needs to be addressed.



Classes are, by definition, mixed ability in composition, even streams and sets, which are simply a narrower demographic. The needs of the learners need to be known, as the starting point for all substantive decisions. This is an essential teacher skill; determine where each learner is, so that clarity can support planning for the next phase of learning.



Pre 2014	L3b/3a	L4c+	L4b	L5	L6
Peer expectations too hard. Extra support needed, possibly regular adult. Skills (knowledge) drawn from earlier year groups. Previously 1/2/3 levels below peers.		Wobbly group. Some things easier than others. Occasional gaps in knowledge. Possibly poor memory. Impact of second language, oral and written. Regular reminders of task purpose. Vulnerable in test situation.	More secure. Generally pick things up and make appropriate progress. Individuals may be stronger in one subject than another.	Peer expectations too easy. Skills and knowledge drawn from later years. Issue at yrs 2 and 6? Previously 1 or 2 levels ahead. Could become bored and challenging, or some become complacent.	
Edward		Dhuha	Caroline	Bridget	Amran

It was to articulate this, that I wrote a piece which I entitled 24652, to explore a teaching and learning rationale against the teaching standards. The 24652 approach describes very clearly the analyse-plan-do-review-record approach which is well known to teachers. It is then easier to look at what is happening within a lesson, with expectation becoming a prompt to teacher action, when it is clear that an individual, or a group, is not "getting it". I have called this opportunistic teaching, which I feel is a

more dynamic approach than the “mini-plenary” model which can be used just to show teaching “prowess”.



While some individual children demonstrate very clearly that they have significant individualised needs, which ultimately leads to a diagnosis and, for some, an Education Health and Care Plan, there is a further group who find learning more difficult, whose needs might just put them around whatever the teacher internalises as the significant point. Schools are being challenged to develop learners to get 85% of their year six cohort in 2016 “at or above national expectation”, with some at “mastery” level. (Until they change the wording)

Those children in the 70-90% group will become a significant target group for some schools in such a scenario. Equally, however the notion of progress will also become significant, for all schools, as they will be asked to be able to show progress across all ability groups over time.

What would I do?

- Ensure that teachers know the needs of their children really well and plan to teach the groups with the greatest needs, at critical points. TAs can then be deployed to the needs of other groups.
- Ensure that all communication across the school was of the highest quality, including with parents whose backgrounds and needs need also to be taken into account.

- Develop a school portfolio, based on a series of whole school writing projects, linking with other schools if possible, to moderate internally and seek external feedback. <http://chrischiversthinks.weebly.com/blog-thinking-aloud/school-portfolios-support-assessment>
- If teachers are insecure about teaching children with significant individual needs at either end of the learning spectrum, they should seek support from colleagues in other year groups, to extend their expertise.
- Look at internal systems, especially reading approaches, to explore whether they support learners, or whether the learners have to fit the prescribed system.
- Develop a more open approach to writing, based on an individual portfolio approach, as detailed here. <http://chrischiversthinks.weebly.com/blog-thinking-aloud/pupil-portfolios-public-progress>
- In Primary, have one writing book, whatever the subject, to create a clear focus for each piece of writing. This would enhance writing across the curriculum and allow other subjects to provide the stimulus, the context and the vocabulary for writing. <http://chrischiversthinks.weebly.com/blog-thinking-aloud/writing-process-tweak-your-books>
- Learning Objectives to be seen as the title for the lesson.
- Success Criteria to be the sub headings and a stepped guide to a successful outcome.
- Individuals to have flip out personalised learning foci, so that they can support in-lesson discussions of learning. They also provide the basis for marking to the individual need. <http://chrischiversthinks.weebly.com/blog-thinking-aloud/marking-keep-it-simple>

Keep a track of individual progress, with some vulnerable individuals being subject to more of a case-study approach.

<http://chrischiversthinks.weebly.com/blog-thinking-aloud/send-building-an-individual-case-study>

SEN RADIO?



Seeking greater clarity by fine tuning actions through a

Record of Actions, Discussions or Decisions, Interventions and Outcomes

(RADIO, in case you missed it!).

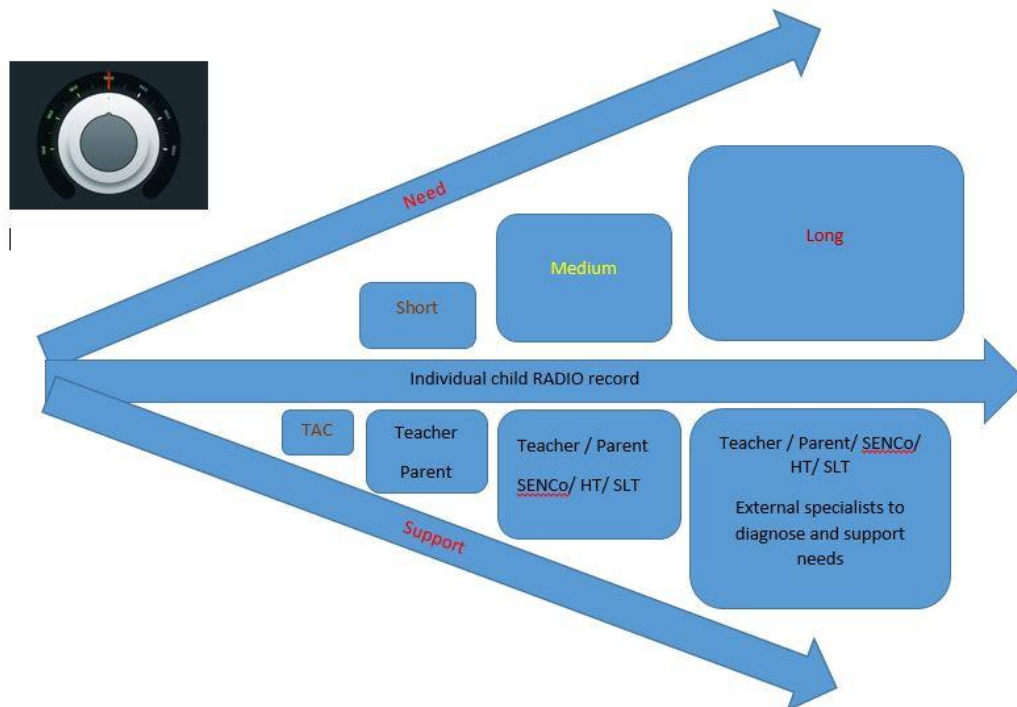
Building an individual case study.

Essentially, SEND practice describes a sequence of events, which seek to refine the actions and focus of attention, to identify, quantify and qualify the exact nature of a problem. Once this has been established, remedial action can take place. The longer the gap, the greater the problem can become, as further complications can become built into the experience, not least of which is learner self-esteem, affected by adult and peer responses to the circumstance.

Every teacher is a teacher of individual needs, which often identify themselves as little concerns when a learner either exceeds or does not grasp what is being expected.

The SEND framework 2014 does state that poor teaching approaches will handicap decisions on a child's special educational needs. SEND is not a substitute for poor teaching or poor teachers. High quality teaching and learning should identify, describe and track needs within a classroom. Work sampling, annotations and record keeping will all contribute to good decisions. Some may say that this is additional work. However, it could be argued that well planned, well focused activities, with good oral and written feedback, to identified needs, in itself constitutes a reasonably

clear start point of a record. An annotated personal record, for discrete individuals, as describe below should also be kept.



Teachers receive their classes from someone else, even at the earliest stages, where a parent or nursery member of staff has already become aware of little foibles, or gaps in understanding, or an area where there appears to be extra talent.

The parent is the child's first teacher; it is to be hoped that their relationship is such that they get to know their children really well, through interactions at home and in places of interest that generate speaking and listening skills. As a Governor of a school in Gosport, as well as my own education career, I know that this is not the case, with children arriving operating at two year old levels, of speech and socialisation.

The adult role, teacher and support staff, is to be vigilant in spotting the child reactions in different situations, noting areas of concern, but also of achievement, so that a balanced picture can be built. The profiles built up during the Early Years stage is a more refined document than may have formerly been available.

If concerns emerge, there are likely to be three phases;

1. **Short (wave) term, classroom based.** The teacher and other adults become aware that an area of need exists. They develop a short term plan to address the issue and agree a monitoring approach that allows them to spot and track the outcomes. Where feasible, discussions with the learner might deepen the adult understanding of the learning issues. Outcomes are checked carefully to deduce any patterns arising, which are then shared with parents and decisions reached about next steps.
2. **Medium (wave) term, involving internal specialist colleagues.** Where an issue goes beyond the current capacity of the class teacher, the school internal specialist, the SENCo, should be involved to oversee the record, to discuss with the teacher and the parent possible ways forward and to agree a new plan of action in the classroom. This may involve using a discrete approach to the identified problem, with some specified time need. For example, a child with a specific reading issue might need some individualised time with an adult, whose role is to undertake a miscue analysis during each session to deduce with greater accuracy the nature of the problem.

The SENCo may be involved in classroom observations, keeping records of on/off task behaviours, relationships, task application, with outcomes being photocopied and annotated to deepen the understanding of the problem, thereby refining the classroom action. Interventions strategies must be SMART targets. Too often in SEND situations, class teachers operate at too global a level, so that the refined needs of the individuals are missed, until they become more critical. There is a need for regular work sampling and annotations to describe the learning journey and issues still arising. **The lack of such a record could handicap a child and the teacher, as it will be requested before specific help can be offered, especially if the school SLT has to allocate additional funding/adult support to address the issue.**

3. **Long (wave) term, the school will involve a range of specialist experts, to support the diagnosis of the issue.** Diagnosis depends on the quality of record keeping in the classroom and the school, if patterns are to be describe and the area for investigation is to be narrowed. As a result, a programme of action is likely to be agreed, timescales set and evidence needed identified. This is likely to be similar to the needs above, but within a refined remit.

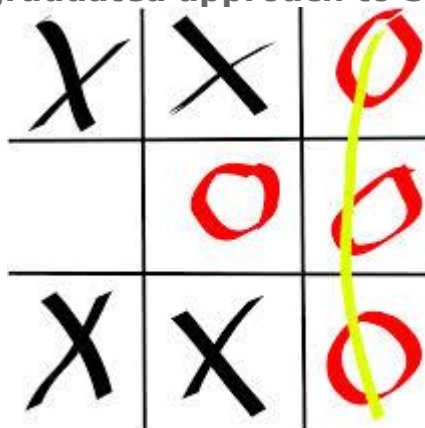
Over time, a case study emerges, with a record of actions, discussion, decisions, interventions and outcomes. It may be, at this stage, that the collective wisdom is that there is a problem that is greater than the system capacity to identify and remediate the need. In the new SEND framework, schools will apply for consideration of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The evidence file is sent to a panel for consideration, along with other applications. Each case is judged on its merits and there is no guarantee that awarding an EHCP will be the outcome. Equally, an EHCP may not guarantee extra funding or alternative education placement. The EHCP, if awarded, is quite likely to be a tighter descriptor of the learner's individual needs, the education response to be allocated by the establishment, the timescale and regularity of reviews.

SEND issues cause teachers to become worried. I have suggested ways in which a teacher can expand their understanding of teaching and learning outcomes across the range of learners they are likely to encounter, in another post.

TIC TAC TOE A graduated approach

TIC – Team including the child; TAC- Team around the child; TOE- Team of experts- a graduated approach to Special Needs?



For the uninitiated, noughts and crosses and tic tac toe are the same game, the first title being British. Derived from a Roman game, it is a game of strategy, with two players trying to block the other's moves. A good description of the game can be found on:-

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tic-tac-toe>

However, it is not the game that interests me in the field of Special Needs, so much as the strategy. Over my sixteen years as a headteacher, I had many discussions with parents expressing disquiet over the processes of the SEN system, particularly the hoops that they had to jump through in order to get some external views on their child. This was often particularly severe in the case of statements. Over time this became clearer with children having some kind of designation, Early Intervention, School Action, School Action Plus, with funding allocated to specific categories. There were still "blockages", mainly due to allocation of time by specialist services, but it was possible to develop a system which was

understandable to all parties.

Reflecting after the event and also on the practices seen in a number of the Inclusion Quality Mark schools' reports, it would seem that a system based on the initials, rather than the strategy of Tic Tac Toe would be helpful.

TIC – Team including the child; TAC- Team around the child; TOE- Team of experts

It is arguable that all teams are teams around the child, but it is possible to visualise this as a journey that starts with conversations between the teacher and child, develops with parent-child-teacher, then starts to involve a larger group of internal and external expertise in support of the child's development. Essentially, the system is creating a series of safety nets through which, it is to be hoped, no child can slip.

There are many **examples of these systems across the IQM family of schools**, with a common thread of high level communication among all participants.

Parents at **John Bentley School in Calne, Wiltshire** the **John of Gaunt School, in Trowbridge**, articulated the view that "Contact arrangements with school are very good. There is very good communication with the school staff, especially the Health and Welfare system and Individual Learning Department, with very quick response to queries. There is a quality of access to teachers at all levels, including senior managers. The systems in the school support their children. They value the Parentmail system, improving regular contacts. Staff visit the home to support individual children. Work is provided for children when they have to at home for an extended period. The "time out" system allows students with specific issues to self-refer to support."

The processes showed that "Inclusion is a strength of the teaching and learning environment, with a range of dedicated staff allocated to support individuals, either in learning or their emotional security. The Calne Cluster Multi Agency Forum has become, over the past couple of years, a significant factor in the assurance of coordinated support action with external agencies. Developed with the aid of NCSL funding, this cluster meets regularly to share good practice, which can be based around anonymous family case studies. It also gives a strong personal basis for Team Around the Child (TAC) as they become necessary to support individuals."

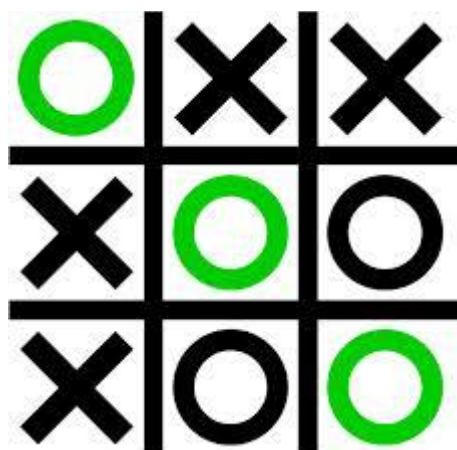
support that ensures that, not only do they not “slip through the net”, but are enabled to pursue their personal ambitions.

Children are discussed on a regular basis, eg Primary Phase class teacher, Safe worker and class worker roles, together with HS Safe workers, Key Stage Learning Leader role, Education Welfare Officer, Academy Counsellor all work together to ensure inclusion. Information is shared between them in weekly ECM Meetings.

There is much joined up thinking, with staff articulating their working relationships with others. This was particularly evidenced in conversation with the Academy Counsellor, EAL team member, JCS staff member and the year 8 SAFE worker, where each found ways to describe how they work together for the good of individual children. This was endorsed through other conversations focused on curriculum entitlement, where children are supported to succeed. All conversations had a focus of building capacity, taking personal responsibility, good communication, demonstrating that each child in this Academy has an identifiable Team Around each Child, always looking to enhance opportunities.

Orchard Primary, Hackney held regular meetings across the three schools in its group, checking on the vulnerability of each child, with specific focus on certain children and families. There was a follow-through system, with specific staff delegated to monitor and mentor as needed.

Bethnal Green Academy pastoral care was exemplary, with multiple layers of support, with mentoring and coaching at the heart of the systems.



SEND; Teachers as Investigators

Teachers will need to become active investigators in their classrooms.

For the purpose of this post, I am looking at the needs of children starting in mainstream education, as children in SEND settings may well have had a diagnosis before starting school. There is, to my mind at least, a need for schools and teachers to explore their current practices and to enhance these, to allow classroom based staff to make the significant contribution necessary to accommodate the new requirements.

The SEN framework is changing. This has been well documented, [on this site](#) and elsewhere. Some of the change is more significant than others, as far as the operation in school is concerned. That's where I'd like to concentrate. I know that Malcolm Reeve (@Malcolm_Reeve) is currently looking at the Local Offer aspect.

One big structural change is to put emphasis on **the classroom as the prime place** where good or better teaching and learning is seen as addressing the needs of all individuals. Therefore work has to be well planned, well delivered, activities engaged with, feedback given and supportive, developmental marking afterwards. In which case, **the class teacher becomes the conduit through which SEND decisions are effected**, with enhanced responsibility. Consider for a moment the position regarding Performance Related Pay (PRP) where a teacher can be held responsible for the outcomes of all groups of learners.

Teachers will need to know their children very well, to be able to personalise interventions and commentaries. The deployment of available support, for specific purpose, with defined, checkable outcomes, will be essential. However, as the highest trained person in the classroom, the teacher may reasonably be expected to take the greater burden of the most challenging learning needs, while the support does just that, supports other learners.



IEPs are not mentioned in documentation. Their omission can be seen either positively or negatively. Sadly, there have been many examples from practice where IEPs have become part of the ritual of

planning, without really impacting on the needs of the child. Targets are not always well set or followed through, so become continuous. Timescales are often also over-generous, so that they slip out of the immediate consciousness, to be reviewed later. There will need to be some kind of paperwork trail to track the multiple interventions that impact on a child with learning needs.

Many posts on this blog look at the detail of teaching and learning, with regard to addressing the needs of individuals, aka personalisation, whether more or less able learners. This is based on a simple premise, articulated as:-

- 1) analysis of evidence leading to quality information being made available to support
- 2) detailed planning, including the provision of appropriate resources and staffing.
- 3) Students in the best practice, actively sharing in their learning journey, which is
- 4) tracked and reviewed at regular intervals with
- 5) records being collated and disseminated, allowing the process to be cyclic and developmental.

Differentially, this can be interpreted over time scales, dependent on the need to intervene and support, a series of cycles within cycles, based on individual needs.

All aspects need to be considered, starting with the appropriateness of the task, or the necessity to adapt, the need for support to achieve an appropriate outcome.

Within the task, the deployment of staff to be the eyes and ears, with the capacity to intervene appropriately to need will be essential. It will become **an essential skill to spot and deal with issues** as they arise to smooth the learning path. These **interventions will need to be noted** in some way. Therefore a methodology needs to be considered. In the first instance, the exercise book could become a part of the dialogue of concern, noting advice given, as well as clear, readable, understandable feedback. A secondary need will be to keep a track of teacher thinking, through post it notes, amended planning, or diary format.

In addition, the teacher needs to get better at initial investigation of issues.

Behaviour is no longer a special needs category. Issues need to be described and explored for causation.

There are four areas of SEN description in the new framework

- **Communication and Interaction**
- **Cognition and Learning**
- **Social, Mental and Emotional Health**
- **Sensory and/or Physical needs.**



Instead of the School Action category.

Teacher judgement plays a significant part. If a teacher has never met an issue, or makes simplistic inappropriate judgements, then the subsequent learning journey for the child will become more complex, with the potential for regression, rather than progress, as the relationships can become strained.

So, from a classroom perspective, I'd offer the following:-

- **Start a Note of Concern file on individuals who are raising worries.**
- **Annotate plans regularly with individual concerns.**
- **Annotate exercise books with appropriate supportive commentary.**
- **Make diary notes in the Note of Concern to deduce any pattern arising.**
- **All adults become "spotters". Keep a post it note record of things that happen in the lesson, to add to the Note of Concern. Ask any support adults to do the same.**

- **The record should allow the teacher to create a proper narrative, with action, outcome and judgements/decisions, refined actions.**
- **There should be a record of planning adaptation.**

At this point, the class teacher can take the beginning of a case study to the SENCo, thus avoiding the generic conversation that starts, "X has a problem with..." or "Y just doesn't get it..." which then needs to go through the process outlined above. By adopting this approach early, and it is embedded in many schools, valuable time for vulnerable learners is saved.

The class teacher is not being asked to be a diagnostician, but an investigator and describer of learning, behaviours and outcomes. The TA or other adult support can provide an additional insight into issues. The broadest view available will support decision making.

Stepping up a notch. Instead of School Action Plus.

If the teacher has got to the point where the child's needs exceed their expertise or experience and they feel the need to involve another adult, such as the SENCo, to seek advice and solutions, then the school awareness is raised. This has previously been called School Action Plus, and may involve further exploration of the issues with a range of external expertise, all of which will be subject to reports to the school, enhancing the available evidence.

I'd expect some kind of school based action plan to be developed, with the focus on actions, from the teacher, to seek to effect specific change; to keep a further diary of interventions, and outcomes, over relatively short timescales. These PAPs need to be seen embedded in plans and visible in practice. They should be clear descriptors, **accessible and shared with parents at each stage**. The focus on classroom action is essential. Progress should be capable of being measured in some form.

Regular reviews and refinements eventually build to a more substantial case study file, which is likely to be then supported with reports from a range of additional professionals.



Another notch. Statements have become Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

In order to ask for an EHCP, the school has to be able to present significant evidence of different scales of intervention over time. A failure to do so could lead to the vulnerable child in the school not receiving timely additional focused support, causing a further delay in development.

As with Statements of Educational Need, the EHCP judgements are made by an expert locality panel, which scrutinises evidence in detail. And as with a statement, these do not necessarily come with funding, but may come with specific actions on the establishment to provide support, with an in-built requirement for regular reviews.

Inaction is not an option. Evidence chasing will assume greater importance, with a heavy emphasis on the classroom teacher.

Training will be needed.

Schemes need to be established immediately and embedded in practice.

SEND is no longer "someone's job", it is everyone's job...

Training is an interesting issue, in that there are and will be significant calls from all sides for "more training". The availability of external staff is likely to be seriously strained in the near future, as all schools ask for the same personnel. I can see a number of options addressing these needs.

- **Local specialists** (possibly including Special School staff) to create fact sheets available to all local schools, to address possible concerns across a range of needs, ASD, ADHD, SALT, OT as an example.
- **In-house solutions 1.** Some special needs in learning can be evidenced against the outcome of younger children. Therefore, by definition, the

expertise is in-house. Exemplar portfolios will help with decision making, if they incorporate both a statement of what's evident and a description of potential next steps. In "old money" a level 2 child in year five is operating on a par with an average year 2 child. By talking with the year 2 teacher, the professional dialogue will offer insights into routes. In a separate system, it may be necessary to make links with feeder schools.

- **In house solutions 2.** The school SENCo, if (s)he has undertaken the required training, should be in a position to offer the broad brush explanations necessary for class-based colleagues.
- **Planning for learning** needs to look at the dynamics as well as the fixed points. The plan, based on expectation, should prompt thinking on the hoof, ensuring interactions that result on lessons being tweaked to the evident needs.
- Consider the diagram below. **Basic principle of SEND, know your children, well.**

