

## Towards 2014 – Preparing for Change

### Guidance Sheet 9 (July 2014)

#### Which Children Should Receive SEN Support?

##### The Issue:

##### In the SEN and Disabilities Review 2010, Ofsted said:

.... we also recognise that as many as half of all pupils identified for School Action would not be identified as having special educational needs if schools focused on improving teaching and learning for all, with individual goals for improvement.....

Schools should stop identifying pupils as having special educational needs when they simply need better teaching and pastoral support.

##### Ofsted Subsidiary Guidance September 2013 paragraph 47 says:

Inspectors should also look at the way the school identifies pupils who have special educational needs. They should find out whether pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, when in fact their progress has been hampered by weak teaching.

##### The (0-25) SEN Code of Practice (July 2014) says:

6.14 All schools should have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the child or young person.

6.16 Schools should assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information from previous settings and key stages where appropriate. At the same time, schools should consider evidence that a pupil may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and, if so, what reasonable adjustments may need to be made for them.

6.19 Where progress continues to be less than expected the class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, should assess whether the child has SEN.

6.23 Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN.

##### Guidance:

It is clear that the move from School Action and School Action Plus to SEN Support, expects schools to think carefully about which children are being identified as having Special Educational Needs. Schools will need to be very clear about the process which they adopt to identify such pupils. All pupils should receive quality first teaching in the classroom, with a differentiated curriculum. Those that are identified by the school tracking system as not meeting their expected targets, should receive short term, effective intervention, designed to boost their progress and get them back on track. Those that still do not make progress, having received such intervention, should be considered for SEN Support.

There are key questions which should be asked in making the decision:

1. Are pupils making 'adequate' progress (two levels over a Key Stage)?
2. Has the rate of progress accelerated with early intervention?
3. Does the pupil have a recognised special need eg ASD, Dyslexia?
4. Is the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers widening?

If the answers to questions 1 and 2 are 'no' and the answers to questions 3 and 4 are 'yes', school should begin to gather evidence from the child's parents and any professionals working with the child. They should also carry out an agreed, rigorous assessment, which will identify the key areas of learning to be included in a tailored intervention programme.

If the child does not have a recognised special need, but is not making progress the school should consider additionally:

- Is the lack of progress due to poor teaching?
- Is the lack of progress due to ineffective intervention?