

## *This is the first in a series of bulletins about the national reforms to the SEN framework.*

*A newsletter will be published each half term.*

### Introduction

In March 2011, the Government published its consultation Green Paper on special educational needs and disability. The purpose of this paper was to test a range of proposals that would respond to existing failings and frustrations within the system. These failings included:

- Children with special educational needs or disability sometimes do not get the help they need to do well.
- It can take too long to find out that a child needs help.
- Sometimes children with special educational needs or a disability do not do well at school because people don't expect them to.
- Parents do not have enough information about what help and which schools are best for their child.
- Parents have to ask separately for every bit of help they need.
- Teachers, health workers and social care workers do not always work together to get the best help for a child and their family.

current Statutory and Learning Difficulties assessment processes.

- That families of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan can access a personal budget linked to the plan.
- That Local Authorities and other stakeholders have to publish a Local Offer that describes provision available for children with special educational needs and provides advice and guidance to families.
- That there will be a new approach to identifying special educational needs through a single early years or school based category. This will replace School Action and School Action +.
- That there will be a new duty on health to provide services detailed in the plan.

### Summary of the reforms

- The introduction of a new 0 - 25 co-ordinated assessment and Education Health and Care Plan replacing the



### Timescales

The Children and Families Bill is progressing through Parliament and will be implemented from September 2014



## Emerging principles

The recommendations within the Children and Families Bill have been informed by a number of reviews into SEN including the Bercow Review into speech and language provision, the Lamb Inquiry into parental confidence as well as the work of the Pathfinder Authorities. It is clear from these reviews that new processes should be underpinned by the following principles

- Children, young people and their families should be at the centre of the process;
- They should only be expected to share information once;
- Person centred and key working approaches should be used;
- Any plans should focus on the short-term and long-term outcomes for the child;
- The process should be more streamlined but that more time should be invested in joint agreements on the outcomes for the child.

## Pathfinders

Twenty Pathfinders involving 31 Local Authorities have been established since September 2011 to test the new arrangements.

In the North East, there are 2 pathfinders, involving three Local Authorities. These are:

- Hartlepool and Darlington
- Gateshead.

Hartlepool has since been identified as the Pathfinder Champion to support the roll out across the North East and Cumbria. They have organised a number of events across the region to raise awareness of the reforms and support this roll-out. This included a regional conference and workshops.

North Yorkshire and York were also identified as Pathfinders for the York and Humberside region. We are interested in the developments in North Yorkshire, as it is one of the largest Local Authorities in the country.

## Progress in Durham

A Multi- agency workshop was held in May to launch the proposals around the reforms.

A Multi-agency SEND Reforms Steering Group was established in June to lead on the developments . The representatives are:

### Parents

Marsha Dolan

### Durham County Council

Jane Le Sage  
Linda Bailey  
Julie Scurfield  
Derek Sayer  
Elaine Chandler  
Suzanne Welsh  
Philip Malyan  
Suzanne Carty  
Gill Eshelby  
Glynis Barron  
Lynne Gillham  
Nora Waugh

### Schools

Julia Graham, Beechdale Nursery  
Andrea English, The Oaks  
Tracy Hutchison, Evergreen  
Tim Bennett, Windlestone  
Sue Cook, The Meadows  
Sam Robbins, The Durham Federation  
Geoff Wilson, St Bede's RC, Peterlee  
Jeanette Shaughnessy, St Mary's RC

### Colleges

Sally Hudson, East Durham and Houghall

### Health

Emma Thomas  
Dave Linsley

Work-streams have been established for the Education, Health and Care Plan and the Local Offer. A work-stream to consider Personal Budgets is about to be launched. More parents are involved in these work-streams.

Colleagues have also visited North Yorkshire to discuss their approach to the SEN reforms particularly the single assessment process and their Local Offer.



A Communication Strategy will be launched in October to ensure that parents and carers, children and young people, School Governors and professionals from across all agencies are kept informed.

## Future Dates



### Workshops organised by Hartlepool:

#### Personal budgets:

- 12 December 2013 at 9:30 in Stockton.
- 13 December 2013 at 9:30 in the Dryden Centre, Gateshead.

#### Preparing for Adulthood:

- 5 February 2014 at 9:30 am in Stockton.
- 6 February 2014 at 9:30 am in the Dryden Centre, Gateshead.

*There will be a limited number of places but if you would like to attend please contact Derek Sayer at [derek.sayer@durham.gov.uk](mailto:derek.sayer@durham.gov.uk)*

### Dates of work-stream meetings

#### SEND Steering Group

Wednesday 6 November 2013 at 1:00 pm at the Leadership Centre.

#### Education, Health and Care Plans

Friday 18 October 2013 at 1:00 pm at the Leadership Centre.

#### Local Offer

- Tuesday 22 October 2013 at 1:00 pm at the Leadership Centre.
- Wednesday 20 November 2013 at 10:00 am.

#### Making Changes Together Conference

- Thursday 14 November 2013 at 6:30 pm at Ramside Hall.
- Friday 15 November 2013 at 10:00 am at Ramside Hall.

- This is a significant reform that affects children and young people, parents and carers, schools and all stakeholders involved with children and their families.
- Further events will be organised but please contact Derek Sayer if you would like him to come and speak to Management Groups, parent/carer groups about the reforms and hear their views.

## Publications

Information from the Pathfinders can be found at [www.sendpathfinder.co.uk](http://www.sendpathfinder.co.uk)

### HOT OFF THE PRESS

The Department for Education has published the draft SEN Code of Practice. This can be found at <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/>. All responses to this consultation must be received at the DfE by **no later than 9 December 2013**.

We are organising the following consultation events:

- Tuesday 19th November 9am - Durham Leadership Centre.
- Wednesday 20th November 1pm - Venue to be confirmed.
- Tuesday 26th November 3pm - Durham Leadership Centre.

If you would like to attend any of these events please email [derek.sayer@durham.gov.uk](mailto:derek.sayer@durham.gov.uk)

### For further information

Bulletins will be circulated widely. They will be placed on the Making Changes Together website at [www.mctdurham.co.uk](http://www.mctdurham.co.uk) and schools will be able to access them through the SENCO network on the Durham Learning Gateway. If you need further information about the developments in Durham please contact Derek Sayer, SEND Development Officer by e-mailing [derek.sayer@durham.gov.uk](mailto:derek.sayer@durham.gov.uk)

