# Best Practice Network school improvement library

## Improving provision and practice for pupils with SEND, impacting on their progress and outcomes

### Headteacher and SENCo, Primary School, North West

Tags: Primary, SEND, SENCO, federation

### The issue

* Significant numbers of children with SEND in the school
* Data analysis identified need to improve SEND progress and outcomes
* National assessment reform for pupils with SEND required a review of provision and practice
* New SENCO in post

We have experienced period of change with Education Health and Care plans replacing Statements on a rolling programme. Following the Rochford Review, the statutory requirement for teachers to use performance scales, (P-scales), to assess pupils with SEND, who are not working at the standard of national curriculum assessments was removed and replaced with Pre-Key Stage Standards in 2018. Provision and practice for pupils with SEND in my school required review.

When reviewing whole school change I used our ‘Solutions Oriented Schools’ (SOS) principles. I evaluated what works well, and what requires improvement and identified that many of our successes resulted from systems. Frequently, the solutions posed are too simple to deal with the full complexity of the problem. There was a need for improvements to the systems in place to support pupils with SEND.

I reviewed the outcomes for pupils with SEND and looked at quantitative data assessing progress and outcomes. I examined qualitative data; what do we offer our pupils with SEND to prepare them for the next stage of their education and adult life and identified that this was inconsistent for pupils with SEND. I set the target to improve outcomes for the groups and consistency of response to their needs.

### The solution

* Collaborated with SEND Governor and board to improve SEND provision
* Conducted a SEND audit
* Budget review and development of outcome informed budget for SEND
* Reformed SEND assessment, introducing alternative methods of assessment
* Improveed quality of IEPs
* Established cycle of annual reviews
* Established effective systems and processes for managing SEND provision
* Improved systems for EHCP writing and review
* Established provision mapping for children with SEND
* Developed SEND partnerships regionally
* Exploited support from TSA and Federation SENDco
* Developed early intervention strategy and intervention impact reviews
* SEND focussed CPD and coaching
* Teaching and learning reviews, learning walks, observations and monitoring
* Teaching assistant performance monitoring

A SEND Governor offers both support and challenge to improve provision and practice for pupils with SEND. Feeding back to Governors on SEND progress and outcomes highlighted inconsistencies in the provision and practice for individuals. The Governors were fully on board. The Governors questioned outcomes of pupils without the knowledge of individuals and this prompted the development of a case study approach. Through a SEND audit with Governors and Federation Leads I was challenged to consider how budget allocations were being used to meet the needs of the pupils and manage the annual spending per pupil. This was drilled down in order to identify the support individuals were given and any justifications for any over or underspending.

I questioned what systems, structures and processes were in place for the children with SEND. I carried out a review to identify what was in place and if they had a purpose that was understood, a clear outcome and were being effectively monitored.

I reviewed:

* Identification of pupils with SEND, I questioned identification of pupils and how is this communicated with the SENDCO, Head of School and parents
* Target setting for individuals : the use of IEPS, sharing with parents and record keeping
* Provision mapping for individuals including spending of SEND funding allocations
* Progress and outcomes of pupils with SEND
* The recording of recommendations from Outside Agencies and implementation
* Roles and responsibilities of the Head of School and Federation SENDCO
* Policies, procedures and paperwork in use by in the region and systems for managing pupils from two Local Authorities and three Health Authorities
* Reporting to the Governing Body

The evidence suggested that I need to:

* Be mindful that the effective practice praised by Ofsted is as a result of school systems rather than individuals.
* Audit and review our strategy for identifying and supporting pupils with SEND.
* Review the allocation of funding and the impact of spending.
* Focus on those pupils with SEND who do not have 1:1 support.
* Ensure record keeping is effective.
* Have clarity on the differing systems in operation across the region.
* Ensure parents are fully informed.
* Track progress and outcomes of pupils with SEND as a separate group.
* Review daily provision and practice for individuals with SEND.

My action plan addressed each of these.

To lead change that would improve the provision and practice for pupils with SEND, I planned to improve the systems within school with a clear focus on the Code of Practice, and accountability.

The effect of the changes planned would be improvements to:

* Provision and practice for pupils with SEND.
* Progress and outcomes for all pupils with SEND.
* Paperwork and record keeping systems. They will clearly track the provision the children have received and its impact.
* Spending. Directly link to outcomes. Interventions and strategies adopted will be clearly costed. There will be regular reviews of the impact of the money spent.
* Support from the Federation SENDCO. They will be fully informed of the SEND needs within the school, and offer Quality Assurance and challenge to ensure high quality practice.
* The early identification of needs and involvement of external agencies and practitioners.
* The engagement with outside agencies.

I shared my project with Governors and gathered their views, using these to inform my planning. Governors asked challenging questions about the rationale for the project, and the desired impact it would have for the group identified and the wider school.

I planned communication with the Governors through 1:1 meetings with the SEND Governor, committee meetings (Outcomes for Pupils, Teaching and Learning, Leadership and Management) and full governing body meetings.

I had a meeting to conduct a SEND audit. Provision and practice were challenged in detail alongside the spending of the SEND budget.

A good understanding of stakeholder views and ensuring communication is essential. This was evident when handling a complaint around provision for one child with SEND, and submitting representations to the Local Authority about meeting the needs of new children to the school.

A Federation Partnership of schools has benefits. A distributed structure of leadership and management has aided succession planning. My school has historically been in a vulnerable position with an IEB and falling roles, the Federation has supported the growth of the school and positive changes to the quality of education offered - Ofsted Outstanding 2017.

I am in the new position of leading SEND and I am supported by an experienced Federation SENDCO. Exploiting this opportunity for collaborative working aids both schools. There has been invaluable CPD for myself and my staff and a level of quality assurance in monitoring from these links.

The school’s location means that pupils attend from two regions and are the responsibility of the SEN Teams in the relevant local authority. I have established a close working relationship with SEN officers in both Authorities. A recent SEND inspection in one region led to changes to systems and paperwork and I have utilised partnership opportunities with the LA and local schools to understand these.

The TAF (Team Around the Family) and CAF (Common Assessment Framework) processes in the two Authorities differ and I have sought training from both Authorities. I have opened and lead on a CAF for one pupil and this has resulted in an application for a needs assessment.

An overarching aim of my action plan is the early identification of needs and support. Through partnership working and collaboration I have actioned this and seen benefits for individuals and the wider school.

The Governing body received updates throughout the plan. An updated SEND policy was ratified by Governors and feedback provided by myself and the Federation SENDCO support collaboratively. Governors offered both support and challenge with decision making, asking questions to establish how changes had been planned and the impact measured. The SEND Governor has kept up to date with changes in practice and provision through regular contact with the Federation SENDCO. Governors being informed and having the opportunity to question, challenge and input into decisions has proved invaluable.

My actions have been informed by examples of leadership from other schools, and in particular specialist provision. Working with different leaders through our Teaching School Alliance has enabled me to reflect on how to bring about rapid and sustained change with a systems driven approach.

Throughout the implementation phase evidence of change was being gathered. Highlighting improvements and strengths and sharing these with staff were important for the project to gain momentum and have impact. Measures of progress, both quantitative and qualitative were captured. Where impact was not evident or less than expected this was unpicked and reviewed. The pace of change was reviewed, milestones were planned in. Consideration was given to progress measures and allowing sufficient time for impact to be observed and measured before reviewing the success of changes and any adaptations.

Where progress data showed minimal change for pupils, further evidence was reviewed and evaluated. This has informed the next stage of the project which will look at how we implement the Pre-Key Stage Standards as a means of measuring pupil progress and/or attainment in 2018-19.

Planning in opportunities to review the data for all vulnerable groups on a half termly basis is a key part of my evaluation. A review of the progress and attainment of pupils with SEND features. This data is shared with the Federation SENDCO, Executive Headteacher and Governors. The review by three different groups/individuals supports monitoring and adds a further level of scrutiny.

I have increased the information sharing with the Federation SENDCO, this has provided an additional level of accountability. Information sharing led to challenging questions being posed that supported us to reflect on the impact of actions taken and the reasons behind any patterns and trends.

The provision for pupils at a SEN support level has improved with more detailed provision mapping and focused IEPS, which are now reviewed half termly.

Teaching and learning reviews, staff meetings and INSET sessions have been planned in response to the SEND needs in the school and improving provision; e.g. a new reception child with a pending diagnosis of ASC is joining the school in September, therefore one of our partners will deliver training.

The annual review process for children in receipt of additional funding has also been reviewed and now offers a more collective response. All staff working with the pupil in school and outside agencies contribute. The review is conducted in a timely manner and recommendations are actioned swiftly.

I was mindful when introducing new systems and practices around SEND, not to increase workload. I carefully planned time in for the systems to be implemented. Staff meeting allocations for provision mapping, IEPs, and data input. I planned in training to support staff knowledge, understanding and skills for them to complete tasks efficiently.

I made changes in other areas of school practice to balance any increased workload from these changes. I introduced a ‘No more marking’ policy and replaced marking with feedback and structured conversations within lessons, with no negative impact on outcomes. I provided unqualified, newly qualified and recently qualified staff, with additional non-contact time, mentor support, and experienced colleague support from school and the Federation.

The fast paced nature of education means that there have been a number of changes to action in the last year, and it has been important to draw upon relevant partnerships and collaborations when implementing change.

As Head in a new school, I have looked for opportunities to work collaboratively in partnerships with others to benefit the school. Drawing on experienced colleagues for support where and when appropriate. Existing partnerships with the Federation, TSA, Cluster and outside agencies have been strengthened.

It has been essential this year to know of the partnerships and collaborations available to draw on areas of expertise when relevant; e.g. having a Year 6 teacher resign, pre-capability, in the Autumn Term meant there was a necessity to initiate collaborations with experienced Upper Key Stage 2.

My work across the Federation, TSA and Cluster has enabled me to collaborate. I believe this partnership working is vital to the success and growth of the school. In a small school it is easy to become isolated and struggle to keep up with change on a local, national and global scale. The partnerships that have been established and continue to flourish will support ongoing success.

Having a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development is important so skills are shared Federation wide; e.g. the Federation SENDCO has supported my first year as SENDCO. The strengths of our setting, expertise in EYFS and KS1 moderation, were shared and highlighted by Ofsted.

Working on a Local Authority border, building partnerships with those involved in both authorities is important. This provides the necessary support when working with the different authority teams.

The work with the local TSA and Universities is benefiting our succession planning as a School and Federation. We have historically experienced difficulties with recruitment and these partnerships are proving beneficial.

### Impact

Outcomes for SEND pupils improved in 2018. Evidence shows in some year groups progress is above that expected. Where progress is less than expected there are reasons, alternative progress measures have been considered.

The provision and practice for pupils with SEND has improved. This has been evidenced in Precision Teaching observations daily, and though quality assured Teaching and Learning Reviews with the Federation SENDCO and/or Executive Headteacher.

Alternative assessments, such as SWST, NARA, LASS, NFER VR and Non VR, have been introduced to assess progress, and identify specific areas of need.

Referrals to specialist support: SALT, Paediatrics, and Educational Psychologist, have increased.

The CAF process has been initiated for one SEND pupil and an application for a Needs assessment actioned.

Early intervention systems have been improved with SENDCO referrals now being used to raise concerns, and action plans established promptly.

'Action for Inclusion' meetings have been conducted to support the induction of two new pupils.

The evidence gathered over the duration of the project clearly shows that the school finds itself in a stronger position to support children with SEND through early identification, provision and practice, support of specialist services, and applications for needs assessments.

The outcomes and progress for pupils with SEND have been analysed and presented to Governors and staff highlighting the strengths and areas for development.

Provision mapping systems have improved. Half termly analysis of provision maps and IEPS have improved provision and practice. Reviewing interventions and their impact has been positive but there is further work to do. Advice from the EP service has helped to identify those interventions that are most effective and using up to date research of the EEF supports us to match interventions to needs.

SEN auditing has been undertaken and highlighted any changes to provision, practice and allocations of budget.

When analysing progress for pupils with SEND we can see that:

* Early intervention had a positive impact with pupils in Reception (all SEN Support pupils) making between 4 and 5 points progress (expected progress is 3 points).
* One pupil with SEN support needs in Year 3 made less than expected progress in Reading and Writing. Our case study approach shows that they have been supported with referrals to Paediatrics and SALT. School initiated a CAF. A possible diagnosis of ADHD and Dyspraxia is being explored. School has made an application for a needs assessment.
* In Year 6 (all SEN Support pupils) above expected progress has been made in Reading, Writing and Maths. A Year 6 pupil, for whom SEN needs where identified early by school, but requested by parents not to pursue, has achieved the Expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths. For another individual in Year 6, an outcome of Level 1 in Reading was recorded at the end of KS1, and they are now working at the Expected standard (Scaled score 107).

When using quantitative data to evaluate and monitor performance it is also important to consider the qualitative data available.

Interventions are more closely targeted to individual needs.

Barriers to learning are addressed and support and advice is obtained.

An inclusive environment is evident throughout the school and opportunities are planned for to include all. For example, on educational visits and residentials any Physical Disability needs are always fully met.

I am most proud that all pupils are actively encouraged and supported to achieve their full potential, and leave school with a positive and inclusive outlook.