# UNIVERSAL UNIT UNIT 2 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY: DEFINITIONS AND DATA

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

The trainee will:

- understand the definitions of special educational needs and disability;
- understand the links between the nature of the definitions and school practices in identification;
- analyse their school's data in the light of national patterns;
- review school practice in identification and making provision;
- plan school-based developments.

## **ONLINE RESOURCES**

The content and tasks throughout these PDFs are supported by online resources that are designed to facilitate and supplement your training experience. Links to these are signposted where appropriate. The resources use graphics

and interactive elements to:

- Highlight salient points
- Provide at-a-glance content summaries
- Introduce further points of interest
- Offer visual context
- Break down and clearly present the different stages and elements of processes, tasks, practices, and theories

The online resources offer great benefits, both for concurrent use alongside the PDFs, or as post-reading revision and planning aids.

Please note that the resources cannot be used in isolation without referencing the PDFs. Their purpose is to complement and support your training process, rather than lead it.

You should complete any learning or teaching tasks and additional reading detailed in this PDF to make full use of the Advanced training materials for autism; dyslexia; speech, language and communication; emotional, social and behavioural difficulties; moderate learning difficulties.

To find out more about the resources, how they work, and how they can enhance your training, visit the homepage at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/lamb">www.education.gov.uk/lamb</a>

The first resource for this unit can be found here:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/intro

## **BRIEFING 1: THE DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The Education Act 1996 says that a child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her<sup>1</sup>. In turn a child has a learning difficulty if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age. It also says that a disability, which prevents or hinders them from making use of education facilities, amounts to a learning difficulty if it calls for special educational provision to be made. Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or otherwise different from provision that is normally available in the area.

It is often thought that special educational needs broadly equates to learning difficulties. In fact the definition includes more children than those who have *learning difficulties* in the commonly accepted sense. This is because the definition of learning difficulties in the legislation includes children who have a disability and who need something additional or different to be provided for them. So, for example, a child with a visual impairment who needs materials to be provided in an enlarged font is defined in the legislation as having a learning difficulty even if they are not behind in their learning.

The definition of SEN is relative in two important ways:

- children are compared to the majority of children of the same age: a child has a *learning difficulty* if he or she has a *significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age;*
- and provision to meet their needs is defined relative to the provision that is normally available in the area.

The relative definition means that there is significant variation in the way pupils are identified as having SEN: numbers of pupils identified; the type of needs; at different stages and over time. Ofsted<sup>2</sup> highlights variation in:

- the way that categories of need are used;
- the nature of the need that is identified as the primary concern where learners have more than one SEN;
- the way that schools place learners at the different stages of the SEN Code of Practice and in the guidance that local authorities use for considering whether to make a statutory assessment or to issue a statement;
- the numbers of learners placed in special schools in different local authority areas.

Many of these considerations are as much about the context: school practices or local patterns of provision, as about the individual characteristics of pupils. A decision about whether a pupil is identified as having a special educational need or not relies on a professional judgment. The approach adopted in the SEN Code of Practice is to guide professional judgment with a series of broad indicators. Across different areas of special educational needs, these rely on notions of:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Section 312 Education Act 1996

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ofsted (2010) The special educational needs and disability review: A statement is not enough, page 20, sections 18–39

- adequate progress; and
- responsiveness to earlier interventions.

However, if these are the considerations used to identify pupils as having SEN, there are inherent risks. Ofsted identified the risk of acceptance of low attainment and slow progress as given:

Having identified pupils with special educational needs in this way, some providers saw this as a reason for continued low attainment or slow progress<sup>3</sup>.

If falling behind means that pupils may too readily be identified as having SEN, another key challenge for the 'adequate progress' criterion is that pupils with specific difficulties who may nonetheless be attaining at or near age-related norms may be assumed not to have a special educational need.

### **BRIEFING 2: ADDITIONAL TO OR OTHERWISE DIFFERENT FROM**

The first part of the definition of special educational needs relies on a judgment about whether a pupil has learning difficulty that amounts to a *significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age.* The second part of the definition relies on a judgment about whether a pupil's learning difficulty *calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.* Special educational provision is provision that is *additional to or otherwise different from* provision that is normally available in the area<sup>4</sup>.

It is helpful to be clear about what is *normally available* in school and what is *additional to or otherwise different from*.

Inspectors observed schools focusing on providing additional help for pupils with identified special educational needs rather than on improving the quality of their standard offer for all pupils. In some of their visits to schools, inspectors met pupils who were provided with significant additional support whose needs could and should have been met by appropriately differentiated teaching, good learning and pastoral support earlier on<sup>5</sup>.

Ofsted argues that decisions about the introduction of additional provision should be based on an understanding of gaps in pupils' knowledge and evidence based research of what works well and not, as suggested in the 2010 Review, be used to 'make up for poor day-to-day teaching'<sup>6</sup>.

What do schools sensibly make normally available and what do they provide that is additional to or otherwise different from the main offer? Many interventions for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ofsted (2010) The Special educational needs and disability review: A statement is not enough

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Section 312 Education Act 1996

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ofsted (2010) The Special educational needs and disability review: A statement is not enough

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ofsted (2010) The Special educational needs and disability review: A statement is not enough

pupils with special educational needs are versions of what teachers provide for all pupils, but with greater intensity, frequency or detail. Two aspects of practice are considered below: assessment and parental engagement.

# BRIEFING 3: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS: THE DATA

Whilst the development of data on the progress of pupils with SEN lags behind data on the progress of other pupils, the data on other aspects of SEN are relatively well-developed. The submission of data through the School Census provides a time series over a number of years.

The most recent data are available on the Department for Education Research and Statistics website: <u>http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/</u>

Listen to the MP3 audio clip "IOE2-How do we identify which pupils have SEN?"

## Listen to this clip:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/identifying-sen

# SEN variation: Trends in overall numbers of pupils identified

## See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/trends

In 2011 there were some 1,449,685 pupils with SEN without a statement, representing 17.8 per cent of pupils across all schools. Over 2003 to 2010 there was an increase from 14 per cent to 18.2 per cent, with a slight decrease (mostly at School Action) to 17.8 per cent in 2011.

Between 2003 and 2011, the percentage of pupils with a statement went down from 3 per cent to 2.7 per cent in 2010, with a slight rise to 2.8 percent in 2011.

Over the same period, 2003 to 2011, overall attainment at the end of key stages 2 and 4 increased, both for pupils identified as having SEN and those not so identified.

Table 1: All schools – pupils with and without statements of special educational needs, as at January each year<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Department for Education (2011) Special Educational Needs in England, January 2011

|      | % of pupils with a statement | % of pupils with SEN but without a statement |
|------|------------------------------|--|
| 2011 | 2.8%                         | 17.8%  |
| 2010 | 2.7%                         | 18.2%  |
| 2009 | 2.7%                         | 17.8%  |
| 2008 | 2.8%                         | 17.2%  |
| 2007 | 2.8%                         | 16.4%  |
| 2006 | 2.9%                         | 15.7%  |
| 2005 | 2.9%                         | 14.9%  |
| 2004 | 3.0%                         | 14.4%  |
| 2003 | 3.0%                         | 14.0%  |

#### SEN variation: local and school level

A consequence of the relative nature of the definition of SEN is that the number of pupils identified as having SEN varies significantly between schools<sup>8</sup>.

Research carried out by the National Children's Bureau and the Thomas Coram Unit<sup>9</sup> also found significant variation in rates of identification at a local level. The researchers found that across different local authorities:

- higher levels of deprivation were associated with higher levels of pupils with SEN;
- there was little or no association between deprivation and the rate of pupils with a statement;
- higher rates of disability were associated with a lower percentage of pupils with SEN with a statement.

The researchers expected that appeals against the decision of the local authority would be more frequent where there were low numbers of statements. In fact there was no correlation between levels of statements and levels of appeals. The rate of pupils with a statement depends much less on the level of disability in the area. It suggests that, as with schools, it is more influenced by local policy and practice.

#### SEN variation: month of birth

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> DCSF (2010) Breaking the link between special educational needs and low attainment: Everyone's business

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Lewis, J., Mooney, A., Brady, L., Gill, C., Henshall, A., Willmott, N., Owen, C., Evans, K. & Statham, J. Special educational needs and disability: Understanding local variation in prevalence, service provision and support. DCSF commissioned research report

The younger children are in their year group, the more likely they are to be identified as having SEN. So, summer born children are more likely to be identified as having SEN than their autumn born peers.

#### See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/birth-date

### SEN and disadvantage

Children who are entitled to free school meals are more likely to be identified as having SEN:

Table 2: Percentage of pupils with special educational needs who were eligible for free school meals by school type in 2011<sup>10</sup>.

| % of pupils with SEN who were eligible for free school meals by school type in 2011 |  |            |  |  |
|---|--|------------|--|--|
| School type   | Provision                              | Percentage |  |  |
| Primary   |  |            |  |  |
|   | Pupils with no SEN                     | 14.90%     |  |  |
|   | Pupils with SEN but without statements | 31.50%     |  |  |
|   | Pupils with statements                 | 28.50%     |  |  |
| Secondary   |  |            |  |  |
|   | Pupils with no SEN                     | 11.40%     |  |  |
|   | Pupils with SEN but without statements | 26.70%     |  |  |
|   | Pupils with statements                 | 25.90%     |  |  |
| Special   |  |            |  |  |
|   | Pupils with no SEN                     | 2.90%      |  |  |
|   | Pupils with SEN but without statements | 24.70%     |  |  |
|   | Pupils with statements                 | 35.10%     |  |  |

## SEN variation by age and stage

The vast majority of pupils with SEN are identified after school entry. The incidence of pupils with SEN both with and without statements is greater in secondary schools (2.0 per cent with a statement, 19.4 per cent without) than in primary schools (1.4 per cent with a statement, 17.9 per cent without a statement)<sup>11</sup>.

There is an increase in the percentage of pupils with a statement over the years of primary education, for example:

- at age 6, 1.7 per cent of pupils have a statement
- at age 8, 2.6 per cent of pupils have a statement
- at age 10, 3.2 per cent of pupils have a statement<sup>12</sup>

For secondary pupils the rate of pupils with a statement is fairly constant.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Department for Education (2011) Special Educational Needs in England, January 2011
<sup>11</sup> DfE (2011) Special Educational Needs in England, January 2011. SFR 14/2011
<sup>12</sup> DfE (2011) Special Educational Needs in England, January 2011. SFR 14/2011

### SEN variation: Different needs identified at different ages and stages

The nature of special education needs also varies at different key stages. In 2009, the highest percentage of pupils with SEN, without a statement, below the age of 7 are those with speech, language and communication needs;

- the highest percentage of pupils with SEN, without a statement, aged 7-11 are those with moderate learning difficulties; and
- the highest percentage of pupils with SEN, without a statement, aged 12-17 are those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

#### See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/key-stages

Table 3:

Percentage of pupils by SEN status and primary need\*\* in state-funded primary schools, state-funded secondary schools and special schools\*, January 2011<sup>13</sup>

|   | State-funded primary schools |      | State-funded secondary schools |      | Special<br>schools* | All schools |       |      |      |       |
|---|------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|---------------------|-------------|-------|------|------|-------|
|   | SA+                          | St't | Total                          | SA+  | St't                | Total       | Total | SA+  | St't | Total |
| Specific<br>learning<br>difficulty                    | 11***                        | 4.4  | 9.8                            | 17.2 | 12.2                | 16.1        | 1.2   | 13.7 | 5.4  | 11.1  |
| Moderate<br>learning<br>difficulty                    | 25.9                         | 11.3 | 23.3                           | 24.9 | 18.8                | 23.5        | 19.7  | 25.4 | 17.3 | 22.9  |
| Behaviour,<br>Emotional &<br>Social<br>Difficulties   | 19.8                         | 13   | 18.6                           | 34.4 | 15.6                | 30          | 14.2  | 26.1 | 14.2 | 22.5  |
| Speech,<br>Language<br>and<br>Communicati<br>on Needs | 28.7                         | 24.2 | 27.9                           | 6.3  | 15.2                | 8.4         | 4.9   | 18.9 | 13.3 | 17.2  |
| Autistic<br>Spectrum<br>Disorder                      | 3.9                          | 20.9 | 6.9                            | 4    | 19                  | 7.5         | 19.6  | 4    | 19.8 | 8.8   |

\* Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools. Only total SEN are included for special schools because of the small numbers without a statement in special schools. The single largest group of pupils in special schools are those with severe learning difficulties, 24% of all pupils in special schools, not shown in this table.

\*\* Only five areas of need are shown. For full data see latest Statistical First Release: <u>http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> DfE (2011) Special Educational Needs in England: January 2011. SFR 14/2011

\*\*\* 11 per cent of pupils at School Action Plus in primary schools are identified as having specific learning difficulties. Highest percentage in each column is highlighted.

In table 3, the data for 2011 are shown by SEN status and type of need for five areas of need: specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, behaviour emotional and social difficulties, speech, language and communication needs and autistic spectrum disorder.

## BRIEFING 4: DISABILITY: DEFINITION AND DATA

### The definition of disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

A common perception is that the definition of a disability applies to a small group of people, commonly thought to be only those with a physical or sensory impairment<sup>14</sup>. In practice it applies to a much larger group of people. The definition is broad and can include a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as well as those that are more readily recognised, such as a visual or physical impairment. An impairment does not of itself mean that a pupil is disabled. It is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has to be considered. To amount to a disability the effect has to be *long-term* and *substantial*.

The expressions *long-term* and *substantial* are somewhat misleading in that they are neither particularly long-term nor very substantial. *Long-term* is defined in the Equality Act as having lasted or being likely to last 12 months or more. Clearly this rules out conditions such as a broken limb which is likely to mend within that time. *Substantial* means *more than minor or trivial* but it may helpfully be thought of as meaning *having some substance*. The combined effect of these two terms is to provide a relatively low threshold for what may count as a disability, thus including more people in the definition.

Progressive conditions are conditions that are likely to change and develop over time. Pupils who have progressive conditions are included in the definition and are likely to be covered as soon as there is some effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, and before there is a substantial effect. In addition, people with cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV infection are covered by the Equality Act definition as soon as they have the condition and before there is necessarily any effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Pupils with a severe disfigurement do not have to prove that their impairment has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Porter J and others (2008) *Disability Data Collection for Children's Services* Research Report DCSF-RR062

For planning purposes and for the avoidance of discrimination, some schools think of more pupils being included in the definition of disability rather than fewer.

### Special educational needs and disability

Though the definition of disability comes from the Equality Act 2010, see below, and the definition of SEN comes from the Education Act 1996, there is a significant overlap between the two groups of pupils.

The definition of SEN includes many, but not necessarily all, disabled children: a disabled child has special educational needs if they have a disability and need special educational provision to be made for them in order to be able to access the education which is available locally. The largest group of pupils who may be disabled but do not have SEN are likely to be those with a range of medical conditions, for example, those with severe asthma, arthritis or diabetes may not have SEN but may have rights under the Equality Act.

Similarly, not all children with SEN will be defined as having a disability under the Equality Act 2010. It is likely that many of the pupils who have SEN and a statement or who are at *School Action Plus*, or *Early Years Action Plus*, will count as disabled. This is not because they are at School Action Plus or have a statement but because pupils in these groups are more likely to meet the definition in the Equality Act than pupils who are at School Action.

Some children whose emotional and behavioural difficulties have their origins in social or domestic circumstances be identified as having SEN, but may fall outside the definition of disability in the Equality Act, though those with a mental health condition are likely to be included where their impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

#### See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/disability

#### **Disability data**

The data on disability are less well developed than those on SEN. Data have not been collected through the School Census, though in 2011 a voluntary collection of disability data was proposed.

A number of UK studies that have collected disability data have produced prevalence figures that vary by more than 10%<sup>15</sup>. A report from the Cabinet Office in 2005<sup>16</sup> drew on a number of different studies and data sources to estimate that about 11 million adults and 772,000 children in the UK are disabled, equivalent to 24% of the adult population and 7% of all children.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Porter J and others (2008) *Disability Data Collection for Children's Services* Research Report DCSF-RR062

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Cabinet Office (2005) Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People

#### See online resource:

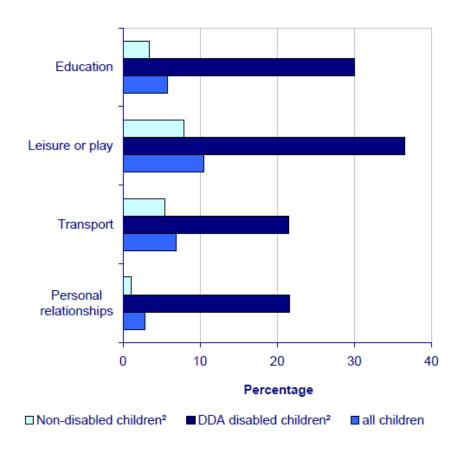
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/disability-data

#### The Life Opportunities Survey

A more recent survey, The Life Opportunities Survey, carried out by the Office for National Statistics for the Office for Disability Issues<sup>17</sup>, carefully distinguished between children who had an impairment and those who met the criteria in the Equality Act definition of disability. The survey identified 9 per cent of children aged 11 to 15 in Great Britain as being disabled.

The survey compares *participation restrictions* experienced by children with and without impairments. Leisure or play activities was the area where both groups reported participation restrictions, with parents of 29 per cent of children with impairments and 8 per cent of children without impairments reporting a restriction in this area. Parents of children with impairments reported more restrictions to education (28 per cent), transport (21 per cent) and personal relationships (18 per cent) than parents of children without impairments (3 per cent, 5 per cent and 1 per cent respectively).

Table 4: Participation Restrictions experienced by DDA disabled and nondisabled children, 2009/10, in Great Britain<sup>18</sup>



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Office for National Statistics (2009) *Life Opportunities Survey: Interim Results, 2009/10* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Office for National Statistics (2009) Life Opportunities Survey: Interim Results, 2009/10

Parents of children with impairments identified the attitudes of others as being the most significant barrier to participation (reported by 35 per cent of parents), with lack of help or assistance and lack of special aids or equipment (20 per cent and 14 per cent respectively) next.

# TASK 1: REFLECTING ON THE DATA

Sir Alan Steer: Review of pupil behaviour: Interim report

Accurate identification of children's special educational needs is essential if those needs are to be met and that child is to progress. While many schools display exemplary practice there is a lack of consistency of practice in the system as a whole and there are problems both with the over identification and under identification of SEN by individual schools. Some schools identify far higher numbers than found in other schools in a similar context. This might result from a desire to emphasise to the outside world and Ofsted the difficulties the school faces, but over identification as well as under identification can be damaging to the children and to good practice in the school. The high number of summer born children identified as having special educational needs is surprising and would appear to lack justification. The impact of erroneous identification on the expectations of the child and their teachers is a matter of concern and is likely to be a cause of subsequent problems. This includes problems around pupils' motivation, engagement and behaviour.

When very large numbers of children in a school are identified with special educational needs it can have an adverse effect on expectations for attainment. The SENCO, teachers and support staff can become overwhelmed, finding it difficult to prioritise and effect lasting change. In these circumstances children with real needs can be easily overlooked. I also fear that some schools with very high numbers of children with SEN may be failing to consider that the issue of pupil progression may relate to learning and teaching practice across the whole school, rather than 'within the child' barriers to achievement<sup>19</sup>.

Listen to the MP3 audio clip "Budget and Provision mapping" then discuss with colleagues:

## Listen to this clip:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/provision

What do you see as the main reasons for school level variation in the SEN data? What evidence do you have to support your view?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Sir Alan Steer (February 2009) *Review of pupil behaviour: Interim report 4.* 

Do you think there are any incentives or pressures to identify pupils as having SEN in your school? If so, what are they? Is there evidence that incentives or pressures have an impact on the school's practices?

Do you think there may be any pupils in your school whose needs have been overlooked? How might you know whether or not there are any?

What factors might lead a school to under-identify the number of pupils who count as being disabled under the DDA? What evidence are you drawing on?

# TASK 2:

Consider a group of pupils in your school. Choose one particular group of pupils, those with:

- specific learning difficulties;
- moderate learning difficulties;
- behaviour emotional and social difficulties;
- speech, language and communication needs; or
- autistic spectrum disorder.

For the group of pupils you have chosen, analyse identification rates within your own school and compare them with national figures. Then analyse the provision that your school makes that is *additional or otherwise different from* provision for all pupils. Take into account the questions set out below.

If you can work with a colleague, there will be a significant benefit from comparing and contrasting what you find in your respective analyses. You might ideally work with a colleague considering a different group of pupils in your own school or the same group of pupils in another school.

# Identification:

For the group of pupils you have chosen:

- How many pupils are identified with this type of need? If numbers are very small, you may want to jump to the next set of questions.
- What is the pattern across year groups?
- What is the pattern in terms of SEN status: School Action, School Action Plus or pupils with a statement? Is this group of pupils more or less likely than others to have a statement?
- What proportion of all pupils with SEN is this group in your school?
- If you have any specialist facility in your school, for example specialist staff, resourced provision or a unit, how many pupils are associated with this provision?
- How does the data in your school compare with the national figures for pupils with this type of need, in your phase (primary or secondary) at School Action Plus and with a statement? Use the data in Table 3 on or use the latest data in the Statistical First Release, available at: http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/

Consider how pupils in your chosen group are identified:

- How many pupils are identified before they are admitted to the school?
- What is the role of staff, including any specialist staff, in identifying pupils as having this type of need?
- What is the role of parents?
- What is the role of pupils themselves?
- What is the role of any external specialist services?

## Provision:

For the group of pupils you have chosen, consider the provision that is made in your school. If you have a provision map, use the information in that, particularly for the first few questions.

- What provision does your school make that is additional to or otherwise different from provision made for all pupils?
- What provision does your school make that is specific to this group of pupils?
- What provision do you make that is unique to individual pupils in this group?

# See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/provision-map

How does the school decide what provision to make?

- What evidence do you draw on from within or beyond the school?
- What is the role of staff, including staff with specific expertise, in deciding what provision to make?
- To what extent do staff members work collaboratively with others to identify possible solutions to particular barriers?
- What is the role of parents in proposing any particular provision or any particular approach?
- What is the role of pupils themselves?
- What is the role of any external specialist services?

What do you know about how effective the provision is?

- What evidence do you have of the impact of provision? From teachers? From support staff? From data?
- What feedback do you have from pupils themselves? From parents?
- Could any of the provision be made more effectively and efficiently if it were made more readily available for all pupils, or if it were incorporated into whole school practices? (See points raised by the Ofsted report<sup>20</sup> and discussed in Assignment 2.)
- How does your understanding of the impact of different types of provision affect subsequent decisions about provision?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ofsted (2010) The Special educational needs and disability review: A statement is not enough

# TASK 3: THE SCHOOL'S APPROACH TO DISABILITY

Set out below is a set of 13 factors in school practice that were identified as being key to supporting schools in making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Consider how well your school performs on each of these factors. Cite the evidence you are using to inform your rating.

If you can identify a colleague to work with you, ask them to undertake the same exercise. Compare your ratings and the evidence you have used.

| Factor:   | Score 1-5 | Evidence |
|---|-----------|----------|
| Vision and values based on an   |           |          |
| inclusive ethos   |           |          |
| A 'can do' attitude from all staff  |           |          |
| A pro-active approach to<br>identifying barriers and finding<br>practical solutions |           |          |
| Strong collaborative relationships with pupils and parents                          |           |          |
| A meaningful voice for pupils   |           |          |
| A positive approach to managing behaviour   |           |          |
| Strong leadership by senior management and governors                                |           |          |
| Effective staff training and development  |           |          |
| The use of expertise from outside the school  |           |          |
| Building disability into resourcing arrangements                                    |           |          |
| A sensitive approach to meeting<br>the impairment specific needs of<br>pupils       |           |          |
| Regular critical review and evaluation  |           |          |
| The availability of role models and positive images of disability                   |           |          |

# TASK 4: NEXT STEPS

Review the strengths and weaknesses you have identified in your school through your work on tasks 1-4. Gather together your evidence. Talk to relevant colleagues about your analysis. Do they agree with your analysis? And potential ways forward?

Are there implications for school development? Professional development? The development of policy and practice in your school? If so, who needs to be involved? How can these issues be taken forward? Listen to the MP3 Audio clip "How useful is pupil voice when pupils have SEND?"

### Listen to this clip:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/mld/sen-definitions-data/pupil-voice

Could you make better use of the opinions and feedback from your pupils- to what extent are they currently actively involved in any SEND policy and practice in your school?

Write down what you think needs to happen next. Then:

- Consider whether there is further work to be done on next steps?
- Consider what choices you may make in your work on other assignments in these materials to inform and develop your proposals?
- Discuss you proposals with the relevant senior manager. If there are issues to be addressed more urgently, discuss these too.
- Return to your proposals, review and revise them in the light of your work on subsequent assignments in these materials.

# **REVIEW OF LEARNING IN UNIT 2: DEFINITIONS AND DATA**

This unit set out to enable trainees to:

- understand the definitions of special educational needs and disability;
- understand the links between the nature of the definitions and school practices in identification;
- analyse their school's data in the light of national patterns;
- review school practice in identification and making provision;
- plan school-based developments.

How confident are you in each of these elements?

What evidence do you have of your learning in this unit?

Are there aspects of this unit you want to revisit?

If you completed Assignment 5, you will have considered next steps for your school. How confident are you that your initial proposals are viable?

What are the next steps for you in your learning?