



# Estyn

**Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru**

**Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales**

**“... Rhagoriaeth i Bawb...” – “...Excellence for all ...”**

**BEST PRACTICE IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF  
STATEMENTS OF SPECIAL  
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND  
DELIVERY BY SCHOOLS OF  
THE ACTION AGREED**



**“... Rhagoriaeth i Bawb...”** – “...Excellence for all ...”

# Main findings

- There is considerable variation between LEAs across Great Britain and within Wales in the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- Percentage of pupils (2003) with statements / records of need:
  - ♦ Wales 3.4% (2004 - 3.3%)
  - ♦ N. Ireland 3.1%
  - ♦ England 3.0%
  - ♦ Scotland 2.1%
- Wales figures (2004) vary from 1.6% (RCT and Bridgend) to 4.9% (Newport and Wrexham)



# Main findings

- All authorities in north-west, north-east and mid Wales have a higher than average percentage of statements.
- All authorities that have a low percentage of statements, compared with the Welsh average, are in south-east and south-west Wales.



# Main findings

- There is no clear link between the social and economic characteristics of local authority areas in Wales and the percentage of pupils with statements.
- There is no clear link between the amount of money that Welsh LEAs spend on pupils with special educational needs and the percentage of pupils with statements.



# Main findings

- Authorities that have the lowest percentage of pupils with statements:
  - ♦ reserve them for pupils who need special school placement
  - ♦ provide additional resources to pupils in mainstream schools, without requiring a statement
  - ♦ have discontinued the statements of some pupils whose needs can be met by other means.



# Main findings

- Authorities with a higher percentage of pupils with statements:
  - ♦ deliver much of their additional mainstream school support through a statement; and
  - ♦ do not often discontinue existing statements.



# Main findings

- Most LEAs have achieved some success over the past three years in reducing the number of new statements that they issue, some from a high starting point.
- Most LEAs state in their Strategic Plans that they aim to reduce statements.
- However, very few LEAs have specified a corresponding target as a percentage of pupils with statements.





# Main findings

- Almost all LEAs' plans show clear links between strategies to promote inclusive education and strategies to reduce statements.
- Most emphasise the importance of developing the capacity of mainstream schools to make high quality provision for pupils with special educational needs.



# Main findings

- LEAs do not save money by reducing statements.
- They do use their available resources more effectively.
- They give more time to school improvement work and earlier intervention with pupils with special educational needs.



# Main findings

- LEAs and schools still have much work to do to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and value for money of SEN provision that they make with or without a statement.



# Main findings

- Many LEAs have not succeeded in persuading parents and some of their schools that they can guarantee pupils' entitlement to provision without the statutory protection of a statement.
- LEAs face challenges to provide statements for pupils in order to secure scarce services from other agencies, particularly speech and language therapy.



# Main findings

- A minority of LEAs would like the Assembly to provide guidance on a suitable target for the percentage of pupils with statements.
- More would prefer to have clear guidance on:
  - ♦ the type and degree of SEN for which a statement is required; and
  - ♦ the quality and standard of provision that is appropriate for meeting the various types and degrees of SEN.



# Recommendations for Welsh Assembly Government

- Work with local authorities and health trusts, early years providers, schools and the voluntary sector to define the standards and quality of provision for all types of SEN.
- Provide guidance to local authorities and schools about the threshold of SEN at which statutory assessment and provision of a statement is appropriate.



# Recommendations for Welsh Assembly Government

- Review the SEN Code of Practice in order to clarify whether LEAs are required to provide statements for pupils for whom they make special provision in mainstream schools.
- Consult more widely with parents, carers and pupils when planning and evaluating educational provision and additional support for pupils with SEN.



# Recommendations for Welsh Assembly Government

- Use the opportunity of the current review of the curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales to:
  - ♦ strengthen the entitlement of all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum; and
  - ♦ remove the link between statements and National Curriculum disapplication.



“... Rhagoriaeth i Bawb...” – “....Excellence for all ....”



# Recommendations for Welsh Assembly Government

- Improve the clarity of information for LEAs and schools about funding of SEN provision.
- Work with LEAs and schools to develop a system to determine the value for money of all additional provision.
- Work with local authorities and health trusts to develop a more systematic approach to the joint planning and funding of services for children and young people with special needs.

