



West Midlands Regional Partnership

Annual Review Guidance for Schools

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Note: Throughout this document where reference is made to parents, the term implies parents, carers or those with parental responsibility. Where reference is made to pupil it implies child or young person.

1. Introduction

“All statements (other than those for children under 2) must be reviewed at least annually..... LEAs must ensure such a review is carried out within 12 months of either making the statement or of the previous review.”

SEN Code of Practice Paragraph 9:1

For children under five years the statement should be reviewed every six months, following the Annual Review procedures.

1.1 The Purpose of the Annual Review is to make sure that at least once a year the parents, the pupil, the Local Authority (LA), the school and all the professionals involved monitor and evaluate the continued effectiveness and relevance of the provision set out in the statement.

The focus of the Annual Review is to:

- report on progress and attainment over the past year. Reviews should therefore be positive reports which outline the child’s achievements and the strategies the school has used;
- identify areas of work and individual targets for the forthcoming year; and
- consider the continuing appropriateness of the statement in the light of the child or young person’s performance during the previous year including whether the statement should be ceased.

1.2 The role of the LA in the Annual Review process is to:

- write to Headteachers no less than 2 weeks before the start of each term with a list of pupils on their roll who will require an Annual Review that term;
- write to the designated professional in the Health Authority and Social Care Services with the same information;
- make the same list available to the Educational Psychological Service (EPS) and other Support Services; and
- send Connexions a list of all Year 9 pupils who will require a Transition Review within the coming academic year. This should be sent no later than 2 weeks before the start of the academic year.

1.3 Interim or early annual reviews may be called when:

- this is a recommendation from a previous Annual Review;
- a school identifies that a child or young person is at serious risk of disaffection or exclusion;
- the needs of a child or young person have changed significantly ;
- there is a parental request; or
- to offer reassurance to parents and professionals where there is, or has been, disagreement.

1.4 Transfer Reviews should be held 18 months before a change of age phase, for example:

- for a child attending an Infant School a transfer review should be held no later than the Summer Term of Year 1; or
- for a child attending a Combined or Primary School, or a Junior School a transfer review should be held no later than the Summer Term of Year 5.

This is to make sure that careful thought is given to the type of provision that the pupil will require for the next phase of their education.

The law requires that a statement **must** be amended to name the intended placement by February 15th in the year of transfer.

1.5 Annual Reviews, Year 9 and above

Annual Reviews in Year 9 and above **must** include planning for the young person's transition to adulthood.

2. Preparing for and conducting Annual Reviews

Preparing for and conducting Annual Reviews should be seen as a **four part process**:

- Part One: Planning the review. Preparing for the review meeting, including the collection, collation and circulation of information.
- Part Two: The Annual Review Meeting.
- Part Three: The Headteacher's report of the Annual Review Meeting.
- Part Four: The LA's review of the statement in the light of the Headteacher's report of the review meeting and its decision whether to maintain the statement, amend the statement or cease to maintain it.

2.1 Part One: Planning the Review

At least 2 weeks before the start of each term, the LA will write to the Headteacher with a list of all the children or young people who require Annual Reviews and 'Transition Planning' that term.

The Headteacher must ensure that the Annual Review meeting is arranged. The arrangements may be delegated to another member of staff.

When planning the time and date of the review meeting, it is important to consult parents and professionals to make sure that, as far as possible, the arrangements are convenient to all.

Wherever possible, the pupil should be actively involved in the review process and attend the meeting. Chapter 3 of the SEN Code of Practice, 'Pupil Participation', and Section 3 of the SEN Toolkit, gives clear guidance on how Articles 12 and 13, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child could be implemented within statutory processes.

“Children, who are capable of forming views, have a right to receive and make known their information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter affecting them. The views of the child should be given due weight according to the age, maturity and capability of the child.”

Articles 12,13 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

We should also bear in mind Every Child Matters: Change for Children. Of the five outcomes for children & young people, emphasis within this process should be given to that of making a positive contribution.

Making a positive contribution means:

- engage in decision making and support in the community and environment;
- engage in law abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school;
- develop positive relationships and choose not to bully and discriminate;
- develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges; and
- develop enterprising behaviour.

Every Child Matters: Change for Children 2004

The Headteacher **must** invite the following people to the review meeting:

- the pupil's parents, ensuring that all those with parental responsibility are informed or involved. If the child or young person is looked after by the LA then the social worker, residential worker and/or foster parents should be invited, as appropriate; the pupil's parents, ensuring that all those with parental responsibility are informed or involved. If the child or young person is looked after by the LA (accommodated or full care order) then the social worker, residential worker and/or foster parents should be invited.
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- a relevant teacher;
- a representative from the LA that is responsible for funding the provision;
- the Connexions Personal Adviser in Year 9 and above;
- any other person the Headteacher considers appropriate; and
- any other person the LA considers appropriate and specifies in a notice. This could include a representative from the receiving school in Year 2 or Year 6.

2.1 Part One: Collection, Collation and Circulation of Information

The Headteacher **must**:

- prepare a written report to circulate prior to the meeting;
- request a written report from
 - the child/young person's parents, or those with parental responsibility;
 - anyone the Head teacher considers it appropriate to ask; and
 - anyone specified by the LA.

All written reports, including that prepared by the Headteacher, must be circulated, by the school, at least 2 weeks in advance, to all those invited to attend the meeting.

The Head teacher's report should record:

- any **significant** changes in the child or young person's needs which may result in amendments to Part 2 of the statement;
- overall **progress** over the past year towards each objective identified in the statement;
- what **success** the pupil has achieved in meeting the short and long term **targets** set as steps towards the statement objectives;
- the pupil's current levels of attainment expressed as National Curriculum Levels or P levels, as appropriate; and/or scores from appropriate standardised measures; or criterion referenced assessments.
- comments upon any continuing difficulties with some insights into methods of teaching and support strategies that have proved effective; and
- whether the child or young person is fully included in the life of the school, or how this can be achieved.

2.2 Part Two: The Annual Review Meeting

Please refer to the SEN Toolkit Section 9 paragraph 18 for full guidance on conducting Annual Review meetings.

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/4614/Toolkit%209%20Text.pdf>

In the year preceding a phase transfer, the Headteacher should ensure that due consideration has been given, at the Annual Review meeting, to the *type of*

provision the child or young person is likely to require in the next phase. This is to ensure that parents can express a preference for a school to be named in Part 4 of the statement in good time for the statement to be amended by February 15th in the year of transfer.

2.3 Part Three: The Headteacher's report of the Annual Review meeting

The Headteacher **must** send, to the LA and to all those invited to attend the review, a copy of the report of the meeting together with copies of all the advice received. This should be within 10 days of the meeting or by the end of the school term, whichever is sooner.

In the case of advice which has been circulated in advance of the meeting, it is **not** necessary to send this again.

Following the Annual Review meeting in Year 9 and above, a copy of the Transition Plan should be attached to the Annual Review report and should be sent to the LA for information. It is the responsibility of the Connexions Service to implement the Transition Plan.

If the review recommends referral to outside agencies for further advice, as a matter of urgency, the Headteacher should undertake this and keep the LA informed.

2.4 Part Four: The LA's Review of the Statement

The LA concludes the review process by considering the report and recommendations of the review meeting.

When reviewing the statement, the LA may maintain the statement, amend the statement, give notice of its intent to cease to maintain the statement or start a new assessment. The LA **must** write to the parents to inform them of its decision and a copy of this letter should be sent to the Head teacher and anyone else considered appropriate. This must be within one week of making the decision.

3. Transition Planning

3.1 Annual Reviews from Year 9 onwards

Please refer to Section 10 of the SEN Toolkit Transition Planning
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/4615/Toolkit%2010%20Text.pdf>

Annual Reviews for pupils in Year 9 and above **must** follow the same procedures as all other reviews, but **must also include** Transition Planning.

At least two weeks before the start of the school year the LA will send the Connexions service a list of all pupils who require a Year 9 Annual Review. A representative from Connexions **must** attend the review.

Following the Year 9 Annual Review, the Headteacher **must** ensure that a Transition Plan is drawn up. At subsequent Annual Review meetings the Transition Plan **must** be reviewed and amended as necessary.

The Transition Plan should:

- draw together information from a range of individuals within and beyond the school in order to plan clearly and realistically with the young person for their transition to adult life; and
- include the details for ongoing school provision as well as post school arrangements.

Agenda for Annual Review Meeting

Name of Pupil

Date of Meeting

1. Introductions
2. Confirmation of reports, including pupil's and parents views
3. Review of progress
4. Significant changes
5. Planning for the next twelve months
6. Recommendations from the Annual Review
7. Further action
8. Date of next review

Agenda for Annual Review Meeting

Name of Pupil

Date of Meeting

1. Introductions

The chairperson should introduce and welcome everyone, explain the purpose of the meeting and make sure that each person explains the ways in which they interact with the pupil so that parents have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to their child and the review process. The head teacher should also make sure that parents know who was invited and unable to attend.

The SEN Toolkit, Section 9 Para 21

It is expected that the pupil will be present for all or part of the meeting, where s/he is cognitively able to cope with the demands of participation. His/her views should have been sought and recorded prior to the meeting by a known and trusted adult.

2. Confirmation of reports

The chairperson should check that all present have read the reports, this will reassure parents that everyone is starting on the same wavelength. It will, of course, also highlight any discrepancies in the receipt of the reports.

The SEN Toolkit, Section 9 Para 22

3. Review of progress

There should be discussion of reports and written advice, in particular as it relates to the objectives of the statement. This should include looking at IEP targets, National Curriculum levels, especially where relating to literacy and numeracy. It is good practice to have updated standardised test scores available. The meeting should examine strategies successfully employed to meet the pupil's special needs. It is during this part of the meeting that the views of parents and the child or young person should be discussed.

The SEN Toolkit, Section 9 Para 23/4

4. Significant changes

The meeting should discuss any significant changes in the pupil's circumstances, any changes in the pupil's special educational needs and any changes to requirements for equipment, aids and access.

The SEN Toolkit, Section 9 Para 24

5. Planning for the next twelve months

There should be discussion of IEP targets for the following year. There may have been

other issues raised during the meeting. *If there is further action required this should also be agreed and the person responsible for the action should be named. If the further action includes referral to an external agency that is not already involved with the pupil, this is a matter that the head teacher should expedite. It is not necessary for such referrals to await LA agreement.*

The SEN Toolkit, Section 9 Para 26

6. Recommendations from the Annual Review

The following issues should be considered and discussed, and consequent recommendations should be recorded with reasons:

- a. Does the statement remain appropriate?*
- b. Is the pupil fully included within their school community? And if not how can it be accomplished?*
- c. If the pupil is currently in specialist provision – Is the pupil ready to be included in a mainstream environment?*
- d. If the pupil is currently in a mainstream school – would it be appropriate to move the pupil to specialist provision?*
- e. Is the statement still needed to achieve inclusion, either within the current school community or in mainstream?*
- f. What does the pupil need in order to be included successfully?*
- g. Is any further action required and if so, by whom?*
- h. Have the pupil's needs changed?*
- i. Should the LA cease to maintain the statement?*
- j. Should the statement be amended? If so, why and how?*
- k. Are there any other significant recommendations?*

If differing opinions are expressed at the meeting, then these views should be recorded so that the LA is aware of the views of all those present.

The SEN Toolkit, Section 9 Para 25

7. Further action

What happens next should be explained to all those present at the meeting.

The chairperson should make absolutely clear that although the meeting can agree recommendations, the LA will make the final decision on whether to make any amendments to the statement, or where appropriate, to cease to maintain it.

The SEN Toolkit, Section 9 Para 30

8. Date of next review

The next review will usually be in twelve months. However if agreement is reached that there is a need for an earlier (interim) review this should also be recorded in the note of the meeting under recommendations.

The SEN Toolkit, Section 9 Para 29

Good practice guide

The following are considered points of good practice when arranging and conducting Annual Review meetings.

- Organising a calendar for all Annual Review meetings at the beginning of each academic year is recommended. Headteachers should indicate in their invitation to key professionals whether their attendance and /or written contribution is considered beneficial, essential or not required. If essential, then consulting with those key professionals **when setting the date** is critical to ensuring their attendance.
- Schools should consider the particular needs of parents, for example, the language spoken, or if parents are hearing impaired the need for an interpreter who signs. For speakers of other languages, or for visually impaired parents, schools may wish to send messages, and provide reports, on audio cassettes.
- Headteachers should make sure that parents/ carers or those with parental responsibility are aware that they may bring a friend, adviser, relative or their Independent Parent Supporter to the review meeting. Headteachers should ensure that parents are aware of the role and contact details of the Parent Partnership Service in the Local Authority.
- Headteachers should make sure that parents are aware that help in preparing their report is available from the school or setting or the LA Parent Partnership service if needed. This could include help with putting parent's thoughts down on paper or translation or interpretation of advice written in a language other than English.
- The Headteacher should ask a visiting professional for specific advice about individual pupils, even though the professional may have been given a list of pupils whose Annual Reviews are due that term.
- Any reports for the meeting should include the child's name and the date written. They should be signed and dated and include the author's name and designation.
- The function and purpose of the Annual Review meeting should be discussed with the child or young person in advance of the meeting. It is particularly rewarding for the child to take some ownership of the meeting by for instance being involved in sending out the invitations or welcoming the invitees when they arrive.

- Children or young people may feel more confident and supported to attend part of the review meeting if they are able to bring along a friend or teacher mentor, or if they have a piece of work to show of which they are particularly proud.
- The views of the pupil should be sought when setting them targets for the next 12 months.

Timeline for the Annual Review process

Termly notification to schools by the LA



Head teacher to arrange review date and invite participants, collect information/reports/advice in order to circulate to all invitees 2 weeks before the meeting



Head teacher to collate and submit review report with attachments to the LA within 10 working days or the end of the school term if sooner.



LA to respond to parents within 1 week of reaching a decision.

Please refer to the SEN Code of Practice, Chapter 9 and the SEN Toolkit, sections 9 and 10 for guidance about Annual Reviews.