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Parental Attitudes to the Statutory Assessment and Statementing Procedures on Special Educational Needs

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RESEARCH REPORT

**Parental Attitudes to the
Statutory Assessment and Statementing
Procedures on
Special Educational Needs**

University of Ulster
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In 1998, the Department of Education (DE) introduced the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. The Code was developed with the view that the special educational needs (SEN) of most children can be identified and addressed in a mainstream setting. It standardised procedures for schools and others in providing for children with SEN and set out a recommended 5-stage plan for implementation.
2. Against a context of emerging policy and legislation, several studies have already been carried out to examine aspects of special education provision in Northern Ireland. The purpose of this research study, as identified by DE, was to conduct a representative survey of the parents of children with a statement of SEN, and to ascertain the parents' views on a number of issues.
3. The remit of the research study translated into 5 key tasks :
 - i) to explore parents' experience of the statutory assessment procedure;
 - ii) to examine whether, in the parents' view the process met their child's needs;
 - iii) to analyse if provision met parental expectation;
 - iv) to examine parents' attitudes to inclusion in mainstream schooling;
 - v) to identify any other relevant issues.
4. Changes in educational policy and legislation have had, and will continue to have implications for the status, remit and delivery of special educational provision. The most notable developments have included :
 - The Warnock Report (1978) on The Education of Handicapped Children and Young People, which redefined thinking on educating children with SEN and continues to have a basis in policy development;
 - Educational legislation and reform from the 1980s's onwards which made specific provision for children with SEN. Most significant have been :
 - The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986;
 - The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995;
 - The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996;
 - The Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997;
 - The Special Educational Needs Tribunal Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997;
 - The Education (Special Educational Needs) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998.
 - Governmental and departmental initiatives (including the Programme for Government, DE Strategic Plan, the School Improvement Programme and New Targeting Social Need), though not specifically addressing special education provision, included an awareness of and a commitment to a more inclusive educational environment;
 - Increasingly relevant are explicit reference to issues of equality and human rights as defined in :
 - The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991;
 - The Human Rights Act 1998;
 - The Northern Ireland Act (Section 75) 1998;
 - The Equality (Disability etc) (Northern Ireland) Order 2000;

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill 2002.
5. Quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were developed to compile a broad representation of parent perspectives – namely a questionnaire survey and telephone interviews. Of 2346 questionnaires issued, 1032 (44%) were returned. Telephone interviews comprised 2 representative groups of parents – a sample of those most dissatisfied with the process and a sample of all parents to obtain views on inclusion.
 6. Data analysis revealed that, overall, parents were satisfied with the present system for statutory assessment and statementing. A number of caveats were identified as areas of concern. These include :
 - administrative procedures which are time-consuming, bureaucratic and non-user friendly;
 - perceived deficiencies in the level and nature of communication;
 - perceived deficiencies in the dissemination of information;
 - perceived deficiencies in levels of parent support and guidance;
 - perceived deficiencies in the implementation of procedures;
 - perceived deficiencies in training for teaching and teaching support staff;
 - perceived deficiencies in funding and resource allocation.
 7. The research study suggests that consideration should be given to the improvement of special education provision as part of an inclusive strategy. Recommendations, based on parental feedback, are made with regard to the assessment procedure; the statementing procedure; support and guidance; administrative procedures; training and resources and inclusion.
 8. Recommendations for the assessment procedure include :
 - the development of a more personal, less bureaucratic framework;
 - a review of strategies to increase parental representation and involvement;
 - a review of the relevance, validity and compatibility of assessments to the individual child;
 - a review of strategies to improve early intervention;
 - a review of statutory arrangements for children with medical/physical conditions.
 9. Recommendations for the statementing procedure include :
 - the development of relevant, unambiguous and understood statements that reflect the needs of the individual child;
 - a review of guidance procedures for parents
 - a review of funding arrangements to adequately resource recommendations set down in the statement;
 - a review of the implementation of recommendations set down in the statement;
 - a review of the quality and effectiveness of the Annual Review;
 - a review of the quality and effectiveness of the Transition Plan.
 10. Recommendations for support and guidance include :
 - a review of the arrangements for the dissemination of information to parents;
 - a review of the helpfulness of professional terminology to parents;
 - a review of the remit of the Named Board Officer;
 - consideration of the nomination of a designated Officer with a specific remit for parents of children with SEN;

- consideration of the merits of a helpline service to provide independent, impartial advice;
- a review of the efficiency of current partnerships with other statutory agencies and voluntary organisations.

11. Recommendations relating to administrative procedures include :

- a review of strategies to streamline and reduce timescales;
- a review of the efficiency of current management information systems;
- consideration of strategies to reduce the shortfall in levels of provision of specific remedial services.

12. Recommendations relating to training and resources include :

- consideration of the training implications for teaching and teaching support staff for educating children with SEN;
- consideration of strategies to further promote an awareness and understanding of SEN;
- consideration of strategies to increase the number of teachers with specialist qualifications;
- consideration of additional funding to further support in-service training;
- a review of training opportunities and consideration of accredited training for non-teaching staff.

13. Recommendations relating to inclusion include :

- Consideration of the further promotion of an educational culture of equity and respect for diversity;
- Consideration of the development and promotion of a more inclusive teaching profession;
- A review of the impact of inclusion on the professional development of teachers;
- A review of schools' policy in relation to SEN.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This research study on parental attitudes to Stages 4 and 5, (the statutory assessment and statementing procedures) outlined in the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs, is a response to a commission from the Department of Education (DE).

The present system for the identification, assessment and statementing of children with special educational needs (SEN) was first introduced in January 1986. Legislation relating to current special education is contained in the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, Part II and Schedules 1 and 2, which replaced 1986 legislation. The Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 and the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998 are the current subordinate legislation. The Special Educational Needs Tribunal Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 govern the workings of the Tribunal body.

Since the 1998/99 academic year, Northern Ireland has had a similar government code of practice to that already operated in England and Wales, offering practical guidance on how to identify, assess and monitor all pupils with SEN. The Code was developed with the view that the SEN of most children can be identified and addressed in a mainstream setting. Importantly, it standardised provision for children with SEN in terms of procedures and timescales. It set out 5 recommended stages, from an initial school-based assessment through to the decision by the Education and Library Board (ELB) to issue a statement identifying a child's special educational needs. ELBs have a statutory duty to identify, assess, and in appropriate cases, make special educational provision for children with SEN in their areas.

The Code of Practice in England and Wales has since been revised with a condensed, graduated 2-stage school base – comprising School Action and School Action Plus – which may or may not lead to a request for statutory assessment. The more simplified Code was introduced in 2000/01 to safeguard the interests of children, focus on preventative work, reduce bureaucracy and promote effective school-based support and monitoring.

The number of pupils with statements of SEN in Northern Ireland in 1997/98 prior to the introduction of the new Code of Practice was 7,962, representing 2.3% of the total school population. The number of pupils with statements of special educational need in the 2001/02

academic year stands at 10,040, representing 2.9% of the total school population. A detailed breakdown of the figures is illustrated in Tables 1 and 2.

Several studies on special educational provision have been carried out against the backdrop of emerging policy and legislation (The Dyson Report, 1998; Northern Ireland Audit Office, 1998; Northern Ireland Forum for Political Dialogue, 1998). They have sought to examine aspects of special education provision in Northern Ireland, including the effectiveness of the assessment and statementing processes and the implementation of the Code of Practice, as well as developing baselines of good practice. The Central Management Support Unit (CSMU) has conducted the most recent and most comprehensive analysis of special education services for Education and Library Boards (2002). The Unit undertook a fundamental review of provision with the aim to enhance the quality of service. The views of 70 parents were sought as part of the review process.

It is acknowledged that parents have a central role to play in their child's education. A recent critique by Riddell, Adler, Wilson and Morduant (2001) identified *changes in procedural justice that reflect the shifting balance in power in parent/professional relationships.. amongst them SEN legislation, the increasing use of voice by parents' groups and organisations and the growth of public sector accountability.* In England and Wales, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) through Local Education Authorities (LEAs), has made active efforts to engage parents in the special educational provision of their child through Parent Partnership Schemes (PPS). The aim of PPS is to ensure that parents of children with additional needs have access to information, advice and guidance in relation to the SEN of their child so they can fully participate in decision-making and make appropriate informed decisions. The PPS also had a particular focus in engaging socially disadvantaged parents who might otherwise be alienated from the process. Research undertaken by the National Children's Bureau (1998) to identify successful PPS and to highlight and recommend good practice, found that the Scheme has had a positive impact but requires ongoing attention to maintain good practice.

In England, the Programme of Action for meeting SEN (1998) has maintained efforts to improve support and advice for parents, including a commitment of £18M over a 3-year period (1999-2002) to expand and develop PPS. One of the recommendations of the Dyson Report was that DE should strive to ensure the early involvement of parental support and lobby groups. At present, there is no equivalent body representing parents within the Northern Ireland education system.

1.1 Background

Appropriate provision for those children with SEN has often been rooted within legislation which impacts structurally and socially on education. Within current Scottish educational legislation (Scottish Parliament, 2002), the term SEN has disappeared to be replaced by *pupils with a disability*. The hitherto ubiquitously accepted model, which defined disability as a social phenomenon, has recently received criticism for failing to include all aspects of disability by marginalizing those with intellectual disabilities (Chappell, 1998; Haddow, 2001; Humphrey, 2000). It is argued that the social model is no longer a valid representation as it is *too excluding, too simplistic and too out of touch of the diversity of human life* (MacKay, 2002).

Current policy stems from the influence of the Warnock Report (1978), *The Education of Handicapped Children and Young People*. The Report was revolutionary in transforming thought on children with SEN, and formed the basis of subsequent policy and legislation. The Report removed labels previously used in education such as *handicap* and replaced them with the inclusive term *special educational need*. It defined special educational need in terms that took it beyond the former concepts of special and remedial education, so that it identified all children and young people whose educational needs could not always be met by the classroom teacher. The Report estimated that around 20% of all school children will have some form of SEN at some stage in their school lives and that approximately 2% of these children will have sufficiently severe needs to require a formal assessment and specialist provision.

A significant recommendation of the Warnock Report was that as many children as possible with SEN should be educated in mainstream schools alongside their peers. The Salamanca Statement, drawn up at the UNESCO World Conference (1994) continues to reflect the ethos of Warnock, calling on governments *to adopt as a matter of law or policy, the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise*. The mainstreaming and inclusion of most children remains a significant part of educational policy. In Northern Ireland a more inclusive, holistic approach to dealing with SEN has been influenced to some extent by emerging changes in the curriculum and also by certain education initiatives such as the Local Management of Schools (LMS) and the School Improvement Programme.

Although current policy can challenge prevailing trends regarding the integration of disability and SEN, MacKay (2002) argues that it is equally important to avoid the inappropriate mainstreaming of children, which neither meets their educational needs nor those of their classmates. Special educational needs ranges from the minor and temporary difficulty to the more severe and long lasting (Scottish Executive, 2002). Children with difficulties occupy different points on the continuum of SEN, and will require different forms of provision to enable them to derive the most benefit from their education. Some children will have SEN, which can be met, within the classroom without the need of a formal statement. Other children will have needs of a more definite and/or continuing nature which will necessitate a formal statement with greater monitoring and specific provision.

The statement (if one is issued) is a legally binding document issued at the end of a statutory assessment process, which specifies the additional provisions required to meet the child's need. Florian (2002), however, points out that statements were introduced only one decade after children with severe learning difficulties became eligible for education, and that any judgements on their appropriateness should be made on the basis of whether they serve their intended purpose.

1.2 The Remit of the Research Study

DE provided terms of reference. The aim was to conduct a representative survey of the parents of children with a statement of special educational needs, and to ascertain the parents' views on a number of issues. In operational terms the objectives translated into five key tasks:

- i) to explore parents' experience of the statutory assessment procedure;
- ii) to examine whether the process met their child's needs in the parents' view;
- iii) to analyse if provision met parental expectation;
- iv) to examine parents' attitudes to inclusion in mainstream schooling;
- v) to identify any other relevant issues.

2.0 HISTORY OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

2.1 Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986

Prior to 1986, little legislation existed to assist those children with SEN. The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order, 1986 made a distinction between *pupils requiring special educational treatment* and *children unsuitable for education*, where the latter often became the responsibility of the Health and Social Services (HSS).

However, in 1986, special education legislation in Northern Ireland was brought into line with the rest of the United Kingdom, and in 1987, the education of children with SEN became the responsibility of the Department of Education. Under these conditions, the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order stated that ELBs were required to provide for children and young people in schools up to the age of 19 – provision includes visual and hearing impairments, speech and language difficulties and moderate or severe learning difficulties. The children could be taught in mainstream primary or secondary schools, in special units or in day or residential special schools.

Since the 1980's there have been significant changes in policy and legislation affecting children. These include measures, which strengthen the rights of children and parents and the development of inclusive policies within education.

2.2 The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order became law in March 1995 and operational in November 1996. It followed the introduction of the Children Act 1989 in England and Wales and broadly replicated the conditions of that Act. The Order was the most comprehensive piece of legislation enacted in Northern Ireland in relation to children, and fundamentally changed the balance between parental care and state intervention.

The Order had significant implications, not only for children and their families, but also the wider and non-statutory community, including social services, health and voluntary organisations. The Order used the phrase *parental responsibility* to sum up the collection of duties, rights and authority that a parent has in respect of his/her child. Additionally, it

advocated a partnership principle that encouraged *fostering good working partnerships among parents and all other providers of services to children.*

The Order stipulated that all those with parental responsibility should be treated equally by schools, and that they should be given information and the opportunity to participate in decision-making about the child's education. This was outlined in Schedule 2, Article 18(2) under Provision of Services for Families, so that *every authority shall publish information about services provided by the authority and every authority shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that those who might benefit from the services receive the information relevant to them.*

2.3 The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996

Current legislation relating to provision for children with SEN in Northern Ireland is contained in the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. The major considerations of the Order focused on:

- defining the terms used in the Order;
- setting down the duties of ELBs, Boards of Governors and HSS authorities with regard to special education policy and provision;
- developing and publishing a Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs;
- establishing an independent Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Northern Ireland, with defined grounds of appeal for parents.

The introduction of a Code of Practice as part of the Order provided a framework within which all schools could devise strategies for meeting pupils' special educational needs. Its structures and procedures were designed primarily to improve the quality of the provision made for children with SEN. The Order required DE to issue and keep under review a Code of Practice giving practical guidance to ELBs and Boards of Governors. Under the terms of the Order, DE, ELBs and Boards of Governors had a legal obligation to *have regard to* the Code of Practice in exercising their statutory duties. Legislative measures also attached conditions to the mainstream education of children with SEN.

The Order placed a duty on ELBs to promote the education of children with SEN in mainstream schools, with the following conditions :

- he/she receives the special education which his/her learning difficulty calls for;
- the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he/she will be educated;
- the efficient use of resources.

The definition of *learning difficulty*, in the Order covered children with physical or mental disabilities, but also included those children whose development was comparatively slower than their years.

Within the framework of the implementation of the Order, Circular 1996/40 *Special Educational Needs: Implementation of the Education (NI) Order 1996. Revision of the Draft Code of Practice*, outlined provisions for SEN. Under Article 6 of the Order, ELBs have a responsibility to determine and keep under review their policy and arrangements for special education provision in consultation with other relevant bodies. As well as providing advice and various supports to schools for the implementation of the Code of Practice and for in-service teacher training, Boards were also responsible for advising parents about the assessment and statementing procedures and of the support and services available.

Additionally, the Order imposed the statutory duty on Boards, Boards of Governors of grant-aided schools and others exercising relevant functions to have regard to the provisions of the Code of Practice. The Order also made provision for the establishment of a Special Educational Needs Tribunal (SENT) – formerly overseen by DE – which would bring independence to appeals by parents against Board decisions about special educational provision and to extend their grounds of appeal.

In a speech to the annual conference of the association of ELBs, the then Education Minister, Michael Ancram, announced that the provisions of the Order meant that *parents will have substantial new rights of appeal; parents of statemented pupils will be able to state a preference of grant-aided school; statements of special educational needs will have to contain more detailed information and Boards and schools will have to draw up special educational needs policies.*

2.4 Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997

The Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations (Northern Ireland) came into operation in September 1997. The Regulations outlined notices relating to the assessment procedure (Article 15(4) Education Order 1996) and notices that accompany a proposed statement (Article 16 (1)). It also supplemented the procedural framework for making an assessment and a statement contained in Part II (Schedules 1 and 2) of the Education (NI) Order 1996.

Within the Regulations, provisions were set down for the consideration of parental contributions to the assessment and statementing processes. Regulation 5 stipulated that ELBs *in making an assessment of a child's special educational needs must seek advice from the child's parent, educational advice, psychological advice and any other advice, which it considers, appropriate for the purposes of arriving at a satisfactory assessment.* Regulation 9 defined parental contribution and stated that *it is provided that in making an assessment, a Board shall take into consideration representations from the parent, evidence submitted by the parent and the advice which has been obtained.*

Within this environment the Special Educational Needs Tribunal Regulations (Northern Ireland) were introduced in September 1997. These Regulations contained guidance for parents who wished to request an appeal to the Tribunal. It outlined the time span and content of any material that should go to the Tribunal as well as the commitments to be undertaken by the Board at any Tribunal.

2.5 The Equality (Disability etc) (Northern Ireland) Order 2000

The Equality (Disability etc) (Northern Ireland) Order came into operation in April 2000 and was developed to ensure that disabled people in Northern Ireland had rights broadly similar to those available to disabled people in Great Britain. Again, the focus was on inclusion.

The Disability Rights Task Force was set up by the UK government to report on how best to secure more comprehensive and enforceable civil rights for disabled people, which were not fully provided for in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), 1995. The Disability Rights Commission was subsequently established in April 2000; on the same date the Equality

Commission became arbiters on the promotion of disability rights legislation in Northern Ireland.

The Task Force's report, *From Exclusion to Inclusion* (1999) reinforced previous recommendations on the need for an enforcement body. It focused on the full range of issues that affect disabled people's lives, including the education of children with SEN.

2.6 The Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill 2002

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill (2002) outlines proposals, which aim to define the provision of *comprehensive and enforceable rights to education for all disabled people*.

The objective of the proposed legislation is *to give school pupils and students in Northern Ireland the same rights with regard to access to schools and further and higher education institutions as exist in other parts of the United Kingdom*. Responsibility for the proposed legislation lies with the Department of Education and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). It was anticipated that appropriate legislation would be introduced in 2003 following a period of consultation.

In the preparation of the Bill, a consortium from the Equality Commission reviewed the Great Britain Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) with a view to identifying how it could best be implemented in NI and advocating any changes appropriate for a local context. It is proposed that the new legislation for NI will be in three parts and will amend existing legislation. Part 1 will deal with special educational needs and will make changes to existing legislative provision outlined in Part II of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. Parts 2 and 3 will amend the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Within the remit of special educational needs, proposed amendments include :

- increased efforts should be made to strengthen the rights of children with SEN to a place in an ordinary school;
- pupils with SEN and a statement must be educated in ordinary schools unless this would be against the wishes of their parents or would be incompatible with the provision of the efficient education of other children;

- all ELBs would be required to make arrangements for providing information on SEN matters to parents of children with SEN in the area;
- schools should be required to notify parents that their child has been identified as having SEN;
- ELBs would be required to give notice to parents of the time limits relating to an appeal to the Tribunal at the same time as notifying parents of their right of appeal;
- parents should be assisted by clearing up any ambiguity when ELBs are considering making an assessment of a child;
- revision of the procedures which must be followed by ELBs when making, maintaining and amending statements of SEN;
- requiring ELBs to make arrangements for services to provide parents of children with SEN with advice and information and the means of resolving disputes with schools and Boards;
- conciliation arrangements should be available, independent of the Board;
- parents should have the right to appeal to the SEN Tribunal against a decision by a Board to refuse a school's request for a statutory assessment;
- requiring ELBs to comply within prescribed periods with orders of the Special Educational Needs Tribunal and make other changes in support of the SENT appeals process and the statutory assessment process;
- requiring schools to inform parents where they are making special educational provision for their child and ensure parents have a right of appeal where schools request a statutory assessment of a pupil's special educational needs.

2.7 Human Rights

2.7.1 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

In 1991 the UK adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, undertaking to bring UK law, policy and practice into line with the Convention's Articles. Although common standards are set down, the Convention takes into account the different cultural, social, economic and political realities of individual States. The Articles collectively aim to ensure the overall welfare of the child. Several focus specifically on the right to non-discrimination and the right to education.

Article 23 advocates that State parties should :

- Recognise that mentally or physically disabled children should enjoy a full life in conditions which promote dignity, self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community;
- Recognise the rights of the disabled child to special care and to assistance which is appropriate to the child, subject to available resources;
- Ensure that assistance shall be designed so that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education in a manner conducive to the child receiving the fullest possible social integration and individual development.

Additionally, within the remit of education, Article 28 sets down the right of the child to education, with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity. Article 29 further stipulates that State parties agree that the education of the child should be directed to the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

The Human Rights Act (1998) gives further effect to rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights. Notably, it promotes the education of children with SEN in integrated settings.

2.7.2 Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Section 75)

In a press release on *Children's Right to Education*, the then Minister for Education, Martin McGuinness, said *the way we treat our young people who have special educational needs is a touchstone of our commitment to human rights. We need a proper debate about both the quality of our services and about how best to address the whole topic of inclusion in a way, which meets the needs of children, satisfies parental wishes and advances the education of all our children.* (DE, 2001)

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) requires all public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to NI, to have due regard to *the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without.* In line with this, the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government gave a commitment to ensuring equality of

opportunity and states that *the protection of human rights and promotion of equality are central to the Agreement.*

The provisions set down within Section 75 have broad implications within an overall agenda of inclusion. There is much compatibility between the principles of equality of opportunity and targeting on the basis of objective social need. It is anticipated that many of the actions undertaken in relation to Section 75 will be reflected in comparable initiatives developed as part of New Targeting Social Need policy. However, the emerging, more comprehensive legislation in relation to disability rights and provisions for education may impact significantly on the implementation of Section 75.

3.0 THE CHANGING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Department of Education Strategic Plan

One of the aims of the education service is *to promote lifelong learning, by securing an efficient and effective education service which will strengthen society and the economy, enrich the quality of life, ensure equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all and combat the effects of social needs.*

The publication of the first Strategic Plan by DE in 1996 reflected an evolving educational environment. The mission statement of the original Strategic Plan (1996-00) comprised 3 broad strategic aims. One of these aims was *Raising the Standards of Learning*, which included a commitment to ensure that each individual acquired, to the best of their ability, the key skills of spoken and written communication, numeracy and working with information technology. It also identified the need *to help people of all ages and abilities, and especially those disadvantaged by social need or physical disability, to develop the skills, competences and flexibility needed for their own working life.* Many of the themes of the Strategic Plan remain current and continue to reflect the future priorities of the present plan.

The present DE Consultation Document, *Learning for Tomorrow's World : Towards a New Strategic Plan for Education Services in Northern Ireland (2000-06)*, draws on the views of all those with an interest in education. The DE Strategic Plan seeks to set the longer term aspirations of the education service, to articulate a common vision for the education service and to promote greater cohesion of purpose and activity within and between the various agencies that make up the service. The Strategic Plan reflects the aspirations of the overall

Programme for Government put forward by the Northern Ireland Assembly, but it also crucially highlights key educational issues, which those within the education service regard as the highest priorities for the immediate future.

Under the heading *Looking to the Future*, DE offer their vision for schools, *to provide all young people with the best possible education, which enriches their lives and enables them to play an effective role in society*. Whilst acknowledging the pivotal role of schools in formal education, the Plan also addresses the need to continue to build a close and vibrant partnership with parents, employers, voluntary and community groups, reflecting the Children (NI) Order 1995, which promoted a close partnership with other statutory agencies.

As part of the fundamental strategy, the Plan noted that *parents rightly expect that their children will receive their full entitlement to a quality education with due regard to breadth and balance, challenge and vigour*. It is recognised, however, in the context that *each child is an individual, with particular needs and aptitudes, and teaching professionals must therefore have the capacity to tailor provision appropriately*. This is further addressed within the theme *Achievement and Personal Development*, where DE highlights several points of action, one of which is *Promoting Higher Attainment and Targeting Underachievement*. This includes the promotional development of innovative methods to secure the inclusion of people, who for whatever reason, would otherwise be marginalised and includes meeting the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and promoting the full social inclusion of young people who are, or who are at risk of being marginalised. Arrangements to extend and enhance parental rights in the assessment of and provision for children's special educational needs are also targeted.

3.2 The Draft Programme for Government

The NI Executive, through the Programme for Government, is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and human rights for all citizens. The Programme for Government has made provision for the introduction of new legislation to promote disability rights in schools and in further and higher education, through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill currently under consultation.

The remit of the Programme for Government, as outlined in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 1998, is of a *peaceful, cohesive, inclusive, prosperous, stable and fair society*,

firmly founded on the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust and the protection and vindication of the human rights of all.

In seeking to establish direction and focus for the education sector, the Plan identified several discrete themes as guidance. Under the theme of *Promoting Excellence* it advocates improving *standards in education across the range of abilities by nurturing an enquiring mind and to have regard to the individual needs of the learner, in particular those affected by social disadvantage and those with learning difficulties.*

It is inevitable that the themes identified will raise a range of key issues. Of particular significance within the theme of *Promoting Excellence* are issues relating to *standards in education and raising achievement for all*. It is suggested that future educational planning should contain challenging targets for improvements across the ability spectrum. It is recognition that the education service has a key role in promoting inclusiveness.

3.3 New Targeting Social Need

Amongst the Executive's Priority Areas are several common themes. Included is New Targeting Social Need (New TSN). New TSN policy aims to tackle social need in key policy areas. Through it, the government is seeking to address social need and social exclusion in Northern Ireland by targeting its efforts and available resources towards, amongst others, people, groups and areas in greatest social need. Education is considered one of the most important influences on the social and economic circumstances of those areas and persons in greatest need and has a central role to play in New TSN.

New TSN policy developed from earlier TSN policy, but now has a more specific focus on unemployment, health, education and housing. Additionally, it has an undertaking to further *Promoting Social Inclusion* (PSI), a co-ordinated programme that seeks to tackle the causes of social exclusion.

A PSI consultation exercise highlighted several groups as being at risk of social exclusion: commonly identified as travellers, minority ethnic people, young people at risk and people with disabilities. Several categories of disadvantaged pupils are considered, including pupils in mainstream schools who have a statement of SEN. The consultation identified a range of factors, which could contribute to exclusion, including lack of education and basic skills;

policies and service delivery, which were not sensitive to the needs of minority groups (eg people with particular disabilities or learning needs); and lack of access to, and information about, services. Within the framework of PSI provision is made for the development of a strategy to implement the Executive response to the Disability Rights Task Force recommendations to bring about improved rights for disabled people. The emphasis on social inclusion is combined with a commitment that all aspects of the education service are accessible and relevant to the needs of individuals.

Of significance within New TSN is the priority area, *Investing in Education and Skills*. It's aim is to ensure *high quality education and training for all; providing an education and training system which recognises and responds to the diversity of our society and the needs of its young people and ensures equality of provision and access for all*. It is anticipated that the policies and programmes in this Priority will enhance equality of opportunity for a number of Section 75 groups, but particularly children and young people and those with disabilities.

4.0 THE EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

4.1 The Education and Training Inspectorate

Since the introduction of the Code of Practice in 1998, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has undertaken several inspections of special education provision, within mainstream, units and special schools, as well as inspections on the quality of education provision for specific learning difficulties. It was hoped that the associated reports would bring SEN provision into sharper focus and assist ELBs, the Curriculum Advice and Support Service (CASS), senior management, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) and class teachers in auditing and evaluating their practice, and where necessary, effect improvement.

Each of the inspections involved some or all of the Boards. The main purposes of the inspections were to report on the quality of provision for special educational needs, including the partnership between the schools/units and parents and with the wider community. They also sought to identify the particular strengths and weaknesses of the provision being made within the context of the Code of Practice. Significantly, contact with parents was regarded as important, and was seen as a major ingredient in the overall potential success of school policy.

Collectively, within the schools/units inspected, the following strengths were noted in relation to parental support and involvement:

- parents were kept well-informed of their child's progress in a significant minority of schools;
- in a few schools parents were involved in defining and supporting specific targets for their child;
- maintenance of detailed records for future teaching strategies which provided progress reports for both children and parents;
- presence of good liaison with parents and external agencies;
- introduction of a home-school liaison post as an effective initiative as a means of encouraging participation in the education process and as a means of sharing and developing important parental and teaching skills;
- good (and in some cases, excellent) quality of home-school liaison;
- quality of consultation and communication arrangements with teachers;
- effective dissemination of information on policies and procedures to parents and guardians;
- involvement of parents in the production of child protection procedures and policies and keeping parents fully informed about pastoral care provision and the recommendations of DE;
- operation of a common system of contact with parents;
- benefits of a policy of closer links with parents through active contribution;
- promotion of a positive ethos in special educational needs provision.

Collectively, the limitations within the schools inspected were identified as:

- provision for special educational needs remained variable in some instances;
- poor attendance at annual meetings of Boards of Governors to report school progress to parents;
- poor school ethos in some SEN provision was reflected in a lack of meaningful parental contact;
- in some cases schools reported that the absence of parental interest in their child's educational progress resulted in lack of motivation and limited educational attainments on the part of pupils;
- need to streamline certain administrative aspects of managing SEN provision.

4.2 The School Improvement Programme

The *School Improvement Programme* was introduced in 1998 with the aim of improving administrative and curricular standards within schools. The principles of the Programme were established in the 1980's within a framework of curricular initiatives including *Primary Guidelines* and the *11-16 Curriculum Review and Development Programme*, and more recently under the *Raising Schools Standards Initiative* (RSSI) in 1994/95.

One of the main tools of RSSI was that a combined strategy of school self-evaluation and a specific programme of self-improvement worked very effectively for most participant schools. The School Improvement Programme reflected the goal of RSSI to continue to help and support identified schools to address their weaknesses. The overall purpose of the Programme was *to raise the standards of attainment of pupils in the participating schools to the point where all pupils are attaining at a level commensurate with their ability*. The emphasis was concentrated in 3 key areas:

- i) quality of teaching and learning;
- ii) quality of school management and leadership;
- iii) school development plans, incorporating targets for improvement.

The school development plan has become the accepted way of setting out a school's curricular and other intentions. Aspects include the nature and quality of teaching, assessment and learning strategies, the quality of the pupils' work and identified strategies to raise the standards of their attainments. The Programme guidelines outline the factors that make schools and classrooms most effective in promoting children's achievement. These include:

- a shared vision and aims;
- high expectations of what their pupils can achieve;
- concentration on learning and teaching;
- monitoring of individual children's progress.

Schools are encouraged to critically evaluate the nature of their work across a wide range of issues - including special educational needs provision, accommodation and resources and links with parents. The purpose of an evaluation is to help schools determine appropriate targets for

improvement to be implemented via an Action Plan. It is commonly agreed that target setting is a relevant exercise for the continuous improvement of all schools, whatever their circumstances. It is stressed however, that schools neither underestimate the children's capabilities nor set targets, which are unrealistic.

The promotion of good behaviour and discipline is viewed as an integral part of raising pupil attainment. Measures introduced through the School Improvement Programme help schools in the early identification of those pupils who are having learning problems. It is acknowledged that misbehaviour can often be a symptom of a learning difficulty, but if a pupil's difficulties are addressed at an early stage, subsequent behaviour problems may be prevented. The Code of Practice, therefore, has a significant role to play in enabling schools to tackle behaviour problems in a structured, systematic way. However, an effective system requires that discipline, pastoral care and special needs policies be properly integrated within the school.

4.3 The Code of Practice

The implementation of the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of SEN supports the aim of social inclusion with a commitment towards ensuring that all aspects of the education service are truly accessible and relevant to the needs of individuals. The Code of Practice came into effect on September 1 1998. Additionally, DE provides a handbook – Special Educational Needs: A Guide for Parents – which outlines the various stages and associated terminology.

The Code of Practice outlines the 5-stage approach in the identification of SEN. Responsibility at stages 1-3 lies at school level with additional support from the ELB and/or Health and Social Services if necessary. At Stages 4 and 5 responsibilities are shared between ELBs and schools. Stages 4 and 5 of the Code of Practice are significant because they confer legal rights and a guarantee of funding not accorded to non-statemented children. The individual stages are not automatic steps towards statutory assessment; instead they are seen as *a means of informing decisions to be made by schools, in consultation with parents, as to what special educational provision is necessary to meet the child's needs at whatever stage that may be.*

Stage 1 : Teachers identify and record a child's special educational needs. Initial action is taken, in consultation with the school's special educational needs co-ordinator;

- Stage 2 : Information is collected and recorded by the SENCO to co-ordinate the child's special educational provision;
- Stage 3 : Teachers and SENCO have additional support from specialists outside of the school;
- Stage 4 : ELB considers the request for a statutory assessment. If appropriate, a multi-disciplinary assessment is conducted;
- Stage 5 : ELB considers the need for a statement of special educational needs. A statement (or a note in lieu) is made if appropriate and arrangements set down for monitoring and subsequent reviews.

The Code of Practice acknowledges that parents are partners in the educational process. Parents have unique knowledge and information about their child, so that *schools should seek at all times to foster the active participation and involvement of parents, offering encouragement to recognise their own responsibilities towards their child and emphasising the benefits of working in partnership with the school and others involved.* Arrangements are in place to ensure the involvement of parents of children with SEN, so that they have access to information, including:

- the school's SEN policy;
- support available within the school and Board;
- their involvement in assessment and decision-making, emphasising the importance of their contribution;
- relevant health or social services contacts or voluntary organisations which might provide information or counselling.

4.3.1 The Conduct of a Statutory Assessment

For a small number of children it will not be possible to have their needs met at the school-based stages. When this happens, the child is referred to the ELB for statutory assessment. Requests for assessment can be made by a referral from the school, another agency or the

parent. The Code of Practice stipulates that an assessment should be undertaken if the ELB considers that it needs or probably needs to determine a child's special educational provision by making a statement. Although statutory assessment will not always lead to a statement, information gathered during an assessment may usefully inform how a child's needs may be met by his/her school without the need for a statement.

When making a referral for statutory assessment, the school should clearly state the reasons for the referral and submit relevant health, social services and educational information/evidence, including the recorded view of parents. If a Board decides to issue a notice to parents informing them that it proposes to make an assessment, it must indicate the reasons why under Article 15 (1). Additionally, the Board is obliged to advise parents on procedural steps relating to assessment. These include:

- the right to make representations and submit written evidence to the Board within a specified period;
- the name of the designated Board Officer to be contacted on matters relating to statutory assessment and statementing;
- the procedures followed during statutory assessment.

The Board is also required to advise parents of the associated provisions and guidance accessible to them, including provision available in grant-aided schools in their area; private advice or opinions sought; guidance and support from a person independent of the Board; and any other relevant sources of independent advice such as voluntary organisations or local support groups.

The Code acknowledges how stressful the assessment process can be for parents and duly advocates that Boards present information in a manner that encourages open discussion and participation. This includes the personal delivery of the letter informing parents of the proposal to assess, which offers an opportunity for parents to raise any questions or concerns. Having notified parents that a statutory assessment might be necessary, the Board should inform parents within 6 weeks whether or not it will make a statutory assessment. The decision should be made in consideration of evidence provided by the school and parents. Parents should be informed of their right to be present with their child at any interview, test, medical or other assessment that may be necessary. In each instance where a statutory

assessment must be made, the Board must seek parental, educational, medical, psychological and social services advice or any other advice considered necessary. All concerned should respond within 6 weeks.

On receipt of all advice, the Board must then decide whether to make a statement. If a statement is considered necessary, a copy of the proposed statement must be sent to the child's parents. Equally, the Board must inform a parent in writing if a statement is considered not necessary. On receiving the proposed statement parents have the right to state a preference for the grant-aided school their child should attend and also to make representations to, and hold meetings with, the Board. The recommended length of time for a Board to reach the stage of issuing a proposed statement *must be no longer than 18 weeks from the date of either the receipt of the parent's request for an assessment or the issue of the notice under Article 15(1)*. Although law does not prescribe the period from the proposed to the final statement, Boards should endeavour to complete this within a further 8 weeks.

4.3.2 Statements

The aim of the statementing process is to formally set down the requirements of pupils with SEN and to ensure that parents are satisfied with the proposed statement, that they understand the reasons for the proposals made for their child and that they are confident that their feelings and views have been given full consideration.

On receipt of advice from all concerned, the Board must decide whether the degree of the child's learning difficulty or disability, and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's special educational needs, require it to determine the child's special educational provision through making a statement.

Where, in the light of a statutory assessment made under Article 15, a Board decides that it is necessary for it to determine the special educational provision necessary to meet a child's special educational needs, it must make and maintain a formal statement of those needs under Article 16. The Board should consider all information provided by the statutory assessment when deciding whether to draw up a statement. If an assessment shows that the provision made by the school is appropriate, but that the child is still not progressing sufficiently, or at all, the Board should consider what further provision may be needed and if this provision can be made within the school's resources.

The Code of Practice advocates that Boards should seek to draft explicit, unambiguous statements so that any diagnostic or technical terms are explained in vocabulary that parents or other non-professionals will understand. The Board must send the proposed statement, and copies of the advice, which has been submitted during the assessment, to the child's parents. It must also send a notice in the prescribed form, which sets out the procedures to be followed, including procedures and statutory arrangements for naming the appropriate school.

It is acknowledged that if parents have been fully consulted throughout the assessment procedure, they are more likely to be satisfied that the proposed statement represents a fair and accurate evaluation of their child's special educational needs, and the provision identified represents an appropriate response to those needs. However, parents do have the statutory right to make representations, for the Board's consideration, regarding the content of the statement or to request meetings to discuss any part of the content of the proposed statement, including any advice obtained during the statutory assessment. It is advocated that parents should have sufficient time and information to discuss any anxieties with the Named Board Officer to ensure mutual agreement. The Board should inform parents of their right to make representations, within successive 15-day limits, regarding any aspect of the assessment process or content of the statement. Subsequent to any suggestion and agreement of amendments to the proposed statement between the Board and the parents, the final statement should be issued immediately. Boards are requested to ensure that parents understand the significance and implications of any amendments and the accompanying provision proposed to meet the child's special educational needs. Should a request for amendment be refused or a parent be unwilling to accept proposed amendments, the Board must inform the parents of the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal if they wish to do so.

4.3.3 The Annual Review

Within the framework of the Code of Practice, Boards are required to review all statements annually as part of a process of continuous assessment. The review is normally based on written reports submitted by the schools, incorporating the views of staff, and *as far as possible, acknowledging parents' views, which should always be sought*. Parents should always be informed of arrangements for review meetings. The Board initiates the review and makes its own recommendations based on consideration of a review report and recommendations prepared by the school principal. The school, the child's parents and all those invited to the review meeting are sent copies. As part of the preparation for the review

meeting, the principal must request written advice from the child's parents, all those identified by the Board and any others considered to have a contribution to make. Parents are encouraged to give their views of the past year's progress and their hopes for the future. The Board then reviews and makes its recommendations in the light of all received information. The recommendations should be communicated to the child's parents, the school and all those invited to the review meeting before the statutory deadline.

If a Board proposes to amend a statement, it must inform the parents in writing of the reasons for the proposal, with accompanying copies of evidence and must also advise them of their right to make representations within the specified time period. The Board must consider any representations made by parents before deciding if and how to amend the statement. The Board must write to the parents informing them of their decision to proceed or not. If the Board does proceed with an amendment it must provide parents with a copy of the amended statement and advise them of parental rights of appeal. Similarly, if a Board considers that it is no longer necessary to maintain a statement, it must give parents notice of the decision with an explanation and details of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

The annual review process applies to a young person up to the age of 19 if he/she is still at school. The Board convenes the meeting, inviting parents, relevant members of staff and anyone else it considers appropriate, including a representative of the HSS authority and the Careers Service. Following the meeting the Board prepares the review report and the *Transition Plan* for circulation to the parents, principal, all those from whom advice was sought, all those attending the meeting and any others whom it considers appropriate.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The chosen research methodology and associated evaluation instruments have been designed within the context of current educational policy and statutory requirements relating to Stages 4 and 5 of the Code of Practice, and addresses representativeness in seeking parents' views in so far as possible. The research is intended to investigate parental perceptions concerning statutory assessment and statementing and the associated processes, namely amendments to statements, the annual review and transition plans, and their views on the concept of inclusion.

A quantitative and qualitative approach to the collection of data was considered the most efficient means of compiling a broad representation of parent perspectives. Two methods of gathering information – a questionnaire survey and telephone interviews – were developed.

5.1 The Questionnaire

The initial survey strategy had been to send a province-wide, self-completion postal questionnaire to all parents of children who had been statemented between 1997-2001. Due to concerns relating to the legal and confidential implications of access to information and parental choice, it was agreed that each ELB would firstly issue a letter to parents of children who had statements or going through the statutory assessment process inviting them to take part in the survey. Additionally, the various management information systems within each ELB and the associated methods for recording and retrieval of information delayed the process. A total of 7,222 letters of invitation were issued. Of these, 2,346 (32%) parents responded that they would be willing to take part in the survey. Of this number, 1,032 (44%) questionnaires were returned. This number included some returns (n=25) from an abbreviated questionnaire which had been sent to identified parents (n=48) in BELB who lived in the most deprived wards and who had not completed the original questionnaire. This also served to address some under-representation in the main survey.

The intention was to use a research instrument which would collect information in as much detail as possible without overburdening respondents. A preliminary pilot questionnaire was administered to a selected sample of parents. The final draft was passed to members of the Steering Group for comment prior to administration to guarantee face validity. The questionnaire survey was designed to provide a baseline of information about parents' knowledge and attitudes. It comprised 6 main sections covering the statutory assessment procedure; the making of a statement; the annual review; amendments to statements; the transition plan; and other information. The design of the questionnaire ensured that data was provided and validated within the context of socio-economic background, geographic location and type of educational provision. Data from the questionnaire was necessarily mostly quantitative but included qualitative elements. Quantitative responses were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows. Cross-tabulations enabled results to be classified in total, thematically, and by individual ELBs, and these are presented individually and collectively in the attached Appendices.

5.2 The Interview

Parents who completed the questionnaire had the option to indicate if they wished to be contacted for a telephone interview. There are significant benefits to face-to-face interviews, but the cost of this within the budget of the research was prohibitively expensive. Telephone interviews were considered a compromise. They were developed to enrich and validate the data collected from the questionnaires. This enabled the research team to qualitatively explore and clarify emerging issues. Interview questions were based around the same broad areas as the questionnaire, with the added opportunity to obtain information in greater detail. Two representative control group of parents were selected for interview. Those chosen were :

- parents who were most dissatisfied with the process (n=57);
- a selected group of all parents to obtain views on inclusion (n=108).

The subject of inclusion is itself a broad area with different connotations and implications for parents, and possibly merits a more detailed, discrete investigation.

6.0 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data provided within each section represents parental response to a given quantitative or qualitative question, with associated discriminant analysis where appropriate. A fully comprehensive breakdown of the data is presented as accompanying appendices, with data given for each ELB. The total responses for each question are variable, owing in part to the fact that not all questions were applicable to every respondent. Equally, not all respondents chose to answer every question that was relevant to them. However, since the purpose of this survey is to measure parental attitudes, the data reflects the views and experiences of this particular consumer group. It is inevitable that perceptions will differ between the providers and recipients of special education services.

6.1 Characteristics

- A total of 1032 parents responded to a question requesting information on the nature of their child's learning difficulty. In most instances, parents ticked more than one box and the results are reflective of this.

6.1.1 The Nature of the Learning Difficulty

- 59.2% (611) parents indicated that their child had learning difficulties (moderate/severe/profound/multiple). This result varied significantly across ELBs.
- 18.3% (190) parents responded that their child had specific learning difficulties (eg dyslexia).
- 29% (299) parents responded that their child had emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- 18.2% (188) parents indicated that their child had physical difficulties. This result varied significantly across ELBs.
- 8.8% (91) parents responded that their child had sensory impairments (hearing difficulties).
- 7.8% (81) parents indicated that their child had sensory impairments (visual difficulties). This result varied significantly across ELBs.
- 48.1% (496) parents responded that their child had speech and language difficulties.
- 25% (258) parents responded that their child had medical conditions.

6.1.2 Type of School Currently Attended

- Of the parents who responded (1032), a total of 30.5% (315) indicated that their child presently attended a primary mainstream school, ranging from 19.2% (23) in BELB to 45.3% (82) in WELB. A further 25.4% (262) parents indicated that their child was currently in a special school, rising from 14.9% (27) in WELB to 35.4% (84) in NEELB. 15.7% (162) of parents responded that their child presently attended a secondary mainstream school, ranging from 10.6% (31) in SEELB to 19.9% (36) in WELB. 13.6% (140) parents indicated that their child attended a special primary unit, ranging from 6.6% (12) in WELB to 18.2% (37) in SELB; while a further 6.5% (67) indicated that their child attended a special secondary unit, ranging from 3.9% (7) in WELB to 10.3% (21) in SELB. 3.6% (37) parents

responded that their child was attending a grammar school, ranging from 2.5% (6 and 5) in NEELB and SELB respectively to 6.7% (8) in BELB. A further 3.1% (32) responded that their child had other educational provision, ranging from 1% (2) in SELB to 5.1% (15) in SEELB. 1.5% (15) parents indicated that their child presently attended nursery; 0.2% (2) indicated that their child was at a preparatory school and 0.1% (1) indicated pre-school. This result varied significantly across ELBs.

6.1.3 Type of School Previously Attended (if applicable)

- A total of 273 parents responded. Responses were not uniform across ELBs. 57.1% (156) parents indicated that their child had been in primary mainstream, ranging from 38.5% (10) in BELB to 67.3% (35) in SELB. 11.7% (32) parents responded that their child had previously been in a special unit, rising from 3.7% (3) in NEELB to 29.7% (11) in WELB. A further 11% (30) responded that their child had formerly been in a nursery, rising from 3.8% (1) in BELB to 17.3% (9) in SELB; while 8.4% (23) parents indicated that their child had previously been at a special school, ranging from 1.9% (1) in SELB to 15.4% (4) in BELB. 5.5% (15) of parents indicated that their child had previously been at secondary school, ranging from 3.8% (2) in SELB to 11.5% (3) in BELB; 4% (11) of parents indicated pre-school, ranging from 3.8% (2) in SELB to 7.7% (2) in BELB. A further 1.1% (3) indicated previous schooling had involved other educational provision; 0.7% (2) responded that previous schooling had been preparatory and 0.4% (1) of children had attended a grammar school. This result varied significantly across ELBs.
- Of the parents who responded (1012), most indicated that their child attended school within the Board area where they lived. This was not uniform across ELBs, but represented 87.5% (84) in BELB; 92.5% (221) in NEELB; 87% (255) in SEELB; 95.6% (194) in SELB and 97.2% (176) in WELB. This result varied significantly across ELBs.

6.1.4 The Family

- Of the parents who responded (1006), a total of 85.7% (862) indicated that no other child in the family had a statement.

- A total of 79.7% (808) parents indicated that the questionnaire had been completed by the mother; 8.1% (82) by the father and 10.1% (102) by both mother and father. 1.1% (11) indicated that it was completed by someone with parental responsibility and a further 1.1% (11) by someone other than the parents.

6.2 The Statutory Assessment Procedure

6.2.1 Levels of Satisfaction

- An overall total of 79.7% (794) parents indicated that they were satisfied with the statutory assessment procedure – 25.6% (255) were very satisfied and 54.1% (539) were satisfied. Overall levels of satisfaction were not uniform across individual Boards, ranging from 69.3% (156) in NEELB to 86% (247) in SEELB. An overall total of 20.3% (202) of parents responded that they were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the statutory assessment procedure – 13.9% (138) unsatisfied and 6.4% (64) very unsatisfied. Those parents who were unsatisfied ranged from 9.8% (28) in SEELB, rising to 19.1% (43) in NEELB. Parents who were very unsatisfied ranged from 4.0% (7) in WELB to 11.6% (26) in NEELB. These figures varied significantly across ELBs.

6.2.2 The Assessment Process

- A total of 30.3% (285) parents replied that the most recent assessment had taken place in 2002; 24.0% (226) parents responded that their child had been assessed in 2001 and a further 13.9% (131) in 2000.
- A total of 45.4% (453) parents responded that the school was instrumental in initiating the request for assessment. This was statistically significant and was not uniform for each ELB, ranging from 57.3% (55) in BELB to 41.7% in SEELB. Parental request represented 26.5% (264) of the total sample, a response that was again not uniform across individual Boards, ranging from 19.8% (19) in BELB to 30.6% (72) in NEELB. A total of 19.9% (199) respondents indicated that another agency (doctor, speech therapist, psychologist) had requested the statutory assessment. 8.2% (82) parents said they did not know.

- A total of 63.4% (619) parents responded that their child had been experiencing difficulties for longer than 2 years prior to the start of the assessment procedure. *This should have been done much earlier, so my child had the chance of earlier intervention. I feel that if my son had received help sooner, he would have achieved better things in primary school.* A further 15.9% (155) replied that their child had been experiencing difficulties for at least 2 years prior to assessment. 11.8% (115) responded that the time span had been 1 year, and 5.0% (49) said it had been less than 6 months.
- An overall total of 43.7% (430) of parents responded that the period between the request for assessment and the start of assessment had been longer than 6 weeks : *I knew and her primary school knew she needed specialist help. It took a private report and a lot of pushing before the Board did something.* 9.7% (95) indicated that the time period had been between 4-6 weeks; 6.6% (65) indicated 3-4 weeks and 2.6% (26) indicated a period of 1-2 weeks. A further 37.3% (367) responded that they did not know.

6.2.3 The Role of ELBs

- A total of 54.6% (545) parents responded that they had been given a designated Named Board Officer as a point of contact for advice and guidance, although, *when we rang the Board we couldn't get to speak to who we asked for – I spoke to secretaries mostly. Phone calls were not returned. It was very frustrating. There should be one point of contact for parents.*
- Of those parents who replied that they had been given a designated Named Board Officer, a total of 81.7% (442) indicated that that Officer had kept them informed of the statutory assessment process. A breakdown of the total figure illustrates a range across the Boards, from 71.8% (74) in WELB to 93.8% (45) in BELB. A total of 16.5% (89) parents replied that they had no contact with a Named Board Officer, ranging from 6.3% (3) in BELB to 26.2% (27) in WELB. 1.8% (10) parents said that they did not know. These figures varied significantly across ELBs.
- Of the parents who responded, 87.2% (873) said they had been advised of their right to make a representation about their child's learning needs. A total of 7.6%

(76) parents said they had not been advised, ranging from 5.8% (17) in SEELB to 8.9% (21) in NEELB, and a further 5.2% (52) parents said they did not know.

- Of those parents who replied that they had been advised of parental representation, 87.9% (761) indicated that they had made a written and/or oral representation to a Board Officer.
- Of the 758 parents who responded, 18.1% (137) replied that they had submitted private reports.
- A total of 28.6% (286) respondents said they had been informed of other sources of advice and guidance. 55.5% (555) of parents replied that they had not been informed : *I had to look under Voluntary Organisations myself to find the name of someone to help me.* 15.9% (159) revealed that they did not know.
- Of those parents who had been informed of alternative sources of advice, a total of 69.8% (194) said that they had sought additional guidance.
- Of the parents (193) who stated that they had sought advice, 49.2% (95) chose 'Other'. This group commonly comprised professional support, including doctors, nurses, psychologists and speech therapists among others. Parent support groups were cited as the preferred option for 27.5% (53) of parents, followed by 'Friend' 12.4% (24) and 'Relative' 10.9% (21).

6.2.4 The Assessment Report

- A total of 96.4% (958) parents responded that they had received copies of written reports on their child's assessment. 2.7% (27) of parents responded that they had not received a copy and 0.9% (9) did not know.
- Of those parents who received a written report, a total of 81.7% (781) were satisfied that it represented an accurate description of their child's educational needs. A total of 13.9% (133) parents responded that they were partly satisfied with the written reports, and a further 4.4% (42) of parents were not satisfied. Concerns still existed however, that : *there is a common policy and not much in the way of an*

individualised plan. I feel that if 10 children with varying needs were assessed, the summary of ways to help the children would be the same.

6.2.5 Suggested Improvements for the Statutory Assessment Procedure

- Suggestions to improve the statutory assessment procedure were proposed by 727 parents. The responses are categorised collectively under the themes of the assessment process, administration, communication, dissemination, and parental support.

- The Assessment Process
 - Earlier intervention
 - Assessments should be relevant and applicable
 - More time should be spent with the child
 - More consideration of parental knowledge of the child
 - Clear and full explanation of results
 - Consideration of a different system for those children who are physically disabled or who have a medical condition

- Administration
 - Reduction in time taken
 - Clear, unambiguous terminology
 - Less bureaucracy and paperwork
 - Less generalised language in relation to specific conditions

- Communication
 - Greater communication with parents
 - Appointment of a designated person to talk to
 - Better communication between school and ELB
 - Provision of independent advice service

- Dissemination
 - Greater feedback from professionals
 - Greater information on parental rights and available options
 - Increased training for teaching staff

- Parental Support
 - More one-to-one contact
 - Greater consideration of parents' views
 - Greater sensitivity towards parents
 - Improved back-up services

6.2.6 Discriminant Analysis

- Discriminant analyses were used to determine the predictors of satisfaction. In order of importance, the parents who were most likely to express dissatisfaction were :
 - Those who had not received written reports
 - Those who had requested the assessment
 - Those who had not been advised by the ELB of their right to contribute
 - Those whose children had been assessed in 1997 and 1999
 - Those whose children had been experiencing problems for two years or more
 - Those whose children had emotional and behavioural problems.

6.3 The Making of a Statement

6.3.1 Levels of Satisfaction

- Of the parents who responded (943), an overall total of 79.8% (753) indicated their satisfaction with the procedure for making a statement – 23% (217) were very satisfied and 56.8% (536) were satisfied. This ranged from 74.7% (154) in NEELB to 86.2% (94) in BELB. An overall total of 20.2% (190) of parents responded that they were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the statutory assessment procedure – 15.1% (142) unsatisfied and 5.1% (48) very unsatisfied. This ranged from 13.8% (15) in BELB to 25.2% (52) in NEELB. These results vary significantly across ELBs.
- Of the 843 parents who responded, a total of 80% (674) agreed that the final statement represented a fair and accurate assessment of how their child's needs would be met. A further 17.1% (144) parents responded that the final statement partly represented how their child's needs would be met, and 3.0% (25) parents responded that the final statement was not representative. Reservations related to

concerns that : *statements need to clearly indicate each child's individual requirement. It all seems too standardised. They should be assessed on their own needs.*

- Of the parents who responded (986), an overall total of 73.8% (728) indicated that their child had definitely benefited from having a statement : *the difference that having a statement has made has been amazing. I now have a happy, confident little boy. He felt so isolated before.* A further 22.2% (219) of parents responded that having a statement had mixed benefits for their child and 4% (39) of parents indicated that having a statement had no benefits. A concern existed that : *the issue of support to meet needs is vital. If resources are not available, the statement becomes questionable of having any benefit at all.*
- Most respondents (972) indicated that having a statement made had definitely benefited them as a parent, representing 59.9% (582) of the total. A further 27.6% (268) responded that having a statement made had mixed benefits, while 12.6% (122) indicated that it had no benefits.

6.3.2 The Proposed Statement

- A total of 24.5% (240) parents responded that a proposed statement had been issued less than 18 weeks after the initial request, ranging from 16.2% (32) in SELB to 37% (34) in BELB. A further 23.4% (229) of parents indicated that the time taken had been longer than 26 weeks, ranging from 12% (11) in BELB to 29.4% (58) in SELB. A total of 17% (167) responded that it had taken between 18-26 weeks, ranging from 13% (12) in BELB to 20.8% (41) in SELB. A further 35.1% (344) did not know. These results vary significantly across ELBs.
- An overall total of 70% (690) parents responded that the wording of the proposed statement - including the recommendations made – was easily understood. A further 22.3% (220) parents responded that the proposed statement was understood in part and 7.7% (76) indicated that it was not understood. It was pointed out, however, that : *unless parents have good layman's understanding of the terminology used, the system is overwhelming to many.*

- Of the 983 parents who responded, 79.1% (778) stated that the proposed statement – including the recommendations made – was specific to their child’s needs, including the hope that : *if we were to experience problems, the statement would be the tool to protect and support our son.* A total of 16.5% (162) parents responded that the proposed statement was specific in part to their child’s needs and 4.4% (43) parents stated that the proposed statement was not specific to their child’s needs. Parents however, did have concerns that the recommendations were of benefit only if finance existed to implement them : *I feel that finances always dictate what help a Board can offer a child. Sometimes good recommendations are made which are not followed through because the Board offers the most cost-effective version instead which does not always cover all needs.*
- Most of the 906 parents who replied, 54.1% (490) indicated that they had met the Named Board Officer between 1-5 times. Parents who met the Board Officer more than 5 times represented 1.8% (16) of total replies. A further 44.2% (400) parents responded that a meeting had not been required. Notwithstanding there was still a concern that : *the issue of communication with parents needs to be addressed urgently. Personally, I have felt excluded from the procedure and have had little influence over my son’s past and future education.*
- Of the total (985) number of parents who responded, 18.5% (182) indicated that they had requested amendments to the proposed statement, while 12.6% (124) responded that they did not know they could. 53.8% (530) indicated that they had not requested any amendments, and a further 15.1% (149) parents replied that none were needed.
- Most parents who indicated that they had requested amendments to the proposed statement said that the Board had taken account of their request, representing 70.3% (142) of the total response. A further 17.8% (36) parents responded that the Board did not take account of their request and 11.9% (24) responded that they did not know.

6.3.3 The Final Statement

- Most parents, representing 39.5% (377) of the total number who responded (954) indicated that they did not know how long this process took. This response was not uniform across individual ELBs, ranging from 46.2% (79) in WELB to 35.4% (68) in SELB. A further 21.4% (204) parents responded that the process had taken place within 8 weeks, varying from 12.5% (24) in SELB to 31.9% (29) in BELB. Those parents who indicated that the process had taken between 8-16 weeks represented 21% (200) of the total, rising from 16.5% (15) in BELB to 26.6% (51) in SELB. A total of 18.1% (173) of parents responded that the process had taken longer than 16 weeks, ranging from 12.1% (11) in BELB to 25.5% (49) in SELB. These results vary significantly across ELBs.
- Most parents responded that they agreed with the school named in the final statement, representing 92.7% (907) of responses (978).
- Of those parents who chose to indicate why they did not agree with the school named in the final statement, most responded that they either wanted a mainstream placement or a different special school placement, each representing 22.4% (15) of the total responses. A further 13.4% (9) of parents indicated that they wanted a unit placement; 11.9% (8) of total responses wanted a special school placement; 7.5% (5) indicated a preference for a different mainstream placement; while 3% (2) preferred a different unit placement. Additionally, 19.4% (13) of the total response replied 'Other', which variously represented a preference for private tuition, education at home or within a different education authority. Concerns were expressed that : *the Board should ensure that when a school takes a child with a disability, they should consider if there is a teacher who has the right training to teach them.*

6.3.4 The Special Educational Needs Tribunal

- A total of 18.3% (11) parents responded that they had appealed to the Tribunal.
- Most parents responded that the appeal did not go to a hearing, representing 60% (6) of the total.

- For the 4 parents who did appeal, 3 indicated that the appeal had taken place within 8-16 weeks. One parent responded that the appeal hearing had taken place after 16 weeks.
- For the 4 parents who underwent an appeal hearing, 50% (2) indicated that their child obtained a place at the school of their choice.

6.3.5 Suggested Improvements for the Statementing Procedure

- Suggestions to improve the statementing procedure were proposed by 608 parents. The responses are collectively categorised under the themes of the statementing process, administration, communication, implementation and parental involvement.
- The Statementing Process
 - There should be clearer explanations of the reasons for statementing
 - A statement should be fully representative of the child's needs
 - Results should be explained clearly and in full
 - Recommendations should be carried out
 - Consideration should be given to its relevance for a purely medical/physical condition
- Administration
 - Reduction in the length of time taken
 - Clear, unambiguous terminology
 - Less general, unspecific language
 - Less bureaucracy and paperwork
- Communication
 - Greater feedback from and between professionals
 - Comprehensive explanation of services available
 - Designated person to talk to
 - More one-to-one contact

- Implementation
 - Increased training for teaching staff
 - More specialist staff in mainstream schools
 - Greater awareness of the various types of learning difficulty
 - Increased professional involvement from external agencies
 - Consideration of needs outside the classroom
 - Consideration of children with medical/physical conditions

- Parental Support
 - More information for parents
 - More parental involvement
 - Greater consideration of parents' views
 - Improved back-up and support system

6.3.6 Discriminant Analysis

- Discriminant analyses were used to determine the predictors of satisfaction. The single most important factor was satisfaction with the assessment procedure. However, further analyses were undertaken to determine the other variables that impacted significantly on satisfaction with statementing. In order of importance, the parents who were most likely to express dissatisfaction were :
 - those who felt the statement was not specific to the child's needs in whole or in part;
 - those who felt the final statement did not represent a fair and accurate assessment of how the child's needs would be met in whole or in part;
 - those who did not agree with the school in the final statement;
 - those who felt the statement was not easily understood;
 - those with statements issued in 1997, 1999 and 2000;
 - those who had requested amendments to the statement or who reported they did not know they could do this.

6.4 The Annual Review

6.4.1 Levels of Satisfaction

- A total of 706 parents responded that the annual review was helpful in meeting the special educational needs of their child, representing 72.7% of responses (971). A further 15.9% (154) indicated that the annual review was sometimes helpful, while 4.3% (42) parents responded that it was not helpful.
- Of the parents who responded (965), an overall total of 88% (849) indicated their satisfaction with the arrangements for review meetings – 27.3% (263) were very satisfied and 60.7% (586) were satisfied. An overall total of 12% (116) of parents who responded indicated that they were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the arrangements for review meetings – 9.2% (89) unsatisfied and 2.8% (27) very unsatisfied. There were concerns that : *a review seems to be a bargaining auction rather than a detailed examination of the child's progress and future needs.*

6.4.2 The Process of the Annual Review

- Most parents confirmed that arrangements were in place for their child's statement to be reviewed annually, representing 87.5% (872) of total responses (997). However, some parents felt that : *when the annual review comes around, no-one comes to the meeting to discuss my child's progress, only the teacher and myself, so I think they are just not interested.* A total of 3% (30) responded that arrangements were not in place, and a further 9.5% (95) of parents did not know.
- Most parents responded that their child's statement had been reviewed between 1-4 times, representing 72.3% (706) of total responses (976). 13.9% (136) responded that their child's statement had been reviewed between 5-8 times and a further 2.3% (22) indicated that a review had taken place 9 or more times. 11.5% (112) responded that they did not know.
- Most parents responded that they had received a report summarising the outcome of the review meeting for their child, representing 78.3% (756) of total responses (965).

6.4.3 The Operation of the Annual Review

- Most parents responded that a review was needed annually, even if their child's needs remained unchanged, representing 75.8% (750) of total responses (989). This was expressed : *I am aware that once something is not reviewed, the child may become displaced and it is difficult to gain access to the system again.* 18.4% (182) of parents responded that an annual review was not necessary if their child's needs remained unchanged, and a further 5.8% (57) of parents said that they did not know.
- A total of 631 parents responded that they would be unhappy if the annual review was held only at key times, representing 63.9% of total responses (988). 26.9% (266) of the total responded that they would be happy if the review was held at key times, and a further 9.2% (91) indicated that they did not know.

6.4.4 Changes to the Review Process

- A total of 132 parents offered suggestions for changes in the Annual Review. The most common suggestions were :
 - Review when necessary (eg a decline in progress; if a problem arises)
 - Review as and when the parent and/or teacher requests
 - Informal review if the child's needs remain unchanged
 - Only review at key times (eg at each Key Stage; at transfer stage)

6.4.5 Suggested Improvements for the Annual Review

- A total of 226 parents offered suggestions for the improvement of the review process. The most common proposals were :
 - Full and active participation by all those involved in the process
 - Clear identification of objectives
 - Regular communication with and between ELBs, parents and associated professionals
 - Increased involvement of parents
 - Meetings which are relevant and specific to each child
 - Implementation of recommendations

6.4.6 Discriminant Analyses

- Discriminant analyses were used to determine the predictors of satisfaction. The single most important predictor was satisfaction with the statementing procedures. In order of importance, the parents who were most likely to express satisfaction with reviews were :
 - Those who perceived the review to be helpful to the child
 - Those who received a report summarising the outcomes of the review meeting

6.5 Amendments to Statements

6.5.1 Requests for an Amendment

- Most parents responded that no amendments had been made to their child's statement, representing 64.6% (649) of total responses (981). A total of 20.9% (210) parents responded that amendments had been made and 14.4% (145) respondents did not know.
- Of 203 respondents, 52.7% (107) indicated that they had requested the amendment.
- Of 195 respondents, 59.5% (116) indicated that the Board had proposed the amendment, ranging from 43.6% (17) in WELB to 73.3% (44) in SEELB. A total of 40.5% (79) parents responded that the Board had not requested the amendment, rising from 26.7% (16) in SEELB to 56.4% (22) in WELB. These figures varied significantly across ELBs.

6.5.2 Reasons for an Amendment

- A total of 194 parents indicated reasons for an amendment. The reasons were identified as:
 - A change of school
 - A change in provision (eg classroom assistance; speech therapy)
 - Updating to reflect child's changing condition and/or needs
 - A change in wording
- Most parents responded that they had been provided with copies of relevant evidence for the suggested amendment, representing 74.9% (143) of total responses

(191). A total of 17.3% (33) of parents indicated that they had not received copies of relevant evidence, and a further 7.9% (15) of parents responded that they did not know.

- Of 106 respondents, 84% (89) expressed satisfaction with a change of school where it had been suggested.
- A total of 102 parents responded that they did not ask the Board to insert the name of another school, representing 76.1% of total responses (134).

6.5.3 The Special Educational Needs Tribunal

Of 18 respondents, 22.2% (4) of parents indicated that they did appeal to the SEN Tribunal.

6.6 Transition

6.6.1 Levels of Satisfaction

- Of the parents who responded (90), an overall total of 76.7% (69) indicated their satisfaction with the recommendations in the Transition Plan – 25.6% (23) were very satisfied and 51.1% (46) were satisfied. An overall total of 23.3% (21) of parents who responded indicated that they were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the recommendations – 13.3% (12) unsatisfied and 10% (9) very unsatisfied.

6.6.2 The Development of the Transition Plan

- Most parents responded that they did not have a copy of a Transition Plan for their child, representing 65.6% (103) of total responses (157).
- Of 133 respondents, 51.9% (69) indicated that they were aware of a named teacher who would co-ordinate the transition process.
- Most parents responded that they had received advice and guidance from the school regarding the Transition Plan, representing 62.2% (61) of total responses (98). 17.3% (17) of parents indicated that they had been advised by a social worker/social

services; a further 16.3% (16) had received advice from the Careers Service and 4.1% (4) indicated that they had obtained advice from Health Services.

6.6.3 Suggested Improvements for the Transition Plan

- A total of 48 parents offered suggestions to improve transition planning. The most common suggestions were :
 - Improved information with specific guidance
 - Improved contact with associated professionals (eg HSS, Careers Service, Social Services)
 - Designated person to talk to

6.7 Parental Attitudes Towards Inclusion

The group who were questioned on the subject of inclusion comprised a sample of both satisfied and dissatisfied parents. The group also represented parents who had children variously placed in mainstream classes, units or special schools.

Most of the parents interviewed welcomed the inclusion of children with SEN into mainstream schools. Consensus was, however, limited by a number of caveats relating to existing standards in training, teaching, intervention and resources.

The main points raised in support of inclusion can be categorised as follows :

6.7.1 Collective Benefits of Inclusion

- Inclusion should be encouraged where possible and where appropriate.
- Inclusion should not be endemic, but should be based on the ability, needs and interests of the individual child.
- Inclusion demands a broader view of children's needs so that their education is not just defined in terms of their learning difficulty or disability.
- Positive inclusion should challenge common stereotypes and prejudices surrounding the term 'special educational needs'.
- Inclusion should encourage mainstream schools to develop and promote a whole-school ethos of equity, inclusiveness and integration and to demonstrate this in subsequent policy documents.

- A detailed, comprehensive and unambiguous statement should reliably inform the type of school proposed and appropriate educational provision.
- Successful inclusion strategies should ensure that all recommendations specified in the final statement are implemented.
- Special schools – both socially and geographically – can have an alienating effect.

6.7.2 Benefits of Inclusion for Children

- Children should be consulted as part of any inclusive plan to gauge their readiness for integration.
- Inclusion in a mainstream setting enables children with SEN to interact with their peers and encourages the development of a social identity and associated social skills.
- Integration with one's peers is considered a significant factor in the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth.
- Inclusion can encourage independence.
- Inclusion can encourage and positively challenge the intellectual and educational progress of children with SEN.
- The presence of children with SEN in a mainstream setting has significant benefits for other children – educationally, intellectually, socially and emotionally. These benefits need promotion.
- Concerns exist that brighter children may be under-challenged in a special school.
- Children with a purely physical disability or medical condition should have automatic ease of access to mainstream schools and freedom of movement around school buildings.
- Inclusion in a local mainstream school has extra-curricular benefits and enables children with SEN to socialise with their peers outside school hours.
- Inclusion in a mainstream school can benefit the family in terms of travelling times and associated arrangements.

6.7.3 Implications for Schools

- DE should consider the funding implications which accompany increased inclusion, and take steps to ensure sufficient resources exist to support integration.
- DE and ELBs should develop training strategies to ensure that mainstream schools have sufficient numbers of trained teachers with expertise of SEN in its various forms.
- Mainstream schools should seek to raise staff awareness of SEN in its various forms – from ancillary staff to senior management and Boards of Governors.

- Mainstream schools should have adequate facilities and resources to accommodate children with SEN.

Reservations surrounding strategies to promote inclusion can be categorised as follows :

6.7.4 Collective Disadvantages of Inclusion

- Certain learning difficulties – particularly severe or profound difficulties – may not, under present conditions, be adequately provided for in a mainstream setting.
- Special schools have an important role to play in the education of certain children with SEN and may have greater expertise and available resources.
- The integration of children with SEN in a mainstream setting may only serve to highlight their differences.

6.7.5 Disadvantages of Inclusion to Children

- Mainstream inclusion may not necessarily be the best option for every child. Children with SEN should essentially attend the school that most responds to their needs.
- Consideration should be given to the difficulties that a child with SEN may encounter in a mainstream setting, including the size of class, inability to cope with curricular demands, the worry of ‘being left behind’ and the prejudices of others in the school.
- Children with SEN may benefit from being educated in smaller groups.
- Lack of awareness may lead to mis-labelling and unnecessary stereotyping.
- The integration of children with SEN into a mainstream setting may detrimentally affect the progress of other children in the class.
- A special school placement can protect children with SEN from bullying and insensitive treatment.

6.7.6 Implications for Schools

- Insufficient funding arrangements to access adequate resources may not be available to mainstream schools who are seeking to become more inclusive.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions have been informed by the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire survey and the qualitative responses from both the questionnaire and telephone interviews. They contrast slightly with the findings outlined in the Best Value Report and the Audit Commission Report in England. The conclusions do not discount the overall levels of satisfaction that the data suggests, but support the retention of a structured – albeit revised – system.

The recommendations have emerged from an analysis of the strengths and limitations of current practice as perceived by parents. They offer suggested strategies for an improved relationship between parents and education providers. The recommendations will necessarily impact at school, Board and Departmental level, although it is hoped that they will form some part of the overall consideration of special educational provision in Northern Ireland.

The recommendations are presented under several headings.

7.1 AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

7.1.1 DE should consider a revision of the classification of SEN as laid down in the Code of Practice towards an identification that is more flexible and sensitive to the range and type of individual differences that make up the school age population, and that reflects the individual requirements of the child.

7.1.2 DE should review the validity of the current model for statutory assessment and statementing procedures. The perception of a ‘one size fits all’ template can encourage an environment in which there is little manoeuvrability for the full range of SEN – from the physical to the intellectual.

7.1.3 DE and ELBs should review the prescriptiveness of current statutory arrangements for children with physical or medical conditions and investigate alternative procedures.

7.1.4 DE should review current arrangements for children with a statement of SEN who wish to sit the transfer test at age 11.

7.1.5 ELBs should review strategies to increase parental representation as a valid and important contribution to the statutory assessment and statementing processes.

7.1.6 ELBs should investigate the perceived breakdown in communication with some parents and seek to ensure that parents are fully aware of and understand their rights.

7.1.7 ELBs should review the system for dealing with parental concerns or objections at any stage of the statutory assessment or statementing process.

7.2 THE STATUTORY ASSESSMENT AND STATEMENTING PROCEDURE

7.2.1 It is recommended that ELBs consider how to combat the perceived view of the assessment process as impersonal, clinical and a desk-bound exercise.

7.2.2 ELBs should review the relevance of current assessment procedures to the individual child so that evidence collected will reflect the specific needs of the child and inform the development of appropriate interventions.

7.2.3 DE and ELBs should review current practice relating to the statutory assessment procedure and explore procedures for the development of a less bureaucratic framework. Issues to consider include :

- the promotion of a more child-centred, needs-based approach;
- the promotion of a more personalised approach;
- improved communication with and between Boards, external agencies and parents to improve the quality and value of the exercise for all parties;
- strategies to minimise quick diagnosis by professionals;
- strategies to ensure that assessments are conducted by professionals in a comprehensive manner, in a mutually beneficial environment and within a realistic timeframe;
- procedures to ensure that findings from assessments are acted upon.

7.2.4 ELBs should review working partnerships with external professionals during the conduct of an inter-agency, multi-disciplinary assessment. Issues to be addressed include :

- an investigation of strategies to increase co-operation and co-ordination with and between Boards and associated health, social services and careers professionals;
- a review of the efficacy and value of assessment procedures undertaken by associated professionals;
- reducing duplication in certain areas eg the medical history of the child.

7.2.5 ELBs should review current strategies for early intervention. The combined factors of late detection and waiting lists can create a perceived environment which is to the detriment of the child's education. The benefits of early intervention would suggest that a difficulty identified and dealt with sooner may not manifest as a more severe learning need at a later date.

7.2.6 DE and ELBs should review the validity and relevance of statements to ensure that they are diagnostic and informative to the parent.

7.2.7 DE and ELBs should consider strategies to combat negativity – with a view to promoting what a child can do rather than what he/she cannot.

7.2.8 DE and ELBs should consider the emotional and social benefits of a statement to the parents and the child with SEN.

7.2.9 DE and ELBs should review current practice relating to the statementing procedure. Issues to consider include :

- the development of unambiguous terminology that cannot be open to mis-interpretation;
- the development of statements that are more specific and appropriate to the needs of the individual child;
- the implementation of arrangements to ensure that recommendations are adhered to;
- the establishment of arrangements to ensure adequate funding is secured to effectively implement recommendations;
- a review of current practice for advising parents on amendments to statements.

7.2.10 ELBs should review the perceived discrepancy between recommended provision and fulfilled provision and investigate suitable and appropriate alternatives that ensure continued freedom of choice. This includes arrangements for :

- placement at the school/unit of choice;
- provision of classroom assistance;
- provision of peripatetic support;
- provision of additional resources;
- provision of transport.

7.2.11 The Annual Review is still considered a vital component in the educational progress of a child with SEN. DE and ELBs should consider the advantages and/or limitations of introducing a system of review at significant points in the child's education :

- at the specific request of the parent;
- if a child changes school;
- if changing circumstances indicate the need for a review;
- at the end of the academic year.

7.2.12 ELBs should review current practices for the Annual Review, with consideration to the following issues :

- the development of strategies to minimise the non-attendance by external associated professionals involved in the educational progress of the child;
- the establishment of arrangements for inter-agency attendance where appropriate;
- the identification of sourced funding to increase resource capacity so that recommendations from the review are fulfilled.

7.2.13 DE and ELBs should review current practice relating to the efficiency and usefulness of the Transition Plan.

7.3 SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

The problems which parents in need face are often compounded if they have difficulties in finding out about, or accessing, services and benefits to which they are entitled and which could help them. The research findings indicate that parents often feel excluded due to a perceived lack of information and support, and have stated the need for greater and wider

information in order to make sense of what is offered. The following recommendations have emerged :

7.3.1 DE and ELBs should review existing arrangements for the dissemination of information to parents regarding the statutory assessment and statementing procedures and explore strategies for improving efficiency. Issues to consider include :

- the provision of sufficient, relevant and accessible information which is easily and automatically referred to parents;
- a review of the system for informing parents of possible outcomes at each stage of the process;
- raising awareness of all alternative options of advice
- a review of the usefulness and efficiency of the complaints procedure.

7.3.2 Professional jargon is often cited as an obstacle which can lead to confusion and thwarts parents from making the best contribution to the statutory assessment and statementing processes. DE and ELBs should consider the development of clear, comprehensible and unambiguous terminology which encourages rather than restrains open dialogue. This includes documentation relating to :

- the results of the statutory assessment procedure;
- the wording of the proposed and final statement;
- information relating to the Annual Review;
- information relating to Transition Plans;
- information relating to the SEN Tribunal;
- any other correspondence that ELBs may have with parents.

7.3.3 ELBs should review the remit of the Named Board Officer and accessibility to that Officer. Consideration should be given to the nomination of a designated Officer with specific remit to :

- deal with parental queries;
- develop a protocol to maximise opportunities for one-to-one contact;
- ensure continuity in communication and correspondence;
- build on existing good practice.

- 7.3.4** DE and ELBs should consider the efficiency and value of outreach support services for parents.
- 7.3.5** DE should investigate the possibility of establishing an SEN information helpline – similar to the ENQUIRE helpline in Scotland – to provide an independent information and advice service for parents, carers and families of children with SEN, and for children and young people themselves. Perhaps this could become part of a broader strategy for parental inclusion in decision-making within education. This needs further research.
- 7.3.6** DE and ELBs should consider the advantages and limitations of the Parent Partnership Scheme in England and Wales as per recent research reviews, and investigate strategies for potential adaption and implementation in Northern Ireland.
- 7.3.7** ELBs should review the level of provision of associated external services compared to the growth in numbers of children identified as having SEN, and investigate collaborative strategies to reduce the shortfall.
- 7.3.8** ELBs should review the establishment and maintenance of links with voluntary agencies who have trained staff with specific knowledge of different medical and learning conditions and who are available to work with the families and children with SEN.

7.4 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

- 7.4.1** The length of time taken from commencement to completion of the process is one of the most common concerns for parents. DE and ELBs should review current practice and investigate ways to streamline arrangements within clearly defined timescales that can be realistically adhered to. This applies to :
- the conduct of the statutory assessment;
 - the issuing of the proposed and final statement;
 - amendments to statements;
 - the Annual Review;
 - the Transition Plan;

- the SEN Tribunal.

7.4.2 DE and ELBs should investigate possible arrangements for the effective monitoring of performance and outcomes with indicators for consistent quality of practice.

7.4.3 ELBs should review their current management information systems and investigate alternative procedures for the receipt, recording and retrieval of all data and correspondence.

7.4.4 DE and ELBs should seek to address the problem of an overloaded system and develop working strategies within feasible and reasonable timescales.

7.4.5 DE and ELBs, in co-operation with HSS and other external organisations, should seek to investigate possible strategies to reduce the shortfall in levels of provision of specific remedial services.

7.5 TRAINING AND RESOURCES

7.5.1 The research findings suggest there are significant teacher training implications for educating children with SEN. Improved provision for teacher training means that teachers are more confident and competent in addressing potential difficulties. However, any changes in the quality and range of training will necessarily require additional resources and funding. The following issues should be considered :

- DE should seek to further promote within all schools an awareness and understanding of SEN in its various forms and identify associated supporting strategies;
- DE should investigate strategies to increase the number of experienced teachers with the aim of having a dedicated, trained SEN teacher in every school;
- DE should consider the allocation of additional funding to further develop in-service training to maximise the level of expertise in schools;
- DE should consider accrediting in-service training with specialist SEN qualifications
- DE should source additional funding where necessary to enable schools to effect specific provisions stipulated in the statement.

7.5.2 Training implications extend beyond professional teaching staff and should take account of the following :

- DE and ELBs should review training opportunities for non-teaching support staff and consider the value of specific accredited training for those working with children with SEN;
- ELBs should review the impact of limited classroom assistance and its effect on the educational progress of a child with SEN;
- DE and ELBs should seek to clarify with schools the precise remit of non-teaching staff as set down in the final statement and take steps to discourage possible other uses of non-teaching support.

7.6 INCLUSION

7.6.1 DE should further promote an educational culture where a commitment to equity and a recognition for diversity exists.

7.6.2 DE should consider the development and promotion of a more inclusive teaching profession that increases a school's capacity to respond to the demand to increase participation and decrease exclusion.

7.6.3 The policy of educating more children with SEN in mainstream schools will have implications for the professional development of teachers. It will increase the need for in-service training and also require input at initial teacher training level to ensure knowledge of developments in what is a complex and changing area of education.

7.6.4 Schools should be encouraged to strategically plan and develop coherent and inclusive policy in relation to SEN which is disseminated to all staff, senior management and Boards of Governors.

7.6.5 DE should investigate with schools strategies to increase association between mainstream and special schools.

7.6.6 DE should review the profile of SEN within governmental and departmental initiatives.

Recommendations include :

- strengthening institutional commitment to SEN provision through greater association with the School Improvement Programme, including the development of whole school plans and associated strategies to raise the standards of attainment for all children and identification of targets for improvement;
- greater regard, under the remit of New TSN, to the causes of social exclusion within the education sector and the benefits of remedial strategies such as Promoting Social Inclusion;
- a review of existing education policy and consideration of the significance of discrimination, equality and human rights legislation in the development of more inclusive policies.

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TABLES AND APPENDICES

Table 1	:	Pupils Statemented 1997/98
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Appendix 1	:	The Questionnaire
Appendix 2	:	Questionnaire Analysis (quantitative data)
Appendix 3	:	Questionnaire Analysis (qualitative data)
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STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

When completing this form, please tick the appropriate box(es) for each question or write in the space given.

SECTION 1 - THE STATUTORY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

A statutory assessment is undertaken if the Board believes it necessary to determine the child's special educational provision.

1. When did your child last have a statutory assessment? _____ Year

2. Who asked for the statutory assessment to be carried out?
Parent Other Agency School Don't know
If you ticked Other Agency, please specify

3. How long in advance of the statutory assessment was your child experiencing difficulties?
6 months 1 year 2 years Longer Was not aware my child had difficulties

4. How long was the period between the request for assessment and the start of the assessment procedure?
1-2 weeks 3-4 weeks 4-6 weeks More than 6 weeks
Don't know

5. Were you told of a Named Board Officer and how he/she could help you?
Yes No Don't know

6. If the answer to Q5 is yes, were you kept informed of progress by the Named Board Officer?
Yes No Don't know

7. Did the Board advise you of your right to make a contribution about your child's needs?
Yes No Don't know

8. If the answer to Q7 is yes, did you make a written and/or oral representation to a Board Official?
Yes No Did not know I could

9. If the answer to Q8 is yes, did this include assessment reports you had done privately?
Yes No Did not have private reports done

10. Were you told where to get advice or guidance from someone other than the Board or school involved?
Yes No Did not know I could

11. If the answer to Q10 is yes, did you take any such advice or guidance?

Yes No

12. If the answer to Q11 is yes, who gave you this advice or guidance?

Relative Parent Support Group Friend Other

If you ticked Other, please specify

13. Did you receive a copy of any written reports about your child's special educational needs?

Yes No Don't know

14. If the answer to Q13 is yes, were you satisfied that the reports gave an accurate description of your child's needs?

Yes No Partly

15. Overall, how satisfied were you with the statutory assessment procedure?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied

16. What improvements would you suggest to the statutory assessment procedure?

.....
.....
.....

SECTION 2 – THE MAKING OF A STATEMENT

The Board decides if a child's needs will best be met by making a statement of special educational needs.

17. How soon after the request for a statutory assessment were you issued with a proposed statement?

Less than 18 weeks 18-26 weeks More than 26 weeks Don't know

18. Was the wording of the proposed statement – including the recommendations made – easily understood?

Yes No In part

19. Was the proposed statement – including the recommendations made – specific to your child's needs?

Yes No In part

20. How often did you meet with the Named Board Officer to discuss the proposed statement?

Meeting not required 1-5 times More than 5 times

21. Did you request any amendments to the proposed statement?

Yes No Did not know I could No amendments needed

22. Did the Board take account of your requested amendments?

Yes No Don't know

23. How long did it take to complete the final statement from the date of issue of the proposed statement?

Within 8 weeks 8-16 weeks More than 16 weeks Don't know

24. Did you agree with the school named in the final statement? Yes No

25. If the answer to Q25 is no, please give your reason.

- Wanted a special school placement.
- Wanted a unit placement.
- Wanted a mainstream school placement.
- Wanted a different special school placement.
- Wanted a different unit placement.
- Wanted a different mainstream school placement.
- Other

If you ticked Other, please specify

26. If you could not resolve your disagreement with the Board over the proposed statement, did you appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal?

Yes No

27. If the answer to Q26 is yes, did the appeal go to a hearing?

Yes No

28. If the answer to Q27 is yes, how long after lodging the appeal did the hearing take place?

Within 8 weeks 8-16 weeks Longer Don't know

29. Did your child obtain a place at the school of your choice as a result of the hearing?

Yes No

30. Does the final statement represent a fair and accurate assessment of how your child's needs will be met?

Yes No In part

31. Overall, how satisfied are you with the procedures for issuing statements for you child?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very Unsatisfied

32. What improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the statementing procedure?

.....
.....
.....

33. Overall, do you feel that having a statement:

Has definitely benefited your child

Has had mixed benefits

Has had no benefits for your child

34. Overall, do you feel that the process of having a statement made:

Has definitely benefited you as a parent?

Has had mixed benefits to you as a parent?

Has had no benefits to you as a parent?

35. Please add any comments you wish to make to Q33 and Q34

.....
.....
.....
.....

SECTION 3 - THE ANNUAL REVIEW

36. Are there arrangements in place for your child's statement to be reviewed annually?

Yes No Don't know

37. How many times has your child's statement been reviewed?

1-4 times 5-8 times 9 or more times Don't know

38. Is the annual review process helpful in meeting the special educational needs of your child?

Yes No Sometimes Don't know

39. In your opinion, is a review needed each year if the child's educational needs remain unchanged?

Yes No Don't know

40. Would you be content if a review was held only at key times such as transfer stage, if there are problems or the child's needs change?

Yes No Don't know

41. If the answer to Q40 is yes, please specify what changes you think should be made to the review process.

.....
.....
.....

42. Have you received a report summarizing the outcome of the review meeting for your child?

Yes No

43. Overall, are you satisfied with the arrangements for the review meetings for your child?

Very satisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very unsatisfied

44. What improvements would you recommend?

.....
.....
.....

SECTION 4 – AMENDMENTS TO STATEMENTS

45. Have any amendments been made to your child’s statement?

Yes No Don’t know

If no, please go to SECTION 5

46. If the answer to Q45 is yes, please specify

.....
.....
.....

47. Did you request the amendment? Yes No

48. Did the Board propose the amendments to your child’s statement? Yes No

49. Were you provided with copies of relevant evidence for the amendment?

Yes No Don’t know

50. If the amendment suggested your child should change school, were you satisfied with the school named in the statement?

Yes No

51. Did you ask the Board to put in the name of another school? Yes No

52. If your request was turned down, did you appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal?

Yes No

SECTION 5 - TRANSITION

This Section is to be completed if your child is 14 or over. If not, please go to SECTION 6.

53. Do you have a copy of a Transition Plan for your child? Yes No

54. Have you been given the name of a teacher who will co-ordinate the transition process?

Yes No

55. Did you receive advice or guidance from any of the following? (Please tick those that apply)

School Social Workers/Social Services

Health Services Careers Service

56. Overall, how satisfied are you with the recommendations made in the Transition Plan?

Very satisfied Very unsatisfied

Satisfied Very satisfied

57. What improvements, if any, would you make to the transition planning process?

.....
.....
.....

SECTION 6 - OTHER INFORMATION

58. Child's Date of Birth Post Code

Age first assessed

59. Please indicate the nature of your child's learning difficulty. (Tick the box(es) that apply.)

- Learning Difficulties (moderate, severe or profound and multiple)
- Specific Learning Difficulties
- Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
- Physical Disabilities
- Sensory Impairments (hearing difficulties)
- Sensory Impairments (visual difficulties)
- Speech and Language Difficulties
- Medical Conditions

If you have ticked more than one box, please specify below the primary reason for your child's statement.

.....
.....
.....

60. What type of school does your child presently attend? (Tick one box)

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pre-School | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grammar | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> | Special School | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Primary Mainstream | <input type="checkbox"/> | Special Primary Unit | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Preparatory | <input type="checkbox"/> | Special Secondary Unit | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Secondary Mainstream | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other form of schooling | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you ticked 'Other Schooling', please specify

.....

61. If the statement changed the sort of school your child attended, please indicate what sort of school your child attended before he/she had a statement.

- | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Pre-School | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grammar | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> | Special School | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Primary | <input type="checkbox"/> | Special Unit | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Preparatory | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Secondary | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

If Other, please specify

.....

62. Does another child in the family have a statement?

Yes No

63. In which Education and Library Board area do you live?

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Belfast | <input type="checkbox"/> | Southern | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| North-Eastern | <input type="checkbox"/> | Western | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| South-Eastern | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

64. In which Education and Library Board area is your child's school?

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Belfast | <input type="checkbox"/> | Southern | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| North-Eastern | <input type="checkbox"/> | Western | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| South-Eastern | <input type="checkbox"/> | Outside NI | <input type="checkbox"/> |

APPENDIX 2

1. When did your child last have a statutory assessment? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
1997	Count	8	21	36	24	21	110
	% within elb reside	8.8%	9.5%	13.4%	12.4%	12.6%	11.7%
1998	Count	5	20	27	22	13	87
	% within elb reside	5.5%	9.0%	10.1%	11.4%	7.8%	9.3%
1999	Count	16	27	26	18	14	101
	% within elb reside	17.6%	12.2%	9.7%	9.3%	8.4%	10.7%
2000	Count	13	31	38	32	17	131
	% within elb reside	14.3%	14.0%	14.2%	16.6%	10.2%	13.9%
2001	Count	22	66	50	40	48	226
	% within elb reside	24.2%	29.9%	18.7%	20.7%	28.7%	24.0%
2002	Count	27	56	91	57	54	285
	% within elb reside	29.7%	25.3%	34.0%	29.5%	32.3%	30.3%
Total	Count	91	221	268	193	167	940
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq = 26.0 NS

2. Who asked for the statutory assessment to be carried out? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Parent	Count	19	72	76	52	45	264
	% within elb reside	19.8%	30.6%	26.2%	26.4%	25.0%	26.5%
Other agency	Count	11	46	76	39	27	199
	% within elb reside	11.5%	19.6%	26.2%	19.8%	15.0%	19.9%
School	Count	55	101	121	85	91	453
	% within elb reside	57.3%	43.0%	41.7%	43.1%	50.6%	45.4%
Don't know	Count	11	16	17	21	17	82
	% within elb reside	11.5%	6.8%	5.9%	10.7%	9.4%	8.2%
Total	Count	96	235	290	197	180	998
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 25.7 S p<0.05

3. How long in advance of the statutory assessment was your child experiencing difficulties?
*elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
6 months	Count	2	12	14	13	8	49
	% within elb reside	2.2%	5.3%	4.9%	6.7%	4.5%	5.0%
1 year	Count	11	19	43	23	19	115
	% within elb reside	11.8%	8.3%	15.0%	11.9%	10.8%	11.8%
2 years	Count	13	35	48	34	25	155
	% within elb reside	14.0%	15.4%	16.8%	17.6%	14.2%	15.9%
Longer	Count	60	152	168	117	122	619
	% within elb reside	64.5%	66.7%	58.7%	60.6%	69.3%	63.4%
Not aware of diffs	Count	7	10	13	6	2	38
	% within elb reside	7.5%	4.4%	4.5%	3.1%	1.1%	3.9%
Total	Count	93	228	286	193	176	976
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 18.8 NS

4. How long was the period between the request for assessment and the start of the assessment procedure? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
1-2wks	Count	3	5	5	6	7	26
	% within elb reside	3.2%	2.2%	1.7%	3.1%	4.0%	2.6%
3-4wks	Count	8	12	22	14	9	65
	% within elb reside	8.6%	5.2%	7.6%	7.1%	5.1%	6.6%
4-6wks	Count	11	21	32	17	14	95
	% within elb reside	11.8%	9.2%	11.1%	8.7%	8.0%	9.7%
>6wks	Count	36	108	126	89	71	430
	% within elb reside	38.7%	47.2%	43.6%	45.4%	40.3%	43.7%
Don't know	Count	35	83	104	70	75	367
	% within elb reside	37.6%	36.2%	36.0%	35.7%	42.6%	37.3%
Total	Count	93	229	289	196	176	983
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 10.1 NS

5. Were you told of a named board officer and how he/she could help you? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	48	126	173	94	104	545
	% within elb reside	50.0%	54.1%	59.5%	47.5%	57.8%	54.6%
No	Count	35	89	90	81	58	353
	% within elb reside	36.5%	38.2%	30.9%	40.9%	32.2%	35.4%
Don't Know	Count	13	18	28	23	18	100
	% within elb reside	13.5%	7.7%	9.6%	11.6%	10.0%	10.0%
Total	Count	96	233	291	198	180	998
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 11.2 NS

6. If yes, were you kept informed of progress by the Named Board Officer? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	45	97	141	85	74	442
	% within elb reside	93.8%	77.6%	82.9%	89.5%	71.8%	81.7%
No	Count	3	26	24	9	27	89
	% within elb reside	6.3%	20.8%	14.1%	9.5%	26.2%	16.5%
Don't Know	Count		2	5	1	2	10
	% within elb reside		1.6%	2.9%	1.1%	1.9%	1.8%
Total	Count	48	125	170	95	103	541
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 19.2 S p<0.05

7. Did the Board advise you of your right to make a contribution about your child's needs? *elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	81	200	264	167	161	873
	% within elb reside	86.2%	85.1%	90.4%	83.9%	89.0%	87.2%
No	Count	8	21	17	16	14	76
	% within elb reside	8.5%	8.9%	5.8%	8.0%	7.7%	7.6%
Don't Know	Count	5	14	11	16	6	52
	% within elb reside	5.3%	6.0%	3.8%	8.0%	3.3%	5.2%
Total	Count	94	235	292	199	181	1001
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 8.5 NS

8. If yes, did you make a written and/or oral representation to a Board Officer? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	66	176	230	150	139	761
	% within elb reside	81.5%	89.8%	88.1%	89.8%	86.3%	87.9%
No	Count	14	16	30	13	17	90
	% within elb reside	17.3%	8.2%	11.5%	7.8%	10.6%	10.4%
Don't Know	Count	1	4	1	4	5	15
	% within elb reside	1.2%	2.0%	.4%	2.4%	3.1%	1.7%
Total	Count	81	196	261	167	161	866
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 11.8 NS

9. If yes, did this include assessment reports you had done privately? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	15	32	43	26	21	137
	% within elb reside	22.7%	18.3%	18.7%	17.4%	15.2%	18.1%
No	Count	28	74	100	65	70	337
	% within elb reside	42.4%	42.3%	43.5%	43.6%	50.7%	44.5%
Don't Know	Count	23	69	87	58	47	284
	% within elb reside	34.8%	39.4%	37.8%	38.9%	34.1%	37.5%
Total	Count	66	175	230	149	138	758
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 3.9 NS

10. Were you told where to get other advice or guidance from someone other than the Board or school involved? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	35	61	84	51	55	286
	% within elb reside	36.8%	26.3%	29.0%	25.1%	30.6%	28.6%
No	Count	48	139	154	121	93	555
	% within elb reside	50.5%	59.9%	53.1%	59.6%	51.7%	55.5%
Didn't know I could	Count	12	32	52	31	32	159
	% within elb reside	12.6%	13.8%	17.9%	15.3%	17.8%	15.9%
Total	Count	95	232	290	203	180	1000
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 8.9 NS

11. If yes, did you take any such advice or guidance? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	25	43	55	38	33	194
	% within elb reside	71.4%	72.9%	68.8%	77.6%	60.0%	69.8%
No	Count	10	16	25	11	22	84
	% within elb reside	28.6%	27.1%	31.3%	22.4%	40.0%	30.2%
Total	Count	35	59	80	49	55	278
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 4.3 NS

12. If yes, who gave you this advice or guidance? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Relative	Count	3	6	5	6	1	21
	% within elb reside	12.5%	13.6%	9.1%	15.4%	3.2%	10.9%
Parent support group	Count	5	12	10	10	16	53
	% within elb reside	20.8%	27.3%	18.2%	25.6%	51.6%	27.5%
Friend	Count	2	7	9	3	3	24
	% within elb reside	8.3%	15.9%	16.4%	7.7%	9.7%	12.4%
Other	Count	14	19	31	20	11	95
	% within elb reside	58.3%	43.2%	56.4%	51.3%	35.5%	49.2%
Total	Count	24	44	55	39	31	193
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 16.5 NS

13. Did you receive a copy of any written reports about your child's sen? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	90	221	283	191	173	958
	% within elb reside	94.7%	94.8%	97.6%	96.0%	97.7%	96.4%
No	Count	4	11	4	4	4	27
	% within elb reside	4.2%	4.7%	1.4%	2.0%	2.3%	2.7%
Don't know	Count	1	1	3	4		9
	% within elb reside	1.1%	.4%	1.0%	2.0%		.9%
Total	Count	95	233	290	199	177	994
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 11.7 NS

14. If yes, were you satisfied that the reports gave an accurate description of your child's needs?
* elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	78	173	235	159	136	781
	% within elb reside	86.7%	79.0%	83.0%	83.7%	78.2%	81.7%
No	Count	6	8	12	9	7	42
	% within elb reside	6.7%	3.7%	4.2%	4.7%	4.0%	4.4%
Partly	Count	6	38	36	22	31	133
	% within elb reside	6.7%	17.4%	12.7%	11.6%	17.8%	13.9%
Total	Count	90	219	283	190	174	956
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 10.5 NS

15. Overall, how satisfied were you with the statutory assessment procedure? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Very Satisfied	Count	43	47	71	51	43	255
	% within elb reside	37.1%	20.9%	24.7%	26.2%	24.9%	25.6%
Satisfied	Count	56	109	176	103	95	539
	% within elb reside	48.3%	48.4%	61.3%	52.8%	54.9%	54.1%
Unsatisfied	Count	12	43	28	27	28	138
	% within elb reside	10.3%	19.1%	9.8%	13.8%	16.2%	13.9%
Very Unsatisfied	Count	5	26	12	14	7	64
	% within elb reside	4.3%	11.6%	4.2%	7.2%	4.0%	6.4%
Total	Count	116	225	287	195	173	996
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 36.6 S $p < 0.05$

17. How soon after the request for a statutory assessment were you issued with a proposed statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
<18 weeks	Count	34	53	70	32	51	240
	% within elb reside	37.0%	22.8%	24.7%	16.2%	29.0%	24.5%
18-26 weeks	Count	12	35	55	41	24	167
	% within elb reside	13.0%	15.1%	19.4%	20.8%	13.6%	17.0%
>26 weeks	Count	11	66	56	58	38	229
	% within elb reside	12.0%	28.4%	19.8%	29.4%	21.6%	23.4%
Don't know	Count	35	78	102	66	63	344
	% within elb reside	38.0%	33.6%	36.0%	33.5%	35.8%	35.1%
Total	Count	92	232	283	197	176	980
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 31.4 **S** p<0.05

18. Was the wording of the proposed statement – including the recommendations made - easily understood? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	63	158	215	130	124	690
	% within elb reside	69.2%	68.4%	74.4%	65.3%	70.5%	70.0%
No	Count	6	25	16	19	10	76
	% within elb reside	6.6%	10.8%	5.5%	9.5%	5.7%	7.7%
In part	Count	22	48	58	50	42	220
	% within elb reside	24.2%	20.8%	20.1%	25.1%	23.9%	22.3%
Total	Count	91	231	289	199	176	986
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 10.1 NS

19. Was the proposed statement – including the recommendations made - specific to your child's needs? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	74	189	231	156	128	778
	% within elb reside	80.4%	81.8%	80.2%	78.8%	73.6%	79.1%
No	Count	5	7	10	9	12	43
	% within elb reside	5.4%	3.0%	3.5%	4.5%	6.9%	4.4%
In part	Count	13	35	47	33	34	162
	% within elb reside	14.1%	15.2%	16.3%	16.7%	19.5%	16.5%
Total	Count	92	231	288	198	174	983
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 6.8 NS

20. How often did you meet with the Board Officer to discuss the proposed statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Meeting not required	Count	37	98	102	84	79	400
	% within elb reside	43.5%	46.9%	37.8%	48.8%	46.5%	44.2%
1-5 times	Count	47	107	165	84	87	490
	% within elb reside	55.3%	51.2%	61.1%	48.8%	51.2%	54.1%
>5 times	Count	1	4	3	4	4	16
	% within elb reside	1.2%	1.9%	1.1%	2.3%	2.4%	1.8%
Total	Count	85	209	270	172	170	906
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 9.3 NS

21. Did you request any amendments to the proposed statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	19	46	54	33	30	182
	% within elb reside	20.7%	20.0%	18.7%	16.8%	16.9%	18.5%
No	Count	53	118	149	121	89	530
	% within elb reside	57.6%	51.3%	51.6%	61.7%	50.0%	53.8%
Didn't know I could	Count	11	31	32	15	35	124
	% within elb reside	12.0%	13.5%	11.1%	7.7%	19.7%	12.6%
None needed	Count	9	35	54	27	24	149
	% within elb reside	9.8%	15.2%	18.7%	13.8%	13.5%	15.1%
Total	Count	92	230	289	196	178	985
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 20.9 NS

22. Did the Board take account of your requested amendments? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	13	34	48	23	24	142
	% within elb reside	72.2%	65.4%	80.0%	65.7%	64.9%	70.3%
No	Count	3	9	7	10	7	36
	% within elb reside	16.7%	17.3%	11.7%	28.6%	18.9%	17.8%
Don't know	Count	2	9	5	2	6	24
	% within elb reside	11.1%	17.3%	8.3%	5.7%	16.2%	11.9%
Total	Count	18	52	60	35	37	202
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 8.5 NS

23. How long did it take to complete the final statement from the date of issue of the proposed statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Within 8weeks	Count	29	48	68	24	35	204
	% within elb reside	31.9%	21.4%	24.6%	12.5%	20.5%	21.4%
8-16 weeks	Count	15	45	55	51	34	200
	% within elb reside	16.5%	20.1%	19.9%	26.6%	19.9%	21.0%
>16weeks	Count	11	50	40	49	23	173
	% within elb reside	12.1%	22.3%	14.5%	25.5%	13.5%	18.1%
Don't know	Count	36	81	113	68	79	377
	% within elb reside	39.6%	36.2%	40.9%	35.4%	46.2%	39.5%
Total	Count	91	224	276	192	171	954
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 34.7 S p<0.05

24. Did you agree with the school named in the final statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	87	214	255	188	163	907
	% within elb reside	94.6%	93.9%	89.2%	94.0%	94.8%	92.7%
No	Count	5	14	31	12	9	71
	% within elb reside	5.4%	6.1%	10.8%	6.0%	5.2%	7.3%
Total	Count	92	228	286	200	172	978
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 7.8 NS

25. If no, please give your reason. * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Wanted special school placement	Count		2	4	1	1	8
	% within elb reside		14.3%	13.3%	10.0%	11.1%	11.9%
Wanted unit placement	Count		1	5	3		9
	% within elb reside		7.1%	16.7%	30.0%		13.4%
Wanted m'stream placement	Count		3	7	3	2	15
	% within elb reside		21.4%	23.3%	30.0%	22.2%	22.4%
Wanted different special school placement	Count	3	4	4	2	2	15
	% within elb reside	75.0%	28.6%	13.3%	20.0%	22.2%	22.4%
Wanted different unit placement	Count			1		1	2
	% within elb reside			3.3%		11.1%	3.0%
Wanted different mainstream placement	Count			3	1	1	5
	% within elb reside			10.0%	10.0%	11.1%	7.5%
Other	Count	1	4	6		2	13
	% within elb reside	25.0%	28.6%	20.0%		22.2%	19.4%
Total	Count	4	14	30	10	9	67
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 19.9 NS

26. If you could not resolve your disagreement with the Board, did you appeal to the SEN Tribunal?

* elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	1		4	3	3	11
	% within elb reside	33.3%		15.4%	30.0%	37.5%	18.3%
No	Count	2	13	22	7	5	49
	% within elb reside	66.7%	100.0%	84.6%	70.0%	62.5%	81.7%
Total	Count	3	13	26	10	8	60
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 6.4 NS

27. If yes, did the appeal go to a hearing? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count		1	2	1	4
	% within elb reside		25.0%	66.7%	50.0%	40.0%
No	Count	1	3	1	1	6
	% within elb reside	100.0%	75.0%	33.3%	50.0%	60.0%
Total	Count	1	4	3	2	10
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 2.0 NS

28. If yes, how long after the appeal did the hearing take place? * elb reside crosstabulation

		seelb	selb	welb	total
8-16weeks	Count	1	1	1	3
	% within elb reside	100.0%	50.0%	100.0%	75.0%
Longer	Count		1		1
	% within elb reside		50.0%		25.0%
Total	Count	1	2	1	4
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 1.3 NS

29. Did your child obtain a place at the school of your choice as a result of the hearing? * elb reside crosstabulation

		seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	1	1		2
	% within elb reside	100.0%	50.0%		50.0%
No	Count		1	1	2
	% within elb reside		50.0%	100.0%	50.0%
Total	Count	1	2	1	4
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 2.0 NS

30. Does the final statement represent a fair and accurate assessment of how your child's needs will be met? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	77	152	205	131	109	674
	% within elb reside	81.9%	81.3%	83.0%	80.4%	71.7%	80.0%
No	Count	5	4	4	3	9	25
	% within elb reside	5.3%	2.1%	1.6%	1.8%	5.9%	3.0%
In part	Count	12	31	38	29	34	144
	% within elb reside	12.8%	16.6%	15.4%	17.8%	22.4%	17.1%
Total	Count	94	187	247	163	152	843
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 14.5 NS

31. Overall, how satisfied are you with the procedures for issuing statements for your child? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Very Satisfied	Count	37	46	69	34	31	217
	% within elb reside	33.9%	22.3%	24.8%	18.6%	18.6%	23.0%
Satisfied	Count	57	108	164	107	100	536
	% within elb reside	52.3%	52.4%	59.0%	58.5%	59.9%	56.8%
Unsatisfied	Count	12	34	35	32	29	142
	% within elb reside	11.0%	16.5%	12.6%	17.5%	17.4%	15.1%
Very Unsatisfied	Count	3	18	10	10	7	48
	% within elb reside	2.8%	8.7%	3.6%	5.5%	4.2%	5.1%
Total	Count	109	206	278	183	167	943
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 22.8 S p<0.05

33. Overall, how has your child benefited from having a statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Has definitely benefited child	Count	68	175	209	154	122	728
	% within elb reside	74.7%	75.4%	71.3%	79.0%	69.7%	73.8%
Has had mixed benefits	Count	17	51	71	34	46	219
	% within elb reside	18.7%	22.0%	24.2%	17.4%	26.3%	22.2%
Has had no benefits for child	Count	6	6	13	7	7	39
	% within elb reside	6.6%	2.6%	4.4%	3.6%	4.0%	4.0%
Total	Count	91	232	293	195	175	986
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 8.7 NS

34. Overall, what have been the benefits to you as a parent of having a statement made? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Has definitely benefited you as a parent	Count	55	144	161	117	105	582
	% within elb reside	61.8%	62.9%	55.9%	61.3%	60.0%	59.9%
Has had mixed benefits to you as a parent	Count	18	63	88	52	47	268
	% within elb reside	20.2%	27.5%	30.6%	27.2%	26.9%	27.6%
Has had no benefits to you as a parent	Count	16	22	39	22	23	122
	% within elb reside	18.0%	9.6%	13.5%	11.5%	13.1%	12.6%
Total	Count	89	229	288	191	175	972
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 8.04 NS

36. Are there arrangements for your child's statement to be reviewed annually? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	107	188	262	180	154	891
	% within elb reside	89.9%	82.1%	89.7%	90.0%	85.6%	87.4%
No	Count	1	7	9	4	9	30
	% within elb reside	0.8%	3.1%	3.1%	2.0%	5.0%	2.9%
Don't know	Count	11	34	21	16	17	99
	% within elb reside	9.2%	14.8%	7.2%	8.0%	9.4%	9.7%
Total	Count	119	229	292	200	180	1020
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 15.01 NS

37. How many times has your child's statement been reviewed? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
1-4times	Count	65	145	222	148	126	706
	% within elb reside	68.4%	65.6%	77.6%	75.1%	71.2%	72.3%
5-8times	Count	17	35	33	27	24	136
	% within elb reside	17.9%	15.8%	11.5%	13.7%	13.6%	13.9%
9 or more	Count	1	5	7	4	5	22
	% within elb reside	1.1%	2.3%	2.4%	2.0%	2.8%	2.3%
Don't know	Count	12	36	24	18	22	112
	% within elb reside	12.6%	16.3%	8.4%	9.1%	12.4%	11.5%
Total	Count	95	221	286	197	177	976
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 14.76 NS

38. Is the annual review helpful in meeting the sen of your child? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	71	157	204	150	124	706
	% within elb reside	75.5%	71.4%	71.8%	75.8%	70.9%	72.7%
No	Count	2	7	17	8	8	42
	% within elb reside	2.1%	3.2%	6.0%	4.0%	4.6%	4.3%
Sometimes	Count	12	33	50	31	28	154
	% within elb reside	12.8%	15.0%	17.6%	15.7%	16.0%	15.9%
Don't know	Count	9	23	13	9	15	69
	% within elb reside	9.6%	10.5%	4.6%	4.5%	8.6%	7.1%
Total	Count	94	220	284	198	175	971
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 14.52 NS

39. Is a review needed each year if your child's educational needs remain unchanged? * elb reside
 crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	64	178	226	145	137	750
	% within elb reside	67.4%	78.4%	78.2%	73.2%	76.1%	75.8%
No	Count	24	36	45	42	35	182
	% within elb reside	25.3%	15.9%	15.6%	21.2%	19.4%	18.4%
Don't know	Count	7	13	18	11	8	57
	% within elb reside	7.4%	5.7%	6.2%	5.6%	4.4%	5.8%
Total	Count	95	227	289	198	180	989
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 8.02 NS

40. Would you be happy if the annual review was held only at key times? * elb reside
 crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	35	49	72	62	48	266
	% within elb reside	36.8%	21.5%	24.8%	31.3%	27.1%	26.9%
No	Count	49	155	190	122	115	631
	% within elb reside	51.6%	68.0%	65.5%	61.6%	65.0%	63.9%
Don't know	Count	11	24	28	14	14	91
	% within elb reside	11.6%	10.5%	9.7%	7.1%	7.9%	9.2%
Total	Count	95	228	290	198	177	988
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 13.41 NS

42. Have you received a report summarizing the outcome of the review meeting for your child?
 *elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	76	169	232	142	137	756
	% within elb reside	80.9%	76.1%	82.0%	74.3%	78.3%	78.3%
No	Count	18	53	51	49	38	209
	% within elb reside	19.1%	23.9%	18.0%	25.7%	21.7%	21.7%
Total	Count	94	222	283	191	175	965
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 4.99 NS

43. Are you satisfied with the arrangements for the review meetings? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Very Satisfied	Count	43	62	68	49	41	263
	% within elb reside	37.7%	28.4%	24.5%	26.1%	24.4%	27.3%
Satisfied	Count	59	125	176	119	107	586
	% within elb reside	51.8%	57.3%	63.5%	63.3%	63.7%	60.7%
Unsatisfied	Count	9	21	26	18	15	89
	% within elb reside	7.9%	9.6%	9.4%	9.6%	8.9%	9.2%
Very Unsatisfied	Count	3	10	7	2	5	27
	% within elb reside	2.6%	4.6%	2.5%	1.1%	3.0%	2.8%
Total	Count	114	218	277	188	168	965
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 13.7 NS

45. Have any amendments been made to your child's statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	14	46	68	42	40	210
	% within elb reside	12.2%	20.2%	23.6%	21.2%	22.9%	20.9%
No	Count	75	144	188	132	110	649
	% within elb reside	65.2%	63.2%	65.3%	66.7%	62.9%	64.6%
Don't know	Count	26	38	32	24	25	145
	% within elb reside	22.6%	16.7%	11.1%	12.1%	14.3%	14.4%
Total	Count	115	228	288	198	175	1004
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 14.9 NS

47. Did you request the amendment? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	7	23	34	22	21	107
	% within elb reside	63.6%	48.9%	54.8%	52.4%	51.2%	52.7%
No	Count	4	24	28	20	20	96
	% within elb reside	36.4%	51.1%	45.2%	47.6%	48.8%	47.3%
Total	Count	11	47	62	42	41	203
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 9.46 NS

48. Did the Board propose the amendments? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	5	23	44	27	17	116
	% within elb reside	45.5%	52.3%	73.3%	65.9%	43.6%	59.5%
No	Count	6	21	16	14	22	79
	% within elb reside	54.5%	47.7%	26.7%	34.1%	56.4%	40.5%
Total	Count	11	44	60	41	39	195
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 11.4 S p<0.05

49. Were you provided with copies of relevant evidence for the amendment? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	9	32	46	28	28	143
	% within elb reside	81.8%	71.1%	79.3%	68.3%	77.8%	74.9%
No	Count	2	10	5	10	6	33
	% within elb reside	18.2%	22.2%	8.6%	24.4%	16.7%	17.3%
Don't know	Count		3	7	3	2	15
	% within elb reside		6.7%	12.1%	7.3%	5.6%	7.9%
Total	Count	11	45	58	41	36	191
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 7.47 NS

50. If the amendment suggested a change of school were you satisfied with the school named in the statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	3	18	35	18	15	89
	% within elb reside	75.0%	69.2%	97.2%	81.8%	83.3%	84.0%
No	Count	1	8	1	4	3	17
	% within elb reside	25.0%	30.8%	2.8%	18.2%	16.7%	16.0%
Total	Count	4	26	36	22	18	106
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 9.2 NS

51. Did you ask the Board to put in the name of another school? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count		10	14	4	4	32
	% within elb reside		30.3%	33.3%	13.8%	14.8%	23.9%
No	Count	3	23	28	25	23	102
	% within elb reside	100.0%	69.7%	66.7%	86.2%	85.2%	76.1%
Total	Count	3	33	42	29	27	134
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 6.6 NS

52. If your request was turned down, did you appeal to the SEN Tribunal? * elb reside crosstabulation

		neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	2			2	4
	% within elb reside	50.0%			33.3%	22.2%
No	Count	2	6	2	4	14
	% within elb reside	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%	77.8%
Total	Count	4	6	2	6	18
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 4.5 NS

53. Do you have a copy of a Transition Plan for your child? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	6	13	17	9	9	54
	% within elb reside	26.1%	33.3%	35.4%	37.5%	39.1%	34.4%
No	Count	17	26	31	15	14	103
	% within elb reside	73.9%	66.7%	64.6%	62.5%	60.9%	65.6%
Total	Count	23	39	48	24	23	157
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 1.1 NS

54. Have you the name of a teacher who will co-ordinate the transition process? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	9	18	19	11	12	69
	% within elb reside	47.4%	56.3%	47.5%	52.4%	57.1%	51.9%
No	Count	10	14	21	10	9	64
	% within elb reside	52.6%	43.8%	52.5%	47.6%	42.9%	48.1%
Total	Count	19	32	40	21	21	133
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 0.94 NS

55. Did you receive advice/guidance from any of the following? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
School	Count	5	18	16	11	11	61
	% within elb reside	38.5%	69.2%	61.5%	73.3%	61.1%	62.2%
Health Services	Count	1		1		2	4
	% within elb reside	7.7%		3.8%		11.1%	4.1%
Social worker/services	Count	5	2	5	3	2	17
	% within elb reside	38.5%	7.7%	19.2%	20.0%	11.1%	17.3%
Careers Service	Count	2	6	4	1	3	16
	% within elb reside	15.4%	23.1%	15.4%	6.7%	16.7%	16.3%
Total	Count	13	26	26	15	18	98
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 12.8 NS

56. How satisfied are you with the recommendations made in the Transition Plan? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Very Satisfied	Count	3	8	4	6	2	23
	% within elb reside	30.0%	36.4%	13.3%	40.0%	15.4%	25.6%
Satisfied	Count	6	9	18	7	6	46
	% within elb reside	60.0%	40.9%	60.0%	46.7%	46.2%	51.1%
Unsatisfied	Count		4	4	1	3	12
	% within elb reside		18.2%	13.3%	6.7%	23.1%	13.3%
Very Unsatisfied	Count	1	1	4	1	2	9
	% within elb reside	10.0%	4.5%	13.3%	6.7%	15.4%	10.0%
Total	Count	10	22	30	15	13	90
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 10.5 NS

59a. Learning difficulties (moderate\severe\profound\multiple) * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	60	156	173	121	101	611
	% within elb reside	50.0%	66.1%	59.0%	59.9%	55.8%	59.2%
No	Count	60	80	120	81	80	421
	% within elb reside	50.0%	33.9%	41.0%	40.1%	44.2%	40.8%
Total	Count	120	236	293	202	181	1032
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 9.8 S p<0.05

59b. Specific learning difficulties (eg dyslexia) * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	21	43	57	31	38	190
	% within elb reside	17.5%	18.2%	19.4%	15.4%	21.0%	18.3%
No	Count	99	193	237	170	143	842
	% within elb reside	82.5%	81.8%	80.6%	84.6%	79.0%	81.6%
Total	Count	120	236	294	201	181	1032
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 1.86 NS

59c. Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	41	61	91	47	59	299
	% within elb reside	34.2%	25.8%	31.1%	23.3%	32.6%	29.0%
No	Count	79	175	202	155	122	733
	% within elb reside	65.8%	74.2%	68.9%	76.7%	67.4%	71.0%
Total	Count	120	236	293	202	181	1032
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 7.7 NS

59d. Physical Disabilities * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	21	45	39	37	46	188
	% within elb reside	17.5%	19.1%	13.3%	18.3%	25.4%	18.2%
No	Count	99	191	254	165	135	844
	% within elb reside	82.5%	80.9%	86.7%	81.7%	74.6%	81.8%
Total	Count	120	236	293	202	181	1032
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 11.18 S p<0.05

59e. Sensory Impairments (hearing difficulties) * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	14	22	18	21	16	91
	% within elb reside	11.7%	9.3%	6.1%	10.4%	8.8%	8.8%
No	Count	106	214	275	181	165	941
	% within elb reside	88.3%	90.7%	93.9%	89.6%	91.2%	91.2%
Total	Count	120	236	293	202	181	1032
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 4.5 NS

59.f Sensory Impairments (visual difficulties) * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	15	12	12	19	23	81
	% within elb reside	12.5%	5.1%	4.1%	9.4%	12.7%	7.8%
No	Count	105	224	281	183	158	951
	% within elb reside	87.5%	94.9%	95.9%	90.6%	87.3%	92.2%
Total	Count	120	236	293	202	181	1032
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 18.37 S p<0.05

59g. Speech and language difficulties * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	49	115	135	101	96	496
	% within elb reside	40.8%	48.7%	46.1%	50.0%	53.0%	48.1%
No	Count	71	121	158	101	85	536
	% within elb reside	59.2%	51.3%	53.9%	50.0%	47.0%	51.9%
Total	Count	120	236	293	202	181	1032
	% within elb reside	100.0%	51.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 5.1 NS

59h. Medical Conditions * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	33	47	79	51	48	258
	% within elb reside	27.5%	19.9%	27.0%	25.2%	26.5%	25.0%
No	Count	87	189	214	151	133	774
	% within elb reside	72.5%	80.1%	73.0%	74.8%	73.5%	75.0%
Total	Count	120	236	293	202	181	1032
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 4.48 NS

60. What type of school does your presently attend? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Pre-school	Count % within elb reside		1 .4%				1 .1%
Nursery	Count % within elb reside	2 1.7%	1 .4%	4 1.4%	1 .5%	7 3.9%	15 1.5%
Primary Mainstream	Count % within elb reside	23 19.2%	47 19.8%	97 33.2%	66 32.5%	82 45.3%	315 30.5%
Preparatory	Count % within elb reside		1 .4%		1 .5%		2 .2%
Secondary Mainstream	Count % within elb reside	16 13.3%	41 17.3%	31 10.6%	38 18.7%	36 19.9%	162 15.7%
Grammar	Count % within elb reside	8 6.7%	6 2.5%	12 4.1%	5 2.5%	6 3.3%	37 3.6%
Special School	Count % within elb reside	36 30.0%	84 35.4%	83 28.4%	32 15.8%	27 14.9%	262 25.4%
Special Primary Unit	Count % within elb reside	21 17.5%	37 15.6%	33 11.3%	37 18.2%	12 6.6%	140 13.6%
Special Secondary Unit	Count % within elb reside	9 7.5%	13 5.5%	17 5.8%	21 10.3%	7 3.9%	67 6.5%
Other	Count % within elb reside	5 4.2%	6 2.5%	15 5.1%	2 1.0%	4 2.2%	32 3.1%
Total	Count % within elb reside	120 100.0%	237 100.0%	292 100.0%	203 100.0%	181 100.0%	1033 100.0%

Chi Sq 113 S p<0.05

61. If the statement changed the type of school your child attended, please indicate what sort of school your child attended before he/she had a statement * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Preschool	Count	2	4	3	2		11
	% within elb reside	7.7%	4.9%	3.9%	3.8%		4.0%
Nursery	Count	1	8	9	9	3	30
	% within elb reside	3.8%	9.8%	11.8%	17.3%	8.1%	11.0%
Primary	Count	10	54	42	35	15	156
	% within elb reside	38.5%	65.9%	55.3%	67.3%	40.5%	57.1%
Preparatory	Count		1	1			2
	% within elb reside		1.2%	1.3%			.7%
Secondary	Count	3	4	4	2	2	15
	% within elb reside	11.5%	4.9%	5.3%	3.8%	5.4%	5.5%
Grammar	Count			1			1
	% within elb reside			1.3%			.4%
Special School	Count	4	8	5	1	5	23
	% within elb reside	15.4%	9.8%	6.6%	1.9%	13.5%	8.4%
Special unit	Count	6	3	9	3	11	32
	% within elb reside	23.1%	3.7%	11.8%	5.8%	29.7%	11.7%
Other	Count			2		1	3
	% within elb reside			2.6%		2.7%	1.1%
Total	Count	26	82	76	52	37	273
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 46.8 S p<0.05

62. Does another child in the family have a statement? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	10	40	30	32	32	144
	% within elb reside	10.3%	16.8%	10.4%	15.8%	17.7%	14.3%
No	Count	87	198	258	170	149	862
	% within elb reside	89.7%	83.2%	89.6%	84.2%	82.3%	85.7%
Total	Count	97	238	288	202	181	1006
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 8.1 NS

64. In which Education and Library Board is your child's school? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
BELB	Count	84	13	27	4	1	129
	% within elb reside	87.5%	5.4%	9.2%	2.0%	.6%	12.7%
NEELB	Count	5	221	4	2		232
	% within elb reside	5.2%	92.5%	1.4%	1.0%		22.9%
SEELB	Count	6	2	255	2		265
	% within elb reside	6.3%	.8%	87.0%	1.0%		26.2%
SELB	Count			5	194	4	203
	% within elb reside			1.7%	95.6%	2.2%	20.1%
WELB	Count		2			176	178
	% within elb reside		.8%			97.2%	17.6%
Outside NI	Count	1	1	2	1		5
	% within elb reside	1.0%	.4%	.7%	.5%		.5%
Total	Count	96	239	293	203	181	1012
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 3237.2 S $p < 0.05$

65. Who completed this questionnaire? * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Mother	Count	78	190	241	161	138	808
	% within elb reside	80.4%	79.5%	82.0%	79.3%	76.2%	79.7%
Father	Count	9	13	21	21	18	82
	% within elb reside	9.3%	5.4%	7.1%	10.3%	9.9%	8.1%
Mother and Father	Count	6	27	31	19	19	102
	% within elb reside	6.2%	11.3%	10.5%	9.4%	10.5%	10.1%
Parental Responsibility	Count	3	4		1	3	11
	% within elb reside	3.1%	1.7%		.5%	1.7%	1.1%
Other	Count	1	5	1	1	3	11
	% within elb reside	1.0%	2.1%	.3%	.5%	1.7%	1.1%
Total	Count	97	239	294	203	181	1014
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 20.8 NS

66. I am willing to talk to the University about my views and experiences. * elb reside
 crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
Yes	Count	61	145	186	119	112	623
	% within elb reside	62.9%	60.7%	63.3%	58.6%	62.2%	61.5%
No	Count	36	94	108	84	68	390
	% within elb reside	37.1%	39.3%	36.7%	41.4%	37.8%	38.5%
Total	Count	97	239	294	203	180	1013
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 1.29 NS

Age first assessed * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
0	Count					3	3
	% within elb reside					1.8%	.3%
1	Count					1	1
	% within elb reside					.6%	.1%
1	Count		1	2	2		5
	% within elb reside		.5%	.7%	1.0%		.5%
2	Count	8	9	12	11	7	47
	% within elb reside	9.1%	4.1%	4.3%	5.7%	4.2%	5.0%
3	Count	14	44	50	34	33	175
	% within elb reside	15.9%	20.3%	17.9%	17.7%	19.6%	18.5%
4	Count	18	52	86	39	50	245
	% within elb reside	20.5%	24.0%	30.8%	20.3%	29.8%	26.0%
5	Count	18	30	28	27	15	118
	% within elb reside	20.5%	13.8%	10.0%	14.1%	8.9%	12.5%
6	Count	8	19	16	24	13	80
	% within elb reside	9.1%	8.8%	5.7%	12.5%	7.7%	8.5%
7	Count	5	22	27	16	14	84
	% within elb reside	5.7%	10.1%	9.7%	8.3%	8.3%	8.9%
8	Count	5	11	23	11	7	57
	% within elb reside	5.7%	5.1%	8.2%	5.7%	4.2%	6.0%
9	Count	1	12	12	7	7	39
	% within elb reside	1.1%	5.5%	4.3%	3.6%	4.2%	4.1%
10	Count	6	5	10	14	6	41
	% within elb reside	6.8%	2.3%	3.6%	7.3%	3.6%	4.3%
11	Count		4	9	5	6	24
	% within elb reside		1.8%	3.2%	2.6%	3.6%	2.5%
12	Count	2	3	2	2	2	11
	% within elb reside	2.3%	1.4%	.7%	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%
13	Count		2	2			4
	% within elb reside		.9%	.7%			.4%
14	Count	3	2			3	8
	% within elb reside	3.4%	.9%			1.8%	.8%
19	Count		1				1
	% within elb reside		.5%				.1%
	Count					1	1

791	% within elb reside					.6%	.1%
Total	Count	88	217	279	192	168	944
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Sq 93.42 S p<0.05

Number of different difficulties * elb reside crosstabulation

		belb	neelb	seelb	selb	welb	total
0	Count	1	3	1	1		6
	% within elb reside	1.0%	1.3%	.3%	.5%		.6%
1	Count	35	84	119	77	45	360
	% within elb reside	36.5%	35.6%	41.0%	38.9%	25.4%	36.1%
2	Count	30	69	88	57	63	307
	% within elb reside	31.3%	29.2%	30.3%	28.8%	35.6%	30.8%
3	Count	18	58	50	39	43	208
	% within elb reside	18.8%	24.6%	17.2%	19.7%	24.3%	20.9%
4	Count	8	15	22	15	16	76
	% within elb reside	8.3%	6.4%	7.6%	7.6%	9.0%	7.6%
5	Count	2	7	7	5	5	26
	% within elb reside	2.1%	3.0%	2.4%	2.5%	2.8%	2.6%
6	Count			2	3	4	9
	% within elb reside			.7%	1.5%	2.3%	.9%
7	Count	2		1	1	1	5
	% within elb reside	2.1%		.3%	.5%	.6%	.5%
Total	Count	96	236	290	198	177	997
	% within elb reside	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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APPENDIX 3

QUESTION 16: What improvements would you suggest to the statutory assessment procedure?

No.	Comments	Total
1	No Comment	572
2	Reduction in time taken to complete assessment	177
3	Greater communication with parents	106
4	Greater feedback from professionals	53
5	Consideration of parents' views	43
6	Clear explanation of services available	37
7	Clear, unambiguous terminology	34
8	More one-to-one contact rather than just letters	28
9	More communication with parent during the assessment process	28
10	Earlier identification and intervention	22
11	Relevant and applicable assessments	21
12	Greater sensitivity to the impact on parents	19
13	Designated and/or independent person to talk to	15
14	No suggestions	15
15	More communication with child during assessment	14
16	Better communication between school and board officials	13
17	Greater back-up and support for parents	12
18	Less bureaucracy and paper work	11
19	Improved training and awareness for teaching staff	10
20	Clear and full explanation of assessment results	10
21	Earlier assessment	10
22	Parents know their child best	10
23	Time for parents to understand diagnosis and reach decisions	8
24	Less general, descriptive language unrelated to specific conditions	6
25	More information sessions before assessment commences	5
26	Less formal assessments	4
27	Full explanation of parental rights	3
28	Sensitive treatment of the child	3
29	Automatic statement for disability	2
30	Value of a helpline	1
31	More opportunity for contact with other parents	1
32	Complete overview of whole process	1
33	Different approach for children with physical disability	1
34	Independent advise	1
35	Help parents understand their child's needs and potential	1
36	Financial recompense for private assessments and reports	1

QUESTION 32: What improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the statementing procedure?

No.	Comments	Total
1	No Comment	639
2	Process and time taken should be quicker	135
3	Greater communication and information for parents	79
4	Greater feedback from and between professionals	40
5	Consideration of parental views	34
6	Greater parental involvement	31
7	Statement should be representative of child's needs	27
8	Provisions recommended should be carried out	27
9	Greater explanation of the reasons for statementing	26
10	Results should be explained clearly and in full	25
11	Clear, unambiguous terminology	23
12	None	16
13	Clear explanation of services and options available	15
14	Designated person to talk to	14
15	Less bureaucracy and paperwork	14
16	Increased training and awareness for teaching staff	13
17	Descriptive language to general and unspecific	12
18	More one-to-one contact	11
19	Parents know their children best	11
20	Greater sensitivity to the impact on parents	8
21	Full explanation of parental rights	8
22	Need for accurate assessments if statement is to be worthwhile	7
23	More time spent with child	6
24	More support for parents	4
25	Early intervention	4
26	Regular written updates	3
27	Identified sources of help for parents	3
28	Option to sit 11+	2
29	More use of independent reports and advice	2
30	Relevance of statement when condition is purely medical and/or physical	2
31	Consideration of child's needs outside the classroom	2
32	Greater awareness by Board Officers of different conditions	1
33	Provision of more professionals eg psychologists, speech therapists	1
34	Importance of home visit by Board officials	1
35	Increase in available programmes eg speech and lanaguage	1
36	Increase in specialised teachers within mainstream schools	1
37	Greater consideration of parental choice in school	1
38	Different approach needed for children with physical disabilities	1

QUESTION 35: Please add any comments you wish to make to Q33 and Q34.

No.	Comments	Total
1	No Comment	712
2	It has given my child the support and help he/she needs to progress	131
3	Greater help and support from professionals	37
4	Schools and Boards must meet the recommendations set out	27
5	There must be acknowledgement and recognition of child's educational needs	26
6	Satisfied with process and statement	26
7	Child's potential has not been achieved and benefits have been limited	25
8	Found process difficult, disappointing, stressful and confusing	19
9	Less stigma should be attached to statementing	17
10	Process helps parent understand their child's needs	15
11	Parents should have greater involvement	8
12	Recognition of the statement as the legal document it is	7
13	Concerns that certain areas need more attention eg speech therapy	5
14	Need for increased specialised resources	4
15	Child can feel excluded, isolated and left out	2
16	Need for a statement for physical disabilities only	2
17	School has listened to the views of both parent and child	2
18	Statement should be laid out more clearly	2
19	More integration with other children in mainstream	2
20	Parental choice on 11+	1
21	All involved should act in the child's best interests at all times	1
22	Disappointed with outcome	1
23	Suitability and qualifications of teachers to teach special needs	1
24	Staff training	1
25	Consistent care and support right up to 'A' Level	1
26	Statement should be recognised in the rest of the U.K	1
27	Lack of funding means needs cannot be met	1
28	Recognition by Board Officers and teachers that things change throughout the year	1
29	Board should take into account family circumstances	1

QUESTION 41: If the answer to Q40 is yes, please specify what changes you think should be made to the review process

No.	Comments	Total
1	Not Applicable (answered No or Not Sure)	814
2	No Comment (answered Yes)	106
3	Only review if necessary eg slump in progress, transfer stage, start of school year	39
4	Arrangements established to discuss a specific problem if one arises	23
5	Review when parent and/or teacher request	17
6	Informal review if child's needs have remained unchanged	10
7	Only review at key times	8
8	Need for ongoing dialogue throughout the year	6
9	Need for an objective representative for parent and child	5
10	Need for more frequent reviews	4
11	All persons involved should attend	3
12	Review should acknowledge potential changes throughout the school year	3
13	Full explanation of parental rights	2
14	Benefits of the review cannot be overlooked	2
15	Reviews are not necessary	1
16	Reviews are only necessary every 5 years	1
17	Need for home visits prior to the review	1
18	Need for regular updates	1
19	Outcome and recommendations of review should be recognised in rest of UK	1
20	Review at end of each term	1
21	Review should be relevant	1
22	Process should be quicker	1

QUESTION 44: What improvements would you recommend?

No.	Comments	Total
1	No Comment	846
2	All those involved in the process should turn up	50
3	Parents must be kept informed	32
4	Regular communication and feedback from school, Board and other professionals	29
5	Greater involvement of parents and their viewpoint	23
6	Meeting should be of value, relevant and specific to the child	15
7	None	13
8	Review is needed more than once a year	12
9	Recommendations should be implemented	6
10	Need for individual meetings with teachers and other professionals prior to main meeting	5
11	Review should be scheduled for beginning of academic year	5
12	Objectives and targets need to be clearly identified	4
13	Child is the priority	3
14	Process should be more simple	3
15	Process should be more thorough	3
16	Review should have more independent representation	2
17	Process should be more informal	2
18	Process is of no value if 'tick box' situation exists	2
19	More time should be spent talking with the child	2
20	Review particularly important when transferring from primary to secondary school	2
21	Review should be more structured	2
22	Child 16+ should attend the meeting	1
23	Review is needed less than once a year	1
24	Was not aware of review	1
25	Review should be quicker	1
26	Need for increased liaison between professionals	1
27	School should be more involved	1
28	Review only at key times	1
29	Some aspects are not always necessary eg medical exam	1
30	Statement should reflect review, with revisions if necessary	1

QUESTION 46: If the answer to Q45 is yes, please specify

No.	Comments	Total
1	Not Applicable	825
2	Change of school	65
3	Change in provision eg speech therapy, classroom assistance	63
4	No Comment	37
5	Updated as needs changed	21
6	Statement withdrawn	4
7	Change in wording	3
8	Educated with home tutor	1

QUESTION 57: What improvements, if any, would you make to the transition planning process?

No.	Comments	Total
1	No comment	984
2	Improved advice and help	12
3	Clear explanation of the process	9
4	Don't know	6
5	More information	5
6	Greater contact with professionals	4
7	Sensitive treatment of young person	3
8	Agencies should meet recommendations set down	2
9	Excellent service	1
10	Assessment plans should be implemented better	1
11	None	1
12	Broader consideration of 16+ options	1
13	More time spent with young person	1
14	Identification of designated contact	1
15	Copy of report should be automatically available	1
16	Process should be less generalised and more specific to the young person	1

APPENDIX 4

DISSATISFIED PARENTS

What improvements (if any) do you think could be made to the statutory assessment procedure?

No.	Comments	Total
1	More communication and involvement of/with parents in the process : to be made aware of things; to be better informed; improvement in provision of information	14
2	Speed – need to lessen the time of the assessment and improve timescales	13
3	Earlier assessments	5
4	Greater awareness and understanding by Board of child/family and their needs/problems	5
5	Process could be simplified : less paperwork; it is too disorganised; too much bureaucracy and red tape	5
6	Clear explanation of process - how to go about it step by step	5
7	Teachers/schools need to be more aware of the specific conditions and needs of children : acknowledge the problems and the psychological impact on the child	4
8	Lack of communication between professionals	4
9	Process is very stressful, frustrating, frightening, ruthless and upsetting for parents	4
10	Statement is too vague, ambiguous and unclear about child's needs and associated provision	3
11	Should be a designated case officer/point of contact	3
12	Feel unempowered : guilty, unimportant and helpless	3
13	Difficult and complicated process to understand	3
14	Parents have to be assertive and pushy otherwise they wouldn't get anywhere : feel for those who don't know their rights	3
15	Don't feel either the board or school do enough to help	3
16	Children have to fit the system, rather than system fit the child	3
17	We always have to contact them; they don't contact us	3
18	Need to be more open, forthcoming and honest about the process	3
19	School and teachers were helpful	2
20	Need to improve personal skills : professionals were rude and off hand	2
21	Should produce a leaflet to clearly explain what is a complicated procedure OR an organisation to guide parents through	2
22	Statement is full of jargon – difficult to understand language used	2
23	Recommendations can't be set up due to a lack of funding which limits the provision	2
24	Parents are experts on their own children : should listen to their concerns	2
25	More sessions : one or two brief meetings are not enough	2

26	Should consider any comments made as part of a private assessment	2
27	Should be emergency procedures to implement immediate help when necessary	2
28	Need for more training : teacher knew very little about procedure	2
29	Need more training all round to know system better	2
30	Need to be more flexible	1
31	Need improvements in timescales to implement recommended provisions	1
32	Long waiting lists	1
33	Need to review complaints procedure	1
34	Process fails those with relatively new conditions : the tests fail to adequately identify these problems	1
35	Schools can benefit from the statement	1
36	Disliked assistant – feel they didn't want to know the child	1
37	Board is understaffed and unable to make decisions	1
38	Feel like you are in competition for resources with other children and families	1
39	Need to be aware of all available options	1
40	Some children need to be screened before starting school	1
41	Pro-active screening	1
42	School held child back	1
43	Boards have the attitude that they are “god”	1
44	Against the process because it stigmatises and labels child	1
45	Process is too insular	1
46	Need to enhance teacher training in the area of SEN	1
47	Children should be reassessed at the age of 14	1
48	Parents should know in advance which school the child is going to	1
49	Need for counselling advice for parents	1
50	Hard to come to terms with diagnosis	1
51	No backup or support	1
52	Struggle getting help	1
53	Assessments need to be more accurate	1
54	Professionals were quick to pre-judge child	1
55	Not made aware of changes to child's education : moved schools	1

DISSATISFIED PARENTS

**What improvements (if any) do you think could be made to the statutory
statementing procedure?**

No.	Comments	Total
1	Process could be more efficient : was very slow and overly long	14
2	Need for greater communication with parents : take views seriously	9
3	ELB Officers difficult to contact	6
4	Parents have to push to contact the professionals : need to be assertive and constantly fight for rights	4
5	Need to review timescales : delays cause parents to lose placements or only finding a placement one week before starting school	4
6	Process is too formal : needs to be less clinical and more child friendly	4
7	No complaints about procedure	4
8	Needs to be more open to new ideas	4
9	Need identified point of contact – someone who knows whole case history of the child and who can take you through the stages clearly	4
10	It is too general and vague : needs to be more specific	4
11	Parents need regular updates eg what stage the process is at; explanation of tests and results	3
12	Process was straightforward	3
13	Boards need to be more helpful	3
14	There is a huge demand on services but a lack of resources	3
15	Children can be very aware of being assessed	2
16	ELBs and DE need to work together and communicate with each other	2
17	Need to be more aware of facilities and options available	2
18	Recommendations are not carried out	2
19	Language needs to be more clear and less complicated	2
20	There should be a fast track process for very needy cases such as physical disabilities where the needs are obvious	2
21	Would like to see all those involved actually become involved	2
22	Process made me feel demoralised, ignored and unempowered	2
23	Booklet wasn't helpful	1
24	ELBs need to be more flexible	1
25	Co-operation between ELBs and parents is poor	1
26	Need to inform parents of policies and procedures	1
27	Felt that some of the professionals represented the board, rather than the child	1
28	The assessment by the school doctor merely voiced my opinions	1
29	Board refuses to commit resources	1
30	Child is not receiving any help	1
31	Child receives no supervision at school	1
32	Staff need greater training, especially for emotional needs	1
33	Teachers shouldn't treat families differently	1
34	Children in school should be educated about peer's disability	1
35	My child's education is important	1
36	Too much bureaucracy and red tape	1

37	School can not cope with the emotional problems of child	1
38	They seemed to have pre-judged my child's needs	1
39	Scare tactics were used	1
40	Teachers need to be monitored	1
41	ELBs lack understanding and empathy	1
42	There should be more sessions with the child before making a statement	1
43	Assessors might catch the child on a bad day	1
44	Disagree with a stranger assessing my child – a relationship needs to develop	1
45	ELBs need to spend more time listening to parents and teachers	1
46	Need to maintain the statement if the child moves school	1
47	Mainstream schools are running scared of special needs children	1
48	Automatic and quick assessment for every child who needs it	1
49	Need to always have regard for the good of the child	1
50	No back up from school	1
51	Process is very daunting	1
52	Given no help	1
53	Teachers need greater training so they can understand the procedure	1
54	Process is filled with pressure and emotional blackmail	1
55	Felt alienated from other families	1
56	ELBs need to support their staff	1
57	Too much pressure on school and their league tables to worry about children with SEN	1
58	Culture is too insular	1
59	Board should be more involved	1
60	Suggest presence of an independent person when child is being assessed	1
61	Very little input from some professionals	1
62	Aren't enough trained professionals	1
63	Need whole new system for children on autism spectrum	1
64	Statementing process is too quick	1
65	Was asked for my opinion at all stages	1
66	Was not involved in procedure : just told the results	1
67	Disagreed with outcome of statement	1
68	ELBs need to be more sensitive towards parents	1
69	Board puts obstacles in my way	1
70	ELBs need to develop new ideas	1

DISSATISFIED PARENTS

What improvements (if any) do you think could be made to the annual review process?

No.	Comments	Total
1	Should be compulsory attendance for all those involved	6
2	No one listens to parents opinions	4
3	The annual review took too long : they trail their heels	3
4	Have not had an annual review	3
5	Need for more information and what facilities are available	3
6	School is trying hard and point out difficulties : am happy with school	3
7	Some people failed to turn up for the annual review	3
8	Recommendations have not been carried out	2
9	There is a lack of funding and not enough resources	2
10	Review should be taken more seriously	2
11	Teachers from previous year and classroom assistants should be involved	2
12	They system is stuck in a rut and needs to challenge itself	2
13	They system is old fashioned	2
14	The meetings are given a small time slot : it is difficult to review one year in 15 minutes	2
15	The annual review was excellent; I am happy with it	2
16	The annual review is fair	2
17	Yearly review is not enough : needs to be done more often	1
18	The annual review is a whole waste of time	1
19	The annual review was handled well by all the professionals	1
20	They just sit there and tell me what they are going to do	1
21	I have never been present	1
22	The panel need to take note of teachers' opinions	1
23	Lack of opennness	1
24	Need for better support	1
25	ELBs need new ideas to improve it	1
26	Need to be specific if changes have to be made	1
27	Parents should be informed of independent sources of advice	1
28	Need for more face-to-face contact and interaction with professionals rather than over the telephone	1
29	The system can't cope with increasing number of children with SEN	1
30	They seem to prioritise based on how disruptive your child is	1
31	You don't want to ask for too much in case you are seen as a nuisance	1
32	There is nothing tailored for child/family emotional problems	1
33	I had to fight all the way	1
34	Too many scare tactics are involved	1
35	The educational psychologist did not develop a relationship with child	1
36	Not happy with some of the comments made by so-called "experts"	1
37	Problems arise when health and education fall into separate Boards	1

38	It was positive and forward-thinking	1
39	Recommendations can be rejected due to lack of funding	1
40	I do not have access to all that my child needs	1
41	Transport to school is a problem	1
42	Have to acknowledge that the statement is a legal document	1
43	Feel very bitter about whole thing	1
44	There is a lack of facilities	1
45	It can be hard to understand what they mean	1
46	Schools don't want to know children with special needs	1
47	Child would have been better off without the statement	1
48	They take the side of the school	1
49	I don't see how the board comes to their conclusions	1
50	If provision is made for help, then the resources should be available	1
51	There is a lack of training	1
52	Statement is ignored and replaced by the school's routine	1
53	They have their minds made up before the meeting	1
54	Teachers decided my child didn't need a review	1
55	Lack of communication between agencies	1
56	Too much conflicting advice	1
57	Code of Practice is too vague	1
58	Can be very frightening and intimidating as it is on their turf	1
59	They lead us to believe what they say is gospel truth	1

DISSATISFIED PARENTS

Have any amendments been made to your child's statement?

No.	Comments	Total
1	None have been made : nothing significant	7
2	Have moved schools : the original recommended school didn't work out	7
3	We qualified for increased the hours from the classroom assistant	4
4	We have pushed to have him moved : the Board recommended a school where we knew he couldn't cope	2
5	Things are only done because I am a pushy parent : I have had to fight	2
6	I had to take things to the Tribunal to sort them out	2
7	The school are now backing us in the direction we wish to go	2
8	Recommendations came unstuck due to lack of funding	2
9	My child should be receiving more therapy	2
10	It's a struggle to get any requested changes : life is hard enough coping with a child with special needs	2
11	They only attempted to communicate/compromise at the tribunal	1
12	I don't think my child has been properly assessed	1
13	I have not been informed of anything	1
14	Angry at lack of information given to parents	1
15	Boards only pay you lip-service	1
16	Changes are wishy-washy and don't mean a thing	1
17	They do as little as they can get away with	1
18	It is a "them and us" situation	1
19	Previous review was inadequate	1
20	Now receiving intensive speech and language therapy	1
21	Now investigating my child's hearing	1
22	Board wanted us to stop statement but we received back up from the school	1
23	Hoping to integrate child one day a week into mainstream school	1
24	People are constantly quoting policy at me – but give no real answers	1
25	I had to seek additional help outside the system	1
26	Teachers and ELBs should acknowledge that parent knows child best	1
27	ELBs should start from a base line provision and build from there	1
28	Too difficult to get the things we need	1
29	Now receives help from a specialist dyslexic teacher	1
30	There have been many changes throughout the year and we now feel amendments have to be made	1
31	We had to move outside the area to find the facilities we need	1
32	Should listen to parents	1
33	His reading level hasn't improved	1
34	Provision has been removed – which I don't agree with	1
35	Provision has been removed – which I am happy with	1

36	Amendments were made in terms of our child's behaviour	1
37	We are trying to move away from the label of 'being stupid'	1
38	I am happy with progress but constant pressure is placed on us to change provision	1
39	Not sure if we are moving in the right direction	1
40	Question the training of the special needs teachers	1
41	I would like my child to be seen by a psychiatrist	1
42	I object to the proposals put forward	1
43	The system is ignorant to the child's needs	1
44	Either the ELBs can't cope or they don't want to cope	1
45	Too much bureaucracy	1
46	Provisions haven't come through yet	1
47	Diagnosis hasn't been noted on statement : would like to change this	1
48	Forms are too vague : they need to be more specific	1

DISSATISFIED PARENTS

What are your thoughts on the inclusion of children with special educational needs into mainstream schools?

No.	Comments	Total
1	Depends on the individual child, their ability level and needs. Children should be assessed on an individual basis	14
2	Mainstream allows children to see the society around them which is important in terms of social contact and developing social skills	8
3	Depends on whether school had the facilities/resources to meet their needs : Adequate provision and assistance are vital	7
4	Makes child feel more normal and benefits self-esteem, self-confidence and self-worth	5
5	Where possible and appropriate, then yes	5
6	Some children will not fit in e.g. severe or profound learning difficulties	5
7	Child with special needs in mainstream educates others to value life and encourages more understanding	4
8	Integration into mainstream could affect the other children and hold them back	3
9	A child with SEN is safe from bullying in a special school : other children can be cruel	3
10	Mainstream teachers wouldn't have sufficient knowledge, training or understanding	3
11	Mainstream is not necessarily for every child	3
12	Need for wider range of options : parent's must have a choice	3
13	My child loves mainstream : it is the best thing that has ever happened to him	2
14	Depends on the quality of teaching and teachers' attitudes	2
15	Special needs are so wide-ranging	2
16	This should be encouraged : I agree with the ethos	2
17	In mainstream my son would have been labelled a bad child	2
18	Schools should reflect an integrated society	2
19	There is a need for special schools	2
20	Mainstream classes are very large	2
21	If assessment has been conducted properly, that will dictate the best school should be based on the recommendations	2
22	Mainstream would make children aware of their differences	2
23	Mainstream schools find it hard to deal with children with special needs	2
24	Mainstream schools encourage greater independence	2
25	They can be treated like babies in separate units or special schools which causes more exclusion	2
26	If the child can cope then a mainstream school is better	1
27	If parents request special school then that is where they should go	1
28	Children shouldn't be made to feel "thick"	1
29	Mainstream schools worry too much about little things	1

30	As long as any recommendations are carried out fully eg the level of classroom assistance	1
31	Only if the child is ready	1
32	It is much harder to move from special to mainstream than mainstream to special, therefore aim for mainstream first	1
33	If they system is implemented properly it could be excellent	1
34	Children shouldn't be ignored or treated as an inconvenience	1
35	Special schools can be alienating	1
36	Mainstream allows the child to progress	1
37	In mainstream other children don't tend to see the difference	1
38	Segregation can affect confidence	1
39	It is a separate issue for children with a purely medical condition	1
40	Special school can benefit some children	1
41	Whatever is best for the child	1
42	Mainstream schools are often more convenient for both child and family and may require less travelling	1
43	Brighter children can be over looked in a special school	1
44	Children need to be challenged	1
45	A broader view of children's overall needs is required : education should not be defined in terms of disability	1
46	More training needed across the whole education system	1
47	Need for some overseeing body to keep an eye on teachers	1
48	It is brilliant to have all children mixing and being normal	1
49	Have strong reservations	1
50	Mainstream schools have funding problems	1
51	Days of locking people away are gone	1
52	Problem is that children can learn to be prejudiced	1
53	Don't think mainstream is right for children with special needs	1
54	Children with special needs should be in small groups	1
55	Need to encourage teachers to understand and see the good in each child	1
56	I have only ever considered a special needs school for my child	1
57	Special schools have a better quality of teaching for SEN	1
58	The child should go to school that best suits their needs	1
59	Children can be easily forgotten in mainstream and get left behind	1

DISSATISFIED PARENTS

Ideally, how would you like to see the operation of the statutory assessment and statementing procedures?

No.	Comments	Total
1	Parents need to be better informed and have greater involvement	10
2	Assessment procedure needs to be quicker with adequate time to implement recommendations	8
3	Increased and longer assessments should take place both at home and in school	8
4	Need for more awareness by teachers of different conditions and underlying problems	6
5	Parents are often left to do things themselves	5
6	Board could have done a lot more to help, but they weren't interested	4
7	Need a large increase in resources and funding	4
8	Language needs to be simplified : the jargon is meaningless and too vague	4
9	Need someone to fully explain procedure to parents with provision of greater guidance and advice	4
10	Schools were very supportive and helpful	4
11	School could have done a lot more to help	3
12	Parents shouldn't be left feeling totally alone and isolated	3
13	Parents views should be seriously considered	3
14	More one-to-one contact with child during the assessment	3
15	Professionals are hard to contact	3
16	Recommendations should be carried out	3
17	Would like to see a point of contact or nominated case officer	2
18	Decision-makers need to be more involved with less pen pushing	2
19	More communication between agencies	2
20	Need for earlier assessments	2
21	Professionals need to be educated : we are not all lazy, over-anxious parents	2
22	They have a "god" attitude that we should take their word as gospel truth	2
23	Boards should acknowledge the stress for parents of having a child diagnosed with special needs	2
24	Need for a more personal service : professionals are too clinical	2
25	Scare tactics are involved	2
26	Need to be considerate of parents' feelings	2
27	Need to improve professional manner : rudeness and bad manners are offensive	2
28	Assessments are short and child could be met on bad day : difficult to obtain a comprehensive idea of ability based on flimsy evidence	2
29	The schools' hands are tied	2
30	There are not enough specialised schools	2
31	Professionals are very unhelpful	1
32	Professionals should do what they are paid for	1

33	Those who did the assessment were amazing	1
34	Final decision is left to a pen pusher with no qualifications	1
35	Recommendations of the educational psychologist should be carried out	1
36	It is difficult for a parent to be seen as not fussing	1
37	Schools should group together those with similar problems	1
38	Parents should be provided with a proper service	1
39	Boards try to save money	1
40	Parents should be advised to have an independent professional look over the statement	1
41	Need to overview the service provided for children on the autistic spectrum	1
42	Boards need to take responsibility for every child	1
43	Recommendations should always be passed on to parents	1
44	To much paper work	1
45	Happy with end result	1
46	I had to go to a tribunal	1
47	There should be independent monitoring arrangements within schools	1
48	An overview of whole system is needed	1
49	Professionals need to treat children with care	1
50	There should be a different system for those children with physical disabilities	1
51	DE should question who really benefits from the statement	1
52	ELBs should question if classroom assistants are used for the purposes they are intended	1
53	I don't feel it has benefited my child	1
54	There should be more public awareness	1
55	There should be less stigma attached	1
56	ELBs need to fully explain why and how the statement works	1
57	Too many professional are involved	1
58	The system should work more for the individual child and not the child having to fit the system	1
59	There should be more frequent assessments	1
60	Parents need to know someone is on their side	1
61	There should be a screening process built into the process	1
62	There should be a purpose built school for autistic children	1
63	There should be an independent supervisor in schools so that teaching and provision is as it should be	1
64	Delays do not benefit the child	1
65	There is a need for more professionals	1
66	Assessors should take the family history into consideration	1
67	ELBs are in living in the dark ages	1
68	ELBs fall down in a lot of areas	1
69	ELBs need to be more open and honest	1
70	The schools cope as best they can	1
71	The school didn't want to deal with my special needs child	1
72	ELBs need to take advice from people on the ground – they live in cloud-cuckoo land	1

APPENDIX 5

What are your thoughts on the inclusion of children with special educational needs into mainstream primary schools?

1. Unit Placements

No.	Comments	Total
1	As long as support and provision is available	2
2	Children may not be able to keep up with others, be unable to cope or get frustrated	2
3	My child doesn't get to socialise regularly in a special school	1
4	Children are better off at a special needs school	1
5	Children can get bullied in a mainstream school	1
6	All children should be in a mainstream and receive the help they need	1
7	Depends on the child's ability	1
8	My child is happy in the unit	1
9	You shouldn't stretch a child if they cannot cope	1
10	A special school provides children with much more support	1
11	Special needs schools do make efforts to integrate children	1

Advantages and Disadvantages of Unit Placements

No.	Comments	Total
1	Benefit: Small class numbers and teacher-to-student ratio	3
2	Benefit: Child has come on leaps and bounds and is doing so well	2
3	Benefit: Small group sessions	1
4	Benefit: Consistent communication between the teachers	1
5	Benefit: My child seems able to cope	1
6	Benefit: It suits my child	1
7	Benefit: My child still has the chance to integrate	1
8	Benefit: My child has marvellous teachers	1
9	Drawback: Time it takes to get to school	2
10	Drawback: Unit only goes to P3 and I fear all hard work will be lost	1

2. Special Schools

No.	Comments	Total
1	Mainstream schools would need additional resources, more trained teachers and extra help for teachers	2
2	Children would be given more opportunities in mainstream	1
3	Parents would be able to see what their child could achieve in mainstream	1
4	Mainstream schools are so big	1
5	Fear how mainstream children would cope with some behavioural problems	1
6	There are smaller numbers in special schools	1
7	Teachers have appropriate training at special schools	1
8	Children are able to receive all that they need at special school	1
9	The decision is up to the parents	1
10	It is not a realistic option for some children	1
11	It depends on the individual child	1
12	Children would benefit from integration	1
13	As long as the children receive the individual attention they require	1
14	Teachers need to work with children at their own level and pace	1

Advantages and Disadvantages of Special Schools

No.	Comments	Total
1	Benefit: Children receive all the attention and support they need	3
2	Benefit: Small numbers	2
3	Benefit: My child loves the school and is settled	1
4	Benefit: Teachers take good care of the children	1
5	Benefit: The children are surrounded by people like themselves	1
6	Benefit: Good range of subjects and physical activities	1
7	Benefit: Teachers are very approachable	1
8	Benefit: Full-time classroom assistants	1
9	Benefit: Teachers are able to handle the various behaviours	1
10	Drawback: Lack of contact with 'normal' children	2
11	Drawback: Distance to travel to school	1
12	Drawback: Lack of contact with other children and parents at school due to distance from home	1
13	Drawback: My child isn't being pushed to his full ability	1
14	Drawback: My child seems to have fallen behind the level he had achieved at mainstream	1

3. Mainstream

No.	Comments	Total
1	Integration should be for the benefit of the child	5
2	Children don't want to appear different and want to be a part of things	5
3	A lot of children could not cope in mainstream	3
4	If possible, then yes	3
5	Depends on the needs and ability of the individual child	3
6	Schools need to be sufficiently resourced and supported	3
7	Parents should have the choice and the final decision should be theirs	2
8	Support the idea	2
9	I didn't want my child to be labelled by attending a special school	2
10	Teachers would need additional training	2
11	It is a lot to ask of mainstream schools and may be difficult for them	2
12	Dislike the status children acquire in special schools : they get branded and boxed	2
13	Integration is a must, it is so important	2
14	In mainstream schools children would learn what the others are learning, but also learn from others	2
15	Children have the chance to mix and socialise with other children	2
16	Have no knowledge of any other type of school	1
17	Mainstream is a child's best chance to reach their full potential	1
18	Every child deserves the opportunity	1
19	I don't have faith in the curriculum of a special needs school	1
20	Only concern would be that time may be taken away from specific therapy	1
21	Huge finances would be required to support special needs children in mainstream schools	1
22	Important to teach other children respect and not to be afraid of 'difference'	1
23	The more integrated a society becomes, the less fear and prejudice exists	1
24	There is a place for special schools	1
25	Do mainstream schools want children with SEN?	1
26	There is no flexibility in mainstream schools	1
27	It should be a normal occurrence for children with special needs to go to mainstream schools	1
28	Children can stay with their friends if they attend mainstream schools	1
29	This may prove very difficult for teachers	1
30	Children shouldn't have to struggle in mainstream	1

Advantages and Disadvantages to Mainstream Schools

No.	Comments	Total
1	Benefit: My child isn't excluded and does not feel different, inadequate or like an outsider	5
2	Benefit: My child integrates with his peers and has more social contact	5
3	Benefit: My child gets adequate help and attention, and is well looked after	4
4	Benefit: My child is with other family members and friends from our neighbourhood	4
5	Benefit: My child has progressed in leaps and bounds	2
6	Benefit: Everyone is very helpful and supportive	3
7	Benefit: Acquisition of social skills	2
8	Benefit: It educates others in respect and tolerance	2
9	Benefit: My child receives all of the curriculum	2
10	Benefit: My child's language skills are developing as he also learns from his peers	1
11	Benefit: My child receives a good range of subjects	1
12	Benefit: my child would see special school as a label	1
13	Benefit: My child is not stigmatised	1
14	Benefit : Child might mimic and learn destructive behaviours in a special school	1
15	Drawback: Mainstream schools are very big	3
16	Drawback: The thought of being seen as 'different'	2
17	Drawback: My child dislikes the attention that assistance from the classroom assistant brings	2
18	Drawback: My child needs more help and one-to-one attention	1
19	Drawback: I fear others will bully and tease my child	1
20	Drawback: Not as much feedback as the special schools	1
21	Drawback: Special schools are more aware of child's needs	1

APPENDIX 6

Satisfaction with assessment procedures:

Of the 987 parents who expressed an opinion:

- 245 (25.3%) were very satisfied
- 538 (54.5%) were satisfied
- 135 (13.7%) were unsatisfied
- 64 (6.5%) were very unsatisfied

These were then grouped into those who were satisfied (N=788: 79.8%) and those who were dissatisfied (N=199: 20.2%).

Discriminant analyses¹ were then used to determine the predictors of satisfaction. In order of importance the parents who were most likely to express dissatisfaction were:

- Those who had not received written reports (64% of those who had not were dissatisfied compared to 19% of those who had).
- Parents who had asked for the assessment to be done (28% were dissatisfied compared to 16% when the school had asked for the assessment).
- Board had not advised parents of their right to contribute (49% of these parents were dissatisfied compared to 18% who had been told).
- Parents whose children had been assessed in 1997 and 1999 were more dissatisfied than those assessed in 2002 (26% versus 13%).
- Parents whose children had been experiencing problems for two years or more were more likely to be dissatisfied (22%) as were those who had not been aware of difficulties (20%) compared to those who had been experiencing difficulties for 12 months (12%) or 6 months (10%).
- Parents whose children had emotional and behavioural problems were more likely to be dissatisfied (25%) than those whose children did not have these problems (18%).

(NB Other possible predictors were NOT significant with this sample: Education and Library Board making the assessments; age of child; type of school attended etc.)

¹ F=8.65: df 6,855: p<0.001

Satisfaction with statementing procedures:

Of the 935 parents who expressed an opinion:

- 210 (22.5%) were very satisfied
- 539 (57.6%) were satisfied
- 138 (14.8%) were unsatisfied
- 48 (5.9%) were very unsatisfied

These were then grouped into those who were satisfied (N=749: 80.1%) and those who were dissatisfied (N=186: 19.9%).

Discriminant analyses² were then used to determine the predictors of satisfaction. Not surprisingly, the single most important predictor was satisfaction with the assessment procedures. 76% of those dissatisfied with assessment procedures were also dissatisfied with statementing compared to 5% of those who had expressed satisfaction with the assessments.

However further analyses were undertaken to determine the other variables that impacted specifically on satisfaction with statementing.

In order of importance the parents who were most likely to express dissatisfaction were:

- Those who felt the statement was not specific to the child's needs in whole or in part (61% dissatisfied compared to 11% of those satisfied with the statement.
- If they felt the final statement did not represent a fair and accurate assessment of how the child's need would be met, or only did it in part (56% dissatisfied compared to 11% of those satisfied with the statement.
- Those who did not agree with the school in the final statement (54%) compared with those who did agree (17%).
- Those parents who had asked for the statement (29% dissatisfied) compared to 15% of those parents reporting that the school had asked for the statement.
- Those who felt the statement was not easily understood were more dissatisfied (58%) than those who felt it was easy to understand (12%)
- Those with statements issued in 1997, 1999, 2000 (27% dissatisfied) compared to 2001 (19%) and 2002 (11%).
- Those who had requested changes to the statement or reported that they did not know they could do this (40% dissatisfied) compared to 13% of those who had not requested changes.

² F=39.0 : df 7,657: p<0.001

Satisfaction with review procedures:

Of the 954 parents who expressed an opinion:

- 255 (26.7%) were very satisfied
- 587 (61.5%) were satisfied
- 85 (8.9%) were unsatisfied
- 27 (2.8%) were very unsatisfied

These were then grouped into those who were satisfied (N=842: 88%) and those who were dissatisfied (N=112: 12%).

Discriminant analyses³ were then used to determine the predictors of satisfaction. The single most important predictor was satisfaction with the statementing procedures. 73% of those dissatisfied with statementing procedures were also dissatisfied with reviews compared to 27% of those who had expressed satisfaction with the statements.

In order of importance the parents who were most likely to express satisfaction with reviews:

- Those who perceived the reviews to be helpful to the child. (96% compared to 49% who thought it was not helpful for the child.)
- Those who received a report summarising the outcomes of the review meeting. (94% compared to 64% of those who did not get a report).

³ F=117.3: df 2,813: p<0.001

Perceived benefits to the child:

Of the 999 parents who expressed an opinion:

739 (74%) felt the process had definitely benefited the child

220 (22%) felt it had mixed benefits

40 (4%) felt it had no benefits for the child.

These were then grouped into those who felt it had brought clear benefits (N=739: 74%) and those who less sure (N=262: 26%).

Discriminant analyses⁴ were then used to determine the predictors of benefits to the child.

The parents likely to perceive benefits for the child were, in order of importance:

- Those parents who were satisfied with the statementing process.
- Those whose children had speech and language difficulties
- Those who were satisfied with the assessments.
- Those whose children had visual difficulties.
- Those whose children had physical disabilities.
- Those whose children were under 12 years of age.

Perceived benefits to the parents

Of the 985 parents who expressed an opinion:

591 (60%) felt the process had definitely benefited them as parents

271 (27.5%) felt it had mixed benefits

123 (12.5%) felt it had no benefits for them.

Discriminant analyses⁵ were then used to determine the predictors of benefits for the parents.

The parents likely to perceive no benefits for themselves were, in order of importance:

- Those who were not satisfied with the statement.
- Those who have been experiencing problems for more than two years
- Those parents who had only one child with statements. (Parents with two or more children were more likely to report benefits for themselves).

⁴ F=15.5 : df 6,751: p<0.001

⁵ F=16.9 : df 6,1428: p<0.001

Belfast Education and Library Board Statements

APPENDIX 7

Deprivation	Population 0-15 years	%	Number of statements	Rate per 1,000	% of total	Initial return	% of returns	Questionnaires	% of Ques
1-10 percentile	29260	44%	471	16.1	46%	68	32%	24	25%
11-25 percentile	10899	16%	138	12.6	13%	28	13%	15	16%
>25 percentile	26502	40%	312	11.8	30%	92	44%	51	53%
Missing			106	?	10%	22	11	7	7%
Totals	66,661		1027	15.4		210		97	

Type of school

Type	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Mainstream	290	28%	58	28%	41	42%
Special School	599	58%	124	59%	30	31%
Special Unit	86	8%	16	8%	21	22%
Other	52	5%	12	6%	5	5%
Total	1027		210		97	

Age of student

Age Groups	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Less than 8 yrs	196	19%	57	27%	21	21%
8-11 years	362	35%	77	37%	42	43%
12 and over	466	45%	76	36%	34	35%
Total	1024		210		97	

Northern Education and Library Board Statements

Deprivation	Population 0-15 years	%	Number of statements	Rate per 1,000	% of total	Initial return	% of returns	Questionnaires	% of Ques
1-10 percentile						21	4%	9	4%
11-25 percentile						55	10%	22	9%
>25 percentile						449	80%	197	82%
Missing						31	6%	11	5%
Totals						547		239	

Type of school

Type	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Mainstream			211	39%	97	41%
Special School			254	46%	84	35%
Special Unit			78	14%	50	21%
Other			3	1%	6	3%
Total			547		237	

Age of student

Age Groups	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Less than 8 yrs			128	23%	64	27%
8-11 years			178	33%	81	34%
12 and over			240	44%	94	39%
Total			546			

Southern Education and Library Board Statements

Deprivation	Population 0-15 years	%	Number of statements	Rate per 1,000	% of total	Initial return	% of returns	Questionnaires	% of Ques
1-10 percentile						23	5%	10	5%
11-25 percentile						68	16%	39	19%
>25 percentile						317	74%	142	70%
Missing						22	5%	12	6%
Totals						430		203	

Type of school

Type	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Mainstream			247	57%	111	54%
Special School			69	16%	32	16%
Special Unit			114	27%	58	29%
Other					2	1%
Total			430		203	

Age of student

Age Groups	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Less than 8 yrs			117	27%	54	27%
8-11 years			185	43%	82	41%
12 and over			127	30%	65	32%
Total			429		201	

South Eastern Education and Library Board Statements

Deprivation	Population 0-15 years	%	Number of statements	Rate per 1,000	% of total	Initial return	% of returns	Questionnaires	% of Ques
1-10 percentile						31	4%	11	4%
11-25 percentile						38	6%	8	3%
>25 percentile						600	83%	249	84%
Missing						51	7	26	9%
Totals						720		294	

Type of school

Type	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Mainstream			329	46%	144	49%
Special School			252	35%	83	28%
Special Unit			128	18%	50	17%
Other			9	1%	15	5%
Total			720		292	

Age of student

Age Groups	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Less than 8 yrs			206	29%	91	31%
8-11 years			267	37%	109	37%
12 and over			246	34%	93	32%
Total			720		293	

Western Education and Library Board Statements

Deprivation	Population 0-15 years	%	Number of statements	Rate per 1,000	% of total	Initial return	% of returns	Questionnaires	% of Ques
1-10 percentile						60	14%	28	16%
11-25 percentile						88	20%	31	17%
>25 percentile						260	59%	109	60%
Missing						31	7%	13	7%
Totals						439		181	

Type of school

Type	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Mainstream			282	64%	131	72%
Special School			123	28%	42	15%
Special Unit			23	5%	27	11%
Other			10	2%	4	2%
Total			438		181	

Age of student

Age Groups	Number of Statements	%	Number returns	% returns	Questionnaires	% Ques
Less than 8 yrs			113	26%	61	34%
8-11 years			174	40%	67	37%
12 and over			149	34%	53	29%
Total			436		181	

APPENDIX 7

Comparisons across ELBs on deprivation measures (initial returns)

Chi Sq 301 P<0.001

		<i>BELB</i>	<i>NELB</i>	<i>SEELB</i>	<i>SELB</i>	<i>WELB</i>	<i>Total</i>
1-10 percentile	Count	68	21	31	23	60	203
	% within ELB	36.2%	4.1%	4.6%	5.6%	14.7%	9.3%
11-25 percentile	Count	28	55	38	68	88	277
	% within ELB	14.9%	10.7%	5.7%	16.7%	21.6%	12.7%
greater 25 percentile	Count	92	440	600	317	260	1709
	% within ELB	48.9%	85.3%	89.7%	77.7%	63.7%	78.1%
	Count	188	516	669	408	408	2189

		<i>BELB</i>	<i>NELB</i>	<i>SEELB</i>	<i>SELB</i>	<i>WELB</i>	<i>Total</i>
Mainstream	Count	58	211	329	247	282	1127
	% within ELB	27.6%	38.6%	45.7%	57.4%	64.2%	48.0%
Special	Count	124	254	252	69	123	822
	% within ELB	59.0%	46.4%	35.0%	16.0%	28.0%	35.0%
Unit	Count	16	78	128	114	23	359
	% within ELB	7.6%	14.3%	17.8%	26.5%	5.2%	15.3%
Other	Count	12	3	9		10	34
	% within ELB	5.7%	.5%	1.3%		2.3%	1.4%
	Count	210	547	720	430	439	2346

Comparisons across ELBs on type of school attended (initial returns)

Chi Sq 283 $p < 0.001$

Comparisons across ELBs on children's ages (initial returns)

Chi Sq=27 p<0.001

		<i>BELB</i>	<i>NELB</i>	<i>SEELB</i>	<i>SELB</i>	<i>WELB</i>	<i>Total</i>
less than 8	Count	57	128	206	117	113	621
	% within ELB	27.1%	23.4%	28.7%	27.3%	25.9%	26.5%
8-11	Count	77	178	267	185	174	881
	% within ELB	36.7%	32.6%	37.1%	43.1%	39.9%	37.6%
12 and over	Count	76	240	246	127	149	838
	% within ELB	36.2%	44.0%	34.2%	29.6%	34.2%	35.8%
Count		210	546	719	429	436	2340

Comparisons across ELBs on deprivation measures (returns)

Chi Sq 116 p<0.001

		<i>belb</i>	<i>neelb</i>	<i>seelb</i>	<i>selb</i>	<i>welb</i>	<i>Total</i>
1-10 percentile	Count	24	9	11	10	28	82
	% within elb reside	26.7%	3.9%	4.1%	5.2%	16.7%	8.7%
11-25 percentile	Count	15	22	8	39	31	115
	% within elb reside	16.7%	9.6%	3.0%	20.4%	18.5%	12.2%
greater 25 percentile	Count	51	197	249	142	109	748
	% within elb reside	56.7%	86.4%	92.9%	74.3%	64.9%	79.2%
	Count	90	228	268	191	168	945

Comparisons across ELBs on type of school attended (returns)

Chi Sq 76 p<0.001

		<i>belb</i>	<i>neelb</i>	<i>seelb</i>	<i>selb</i>	<i>welb</i>	<i>Total</i>
Mainstream	Count	41	97	144	111	131	524
	% within elb reside	42.3%	40.9%	49.3%	54.7%	72.4%	51.9%
Special School	Count	30	84	83	32	27	256
	% within elb reside	30.9%	35.4%	28.4%	15.8%	14.9%	25.3%
Special Unit	Count	21	50	50	58	19	198
	% within elb reside	21.6%	21.1%	17.1%	28.6%	10.5%	19.6%
Other	Count	5	6	15	2	4	32
	% within elb reside	5.2%	2.5%	5.1%	1.0%	2.2%	3.2%
	Count	97	237	292	203	181	1010

Comparisons across ELBs on children's ages (returns)

Chi Sq=10 Not significant

		<i>belb</i>	<i>neelb</i>	<i>seelb</i>	<i>selb</i>	<i>welb</i>	<i>Total</i>
Under 8 years	Count	21	64	91	54	61	291
	% within elb reside	21.6%	26.8%	31.1%	26.9%	33.7%	28.8%
8-11 years	Count	42	81	109	82	67	381
	% within elb reside	43.3%	33.9%	37.2%	40.8%	37.0%	37.7%
12 years and over	Count	34	94	93	65	53	339
	% within elb reside	35.1%	39.3%	31.7%	32.3%	29.3%	33.5%
	Count	97	239	293	201	181	1011



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