Review of Pupil Behaviour Interim Report 4

Sir Alan Steer
February 2009

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Rt. Hon. Ed Balls MP
Secretary of State
Department for Children, Schools and Families
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
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6th February 2009

Dear Secretary of State,

Behaviour Review.

I am please to submit for your consideration the fourth part of my review into pupil behaviour in schools. In this report I have considered three inter-connected areas which each are of vital importance for the future success of a school system that aims to educate all of our children.

The recommendations I make focus on areas where I believe it is possible to make improvements. Problems of bad behaviour do remain and in some areas these can be significant. It is in the interests of society and the children concerned that these are addressed with rigour and intelligence. However I remain confident that standards are high in the large majority of schools and I have the highest regard for those teachers and young people who perform extremely well in our education system.

Sir Alan Steer
Pro Director Institute of Education
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents outcomes from the latest stage of my review of pupil behaviour issues, announced in the Children's Plan. It advises on:

- how school behaviour and attendance partnerships might be developed so as to maximise their effectiveness;
- the impact on pupil behaviour of consistently applied school policies on learning and teaching; and
- the links between behavioural standards, special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

Given the breadth of these issues, my report makes a number of detailed recommendations. I highlight here some of the key ones.

The **behaviour and attendance partnerships** are an important way for secondary schools to work together to improve behaviour, support attendance and reduce exclusions. This is consistent with the focus on partnerships in the Children's Plan and in the government's proposals for the 21st Century School. The partnerships are generally relatively new and I recommend that consideration needs to be given to consolidating and clarifying their status, as a basis for their further development. I also set out a number of key characteristics that one would expect to find in all these partnerships, and which should be included in the new statutory guidance that the government is planning to introduce through the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill.

The key characteristics include a focus on early intervention when behaviour and attendance problems occur; clear arrangements for the placement of "hard to place" pupils and, when appropriate for the managed move of pupils between schools; the intelligent use of data; an emphasis on improving pupil attendance as well as behaviour; a staff training programme and the sharing of resources to enable the partnership to buy in specialist support. They also include engagement with primary schools and further education, plus the allocation of at least one Safer School Partnership police officer. This will broaden the scope of the existing, largely secondary school focused partnerships. It will help to promote early intervention and to link different partnership arrangements, in the spirit of the 21st Century School document.

Learning, teaching and behaviour are inseparable issues for schools. I have found considerable evidence, supporting my own experience as a head teacher, of how consistent high quality learning and teaching practice promotes pupil engagement and good standards of behaviour. The importance of schools establishing baseline consistency in learning and teaching practice, within schools and between school phases, cannot be exaggerated. The effective use of Assessment for Learning teaching strategies demands this.

This section of my report therefore includes a key recommendation that schools should have a written policy on learning and teaching. This should be practical in nature and regularly reviewed. It will assist the induction of new staff and ensure that school practice is sustained.

I also recommend that schools should be encouraged to improve transition between Key Stages, that leadership training courses should be reviewed to ensure that the issue of in school

variation is given prominence, that schools should utilise the teaching strategies promoted by Assessment for Learning and that DCSF should continue to promote to schools the good practice advice of the former Practitioners' Group on School Behaviour and Discipline.

My conclusions on **SEN and disability related behavioural difficulties** contribute towards a wider, on-going debate. Brian Lamb will be producing a report later this year on parental confidence in SEN services and in 2009/10 Ofsted will report on improving outcomes for pupils with SEN and disabilities. My work also links to the report of the national review of services for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), which I warmly welcome.

There are many examples of outstanding school practice but applying this consistently within and across schools remains a major challenge. Over or under identification of SEN in some schools can lead to inappropriate provision, pupil disengagement and problems around both attainment and behaviour. My report provides a number of pointers to good professional practice and I welcome the considerable progress that the DCSF has made to date in supporting improvements in standards for pupils with SEN, including its plans to examine the issue of disproportionate SEN exclusions.

Pages 26-27 of my report set out a number of detailed recommendations on SEN and disability. These include recommendations on:
- including issues of SEN identification and monitoring progression in the conversation with the School Improvement Partner (SIP);
- schools monitoring and evaluating the impact of interventions on pupils with SEN and disabilities;
- schools working in partnership with one another and with other providers to extend the range of school based support;
- local areas setting out a clear description of the services available, including services to improve mental health and psychological well-being;
- schools not using unlawful "unofficial" exclusions;
- training for school leaders and SIPs and adopting Ofsted recommendations on preparing new teachers to teach pupils with SEN.

I also include a key recommendation that the current review of the Dedicated Schools Grant should consider how a future funding system can best support schools and local authorities in effective early intervention to meet children's needs.

In carrying out this review I have been greatly aided by the professional associations and other stakeholders. It will be important to fully engage them in carrying forward my recommendations. This paper concludes the series of four reports on specific issues around pupil behaviour. At the Secretary of State's request, I shall be producing one final report, drawing together the threads of these reports and key messages from the 2005 report of the Practitioners' Group in a general overview of pupil behaviour issues.

Sir Alan Steer

BEHAVIOUR REVIEW   INTERIM REPORT 4   February 2009

1. In October 2005 the report of the Practitioners' Group on School Behaviour and Discipline was published. The group had been established in the previous June by the Minister of State as a result of concerns raised by the Chief Inspector and the professional associations that low level disruptive behaviour appeared to be a significant problem in English schools.

2. A number of the recommendations made in the report were incorporated in the 2006 Education Act. The clarification of the legal rights and responsibilities of teachers regarding discipline was particularly significant. Almost all of the remaining recommendations were also agreed by government, or other organisations to whom they were addressed. The Practitioners' Group were delighted that their report and good practice advice was endorsed by all the Professional Associations and was circulated widely in schools. The support of the Professional Associations has been exemplary and I wish to thank them warmly.

3. In December 2007 in the Children's Plan, the Secretary of State requested a review of the progress made in raising standards of school behaviour and discipline since the publication of the Practitioner Group report. The review would also examine any new issues that had arisen since 2005. This report continues that review and addresses the following issues.
   - A. Behaviour and Attendance partnerships.
   - B. Learning, Teaching and Behaviour.
   - C. Special Educational Needs (SEN), Disabilities and Behaviour.
   - D. Related issues.

4. I shall also briefly return to some of the matters contained in my three earlier reports produced in 2008 as part of the review of behaviour in schools.

March	Cyber bullying
	Parental responsibility
	School behaviour partnerships and the role of Academies
May	Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision
July	Parental engagement and responsibility
	School powers to search pupils

   Recommendations from these reports have been acted upon, including through the intended 2009 Children, Skills and Learners Bill. Academies will be required to participate in local Behaviour Partnerships. School staff will have extended legal powers to search pupils for alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen property. The White Paper 'Back on Track' was published in May 2008 and sets out a vision for radical change in the provision of Alternative Education for those children with behavioural difficulties for whom mainstream school would be inappropriate.

5. The issues of parental engagement and responsibilities have been important parts of this review. The measures recommended in the earlier reports, such as on-line reporting and the Parent Support Adviser programme are in the process of being developed.

6. I intend to complete my Behaviour Review in April 2009 when I shall issue my final report.

Core beliefs
7. In 2005 the Practitioner's Group identified six core beliefs that they saw as the essential elements of a successful school behaviour and discipline strategy. I confirm my commitment to these beliefs which have guided my work in carrying out this review.

Learning Behaviour: The report of the Practitioners' Group on School Behaviour and Discipline. October 2005
*   The quality of learning, teaching and behaviour in schools are inseparable issues, and the responsibility of all staff;
*   Poor behaviour cannot be tolerated as it is a denial of the right of pupils to learn and teachers to teach. To enable learning to take place preventative action is most effective, but where this fails, schools must have clear, firm and intelligent strategies in place to help pupils manage their behaviour;
*   There is no single solution to the problem of poor behaviour, but all schools have the potential to raise standards if they are consistent in implementing good practice in learning, teaching and behaviour management;
*   Respect has to be given in order to be received. Parents and carers, pupils and teachers all need to operate in a culture of mutual regard;
*   The support of parents is essential for the maintenance of good behaviour. Parents and schools each need to have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities; and
*   School leaders have a critical role in establishing high standards of learning, teaching and behaviour.

A.   Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships.

This 21st century school system, which is beginning to develop, will look and feel very different to the one we have been used to. It will be one in which, to achieve their core mission of excellent teaching and learning, schools look beyond traditional boundaries, are much more outward-facing, working in closer partnership with children, young people and parents; other schools, colleges, learning providers and universities; other children's services; the third sector, the private sector and employers; and the local authority and its Children's Trust partners.
21st Century Schools: A World Class Education for Every Child   *DCSF 2008*

8. The need for schools to operate in partnership with each other and with those organisations supporting children should be beyond question. This principle is supported by all parts of the education community, though practice is more problematic. If the needs of children are the moral force driving education, institutional isolationism has no place.

9. The emphasis on collaboration and co-operation in the Children's Plan is now being developed through the current consultation on the creation of a 21st century education system. I endorse the aspirations contained in the consultation document and the vision it presents for the future of Children's Services.

10. All schools have a responsibility to promote the interests of the children in their care and those in the wider community. I welcome the intention to require all maintained secondary schools, Academies, Pupil Referral Units and special schools to be members of Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships. This is a necessary move to ensure that children experience good practice regardless of the school they attend, or the area in which they live. Where any school - including an Academy, Faith, or Community school - acts inappropriately and without regard to the interests of the community, this can be very damaging to partnership working. Unfortunately there remain too many instances where this behaviour occurs.

Our vision is of increasing alignment of partnerships and, where appropriate, greater formality so that, wherever this would deliver significant benefits, they become single partnerships with several purposes and with collective responsibility for outcomes for children in a local area. For example, alignment may be possible between behaviour partnerships and 14-19 consortia; or between clusters of secondaries with their feeder primary schools and partnerships with wider children's services for the purpose of early intervention.
21st Century Schools: A World Class Education for Every Child   *DCSF 2008*

The current situation.
11.   Individual schools may be in a number of partnerships for a number of reasons. They may be developing the 14-19 curriculum, be members of a Specialist School grouping, or participating in a Trust or Federation. The local need and context will always influence how a partnership develops and this is important in ensuring that the members have ownership. All partnerships need to be supported and challenged appropriately so that they operate to the highest standards and in a manner that is sustainable.

12. The expectations of the Children's Plan and the vision of the 21st Century Education proposals may require that some of the existing partnerships are rationalised to achieve symmetry. Good partnership working rests on shared principles and good professional relationships. This is much easier to achieve if there is a consistency in the membership of the partnerships to which a school belongs. Where partnerships are established, or rationalised this needs to take full account of the interests of the wider local education community. This may mean ensuring that partnerships are balanced in terms of the different strengths of individual members and the overall level of local need. While the ownership of a school partnership must always be with the members, the suggested involvement of the Local Authority in partnership development is welcome and will help to ensure that the overall needs of the community are met.

Behaviour and Attendance partnerships.

13. Generally these partnerships are relatively recent in existence and therefore are embryonic in nature. It is clear that at present there is a great variation in practice. One cannot assume that a commitment by a school to the Local Authority Fair Access protocol is an indication of real partnership working. In very many areas this is not the case.

14. I have visited Behaviour and Attendance partnerships and received evidence from schools, Local Authorities and other sources. Examples of excellent practice were observed in Leeds North East, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest and I am aware that these are replicated in many other parts of the country. Many other schools commit to working together and provide further instances of exemplary practice, but few partnerships are yet implementing fully the five design principles which the DCSF has identified in guidance to schools. (Appendix 1). I believe that the design principles need to be reviewed in order to ensure that they better support partnership working in the context of the Children's Plan.

15. Partnerships generally include secondary schools, PRUs and members of support services. They may also include Special Schools and Further Education Colleges. I welcome the plan to require the inclusion of PRUs and Special Schools and to encourage the development of links to Further Education colleges. In many partnerships engagement with the primary sector does not appear to be strong and this is a significant area for development. It would make partnerships too large and unwieldy if all primary schools became full members, but close links are essential.

16. Partnerships currently tend to concentrate on behaviour, rather than behaviour and attendance issues. There also appears to be little focus on staff training. At present few partnerships go beyond trying to ensure that there is an appropriate and equitable distribution among schools of hard to place pupils and those who have been permanently excluded. Where children require appropriate provision outside the mainstream, partnership panels work to identify the right placement.

Effective partnership working.

17. It would appear to me that where partnerships are working well there are some common factors that have made them successful.

- The existence of trust among the head teachers involved and their acceptance of a responsibility to contribute to the well being of all children in the community.
- The ability of partnership members to challenge each other.
- A sense of ownership of the partnership by the schools involved.
- A commitment by the schools to personalise their provision and their practices to prevent unnecessary school exclusions.
- Close working relationships with other agencies, local behaviour support teams and the police.
- The presence of external support and facilitation. The importance of there being external support for the partnership cannot be over estimated. The best partnerships had consistent high quality support from Local Authority and National Strategy consultants who worked with the head teachers to set the agenda, provide critical challenge and link the partnership with other local agencies.
- Intelligent use of data to identify need and to influence practice.
- Clear structures and practices that are transparent and accepted as equitable by all members of the partnership.
- Joint partnership decision making on the use of funding related to partnership working.

18. It is important that a shared understanding is developed as to the fundamental principles of effective behaviour and attendance partnership working. Without the identification of certain key characteristics for operating there is a danger that some partnerships will exist on paper rather than in reality. The five design principles that currently exist for Behaviour and Attendance partnerships are broad. They need to be reviewed so that they focus on specific key essentials. I return to the issue of key characteristics for effective partnership working in paragraph 24.

Managed moves.

19. The benefits of effective partnership working are apparent and can cause significant reductions in the number of children being permanently excluded. Through co-operative working, children can receive the additional support necessary for them to remain in their school, or rapidly receive a new placement either in another mainstream school, or in other provision. Carr Manor and Chingford Schools provided examples of outstanding practice in this regard. Where managed moves between schools are working well and where the pupil and the parent are fully involved in the process, the disruption to education is minimised and the level of distress greatly reduced for all concerned. Care must always be taken to ensure that parents are aware of their legal rights as well as their responsibilities.

20. When a child is exhibiting significant and unacceptable behaviour, a managed move to another institution can represent intelligent behaviour management. For many children a new environment provides the stimulation that enables them to change their attitude

and behaviour. A managed move of a child between schools should take place because it is in the interests of the child concerned, other children and the school. To achieve a successful outcome great care should be taken in preparing the child for the move and in inducting the child into the new school. Where a managed move takes place it should not result purely from a desire to reduce the number of permanent exclusions in the area. A reduction in the number of permanent exclusions in the Local Authority may be attractive, but the objective must always be to deal with the behaviour problems and to assist the child concerned to learn to behave in a socially acceptable manner.

21. In areas experiencing problems with gangs, particular care needs to be taken when setting up a managed move. Pupils wishing to distance themselves from gang participation need to be given that opportunity. Pupils moving to a different school should not inadvertently be placed in jeopardy through their new travel arrangements.

Fixed term exclusions.
22. I was concerned by the lack of focus in a number of partnerships on the level of fixed term exclusions. Fixed term exclusions are necessary on occasions, as are permanent exclusions, and they can be positive when used carefully. They should not be used as a substitute for taking other forms of effective action to address the problems.

23. Effective behaviour management strategies do not result in high numbers of fixed term exclusions. Evidence from OfSTED suggests that in schools with very high exclusion rates it is likely that there is inconsistency in the application of behaviour management and inconsistency in the standards of learning and teaching. The level of fixed term exclusions in a school needs to have the same importance for Local Authorities as the level of those that are permanent. Some schools have high numbers of repetitive fixed term exclusions. The success of this approach as a strategy is questionable as it would appear to be ineffective for the pupils concerned. Where fixed term exclusion numbers are high this should be seen as indicating a need to provide support to the school in question. At present this does not always appear to be the case.

Behaviour and Attendance partnerships: areas for development.

24. Behaviour and Attendance partnerships will develop as working relationships strengthen and as new needs and opportunities are identified. At present there is a tendency to focus purely on dealing with the problems that have arisen through the bad behaviour of an individual child. The potential for effective partnership working is much greater than this. Employing shared specialist workers, sharing resources and sharing training will create a capacity for effective working that no individual school could achieve.

- Partnership status. Consideration needs to be given to consolidating and clarifying the status of the behaviour and attendance partnerships. The partnerships in future will wish to be making staff appointments and commissioning services from external suppliers. They will be undertaking tasks previously performed by the Local Authority, or other organisations. They will need to participate in a clear and 'light touch' accountability system. For these and other reasons partnerships will need to have a formal position within the education system.

- Partnership reporting. Behaviour and Attendance partnerships exist to improve outcomes for all young people in their area, especially for those who have problems with disruptive behaviour and disengagement. Currently there are no consistent arrangements for local reporting by the partnership on how it is working and what it is achieving. The Children's Trust has a wider role in promoting the well being of all children and young people in its area and is responsible for drawing up the local Children and Young People's Plan. Forthcoming legislation will ensure that schools are represented on the Children's Trust Board. It is my view that the work of the Behaviour and Attendance partnerships should contribute to the local Children and Young People's Plan and that this plan should identify how the Trust will support the partnership. To enable this to take place the Behaviour and Attendance partnership should report annually to the Children's Trust Board. This would support accountability, enable the spread of good practice and guide the strategic thinking of the Children's Trust.

- Partnership key characteristics. While taking care to ensure that each partnership has the freedom to develop its own ethos, partnerships would find it helpful for guidance to be given indicating baseline requirements and examples of existing good practice. It is a reasonable expectation that the following features should be found in all Behaviour and Attendance partnerships.
    i.   The active engagement of all member schools and other bodies within the partnership reflecting their ownership of the partnership.
    ii. The inclusion within the partnership of the local Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), or PRUs, if they exist, together with other major providers of Alternative Provision providers.
    iii. Engagement of the partnership with primary schools and Further Education.

iv. Alignment of the Behaviour and Attendance partnership with the local Safer School Partnership. There should be full engagement with the police so that each partnership has at least one allocated SSP officer. It is crucial that police forces make this support available.

v. Engagement with extended services.

vi. Clear protocols for pupil managed moves and for the placement of 'hard to place' pupils. These protocols to be operated by all members of the partnership.

vii. A focus on early intervention.

viii. The use of 'pooled' resources to enable the partnership to buy in specialist support.

ix. The intelligent use of data so that the partnership can monitor its performance and identify strategic objectives.

x. A staff training programme related to Behaviour and Attendance.

- Early intervention. Partnerships need to place a greater emphasis on the prevention of problems through effective early identification and intervention. This will involve sharing best practice and resources across schools. One would expect the establishment of good practice across a partnership to include learning and teaching strategies, behaviour management, S.E.N. identification and support, parental engagement and working with external specialist agencies including the police to ensure appropriate early intervention strategies.

- Extended services. Effective early intervention requires that a school, acting individually, or in partnership, possesses the capacity to do so. As schools move towards fulfilling the aspirations of the Children's Plan it will become clearer that this will be only possible if they work in partnership with other providers. There is the opportunity for partnerships to consider making joint staff appointments to extend the range of specialist support available. Acting together, for example, schools could use the delegated extended school funds to appoint parent support advisers where on their own such funds might prove to be insufficient. The widespread concern among schools regarding the level of support from the Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Service might be alleviated if partnerships appointed their own psychiatric social worker.

- Primary school involvement. In some partnerships links with primary schools are strong, but this is not universal. Working effectively with children and their families requires an approach that is not determined by school phases. The benefits of cross phase working have been illustrated in the work of the Behaviour Improvement Partnerships (BIPs). The DCSF, through the National Strategies, need to give consideration to the development of links between primary schools and the existing, secondary school based Behaviour and Attendance partnerships.

- PRUs and other Alternative Provision. It is imperative that raising standards in this area remains a priority as signalled in the 'Back on Track' White Paper. As indicated

in my interim report last May, there are many examples of outstanding provision, but there are also others that are far from satisfactory and this illustrates a lack of national minimum standards when dealing with vulnerable and/or challenging children. Even when PRUs are working well there is a tendency for the rate of reintegration of pupils into mainstream to be far too slow due to schools refusing admission fearing that they lack the support to meet the child's needs. While this might be understandable with pupils in their final school year, it is not acceptable for younger pupils. Where PRUs are unable to return children to mainstream they are unlikely to be able to offer short term intervention to children as their spaces are fully taken by long term placements. This denies the exercise of a core function for the PRU and negates the concept of working with children to help them overcome their behaviour difficulties. The greater engagement of PRUs with other schools through Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships, together with the establishment of statutory management committees for PRUs, should help to ensure that there is a better dialogue between them and mainstream schools.

- Safer School Partnerships between schools, the police and other agencies. Embracing the Safer School Partnership within the broader Behaviour and Attendance Partnership would be sensible for several reasons. Safer School Partnerships support schools in dealing with particularly challenging pupils and can play an important role in early intervention and preventative work. Although some schools have their own allocated police officer, it would be unrealistic to ask police to allocate an officer to every school in the country – whereas the allocation of at least one police officer to each Behaviour and Attendance Partnership would seem a more realistic expectation. Allocating a police officer to a group of schools means that the support can be deployed more flexibly, supporting as appropriate the managed moves of pupils with particular behavioural difficulties and giving a clear message that schools are working in partnership to promote improved behaviour and school safety. Schools know that maintaining a high standard of behaviour requires that they work with the community and are sensitive to the pressures and stresses within their community. Where there are specific problems arising from the presence of gangs, or from drug abuse this is particularly important and in these cases the police should consider a more intensive level of support.

- Building Schools for the Future. It is not clear that the BSF design principles have yet to take account of the building needs arising from the creation of school partnerships and school based extended services. This needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Neither is it clear that full notice has been taken of the recommendations of the Practitioners' Group regarding the links between the built environment and pupil behaviour.

'Whenever school buildings are being designed, or renovated, the potential of the environment to improve behaviour and discipline is a priority for architects, school managers and local authorities.'
Learning Behaviour: recommendations 3.9.2   *DCSF 2005*

- Inspection. Current inspection procedures will need to change to take account of the impact of school partnership. Schools working with others to extend the services they offer to children and families will also need the inspection regime to recognise and to take account of the impact of their partnership on outcomes for children.

> *We are clear that schools will not be able to deliver the 21st century school vision in isolation. In the past, it was considered legitimate for individual schools to remain isolated and inward–looking; in the future, schools will instinctively seek to work in partnership with each other and with other providers and services, in order to offer a greater range of provision, to learn from each other and to take collective responsible for improving outcomes for children, young people and families in their local area. Strong school-to-school partnerships are one of the key means of driving up standards and making more effective use of the best leadership across the schools system.*
> *21ST Century Schools: A World Class Education for Every Child.* DCSF 2008

Recommendations.

i. **The status of Behaviour and Attendance partnerships and their relationship to the Children's Trust should be clarified so that there is clear accountability and so that in each area the partnerships contribute to the Children and Young People's Plan and are supported effectively by other children's services. The Behaviour and Attendance partnership should report annually to the Children's Trust Board.**

ii. **To support the further development of the Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships, the existing guidance should be reviewed so that it sets out clearly the key characteristics one would expect to find in all partnership arrangements.**

   a. **The active engagement of all member schools and other bodies within the partnership reflecting their ownership of the partnership.**

   b. **The inclusion within the partnership of the local Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), or PRUs, if they exist, together with other major providers of Alternative Provision.**

   c. **Engagement of the partnership with primary schools and Further Education.**

   d. **Alignment of the Behaviour and Attendance partnership with the local Safer School Partnership. There should be full engagement with the police so that each partnership has at least one allocated SSP officer. It is crucial that police forces make this support available.**

   e. **Engagement with extended services.**

   f. **Clear protocols for pupil managed moves and for the placement of 'hard to place' pupils. These protocols to be operated by all members of the partnership. Guidance to schools should detail the legal rights of parents.**

   g. **A focus on behaviour and attendance and on effective early intervention.**

   h. **The use of 'pooled' resources to enable the partnership to buy in specialist support.**

   i. The transparent use of data so that the partnership can monitor its performance and identify strategic objectives.

   j. A staff training programme related to Behaviour and Attendance.

 iii. All existing school partnership arrangements should be reviewed by their members in consultation with the Children's Trust so as to create greater coherence, increase effectiveness and reduce bureaucratic workload.

 iv. Guidance should be issued to schools on best practice when operating managed moves.

  v. The Building Schools for the Future programme needs to take more account of the need to provide schools with the space and accommodation they need to offer partnership extended services.

 vi. The National Strategies should be asked to consider how best they could act as facilitators in promoting partnership working between schools on behaviour and attendance issues, including helping the partnerships to raise standards of training and to extend the range of support available.

 vii. Consultations on how to most effectively implement these recommendations should take place with all the professional associations and other stakeholders.

B.   Learning, Teaching and Behaviour.

The quality of learning, teaching and behaviour in schools are inseparable issues, and the responsibility of all staff.
Learning Behaviour. The report of the Practitioners Group on School Behaviour and Discipline. D.C.S.F. 2005

Ensuring that all staff share clear expectations and communicate them to pupils is key to promoting positive behaviour and attitudes to learning. In schools which manage behaviour successfully, senior leaders see this as an integral part of school of school improvement, and train and support their staff accordingly. There are clear and coherent behaviour policies, implemented consistently by all staff. The quality of teaching and learning is a crucial influence on behaviour. For example, in most of the secondary schools in which behaviour is inadequate, teaching and learning are also inadequate, with inconsistent management of behaviour as a contributory factor. In the secondary schools where behaviour is outstanding, teaching is almost always good, or outstanding.
The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education.   Ofsted 2008

25. Learning, teaching and behaviour are inseparable issues for schools. This connection was expressed clearly in the 2008 Annual Report of the Chief Inspector and was the key principle that guided the work of the Practitioners' Group in 2005. In school, children spend the great majority of their time in the classroom and it is here that the problem of low level disruption can arise and it is here that solutions must be sought.

26. It has long been recognised that securing the constructive engagement of pupils involves the planning of learning experiences that are relevant, engaging and appropriately differentiated. Curriculum developments in recent years at 14-19 and at Key Stage 3 (11-14) have greatly assisted teachers in engaging their pupils. One can anticipate that the review of the primary curriculum by Sir Jim Rose will have the same highly beneficial effect. The impact of these curriculum changes will need to be monitored with the full participation of the profession to assist further development.

27. I am confident that these curriculum developments will make a significant contribution to the promotion of positive pupil behaviour. For this to be most marked schools need to ensure that all staff are trained and supported so that they can work effectively as a team being mutually supportive of themselves and their pupils.

28. In 2008 the School Standards Advisers (DCSF) surveyed 18 secondary schools that had made spectacular progress within the last 7 years in raising standards of behaviour and attainment. The survey findings showed that all the schools had placed a high priority on raising the quality of teaching and learning and in ensuring that best practice was found consistently across the school.

"If the lesson engages people, then fewer people will mess around. If the work is too easy, you tend to switch off." (Pupil)
"If you get the learning right, behaviour isn't an issue." (Headteacher)
"We are committed to personalising the educational experience and learning for all." (Headteacher)

> *"The most significant influence on pupil attainment is the teacher … genuine and lasting school improvement depends on developing the quality of teaching." (Extract from one school's T&L policy)*
> *"Learning and teaching are the core purposes of the school." (Headteacher)*

> *Approaches to maintaining or improving pupil behaviour were strongly linked to the learning experience of the pupils. Behaviour management strategies provided a 'bottom line' but engaging the pupils in their learning was the prime aim. Strong teacher/pupil relationships and mutual respect were seen as fundamental to achieving high levels of pupil engagement. The strength of these relationships provided teachers with a firm foundation to take risks and to try new approaches in their classrooms. Consistency of expectations by all staff was seen as a main contributor to success. 'Learning walks' in the schools illustrated very clearly that a high level of consistency can be achieved.*
> *Improving the quality of teaching and learning*   *D.C.S.F. 2008*

In-school performance variation.

29. Standards of learning and teaching have risen considerably in English schools as indicated in the Apter study and in OfSTED surveys. This has resulted in improved pupil behaviour. This is pleasing, but problems do remain. The PISA 2006 study reveals that England has higher rates of performance variation between schools and within schools than most other O.E.C.D. countries. Where this variation reflects individual teacher creativity it is to be welcomed. Unfortunately variation in within school performance can often indicate a lack of collegiate practice and professionalism arising from unrestricted individualism and a lack of clear direction on what is the core function of the institution. Secondary schools by their nature and structure are most vulnerable to experiencing these problems.

30. The issue of in-school performance variation needs to be given greater consideration than at present. Lack of consistency in practice within a school undermines behaviour management and can leave individual teachers isolated. Newly appointed teachers, or supply teachers can lack the guidance necessary to be effective. Were the degree of variation to be reduced one could expect to see increased numbers of pupils reaching the desired attainment levels and fewer schools needing to be included within the National Challenge and the 'coasting schools' initiative. In-school performance variation and its possible causes should be addressed in the training provided for school and subject leaders and be a key element of the work of the school improvement partner.

Consistent high quality teaching.

> *'Too many people divorce teaching from behaviour. I think that they are really, really linked and students behave much better if the teaching is good, they are engaged in what they are doing and it's appropriate to them. They've not got lost five minutes into the lesson and begun to misbehave and cause disruption.'*
> *'A focus on improving schools through the introduction of better and stronger management isn't enough to make every lesson good – schools should have the improvement of teaching and learning as their top priority.*
>   *Christine Glbert HMCI January 2009*

31. The importance of schools establishing baseline consistency in their learning and teaching practice cannot be exaggerated. Where there is such consistency teachers become mutually supportive with their individual efforts being strengthened by the work of their colleagues. For children the beneficial impact can be very significant, particularly for those who are most vulnerable. The provision to pupils of consistent good teaching is the most significant means of narrowing the gap in achievement of children from different ethnic and social backgrounds. Effective reward systems linked to classroom performance do much to promote pupil engagement and good behaviour.

32. Schools are not value free communities and the effectiveness of any practice will be determined by the values and expectations that are agreed by all. The work of school staff can be undermined when staff, pupils, or parents do not comply with the general expectation.

33. In February 2006 D.f.E.S. (D.C.S.F.) published as a separate document the section of the Practitioner's Group report entitled: Principles and Practice - What Works in Schools. This publication was practical in content and met with widespread approval in schools. It would be helpful if action was taken to remind schools of its existence and to promote its circulation.

Extracts : Principles and Practice – What works in Schools
All schools should:
- *ensure all staff follow the learning and teaching policy and behaviour code and apply agreed procedures;*
- *use commonly agreed classroom management and behaviour strategies;*
- *ensure that all teachers operate a classroom seating plan. This practice needs to be continued after transfer to secondary school;*
- *use Assessment for Learning techniques, such as peer and self assessment, to increase pupils' involvement in their learning and promote good behaviour;*
- *recognise that pupils are knowledgeable about their school experience, and have views about what helps them learn;*
- *assess staff's needs and build into their in-service training programmes specific opportunities to discuss and learn about behaviour;*
- *identify those pupils who have learning and behavioural difficulties, or come from homes that are in crisis and agree with staff common ways of managing and meeting their particular needs;*
- *have a wide range of appropriate rewards and sanctions and ensure they are applied fairly and consistently by all staff*

34. Consistent high quality teaching is the single most important factor in raising standards. (McKinsey report 2007) For children with behaviour problems or other learning needs it is particularly important that their classroom experience is rigorous, but personalised. Much poor behaviour has its origins in the inability of the child to access learning, rather than as a result of an unchangeable character defect.

Transition between school Key Stages.

35. The need for a greater emphasis on the importance of consistency exists within schools and between all school phases. While concern over transition problems is focussed on the move from primary to secondary school, it can be argued that there are issues of progression at each Key Stage move. Schools need to be more aware of the prior experience of pupils and of the teaching practices of the previous Key Stage. The good work of school staff in each <u>Stage</u> needs to be understood and built on and the concept of a professional team extend beyond the confines a single phase institution. A school Learning and Teaching policy should reflect this understanding and promote good practice.

Assessment for Learning. (AfL)

36. Assessment for Learning as defined by Wilam and Black is one of the most significant pedagogical developments of recent years and is now embedded within the National Strategies. AfL practices actively engage pupils in their learning and in the assessment of their progress. Teachers use the assessment information gained to modify and develop their teaching strategies. In Highcrest School, High Wycombe and in many other schools I have witnessed the profound impact on pupil learning and behaviour that AfL can make. I warmly welcome the commitment in the Children's Plan to make AfL practices universal across all schools.

37. The effective use of Assessment for Learning teaching strategies demands an agreed and consistent approach within a school. This is especially true in a secondary school where pupils will be taught by a number of subject teachers. Pupils benefit most from the use of AfL when their experience in one lesson is reinforced in the next. Where this does not occur the impact of the programme is less marked.

Learning and Teaching policy.

'We are looking for consistency, not uniformity. We want staff to work together without losing the natural flair and creativity of teachers.'   Headteacher

38. The creation in schools of positive and consistent approaches to learning, teaching and behaviour management requires action. It cannot be assumed that this ethos will develop naturally in all schools and within an acceptable timescale. Where the ethos does exist it also cannot be assumed that it will be sustainable unless it is embedded in school practice and policy. In their report the Practitioner's Group expressed their belief that schools should develop a Learning and Teaching policy that identifies the teaching and classroom management strategies to be followed by all staff. This would under pin the fundamental work of the school.

'Our Learning and Teaching policy identifies teaching and classroom management strategies which we all follow. It is a 'must do' document, but we find this to be supportive rather than restrictive. By having a common approach to what we call baseline issues we support each other and pupils understand our expectations. Above that common baseline the school culture is to encourage us all to be innovative and

creative. Our policy is reviewed each year by teachers and is a subject for constant discussion. It links to our training programme so we have the support to improve our teaching. The focus on learning and teaching makes me feel truly professional and the impact on pupil attitude and behaviour is striking.'

Teacher : Learning Behaviour 2005

39. It is for teachers rather than government to identify the key professional practices whose consistent application forms their school Learning and Teaching policy. Guidance and examples of best practice are available, but it is the utilisation of the professional expertise of school staff and their knowledge of the school context that will result in the most successful outcomes.

40. Where schools have most successfully developed high standards of learning and teaching their policy documents have included at least the following expectations.
    - Consistent practice in pupil assessment to ensure effective teacher-pupil communication.
    - The engagement of pupils in the assessment of their work.
    - Consistent practice in classroom management strategies.
    - The use of data to monitor individual learning progress and initiate intervention where necessary.

41. Many schools already possess Learning and Teaching policies. They see these as being essential to their work and the means by which teachers support each other and work most effectively in the interests of their pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that where a school has been able to develop good leadership at all levels and a clear focus on effective classroom practice, standards of pupil behaviour are high.

42. Unfortunately in some schools the degree of in school variation of performance is a matter of concern. Staff do not have the guidelines necessary for them to work as a fully effective team and this can impact adversely on their classroom experience and morale. For pupils, the lack of consistency in their classroom experience can create difficulties for them in accessing the learning with consequent problems in their engagement and behaviour. These difficulties can be particularly acute following transition from primary to secondary school if the pupil is faced with adjusting to the different demands and practices of 10-12 subject teachers who are not operating as a team.

43. It is my view that all schools should be have a Learning and Teaching policy that identifies those baseline practices that will be followed by all staff. It is the process of devising the policy which is particularly important being the means by which school teams identify key classroom strategies which will be implemented consistently. This supports pupils and staff and is particularly important for those joining the school.

44. I am aware that some school leaders believe that schools already have a sufficient number of 'requirements'. I am sympathetic to the pressures that schools face, but

believe that the promotion of professional consistency and collegiate professionalism in a school is the surest way to create effective working. For school staff and school leaders, the result of being in an effective institution is raised morale, reduced stress and less unnecessary workload pressures.

45. A Learning and Teaching policy relates to the core functions of the institution. It needs to be embedded in school culture, closely linked to the school behaviour policy and to be a source of guidance to staff and pupils The Learning and Teaching policy needs to be reviewed regularly and to be guide the school training programme for staff. I confirm the view of the Practitioners' Group that each school should possess a written Learning and Teaching policy and I shall be consulting within the profession as to how best this can be achieved. I will return to this issue in my final report.

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)
46. The introduction of the programme of study Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning is seen by schools as having had a positive impact on children in developing positive attitudes and behaviour. While it is too soon for a full assessment to be made, the opinion of the teachers indicates that S.E.A.L. will form part of a number of strategies that schools will use to teach 'learning behaviour'.

Recommendations.
  i.   **To promote consistent high quality teaching for pupils all schools should have a Learning and Teaching policy that identifies baseline good practice which is followed and supported by all staff in the school.   It is the process of creating this consistency that is most important, but to assist the induction of new staff and to ensure that school practice is sustained, a written Learning and Teaching policy should be produced. This should be practical in nature and reviewed regularly.**
  ii. **Schools should be encouraged and supported to improve the transition of pupils between Key Stages by acquiring greater awareness of the pedagogical practices of the different school phases.**
  iii. **Leadership training courses provided by NCSL and others should be reviewed so as to ensure that the issue of within school variation is given prominence and that strategies are developed to address the problem.**
  iv. **Schools should utilise the teaching strategies promoted by Assessment for Learning to increase the engagement of pupils.**
  v.   **DCSF should continue to promote to schools the section of the 2005 Learning Behaviour report: Principles and Practice: What Works in Schools.**

Special Educational Needs (SEN), Disabilities and Behaviour.

47. I was asked to include in this report advice on SEN and disability related behavioural difficulties. My own experience as a mainstream school head teacher makes me acutely aware of the importance of ensuring appropriate support for pupils with SEN to enable them to succeed, including action to address any behavioural difficulties. Where the needs of pupils are not addressed at an early stage, frustration, alienation and poor behaviour can result. This section of my report therefore considers some of the behaviour related issues associated particularly with pupils with SEN and/or disabilities, particularly as these apply in mainstream schools.

48. In 2009/10 Ofsted will report their findings on how best to improve outcomes for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. In 2009 the Lamb review will examine the level of parental confidence in SEN services provided by schools and local authorities. These are welcome developments and my subsequent comments are intended to contribute to the debate. They cannot anticipate the outcomes of those two substantial and important pieces of work.

49. The links between behavioural standards and SEN/disabilities are intricate and profound. For most children who display poor behaviour, this is a temporary problem which can relate to their home circumstances and the effectiveness of learning, teaching and behaviour strategies within the school. Their behaviour problems can be resolved with early and effective intervention to keep them engaged with learning and school staff can be very effective in doing this. For a small minority of children the degree of special educational need, or disability may be such that intensive support, or even alternative provision is required. Whatever the cause of the individual behaviour problem, successful intervention requires intelligent, caring action on behalf of the school and the external support agencies and which relates to individual need.

50. The education service contains many examples of outstanding practice in helping children with SEN and/or disabilities to achieve their potential, including overcoming any associated behavioural problems. In carrying out this review I have been fortunate in meeting numerous children who, with help, have been able radically to improve their behaviour and their subsequent life chances. The education professionals involved deserve the highest praise. Unfortunately, as identified by Ofsted, there is too much variation in practice within the system and even within schools. For example assessment data is not always used properly and there can be an over reliance on unfocused support from untrained school staff. Achieving consistency of good practice remains a major challenge for the education service. Where it is achieved the impact on those children who are most vulnerable is profound.

The legal context.

51. Before considering what more schools might do to assist children with SEN and/or disabilities attention should be given to the legal context in which they operate. Schools and Local Authorities must not treat disabled students less favourably without justification and must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they are not

disadvantaged compared to their peers. The Disability and Discrimination Act 2005 places a general duty on schools to have regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as subsequently amended);
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Where a child has special educational needs a school has statutory duties under the Education Act 1996, which include the following :

- doing its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for the pupil's SEN;
- ensuring that where the head teacher or a nominated governor has been informed by a local authority that a pupil has SEN, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach him/her.
- ensuring teachers are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for pupils who have SEN;
- ensuring a pupil with SEN joins in the activities of the school together with other pupils, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the SEN provision their learning needs call for, the efficient education of the pupils with whom they are educated and the efficient use of resources;
- report to parents on the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with SEN;
- have regard to the SEN Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with SEN;
- ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their child.

This does not mean that schools have to tolerate unacceptable and wilful behaviour.

A personalised approach.
52. Children with SEN and disabilities should have a high profile within schools and within the education and supporting services. Too often these children can lack champions able to guide them and their families through what can be a confusing and complicated support system. As a result their needs can be neglected. The Practitioners' Group believed that one role of the Parent Support Advisers would be to offer practical support to parents of children with SEN/Disabilities.

53. Schools need to maintain good discipline. This should not prevent a school from having the confidence to treat incidents of bad behaviour on an individual basis and on occasions with flexibility. DCSF. guidance on how to differentiate behaviour policies

to take account of SEN. and disabilities has been provided but needs to be further reiterated. Pastoral Support Programmes which bring together the expertise of relevant agencies and involve the parent and the child, can be highly effective in preventing subsequent problems and eventual exclusion, but it is not clear that these are being used as often as they might be.

Identification of SEN in children.

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

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

56. Where the special educational needs of a child are not recognised early this can result in disaffection and bad behaviour. A child on the autistic spectrum, or who has speech, language and communication difficulties may find it difficult to understand the expectations of school staff and to communicate concerns to others. Consideration should always be given to whether a child's behavioural difficulties arise from an underlying learning difficulty that has not been identified, or is not being appropriately addressed.

57. When a school has identified that a child is experiencing a problem a proper assessment of need must take place. This could be an educational assessment, but could encompass the social and psychological needs of the child and the family. Where appropriate a SEN statement may be issued releasing additional support for the child.

Monitoring progress.

58. The SEN Code of Practice stresses the importance of schools monitoring and evaluating the impact of interventions on pupils' progress and to consider what further, additional, or different provision might be made where further progress remains unsatisfactory. Similarly, the disability equality duty requires schools to gather information on the achievements of disabled pupils and to assess the impact of its policies and practices on disability equality. Both schools SEN and disability equality duties require a clear focus on improving progression and outcomes for children with SEN and/or disabilities. The disability equality duty also requires schools to monitor the impact of their behaviour policies on disabled children.

59. The guidance produced by D.C.S.F. for school improvement partners on effective working with vulnerable pupils is welcome. This guidance needs to be given a high profile in coming years to ensure that the advice it contains becomes embedded within the system. The school improvement partner and the school should assess how the special educational needs of children are being identified and how the progression of these children is being maximised as a result of school intervention.

60. Those children with severe behavioural problems are few in number, but they require more significant and personalised support.

Progress to date.

61. Considerable progress is being made in improving standards for children with SEN. Actions include :

- Better data and guidance to schools to enable them to assess how children with special educational needs are progressing is being developed and is expected to be published next year.
- The development by the Audit Commission and the National Strategies of a SEN value for money toolkit. This assists schools to evaluate their management and deployment of SEN resources and to assess the impact of those resources on outcomes for the children.
- The Inclusion Development Programme. Supported by National Strategies consultants, this programme offers professional development for teachers and others who work with children with SEN. During 2009 this will cover autism and during 2010 it will cover behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The recent laying of regulations intended to require all SENCOs to be qualified teachers .
- The recent publication of a Government Action Plan addressing the recommendations of John Bercow's review on improving services for children with speech and language difficulties.
- Additional measures to improve outcomes for children with SEN as set out in the Children's Plan One Year On report.

The commitment to continue this work was a key element of the Children's Plan. Investment has been significant and one can anticipate that recent improvements will

continue. Despite this progress I wish to highlight some areas where I believe further improvement is required. These are in addition to my earlier comments on the accurate identification of SEN needs and the importance of schools monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their SEN practice..

Attainment levels of children with SEN.

62. In 2007 only 9.4% of pupils with special educational needs achieved 5 A*-C G.C.S.E. grades (including English and Mathematics) as compared with 53.8% of pupils with no identified special need. Low expectations for these learners are a problem in schools and in alternative provision and can often result in poor behaviour and low school attendance. Pupils with special educational needs perform significantly worse than others, even after the nature of their special need is taken into account.

63. Effective use of assessment data focussed on specific groups of children raises the level of awareness of need in a school and helps to ensure that individual needs are met. Choosing the progression made by the least able 10% of the pupil population as a key performance indicator and as a driver in identifying development needs would be helpful. A similar focus on other groups such as children with dyslexia, or children who are economically disadvantaged would help to ensure that the institution is responsive to the needs of all sections of its community.

Effective early intervention.

64. The Children's Plan correctly places effective early intervention at the heart of the document. Few would disagree with the essential common sense of this position or that effective early intervention is particularly important for children with SEN/Disabilities. However at present resources and attention are all too often directed towards dealing with the problems that have occurred, rather than with preventative work. In order that Education and related services implement effective early intervention it may be necessary to challenge existing policy principles on school funding so that resource allocation allows this to happen.

65. Effective intervention in the early years of schooling must be the foundation for subsequent success. Early Years provision and Primary schools can be very successful in this work, but they need to have the capacity and the skilled staff to intervene effectively. Secondary schools can, and do, take very effective actions to meet children's needs and to enhance their learning and their lives, but too often unresolved pupil difficulties at age 11 blight future progress. Often successful intervention requires education, health and social care services to work together in the interests of the child.

66. It is a concern that many SEN Co-ordinators in primary schools do not have the dedicated time to carry out the task. It is my opinion that each school SENCO should have a time allocation to enable them to perform the role.

67. I am concerned that the importance of effective early intervention is reflected within the resource allocation to schools. I am also concerned that when resources are allocated

for the purpose of early intervention they are done so in a manner to ensure that they are spent on the intended purpose. I hope that the current review of the Direct School Grant will take into account the importance placed in the Children's Plan on early intervention.

Exclusions.

68. There is clear evidence that children and young people with SEN are more likely to be excluded from school than others, and I welcome plans by DCSF to examine this issue. Schools and Local Authorities need to review the pattern of exclusions and consider what might be done differently to reduce the need for their occurrence. This might include the provision of support to schools, the strategy and timing of early intervention for pupils and the effectiveness of strategies for the early identification of SEN.

69. In 2005 the Practitioners' Group expressed their strong disapproval of the practice in a small number of schools of using informal exclusions for pupils. This practice is unlawful. It is apparent from the evidence received from the National Autistic Society that the informal exclusions still take place. Such practice is damaging to the children concerned and is damaging to the relationship between the school and the parents concerned. It also places the school at risk since it is acting outside the law.

70. When working with children with SEN and/or disabilities schools need to plan ahead so as to make the reasonable adjustments that will be needed. This is intelligent behaviour management. It does not mean that schools accept low standards of behaviour; it does mean that they use professional skills to deal with them.

71. Where the exclusion of pupils with SEN/Disabilities has taken place these need to be closely monitored and evaluated by the school. In some cases this will assist the school in developing effective early intervention strategies to prevent the necessity of subsequent school exclusion.

72. School exclusion of any child should only take place if there is no reasonable alternative action available. For children with SEN/Disabilities, a school will need to consider if the unacceptable behaviour arises from unmet special needs and if the provision of further support to the child would allow him/her to remain in the school.

Mental Health

73. The quality of support for children with mental illness has been a matter of considerable concern to schools. Standards have been variable across the country and have sometimes been poor. Problems arising from mental ill health among children can result in the school feeling that they have no alternative to permanently excluding the child, even when this is not the appropriate response..

74. Many head teachers complain of the difficulty in accessing Children and Adolescent Support Service (CAMHS) support and the speed in which this support is made available. Even when appointments are offered to the child and the family this does not always lead to treatment. Many families experiencing difficulties fail to keep the

appointment with the result that the possibility of treatment is lost, or postponed. There is a need for a support system for a child that is pro active, reflecting the fact that the provision of a service may not address the anticipated needs if the recipient of the service is unable to achieve access. The development of Parent Support Advisers in schools is most welcome in having the potential to provide this essential support to children and their families. As I have previously emphasised this initiative needs to receive proper recognition of its importance and careful planning to ensure that it is developed to a high standard throughout the system.

75. Schools can support the child and the family in obtaining CAMHS support, but there is a need for CAMHS to be more pro-active in meeting the needs of children with mental health problems. Regular liaison with school staff would assist in developing effective early intervention and help to prevent vulnerable children 'slipping through the net'.

76. The commitment to extend the current Targeted Mental Health in Schools pathfinder to all local authority areas by 2010-11 will be warmly welcomed by schools. This will help to provide effective early intervention at school level.

77. The provision of CAMHS support is particularly important for Pupil Referral Units and other forms of Alternative Provision. As a result of the reforms arising from the White Paper 'Back on Track' and from the recent report of Jo Davidson's review of mental health services, CAMHS staff will need to be much more accessible to schools and PRUs – for example, through being part of a growing number of extended school services, based in and around schools and PRUs.

78. I warmly welcome the final report of the National CAMHS Review. I regard it as making a significant contribution to raising standards and look forward to the implementation of the recommendations. In particular, it is very important that there should be a clearer articulation of mental health services' roles and responsibilities for all relevant people working in children's services at local regional and national level. This should include each Children's Trust clearly setting out how it will ensure the delivery of the full range of mental health and psychological well being services across the full spectrum of need.

79. To improve the access children, young people and their families have to mental health and psychological well being support, local areas should set out a clear description of the services that are available locally, which should include services to promote mental health and psychological well-being, early intervention support and high quality, timely, responsive and appropriate specialist services which span the full spectrum of children's psychological and mental health needs.

Parental engagement.
80. It is important for schools to work closely with parents where difficulties arise at school. Often parents are encountering similar difficulties at home and welcome support and advice. The need for such co-operation and constructive support is

particularly strong for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. The range of current initiatives to support greater parental engagement with schools, as set out in Chapter 3 of the Children's Plan and as discussed in my July report should facilitate this process.

81. As indicated in my July report, I see Parent Support Advisers as having a valuable role in working with parents and children. Parents are not always aware of the level of support available in school and beyond education. Children's disability services and the voluntary sector can provide important help once a parent has been assisted in making contact. For those parents and children experiencing difficulties this supportive role is particularly important.

Partnership and building school capacity.

82. As stated earlier in this report I am strongly supportive of the intention to develop school partnership working. To ensure that a full range of support is available for children with SEN I believe that partnership working is essential. Working together, schools can share good practice, particularly in the area of staff training. They can also explore the possibility of making joint staff appointments, or jointly buying in specialist services where individual institutions would find this prohibitive. Sharing a school counsellor, or a parent support adviser, schools can extend the range of support they can offer children and families to the benefit of everyone. I believe that such actions are in full accord with current policy on school workforce reform.

83. These partnerships should be between primary schools, between secondary schools and between primary and secondary schools. Close partnership working with Special Schools, Pupil Referral Units and other alternative provision in addition to the local Children's Trust is essential.

84. The wider issues relating to school partnership working are addressed elsewhere in this report.

Pupil Referral Units and other alternative educational provision.

85. I also warmly welcome the White Paper 'Back on Track' referred to above. For those children for whom mainstream schooling is not appropriate, Alternative Provision must be of a high quality and appropriate to their needs. This must be true regardless of where they live. Children with behavioural difficulties do not forfeit their entitlement to care and it is in the interests of society that their needs are met. I remain convinced that, in all but exceptional cases, children can be helped to learn how to behave and that must be the aim in both mainstream and alternative schooling. In this context, it is particularly important that all local authorities ensure they have an appropriate range of provision for addressing the full range of SEN arising in their area, so that children with SEN do not find themselves spending unnecessarily long periods of time in PRUs, when they would benefit more from an appropriate placement in either a special school or a specialist unit in a mainstream school.

86. Alternative Provision needs to recognise individual needs. For too long there has been a 'one size fits all' approach which can result in the children concerned not receiving the education and support relevant to them. A proper assessment of need for all children entering Alternative Provision would help to ensure that individual needs are met. It was pleasing to see that the Alternative Provision pilots announced in October 2008 contained a range of educational experiences and provision.

Standards of teacher training relating to SEN.

87. In September 2008 Ofsted reported their concerns that new entrants to teaching needed to be better trained to teach children with special educational needs. They found that while initial teacher training was rarely inadequate in this regard, it was generally satisfactory in standard rather than good. New teachers lacked sufficient understanding of the range and depth of children's special educational need and could be ill prepared for their classroom experience.

88. These findings were confirmed by research from Liverpool John Moores University. A survey of newly qualified teachers revealed that nearly half did not feel confident in teaching children with special educational needs. The research also showed that training in special educational needs was often purely theoretical and that trainee teachers can receive as little as 10 hours of training on S.E.N. issues. A further concern was the perception that teacher training needs to place a greater focus on the pedagogical principles that create effective S.E.N. practice.

89. In general it is my belief that the standard of Initial Teacher Training has never been higher, but in this respect I share the concerns identified. However I wish to extend the focus of attention on training to go beyond that provided for new entrants. Good schools have a structured programme of training for their staff so that there is continuous development. Training for senior school leaders is also important. Initial Teacher Training is of vital importance, but cannot on its own be responsible for providing lasting and specific skills.

Recommendations.

  i. **Training for school leaders should be reviewed to ensure that the principles of good practice for special educational needs and disabilities are given a high priority.**

 ii. **Schools should ensure that they are monitoring and evaluating the impact of interventions on the progress made by pupils with SEN and disabilities and consider what further additional or different provision might be made where progress remains unsatisfactory.**

iii. **The means by which a school identifies children as having a special need should form part of the conversation between the head teacher and the School Improvement Partner. This conversation should focus on the progression made by those children, and the extent to which progression is being accelerated through the school's interventions.**

iv. **The training for School Improvement Partners should be reviewed to ensure appropriate attention is given to SEN and disabilities in the 'school conversation'.**

v. **The recommendations contained in OfSTED report on the preparation of new teachers to teach pupils with special needs (September 2008) should be adopted by named bodies and implemented. (Recommendations : Appendix 2)**

vi. **Effective early intervention is particularly important for children with SEN/Disabilities. Consideration should be given to ensuring that early years and primary education have staff with appropriate training and time to identify children with SEN and to intervene effectively at an early point. Additional services, such as speech and language, occupational therapy and physiotherapy need to be provided at the earliest possible stage. The current review of the Dedicated Schools Grant should consider how best early intervention can be funded.**

vii. **Each Children's Trust should identify how it will ensure the delivery of the full range of mental health and psychological well being services across the full spectrum of need. Service delivery should be proactive reflecting the fact that the provision of a service may not address the anticipated needs if the recipient of the service is unable to achieve access.**

viii. **To improve the access children, young people and their families have to mental health and psychological well being support, local areas should set out a clear description of the services that are available locally, which should include services to promote mental health and psychological well-being, early intervention support and high quality, timely, responsive and appropriate specialist services which span the full spectrum of children's psychological and mental health needs.**

ix. **Schools must not use informal or unofficial exclusions as these are unlawful and particularly damaging to children with SEN and disabilities.**

x. **Schools should consider how, in partnership with other education providers and external providers (Social Care, CAMHS, Health), they could extend the range of school based support they could offer to their pupils.**

xi. **DCSF guidance to schools on best practice in working with pupils with SEN/Disabilities needs to be issued at regular intervals to support schools in addressing the needs of these pupils effectively.**

Conclusion.

90. In carrying out this part of my review into behaviour in schools I have been ably supported by experts within the profession, the Special Education Consortium, officials of the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the professional associations. I would like to thank the education officers and schools who have contributed to my understanding of the issues, particularly those in Brighton, Kent, Leeds, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. The advice and guidance of individual head teachers and school staff has been invaluable and it has been a pleasure to witness some of the outstanding work taking place in our schools.

Sir Alan Steer
February 2009

School partnerships to improve behaviour and tackle persistent absence – design principles. (National Strategy)

- Schools (and PRUs) in a geographical area need a shared vision which commits their staff and governors to work together to improve behaviour, tackle persistent absence and improve outcomes for pupils with challenging behaviour and attendance for the benefit of all pupils.
- Schools (and PRUs) make a formal written commitment which articulates their shared vision that all pupils are the collective responsibility of the partnership and they will intervene early with pupils at risk of exclusion and persistent absence, to improve behaviour and attendance and improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Schools agree and operate a fair access protocol which ensures that all schools admit a fair share of 'hard to place' pupils and agree a managed move protocol for pupils for whom a move to another school is agreed appropriate.
- Schools are able to access high quality support and provision from LA, PRUs, private and voluntary sector which meets the needs of pupils at risk of exclusion, fixed period excluded pupils and persistent absentees using resources devolved by the LA where this is agreed between the LA and the schools.
- The educational, personal development and welfare needs of pupils are identified early and assessed before the partnership arranges additional support as a co-ordinated package and monitors progress towards agreed educational objectives.
- Schools agree local targets to meet required outcomes and the partnership manages its own performance and processes.

Ofsted: How well new teachers are prepared to teach pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.   September 2008

Recommendations

The Training and Development Agency for Schools should:

- ensure that initial teacher education providers make clear to trainees what a training programme should include if it is to prepare them well to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- ensure that those responsible for monitoring induction provision are fully aware of what constitutes good practice in teaching pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- exemplify the professional standards relating to teaching and learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure greater
- consistency in judging whether the standards are met.
  Providers should:
- ensure that a person with appropriate expertise monitors the quality of tuition in teaching pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensure that a focus on teaching pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities permeates the courses they offer and that the programmes include sessions that deal specifically with the most up-to-date examples of effective practice in this area
- emphasise the importance of good leadership and management of the work of other adults to improve the outcomes for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
  Providers and local authorities should:
- ensure more rigorous evaluation of the provision for learning difficulties and/or disabilities in schools, so that they can adapt courses and programmes to minimise the differences in their style and quality of provision, as well as in the experiences of intending teachers.
  All training partners should:
- ensure that new teachers are equipped to evaluate how effectively lessons enable pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress.
  Schools should:
- provide newly qualified teachers with sufficient opportunities to prepare them effectively for the start of their career and to give them a good grounding in all the professional standards, including those relating to teaching pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.