

Inclusive Cumbria

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INTRODUCTION



"Cumbria County Council has a long and strong commitment to integration. This has always been supported by the three main political groups and was first set out in the "One in five" policy proposals in 1986.

The present policy direction, which was developed by a Working Party of County Councillors, Officers and teachers, by drawing on a large number of witnesses and a lot of evidence has now been approved by cabinet. It sets out the way we want development to progress. It recognises that inclusion is more than integration and that inclusive education involves more than just pupils with Special Educational Needs.

The vision of an "Inclusive Cumbria" is one that I hope we can all commit to and the proposals set out how schools will be supported in achieving this. Achieving a more inclusive society is something we can only secure by working together. Starting in our schools and with our children is a very good place."

Cllr Joan Stocker
Education Spokesperson



"Cumbria has a long and honourable tradition in making appropriate and effective provision for the young people in our county who have learning needs, which are judged to be 'special'. We have been particularly innovative and forward looking in developing and implementing policies which have enabled the needs of the large majority of these 'special learners' to be met in our mainstream primary and secondary schools.

It is not an accident that our policy and practice in these regards are singled out for particular praise in a recent inspection by Ofsted of the LEA. But neither members nor officers have any sense of complacency. We actively look to meet the changing needs and expectations of Cumbrian citizens and Cumbrian communities.

The publication of Inclusive Cumbria is a very important milestone for the County Council in its mission to develop a truly inclusive education system for the County. This policy derives from extensive research and discussion involving members, officers and a wide range of stakeholders.

I am very grateful to all those many people who contributed to this work. We can only develop and deliver inclusion by working together.

Inclusive Cumbria sets a clear strategic framework for the further development of the County Council's policies. In this critically important area of business it maintains and promotes our values and principles. I commend it to you."

John Nellist
Director of Education

VISION, BELIEFS, VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Vision and Beliefs

Our vision is for an inclusive education system in Cumbria that enables all learners to benefit from successful learning opportunities in their local community.

It is underpinned by the beliefs that:

- Learning provides the basis that enables people to participate fully in every-day life.
- All learners are valued and respected as equal members of the learning community.
- All learners should receive the support necessary to progress towards their potential.
- All learners have the right for learning opportunities in their local community.
- Inclusive learning provides a benefit to the whole learning community by enabling us to experience and learn from diversity and so develop tolerance and understanding.
- Inclusion is about recognising and valuing difference and an inclusive school is a model for the kind of society we hope to promote.

These beliefs are underpinned by the following operating principles:

- Learners and their needs will be central to the planning and delivery of services.
- The views of learners and their carers will be sought and valued.
- Individual learning and support needs will be identified and met appropriately as early as possible.
- The learner and their carers will be given access to information and advice that will allow them to make informed choices.
- Clear learning outcomes will be developed for and with every learner.
- All developments will be based on careful analysis of existing provision, detailed research of best practice and open consultation with all stakeholders.
- Inclusion is a continuous and ongoing process.

Financial Principles

- All resources will be allocated in a transparent way.
- All resources will be openly accounted for.
- Resources will be targeted in proportion to the level of need.
- Resources will be allocated through models and methods that have been fully consulted on.
- There will be a clear link between plans, resources and outcomes.
- Resources will whenever possible be allocated through agreed targeting procedures, reducing the need for statutory assessments and unnecessary bureaucracy.
- There will be transparent monitoring arrangements for all resources.

Partnership

- Collaborative working is essential to securing maximum progress towards inclusive schooling.
- All partners - young people and their carers, educators, and workers in statutory and voluntary agencies - will be valued equally and their full participation will be sought.
- Joint planning stemming from shared values will be the prime style of partnership working.
- Opportunities for joint financial planning and joint budgets will be actively pursued.

Training

- All change and development will be supported through planned training programmes.
- Training needs will be identified by regular audits of need.

Local, National and International Contexts

These principles, beliefs and values and the vision they inspire are backed up by local, national and international imperatives.

Locally, the County Council is committed to supporting the development of a fully inclusive society here in Cumbria.

The County Council's core values (as expressed in the County Council Strategy 2001/02 and Beyond) includes social inclusion as one of the seven core values. The strategy states that:

The County Council will strive to reduce social exclusion and find innovative solutions that will make a difference to individuals or to areas who suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health, family breakdown and isolation.

Another of our core values relates to equality and fairness. The strategy states here that:

Everyone needs to be included in society and the life of the community and to be treated fairly whoever they are or wherever they live.

National legislation, most recently the SEN and Disability Act (2001), strengthens the duty of LEAs to educate children with special needs in mainstream schools. Statutory guidance from the Department for Education and Skills on Inclusive Schooling sets out the **key principles for an inclusive education service**.

- *Inclusion is a process by which schools, local education authorities and others develop their cultures, policies and practices to include pupils.*
- *With the right training, strategies and support nearly all children with special educational needs can be successfully included in mainstream education.*
- *An inclusive education service offers excellence and choice and incorporates the views of the parents and children.*
- *The interests of all pupils must be safeguarded.*
- *Schools, local education authorities and others should actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation.*
- *All children should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential.*
- *Mainstream education will not always be right for every child all of the time. Equally just because mainstream education may not be right at a particular stage it does not prevent the child from being included successfully at a later stage.*

The statutory guidance is clear that *schools supported by local education authorities and others should actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude pupils with special educational needs*. It states further that:

Inclusion is about engendering a sense of community and belonging and encouraging mainstream and special schools and others to come together to support each other and pupils with special educational needs. Inclusive schools and local education authorities have:

- *an inclusive ethos;*
- *a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils;*
- *systems for early identification of barriers to learning and participation; and*
- *high expectations and suitable targets for all children*

In developing these principles for a Cumbrian context, the LEA consulted with schools and secured their support for a *Policy on Inclusive Learning*. This policy is attached in full as Appendix A.

This reinforces further statutory guidance found in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (November 2001) which sets out in paragraph 1:5 a number of general principles:

- *A child with special educational needs should have their needs met.*

- *The special educational needs of children will normally be met in mainstream schools or settings.*
- *The views of the child should be sought and taken into account.*
- *Parents have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education.*
- *Children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for the foundation stage and the National Curriculum.*

Paragraph 1:6 identifies a number of factors which are critical to success here:

- *The culture, practice, management and deployment of resources in a school or setting are designed to ensure all children's needs are met.*
- *LEAs, schools and settings work together to ensure that any child's special educational needs are identified early.*
- *LEAs, schools and settings exploit best practice when devising interventions.*
- *Those responsible for special educational provision take into account the wishes of the child concerned, in the light of their age and understanding.*
- *Special education professionals and parents work in partnership*
- *Special education professionals take into account the views of individual parents in respect of their child's particular needs.*
- *Interventions for each child are reviewed regularly to assess their impact, the child's progress and the views of the child, their teachers and their parents.*
- *There is close co-operation between all the agencies concerned and a multi-disciplinary approach to the resolution of issues.*
- *LEAs make assessments in accordance with the prescribed time limits.*
- *Where an LEA determines a child's special educational needs, statements are clear and detailed, made within prescribed time limits, specify monitoring arrangements, and are reviewed annually.*

These principles, values and beliefs also have an international expression – as found for example in the Salamanca Statement:

We, the delegates of the World Conference on Special Needs Education representing ninety-two governments and twenty-five international organizations, assembled here in Salamanca, Spain, from 7-10 June 1994, hereby reaffirm our commitment to Education for All, recognising the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system, and further hereby endorse the Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, that governments and organisations may be guided by the spirit of its provisions and recommendations.

Inclusion however, is not exclusively about special educational needs and the legislative framework also reflects strongly on requirements to support people from different cultures. The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) and the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry Report (McPherson 1999) led to the Commission for Racial Equalities Report 2000, "Learning for All: Standards for racial equality in schools", sets out the standards and expectations for all schools in this area.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) amended the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) to make it unlawful to discriminate against disabled pupils or prospective pupils.

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

In this report Cumbria County Council seeks to draw together all of the issues relating to inclusion in education. The report is not only about special educational needs. It is also about physical access, social inclusion and the needs of vulnerable and minority groups.

The report sets out the vision of our County Council within the statutory framework and legislative guidelines, and indicates the strategy by which this vision will be progressed and reviewed.

The report itself was developed by a Working Party of County Councillors from all the main political groups. The Working Party included representatives from all school sectors and the teachers' professional associations were also represented. Officers of the LEA supported the work of the group. They provided advice to the Working Party as did specialist teachers and teachers from mainstream and special schools. Reports and advice were also received from colleagues in Health and Social Services, from parents and from voluntary groups. The Working Party met first on 11 December 2000 and the report was agreed in April 2002. It then underwent extensive consultation and was amended in the light of the feedback in November 2002.

The Working Party is proud to acknowledge and celebrate the successful work on inclusion that has been developed in Cumbria. It believes, however, that with appropriate support and resources, the County can provide more inclusive learning opportunities for its pupils.

The Working Party recognises that schools cannot achieve inclusive education without support and resources. It also recognises that inclusion requires multi-disciplinary partnership and interagency cooperation at both strategic and operational levels.

The report makes a number of recommendations, which will require action plans. These will set clear targets, timescales for achieving these and will identify the people who will be responsible for progressing the recommendations.

Development of Inclusion in Cumbria

Cumbria has a long established commitment to supporting the integration of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools.

In 1986 the *One in Five* Working Party produced a report on the development of services for children with special educational needs in Cumbria. This report contained 124 detailed recommendations and led, amongst other things, to the closure of seven special schools. The County closed three day schools and one residential school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties; two schools for children with physical and medical needs; and one school for pupils with severe learning difficulties. A policy of appropriately supported integration was agreed and this was implemented. The provision represented in the special schools was replaced through a number of mainstream strategic facilities and by enhancing the support services available to work with schools.

The *One in Five* Working Party Report anticipated many of the changes and developments that were to occur in special education. It received wide local support and attracted national recognition and approval. However, its recommendation for a network of enhanced learning support departments (ELSD), the forerunner of today's strategic facilities, was never fully implemented. The Education Reform Act 1988 introduced local management of schools and Cumbria's scheme for funding schools did not accommodate different resourcing for either special schools or ELSDs.

There was a major setback to the development of special education in 1993 when a significant overspend in the SEN budget led to a loss of confidence and a major restructuring of SEN services.

In 1997 the Education Committee asked the Education Advisory Sub-Committee, to carry out a review of special educational needs in Cumbria. This review, *Focusing on Effectiveness*, looked at all aspects of special educational needs policy and practice. It consolidated the changes that had occurred as a result of local management of schools and took account of the national agenda which was developing at that time.

The current review was stimulated by discussion in the Education Forum and agreed by Cabinet. This discussion recognised the need to address the expectations of the Department for Education and Employment's (DfEE) *Programme of Action: Meeting Special Educational Needs* and to move from an integrated to an inclusive educational system. For the review itself to be inclusive, it had to go beyond a narrow and traditional definition of special educational needs. It also had to engage schools and partners from Health and Social Services in the review process.

As we begin this review, we should recognise that Cumbria already has one of the highest levels of integration nationally. There are five special schools that cater for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties, a number of strategic facilities for key groups of pupils and a low level of usage of out of county residential provision. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have those needs met in their local mainstream schools.

Recent consultative process

Three major consultation exercises have influenced the development of this report.

In March 2001, all schools and LEA support staff were consulted on the *Policy on Inclusive Learning*. Seventy-one responses were received from the 351 schools and other educational establishments, a 20.2% return. Two respondents rejected the idea of inclusive learning and expressed a desire to increase segregated schooling. All other responses supported the concept although a number expressed the view that idealism without resources was meaningless.

In January 2002, all schools and LEA staff were consulted on the *Vision, Beliefs, Values and Principles*, which would provide the underpinning for policy and practice. Sixty-three responses were received, a response rate of 17.95%, or just over one in six. Only two responses (3.17% of the returns) raised concerns about the principles. The document was subsequently modified in the light of the helpful advice and constructive criticism the Working Party received.

In the summer of 2002, the final draft was sent to all schools and to key partners and comments were invited. Seventy questionnaires were returned indicating a 95% support for the key recommendations. Some twenty written responses were also received. There were six local forums attended by some one hundred and seventy teachers, parents and governors. Three 'Citizen's panels' were also independently convened.

All of these consultation exercises show strong support for the continued development of inclusive learning in Cumbria.

Baseline data on inclusion

All figures as at April 2002

<u>Special Educational Needs:</u> <u>Type of need:</u>	No. of pupils with a statement in mainstream	No. of pupils placed in special school*	No. of pupils placed in out of county residential schools
- Speech and language	262	0	0
- Autism	123	0	9
- Moderate learning difficulties	498	0	0
- Severe learning difficulties	253	343	0
- Profound learning difficulties	39	97	0
- Specific learning difficulties	140	0	0
- Hearing	76	0	15
- Vision	21	0	4
- Physical/medical	162	0	1

<u>Access: Number of Strategic Facilities</u>				
Learning Support Units	8			
Hearing	1			
Autism	2			
Phys/medical	16			
Severe Learning Difficulties	9			
Special Schools	5			
Pupil Referral Units	4			
Literacy Centres	3			
<u>Social Inclusion:</u>	No. of pupils with a statement	No. of pupils placed in special school	No. of pupils placed in out of county/ Residential	
SEN Behaviour	360	0	16	
Ratified Permanent Exclusions	Primary	Secondary	Special	Total
2000-2001	1	38	0	39
2001-2002	8	42	0	50
No. of days lost to fixed term exclusion	Primary	Secondary	Special (not available)	
2000-2001	243	2,949		
2001-2002	316	2,970		
Attendance 2000/2001	Primary	Secondary	Special	
% authorised absence	5.1%	7.3%	9.8%	
% unauthorised absence	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%	
<u>No. pupils attending Cumbria's five special schools</u>	Jan 2000	Jan 2001	Jan 2002	
	383	425	442	
	Children in Public Care (2001/2002)	Ethnic Minorities (2000/2001)	Traveller Children (2000/2001)	Pregnant schoolgirls /schoolgirl mothers (2000/2001)
No. in County	464	582	53	24
No. in Special Schools	32	4	2	0
No. in Out of County/Residential	44/11	0/0	0/0	0/0
No. in PRU	17	4	0	0
No. on Education Otherwise Register	9	0	0	5
No. out of provision	13	0	nk	7

*** Figures refer to reason for placement. Pupils are placed in Cumbrian special schools only if they have severe or profound learning difficulties.**

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Communication and Interaction

The Code of Practice recognises that most children with special educational needs have difficulties with speech, language or communication. The Code picks out several groups of pupils who may have complex communication needs and we would highlight two of these for discussion here. These are pupils with:

- Speech and language difficulties
- Autism

The Code lists some of the provision that these pupils might need – provision ranging from *flexible teaching arrangements* through to *help in using augmentative or alternative means of communication*. The Code observes that if the school could provide some or all of these programmes in collaboration with the LEA or external support services, statutory assessment would not be necessary. If, on the other hand, these interventions had already been provided through School Action Plus and the child had not made acceptable progress, then a statutory assessment should be considered.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

The Working Party was pleased that the issues around speech and language difficulties were addressed jointly by senior professionals in Education and Health working together: by the County's Advisory Teacher for Speech and Language, and the Manager of a District Speech and Language Therapy Service. This recognised the need for a coordinated multi-agency approach to the problems.

The Working Party heard that there are four main areas of difficulty, which can affect a child in education:

- Speech intelligibility,
- Receptive language difficulties causing difficulties in understanding,
- Expressive language difficulties leading to poor communication and
- Social communication difficulties.

Provision for children is made through an agreed protocol between Education and Health.

Unlike some other areas of special educational needs, many speech and language difficulties can be successfully addressed through appropriate intervention. The needs of all pupils with speech and language difficulties can be met in County schools.

The number of pupils with speech and language difficulties break down as follows

Number at School Action Plus	Number with a statement of SEN	Number in out-county residential placements	Number supported by Health Service therapists
254	262	0	1950

RECOMMENDATION (1)

To enable schools better to support the inclusion of pupils with speech and language difficulties, Education and Health Service speech and language staff should together:

- Develop guidelines, support materials and training materials for school staff.
- Produce guidelines for parents outlining clearly how services are accessed.

- Produce guidelines setting out high standards of service delivery and provision that will be rigorously monitored and evaluated.

AUTISM

The terms autism and Asperger Syndrome are used to describe children who show characteristic impairments in three areas:

- Language and communication
- Social interactions and
- Rigidity of thought and behaviour

The related term “autism spectrum disorder” is often used to describe the range of needs, and the severity of needs that these young people have. Some of these pupils are extremely able, they may simply appear eccentric to other people, and they may be high achievers in school. Others will experience severe or profound learning difficulties and challenging behaviour.

The number of pupils on the autistic spectrum is difficult to estimate, but numbers do seem to be increasing. A research project carried out in South Cumbria in 1999 revealed that a minority of pupils thought to be autistic had a medical diagnosis (21%) and most, but not all, had a statement of special educational needs (76%).

Number with a statement of SEN	Number in out-county residential placement	Number in special schools	Number in strategic facilities
123	9	Not known	13

Most pupils with autism attend, and will continue to attend mainstream schools. Autistic pupils who also have severe or profound learning difficulties may attend our special schools, and a small number of pupils whose behaviour is particularly challenging go to out-county residential schools.

The county has two Strategic Facilities for autistic pupils (as part of a mainstream primary and secondary school in Cockermouth.) These have had very positive independent evaluations and are well regarded by local parents. A key feature in their success has been staff training and staff expertise is a critical component in making good provision for any pupil with autism, no matter where they are educated. The LEA, through the County Psychological Service, currently provides accredited training for large numbers of teachers and support staff.

The Working Party appreciated the complexity of this condition and the individuality of pupils needs. Members were pleased to be able to meet with autistic pupils at the strategic facility and to hear from a parent representing the National Autistic Society.

The key issues for this group of pupils are:

- Early intervention and support to families
- Providing a range of training opportunities for teachers and learning support assistants
- The extension of the network of strategic facilities
- Making in-county provision for all young people with autism.

RECOMMENDATION (2)

In order to enable more pupils with autism to be supported within Cumbria it is recommended that:

- The Education Service develops support materials on autism for schools and for families to enable young people with autism to be educated successfully in their local schools.
- A network of strategic facilities is developed following the Area Inclusion Review process. This should include nursery facilities.

- The ability of Cumbria's special schools to support young people with autism is recognised. This should be strengthened by supporting moves towards external accreditation, or the development of specialist provision.
- Education and Social Services staff undertake work together to foster a holistic approach which takes account of the needs of the whole family as well as educational needs of the child.
- The accredited training programme continues to be supported, encouraged and resourced as part of a strategic plan.
- The Education Service should work with the Health Service to secure an agreed model of multi-disciplinary assessment. This should mean that parents do not have to travel out of Cumbria for an assessment or diagnosis.
- The Education Service should produce an action plan to work towards achieving the DfES recommended standards of an ASD 'friendly' LEA.

Cognition and Learning

The Code of Practice identifies numbers of pupils who require "specific programmes to aid progress in cognition and learning" and, for the purposes of the present discussion, these are pupils who experience:

- Specific learning difficulties/dyslexia
- Moderate learning difficulties
- Severe learning difficulties

Again the Code suggests that decisions will need to be made on an individual basis on whether provision can be made through intervention at School Action Plus or whether the LEA should undertake a statutory assessment.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES/DYSLEXIA

Fluency in reading and writing underpin much of what we do in education and for many pupils this is critical to their success in school. Dyslexic pupils might be attending any school and our response, in consequence, has to be a flexible one. The key requirements are:

- Teachers who can identify the problem at an early stage
- Differentiated and flexible teaching
- Teachers who have expertise in working with pupils with specific learning difficulties
- Specialist provision where it is needed
- On-going training for staff in schools

Number of pupils with specific learning difficulties

Number with a statement	Number in Special School	Number in out-county residential schools
140	0	0

Cumbria LEA and Cumbria's schools already make extensive provision for this group of pupils. The training element is particularly strong and is evident in Cumbria's Reading Intervention training and the Cumbria Advanced Certificate in Specific Learning Difficulties. Specialist provision is made through our Reading Intervention packages, specialist literacy teachers and the network of Literacy Centres. Statements are still used for some dyslexic pupils in primary schools – but not now in secondary schools. They should become increasingly unnecessary for this group of pupils as staff expertise increases further and as new funding mechanisms are developed.

The only challenge to inclusion of this group of pupils comes when parents lose confidence in the ability of supported mainstream provision to meet their children's needs.

RECOMMENDATION (3)

The LEA should:

- Continue to develop expertise within schools, alongside their understanding of and receptiveness to conditions like dyslexia, to help them provide a supportive learning environment in which parents have confidence.
- Work with schools to encourage them to meet the British Dyslexia Association standards for 'Dyslexia Friendly Schools'

MODERATE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

This term describes a group of pupils who need more time to learn new skills than other pupils do. They often learn best if their teaching can be carefully structured, and if they have frequent opportunities to rehearse and practise the skills they have learned.

Fifteen or twenty years ago these pupils made up the bulk of our special school population. Cumbria has long since closed its schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (although many other LEAs have not). Almost all moderate learning difficulties pupils now attended in mainstream schools – and usually this is their neighbourhood catchment school. Statements are still used to fund provision in primary school but not in secondary schools. There is some concern that this group of pupils needs may not be effectively met in all schools.

Number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties

Number with a statement	Number in Special School *	Number in out-county residential schools
498	0	0

The key requirements for the future are to:

- Develop sensitive funding arrangements for Key Stage 1 and 2
- Work with secondary schools on developing flexible curricula in Key Stage 4.
- Research into the outcomes for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

RECOMMENDATION (4)

In order to support primary schools in providing inclusive learning opportunities for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, the LEA should:

- Develop with schools mechanisms for targeting resources to these pupils without the requirement of a statement. This will reduce bureaucracy and should create stable funding arrangements.

In order to remove any barriers to the inclusion of these pupils in secondary schools, the Education Service should:

- Work with secondary schools to explore and support the opportunities of curriculum flexibility for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

Some pupils with moderate learning difficulties may be directed inappropriately to special schools at secondary transfer. In order to consider the appropriateness of these placements:

- A research project should be undertaken reviewing the factors determining the placement and the progress made of all pupils who transferred to special schools at key stage 3 or 4 in 2001 and

2002.

In order to be satisfied with the current pattern of provision and progress made by pupils with moderate learning difficulties:

- Research should be undertaken on the provision and progress made by pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

SEVERE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

These young people have significant and lifelong learning disabilities and we can properly take pride in the provision that is made for them. Less than 30 years ago, the legislative framework held them to be 'in-educable' and they were not expected (or indeed permitted) to attend schools at all. In Cumbria around half of these pupils are now educated in mainstream schools; and the others are in our five excellent special schools. They follow the National Curriculum as other pupils do, modified as necessary to accommodate their special needs. They follow accredited courses, and a small number have gained graded results at GCSE.

Number of pupils with severe/profound learning difficulties

Number with a statement	Number in mainstream school	Number in Special School	Number in out-county residential schools
574	133	441	0

RECOMMENDATION (5)

In order to remove barriers that inhibit the inclusion of pupils with severe learning difficulties in mainstream school when their parents wish this, the LEA should:

- Provide additional support for staff and governors when decisions about placement are being made. This should ensure that schools have a fully informed understanding of the needs and capabilities of the pupils concerned.
- Identify the additional resources that are available to support young people with severe learning difficulties and advise on how they can be most effectively used.
- Develop with schools strategies to involve other pupils appropriately when young people with severe learning difficulties join the school.
- Develop with special schools ways in which their resources and expertise can be used to support inclusion.
- Work with the DfES to ensure that government appreciates the tension between the inclusion agenda and published league tables for attainment
- Develop additional methods of recording progress that are common for pupils with similar needs across different settings.
- Work to support the special schools in addressing the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour
- Develop a transparent funding model to support the dual registration of pupils

Sensory and/or Physical Needs

This term includes a wide spectrum of sensory, multi-sensory and physical difficulties. In the present context these would be pupils with:

- Hearing difficulties
- Visual difficulties
- Physical/medical difficulties

The Code suggests that intervention at School Action Plus will be appropriate for most pupils. The governing factors are likely to be the extent of the aids, adaptations and specialist teaching which is required. Statutory assessment is likely to be necessary for the pupils with the most complex physical needs and the most severe sensory losses.

HEARING DIFFICULTIES

The County's Advisory Teacher of the Deaf gave evidence to the Working Party.

She said that there are two broad types of deafness: conductive deafness, which is usually temporary and caused by middle ear problems; and sensori-neural deafness which is caused by permanent damage to the inner ear. The effects of sensori-neural deafness are much more severe because of the impact this has on the development of speech and language, and on social and cognitive development. It is this group which the Education Service is primarily concerned with.

As with visually impaired and blind children, parents need advice and support from a very early stage. Hearing aids and other audiological equipment have to be available and well managed to ensure optimal listening opportunities. The pupils' listening, speech and language development need to be monitored closely. Pupils who will need to sign, and pupils who have other special needs should be identified early. Some children require direct and on-going teaching by a qualified teacher of the deaf.

The Service currently has 9.7 full time equivalent teachers and they are involved with 216 deaf children. There is one strategic facility in the county at Bransty Primary School in Whitehaven. We have a small number of pupils in specialist out-county provision. Almost all of these pupils are of secondary age and all need signing as an essential component in communication.

The challenges for inclusion were seen as

- Recognising the key role of the teacher of the deaf with families of newly diagnosed babies
- Having available a range of audiological equipment to allow deaf pupils to have aural access to the curriculum
- Providing for the small number of pupils who, in spite of advances in technology, depend on signing as their main medium of communication.

RECOMMENDATION (6)

In order to enable deaf children to be included in schools and their local communities, the LEA should:

- Encourage the teachers of the deaf to play a key role in partnership with the health service in supporting families of newly diagnosed babies
- Make available the resources to provide the necessary range of audiological equipment to allow deaf pupils to increase their aural access to the curriculum
- Where pupils are dependent upon signing as their main medium of communication continue to provide trained signing support in schools and to support signing training for parents.

VISUAL DIFFICULTIES

The Working Party heard evidence from the County's Advisory Teacher for the Visually Impaired.

He pointed to a gradual rise in the numbers of blind and partially sighted pupils in Cumbria over the past 20 years and this reflects a national trend. These pupils are now being maintained in local schools in greater numbers through the support of Cumbria's small team of Teachers of the Visually Impaired, and with specialist aids and equipment where this is needed.

There has been in consequence a significant shift away from specialist and expensive out-county provision and the following table shows this clearly.

	Visually Impaired Pupils In Cumbrian Schools	Visually Impaired Pupils In Out-County Special Schools
1983	32	29
1993	73	3
2002	104	5

These figures include the significant number of pupils who are visually impaired and who also experience severe or profound learning difficulties. Around 20% of the group are dually disabled in this way.

There are presently three full time equivalent teachers working with this group of pupils.

The key challenges for partially sighted pupils are

- Intervening very early to support parents in programmes of visual stimulation and
- Responding flexibly to needs as they arise across the county.

The challenge in relation to blind pupils is

- How to support blind pupils effectively in local secondary schools.

This would demand appropriate aids and adaptations, specialist Braille support and translation equipment, long term planning and an long term commitment from the LEA, the schools involved and, importantly, the parents of blind pupils.

RECOMMENDATION (7)

In order to increase the inclusive learning opportunities for blind children in Cumbria, the LEA should actively explore with secondary schools the possibilities of arranging the necessary pattern of provision for blind pupils to continue their education in Cumbria, wherever this is considered appropriate.

PHYSICAL/MEDICAL DIFFICULTIES

The Code of Practice has the following to say on the subject of physical and medical difficulties.

Physical impairments may arise from physical, neurological or metabolic causes that only require appropriate access to educational facilities and equipment; other may lead to more complex learning and social needs...for some pupils the inability to take part fully in school life causes significant emotional stress or physical fatigue.

A medical diagnosis or a disability does not necessarily imply SEN. It may not be necessary for a child or young person with any particular diagnosis or medical condition to have a statement, or to need any form of additional educational provision at any phase of education. It is the child's educational needs rather than a medical diagnosis that must be considered. Some pupils may not require statement or school-based SEN provision but they have medical conditions that, if not properly managed, could hinder their access to education.

Medical conditions may have a significant impact on a child's experiences and the way they function in school. The impact may be direct in that the condition may affect cognitive or physical abilities, behaviour or emotional state. The impact may also be indirect, perhaps disrupting access to education through unwanted effects of treatments or through the psychological effects that serious or chronic illness or disability can have on a child and their family. The effects of a medical condition may be intermittent and their impact on the child's function in school can vary at different stages of their school career. This may reflect changes in the school curriculum, changes in the individual child and changes in the peer group, for example, with the onset of puberty.

Consultation and open discussion between the child's parents, the school, the school doctor or the child's general practitioner, the community paediatrician and any specialist services providing treatment for the child will be essential to ensure that the child makes maximum progress. Such

collaboration should also ensure the child is not unnecessarily excluded from any part of the curriculum or school activity because of anxiety about their care and treatment.

Schools should ensure that their own pastoral care arrangements allow children and young people to discuss any health related and other problems with a relevant health professional, educational psychologist, education welfare officer, counsellor or other professional. The school and family should liaise in providing maximum support for the child.

Children with a physical or medical condition may have a permanent disability or one which may either improve or deteriorate. Their needs will be very individual.

Number with a Statement of SEN	Number in Strategic Facilities	Number in out-county residential placement
162	17	1

Many pupils in our special schools have physical and or medical needs as well as significant learning difficulties. They are placed for their learning needs and not for their physical needs.

The Working Party was particularly concerned that some young people with a medical condition might not be included in their local neighbourhood school because of concerns about the administration of medication.

The other key issues focused on were:

- The need to ensure that the programme of adapting schools proceeds systematically and strategically
- The need for clear protocols in respect of responsibilities and resourcing between Health and Education.

RECOMMENDATION (8)

To ensure that pupils with physical access difficulties have their education as close to their local community as possible, the LEA should:

- Ensure that its developing Accessibility Plan addresses the issue of distance between schools adapted to provide full curriculum access for pupils with disabilities.
- Develop with Health and Social Services a strategy for the universal provision of a children's occupational therapy service.
- Work with teachers, professional associations and the Health Authority to provide guidance, training and support to encourage schools to accept responsibility for administering medication.
- Work with the Health Service to agree protocols in the provision of support from professions allied to medicine, nursing and equipment.

ACCESS

A major consideration for inclusive learning lies in ensuring that the learning environment is accessible to all pupils. This goes beyond the narrow but important issue of access for the physically disabled. It should embrace the environmental requirements of young people with hearing and visual difficulties. It can also extend to the spatial requirements of pupils with autism and emotional or behavioural difficulties; and might include specialist equipment that enables learners to access their curriculum.

Local Education Authorities have a statutory responsibility under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001) to plan to increase access to education by disabled pupils. The LEA has to produce an Accessibility Plan by April 2002.

An accessibility strategy or plan is a strategy or plan for:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculum's;
- Improving the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by schools; and
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is already provided, in writing, to pupils who are not disabled. This should be done within a reasonable period of time and in formats which take account of any views expressed by the pupils or their parents about their preferred means of communication.

Evaluation plans should be developed in connection with goals, targets and time frames.

The success of an effective accessibility strategy should not just be focused on whether goals and targets have been met. It might also be illustrated by a number of other changes such as:

- An increased number of pupils with disabilities in their neighbourhood schools;
- Observable changes in the confidence of staff in teaching and supporting disabled children with a range of needs;
- Improvements in the physical accessibility of school buildings;
- Evidence of the greater involvement of pupils with disabilities in the full life of the school (for example participation in after school clubs, leisure, sporting and cultural activities and on school trips); and
- Greater satisfaction of parents of disabled pupils with the provision made for their children and their participation in the life of the school.

The LEA is responsible for producing an overall LEA Accessibility Plan. Legislation will require every school to produce its own school accessibility plan.

RECOMMENDATION (9)

In order to increase accessibility to learning opportunities, the Education Service should:

- Produce an LEA Accessibility Plan in partnership with others, and
- Support schools in developing their own accessibility plans.

The LEA should do this by:

Establishing a working group led by Client and Property Services, with expertise drawn from the Special Educational Needs Service and Learning Support Service, representation from schools, Health and groups representing people with disabilities. This working group will:

- Draw up an outline LEA Accessibility Plan
- Draw up guidelines and support materials for schools' accessibility plans
- Draw up a protocol and model for carrying out access audit

- Take direct evidence from pupils with disabilities when carrying out this work.

The initial targeting of resources should address the challenge of access in the more isolated communities of Cumbria. This should reduce the distance any pupil might have to travel to access the full curriculum.

The LEA Accessibility Plan will draw on audits of provision and its implementation should wherever possible, coincide with the cycle of area reviews undertaken as part of the Inclusion Audit.

In order to support inclusion and remove parental uncertainties, the Special Educational Needs Service should:

- Draw up, in partnership with colleagues from Health and Social Services, a clear policy on the provision of equipment and
- Develop a strategy for storing and recycling larger items.

Governors

The important role Governor's play in supporting inclusion is recognised. Although there are named governors for pupils with special educational needs, other groups do not always have the advantage of an informed advocate on the Governing Body.

RECOMMENDATION (10)

The LEA should actively work to encourage governors to recognise the role of SENCOs and to encourage the good practice of dedicated non-contact time for SENCOs to enable them to effectively coordinate support within and beyond school.

Gifted and Talented Pupils

Although gifted and talented pupils are not considered to have special educational needs, they require sensitive and carefully planned support. Some gifted and talented pupils can suffer from social isolation and can become vulnerable within educational settings.

RECOMMENDATION (11)

In order to strengthen the support given to gifted and talented pupils, the LEA should develop further and disseminate the good practice that has been developed in the Barrow Community Learning Partnership and the West Cumbria Excellence Cluster. In addition, the LEA will work in partnership with the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth, based at Warwick University to promote good practice.

Training

The Working Party recognises the crucial role that training can provide in creating cultures, enhancing skills, removing uncertainties and developing good practice. It is therefore felt that a training plan is an essential feature for future development.

RECOMMENDATION (12)

In order to develop inclusion systematically and to remove the barriers that may be found in all aspects of the education system:

- The LEA should consider the development of guidance materials, based upon the key areas contained in 'The Index for Inclusion', which will help schools to individually progress.
- The LEA should consider formally adopting the 'Index for Inclusion' as a constructive tool to help schools individually progress.
- The LEA should also develop, in parallel with the Action Plan a training plan to support schools in making progress.

RECOMMENDATION (13)

In order to be confident there is an appropriate level of expertise to support schools:

- The LEA should undertake a benchmarking audit of specialist support services.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Working Party heard extensive evidence on the challenge schools face in meeting the needs of pupils with emotional social and behavioural difficulties. The priority that this group requires is reflected by the inclusion of their needs in the key recommendations. This section focuses primarily on issues arising from the special educational needs that these pupils have.

The Code of Practice describes their needs as follows:

Children and young people who demonstrate features of emotional and behavioural difficulties, who are withdrawn or isolated, disruptive and disturbing, hyperactive and lack concentration; those with immature social skills; and those presenting challenging behaviours arising from other complex special needs, may require help or counselling for some, or all, of the following:

- *Flexible teaching arrangements*
- *Help with development of social competence and emotional maturity*
- *Help in adjusting to school expectations and routines*
- *Help in acquiring the skills of positive interaction with peers and adults*
- *Specialised behavioural and cognitive approaches*
- *Re-channelling or re-focusing to diminish repetitive and self-injurious behaviours*
- *Provision of class and school systems which control or censure negative or difficult behaviours and encourage positive behaviour*
- *Provision of a safe and supportive environment*

Number of pupils with behavioural emotional social difficulties

	Number with a Statement of SEN	Number in out-county residential placement	Number Permanently Excluded	Number in Pupil Referral Units
Primary	161	0	35	31
Secondary	199	16	1	180

Evidence presented to the Working Party by teacher representatives made it very clear that pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties present the greatest challenge for inclusion. This is because:

- They often have a detrimental effect of the learning opportunities of other children
- They take up a disproportionate amount of teacher time, attention and resources
- In some cases they apparently do not want to engage constructively in the learning process or with the learning community
- They are a major cause of staff stress and teachers leaving the profession.

The Working Party was impressed by the work done in Cumbria through the Behaviour Curriculum and the support materials for schools, which develop positive teaching strategies, promote good behaviour and constructive classroom management techniques.

Cumbria's Behaviour Support Plan sets out a clear vision for behavioural support based on an agreed and transparent set of operating principles. The essential messages of the strategy are:

- Behaviour is best addressed within the context of a whole school and not by focusing on individual needs alone
- Priority will be given to early intervention and preventative work

- Well coordinated multi-agency approaches are vital

RECOMMENDATION (14)

In order to support schools in providing, inclusive learning opportunities for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties the LEA should:

- Use the Area Inclusion Reviews to determine how far the continuum of need is matched by a continuum of provision in the area.
- Develop as a matter of urgency a strategy to ensure that the capacity of the Pupils Referral Units is used optimally and the 'flow' of pupils secured to enable them to provide more flexible provision.
- Consult further with schools on the development of area-based resources. These would be managed jointly by primary and secondary schools and the LEA, and would provide flexible, locally sensitive patterns of early response.
- Consult with secondary schools on alternative methods to target and allocate resources for behavioural needs and avoiding the in-built bureaucracy and delays of statementing.
- Work with schools to evaluate the contribution that on-site facilities can make (Nurture Units, Learning Support Units etc.); identify and disseminate good practice; and support the further development of on-site facilities where this is shown to be effective.
- Work with secondary schools to maximise the curriculum flexibilities that are now available to enable alternative provision to be made where appropriate.

The basic measures for inclusion for this group of pupils are reflected through:

- Number of pupils permanently excluded
- Number of days lost through fixed term exclusion
- Number of pupils placed in out of county/residential placements

VULNERABLE AND MINORITY GROUPS

We can identify four groups of young people who are particularly vulnerable to social exclusion.

- Children in public care
- Ethnic minorities
- Traveller children
- Pregnant schoolgirls and teenage mothers

Children in Public Care

Coming into care has a major disrupting effect on children's lives and on their subsequent life chances. Educational outcomes for this group have been poor and they have not participated as fully as others do in further education, in training or employment. Although they may be 'looked after' by Local Authorities, they are vulnerable to social exclusion in the widest sense of the term.

The government has set ambitious target for Local Authorities – Social Services and Education Departments - in relation to stable placements and educational outcomes for these young people. In Cumbria we have a team of three specialist teachers led by a Senior Educational Psychologist who work to support this group. This team - the Looked After Children Education Service – is jointly funded by, and works closely with Cumbria Social Service Department.

This work and our future plans are embedded within Cumbria's Behaviour Support Plan and the Quality Protects Management Action Plan.

Number of Children in Public Care (year R through to year 13)

Total number of children in public care	No. permanently excluded	No. in special schools	No. in residential schools	No. in PRU
464	1	32	11	17

RECOMMENDATION (15)

In order to support the inclusion of children in public care, the LEA should:

- Work with schools to reduce delays in finding a place in a new school when children move placement.
- Ensure that all pupils have access to and attend full time education.
- Secure priority access for children in public care to pupil support services.

Ethnic Minorities

The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds in Cumbria is small and these pupils are widely dispersed across the county. There are some long established groups with strong networks, but there are also individual families in a range of communities. The needs of different individuals and groups are varied and we need to be sensitive to their individuality and seek to respond to the needs they identify.

Not all the people from minority ethnic groups who live in Cumbria can draw on the support of their own ethnic communities as they may be able to do elsewhere. In addition the dispersed nature of the population makes it difficult to organise and provide services for them. However not all individuals from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds require support.

In September 2000 there were 582 pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds in Cumbria. The pupils came from some 20 different language groups and were attending 125 schools. They represent just over 1% of the school population.

RECOMMENDATION (16)

In order to increase the inclusion of pupil's from ethnic minorities the LEA should:

- Develop a strategy in consultation with these groups to better meet the diverse needs of different groups
- Enhance the expertise and resource available from within the education service to enable schools to support the needs of bi-lingual learners
- Improve the support and challenge to schools so that they can confidently tackle issues of cultural harmony and relations within the curriculum.

Traveller Children

Cumbria has an established service to Travellers. The Specialist Teaching Service employs a small team of teachers and teaching assistants to run a mobile nursery. Teachers are also employed to offer support, where appropriate, and advice to all schools on traveller issues. In addition, extra support has been targeted on the two schools nearest to the only two permanent sites in the county.

RECOMMENDATION (17)

In order to improve inclusion for pupils from travelling families the LEA should:

- Develop strategies with schools and the travelling community to improve attendance at secondary schools.

Pregnant Schoolgirls and Teenage Mothers

In the past, schoolgirls who became pregnant often dropped out of education. They found it difficult to return to school, or to further education after their babies were born. Pregnancy and teenage motherhood can therefore be a major barrier to inclusion within education and employment.

Teenage pregnancy referrals in 2000-01 were as follows.

Area	Number of referrals 2000-01
North Cumbria	7
West Cumbria	11
South Cumbria	6
Total	24

The incidence increases with age.

Year Group	Percentage of referrals 2000-01
Year 9	7%
Year 10	25%
Year 11	68%

RECOMMENDATION (18)

In order to improve inclusion for pregnant schoolgirls and schoolgirl mothers, the LEA will:

- Work with schools to ensure that supportive, sensitive flexible learning opportunities are developed appropriately for the different needs of individual pupils

- Work strategically with health and social services to ensure that education and training are supported through *Cumbria Teenage Pregnancy and Teenage Parenthood Strategy 2001-2002*.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the recommendations embedded in the text, which relate to particular areas of need, the Working Party has identified five key areas that are highlighted as of particular significance.

- Area Inclusion Review, the Inclusion Audit and Chartermark
- The future development of special schools
- Early Intervention
- Disaffection and challenging behaviour
- Multi-disciplinary coordination

Area Inclusion Review, the Inclusion Audit and Chartermark

The Working Party heard concerns that the development of strategic facilities had, in the past, often been pragmatic rather than strategic. In order to address this, it was agreed that all the needs of a single area of the county should be considered at once. This will be done through an Area Inclusion Review.

The county will be subdivided into a number of discrete areas for this purpose. These areas will be based on district boundaries, school consortia groupings and distinct geographical identities where these exist. There will be between ten and sixteen such areas and they will vary in size.

The particular and individual needs of each area will be considered through a structured process. This will start with an audit – an Area Inclusion Audit – of the needs and provision that exist within the area. This will involve the collection of data, and will also involve discussions at area forums and with other groups. The Area Inclusion Review will consider among other things the pattern of placements - strategic facilities or special schools - that would be needed to support young people with particular needs. It will end with an Area Inclusion Action Plan setting out how the particular challenges in each area will be addressed.

The programme of Area Inclusion Reviews will cover a four-year repeating cycle. In order to inform and support the Area Inclusion Review, an Inclusion Audit tool has been developed (Appendix B). This should enable data to be gathered in a systematic and comparable way. It will provide baseline information for individual schools, area clusters and the county as a whole. It will allow inclusion issues to be identified - and progress to be measured.

In order to recognise and celebrate the successes that Cumbrian schools have achieved in supporting inclusion it is recommended that inclusive schools should be able to achieve a Chartermark. The Chartermark would be based on achieving agreed standards on all four of the dimensions of inclusion: inclusive learning, access, social inclusion and with vulnerable and minority groups. The Council will develop the standards and a clear process of supported self-assessment in consultation with schools and will provide a plaque to schools achieving the standard. The Chartermark will be available to all schools and include special schools and PRUs in recognition of the role they have in supporting inclusion.

RECOMMENDATION (19)

In order to ensure that the development of inclusive learning is undertaken in a planned, strategic way, the LEA should

- Carry out a programme of Area Inclusion Reviews cover the whole county.

To ensure that future developments are strategic, coherent and sensitive to local circumstances:

- The Area Inclusion Reviews should be organised in conjunction with any review of school places undertaken through the School Organisation Plan and be integrated within the overall Accessibility Plan.
- The order in which areas are reviewed should reflect gaps in existing provision.
- The needs of individual areas of the County should be reviewed through a structured Inclusion Audit alongside a programme of discussions that leads to an area based action plan for inclusion.

Central to the planned pattern of inclusive provision will be the role of strategic facilities. The LEA

should:

- Ensure that existing strategic facilities are incorporated in formal school organisation committee consultation process that will follow an Area Strategic Review.
- Develop a supportive partnership network amongst strategic facilities that will provide peer support and the opportunity to disseminate good practice.
- Encourage schools with strategic facilities to ensure that their role is emphasised appropriately when headteachers are appointed.

RECOMMENDATION (20)

In order to recognise and celebrate the successes that Cumbrian schools have achieved in supporting inclusion the LEA should develop, in partnership with schools, a standard that recognises this success and award a Chartermark to successful schools.

The Development of Special Schools

The County has five excellent special schools which have experienced a recent period of significant growth. The DfEE's *Special Educational Needs Programme for Action* encourages LEAs to review their pattern of special school provision and the recent legislative changes in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 strengthen parents' rights to request inclusive education. These factors have led the Working Party to consider the future of special schools. The full range of options from the possibility of reducing the number of special schools to increasing their range was considered in detail. It was accepted that for the present the County needs to have a range of provision from supported mainstream placements, through strategic facilities to special schools. It was recognised that special schools remain the option of choice for many parents, and that some Cumbrian schools are yet prepared to meet the needs of pupils with severe or profound learning difficulties. However it was acknowledged that it was timely to review with special schools the distinctive contribution they make and establish them at the heart of an inclusive community. The challenges facing special schools were identified in discussion with them and are set out in Appendix C.

RECOMMENDATION (21)

In order to secure a future role for special schools at the heart of the inclusive community:

- Their role, resourcing and responsibilities will be reviewed and a clear remit established for the future.

In order to ensure that inclusive learning opportunities are developed to suit local needs:

- The local role of the special schools will be considered as part of each Area Inclusion Review.

In order to support inclusive learning opportunities where these are required:

- Capital resources will not be used to increase further the capacity of the special schools to increase their numbers, but will be directed instead to the development of strategic facilities. Capital resources will continue to be made available to ensure that the high standards of accommodation are maintained in the County's special schools.

Early Intervention

Early intervention was frequently raised as an important issue in the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. The concept can have two distinct meanings. Early intervention can mean intervention when the child is very young. It can also mean intervention, at whatever age, as soon as a need is identified. The Working Party considers both these meanings to be important.

In the case of very young children the Working Party was made aware that early intervention often involves a cyclical process of assessment, putting a programme into place; implementation and

review. This allows us to undertake a longitudinal, and often multi-disciplinary assessment, while attending thoughtfully and sensitively to the young child's needs.

On the issue of responding early to identified needs, the Working Party endorsed the recommendations of the Best Value Review on Services for Vulnerable Individuals. This recommended that primary schools be consulted on the delegation of high incidence statutory funding on the basis of one or a combination of factors such as free school meals, measures of prior attainments, and/or standardised tests.

RECOMMENDATION (22)

In order to ensure that young children are appropriately integrated and supported in all foundation stage settings, the LEA should:

- Ensure that all settings delivering the foundation stage have an identified and trained SEN Coordinator (SENCO) responsible for establishing and implementing programmes and support in the settings
- Put in place a network of area SENCOs for early years setting with a target ratio of 1 area SENCO to 20 non-maintained settings delivering funded early education, by 2004

In order to strengthen multi-agency coordination in the early identification of young children with special educational needs and so better develop opportunities for inclusion, the LEA should work with partners in health and social services to:

- Establish a network of coordinated multi-disciplinary meetings to exchange information about young children with special needs and coordinate the support necessary for their inclusion
- Produce clear guidance for parents to help them understand and access the appropriate support.

In order to support schools in providing inclusive education the LEA should:

- Accelerate progress in developing with schools acceptable methods of targeting resources without recourse to statements.

Disaffection and Challenging Behaviour

Some of the issues relating to behavioural emotional and social difficulties are discussed earlier in this report. However, the Working Party believed that this was such a significant inclusion issue that it needed to be considered as one of the key issues.

The challenge to schools comes from young people who, it seems, may not want to engage with the learning opportunities that schools offer to them, and whose presence can in some instances diminish the learning opportunities of others. This is not just a problem for secondary schools. The Working Party recognised that nurseries as well as primary schools experience pupils who are aggressive and rejecting; and that the special schools too can experience extremes of challenging behaviour.

Young people with problematic behaviour of whatever age are at particular risk of exclusion from school. Their behaviour may have wider social impact and lead to social exclusion in a wider sense.

The Working Party were informed of the distinction between behaviour which is categorised by some as "conduct disorder" and that which stems from a mental health problem. Whilst the impact of disruptive, aggressive or challenging behaviour on other pupils, parents, teachers or support staff can be distressing whatever the cause, a differentiated response to that behaviour might be entirely appropriate.

The Behaviour Support Plan was acknowledged as a crucial strategic document. This recognises that behaviour can be considered as a continuum of need for which there is a continuum of provision. The Behaviour Support Plan sets out the context for behavioural change and development along with

a strategy for addressing behavioural difficulties through area based multi-disciplinary groups. The successful implementation of the Behaviour Support Plan should be central to any strategy for addressing behavioural difficulties.

RECOMMENDATION (23)

The LEA should:

- Incorporate the behaviour audit as a strand within the Inclusion Audit so that areas of particular need and changing patterns of behaviour can be monitored and responded to.
- Work with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to ensure that there is a clear understanding of how support services can be accessed and what patterns of provision are available. If there are apparent deficits in support provision in some areas of the County the LEA should use its representation on joint service strategic planning bodies and commissioning bodies to enable the issues to be constructively explored through informed debate.
- Take an active role in coordinating a county-wide strategy on support for parenting.

RECOMMENDATION (24)

In order to strengthen the role of Behaviour Support Plan as an active operational and strategic tool, the LEA should:

- Make an annual report on the progress of the plan to the Learning and Recreation Scrutiny Panel in the summer of each year.
- An annual summative report based on the Audit of Violent and Aggressive Behaviour should also be made to the Scrutiny Panel at the same time.

In order that the Behaviour Support Plan continues to provide support for inclusion the LEA should ensure that the action plans which further the objectives below are afforded a high priority:

- Provide training opportunities and develop materials for school staff to improve skills and develop strategies to promote positive behaviour.
- Develop strategies and support to develop whole school approaches that promote social inclusion and positive behaviour.
- Further develop and promote early intervention strategies
- Identify and share good practice between schools.

RECOMMENDATION (25)

In accordance with Objective 1 of the Behaviour Support Plan (to develop area groups, involving school staff, to have increased autonomy for the allocation of resources) and in response to the continuing concern of secondary schools, the LEA will work through the secondary consortia to establish for each of the key areas a task group. The task group will be drawn from schools, LEA and other services to produce a costed action plan to develop a local strategic plan for provision that is suitable to meet the needs of pupils who are emotionally, socially or behaviourally challenging.

Multi-Disciplinary Co-ordination

It was very clear to the Working Party that schools could not maximise the opportunity for inclusive learning unless there was a pattern of well coordinated support from a wide range of agencies. The range, variety and growth in numbers of agencies and support services that schools work with is potentially bewildering and it is felt that the LEA could play a significant supportive role in working in partnership with other services to provide clarity as to roles and responsibilities and access to such provision.

It was also recognised that there was similar potential for confusion amongst parents and that it would be helpful to produce clear guidance in plain English. The Working Party also recognised the crucial role that voluntary organisations play in supporting parents and promoting inclusion and expects that, as with parents, they will be respected as equal partners. A significant issue of concern was the duplication and proliferation of assessments that many young people and their parents have to experience.

The County Council's key strategic forum for multi-disciplinary coordination and the development of Children's Services is the Children and Young Person's Partnership. This is chaired by the Director of Social Services and the Education Service, as well as Health Services and voluntary bodies are represented on it.

RECOMMENDATION (26)

The LEA should:

- Work with other agencies to provide clear guidelines for schools and parents on the roles and responsibilities of different services.
- Develop protocols and practice with Health, Social Services and Connexions for multi-disciplinary assessment that makes the assessment process inclusive and avoids wasteful duplication.

In order that all the services in the county working towards inclusion are aware of the developments in education, this report should be tabled at the Children and Young Person's Partnership forum for discussion and dissemination.

The LEA recognises the important contribution that parents make to understanding and addressing their children's needs we are committed to continuing to enable parents to make an informed choice about their children's future.

RECOMMENDATION (27)

In order to ensure that the views of parents are taken into account

- Develop a more effective strategy for engaging parents as partners of equal value in contributing both to the arrangements for their own children and any developments in policy and practice.

Over the duration of the Working Party, national and local developments all pointed towards the need for closer working relationships between Social Services children's services and Education Service support services. In Cumbria the recommendation for closer links made in the Best Value Review of Services for Vulnerable Children was followed up by a consultants' report 'Shaping Learning and Care' Services. This set out some of the opportunities and challenges in closer working.

RECOMMENDATION (28)

In order to avoid duplication and waste and to provide an effective coordinated response, the Education Service will work constructively with Social Services to further better ways of working together through the Shaping Learning and Care initiative.

FINANCIAL PROFILE

Current Resource Allocation

The County Council provides (for the financial year 2002-03) the following resources to support special educational needs and inclusion.

Non-statutory special educational needs	£5,254,905
Statements/allowances	£12,861,261
Standards Fund	£ 2,487,264
Residential Schooling	£ 1,229,373
LEA initiatives	£302,686
Contracted/Commissioned activity	£ 341,610
Management and administrative costs	£ 801,337
Looked after children	£ 47,469
Reading Intervention Project	£ 108,679
Special Education Transport	£1,816,681
PRU and EBD Services	£1,998,192
Specialist Teaching Services	£1,674,502
County Psychological Service	£ 937,595
Out of county hospital tuition	£ 84,728
Education Welfare Service	£1,438,169

In the 2002-02 budget, the County Council enhanced the resources made available for special educational needs and inclusion. Some of this additional resourcing, for example that provided for reintegration officers and for pupils from ethnic minorities, directly relates to the inclusion agenda. However, some of the resources have necessarily been focused on commitments that are 'exclusive' for example an enhancement of the residential school budget and the allocation of resources to provide full-time education for pupils who are permanently excluded. Other additional resources such as increased resources for statements, standards fund and special educational transport are potentially inclusion neutral.

In addition to resources within the Pupil and School Support Service budget to support inclusive learning, social inclusion and vulnerable minority groups the County Council is in receipt of grants of over £700,000 a year for the next five years from the Schools Access Initiative (SAI) to support projects to improve access to mainstream schools for pupils with disabilities including those with wheelchairs and for those with physical or sensory impairments (with or without a statement).

In addition to these resources individual schools can apply annually for awards of between £100 to £2,500 to support out of school activities. Activities such as breakfast clubs, lunchtime activities and after school activities can make a significant contribution to inclusion.

Projected Refocus of Resources to Meet Objectives

Much of the resources allocated for inclusion/special educational needs are committed and delegated to schools.

Those resources that have some scope for flexibility represent less than 10% of the budget.

Standards Fund	£2,487,264
LEA initiatives	<u>£ 302,686</u>
	£2,789,950

Standards Fund (2002-03)

There are two main standards fund allocations

202A	Special Education	£ 774,524
201A	Social Inclusion/Pupil Support	£1,325,018

and a number of smaller allocations

201B	Ongoing inclusion projects	£ 43,000
202B	Looked after children	£ 95,620
304	Travellers and Displaced Persons	£ 79,601
203	Teenage Pregnancy	£ 65,173
607	Learning Support Units	£ 156,601
303	Ethnic minority achievements	£ 12,900

All standards fund grants are governed by statutory guidelines and are accountable to achieve specific objectives. Inclusion is one of the objectives and the resources will be refocused to ensure that measurable inclusion outcomes result from the targeted allocation of resources.

The resources most directly targeted on inclusion are the allocations with 202A Special Education directed at inclusive education.

202A(3)(i)	Mainstream placements	£ 200,000
202A(3)(ii)	Developing mainstream special school partnerships	£ 190,000
201A	Pupil Retention Grant	£1,020,264

The 'mainstream placements' grant is targeted to increase statement allocations above standard bandings primarily to enable pupils with severe learning difficulties to be supported in mainstream schools. The 'Developing mainstream special school partnership' resource is focused on enabling pupils already within special schools to have the opportunity of split placements and supported inclusion in mainstream schooling. The 'Pupil Retention Grant' enables secondary schools to support disaffected pupils and reduce exclusions.

Standards Fund resources reflect national priorities and their level and availability change from year to year.

LEA Initiatives

This relatively small resource, just over £300,000 is the assistance to pupils budget which is available at a local area level to support pupils at School Action Plus for whom short-term focused intervention would prevent the future necessity of a statement.

Strategic Focus

Over time the special educational needs resources are expected to move from reactive statutory allocation to target early intervention. This will result in resources moving from the statement budget to the non-statutory special educational needs budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS (29)

In order that all the centrally retained pupil and school support services are clear in their contribution to developing and supporting inclusion in Cumbria, their performance plans should indicate specifically which inclusion targets they contribute to, how much resource is targeted on these areas and clear success indicators should be specified.

In order that schools are fully aware of the resources that have been allocated to them to support inclusion, the LEA should strengthen its information to schools concerning the allocation of resources and highlight those allocated for supporting inclusion.

The LEA should work with schools to strengthen the processes for monitoring the effective use of resources for supporting inclusion and should disseminate examples of good practice.

In order to maximise the resources available for inclusion, the LEA should work with schools to develop guidelines and protocols that will support any bids for additional resources provided through the Education Extra Award Grant.

Performance Targets and Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure progress towards inclusive education in Cumbria.

OVERALL MEASURES OF INCLUSION.

The number of pupils not educated in mainstream schools as a proportion of:

The full-time equivalent number of pupils on roll (form 7 January)
The 0-19 population of the County (CIS estimates)

The number of pupils of each defined area of need:

moderate learning difficulties
severe learning difficulties
profound learning difficulties
specific learning difficulties
hearing impaired/deaf
visually impaired/blind
speech and language
physical/medical needs
emotional, behavioural and social difficulties

who are not educated in mainstream school expressed as a percentage of:

the whole school population
the stated population of that area of need.

ACCESS

The number and percentage of mainstream schools which have full curriculum access for pupils with physical/medical needs.

The number and percentage of mainstream schools which have disabled toilet facilities, including changing areas and hoists.

The maximum travelling distance to a mainstream school with disabled toilet facilities, including changing areas and hoists.

The number of schools with which the LEA has conducted an access audit and which have subsequently produced an accessibility plan, expressed as a percentage of all schools.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The number of pupils permanently excluded as a percentage of each of the primary, secondary and special school population.

The attendance rate of pupils expressed as a percentage rate for the primary, secondary and special school population.

The number of fixed term exclusions.

The number of permanently excluded pupils for whom the LEA is providing the opportunity of a full time alternative education expressed in available provision and actual attendance.

The number of pupils placed in out of County placements for emotional/social or behavioural reasons expressed as the number of residential placements; the number of day placements; and the total of residential and day placements.

CHILDREN IN PUBLIC CARE

Permanent exclusions of children in public care. expressed both as a number and a percentage of the population of children in public care.

Out of County placements of children in public care, expressed both as a number and a percentage of the population of children in public care.

ETHNIC MINORITIES

The number of reported incidents of racial harassment.

Permanent exclusions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds, expressed both as a number and a percentage of the population of pupils from ethnic minorities.

TRAVELLER CHILDREN

The number of secondary age traveller children attending full time secondary education.

The attendance rate of traveller children expressed as a percentage for primary and secondary age children.

PREGNANT SCHOOLGIRLS AND SCHOOLGIRL MOTHERS

The number of schoolgirl mothers who return to full-time education expressed as a percentage of the total number of schoolgirl mothers.

OFSTED INSPECTIONS

The number of schools (and as a percentage of those reported on) which are judged to have good or satisfactory arrangements for inclusion in their Ofsted inspection.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The number of schools which have been part of an Area Inclusion Audit and which are covered by an Area Inclusion Plan.

The number of schools which have undertaken a self-review exercise involving the *Index for Inclusion*.

The number of schools which have produced and sent to the LEA an inclusion statement which is part of their prospectus and policy.

COLLECTING AND REPORTING ON THE DATA

The LEA will produce annually a report for the Learning and Scrutiny Panel in the Autumn Term that provides an indication of progression on the performance indicators.

The LEA will also report annually to Learning and Scrutiny Panel in the Autumn Term on the progress towards the recommendations made in this report.

The LEA will summate the data for individual schools as part of the Inclusion Audit so that they will see their performance in comparison to their neighbourhood group, the County average and national comparative data where these are available.

RECOMMENDATION (30)

In order to ensure that a fuller picture of developments emerges, the LEA should work with schools and other partners to produce a complementary raft of qualitative measures that will provide a balanced profile of developments concerning inclusion.

Detailed Plans and Key Contact Points

The recommendations of the report *Inclusive Cumbria* relate directly to a number of statutory and strategic plans. The table below lists the key plans and the key point of contact within the County.

Statutory Plans	Key Contact	Contact Address
Education Development Plan	Geraint Howell Assistant Director of Education	Standards and School Improvement Education Service 5 Portland Square Carlisle
Behaviour Support Plan	Stuart Goodall Senior Education Officer	Pupil & School Support Education Service 5 Portland Square Carlisle
Early Years Partnership Plan	Joyce Miller	Early Years Education Service 5 Portland Square Carlisle
Accessibility Strategy and Plan	Colin Jefferson	Client & Property Service 18 Portland Square Carlisle
Quality Protects – Management and Action Plan	Head of Corporate Parenting (post vacant)	Social Services 3 Victoria Place Carlisle
Strategic and Service Plans	Key Contact	Contact Address
Education Service Plan	Michael Watmough Assistant Director of Education	Education Service 5 Portland Square Carlisle
Special Educational Needs Service Plan	Inclusive Learning Manager (post vacant)	Special Educational Needs Service 5 Portland Square Carlisle
Best Value Review 'Services for Vulnerable Children' – action plan	Michael Watmough Assistant Director of Education	Education Service 5 Portland Square Carlisle

