



## **Annual & Transitional Reviews**

### NOTES OF GUIDANCE

The following documentation provides guidance and formats for schools in conducting Annual Reviews of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. Where schools have developed procedures that meet the legislative requirements and the principles of KCC guidelines they should not feel obliged to completely revise their systems.

Special schools in particular, given the number of pupils with statements, will in the main have well established procedures. They may well wish to adapt their current record keeping to incorporate all the information outlined in the annual review record and adapt IEP formats to fulfil the requirements to set and review SMART targets against objectives in the statement.

Clusters of schools and consortia, particularly in the special school sector, are encouraged to share existing and future practice and if appropriate provide guidance for others. From time to time the LEA will co-ordinate publication of such advice and circulate it accordingly.

#### **Purpose**

The Annual Review is a statutory requirement and an essential tool for reviewing and measuring a child/young person's progress against targets set at the previous review.

The purpose of the Annual Review is to review the effectiveness of provision in the child/young person's Statement. It should:

- Focus on the child or young person's progress and development since the last Review,
- Identify any difficulties which need to be addressed,
- Review the special provision made,
- Consider the continuing appropriateness of the Statement,
- Consider whether any amendments are required or whether the LEA should cease to maintain the Statement and
- Set targets for the following year.

## **Key Principles:**

- Annual Reviews should be conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice, the SEN toolkit (Section 9) and relevant legislation. An extract (paras 18-34) from Section 9 of the Toolkit follows this document.
- Annual Reviews should integrate a variety of perspectives on progress including those of all key stakeholders (e.g. child/young person, parents, carers, school, outside agencies etc).
- The Annual Review is a process and not a meeting.
- The involvement of parents and/or carers is paramount; every effort should be made to ensure their participation.
- Wherever possible the child/young person should be actively involved in the review process.
- Arrangements for the Annual Review should be as manageable as possible. Schools, pre-school providers and PRU's should plan the programme of Annual Reviews to maximise parental participation but also to ensure effective co-ordination with internal reporting processes and those of the LEA and other agencies. Schools, pre-school providers and PRU's are expected to publish their arrangements for annual reviews and transition planning.
- Social workers should be invited to attend Annual Reviews of all Looked After Children. They are expected to attend.
- Headteachers should also consult social workers regarding invitations to reviews of LAC (e.g. foster carers, residential social worker).
- Wherever possible Annual reviews of LAC should be planned to coincide with LAC reviews and an agenda should be drawn up to reflect the requirements of all agencies.
- In advance of all transfers staff from all relevant schools/colleges etc. should be involved.
- An early Annual Review must be called if there is any likelihood of the educational placement breaking down.
- An early Annual Review must also be called before:
  - Seeking disapplication of the National Curriculum
  - Considering permanent exclusion.

## **Annual Review Process**

The Annual Review Process should be as follows:

The LEA will notify schools, pre-school providers and PRUs of Annual Reviews to be conducted during each term of the academic year. In consultation with relevant partners, and maintaining due flexibility, the school, pre-school providers and PRUs will draw up a provisional schedule of dates when it would propose to hold annual review meetings for each relevant child/young person. This provisional list will then be copied to relevant agencies and LEA officers. The agreed schedule will act as a trigger for other agencies and LEA officers to prepare additional advice and evidence is needed for the Annual Review meeting as well as the school/pre-school report. Given the numbers involved, special schools, in particular, may want to work in close collaboration with the LEA and Social Services to ensure a workable and effective schedule.

Normally ARs should be held within one year of a statement being issued and subsequently within one year of the previous review. To facilitate smooth transfer of Key Stage, the transfer planning should be brought forward to an AR at least a year in advance of the proposed transfer (see Other Key Transition Points below). ARs should be brought forward in those cases where, despite considerable input from all of the support services and agencies, a placement is in danger of breaking down.

If a child/young person with a statement joins a new school/provision during the academic year, the school/provision will take responsibility for scheduling the Annual Review and notifying the LEA.

Parents have the right to request an Annual Review early.

For children/young people out of school the LEA takes responsibility for managing the Annual Review.

### **Follow up from previous Annual Review**

The source documents on which the new Review might draw include:

- National Curriculum SATs performance and forecasts or Teacher Assessment if more appropriate, including P scales.
- Statement of Special Educational Need.
- Objectives and targets for previous year agreed during last Annual Review.
- Objectives translated into targets for IEP & monitoring and assessment arrangements agreed.
- Standardised test results.
- Any external agency reports.

### **Before the Annual Review Meeting**

**A comprehensive school report should be prepared and circulated to parents/carers and other parties well in advance of the Review meeting. A form is attached at Appendix 1 for this purpose.**

The report should include:

- Educational progress since last review.
- Outcomes of agreed monitoring and assessments carried out.
- Outcomes from regular IEP reviews.
- Evidence and advice collected from all relevant agencies.
- Reference to the working relationship with parents and others.

Schools, pre-school providers and PRUs should make every effort to empower parents/carers and the pupil to make a contribution to the review. This should be in response to the report received. Any additional evidence received by the school, pre-school providers and PRUs must then be circulated to all relevant parties at least two weeks prior to the Review meeting. The critical requirement is to involve parents/carers and young people in the Annual Review in a meaningful way. For many it will be appropriate to ask them to record their views in writing. Standard proformas are provided for this (appendices 2 & 3). However schools must judge the most effective way to engage with parents/carers and young people supporting them to record their views in the most appropriate way. Social workers may be able to assist in this process.

Invitations to the annual review meeting should be sent to parents/carers in the most appropriate way and the parents should be strongly encouraged to attend.

## **Annual Review Meeting**

The format for recording the actual AR meeting, and consequently the agenda for the meeting, is set out in the attached form headed “RECORD OF ANNUAL REVIEW MEETING”. This form identifies the data and information that the LEA requires to effectively review the Statement. Where schools use their own form/format, they need to ensure that the same data and information is captured and recorded. The school should:

1. Ensure all administrative details are correct and record any changes in circumstances.
2. Outline and review the support programme.
3. Check and review standardised assessment information available. Hard data should be recorded in the school report. Review educational progress overall.
4. Review progress against the targets set at the last review.
5. Consider the Statement of Special Educational Need against the LEA’s criteria setting new targets as appropriate.

Throughout the meeting the views of all relevant contributors should be sought, including parents and the child/young person. Reference should be made to relevant reports as necessary. If they have been circulated in advance this is more effective than considering each report in turn.

An Annual Review Record should be completed in draft during the meeting to record outcomes as discussions proceed. The Record should then be finalised as soon as possible after the meeting.

## **After the Annual Review Meeting**

The completed RECORD OF ANNUAL REVIEW MEETING should be sent to the LEA and other stakeholders together with:

- School report
- Parental/carer contribution
- Child/young person contribution
- All other agency reports

On receipt of the documentation the LEA will consider, via its agreed decision making procedures, what actions it proposes to take. Parents/carers views will be carefully considered before the LEA decides what action is to be taken and before implementing any decision. This will be one of the following outcomes:

- Ceasing to maintain the statement
- Continuation of existing statement
- Amendment to the statement
- Carrying out a new statutory assessment

## **Transition Reviews**

The same process shall apply as for Annual Reviews except that:

- This will normally take place in Year 9.
- The Connexions Service must be involved (Carers Service until Connexions Service is established).
- The school in addition to the normal Annual Review Record must formulate a Transition Plan.
- Headteachers should invite social workers to attend for Children in Public Care and as appropriate, for Children in Need (i.e. children eligible for assessment under the Disabled Persons (Service, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986).

Subsequent reviews are as important as the first transition review. Parents/carers and young people should have access to objective information about post school options.

Transition reviews should be seen as part of a wider process to support young people into adulthood. For young people known to Social Services a Person Centred Plan or Pathway Plan (LAC) may need to be drawn up at aged 16. It is imperative therefore that the Transition Review involves all relevant agency contributions.

Schools may in any case wish to adopt Person Centred Planning Principles. Advice and relevant documentation can be sought from Social Services and will be circulated as required.

The Transition Plan format is attached as appendix 4. Section 10 of the SEN Code of Practice Toolkit contains further guidance on conducting Transition Planning.

### **Other Key Transition Points**

A similar process also applies to other key transitions for the child/young person e.g. transition to school from pre-school, transitions between Key Stages and other planned changes of school placement.

Transfer between school phases requires particular consideration. Year 5 (or Year 7 in some cases; e.g. middle schools) Annual Reviews should make provisional recommendations for secondary education to enable amendment of statements by 15 February in the year of transfer (see CoP section 5.20).

Consideration should be given to informally reviewing a statement for a child/young person under 5 at least every 6 months.

In certain circumstances, e.g. secondary transfer, schools might consider completing the relevant parts of a Transitional Plan.

## **EXTRACT FROM SECTION 9 OF THE SEN TOOLKIT: Preparing for and Conducting Annual Reviews (2001)**

### **The Annual Review Meeting**

1. The Headteacher should decide which member of the school staff should chair the meeting. Where issues are complex, it is not easy to both chair and take notes of the key points and recommendations. In such situations the Headteacher should ensure that an additional member of staff, perhaps an administrative assistant is available to take notes. The Headteacher should also decide how the pupil will best be actively involved in the process, and make sure that their opinions can be taken into account where possible even if they do not attend all of the meeting.
2. Where necessary, the Headteacher should arrange for an interpreter or signer to be present at the review meeting.
3. Schools should try to create a positive environment for review meetings and have a consistent format so that parents and professionals can know what to expect. A suggested format is set out below:-
4. **Introduction:** The chairperson should introduce and welcome everyone, explain the purpose of the meeting and make sure that each person explains the way in which they interact with the pupil so that parents have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to their child and the review process. The Headteacher should also make sure that parents know who was invited and unable to attend.
5. **Confirmation:** of reports received and read: the chairperson should check that all present have read the reports, this will reassure parents that everyone is starting on the same wavelength. It will, of course, also highlight any discrepancies in the receipt of the reports.
6. **Review of Progress:** The pupil's progress since the statement was issued or last reviewed should be discussed. Copies of the statement should be available for reference. If the pupil is present they should be encouraged to tell the meeting how they think that they have progressed and how they feel. The tone of the meeting must be receptive to the pupil. It would be sensible if the school prepared the pupil for the meeting by explaining the format beforehand.
7. In the light of the reports the meeting should consider the following:-
  - The pupil's views.
  - The parents' views.
  - The pupil's overall progress over the past year, especially in relation to each special educational need.
  - The pupil's progress towards meeting the overall objectives set out in the statement.
  - The successes the pupil has achieved in meeting the targets in the IEP and the objectives set out in the statement.
  - National Curriculum levels including the most recent end of key stage assessment.
  - The pupil's current levels of attainment in literacy and mathematics.

- Comments upon any continuing difficulties, noting successful strategies.
- Any significant changes in the pupil's circumstances.
- Any changes in the pupil's special educational needs.
- Any change in requirements for equipment, aids and access.

## 1. Recommendations

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

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

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

1. **Planning:** for the next 12 months. A target to be met over the coming year should be agreed for each special educational need identified in the statement or at the review. The first IEP for the forthcoming year could also be discussed.
2. **Other Issues:** may have arisen during the meeting. If there is further action required this should be agreed and the person responsible for the action should be named. If the further action includes referral to an external agency that is not already involved with the pupil, this is a matter that the Headteacher should expedite. It is not necessary for such referrals to await LEA agreement.
3. If the LEA provides the pupil with transport it is appropriate to consider whether or not it is still needed.
4. **The next review** will usually be in 12 months. However, if agreement is reached that there is a need for an earlier (interim) review this should also be recorded in the note of the meeting under recommendations.
5. **What happens next** should be explained to all those present at the meeting. The chairperson should make absolutely clear that although the meeting can agree recommendations, the LEA

6. It should be explained to parents that any queries regarding the report of the meeting that they might have should be addressed first to the school.

### **Report of the Annual Review Meeting**

7. The Headteacher should prepare a report of the meeting and set out the recommendations. The report should reflect the consensus of the meeting, but also record any dissent. It must be sent to the LEA no later than ten days after the meeting or the end of that term, whichever is the earliest date. The report must be copied to the parents and all those concerned that the Headteacher considers appropriate.

### **LEA reviews the statement**

8. The LEA will review the statement in light of the report and its recommendations. The LEA may decide to maintain the statement, amend the statement, cease to maintain the statement or start a new statutory assessment.
9. The LEA **must** write to the parents, with a copy to the school, informing them of the decisions taken and the reasons. The LEA should offer to meet the parents if there are any significant outcomes or amendments the parents wish to discuss.