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INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS

Information Sheet 5

The Code of Practice 2001 stresses that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a very important planning, teaching and reviewing tool for individual pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

All children receiving special educational needs support at School Action or School Action Plus¹ or those who have a statement of SEN² should have an IEP.

The IEP will also be used by the Local Education Authority (LEA) in considering whether a statutory assessment and possibly a statement of special educational needs is required and to monitor progress for children with statements at Annual Review³.

IEPs should include details of:

- the nature of the child's difficulties
- action to be taken by the school
 - provision (what will be done)
 - staffing (who will do it)
 - frequency (when and how often it will be done)
 - specific resources: ie programmes/activities/materials/equipment
 - short-term targets
 - parental support
- pastoral care/medical requirements
- monitoring and assessment arrangements
- review arrangements and dates

The IEP is not the child's school record and it should look ahead (an action plan) rather than looking back (a review).

The school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO)⁴ usually writes the IEP in consultation with class or subjects teachers, parents and any outside professionals who may be working with the child (eg. speech and language therapists or visiting specialist teachers).

Good practice is that IEPs should be reviewed at least twice a year for school aged pupils and at least termly for pre-school children and that parents should be consulted. Any action parents are to take should also be recorded (eg. Mrs Smith to play Maths games with David at home).

1. See information sheet – 'I think my child has SEN...'
2. See information sheet on Statements
3. See information sheet on Annual Reviews
4. See information sheet on the Role of the SENCO

Most schools design their own IEP forms and there may be a great variety of formats.

As the name implies, IEPs should be written for the individual pupil, however the Code of Practice says that there may be times when several pupils are working towards the same targets. If that is the case then the school can write a group education plan, but they must also keep the individual child's school record up to date.

Targets on an IEP should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bonded. The Code of Practice suggests that there should be only three or four different targets at any one time and that the IEP should be crisply written.

If the pupil has a Statement the targets on the IEP should relate to the objectives in Part 3 of the statement.

The SEN Code of Practice 2001 is available free of charge from

DfES Publications

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