SEND Reviews

What is a SEND Review?

A school is able to commission or undertake a SEND Review in order to evaluate the effectiveness of its provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes mainstream schools, alternative provisions, and specialist settings. A SEND Review should help to ensure that all children, in all educational settings, achieve their very best, including the knowledge, skills and qualifications that they need for successful transition, further education and employment.

The review process typically takes three days. This includes the preparatory work before going into the school, the time needed to collect evidence during the school visit, and the report writing and feedback that takes place after the review. Many schools will establish an ongoing relationship with their SEND Review Team who can provide follow-up support and advice. The timescale for a review would typically be five-six weeks from preparation to reporting.

In a nutshell a SEND Review is....

- A focus on self-evaluation, supported by a reviewer team with expertise.
- A practitioner-led process, developed through collaboration. A 'done with' process.
- An opportunity for peer-to-peer support
- Based on trust
- Non-confrontational

A SEND Review is not....

- An OFSTED Inspection
- About reviewing the capacity of the SENDCo
- About gathering evidence
- A means for accessing / requesting additional funding
- A 'done to' process.

What are the benefits of commissioning a SEND Review?

Commissioning a SEND Review means that both the 'supporting' and 'supported' benefit from working together. The school receiving the review benefits from experienced practitioners with knowledge and expertise in SEND and a track record of improving outcomes. Reviewers also benefit from the process: they gain experience of schools in different contexts and settings and often learn a great deal from the schools that they work with. It is a rewarding and enriching experience that supports professional development, develops knowledge, and inspires new ideas and ways of working. As a result, the opportunity to engage in such work can also offer a powerful retention strategy for schools involved.

Information adapted from the NASEN SEND Review Guide 2020

When should schools commission a review?

Reviews can be commissioned for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to:

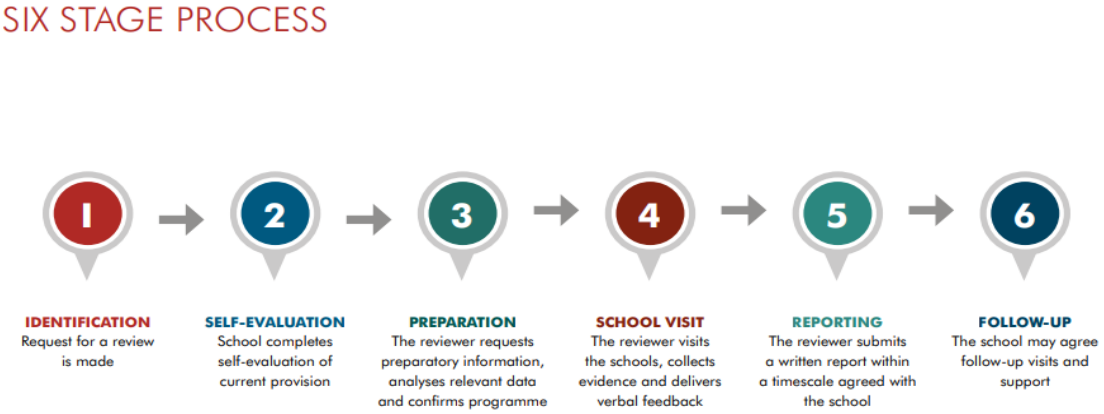
- Raising attainment and improving progress
- Improving the quality of provision for pupils with SEND
- Reviewing the quality of inclusive practice at a school
- Increasing attendance and reducing suspensions & exclusions for pupils with SEND
- Gaining a better understanding of the wellbeing of pupils with SEND
- Identifying SEND as an area for development through self-evaluation
- Wanting a fresh perspective on provision from an experienced SEND Reviewer Team
- Significant change in the demographic of the SEND population in the school
- A change in leadership and management at the school
- External validation of a school's evaluation of its SEND provision

Who recommends that a SEND Review should take place?

A review might be requested by an education setting or recommended by a number of stakeholders including, but not limited to:

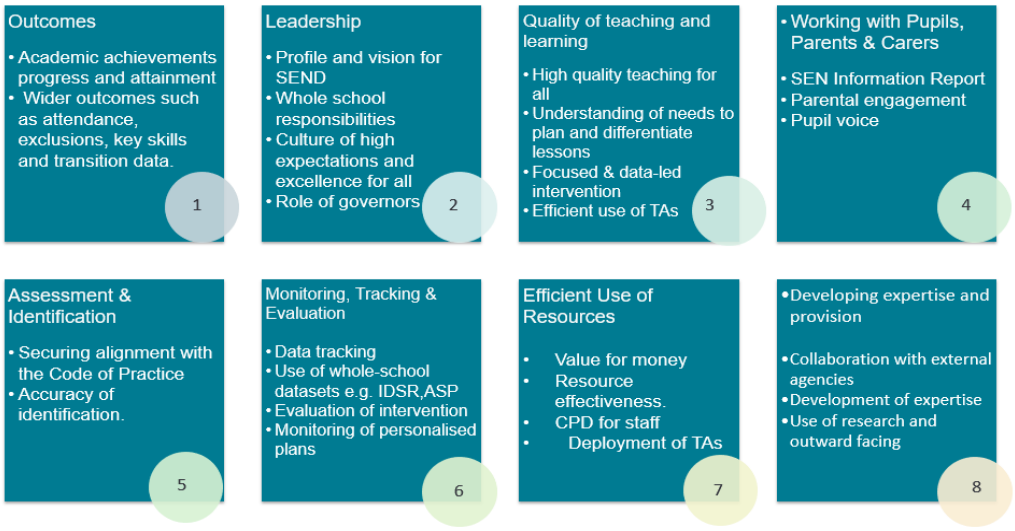
- Regional Schools Commissioners
- A school's local authority
- A Teaching School Hub
- An organisation involved in running the school such as a Multi-Academy Trust or Diocese.

Process



Information adapted from the NASEN SEND Review Guide 2020

The SEND Review: Areas of focus



Gathering Info

Types of information that may be requested and reviewed before the visit by the SEND Review Team:

- School's self-evaluation using the Oldham self-evaluation SEND Review document (school to complete and provide)
- Latest Ofsted report (publicly available)
- IDSR & ASP data (school to provide)
- Provision map (school to provide)
- School Development Plan (school to provide)
- Current progress data (school to provide)
- SEN Information Report (publicly available)
- The School's SEF (school to provide)
- Outline of roles and responsibilities (school to provide)
- External reviews/reports (if available)
- Statutory policies relating to SEND (school to provide)
- Comparative data for SEND pupils – attendance, fixed-term exclusions, permanent exclusions, internal isolation (from school and LA)
- Information re policy and practice for deployment of TAs + details of induction/training (school to provide)
- Details of staff CPD relating to SEND (school to provide)

For the review day, it is helpful to have a space available for the SEND Review Team to use, plus, if available, meet with the following individuals:

- Head teacher – priority
- Senior Lead for SEND – priority.
- SENCO – priority

Information adapted from the NASEN SEND Review Guide 2020

- Parents/carers
- Pupils
- SEND governor / Chair of Governors
- Teaching assistants
- Classroom teachers
- Pastoral staff
- Specialist teachers (e.g., SaLT in a resource base)

It is also useful to carry out a selection of the following activities:

- Tour of the school at the beginning of the day
- Observation of lessons (learning walk)
- Observation of SEND intervention sessions
- Assessment systems for pupils
- Paperwork review
- Book looks
- Observation of unstructured activities
- Observation of alternative/off-site provision
- Review of any available case studies

The Report

All schools completing a SEND Review will receive a report highlighting the areas of strength observed on the day and recommendations regarding areas for development. The information used to inform the report recommendations will only be gathered from the documentation provided by the school ahead of the SEND Review and evidence seen and collated from observations and discussions on the review day. This provides a clear and transparent process for school leaders to ensure the SEND Review process remains a 'done with' process.

The Report Template

SEND Review Report for .....

Context of the school including key SEND statistics, for example % of pupils with SEND, % of pupils with an EHCP
SEND Review Process

Information adapted from the NASEN SEND Review Guide 2020

FOCUS	STRENGTHS	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT
Outcomes		
Leadership		
The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEND		
Working with pupils and parents		
Assessment and identification		
Monitoring, tracking and evaluation		
Efficient use of resources		
The quality of SEND provision		

Impact

The school's Senior Leaders are best placed to decide how to action the recommendations from the SEND Review and incorporate these in school improvement plans. The SEND Review Team will be keen to understand the impact of the recommendations and will meet with the school again to discuss this.

Enquiries and SEND Review Request Referrals

Oldham completed the SEND Review training, provided by Whole School SEND, in 2022. We continue to offer the training to Oldham colleagues in our Specialist Support Services and wider partners.

If you would like to discuss the benefits of a SEND Review for your school, or would like to complete the SEND Review Request Referral, please contact:

Sharon Meacock, SEND Improvement Officer

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Information adapted from the NASEN SEND Review Guide 2020