Children’s Services

Annual Reviews of Statements of Special Educational Need

Guidance Document

Version 5 – Aug 2012
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**AR Guidance**

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Introduction

Norfolk County Council Children’s Services has published new forms for Annual Reviews, which all schools must start to use by the beginning of the Autumn Term 2012.

This version of the Guidance incorporates amendments resulting from feedback provided by schools, parents/carers and professionals during the academic year 2011-12.

Schools/setting must ensure that they are using the most up to date versions of the forms, which can be obtained from Norfolk Schools Website www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/Pupil-needs/SEN-statutory-processes/NCC097534.

There are 3 forms:

- Early Years Annual Review
- Annual Review Year 1 to Year 8
- Annual Transition Review Year 9 and above

Each form has been locked to protect the format. Should you wish to unlock any of the forms to enable editing of the font or format please click – tools – forms – click the unprotect icon.

The key changes are:

- New person-centred format for the Early Years and Foundation Stage Annual Review
- Revised Transition Plan to compliment the Learning Disability Assessment
- Reduction in the length of all forms
- One flexible version of each form for electronic or handwritten completion

Core strands in all formats are:

- A person-centred approach means that children or young peoples’ views are a central feature of the review and suggestions are made as to how children or young people can be involved, not only in giving their views to the review but also in the preparation and organisation of the meeting. It is expected that all children and young people will be involved in their Annual Review.
- The person-centred ethos also means that there are improved opportunities to support and encourage parents/carers in engaging with their child’s education and particularly with the Annual Review.
- Revised formats for recording the child/young person’s and parent/carer’s views.
- The child/young person’s views can be collected in a variety of formats.
- The school to provide copy of the child or young person’s timetable which clearly shows how the provision set out in the Statement is being delivered as part of the review report.
- A more thorough, structured and detailed review of the Statement itself.
- A clear Action Plan format which can be copied at the end of the review for all attendees to take away as an aide-memoire.
- The Transition Plan is an integral part of the documentation of the Transition Review rather than an add-on.
• Clear guidance within the forms on how to recommend amendments to the Statement.
• Checklists for schools/settings to use before and after the review meeting to aid planning, smooth running and improved administration of the process.
• Schools and settings are encouraged to ‘customise’ the format with their own front page, perhaps including photograph(s) of the child or young person.
• The SEN Website will carry examples of good practice for reference.

Implementation

All schools and settings must use these forms from the beginning of September 2012. The new forms are accessible via Norfolk Schools website, Norfolk Children’s Services Internet and Intranet sites and the Norfolk Children’s Services SEN Website.

Status of Guidance

This Guidance is intended to be read alongside the relevant legislation and statutory guidance that is listed at the back of this document. It provides clarification and suggestions for good practice in the planning, conducting and recording of Annual Reviews for all children and young people holding Statements issued by Norfolk County Council in all settings and schools.

Note on the Organisation of this Guidance Document

This document has been written to provide comprehensive and detailed guidance on Annual Reviews for all settings and schools wherever Annual Reviews for Norfolk children and young people are conducted. Some schools/settings may conduct Annual Reviews on a daily or weekly basis; others may conduct one review per term or only have one Annual Review each year. Regardless of the frequency it is expected that the conduct and organisation of all reviews will be based on this guidance and its underlying person-centred approach and upon the legislation and statutory guidance available.

The guidance follows the format of the Annual Review process from planning through the review meeting itself to completion of the process.

The Norfolk Children’s Services Inclusion Statement

Norfolk Children’s Services defines inclusion as:

The process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given an equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.

In real terms this means that we:

• Adopt creative and flexible approaches
• Give consistent messages
• Actively challenge and dismantle barriers
• Offer a range of readily accessible provision
• Actively involve and listen to the young person
• Work in partnership
Person Centred Approaches

The Annual Review process has been developed based on the principles of Person Centred Approaches and encourages a more holistic understanding of the child or young person.

A Person Centred Approach addresses different aspects of the individual’s life and expands the focus to incorporate other elements in addition to school-based activities. It allows flexibility in the way that reviews are organised, prepared for and delivered and involves the child/young person and their families on a deeper level. This approach ensures that the child/young person is recognised for all their qualities and helps to capture their thoughts and aspirations for the future in a meaningful way to both them and the professionals who work with them.

Adopting a Person Centred Approach empowers the child/young person and their family, effectively informs professionals and helps ensure that all necessary elements are included in future plans.

Annual Review Expectations

- Annual Reviews will be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- All those participating in an Annual Review have the right to be heard.
- All views will be considered and respected.
- All those participating in an Annual Review have a responsibility to listen to the views of others at the meeting.
- Participation may be via verbal or recorded views. Views do not need necessarily to be expressed in a written format. However views will be recorded in writing for the purposes of the Annual Review Report.
- All children and young people are capable of expressing their views. Our role as professionals is to capture and understand those views.
- All children and young people will be enabled to express their views to their Annual Review.
- All children and young people have a right to attend their Annual Review Meeting and communicate their views. They will be encouraged and supported to do. They may choose to attend all or part of the meeting and their wishes will be respected in this regard.
- All parents/carers and those with parental responsibility should be involved in the Annual Review process. The role of the setting or school is to ensure that all parents, even when they no longer live together, and those with parental responsibility, are included in the process and are able to express their views.

Planning an Annual Review

Careful planning for an Annual Review is the key to its successful outcome.

Planning for each child or young person’s Annual Review should begin as soon as the school receives the final Statement. The first Annual Review must be held within twelve months of the date of the final Statement and subsequent reviews must be held on or before the anniversary of that date.
It is recommended that as soon as the final Statement is received the school or setting sets the date for the first review with parents/carers and relevant professionals in order to give everyone the opportunity to put the date in their diary. Further reminders will be needed as the date approaches.

An Annual Review can be held less than twelve months after the date of the first final Statement or the anniversary of the Statement if this is felt to be in the child or young person’s best interests:

- If the child or young person’s special educational needs have changed significantly, ie a new diagnosis.
- If parents/carers request an early review.
- If the final Statement was issued on a date which falls during the school holidays.
- If a review is required to begin planning for a significant event, eg phase transfer, moving on to further education, training or employment.
- If the child or young person is at risk of exclusion:
  - If the child or young person is at risk of repeated fixed-term exclusions an Annual Review should be convened as soon as possible.
  - If the child or young person is at risk of permanent exclusion then an Annual Review must be called.

Annual Reviews should not be held more than twelve months apart in any circumstances.

**Children and Young People Educated At Home**

For children and young people who are educated at home by their parents the Local Authority is responsible for organising and convening the Annual Review. The officer responsible for convening the review should liaise with parents/carers regarding the date and venue of the meeting.

**Annual Review in the Early Years**

The SEN Code of Practice recommends that LAs informally review a Statement for a child under five years old at least every six months to ensure that the provision continues to be appropriate to the child’s needs. Such ‘informal’ reviews would complement the Annual Review. It is recommended that any informal review covers the same areas as an Annual Review although there is no requirement to do so. It is also recommended that any ‘informal reviews’ are recorded in writing. It is recommended that an informal review should use the same paperwork as an Annual Review. The paperwork has been designed to be used either for an Annual Review or an interim review. Settings and schools must ensure that the Statement is reviewed at least annually. An ‘interim review’ can recommend amendments to a Statement – in which case the Annual Review form must be used to ensure that the amendments are properly recorded and evidenced.

**Checklist Before the Annual Review**

The Checklist Before the Annual Review can be downloaded from [www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/download/NCC097504](http://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/download/NCC097504). It provides a ‘countdown’ of actions to be taken starting in the term before the meeting. A copy should be used to prepare for each
child or young person’s Annual Review and completed before the review to ensure that nothing is missed.

Where possible settings or schools will arrange dates for Annual Reviews well in advance. It is really important that these dates are made in consultation with parents/carers and other professionals whose advice/attendance is felt to be an important contribution.

Parents/carers and professionals are busy people and early consultation and confirmation of dates will help the setting or school to ensure a good attendance at the meeting. The child or young person’s view should be taken into account in terms of who is invited – and the number of attendees should also be kept under scrutiny. Care should be taken to ensure that the size of the meeting does not become overwhelming for the child or young person or parents/carers and also does not become too unwieldy to be effective.

The Annual Review report should be completed in draft before the meeting – the following sections can be completed prior to the meeting.

- Front pages with child or young person data, list of invitees
- Child or young person’s views
- Parents’/carers’ views
- Summary report
- Progress monitoring
- Transition plan – in part

The draft report should be emailed/posted to all invitees two weeks before the meeting date. Settings and schools should ensure that any email link is secure before using this method of communication. One copy can be emailed to the appropriate Children’s Services mailbox – the accompanying email should make it clear to which Children’s Services’ professionals the report should be forwarded.

**Looked After Children (SENCOP 9:6 and 25-27)**

When a child or young person is ‘Looked After’ by Children’s Services Social Care it will be essential to contact the appropriate case-responsible social care practitioner as well as the carers to ensure their attendance. Parents and carers of Looked After Children should be invited to the Annual Review as a matter of course, but the advice of the case-responsible social care practitioner should be sought in the first instance.

It may be appropriate to consider holding the Annual Review and the social care statutory placement review at the same time. The setting or school and the case-responsible social care practitioner should liaise in the early stages of planning the dates of the two reviews if this is felt to be appropriate.

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) should be considered at the Annual Review.

**Preparing for the Annual Review**

In the term before the meeting the setting or school must remind parents/carers and professionals about the date, if it was set at the last review. All such reminders can be sent in the most appropriate medium. Care should be exercised to ensure that only essential information is securely sent to the correct address. Settings and schools are advised to keep a record of all communications on the child or young person’s file.
If a date for the Annual Review has not yet been set, it should be organised as soon as possible and in consultation with parents/carers and professionals.

The setting or school will need to consider which professionals should be invited to the meeting. A representative from the Local Authority should be invited – usually this would be the Additional Needs Coordinator but it may be appropriate to invite the Educational Psychologist or an external specialist with a direct support for learning function, Early Years Advisor or Portage Worker.

For children or young people with sensory needs it may be appropriate to invite the Teacher of the Deaf or Visually Impaired or Multi-Sensory Impairment.

Guidance Advisers must be invited to all reviews for young people at Year 9 and above.

The setting or school or may also wish to invite relevant Health professionals who are working with the child or young person – Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Community Paediatrician. It may be appropriate to invite other medical professionals who are working with the child.

Where a child or young person is in a dual/inclusion placement the school or setting where the child or young person is on roll is responsible for the Annual Review and should invite the other school or placement to submit a report and attend the review meeting. Where a child or young person attends sessions at a Short Stay School for Norfolk a representative should be invited.

For children and young people who are Looked After the case-responsible social work practitioner must be invited as the PEP should be reviewed at the Annual Review.

Where a child or young person receives support from an agency, a representative from the agency should be invited – this may include local voluntary or charitable groups, the Youth Offending Team, local community support. No list can be exhaustive but settings and schools will be aware of those working with the child or young person.

The school or setting should also be aware of the potential for the meeting to become very large if there are a significant number of professionals working with the child or young person. It is important to consider the relevance of the attendance of any professional or agency at an Annual Review of a Statement. The focus should be on the contribution which the invitee can make to the Annual Review process.

At this point the organisation of the review should be planned and the child or young person child consulted about what part he/she would like to play such as:

- Sending out his/her own personal invitations
- Thinking about the room and the refreshments
- Beginning to prepare his/her views for the meeting (gathering the child or young person’s views should never be done at the last minute but as part of a planned, ongoing engagement with learning throughout the academic year).

The setting or school should also review any arrangements required to address the special needs of parents/carers and professionals who may be attending; eg an accessible room, hearing or visual needs that require a differentiated format for the report or
interpretation/translation at the meeting. The same considerations should be applied to the format of the Annual Review report.

The Chair

The Head Teacher should chair the meeting. The Head may delegate this responsibility to the SENCO or a member of the Senior Management Team, if this is appropriate. In some settings the manager may chair the meeting. For children and young people who are educated by their parents at home a representative from the Local Authority will chair the review meeting.

Chairs, particularly those who are new to Annual Reviews, may find the Parent Partnership Leaflet on Annual Reviews helpful as well as the Chapter 9 of the SEN Code of Practice. This Leaflet can be found at: http://www.norfolkparentpartnership.org.uk/Downloads/AnnualReview.pdf

A copy of this leaflet must be sent to parents/carers at the same time as the setting or school sends out the Annual Review report ahead of the review meeting itself.

Views of the Child or Young Person

Every child or young person is capable of expressing a point of view that should be captured and conveyed to the meeting.

Person Centred Planning and Child or Young Person Involvement

The principles of Person Centred Planning have been key factors in informing the new approach and documentation for Annual Reviews in Norfolk and therefore settings and schools are encouraged to enable children and young people to take a leading role in the preparation, organisation and conduct of their Annual Reviews.

Children and young people should be actively encouraged and supported to be involved in their learning and reviewing their progress on an ongoing basis so that when they come to their Annual Review it is a natural next step in that process. Children and young people should also be encouraged and supported to actively participate in their Annual Reviews in the way that suits them best.

SEN Code of Practice

Chapter 3 of the SEN Code of Practice gives guidance on how to enable children and young people’s participation and how to obtain their views. We have provided a questionnaire format to help children or young people give their views, but schools may prefer to develop their own version. Children and young people’s views can be conveyed through different media including video, photographs and drawings as well as written language and the medium for each child or young person should be carefully considered to enable his/her views to be reflected. Schools and settings are encouraged to share their formats via the SEN Website and the SENCO network.

Child and Young Person’s Views Form

Separate ‘stand-alone’ versions of the Child or Young Person’s Views Form are available on the SEN website. A differentiated version of the form is also available on the SEN Website www.norfolk.gov.uk/SEN.
Involving children and young people in the Annual Review

The child or young person can be involved in sending out invitations to those attending the review and should be consulted about who is to attend. He or she should be involved in as much of the review meeting as possible, but the key issue is to make it a positive experience for him/her by taking account of his or her views.

The child or young person can help to prepare the room for the review, greet visitors and offer refreshments, which he/she can have helped to choose and prepare. Such activities help children and young people to feel part of the process.

When should the child or young person’s views be considered in the meeting?

The child or young person’s views can be considered at the beginning of the meeting or later on. The Chair should take account of their wishes and feelings and ensure that the meeting is supportive. It may be appropriate for the child or young person to give his/her views to a smaller group of people rather than the whole meeting.

Ideally the child or young person should attend the whole meeting but it may be that he/she feels that this would be too much for him/her. The decision about how much of the meeting a child or young person should attend should be his/hers. If the child or young person does not remain for the entire meeting then an adult should be clearly identified by the child or young person beforehand, who will provide feedback about the meeting.

Views of the Parents/Carers

Chapter 2 of the SEN Code of Practice provides advice about how to support parents in being involved with their child’s education. For many parents/carers the Annual Review Meeting can be a stressful and difficult time and it is very important that the setting or school makes sure that parents/carers are prepared, supported and encouraged to attend.

Parents’/Carers’ Views Form

A separate ‘stand-alone’ Parent/Carer Views form is available on the SEN Website as well as being included in the main document. A copy of this form can be given or sent to parents/carers. They can also send in their views in a ‘report’ format if they prefer. Settings and schools should also offer parents/carers the option of a discussion/conversation to record their views, if this is the parents’/carers’ preference. Settings and schools will need to be aware that some parents/carers may find the questionnaire format off-putting and should be prepared to support them in giving their views.

Parents/carers have given us the following feedback about what helps them at Annual Reviews:

Planning the Meeting

- Consult parents/carers when setting the date of the Annual Review (setting the date at the previous review is the first step).
- Make sure that parents/carers know when and where the meeting is to take place.
- If parents/carers have difficulty in getting to the setting or school consider holding the review in an alternative venue – such as the local primary school if the child is at secondary or special school.
• Consider parents’/carers’ work or childcare commitments when setting the date and time.

• Encourage parents/carers to bring someone with them as a supporter, eg relative/friend/Parent Partnership Independent Parental Supporter.

• Ensure that any additional needs that parents/carers may have are addressed – an accessible room, hearing or visual needs which require a differentiated format for the report or interpretation at the meeting.

• Make sure that parents/carers have the setting or school’s report in good time for the meeting as well as a copy of the Parent Partnership booklet about Annual Reviews so that they feel well prepared.

• Sensitive planning may be required to take account of family dynamics or tensions.

Parents/carers must be offered every opportunity to convey their views to the meeting, so even if they are unable to attend, their views can be considered. It may be appropriate to consider postponing the meeting; this is a decision for the Chair.

If parents/carers are anxious about attending the meeting it may be appropriate to have a pre-meeting with parents/carers. It may also be appropriate to discuss with them the order of the items in the meeting.

At the Meeting

There is no set time limit for an Annual Review. The minimum is likely to be about 45 minutes but some reviews can take longer. Settings or schools should consider using pre-meetings where necessary or add a further meeting if a major matter arises during the review that requires further substantial discussion.

The Chair should then give everyone the opportunity to introduce themselves and explain their connection to the child or young person.

The next step is to outline the purpose of the meeting.

‘The purpose of an Annual Review is to integrate a variety of perspectives on a child’s progress, to ensure that they are achieving the desired outcomes, and, if necessary, to amend the Statement to reflect newly identified needs and provision.’ SENCOP 9:4

The Chair should then confirm that everyone has received and read the setting or school’s report, which will have been sent out at least two weeks before the date of the meeting. If, at this point anyone has not seen the report, an opportunity should be offered for him or her to read the report.

It is also helpful at this point to confirm the order in which the meeting will proceed. It is not essential to keep to the order in which the forms are set out. If it is felt it would be more helpful to say, deal with progress monitoring before hearing the child or young person’s and parents’/carers’ views, this arrangement can be agreed by the parties present at the meeting. The Chair should then lead the meeting through the review documentation in the agreed order. All sections need to be covered but individual circumstances such as the age and stage of the child or young person; specific parental or setting or school concerns will mean that some sections will need greater emphasis than others.
The key task is to ensure that all aspects of the Annual Review have been covered, that everyone has had the opportunity to express their views and that the report form has been completed.

**Recording the Meeting**

Chairs may find it helpful to have someone at the meeting to take notes, although most Chairs take notes as the meeting proceeds. (Notes can be taken in writing on a blank copy of the form or on a laptop on an electronic copy of the form.) It is good practice to review each section as it is completed to confirm that everyone is in agreement with what is being recorded. (Some schools, which have interactive whiteboards, may wish to consider using this medium to show the record of the review as it progresses.)

The Annual Review should focus on the individual child or young person and his/her needs. It is possible that other children or young people in the school may be mentioned in relation to the child or young person who is the subject of the review. The names of these children or young people should not be recorded in the review record.

**Completing the Form**

**Child or Young Person’s Personal Details**

This page should be filled in before the report is sent to parents and professionals at least two weeks before the meeting. At the meeting the Chair should confirm that the child or young person’s and parents’/carers’ personal details are correct and note any changes.

**Children or young people taught out of their chronological year group**

Schools should be very wary of the practice of placing a child or young person in a year group below their chronological age, sometimes known as ‘backclassing’. It can be very tempting to ‘give the child another year to catch up’, particularly when a move to another school is on the horizon. Schools should be able to differentiate the curriculum to meet a child or young person’s special educational needs and the Statement will provide the advice on how this can be done. Such a decision taken in the current school cannot be imposed on any other school. There can be no guarantee that when the child or young person reaches statutory school leaving age chronologically that they will be permitted to remain for a further year. Very careful consideration of such a proposal should be undertaken, taking account of all the implications throughout the child’s educational career.

There are exceptional circumstances when a child or young person has missed a substantial part of the school year through ill-health, when such an arrangement may be justified. The views of the child or young person must be taken into account and consideration given to how they might feel about such an arrangement later in their educational career, particularly in terms of their personal, emotional, social and physical development.

In any event such arrangements must be recorded on the Annual Review form and the Statement must be amended to reflect the arrangement.

The same consideration must be given to any child or young person who is placed in a year group older than their chronological age group – for all the reasons given above.

Schools are strongly recommended to consult external specialists with a direct support for learning function for advice before taking such a decision.
**Child or Young Person’s Parent or Person Responsible**

This section can be completed ahead of the meeting and checked with parents/carers at the beginning of the meeting. Some sensitivity may be required here in recording these details. It is particularly important to ensure that contact details are correct for Children’s Services Records as well as for the school.

Children or young people and parents/carers are invited to sign the review document to confirm their attendance. Schools and settings will need to be sensitive where learning or language difficulties may make this difficult.

**Details of those invited to the Annual Review**

Everything in this section can be completed ahead of the meeting except the last column, which records attendance.

**Child or Young Person’s Views**

This section may be completed before the report is sent to parents/carers and professionals.

Some sensitivity will be required in relation to some of the questions in this section as not all schools set homework, for example. Schools may wish to use a different format or set of questions for their children or young people, if this is felt to be appropriate.

If the child or young person has identified something that they wish to celebrate by bringing an item into the review then that should be encouraged. It maybe appropriate to start the meeting with this section of the review so that the child or young person does not lose his or her enthusiasm. There may be a need for the review meeting to move at this point to look at work on a classroom wall or outside in the grounds, where this is appropriate.

**Child’s View in the Early Years**

Settings and schools will need to exercise professional judgement and knowledge of the individual child in how the child’s views are obtained. The questions in the review form are a guide only. Clearly very young children’s responses are likely to be of the moment and may need interpretation/inference if the child’s main means of communication is other than verbal.

Evidence/Responses can be recorded as:

- Verbal answer recorded
- Photograph what the child likes
- The child says or communicates what photos should be taken

**Parent/Carers’ Views**

Parents/carers should be encouraged to send their views in ahead of the meeting. Some parents/carers will want to respond to the questions verbally in the meeting and their views should be recorded. Schools and settings should consider making facilities available for parents to record their views in school or at the setting.

It is important to support parents/carers to look to the present and the future for their child, as an Annual Review is as much about the future and planning as it is about reviewing the past twelve months.
Parents/carers may be very anxious about the Annual Review and it may be appropriate to take their views at the beginning of the meeting. Alternatively it may be appropriate to take their views later in the meeting. The Chair has discretion for flexibility.

The Chair should also be sensitive to the needs of parents/carers and be aware that they may need a ‘breather/timeout’ during the meeting.

Chairs should be aware that discussing future planning for children and young people who have life-limiting diagnoses will be a very sensitive issue.

Parents/carers can choose not to answer any question and their choice should be respected. Chairs must use their discretion in deciding whether to explore the reasons for choosing not to answer a specific question.

Children or young people may express views that differ from those of their parents/carers. This is a matter that needs to be addressed with tact. Both expressed views should be given consideration and weight and can be recorded.

**Parent/Carer’s views in the Early Years**

It is likely that parents/carers will want to discuss non-educational issues at the review. Professionals attending the review may be able to signpost further information or sources of support or it may be appropriate to convene a CAF to deal with these wider issues.

**Summary Report for Statutory Annual Review**

This section should be completed before the report is sent to parents/carers and professionals. The Action Points from the last Annual Review should be recorded. Completing this section in advance gives parents/carers and professionals time to consider the report and be prepared to discuss it at the review. If differing views are expressed at the review these must be recorded in the relevant section of the report.

It is essential that schools provide a copy of the child or young person’s timetable with the provision set out in the Statement clearly identified. Schools and settings are required to make the minimum provision set out in the Statement. Schools will need to demonstrate how they meet the child or young person’s needs through flexible use of resources. All schools and settings receive sufficient funding to make this provision.

Special school provision is delivered differently to that in mainstream schools and special school heads/deputies will explain how the provision is delivered. Special schools are expected to provide a copy of the child or young person’s timetable.

The most recent IEP should also be attached with evaluations.

**Progress Monitoring**

This section should be completed before the report is sent to parents/carers and professionals.

Schools may prefer to substitute a different record of progress monitoring. Measures may be expressed in P Scales, PIVATS, BSquared, CASPA or other measures and recording systems.
Global targets could include behaviour, eg reducing frequency and severity of incidents or independence skills, eg progress in toileting skills, independence in managing medical procedures as well as learning targets.

Parents/carers should also be involved in further target setting and review throughout the school year, as well as monitoring their child’s progress, through regular contact via meetings, telephone, email and other contact routes as appropriate. Throughout the year the child or young person should also be supported in setting, evaluating and reviewing their progress targets.

Assessments can include other external specialists’ assessments, eg Speech and Language Therapy, which took place in the last twelve months and are referred to in the Summary Report.

Schools and settings must be aware of only making comparisons between the same type of test. Dates of testing are essential to enable sound progress monitoring.

**Progress Monitoring in Early Years Reviews**

The school or setting will need to give consideration to what ‘progress’ in very little children means. It is likely that an holistic approach will be needed. Schools and settings should reflect on what is written in the Statement in terms of the objectives and what progress the child has made. There may need to be an awareness of children who have ‘lost ground’ as a result of prolonged ill-health or as a result of their condition, eg epilepsy. This is particularly relevant as reviews should be taking place every six months.

In some cases it may also be important to consider the effects of medication upon a child’s progress.

Sources of evidence include:

**Tools**
- EY Foundation Stage
- PIP developmental scale
- BPVS
- Bsquared and PIVATS

**Evidence and Observations**

Evidence is needed about the child in different contexts, ie home/school/assessments/setting:

- Portage assessments
- Early Support Development Journal
- Learning Stories and Learning Diaries
- IEPs

**Medical**

- Ruth Griffiths Developmental Scale
- S&LT assessments, eg CELF/Renfrew/Reynell
Transition Planning (SENCOP 9:45-9:64) (Year 9 onwards only)

Transition Planning for all young people must begin in Year 9, but the date arranged at the Year 8 review must include notice for the Guidance Adviser. The above section of SENCOP gives clear details about how transition planning should be undertaken and who should be involved.

Every young person must have a Transition Plan drafted in Year 9 at the Annual Review in that year, regardless of when it is planned that they would leave school. In subsequent years the Transition Plan should be reviewed and amended as appropriate. The Transition Plan is included in the Year 9 and above Annual Review Form. (A ‘stand alone’ version of the Transition Plan is available on the SEN Website www.norfolk.gov.uk/sen

Schools may use an alternative Transition Plan format if they wish, provided that it covers all the aspects of a child or young person’s future life. Such an alternative format must be attached to the Year 9 and above Annual Review Form and returned with it to Children’s Services.

The Transition Plan is a vehicle for capturing information that is unique to the individual young person in order to aid them (and their families) in their future planning and preparation for leaving school.

Young people aged over 13 years will need planning in place that ensures all current and future parties are aware and/or involved.

The new Transition Plan has been written:

- To be a transparent form that clearly shows actions, responsibilities and timeframes for plans to be put in place
- To inform the Guidance Advisers about the young person and supply informative content that can be included in the Learning Disability Assessment
- To supply the appropriate teams/professionals (particularly if they are unable to attend the review) with relevant information about the young person, which will be recorded on a system that Norfolk County Council practitioners can access
- To become a ‘living document' that shows progression and identifies clear next steps

Once instigated the Transition Plan can be added to on an annual basis (or more frequently if appropriate). The front sheet will need to be completed each year so that there is evidence of up to date consent to be able to share this information.

It is recommended that schools consider termly reviews of the Transition Plan – this would not be in the context of an Annual Review but as an interim review. One of these meetings can be designated as the formal Annual Review. The purpose of this practice would be to enable the Transition Plan to grow with the young person as they begin to explore their options for adult life. This approach enables the Annual Review to be used as a coaching approach to support young people.

It is not envisaged that at the Y9 review the Transition Plan will be complete. The intention is to begin planning for adult life, to enable the young person and their parents/carers to explore choices and options.
Samples of completed Transition Plans and LDA will be available in the future on the Norfolk Schools website [http://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/Pupil-needs/SEN-statutory-processes/index.htm](http://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/Pupil-needs/SEN-statutory-processes/index.htm)

It should be noted that the head teacher is responsible for ensuring that the Transition Plan is drawn up.

Young people and parents/carers may find it difficult to think about the future in general terms as well as about leaving school and Chairs will need to be aware of and sensitive to this issue. Particular care will be required when a young person (or a parent/carer) has a life-limiting diagnosis.

**Timing of Reviews in Y9 and Beyond**

The Annual Review must take place at least every twelve months. As young people progress through secondary education it is suggested that the timing of their Annual Review should be considered in the context of planning for the next stage of their education/training/employment. It is likely that schools may wish to hold Y10 and 11 reviews earlier in the academic year rather than later to enable young people to consider Post 16 options. Preparatory work may be needed in the summer term of Y10 and a full review in the autumn term of Y11. The practice of termly reviewing may support this practice.

**The Role of the Guidance Adviser**

A Guidance Adviser brings specific skills to the Transition process which are quite distinct from a SENCO or a Teaching Assistant. These include knowledge of the Post-16 learning pathways which will meet the young person’s future aspirations and needs. It is critically important that SENCOs and Guidance Advisers work closely together in the interests of the young person.

**The Transition List** is compiled by Transition Workers in the Children’s Services Children with Disabilities Team. They compile a list of young people aged 13+ who live in their area and circulate it to the adult social care teams. The Information is factual: name, address date of birth, any information re the young person’s disability, school attended and possible future plans, if known. The Transition Workers aim to attend all appropriate Year 9 reviews where the family do not have a social worker but there are occasions when that is not possible.

An additional Transition list of all young people with a statement from the age of 13/14 is sent to Guidance Advisers, social care staff (children and adults) by the Transition Tracking Officer. The Children with Disabilities team are involved with young people with specific eligibility criteria that may be different to Adult Care. Information should be passed to Adult Care teams using the information form from the age of sixteen years of age. This should be done in partnership between the school and the Guidance Adviser.

The Annual Review from Year 9 onwards should consider, where appropriate, whether the young person will need support post 18. If the family are saying ‘yes’ to that question, then they could be asked if they are agreeable to their child’s name being added to the transition list to aid planning and a note made to that effect on the Transition Plan.
Reviewing the Statement

It is essential that the setting or school checks its record of addresses and contact details of parents and carers and amends its own records if necessary. The setting or school should notify the LA immediately via the appropriate SEN mailbox\(^1\) of any change of contact details.

The Annual Review meeting can make one of the following recommendations as an outcome of the Annual Review:

1. Cease to Maintain the Statement
2. Amend the Statement
3. Maintain the Statement
4. Request a further statutory assessment

**Ceasing to Maintain a Statement (SENCOP 8:117 – 124)**

“… Statements should be maintained only when necessary.” SENCOP 8:117

“The L(E)A should consider … whether the objectives of the Statement have been achieved, and whether the child’s needs could be met in future within the resources of mainstream schools within the area without the need for continuing L(E)A oversight …” SENCOP 8:118

Every Annual Review should actively consider whether a Statement should be ceased. Settings and schools should consult the above section of the SEN Code of Practice. Settings and schools should be confident in their ability to meet the needs of the vast majority of children and young people through Action and Action Plus, using the resources available to them. In considering the resources available, the documents: *Support for Learning Funding Guidance* and *Support for Learning: A tool kit for Cluster Collaboration* should be referred.

The local authority may decide to take a different action to that recommended by the Annual Review meeting based upon the Annual Review report. For example, the LA may decide that the report indicates that the Statement needs amending when the recommendation of the review is to maintain without amending.

**Recommendations to Amend**

Children and young people mature and develop over time and many make sound educational progress. As a result an Annual Review may conclude that the child or young person has become a more independent learner and requires less intervention than the Statement initially identified. In these cases, the Annual Review will want to consider a reduction in provision to reflect this progress.

It is also possible that over time a child or young person’s special educational needs may change and the Statement will require amending.

**Maintaining the Statement**

The child or young person’s Statement may continue to accurately reflect the needs, objectives and provision to meet needs as set out in Parts 2 and 3 and therefore will not require any amendments. The meeting can recommend that the Statement is maintained without amendments.

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\(^1\) SEN Mailbox addresses are given in “Contacts” at the end of this document.
The meeting should also consider whether the non-educational needs and provision set out in Parts 5 and 6 remain accurate.

**Request a further statutory assessment**

In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate for the meeting to recommend that the LA undertakes a new statutory assessment. However in most cases amendments can be made to the existing Statement based upon the Annual Review and new professional advice.

**Amending a Statement**

If the meeting proposes amendments to the Statement, these must be agreed at the meeting. Those attending the meeting know the child or young person best and are best placed to recommend amendments. It is not acceptable for the meeting to decide that the Statement should be amended and then not recommend the amendments. Such review reports will be returned to the school for completion. All recommended amendments must be evidence-based.

Annual Reviews are an opportunity for celebrating the progress a child or young person has made. Increasing independence and decreasing dependence should be celebrated and further encouraged. Chairs may need to be sensitive and supportive to parents/carers’ concerns as their child grows up.

If the Annual Review Meeting recommends amendments to the Statement such amendments can be written or typed on a hard copy of the Statement and submitted with the review report or settings or schools can request an electronic copy of the Statement from their local Operational Division via the email addresses at the end of this document. Any amendments made to the electronic document should be done via ‘track changes’ so that they are clearly visible to the Additional Needs Coordinator who receives the Annual Review Report on behalf of the Local Authority.

Chairs should remind the meeting that it is recommending amendments to the Local Authority for its consideration.

If an Annual Review meeting recommends amendments to a Statement there must be clear and demonstrable reasons. Documentary evidence must be provided and submitted with the report. The decision as to whether to amend the Statement lies with the Local Authority.

Chairs should ensure that everyone attending the meeting has the opportunity to give their views. Chairs should be aware that there may be differing views put forward by attendees and be prepared to manage such situations.

Any differing opinions must be noted on the record form.

**Action Plan**

At the end of the meeting the Chair should ensure that the Action Plan is completed and, ideally provide each attendee with a copy of the Action Plan. A copy of the Action Plan can be given to everyone at the end of the meeting. The Action Plan should also be included in the final version of report.
Phase Transfer Planning

Phase Transfer applies to the following:

- Transfer between Primary and Secondary schools
- Transfer between Junior and Secondary schools
- Transfer between Infant and Junior schools

Schools are advised to begin planning for Phase Transfer at least four terms ahead of the expected date of transfer. If appropriate it is recommended that an early Annual Review is held in the summer term of Year 1 (infant schools) or Year 5 (primary/junior schools) in order to begin the process.

A further meeting may be needed once the transfer school has been identified and confirmed to put in hand any specific planning for the transfer such as:

- Familiarisation visits
- Planning for taster dates at the new school
- Liaison between parents/carers and the new school
- Handovers between staff in the current and new school
- Ideas for parents/carers to support the child or young person during the summer holiday between leaving the current school and moving to the new one – such as photographs

Experience shows that such careful planning ensures a much smoother and successful transfer for children or young people.

Transition for Children from Early Years Settings to Primary Education

Settings and schools should liaise closely with parents/carers in planning for a child to move into school.

Settings are advised to begin planning early for transition – it is recommended that the school is invited to at least one if not two six-monthly reviews prior to transfer.

A further meeting may be needed once the school has been identified and confirmed to put in hand any specific planning for the transition such as:

- Familiarisation visits
- Planning for taster dates at the school
- Liaison between parents/carers and the school
- Handovers between staff in the setting and the school
- Ideas for parents to support the child during the holiday period between leaving the setting and moving to school – such as photographs

Closing the Meeting

The Chair should close the meeting with thanks to everyone for attending and ensure that the date of the next meeting has been set and is in the school diary.
After the Meeting

The meeting record should be completed by the Chair, signed and dated once complete and sent to the Annual Review Team at County Hall within ten school days of the date of the meeting or by the end of term, whichever is the earlier.

Electronic Transmission of Annual Reviews

The completed Annual Review report can be emailed to the local Children’s Services SEN mailbox. It must be sent from the ‘head@’ email address and will be accepted without the head’s signature on the form. Alternatively the form can be signed, dated, scanned and emailed or sent in hard copy with a signature.

Where professional reports have been provided to the review these must also be attached to the report. Please do not send reviews and reports by separate means. Reports can be scanned and attached to emails.

The Local Authority will aim to respond to the recommendations of an Annual Review within half a term of the receipt of the Annual Review report. The Local Authority will notify parents/carers, schools or settings and other appropriate professionals of its response to the recommendations of the Annual Review report within a week of making the decision.

The Chair is also responsible for sending a copy of the report to all those who attended/were invited to the meeting. Email can be used where there is a secure link.

Checklist After the Meeting

The Checklist After the Meeting http://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/download/NCC097505 provides detailed guidance on how to complete the review. It is very important that this guidance is carefully followed. Incomplete or incorrectly completed reviews will be returned to the school or setting for amendment.

Feedback

Feedback is welcomed on this new approach from everyone involved in the process – children and young people, parents/carers and settings or schools as well as professionals from Children’s Services and beyond. Feedback to:

Gillian Hiles
Specialist SEN Commissioner (Professional Adviser for SEN)
Norfolk Children’s Services
Room G15
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
NR1 2DL

Email: gillian.hiles@norfolk.gov.uk
Telephone 01603 638196

Address given in Contacts section
References:
Education Act 1996

Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 No. 3456

Department for Education
https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DfES%200581%202001

Support for Learning: A tool kit for Cluster Collaboration

Contacts
Norfolk County Council SEN Website: www.norfolk.gov.uk/SEN

Parent Partnership: http://www.norfolkeparentpartnership.org.uk

Where to send completed forms to? http://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/Pupil-needs/SEN-statutory-processes/NCC097534

Glossary and Acronyms

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<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>BPVS</td>
<td>British Picture Vocabulary School</td>
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<td>BSquared</td>
<td>An assessment tool</td>
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<td>CASPA</td>
<td>Comparison and Analysis of Special Pupil Attainment</td>
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<td>CELF</td>
<td>Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals</td>
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<td>DfE</td>
<td>Department for Education</td>
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<td>EYFS</td>
<td>Early Years Foundation Stage</td>
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<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individual education plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>L(E)A</td>
<td>Local (Education) Authority (note: only used with reference to primary legislation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>P Scales</td>
<td>Measures below the National Curriculum</td>
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<td>PIP development scale</td>
<td>A developmental assessment tool</td>
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<td>PIVATS</td>
<td>A system to inform target setting for pupils of all ages whose performance is outside national expectations.</td>
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<td>Portage</td>
<td>Portage is a home-visiting educational service for pre-school children with additional support needs and their families</td>
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<td>Renfrew</td>
<td>Word Finding Vocabulary Test</td>
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<td>Reynell</td>
<td>Assessment of language scales</td>
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<td>S&amp;LT</td>
<td>Speech &amp; Language Therapy/Therapist</td>
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<td>SEN</td>
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<td>SEND</td>
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