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Analysis for Policy

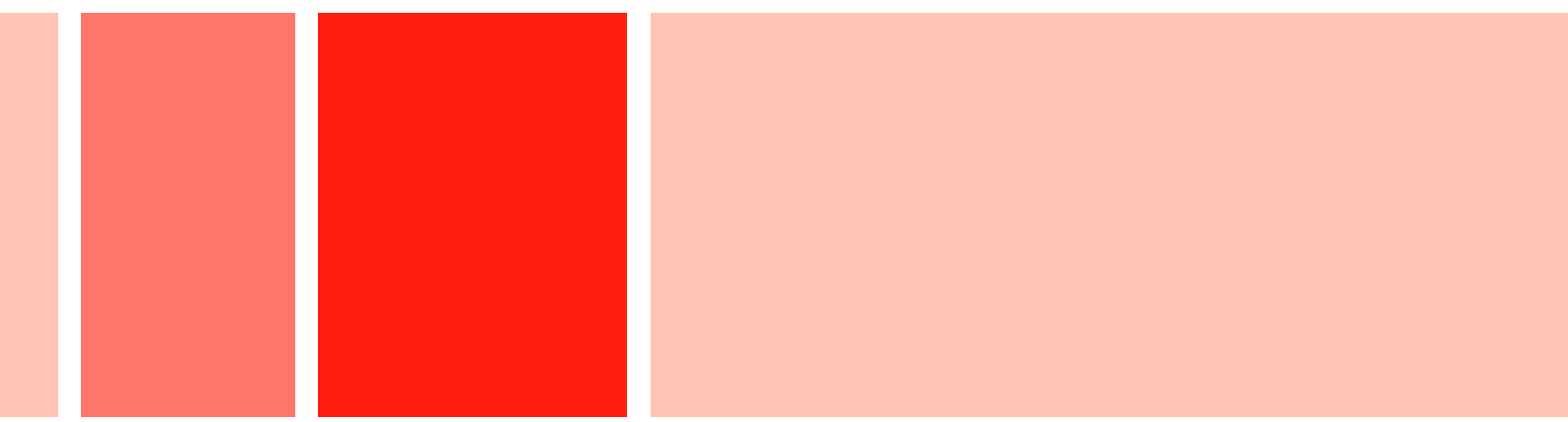


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Programme of Action Research to Inform the Evaluation of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot Developmental Phase: final report



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Views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

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Glossary of acronyms

ALN	Additional learning needs
ALNCo	Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator
CIF	Common Inspection Framework
CPD	Continuous professional development
CYPP	Children and young people's partnership
DCELLs	Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
DCSF	Department for Children, School and Families
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EAL	English as an additional language
ELLS	Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
IDP	Individual development plan
IFST	Integrated family support teams
LAC	Looked after child/children
MAT	More able and talented
MCIS	Monitoring, challenge, intervention and support
NAfW	National Assembly for Wales
NBAR	National Behaviour and Attendance Review
NC	National Curriculum
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NDA	National Disability Authority
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PASS	Pupil Attitudes to School and Self
PCP	Person centred planning
PLASC	Pupil Level School Annual Census

PRIP	Planning and Reviewing in Partnership
PWU	People and Work Unit
SALT	Speech and language therapy
SEF	School Effectiveness Framework
SEN	Special educational needs
SENCo	Special educational needs co-ordinator
SMT	Senior management team
SLT	Senior leadership team
TA	Teaching assistant
TAC	Team Around the Child
TAPPAS	Team around the pupil, parent and school
QA	Quality assurance
SIMS	Schools Information and Management System
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WG	Welsh Government

Contents

Glossary of acronyms.....	3
Executive Summary	7
1. Introduction.....	19
2. The context for the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects	24
3. The action research methods	44
4. Management and implementation of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects	52
5. The expected contribution of the pilot projects to the reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with Additional Learning Needs.....	79
6. Conclusions and recommendations.....	91
7. Bibliography	102
Appendix 1: summary of progress against contract objectives.....	109
Appendix 2: additional and special educational learning needs	127
Appendix 3: documents reviewed	129

Figures

Figure 1: overview of the shortcomings at each stage of the process	9
Figure 2: overview of the shortcomings at each stage of the process	35
Figure 3: intended outcomes of reform.....	43
Figure 4: vision of system-wide reform.....	63

Tables

Table 1: pilot A, Caerphilly and Flintshire	109
Table 2: pilot B, Carmarthenshire and Torfaen	112
Table 3: pilot C, Bridgend and Pembrokeshire.....	117
Table 4: pilot D, Cardiff and Newport	125

Executive Summary

The Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects

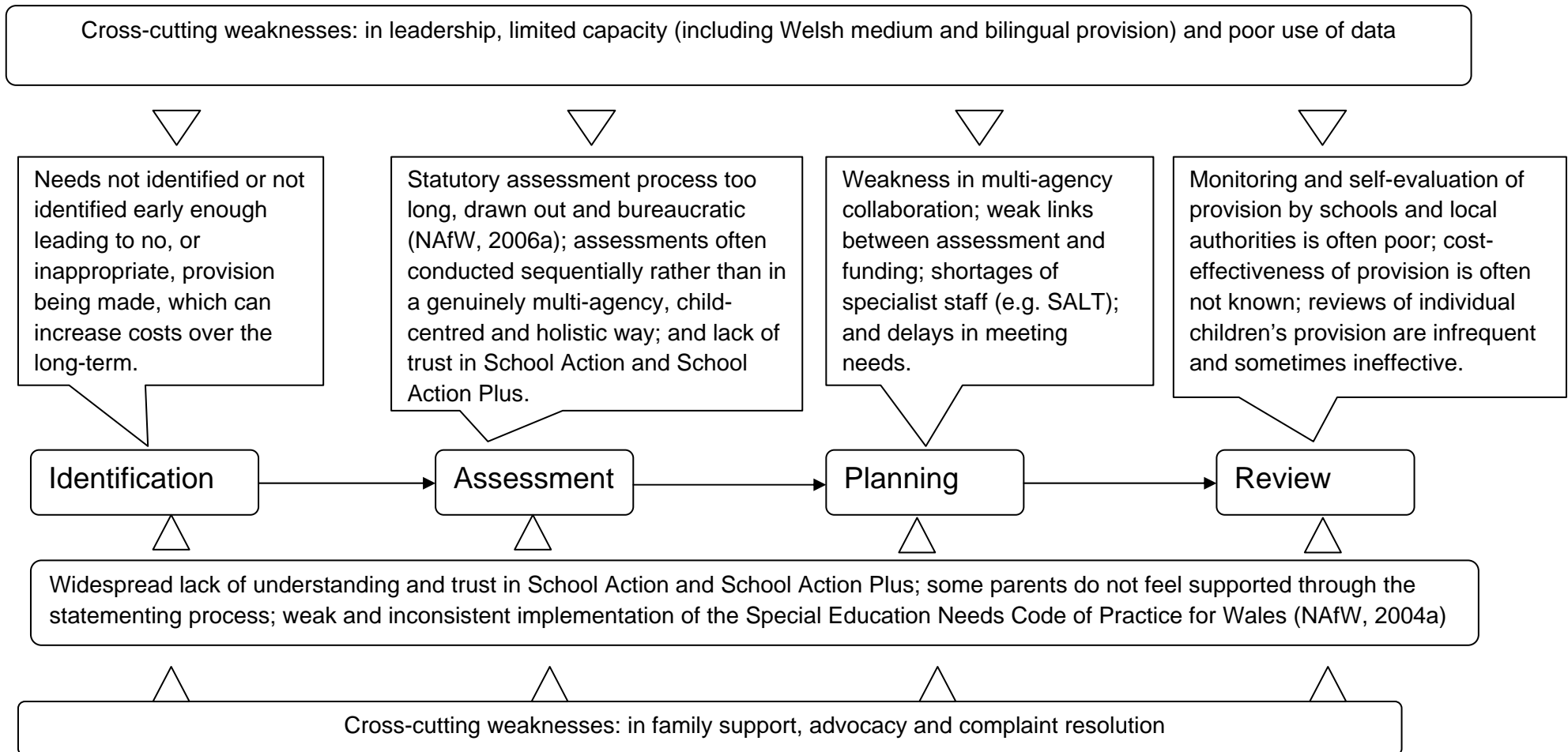
1. The Welsh Government is reforming the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs. This process of reform follows a policy review of special educational needs (SEN) undertaken by the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW), Education Lifelong Learning and Skills (ELLS) Committee. This policy review was initiated in response to recommendations made in reports by Estyn (2003), the Audit Commission (2002) and Cambridge Education Associates (unpublished document). The review was conducted in three phases, with reports focused upon early identification and intervention (Part 1) (NAfW, 2004a), the Statutory Assessment (Statementing) Framework for Children with SEN (Part 2) (NAfW, 2006a) and Transitions (Part 3) (NAfW, 2007). The review considered provision for both special educational needs and additional learning needs (referred to as additional educational needs).
2. The policy review identified weaknesses in relation to each stage of the process for meeting special educational needs (identification, assessment, planning and review) and in relation to quality assurance and evaluation of the process. Figure one provides a summary of the key weaknesses. These weaknesses contributed to poor outcomes for many children and young people, to parents' and carers' dissatisfaction and, in some cases, anger over provision, and to poor value for money for the state. For example, failure to intervene early and effectively can lead to problems escalating and becoming more expensive to deal with.
3. In 2009, in response to these weaknesses, four pilot projects were set up as part of a programme of action research designed to inform and enable reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs. The pilots were established to address particular elements of reform as follows:
 - pilot A, to develop a pilot model for the quality assurance of provision made for children and young people with additional learning needs (undertaken by Caerphilly and Flintshire local authorities);

- pilot B, to develop and pilot an inter-disciplinary model for the identification, assessment, planning and review of provision for children and young people with severe and/or complex needs (undertaken by Carmarthenshire and Torfaen local authorities);
 - pilot C, to develop and pilot a model for the identification, assessment, planning and review of provision for children and young people with additional learning needs that are not severe and/or complex (undertaken by Bridgend, Pembrokeshire and Torfaen local authorities); and
 - pilot D, to develop the role of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator/Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo/ALNCo) (undertaken by Cardiff and Newport local authorities).
4. The initial developmental phase of the pilot was originally intended to run from September 2008-July 2011. However, delays arising from legal issues meant that the start date was delayed until September 2009 and contracts with the pilot projects were not signed until October 2009-January 2010. Therefore, the developmental phase was cut from almost three years to less than two years. In August 2011, the Additional Learning Needs Pilots moved to the piloting phase (known as the robust testing phase). The piloting phase is due to conclude in July 2012. Consideration is being given to a further period of piloting to evaluate how the elements of the proposed reforms work as a system.

Action research and evaluation of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects

5. The People and Work Unit were commissioned to undertake a programme of action research to assess the impact and effectiveness of the ALN pilots. This has included:
- working with the pilot projects and the Welsh Government statutory reform team in the role of critical friend;
 - undertaking a systematic scoping review looking at the literature on the need for reform, a detailed analysis of the costs of reform and evaluation of the progress made by the pilot projects; and
 - participating in, and contributing to, a series of project meetings and meetings of the Additional Learning Needs Statutory Reform Group.

Figure 1: overview of the shortcomings at each stage of the process



Management and implementation of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects by the Welsh Government

6. The consultation process, which led to the establishment of the pilot projects, highlighted a substantial degree of consensus around the weaknesses of the existing system but less clarity on the direction of change.
7. The need for a comprehensive vision was identified early on in the developmental phase of the pilot projects. This needed to outline:
 - the intended outcomes of reform;
 - the means for achieving those outcomes, such as the introduction of new planning and quality assurance processes; and
 - the ways in which the different strands of reform (such as planning and quality assurance processes) were intended to fit together to realise these outcomes.
8. However, given the breadth and complexity of the proposed reforms, which included many different strands, it proved to be challenging to develop and communicate a comprehensive vision. This made it difficult to see how the different strands being piloted related to each other and to other parts of the system. This, in turn, contributed to weaknesses in integrating the different strands - such as the quality assurance system, individual development plan (IDP) and ALNCo role - across the pilot projects. It also made it challenging to communicate the vision of reform and engage with stakeholders who were not directly involved in the pilots.
9. Strong central leadership and co-ordination of the pilot projects was required for the following reasons:
 - the diversity of the pilot projects;
 - the absence, at the start of the developmental phase, of a detailed vision outlining how the pilot models would relate to each other and to the other proposed reform of the statutory framework; and

- the limited time available for the developmental phase.
10. The ability of the Welsh Government to provide strong central leadership and co-ordination of the pilot projects, was constrained by the small size (and, consequently, limited capacity) of the statutory reform team and by the open, collaborative approach taken to managing the project: an approach which was effective in engaging the pilot projects in development but which slowed the process.
 11. The pilot projects fostered strong support and engagement from those involved in the process and were effective in engaging parts of the voluntary sector. However, the pilots had only limited success engaging stakeholders from other key sectors not directly involved in the pilot projects, such as school improvement services within local authorities, and health and social care services.
 12. The IDP proved, in many ways, to be the most complex element of the three models developed by the pilot projects. The IDP is intended to replace statements of special educational needs, one of the most contentious parts of the existing system and is, therefore, central to the proposed reforms. Moreover, unlike many other elements of the reform, the proposed introduction of IDPs requires primary legislation. Therefore, decisions about the IDP have to be made before legislation can proceed and the planned legislative timetable has created additional pressures.
 13. The IDP came to dominate and, arguably, unbalance the pilot projects, drawing in increasing amounts of the pilots' and the Welsh Government reform team's time and energy, to the detriment of the development of the other models and other elements of the proposed reforms, such as parent partnership support services.

Management and implementation of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects by local authorities

14. Overall, the pilots were well managed and the pilot projects' management structure, involving pilot lead officers, project managers and reference or steering

groups, was effective. As outlined below, each pilot project largely fulfilled their terms and conditions.

15. **Pilot A**, led by Caerphilly and Flintshire, was contracted to develop a model for the quality assurance of provision made for children and young people with additional learning needs. The work included three core strands, the development of:

- outcome measures, to enable a range of 'hard' and 'soft' outcomes, such as changes in children and young people's attainment and attitudes, and the experiences of children and young people, their parents and carers and other professionals working with them, to be measured by schools;
- provision mapping, a tool for linking data on inputs, such as expenditure and the type of interventions being delivered to children and young people with additional learning needs, with data on outcomes for those children and young people; and
- a self-evaluation toolkit to enable schools to evaluate their capacity to meet the needs of pupils with additional learning needs.

16. Good progress was made on all three strands and each was extensively piloted. By the end of the developmental phase, however, further work was needed to refine the IT systems to support the provision map. Moreover, amongst the pilots that had not piloted the tools (pilots B, C and D), there was some scepticism about some elements of the quality assurance system, such as the outcome measures.

17. **Pilot B**, led by Carmarthenshire and Torfaen, was contracted to develop and pilot a framework for the identification, assessment, planning and review of provision for children and young people with additional learning needs that are severe and/or complex. This included the development of:

- an individual development plan (IDP);
- structures and processes for enabling multi-agency working;

- structures and processes for enabling multi-agency funding decisions to be made, including developing the role of Complex Needs Panels, which make funding decisions; and
- family information and support services and dispute resolution mechanisms.

18. Good progress was made developing the IDP, known as Planning Together.

Although the time it took to develop the IDP meant that only limited piloting was possible, feedback on the IDP developed by pilot B from professionals, parents, carers, children and young people was positive. The model was accepted by a multi-agency advisory group as the proposed model, for all children and young people with additional learning needs¹, to be piloted following the completion of the developmental phase of the pilots.

19. However, less progress was made in developing existing systems, processes and structures for enabling multi-agency working or developing family information and support services and dispute resolution mechanisms. Moreover, the developmental work to date has focused upon children and young people aged 5-16. Only limited links have been made to the Early Support programme, for children aged 0-4, and to provision for those aged 17-25.

20. **Pilot C**, led by Bridgend, Pembrokeshire and Torfaen², was contracted to develop and pilot an identification, assessment, planning and review framework for children and young people with additional learning needs that are not severe and/or complex. This included the development of an IDP – an integral part of the planning process. They were also contracted to develop family information and support services, dispute resolution mechanisms and to develop and pilot a system for facilitating the improvement of schools' additional learning needs provision.

¹ Initially separate IDPs were developed by pilot B, for children and young people whose additional learning needs were severe or complex, and by pilot C, for those whose additional learning needs were neither severe nor complex.

² Torfaen was involved in both pilots B and C. However, in practice, it worked more closely with Carmarthenshire on pilot B. We, therefore, discuss Torfaen's contribution in relation to pilot B. It is also important to note that the distinction between pilots B and C was blurred once the decision had been taken to develop one IDP for all children and young people with additional learning needs, regardless of whether or not their needs are severe or complex.

21. Good progress was made developing the single individual planning process covering all aspects of a child's or young person's needs. Although only limited piloting of the IDP, known as John/Jenny's plan, was possible, feedback on the IDP developed by pilot C from professionals, parents and carers, and children and young people was positive. Nevertheless, at the end of the developmental phase, it was agreed by a multi-agency advisory group, that a single IDP based on Planning Together (pilot B's IDP), be developed for all children and young people with additional learning needs. Despite the differences in the models developed by pilots B and C, there had been strong consensus across the pilots on the content and approach to IDPs and both Planning Together and John/Jenny's plan, developed and shared a person-centred planning approach. The work undertaken by pilot C was also used to inform the further development of Planning Together.
22. Good progress was also made on the other key elements, including developing family information and support services, an identification, assessment, planning and review framework, and proposals for facilitating the improvement of schools' additional learning needs provision.
23. **Pilot D**, led by Cardiff and Newport, was contracted to develop and define the role of the ALNCo and to develop and pilot an accredited course for ALNCos.
24. Good progress was made in developing and defining the role of the ALNCo. A role specification was developed, outlining 'principles' – what an ALNCo needs to know - and 'themes' – what an ALNCo needs to do (pilot D, unpublished document). A professional qualification to equip ALNCos with the knowledge and skills demanded by the principles and themes in the role specification was also developed. Feedback from stakeholders, including representatives from special schools, the local authority and the voluntary sector, about the proposed role specification and qualification has been positive. However, it was agreed with the Welsh Government that until decisions about the future ALNCo role and training had been made, and a commissioning process undertaken, it would not be possible to pilot the accredited course needed for the professional qualification.

The role of action research in the development of the pilot

25. The effectiveness and impact of the People and Work Unit's role as critical friend to each of the pilot projects varied and most pilots only used the support sporadically. In contrast, the People and Work Unit's role as critical friend to the programme as a whole was more effective.

Outcomes and impact of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects during the developmental phase

26. This report focuses upon the outcomes and impact of the developmental phase of the pilot projects upon the proposed statutory reform process. Four key ways in which the pilot projects could contribute to this process were identified:

- piloting key elements of reform to enable their cost-effectiveness to be evaluated;
- clarifying a comprehensive and positive vision of reform, outlining both how the existing system would be reformed and the expected impact of that reform;
- informing proposals for system-wide reform; and
- fostering understanding of, and engagement with, the statutory reform process amongst key groups of stakeholders.

27. By the end of the developmental phase of the pilot projects:

- three models – the quality assurance system, an individual planning process centred upon the IDP and the ALNCo role - had been developed and subjected to limited piloting. This helped inform an analysis of the expected costs of reform. However, the limited piloting meant it provided very little evidence on the likely impact or cost-effectiveness of the models;
- the models the pilots developed, became key elements of the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs. The pilots' developmental work also provided a clearer picture of the impact that these and other elements of the reform programme, such as family

information and support services, were expected to make. Nevertheless, the vision of reform for children and young people aged 5-16 was much clearer than that for those aged 0-4 and 17-25. There were also important aspects of the vision, which cut across the 0-25 age range, which were unresolved at the end of the developmental phase. These included the extent to which the existing legal protection accorded to statements would be extended to children and young people whose additional learning needs are not severe and/or complex; the definition of additional learning needs; and the eligibility of children and young people for IDPs;

- the pilots have largely validated the initial analysis of the case for change, which identified systemic weaknesses in the existing system. Although the limited piloting of the models reduced their contribution, the pilots have still made a significant contribution to analysis of the implications of a system-wide reform. This has informed the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales; and
- the pilots successfully engaged those directly involved in development work and piloting, but were not an effective, nor arguably appropriate, vehicle for engaging other groups of stakeholders, such as those working on school improvement, health and social care.

28. The expected outcomes and impact of the pilot project models themselves, upon children and young people, their parents and carers and the state, will be evaluated following completion of the piloting phase.

Conclusions

29. The pilot projects reinforced the case for evolutionary rather than revolutionary reform. The pilot models are consistent with the principles embodied in the existing Special Education Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) and build upon existing good practice, using the models that have been developed to enable and support change. Crucially, the evidence from both the pilots and the scoping review indicates that while aspects of the existing system are inefficient and/or ineffective, many of the weaknesses of the existing system are not

inherent in its models and structure, but relate to poor implementation and limited capacity.

30. The developmental approach, using pilot projects, was largely successful in developing models, but it demanded strong central co-ordination and struggled to fully pilot the models within the developmental phase.
31. Progress has been made in developing and piloting models for children and young people in school and aged 5-16. However, further work is required to develop and pilot the models. Further work is also required to develop and pilot models for children aged 0-4 years, where links have been made to the Early Support programme, but remain inchoate, and, for young people aged 17-25, where only limited progress has been made. Further work is also required to pilot the models with those working in other sectors, such as health and social care.
32. There is no panacea. Successful reform will depend upon a range of inter-dependent reforms and there is, therefore, a clear case for system-wide piloting. However, it is likely to be challenging to achieve this within the time available for the current piloting phase, which is due to conclude in July 2012.

Recommendations

33. Recommendation one: in relation to the IDP and quality assurance system, consideration should be given to specifying the processes and requirements for an individual planning process and quality assurance system, and providing examples of good practice, based upon the existing evidential base (drawing, for example, upon other studies and evaluations) and evidence from the models that have been developed by the pilots, without requiring the adoption of a specific tool or piece of software. An approach akin to the 'adopt or justify model'. In contrast, we recommend that consideration is given to making the ALNCo training mandatory and organised on a national basis.

34. Recommendation two: consideration should be given to asking local authorities to develop their plans on how they are going to build on their existing good practice when implementing the proposed reforms.
35. Recommendation three: as part of the piloting phase, consideration should be given to exploring whether, and how, the models can be extended to children aged 0-4 years and young people aged 17-25 years.
36. Recommendation four: consideration should be given to embedding a programme of engagement of key stakeholders from the Welsh Government and local authorities, local health boards and local health trusts into the piloting phase.
37. Recommendation five: during the piloting phase, due regard should be given to identifying and mapping out the contextual changes required to enable the pilot models to function to full effect. The evaluation should, therefore, look at both processes and outcomes.
38. Recommendation six: consideration should be given to commissioning further research to better understand the cost-effectiveness of multi-agency panels, the extent of training needs and how they could best be met, and the requirements for key working and designated key workers.

1. Introduction

The Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects

- 1.1. In 2009, the Welsh Government commissioned four pilot projects in order to explore ways of addressing weaknesses in relation to the planning, co-ordination and quality assurance of educational provision for children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). Children and young people with additional learning needs are defined as those learners whose 'needs are greater than the majority of their peers'³ (NAfW, 2004b, p1).
- 1.2. The initial developmental phase of the pilot projects was delayed, which reduced the length of time available for the development of the pilot models from three to two years. This report focuses upon the pilot developmental phase which ran from July 2009 to July 2011. This was followed by a piloting phase, known as the robust testing phase, that ran from August 2011 and which is due to conclude in July 2012. As we outline in section four, the reduction in the length of time available during the developmental phase and the time it took to develop the models, meant there was only time for limited piloting of the models and approaches developed by the projects during this phase. Consideration is being given to a further period of piloting, to follow the robust trialling phase, in order to evaluate how well the proposed elements of reform work together as a system.
- 1.3. Pilot A, led by Flintshire and Caerphilly local authorities, was contracted to develop and pilot a quality assurance system to evaluate the educational provision for children and young people with ALN. The work included three core strands, the development of:
 - provision mapping, a tool for linking data on inputs, such as expenditure and the type of interventions being delivered to children and young people with

³ The concept and definition of additional learning needs and special educational needs are discussed in detail in section two and appendix two.

additional learning needs, with data on outcomes for those children and young people;

- outcome measures, to enable a range of 'hard' and 'soft' outcomes, such as attendance, behaviour, progression in personal and social skills, participation in activities in school and out of school and stakeholder satisfaction with provision, to be measured by schools; and
- a self-evaluation toolkit to enable schools to evaluate their capacity to meet the needs of pupils with additional learning needs⁴ and their compliance with statutory requirements such as the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) and the Equality Act (2010)⁵.

1.4. Pilot B, led by Carmarthenshire and Torfaen local authorities, was responsible for developing and piloting an identification, assessment, planning and review framework, for children and young people with additional learning needs that are severe and/or complex (see boxed text). The work included three core strands, developing:

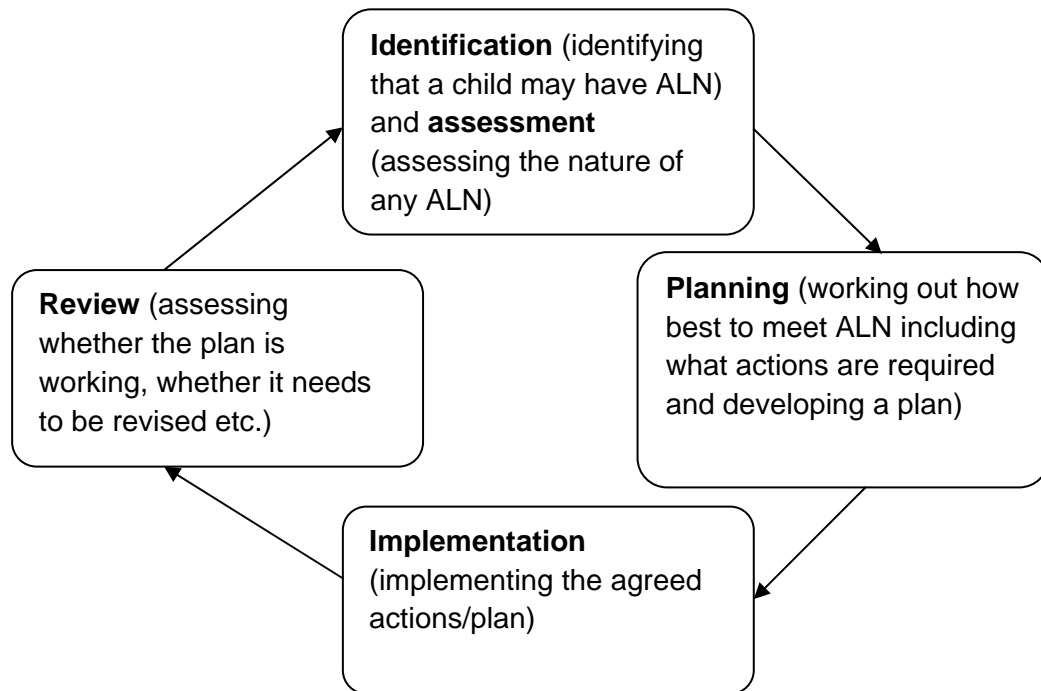
- a single individual planning process covering all aspects of a child's or young person's needs, centred around the IDP;
- systems and processes for enabling multi-agency working and multi-agency funding decisions to be made to meet a child's or young person's needs, such as the development of complex needs funding panels; and
- family information and support services, and dispute resolution mechanisms.

⁴ This draws upon a range of sources including the Estyn Common Inspection Framework and the draft Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) for Wales.

⁵ This replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The identification, assessment, planning and review cycle

As illustrated below, the process for meeting children and young people's additional learning needs agreed by pilots B and C, involves four broad stages:



The individual development plan (IDP) and the individual planning process used to create the IDP, is an integral part of this cycle. For example:

- information on assessment is considered as part of the individual planning process and is recorded in the IDP;
- the planning process is used to create an action plan, which is recorded in the IDP; and
- the planning process includes a review of the IDP, within at least six months, which is used to inform future action, and to update the IDP.

Adapted from Pilot Project C (unpublished document a).

- 1.5. Pilot C, led by Bridgend, Pembrokeshire and Torfaen⁶ local authorities, was responsible for developing and piloting an assessment and planning framework for children and young people with additional learning needs that are not severe and/or complex. The work included three core strands, developing:
- a single individual planning process covering all aspects of a child's or young person's needs;
 - a system for facilitating the improvement of school's additional learning needs provision; and
 - family information and support services, and dispute resolution mechanisms.
- 1.6. Pilot D, led by Cardiff and Newport local authorities, was responsible for developing and defining the role of the Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) and developing and piloting an accredited course for ALNCoS.
- 1.7. The Additional Learning Needs Pilot was intended to inform the reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales. The need for reform of the statutory framework had been identified through the review of special educational needs undertaken by the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee (NAfW, 2004a, 2006a, 2007), Estyn (2003, 2004, 2007), the Audit Commission (2002) and the initial Welsh Government consultation with stakeholders (WAG, 2008a).
- 1.8. Following completion of the developmental phase, the Welsh Government developed detailed proposals for reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales. The pre-legislative consultation on these proposals is due to be published in June 2012.

⁶ Torfaen was involved in both pilots B and C. However, in practice, it worked more closely with Carmarthenshire on pilot B. We, therefore, discuss Torfaen's contribution in relation to pilot B. It is also important to note that the distinction between pilots B and C was blurred once the decision had been taken to develop one IDP for all children and young people with additional learning needs, regardless of whether or not their needs are severe or complex.

- 1.9. The People and Work Unit was commissioned to undertake a programme of action research to assess the impact and effectiveness of the ALN pilots. This report sets out the People and Work Unit's findings, drawing from literature and research undertaken as part of the study.
- 1.10. The report consists of six sections. Following this introductory section: section two outlines the context of the pilot projects including the policy context and the need for reform; section three outlines the methodology; section four reviews the work and findings of the pilot projects; section five considers the outcome and impact of the developmental phase of the pilot projects and the contribution the work has made to the reform programme; and section six outlines the conclusions and recommendations.

2. The context for the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects

Special educational needs and additional learning needs

2.1. Section 312 of the Education Act 1996, provides the legal definition of special educational needs. As outlined in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b):

‘Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

(a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or

(b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority, or

(c) are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

Special educational provision means:

(a) for children of two or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools, in the area

(b) for children under two, educational provision of any kind.’

(NAfW, 2004b, p1., adapted from Section 312 of the Education Act 1996).

- 2.2. In 2006, the statutory guidance Inclusion and Pupil Support (NAfW, 2006b) introduced the concept of additional learning needs and provides the current policy framework for children and young people with additional learning needs. This guidance identifies children and young people as having additional learning needs when their learning needs are greater than the majority of their peers. Children and young people whose needs are significantly greater than the majority of their peers are defined as having special educational needs (NAfW, 2006b). As such, special educational needs are a subset of additional learning needs, and a distinction is made between additional learning needs that are severe and complex, which roughly equates to special educational needs (as defined by the Education Act 1996), and those additional learning needs that are not severe and/or complex. The development of these concepts and definitions is discussed in further detail in appendix two.

Inclusion and pupil support

- 2.3. The statutory guidance Inclusion and Pupil Support (NAfW, 2006b) aims to ensure children and young people with additional learning needs receive suitable education and do not become disengaged from education. It stresses that inclusion requires more than simply placing pupils in mainstream or special schools; it requires changes to the way schools work and teach, including the development of an inclusive curriculum differentiated to meet the needs of all children and young people, enhancing staff's understanding of inclusive learning, high expectations, joint working with parents and partner agencies and developing approaches for listening to the views of children and young people (ibid, section 2, para.2-3). The legal definition of special educational needs is not changed by the Inclusion and Pupil Support guidance and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) (discussed below) continues to apply to those children and

young people whose needs fall within the legal definition of special educational needs.

The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales

- 2.4. The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) outlines how services such as education, health and social care should exercise their functions relating to children with special educational needs and defines the standards that should be met (see boxed text below).

The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales

The basic principles of the code are:

- all children with special educational needs should have their needs met;
- these special educational needs should normally be met in early years settings and/or mainstream schools;
- the views of parents and their children will be listened to and taken into account;
- parents have a vital role in supporting their child's education; and
- children with special educational needs should receive a broad, well-balanced and relevant education.

Adapted from NAfW, 2004b.

- 2.5. The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) outlines a step-by-step approach to meeting a child's (or young person's)⁷ needs. The first step, known as School Action, is to make additional provision within school for a child identified as needing help, such as different ways of teaching or through providing specialist equipment. If the child still struggles to make progress, the second step, School Action Plus, involves seeking specialist advice and support from someone outside the school, such as a speech and language therapist. If a mainstream school cannot meet a child's

⁷ The code refers to 'children', to denote children and young people up to the age of 18.

learning needs or the child is still struggling to make progress under School Action and School Action Plus, the third step is a statutory assessment which involves the local authority assessing the child's needs and identifying the type and quantity of specialist help they require. If the assessment indicates that specialist help is required⁸, the child's needs and the response to meeting those needs are recorded in a statement of their special educational needs. Schools are required to keep a register of all pupils that have been identified as having special needs.

Person-centred planning

2.6. Person-centred planning is at the heart of many of the proposed reforms being introduced as part of the reform of the statutory framework for special educational needs. It has been described as 'a way of discovering how a person wants to live their life and what is required to make that possible' (NDA, 2011, p68). It reflects a 'social' (as distinct from 'medical') model of disability, embodies a strengths-based approach to planning and seeks to involve people as active participants in the planning process. It typically involves exploring (and distinguishing between) what is 'important to' and 'important for' a person and may also explore 'what is working' and 'what is not working' for a person, their strengths, achievements and the challenges they face, using a range of methods to facilitate this. Crucially, it also involves planning to meet a person's needs, preferences and aspirations in a person-centred, rather than service-centred way.

⁸ As the guidance outlines, following an assessment, 'The LEA may decide that the degree of the child's learning difficulty and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's special educational needs is such as to require the LEA to determine the child's special educational provision through a statement'. It goes on to say that 'The LEA will make this decision when it considers that the special educational provision necessary to meet the child's needs cannot reasonably be provided within the resources normally available to mainstream schools and early education settings in the area' (NAfW, 2004a, 94).

The weaknesses of the existing statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs

- 2.7. In 2003, the National Assembly for Wales' Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (ELLS) Committee started a policy review of special educational needs (SEN). The review was initiated in response to recommendations made in reports by Estyn (2003), the Audit Commission (2002) and Cambridge Education Associates (unpublished document). The review was conducted in three phases, with reports focused upon early identification and intervention (Part 1) (NAfW, 2004a), the Statutory Assessment (Statementing) Framework for Children with SEN (Part 2) (NAfW, 2006a) and Transitions (Part 3) (NAfW, 2007). The review considered provision for both special educational needs and additional learning needs (referred to as additional educational needs) and made over 100 recommendations.
- 2.8. The review concluded that despite the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b), which services must have regard to⁹, there was a "postcode lottery" in Wales in relation to the quality of provision (NAfW, 2006a). Both this review and Estyn (2003) found that:
- there were often long delays in providing support for pupils with special educational needs, even where these needs had been identified (Estyn, 2003);
 - there was a lack of understanding and trust in the current system and many parents found that seeking specialist advice and support for their child was a frustrating and distressing process (NAfW, 2004a, 2006a);
 - the system was judged to be too complex, bureaucratic, costly and time consuming (particularly in relation to the statementing system) and insufficiently child or parent/carer-centred (NAfW, 2004a); and

⁹ The code is statutory guidance. As the code states: 'whenever settings, schools and LEAs decide how to exercise their functions relating to children with special educational needs, and whenever the health and social services provide help to settings, schools and LEAs in this, those bodies must consider what this Code says. These bodies must fulfil their statutory duties towards children with special educational needs but it is up to them to decide how to do so – in the light of the guidance in this Code of Practice' (ibid, p. xi).

- although good progress had been made in developing Welsh medium provision in some areas, in other areas much less progress had been made (NAfW, 2004a, 2006a).

2.9. The systematic scoping review¹⁰ (discussed in detail in the interim report, Holtom et al, forthcoming a) highlights a range of weaknesses in the system, which contribute to these failures. These are discussed below.

Weaknesses in leadership, teaching and assessment

2.10. Reports have identified a considerable variation in the quality of leadership and the co-ordination of provision made by schools (WAG, unpublished document b) and local authorities (Estyn, 2011) for additional learning needs, and have noted that good practice is not always effectively disseminated or consistently implemented (NAfW, 2004a). Moreover, some local authorities are criticised for not making effective use of staff from specialist schools to assist with inclusion into mainstream schools or settings (Beany, 2006) and some teachers do not have up-to-date knowledge and expertise in assessing pupils' progress (Estyn, 2003). As a consequence, some children and young people do not receive appropriate support due to late diagnosis of, or failures to diagnose, their special educational needs (NAfW, 2004a). However, recent initiatives, such as Unlocking the Potential¹¹, are judged to have helped address this weakness (Estyn, 2009).

2.11. The scoping review identified relatively little direct reference to weaknesses in teacher training and practice in Wales¹². In contrast, the Rose review (2010) on dyslexia in English schools highlights weaknesses in teaching, particularly

¹⁰ The study was systematic but did not have the scope of, for example, a rapid evidence assessment and is, therefore, best described as a systematic scoping review.

¹¹ The initiative which provided funding to promote the use of special schools as community focused resource bases, was judged by Estyn to be 'very successful' in raising awareness of the expertise in special schools and in promoting an exchange of skills between mainstream and special schools (Estyn, 2009).

¹² There is, for example, no direct reference to poor quality teaching in the ELLS Committee reviews, although the importance of SEN in Initial Teacher Training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was highlighted in school visits undertaken as part of the review and Estyn (2003) makes recommendations on the importance of teacher training in this area.

at reception years, and the limited capacity of some schools to deal with special educational needs and prevent unnecessary recourse to local authority assessment (Rose, 2010). In part, the Rose review attributes this to weaknesses in initial teacher training, which means that teachers are not adequately prepared to deal with special (or by implication, additional) learning needs. The need to develop teacher training and knowledge sharing within the pedagogic community was also highlighted by the Salt Review of Teacher Supply for Severe, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (Salt, 2010). It is likely that similar issues apply to many schools in Wales, given the similarities between the two systems in terms of both teacher training and practice, and the movement of teachers and trainee teachers between England and Wales.

- 2.12. Nevertheless, there is some evidence of improvements in pedagogy and teacher training. A study commissioned by the English Department for Education (Lindsay et al, 2011) on the range of developments that aim to improve teacher support regarding special educational needs suggests that there have been improvements in initial teacher training (which qualifies teachers to teach in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales). Based on interviews with providers of undergraduate teacher training, local authority inclusion development programme leaders and school staff, the study found that training providers are fully incorporating the SEN toolkit into teacher training (ibid.).

Weaknesses in data, monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance

- 2.13. Estyn has concluded that ineffective monitoring and evaluation of services and the lack of standardised measures of pupil need or progress also contribute to weaknesses in provision (Estyn, 2003, 2011). One consequence of this is that there is insufficient evidence of the cost effectiveness¹³ of different types of intervention and little is known about the impact of provision

¹³ Nevertheless, it has been suggested that the data currently held could be linked with more biographical variables from other sources, including interest group databases and census data, in order to provide a better cost-benefit analysis of interventions (Dyson and Pappas, 2004).

for children with special educational needs upon their achievement in school¹⁴ (Estyn, 2003).

Poor planning, provision and co-ordination

2.14. Estyn has also identified significant weaknesses in multi-agency working, including:

- poor communication and information sharing;
- under-developed planning and evaluation;
- multi-disciplinary assessments which are often completed in isolation from one another;
- poor communication of local authority plans and the financial effects of these, and disputes between agencies over levels of funding, priorities and which agency pays for what and when; and
- a lack of trust by one agency of another (Estyn, 2003, 2011).

2.15. This can have a negative impact on children's, young people's and their family's experience of the process. For example, they may have to explain their circumstances over and over again to different professionals. It can also have a negative impact upon the effectiveness of provision. For example, different interventions may be poorly co-ordinated, limiting their effectiveness.

Limited capacity

2.16. Although the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee reported that 'No clear evidence has emerged that the overall level of resource is inadequate', they highlighted the widespread perception amongst respondents to their consultation that there was 'insufficient funding available for the early identification and intervention of SEN through the various settings' (NAfW,

¹⁴ Reliance on teacher assessment where SEN provision is limited is problematic and too often data simply relates to the distance between outcomes in SEN and non-SEN pupils. Estyn has argued that assessment of outcomes should measure the 'distance travelled' by pupils relating to their circumstances and provision that they access (Estyn, 2007).

2004a, p9). They concluded that 'there is a shortage of specialist staff involved with early identification and provision of support for children and young people with SEN' (NAfW, 2004a, p30).

Weaknesses in family support, advocacy and dispute resolution

- 2.17. The Welsh Government consultation process about reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs, highlighted significant weaknesses in work with the families of children and young people with additional learning needs (WAG, 2008a). Similarly, the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee review reported that many parents and carers 'feel compelled to press for statements because they do not feel that their children are being adequately supported' (NAfW, 2006a, p17). This problem stems, in part, from the complexity and administrative demands created by the systems and practices used for the identification, assessment, planning and review of additional learning needs, such as processes associated with School Action, School Action Plus and statementing. This can create barriers between parents, teachers and other professionals, and contributes to low levels of trust in the system (NAfW, 2006a).
- 2.18. These findings on the divide between families and professionals are echoed by the Bercow (2008), Lamb (2009) and Rose (2010) reviews, commissioned by the English Department for Education. The Lamb review (DfE, 2010) highlights the differing views of teachers, parents and carers regarding the effectiveness of support for pupils with special educational needs, particularly in relation to inclusion in mainstream schools and behavioural issues. The Bercow review (2008) identifies a further divergence between parents and teachers, with parents feeling a lack of empathy from education professionals; and teaching staff pointing to limited resources to meet special educational needs. The Rose review suggests that a lack of parental confidence in the ability of mainstream schools to cope with learning difficulties has prompted many to seek statements of special educational needs from the local authority; a conclusion that informs the reform of the system in Wales (WAG,

unpublished document b). It is also believed that few parents are made aware of the independent advocacy available to them from School Action stage upwards (Callanan et al, 2008).

Meeting the needs of looked after children

2.19. The Office of the Children's Commissioner reported that children looked after by the local authority find it particularly difficult to access statutory assessment arrangements¹⁵ for meeting their special educational needs (NAfW, 2006a). Similarly, the special educational needs of young people looked after by the local authority are not always effectively diagnosed or addressed. In some cases, decisions about care placements do not give sufficient weight to the impact upon a young person's education (Archer and Fletcher-Campbell, 2003).

Transition from secondary school into further or higher education or employment

2.20. There are poor outcomes for adults with learning disabilities in terms of securing employment and independence (NAfW, 2007). While transition meetings are required by law for those with a statement of special educational needs, many young people do not recall attending these meetings, or were under-prepared, and frequently both young people and their parents and carers felt anxious about, and unsupported during and following, transition (Sloper et al, 2011). Furthermore, few report having met with a dedicated independent careers advisor (Aston et al, 2004). Of all the transitions young people with additional learning needs make, transition to work-based learning is often the most difficult and it is here that a lack of joined-up working is perhaps most evident (Estyn, 2005).

¹⁵ This is recorded in the ELLS Committee report (NAfW, 2006).

Summary of the shortcomings of the existing system

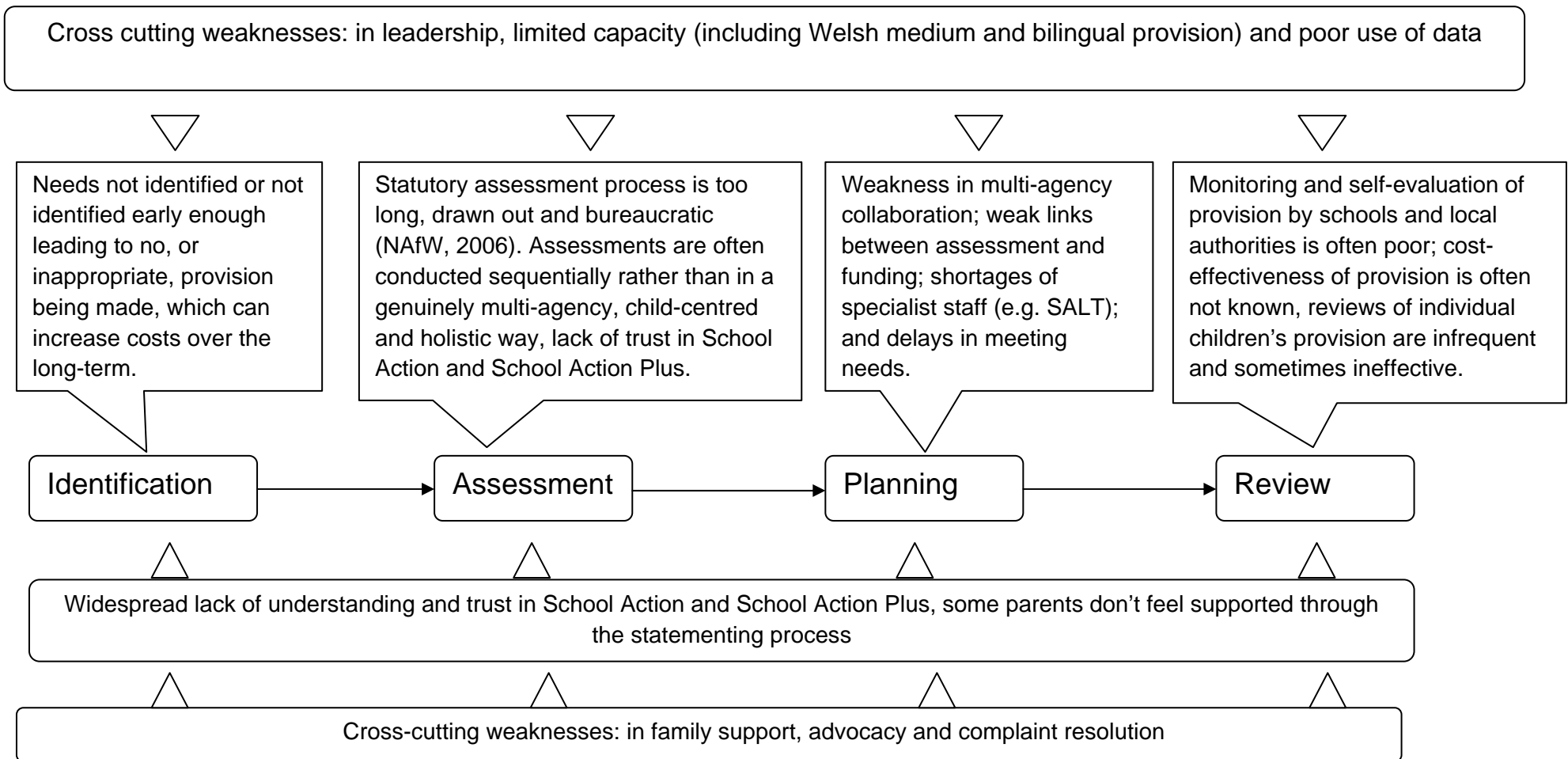
2.21. Figure two below provides a summary of the key shortcomings of the existing system in relation to each of the key stages of identification, assessment, planning and review of provision. These weaknesses, in turn, contribute to poor outcomes for many children and young people and to parents' and carers' dissatisfaction and, in some cases, anger over provision, and also contribute to poor value for money for the state.

Consultation with stakeholders on the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales

2.22. One of the key recommendations of the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee review was that stakeholders should be consulted about any proposed reform of the statutory framework (NAfW, 2006a). A Welsh Assembly Government task group contributed to the policy review and, in response to the recommendations of the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee (ibid.), drew up seven options for change which, in 2007, were discussed with stakeholders and refined into three options:

- minor changes;
- reshaping the approach; and
- the development of a 'passport approach' (WAG, unpublished document c).

Figure 2: overview of the shortcomings at each stage of the process¹⁶



¹⁶Although the key stages, identification, assessment, planning and review are presented in a linear sequence in order to illustrate the weaknesses, they should be thought of as a cycle.

2.23. These three options were then discussed with parents and carers and relevant professionals (in June and July 2007) and the voluntary sector (in autumn 2007) (WAG, 2008a). As outlined in the report on the process:

The aims of the preliminary consultation with key stakeholders were to:

- 'Build confidence and a consensus about the way forward.
- Explore possible options for reform emerging from the work of the National Assembly ELLS Committee Review of Statutory Assessment and Statementing and the related work outcomes from the WAG Task Group.
- Seek views about the effectiveness of the current system.
- Elicit essential features of a reformed framework' (ibid., p1).

2.24. The consultation found a high level of consensus around the weaknesses of the existing system, with views from both phases of the consultation with parents, carers, professionals and the voluntary sector, closely aligned. However, no single option for addressing these weaknesses emerged as a clear way forward, although aspects from all of them were seen as potential improvements on the current system. The resulting report, *Statements or Something Better?* (ibid.), summarised the main desirable features of a reformed system as identified by the consultation. The report states that such a system would need to be based on the rights of the child and the following underpinning principles for children and young people with ALN:

- 'To benefit from an inclusive education in whatever setting they are educated.
- To have the rights and entitlements afforded to all other children and young people as embodied in Rights to Action [WAG, 2004].
- To benefit from a high quality broad and balanced education.
- To be able to make good progress towards achieving their potential and an independent life.

- To have assessments and planning of provision based upon an holistic view of individual needs.
- To have individual ALN identified and assessed early and appropriate provision made promptly.
- For those who are registered as Looked After, to benefit from effective corporate parenting.
- For those with differing ethnic and cultural backgrounds to have their special educational needs identified, assessed and met appropriately' (WAG, 2008a, p3).

2.25. The report (WAG, 2008a) also focuses on the need to develop consistency and quality across Wales, across stages of education and across the range of agencies working with a young person. Such provision needs to:

- 'Be equitable, fair and transparent.
- Be consistently applied within and across LEAs in Wales.
- Be flexible and responsive to individual needs.
- Foster effective partnerships with parents/carers and the voluntary sector.
- Have effective protection of entitlement.
- Make efficient use of resources.
- Ensure rigorous evaluation and monitoring to assure consistently high quality.
- Listen empathetically and take account of the views of children, young people and their parents or carers are in planning provision.
- Have short timescales that are adhered to, from the point of identification to the making of provision.
- Ensure rigorous evaluation and monitoring to assure consistent high quality' (ibid., p4).

2.26. Looking at the three options put forward of:

- option one: instituting minor changes;
- option two: reshaping the approach; or

- option three: a passport approach;

the consultation found there was widespread support for:

- A system of assessment and planning that is less “medical” in its approach and recognises the need for planning a child’s learning environment along with any inherent individual needs (all options);
- A consistently applied system across Wales (all options);
- The school-based *Individual Development Plan* (IDP) (option one);
- The provision of *Advocacy support* (all options);
- The appointment of a *Lead Professional* (all options);
- *The School Improvement Adviser* (all options);
- The *complex needs panel* (option two);
- The inter-disciplinary “waking day” or 24 hour curricular provision for those with more complex needs (option two); and
- The flexible entitlement statement (passport) for those who do not have complex needs (option three) (Adapted from WAG 2008a, pp4-5).

2.27. The report calls for a system that listens empathetically to, and takes account of, the views of children and young people and of their parents or carers in planning provision and that is responsive, moving quickly from identification of needs to putting provision in place. In order to achieve such a system, the report identifies some key changes to the current statutory framework and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) to improve:

- the approach to funding special educational needs/additional learning needs provision, making it more consistent, transparent and equitable;
- the approach to assessment and intervention between schools and local authority education services, making it more consistent;
- monitoring the implementation of regulations and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004a);

- the capacity of schools and other educational provision to provide for pupils with additional learning needs;
- arrangements for professional development at all levels and contexts; and
- clarity and structure in relation to the role of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator/Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo/ALNCo) within mainstream schools (ibid.).

2.28. As the report outlines in the conclusion, overall, the general consensus was that the focus should be on improving implementation of the current statutory framework rather than implementing a radical overhaul. This was because the framework was felt to offer most of what is needed and, with some improvements, it was felt that it could be made to be 'fit for purpose'. Specifically, if the current framework was made less bureaucratic and less 'medical' in its approach, it could be adapted for the wider group of learners with additional needs (ibid.).

2.29. Nevertheless, the responses made it clear that the current system is not working as it should. The inconsistencies of implementation within, and across, local authorities and mainstream schools mean that parents and carers generally have low levels of trust that they will be dealt with fairly and that their children's needs will be met appropriately. Consequently, the consultation found that the most valued aspect of the current arrangements is the legal protection afforded by a statement. Those parents whose children were protected by a statement, wanted to keep it and those whose children did not currently have a statement, wanted one.

The statutory reform process and the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects

2.30. The four Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects were established in 2009 to further develop and pilot models designed to address key recommendations made by the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee (NAfW,

2006a) and subsequent consultation (WAG, 2008a)¹⁷. These included the need to:

- improve the quality and consistency of identification, assessment, planning and review, which led to the establishment of pilot A, responsible for developing a quality assurance system;
- introduce a system of assessment and planning that was less ‘medical’ and more child or young person-centred, which led to the establishment of pilots B and C, responsible for developing individual assessment, planning and review processes for those with severe and/or complex additional learning needs and for those whose additional learning needs are not severe and/or complex; and
- to clarify and develop the role of the SENCo/ALNCo within mainstream schools, which led to the establishment of pilot D, responsible for developing the role of the ALNCo.

2.31. In order to address other recommendations made by the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee (NAfW, 2006a, 2007) and subsequent consultation (WAG, 2008a) a number of other complementary pilot projects and initiatives were established. These included: the Transition Key Working pilot projects and the development of the Early Support programme for disabled children aged under five and their families.

2.32. In order to enable the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs, new legislation is proposed¹⁸ to:

- give a statutory footing to the concept of additional learning needs;
- impose a duty on the Welsh Ministers to issue a code of practice in relation to the new statutory framework for ALN;
- replace statements of special educational needs with individual development plans (IDPs);

¹⁷ The developmental phase of the pilot projects ran until July 2011. This developmental phase is being followed by a year-long robust testing phase, due to conclude in July 2012.

¹⁸ This will replace Part IV of the Education Act 1996, which currently sets out the statutory framework for those with special educational needs, and which is outlined in appendix two.

- set out new duties for public bodies, including a duty to collaborate in respect of additional learning needs provision; and
- set out the resolution process for any disputes.

2.33. Other key reforms include:

- reforming arrangements for quality assurance;
- introducing training for school Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators in Wales;
- developing provision pathways that clearly define roles, responsibilities and minimum standards for service provision;
- making local authorities responsible for securing and funding specialist further education provision; and
- reforming the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales.

2.34. It is planned to include the new legislation in the Education Wales Bill 2013. Consultation on the proposed reforms is planned for the summer of 2012. Therefore, decisions about the proposed models and structures developed by the pilot projects, that will be consulted upon, need to be made by the summer of 2012.

The intended outcomes of reform

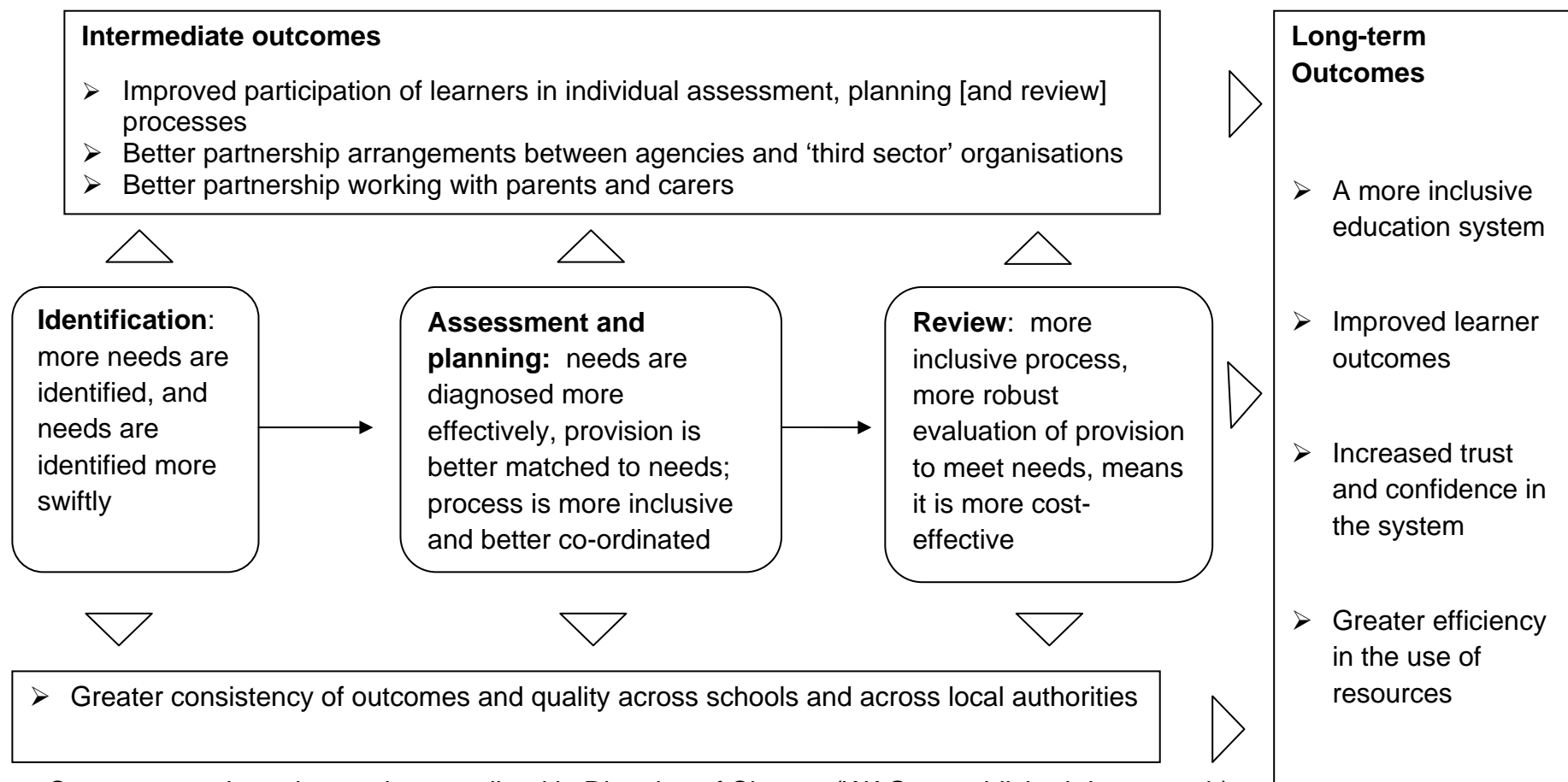
2.35. Taken together, the proposed reform of the statutory framework are intended to secure a range of long-term outcomes:

- 'A more inclusive education system.
- Improved learner outcomes.
- Improved participation of learners in individual assessment and planning processes.
- Increased trust and confidence in the system.
- Greater consistency of outcomes and quality across schools and across LAs.

- Better partnership arrangements between agencies and ‘third sector’ organisations.
- Better partnership working with parents and carers.
- Greater efficiency in the use of resources’ (WAG, unpublished document b, 3-4).

2.36. The intended outcomes include both ‘intermediate’ and ‘final’ outcomes. Figure three, below, illustrates how improvements to each stage of the identification, assessment, planning and review cycle is expected to lead to a range of intermediate outcomes, such as better partnership working with parents and carers which are, in turn, intended to contribute to final outcomes such as increased trust and confidence in the system.

Figure 3: intended outcomes of reform



Outcomes are based upon those outlined in Direction of Change (WAG, unpublished document b).

3. The action research methods

3.1. The People and Work Unit worked with the Welsh Government statutory reform team and the four Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects¹⁹ across two phases. In 2009, the People and Work Unit was commissioned to work with each pilot project and the Welsh Government to develop an evaluation and action research framework (Holtom and Lloyd-Jones, unpublished document a). In 2010, the People and Work Unit was commissioned to use this framework to support a programme of action research over 18 months to inform evaluation of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot project. The objectives were to:

- provide support to the pilots on applying monitoring and self-evaluation procedures to track progress on the pilots;
- provide support to the pilots through a critical friend role;
- undertake an action research study on each of the four pilot schemes [projects];
- review the self-evaluations and provide independent judgments on the implementation and impact of the pilots;
- design and implement professionals, children and young people with ALN, their parents and carers, and other stakeholders whose work is expected to change as a result of the pilot;
- develop a method for assessing the counterfactual created by pilots B and C;
- develop and implement programme level research that draws together the four pilots and investigates their coherence and the wider learning about the operation of the system;
- assess the contribution the pilots have made to achieving the goals of the wider reform agenda; and
- review the overall management and implementation of the pilots and identify features of good practice that can be used to inform future implementation.

¹⁹ In this report the term 'ALN pilot project' is used to identify the whole programme and 'pilot projects' refers to the individual local authority led projects within the programme.

This will include the practical aspects of delivery and a cost benefit analysis (WAG, unpublished document a).

- 3.2. In addition to this report, the study has included an interim report on the developmental phase of the Additional Learning Needs Pilots (Holtom et al, forthcoming a) and an interim report on the costs of statutory reform of special educational needs provision (Holtom et al, forthcoming b). The study has also included the development of a method for assessing the counterfactual created by pilots B and C and a method of collecting evidence from stakeholders. However, it was agreed with the Welsh Government that these elements would not be implemented until the piloting phase and they will, therefore, be considered in the final report on that phase.
- 3.3. The programme of action research to inform evaluation of the ALN pilot represented a different approach to that of a more traditional external evaluation. Rather than undertaking extensive primary research, the People and Work Unit was commissioned to work with each pilot and the Welsh Government statutory reform team to develop their monitoring, self-evaluation and action research approaches and methods to help provide the data needed for an external evaluation. This has included:
 - working with each pilot project to develop and clarify their theory of change and using these to inform the specifications that have been developed for each of the pilot project models; and
 - acting as a critical friend to each of the pilot projects and the Welsh Government statutory reform team, offering support and challenge, making links to other areas of research and offering advice in areas such as cost benefit analysis.
- 3.4. In addition, the evaluation has also drawn upon more traditional evaluation methods and approaches, including:

- a review of project documentation and reports, in order to provide background material and information on the context that could inform the action research and evaluation;
- a systematic scoping review looking at both published and unpublished project documentation and the wider published education literature, in order to evaluate the need for reform;
- discussions with pilot lead officers and project managers and the Welsh Government statutory reform team, in order to monitor and evaluate progress;
- participation in a series of meetings including pilot lead officer and project manager meetings; project management meetings and meetings of the ALN Statutory Reform Group. The purpose of participating was to monitor developments and changes in the context for the work; to enable proposed research approaches and methods to be discussed with stakeholders; and to enable emerging findings to be discussed and shared; and
- theory-based evaluation, outlining the pilot models' logic and the expected links between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes, so that the assumptions underpinning the models could be considered.

3.5. This approach, linking the critical friend role with more traditional evaluation methods, aimed to ensure that the programme of action research and the evaluation was both formative – able to inform the development of the pilot projects and the statutory reform process - and summative – able to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the pilot projects.

Scoping review and document analysis

3.6. Key project documentation, including Statements or Something Better? (WAG, 2008a), Direction of Change (WAG unpublished document b), pilot projects' proposals, quarterly reports and discussion documents were reviewed (a full list is included in appendix three), with a focus upon identifying:

- evidence of the need for change;
- the pilots' potential contribution to reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs; and
- key issues, such as barriers to reform.

3.7. The document review was complemented by a systematic scoping review of the wider published literature on additional learning needs provision and policy. The review was limited in scope and deliberately sacrificed 'sensitivity' in favour of 'specificity'²⁰, in order to maximise the number of relevant studies identified in the time available. For example:

- the search only covered England and Wales (given the historic similarities between the Welsh and English systems);
- the search was limited to four education databases that are widely used by education professionals and pedagogic research academics:
 - the British Education Index²¹;
 - the research repository of the Institute of Education²²;
 - the EPPI-Centre Database of Educational Research²³; and
 - the UK Educational Evidence Portal²⁴.
- the search terms used were limited in number: 'special educational needs'²⁵ OR 'SEN' AND 'provision' OR 'system*' OR 'service' OR 'framework' OR 'co-ordination'; and
- reports were screened by:

²⁰ Increasing 'specificity' increases the relevance of the studies identified, but by reducing the 'sensitivity' of the study it increases the risk that relevant studies are not included because the inclusion criteria are too narrowly drawn.

²¹ <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/bei/index.html>

²² <http://eprints.ioe.ac.uk/>

²³ <http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/webdatabases/Intro.aspx?ID=6>

²⁴ <http://www.eep.ac.uk/DNN2/>

²⁵ We considered using 'additional learning needs', but the term is rarely used in England and, although more widely used in Wales, it is still less common than the term special educational needs (the term 'additional support needs' is used in Scotland in place of SEN). ALN includes special educational needs and initial scoping work indicated that most of the literature focuses upon provision for more complex and severe ALN, which roughly equate to special educational needs. Moreover, trial searches using the term 'additional learning needs' yielded far fewer results. For these reasons we judged that 'special educational needs' was a more appropriate search term.

- year of publication, and only those covering the period 2005-2011 were included since the objective was, in part, to update the evidence for statutory reform by looking at evidence collected in the last five years;
- by location, with only those covering the English and Welsh systems included, since these are the two UK systems with the closest links; and
- by population, with only those covering children and young people aged 5-16 included, because the pilot project models have focused upon this age group.

Because this was intended to be a scoping review, covering both policy and research, which aimed to give an overview of the issues highlighted by the literature without robustly assessing the evidential basis upon which need was identified, no specific inclusion or exclusion criteria was applied in relation to methods.

- 3.8. Given the limited scope, this search was supplemented with a review of reports published by the Welsh Government, Estyn and the English Department for Children, Schools and Families (now the Department for Education) and research highlighted by the Education and Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee (some of which pre-dates 2005).
- 3.9. The scoping review continued as part of the action research programme for the lifetime of the study, allowing for some development of its breadth.

Strengths and weaknesses of the approach

Evaluating the process

- 3.10. The methodology, which included on-going involvement in project meetings, gave the research team an insider's perspective and, as an approach, had parallels with ethnographic research²⁶. This gave the research team privileged

²⁶ Crucially, although members of the research team were not simply (nor did they aim to be) 'neutral' observers, but were active participants in these processes.

access to aspects of the work of the statutory reform team and the pilot projects, enhancing their knowledge and understanding of each. Given the complexity of the pilot projects and the broader context, this was extremely useful, and it would have been difficult to generate this level of knowledge and understanding solely through more traditional methods such as interviews.

- 3.11. However, the approach had some weaknesses. It was time consuming, which limited the scope to undertake other types of research. Moreover, because members of the research team were only involved in some aspects of the work of the statutory reform team and the pilot projects, most notably 'public' events and meetings, considerable care was needed to ensure that the understanding and insights drawn from these were not partial (or biased). The approach also increased the risks that the research team might lose objectivity. It was, therefore, important for the research team to adopt a 'reflexive' stance, which they did, to enable them to stand back and critically evaluate the work of people they had worked together with over a number of years.

Evaluating the impact of the pilot projects

- 3.12. Because there was only limited piloting of the models developed by the pilots, there was relatively little scope within the developmental phase to empirically evaluate the impact of the pilot projects upon, for example, the experiences of children and young people. Therefore, whilst tools to enable these types of impacts to be assessed were developed, they were not used during the developmental phase of the pilot projects. However, it is anticipated that these tools can be used in the piloting phase. The focus of this will be upon evaluating the overall impact of the pilots, looking at, for example, the impact of a range of reforms upon trust and confidence in the system, rather than trying to evaluate individual models in isolation.
- 3.13. Given the limited piloting, a theory-based evaluation of the likely impact of the pilot models, including the impact upon costs, was undertaken. The research team's understanding of the process and wider context was crucial in enabling

this (e.g. by enabling logic models, outlining the links between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes, to be developed). However, given the limited piloting, the data that could be used to test the strength of the assumptions inherent in the logic models was limited²⁷. It is anticipated that the piloting phase will enable the logic models developed during the developmental phase to be tested and refined.

- 3.14. Notwithstanding its limitations due to the lack of empirical evidence, using a theory-based approach to evaluate the likely impact of the pilot models provided a good basis for exploring and analysing processes and their relationships to contexts. Given the intention that the pilot models, if successful, are rolled out across Wales, understanding how, why and under what circumstances they work, will be crucial. Using a theory-based approach enables some assessment of the likely external validity of the findings to be made (that is, the extent to which the findings can be generalised). If, for example, the pilot areas are unrepresentative, even if the findings have internal validity (that is, the extent to which the findings are a true reflection of the impact in the pilot area) they may not have external validity and, consequently, will not be a true reflection of the likely impact in other areas (HM Treasury, 2011). A theory-based approach can help identify important characteristics of the pilot areas. An assessment of the extent to which they are shared by other areas can then be made²⁸. For example, if the impact and effectiveness of a pilot model is found to be dependent upon particular contextual factors, such as the degree of delegation of funding to schools, findings on impact and effectiveness are only likely to apply to those local authorities with a similar degree of delegation of funding to schools. This will be further explored during the piloting phase.

²⁷ The main sources of data were the systematic scoping review and qualitative data provided by the pilot projects.

²⁸ If these important characteristics are shared, we can say that the pilot areas are representative of other areas and is therefore likely to have external validity.

Facilitating a programme of action research

3.15. The research team was required to undertake an action research study on each of the four pilot projects, to provide support to the pilots through a critical friend role and to provide support to the pilots on applying monitoring and self-evaluation procedures to track progress. It was expected that the monitoring and self-evaluation, combined with a range of tools for assessing stakeholders' experiences, would provide much of the data required for the overall evaluation of the pilot projects. However, as we outline in section four, the delays in starting the projects and developing the models meant there was only limited piloting of the models and, consequently, the evidence generated by the action research was also limited. We discuss the effectiveness of the research team's role in supporting the pilots and the statutory reform team further in section four.

4. Management and implementation of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects

The Welsh Government

Vision and strategic leadership

4.1. The first recommendation of Part 2 of the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee Policy Review of Special Educational Needs²⁹ was that ‘the Welsh Assembly Government should carry out a wide-ranging consultation with parents and other stakeholders to build consensus and confidence before any fundamental changes are made to the statutory assessment framework’ (NAfW, 2006a, p13). In response, as outlined in section two of this report, the pilot projects were commissioned after a lengthy process of review and consultation. This process highlighted a substantial degree of consensus around the weaknesses of the existing system but less clarity on the changes needed. *Statements or Something Better?* (WAG, unpublished document b), the culmination of this process, is consequently a mix of:

- ‘rights’ and ‘principles’ which frequently reflect stakeholders’ aspirations for change, such as the aspiration for children and young people with additional learning needs to have an ‘inclusive’ and ‘broad and balanced education’;
- ‘key improvements’, reflecting the need to address key weaknesses of the existing system including developing a less ‘medical’ approach to planning and assessment and greater consistency; and
- ‘options’ - the ideas and proposals for new models, structures and roles such as the provision of an individual development plan (IDP) for all children and young people with additional learning needs, complex needs panels, lead professionals and advocacy support (ibid).

4.2. However, *Statements or Something Better?* (ibid.) offers little, or no, detail on how these models, structures and roles would fit together and work in

²⁹ Part two covered the Statutory Assessment Framework (statementing).

practice. As one stakeholder put it 'all the strands were there, but they were not pulled together'.

4.3. This provided the context for the pilot projects, which were established to develop:

- some of the ideas and options put forward by stakeholders during the initial consultation phase, such as the introduction of a school-based individual development plan and complex needs panels, by developing and piloting models; and
- models to enable some of the key improvements identified as necessary, to be achieved. These included the need to:
 - increase consistency in the processes of identification, assessment, planning, implementation and review of provision to meet additional learning needs;
 - to improve monitoring of the implementation of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) and of regulations, such as the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Wales) Regulations 2002 (which covers the statutory assessment process);
 - to provide greater clarity and structure in relation to the role of the SENCo/ALNCo role within mainstream schools;
 - to develop a more empathetic and open partnership with parents and carers; and
 - to increase the involvement of young people in the processes (ibid).

4.4. As such, the projects could more accurately be described as development projects rather than pilot projects. As outlined in section one, the pilot projects were responsible for first developing, and then piloting, approaches, structures and processes, to address key weaknesses in relation to:

- quality and consistency, by developing criteria and frameworks for monitoring and evaluating provision and outcomes (pilot A);

- planning processes, that were not person-centred and considered inefficient and ineffective, by developing a single person-centred individual planning and review process (pilots B and C); and
 - the co-ordination, monitoring and development of identification, assessment and planning provision for additional learning needs within schools, by developing the role of the Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) in schools (pilot D).
- 4.5. Partly as a consequence of the need to develop approaches, structures and processes, the pilot projects' terms and conditions were typically expressed as outputs rather than outcomes, describing what tools were needed, such as a quality assurance system, or single individual planning process, rather than their intended outcomes.
- 4.6. The need for a comprehensive vision, outlining both the intended outcomes of reform and the ways in which the various strands of reform were intended to fit together to realise these outcomes, was identified early on. A document, 'Direction of Change' (WAG, unpublished document b), was drafted in response to this and its content was discussed with the pilot projects and local authorities at a conference.
- 4.7. Nevertheless, the ambition, breadth and complexity of the proposed changes made them difficult to describe and communicate in a simple and clear way and this lack of a comprehensive and positive vision of how the reformed system would work, at the start of the developmental phase, impacted upon the pilot projects in a number of important ways:
- it truncated the conventional 'plan, do, review' cycle of a traditional pilot project (Lewin, 1946) by placing greater emphasis upon planning and developing the models, at the expense of piloting (doing) and reviewing;
 - it made it difficult to see how the different elements being piloted related to each other and other parts of the system. This contributed to weaknesses in integration across the pilot projects. It may also have contributed to narrowing

the focus upon individual elements, most notably the quality assurance system, individual planning process (centred upon the IDP) and the ALNCo role, which were the most visible and tangible elements of reform. This diverted attention from other elements of reform, such as the capacity-building needed to enable the models to function effectively; and

- it made it very challenging to communicate the vision and engage with stakeholders not directly involved in the pilots.

4.8. More positively, over the course of the developmental phase, the vision has developed and crystallised. As we outline in section five, the pilots have developed models for a quality assurance system and IDP, defined the role of the ALNCo and helped crystallise many of the capacity-building elements needed to make such changes effective. They have also outlined how these elements of reform fit with other elements including Early Support, transition planning, key working, and family information and support services. Nevertheless, important elements of the proposed reform, including the scope of legal protection, criteria and eligibility for IDPs, and the definition of additional learning needs had not been agreed by the end of the developmental phase, illustrating the extent to which the reform programme is still a work in progress.

Planning, implementation and management of the pilot projects

4.9. The start of the projects was delayed by almost a year while legal issues, relating to the legal authority to establish the pilot projects before primary legislation was enacted, were resolved. Because the legislative timetable was not changed, this cut the length of time available for the pilot phase from three to two years. This, in turn, created pressures to start the pilots as soon as possible and contributed to weaknesses in planning.

4.10. The pilot projects were managed by a statutory reform team within the Welsh Government Support for Learning Division. Although only a small team with limited capacity, they were responsible for both managing the pilots and the

wider proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales.

4.11. There were a number of reasons why the pilot projects required strong central leadership and co-ordination. These included:

- the ambition and complexity of planned reforms which demanded systems thinking. That is, thinking about the relationship between different elements of the system, and their influence upon each other, given the inter-dependence of different strands of reform (all of which required those leading the programme to take a system-wide view);
- the need to develop and articulate a clear comprehensive vision of reform, outlining how the different elements being piloted would relate to each other and would relate to other strands of the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales; and
- the need to ensure that the strong visions held by the individual local authorities involved were aligned, and consistent with, a national vision.

4.12. However, the ability of the Welsh Government to fulfil this role was constrained by the small size (and, consequently, limited capacity) of the statutory reform team. This was compounded by the loss of key members of the team during the lifetime of the pilot and a number of changes within the leadership team overseeing the reform agenda.

4.13. There was also general agreement between the Welsh Government statutory reform team and the pilot project teams that the terms and conditions the pilot projects were commissioned to deliver were problematic. This increased the challenge for the Welsh Government statutory reform team. There were too many terms and conditions and, as noted, they focused primarily upon outputs rather than outcomes. There was also duplication of outputs across the pilot projects. The Welsh Government statutory reform team reported that these terms and conditions were dictated by legal advice and that they (the Welsh Government statutory reform team) wanted a smaller number of more

outcome-focused terms and conditions. In response to the problems, a number of changes to the terms and conditions were negotiated between the Welsh Government and the pilot projects as the work progressed.

- 4.14. The statutory reform team adopted an open, collaborative approach to managing the project. This had both strengths and weaknesses. Pilot lead officers and project managers valued the opportunities it gave them to contribute to, and influence, the programme. However, it was also felt to have slowed the process, making it more difficult to make decisions. It gave pilots considerable autonomy, which in some ways enriched the process, but which also contributed to duplication of work in some areas and the development of competing visions of reform, which we discuss further in section five. As a consequence, as one stakeholder put it, there were ‘too many chiefs’ and the process generated considerable frustration at times.
- 4.15. Given this finding, the moves to establish stronger central co-ordination as part of the piloting phase of the pilot projects has been welcomed.

Engaging stakeholders

- 4.16. The consultative process, outlined in section three, highlighted the importance of engaging a range of stakeholders in any proposed changes. Without this, there is a serious risk that the contribution made by the pilot projects to the proposed reforms, such as the development of models and approaches, will be seriously limited by a lack of support and engagement amongst those who will be effected by the reforms.
- 4.17. Within the Welsh Government statutory reform team, the Inclusion Development Officer played a key role in engaging stakeholders in the process and championing the reforms. Pilot projects have valued the contribution he was able to make to the process, and the Inclusion Development Officer is credited, in particular, with building support amongst the voluntary sector. However, the capacity of the statutory reform team to engage stakeholders was inhibited by a number of factors, including the small

size of the team, the range of demands upon their time and their positions within the Welsh Government. Moreover, the impact of structures such as the Statutory Reform Group, which could potentially have played an important role in engaging stakeholders, was limited by its narrow membership. It provided useful input on the multi-agency aspects of reform, but was judged by a number of stakeholders interviewed in the course of the research, to be insufficiently education focused and did not provide a platform for strategic engagement with other stakeholders. This reflects the breadth of the agenda and the wide range of stakeholders who need to be involved in the process.

- 4.18. The pilot projects were also encouraged to engage with a range of stakeholders, contributing to conferences, events and meetings in both their local authorities and beyond. Some of the project lead officers also attended the Association of Directors of Education Wales (ADEW) meetings and were able to talk about the work. However, their scope to engage stakeholders in the process and vision, as opposed to informing them of developments, was limited by the developmental nature of their work. Crucially, this meant that it was often judged to be premature to discuss work that was on-going and subject to change.
- 4.19. The relatively low profile of the proposed reform of the statutory framework, outside the circle of those directly involved in the pilot projects or the reform process, was another important challenge. Within education, additional learning needs are often not perceived as a 'mainstream' education issue, and engagement by stakeholders from health and social care was sporadic. This meant that many key stakeholders did not see either the pilot projects or the proposed reforms as particularly important or central to their work.
- 4.20. As a consequence, despite the work of the Welsh Government statutory reform team and the pilots, by the end of the developmental phase the programme had had only limited success engaging stakeholders from mainstream education and other services, including key sections of the Welsh Government, school improvement services within local authorities and health

and social care services. Despite a number of attempts to engage them through meetings and presentations, levels of awareness remained low amongst these groups. As a consequence, by the end of the developmental phase, many key stakeholders did not fully understand the pilot projects or their place within the wider reform agenda, did not appreciate their implications, nor did they actively support them.

4.21. The failure to place additional learning needs at the heart of the school effectiveness/improvement agenda at either national or local level is a major weakness of the programme. Within the Welsh Government, additional learning needs remain associated primarily with the Support for Learners Division. Two other changes have also, to some extent, sidelined the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs:

- the splintering of local authority advisory services, with the establishment of separate inclusion and school improvement services; and
- moves to establish educational consortia which have focused upon school effectiveness/improvement, rather than inclusion, and whose development has absorbed considerable time and energy.

4.22. Therefore, as one stakeholder commented, it is very hard to get mainstream education services to see that 'inclusion is a school improvement issue'. It remains in many ways a 'poor relation'. Given the current national emphasis upon raising standards and, therefore, upon school improvement and effectiveness, there is a real frustration that the reforms are not at the heart of this. As one stakeholder commented 'a real opportunity [was] lost, squandered'.

4.23. More positively, in general terms, the more engaged people have been in the process, the more knowledgeable and supportive they are about the proposed reforms. Moreover, given the weaknesses outlined above, the establishment of a Programme Board in the middle of 2011, involving representation from

across the Welsh Government, is seen by stakeholders as a very important and positive step.

Systems thinking and the coherence of the pilot projects

- 4.24. Although all four pilot projects were formally of equal importance, the IDP (a key element of the work undertaken by pilots B and C) became, in many ways, the centrepiece of the pilot's contribution to the reform programme. It was the putative replacement for statements, whose problems helped precipitate the whole reform process³⁰. It is also one of the most visible and tangible elements of the proposed reforms and has provoked the most discussion amongst parents, carers and the voluntary sector, becoming the most contentious element developed by the pilot projects. In contrast, although detailed proposals for the training and role of the ALNCo have been developed, it remains a largely paper-based vision. This was because, as we outline below, it was agreed by the Welsh Government statutory reform team and the pilot projects that it was not possible to pilot the training during the developmental phase, because the qualification could not be commissioned until decisions about whether, for example, the qualification would be mandatory for ALNCoS, was made by the Welsh Government. Moreover, unlike the IDP, it does not directly impact upon the legal rights and entitlements of children and young people. Similarly, whilst the quality assurance system was developed and piloted, for many stakeholders such as children and young people and parents and carers, it remains a 'backroom' operation.
- 4.25. The IDP also proved in many ways to be the most complex and contentious of the three models that were developed. As we outline below, aspects of the IDP represent a continuation or development of existing practice. However, other aspects represent a more radical break from existing practice and the challenges of working out the practical implications of these more radical changes were compounded by time pressures. Crucially, as outlined in

³⁰ For example, it is no accident that the culmination of the consultative process was titled 'Statements or Something Better?'.

section two, the IDP requires primary legislation to enable it to be rolled out. As the end of the developmental phase and the start of the legislative process loomed, pressure mounted to complete the process of developing the IDP.

- 4.26. The basic structure and approach of the IDP, rooted in person-centred planning and an assessment, planning and review cycle, represents a continuation or development of existing practice. They are broadly comparable to the existing Individual Education Plans which are prepared for children and young people with additional learning needs. As such, these aspects were relatively easy to develop.
- 4.27. The introduction of person-centred planning as an ethos, marks a more significant change. Although the Individual Education Plan was intended to be learner-centred, it was often not in practice. Person-centred planning provided the basic structure of the IDP, using its criteria of 'what is important to', 'what is important for', 'what's working', 'what's not working', the 'strengths and achievements' of a child or young person and the 'challenges' they face, for assessing and planning how to meet needs. Whilst there is strong support for the person-centred planning approach from those children, young people and professionals currently using it, it creates significant challenges in changing cultural and institutional practices, in order to re-orient them from a service-centred to a person-centred approach and ethos. Rather than requiring children and young people to fit into existing services (a service-centred approach), services need to adapt and change so that they meet the needs of the person (a person-centred approach).
- 4.28. The aspiration for the IDP to become a single plan capable of replacing a number of other existing plans, including the Statement of Special Educational Needs, the Individual Education Plan and integrating aspects of health and social care plans, marks another significant break with existing practice. The successful introduction of the IDP creates significant challenges in relation to promoting and enabling effective multi-agency working; in establishing joint or tripartite funding arrangements between education, health and social care; in co-ordinating different agencies and supporting families through sometimes

complex and distressing processes; and in establishing criteria for eligibility for an IDP and the extent of legal protection.

- 4.29. The third key change, or break with existing practice, was the decision to make the IDP an on-line tool. This also received widespread support from those involved in the programme, but created significant challenges in developing IT systems and protocols for security and information sharing.
- 4.30. As a consequence of both its complexity and visibility, the IDP came to dominate and unbalance the programme. Although it was anticipated that it would be the most complex element, it sucked in increasing amounts of the Welsh Government's and the pilots' time and energy to the detriment of other important elements of the pilot projects. It provoked the most discussion, and the collaborative management model adopted by the Welsh Government statutory reform team (outlined above) gave ample space for members of the pilots, who expressed strong and often competing visions, to articulate their views. Although at times pilots A and D felt somewhat sidelined, because of the attention paid to the IDP, good progress was made in developing the quality assurance system and ALNCo role. However, the attention paid to the IDP also meant that much less attention was paid to other key elements of the proposed reforms and to the integration of the different elements, a critical element in planning a system-wide reform. It was only towards the end of the developmental phase, once progress on key elements of the IDP, including its structure and planning processes had been made, that the focus shifted back to integration.
- 4.31. The vision of system-wide reform developed by pilot C (Pembrokeshire and Bridgend) provides a useful overview of the elements required to develop an effective and inclusive education system.

Figure 4: vision of system-wide reform



Source: Pilot project C, unpublished document b.

4.32. Within this framework, the IDP plays a critical role in helping put learners at the centre of the process. However, in order to be effective, the IDP needs to be underpinned by the elements set out in figure four above. In more detail, these are:

- 'leadership and strategic vision that clearly defines the direction;
- management that delivers positive policies, [systems] and processes and promotes early identification, assessment and monitoring;
- effective use of finance and the allocation of resources that ensure maximum delegation;
- the development of partnerships and networks that fully engages parents/carers and other agencies;
- monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of provision and practice with established systems to avoid conflict; and
- building the capacity of all stakeholders' (pilot project C, unpublished document b, pp1-2).

- 4.33. Both the quality assurance system and the ALNCo role contribute to these elements, in terms of monitoring and evaluation and strengthening leadership and capacity. However, this vision of what is required goes beyond that which has been developed by the pilot projects. Although proposals relating to each of these areas have been put forward by pilots and other stakeholders, these had not been agreed upon by the end of the developmental phase.
- 4.34. The need to both develop proposals for each element and integrate them as part of a system-wide vision of reform was acknowledged throughout the developmental phase, and repeated attempts were made to address this. However, the Welsh Government statutory reform team remained constrained by its limited capacity and time pressures. Within this context, the decision to prioritise the IDP was an understandable and logical one, given the legislative timetable. However, the inter-dependence of reforms, which demands systems thinking, means that prioritising the development of any one element is inherently problematic, as its effectiveness and impact will depend upon other elements of the system. In this context, some pilots were concerned that insufficient attention had been paid to the work they had done on other elements of the proposed reforms such as capacity-building and family support services.

The role of local authorities

- 4.35. Local authorities submitted proposals to the programme to run a pilot. In all cases their proposals grew out of work that they were currently doing and, in some cases, had developed to a significant level. The Welsh Government statutory reform team then paired local authorities to jointly run a pilot (local authorities did not bid as a partnership with others). Each pilot was run by a senior officer within the local authority, or, in one case, by a recently retired Head of Inclusion.
- 4.36. Inevitably, local authorities were focused on both developing capacity and tools for their own area, as well as contributing to the reform programme. This dual orientation added to the pressure to use the time to create useful

'outputs', focused on what would work locally. Frequently, it was easier for the pilots to be clear about the potential impact of their work on the local authority than it was on the wider reform programme. Pilots have all developed systems within their local authority area and built capacity to use them.

4.37. Nevertheless, the extent to which the work was embedded within the local authority appeared to depend upon a number of factors including:

- the status of the development work that had been done prior to starting the pilot, for example, in Carmarthenshire, a pre-existing multi-agency Complex Needs Panel was involved with the pilot from the start and could consider and act on findings from the pilot;
- the degree of integration that existed between inclusion services and mainstream provision within the local authority. Some pilots reported difficulty in communicating their findings to colleagues in school improvement services, for example, because inclusion was a separate division of education services that was seen as offering little to the mainstream school improvement services; and
- the commitment and enthusiasm of the staff involved in the pilot. In each area, the team involved in developing and running the pilot were highly committed to the work and were enthusiastic. However, until structures and approaches are mainstreamed, the work is very reliant upon individuals who may move on.

Evaluation of achievements of pilot objectives

Introduction

4.38. Each local authority within the pilot projects worked to a detailed list of between 16 and 35 terms and conditions, which became their *de facto* objectives. Further detail about the terms and conditions is included in appendix one and in this section we summarise the key points.

Pilot A – Caerphilly and Flintshire

4.39. Pilot A was responsible for developing a model for the quality assurance of provision for children and young people with additional learning needs. The work included three core strands, which would support schools' self-evaluation and local authorities' monitor, challenge, intervention and support (MCIS) role. The strands consisted of developing:

- provision mapping, a system for linking data on pupil provision and outcomes, which was led by Caerphilly;
- 5x10 outcome grids, tools for measuring a wide range of learning outcomes such as progression in personal and social skills, attendance and behaviour and participation in school and out of school activities, and stakeholder satisfaction with provision, which was led by Flintshire; and
- a capacity toolkit, including criteria for schools to enable them to self-evaluate their capacity to meet the needs of pupils with additional learning needs, and to comply with statutory requirements such as the special educational needs code of practice and the Equality Act (2010), which was led by Flintshire.

4.40. Good progress was made on all three strands:

- an Excel-based provision map was developed, piloted and refined through piloting in all Caerphilly's schools. In addition, 25 other schools and eight local authorities³¹ are using the provision map. A SIMS-based version is scheduled to be piloted in seven schools. Feedback on the provision map has been positive;
- outcome grids and a capacity toolkit, based upon the Estyn three key questions³² have been produced, piloted and refined within schools in Flintshire and Caerphilly. Feedback has been positive; and

³¹ Bridgend, Cardiff, Blaenau Gwent, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen.

³² Key question 1: How good are outcomes? Key question 2: How good is provision? and key question 3: How good are leadership and management?

- progress has been made in integrating the outcome grids into the provision map.

4.41. Overall, pilot A concluded that the principles of the provision map and the IT system underpinning it have been 'established', however, they acknowledge that 'further work is needed to refine the IT systems needed to facilitate this' (Pilot project A, unpublished document).

*Pilot B – Carmarthenshire and Torfaen*³³

4.42. Pilot B was responsible for developing and piloting an assessment and planning framework for children and young people with additional learning needs which were severe and/or complex (including a single individual planning process covering all aspects of a child's or young person's needs). The pilot was also responsible for developing systems and processes for enabling multi-agency working and multi-agency decisions about funding to be made (including the role of Complex Needs Panels) and for developing family information and support services, and dispute resolution mechanisms.

4.43. Good progress was made developing the IDP, the centrepiece of the single individual planning process. The development of the IDP, known as Planning Together, was led by Torfaen. Despite delays starting the project (for example, the project manager was not appointed until nine months after the pilot started), coupled with some initial teething problems, feedback on this IDP from professionals, parents and carers, and children and young people has been positive. The model was accepted by a multi-agency advisory group brought together by the Welsh Government, with only minor amendments at the end of the developmental phase as the model to be piloted during the testing phase³⁴.

³³ As noted, Torfaen was involved in both pilots B and C. However, in practice, it worked more closely with Carmarthenshire on Pilot B. We, therefore, discuss Torfaen's contribution in relation to pilot B.

³⁴ As we outline in section five, the need for separate planning processes for children and young people with additional learning needs that were severe and complex and those whose additional learning needs are not severe or complex, was dismissed mid-way through the developmental phase.

- 4.44. Piloting of the IDP developed by pilot B, Planning Together, has been limited, due primarily to the delays starting the project and the time needed to develop the IDP. A paper-based version was piloted with seven families in Carmarthenshire and the on-line version was piloted with eleven families in Torfaen³⁵. This provided support for the basic concepts, such as the content, structure, ethos and approach rooted in person centred-planning. However, it demonstrated that it was highly probable that a paper-based version would be less effective than an on-line tool, since the paper-based version would be less flexible, less responsive and less efficient than an on-line version. The paper-based version was described as making planning more of an event rather than an on-going process, because the requirement to post out paper versions hampered information sharing and meant that every time a change to the plan was required, hard copies needed to be sent to all those involved. This, in turn, is likely to make it more difficult to ensure the IDP is flexible and responsive enough to change as a child's or young person's needs change. Moreover, because the IDP process is more holistic than existing planning processes, involving more people, even though this was seen as a real strength, this further increased the paperwork associated with the paper-based IDP.
- 4.45. Although the limited piloting suggests that a purely paper-based system would be both less efficient and less effective than a web-based model, this does not mean that paper-based IDPs should not be used, as it is important that people have a choice. For example, some children or young people, some parents and carers and some professionals may not feel comfortable or confident using an on-line IDP or may find it difficult to access an on-line IDP. In these cases, it is appropriate to use paper-based IDPs, for example, printing out paper copies of an IDP to discuss at meetings. However, where possible, in order to facilitate an on-going process and to minimise the paperwork and administration generated by the IDP, it is appropriate to fully exploit the potential benefits offered by information and communications technology. For

³⁵ As outlined in appendix one, although the pilots were required to "...develop and pilot a single individual planning and review process covering all aspects of a child and young person's needs", there was no target set for the number of children or young people who should be involved in piloting.

example, data recorded on a paper copy of an IDP could be inputted into an on-line version, and this could be updated between meetings. Although it would be necessary, and appropriate, to print copies of changes and updates and to send them to parents and carers who were not comfortable or confident using the on-line tool, others involved in the process could continue to use the on-line tool. There would, therefore, be no need to provide paper copies to other people involved in the process.

4.46. Most of the IDP developmental work focused upon school age children with only limited links made to Early Support and post-16 provision, including transition planning and support.

4.47. Less progress was made by Torfaen during the developmental phase in developing systems, processes and structures for enabling the multi-agency working and for enabling multi-agency funding decision making. These processes and structures were already well developed in Carmarthenshire and included:

- an Inter-agency Protocol for Children with Complex Needs and Children Placed out of Area (James, 2008);
- a Strategic Planning Group for children with disabilities and complex needs (part of the children and young people's partnership);
- a Complex Needs Panel; and
- tripartite funding.

4.48. In Carmarthenshire, these processes and structures were adapted and developed through the work of the pilot. This included facilitating joint diagnosis, assessment and planning and using person-centred planning processes to bring the child's or young person's voice into these processes and structures. However, there was little progress in Torfaen, which was starting from a much lower base of multi-agency working. Proposals for processes and structures have been put forward in Torfaen, but were put on hold until the IDP was developed.

4.49. Similarly, much less progress was made in either local authority for developing the pre-existing family information and support services and dispute resolution mechanisms.

Pilot C – Bridgend, Pembrokeshire and Torfaen

4.50. Pilot C was established to develop and pilot an assessment and planning framework for children and young people with additional learning needs that are not severe and/or complex, including a single individual planning process covering all aspects of a child's or young person's needs. The pilot was also responsible for developing family information and support services, and dispute resolution mechanisms; and developing and piloting a system for facilitating the improvement of schools' additional learning needs provision.

4.51. Good progress was made developing the single individual planning process, including the IDP, which was named 'John's/Jenny's plan'. There was limited piloting of the IDP with a total of twelve pupils in four schools using the on-line IDP in Pembrokeshire. Much of the focus was upon testing the technology, rather than the assessment and planning processes and the methods and approach for person-centred planning. A paper-based version of the IDP was also piloted with nine families in Bridgend. However, plans for piloting the on-line version in Bridgend were abandoned after the pilot project manager left.

4.52. Nevertheless, as outlined below, at the end of the developmental phase, the decision was taken to base the IDP to be used in the piloting phase upon the IDP developed by pilot B, albeit drawing upon the experience and learning of the work undertaken by Bridgend and Pembrokeshire on pilot C.

4.53. Pilot C made good progress on other key elements:

- Bridgend led the development of family information and support services, piloted the work of a family liaison worker and produced proposals for family information, support and dispute resolution services³⁶;
- Bridgend produced detailed proposals for an assessment and planning framework for children and young people with additional learning needs³⁷; and
- Pembrokeshire and Bridgend both produced proposals for facilitating the improvement of schools' additional learning needs provision, such as the Planning and Reviewing in Partnership model (pilot project C, unpublished documents a, b).

Pilot D – Cardiff and Newport

- 4.54. Pilot D was established to develop and define the role of the Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) and to develop and pilot an accredited course for ALNCos.
- 4.55. Good progress was made in developing and defining the role and feedback from stakeholders within the pilot local authorities has been positive. However, it was agreed with the Welsh Government that until decisions about the future of the ALNCo role and training had been made, it would not be feasible to pilot the accredited course.

Management and implementation of the pilot projects

- 4.56. Overall, the pilots were well managed and, as outlined above, largely fulfilled their terms and conditions. Although not consciously intended, the work undertaken by pilot B in developing a single individual planning process was complemented by the work of pilot C in developing the supporting structures, processes and systems, such as family support and information services and assessment and planning frameworks where (as outlined above) pilot B made less progress. This helped reduce duplication of work across the pilots. The

³⁶ This included a 'Parent Route Map' and a 'Possible Model for Disagreement Resolution'.

³⁷ A 'Possible Model for a Single Individual Planning Process' and a 'Possible Model for the Continuous Cycle in Meeting Additional Learning Needs'.

commitment and enthusiasm of those working on the projects was also notable.

- 4.57. The management structure of the pilot projects, involving lead officers within the local authority, project managers and reference or steering groups, was generally effective. Lead officers and project managers worked well together. The structure helped ensure that the programme could draw upon lead officers' knowledge and expertise, whilst enabling each local authority to have sufficient capacity to manage the projects (given the other demands upon lead officers' time). The role of the project managers developed over the course of the pilots. In addition to planning, organising and managing resources – traditional project management roles - their insights and understanding of both the operation of the pilot project models and the wider system, made an important contribution to the project. Pilot project steering groups helped provide a wider reference group in each area and were valued by pilot lead officers and project managers.
- 4.58. However, as outlined above, more progress was made on some elements of the pilot models than others, and the pressure to focus upon the IDP led to some elements being sidelined by both the statutory reform team and some pilot projects. Moreover because, as we outline above, in many cases the pilots were building upon existing work, a real strength in many ways, the 'distance travelled' in relation to some elements of the pilot models was limited.
- 4.59. In general, pilots worked more effectively and more closely with their partner in each pilot than they did with other pilot local authorities. Although Torfaen was part of both pilots B and C, in practice it worked primarily with Carmarthenshire on pilot B. In addition, as we outline above, within each pilot project there was a division of labour, with each local authority partner focusing upon and leading different elements. For example, within pilot A, Caerphilly led the development of the provision map and Flintshire led the development of an outcome measures and capacity toolkit.

- 4.60. Integration across the pilot projects was not as strong as integration between within the individual pilot projects. The delays in starting the pilot projects, exacerbated by delays in recruiting project managers, in Torfaen in particular, hampered the integration of the individual elements being developed by the pilot projects, as the pilots progressed at different speeds.
- 4.61. At the end of the development phase, therefore, it was difficult to integrate the individual elements developed by each of the pilot projects into a coherent whole, which will be essential to enable system-wide reform. This lack of cross-pilot integration created particular challenges when, as we outline below, the decision was made to move from separate planning processes, centred upon IDPs, for children and young people with severe and/or complex additional learning needs and for those whose additional learning needs are neither severe and/or complex, to a single model.
- 4.62. The reduction in the time available for the developmental phase from close to three years to less than two years meant that there was not enough time to develop and pilot models, nor integrate the individual models. This contributed to the strong sense that too much time was spent 'planning' and there was not enough time to develop, pilot and review the work, particularly in relation to pilots B and C.

The development of the IDP

- 4.63. There was a consensus amongst the pilots at the start of the developmental phase that the individual planning processes for children and young people with severe and/or complex additional learning needs would be different to those for children and young people whose needs are not severe and/or complex. However, it became clear by the end of 2010, that the same basic principles applied to both groups of children and young people and that an IDP could and should be sufficiently flexible to enable it to be used with both groups. This created challenges, because both pilots B and C had begun developing different IDPs, and as one stakeholder commented 'we all went off in different directions'.

- 4.64. In response, it was decided by the Welsh Government statutory reform team and the pilots that pilots B and C would continue to develop their own IDPs, but that they would need to work together with a view to producing an integrated model in the summer of 2011. A series of joint meetings for pilots B and C ('cross IDP meetings') were organised and a proposal was put forward by the pilot projects for an event in the summer of 2011 to engage a range of stakeholders in identifying the relative merits of the emerging models and to develop a single model.
- 4.65. The IDPs developed by pilots B and C shared important key features. Most notably an approach to planning, and content structure for the plan itself, drawn from person-centred planning, using the criteria of:
- 'important to and important for';
 - 'what's working' and 'what's not working'; and
 - 'strengths', 'achievements' and 'challenges'.
- 4.66. The IDPs also shared similar processes for the identification and assessment of additional learning needs, planning to meet those needs, and processes of review to assess how well provision was meeting needs. However, there were differences in the detail, layout and language of the two IDPs and more fundamentally, the IT systems they used. As a consequence, when it became clear that a single model of assessment, planning and review for all additional learning needs was both possible, given their common approach and, therefore, preferable to having one model for severe and/or complex needs and one for needs that are not severe and/or complex, it was difficult to integrate the two models.
- 4.67. In order to help integrate the two models, the People and Work Unit facilitated a series of review meetings, which were designed to explore the areas of commonality and difference and to forge a consensus around a single IDP. The common approach, content and structure, drawn from person-centred planning and common processes for, identifying, assessment, planning and

review, made it relatively straightforward to agree upon a single structure, content and process for the IDP during the review meetings. However, there remained disagreement over a number of other areas including: definitions (what constituted 'additional learning needs'); criteria (who would have an IDP); and the operation of planning and review meetings.

- 4.68. Despite the progress in forging a consensus, tensions between pilots B and C persisted and each continued to develop separate models, albeit with a common approach, content, structure and process. In August 2011, the decision was made by a multi-agency advisory group, including representatives from pilots B and C, the Welsh Government, Care Council Cymru and SNAP Cymru, to adopt the model developed by pilot B, albeit drawing upon aspects of the model developed by pilot C.
- 4.69. Some members of the Welsh Government statutory reform team and the pilot projects agreed, that with the benefit of hindsight, it had been a mistake to develop two different IDP models. It created unnecessary duplication of effort, slowed progress and created tensions. Nevertheless, other members of the Welsh Government statutory reform team and the pilot projects felt that the process offered some important benefits. For example, it helped make the choices about how to structure an IDP more explicit. Moreover, as one stakeholder pointed out, because they had developed two models and one model had been judged more effective than the other by the multi-agency advisory group, there was no guarantee that they would have developed the right model if they had only developed one model from the outset.

The role of action research in the development of the pilot projects

- 4.70. The action research approach was based upon the 'plan, do, review' model of action research (Lewin, 1946). The action research process was supported by the People and Work Unit. The role included developing an evaluation framework to help pilots focus on the stages of their work; acting as a critical friend (see boxed text below) to both individual pilot projects and to the Welsh Government statutory reform team; observation and participation in project

and statutory reform meetings; intervention to help integrate the work of the individual pilot projects through joint meetings and the on-going contribution of reports to inform the development of the work.

4.71. The effectiveness and impact of the People and Work Unit's role as critical friend to each of the pilot projects varied. One pilot, in particular, very much valued the critical friend role, highlighting the value of a team with 'good knowledge' of the pilot's work who could be used as a sounding board and who could help advise on whether the pilot was going in the right direction or not, drawing upon the research team's understanding and knowledge of this area. However, the other pilots only drew upon this resource sporadically. With these pilots, meetings were used primarily to enhance the research team's understanding of the pilot projects' development, rather than informing and influencing the development of the pilot projects. In these cases, the projects were confident that they did not need this support. However, one pilot expressed disappointment that in fulfilling the critical friend role, the People and Work Unit had not taken a more pro-active role in outlining clear expectations and providing feedback on the progress of the pilot. An approach closer to that of a traditional evaluator rather than critical friend could, therefore, have been valuable in this case.

The role of a critical friend

- 'offering support' by, for example, helping foster confidence and encouraging people to innovate and, where appropriate, take risks;
- 'providing challenge' by, for example, challenging assumptions and group think;
- 'consultancy' by, for example, providing expertise and contacts;
- 'leading enquiry' where the critical friend has expertise in research in enquiry; and
- 'brokering knowledge' by linking those they work with to current research and policy (NCSL, 2005, p2).

4.72. The reasons why the effectiveness of the critical friend role with pilots varied included:

- the in-depth knowledge and experience of some pilot lead officers and project managers and the role they played in supporting each other, which meant their need for the support, consultancy and brokerage roles offered by a critical friend, was limited;
- the lack of clarity about the objectives of the pilot projects (as distinct from their terms and conditions, which we discuss above), which made it difficult to plan a programme of action research and evaluation to explore and assess progress toward achievement of the projects' objectives; and
- the time it took to develop models that could be piloted, which meant that the research team's expertise in areas such as evaluating stakeholders' experience could not be effectively used.

4.73. As a consequence, the impact upon the pilot projects and the programme of action also varied. Where, for example pilot lead officers and project managers already had the expertise needed, there was no need for the support, consultancy and brokerage roles, and therefore, the negative impact was limited. In contrast, the time it took to develop models and the lack of clarity about pilot project objectives, meant that the critical friend role could not be effectively performed and the research team's ability to lead inquiry into the impact and effectiveness of the pilot projects was limited.

4.74. In contrast, the effectiveness and impact of the role as critical friend to the overall programme was much greater. The Welsh Government statutory reform team and many of the pilots highlighted, in particular, the People and Work Unit's role in helping facilitate a series of meetings in 2011. These meetings helped forge consensus around the IDP model and other aspects of the proposed reforms, including the relationship between the pilot projects, Early Support, key working and co-ordination, transition, post-16 and post-19 provision.

4.75. The People and Work Unit also worked throughout the developmental phase with the Welsh Government statutory reform team. This included:

- a formal role acting as an external evaluator and undertaking an interim review of the pilots (Holtom et al, forthcoming a) and a detailed costs analysis (Holtom et al, forthcoming b);
- a more informal role, acting as critical friend, contributing to the drafting of papers, the planning and development of meetings and events and a role offering support and advice. The People and Work Unit's contribution to shaping the thinking around reforms was reported to be greatly valued by the Welsh Government statutory reform team; and
- working as a facilitator to help identify and explore points of agreement and disagreement and to forge a consensus around the vision of reform as the developmental phase drew to a close, which was reported to be greatly valued by the Welsh Government statutory reform team and by three of the pilots.

5. The expected contribution of the pilot projects to the reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with Additional Learning Needs

The contribution of the pilots to the strategic priorities identified in 'Direction of Change'

5.1. Four key ways in which the pilot projects could contribute to the statutory reform process were identified in the interim report (Holtom et al, forthcoming a):

- piloting key elements of reform, to enable their cost-effectiveness to be evaluated;
- clarifying a comprehensive and positive vision of reform, outlining both the expected impact of reform (what would change) and the ways in which this was expected to happen (how the system would be reformed);
- informing proposals for system-wide reform; and
- fostering understanding of, and engagement with, the statutory reform process.

The development of models

5.2. As outlined in section four, at the end of the developmental phase, although models for the quality assurance framework, IDP and ALNCo had been developed, none had been fully piloted. Moreover, whilst the basic models for the quality assurance system and IDP have been subjected to a limited pilot, much of the detail has yet to be worked out. For example, by the end of the developmental phase, there remained significant and unresolved questions in relation to information technology, security, the sharing of personal information and multi-agency working in relation to the IDP.

5.3. Although none of the pilot models had been robustly tested and evaluated by the end of the developmental phase, meaning that it was not possible to

evaluate their cost-effectiveness, the feedback from stakeholders involved in the pilots is encouraging. Crucially, as one stakeholder pointed out, there was no guarantee of this and the models could have proven unworkable. Both the IDP and the quality assurance system continue to be developed and refined and it is expected that the IDP will be piloted with much larger numbers of children and young people, with a range of needs and in a wider range of settings, during the piloting phase.

Clarifying the vision

- 5.4. The models the pilots developed became key elements of the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs. The pilots' developmental work also provided a clearer picture of the impact the models and other elements of the reform programme, such as family information and support services were expected to make. The models, therefore, provide the basis for many of the Welsh Government's proposals for reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with additional learning needs.
- 5.5. Although the pilot models provide the basis for many of the Welsh Government proposals for reform, they did not provide the Welsh Government statutory reform team with a comprehensive vision or blueprint for reform. In particular, the aspiration is for the statutory reforms to cover all children and young people with additional learning needs aged 0-25, whilst the pilot models were developed primarily for children and young people aged 5-16. Within this age range, considerable progress had been made by the pilot projects and the Welsh Government statutory reform team in not only developing models but also in mapping the relationship between the different elements of the proposed reforms. In contrast, there was less clarity about how key elements, such as the IDP and quality assurance system, would work for young children (aged under five) and link to other initiatives, like Early Support; and, for young adults (aged over 16), there was less clarity about how the IDP would link to transition planning and considerable uncertainty about how IDPs or the quality assurance system would work with young adults in, for example,

further or higher education institutions or in training settings. By the end of the developmental stage, however, progress had been made in creating the links necessary to extend the key elements of the reform programme to young people under five years old and to young adults aged over 16 years.

- 5.6. The failure to fully extend the pilot models from 5-16 to 0-25 reflected, in part, the lack of clarity at the start of the process about how reform across this age range would operate and, therefore, what was required from the pilots. As a consequence, although the terms and conditions for pilots B and C required them to link to the Early Support and Transition Key Worker pilot projects, and to develop an appropriate framework for young people aged 14-25, there was no reference to this in the terms and conditions for pilot A.
- 5.7. The failure to fully extend the pilot models from 5-16 to 0-25 also reflected the decision of both the Welsh Government statutory reform team and the pilot projects to focus initially upon children and young people aged 5-16. As a consequence, much of the planning for how the IDP would link to Early Support and transition planning only took place toward the end of the developmental phase. Although, as noted, there was no specific reference to quality assurance in non-school settings, pilot A responded to a request from the Welsh Government to consider the implications of linking to the Early Support programme and provision for those aged 17-25 towards the end of the developmental phase.
- 5.8. Moreover, despite the progress made in relation to provision for 5-16 year olds, there were still important aspects of the vision, which cut across all ages (0-25), which were unresolved at the end of the developmental phase. These included the extent to which the existing legal protection accorded to statements would be extended to children and young people whose additional learning needs are not severe and complex, the definition of additional

learning needs³⁸ and the eligibility for IDPs. The steps taken by the Programme Board to take decisions on these remaining issues have, therefore, been welcomed by the pilot projects.

5.9. Finally, the sheer breadth of the vision of system-wide reform, embodied in the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales, meant that many elements were not addressed by the pilot models in the developmental phase. For example, the proposed reform also includes changes to family information and support services, dispute resolution services, an extension of the existing right for parents to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales to children and young people, reform of post-16 provision for young people with special educational needs and key working for children and young people with severe and/or complex needs.

Informing system-wide reform

5.10. In addition to developing models which are integral parts of the proposed reforms, the pilots have contributed to informing the proposed system-wide reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs, in two important ways:

- they have confirmed the analysis of the weaknesses of the existing system identified by the consultations and the reviews discussed in section two; and
- they have directly informed the proposed system-wide reform, intended to address those weaknesses.

5.11. The pilots have added to the evidence base outlining the weaknesses of the existing system. However, in general, the pilots have not identified major new

³⁸ The original Legislative Competence Order (NAfW, 2008) proposed a different definition to that in the current Statutory Guidance (Inclusion and Pupil Support (NAfW, 2006b)), specifically, '(a) persons who have a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of persons of the same age as those persons; (b) persons who have, or have had (i) a physical or mental impairment, or (ii) a progressive health condition (such as cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection) where it is at a stage involving no physical or mental impairment'. However, it was agreed that a different definition could be adopted, if required.

weaknesses of the existing system. Given the expertise and experience of those involved in the pilots, this was understandable. For example, anecdotal evidence indicated that the SENCo's workload was a significant problem. The research undertaken by pilot D has added considerable detail to the scale of the problem, and highlighted the huge variation in SENCo roles and responsibilities. This, in turn, has informed the specification for the ALNCo role, which is intended to redefine the role, to ensure a focus upon leading and co-ordinating provision, and supporting others, reducing demands upon ALNcos in terms of day-to-day planning and delivery of interventions for children and young people with additional learning needs.

- 5.12. Overall, the pilot projects have also made an important, if in many ways limited, contribution to informing the proposed system-wide reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales, by enabling the relationships between different elements to be explored. The pilot projects' contribution was curtailed by the limited piloting that took place. Moreover, because discrete elements, such as the IDP, were trialled largely independently from other elements, such as the quality assurance system and reform of multi-agency working, the scope to explore the inter-relationship between different elements was limited. This is important because the impact of reform is expected to be more than the sum of the individual parts and the cost-effectiveness of individual elements of the reform programme will depend upon other inter-related and inter-dependent elements. The limited piloting, therefore, significantly limited the pilots' potential to generate empirical evidence that could inform system-wide reform. This, in turn, limited the scope to robustly evaluate the likely costs and benefits of reform.
- 5.13. Nevertheless, the pilot projects were able to make an important contribution to planning for system-wide reform, by enhancing the Welsh Government statutory reform team's understanding of the system, the relationship between different elements developed by the pilot projects, and the estimated costs of key elements of the proposed reforms. The pilot projects did this primarily by:

- developing key elements, such as the IDP and quality assurance framework, subjecting them to limited piloting and seeking feedback from stakeholders on these models and their implications for other parts of the system;
- exploring the potential links between the pilot models and other elements of the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs, such as Early Support and key working for children and young people with severe and complex needs; and
- involving practitioners (most notably, the Inclusion Development Officer, pilot lead officers and project managers), who have an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the existing system, in thinking about and planning reform of the system.

Fostering understanding of, and engagement with, the statutory reform process

- 5.14. Given the developmental nature of the pilots, there were limits on the scope to use the pilots to foster understanding of, and engagement with, the statutory reform process. In particular, while the vision of reform was being developed, and was subject to change, it was not appropriate to formally consult stakeholders about the proposed vision of reform.
- 5.15. The pilot projects themselves provided an effective vehicle for engaging a small circle of stakeholders in the process and, in general, the more involved people were, the more they supported and understood the agenda.
- 5.16. However, the range of stakeholders engaged in the process has been narrow and in general, as outlined in section four, the pilot projects have not generally proved effective vehicles for engaging stakeholders from a number of key sectors, such as health, social care and school improvement services and new planning and delivery structures, such as regional educational consortia.

Learning and implications from the developmental phase for the piloting phase

- 5.17. The piloting phase is intended to enable system-wide testing. The developmental phase has shown how important this will be. It has highlighted

the inter-dependence of different elements of reform and the consequent need for 'systems thinking', of examining and planning for the reform programme as a whole and, therefore, the relationship between the different elements, rather than examining each separately. It also highlights the importance of ensuring that no single element is given precedence. Effective system-wide piloting should help further clarify the vision of reform, inform the broader statutory reform process, and provide additional empirical evidence of the likely cost-effectiveness of the proposed reforms.

5.18. The developmental phase has demonstrated the potential value of action research as a developmental process. For example, it highlighted the value of some of the inclusive processes the pilot projects operated. These included, for example, involving schools in shaping the IDP and quality assurance tools, developing new versions and revisiting schools to check their responses. The approach built interest in the tools amongst those involved and, in some cases, promoted a sense of shared ownership. The process illustrated some of the approaches needed to develop, rather than impose, reform and has implications for the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales. These include ensuring that people engage with the proposed reforms, feel their existing good practice is being recognised, and built upon, and have the opportunity to continue contributing to its development. All the pilots worked with practitioners, testing what it was like to implement the tools and processes being developed, ensuring that they listened and responded to any concerns raised, and focusing on the applicability of the developments they were piloting.

5.19. The developmental phase also highlighted the challenges associated with adopting action research as a developmental process. These include, in particular, the importance of:

- ensuring there is sufficient time allocated to each stage of the action research – planning, doing and reviewing; and

- strong central co-ordination and strategic leadership which, in this case, requires a statutory reform team with sufficient capacity to fulfil the co-ordinating role and which requires strategic leadership from senior civil servants in the Support for Learners Division.

Learning and key lessons from the developmental phase for the statutory reform process

The estimated costs of the proposed reforms

5.20. As outlined in section three, as part of the programme of action research, an interim review of the costs of implementing system-wide reform was undertaken (Holtom et al, forthcoming b). This concluded that, although further developed by the pilot projects, the key elements of the proposed reforms, such as IDPs, had not been fully piloted. As a consequence, the majority of the costs of reform could not be measured empirically and would need to be estimated.

5.21. The analysis considered three types of costs:

- start up costs - the costs associated with establishing the elements of reform;
- operational costs - the cost of operating the reformed elements; and
- consequential costs – the impact of reforms upon the costs borne by other services, including any cost savings generated by reform.

5.22. The analysis of costs undertaken for this study indicates that the net start up costs of key elements of reform, most notably in terms of capacity building, are likely to be considerable (in the order of £1 million) but are subject to the options chosen. These costs are discussed in detail in the forthcoming interim report on the costs of the additional learning needs reform (Holtom et al, forthcoming b). The analysis also indicates that once systems are established, costs are likely to be comparable to existing arrangements, that is, neutral, and may generate net cost savings in some areas.

- 5.23. While it is likely the reformed system will mean more needs are identified, increasing demands upon services, it is expected that this will be offset by earlier identification of need and improvements in administration, planning and provision to meet those needs. This will mean that more needs can be met, and that needs can be met more effectively, without increasing the overall cost to the system as a whole. Moreover, in general, the proposed reforms do not impose new duties upon schools, local authorities or local health boards, meaning they represent existing rather than new costs. Where new duties are imposed, these typically extend or change existing duties rather than creating completely new duties.
- 5.24. The cost analysis also concluded that, in assessing net costs, it will be important to consider costs across the system and over time. This requires an analysis of the system as a whole, looking at how the decisions of one service can impact upon the costs of another service³⁹, and at how addressing a current need will impact on future needs. This will involve multi-agency budget planning that takes into account current and projected costs. For example, earlier intervention and better planning, two key goals of reform should, for example, ensure that needs are identified swiftly, and that provision is promptly put in place to meet those needs. This, in turn, should prevent problems escalating and becoming more expensive to address (Allen, 2011) as a consequence of, for example, children or young people falling further and further behind, increasing their risk of disengagement and disaffection, and sparking other problems such as poor behaviour. The challenge is that such an approach may cost one agency more in the short-term, but save money over the longer-term for two or more other agencies.
- 5.25. Crucially, more effective identification of need and planning applies both to the individual and the system as a whole. At present, resources are not used efficiently because neither the identification of need nor the planning for the provision to meet that need happens early, or coherently, enough. As a

³⁹ This approach can be contrasted with an approach which, for example, looks at the cost of each service individually and in isolation from other services.

consequence, much planning is too hasty and focused on alleviating immediate problems, making it more difficult to secure good value for money and to engage other agencies effectively. For example, in many cases those commissioning services do not have a robust overview of the needs of children and young people and so they cannot plan to commission local provision and are instead forced to rely upon more expensive, out-of-county provision.

- 5.26. Finally, the cost analysis study concludes there is a strong case for sequencing reforms to ensure that, for example, as is currently happening, parent support and dispute resolution services are put in place before, for example, rights of appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales are extended to those aged 0-2 and 19-25, with severe and/or complex needs. It is also important that the less costly reforms are not 'cherry picked' since successful reform will depend upon system-wide reform.
- 5.27. Given the uncertainty around both the net cost and the cost-effectiveness of many of the elements of reform discussed in this report, there is a strong case for exploring these issues further in the piloting phase. This could include further action research to better understand the cost-effectiveness of multi-agency panels, the extent of training needs and how they could best be met, and the requirements for key working and designated key workers.

The case for evolution reform rather than revolution

- 5.28. The developmental phase has highlighted considerable concern amongst the majority of pilots that the focus upon the systemic weaknesses of the existing system has overshadowed its virtues and strengths. As a consequence, whilst acknowledging and supporting the principle of reform, they fear 'the baby will be thrown out with the bathwater'. Rather than consolidating and developing existing good practice, for example, it will be swept aside.
- 5.29. The case for ensuring good practice is not lost is broadly supported by the initial consultation on the proposed reforms (WAG, 2008a). This identified that

most of the characteristics of an effective framework already exist but the fundamental problem is one of implementation. It is widely reported by the pilot projects that the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) if fully implemented, would achieve nearly all of what the reform agenda seeks to do. New models, such as the introduction of the IDP may, for example, make multi-agency working and a person-centred approach, easier to achieve but will not, ensure it. Nor will the pilot models ensure that other elements of the system will operate as intended. The challenge, then, is in improving the implementation of both the new models, such as the IDP, and existing systems and processes.

- 5.30. However, as outlined in section four, some of those involved with the pilots expressed concern that too much attention was placed upon the new models, most notably the IDP, as if they were a panacea that would solve all the problems. As one stakeholder put it:

‘Reform needs an effective system that supports schools and children so well that they do not have to go to statementing and the IDP will consolidate the agreements that will underpin this system – but not create it’.

- 5.31. Whilst supporting the model and its important innovations, most notably a web-based system rooted in person-centred planning, stakeholders stressed it needed to be underpinned by capacity building and action to ensure that implementation was effectively monitored and quality assured.

The developmental phase has also illustrated how difficult it can be to assess the effectiveness of one part of a system when the system as a whole has not yet been developed. An IDP for young people with severe and complex needs, for example, is envisaged as a tool for multi-agency use that pulls together all aspects of support and objectives for a young person, providing a strategic overview that is capable of integrating health, education and social care planning and outcomes. For this to work effectively, the pilots indicated

that all the people working with a child or young person need to find it an efficient use of their time to work on the IDP. However, until practice, and in some cases legislation, is changed to incorporate this model people will often find that using an IDP merely duplicates their work. They may, for example, end up writing one report for their required case notes and another for the IDP. In such a case, the piloting phase will give a distorted picture since what is intended to be a time efficient process will be disproportionately time consuming. Making the required changes to legislation and practice is unlikely to happen quickly and it will take time to decommission existing systems and establish develop new approaches.

- 5.32. The developmental phase has emphasised the breadth and complexity of the proposed reforms and the need, if they are to succeed, for a system-wide reform. This, in turn, will require the engagement of stakeholders from a range of sectors and levels, including stakeholders from health, education and social care at national, regional (e.g. from local authority education consortia and local health boards) and local levels (e.g. from within individual learning settings, local authority services and children and young people's partnerships). It will also need to continue to involve and engage parents and carers, children and young people, and the voluntary sector.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

Introduction

6.1. Although the pilot projects and the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales are not synonymous, it is not helpful to try to analyse the pilots in isolation from the proposed reforms. In the conclusions, therefore, we consider both the pilot projects and their relationship to the wider reform agenda. We also review the conclusions reached by the interim report on the developmental phase.

The case for evolution rather than revolution

6.2. The interim report on the developmental phase of the Additional Learning Needs Pilot projects identified that there was clear alignment between the weaknesses in the current system - such as its inconsistency, complexity and inefficiency, the lack of understanding and trust it engenders, and the response to those weaknesses – the three pilot models - the quality assurance framework, IDP and ALNCo role - being developed, and other elements of reform, such as improvements to family support and information services.

6.3. At the end of the developmental phase, there remains a clear alignment between the weaknesses of the existing system and the proposed reform of the statutory framework, which include but go beyond the models being developed. The identification and documentation of the weaknesses of the existing system produced by the Welsh Government consultation and the reviews undertaken by the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee (NAfW, 2006a), Estyn (2003, 2004, 2007), the Audit Commission (2002) and Cambridge Education Associates (unpublished document) remains

valid and the direction of change embodied by the three models is logical.

- 6.4. We also found strong support for the principles and approach embodied in the Special Education Needs Code of Practice for Wales (NAfW, 2004b) together with an acknowledgement that it has not had its intended effect. As one stakeholder put it, 'if we had implemented the code of practice, we wouldn't be here now'. The Special Education Needs Code of Practice for Wales was commonly described as 'lacking teeth' and consequently, lacking the power to ensure consistent implementation across Wales. There is also a strong desire amongst the pilot local authorities to ensure that the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales consolidates, and further develops, existing good practice.
- 6.5. This analysis suggests that the weaknesses of the existing system are not inherent with its structures and models, but relate to poor implementation of them. Therefore, simply introducing new models and structures without addressing the reasons why the existing models were poorly implemented is likely to fail. In our judgment, this analysis is basically sound. Nevertheless, the reviews of the existing system (discussed in section two) also make it clear that there are aspects of the existing structures and models that are inefficient or ineffective and which need improving.
- 6.6. The three models that have been developed (the quality assurance system, the IDP and ALNCo role) are consistent with a model of evolutionary reform, rather than revolutionary reform. In general, the models do not represent a radical break with existing good practice or the code of practice. Instead, they enable existing good practice and the approach embodied by the code of practice, to be consolidated, developed and extended across Wales. Crucially, though, they are also

intended to be underpinned by capacity building. As such, they build upon existing good practice, but also develop it by, for example, making more effective use of information technology, and are supported by reforms to improve the skills and knowledge of practitioners. They also offer the potential to ensure that good practice is consistently implemented throughout Wales.

The cost implications of the proposed reforms

- 6.7. The interim report on the developmental phase of the additional learning needs pilot project identified, midway through the developmental phase, that it was not possible to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the models because they had not been fully piloted or evaluated. At the end of the developmental phase, we conclude that the evidence of the likely cost-effectiveness of the models is both stronger and encouraging, but is still not conclusive. It is, therefore, important that the evidence base is strengthened through the planned piloting phase.
- 6.8. Overall, the analysis of costs undertaken for this study indicates that the net start up costs of key elements of reform, most notably in terms of capacity building, are likely to be considerable (in the order of £1 million), albeit subject to the option chosen (Holtom et al, forthcoming b). However, the analysis also indicates that once systems are established, costs are likely to be comparable to existing arrangements (that is, to be neutral) and may generate net cost savings in some areas.

The action research methodology

- 6.9. In order to be effective, the establishment of the pilot projects to develop and inform policy required strong central co-ordination. The pilots are also part of a complex and ambitious reform agenda which

demands strategic leadership. However, the limited capacity of the statutory reform team, given its small size and changes in personnel within the Welsh Government, has undermined both co-ordination and strategic leadership.

- 6.10. Initially, communication of the vision or ‘big picture’ (how the pilots and other elements of the proposed reforms were expected to fit together) and integration of the different models developed by the pilots and by the Welsh Government statutory reform team was weak, although this improved over time.
- 6.11. The way in which the models were developed by local authorities had important strengths but also some weaknesses. It enabled the pilots to draw upon the experience, expertise and passion of a group of highly committed practitioners, helping ensure that the models were rooted in, and developed from, existing good practice⁴⁰. However, because the models for the IDP in particular and to a lesser degree the quality assurance system, were so rooted in existing practice, which differed across the pilot areas, it was difficult to develop a single national model.
- 6.12. The focus of the developmental phase narrowed over time from an initial broad focus upon system-wide reform to a focus on developing the three models. This helped ensure that progress was made in developing the models, but caused tensions amongst some pilots who felt that important aspects of the work, including family support services and capacity building, were sidelined. It is important that the work on other aspects of the reform process is not lost, an issue we return to when we discuss the need for ‘systems thinking’.

⁴⁰ That is, practice judged by local authorities to be good, and for example, recognised by Estyn as good practice.

The development of models

- 6.13. As a piece of action research, despite the problems, the pilot projects have usefully developed, although not yet robustly piloted, three models. They have also generated important insights which can inform the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales.
- 6.14. Most progress has been made in developing and piloting models for children and young people aged 5-16. The separate projects developing Early Support and transition key working models were only linked in later. There was also only limited progress in planning how the IDP and quality assurance system would work with young people who had left school, were in further or higher education, or in work-based learning.
- 6.15. It will, therefore, be important to use the piloting phase to generate more robust evidence of the cost-effectiveness of the three models that have been developed and their relationship to, and impact upon, other elements of the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs. The evaluation and action research will need to consider both outcomes and the process, including fidelity to the models that are being piloted (that is, whether in practice they are implemented as they are intended to be, or whether, for example, models are adapted to fit local contexts) and the way in which stakeholders may 'work around' problems in practice.

Engaging stakeholders

- 6.16. As outlined in section four, the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee review emphasised the importance of consultation with parents and other stakeholders in order 'to build consensus and confidence' before any fundamental changes were made to the statutory assessment framework (NAfW, 2006a, p13). A wide-ranging

consultation was initiated and the models the pilots developed were directly informed by this process. The consultative process did not, however, lead to consensus on proposed reforms. It was, therefore, vital that consensus building continued during the developmental phase of the pilots. Crucially, without consensus around, and confidence in, the models the pilot projects developed, it would be risky to reform the statutory framework.

6.17. Although strong progress was made in engaging the voluntary sector, engagement of other sectors, such as health and social care, was initially weak, and only improved towards the end of the developmental phase of the pilots. The pilot projects were not intended to, nor were they able, to effectively engage with stakeholders from across the 0-25 age range or with key public service sectors (health, education and social care) beyond their pilot areas. However, this would not, in itself, stop the Welsh Government (as distinct from the pilot projects) from actively engaging stakeholders, although as we outline below, there were a number of challenges that made this difficult. Given the initially slow progress it is, therefore, extremely encouraging that support from key stakeholders within health, education and social care within the Welsh Government has now been secured.

6.18. The limited progress engaging some stakeholders reflected the complexity of the vision of reform of the statutory framework which, in part, needed to be developed through the pilots before it could be communicated across relevant public service sectors. It also reflected the difficulty of discussing a vision which was subject to change. Crucially, until the developmental phase was complete, it would have been difficult to engage a wide range of stakeholders in an on-going process and risked creating confusion and uncertainty if incomplete models, which changed over the course of the developmental phase, were shared and discussed. Nevertheless, the evidence from the pilots suggests that those stakeholders who have engaged with, and used,

the models understand and support them, which is a significant and encouraging finding.

- 6.19. A distinction may be drawn between engagement with stakeholders on the detail of the proposed models, which as outlined above, would be problematic, and a broader process of engagement with stakeholders to, for example, raise awareness of the proposed reforms, their intended outcomes and likely implications for other sectors. The failure to initially effectively engage stakeholders from mainstream education in this broader process of engagement was a notable weakness. In particular, although the potential implications of the proposed reform of the statutory framework for mainstream education are considerable, to date, the work of the pilots is often not seen, even within the local authorities where the work is being piloted, as a 'mainstream' issue. The danger of inclusion and special educational needs continuing to be seen as a separate branch of learning provision is that other education professionals working in this area, most notably those engaged in school improvement and effectiveness, fail to engage with the reforms. Given the importance of mainstream provision in identifying, assessing and providing for a range of additional learning needs that are neither severe nor complex, this creates significant challenges and risks for the proposed reform of the statutory framework for children and young people with special educational needs in Wales.
- 6.20. The developmental phase also indicates that it is often easier for stakeholders to identify the barriers to reform than it is for them to identify the benefits or outcomes. In tackling these barriers, the piloting phase will need to be able to offer credible, tested models that stakeholders can see will benefit their work. The evidence from the pilots is that key stakeholders can be effectively engaged but that this is a time consuming process which involves giving them time to test things out, to really understand how they work and how they will assist their work.

The need for systems thinking

- 6.21. The interim report on the developmental phase of the Additional Learning Needs Pilots (Holtom et al, forthcoming a) identified that the effectiveness of the individual models being developed would not, in themselves, ensure that the reform as a whole would succeed because their effectiveness would depend, in part, upon other changes to the statutory framework. This finding was enhanced as the programme continued. Crucially, the developmental phase strongly indicates that there is no panacea.
- 6.22. The three models developed by the pilots (the quality assurance system, individual planning process centred upon the IDP and the ALNCo role) are all likely to help remove some barriers, such as poor quality data and administratively complex paper-based systems, which contribute to systemic weaknesses in the existing systems. They should also encourage and enable improvements by, for example, facilitating information sharing and multi-agency working. However, the three models will not, in themselves, address the key weaknesses in the existing system, such as its inconsistency, complexity, inefficiency and the lack of understanding and trust these engender. Effective action to tackle the systemic weaknesses in the existing system will depend upon system-wide reform which includes, for example, other complementary reforms such as capacity building and strengthening family support and information services, which the Welsh Government is taking forward.
- 6.23. It will be important to ensure that the different elements of the proposed reforms (such as the IDP, quality assurance system, ALNCo role, capacity building and family support services) are not established independently from each other. It will be vital to address the links between them and to ensure the underlying conditions needed to enable them to work are in place. Each element may be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for addressing the weaknesses, and may

depend upon other elements to work effectively. As a consequence, the outcomes of successful reform are likely to be greater than the sum of the individual parts, as a result of synergies between the different elements. For example, increasing parental/carer involvement in planning and review, improvements in assessment and provision, and improvements in family information and support services should all contribute to increased confidence and trust in the system.

6.24. The developmental phase suggests there are likely to be a range of risks and challenges to successful system-wide reform that need to be carefully assessed and managed. These include:

- cultural and institutional barriers to multi-agency working;
- the difficulty of streamlining or merging diverse statutory assessment and planning processes;
- lack of standardised information technology;
- cuts in public expenditure;
- structural reform of local education authorities; and
- resistance from those working in this area to undertaking the additional work necessary for creating change.

Recommendations

6.25. Recommendation one: it is important to ensure that existing good practice is consolidated and developed. Therefore, in relation to the IDP and quality assurance system, consideration should be given to an approach akin to the 'adopt or justify model'. This could involve specifying the processes, and requirements of, an individual planning process and quality assurance system, and providing examples of good practice, based upon the evidence from the models that have been developed. However, it would not require the adoption of a specific tool or piece of software. This would strike an appropriate balance between providing flexibility to adapt to local contexts without

unduly sacrificing consistency of quality and the potential to generate economies of scale by developing national models. In contrast, we recommend that consideration is given to making the ALNCo training mandatory and organised on a national basis.

- 6.26. Recommendation two: consideration should be given to asking local authorities to develop plans on how they are going to implement the elements of reform as, for example, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire have done. This would allow local authorities to identify and build upon their existing good practice, identify any gaps in areas such as their current processes for parental engagement, quality assurance, dispute resolution, and needs identification and assessment. This would ensure the process consolidated, and built upon, existing good practice and would allow a more effective assessment of the 'distance to be travelled' within a local authority to be made and a more accurate cost benefit analysis to be achieved.
- 6.27. Recommendation three: as part of the piloting phase, consideration should be given to exploring the extent to which the models developed are applicable to young children aged 0-4 years and young people aged 17-25 years.
- 6.28. Recommendation four: consideration should be given to embedding a programme of engagement of key stakeholders from across the Welsh Government, local authorities, local health boards and local health trusts into the piloting phase. Consideration should also be given to putting in place plans for on-going engagement after the piloting phase concludes.
- 6.29. Recommendation five: the effectiveness of the models developed will depend upon other reforms and changes. For example, better quality data on provision and outcomes will not necessarily lead to improvements without other reforms, such as capacity building. Therefore, during the piloting period, we recommend that due regard

should be given to identifying and mapping out the contextual changes required to enable the pilot models to function to full effect. The evaluation should, therefore, look at both processes and outcomes.

- 6.30. Recommendation six: consideration should be given to commissioning further research to better understand the cost-effectiveness of multi-agency panels, the extent of training needs and how they could best be met, and the requirements for key working and designated key workers.

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Appendix 1: summary of progress against contract objectives

Table 1: pilot A, Caerphilly and Flintshire

Selected objectives/outputs*	Summary of progress (July 2011)
<p>To develop criteria for the evaluation of pupil outcomes using the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC) data. • National Pupil Database (NPD) information. • National Curriculum (NC) assessment and external examination data. • Local Education Authority (LEA) standardised test data. 	<p>The quality assurance (QA) system developed by Caerphilly County Borough Council uses the four sources of data (the PLASC, NPD, NC assessment and external examination data and LEA standardised test data). Whilst this data was available to schools and local authorities, the QA system ensures that it is all held in one place, making it easier to develop profiles for individual pupils, groups of pupils and the school as a whole.</p> <p>Criteria developed are based around assessment of needs, interventions and achievement and allows for assessing impact of interventions at a school, class and category of need level.</p> <p>The pilots report very positive feedback from stakeholders and to date the QA system is being widely used within Caerphilly and has been tested in most of the authorities involved in the pilot.</p> <p>Systems have been developed using Excel and SIMS assessment manager to record individual pupil outcomes.</p> <p>Schools and local authorities report that the access to information provided by the system has enabled them to report effectively on how they are meeting ALN, especially during Estyn inspections; to assess the value of interventions and target those that work best; and to better identify unmet needs.</p>
<p>To develop criteria for evaluating pupil outcomes to include information about other learning outcomes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression in Basic Skills. • Progression in personal and Social skills. • Attendance. • Behaviour. • Participation in wider school and out of hours activities. 	<p>The quality assurance system uses both existing data (e.g. attendance data) and provides tools (the 5x10 outcome grids) developed in Flintshire for generating data, in order to measure the other learning outcomes identified. It allows schools to measure the impact of interventions by allowing a baseline to be easily identified and by capturing data at specific points to allow for assessments of progress.</p> <p>The grids are intended to allow teacher assessments to be embedded into the system by using class teacher or SENCo/ALNCo observations to 'score' impacts. Again, their primary purpose is to measure progress, offering a class, school or group 'score' that can be reviewed and updated by the school and/or local authority.</p> <p>The SIMS assessment manager has been adapted to include the quality assessment grids and the 5x10 outcome grids being piloted in the APP (assessing pupil progress) format.</p>
<p>To develop criteria for evaluating the capacity of schools to meet the needs of its pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and to comply with the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice</p>	<p>Both Caerphilly and Flintshire invested a significant amount of time working with schools directly and identifying capacity issues.</p> <p>A capacity evaluation section has been developed, based upon the Estyn three Key Questions. However, to date, this element of the QA system has had a much lower profile than the others.</p>

for Wales, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements and draft Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) for Wales.	
In drawing up the above sets of criteria, to take into account good practice models and tools used for evaluating and monitoring ALN provision.	In developing the system, the pilot consulted a range of stakeholders and drew on their feedback in order to refine the system. These have included school ALNCoS and local authority Inclusion and School Improvement services.
To agree with schools the process for annual monitoring visits.	The use of the QA systems as evidence for the SEF monitor, challenge, intervention and support (MCIS) visits has been piloted for a year in Caerphilly. This has also been agreed with Flintshire's schools.
To develop a system for the monitoring of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education other than in school. • Out of county placements. 	The QA system is sufficiently flexible to enable outcomes for children and young people who are educated other than at school or out of county, to be assessed and recorded. The 5x10 outcome grids were piloted with two pupil referral units in Flintshire. The outcomes of these grids can be incorporated into the provision map.
To develop appropriate training for schools and other educational provision.	Training was developed and delivered in both counties throughout the pilot period. Training sessions were run for ALNCoS/SENCoS and school clerks to develop their ability and confidence in using the QA system. Take up of these sessions was very good. User guides for the Excel spreadsheet and SIMS systems have been produced along with a format for training, including technical training for IT support; training for SENCo/ALNCo and school clerks, to enable them to set up the system in schools; and training in using the QA system as a school improvement tool.
To establish inter-agency approaches to monitor and evaluate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision for pupils with severe and complex needs. • Looked After Children. • Pupils with severe health needs. 	The system is sufficiently flexible to enable different agencies to contribute to, and be informed by, the QA system. However, to date, the system has only been used by education services.
To involve relevant agencies and voluntary sector organisations to ensure appropriate monitoring and evaluation of specific groups of children and young people with ALN, including those: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who require support for English as an Additional Language (EAL); • who are from Gypsy and Traveller families; and • with specific disabilities and 	All categories of ALN are recorded on the QA systems (and data for specific groups can be analysed). Specific criteria were developed for the 5x10 outcome grids, to enable the needs of the different groups, including children and young people who require support for English as an additional language, who are from Gypsy and Traveller families, or who have specific disabilities and syndromes, to be monitored. Data on these groups can be included in the provision map.

syndromes.	
To work with an independent parent partnership organisation to establish processes to secure regular feedback from parents and carers to be used as part of the monitoring and evaluation system.	Flintshire worked with Flintshire Parent Partnership throughout the pilot. Caerphilly plans to work with SNAP Cymru to secure feedback.
To work with partnership agencies to establish shared monitoring and evaluation system and processes.	The system was discussed with Flintshire CYPP and the North Wales Consortium was kept informed of developments in the work.
To develop area improvement teams to include school improvement advisors and ALN advisors in the quality assurance system.	In Caerphilly, area improvement teams will provide the forum for feedback between school improvement advisors and ALN advisory teachers. The area improvement team approach has been 'mainstreamed' within the Flintshire inclusion service (rather than trying to develop a separate team for ALN quality assurance and improvement). QA is now on the agenda of the Inclusion Service Management Groups.
Following the development of the quality assurance system for criteria to pilot the annual quality assurance system	The tools were being developed throughout the pilot period. QA system version 4 has been used in all Caerphilly's schools, and a SIMS version is waiting to be piloted in seven schools. Twenty five schools in other counties are now using QA system version 4.2 The system was piloted in schools in Flintshire.
To develop and pilot ICT software to support the quality assurance system.	An Excel-based system has been developed and tested and development continues on the SIMS-based system. As Caerphilly's final project report notes: "The principles of the IT system have been established, however, further work is needed to refine the IT systems needed to facilitate this"; progress has also been hampered by the duplication of work in this area, given educational consortia working groups which have been looking at QA largely independently of the work of pilot A.
To establish a management board that meets at least bi-monthly, to have oversight of the pilot project.	A management board, which met bi-monthly, was established in both counties. Within Flintshire, the Flintshire Inclusion Service Management Group (ISMG) acted as the management board for the project.
To develop Welsh medium versions of the agreed frameworks.	A Welsh medium QA handbook (which includes the 5x10 outcome grids) was produced.
To develop a sustainability strategy for the pilot project.	In Caerphilly there are plans for roll-out that will involve integration into school self-evaluation and local authority MCIS visits. As part of the roll-out, training will be provided to local authority IT and school advisory/school improvement teams. There is a commitment to roll out the QA system in Flintshire.

* Some of the wording used in the original pilot terms and conditions has been changed to ensure consistency with the terms used elsewhere in this report.

Table 2: pilot B, Carmarthenshire and Torfaen

Selected Objectives/outputs*	Progress (July 2011)
<p>To develop and pilot an inter-agency Complex Needs Panel (pilot B). To develop an LEA panel to deal with cases where there is disagreement or where solutions cannot be accessed within the resources available (pilot C).</p>	<p>Both Torfaen and Carmarthenshire had established Complex Needs Panels before the pilot project started. Within Carmarthenshire the process was streamlined and within Torfaen proposals were put forward to develop a Multi-disciplinary Group (MDG) to replace the existing Statementing and Funding panels and to draw in a wider range of stakeholders. Proposals for an LEA panel were put forward in Torfaen, but were not piloted.</p>
<p>To establish the role of a lead professional (pilot B). To establish a system of key workers (pilot B).</p>	<p>Within Carmarthenshire, a key worker model was in place with the children's disability team, although it proved difficult to engage key workers with the IDP process. Links were developed with Early Support and transition programmes in the county. Lead professionals were identified from education, health and social care, depending on the child's primary need. The pilot project further developed this role working with CCNUK (now CCN Cymru) to look at the role of a key worker in the context of the IDP. Within Torfaen, the key worker approach was piloted as part of a transition project, and proposals were put forward for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lead professional role, who would be part of the MDG, promote inter-agency work and work closely with key workers and the Complex Needs Officer; and • a key worker, who would mediate and advocate on behalf of the child or young person and monitor the day-to-day delivery of the IDP .
<p>To develop and pilot a single individual planning and review process covering all aspects of a child's and young person's needs (i.e. relating to 24 hours, 7 days a week throughout the year) (pilot B). To develop a single individual planning process covering all aspects of a child's or young person's needs, including plans for Looked After Children (LAC), behaviour plans, plans related to provision of English as an Additional Language (EAL), etc. (pilot C).</p>	<p>A web-based IDP model was developed. It was piloted as a paper-based version with 7 families in Carmarthenshire and 11 families in Torfaen. In addition, the one page profile used within the IDP has been more widely used by schools, especially around the period of transition as young people move from year 6 to year 7. The IDP is sufficiently flexible to cover all a child's or young person's needs and the potential for the IDP to replace or be integrated with other planning processes, such as those for LAC, has been explored. However, by the end of the pilot projects, a single individual planning process which would replace all existing processes had not been agreed. The extent to which the work groups of children and young people, such as LAC or those with EAL, have an IDP will depend, in part, upon the definition of ALN adopted by the Welsh Government. For example, at present, it is proposed that the mere fact of being looked after would not, in itself, mean a child or young person necessarily had additional learning needs.</p>

<p>To develop and pilot the use of the Individual Development Plan (pilots B and C)</p>	<p>An IDP was developed and agreed. However, piloting was limited. IT problems relating to information sharing and security blocked piloting of the on-line IDP in Carmarthenshire and, as a result, a paper-based IDP was piloted with seven families in Carmarthenshire. An on-line IDP was piloted with 11 families in Torfaen.</p>
<p>To develop and pilot ICT software to support the framework (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>As outlined above, IT problems relating to information sharing and security blocked piloting of the on-line IDP in Carmarthenshire. The IDP test site, led by Torfaen, is on-line http://planningtogethertest.torfaen.gov.uk and has been used for limited piloting of the on-line IDP.</p>
<p>To link closely with the Welsh Government Transition Key Worker pilot scheme (2009) (pilots B and C). To develop and pilot an appropriate framework for provision for young people aged 14-25, incorporating person-centred planning approaches (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>Links have been made to the Transition to Work project in both Carmarthenshire and Torfaen, although it should be noted that this is the ESF funded Trinity Fields project, not the Welsh Government Transition Key Worker pilot scheme. Person-centred planning was embedded at the heart of the IDP and piloted in both counties, with young people with severe and complex ALN and ALN that are not severe and/or complex, in secondary school settings. Key stakeholders were trained in person-centred planning in both Carmarthenshire and Torfaen. They included the Carmarthenshire transition team. Although initially there was limited take-up of tools and approaches, they are reported to be keen to use the on-line IDP. Within Torfaen, three people on transition projects were trained as person-centred thinking trainers, with three more in the process of being trained.</p>
<p>To develop standard processes relating to the transition between phases of education (pilot C).</p>	<p>Person-centred planning and IDP were piloted with young people with severe and complex ALN and ALN that are not severe and/or complex in nursery, primary and secondary schools in both counties. This covers key points of transition at ages 5, 11 and 16.</p>
<p>To carry out an audit of expertise and specialist knowledge relating to discrete disabilities e.g. autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and multi-sensory impairments (MSI) (pilot B). To commission external sources to provide for identified shortfall (pilot B).</p>	<p>Audits of ASD and complex health needs were completed in both Carmarthenshire and Torfaen. Within Carmarthenshire, following identification by the Strategic Group for Complex Needs of a shortfall in ASD provision, a new residential ASD provision within the county has been established.</p>
<p>To audit good practice in Torfaen and elsewhere in Wales in partnership with Pembrokeshire and Bridgend authorities (pilot C).</p>	<p>Audits of good practice, based upon Estyn inspections, were undertaken by Torfaen.</p>

<p>To develop a staged approach for assessment to secure the involvement of external professionals, where needed (pilot C).</p>	<p>The existing structure of assessment provided by School Action and School Action Plus has been incorporated into the IDP developed by Carmarthenshire and Torfaen.</p>
<p>To establish and pilot joint diagnosis, assessment and referral processes (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>Joint assessment processes have been developed and piloted in Carmarthenshire. These include, for example, joint visits by speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and educational psychologists. Carmarthenshire reports that 'These visits have, in the main, taken place in schools with the added advantage of giving joint feedback to school staff' (pilot B, unpublished document). Proposals for future multi-agency working are expected to streamline the existing structure in Carmarthenshire, which currently involves a number of different groups meeting. Progress has been made in integrating processes – for example 'For one of the project children in mainstream [school], the outcome of his IDP was to develop a totally integrated programme that would fit into the school timetable whilst also addressing his considerable needs around mobility and speech and language' (ibid.).</p>
<p>To ensure effective co-operation and involvement of all relevant agencies, where appropriate, in the processes surrounding individual plans (pilot C).</p>	<p>In Carmarthenshire, a Strategic Planning Group for children with disabilities and complex needs was already established (as part of the CYPP). The project helped to develop the PCP approach, involving the whole of the physiotherapy and occupational therapy teams in PCP training. There was widespread support for the IDP model. In Torfaen the IDP and PCP training has been used to promote multi-agency work.</p>
<p>To develop and pilot a system for facilitating the improvement of schools' ALN provision (pilot C).</p>	<p>The IDP and person-centred planning are expected to contribute to improvements in schools' ALN provision. However, the key system for facilitating improvement is expected to be the quality assurance system developed by pilot A.</p>
<p>The development of a framework of reasonable limits covering all stages of the assessment, planning and review process (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>The piloting of IDPs was used to assess what would be realistic. It was proposed that the IDP cycle would last for a maximum of six months.</p>
<p>To establish a commitment at a corporate level and effective working partnerships between Education, Social Services and local health services for the management of the [pilot] scheme to include service specifications (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>Within Carmarthenshire, a Strategic Planning Group for children with disabilities and complex needs was already established (as part of the CYPP) and as a result of the project, the Inclusion Division has set up a task and finish group to look at how to move the statutory reform agenda forward within the county and the Director of Education has helped move the IT development forward. Within Torfaen, a single steering group covering both pilots B and C, which included representatives from education, social care, health services, schools and the voluntary sector, was established.</p>

<p>The development of proposals for performance and strategic targets relating to the severe and complex needs model (pilot B).</p>	<p>As outlined above, Carmarthenshire already had a tripartite model, bringing together education, health and social care, in order to meet severe and/or complex needs. This was to be used as the basis for identifying targets.</p>
<p>To develop common definitions and terms (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>The work built on existing good practice. The agreed common format for the IDP was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is important to and important for the young person, what's working, what's not working, strengths and achievements, and challenges; • basic biographical information; • a detailed action plan; and • contact information.
<p>The development of proposals for the joint commissioning of services (pilot B).</p>	<p>A model of tripartite funding was in place in Carmarthenshire, through the Strategic Joint Commissioning Framework and Complex Needs Resource panel. A paper outlining how the model could be developed was produced.</p>
<p>To incorporate the use of the Welsh Government Early Support approaches and materials (2009). To develop and pilot the use of the Individual Development Plan (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>Carmarthenshire, together with Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion, are part of the Early Support Project looking at using the IDP/family file. They have looked at streamlining the work in the early years to fit with Early Support and IDP. Two days training in links to Early Support was organised with Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. Six families were identified to pilot the on-line IDP. One family, with a child of nine months, was identified through Flying Start as a potential participant in the IDP pilot.</p>
<p>To develop a system for providing easily accessible and effective advocacy services for young people and for their parents/carers in partnership with an independent organisation (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>Existing Advocacy services in Carmarthenshire included the Family Advisory Service, SNAP Cymru, the NSPCC and Mencap. These were reviewed, services in other pilot areas were considered, the voluntary sector was consulted and links made to the advocacy services being developed as part of the 'Child's Right to Appeal' project were made. Within Torfaen, the National Youth Advocacy Service has been actively involved in the consultation process and six members of their staff have undertaken person-centred planning training through the project.</p>
<p>To facilitate a more effective approach to resolving disagreements and disputes (pilots B and C).</p>	<p>Family group conferencing was explored in Carmarthenshire. Within Torfaen, the CYPP considered the role of a Complex Needs Officer, who could act as a neutral arbitrator when disagreements or disputes arose. For those children and young people with less complex needs, the local authority education service already operate a resolution role and continued to use this process during the pilot project.</p>
<p>To develop effective mechanisms for ensuring the involvement of young people in their identification, assessment, planning and</p>	<p>As outlined above, training in person-centred planning was developed and delivered to a range of stakeholders in both Carmarthenshire and Torfaen.</p>

review processes (pilots B and C).	
To develop effective information services for parents, carers, children and young people in partnership with an independent parent partnership organisation (pilots B and C).	Carmarthenshire are planning to use a central Information officer and a designated family and child consultation officer.
To work with Bridgend, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire LEAs to develop proposals for the funding of these arrangements (pilots B and C).	A pre-existing model of tripartite funding is part of the Strategic Joint Commissioning Framework in Carmarthenshire and presentations have been made to the Statutory Reform Group and to the pilot projects on how this works.
To establish a management board that meets bi-monthly, to have oversight of the pilot projects comprising of all key stakeholders, including parents and representatives of the parent partnership organisations (pilots B and C).	Management groups were set up in Carmarthenshire and Torfaen and met on a bi-monthly basis.
The piloting of processes and systems as outlined in the above objectives with English and Welsh medium primary and secondary school and education otherwise settings (pilots B and C).	As outlined above, PCP and a paper-based IDP was piloted with 7 families in Carmarthenshire and PCP and the on-line IDP was piloted with 11 families in Torfaen. Person-centred planning and the IDP were piloted with young people with severe and complex ALN and ALN that are not severe and complex in nursery, primary and secondary school settings. Torfaen has also scheduled the translation of all documents for the key stages with their translation service.
To develop an exit/sustainability strategy for the pilot project (pilots B and C).	Within Carmarthenshire, the existing Complex Needs Panel will continue; and a task and finish group was set up to look at how IDPs will replace statements and to consider the implications for existing roles and responsibilities. As outlined above, training in person-centred planning was developed and is being delivered. In addition, two SENCo forums and head teachers' meetings have taken place to provide schools with information about the project and the proposals. Within Torfaen, three people trained as person-centred thinking trainers and three more are in progress; a total of 155 people have been trained in person-centred thinking; and a DVD to show case the work was produced.

Sources: *pilot project progress reports and discussions with the pilots.*

* Some of the wording used in the original pilot terms and conditions has been changed to ensure consistency with the terms used elsewhere in this report.

Table 3: pilot C, Bridgend and Pembrokeshire

Selected objectives/outputs*	Progress (July 2011)
<p>To audit good practice in Bridgend and elsewhere in Wales in partnership with Pembrokeshire and Torfaen authorities.</p>	<p>Seven guidance packs have been developed by Bridgend as a series of Early Professional Development resources for teachers. They describe good practice in making provision for learners with the following types of ALN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • autistic spectrum disorders; • behaviour, emotional and social difficulties; • developmental communication disorders; • Down's syndrome; • moderate learning difficulties; • sensory impairment; and • specific learning difficulties. <p>Within Pembrokeshire, 11 case studies of good practice were developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with Parents: Tenby Junior School; • Partnership with Parents: Manorbier School, Primary; • Partnership with Parents: St Oswald's School, Primary; • Implementing the IDP and Assessment using the PASS Survey: Pembroke Dock Community School, Primary; • Collaboration for Assessment and Moderation: Tenby Family of Schools; • Multiagency Approach: St Marks School, Primary; • Developing a Nurture Group: Milford Junior School; • Developing a Nurture Group: Hakin Infants School; • Using the Pupil Attitudes to School and Self (PASS) Survey: Milford Haven School, Secondary; • Multi-agency Partnerships: Sir Thomas Picton School, Secondary; and • Implementing the IDP: Roch School, Primary.
<p>To develop a system for recording the continuous cycle of assessment, planning, intervention and review, which</p>	<p>A Model for the Continuous Cycle in Meeting Additional Learning Needs was produced by Bridgend. This outlines a continuum of provision running from class action (described as 'additional provision to meet the ALN of learners as part of the range of normal well differentiated provision being made in a mainstream classroom') through School Action (described as 'additional provision made by a school to supplement</p>

<p>can be administered by schools, and owned by the young person and their parents/carers.</p> <p>To develop a single individual planning process covering all aspects of a child's or young person's needs, including plans for looked after children (LAC), behaviour plans, plans related to provision of English as an Additional Language (EAL) etc.</p> <p>To develop effective mechanisms for ensuring the involvement of young people in their identification, assessment, planning and review processes.</p>	<p>'class action'), to School Action Plus (described as 'additional provision made to supplement a school's provision'). The model also includes 'expected operational procedures' covering identification and assessment, planning, implementation and review for each stage of the continuum.</p> <p>A Possible Model for a Single Individual Planning process was also produced by Bridgend. This is based around four stages – identifying and assessing a child's or young person's needs; planning provision to meet those needs; implementing agreed actions; and reviewing the provision to ensure it meets the child's or young person's needs. Further detail is provided by 14 steps, which cover the four stages of the model (and which are outlined in the Possible Model for a Single Individual Planning process).</p> <p>In Pembrokeshire a paper identifying the way in which the inclusion of children with additional learning needs (ALN) can be planned and developed within the learning community - Statements or Something Better?: meeting the needs of pupils with ALN who are not severe and/or complex, a Pembrokeshire approach - was developed.</p> <p>A person-centred IDP model entitled John/Jenny's plan, was developed and, as outlined below, piloted with a small number of schools and families. This had the potential to cover all aspects of a child's or young person's needs, including plans for looked after children (LAC), behaviour plans, plans related to provision of English as an additional language (EAL). However, the extent to which it could do so was dependent upon the definition of ALN adopted by the Welsh Government and changes to the guidance governing planning for these different groups of learners.</p> <p>John/Jenny's plan was intended to be person-centred and user-friendly, although it was acknowledged that further work was needed to make the web-based version more user-friendly.</p>
<p>To develop and pilot the use of the Individual Development Plan (as defined in Statements or Something Better?).</p>	<p>An IDP, John/Jenny's plan, was developed by pilot C.</p> <p>In the summer of 2010, Bridgend piloted a paper-based version of the IDP piloted with nine learners in the Porthcawl cluster of schools (in one secondary and four primary schools). The aim of this was threefold: to explore the types of questions that should be asked of different participants in the process; explore the procedures needed to identify, assess, plan for, implement and review provision for meeting ALN; and to help inform the possible format for a web-based IDP. Further piloting was planned, but could not be carried out after a key member of the pilot project team left. A group of 10 parents and carers was also consulted by Snap Cymru, in order to further explore the type of questions that should be asked and the possible format for a web-based IDP.</p> <p>In Pembrokeshire, there was limited piloting of an on-line version of John/Jenny's plan with 12 pupils in four</p>

	<p>schools. The aim of this was primarily to test the tool and the IT supporting it, rather than the principles underpinning it, such as person-centred planning.</p>
<p>To develop a staged approach for assessment to secure the involvement of external professionals, where needed.</p>	<p>In Bridgend a possible model for the continuous cycle in meeting additional learning needs was produced. This specifies when and which agencies may need to be involved, the training and support implications and the importance of key features, such as standardised documentation, agreed timescales and clear guidance.</p> <p>In Pembrokeshire a group of screening tools and follow-up assessments, including the Pembrokeshire assessment tool, General Learning (GL) assessments and the Pupil Attitudes to School and Self survey are used. These tools and assessments are intended to provide ‘a consistent approach to early identification and monitoring progress’. As outlined in the project’s final report, these assessments are used to enable early intervention, areas of difficulty and to inform policy and practice, by, for example, highlighting the incidence of different types of needs in different schools. These assessment processes are supported by the development of multi-disciplinary teams based around clusters/families of schools (which enable the more complex or severe needs identified through assessment to be provided for).</p>
<p>To develop an LEA panel to deal with cases where there is disagreement or where solutions cannot be accessed within the resources available.</p>	<p>A Possible Model for Disagreement Resolution was produced in Bridgend. It aims to avoid conflict escalating by outlining a sequence of conciliation, mediation and, if necessary, formal arbitration.</p> <p>Pembrokeshire has developed a model that, as their final report outlines, focuses on building effective partnerships with parents so that mutual trust and understanding exists to reduce the need for Disagreement Resolution Services and Tribunals. The model outlines key principles (rather than providing detail on procedures), including developing an ethos or culture of inclusion; promoting, respecting and valuing parental involvement; providing training opportunities for parents (to enable them to learn more about ALN); and enhancing the provision of information to parents.</p> <p>Proposals were also put forward by Bridgend and Pembrokeshire, for providing additional support to schools where they cannot meet the needs of children and young people within delegated resources.</p>
<p>To ensure effective co-operation and involvement of all relevant agencies, where appropriate, in the processes surrounding individual plans.</p>	<p>In Bridgend, the proposed continuous model for matching provision to learners’ ALN and a possible model for multi-agency collaboration in supporting schools in making ALN provision describe when it is appropriate to involve other agencies. The proposed model for transition planning describes the involvement of other agencies in transition planning.</p> <p>In Pembrokeshire, a partnership model was developed. This is rooted in families or clusters of schools. The model includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialist support for each cluster;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inclusion panels within each cluster or family of schools which meet termly, bringing together school staff with external agencies to discuss the needs of children and young people with complex or severe needs; and • a role for ALNCos, co-ordinating tier 1, 2 and 3 services (universal, targeted and specialist services respectively), with support from specialists in order to co-ordinate tier 4 (acute/restorative) services.
<p>To develop standard processes relating to the transition between phases of education.</p>	<p>A proposed model for transition planning was developed in Bridgend. As outlined in the model, this identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the points when transition may take place; • the information that is likely to be required; • who needs to be involved; • timing - when transition planning should start; • the importance of having standard procedures and documentation; and • the importance of protocol arrangements being in place between all the partner service providers. <p>More generally, the IDP developed by Bridgend and Pembrokeshire is intended to cover the 0-25 age range, facilitating the different transitions that children and young people may make as they grow up.</p>
<p>To develop and pilot a system for facilitating the improvement of ALN provision within schools.</p>	<p>Within Pembrokeshire, the focus upon maximising delegation of funding to schools is intended to enable schools to improve provision by, for example, providing schools with greater control over, and continuity in, funding. However, it necessarily limits the local authority's capacity to support individual children and young people. Therefore, the focus is upon supporting schools (in order to improve their provision), by working in partnership with them, with particular attention paid to monitoring and evaluating outcomes and the quality of provision, coupled with training and professional development. The local authority's support and challenge strategy for schools includes a core visit, which, as outlined in the project final report, provides a focus for monitoring the effectiveness of support during the previous school year. It also provides a focus for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting schools in the planning for the next academic year; and • the supported self-review process, aligned to the Estyn Common Inspection Framework and the School Effectiveness Framework (WAG, 2008b), focused upon provision, practice and outcomes. <p>In addition, schools must submit their Disability Equality Scheme, Action Plan and Access Plan to the local authority.</p> <p>Within Bridgend, the 'Planning and Reviewing in Partnership' (PRIP) model has been developed as part of the TAPPAS (Team Around the Parent, Pupil and School) networking arrangements. These arrangements include a school overview and an annual reporting system. This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meetings between senior managers within schools and the local authority Inclusion Service; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the submission of reports for individual schools to the Local Authority 'Schools Overview Group'. It enables provision at different levels (e.g. at the level of individual school, clusters and the county as a whole) to be assessed. These processes are complemented by other proposals for improving provision, such as the Bridgend Continuous Professional Development Strategy and the learning needs analysis framework developed to help identify the training needs of school staff in making suitable provision for learners with ALN (this is part of the Planning and Reviewing in Partnership model). The quality standards in the school self-evaluation framework have also been updated to reflect pilot A's work.
To link closely with the Welsh Government Transition Key Worker pilot scheme (2009).	<p>Meetings were held with the Welsh Government project leader for the Transition Key Worker pilot projects in 2010 and 2011, to ensure development work on the IDP in Bridgend and Pembrokeshire was consistent with the Key Worker pilot projects. For example, exploring how a Transition Key Worker could act as a support co-ordinator for an IDP.</p> <p>Pembrokeshire was one of the counties involved in the Transition Key Worker pilot projects. However, only limited links between the two projects were made.</p>
To incorporate the use of the WAG Early Support approaches and materials (2009).	<p>Pembrokeshire is involved in the Early Support pilots. Meetings were held between the ALN and Early Support pilot projects and Early Support programme materials were considered when developing John/Jenny's plan (the IDP) and incorporated into it, where appropriate. As outlined in the final report, these included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Family Pack (including the Family File); the multi-agency planning tool; the range of information for parents booklets; the range of background information booklets; and the development journals.
Incorporate relevant recommendations relating to the NBAR report.	<p>Bridgend, together with the Vale of Glamorgan, was a partner in the NBAR pilot projects. The NBAR report was considered and key recommendations, such as the need for early intervention in enhancing functional literacy and minimising exclusions, informed the development of models.</p>
Development of training for schools and parents in conjunction with parent organisations.	<p>In Bridgend, two training packs – the 'Bridgend Parent Partnership Pack' and the 'Avoiding Conflict – a one day training course' were developed.</p> <p>In Pembrokeshire, the focus has been upon supporting schools to work with and involve parents.</p>
To develop effective information services for parents, carers, children and young people in partnership with an independent parent partnership organisation.	<p>The Bridgend parent information leaflets were updated and a Parent Route Map was developed. Information points were to be established in two school clusters, including a drop-in surgery where parents and carers can seek advice from a family link worker. It is planned to further extend this to other school clusters in the future.</p>

	Pembrokeshire adopted Bridgend's parent support materials and has developed a model that includes an emphasis upon enhancing the provision of information to parents.
To develop a system for providing easily accessible and effective advocacy services for young people and for their parents/carers in partnership with an independent organisation.	Existing services, such as Tros Gynnal, were funded by Bridgend CYPP to provide advice and guidance for young people, and SNAP Cymru was funded to provide an independent parent partnership service for the parents and carers of learners with ALN.
To facilitate a more effective approach to resolving disagreements and disputes.	<p>A possible model for disagreement resolution was produced in Bridgend. It aims to avoid conflict escalating by outlining a sequence of conciliation, mediation and, if necessary, formal arbitration. This is underpinned by training and support materials for local authority and school staff. As outlined in the project's final report, the model covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the different phases in seeking to resolve a disagreement – conciliation, mediation and arbitration. • where and when disagreements might arise in discussions about ALN; • patterns of behaviour when disagreements arise; • adopting a 'narrative' approach to disagreement resolution; • resolving disagreements about school provision; • resolving disagreements about provision made to supplement school provision; • resolving disagreements involving provision beyond mainstream schools; • support structures for parents/carers; • support structures for children and young people; • support structures for schools and services; • ensuring equity and consistency in disagreement resolution; and • early years settings. <p>In Pembrokeshire, there is a strong emphasis upon developing a person-centred approach, that involves families, that aims to minimise disagreement and support external parent partnership and mediation services where disagreement occurs, so that, for example, appeals to the SENTW can be minimised.</p>
To develop self-evaluation processes, including the systematic monitoring of the views of young people and their parents/carers.	A consultative process was developed in both Bridgend and Pembrokeshire. The views of children and young people, schools and other professionals were collected throughout the process. These included, for example 'Agenda Days' in which children and young people in Bridgend were consulted.

<p>To work with Pembrokeshire and Torfaen education services to develop proposals for the funding of these arrangements.</p>	<p>In Pembrokeshire, delegated funding was already established and their approach to meeting the needs of pupils with ALN which are not severe and/or complex is based upon a model of delegated funding to schools (pilot project C, unpublished document b). The amount delegated to each school is determined by a formula that uses age-weighted pupil units (AWPU) and weighting for other specified factors. Additional funding is determined through audits of pupil need, using a range of direct and proxy indicators, such as eligibility for free school meals. This is intended to ensure schools have the resources and capacity to retain an increasingly specialist workforce and to invest in training and resources to meet the needs of current pupils and future intakes. The local authority retains a small proportion of the funding in order to enable it to provide central support services and to meet needs that cannot be met within schools' delegated resources.</p> <p>Equivalent proposals for funding to school were developed in Bridgend. These are outlined in detail in the Bridgend Education Inclusion Programme Pack.</p>
<p>To develop and pilot ICT software to support the framework.</p>	<p>An on-line version of John/Jenny's plan was developed. Other aspects of the ICT to support the QA system were developed by pilot A.</p>
<p>To work with Torfaen education services to develop proposals for a framework for reasonable time limits for each stage of the identification, assessment, planning and review process.</p>	<p>A tentative proposal of a maximum of 130 working days for a review cycle was put forward (roughly six months). There will be no time limits for each of the individual stages of the review process (identification, assessment, planning and review).</p>
<p>To work with Torfaen to develop a range of performance targets and indicators.</p>	<p>Performance indicators relating to learner outcomes, quality of provision and leadership and management were developed and outlined in detail in the Bridgend Education Inclusion Programme Pack.</p> <p>An equivalent approach to evaluation was developed in Pembrokeshire. This includes core visits and school self-review visits (discussed further above).</p>
<p>To establish a management board that meets bi-monthly, to have oversight of the pilot project comprising of all key stakeholders, including parents and representatives of the parent partnership organisations.</p>	<p>A Project Steering Group and working groups were established and met bi-monthly. These included, for example, the Pilot Project Steering Group in Bridgend and three working groups to develop a parent partnership model, the Individual Development Plan (IDP) model and learner participation support. A Bridgend and Pembrokeshire Overarching Project Management Group was also set up to facilitate collaboration between the two counties and to oversee the project as a whole.</p>
<p>Piloting of the processes and</p>	<p>The headteachers of the Welsh medium schools in Bridgend and members of the Education Other Than at</p>

systems outlined in Objectives 1-13 with English and Welsh medium primary and secondary and Education Otherwise settings.	School Team within the Bridgend Behaviour Support Service, were consulted on the prototype web-based IDP. However, processes and systems were not formally piloted in either setting. Similarly, piloting of the IDP in Pembrokeshire was limited to mainstream settings.
The translation and pilot of the agreed frameworks and all documents relating to the processes and systems outlined in Objectives 1-13 in the medium of the Welsh language.	Translation was suspended until frameworks and documents had been agreed with the Welsh Government.
To develop an exit/sustainability strategy for the pilot project.	Although many of the elements are already integrated into the practice of Bridgend and Pembrokeshire, there are concerns about what will happen when the pilot ends.

Sources: pilot project reports and discussions with the pilot projects

* Some of the wording used in the original pilot terms and conditions has been changed to ensure consistency with the terms used elsewhere in this report.

Table 4: pilot D, Cardiff and Newport

Selected objectives/outputs*	Progress (July 2011)
To identify best practice models, in relation to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales, within Cardiff and Newport and elsewhere in Wales.	A Reference Group with practitioners from Newport and Cardiff LEAs, primary and secondary schools, and central service officers in Parent Partnership roles was established. The existing Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales was analysed and evaluated and a paper outlining recommendations and proposed changes to the existing code was produced.
To determine best practice models for each phase of education and develop a pilot project.	As outlined above, a reference group was established. A number of different models, including (i) separate roles for ALNCOs and SENCOs and (ii) ALNCOs replacing SENCOs, were considered. A joint paper, outlining recommendations, was produced.
To pilot a range of innovative alternative models including the use of administrative and teaching assistants to support the role of the teacher.	As outlined above, a reference group was established. This group established the principles that the ALNCO models will operate within. Research has been undertaken to explore existing practice (including the role currently played by support staff) and the implications of the different models. This included a survey of primary schools in Bridgend, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire and Newport, research with secondary schools in Cardiff and Newport, and case studies.
To pilot clustering arrangements between small schools.	Proposals were put forward by pilot D, for clustering arrangements. Case studies of existing clusters arrangements were also produced. However, clustering arrangements were not piloted by pilot D.
To clarify the role of ALNCO within the schools management team.	The relationship between the school senior management team (SMT) and ALNCO was identified as crucial. Pilot D recommended that ALNCOs be members of the SMT in primary, but not secondary schools.
To develop appropriate person specifications for the ALNCO role in each phase context.	Proposals for the specification for nationally approved training for special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) leading to the award of the National Award for SEN Co-ordination Wales have been developed. The qualification's learning outcomes have been matched to England's, in order to maximise the attractiveness and transferability of the qualification.
To ensure there is no unnecessary administrative burden on schools.	Pilot D's work has highlighted, in particular, the heavy existing administrative burden that falls upon many SENCOs and minimising this is integral to the proposed model.
To produce case study materials identifying effective practice and guidance for schools.	Case studies were produced.
To ensure effective collaborative roles with other agencies and voluntary sector organisations, parent partnerships etc.	Voluntary sector organisations, including SNAP Cymru and The National Deaf Children's Society, were consulted and are reported by pilot D to be very supportive of the proposals.
To explore effective means of incorporating all school-based processes relating to ALN,	ALNCOs' proposed responsibilities cover all different types of ALN. The extent to which the work of an ALNCO covers groups of children and young people, such as LAC or those with

including those relating to looked after children (LAC), behaviour, English as an Additional Language (EAL) etc.	EAL, will depend upon the definition of ALN adopted by the Welsh Government.
To work with higher education institutions to develop and pilot an accredited course for ALNCos.	As outlined above, the course has been developed. Best Practice Network based in Bristol, a leading distance learning training provider for the National Award for SEN co-ordination in England, was identified as the preferred provider. Their course (for England) is currently accredited by Bath Spa University. However, it was agreed with the Welsh Government that it was not possible to commission, and therefore, pilot the accredited course until decisions about the future of the ALNCo role had been made.
To examine and develop information sharing mechanisms based upon identified good practice elsewhere in the UK.	Pilot D worked with Caerphilly (pilot A) to pilot the provision mapping tool in reference group schools.
To develop an ICT software system to support the ALNCo framework.	It was agreed with the Welsh Government that this would be delivered by pilots A (the QA system) and C (the on-line IDP).
To develop quality assurance systems to ensure consistent high quality outcomes.	The self-evaluation audit tool was developed. However, there is uncertainty about whether it will be superseded by pilot A's work on a QA system.
Project progress reports to the WG pilot project co-ordinator on a quarterly basis.	Quarterly progress reports submitted. Final report delayed, pending agreement with the Welsh Government on completion of a number of outputs.
Project managers and lead LEA officers to participate in WG meetings as appropriate.	The project manager and lead officers attended lead officer meetings. The project manager also attended IDP meetings.
The establishment of a management board to have oversight of the pilot project.	A management board was established and held bi-monthly meetings
Translate and pilot the agreed framework in the Welsh language in Welsh medium schools.	A draft of the self-evaluation audit tool was translated. However the final version was not, due to uncertainty about whether it would be superseded by pilot A's work or not.
To develop an exit/sustainability strategy for the pilot project.	To a large degree this is dependent upon the Welsh Government which will need to decide whether or not to proceed with the proposed qualification.

Sources: Pilot D Progress Reports, discussions with Pilot D

* Some of the wording used in the original pilot terms and conditions has been changed to ensure consistency with the terms used elsewhere in this report.

Appendix 2: additional and special educational learning needs

The seminal 1978 Warnock Report (Warnock et al, 1978) proposed a new approach to defining 'special educational needs', replacing 'categories' of children, such as 'blind', 'physically handicapped' or 'educationally sub-normal'⁴¹, with a 'continuum' of need, and extending 'the idea of education provided in special schools, special classes or units for children with particular types of 'disability' to include 'any form of additional help, wherever it is provided and whenever it is' (championing the principle of inclusion) (ibid, 7). The report informed the definition of children with special educational needs used in the 1981 Education Act:

'...a child has "special educational needs" if he has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him.

...a child has a "learning difficulty " if

- (a) he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age; or
- (b) he has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided in schools, within the area of the local authority concerned, for children of his age; or
- (c) he is under the age of five years and is, or would be if special educational provision were not made for him, [sic] likely to fall within paragraph (a) or (b) when over that age.' (Education Act ,1981,ch.60, i)

In order to promote a more inclusive education system and strengthen partnership working, in 2006, the National Assembly for Wales issued guidance, Inclusion and

⁴¹ The full list of categories of pupils requiring special educational treatment in England and Wales, defined in the Handicapped Pupils and Special Schools Regulations 1959, were: blind pupils; partially sighted pupils; deaf pupils; partially hearing pupils; educationally sub-normal pupils; epileptic pupils; maladjusted pupils; physically handicapped pupils; pupils suffering from speech defect; and delicate pupils. (ibid, p.380)

Pupil Support (NAfW, 2006b), which introduced the concept of ‘additional learning needs’ (ALN) to education policy. The guidance stated that:

‘Children and young people have additional learning needs where their needs are greater than the majority of their peers’ (NAfW, 2006b, Ministerial Foreword ⁴²).

Crucially, therefore, it omitted the term ‘significantly’ (as outlined above, the legal definition of special educational needs refers to ‘*significantly* greater difficulty in learning than the majority’ (italics added). As such, the concept is broader than the legal definition of special educational needs, including not only pupils who have ‘severe, complex and/or specific learning difficulties’, who form a subset of those with additional learning needs, but also those with additional learning needs that are neither severe and/or complex (but are still greater than the majority) (NAfW, 2006b, 2).

⁴² There is no page number for the Ministerial Foreword. This definition has been used as it is the most succinct definition and has become widely used. In p. 2 of section 1, the Guidance outlines that the concept of additional learning needs “encompasses all children and young people with learning needs which are greater than those of the majority of their peers and not just those identified as having special educational needs as defined within the Education Act 1996 and the SEN Code of Practice for Wales”. It goes on to state that ‘The term ‘Additional Learning Needs’ includes those learners who require additional support either due to their circumstances or because they have a longer-term disorder or condition. In many cases, for example through sickness or where a family is experiencing temporary difficulties, children and young people may have additional learning needs for a short period only’ (ibid) and in section 2 the Guidance goes on to identify a range of factors which ‘may lead to learners having additional learning needs’ (ibid).

Appendix 3: documents reviewed

Author(s)	Title
Audit Commission (UK)	Special Educational Needs: A Mainstream Issue, 2004
Department for Education and Skills (England)	Bercow Review of Services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs, 2008
Department for Education and Skills (England)	Special Educational Needs Dispute Resolution Service; National Evaluation, 2008
Department for Education and Skills (England)	The Cost and Benefits of Early Identification and Effective Intervention; Final Report, 2004
Department for Education and Skills (England)	The Lamb Inquiry Report on Special Educational Needs and Parental Confidence, 2010
Department for Education (England)	Evaluation of the Impact of the DfE Investment in Initiatives designed to Improve Teacher Workforce Skills in relation to SEN and Disabilities - 1st Interim Report, 2010
Estyn (Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales)	Support for Children with Special Educational Needs; An Estyn Overview, 2003
Estyn (Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales)	Best Practice in The Development of Statements of Special Educational Needs and Delivery by Schools of the Action Agreed, 2004
Estyn (Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales)	Success for All: Support in Further Education Colleges and Work-Based Learning Companies for 16-19 Year Olds with Additional Learning Needs, 2005
Estyn (Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales)	Evaluating Outcomes for Children and Young People with Additional Learning Needs, 2007
Estyn (Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales)	Annual Report 2009-2010 and Annual Report 2010-2011
National Assembly for Wales	Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales, 2004
National Assembly for Wales	Education and Lifelong Learning Committee, Policy Review of Special Educational Needs Part 1: Early Identification and Intervention, 2004
National Assembly for Wales	National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services in Wales, 2005
National Assembly for Wales	Education and Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee, Policy Review of Special Educational Needs: Part 2: Statutory Assessment Framework (Statementing), 2006
National Assembly for Wales	Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee, Policy Review of Additional Educational Needs: Part 3: Transition, 2007
National College for School Leadership	Reaching Out, Reaching In; Implications for Leaders of Mainstream Schools and their Support Service Providers in Supporting Children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder, 2006
Pilot A	Quarterly Progress Report No 1
Pilot A	Quarterly Progress Report No 2

Pilot A	Quality Assurance – pilot A
Pilot A	Flintshire Pilot Project Quarterly Progress Report, July 2010-September 2010
Pilot A	Flintshire Pilot Project Quarterly Progress Report No 2, February 2010
Pilot A	Wider Consultation Action Plan relating to pilot A (measuring outcomes section) (no author, no date)
Pilot A	Pilot Project A – Quality Assurance. Information for the WAG Pilot Dissemination Day, 6 th January 2011, (no author, no date).
Pilots A and B	ALN Pilot Projects Progress Report
Pilot B	Project B: Carmarthenshire. Statements or Something Better? - Severe and Complex Needs, 2010, no author
Pilot B	Implementation Planning Framework for Objectives. 5
Pilot B	Implementation Planning Framework for Objectives. 6
Pilot B	Implementation Planning Framework for Objectives. 9
Pilot B	Implementation Planning Framework for Objectives. 10
Pilot B	Implementation Planning Framework for Objectives. 13
Pilot B	Implementation Planning Framework for Objectives. 20
Pilot B	ALN Pilot Projects Progress Report
Pilots B and C	Notes of Meeting of Cross Local Authority IDP Task Group
Pilots B and C	Statements or Something Better?, pilots B and C
Pilots B and C	Torfaen 'Future of Statements' Progress Report for Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), February 2010
Pilots B and C	Pilots B and C Statements or Something Better? - Future of Statements – Complex and Less Complex Needs, July-September 2010
Pilot C	Pilot C – Bridgend, Summary of Progress to date, 6 th January 2011, and next steps
Pilot C	Pilot Scheme to Develop and pilot a Model for Children and Young People with Additional Learning Needs that are not Severe and Complex, Bridgend Service Agreement with WAG
Pilot C	Statements or Something Better?, Pembrokeshire
Pilot C	Highlight Report
Pilot C	Pilot C (Bridgend) Progress Report, March 2010
Pilot C	Pilot C (Bridgend) Progress Report, September 2010
Pilot D	The Role of the ALNCo
Pilot D	WAG Project Output Highlight Report OP1
Pilot D	WAG Project Output Highlight Report OP2
Pilot D	WAG Project Output Highlight Report OP3
Pilot D	WAG Project Output Highlight Report OP4
Pilot D	WAG Project Output Highlight Report OP5

Pilot D	WAG Project Output Highlight Report OP6
Pilot D	ALN Pilot Projects Progress Report
Welsh Assembly Government	Statements or Something Better? - Summary of Progress to Date and the Next Steps, 2008
Welsh Assembly Government	Specification for the Development of an Evaluation Framework for the Additional Learning Needs Pilot Schemes, 2008
Welsh Assembly Government	The School Effectiveness Framework: Building Learning Communities, 2008
Welsh Assembly Government	Reform of the Statutory Framework for Children and Young People with Additional Learning Needs in Wales – Direction Of Change, 2011
Welsh Assembly Government	Statutory Reform: Voluntary Sector Update Conference
Welsh Assembly Government	Evidence to the Structure of Education Services Task and Finish Group – Additional Learning Needs – Direction Of Change
Welsh Audit Office	Good Practice in Special Education Needs Funding, 2007