



Report of the Inclusion Development Programme, Speech, Language and Communication Strand Pathfinders

July 2009

I CAN and The Communication Trust

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Executive Summary

The Speech, Language and Communication Needs strand of the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) is a resource, provided by the Department of Children, Schools and Families working through the National Strategies and accessed through DVD or internet, to deliver professional development to staff in schools to allow them to support the needs of children and young people within educational provision. The speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) strand was part of the first wave of the IDP and was published in 2008.

I CAN contributed materials for the early years, primary and secondary age group IDP in SLCN and agreed, with the DCSF and the National Strategies, that the charity, together with The Communication Trust, would work with four pathfinder local authorities to support the implementation of the IDP and explore a variety of models of delivery.

Although a period of less than a year has been insufficient to measure significant outcomes for children the anecdotal reports from teachers and teaching staff who participated are positive with quotes indicating that they perceived improvements in engagement in the classroom and in access to the curriculum.

Outcomes for teaching staff were measured using the Speech, Language and Communication Framework¹, questionnaires and interviews. All measures demonstrated changes in awareness, confidence, skills and knowledge.

The resources themselves generally received positive feedback with regard to content but negative feedback relating to their format and navigational issues. Teaching staff were also concerned about the lack of time allocated for them to receive training and implement and embed changes in practice.

The variations between the four models of support provided by I CAN to the Pathfinders allowed those monitoring the implementation to establish that introductory training required a minimum of one full day and that subsequent activities and time to reflect on the IDP were necessary if there were to be changes in practice.

1.1. The Inclusion Development Programme

The purpose of the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) is to deliver a programme of continuing professional development designed to strengthen the expertise and confidence of teachers and teaching assistants in early years, primary and secondary schools and to ensure the progress and achievement of children with special educational needs (SEN). The IDP aims to raise awareness, improve the school and

¹ The Speech, Language and Communication Framework (SLCF) is an online or paper based audit of adults' skills and knowledge in speech, language and communication which are important for everyone who works with children and young people. (The Communication Trust, 2008)

classroom environment and change teaching approaches. By doing this the IDP aims to develop inclusive practice and enable staff to both improve practice for all children and develop more strategic approaches to meet the needs of individual children.

The first phase of the programme, published in March 2008, focuses on speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and Dyslexia. The materials for the IDP for SLCN were developed by the National Strategies and I CAN, working in partnership with a steering group supported by a number of stakeholders including Afasic and the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT).

The IDP roll out to primary, secondary schools and early years settings is managed by the National Strategies, working through their framework of consultants and the Special Educational Needs Strategic Leads in Local Authority Children's Services. Each local authority (LA) and school will be able to implement the training in a way to suit their structure and needs.

In December 2007, there were eight regional meetings to explain the purpose of the IDP materials to the SEN Strategic Leads, with the intention of ensuring the presence of an IDP 'responsible person' in each authority. Representatives from I CAN and Dyslexia Action were also present at each of these meetings to provide support. The materials were disseminated to the SEN strategic leads in spring 2008.

The autism strand of the IDP was released in 2009 and a further strand, focusing on behaviour, emotional and social difficulties, is planned.

As information about SEN is currently a voluntary module in Initial Teacher Training it is critical that the IDP programme is accessible and helpful to all teachers and teaching assistants if it is to make a difference in the lives of children with SEN.

The IDP programme is presented through a series of DVD and web based resources, so that the delivery mechanism can be flexible. The purpose of the IDP Pathfinder Sites is to work collaboratively with Local Authority Children's Services Authorities and/or clusters of mainstream primary and secondary schools to implement the IDP and to provide exemplars and guidance for Local Authority Children's Services Authorities and clusters of schools to support their use of the programme.

The aims of the IDP are to:

- Improve outcomes for all pupils by helping schools and settings to develop more inclusive practices
- Promote the early recognition of signs of difficulties with SLCN and of dyslexia
- Increase the confidence and knowledge of all practitioners and teachers so that they can make adjustments that will narrow the gap between pupils with different types of SEN and their peers
- Support schools and settings to become more effective at strategic approaches and responses to the diverse needs of individual pupils.

Rationale and Objectives of the Pathfinders

The Pathfinder Sites demonstrate to schools and Local Authority Children's Services some alternative models for delivering and embedding the programme.

The objectives of the Pathfinders are to:

- Develop effective dissemination models, which can be shared
- Demonstrate some different ways the programme can be delivered, creating options for schools so that they have a choice to suit their needs
- Establish effective routes for engaging specialists from the LAs, the voluntary sector and NHS (speech and language therapy) in the IDP
- Using the best practice strategies promoted in the IDP, to demonstrate personalised support for children with dyslexia and SLCN in mainstream classrooms
- Map the intended outcomes of the IDP against frameworks of competencies in the specialism and measure changes in confidence in these competencies (using the frameworks) subsequent to Pathfinder activity
- Assess whether the IDP increases the number of teaching staff applying for and taking up further or specialist training and resources.

The outcomes of the Pathfinder activity proposal will provide a subset of the information being gathered in the independent three year evaluation of the IDP being commissioned within a wider evaluation of teacher training activity, by the Department of Children, Schools and Families. This will influence the dissemination approaches for the subsequent SEN strands which will target resources in the most effective and cost efficient way.

I CAN and The Communication Trust have worked with LAs and schools to implement and monitor the SLCN Pathfinders. Comments were sought from members of the Communication Consortium (voluntary and community sector stakeholder group of The Communication Trust) and the RCSLT.

2. Outline of Models

Each of the following models was used to implement the SLCN strand of the IDP in one set of primary and secondary schools.

All training models included the specialist facilitator delivering the introduction to SLCN element of the IDP and concluded with discussion of embedding and sustaining IDP activity.

The intention was that all training would take place in a computer suite (within a chosen school) where participants could view and become familiar with the IDP materials.

Costs

All models require:

- Time for explanations and agreement with local authority and speech and language therapy managers
- The provision of a venue and refreshments
- Administration concerned with booking delegates
- Provision of materials for all delegates

The indicative costs given below do not include the preparation of training for the four models or the monitoring which was necessarily included in the Pathfinders.

Model 1: Cascade delivery to an LA/Cluster

One day of training delivered to representatives of primary schools and one day to representatives of secondary schools; these representatives to roll out beyond this in **all** primary and secondary schools in their areas.

The plan for the training days required that participants undertook self study interspersed with question and answer sessions and facilitated discussion. Approximately one third of the day was to be devoted to process, issues and models for cascading the self study resource to further staff groups.

Costs:

- Agreement, venue, administration and material costs as above
 - Release of speech and language therapy and local authority colleagues for one day to attend training for each of primary and secondary phases
 - Release of representatives of primary and secondary schools for one day to attend training
 - Release of representatives to cascade training to all primary and secondary schools in the area
 - Release of staff from recipient schools for one day each to receive cascaded training
 - Costs of training delivery: two tutors for one day for the primary schools day and the same for the secondary schools day, total costs for the two days approximately £2,400.
- **Model 2:** Delivery to teacher groups with follow up
The plan involved introducing the materials to fifteen to twenty teaching staff from the group of schools (dependant on the size of the computer suite) within a three hour session, within either regular professional development time or in after school staff development time.

Teachers and teaching assistants were set up to work together in a “buddy” system.

Working within a computer suite and in pairs, teaching staff had the opportunity to discuss the materials with a specialist on hand to answer questions and take them through the modules.

A second session was organised after four to six weeks for the teaching staff to return and discuss how they had progressed with the training and how it had changed their practice. This second session focused on the practical aspects of the training and case studies and included aspects of peer review and evaluation of the materials.

Costs:

- Agreement, venue, administration and material costs as above
 - Release of speech and language therapy and local authority colleagues for two half days to attend training and reflection sessions for each of primary and secondary phases
 - Release of representatives of primary and secondary schools for two half days to attend training and reflection sessions
 - Release of representatives of primary and secondary schools to undertake “buddying” activities between training and reflection session
 - Release of representatives to cascade training to primary and secondary schools in the area
 - Release of staff from recipient schools to receive cascaded training
 - Costs of training delivery: two tutors for two days for the primary schools day and the same for the secondary schools day, total costs for the four days approximately £4,800.
- **Model 3: Web Based Forums**
The facilitator introduced, explained and demonstrated the materials to teachers and teaching assistants from schools in the group, giving them the opportunity to work with the materials on computers during the session. The web based learning forum was also introduced and demonstrated. The intention was that once the teachers were using the materials in the classroom, they could use the open forum to discuss their experiences. The training facilitator would act as forum facilitator for the next three months to provide guidance and answer specific questions.

Costs:

- Agreement, venue, administration and material costs as above
- Release of speech and language therapy and local authority colleagues for one day to attend training
- Release of representatives of primary and secondary schools for one day to attend training
- Release of representatives of primary and secondary schools to use the web based forum
- Release of representatives to cascade training to primary and secondary schools in the area
- Release of staff from recipient schools to receive cascaded training
- Costs of training delivery: two tutors for one day (primary and secondary school representatives combined), total costs for the day approximately £1,200
- Costs of establishing the web based forum within the local authority’s intranet

- Costs of external moderation and support of the forum by external tutors, approximate total of 6 days over 3-6 months, £3,600.
- **Model 4:** Direct delivery of training, reflection sessions and work within schools
Training was planned to be delivered directly to staff from five primary schools and one secondary school. Staff would also attend reflection sessions to learn from each other and review implementation.

Specialist teachers and speech and language therapists were allocated to the schools to work within classrooms to model and embed changes in practice.

Costs:

- Agreement, venue, administration and material costs as above
- Release of speech and language therapy and local authority colleagues for two days (one each for primary and secondary phases) to attend training
- Release of whole staff groups from five primary and one secondary school to attend training
- Release of staff from the primary and secondary schools to work with the tutors on an individual or small group basis (maximum four days per school)
- Costs of training delivery : two tutors for one day for primary schools and the same for the secondary school, total costs for the two days approximately £2,400
- Costs of working within the schools to demonstrate reflect and embed changes in practice with staff: Two external staff undertaking four days for each of six schools, total of forty- eight days, approximately £28,800.

3. Selection of Pathfinder Sites

LAs and school clusters were invited to volunteer to be IDP Pathfinder Sites through:

- An invitation to SEN Strategic leads in LAs distributed by the National Strategies
- An invitation distributed by members of the IDP Steering Group
- Discussions with existing contacts of I CAN
- An invitation distributed through NASEN

Those expressing interest were asked to complete and submit a form to I CAN (Appendix 1).

Criteria for selection:

- Speed of response
- Existing links with I CAN (in order to make rapid progress)
- Numbers of schools/teachers involved (as appropriate for Model)
- Proximity to I CAN staffing base for Model 4
- One site to be in receipt of training from local speech and language therapists (SLTs)
- Variation in:
 - Geographical spread
 - Ethnic mix
 - Urban/rural distribution
 - Size

The selection of Pathfinder sites from the nominations was made by I CAN in discussion with the National Strategies, the DCSF and the IDP Steering group.

Model	Number of self nominations	Selection
1	7	Kingston Upon Thames
2	3	Richmond Upon Thames
3	2	Walsall
4	13	Nottinghamshire

4. Implementing the Pathfinders

4.1. Liaison

I CAN staff had a meeting in each Pathfinder LA to which education department and speech and language therapy department officers were invited. The purpose of the meetings was to explore the relevant Pathfinder Model, agree any adaptations and to identify schools and dates for implementation.

I CAN staff attended at least one meeting of each SEN Regional Hub (established September 2008) in order to ensure that regions were fully aware of the Pathfinder Activity and were able to use their experiences to inform support of IDP implementation elsewhere.

4.2. Model 1 in practice

Full day cascade training: Kingston upon Thames

Forty attendees took part in the primary days, representing four clusters of schools (thirty-seven schools). All but one attendee was a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo). Twenty attendees representing ten secondary schools took part in the secondary training. Each day was attended by a Speech and Language Advisory Teacher and a SLT from the local Primary Care Trust (PCT).

Feedback from trainees was that although they felt the programme was valuable, it felt unrealistic to implement the cascade element as in service training days were already set for the current year and there was no allocated time to deliver the training cascade to other school staff. The delegates commented negatively on the lack of lead in time to implement the programme and all felt they would have liked to plan more effectively and to put the programme in their school development plan.

Feedback from attendees:

People attending the training liked the training Model

- They valued the opportunity to ask questions of specialist staff
- They valued contact with staff who knew the IDP materials well in helping them overcome navigation issues
- Attendees gave positive comments about the content of the disc, particularly in the barriers and overcoming barriers sections
- Attendees could see how the resource could support staff in schools
- They didn't feel going through the disc in schools was a realistic option, even though they were enthusiastic about the content
- All training attendees, coordinated by the Language Advisory Teachers, have undertaken to cascade throughout the borough
- The IDP was on the agenda for Kingston's schools conference in March 2009.

Secondary specific feedback:

There were some specific issues that applied to the secondary context:

- If it was seen as SEN, other staff members may not see the IDP as part of their remit
- Training attendees needed to be creative about how to get colleagues to take it up
- Teaching staff and trainers both thought that more time was needed to look in detail at how they could embed approaches from the IDP in classroom/school practice
- Teaching staff were enthusiastic about the content
- Attendees would have liked IDP implementation to be in their school development plans.

Feedback from trainers:

- Initially teaching staff attending the training didn't really understand the IDP, its context and their role in cascading the programme
- One more day for training needed in order to provide more detail
- The attendees very much needed the links to be made for them; supporting new knowledge; making the links to activities to support implementation of that knowledge; signposting the range of resources that would help embed activities within the classroom
- Reflective activities to look at what they'd done were requested.

4.3. Model 2 in practice

Half a day training, buddying and half a day reflective session: Richmond upon Thames

There were twenty two attendees at the primary days, mainly teachers and teaching assistants, representing eleven schools, and sixteen attendees at the secondary days, representing six schools. Two SENCos, advisory teachers, the local authority SEN Officer and a local SLT also attended training with the intention of coordinating a roll out of the programme to all the borough's forty-one primary schools.

The buddy pairs were either teacher pairs or, more frequently, teacher and teaching assistant.

The LA was involved in planning an SEN Conference to include the IDP whilst Pathfinder activity was ongoing.

Feedback from attendees:

- Positive feedback on content and value of disc
- There were some issues in operating the teacher and teacher assistant buddying pairs; it was not possible to release both simultaneously within schools as the teaching assistants had to provide cover for the teachers

- Attendees found the second day to be very useful and used the time together to think about what to do and how they were going to do it, though there were differences between primary and secondary phases:
 - Follow up day with primary staff was positive, staff had familiarised themselves with content of disc and tried to implement some strategies
 - Follow up day with secondary staff was less well attended and attendees were struggling to apply the IDP in schools.
- Attendees valued the opportunity to ask lots of questions
- There were both navigational and technical issues
- Attendees reported that the IDP was helping them identify children and young people with SLCN.

Feedback from trainers:

- Trainers reported that the half day felt like partial training – barely scratching the surface; time allowance felt insufficient so trainers were only able to cover the “What is SLCN” section with a whistle stop tour of the remainder of the content
- There were lots of questions about where useful documents were
- The attendees were a very positive welcoming group.

4.4. Model 3 in practice

Training session plus web based forum: Walsall

Originally two dates were planned for training activity but low anticipated attendance caused cancellation of the first event.

There were twenty attendees representing six schools, a SLT and the local authority.

Attendees at the training were given instructions about how to register and access the web based forum and this information has been included in subsequent information cascades.

Feedback from attendees:

People attending the training were

- Very positive about the training
- Enthusiastic about using IDP in schools
- Concerned about the value of, and difficulties in accessing, the web based forum.

There were some initial technical difficulties with the forum, though even when these were resolved there was a disappointing response to the web forum. Although staff at the training day were enthusiastic about the programme and LA officers were supportive of the web forum, there was no engagement with the online forum. Eight staff members from Walsall completed the Speech, Language

and Communication Framework (SLCF¹) before and after the IDP implementation period, though there was no response to attempted contact with the LA and no one from this model completed the questionnaire.

Feedback from trainers:

- Trainers were positive about the training and felt the group were very receptive to the programme
- It was a particularly mixed group of attendees, including an SLT, headteachers, support staff and teachers as well as representatives from the LA, which needed to be taken into consideration
- Trainers felt the technical details of accessing the forum may have had an impact on engagement.

4.5. Model 4 in Practice

Direct training delivery, reflection sessions and work in schools: Nottinghamshire

Training was delivered to whole school staff groups in primary and secondary schools, one hundred and thirty and one hundred attendees respectively. LA staff and speech and language therapists also attended the training.

Each school received up to four days follow up support, delivered flexibly around the school's identified priorities. For example the secondary school decided to focus on Schemes of Work and designed a series of training days in this area to be delivered by I CAN; primary schools chose a combination of observation sessions, environment assessments, and drop in sessions and two schools decided to work together to look at their speaking and listening targets.

Some schools were very clear around the initial focus, for example, focusing on Newly Qualified Teachers or a particular age or stage of children. This varied amongst the primary schools and there were some changes as the programme progressed. For example, schools may have initially focused on year 1 pupils, and then widened the remit and focus as they saw the impact of the programme.

Teaching staff from the secondary school involved had very clear ideas of how they wanted the programme to be delivered. There were initial meetings with the deputy head and SENCo, who trainers described as very organised and proactive.

In the secondary school, at the end of the training each departmental group had to "bid" for what they wanted. The headteacher, deputy and SENCo then considered bids and decided what they wanted follow up days to be (four follow up days available). Each department attended a one day follow up and had identified a specific piece of work to focus on such as Homework tasks or the Course booklet.

The follow up day was very much led by school staff, to enhance and support the development of the price of work, embedding SLCN into each piece.

In primary schools, follow up tended to be focused on specific observations or coaching approaches, where specialist staff gave specific and detailed support to mainstream staff in order to support embedding of SLCN into practice.

Feedback from attendees and trainers:

- Feedback on training and disc content was positive
- Some negative feedback on disc functionality
- There was a very positive response, from both the schools and the trainers who felt it was a very productive way of developing good practice.

5. Monitoring

5.1. Data Collection

A variety of measures were used in order to monitor the Pathfinder programmes in relation to the initial objectives of the aims of the IDP:

- A recording of staff development, measured using the SLCF (a competency based framework that lists all the skills and knowledge that anyone working with children and young people need to have to support all children’s communication development and those with SLCN) both before and after the IDP has been implemented in school – to evaluate **increase in confidence and knowledge** of practitioners
- Completion of questionnaire and interviews with relevant staff - to establish whether there have been **improved outcomes for pupils, improved recognition of the signs of SLCN and more effective strategic approaches**
- Feedback from trainers was gathered to gain further information about the context of the IDP training and implementation.

Information was sent to all Pathfinder LAs about the monitoring activity (September 2008):

- Background, structure and timeline of the Pathfinders monitoring and comparison activity
- The requirement for all staff taking part in training (i.e. all staff being trained) to complete the enhanced level of the SLCF prior to receiving training. Information on the procedure for doing this was supplied.
- The requirement for trained staff to complete a final questionnaire at the end of the project (April 2009).

A contacts list was established for attendees at Pathfinder training. All on it were sent information on the data required from them direct.

Support was given to Pathfinder sites, where needed, to assist them in registering on the SLCF site and completing the SLCF. Queries resulted in an extension to the “Frequently Asked Questions” section on the SLCF website. In excess of two hundred IDP Pathfinder participants registered on the SLCF site, although some did not complete all sections.

Some areas did not have access to computers in time to complete the SLCF and therefore completed paper copies.

5.2. Outcomes for children

Information on the impact of the programme on children and young people was collected via the questionnaire sent out to LAs and through discussions with school staff and other professionals. There were issues in receiving questionnaires back, with few (11) being returned. Questionnaires were sent out to LA leads in September, with reminders to complete for April 09.

- No questionnaires were returned by this initial deadline date; further reminders were sent to both LAs and to individuals who had completed the SLCF.
- Follow up phone calls were made to individual schools to encourage return.
- Only 11 questionnaires were returned in total
 - 6 from Nottingham,
 - 3 from Richmond
 - 2 from Kingston.
 - No questionnaires were returned from Walsall.
 - There was regular contact with the SLT department in Richmond throughout the project and contact with the LA lead in Richmond.
 - In Kingston the LA lead provided details of the data gathered from recipients of their cascade training and agreed to include elements of the original questionnaire
 - Telephone contact was made with schools in Nottingham to gain further information.

Feedback from both LAs and schools suggested other means of data collection were taking place locally, through the Regional SEN Hubs and through the research project, making schools feel that there was overlap and repetition for them. In many cases the Pathfinder monitoring activity was not considered a priority.

The data that was collected identified the following themes:

Impact

Many schools felt it was too soon to determine direct impact of the programme on children, more time was needed to roll out the programme and see its impact.

“Schools felt it was difficult to measure impact on pupils – pupil impact should be measured after more time.”

Many respondents also felt it was almost impossible to attribute changes in pupil outcomes to one intervention, as there were many different strategies taking place, all which may have had an impact.

“On the whole schools felt that it was too soon to measure pupil progress and that any progress could not be solely attributed to the impact of the IDP”

Respondents in both Kingston and Nottingham gave some specific information on the impact they felt the programme had on children and young people. The areas where they felt there was most impact were as follows:

- Positive changes in behaviour
- Improved attitudes to learning
- Increases in pupil confidence and self-esteem
- Engagement with classroom activities
- More willing / able to answer question
- Improved skills in specific subject areas
- Mathematical skills
- Literacy skills
- Scientific concepts
- More sociable
- More able to access the curriculum.

“Better behaviour from children when using listening skills rules with them”

There was less change noted in relation to the following areas:

- Reasoning and problem solving skills
- Ability to ask for help
- Positive comments from parents
- Changes outside the classroom environment
- Changes in play or behaviour during break times
- Any known changes in out of school activities.

However, different elements were picked up in different schools and settings;

“Students were able to identify teaching styles which helped them to access learning, improved confidence to answer and ask questions. Feeling of achievement when they could understand and explain quite complex concepts”

On the whole, staff were more likely to comment on their own development than direct impact on the children and young people they were working with. Generally, they felt it was both too soon to identify changes and that other programmes might impact on children at the same time.

5.3. Outcomes for staff

Comments from a single school in Nottingham

- *Enhanced awareness of SLCN*
- *Realisation of impact on access to the curriculum and understanding for students with receptive and expressive difficulties*
- *Willingness to try different approaches*
- *Realisation that less is often more*
- *That more students, than was first apparent, actually have difficulties and benefit from support in learning subject specific vocabulary, concepts, and remembered more of what they had learned*
- *That good practice for students with SLCN is usually good practice for all.*

Outcomes for school staff were measured in a number of ways in order to achieve triangulation of data, using the:

- SLCF
- Questionnaires
- Interviews.

The SLCF was used to gather baseline information about staff competence in the area of SLCN at the beginning of the project.

Prior to the project, the IDP was “mapped” against the SLCF with the majority of the relevant competencies falling within the “enhanced” level of the SLCF.

Staff were therefore advised to complete the enhanced level of the SLCF before receiving any training, then again at the end of the project. Additional elements of the IDP mapped across to universal level were included in the staff questionnaire, to be completed at the end of the project.

Mapping of the IDP was as follows with many of the competences falling within the **identification** and **positive practice** strands of the SLCF. The numbers on the table below represent the number of competencies the IDP fulfils at each level and for each strand of the SLCF. The shaded areas show Strand B (identification and assessment of speech, language and communication (SLC)) and Strand C (positive practice) as having most competencies mapped. This means that training and using the IDP should result in most significant change in these areas.

	Universal	Enhanced	Specialist
Strand A - Typical speech, language and communication development and use	3	4	
Strand B - Identification and assessment of speech, language and communication		8	
Strand C - Positive Practice		10	
Strand D - Speech, language and communication and BESD		4	
Strand E - Roles and responsibilities of practitioners and the structures of services	3	1	
Strand F - The SEN Context in educational settings	2		
Strand G - Parents, Carers, Families, Peers and Friends		2	
Strand H - The impact of professional development upon children and young people with SLCN		1	
TOTAL	8	30	

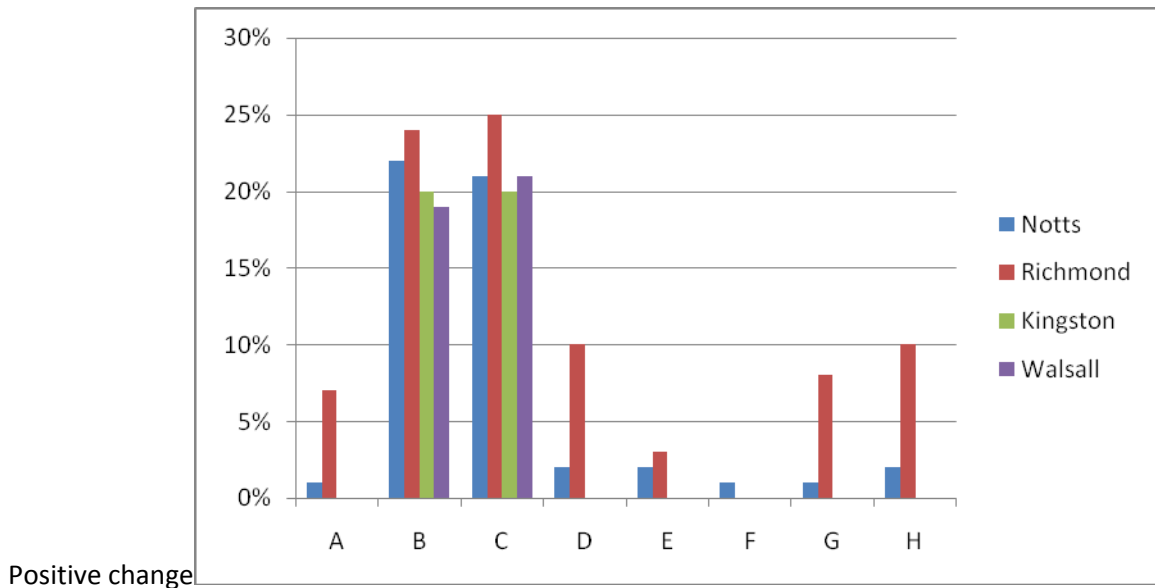
Not all staff involved completed the SLCF; the numbers of people completing the SLCF were not divided equally between the programmes; the majority were from Nottingham, with similar numbers in Kingston and Richmond and lowest numbers in the Walsall Model. There was a much greater engagement proportionally in the Nottinghamshire Model than in any of the other Models.

Model	Results for users	Did not do follow up	Actual number of results
1. Kingston	24	7	17
2. Richmond	24	13	11
3. Walsall	12	3	8
4. Nottinghamshire	149	46	103

Results were analysed in order to identify changes in competences by staff. Areas of positive, negative and no change were recorded.

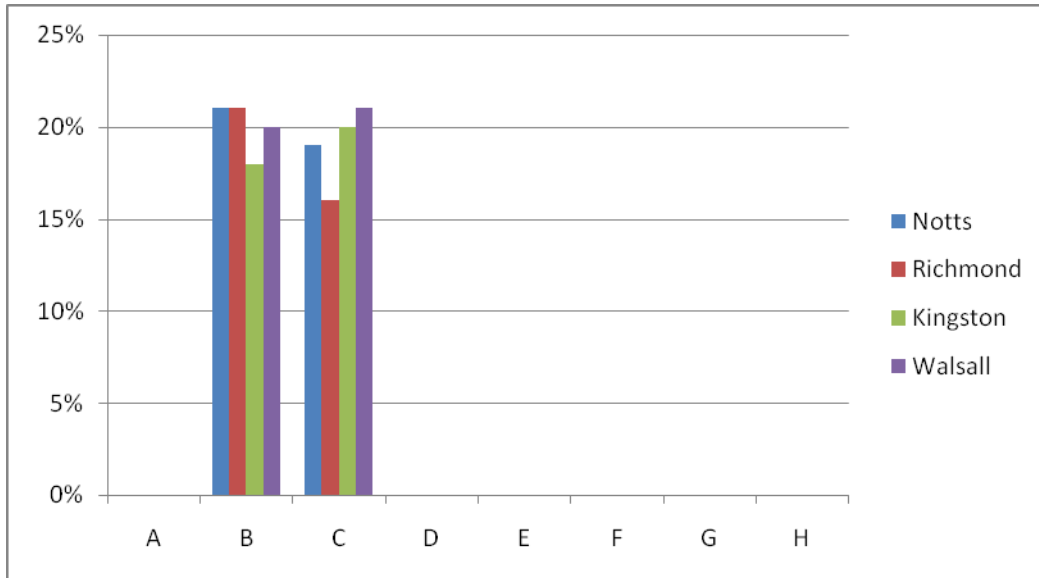
Regardless of the Model, most significant changes were seen in the areas of identification and positive practice. On the whole, Nottingham (Model 4) and Richmond (Model 2) tended to have more changes than the other Models, with changes identified across other strands of the SLCF, in addition to these two.

Significant numbers of staff identified positive change, especially in the areas of identification and positive practice, though there were some positive changes identified in staff across other competences in the Nottingham and Richmond Models, as can be seen on the graph below, with strands of the SLCF (A through to H) identified across the horizontal axis and % change on the vertical.



As well as people making **positive changes** in the areas of identification and positive practice in particular, there were also people across all Models who identified **negative changes** in the areas of identification and positive practice only. The argument here is that increased awareness results in staff being more able to identify areas where they do not feel they have the skills necessary to support children and young people with SLCN effectively. This identified negative change did not happen in any other area of the SLCF.

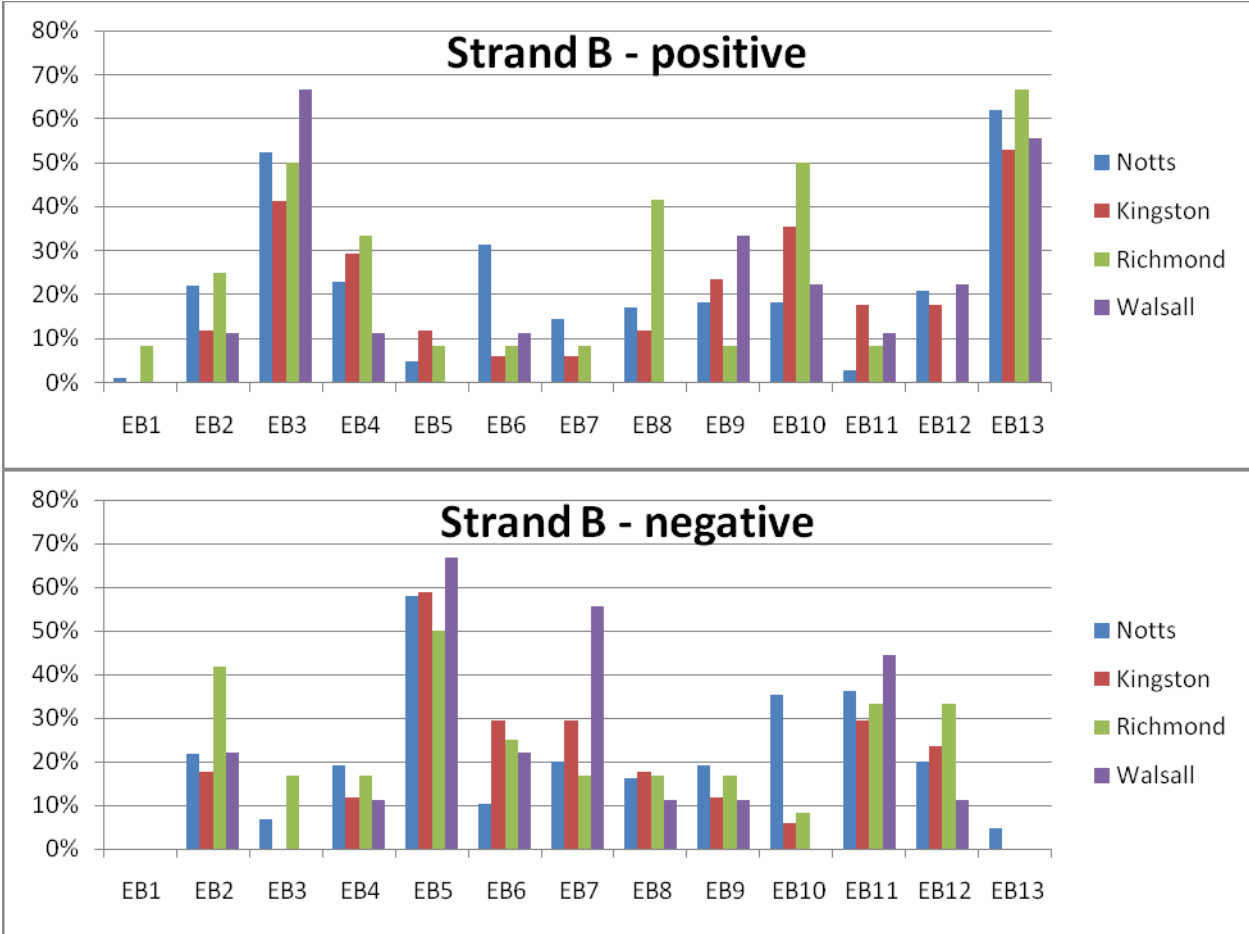
Negative change



A more detailed look at the two strands where most change took place shows clearly some of the differences in learning between competences in each strand and between each Model. Although some of the changes are minimal, it is worth recognising these as possible indicators of trends in certain areas of knowledge and skills for school staff.

Any change in staff competences can be seen as positive, either because their knowledge and skills have improved, through positive change, or their awareness is greater, as indicated by a negative change. No change in competence suggests that for those members of staff, there has been no development.

In strand B below, the numbers of change can be seen as different between each area. For some areas, there are equal numbers of positive and negative change; in Richmond for example in strand B, six of the competences showed positive change, six negative and one no change at all. Only in Nottingham did the positive change outweigh the negative (eight positive to four negative). In Walsall, there were more examples of no change in competences than in other areas.



In addition to the SLCF data, information was gathered from the questionnaires, data provided by some of the Pathfinders and discussion with members of staff at grass roots. There were issues in collecting data in the way originally planned, due to a number of issues already identified. In order to avoid overburdening schools, a pragmatic approach was taken to gathering data through a variety of means and collating and analysing recurring themes. Due to this it has not always been possible to make direct comparison between Models for all aspects of the monitoring activity. However, it was felt all feedback was welcomed as a way of looking at the impact of the programme.

Comments around changes made by staff groups were positive on the whole and fell into a number of themes; however some caution around interpretation is required because at least one area, Richmond upon Thames, Model 2, had a concurrent initiative focussing on SLCN delivered by local SLTs.

Awareness

The vast majority of staff felt the IDP had raised their awareness of SLCN, not only as a general area of SEN, but in regard to its impact on other areas of learning and development and in relation to individual

pupils. The majority of staff felt the IDP had made them aware of children with suspected SLCN they had previously been unaware of.

"We are more aware of pupils needs and know where to look for further information/strategies"

On the whole, staff reported an increase in confidence around SLCN; they identified more areas where they had knowledge in relation to different aspects of SLCN and were more confident in identifying children and young people who might be struggling.

Most staff felt there had been changes in their classroom practice, to greater or lesser degrees. Some felt they already had components of the knowledge and skills included but that the IDP increased their confidence and acted as a reminder to embed good practice.

"The training gave me confidence in classroom practice as some strategies are already in place in the classroom"

Others reported learning a range of strategies they felt were useful in the classroom and felt the IDP had significantly impacted on their practice. This was particularly true of the Nottingham (Model 4) cohort.

- *"I now try to implement the development suggestions that were given to me following my observation to improve my practice"*
- *"I have used all strategies suggested over recent weeks... This supported all of the children in my class but in particular the lower ability children and children with varying degrees of hearing impairments"*
- *"Classroom practice has changed in my classroom as I now constantly think of how I can emphasise meaning to aid children's understanding"*

Teachers and the Teaching Assistants also recognised benefits for the assistants, and some school managers reported positive change across the school.

"TAs found the SLCN checklists useful and are now adapting them so that they can be linked to resources we have in school"

"Audit of best practice enabled staff to review learning and teaching style. This has now been embedded into daily sessions"

The impact for parents was also highlighted by some.

“Parents were pleased to have children identified and referred to SALT earlier”

Collaboration

“Staff liaised with other colleagues from other schools and the benefit of this was clear. This had led to clear collaboration between other professionals”

Collaboration, especially with SLTs and other specialists was highlighted by many as being key to success of IDP implementation, as was liaison and collaboration with other schools.

“SLCN is going to be a main focus for us in the coming year – a member of the speech and language team has been booked to do INSET training with staff and plan to increase resources in this area”

Response to the IDP

During the training itself and through the monitoring activity participating staff raised positive and negative issues in relation to the IDP itself. In summary these were positive about the need for support in this area and about the content of the IDP but negative about the disc and websites’ format and navigational qualities and about the time allocated for professional development and implementation.

- *“We all need more time to be able to use this great resource. We have been lucky to have help via the primary language project – but teachers are totally overloaded trying to manage SPL difficulties, OT difficulties, Behaviour difficulties and so on as well as actually teach their class!”*
- *“The training and content of some of the IDP is good but the IDP website/disc format is a shambles and very difficult to navigate.”*
- *“I think that teachers need another strategy like a hole in the head and they are fed up with all this stuff! They all want to teach the best they can in the time they have and they do not have any time to spend on the IDP website or disc getting lost in all the materials there”*

Teaching staff applying for and taking up further or specialist training and resources:

There were varied responses to whether teaching staff would be taking up further training; some had already applied through to some who were less interested.

Questionnaire responses were as follows:

How likely is it that you or your staff will apply for additional specialist training in SLCN?

Rating	Not at all		Interested in more training		Have already applied
	1	2	3	4	5
No of Responses		2	2	4	1

One school in Nottingham had already planned training for their foundation stage staff; “All the foundation staff have enrolled on a signs and symbols course to update knowledge and improve practice.”

In one of the high schools in Richmond, a range of continuing professional development options were identified in their future plans;

- More informal opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge of SLCN
- Opportunities to meet with experts to discuss outcomes and be able to incorporate these ideas in their own lessons
- More opportunity to discuss concerns with other teachers
- Speech and language assessments to be accessible to all on SIMS.

In the Kingston feedback, 3 of the 15 schools that responded to evaluations identified SLCN as a focus, either in school action plans or for further training / INSET. Some of this was going to be in-house, using IDP materials, others with the support of external specialists.

In Richmond, a training course was arranged and provided by I CAN specialist teacher and SLT to deliver more specialist information, applying SLCN theory to practice. This was attended by around 20 staff, mainly Sencos and SLT colleagues and was well received as the next level of training, building on the IDP content.

5.4. Summary of the monitoring activity, comparing the Models with each other

Value of the resource:

- All training was valued and well received; attendees at training events appreciated how the IDP could help them support children and young people with SLCN
- There were lots of positive comments from all schools around content
- Attendees recognised the value of having training delivered by staff who were familiar with the format of the IDP as well as specialists in the subject area
- Attendees for all Models commented that the implementation of the IDP would be improved if it could be given priority by being on the school's development plan
- Secondary school staff were least positive about the value of the resource either to themselves or to their colleagues. It was believed to be difficult to engage subject specific teachers in SEN issues.

Reaction to the format of the resource

- Attendees on all Models of support commented negatively on the navigational issues of the resource, web and DVD versions.

Reach of the support

Model		Phase	Attendees at events	Schools represented at events	Planned Reach (schools) within LA
1. Thames	Kingston Upon	Primary	40	37	All
		Secondary	20	10	All
2. Thames	Richmond Upon	Primary	22	11	All
		Secondary	16	6	Unknown
3.	Walsall	Combined	20	6	Unknown
4.	Nottinghamshire	Primary	130	5	5
		Secondary	100	1	1

The attendees at Model 1 training were concerned about the time they would require to cascade the resource to other schools.

Cost

- Model 1: In Kingston upon Thames a total of sixty delegates received training to be cascaded to all schools in the borough. The cost for replication of the external support for this model would be approximately £2,400. Additional costs would arise from the venue, administration, liaison and evaluation and, most significantly from the release of the sixty delegates to both attend and cascade training.
- Model 2: A total of thirty-eight delegates received training and reflection sessions in Richmond upon Thames and undertook to cascade the training to other schools. The cost for

replication of the external support for this model would be approximately £4,800. Additional costs would arise from the venue, administration, liaison and evaluation and, most significantly from the release of the thirty-eight delegates to both attend and cascade training.

- **Model 3:** Twenty delegates from Walsall received a single day’s training and were provided with access to a web based forum. The extent of roll out planned is not yet known. The cost for replication of the external support for this model would be approximately £4,800. Additional costs would arise from the venue, administration, liaison and evaluation, from the release of the twenty delegates to both attend and cascade training and from setting up the web based forum.
- **Model 4:** A total of two hundred and thirty delegates received training and support within their own schools in Nottinghamshire. These delegates comprised whole staff groups from five primary schools and one secondary school. The cost for replication of the external support for this model would be approximately £31,200. Additional costs would arise from the venue, administration, liaison and evaluation and, most significantly from the release of the two hundred and thirty staff to attend training and work in school with the tutors.

Engagement with the support

- All staff commented very positively on the value of specialist input and ongoing support
- A review of the levels of completion of the post Pathfinder SLCF might be used as a measure of engagement with the Pathfinder support, although this may also be influenced by other factors.

Model		Total Attendees	Numbers of post Pathfinder SLCF completed	Percentage return rate
1.	Kingston Upon Thames	60	17	29%
2.	Richmond Upon Thames	38	11	29%
3.	Walsall	20	8	40%
4.	Nottinghamshire	230	103	45%

Value of the support Model

- Attendees at Model 1 training, who had no opportunity for a follow up day to reflect on IDP implementation and work towards embedding appropriate practice, felt that this was necessary.
- Attendees and trainers involved with the half day training Model felt that this was too rushed and a full day’s training was required.

Outcomes for children

- Positive impact for children was only reported by participants in Model 1 and Model 4 training. These staff groups both benefitted from a full day’s training. In the case of Model 4 they had additional support to embed changes in practice within school.

Outcomes for teaching staff

- The greatest changes in results from the SLCF, pre and post Pathfinder activity, related to the identification of SLCN and the use of positive practice. These changes were greatest in staff who had benefited from Model 1 and Model 4 support.

6. Barriers, Challenges and learning

After the initial training period, the trainers involved in supporting implementation of the programme, and The Communication Trust staff responsible for implementation were able to highlight specific elements they found were indicators of a successful outcome, these should be used as learning by LAs for implementation of the various strands of the IDP.

6.1. Strategic support for implementation

- The presence of a LA wide plan for support, implementation and monitoring of the IDP gave it coordination and momentum, allowing schools to work together. This appeared particularly motivational when the LA planned an authority wide event or conference to share learning which gave training activities a time line.
- In the secondary schools, in particular, it was apparent that the attitude and involvement of the senior leadership team was paramount for the success of implementation and ongoing use of the programme.
- Teaching staff gave feedback indicating that the placement of the IDP within School Development plans would have enabled them to give it greater priority and ensure staff undertook the necessary professional development.
- Collaboration with other schools in sharing professional development activities and times to share and reflect on learning and experiences supported the IDP implementation.

6.2. Expert support for training

- The use of staff who had pre-existing specialist knowledge to provide the IDP training was greatly appreciated by attendees. As well as expanding on content these staff were able to answer specific questions. I CAN used a teacher and speech and language therapist pair to deliver the SLCN strand in the Pathfinders.
- It is not considered either helpful or cost efficient to use a web forum to provide ongoing specialist support to teaching staff or to use a forum for teaching staff to share learning. The teaching staff offered this facility (Model 3) did not access or use it.

6.3. Specific support for navigation

- In the case of the SLCN strand of IDP teaching staff were very appreciative of the introduction and navigational support provided by the specialist trainer teams. A number of staff had previously tried to use the resources themselves and given up because of navigational issues. It is therefore strongly recommended that staff are introduced to these materials by trainers who are highly familiar with the layout of the IDP.

6.4. Adequate training time

- Experience gained during the Pathfinder implementation suggests that the facilitated/supported introduction to the IDP materials, by specialist staff, needs to be at least a full day in length.

6.5. Allocation of time for cascading training

- Time constraints on teaching staff meant that they felt they would not have had time to go through the materials without the benefit of training days. Likewise they thought it unlikely that sufficient time would be made available for them to cascade their new knowledge in schools. It is recommended that this is addressed by giving schools adequate lead in time to plan training as well as providing the strategic support indicated above.

6.6. Mechanisms for embedding training

- Teaching staff valued the additional sessions for reflecting on learning and implementation provided by some Pathfinder Models. Attendees at Model 1 training, who had no opportunity for a follow up day to reflect on IDP implementation and work towards embedding appropriate practice, felt that this was necessary.
- Supported by theories of adult learning and by experiences gained during the Pathfinders the trainers suggest that the following will support the retention of knowledge and its translation into quality first teaching for SLCN:
KNOWLEDGE + ACTIVITY / RESOURCE + EMBED IN CLASSROOM = QUALITY FIRST TEACHING FOR SLCN
- Also recommended, following experience in the Pathfinders, is providing examples of the use of the IDP materials within an existing school structures or processes (reinforcing that the required good practice is an alternative approach to an existing activity rather than an additional activity).
For example:
HOMEWORK + IDP MATERIALS = SLCN SUPPORTIVE HOMEWORK MATERIALS
This approach, using existing school structures as vehicles for elements of the IDP, seemed effective as a means of embedding good practice in relation to SLCN.

7. Conclusions

I CAN and The Communication Trust supported the implementation of the SLCN Strand of the IDP in four Pathfinder local authorities using four different support Models:

- Model 1 provided a full day's training to representatives of the local authority and of schools who undertook to cascade the training across all schools in their LA.
- Model 2 consisted of half a day's training to representatives of named schools, plus a further half a day's follow up at a later date.
- Model 3 provided access to mediated web forum as follow up to the direct training activity.
- Model 4 provided direct support within named schools to embed earlier training.

Those monitoring the Pathfinder support concluded that a full day's training with follow up activity and an opportunity to embed and reflect on learning provided the greatest change in the skills, competencies and knowledge of teaching staff.

In terms of relating the SLCN Strand Pathfinder activity to its original objectives, the Pathfinders implemented a range of dissemination Models and have provided information on their effectiveness which can be shared by the DCSF and National strategies and they have established the value of involving specialist staff.

Significant changes in the knowledge, skills and competence of the teaching staff have been recorded after Pathfinder activity compared to before it, as measured by the SLCF, against which the IDP was mapped by The Communication Trust.

Some anecdotal evidence is available from two of the Pathfinder Models regarding improved outcomes for children and young people but the timescale of the monitoring was too short for robust evidence to be collected; teaching staff certainly demonstrated increased competence sufficient to provide personalised support for children with SLCN in mainstream classrooms and the value of this was reinforced in training and reflection sessions.

On the whole, staff were positive about taking on further training. In some areas, this had already taken place as an extension to the IDP roll out; in Kingston where there was a conference on SLCN and in Richmond where I CAN provided specialist training to staff.

Individual schools had plans for further inset, often with the support of specialist staff. Where specific training was not identified, some schools had highlighted SLCN as a focus as part of their school action plans. There was also an increased awareness of SLCN and, as a result, suggestions that further strategies and good practice could be built into other professional development activities to enhance support for children with SLCN.

7.1. The relative value of the different models of support

Comparison of the different models of support over a relatively short timescale has been difficult. In terms of positive reception to the training itself and engagement with the monitoring process the most expensive model, Model 4, appears the most successful; in terms of short term outcomes for children Models 1 and 4 were the only models returning positive data; outcomes for staff show a varied picture across different variables but are least marked for staff who participated in Model 3.

However, a true evaluation would need to examine data from the end users of the IDP rather than just those who received direct training. In Model 1, Nottinghamshire, whole staff groups were trained and so the group of delegates was the end user group; the Pathfinder costs detailed in this paper are therefore the total costs for IDP training to five schools and two hundred and thirty school staff. In the other three models I CAN has only been able to collect data and detail costs in respect of the “first tier” delegates, those who received I CAN training. There is no data available as yet on the outcomes of the cascaded training, and it may be reasonable to assume that this will be less effective, but equally as expensive as direct training.

In addition to examining the implementation and outcomes of cascaded training a more long term evaluation would also enable the extent to which new knowledge and competencies were retained and used to be reviewed. It is hypothesised that those delegates engaged with the IDP over the longest period of time and with greatest ongoing contact with specialists, Model 4, would be most likely to embed their learning into practice.

It has not been possible to control variables, other than the model of support, which may have influenced the success of the IDP in the four Pathfinder areas. There are indications that strategic support at local authority and school level is significant. In this regard it is worth noting that all areas except Walsall, Model 3, had plans for further training or a conference to reinforce IDP implementation.

7.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations arise directly from the monitoring data and the learning that has arisen from the Pathfinder SLCN strand activity and have relevance to other strands.

Strategic Support

- A local authority wide plan for support, implementation and monitoring of the IDP gives it coordination and momentum
- The local authority plan should include an event, or series of events, such as a conference to share learning
- The local authority should facilitate and encourage schools in working collaboratively to develop new skills
- School development plans should make reference to the IDP
- Commitment and understanding of the schools’ Senior Management Teams is required.

Resource format

- Attendees on all Models of support commented negatively on the navigational issues of the resource, web and DVD versions, a number of school staff had previously tried to use the resources themselves and given up because of navigational issues. It is recommended that the format be tested with prospective users and amended accordingly for revisions and for future strands.

Training format

- Use of the IDP resources requires scheduled training as well as self study
- All formal training activities should be followed, after a time interval, with an opportunity to reflect on and discuss implementation either through a dedicated session or through allocated time in schools supported by specialists
- Introductory training for each strand of the IDP should be at least one day in length
- It is not considered either helpful or cost efficient to use a web forum to provide ongoing specialist support to teaching staff or to use a forum for teaching staff to share learning
- Training should include examples of the use of the IDP materials within existing school structures or processes (reinforcing that the required good practice is an alternative approach to an existing activity rather than an additional activity)
- Schools need to allocate sufficient time for staff who have received “first tier” training to cascade information and skills to their colleagues.

Trainers

- Training should be delivered by specialist personnel wherever possible; in the case of the SLCN strand this includes speech and language therapists
- Where staff are expected to cascade training to colleagues their levels of pre-existing specialist knowledge, or need for specialist support during the delivery of training, should be considered
- School staff should be introduced to IDP materials by trainers who are highly familiar with them.

Evaluation

- An evaluation of outcomes for children and staff needs to take place using data in respect of school staff who are the end users of the IDP. This needs to include a cost analysis of the professional development activities carried out at all tiers of cascade training where this applies
- Evaluation needs to consider the breadth of training, the number of end users reached, and the depth of training
- Evaluation needs to take place over a length of time which enables the measurement of both embedding of changes in the practice of school staff and outcomes for children.
- We would also need to include a control group

Appendix 1: Application for participation in Pathfinder activity

Areas nominating themselves for potential IDP Pathfinder Activity (2008/09)

Dyslexia

Speech, Language and Communication Needs

Criteria for selection

Speed of response

Existing links with DA/I CAN (in order to make rapid progress)

Numbers of schools/teachers involved (as appropriate for Model)

Proximity to Dyslexia Action/I CAN staffing base for Model 4

Dyslexia strand: One site to have existing links to specialists

SLCN strand: One site to be in receipt of training from local SLTs

Variation in:

Geographical spread

Ethnic mix

Urban/rural distribution

Size

Local Authority or host local authority if it is a cluster/group of schools being put forward
Is the whole Local Authority or a cluster/grouping of schools putting itself forward for Pathfinder activity?
Size of Local authority or school cluster /grouping: Number of primary Schools Number of secondary schools Number of pupils in this grouping Number of staff Geographical spread:
Name and position of contact:
Contact details: Email Telephone Address:

Which area is the LA interested in?			
SLCN		Dyslexia	
Number of schools having access to specialists			
SLCN		Dyslexia	
Previous/ongoing training initiatives			
SLCN		Dyslexia	
Other initiatives in the specialism			
SLCN		Dyslexia	
Please give information about the ethnic mix of pupils in nominated area/cluster:			
Please give information about the urban/rural distribution in nominated area/cluster:			
Availability of computer suites			
Which Models would the LA be interested in?			
1	2	3	4

Appendix 2: CASE STUDIES

Holy Cross high school, Richmond

Most staff were unsure of the impact that SLCN has on the ability of students to access the curriculum. Many were unaware that students without an identified need had SLC difficulties. INSET was given to the whole staff group by one SALT and one Advisory teacher for speech, language and communication needs. The IDP was introduced to all staff; activities worked from IDP; group discussion and question time. All staff were included in training; teachers, NQTs, TAs, leadership team, trainee teachers and kitchen and administration staff.

Staff were unsure how to address these issues and cater for these needs in their lessons. Through discussion with our SALTs 2 of them have worked with a group of Year 9 students, all of whom have difficulties in one out of two History lessons each week for 10 weeks. Working with the SALTs and alone for lesson 2 each week were the class teacher, an HLTA and a History trainee teacher. All students were assessed before the work began and when it was finished. Evaluation will take place from a student and an adult point of view presented to all interested staff in July.

Other key actions following staff evaluation included:

- Use of strategies to support SLCN used in teaching
- Requests for information about students and support in planning learning to ensure maximum understanding
- Topic based subject specific vocabulary sent home for pre teaching
- Collaboration with SLTs about how they could support teaching and learning

Trainee teachers have expressed a wish to be given more information about Special Needs. **(As SENCo** responsible for delivering training to our trainee teachers I have now included specific SLCN activities in my training so that they are all aware of the impact these difficulties have on the ability to learn. Trainees have completed questionnaires about level of knowledge in this area)

Kingston LA

ICAN delivered 'Cascade model' training days for Inclusion Development Programme to representatives from all schools in Kingston. Following this SENCoS were offered follow up sessions, by the speech and language education team, in order to support the implementation of the IDP back in their school – 7 schools took up this offer and the members of the speech and language team supported the SENCo in cascading the programme back to school staff in each setting this consisted of both teachers and TAs. These sessions mainly consisted of discussing what the IDP was, helping staff to navigate through it and allowing them time to explore what was on it including working through one section and drawing attention to useful resources and the self evaluation.

In March, our annual SEN conference had a focus on Speech, language communication needs – again this was attended by mainly SENCo and teachers - two of the seminar/workshop sessions were based on themes from the IDP, focusing specifically on identification of SLCN and creating a communication friendly environment.

Schools were able to identify a whole range of good practice strategies they now used with children and young people;

- Using more visual supports, more visual support at KS2.
- Use of narrative programme/storylines
- Talking partners
- Adapting and monitoring ‘teacher talk’
- Supported children in the playground to practice skills learnt in SLC sessions.
- Classrooms have more visuals – e.g., timetables and opportunities for think, pair, share.
- Using screening checklist
- Knowledge of staff is increasing, better and more effective links with therapist are developing.
- Clearer objectives/expectations
- Instructions being broken down into simpler steps and checked that they are understood
- All members of staff informed about the needs of the child
- Staff better able to identify SLCN and beginning to identify strategies to help support children
- Staff sharing best practice.

Most significant changes seen in relation to pupil/s was that they were more able to ask for help and more willing/able to answer questions, more able to access the curriculum, more sociable with adults/peers and increases were noted in pupil self-confidence and self-esteem.

Some changes were also noted in engagement with classroom activities, improved attitudes to learning, positive changes in behaviour and improved skills in some specific subject areas.

Heatherley primary school, Nottingham

The school is part of the “Garibaldi family” of schools in Nottingham who all took part in the IDP pathfinders programme. Decisions around the focus of the support were discussed across the primary members of the family and an initial focus on support in foundation and key stage one was taken. In

some schools this focus widened to other areas of school, though in Heatherley, the focus remained as planned.

Specialists visited the school to determine priorities; initially there was an audit of the environment, followed by classroom observations and discussions between specialist staff and school staff. School staff involved in the programme received direct oral feedback following observations, with a follow up written report. This highlighted areas where the specialists felt the specialist team also provided a drop in session for staff to attend in order for further information or questions.

The head teacher was very positive about the level and type of support received from specialists and felt staff had gained from the experience. Staff reported a range of changes in strategies used within the classroom as well as positive impact on the children.

Strategies included;

- Visual signs and symbols
- Use of prompt cards
- Social / communication key words
- More photographs used to illustrate class rules
- IEP target information was on the walls for the children to see, was talked through with the children and engaged other children for support
- There was a lot more multisensory / physical learning
- More emphasis on building vocabulary
- Use of forced alternatives to support understanding and engagement
- Repetition and teacher modelling / TA modelling

They also highlighted a range of areas for further development to support talk in the classroom as well as independent learning.