

SEND AWARE

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SUPPORT AND ASPIRATION-UPDATE

The Government's green paper proposals are now in the early stages of parliamentary discussion and consultation. Key areas are:

- Children's special educational needs are picked up early and support is routinely put in place quickly
- Staff have the knowledge, understanding and skills to provide support for children and young people who have SEN or are disabled, wherever they are
- Parents know what they can reasonably expect their local school, local college, local authority and local services to provide, without them having to fight for it
- Children who would currently have

a statement of SEN and young people over 16 who would have a learning difficulty assessment have an integrated assessment and a single Education, Health and Care Plan which is completed in a shorter time and without families having the stress of searching to get the support they need

- Parents have greater control over the services they and their family use, with: every family with an Education, Health and Care Plan having the right to a personal budget and the right to seek a place at any state-funded school.

Want more information? See www.education.gov.uk/

REACTIONS TO SEN SYSTEM REFORMS

Jo Campion, from the National Deaf Children's Society, welcomed the Government's "good intentions" to produce a simpler SEN system. However, she cautioned that "ministers are building their strategy on quicksand" as councils across England are "slashing the specialist educational services that are crucial to achieving these ambitions."

John Dickinson-Lilley, of the deaf-blind charity Sense, welcomed the Government's promise to overhaul the SEN framework, saying that the current system is "extraordinarily complex". He added, though, that the single assessment plan "must be underpinned by clear statutory obligations on all education, health and social care agencies and settings including academies and free schools."

Christine Blower, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, went further in criticising the Bill, claiming that the Government's promise to provide greater choice to parents is illusory. "Cuts to local authority budgets vastly reduce the specialist services which parents and teachers need to access support and ensure progress", she said.

*The Children and Families Bill is to be introduced in 2013

*The role of the Children's Commissioner is due to be strengthened by the Bill

*Local Authorities are to be made more accountable for their provision for SEND

*Councils will be required to publish a local offer

*Parents will be encouraged to seek mediation before litigation in any disputes

ADHD-WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

ADHD is a medical diagnosis that is applied to children and adults who are experiencing significant difficulties in important aspects of their lives, e.g. family relationships, school, or work. These difficulties can be attributed to problems of impulse control, hyperactivity and inattention.

ADD (without the hyperactivity) is an American diagnosis and definition. This suggests that there are aspects of inattention and impulse control but not hyperactivity. ADHD is also known as Hyperkinetic Disorders in other parts of the world but does not have a non-hyperactive subtype.

It is believed that these problems are caused primarily by dysfunctions in the frontal lobes of the brain that are most likely genetically transmitted. This is why aspects can run in families. At the present time more boys than girls are diagnosed with ADHD.

Medication can be prescribed to regulate the imbalance of chemicals in the frontal lobe, such as Ritalin or a slow release alternative. These have their own side effects, such as loss of appetite and changing the child's personality, along with the added problem of 'up' times and 'down' times according to the time of day when the medication is wearing off.

What does this child look like in the class?

- Will be out of seat too often
- Will deviate from what the rest of the class is supposed to be doing
- Will not follow the teacher's instructions or orders
- Will call out or talk out of turn
- Will be aggressive towards classmates
- Will be distracted easily and have a short attention span
- Will bother classmates by intruding on their work efforts or talking to them
- Will be oblivious to what is going on around them or daydream
- Will lose or forget equipment
- Will hand in homework late or not at all
- Will be at risk of exclusion
- Will rush work to finish first or quickly and not do their best
- Will fidget constantly and interfere with equipment
- Will be noisy and over-talkative compared to their peers

IDEAS FOR SUPPORTING ADHD IN SCHOOL

-Ignore-rules-praise: ignore the rule-breaking behaviour, while praising a child who is obeying the rule in a way that is clear to the misbehaving child. This should always involve a statement of the rule.

-Sensory issues: sensory deprivation is not conducive to effective learning, so the child must be stimulated by the task

-Outcomes: these must be positive and desirable and solution-focussed, framed in 'can-do' language. Shorter tasks within a longer period, so that the child can maintain interest in the overall lesson, while completing and working at the desired rate.

-Feedback: this must be specific and more frequent as poorer memory and inattention will hamper their ability to self-monitor. This can also be hampered by lower self-esteem.

-Previewing: previewing and priming can help a child to know what is expected and lead to likely successful outcomes

Need more advice? Want to know more about ADHD? Come and see DB!



'Often the best way to win is to forget to keep score'
M E Murphy.

Useful websites:

www.adhd.org.uk

www.adhd-add.co.uk

www.adders.org