

LOCAL INCLUSION OFFICER SERVICE: Evaluation of School responses August 2007

Local Inclusion Officers asked schools to complete a questionnaire relating to the work of the Service.

Questions fell into 4 main areas, i.e.:

- Customer care
- Information and advice
- Types of intervention
- Other comments.

51 questionnaires were completed and analysed.

Customer care

There was generally very high satisfaction with the level of contact, access to the service and customer care standards. Responses showed that schools know how to contact the Local Inclusion Officer; that the Local Inclusion Officer has responded in line with customer care standards, and that the Local Inclusion Officer has demonstrated appropriate knowledge.

One response indicated that the school had not received a response to telephone calls within 3 days.

Information and advice

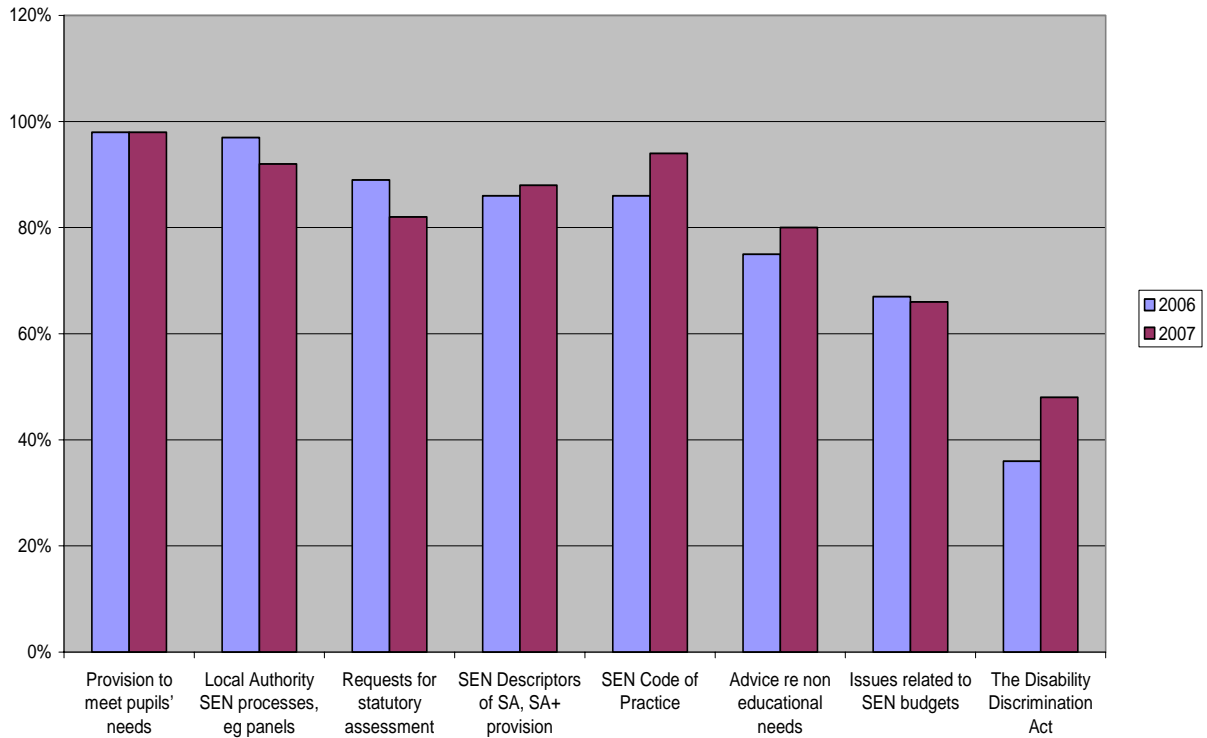
Responses showed that Local Inclusion Officers have offered information and advice about a range of issues:

Provision to meet pupils' needs	98%
SEN Code of Practice	94%
Local Authority SEN processes, eg panels	92%
SEN Descriptors of SA, SA+ provision	88%
Requests for statutory assessment	82%
Advice re non educational needs	80%
Issues related to SEN budgets	66%
The Disability Discrimination Act	48%

Having completed a similar exercise in 2006 it is possible to identify trends in Local Inclusion Officer contacts with schools. Chart 1 compares responses received in 2006 against those received in 2007.

Chart 1

Evaluation of School Responses - Local Inclusion Officer advice 2006 - 2007



On both occasions there is a high emphasis placed on provision to meet pupils' needs, Local Authority processes with respect to pupils with SEN, Statutory Assessment, SEN Descriptors, and the Code of Practice. Increases are noted in contacts about Disability Discrimination in line with service priorities.

Types of intervention

Responses demonstrated a range of types of Local Inclusion Officer intervention:

Attendance at Annual Reviews of statements	98%
Addressing parental concerns	84%
Inter-agency working	78%
Promoting pupil participation	72%
Supporting work at School Action/Action Plus	58%
Staff development	46%
Reducing exclusions	62%

Having completed a similar exercise in 2006 it is possible to identify trends in Local Inclusion Officer interventions. Chart 2 compares responses received in 2006 against those received in 2007.

Chart 2

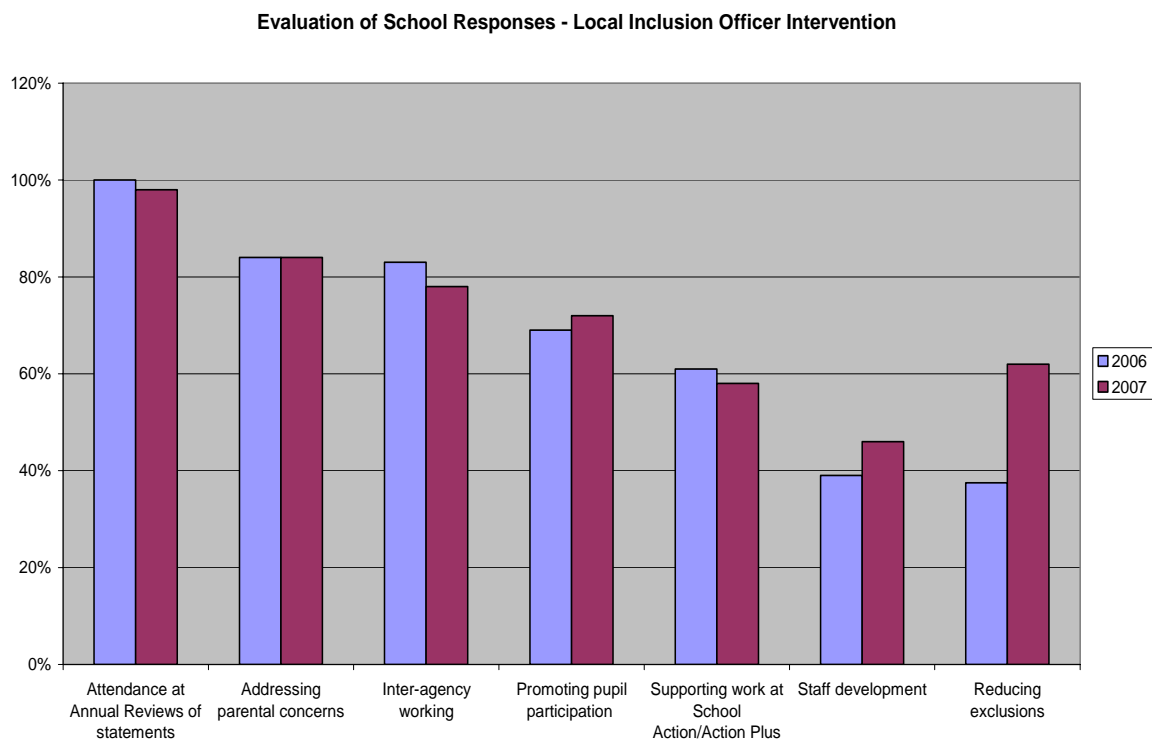


Chart 2 confirms that intervention continues to focus mainly on statutory elements of SEN relating to Statutory Reviews. A major increase is noted in the area of preventing exclusions in line with identified service priorities

Other comments

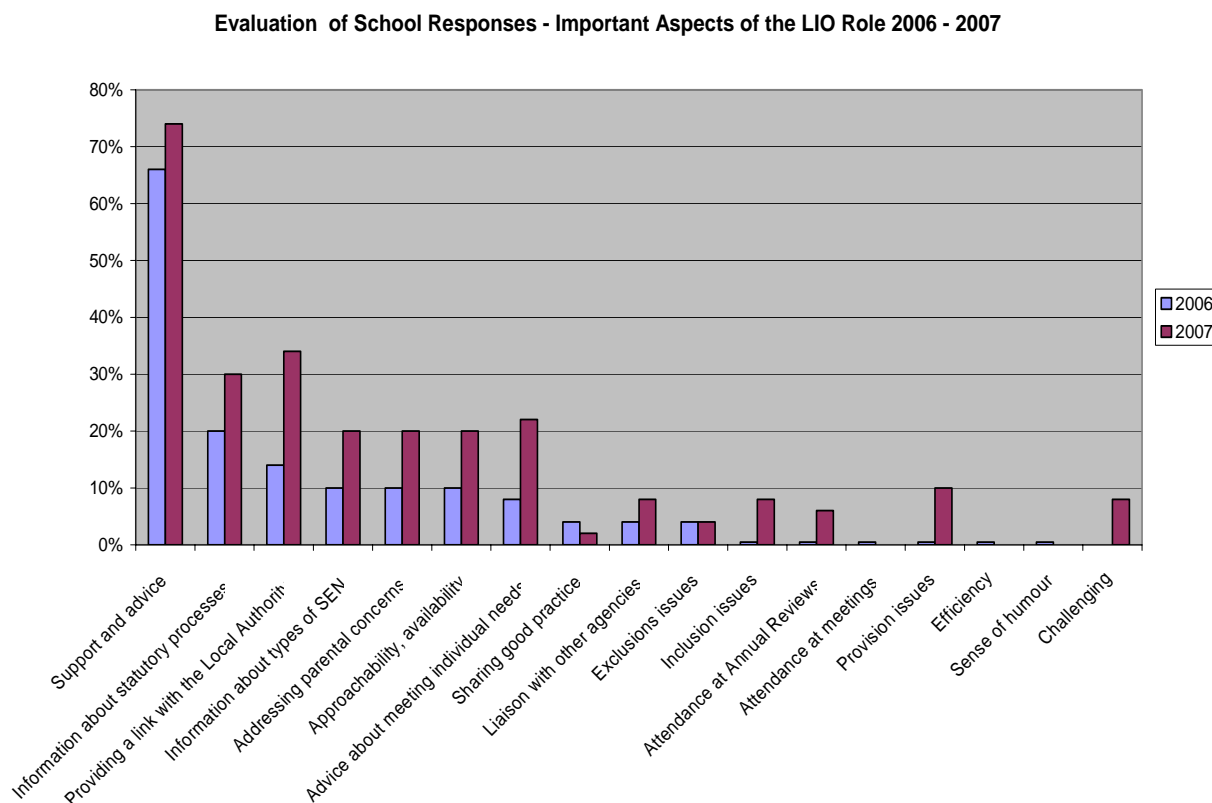
Schools were asked to identify the most important aspects of the Local Inclusion Officer role. Responses show that schools value a range of aspects as follows:

Support and advice	74%
Information about statutory processes	30%
Providing a link with the Local Authority	34%
Advice about meeting individual needs	22%
Information about types of SEN	20%
Addressing parental concerns	20%
Approachability, availability	20%
Provision issues	10%

Liaison with other agencies	8%
Challenging	8%
Inclusion issues	8%
Attendance at Annual Reviews	6%
Exclusions issues	4%
Sharing good practice	2%

Having completed a similar exercise in 2006 it is possible to identify trends in the aspects of the Local Inclusion Officer service which school staff value. Chart 2 compares responses received in 2006 against those received in 2007.

Chart 3



The provision of advice and support continues to be the most valued aspect for the Local Inclusion Officer role. School staff appreciate the ease of contact with the service and the approachability of Local Inclusion Officers. Local Inclusion Officers are seen as sources of knowledge and information about Statutory processes and Local Authority decision making. School staff value Local Inclusion Officer advice about individual pupil needs.

Schools were asked whether they had seen the Local Inclusion Officer Service website and found it useful. 14 schools (28%) said they had found it. 11 respondents found the site useful or very useful. Two respondents found the site difficult to access. One respondent had not used the site but knew how to locate it.

A number of schools expressed high levels of satisfaction with the service, including positive comments about:

- School staff having confidence in the LIO
- LIO is friendly, approachable and supportive
- LIO is flexible and knowledgeable
- Improved service following period of staff absence due to illness
- Useful guidance and support to new SENCO
- LIO newsletter very informative
- A supportive yet challenging service responsive to need and very professional

Suggestions for improvements to the service were as follows:

- Provision of details of LIO structure and advice to be flagged up to all schools.
- Provision for pupils with extremely challenging behaviour should be made available more quickly.
- Meetings with LIO to review the Inclusion agenda
- Arrange mobile phone contact
- Attendance at SENST meetings
- Signposting to other services
- Provide advice similar to that offered by SSEN about resources and ideas
- Avoidance of double booking of meetings
- Increasing numbers of LIOs so that they are not overworked
- Holding SEN cluster meetings during school hours
- Support to school development of SEN issues and inclusion at School Action Plus
- Regular visits to secondary schools to discuss SEN issues and developments

Comments which are common to both 2006 and 2007 responses are:

- Concerns re service capacity
- Provision of details of LIO structure and advice to be flagged up to all schools.
- Provision of advice about resources
- Regular scheduling of visits to secondary schools to discuss general SEN issues.

For the first time this year respondents were asked if there were any other activities which the Local Inclusion Officer Service might be involved in. There was a range of responses to this question mainly focusing on extending the professional role of the Local Inclusion Officer, including:

- Information about the service and SEN for parents

- Collating and advising on alternative providers – provision wider than the Local Authority
- INSET for senior leaders on their role in SEN provision
- Working with students at risk of permanent exclusion
- Supporting cases for adequate school funding of SEN at School Action and School Action Plus
- Staff development
- Advising senior management on the best use of SEN budget
- Training re new criteria for statutory assessment
- Attend SENST meetings

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August 07