

Education Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee

ELLS(2) 16-06(p11)

Policy Review Special Education Needs – Part 3 - Transition Analysis of consultation questionnaire

Purpose

1. This paper invites the Committee to note the results of the consultation held from August to October 2006. The Committee will be invited to consider a draft report on this phase of the review after the Christmas recess at the start of the spring term. It is envisaged that the analysis will form part of that report.

Background

2. The purpose of the consultation was to look at transition issues from school to further and higher education and transition into the world of work. In particular to hear the views of students with special educational needs leaving secondary school and what problems they may come across as they move into further/higher education, training or work.
3. A Consultation questionnaire was issued to all local authorities, 10% of primary and secondary schools in Wales, all special schools, key organisations and stake holders. The consultation was launched at the National Eisteddfod in Swansea on 8 August 2006 and was also available on the Committee's internet site.

Consultation Questionnaire

4. The consultation questionnaire is at Annex A.

Consultation Analysis

5. The consultation analysis is at Annex B.

Recommendation

6. The Committee notes the analysis of the consultation exercise.

**Peter Black AM
Chair of Committee**

**Contact
Steve George, Committee Clerk**



Cynulliad National
Cenedlaethol Assembly for
Cymru Wales

Education Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee
Special Educational Needs Policy Review
Consultation Questionnaire
Transition

Background: The Committee is carrying out a policy review of special educational needs. We have completed the first and second stages of the review. The first focused on early identification and intervention and was published in November 2004. The second stage focused on statutory assessment and was published in May this year.

We are now undertaking the third and final stage of the review which is looking at transition issues; transition from school to Further and Higher Education and transition into the world of work. We are interested in the particular needs of those students with special educational needs leaving secondary education and what problems they may come across as they move into further/higher education, training or work.

We want to hear from anyone with an interest in this subject. We are particularly keen to hear from parents / carers, siblings and other relatives of children and young people with special educational needs, and professionals involved in helping young people in the transition from maintained education.

This short questionnaire is seeking your views on the service provided. Views expressed in this questionnaire will aid the Committee in its deliberations.

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Committee Service
National Assembly for Wales
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Cardiff
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e-mail: stephen.george@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Responses: Should be sent to Joel Steed at the above address by 2 October 2006. It may not be possible to take into account responses received after this date.

Outcome: The results of this consultation will be included in a Committee report, drawing out the key points of the information received, and making recommendations to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning. There will be a plenary debate on this report in the National Assembly and the Minister will respond, on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government, within two months.

Please note:

- Your response should be brief and to the point;
- It is normal practice for the National Assembly to publish evidence either within a report, or as supplementary evidence to a report. We will not publish information which we consider to be personal data, such as name and contact details, unless consent has been provided or these are details relating to an organisation.
- The National Assembly operates within the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- If any information, other than personal data, is being submitted that is regarded by the provider not to be suitable for public disclosure, it is up to the provider to stipulate what part(s) of the information should not be published and provide a reasoned argument to support this. The National Assembly will take this into account when publishing evidence in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- In the event of a request for information, it may be necessary for information which has been provided either as evidence, communication or any other written information, to be disclosed. This may include information which has previously been removed by the National Assembly for publication purposes.
- Please indicate whether you are responding on behalf of an organisation, or as an individual.

Terms of Reference

The Committee will:

- Review the transition arrangements for post-16 students with special education needs between secondary education and further/higher education or training opportunities including the Independent Living Skills Programme; identify examples of good practice;
- Examine the sheltered and open employment opportunities, including the availability of work placements, for learners with complex needs in all parts of Wales, especially rural areas;
- Review the process of Transition Planning from school to adult life as documented in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and the effectiveness of multi agency working arrangements;
- Investigate partnerships and collaborative planning for transition between relevant public sector organisations (in training, employment, careers and health), and with charitable and voluntary agencies;
- Consider the implications of the above matters for Welsh-medium provision and opportunities; and
- Make recommendations to the Assembly Minister on how current arrangements for transition could be improved.

Section 1 About you

To help us to see if there are any patterns in the views of people responding to the consultation, it would be helpful if you could answer the following brief questions before moving on to your views.

Please tick the boxes that apply to you:

Question 1 - You are?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pupil or Student with special educational needs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent/guardian of pupil or student with special educational needs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education Professional
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completing on behalf of an organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

Question 2 - Please state your local authority area

Home:	<input type="text"/>
Study (if applicable):	<input type="text"/>

Question 3 - Please indicate your age group

<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 14
<input type="checkbox"/>	14-19
<input type="checkbox"/>	20-24
<input type="checkbox"/>	25-34
<input type="checkbox"/>	35-44
<input type="checkbox"/>	45-54
<input type="checkbox"/>	55-64
<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 65

Question 4 - Please indicate your main language

<input type="checkbox"/>	English
<input type="checkbox"/>	Welsh
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify): <input type="text"/>

Over the page there are 4 more questions seeking your views on the level of service provided in Wales. **Thank you.**

Question 5 - Transition

The Committee is interested in your views on issues regarding students with special educational needs leaving secondary education and moving into further or higher education or training?

What do you consider the main concerns are with regard to this transition? Please note up to three points:

1	
2	
3	

Other brief comments, including examples of good practice:

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Question 6 - . Employment opportunities

The Committee is keen to hear of concerns and experiences (from the perspective of both employees and employers) about sheltered and open employment opportunities, including work placements

What do you consider the main barriers or problems are concerning employment opportunities? Please note up to three points in each case:

a.) For employees/students

1	
2	
3	

b.) For employers

1	
2	
3	

Other brief comments, including examples of good practice:

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Question 7 - Languages of Wales

The Committee wants to consider issues regarding the provision of services to students with special educational needs in languages other than English.

What do you think are the main issues about the provision of services in languages other than English, concerning the transition from secondary education? Please note up to three points:

1	
2	
3	

Other brief comments, including examples of good practice:

Question 8 – Transition Plan

THIS QUESTION IS AIMED AT THOSE WITH EXPERIENCE OF A TRANSITION PLAN

The Committee is interested in the process of Transition Planning, particularly the effectiveness of the many agencies who may become involved as a student leaves secondary education.

What do you think are the three main issues or concerns? Please note up to three points:

1	
2	
3	

Other brief comments, including examples of good practice:

Thank you for taking the time to give us your views.

Contact Details*

Name:

Organisation:

Address:

E:Mail:

* There is no need to provide contact details if you would prefer not to. However, it would be helpful to have these details, particularly if you are completing this questionnaire on behalf of a representative body or other organisation. Copies of the Committee's final report will be sent to those persons or bodies who have provided contact details.

Responses: Should be sent to Joel Steed at the following address by 2 October 2006.

Committee Service
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA
Telephone: 029 2089 8618
e-mail: joel.steed@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Summary of SEN Policy Review Part 3 – Transition

The consultation asked four questions relating to the transition of young people with SEN. A summary of the responses, by question is below.

There were a total of 113 responses to the consultation, broken down as:

30 organisations, either statutory or voluntary sector;
21 from families of young people with SEN, including one student;
20 schools;
16 local authorities (including 1 social service department);
14 anonymous;
3 further education colleges;
3 universities;
2 SENCOs;
2 local health boards;
1 training provider;
1 volunteer.

What do you consider the main concerns are with regard to transition?

There was a wide range of responses to this question.

Funding

- ◆ The most common concern was insufficient funding for courses and work placements and for visits for taster sessions to colleges and placements;
- ◆ Lack of clarity over funding and problems with late funding.

Opportunities

- ◆ A lack of opportunities and choices that are appropriate, meaningful, and close to home in training, further and higher education and employment;
- ◆ Need for higher expectations for young people and parents and young people need to share expectations.

Support

- ◆ Absence of a support network that pupil has in school when moving on to further education, work or training;
- ◆ Need for pastoral support, advocacy and counselling and dedicated transition workers. Support to help a student study and an understanding of individual students' needs. Disabilities are not always understood and a need for patience in others;
- ◆ Support for parents.

Timing and planning

- ◆ Review meetings did not have enough time allocated to them and the right people did not always attend;
- ◆ A need for a more person-centred approach to transition and support should be provided to students to help them contribute fully to the process;
- ◆ Lack of understanding of the aspirations of students and a lack of consultation;
- ◆ Lack of coordination between adult and children's services;

- ◆ Transition planning should begin when students are aged 14, but decisions can be made too late which can lead to delays;
- ◆ There is a lack of staff to facilitate smooth transition;
- ◆ Delays in organising placements and students;
- ◆ Pupils are not prepared for the changes ahead of them.

Information

- ◆ A lack of suitable and appropriate information available for young people, and a lack of awareness of such information for both pupils and parents;
- ◆ Information is not transferred from sector to sector or delays in doing so;
- ◆ Lack of information sharing about young people and that there are concerns by some that information sharing could be in breach of the Data Protection Act;
- ◆ There is a lack of disability awareness generally and lack of awareness of specific needs (eg, needs of deaf people or those with ASD);
- ◆ Poor communication.

Other concerns

- ◆ The main repeated other concern was about transport – the lack of appropriate, and affordable transport.

The main concerns of **voluntary and other organisations** were:

- ◆ The lack of opportunities;
- ◆ The need for adequate, early planning, adequate support for individuals; and
- ◆ Funding issues.

For local education authorities:

- ◆ The different levels of support that young people received in compulsory education and further education/training/work;
- ◆ The lack of opportunities;
- ◆ Lack of and complexity funding.

For parents, pupils and their families:

- ◆ Lack of opportunities;
- ◆ Lack of information;
- ◆ Funding;
- ◆ The different levels of support offered in school compared with those in continuing education/training/employment;
- ◆ Transport.

For further education, higher education, training and employment providers:

- ◆ The full and early transfer of information to allow for planning for young people;
- ◆ The different levels of support offered in school compared with those in continuing education/training/employment.

For schools:

- ◆ Lack of options available;
- ◆ The transfer of information between sectors;
- ◆ That parents and pupils fully understand the changes ahead;
- ◆ Lack of support networks outside school.

***What do you consider the main barriers or problems are concerning employment opportunities? Please note up to three points in each case:
a.) For employees/students***

The main concerns highlighted by respondents were:

- ◆ The lack of opportunities and choices in a variety of appropriate, meaningful, local settings;
- ◆ Lack of affordable, appropriate transport for young people;
- ◆ The lack of disability awareness and attitudes of employers and co-workers to people with SEN;
- ◆ The limits of young people with SEN, who may have poor literacy skills, low qualifications and communication difficulties and the need for sensitive and understanding employers;
- ◆ Lack of support in the work place for both employees and employers;
- ◆ The complexity of the benefits system and the benefits system itself being a disincentive to work;
- ◆ Lack of information on opportunities and choices and lack of awareness of information;
- ◆ The low expectations of students, parents and employers;
- ◆ Lack of confidence of young people;
- ◆ The need for preparation and planning for the change to the world of work.

The main concerns identified by **organisations** were:

- ◆ The lack of options and opportunities for young people;
- ◆ Attitudes of others and the lack of disability awareness;
- ◆ The need for support in the workplace;
- ◆ Transport and access to opportunities;
- ◆ The balance between paid work and benefits.

For **local authorities**:

- ◆ The lack of options and opportunities;
- ◆ Transport.

For **parents and families**:

- ◆ The need for employers to understand young people's individual needs;
- ◆ The attitudes of others in the workplace;
- ◆ The need for support in the work-place;
- ◆ The lack of opportunities and options.

For **providers**:

- ◆ Attitudes of others and lack of disability awareness;
- ◆ Limited opportunities;
- ◆ Understanding the needs of young people;
- ◆ The balance between benefits and wages.

For **schools**:

- ◆ The levels of support that young people need;
- ◆ The lack of options and opportunities;
- ◆ Lack of confidence and aspirations of young people.

***What do you consider the main barriers or problems are concerning employment opportunities? Please note up to three points in each case:
b.) For employers***

The largest area of concern identified was around employers perceptions of employing young people with SEN, including lack of disability awareness, a lack of understanding of individuals' needs, and a lack of understanding of young people's potential to contribute.

The other main problems identified were:

- ◆ Health and safety and insurance issues;
- ◆ The levels of support and supervision that might be required to employ a young person with SEN;
- ◆ Concerns that employing a young person with SEN may require a higher resource and may not perform as well as others;
- ◆ The lack of support for employers, including the lack of support workers in the work-place and lack of incentives to employ people with SEN;
- ◆ Communication difficulties and lack of confidence in communication;
- ◆ Proper preparation – knowing an individual's needs before they start work;
- ◆ Concerns about adjustments in the workplace.

The main concerns identified by **organisations** were:

- ◆ Attitudes to disability and lack of disability awareness;
- ◆ The lack of funding to provide support for employers to employ young people;
- ◆ Employers may be unaware of the benefits of employing young people with SEN;
- ◆ Insurance issues, health and safety and the cost of adaptations.

For **local authorities**:

- ◆ Employers may have concerns over the support that young people with SEN may need;
- ◆ Lack of disability awareness.

For **families**:

- ◆ That employers will not understand the individual needs of young people.

For **providers**:

- ◆ Employers may be unaware of young people's potential;
- ◆ Concerns about the support that young people may need.

For **schools**:

- ◆ Lack of disability awareness;
- ◆ Understanding young people's abilities;
- ◆ Health and safety issues.

What do you think are the main issues about the provision of services in languages other than English, concerning the transition from secondary education?

The main issues identified were:

- ◆ The lack of opportunities and a broad range of choices in employment, training, further and higher education for those whose first language is not English;
- ◆ A lack of Welsh speaking (and other languages, including British Sign Language) professionals and staff to support students and parents;
- ◆ Information, support and opportunities should be available to students in whatever is their preferred language or communication method and it should be ensured that young people are able to understand information they receive;
- ◆ Funding – the costs of producing multi-lingual materials and employing translators/interpreters;
- ◆ Lack of trained translators;
- ◆ Lack of awareness of all communication methods, verbal and non-verbal;
- ◆ The lack of opportunities for continuation of training, work or on-going education in a student's first language can be confusing for the student;
- ◆ A lack of advocacy in the student's preferred language;
- ◆ Lack of assessment tools in other languages.

The main message from all groups of respondents was that there should be provision in all areas (education, training, employment, information, advice and advocacy) in the young person's preferred method of communication.

What do you think are the three main issues or concerns with regard to transition plans?

The greatest areas of concern identified were:

- ◆ The lack of co-ordination between agencies and the need for a multi-disciplinary process;
- ◆ All those who are involved in transition planning need to attend planning meetings, respondents stated that those invited did not always attend;
- ◆ The participation of students in the process and the need for person centred planning;
- ◆ Transition planning is seen as a 'tick box' exercise that does not focus on the individual needs of the student;
- ◆ There should be a dedicated person in charge of the whole process;
- ◆ The transfer of information between services, such as adult and child services and schools and colleges;
- ◆ The need for early planning, decisions are taken too late;
- ◆ The lack of options available and lack of information on available choices;
- ◆ The timely preparation of students for the changes ahead of them;
- ◆ Engagement of parents and lack of information;
- ◆ Need for counselling/advocacy for students;
- ◆ Financial considerations for services and families and the complexities of funding;
- ◆ The need for effective communication between agencies and with parents and students;
- ◆ Not all agencies have ownership of the plan;
- ◆ Lack of resources.

The main messages from **organisations** were:

- ◆ Transition planning should be person-centred and focussed on the young person's needs;
- ◆ All involved agencies should take part in the planning process.

For **local authorities**:

- ◆ The participation of the young person in the planning process;
- ◆ All agencies should take part in the planning process;
- ◆ The process should begin earlier.

For **families**:

- ◆ Services are not co-ordinated;
- ◆ A lack of information on choices available;
- ◆ There should be one key worker throughout the process.

Providers offered a wide range of views, including:

- ◆ The lack of early planning;
- ◆ The lack of information and options available;

For **schools**

- ◆ All agencies and services should be involved in the process – this is not always happening;

- ◆ The need for proper communication and transfer of information between agencies;
- ◆ The process should be person-centred.