

The Education and Training Inspectorate

An evaluation of the Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing Pilot

2012-2014

Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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Executive Summary

This summary sets out the main findings of the two year evaluation of the Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (CCET) pilot. The report was commissioned by the Department of Education (DE) to support the strategic objectives of Every School a Good School policy and to develop the capacity of special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) in pre-school, primary and post-primary schools to identify, assess and make appropriate interventions for pupils with special educational needs. Two hundred and ninety six schools participated in the pilot.

The schools were allocated to three distinct strands to enable a comparison of the merits of each approach.

Strand 1 - CCET trained SENCO and working independently.

Strand 2 - CCET trained SENCO working with a trained psychology assistant.

Strand 3 - Schools where the SENCO did not received any training but had access to the trained psychology assistant.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out the evaluation over the two-year period 2012-2014 completing an interim report to inform progress in June 2013. This report is based on a wide range of evidence, including the use of questionnaires¹ to 25 schools and telephone interviews of selected schools (13) and monitoring visits to a further 25 schools over the period of the pilot. Account was also taken of evidence arising from inspections where there was sufficient evidence to inform the survey.

The evaluation found that the CCET pilot brought many benefits to schools and the wider educational community, including:

- greater expertise and self-sufficiency in the majority of pilot schools to identify and assess pupils facing barriers to learning;
- improved confidence in schools' capacity to match assessment to intervention and meet needs more effectively;
- more appropriate referrals to educational psychology with the potential to reduce numbers over time;
- valuable outcomes for participating schools, particularly schools in Strand 2 and in the primary sector;
- accreditation which proved to be an important element of the pilot, providing added value and confidence to SENCOs' working approaches and consultation with parents, staff and other professionals such as educational psychologists;
- the identification of clustering and networking as a cost effective system of continuous professional development and support.

¹ See appendix 1 for sample of the questionnaire

In addition:

- the pilot helped to focus interest and action to improve special education provision in the participating schools;
- participating schools benefited from the pilot to varying degrees with more significant outcomes in Strand 2 schools and primary schools;
- year two was much more productive in demonstrating the positive impact of the pilot overall;
- the use of trained psychology assistants, the local clustering of schools and the ongoing focus on improving assessment leading to effective intervention within school development plans were important strengths;
- the project co-ordinators and the regional co-ordinator managed the project very well and were successful in ensuring schools' access to continuous support and advice; their commitment to addressing the areas for improvement identified at the interim stage was excellent; and
- the currency of the CCET accreditation and the impact on formal assessment, while valued by the participating schools, needs to be considered by the educational psychology service to clarify its contribution to the assessment process.

Conclusion

The pilot demonstrated the need for continuous capacity building in special education provision and found a strong link between professional training, ongoing support and networking, and better outcomes.

Recommendations

- 1 There is a need for further ongoing capacity building work in special education linking assessment more purposefully to intervention and tracking of progress.
- 2 Schools should network on a local basis to enable SENCOs to focus on assessment and intervention, discuss practice and promote the development of best practice across all schools, including those which have not availed of the pilot.
- 3 Training for accreditation in educational assessment should be a requirement for all SENCOs, to enhance the capacity of schools to identify and analyse appropriately the level of need and additional provision for pupils who require additional support with their learning.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Department of Education (DE) initiated the Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (CCET) three year pilot to support the strategic objectives of Every School a Good School policy. The overarching aim of the pilot was to develop the capacity of special education co-ordinators (SENCOs)/ teachers in 300 schools for two years (pre-school, primary and post-primary) to identify, assess and make appropriate interventions for pupils with special educational needs. Overall costs are estimated at £995K. Two hundred and ninety-six schools participated in the pilot.

2. Remit of the interim report

2.1 In reaching this final evaluation, the inspection team has taken account of the progress over the three years and, in particular, improvements since the interim report of June 2013.

2.2 The five key objectives of the pilot are to:

1. Provide participating mainstream schools with a co-ordinated and informed capacity to identify and assess pupils facing barriers to learning, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and /or disability, by increasing the educational assessment skills of appropriate staff.
2. Improve the capacity of participating mainstream schools to deliver in-house, relevant and purposeful interventions for the majority of pupils facing barriers to learning, through a consistent approach, and obviate the need for unnecessary referrals for educational psychology assessment.
3. Enable schools to develop and/or expand their in-house expertise/ skills base in educational assessment, increase their confidence in the interpretation of tests, improve the analysis of assessment data and improve their capacity to liaise more effectively with external support services, such as educational psychology.
4. Improve schools' understanding of terminology used in assessment reports completed by educational psychologists.
5. Improve teacher confidence in their communication with parents regarding the school provision planned/in place.

2.3 The interim report identified that some of the objectives will take time to embed and therefore, the evaluations at this stage reflect the context and starting points of the participating schools and the range of variables involved.

3. Context of the pilot

3.1 The pilot is separated into three distinct strands to enable a comparison of the merits of each cohort of schools.

Strand 1 - CCET trained SENCO and working independently.

Strand 2 - CCET trained SENCO working with trained psychology assistant.

Strand 3 - Schools where the SENCO has not received any training but have access to the trained psychology assistant.

3.2 The CCET training programme consisted of four days intensive training and was provided to the SENCOs/teachers of Strands 1 and 2 schools. A requirement to complete a number of assignments is obligatory and upon completion the CCET certification is issued.

3.3 Following training, the pilot schools were supported in cluster groups to share and learn for the outworking of the training. All of the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) initiated cluster groups with two boards holding more regular cluster meetings.

3.4 The DE funded the pilot which was managed separately by each of the five ELBs and overseen by the Regional Strategy Group (RSG).

4. Methodology

4.1 Five inspectors monitored the progress of 25 participating schools (10 post-primary schools and 15 primary schools) from November 2012 to June 2014 and kept a running record of observations and information from interviews with school SENCOs/teachers, pilot co-ordinators and from data provided by the regional project manager. In addition, evidence from inspections was also used to inform the findings. Several meetings were held with local ELB co-ordinators and one with the psychology assistants. The reporting inspector maintained regular contact with the regional project manager and the ELB co-ordinators. Almost all of the sample schools were visited twice over the period and telephone discussions were used to build the evidence base for the survey. A number of other participating schools (13) were contacted by telephone to discuss their views and to confirm findings from the sample. In June 2014, a further sample of 25 schools were sent a questionnaire to find out their views of the impact of the pilot in their schools.

4.2 The inspection team met to moderate the findings and agree the progress of the pilot against its aims and also held two feedback discussions with the regional co-ordinator and ELB co-ordinators to ensure that the evidence was accurate and thorough.

5. The overall findings

- Greater expertise and self-sufficiency in the majority of pilot schools to identify and assess pupils facing barriers to learning;
- improved confidence in schools' capacity to match assessment to intervention and meet needs more effectively;
- more appropriate referrals to educational psychology with the potential to reduce numbers over time;
- valuable outcomes for participating schools, particularly schools in Strand 2 and in the primary sector;
- accreditation proved an important element of the pilot which provided added value and confidence to SENCOs' working approaches and consultation with parents, staff and other professionals such as educational psychologists; and
- clustering and networking identified as a cost effective system of continuous professional support.

In addition:

- the pilot helped to focus interest and action to improve special education provision in the participating schools;
- participating schools benefited from the pilot to varying degrees with more significant outcomes in Strand 2 schools and primary schools;
- year two was much more productive in demonstrating the positive impact of the pilot overall;
- the use of psychology assistants, the local clustering of schools and the ongoing focus on improving assessment leading to effective intervention within school development plans were important strengths;
- the project co-ordinators and the regional co-ordinator managed the project very well and were successful in ensuring schools access to continuous support and advice; their commitment to addressing the areas for improvement identified at the interim stage was excellent; and
- the currency of the CCET accreditation and the impact on formal assessment, while valued by the participating schools, needs to be considered by the educational psychology service to clarify its contribution to the assessment process.

The pilot demonstrated the need for continuous capacity building in special education provision and found a strong link between professional training, ongoing support and networking, and better outcomes.

6. The findings in detail

Findings by ELB across phases

ELB	Pre-School	Primary		Post-Primary		TOTAL % Accredited		TOTAL % Accredited
		Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 1	Strand 2	Primary	Post-Primary	Preschool+ Primary + Post-Primary
BELB	N/A	N = 27/33 81.8%	N = 6/6 100%	N = 5/8 62.5%	N = 4/4 100%	N = 33/39 84.6%	N = 9/12 75%	N = 42/51 82.3%
NEELB	N/A	N = 22/25 88%	N = 7/7 100%	N = 14/15 93.3%	N = 3/3 100%	N = 29/ 32 90.6%	N = 17/18 94.4%	N = 46/50 92%
SEELB	N = 1/1 (Strand 2)	N = 18/19 94.7%	N = 7/7 100%	N = 16/18 88.8%	N = 2/2 100%	N = 25/26 96.1%	N = 18/20 90%	N = 44/47 93.6%
SELB	N = 1/1 (Strand 1)	N = 20/20 100%	N = 6/6 100%	N = 11/11 100%	N = 4/4 100%	N = 26/26 100%	N = 15/15 100%	N = 42/42 100%
WELB	N = 1/1 (Strand 1)	N = 20/20 100%	N = 6/6 100%	N = 19/19 100%	N = 4/4 100%	N = 26/26 100%	N = 23/23 100%	N = 50/50 100%

Accreditation

The data indicates the high level of accreditation gained across the two strands with 95.5% of participating teachers achieving the required standards for certification. Interestingly, more Strand 2 teachers (100%) gained the accreditation than Strand 1 while teachers from the primary sector did better than their counterparts in the post-primary sector. Two conclusions can be drawn from this: firstly the greater accredited outcomes were gained by those teachers supported by the psychology assistants and secondly, the impact in the primary sector was more significant thus suggesting that more work needs to be carried out in the post-primary sector. It was noted that for those SENCOs who did not complete the accreditation, in a majority of cases this was due to sickness, maternity leave or changing positions and/or schools.

Evaluation of the CCET objectives.

Overall

Strand 1 schools reported the need for guidance and support immediately following the initial training and throughout the pilot. The evidence indicates that training based largely on a theoretical perspective and content, requires ongoing practical support to enable schools to develop and embed provision. Clustering/networking is identified as a cost-effective means of developing and disseminating good practice.

Strand 2 schools reported the positive impact of training and ongoing advice and support from the assistant psychologists leading to better outcomes at all levels. Regular access to the assistant psychologist proved a strong factor in enabling teachers to discuss and affirm their working practices and to develop their skills in testing and make better use of diagnostic information. This was the most effective strand.

Strand 3 schools raised consistently the lack of access to training as a major flaw in the outworking of the pilot. The evidence endorses this comment and indicates that schools in Strand 3 did least well in terms of achieving the expected outcomes, though positive outcomes were evident across these schools.

Overall 100% of SENCOs in Strands 1 and 2 completed the training assignments and achieved accreditation, indicating the importance of accreditation as an aspect of training and development.

Improvements in year two were significant; in particular, the emphasis on intervention strategies and sustainability were well promoted by the co-ordinators.

The aims

1. *'Provide participating mainstream schools with a co-ordinated and informed capacity to identify and assess pupils facing barriers to learning, including those with SEN and /or disability, by increasing the educational assessment skills of appropriate staff.'*

Evaluation:

- Schools report improved capacity in the use of tests to identify special educational needs; more use of testing is confirmed across schools; analysing diagnostic information is developing well;
- training for Strand 1 and 2 has raised confidence and affirmed practice in most of the participating schools;

- cluster groups, when regularly held, have enabled the effective dissemination of shared practice and networking; use of video clips and the introduction of on-line training provides added value and potential sustainability to this work;
- introducing additional tests for mathematics and behaviour assessment have extended the assessment provision in a minority of schools which received this additional support.

A majority of participating schools evaluated by ETI, demonstrated that the pilot is leading to the whole school development of a co-ordinated system of assessment, more so in the primary sector and in Strand 2 schools; clustering may enable greater progress and consistency across all strands. Of the three strands, Strand 2 was the most effective and primary schools are demonstrating better and more balanced use of the skills and knowledge gained from the pilot to inform intervention. A majority of schools felt that the pilot enhanced existing good practice and encouraged them to place greater emphasis on analysis of data and tracking pupil progress. The training of one member of staff in each school posed a number of constraints, and inhibited effective whole school development in a minority of schools. The level of existing skills and experience of SENCOs and the priority schools placed on SEN, including senior management responsibility, were variables which meant that the participating schools were at different starting points; progress against the overarching aim was therefore difficult to measure fully. Identifying and including two members of staff in the training programme would go some way to giving the schools greater security and tenure of the training. It might also be useful as other programmes have demonstrated that a requirement to disseminate the training within the school would be better practice.

2. *'Improve the capacity of participating mainstream schools to deliver in-house, relevant and purposeful interventions for the majority of pupils facing barriers to learning, through a consistent approach, and obviate the need for unnecessary referrals for educational psychology assessment.'*

Evaluation:

- Renewed confidence in assessment across almost all of the participating schools;
- less confidence across Strand 1 and 3 schools in delivering purposeful interventions based on diagnostic information; this was a significant finding at the interim stage for the majority of schools;
- Strand 2 schools report a greater impact from testing leading to effective intervention;
- Strand 3 schools report improved knowledge through regular access to the assistant psychologist;
- Strand 1 schools report a more short term impact as a result of the training and the majority found the lack of ongoing support a barrier to development.

Overall, the findings indicate improved confidence and a greater focus on individual target setting based on more purposeful discussion of test results. There is evidence of earlier identification and a broader range of tests used to inform better the individual education plans and focus on how pupils learn. This needs to be disseminated further and underlines the need for accreditation training to address the level of need across schools. The lack of focus on intervention was a flaw in the design clearly identified in the interim report but the use of cluster groups and school initiatives and case studies has helped address this deficiency. Those schools in year two who also enrolled in the Stranmillis and St Mary's Understanding Literacy Difficulties programme expressed a clear view that the latter enhanced and clarified the assessment training provided by CCET, particularly in response to pupils with dyslexia. Those schools that accessed an additional teacher through the OFMDFM Signature Programme² made good use of the extra resource to enable the SENCO time to test more pupils and plan interventions.

3. *'Enable schools to develop and/or expand their in-house expertise/ skills base in educational assessment, increase their confidence in the interpretation of tests, improve the analysis of assessment data and improve their capacity to liaise more effectively with external support services, such as educational psychology.'*

Evaluation:

- This aim was met well across the three strands with best outcomes where clustering was more regular and networking encouraged;
- the co-ordinators were a key feature of this achievement through facilitating and disseminating good practice and identifying effective SENCOs to lead on key areas; and
- the psychology assistants modelling of the testing processes and general input contributed notably to building SENCOs' willingness to use a wider variety of tests and to analyse the test results more thoroughly to inform intervention.

Much of the evidence presented to the inspection team indicates that there was a more informed understanding of tests and their use and, in a majority of school returns, it was evident that test information was increasingly used to diagnose needs and inform intervention. This is in contrast to year 1 when test results tended more often to increase the referrals to psychology services for additional support and resources. Notably the dyslexia portfolio was used extensively and indicates an area where need is clear and where thorough diagnostic information is crucial to effective intervention.

4. *'Improve schools' understanding of terminology used in assessment reports completed by educational psychologists.'*

Evaluation:

- Evaluation clearly shows an improvement in all participating schools' understanding of the terminology used in assessment reports completed by psychologists;

² The OFMDFM Signature Programme funded the employment of almost 300 teachers who had previously been unemployed to help support pupils with difficulties in literacy and numeracy.

- schools report the improved confidence in interpreting assessment data which is helping to generate better discussion about individual needs and personal intervention strategies; case study evidence reflects the accuracy of this finding;
- SENCOs report closer working relationship with psychologists;
- the currency of the CCET accreditation and the impact of SENCO testing information on the formal assessment processes were raised by a number of the schools as an issue which DE and the ELBs need to address with the educational psychology service.

5. *'Improve teacher confidence in their communication with parents regarding the school provision planned/in place.'*

Evaluation:

- The majority of schools highlight this objective as an area where improvement is noted and where more assessment information can be shared and discussed with parents; and
- some schools have reviewed their working links with parents to involve them further in intervention work.

7. Conclusion

The findings of this report conclude that capacity building for identification and assessment is more likely to have a sizeable impact on raising standards when key elements are included in the outworking of the pilot, these include:

- matching assessment and intervention;
- enabling schools to audit their provision with a view to tracking progress and informing improvement;
- access to certification which has currency within the formal assessment process; and
- a system of support, during and beyond the piloting stage.

Finally, the pilot has rightly identified the need for professional training in assessment and intervention, ongoing support and networking across schools to share best practice, and regular and consistent tracking to monitor progress and inform improvement.

8. Recommendations

- 1 There is a need for further ongoing capacity building work in special education linking assessment more purposefully to intervention and tracking of progress.
- 2 Schools should network on a local basis to enable SENCOs to focus on assessment and intervention, discuss practice and enable best practice to develop across all schools, including those which have not availed of the pilot.

- 3 Training for accreditation in educational assessment should be required by SENCOs in all schools to enhance the capacity of schools to identify and analyse appropriately the level of need and additional provision required for pupils who require additional support with their learning.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

PILOT – PROFORMA - CCET FINAL EVALUATION JUNE 2014

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

Please indicate which Strand the school is in:

- Strand 1 - Training alone
- Strand 2 - Training and access to psychology assistant
- Strand 3 - Access to psychology assistant only

NAME OF SENCO/TEACHER WHO UNDERTOOK THE TRAINING:

Please complete

For the principal to complete

Can you comment on how well the course objectives were achieved in your school.

The pilot aimed to:

1. *provide participating schools with a co-ordinated and informed capacity to identify and assess pupils facing barriers to learning, including those with SEN and/or disability, by increasing the educational assessment skills of appropriate staff*

2. *improve the capacity of participating schools to deliver in house relevant and purposeful interventions for the majority of pupils facing barriers to learning, through a consistent approach and obviate the need for unnecessary referrals for educational psychology assessment*

- 3. enable schools to develop and/or expand in-house expertise/skills base in educational assessment increase their confidence in the interpretation of tests improve the analysis of assessment data and improve their capacity to liaise more effectively with external support services, such as educational psychology*

- 4. improve schools' understanding of terminology used in assessment reports completed by educational psychologists*

- 5. improve teacher confidence in their communication with parents regarding the school provision planned/in place*

For the participating SENCO/teacher to complete

1. How has the training improved skills and knowledge of educational assessment for learning in the school?

2. How have you used the training in your school to improve the assessment practices?

3. What impact has the training had on outcomes for ...
 - a. the pupils
 - b. the staff
 - c. the school

4. What shortcomings remain?

5. What tests have you found most useful?

6. What aspects of the course did you find most useful?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this proforma.

Feedback samples from the pilot co-ordinators

- **Comments from schools**

- I have now more confidence in selecting and administering tests.
- I am able to pinpoint difficulties better and to set appropriate targets. I also have better confidence in reporting outcomes of testing to parents and colleagues.
- I am more confident in using tests and am able to obtain better information about children's difficulties and set targets on the basis of test results.
- It has provided a structure for working methodically when addressing issues of SEN and target setting. Test results give a good basis for staff discussion in planning for children and providing what's needed.
- As a result of being involved in pilot B, I am much more aware of the importance of testing for informing parents and teachers.
- Pilot B has helped me to be more accurate in identifying specific difficulties and supporting children.
- Training has boosted confidence in testing and score analysis. It provides us with the capacity to do more in terms of intervention at school based level.
- The main benefits of cluster are the sharing of information, making contacts and a reassurance that support is available.
- Pilot B has helped me to understand psychology reports better.

Year 1

- **Examples of good practice**

- Use of testing and retesting as means of tracking pupil progress.
- Use of tests to inform school-based interventions.
- More holistic use of testing to create reliable profiles of pupils.
- More confidence in communicating with parents and explaining school-based decisions.
- Increased profile of SEN within schools.
- Provision of on-line CCET training to additional members of staff.
- Development of larger SEN teams within schools.

Generally SENCOs in Strands 2 and 3 were pleased with their involvement in the pilot, and were grateful for the practical support they were receiving from the psychology assistants. SENCOs from Strand 1 were less positive, reporting that they were having difficulties finding time to administer tests etc.

SUMMARY YEAR 2 (2013/14)

- Strands 2 and 3 cluster meetings continued to be positive with SENCOs expressing the value of having support from the psychology assistants. Many reported that this allowed them to assess pupils who might otherwise have not been considered. They also found that their consultations with educational psychologists had been speeded up thanks to the additional information they could now bring to the meeting. Relationships between the SENCOs strengthened and they shared strategies etc.
- Strand 1 clusters became more positive as the year went on. They were expressing less frustration with the pilot and were more positive about the training they had received. Again relationships between the SENCOs developed and there was more sharing of good practice between them eg some teachers made arrangements to meet up outside of the cluster meetings.

MEETING OF PILOT B AIMS

- Those who received CCET training became more confident and knowledgeable in administering and interpreting standardised tests. Understanding of terminology has improved. Strand 3 SENCOs also developed this skill through the support of the psychology assistant however this took longer.
- Thanks to discussions at cluster meetings and the support of the psychology assistants in Strands 2 and 3 some SENCOs improved their capacity to deliver interventions for pupils however this was not apparent in all schools. Strands 2 and 3 reported that psychology consultations improved.
- SENCOs in Strands 2 and 3 found the provision of the psychology assistant reports helped them in their communication with parents.

PILOT B LEVEL A TESTING SENCO/TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

How the pilot benefited your school?

- I have a greater understanding of testing. More pupils can be identified and help with IEPs.
- Testing has been streamlined.
- Made me more efficient in my testing and better able to interpret the data and offer more diagnostic solutions.
- More skills. More specific targets on IEPs of tested pupils.
- Yes - definitely.
- The school sees me as a professional who is able to collaborate with other professional in learning support matters.
- We received new tests and have had an assistant psychologist available to assist.
- Evidence to back up professional judgments/opinions. Enhanced confidence reporting to parents and justifying decisions. More information to help with prioritising support/referrals.
- Yes – able to plan more effectively for pupils being seen by educational psychologist.
- We have access to a psychology assistant. Pupils are being tested throughout the year as needs are highlighted.
- Skilled me up as a SENCO to administer tests, greater awareness of implications of tests scores, more confident in talking to parents and other agencies.
- We have been able to test/observe more pupils through the assistance of a psychology assistant.
- It has allowed us to look at restructuring out assessment procedures in school.
- Inclusion in the pilot has benefited our school because it will enhance the quality of Special Needs Provision in the school and will enable all learners to achieve their full potential.
- Increased level of competence of SENCO. Liaison with other schools through clusters enabled us to catch up with backlog of SEN assessments and provided a common vernacular for scores analysis.

How inclusion in this pilot benefited your staff?

- Better detail in IEPs.
- Yes – more precise information without having to go to educational psychology site.
- Awareness has been raised among staff.
- Disseminated this knowledge to staff where appropriate.
- The staff are benefiting from my accuracy in diagnosing the problems strengths/weaknesses in pupils.
- More information exchanged more meaningful measures put in place.
- It Allowed classroom testing to be done quicker so interventions can be initiated quicker.
- CCET trainee more confident and competent in assessing and providing feedback. CCET trained SENCO attends meetings with teachers and supports feedback to parents (in certain individual cases).
- Staff have concrete evidence or results to use to better inform teaching.
- Staff along with me (the SENCO) can write more specific targets on children's IEPs.
- If staff have concerns about individual pupils we are now using tests such as the dyslexia portfolio to gain information where as in the past we should have relied more on the educational psychologist.
- Created an awareness of the need for testing and how it can help us identify pupil's needs.
- Results of tests confirmed staff's own assessment of the pupils and also identified areas that need support etc.
- Yes - enabled staff to ascertain if a pupil is working at his/her level or if pupil should be referred on.
- Staff confident in testing arrangements.
- Those working with SEN pupils have been given more information about the pupils, which can be used in the delivery of their subjects.
- Comprehensive reports created by assistant psychologist, which provide very detailed information for planning.
- The SENCOs skills and knowledge have been enhanced and feedback to school and parents improved. There is a better range of tests in school to help identify specific difficulties individual children are experiencing - EPs are therefore better informed.

How inclusion in this pilot benefited your pupils?

- Better detail in IEPs.
- More specific testing.
- There is a quicker response to their needs.
- Better clearer picture of specific needs and possible intervention.
- Better targeting of needs has helped address gaps in knowledge.
- Student's difficulties are recognised and strategies and intervention are put in place.
- Quicker testing meant intervention was started earlier.
- A number of pupils have been appropriately assessed and IEPs tailored accordingly.
- Helps to prioritise types of support needed and/or referrals needed.
- A bigger picture for each child and there is more evidence.
- The children's support from the SENCO or classroom assistant is more exact to their needs as activities will reflect the specific information given on IEPs. Areas of weakness are targeted better.
- Allowed the pupils more detail information on how teaching staff can help them. Given advice to pupils regarding how best they can help themselves.
- A good baseline is identified and at the end of the year progress can be celebrated.

- More access to tests and testing SEN children with problems have been screening and work more accurately pinpointed to suit the child. Better knowledge of strengths and weaknesses through better analysis of tests and data used more effectively. Children tested earlier/foundation.
- Increased access to provision in a few cases.
- Strategies and recommendation based on their specific needs.
- Their difficulties can be better highlighted and therefore make it easier for class teacher to provide specific, planned, appropriate and effective interventions.

How inclusion in this pilot benefited parents?

- Better detail in IEPs.
- More specific testing.
- Parents are more aware and informed.
- Reports useful to inform parents of difficulties and how they can help.
- More accurate information about their children better advice on how to support their child.
- Some parents would not sign permission to test where as in past parents would not have been aware of testing.
- I am able to relay concise information concerning their child with the tests undertaken through oral and written feedback.
- All testing and analysis is used to inform target setting and interventions/withdrawal normally in school, has not benefited our normal practice.
- Parents of the identified pupils are now provided with clear and fairly detailed evidence on their child's performance and related planned.
- Parents have appreciated more in-depth testing of children. Parents have appreciated oral feedback and written reports. I have discussed younger pupils with parents and haven been able to support the younger pupils learning at home with parents.
- It has given staff 'hard' evidence of children's progress that can be shared with parents.

If you have access to a psychology assistant through CCET pilot please answer the following question.

How your school benefited from the support of a psychology assistant?

- Assisted with testing. Advice for pilot B. Information on various areas able to question psychology assistant regarding pupils.
- The pupils are processed more quickly and therefore can benefit from earlier intervention.
- As my teaching timetable is full, it is good to have someone to help with testing scoring and marking. It is also valuable to have someone to advice and assist with new development.
- It has been brilliant having someone to bounce ideas of ask advice give good dissemination of practice.
- Dedicated time to test – currently no funding to release SENCO to test.
- The support has freed up time and enabled support to be delivered quicker.
- Excellent opportunity to work collaboratively on the testing process and to discuss queries/teething problems.
- As it is always difficult to get time to test individual pupils it has been helpful to have someone to help with this.
- Testing a greater number of pupils.
- Excellent reports have been created as I have used my psychology assistant for the purposes of testing.

- Time - It is a great help to have someone to assist with testing and write reports.
- Resources - Expertise about use of tests/interpretation of results and choices of tests to use. I consider this to be an area for development.
- My experience in educational testing has increased (psychology assistant) carried out testing, gave feedback and strategies for teachers. She has enabled me as SENCO to improve my ability to analyse data, liaise with outside agencies understand terminology.
- Early identification of specific needs/difficulties. She has given me confidence in testing and in looking at results to plan for the children. She has kept me up to date with requirements, computer databases, case studies etc. shares her expertise and knowledge of particular difficulties eg Attachment Disorder.

Feedback samples from the pilot co-ordinators

- ***Comments from schools***

- I have now more confidence in selecting and administering tests.
- I am able to pinpoint difficulties better and to set appropriate targets. I also have better confidence in reporting outcomes of testing to parents and colleagues.
- I am more confident in using tests and am able to obtain better information about children's difficulties and set targets on the basis of test results.
- It has provided a structure for working methodically when addressing issues of SEN and target setting. Test results give a good basis for staff discussion in planning for children and providing what's needed.

- ***Examples of good practice***

- Use of testing and retesting as means of tracking pupil progress.
- Use of tests to inform school-based interventions.
- More holistic use of testing to create reliable profiles of pupils.
- More confidence in communicating with parents and explaining school-based decisions.
- Increased profile of SEN within schools.
- Provision of on-line CCET training to additional members of staff.
- Development of larger SEN teams within schools.

- ***Comments from schools***

- As a result of being involved in pilot B, I am much more aware of the importance of testing for informing parents and teachers.
- Pilot B has helped me to be more accurate in identifying specific difficulties and supporting children.
- Training has boosted confidence in testing and score analysis. It provides us with the capacity to do more in terms of intervention at school based level.
- The main benefits of cluster are the sharing of information, making contacts and a reassurance that support is available.
- Pilot B has helped me to understand psychology reports better.

Year 1

Generally SENCOs in Strands 2 and 3 were pleased with involvement in the pilot thanks to the practical support they were receiving from the psychology assistants. SENCOs from Strand 1 were less positive reporting that they were having difficulties finding time to administer tests etc.

SUMMARY YEAR 2 (2013/14)

- Strands 2 and 3 cluster meetings continued to be positive with SENCOs expressing the value of having support from the psychology assistants. Many reporting that this allowed them to assess pupils who might otherwise have not been considered. They also found that their consultations with educational psychologists had been speeded up thanks to the additional information they could now bring to the meeting. Relationships between the SENCOs strengthened and they shared strategies etc.
- Strand 1 clusters became more positive as the year went on. They were expressing less frustration with the pilot and were more positive about the training they had received. Again relationships between the SENCOs developed and there was more sharing of good practice between them eg some teachers made arrangements to meet up outside of the cluster meetings.

MEETING OF PILOT B AIMS

- Those who received CCET training became more confident and knowledgeable in administering and interpreting standardised tests. Understand of terminology has improved. Strand 3 SENCOs also developed this skill through the support of the psychology assistant however this took longer.
- Thanks to discussions at cluster meetings and the support of the psychology assistants in Strands 2 and 3 some SENCOs improved their capacity to deliver interventions for pupils however this was not apparent in all schools. Strands 2 and 3 reported that psychology consultations improved.
- SENCOs in Strands 2 and 3 found the provision of the psychology assistant reports helped them in their communication with parents.

PILOT B LEVEL A TESTING SENCO/TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

How the pilot benefited your school?

- I have a greater understanding of testing. More pupils can be identified and help with IEPs.
- Testing has been streamlined.
- Made me more efficient in my testing and better able to interpret the data and offer more diagnostic solutions.
- More skills. More specific targets on IEPs of tested pupils.
- Yes - definitely.
- The school sees me as a professional who is able to collaborate with other professional in learning support matters.
- We received new tests and have had an assistant psychologist available to assist.
- Evidence to back up professional judgments/opinions. Enhanced confidence reporting to parents and justifying decisions. More information to help with prioritising support/referrals.
- Yes – able to plan more effectively for pupils being seen by educational psychologist.
- We have access to a psychology assistant. Pupils are being tested throughout the year as needs are highlighted.
- Skilled me up as a SENCO to administer tests, greater awareness of implications of tests scores, more confident in talking to parents and other agencies.

- We have been able to test/observe more pupils through the assistance of a psychology assistant.
- It has allowed us to look at restructuring out assessment procedures in school.
- Inclusion in the pilot has benefited our school because it will enhance the quality of Special Needs Provision in the school and will enable all learners to achieve their full potential.
- Increased level of competence of SENCO. Liaison with other schools through clusters enabled us to catch up with backlog of SEN assessments and provided a common vernacular for scores analysis.

How inclusion in this pilot benefited your staff?

- Better detail in IEPs.
- Yes – more precise information without having to go to educational psychology site.
- Awareness has been raised among staff.
- Disseminated this knowledge to staff where appropriate.
- The staff are benefiting from my accuracy in diagnosing the problems strengths/weaknesses in pupils.
- More information exchanged more meaningful measures put in place.
- It allowed classroom testing to be done quicker so interventions can be initiated quicker.
- CCET trainee more confident and competent in assessing and providing feedback. CCET trained SENCO attends meetings with teachers and supports feedback to parents (in certain individual cases).
- Staff have concrete evidence or results to use to better inform teaching.
- Staff along with me (the SENCO) can write more specific targets on children's IEPs.
- If staff have concerns about individual pupils we are now using tests such as the dyslexia portfolio to gain information where as in the past we should have relied more on the educational psychologist.
- Created an awareness of the need for testing and how it can help us identify pupil's needs.
- Results of tests confirmed staff's own assessment of the pupils and also identified areas that need support etc.
- Yes - enabled staff to ascertain if a pupil is working at his/her level or if pupil should be referred on.
- Staff confident in testing arrangements.
- Those working with SEN pupils have been given more information about the pupils, which can be used in the delivery of their subjects.
- Comprehensive reports created by assistant psychologist, which provide very detailed information for planning.
- The SENCOs skills and knowledge have been enhanced and feedback to school and parents improved. There is a better range of tests in school to help identify specific difficulties individual children are experiencing - IEPs are therefore better informed.

How inclusion in this pilot benefited your pupils?

- Better detail in IEPs.
- More specific testing.
- There is a quicker response to their needs.
- Better clearer picture of specific needs and possible intervention.
- Better targeting of needs has helped address gaps in knowledge.
- Students' difficulties are recognised and strategies and intervention are put in place.
- Quicker testing meant intervention was started earlier.
- A number of pupils have been appropriately assessed and IEPs tailored accordingly.
- Helps to prioritise types of support needed and/or referrals needed.
- A bigger picture for each child and there is more evidence.

- The children's support from the SENCO or classroom assistant is more exact to their needs as activities will reflect the specific information given on IEPs. Areas of weakness are targeted better.
- Allowed the pupils more detail information on how teaching staff can help them. Given advice to pupils regarding how best they can help themselves.
- A good baseline is identified and at the end of the year progress can be celebrated.
- More access to tests and testing SEN children with problems have been screening and work more accurately pinpointed to suit the child. Better knowledge of strengths and weaknesses through better analysis of tests and data used more effectively. Children tested earlier/foundation.
- Increased access to provision in a few cases.
- Strategies and recommendation based on their specific needs.
- Their difficulties can be better highlighted and therefore make it easier for class teacher to provide specific, planned, appropriate and effective interventions.

How inclusion in this pilot benefited parents?

- Better detail in IEPs.
- More specific testing.
- Parents are more aware and informed.
- Reports useful to inform parents of difficulties and how they can help.
- More accurate information about their children better advice on how to support their child.
- Some parents would not sign permission to test where as in past parents would not have been aware of testing.
- I am able to relay concise information concerning their child with the tests undertaken through oral and written feedback.
- All testing and analysis is used to inform target setting and interventions/withdrawal normally in school, has not benefited our normal practice.
- Parents of the identified pupils are now provided with clear and fairly detailed evidence on their child's performance and related planned.
- Parents have appreciated more in-depth testing of children. Parents have appreciated oral feedback and written reports. I have discussed younger pupils with parents and haven been able to support the younger pupils learning at home with parents.
- It has given staff 'hard' evidence of children's progress that can be shared with parents.

If you have access to a psychology assistant through CCET pilot please answer the following question.

How your school benefited from the support of a psychology assistant?

- Assisted with testing. Advice for pilot B. Information on various areas able to question psychology assistant regarding pupils.
- The pupils are processed more quickly and therefore can benefit from earlier intervention.
- As my teaching timetable is full, it is good to have someone to help with testing scoring and marking. It is also valuable to have someone to advice and assist with new development.
- It has been brilliant having someone to bounce ideas off ask advice give good dissemination of practice.
- Dedicated time to test – currently no funding to release SENCO to test.
- The support has freed up time and enabled support to be delivered quicker.
- Excellent opportunity to work collaboratively on the testing process and to discuss queries/teething problems.

- As it is always difficult to get time to test individual pupils it has been helpful to have someone to help with this.
- Testing a greater number of pupils.
- Excellent reports have been created as I have used my psychology assistant for the purposes of testing.
- Time - It is a great help to have someone to assist with testing and write reports.
Resources - Expertise about use of tests/interpretation of results and choices of tests to use. I consider this to be an area for development.
- My experience in educational testing has increased (psychology assistant) carried out testing, gave feedback and strategies for teachers. She has enabled me as SENCO to improve my ability to analyse data, liaise with outside agencies understand terminology.
- Early identification of specific needs/difficulties. She has given me confidence in testing and in looking at results to plan for the children. She has kept me up to date with requirements, computer databases, case studies etc. shares her expertise and knowledge of particular difficulties eg Attachment Disorder.

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