

# School Based Reviews

Guidance for running effective School Based Reviews  
produced by Kent Educational Psychology Service.



## **School Based Reviews: An overview.**

The School Based Review (SBR) is a series of multi-professional meetings to discuss challenging educational issues, seeking solutions that will build capacity and enhance inclusion. It aims to support school staff to provide an educational environment that is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), what they need to succeed in life.

### **What is an SBR?**

An SBR is a consultation meeting held at your school, attended by your Educational Psychologist (EP), in which members of staff can bring issues of concern they would like to discuss. The meeting lasts up to three hours. The focus of the meeting can be individual children, groups of children, or whole school issues. The aim of the SBR is to facilitate discussions around topics or issues to build inclusive practice.

Other professionals can be invited to the meeting if it is appropriate. As SBRs are focused on developing practice at the school level and may involve conversations about a number of different pupils, parents are not invited to attend.

### **Consent**

It is vital that parents give consent to their child being discussed with the EP in the meeting. It is the school's responsibility to obtain this consent. An example is included in this document and further guidance about consent is given below.

### **Record keeping**

It is the school's responsibility to keep minutes as a record of the discussion, and to record any actions that arise from the discussion. Your EP will not keep extensive notes or write any kind of written summary of the discussions.

### **Agenda**

SBR agendas can vary depending on the priorities identified by the school. Meetings can also have different functions through the year with a planning focus early in the year and a review focus later. It is helpful if the agenda is shared with the EP attending before the meeting. If focusing on individual children a maximum of 6 cases should be discussed at each meeting.

## **School Based Reviews. Principles, more detailed guidance, examples and tools.**

You might have purchased three SBRs as a package from KEPS, or you might be using some of your Service Level Agreement (SLA) time to run a SBR. In either event this guidance can help you get the most from the meetings.

Schools have ownership of the SBR meetings and should arrange them to meet their needs. SBRs can be very different in different schools but effective SBRs all have some core principles and elements in common. The focus of SBRs can vary through the year with the first one in the year being a planning type meeting and later meetings having a particular focus. Broader ways of using the time can evolve once relationships have been established and the EP 'knows' the school.

SBRs are a good way to take stock and get an overview of the needs and provision in school, which many SENCOs find a very valuable thing to do regularly through the year. They are a great way to plan SLA time if your school also has an SLA with KEPS. The discussions at SBR should include practical points about whether actions are feasible. SBRs also allow schools to review initiatives, programmes or interventions with the EP over time so that effectiveness and impact can be assessed. EPs will at times take on the role of being a critical friend and ask constructive questions about current practice and whether things could be improved.

SBRs make excellent use of the limited time that EPs have available and are very effective at helping an EP get to know your school well.

### **SBRs can be used in different ways. In practice the SBR will usually;**

- Regularly devote time to planning ways to address problems at a class wide, whole school or strategic level.
- Have no more than 6 individual child discussions on an agenda.
- Seek to make effective and efficient use of any resources that are available in school to meet children's needs.
- Discuss strategies that can be implemented in school to help meet the needs of pupils with additional needs.

### **In addition the SBRs are an opportunity to:**

- Have regard to local arrangements and resources for supporting inclusion such as the Local Inclusion Forum Team.
- Actively identify training and development needs in school and support the ongoing implementation and monitoring of initiatives in school that support SEND and wider learning and wellbeing.
- Inform strategic planning within school and any collaborative group or wider organisation the school is a member of.

### **Core Membership of the School Based Review would normally include;**

- SENCO/Inclusion manager.
- Educational Psychologist.
- Relevant class teachers, subject teachers or supporting staff.

Depending on the topic being covered it might also be helpful to invite

- Headteachers or other Senior managers.
- Pastoral staff and Family Liaison Officer as appropriate.

You might want to consider inviting the SEND governor for the school, specialist teachers, the school's allocated Attendance and Inclusion adviser, Provision Evaluation Officers, Speech and Language Therapists, Early Help or other professionals who might contribute to the discussion, depending on the agenda items that are tabled.

Experience shows that a good number of people for productive discussions is usually 4-6.

### **Consent**

Although parents or carers are not invited to the SBR, working in partnership with parents must be maintained. Parents should be aware that discussions are taking place and be informed of any outcomes as part of the school's normal communication with parents. Schools are expected to gain permission from parents to discuss their child at a SBR. Parental consent can be opt in or opt out, depending on the wishes of the school, as long as the parent is aware that a conversation is taking place.

Documents that parents can complete to provide information and give their views as part of giving consent are good practice. An example form is included at the end of this document.

If, as can occasionally be helpful, the EP will write notes about the case and retain these in a psychology child file, the KEPS service request form must be completed and signed for that child's discussion before the meeting and the EP must have agreed to this before the meeting date. The EP will not retain notes about individual children where a service request form has not been completed.

If you are new to running SBRs it is a good idea for the school and EP to have a conversation/ phone call before the first meeting to ensure consent is understood and that any questions can be answered.

## Recording

The school is responsible for recording the discussion and actions in the SBR and for feeding back to parents. Some examples are provided at the end of this document.

EPs will not keep written records about children discussed in an SBR that allow a child to be identified without having a KEPS service request form that has been signed by the parents.

It is possible for the school to ask the EP to sign SBR records that the school take if they are checked by the EP and the EP is in agreement with what is written.

## The SBR should have regard to relevant national and local guidance such as:

### The SEND Code of Practice.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

### Guidance on the effective use of Pupil Premium.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-effective-use-and-accountability>

### Standards for teacher professional development.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/537031/160712\\_-\\_PD\\_Expert\\_Group\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/537031/160712_-_PD_Expert_Group_Guidance.pdf)

### Kent County Council Local Offer and the Mainstream Core Standards.

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/special-education-needs/special-educational-needs/the-mainstream-core-standards>

### Other statutory guidance such as guidance on the use of P-Scales.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/p-scales-attainment-targets-for-pupils-with-sen>

This guidance is produced by Kent Educational Psychology Service. It is reviewed and updated in response to feedback from schools and professionals who work with them. It was last updated in March 2020 by Ben Hayes, Kelly-Marie Underdown, Sarah Musgrave, Chris Rogers and Rhea Powell.



## Topics for the SBR agenda

Typically an effective SBR might include agenda items such as the following with some examples);

- **Issues which have wider or whole school implications for teaching and learning.**
  - Overcoming difficulties caused by high levels of mobility in the community.
  - Exploring and planning strategies to improve parental engagement.
- **Issues arising from a group or groups of children with similar needs.**
  - Strategies to support staff working in a particular year group with a high cluster of language difficulties.
  - Resources and approaches available to TAs who support children with social communication difficulties.
- **Topics that focus on raising the standards of achievement and improving wellbeing for all children.**
  - Planning and evaluation of a playground initiative to reduce peer friction and difficult behaviour at breaktime.
  - Assessing possible resources for a wellbeing and resilience project in school.
- **Topics that aim to increase the inclusive nature of the school.**
  - Strategies to reduce bullying and improve peer-peer learning systems.
  - Staff skills and knowledge around trauma and trauma informed practice.
- **Topics that aim to consider the curriculum and it's implementation from the perspective of children and young people with additional needs or disability.**
  - Reviewing the provision for children with hearing impairments in school, considering what else could be done.
  - Developing a plans for supporting a group of pupils with high levels of social anxiety who find attending school very difficult.

### Different possible agendas

These are examples of real SBR agendas that schools have found valuable;

#### Example one

- 9.30-9.55am pupil 1 discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- 10-10.25am pupil 2 discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- 10.30-10.55am pupil 3 discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- Comfort break
- 11.05-11.30am pupil 4 discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- 11.35-12.00 pupil 5 discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- 12.05-12.30 pupil 6 discussion (invite individual class teacher)

#### Example two

- Pupil 1 discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- Pupil 2 discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- Pupil 3 discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- Whole school issue: advice regarding meta-cognition for all pupils.

#### Example three

- Year group discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- Year group discussion (invite individual class teacher)
- Individual pupil discussion (invite individual class teacher)

#### Example four

- One whole SBR dedicated to focusing on a specific school issue (e.g. anxiety and emotionally based school avoidance) with key staff and professionals invited (e.g. Specialist teacher, ASD champions, SLT, HLTA, SENCo and EP).

## Preparation for an SBR

### 1 What will the agenda be?

- Consider checking with the headteacher or other colleagues what topics would be valuable to cover.
- Plan the agenda with enough time to gather parent consent before the meeting takes place.

### 2 Who needs to be at the meeting for which items?

### 3 Has consent been given for individual discussions?

### 4 What other information do I need available.

- Would it help to have written information/professional reports etc available?

**It always helps if school have clear questions or identified outcomes that they would like to explore during the SBR. Information that can support the discussion can include;**

- Context information such as numbers of vulnerable groups such as children in care or numbers receiving pupil premium funding.
- Information about school priorities, development planning and planned initiatives.
- Information about the number of children with Education Health Care Plans in school and those who receive High Needs Funding.
- Information about different need types and their prevalence in school.
- Information about attendance and exclusions.
- Analysis of current progress and attainment levels for specific groups in school.
- Information about resources and specialisms that are utilised in school.



## Ideas and tools that can help make your SBR effective

RECORD SHEET FOR A SCHOOL TEACHER/SENCO TO COMPLETE BEFORE AND DURING THE SBR.

Name of Child	Date of Birth	
Area of Concern	Year Group	
	SEN Support? <input type="checkbox"/>	EHC Plan? <input type="checkbox"/>
1. Headline of Concern		
2. Describe present situation		
3. What factors may be contributing to this situation?		
4. What strategies have already been tried? What were the outcomes?		
5. How would you like things to change?		
6. What do you hope to get from this consultation?		
7. SBR Discussion Notes		
8. ACTIONS agreed at SBR		Who? When?

EXAMPLE CONSENT/INFORMATION FORMS THAT PARENTS COULD COMPLETE

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**Kent Educational Psychology Service**

**Parent information form and consent for Educational Psychology involvement**

My name is [EP name] and I am the school's link Educational Psychologist. I support the school in a number of ways to help promote the best inclusive outcomes for children with a range of needs that may include issues with learning or social, emotional or behavioural support.

I meet with the AEN team at the school on a regular basis to review pupils needs, engaging discussion with the SENCo, SEN teaching assistants and any other relevant members of staff. This will take the form of an action plan which will be (forwarded to home?) and kept on their file.

The AEN team would like to refer your son/daughter ..... (name) for one of these discussions. If you consent, please sign the slip below and complete the information so that we can incorporate your views into the discussion.

Many thanks,  
[EP name]  
Educational Psychologist

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I ..... (parent/carer name) give consent for my son/daughter ..... to be discussed by the AEN team with the Educational Psychologist. I understand that any information resulting from this discussion will be used to inform provision for him/her and will be held on their school file under the school's normal recording arrangements.

Name (printed)

Signed ..... Date .....

1. What is/are your priority concern(s) for your son/daughter's education?

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2. What does your son/daughter do well, or enjoy doing most?

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3. Is there anything you feel they struggle with, more than might be expected compared with their peers?

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4. At home, which strategies/approaches have you found most and least helpful so far?

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5. Have other agencies been involved? If so, what was the outcome?

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6. What are your best hopes from the EP's involvement?

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