



# Estyn

*Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

Joining in  
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- ▲ secondary schools;
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- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ LAs;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of The Department for Work and Pensions funded training programmes.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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## Introduction

- 1 'Better Wales', published in 2002 sets out the Welsh Assembly's core values of social inclusion, equality of opportunity and the promotion of a tolerant society in which diversity is valued. This document shows that the Welsh Assembly Government intends to make Wales truly inclusive and to make its economy and communities sustainable.
- 2 There is no research in Wales into the quality of provision for learners aged 5-16 who have moderate learning difficulties and are educated in dedicated resource bases attached to mainstream schools. These resource bases are local education authority provision and are sometimes known as units. For the purposes of this report they are referred to as resource bases. Estyn inspects local authority education services and schools. These inspections do not specifically evaluate the quality of education in resource bases. Any references to their quality are included in the sections on provision for SEN in school inspection reports.
- 3 There is not enough up to date robust data about these resource bases. Examination of recent Welsh Assembly Government data shows that there is no consistency in the way local education authorities plan for such resource bases. Some LEAs have no discrete provision whereas other LEAs fund large resource bases.
- 4 This remit, 'Joining in', includes judgements and recommendations on the following:
  - how well LEAs plan strategically to achieve the best outcomes for pupils who attend resource bases;
  - the quality of provision and inclusion within resource bases; and
  - how well staff in resource bases prepare pupils for transition to secondary school.

Appendix 1 at the end of the report gives examples of good practice. There is a glossary of terms at Appendix 2.

## Background

- 5 In January 2006, 39% of pupils on the SEN registers in maintained schools in Wales were classed as having moderate learning difficulties<sup>1</sup>. When they receive appropriate support for their individual requirements, most of these learners can attend the same educational settings as their peers and many achieve the same qualifications, although they may take longer to do so. They may also have additional needs.
- 6 Not all of these pupils with moderate learning difficulties have statements of special educational needs. Others receive support from school action plus. This means that they receive extra help from their teachers who act on advice from the special educational needs co-ordinator in the school or the SEN named officer in the LEA. The arrangements for this support and the outcomes for the learner are set out in an individual education plan (IEP).
- 7 Estyn's recent remit report 'Success for all', published in 2005, focused on learners between the ages of 16 and 19, with moderate learning difficulties, who were in education and training. The remit found that, for these learners to achieve well, they need to gain confidence and self-esteem and improve their basic and key skills. They need work that is carefully matched to their ability and appropriate targets in order to make progress.
- 8 In February 2007, Estyn produced advice for the Welsh Assembly Government, 'Evaluating outcomes for children and young people with additional learning needs'. This report identified examples of emerging good practice; it also found that much remained to be done to create a unified system to better support learners and improve the evaluation of outcomes for those learners across Wales.
- 9 Inclusive education requires the commitment of schools and LEAs to develop policies and practices that ensure equality of educational opportunity and access; safeguard vulnerable pupils; and focus on raising the achievement of all learners and increasing their participation in their schools and local communities.<sup>2</sup>
- 10 Inclusion and Pupil Support, National Assembly for Wales Circular No: 47/2006 states that, in order to be inclusive, the majority of children and young people will attend their local mainstream school. However, special schools and resourced provision attached to mainstream schools continue to play an important role for those children and young people requiring very specialist and specific support.
- 11 The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 stresses the right to a mainstream education for all children and young people with SEN. The SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002), advises the adoption of a range of strategies to encourage inclusive practice in schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Children have a learning difficulty if they: have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children the same age; or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority. Special educational needs code of practice for Wales 2002

<sup>2</sup> Inclusion and Pupil Support Guidance Circular Social Inclusion, National Assembly for Wales Circular No: 47/2006: November 2006

- 12 Ofsted's recent report, 'Inclusion: does it matter where pupils are taught?' published in 2006, found that the most important factor in determining the best outcomes for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is not the type but the quality of the provision. The report found that effective provision was distributed equally across both mainstream and special schools visited, but there was more good and outstanding provision in resource bases attached to mainstream schools than elsewhere.

<b>The evidence base of the survey</b>
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- 13 Between October 2007 and February 2008, Estyn conducted a survey of local education authorities and individual resource bases across Wales. Inspectors sent comprehensive questionnaires to all LEAs and also to the individual resource bases. Almost all LEAs responded. Inspectors also visited six local education authorities, held discussions with senior officers and visited a range of these resource bases attached to primary and secondary schools. During their visits, they met with the headteachers, teachers and pupils.

## Main findings

### How well do LEAs plan strategically to achieve the best outcomes for pupils?

- 14 Very few LEAs have formal policies or clear criteria for admissions and even fewer LEAs have clear exit criteria when pupils leave the resource base. On occasion, LEAs make the entry criteria too broad in order to admit pupils with a wide range of needs. This makes it difficult for staff to be as effective as they could be.
- 15 Overall, LEAs do not have a clear strategic overview of whether or not all pupils or groups of pupils have access to a full curriculum. Very few LEAs have service level agreements with the resourced schools which set out what the LEA expects the school to provide in respect of the resource base's curriculum.
- 16 Many pupils who attend the resource bases, with moderate learning difficulties, also have further needs such as emotional and behavioural difficulties or autism and also a range of more specific learning needs such as those with communication or speech and language difficulties.
- 17 A few LEAs are beginning to monitor and evaluate outcomes for pupils in their resource bases. However, most LEAs do not have a strategic overview of how well pupils in their resource bases are progressing. LEA staff know how well individual pupils are doing but do not collect and analyse data about the various groups of pupils, such as those with moderate learning difficulties, those on the autistic spectrum and those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a result, they are unaware of which groups are progressing well and whether or not resource bases provide value for money.
- 18 LEAs do not routinely train resource base staff to collect and use data to find out how well individuals and groups of pupils are doing.
- 19 LEAs do not review the functions of their resource bases regularly so do not make appropriate changes to better suit the changing needs of pupils in the locality.
- 20 Access for pupils to resource bases is inconsistent across Wales. A few LEAs do not have resource bases for learners with moderate learning difficulties. Also, where there are such resource bases, pupils sometimes have to travel too far to get to them.
- 21 A few LEAs' resource bases have unfilled places. This represents poor value for money.
- 22 There is good partnership working within LEAs at an operational level, for example between the resource bases and the behaviour support and educational psychology services and the local special school. However, most LEAs do not have a strategic overview of how they will involve other agencies in the planning for provision for pupils in resource bases. For example, there is not enough sharing of information between all professionals involved. Where there is an integrated children's system, (see glossary), there is good sharing of information between departments within the local authority.



- 23 LEAs give good support to their resource base staff through their educational psychology services. However, too few LEAs offer specific training to staff to help them cope with the increasingly complex needs of pupils in their resource bases.

**How good is the quality of provision?**

- 24 In most of the resource bases visited, pupils achieve good or satisfactory standards and access an appropriate range of curriculum opportunities. Most pupils make consistent progress in gaining literacy and numeracy skills.
- 25 Pupils at key stage 4 gain a good range of appropriate qualifications and have good opportunities to learn about the world of work and find out about life at college.
- 26 Most pupils develop the personal and social skills they need for independent living.
- 27 Many pupils have a good range of opportunities to integrate with their mainstream peers.
- 28 Staff do not always cope well with pupils who have challenging behaviour. This means that these pupils do not always do as well as they could.

**How good is the quality of inclusion?**

- 29 Many pupils have good opportunities to work alongside their peers in mainstream classes with support. However, pupils across Wales do not all benefit from enough opportunities to integrate into mainstream classes.
- 30 Where inclusion works well, the resource base staff are fully involved in the mainstream staff activities such as subject faculty meetings and whole school briefings. Generally, mainstream staff are well informed about resource base pupils' needs so that they can plan effectively for them. However, on occasion, mainstream staff are reluctant to include these pupils in their classes as this involves more detailed planning.
- 31 Pupils have good access to a range of extra curricular activities alongside their mainstream peers. However, a few pupils cannot benefit from out of school activities because there is no transport for them beyond the normal school day.
- 32 Staff in resource bases supervise pupils well in unstructured time, as the pupils are vulnerable and more likely to be bullied. The staff support pupils well in order to help them find and keep friends at school.
- 33 There are a few good examples of close working between resource bases and special schools to provide inclusion opportunities for special school pupils. Special school staff also provide training and advice for staff in resource bases and specialist teaching for the pupils.

<b>How well do staff prepare pupils for transition?</b>
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- 34 Most staff prepare pupils well for moving into mainstream settings and on to secondary schools. They use a range of activities to help pupils cope with the changes. They introduce them to key personnel and take them on visits prior to moving so that they are reassured and know what to expect.
- 35 Most staff are careful to fully involve parents and, where appropriate, other professionals including SENCOs from secondary schools.

## Recommendations

- 36 In order to ensure that resource bases for pupils with moderate learning difficulties achieve the best outcomes and inclusion opportunities for pupils and provide value for money:

### **the Welsh Assembly Government should:**

- R1 collect robust data on the whereabouts of resource bases attached to schools and the groups of pupils they work with;
- R2 continue to extend the integrated children's system so that information can be better shared across local authorities in Wales; and
- R3 encourage LEAs to develop comprehensive admissions and exit policies with clear criteria for resource bases;

### **LEAs should:**

- R4 fully involve external partners when planning provision;
- R5 collect and analyse data about pupils who have moderate learning difficulties defined as their main need and other groups of pupils with specific needs within their resource bases to inform strategic planning;
- R6 review the groups and needs of pupils in resource bases regularly and make appropriate changes where necessary;
- R7 produce formal policies and clear criteria for admissions and exits for pupils entering and leaving resource bases;
- R8 set up service level agreements with the schools that host resource bases, which set out exactly what the LEA expects the school to provide; and
- R9 improve the training given to resource base staff and share good practice across LEAs; and

### **schools which host resource bases should:**

- R10 improve training and support for mainstream staff who have pupils from resource bases in their lessons.

## **How well do LEAs plan strategically to achieve the best outcomes for pupils?**

### **How do LEAs plan to meet pupils' needs?**

- 37 Most LEAs plan well to meet individual pupils' needs by assessing their needs carefully to inform comprehensive individual education plans (IEPs) with targets for improvement. In the resource bases they use specialist staff to support pupils' needs, and there is a higher staff to pupil ratio than in mainstream school. However, despite careful planning, on occasion, the wide range of pupils' needs in the resource bases makes it difficult for teachers to meet all pupils' needs. Also, LEAs do not collate or analyse information about individual pupils' progress and outcomes well enough in order to maintain a strategic overview of how well their resource bases meet the pupils' needs.
- 38 LEAs do not review the functions of these resource bases on a regular basis. Many pupils currently in the resource bases, which were originally set up for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, now have different and more complex needs. All pupils in resource bases have speech and language, communication, literacy and numeracy needs. Many pupils also need help with social development and their behaviour. An increasing number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders attend these resource bases due to the scarcity of specialist provision.

### **How easy is it for pupils to access the resource bases?**

- 39 Access for pupils to resource bases is not equitable across Wales. LEAs do not have clear criteria for admissions and many do not have formal admission policies. Currently a few LEAs are developing protocols to improve the admission process. A few local primary schools do not see the LEAs' primary resource bases as an area resource and they use them inappropriately for too many of their own pupils.
- 40 Transport costs and the long distances from home to the resource base sometimes mean that pupils cannot access the provision easily. For example, one LEA's resource base in the south of the county has very few pupils from the north of the county. In another large rural LEA, pupils in three secondary school catchment areas do not have access to a resource base. One large secondary resource base has pupils from other LEAs and as a result a few pupils travel very long distances. These pupils find it difficult to concentrate because they are tired.
- 41 Most LEAs have termly admissions panels. However, on occasion, when there are empty places in the resource bases, LEAs place pupils in a base, regardless of their specific needs. As a result, pupils enter the resource base with too wide a range of needs, in particular behavioural difficulties. This means that the staff are not as effective as they could be as they are not trained to deal with challenging behaviour. In one LEA, schools, both secondary and primary, with resource bases attached are occasionally too slow to admit pupils and are too selective. This means that pupils have lengthy periods of waiting, often a number of months. Although LEAs have the power to direct the resource base to take the pupil, they are reluctant to use these powers.

- 42 Resourced schools sometimes place pupils with behavioural difficulties in the resource base for short periods inappropriately to allow their mainstream teachers to get on with their teaching.
- 43 In one LEA where there are very small schools, under the threat of reorganisation, the resource base does not want to appear to be failing to meet any pupil's needs as this might support an argument in favour of closure. Therefore they do not raise the issue of inappropriate placements.
- 44 It is a concern that a few LEAs' resource bases are under-used and that the LEA does not undertake a review of their use in order to meet any emerging needs. This does not represent value for money.

#### **How well do LEAs plan for pupils' full access to the curriculum?**

- 45 Very few LEAs have a service level agreement with each resourced school which states that the school should offer the full national curriculum to all pupils. LEAs rely too heavily on individual pupils' statements of special educational needs to ensure that each pupil has this entitlement.
- 46 Pupils' access to the curriculum is not consistent across local education authorities. For example, one LEA has a 'general expectation' that pupils have full access but can be dis-applied from subjects according to need. Another LEA recognises that access to the national curriculum is inconsistent and is piloting a project to aid consistency of practice. A few LEAs appropriately hold regular management meetings attended by area educational psychologists and training sessions for staff to make sure that pupils have full access to the national curriculum.

#### **How well do LEAs work in partnership with other agencies to plan for pupils?**

- 47 Most LEAs do not have a clear strategic overview of how they will work in partnership with other agencies to plan appropriate provision for individual or groups of pupils. However, there is very often good day to day working between professionals within the LEA. This includes useful forums for resource base staff to attend, such as panel meetings, special school forums, SEN steering groups, forums for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) and inclusion strategy groups. Most LEAs do not meet formally nor regularly with external partners to plan provision. One LEA recognised the critical role of the Local Health Board in alerting the LEA to children with learning difficulties at a very young age. However, most LEAs rely too heavily on the annual reviews and the statutory assessment process, where pupils have statements of special educational needs, to identify the access for individual pupils to the support of other agencies. One LEA inappropriately expects the teacher in charge of the resource base to lead on this strategic partnership working.
- 48 Many agencies and partnerships are involved to some extent in the support for individual pupils in resource bases but this is generally as and when there are individual needs. These include:
- the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS);
  - youth offending teams;

- school nurses;
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) services;
- social service departments;
- local health boards (LHBs);
- speech and language therapists;
- the children and young people's framework;
- physiotherapists;
- occupational therapists;
- Careers Wales;
- the voluntary sector; and
- the youth service.

49 Where liaison with between the local education authority and other agencies is particularly good, there are well established lines of communication, such as a CAMHS education liaison group. Many agencies are often appropriately involved in training initiatives. For example, one social services department provides a secondary school resource base with a comprehensive sexual awareness course for vulnerable pupils.

50 Sharing of information between education professionals within LEAs and also between education and other agencies is not good enough. In one LEA, school to school transfer of data is problematic. In addition, when schools have information about pupils in their attached resource base they do not always share it with all the school staff involved.

51 In many LEAs, there are too many barriers to the sharing of information about pupils in resource bases. This is due to the need for confidentiality from the local health boards and, to a lesser extent, social service departments. This makes it particularly difficult for resource bases to plan for a pupil prior to admission. The lack of common IT systems across local authorities also limits information sharing. However, one LEA where there is a pilot of the Integrated Children's System (ICS) finds no difficulty with information sharing.

<b>How well do LEAs support resource base staff?</b>
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52 Most resource bases receive very good support from the area psychology services which provide regular dedicated time. All resource base staff have full access to LEAs' staff development programmes. However, not enough LEAs offer specific training to support staff in coping with pupils' more complex needs. For example, one resource base did not receive training in manual handling despite having a number of pupils with severe learning difficulties. Many resource bases have pupils with very challenging behaviour, but the staff do not all receive good enough support to manage this well.

- 53 A few LEAs organise networks for resource base staff so that they can discuss and share good practice and receive mutual support. However, many other LEAs need to do more to combat staff isolation in these settings.

<b>How well do LEAs monitor the quality of the provision and the outcomes for pupils?</b>
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- 54 Overall, LEAs do not do enough to monitor the quality of provision or the outcomes for pupils in resource bases. LEAs make sure that staff carefully assess individual pupils and set appropriate targets for them in their IEPs. They monitor progress against these targets annually through the special educational needs reviews, with good input from the LEAs' educational psychology services. However, pupils who do not have statements of special educational needs and who are receiving school Action Plus do not have the benefit of these reviews. Where pupils attend out of county resource bases, the placing authority attends annual reviews but does not always have enough contact with the resource base staff during the rest of the year.
- 55 LEAs do not routinely train staff in resource bases to use data, including benchmark information, where available, to evaluate learning outcomes for their pupils. This makes it difficult for staff to know how well they are doing to help pupils make progress.
- 56 LEA advisers regularly visit the resource bases and appropriately challenge headteachers on the quality of the targets set for individual pupils. Many LEAs make good use of 'off the shelf' measures of progress such as INSTEP and reading and spelling tests to provide quantitative data. However, very few LEAs have an overview of how well groups of pupils in their resource bases are doing. This makes it difficult for LEAs to make judgements about whether or not these resource bases provide value for money. Generally, LEAs do not gather data on groups of pupils to plan for improvement. Many LEAs are aware of the need to do this but have not yet come to a view on how.
- 57 A few LEAs are beginning to focus more on monitoring and evaluating outcomes for pupils in resource bases. For example, two LEAs are currently developing systems and benchmarking data to track pupils' progress and compare it with pupils' progress in special schools.

## How good is the quality of provision in the resource bases?

- 58 In most of the resource bases visited, provision is good and pupils achieve good or satisfactory standards of achievement. In resource bases visited, most pupils of all ages have good access to a range of appropriate curriculum opportunities, including full use of information technology in the resourced school.
- 59 Most resource bases have very clear rules, which are prominently displayed so that pupils know exactly how they should behave. For example, they are encouraged to listen to the chosen speaker and keep hands, feet, objects and unkind words to themselves. Pupils respond very well to these simple instructions.
- 60 Most pupils make consistent progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills although this progress is slow compared to benchmark data for performance at each key stage. Where pupils' standards are not as good as they should be, it is often because these pupils also have behavioural difficulties that challenge staff.
- 61 Pupils in secondary resource bases also gain a wide range of appropriate qualifications at key stage 4. These include:
- key skills in communication and numeracy at levels one to three;
  - Assessment Qualifications Alliance Initial Awards (AQAs);
  - Entry levels in Mathematics and English;
  - Duke of Edinburgh's awards;
  - Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network Awards (ASDAN);
  - English Speaking Board awards;
  - the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness;
  - Open College Network awards and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) gained during college link courses; and
  - General Certificates in Secondary Education (GCSEs).
- 62 Pupils in secondary resource bases develop appropriate personal and social skills. They have good opportunities to experience the world of work and develop the skills they need for independent living. Many pupils attend colleges for part-time link courses. In one secondary resource base, pupils follow a pre-16 course as part of their learning pathway. In another large secondary resource base, many pupils gain three or four GCSEs and progress to college or work-based learning.
- 63 Pupils in primary resource bases make slow but steady progress, often from a very low baseline. A few resource bases make good use of the P scales to show pupils' small steps of progress as often this cannot be measured by standardised tests. In one primary resource base, some pupils returned to mainstream schools during Year 6 or Year 7. A few move on to special schools.



## **How good is the quality of inclusion?**

### **Access to mainstream classes and activities**

- 64 In the secondary schools, where inclusion works particularly well, the heads of the resource bases are members of the senior management team. Teachers in the resource base do not feel isolated and are linked to subject faculties within the mainstream school. They attend whole school briefings and are part of the whole school systems, including the behaviour policy.
- 65 Many resource base staff generally provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to integrate with their mainstream peers. In secondary school resource bases, wherever possible, pupils are taught in mainstream classrooms or in the resource base by mainstream subject teachers. Many pupils attend mainstream classes for as much as 60% of their school week. As a result, they are fully involved in school activities.
- 66 Generally, in secondary school resource bases, pupils are registered with mainstream classes and take part in all activities with their mainstream peers, such as assemblies, educational visits, the Urdd Eisteddfod and trips abroad. They also attend mainstream clubs such as rugby, chess, cross country and drama. One secondary resource base has pupil representatives on the school council.
- 67 However, for those pupils who need to leave at the end of the day and do not live in the locality, it is not always possible to stay on after school. There is no funding available for additional transport. This means that they may miss important social opportunities.
- 68 Most resource base staff make sure that pupils receive extra supervision during unstructured time, such as playtimes and dinner breaks. These pupils are vulnerable to bullying and do not cope well with being with large groups of other pupils. A few resource bases operate an effective buddy system which links pupils in mainstream classes with those in the resource base.

### **How well mainstream staff are informed about pupils' needs**

- 69 Generally, mainstream staff are well informed about the needs of the pupils. In many primary resource bases, pupils attend part-time on mornings or afternoons. Resource base teachers give the teachers from these pupils' mainstream schools valuable support with providing a curriculum that is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities.
- 70 For example, one resource base organises a SEN briefing for all staff weekly to highlight particular issues for, and information on, pupils in the resource base. In another primary resource base, the head meets regularly with the head of assessment to monitor how much access pupils have to basic skills in their mainstream classes.
- 71 When resource base staff attend courses they often talk to mainstream staff about what they have learned. For example, in a key stages 1 and 2 resource base a

member of staff reported back to the whole staff on what she had learned about autism. Another primary resource base holds regular ‘surgeries’ for mainstream staff on how to write individual education plans (IEPs) so that they include specific targets that lead to measurable outcomes.

- 72 However, in a few cases, resource base staff find that mainstream staff are reluctant to include their pupils in mainstream classes as this involves more detailed planning to meet their needs.

### **Joining in with other schools**

- 73 Although many pupils in resource bases across Wales benefit from opportunities to integrate into mainstream classes, this is not always the case. Resource bases sometimes find it difficult to support integration opportunities as they do not have enough learning support assistants to accompany pupils, who are unable to cope alone, to mainstream classes.
- 74 Resource base staff give pupils who return to mainstream classes good support. They set up carefully phased integration programmes where pupils’ integration opportunities increase as they become more confident
- 75 However, many pupils do not return to mainstream classes or their original primary schools, or move into mainstream secondary schools from these resource bases. Their needs are too severe and they will always need focused and specialised help to access learning.
- 76 Although many resource bases have criteria for admissions, very few have clear exit criteria for when pupils leave the resource base. Teachers do not always know what it is the pupils are expected to achieve in order to return to their mainstream schools. As a result, pupils can stay too long in the resource base.
- 77 In a few cases, there are very good links between the resource bases and local special schools. These links include outreach by staff from either school to offer curriculum support. Also, pupils attend the special school or the resource base in order to experience a wider curriculum.

## How well do staff prepare pupils for transition?

- 78 Most staff carefully prepare pupils, and fully involve parents, so that pupils can get the best out of their move to mainstream settings or onto secondary resource bases. A few resource base staff begin appropriately to plan where pupils will move onto in the Year 5 reviews.
- 79 Most resource base teachers meet regularly with the secondary school SENCOs throughout Year 6 so that SENCOs are well aware of the needs of the pupils who are moving to their school.
- 80 Most staff use a range of approaches to give pupils reassurance and ease their transition into secondary schools. Staff approaches include regular visits to secondary schools to meet their new teachers. One LEA has developed a useful pack to help pupils make the move successfully; see appendix 1, case study 6. Primary resource base pupils often plan events and invite teachers from the secondary school so that they can meet them before moving to their school.
- 81 One secondary school provides the resource base with transition work for Year 6 pupils. This allows pupils to become familiar with secondary school expectations and helps the secondary school understand the levels of ability of the pupils. A few secondary schools provide summer schools for pupils moving to the school from resource bases. Another resource base has made good use of RAISE money to buy in the services of a specialist teacher to monitor pupils' progress during their first term in the secondary school.
- 82 Pupils in secondary resource bases have good opportunities to familiarise themselves with their local college, making regular visits before moving on. Careers Wales specialists are always involved and give useful advice.
- 83 Many resource base staff invite parents and a range of professionals to pupils' annual reviews prior to changing schools. However, pupils without statements do not benefit from the range of their professional involvement to help their transition.

## **Appendix 1: Good practice**

### **Case study 1**

#### **Careful auditing of resource bases**

##### **LEA in South East Wales**

This LEA is currently reviewing the work of its resource bases so that they can be more effective. The LEA has also employed a consultant to evaluate standards of achievement for pupils with special educational needs in its mainstream schools. The LEA has concerns that, although it analyses the progress and attainment of pupils in schools as part of school improvement programmes, the abstraction and analysis of data specifically for pupils attending their resource bases needs to be more focused. The LEA's SEN team is currently considering how to use INSTEP data to influence and direct resource base action plans for improvement. This LEA has recently completed an intensive training programme for schools to use the SEN self evaluation profile so that they can evaluate the quality of their outcomes for pupils with SEN.

### **Case study 2**

#### **Monitoring provision and outcomes for pupils more carefully**

##### **LEA in the South Wales valleys and LEA in South West Wales**

This LEA has identified low levels of academic progress in its resource bases and has developed a small steps pack for scoring progress for resource bases to use. This pack includes an evaluation on how well pupils work with others and their developing social skills. This helps teachers assess pupils' progress. Another LEA has recently revised its annual review records so that it has easier access to learning outcomes. It plans to evaluate pupils' learning outcomes not only at a resource base level but also across the authority.

### **Case study 3**

#### **Helping pupils feel at ease with the school they move on to**

##### **South Wales LEA**

Special needs staff from a comprehensive school visit the primary resource base accompanied by Year 7 pupils. These Year 7 pupils tell the primary pupils about life in the secondary school and what they should expect. They answer any questions the primary pupils may have and explain how they are supported during lessons and by staff at the secondary school. This reassures resource base learners that they will continue to receive good support when they move.

## **Case study 4**

### **Working closely with the local special schools**

#### **Two special schools, one in South Wales and one in North Wales**

An outreach worker from a special school has provided software and training for staff in the secondary school resource base to deliver 'B squared'. 'B squared' is an assessment package which supports the monitoring and evaluation of progress of lower attaining pupils.

Pupils from one resource base are able to attend the special school on part time placements and the resource base hosts pupils from the special school to give them access to mainstream lessons. Pupils in this resource base benefit from sessions with the special school's swimming teacher who gives them valuable physiotherapy exercises in the leisure centre's pool next door to their school.

Another resource base set up a very successful project on key skills with a large special school. Pupils from both schools attended a three day residential course. All pupils made good progress in key skills. Due to the project's success, it was presented to the local Secondary Headteachers' Federation so that it could be adopted for all pupils.

## **Case study 5**

### **Providing vocational opportunities as part of a learning pathway**

#### **Resource bases in South and West Wales**

One secondary resource base works very closely with a local tertiary college to provide pre-16 vocational courses as part of pupils' learning pathways. Pupils attend courses in plumbing, manufacturing and building. They gain confidence and become familiar with the college so that they are comfortable with moving on to a full time college course when they leave school.

Pupils from another resource base all move on to work-based learning or college. Pupils visit the college throughout Years 10 and 11 with their parents or carers. A specialist careers officer gives them very good support. The college provides a 'taster' week for pupils prior to their starting in September. These pupils have very good opportunities to get to know the college before they join and overcome any fears they may have.

### **Case study 6**

#### **Easing transition between two phases – North Wales**

One LEA has developed a comprehensive primary/secondary transition pack. This helps pupils understand what will happen when they move to the new school. The pack was created by a working party of primary SENCOs, resource base staff and LEA inclusion officers. The pack includes details of each pupil's needs, a booklet called 'Moving school' completed by each child and lesson packs to help the pupils learn key concepts skills. This helps pupils make a successful transition.

Staff at a primary school resource base in North Wales work closely with the local secondary school. The secondary school provides work for Year 6 pupils in the resource base so that they become aware of the secondary school's expectations. As a result, the secondary school staff gain a good understanding of the pupils' ability levels before they move on to the school.

### **Case study 7**

#### **Providing opportunities for pupils from the resource base to interact with their mainstream peers – West and North Wales**

One primary school's resource base for key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils provides a 'buddy' system for the pupils in the resource base. When pupils join mainstream classes such as PE, their 'buddy' comes to take them to the class, checks that they have the equipment that they need and then brings them back to their resource base at the end of the lesson.

Another primary resource base creates a 'circle of friends' for vulnerable pupils who need support with making and keeping friends and who would otherwise be isolated in school. These activities help pupils from the resource bases feel welcome and supported by their peers.

### **Case study 8**

#### **Making good use of resource base staff expertise to support mainstream staff**

Staff in a South Wales primary resource base make very good use of their expertise to support mainstream staff. They hold regular 'surgeries' for mainstream staff on how to write individual education plans so that they include carefully written targets that lead to measurable outcomes. Staff value this help and pupils benefit from specific targets.

### **Case study 9**

#### **Close monitoring of inclusion**

A primary resource base in North Wales has developed a useful inclusion monitoring form which outlines staff involved, any differentiation necessary and the support on offer. This resource base's learning support assistant, who supports pupils in mainstream classes, uses these well to record exactly what the pupil has achieved and how well the lesson's content matched the needs and abilities of all the pupils. This makes it easier to plan effectively for improvement in pupils' progress.

### **Case study 10**

#### **Close working with parents and carers**

Teachers in a resource base in North Wales work very closely with parents and carers. They invite parents and carers to visit before the pupil joins the resource base. They have an opportunity to view pupils' work and talk to the staff. The staff encourage parents and carers to be fully involved by setting up a home/school log. They also offer parents and carers support with issues that concern them such as pupils' behaviour. These concerns are logged on a record of concerns sheet and the resource base staff add their response. The form contains useful information for parents and carers so that they can use the same approaches at home as those used in the resource base. This work is closely monitored and regularly reviewed. As a result, pupils receive the support they need from home to make good progress.

## Appendix 2: Glossary / references

<b>Disapplication</b>	Removal or lifting of a programme of study, attainment target, assessment, or any other component of the National Curriculum, or any combination of these including entire subjects or the entire National Curriculum through relevant regulations
<b>INSTEP</b>	A system of assessment and tracking the progress of pupils working at below level 1 of the National Curriculum that is based on National Curriculum P scales
<b>Integrated Children's System</b>	The Integrated Children's System provides the basis for developing an electronic system for recording the interventions of social services and their partner agencies with children.
<b>P scales</b>	The P scales are assessment criteria for progress below level one in the national curriculum programmes of study. These programmes are designed for pupils aged 5-16. They were developed to support target setting through the use of summative assessment to be used at the end of key stages and, for those pupils making more rapid progress, possibly once a year.
<b>RAISE</b>	'Raise attainment of individual standards in education', a grant given to LEAs by the Welsh assembly Government so that they can raise the attainment and individual standards in education
<b>SENCO</b>	Special educational needs co-ordinator; a teacher who co-ordinates the work of a school to support pupils with special educational needs
<b>School action</b>	When a class or subject teacher identify that a pupil has special educational needs they provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum offer and strategies.



## **School Action Plus**

When a class or subject teacher and the SENCO are provided with advice or support from outside specialists, so that alternative interventions additional or different strategies to those provided for the pupil through school action can be put in place. The SENCO usually takes the lead although day-to-day provision continues to be the responsibility of the class or subject teacher.