THE ROLE OF THE SENCO IN AN ERA OF CHANGE

29th November 2011
9th Annual SENCO Update Conference

Presented by Rita Cheminais
SEMINAR OVERVIEW

• Strategic role of the SENCO
• Best value outcomes for SEN/AEN
• Monitoring SEN policy and provision
• Ensuring intelligent accountability for SEN
• Meeting the new OFSTED inspection requirements for SEN
• Signposting to further resources and awards
SEND GREEN PAPER: IMPLICATIONS FOR SENCOs

- Relationship between SENCO & senior management team in school is critical to effectiveness of SENCO role
- Core SENCO role:
  - working with teachers to map provision
  - advising staff on appropriate & alternate interventions
  - modelling effective practice
- SENCO must work closely with designated LAC lead in school, and have appropriate training to support this role
- Enhanced focus on supporting families of SEND children
- Greater school accountability for outcomes & experiences of SEND pupils (OFSTED, performance table indicators)
- Revised SEN code of practice
- Slimmer more parent-friendly school SEN policy
- IEPs replaced by tracking pupil progress, pupils setting own targets, using individual profiles, provision mapping and regular engagement with parents
- National training for new SENCOs will continue to be funded by DFE in academic year 2011-2012, after that it may rely on a school-to-school training model, with specialist leaders of education leading training
Let’s reinvent the wheel!

- **GATEKEEPER:** clarify meaning of SEN with staff, to identify those who ‘truly’ have SEN in the school

- **CAPACITY BUILDER:** training staff to meet the needs of SEN pupils (here we go again, life after the IDP)

- **FINANCIAL WIZARD:** more creative use of scarce resources for additional and different provision – technology versus human resources, e.g. TA or a portable visualiser for a VI pupil?

- **PARENTS/FAMILY FRIEND OR FOE:** greater emphasis on developing positive parenting skills, TAF

- **DATA ANALYST:** ‘progress, progress, progress; stand and deliver, or else!!
STRATEGIC ROLE OF THE SENCO STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS
WHAT DOES BEING STRATEGIC MEAN?

“Being strategic is knowing what to achieve, being able to justify the direction, and finding the best ways to get there.”

“Managers are the people who do things right, and leaders are people who do the right things.”

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”

(Warren G. Bennis)
STAGES IN THE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PROCESS

1. Effective Strategic Leadership (SENCO)
   - Strategic Intent (SEN Vision)
   - Strategic Mission (SEN Policy)

2. Strategic Actions (Influence, persuasion, team building)

3. Formulation of Strategies (Development Plan)
4. Implementation of Strategies (Plan put in action)

5. Strategic Outcome (Change and actions lead to SEN pupil progress)
THE ART OF STRATEGIC PLANNING?

"On Mondays, I get ready to plan my week. On Tuesdays, I plan my week. On Wednesdays, I revise my plan for the week. On Thursdays, I put my plan for the week into my computer. On Fridays, I think about starting my plan for next week."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic skills</th>
<th>Operational skills</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Influencing</strong> others to make things happen</td>
<td><strong>Influencing</strong> others attitudes, beliefs, behaviours using no force</td>
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<td><strong>Decision making</strong> – reasoned well-thought through decisions</td>
<td><strong>Decision making</strong> – gathers data to evaluate &amp; make decisions</td>
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<td><strong>Resource management</strong> – good use of resources meets goals set</td>
<td><strong>Financial management</strong> – understands best value principles</td>
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<td><strong>People development</strong> – enables others to reach their full potential</td>
<td><strong>People development</strong> – uses own time to help others to develop</td>
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<td><strong>Leading change</strong> – proactive change agent &amp; forward planner</td>
<td><strong>Change agent</strong> – open minded, copes well with uncertainty</td>
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<td><strong>Leadership</strong> – creates right environment for high performance</td>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong> – motivates others by creating right work environment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic thinker results focused</strong></td>
<td><strong>Self-management</strong> awareness</td>
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STRATEGIC SENCO IN THE 21ST CENTURY

AND WITH ONE MIGHTY BOUND...
OUT OF THE WAY, JADED
OLD-TIMER! THIS IS A JOB FOR
SUPER-SENCO
WHAT STRATEGIC SENCOs DO

• Set the direction and plan ahead

• Innovate and lead change

• Motivate, encourage and influence others via resonant leadership, within the school and beyond in other schools

• Make good use of professional expertise & knowledge via coaching and mentoring other colleagues

• Value inclusion highly in removing barriers to learning and participation

• Foster a team approach and teamwork
ESSENTIAL QUALITIES FOR A STRATEGIC SENCO

SMALL EGO

WILLING LEARNER

GOOD LISTENER

SEES THINGS FOR WHAT THEY ARE

BIG HEART

STRONG STOMACH

FLEXIBLE

LEGS TO GO THE DISTANCE

GREAT IDEAS

ABLE TO SNIFF OUT TROUBLE

SENSE OF HUMOR

OPTIMISTIC

STRONG WILL

GUTS

FEET FIRMLY ON THE GROUND
SENCOs APPROACH STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP WITH STYLE

- Set direction to enable others to give their best
- Transform ideas into action
- Yearn to be free from paperwork overload
- Lead by example
- Effect change by empowering others
HOW SENCOs DO STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

• **Model good practice** – team teaching, demonstration lessons, leading by example in teacher planning

• **Monitor** – classroom observation/walkthroughs, scrutiny of pupils work, teachers planning, marking & assessment

• **Dialogue** – coaching, mentoring, professional reflection

• **Structures and systems** – meetings, drop-ins, CPD

• **Resources and support** – time, admin support, manage through others, e.g. HLTA/TA deployment, SEN governor, pupil voice

• **Impact focus** – impact of teaching on pupils learning & progress; pupil outcomes; evaluation of differentiation, personalised learning and quality first teaching
WHAT TYPE OF TIME MANAGER ARE YOU?

The headless chicken?
TOP TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR SENCOs

1. Recognise you can’t do everything yourself - delegate
2. Prioritise – 20 tasks rushed or 10 quality tasks in a day? Do the most important tasks first
3. Learn to say “No”
4. Unplug – switch off from emails, phone, computer
5. Identify where you waste time, e.g. emails, internet surfing, long telephone conversations?
6. Set deadlines/time limits for tasks, e.g. one hour per day to read emails instead of all day everyday
7. Manage interruptions – run an appointments systems, or a weekly drop-in session for staff queries, or a texting service, or put ‘DO NOT DISTURB notice on office door
8. Take time off at weekends and after 6pm Monday to Friday to maintain a healthy work-life balance
9. Use RAFT – refer on, action, file, trash or throw away
TIME MANAGEMENT FOR SENCOs

“Before we begin our Time Management Seminar, did everyone get one of these 36-hour wrist watches?”
SENCOs WORK-LIFE BALANCE!
A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF THE SENCO . . . !

“We’re only asking you to work 20 hours a week. To get that much done, you’ll need to be here 80 hours a week.”
A week in the life of...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time spent</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Good use of time</th>
<th>Task 1</th>
<th>Task 2</th>
<th>Task 3</th>
<th>Task 4</th>
<th>Task 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
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<td>Evening</td>
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- Task 1: 70 hours
- Task 2: 6 hours
- Task 3: 9 hours
- Task 4: 10 hours
- Task 5: 20 hours
- Task 6: 15 hours
- Task 7: 8 hours
- Task 8: 11 hours
- Task 10: 8 hours
- Task 9: 11 hours
BEST VALUE OUTCOMES
FOR SEN/AEN
SEN/AEN VALUE FOR MONEY RESOURCE PACK FOR SCHOOLS

http://www.sen-aen.audit-commission.gov.uk

- Online interactive seven-stage value for money model to evaluate the impact and outcomes of additional provision on AEN/SEN pupil progress
- Links with the school’s AEN/SEN provision map
Self Assessment

Outcomes (3A)

Before you respond to any statements it might be helpful for you to read the introduction to section 3A.

The school evaluates effectively the impact of provision on individual pupil progress

1: The school actively monitors and reviews the impact of all additional and different provision on individual pupils’ experience, progress and outcomes.

- Yes
- To some extent
- No

More Information

2: Assessment, target setting and pupil tracking are used systematically to monitor and evaluate the attainment and progress of pupils with SEN/AEN.

- Yes
- To some extent
- No

More Information

3: A range of baseline measures of pupil performance are recorded prior to the start of any new intervention and the views of pupils, parents/carers and teachers are drawn upon when reviewing progress.

- Yes
- To some extent
- No

More Information

4: Decisions about changes to provision for individual pupils are based securely in an objective evaluation of outcomes.

- Yes
- To some extent
- No

More Information

5: The school evaluates effectively the impact of interventions on groups of pupils with similar needs.

- Yes
- To some extent
- No

More Information

The school evaluates effectively the impact of SEN/AEN provision at the whole school level and uses this to inform planning

6: The school regularly consults with colleagues in other schools and services, at cluster, local authority and national level about the effectiveness of its SEN/AEN provision and its impact on outcomes.

- Yes
- To some extent
- No

More Information

7: The school pilots new approaches and tests the effectiveness of interventions.

- Yes
- To some extent
- No

More Information
MONITORING SEN POLICY & PROVISION
A PRACTICAL APPROACH
"Remember when you said learning can be fun? When exactly does the fun start?"
THE CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGH

Definition:
Short, focused informal observation of classroom teaching and learning.

Done in partnership with head teacher or deputy head teacher
Very powerful monitoring model
Ideally 3-5 minutes duration and no longer than 15 minutes

Purpose:
• To identify SEN strengths and areas for further development
• To gather information to facilitate reflective thinking
• To give school-wide snapshot of practice to meet SEN
• To inform whole school SEN CPD
CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGHS ARE NOT ABOUT:

- teachers’ performance management
- using endless lesson observation checklists
- gathering more paperwork
- increasing paper record keeping
5 STEPS TO THE CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGH

STEP 1: Pupil engagement in learning, on task, motivated

STEP 2: Expected learning outcomes – realistic yet challenging objectives set

STEP 3: Learning approaches being used by the teacher

STEP 4: Learning environment – what’s on the classroom walls; what is the emotional intelligence like; is the classroom well-ventilated, well-lit, accessible and free from hazards?

STEP 5: Reflection – what is your initial response to what you have seen & heard? What is your reflective question?
TRANSFER OF LEARNING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM FOR SEN PUPILS

“In an increasingly complex world, sometimes old questions require new answers.”
CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGHS PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION

• As SENCO, what is your response to what you have observed across the school?

• What is this telling you about strengths and weaknesses in SEN policy & provision?

• What is this experience telling you about staff CPD needs for SEN?

• What reflective question do wish to ask each teacher?
“When planning and delivering your lesson, what criteria do you use to decide upon the most appropriate learning approaches to use with SEN pupils, in order to ensure you move their learning forward, that they master new learning, and that they make good progress in the lesson?”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEN STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is working well in SEN?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What isn’t working well in SEN?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What will you do to improve SEN?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What difference have you made to SEN as SENCO?</td>
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THE GROW MODEL OF COACHING TO SUPPORT CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGHS

Goals
- Establish a clear picture of success
- Be positive
- Focus on areas within your control
- Identify outcomes

Reality
- Make an honest appraisal of the situation
- Establish the detail
- Establish a clear picture of where you are
- Understand what has already been achieved

Will
- Establish next steps and actions
- Gain commitment to change
- Ensure obstacles are understood and tackled
- Identify any support needed

Options
- Generate ideas
- Be creative
- Be non-judgemental
- Challenge assumptions
## GROW COACHING REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goals</strong></th>
<th><strong>Reality</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What would need to happen for you to walk away from this conversation feeling that this time was well spent?</td>
<td>• What is happening at the moment?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What will be of real value to you?</td>
<td>• How do you know that this is accurate?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What are you working to achieve?</td>
<td>• How have you verified, or would you verify, that this is so?</td>
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<td>• What would you like to happen that is not happening now?</td>
<td>• Whose views or perceptions are relevant to the situation?</td>
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<td>• What is your dream for the school?</td>
<td>• What is their perception of the situation?</td>
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<td>• What will it be like when you and the school have reached your dream?</td>
<td>• What have you tried so far?</td>
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<td>• What will the outcome be?</td>
<td>• If I were to ask Mary/Simon/the headteacher of a neighbouring school what they are experiencing, what would they tell me?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What are the steps along the way?</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Options</strong></th>
<th><strong>Will</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• What could you do to change the situation?</td>
<td>• What are the next steps?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What alternatives are there to that approach?</td>
<td>• When will you take them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tell me about the possibilities for action. Are they realistic?</td>
<td>• What might get in the way?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What actions have you used or seen used in similar circumstances?</td>
<td>• What support do you need?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What are the pros and cons of each of the options and of retaining the status quo?</td>
<td>• When will you do it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Rate the options on a scale of 1 to 10 in terms of their likely impact and desirability (ie your will to adopt them).</td>
<td>• How do you feel about taking these next steps?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Miracle questions: If a miracle happened and the situation was resolved, what might you be doing differently?</td>
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<td>• Who do you need to get involved to make this happen?</td>
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<td>• How will you get them involved?</td>
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MONITORING THE EFFECTIVE DEPLOYMENT OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS

The SENCO when monitoring the effectiveness of the teaching assistant needs to ensure:

• The teaching assistant is clear about what the SEN pupil is expected to learn
• The teaching assistant builds on the pupil’s prior learning
• The teaching assistant enables the SEN pupil to work independently
• The teaching assistant checks and reviews the SEN pupils learning at the end of the lesson
• The teaching assistant models good learning approaches to the pupil
• The teaching assistant makes good use of open questioning to extend the pupil’s learning and thinking
• The teaching assistant can evidence the impact of their support for learning in relation to improved pupil outcomes
SENCO AS ACTION RESEARCHER!
HOT TOPICS TO EXPLORE

• School staff are identifying too many pupils with SEN at ‘Action’ on SEN Code of Practice threshold.

• Teachers’ low expectations of SEN pupils in school is limiting their progress across a key stage

• Inclusion isn’t working in this school because too many SEN pupils are being excluded.
INTELLIGENT ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SEN
REPORTING TO GOVERNORS ON SEN

Telling questions:
1. What is SEN pupil attendance like and what is being done to improve this?
2. What impact are extended services and multi-agency interventions having on SEN pupil achievement and well-being?
3. How does the progress made by SEN pupils in school compare with other similar schools?
4. How many parental complaints have been made about SEN policy or provision?
5. What has been the impact of any SEN training on enabling staff to meet the needs of SEN pupils?
6. What are the school’s strengths in SEN?
7. What aspects of SEN policy and provision require further development?
8. Does this school offer good value for money in relation to the progress SEN pupils make?
Examples of the **Challenge Questions** relating to improving outcomes for SEND children and young people.

- How do you know if SEND children in your setting consider extended services to be inclusive and accessible?
- What measures are being used to identify if services are making a difference to SEND children’s outcomes and experiences?
- How do you involve SEND children and their parents in ensuring the quality and range of services on offer are appropriate?
- Has your multi-agency partnership developed a joint strategy to provide accessible services for SEND children at your school?

[www.c4eo.org.uk](http://www.c4eo.org.uk)
GET READY FOR THE OFSTED INSPECTION AND SEND

All ready for Ofsted.
EXPECTATIONS FOR SEND PUPILS

Telling questions OFSTED HMI expect SENCOs to answer, and to have clear evidence of three year trends

Contextual data
1. What % of SEND pupils are persistent absentees or are being permanently excluded from the school?
2. What % of SEND pupils are also LAC?
3. What is being done to tackle SEND pupil absence?
4. What % of SEND pupils are victims of/or are involved in bullying incidents in school?
5. What % of SEND pupils are engaging in extended services/extra-curricular activities and how is that impacting on their progress and outcomes?
6. What % of SEND pupils are eligible for FSM & the Pupil Premium?
7. What % of SEND pupils have mental health issues?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES ABOVE?
MORE REALLY TELLING QUESTIONS FOR SENCOs:

- Are the needs of the full diversity of SEND pupils being met?
- How well are SEND pupils achieving & enjoying their learning?
- Is the school identifying the right pupils with SEND?
- How many SEND pupils are underachieving and is that because the classroom provision isn’t right?
- How far is targeted support & extra interventions impacting on SEND pupil progress across the curriculum? (transfer of learning)
- How do SEND pupils learn best?
- What are SEND pupils actually learning in relation to the quality of the teaching?
EXPECTATIONS FOR SEN PUPILS

• How far is the school’s SEN provision map being evaluated in relation to SEN pupils outcomes and best value?
• What is being done in the school to address SEN pupils lack of progress?
• What does the school understand by the term interventions as it’s a very broad term, and goes beyond SEN programmes?
• How far is person-centred planning being used for SEN pupils?
• How are SEN pupils progressing, 12 months on (in the next year group, key stage, or school/college)?
• What are SEN pupils views about their learning and provision?
• How have additional interventions been effective in narrowing the attainment gap between SEN pupils and their peers?
• How has your support for parents impacted on SEND pupils learning and well-being?
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE OR THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE FOR THE SENCO?

“This is a major project of utmost importance, but it has no budget, no guidelines, no support staff, and it’s due in 15 minutes. At last, here’s your chance to really impress everyone!”
SIGNPOSTING TO FURTHER RESOURCES
SEN/SENCO training available, contact:
www.ecm-solutions.org.uk admin@ecm-solutions.org.uk
USEFUL RESOURCES FOR SENCOs

- **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS**: A PRACTICAL GUIDE
  
  *RITA CHEMINAIS*

- **Effective Multi-Agency Partnerships**: Putting Every Child Matters into Practice
  
  *Effective Multi-Agency Partnerships: Putting Every Child Matters into Practice* by Rita Cheminais

*Image of the book cover with the title and author name.*

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Now that we’ve celebrated our diversity, embraced a new spirit of creativity, made a fresh commitment to excellence, and given something back to the community, does anyone here remember what it is we are supposed to be doing?