

# Parent Partnership Services – increasing parental confidence

Exemplification of minimum standards for PPS and Local Authorities



# **Parent Partnership Services - increasing parental confidence**

**Exemplifications of the minimum standards  
for PPS and Local Authorities**

**Revised 2010**

**National Parent Partnership Network**

**This document revises an earlier version of *Parent Partnership Services – increasing parental confidence*, which was published by the *Department for Children, Schools and Families* in 2007.**

The original version of this document was developed as a part of the Government's response to the Education and Skills Select Committee report on SEN<sup>1</sup> in order to build parents' confidence in the advice and information they receive from Parent Partnership Services (PPS). The intention was to build on the minimum standards for PPS set out in the SEN Code of Practice<sup>2</sup> and to illustrate a range of increasingly effective practice. The main emphasis was on practice that would demonstrate how PPS could deliver services at "arm's length" from the Local Authority and in an impartial manner.

This revision follows the Lamb Inquiry<sup>3</sup>, published in 2009. Paragraphs 3.46 to 3.54 of the Lamb report focused on the role of PPS and advised that:

- the exemplification materials should give a higher profile to what the legislation requires and the Code advises
- there should be a more robust approach to the implementation of the materials
- all services should be aiming to reach at least 'good practice.'

This new version of ***Parent Partnership Services – increasing parental confidence*** reflects the advice given in the Lamb Inquiry report and will strengthen further the role that PPS play in ensuring that parents<sup>4</sup> of children and young people with special educational needs have access to high quality services that provide impartial advice, information and support.

---

<sup>1</sup> House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee (2006): *Special Educational Needs Third Report of Session 2005–06* (London: The Stationery Office Limited)

<sup>2</sup> Department for Education and Skills (2001): *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice* (London: DfES)

<sup>3</sup> Lamb Inquiry: *Special Educational Needs And Parental Confidence* (London: DCSF)

<sup>4</sup> References to parents throughout this document are to parents/carers and include anyone who has parental responsibility for the child/young person.

The aim of these exemplification materials is to build parental confidence in the advice and support that they can expect to receive from Parent Partnership Services. Local Authorities and PPS, in conjunction with parents themselves, should use this document to review their current practice and ensure that it meets **Good** or **Best Practice**. The exemplifications of the minimum standards apply to all PPS whether they are at ‘arms length’ from the Local Authority, or partly or fully out-sourced.

During the course of the revision, the opportunity has been taken to cross-reference the exemplifications with the *Functional Map for Parent Partnership Services in England*<sup>5</sup>, by linking section headings with the relevant Key Functions. This should assist Local Authorities and PPS in assessing how effectively they deliver the seven Key Functions for PPS that are set out in the map.

In addition, Local Authorities and PPS may compare their performance year on year, and against other services, using the annual benchmarking report published by the National Parent Partnership Network (see [www.parentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.parentpartnership.org.uk)). As part of benchmarking, all PPS are invited to rate their performance against each of the exemplifications. The results are published annually.

**These exemplifications take account of a range of existing documents and guidance, including:**

<i>The SEN Code of Practice and SEN Toolkit</i>	DfES (2001)
<i>Parent Partnership Services Practice Guide</i>	Council for Disabled Children (2004)
<i>Evaluation of SEN Parent Partnership Services in England</i>	DfES (2006)
<i>Guidance on monitoring service delivery and assessing the impact of Parent Partnership Services</i>	NPPN and NAPPS (2007)
<i>South West Parent Partnership Network Regional Standards</i>	SW Regional Partnership (Revised 2007)
<i>Lamb Inquiry: Special Educational Needs and Parental Confidence</i>	DCSF (2009)
<i>Functional Map for Parent Partnership Services in England</i>	Children’s Workforce Development Council (2010)

<sup>5</sup> Children’s Workforce Development Council (2010): *Functional Map for Parent Partnership Services in England*

## Parent Partnership Services - what the legislation requires and the Code advises

The Special Education and Disability Act (2001) introduced a statutory duty on Local Authorities to *'arrange for the parent of any child in their area with special educational needs to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to those needs'*. In addition the legislation required that *'LEAs (sic) must take whatever steps they consider appropriate to make parent partnership services known to parents, headteachers, schools and others they consider appropriate'*.<sup>6</sup>

Sections 2.16 to 2.21 of the SEN Code of Practice<sup>7</sup> set out national guidelines on the provision of Parent Partnership Services, including 14 minimum standards for Local Authorities and a further 16 minimum standards for PPS themselves. In addition Section 2 of the SEN Toolkit provided guidance on how services should operate.

Over the subsequent decade PPS developed in a variety of ways; indeed national benchmarking<sup>8</sup> has highlighted significant differences in provision. Following the Lamb Inquiry, these revised exemplifications set out what is involved in delivering **Good** and **Best Practice** - which should be the aim of every Local Authority and PPS - whatever model of service delivery they offer. The exemplifications are underpinned by the expectation that Local Authorities, in order to meet their statutory responsibilities, **must**:

- Ensure that the information and advice PPS provide for parents is fairly and squarely within the legislation and the Code of Practice (even where this may differ from local policy or practice)
- Enable the PPS to challenge policy and practice when it is not compatible with the legislation and guidance
- Avoid using the PPS to carry out other statutory duties on behalf of the Local Authority that may compromise the impartiality of the support that PPS offers to parents.

Achieving **Good** or **Best Practice** also supports the achievement of the Primary Purpose for PPS set out in the CWDC Functional Map<sup>9</sup>:

***Ensure parents have access to confidential and impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions about their child's special educational needs. This is achieved by working in partnership with parents, providing information services and training, working with relevant agencies and ensuring parents' views influence local policy and practice.***

<sup>6</sup> See Section 332A, Education Act 1996

<sup>7</sup> See Footnote 2

<sup>8</sup> The annual benchmarking reports published by NPPN are available at [www.parentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.parentpartnership.org.uk)

<sup>9</sup> See Footnote 5

## Minimum standards specified in the SEN Code of Practice

**In delivering effective Parent Partnership Services Local Authorities are expected to:**

- Ensure that the service is flexible and responsive to local changes.

**An effective Parent Partnership Service is expected to meet the following minimum standards and ensure:**

- The provision of a range of flexible services including using their best endeavours to provide access to an Independent Parental Supporter for all parents who want one
- That practical support is offered to parents, either individually or in groups, to help them in their discussions with schools, LEAs (sic) and other statutory agencies
- That parents (including all those with parental responsibility for the child) are provided with accurate neutral information on their rights, roles and responsibilities within the SEN process, and on the wide range of options that are available for their children's education
- That parents are informed about other agencies, such as Health Services, Social Services and voluntary organisations, which can offer information and advice about their child's particular SEN. This may be particularly important at the time the LEA issues a proposed statement
- That where appropriate and in conjunction with their parents, the ascertainable views and wishes of the child are sought and taken into consideration.

## Exemplification of the standards in practice

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
a	The PPS is able to offer all parents who request it access to independent parental supporters who have completed training in the SEN framework and the Code of Practice. The PPS use of a wide range of high quality providers, including paid staff, independent volunteers recruited by the PPS, voluntary organisations or staff employed by other organisations that the PPS signpost parents to.	The PPS is able to offer all parents who request it access to independent parental supporters who have completed training in the SEN framework and the Code of Practice. This may include paid staff, volunteers recruited by the PPS, voluntary organisations or staff employed by other organisations that the PPS signpost parents to.	PPS is not able to offer access to independent parental supporters for parents who request it.

	<b>Best practice</b>	<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Non Compliant</b>
b	A published policy on monitoring and supervision arrangements for all independent parental supporters ensures that quality standards agreed with the PPS Steering/Management Group are met.	A monitoring and supervision process for independent parental supporters is in place to ensure the quality standards agreed with the PPS are met.	There is no routine monitoring of independent parental supporters.
c	The PPS provides the full range of services and practical support for parents set out in Section 2 of the SEN Toolkit, paragraphs 18 to 20.	The PPS provides the majority of services and practical support for parents set out in Section 2 of the SEN Toolkit, paragraphs 18 to 20.	The PPS provides a limited range of services and practical support for parents compared to those set out in Section 2 of the SEN Toolkit, paragraphs 18 to 20.
d	<p>A published confidentiality policy, agreed with the Local Authority and all stakeholders, is in place. It is rigorously adhered to, clearly communicated to all parties and reviewed regularly.</p> <p>The PPS confidentiality policy is explained to parents from the time of their first contact.</p> <p>The PPS does not have access to records on children and young people, except with the permission of the parents/carers and the holders of the relevant records.</p> <p>Additional steps are taken to ensure that all agencies are aware of and respect the PPS confidentiality policy.</p>	<p>A published confidentiality policy, agreed with the Local Authority, is in place, rigorously adhered to and clearly communicated to all parties.</p> <p>The PPS policy on confidentiality is explained to parents from the time of their first contact.</p> <p>The PPS does not have access to records on children and young people, except with the permission of the parents/carers and the holders of the relevant records.</p>	<p>There is no written confidentiality policy.</p> <p>Information provided by parents is shared with others outside the PPS without the explicit permission of the parents (except in circumstances that raise public interest concerns, such as child protection).</p> <p>The handling of information that parents provide does not comply with the common law duty of confidentiality and/or the Data Protection Act.</p>
e	<p>Parents are able to access support from PPS staff (both paid and voluntary) before, during and after an appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal.</p> <p>Members of the PPS providing support have received specific additional training on the Tribunal process.</p>	<p>Parents are able to access support from the PPS as part of the preparation for an appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal.</p> <p>Members of the PPS providing support as part of the preparation for an appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal have received some training on the Tribunal process.</p>	The PPS does not provide support to parents who are making an appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal.

	<b>Best practice</b>	<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Non Compliant</b>
f	<p>The PPS is able to support and empower parents in challenging Local Authority SEN policy and practice.</p> <p>The PPS regularly reviews and reports on its role in supporting parents in challenging Local Authority SEN policy and practice (through its newsletters, website and/or annual report).</p>	<p>The PPS is able to support and empower parents in challenging Local Authority SEN policy and practice.</p>	<p>The Local Authority does not allow the PPS to be involved in supporting parents when they challenge Local Authority SEN policy and practice that does not comply with the SEN legislation and guidance.</p>
g	<p>The PPS works in collaboration with other services and organisations to promote processes for seeking the views and wishes of children and young people, and to ensure that they are taken into consideration.</p> <p>The PPS provides information for parents on ways in which the views of children and young people are sought.</p>	<p>The PPS works with practitioners to ensure that the views of children and young people are reflected in the way they work and are properly considered.</p>	<p>The PPS has no role in ensuring that the views of children and young people are considered.</p>
h	<p>The PPS Steering/Management Group routinely seeks the views of parents (e.g. using existing participation routes) to monitor how effectively the PPS implements its policies on confidentiality (see 1d) and impartiality (see 2a).</p>	<p>The PPS periodically seeks the views of parents (e.g. using existing participation routes) to monitor how effectively the PPS implements its policies on confidentiality (see 1d) and impartiality (see 2a).</p>	<p>The PPS has no mechanism for seeking the views of parents on how effectively the PPS implements its policies on confidentiality (see 1d) and impartiality (see 2a).</p>

### Minimum standards specified in the SEN Code of Practice

**In delivering effective Parent Partnership Services Local Authorities are expected to:**

- Ensure that parents and schools are provided with clear information about the parent partnership services, and about the various other sources of support in their area, including statutory and voluntary agencies
- Ensure that the service is provided with accurate information on all SEN processes as set out in the Education Act 1996, relevant Regulations, and the SEN Code of Practice and relevant information about the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

**An effective Parent Partnership Service is expected to meet the following minimum standards and ensure:**

- That information about the available services is publicised widely in the area using a variety of means
- The provision of neutral, accurate information for parents on all SEN procedures as set out in SEN legislation and the SEN Code of Practice
- The interpretation of information published by schools, LEAs and other bodies interested in SEN
- That a wide range of information for parents is available in community languages, and to parents who may not be able to gain access to information through conventional means.

### Exemplification of the standards in practice

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
a	<p>The PPS has a published policy on impartiality (endorsed by the Local Authority and PPS Steering/Management Group) that is regularly reviewed with input from parents/carers.</p> <p>All documentation is written and produced in accordance with the policy.</p>	<p>The PPS has a published policy on impartiality (endorsed by the Local Authority and PPS Steering/Management Group) and has formal processes for reviewing it.</p> <p>New publications are written in accordance with the policy.</p>	<p>The PPS does not have a published policy on impartiality.</p>

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
b	<p>The PPS provide a comprehensive range of impartial information for parents, reflecting the statutory framework and SEN Code of Practice.</p> <p>All information and publications provided by the PPS are explicit about statutory and non-statutory duties and clarify parents' rights.</p> <p>All publications are written in Plain English.</p> <p>Publications routinely include references and recommendations for further reading.</p> <p>The range, content and accessibility of information materials are regularly reviewed with input from parents and carers.</p>	<p>The PPS provide a comprehensive range of impartial information for parents, reflecting the statutory framework and SEN Code of Practice.</p> <p>All information and publications provided by the PPS are explicit about statutory and non-statutory duties and clarify parents' rights.</p> <p>All publications are written in Plain English.</p>	<p>The range of information provided by the PPS does not reflect the statutory framework and SEN Code of Practice.</p>
c	<p>The PPS has a distinct service identity, including its own logo, strap line, style, etc.</p> <p>The PPS identity is given greater prominence than other service identities (e.g. corporate logo, colours etc.) and is included on all PPS information/ publications.</p> <p>The PPS determines the wording of its own publications, which reflect the SEN framework and Code of Practice. All PPS information includes a date of publication.</p>	<p>The PPS has its own identity and written style, which is used on all information leaflets/publications.</p> <p>All new PPS information includes a date of publication.</p>	<p>There is no evidence of separate identity for the PPS.</p>
d	<p>The PPS has a procedure in place to regularly review the impartiality of all information and publicity materials produced by the PPS, in accordance with its impartiality policy (see 2a). This procedure involves service users and other parent/carers providing independent monitoring of all information and publicity and advice on impartiality.</p>	<p>The PPS Steering/Management Group reviews the impartiality of information and publicity.</p> <p>New information and publicity produced by PPS is monitored in accordance with its impartiality policy (see 2a).</p>	<p>Parents' legal rights are not made clear in PPS information.</p>

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
e	The PPS has its own direct line, answer phone and email contact details. The direct line number and email contact information are included in all PPS publications and are also easily accessible via the Local Authority's website.	The PPS has its own direct line which is included in all PPS publications and is also available on the Local Authority's website.	The PPS does not have a direct line so that parents may have to make calls via a Local Authority switchboard or leave messages with non-PPS staff.
f	<p>The PPS maintains its own dedicated website (with clear PPS identity) which is regularly reviewed and kept up to date. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contact details</li> <li>• information on the range of services provided</li> <li>• copies of the PPS policy on impartiality and confidentiality</li> <li>• copies of all published information leaflets/ newsletters</li> <li>• a link to the Local Authority website</li> <li>• links to other relevant websites</li> <li>• details of any events and/or training that is either run by the PPS or an outside organisation which may be of use to parents and carers.</li> </ul> <p>In addition the Local Authority website has an easily accessible link to the PPS website.</p>	<p>The PPS has an easily accessible, dedicated area (with clear PPS identity) within the LA website. The PPS area includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contact details</li> <li>• information on the range of services provided</li> <li>• a copy of the PPS policy on impartiality and confidentiality</li> <li>• copies of most published information leaflets/ newsletters</li> <li>• links to other relevant websites.</li> </ul>	No information on the PPS is available on the web.
g	<p>The PPS is able to provide a wide range of information materials in community languages and it is possible to provide translations in other languages on request.</p> <p>The most frequently used publications are already available in those languages that are prevalent in the local community.</p>	The PPS is able to provide information materials in a range of community languages on request.	The PPS is not able to provide information materials in the main languages found in the local community.

### 3. TRAINING, ADVICE AND SUPPORT

[Key Functions 1 and 2]

#### Minimum standards specified in the SEN Code of Practice

**In delivering effective Parent Partnership Services Local Authorities are expected to:**

- Ensure, where the service is provided in-house, that the staff receive appropriate initial and ongoing training and development to enable them to carry out their role effectively.

**An effective Parent Partnership Service is expected to meet the following minimum standards and ensure:**

- That advice on special educational needs procedures is made available to parents through information, support and training
- They use their best endeavours to recruit sufficient Independent Parental Supporters to meet the needs of parents in their area, including arrangements for appropriate training, ensuring that they are kept up to date with all relevant aspects of SEN policy and procedures so that they can fulfil their role effectively
- That training on good communication and relationships with parents is made available to teachers, governors and staff in SEN sections of the LEA.

#### Exemplification of the standards in practice

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
a	All members of the PPS (paid staff and volunteers) receive training (see also 1a) that enables them to provide accurate and impartial information advice and support in accordance with the SEN framework, the SEN Code of Practice and the PPS policy on impartiality.  All PPS staff have completed the NPPN legal training course.	All members of the PPS (paid staff and volunteers) receive training (see also 1a) that enables them to provide accurate and impartial information advice and support in accordance with the SEN framework, the SEN Code of Practice and the PPS policy on impartiality.  At least one member of the PPS staff has completed the NPPN legal training course.	No members of the PPS have completed the NPPN legal training course.  Volunteers do not complete training in the SEN framework and Code of Practice.

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
b	<p>The PPS has a performance management policy that sets out processes for identifying individual training needs, how these will be met and the impact of practice is evaluated. The training needs identified in the PPS Development Plan and/or performance management policy are all met.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers are encouraged to identify and address their own development needs including courses leading to nationally recognised qualifications.</p> <p>The PPS Steering/Management Group regularly reviews the range of information, support and training to ensure that it accords with the SEN framework and Code of Practice, and meets with quality standards for impartiality specified in the service policy.</p>	<p>The PPS Development Plan and/or performance management policy identifies the further training needs of PPS staff and arrangements are made to meet these needs within specified timescales.</p>	<p>There are no formal/regular arrangements for PPS staff to receive training that enables them to undertake their role.</p> <p>Information and training materials are all developed and provided by the Local Authority.</p> <p>PPS staff do not have access to the NPPN legal training course.</p>
c	<p>PPS staff regularly organise and offer training for Local Authority staff, schools, parents and other groups in accordance with the SEN framework, the SEN Code of Practice and the PPS policy on impartiality.</p>	<p>PPS staff organise and offer training when requested for Local Authority staff, schools, parents and other groups in accordance with the SEN framework, the SEN Code of Practice and the PPS policy on impartiality.</p>	<p>PPS staff do not organise and offer training for Local Authority staff, schools, parents or other groups.</p>
d	<p>Parent representatives/parent groups and/or other organisations are routinely involved in delivering training organised by the PPS.</p>	<p>Parent representatives/parent groups and/or other providers and organisations are sometimes involved in delivering training organised by the PPS.</p>	<p>Parent representatives/parent groups and/or other providers and organisations are not involved in delivering training organised by the PPS.</p>
e	<p>In addition to the PPS' own materials, information, support and training materials from a wide range of other organisations are made available via the PPS.</p>	<p>In addition to the PPS' own materials, some information, support and training materials produced by other organisations are made available via the PPS</p>	<p>The PPS only provides information, support and training materials developed by the PPS and/or the Local Authority.</p>

	<b>Best practice</b>	<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Non Compliant</b>
f	Parents, schools and the Local Authority routinely use the PPS as a key source of information and advice on SEN and disability law.	Some parents, schools and Local Authority staff use the PPS as a source of information and advice on SEN and disability law.	Parents, schools and the Local Authority do not use the PPS as a source of information and advice on SEN and disability law.

## 4. NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

[Key Function 4]

### Minimum standards specified in the SEN Code of Practice

**In delivering effective Parent Partnership Services Local Authorities are expected to:**

- Develop co-operative arrangements with the voluntary sector to ensure the mutual exchange of information and expertise
- Promote and facilitate arrangements for the service to work in partnership with other agencies such as health and social services, using local planning structures such as the Education Development Plan, Early Years Development and Childcare Plan, Connexions Plan and Children's Services Plan and more recently Children and Young Person Plan. Provisions under the Health Act 1999 allow LEAs and health and social services to pool budgetary and management resources, such arrangements might therefore include the provision of joint information services.

**An effective Parent Partnership Service is expected to meet the following minimum standards and ensure:**

- They work with schools, LEA officers and other agencies to help them develop positive relationships with parents
- They establish and maintain links with voluntary organisations.

### Exemplification of the standards in practice

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
a	<p>The PPS policy on impartiality sets out how the PPS engages with relevant networks and organisations as an impartial facilitating service.</p> <p>The PPS engages in regional and national initiatives to develop policy and practice in relation to impartiality.</p>	<p>The PPS policy on impartiality is promoted with relevant networks and organisations.</p> <p>The PPS participates in regional and national networks and shares good practice regarding impartiality.</p>	<p>There is no evidence that the PPS policy on impartiality informs the service's involvement in national, regional or local networks.</p>

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
b	<p>The PPS has established effective partnerships with an extensive range of national, regional and local networks in order to develop and sustain a high quality and impartial service.</p> <p>The PPS demonstrate how this has impacted on the delivery of a high quality impartial service.</p> <p>There is strong evidence of well-developed collaborative working with local voluntary and statutory services for parents and children, and other PPS. The PPS can provide extensive evidence of how the service influences other agencies and networks.</p> <p>The PPS budget provides for representation at regional and national meetings.</p>	<p>The PPS has established effective partnerships with a range of national, regional and local networks in order to develop and sustain a high quality and impartial service.</p> <p>There is some evidence of change to PPS practice as a result of involvement in national, regional and local networks.</p> <p>There is good evidence of well-developed collaborative working with local voluntary and statutory services for parents and children, and other PPS. The PPS can provide some evidence of how the service influences other agencies and networks.</p> <p>The PPS budget provides for limited representation at regional and national meetings.</p>	<p>The PPS has no systematic involvement in national or regional networks.</p> <p>Collaborative working with local voluntary and statutory services for parents and children, and other PPS, is not well developed.</p>
c	<p>The PPS has a formal written agreement with the Local Authority to support the involvement of the PPS in networking and collaboration nationally and regionally.</p> <p>Impartiality is demonstrated by the way the Local Authority respects and responds to feedback from the PPS' networking and collaboration.</p>	<p>There is evidence that the Local Authority supports the involvement of the PPS in networking and collaboration nationally and regionally.</p>	<p>The PPS is not able to engage in national or regional networking or collaboration due to funding or staffing levels.</p>
d	<p>The PPS provide information, support and training for schools that complies with the SEN framework and Code of Practice and the PPS impartiality policy.</p> <p>The PPS Steering/Management Group regularly monitors the effectiveness of the information, support and training the PPS provides for schools.</p>	<p>The PPS provide information, support and training for schools that complies with the SEN framework and Code of Practice and the PPS impartiality policy.</p>	<p>The information, support and training that the PPS provide for schools does not comply with the SEN framework and Code of Practice, and/or is not consistent with the PPS impartiality policy.</p>

## 5. INFORMING AND SHAPING LOCAL POLICY AND PRACTICE

[Key Function 5]

### Minimum standards specified in the SEN Code of Practice

**In delivering effective Parent Partnership Services Local Authorities are expected to:**

- Actively seek feedback from the service and service users to inform and influence decisions on SEN policies, procedures and practices in order to improve communications and minimise the potential for misunderstandings and disagreements.

**An effective Parent Partnership Service is expected to meet the following minimum standards and ensure:**

- That parents' views are heard and understood, and inform and influence the development of local SEN policy and practice
- The regular review of the effectiveness of the service they provide, for instance by seeking feedback from users.

### Exemplification of the standards in practice

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
a	<p>The PPS provides training for, and supports the active participation of, parents and carers in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing and reviewing the implementation of Children's Service policy</li> <li>• developing and reviewing the implementation of PPS policy.</li> </ul> <p>The PPS provides a support structure to enable parents and carers to fully participate in shaping Local Authority SEN and disability policy development.</p> <p>The Local Authority and other bodies routinely seek PPS participation in key strategic groups.</p> <p>An open channel of communication between the Local Authority, PPS and schools enables misunderstandings and disagreements to be resolved at an early stage.</p>	<p>Training and support is available for parents and carers to support their participation.</p> <p>Processes are in place to collect parents' and carers' views to both inform policy development and review and be reflected in policy development and evaluation.</p> <p>The PPS is represented on some key strategic groups.</p> <p>There is regular dialogue between the Local Authority and PPS to enable misunderstandings and disagreements to be resolved.</p>	<p>Parents, carers and PPS are not routinely consulted about policy or given sufficient time to respond.</p> <p>No structure is in place to provide regular dialogue between the Local Authority and PPS to enable misunderstandings and disagreements to be resolved.</p>

	<b>Best practice</b>	<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Non Compliant</b>
b	The PPS and Local Authority have a formal mechanism to ensure that the PPS inform the Local Authority where they are not fulfilling their statutory obligations and works with them to ensure they can be met.	The PPS informs the Local Authority where they are not fulfilling their statutory obligations and works with them to ensure they can be met.	The PPS is not encouraged to inform the Local Authority where they are not fulfilling their statutory obligations or work with them to ensure they can be met
c	The Local Authority and PPS review the impact of PPS participation on Local Authority policy and practice at least annually. The outcome of this review is set out in the PPS Annual Report and/or newsletter.	The Local Authority and PPS review the impact of PPS participation on Local Authority policy and practice at least annually.	There is no review of the impact of PPS participation in policy and practice.
d	The PPS Steering/Management Group completes a review of it own service policies and practice on a regular cycle and publishes the outcome of each review in the PPS Annual Report and/or newsletter.	The PPS Steering/Management Group completes a review of it own service policies and practice on a regular cycle.	There is no systematic review of PPS policy and practice.

### Minimum standards specified in the SEN Code of Practice

**In delivering effective Parent Partnership Services Local Authorities are expected to:**

- Set out their funding and budgeting plans for the service (where appropriate the budget should be delegated to the Parent Partnership Service)
- Ensure adequate resources and staffing to meet the needs of the parents in their area
- Ensure appropriate management structures for the service
- Ensure that the service has a development plan which sets out clear targets and is regularly reviewed; such plans should specify short, medium and long term strategies and arrangements for evaluation and quality assurance
- Establish, where the service is outsourced either wholly or partially, a service level agreement for delivering the service which ensures sufficient levels of resources and training, and clearly set out the quality standards expected of, and the responsibilities delegated to, the provider
- Have, irrespective of whether it is outsourced or provided in-house, appropriate arrangements for overseeing and regularly monitoring and reviewing the service, taking account of best practice both locally and nationally.

### Exemplification of the standards in practice

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
a	<p>Budget and staffing levels are informed by an analysis of needs and priorities set out in the PPS Development Plan.</p> <p>The service development plan is reviewed annually in conjunction with PPS Steering/Management Group, service users, the Local Authority and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The Local Authority and the PPS work in partnership within the framework of the service Development Plan.</p>	<p>Budget and staffing levels are informed by priorities identified in the PPS Development Plan.</p> <p>The Local Authority actively engages with the PPS to positively develop the service.</p>	<p>The PPS Development Plan does not describe the available budget or it is not adequate to meet identified needs.</p>

	<b>Best practice</b>	<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Non Compliant</b>
b	<p>The budget enables the PPS to fulfil strategic, casework, training and advice roles and meet all agreed development needs.</p> <p>The PPS works collaboratively with other PPS, local voluntary and statutory agencies to maximise use of available funding by identifying alternative resources including funding and personnel.</p> <p>The budget for the PPS is delegated to the service and ring fenced.</p>	<p>The PPS budget is sufficient to enable the service to deliver the core activities set out in Section 2 of the SEN Toolkit and includes some resources for strategic work.</p> <p>The budget is delegated and is clear and transparent and the process for determining the budget is explicit.</p>	<p>The Local Authority holds the budget and it is restricted to basic staffing costs.</p> <p>Staffing levels do not allow the PPS to meet the minimum standards set out in Section 2.21 of the SEN Code.</p>
c	<p>The PPS Steering/Management Group has published terms of reference, including responsibility for ensuring the impartiality of the PPS (including paid staff and volunteers).</p> <p>The Steering/Management Group has delegated responsibility for PPS policy and practice. Where the service is provided by a charity they may co-opt parents or other voluntary organisations to a parent partnership management group.</p> <p>The Steering/Management Group has broad representation, including a majority of parents and an independent Chair.</p> <p>The Steering/Management Group monitors the effectiveness and impartiality of the service in accordance with national guidance, and report regularly to the Local Authority.</p>	<p>The PPS has a Steering/Management Group that has published terms of reference, including responsibility for ensuring the impartiality of the PPS (including paid staff and volunteers).</p> <p>The Steering/Management Group works with the PPS and the Local Authority to support the policy, practice and development of the PPS.</p> <p>The Steering/Management Group has broad representation, including parents.</p> <p>The Steering/Management Group monitors the effectiveness and impartiality of the service and report to the Local Authority.</p>	<p>The PPS has no Steering/ Management Group.</p> <p>The Local Authority's SEN budget holder, or the PPS Coordinator's line manager, chair the PPS Steering/ Management Group.</p>

	Best practice	Good practice	Non Compliant
d	<p>The PPS has its own base in premises that, from the perspective of parents and carers, are independent of the Local Authority.</p> <p>Service premises are easily accessible to parent/carers and suitable for their intended purpose.</p> <p>The location of service premises promotes collaborative working with local voluntary and statutory services for parents and children.</p> <p>Collaborative working is in full accordance with the PPS policies on impartiality and confidentiality and this is reviewed annually by the PPS Steering/Management Group (see also 3b)</p>	<p>The PPS is located separately from LA SEN teams and provides an environment that parents feel comfortable with – the expectation is that this would not normally be within the main LA building.</p> <p>Service premises are easily accessible to parent/carers and suitable for their intended purpose.</p> <p>The location of service premises promotes collaborative working with local voluntary and statutory services for parents and children.</p> <p>Collaborative working is in accordance with the PPS policies on impartiality and confidentiality.</p> <p>Any expectation of the PPS renting accommodation or covering additional overheads is reflected in the delegated budget.</p>	<p>The PPS is based within or close to the SEN casework team.</p> <p>The PPS does not have the capacity for confidential data storage, nor appropriate accessible space for confidential meetings with parents where conversations are not overheard.</p> <p>The location of service premises hinders collaborative working with local voluntary and statutory services for parents and children.</p>
e	<p>A service level agreement or specification, agreed between the Local Authority, service provider (if all or part of the service is out-sourced) and PPS, stipulates that the standards to be delivered will meet the best practice expectations set out in these exemplifications.</p> <p>The Local Authority can provide evidence of the frequency and effectiveness of its arrangements to monitor and review the delivery of the service level agreement or specification for the PPS.</p>	<p>A service level agreement or specification, agreed between the Local Authority, service provider (if all or part of the service is out-sourced) and PPS, stipulates that the standards to be delivered will meet the good practice expectations set out in these exemplifications.</p> <p>The Local Authority has specific arrangements in place to monitor and review the delivery of the service level agreement or specification for the PPS.</p>	<p>There is no agreed service level agreement or specification that sets out the standards that the PPS, and/or service provider (if all or part of the service is out-sourced), must achieve.</p> <p>The standards set out in any service level agreement or specification do not exceed the non-compliant exemplifications set out in this document.</p> <p>The Local Authority does not monitor or review the delivery of the PPS regularly.</p>

**The original version of this document was produced in consultation with the following organisations:**

Association of School and College Lecturers  
Association of Directors of Children's Services  
Council for Disabled Children  
DCSF (now Department for Education)  
East of England Region Parent Partnership Services Network  
East Midlands Region Parent Partnership Services Network  
London Region Parent Partnership Services Network  
National Association of Head Teachers  
National Association of Parent Partnership Staff  
National Governors' Association  
National Parent Partnership Network  
National Strategies SEN Team  
Northamptonshire Local Authority  
North East Region Parent Partnership Services Network  
North West Region Parent Partnership Services Network  
Ofsted  
South East Region Parent Partnership Services Network  
South West Region Parent Partnership Services Network  
The Regional Partnerships  
West Midlands Region Parent Partnership Services Network  
Yorkshire and Humberside Region Parent Partnership Services Network and parent representatives

**The revised version of this document, published in 2010, has been compiled in consultation with representatives of the original Reference Group. Particular thanks are due to:**

<b>Linda Baker</b>	Kent Parent Partnership Service
<b>Victor Baldock</b>	Camden Parent Partnership Service
<b>Sue Brealey</b>	Devon Parent Partnership Service
<b>Elaine Chandler</b>	Durham Parent Partnership Service
<b>Martha Evans</b>	National Parent Partnership Network
<b>Rosemary Kew</b>	Havering Parent Partnership Service
<b>Nick Knapman</b>	Consultant
<b>Scilla Morgan</b>	Hackney Parent Partnership Service
<b>Ollie Pardo</b>	Derby and Derbyshire Parent Partnership Service and NAPPS
<b>Howard Purves</b>	North Lincolnshire Parent Partnership Service
<b>Daisy Russell</b>	National Parent Partnership Network