

LMSS MODERATION GUIDANCE FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND UNITS

REVISED JANUARY 2013

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out the process of moderation undertaken on an annual basis. The purpose of the moderation process is to ensure peer review of headteacher assessed bandings in an open and transparent manner, using the agreed LMSS banding criteria. The schools that are involved in this process;-

Special Schools

Ashmount
Birch Wood
Birkett House
Dorothy Goodman
Forest Way
Maplewell Hall

Special Nursery

Sketchley Menphys Special Nursery
Wigston Menphys Special Nursery

Schools with a special unit

Beacon Academy
Brookeside Primary
St Denys Infant
Hugglescote Primary
Newbold Verdon Primary
Rawlins Academy
Sherrard Primary
Westfield Infants
Westfield Juniors

Responsibilities

A. SEN Assessment Service will:

Maintain up to date records of all children attending special schools, units and specialist nurseries, their banding and whether they have previously been moderated. These records will be shared with schools as part of the LMSS moderation, or on request.

SENA will ensure that a child who previously attended a special nursery and had a banding, that if the child transfers to a special school or Unit, their "nursery" banding transfers too.

This financial information will be shared with the CYPS Finance Unit for calculating element 3 top up funding

Either the Service Manager or an SEN Officer will participate in the moderation visits.

The SEN assessment service will make the necessary arrangements working with school to plan the moderation process.

B. Special School and Unit Headteachers will:

- assess children on their rolls, using the LMSS criteria
- share that information with SENA, on request
- agree to peer moderation
- agree to be part of the moderation of other schools
- if in dispute, use the agreed appeals process
- support new headteacher colleagues in the process of banding and moderation
- use the agreed forms for providing evidence.- 2 -

C. The Moderation Team

The Moderation Team will be made up of the SEN Assessment Service Manager and two heads.

D. CYPS Finance will:

Calculate element 3 top up funding based upon the outcomes of the LMSS moderation process.

E. Process

The following sets out the key actions for the LMSS moderation process:

1. At the beginning of the Autumn Term, SEN Assessment Service to send LMSS banding forms for special schools and units to complete.
2. End of September, special schools to return headteacher's assessed banding to the SEN Assessment Service.
3. A representative from the SEN Assessment Service to meet with the Chair of the special school heads and/or another head teacher nominated by the schools to agree those pupils to be moderated.
4. Second week in October, SEN Assessment Service to provide all schools with the names of those pupils to be moderated.
5. October and November, moderation visits to be undertaken.
6. Mid-November, SEN Assessment Service Manager to confirm to all special schools the outcome of moderation.

7. Beginning of December, any appeals of the moderated bandings to be received by the SEN Assessment Service Manager.
8. By mid-December, any appeals to be heard and decisions determined.
9. Mid-January, post moderation meeting with all special school and unit heads with SENA to review moderation process and consider any amendments to the LMSS banding criteria. SEN Assessment Service also provide at this meeting a summary of all banding information. Dates to be set for the next round of moderation.
10. End of January, SEN Assessment Service to provide CYPS Finance with the agreed bandings for all children attending special schools, units and nurseries.

F. Choosing those pupils to be moderated

This is undertaken by a representative from the SEN Assessment Service, the Chair of the special school heads and/or another head teacher nominated by the participating schools. A minimum of six pupils, increasing in multiples of three, will be moderated depending upon the number of changes in banding.

Factors that need to be considered when choosing the pupils to moderated are as follows:

- pupils on high bandings who have not been previously moderated
- new admissions entering on high bandings
- increase in banding levels by two or three points
- mix of male/female pupils
- a cross section of bands from four to ten.

For the specialist nursery children, a selection will be made across the two sites. The nursery will be contacted on the day to ensure that the pupils to be moderated have attended at least a term and are in attendance for the day of moderation.

G. Moderation visit to schools

- The school will ensure that a suitable space is made available for the moderation team.

The moderation team will be made up of two special school/unit/nursery heads and one representative from the SEN Assessment Service.

- The special school/unit/nursery head will ensure that all necessary files and paperwork, including pen portraits, will be available. It is anticipated that most children being moderated will also be observed and therefore a school will need to know whether a child is in attendance and their whereabouts during the period of the moderation visit.
- The moderating team will assess all paperwork and observe the child if necessary, to ensure that there is evidence that can justify the headteacher's assessed banding. Once all the moderation team have viewed the papers, there will be a round table discussion, led by the SEN Assessment Service representative, to determine a consensus professional opinion of an agreed banding.
- When observing children in school, the team will need to ensure confidentiality and professional standards and courtesy to minimise any disruption to teaching, learning and school routines. If on the day of the moderation visit only two of the moderation team are available, the headteacher of the school will be asked for consent for the moderation to continue with a team of two moderators. If consent is not given, then the moderation visit will need rearranging. The head teacher(s) who make up the moderation team would also need to agree to proceeding with the moderation if only two moderators are in attendance.
- The SEN assessment Service representation will provide verbal feedback at the end of the moderation(s) visit to the head teacher

H. Outcome of Moderation Visit(s)

Where the moderation team ratify two thirds of the head teacher's assessed bandings, then all of the head teacher's assessed bandings are considered accurate and thereby ratified, only changes being the moderators' assessed banding for children moderated overrides the head teacher's assessed banding.

If the moderation team find that less than two thirds of the headteacher's assessed bandings are agreed, then the moderation team can request the papers of more children to be assessed. If at the end of this the moderation team cannot agree two thirds of the headteacher's assessed bandings, then, an additional visit should be arranged to moderate another sample of children, with the same moderation team.

If after a second or third moderation visit, two thirds of the headteacher's assessed bandings cannot be ratified, then the SEN Assessment Service representative will determine, following consultation with the moderation team and taking into account the level of disparity between the moderation team's findings and the headteacher's assessed bandings, the following:

Option 1

No uplifts in bandings are agreed.

Option 2

The bandings ratified in the previous financial year be used for funding purposes. Any new admissions to be funded by either 1. Using the head teacher's assessed banding but using an average for the school population, or 2. Using the head teacher's assessed banding but minus one.

Option 3

All pupils' bandings are reduced by one.

Where there is such disagreement, it is anticipated that for the next financial year, the headteacher concerned is supported by a headteacher colleague through the banding process.

At the end of the moderation visit, the SEN Assessment Service representative will feed back to the headteacher the outcome of the moderation visit with a follow up letter.

H. Appeals

A special school/Unit/nursery can appeal against the outcome of moderation if they are dissatisfied with individual pupil's results, or the effect of the moderation on all pupils' bandings. The appeals will need to be lodged within the specified time scale, in writing, to the SEN Assessment Service Manager with reasons and evidence, referring to the LMSS matrix. The appeals panel will be made up of two special school heads and a representative of the Children & Young People's Service. Who, though knowledgeable of the LMSS process, had not been directly involved in the moderation of pupils. As of autumn 2007, this is Charlie Palmer, Head of Special Educational Services.

I. Appendices

1. Agreed criteria
2. Pen Portrait Formula
3. Example letters used by SENA