

INCLUSION SUPPORT

SEN AUDIT 2003

REPORT

MARY ARKLESS
SEN Audit Co-ordinator

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Introduction

- Thanks should be given to SENCOs and other school staff for their considerable efforts in identifying children who meet SEN Audit criteria in their schools.
- Last year, in spite of a slight hiccup relating to the exporting of files, 100% of Primary and Secondary schools finally succeeded in making their returns electronically and downloading them to the LEA. The hard work of all support service staff in ensuring the successful use of criteria and the use of the electronic version for making returns is also fully recognised.

Training and Support

- The following training was provided:-
 - 6 sessions were delivered by the SEN Audit Core Group in venues across the city. Over 200 SENCOs and other staff attended. Feedback given was that these sessions had been helpful.
 - Sessions on the SEN Audit were also included in the two New SENCO training courses run during the year.
 - In addition training was provided to those school staff responsible for dealing with the software and the exporting of files. This training was delivered by EDIT.
 - The CRISP team also ran training for new SENCOs on using the CRISP software including the SEN Audit.
 - A number of school based sessions were delivered by PSS staff. These were to help individual schools in ensuring consistency in the assessment of pupils using the SEN Audit criteria.

Collection of SEN Audit Returns

- This year the updated version of the CRISP software (CRISP v. 5), was sent out to schools. The staff trained in the installation of the software ensured that the CD was installed satisfactorily.
- The only real difficulties experienced with exporting the returns were where some schools placed the file in the wrong directory. However, finally all schools managed to send in their SEN Audit returns electronically, which was a real success story.

- As Education Finance had been requested by schools to provide the budget statements to schools a few weeks earlier than usual, the whole process was under pressure of time. Nevertheless, thanks to EDIT staff and the SEN Audit administrative officer the data was sent in on time.

Moderation of the SEN Audit

The Moderation Process

Selection of Schools

- The criteria for selecting schools was as follows:-
 - Schools where there were concerns following last year's Audit moderation.
 - Schools that had not been moderated for 3 years.
 - A small random sample of schools that had been moderated last year.
- A total of 130 schools were selected (33% of all schools).
- All schools sent in pupil evidence as requested.
- This year the SEN Audit Office contacted those schools where it was clear that the pupils selected were newly identified and alternative pupils were chosen.
- As for last year the stricter criteria for assessing the evidence was used. Thus schools were asked for 3, 6, or 9 samples of evidence. It was required that 2/3 of the samples were satisfactory in meeting the criteria, both in attainment and provision.
- Samples were selected randomly within a formula to ensure a spread of pupils at different year groups and bands.

Evidence Requested

- The following pupil evidence was requested from each selected school:-
 - Copy of the SEN Audit profile.
 - The IEP or Group Education Plan in use at the time of Audit completion. (Where schools had used alternative target setting processes with the pupils evidence of this was acceptable).
 - The IEP, Group Education Plan or alternative and Review preceding that in use at the time of the Audit.
 - A piece of unaided writing produced at the time of the Audit with a transcription where necessary and a note of the time taken.

- At KS1 appropriate samples of evidence to support the writing criteria with details of the amount of support given.
- Record of the most recent English SATs results.

Moderation of the Pupil Evidence

- This was carried out over a period of 2/3 days including training for the moderation team.
- As in previous years, a letter had been sent out to all SENCOs inviting anyone to apply who was interested in joining the moderation team.
- This year we were unable to provide funding to cover SENCOs but in spite of this even more SENCOs did apply.
- We were very pleased that 28 SENCOs took part, which was over twice as many as the 13 SENCOs involved last year. These represented SENCOs from Primary and Secondary phases from across the city as well as 1 SENCO from a special school.
- In addition 6 PSS staff participated, as well as the SEN Audit Core Group.
- The training took place in the morning of March 17th; the team worked in pairs during that afternoon and then individually for the next day. The PSS staff continued during the 3rd day.
- Overall the moderation ran very smoothly and the feedback from the SENCOs was that the experience had been very worthwhile.
- Those schools that had not been able to provide satisfactory evidence either for attainment, provision or both were then scrutinised more closely by the SEN Audit Core Group.
- A tracking exercise was carried out to track the year group that had completed their SATs in the previous year and determining the number of pupils that met SEN Audit Bands 2 and 3. A comparison was made between the number of children identified on the SEN Audit and the number of children that were at the levels appropriate to the SEN Audit on SATs.
- In addition we looked at the returns of these schools in relation to those of their family groups of schools and identified if they were high or low in the group.

Results of Moderation

- Of the 130 schools involved, 15 schools were unable to provide satisfactory evidence to support their SEN Audit returns.

- Of these, 7 were unable to provide sufficient evidence to support attainment and provision criteria.
- 2 schools had a problem with providing evidence to support the attainment criteria only.
- A further 6 schools were unable to provide satisfactory evidence to meet the provision criteria only.
- Of the schools with difficulties 7 were able to provide satisfactory explanations.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
% of schools providing satisfactory evidence to support the attainment criteria.	90% of 100% of schools	94% of 25% of schools	91% of 100% of schools	96% of 100% of schools	98% of 50% of schools	83% of 25% of schools (stricter criteria for moderation)	93% of 33% of schools (stricter criteria for moderation)

- The above table demonstrates that even with considerably stricter criteria for satisfying the moderation team that the evidence supports audit returns, the % of schools providing satisfactory evidence to support the attainment criteria has increased by 10% since last year.
- A total of 89% of schools moderated, succeeded in providing satisfactory evidence for both attainment and provision criteria, which is an increase of 9% from last year.
- Part of the increase may have been due to a slight change in the procedures for dealing with the evidence that was sent in. This involved contacting schools where pupils selected by the Audit Group were new to the school (therefore with little evidence) and asking for evidence for alternative pupils instead.
- In spite of this, there was still a problem of non-submission of the appropriate evidence in some of the schools where there were concerns.
- The over and under identification of writing as assessed using the unaided writing samples seemed to be reduced this year.
- There was still a problem in some schools relating to lack of specificity of targets and reviews.

- As far as provision was concerned there was still insufficient evidence of time allocation and, in a number of schools, lack of evidence of pupil contribution to the IEP/Review. However in two of the schools causing concerns there were good systems established for involving pupils in their own target setting.
- The increased flexibility of asking for any target setting evidence, not just IEPs was in line with the new SEN Code of Practice and other DfES initiatives.

Outcomes of Moderation

- The moderation panel agreed a range of possible outcomes for those schools where there had been insufficient evidence provided. These included:-
 - Involvement of the school's Link adviser.
 - Involvement in the Inclusion Support's SEN Evaluation Framework.
 - Development of an action plan in liaison with the school's PSS teacher.
 - Moderation next year.
- It was not necessary for any school to lose funding for the year 2004-05 as a result of concerns raised by the moderation process.

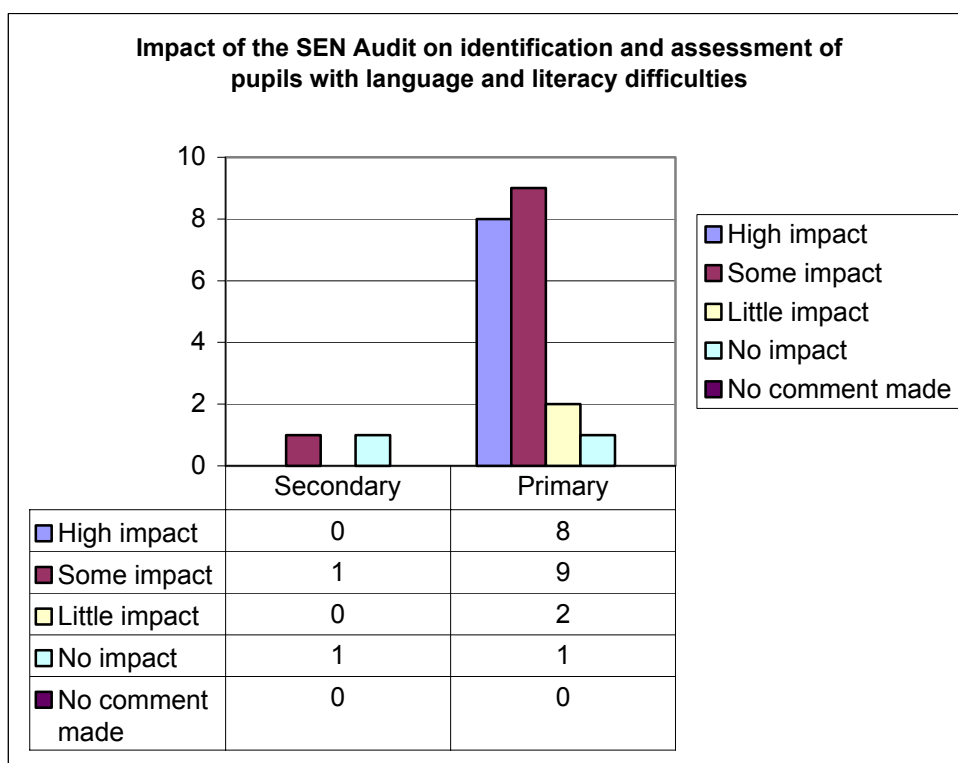
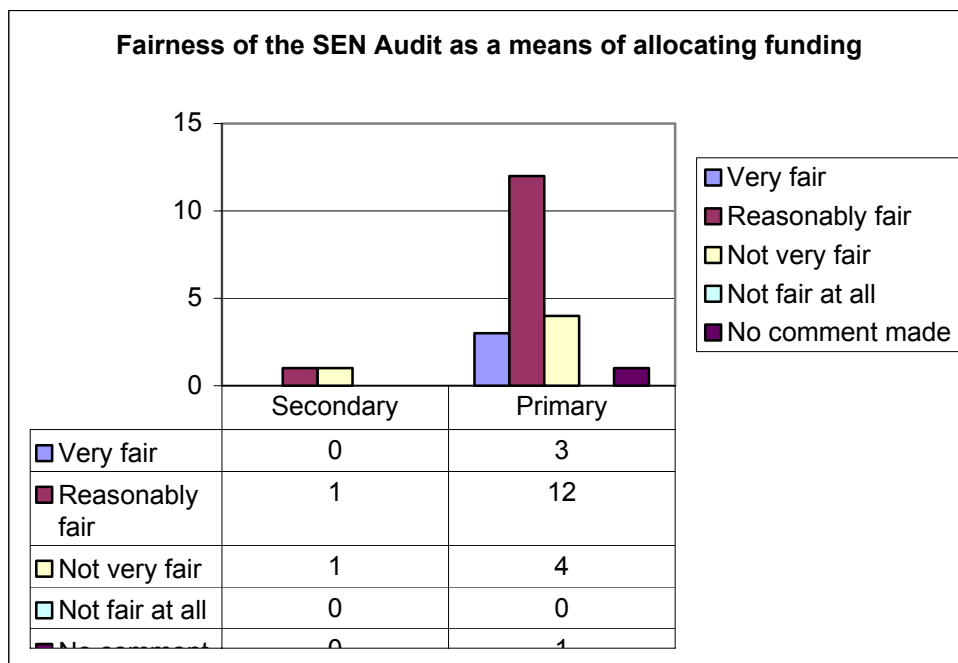
Feedback from Schools about the SEN Audit Process

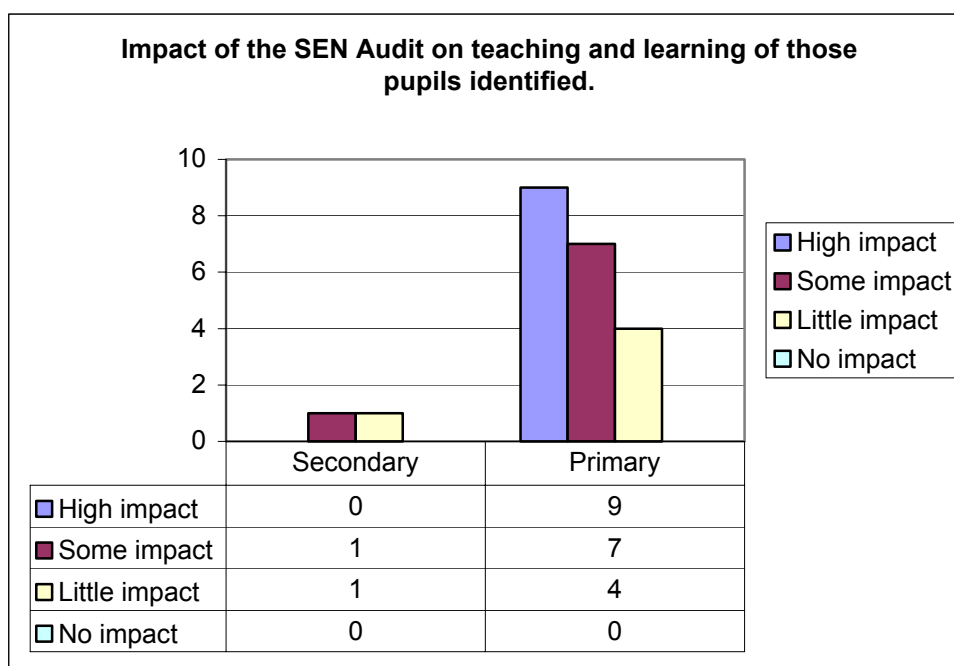
- A feedback sheet was included in the SEN Audit pack of materials sent out to schools at the beginning of the Autumn term. During the SENCO training it was emphasised how important it is to complete and return the feedback sheet so that the SEN Audit Steering Group and the SEN Audit Core Group have some information about the views of staff about the process and its impact in schools.
- A total of 22 Primary and Secondary feedback sheets were received and a further 6 from Nursery schools. This was a disappointing return and the Core Group are looking at ways to encourage a higher return for the next SEN Audit.

Results of Feedback

- The following graphs and tables indicate the responses to the 3 questions asked:-
 - How fair do you think the SEN Audit is as a means of allocating top-up funding as part of the notional SEN budget?
 - What impact has the SEN Audit had on the identification and assessment of pupils with language and literacy difficulties?

- What impact has the SEN Audit had on the teaching and learning of those pupils identified?





- As can be seen the majority of Primary schools responding to the three questions gave responses that indicated reasonable satisfaction. There were mixed views from the 2 Secondary schools responding. A variety of comments were made, both positive and negative. The majority of negative comments were in fact constructive and will be considered carefully in the further development of the SEN Audit and guidance to schools.
- There was criticism of the SEN Audit from some Nursery schools. Some criticisms related to the criteria themselves, others related to the timing of the SEN Audit and the fact that it deals with only language and literacy.

Analysis of Data

General

- Charts 1 and 2 below provide an analysis of the number and percentage of pupils meeting the SEN Audit criteria at Bands 2 and 3 for 2002 – 03.
- As can be seen there has been a small increase of % of pupils at Band 2 (.08%) but a more substantial increase in pupils at Band 3 (.94%). It would appear from these statistics that there is an increasing tail of underachievement of pupils at Band 3 in language and literacy that needs to be addressed.
- Further analysis of the data indicates varying patterns of increase in Primary and Secondary phases. In Primary the % of pupils at Band 2 has

actually decreased but then increased in Secondary. For Band 3 the % of pupils has increased across the board.

Chart 1: Number of Pupils meeting SEN Audit Criteria at Final Bands 2 and 3 in 2002 and 2003

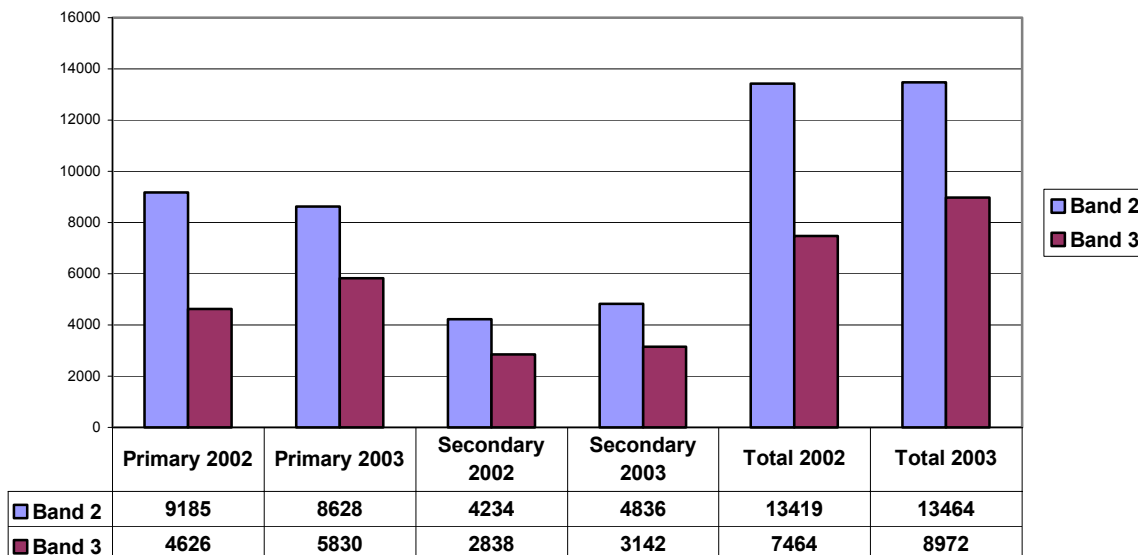
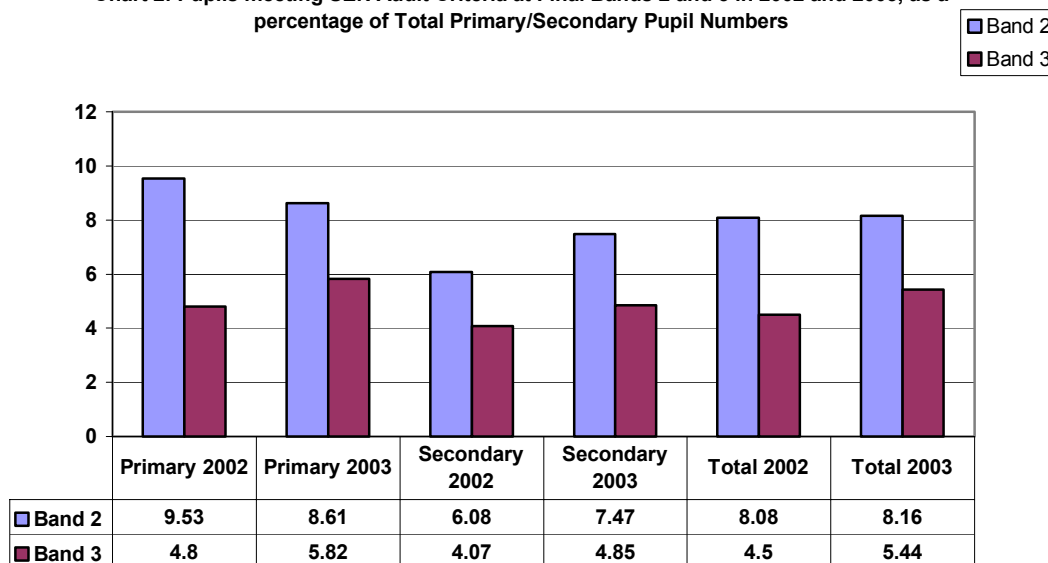


Chart 2: Pupils meeting SEN Audit Criteria at Final Bands 2 and 3 in 2002 and 2003, as a percentage of Total Primary/Secondary Pupil Numbers

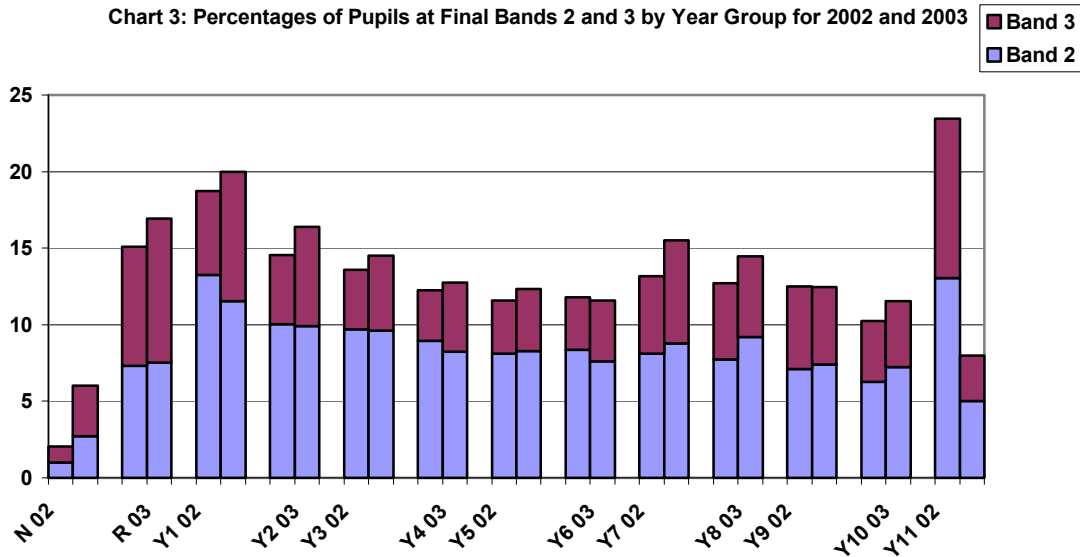


Analysis by Year Group

- Chart 3 below analyses the percentages of pupils at Bands 2 and 3 by year group comparing results for 2002 and 2003. These show in more detail the particular year groups where there are increases and decreases.
- As can be seen, there are over all increases in most years with the exception of Y6, Y 9 and substantially Y11. It is not clear why such a large % of pupils had been identified in the previous year's Audit at Y11

but this seems to have resolved itself this year. The first column in each pair indicates results for 2002, the second column shows results for 2003.

Chart 3: Percentages of Pupils at Final Bands 2 and 3 by Year Group for 2002 and 2003



Analysis by Gender

- Chart 4 indicates as in previous years that the proportion of girls and boys identified as having language and literacy difficulties has remained about the same with roughly a 60/40 split.
- This is demonstrated in most year groups with a little variation depending on the age group as can be seen in Chart 5 below. The first column of each pair indicates the results for females with the second column of each pair showing the results for males.

Chart 4: Pupils at Bands 2 and 3, analysed by Gender

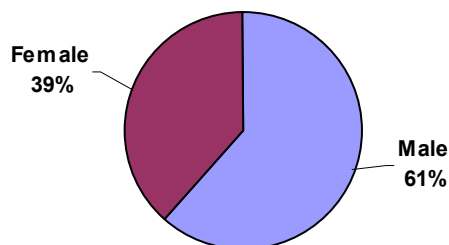
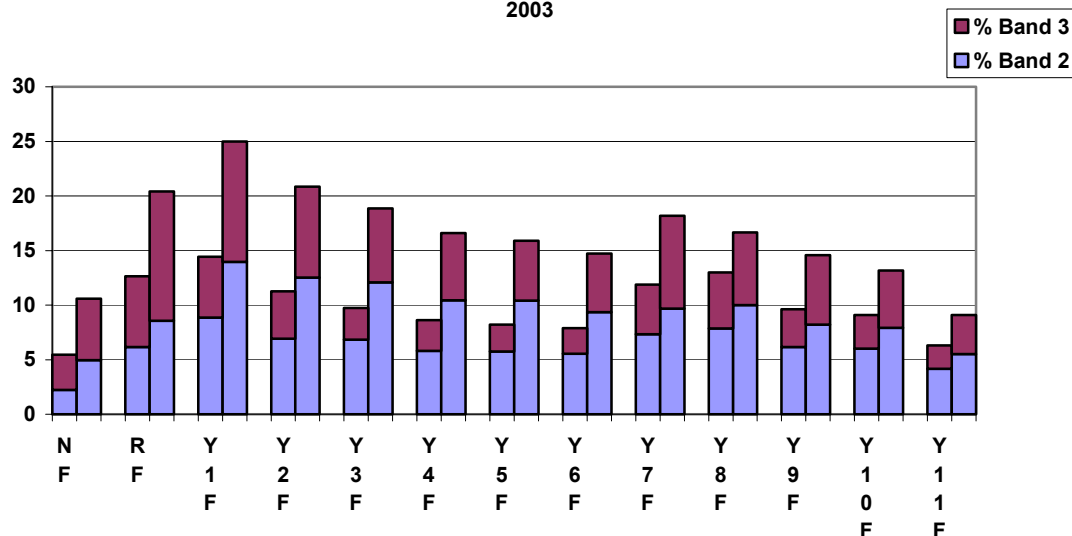


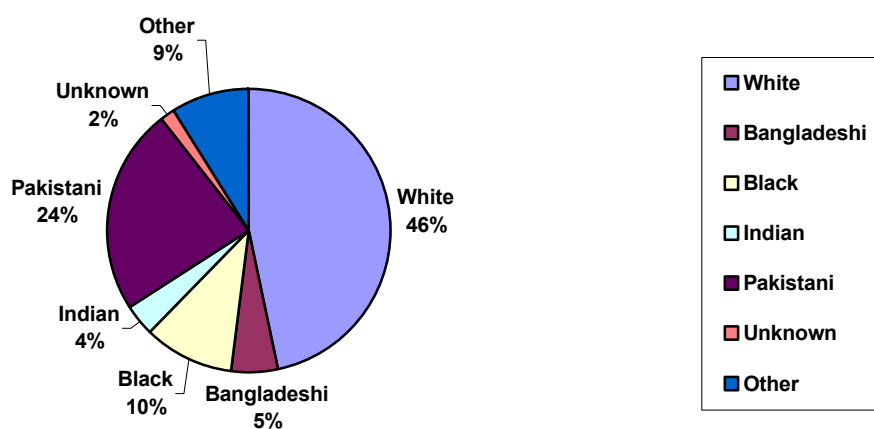
Chart 5: Percentages of Pupils at Final Bands 2 and 3 by Gender and Year Group for 2003



Analysis by Ethnicity

- The analysis by ethnicity is similar to that obtained for the previous year.

Chart 6: Percentage of Pupils meeting SEN Audit criteria analysed by Ethnicity

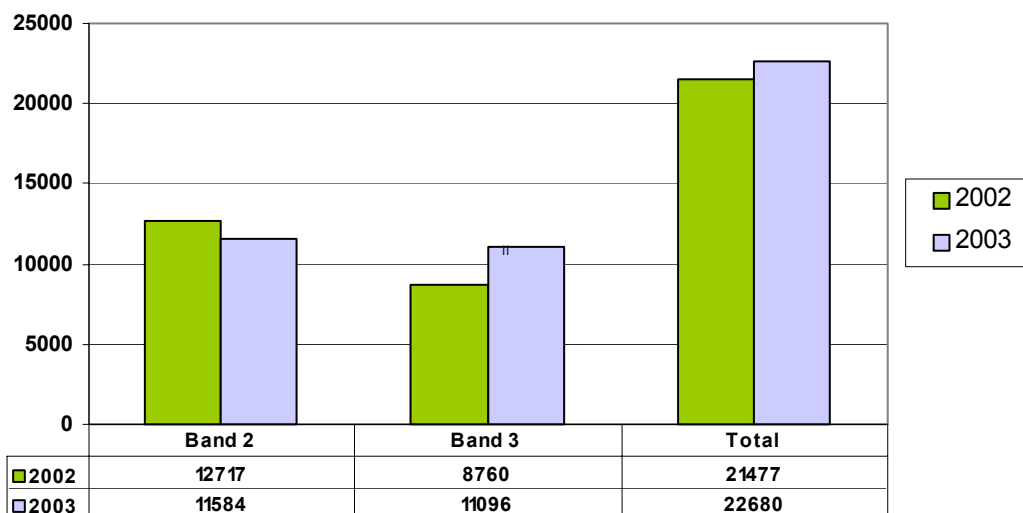


- Further comparison with the ethnic composition of the whole school population indicates that in every ethnic group except for White and Indian there is a higher percentage meeting SEN Audit criteria than in the overall population. Again this has implications for schools in their efforts to raise achievement for all children.

Analysis by Area of Difficulty

- Data has also been obtained regarding the specific area of difficulty assessed through the SEN Audit i.e. Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing. This is helpful to schools and support services in identifying the area(s) that will need to be targeted for particular interventions as well as helping staff to evaluate their existing methods.
- For Speaking and Listening and Reading there was a slight decrease in the number of pupils at Band 2 and a slight increase in pupils at Band 3 from the SEN Audit 2002 to 2003.
- It would appear from the data that the greatest increase is evident in the number of pupils identified as having difficulty at Band 3 in Writing as indicated in Chart 7. It would seem that possibly those pupils previously at Band 2 (the numbers of which have decreased) have fallen even further behind and are now being assessed as Band 3.
- However, while this has implications for attempts to improve the teaching of writing and the development of appropriate Wave 3 interventions, we should be wary of providing simplistic explanations for what are complex trends.

Chart 7: Number of Pupils at Writing Bands 2 and 3 in 2002 and 2003



Recommendations

1. To increase the amount of funding allocated through the SEN Audit. This will ensure that resources are more directly targeted to meeting needs in schools. Currently the composition of the Notional SEN Budget is being reconsidered and options will be presented to schools regarding the mechanism by which a possible additional £3.7 million can be allocated.
2. From both the analysis of comments on the feedback sheets as well as some verbal feedback received, the process of assessing pupils against the SEN Audit criteria is considered to be time consuming. Some of the feedback indicated that this was a valid use of time. It is recommended that opportunities for sharing good practice be provided during the SENCO training sessions. The meeting with some SENCOs from secondary schools highlighted the good practice that is possible for KS3 and 4 and this practice should also be disseminated through the training provided.
3. However, the SEN Audit Core group should review the literacy criteria particularly for Years 7 – 11 to see if there are ways to simplify the assessment process without jeopardising the positive aspects of existing practice. It is recommended that this review is carried out with a group of secondary SENCOs/English Department staff and that it takes into account current assessment practice in KS3 and 4. The recommendations of this group will be considered for the SEN Audit 2005.
4. The Nursery school feedback indicates some dissatisfaction with the Nursery criteria used last year. Since that feedback was given, the Speaking and Listening criteria have been revised following consultation. Nevertheless, as Nursery schools are now receiving a portion of their funding through the SEN Audit, more detailed consultation needs to take place with Nursery staff (Head teachers and SENCOs) to ensure that the criteria are appropriate. In addition, advice should be sought on the most appropriate way of moderating Nursery Audit returns.
5. Further feedback should be sought particularly around the revised Speaking and Listening descriptors and if necessary adaptations made for the SEN Audit 2005.
6. An increased number of training sessions should be delivered for the SEN Audit 2005. These should be targeted at particular phases e.g. Primary, Secondary, Nursery. A small charge should be made to help towards covering the cost of running the sessions.
7. It is recommended that the method of selecting schools to send in pupil evidence for moderation purposes should be linked to the SEN Framework for Evaluation. In addition schools with concerns arising from

the moderation should have additional weighting in the filtering process that is part of that Framework.

8. It is recommended that work be undertaken to explore the use of the SEN Audit returns for tracking pupil progress in each school with a view to the inclusion of such data as part of the SEN Evaluation Framework.
9. With personalised learning, the SEN Audit descriptors are well placed to assist schools in ensuring appropriate assessment and target setting for pupils with language and literacy difficulties. The fact that the descriptors link in with the NLS and the new National Speaking and Listening Strategy helps in this process. In view of this, more work is required on collecting and collating teaching and learning ideas related to the descriptors from Y7 – Y11.
10. The ideas for teaching and learning, currently on the software, should be printed out and produced in the form of a booklet for distribution to participants at the SENCO training sessions. This will help SENCOs to disseminate them to other school staff. Further copies should be available to schools at a small cost.
11. All criteria both for Speaking and Listening and for Reading and Writing should form a seamless continuum. This will make it easier for schools to use the descriptors as an aid to assessment and target setting.
12. A module incorporating CRISP and the SEN Audit is being developed within CMIS, which will simplify considerably the mechanism for transferring CRISP and SEN Audit returns electronically. This system is likely to be operating in over half Birmingham schools during the next year. However it is not possible to update the existing CRISP software with the new Speaking and Listening criteria unless a new CD is produced. To avoid the necessity of schools having to install another CD next year, schools should be advised to use the hard copy of the SEN Audit criteria for assessing pupils while still using the CRISP v. 5 software for making their returns. The method for updating the software easily needs to be investigated by the LEA.

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