

Removing barriers: A can-do attitude ^[1]

A report on developing good practice for children with special needs in early years childcare and education in the private and voluntary sectors

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpts from the report:

This report sets out the findings of a survey to evaluate what child care providers in the private and voluntary sector are doing to make it easier for children with special needs to access care and education and for these children to have the best possible outcomes. Inspectors visited 42 child care providers across the country that were judged during their previous inspection as good or outstanding at including children with special needs, or had been nominated by a national child care organisation for having good practice in this area.

The report found that inconsistencies between local authorities and a lack of joined-up thinking is limiting access to good quality child care provision for parents with children who have special needs.

In order to improve outcomes for children with special needs:

- local authorities should support child care providers in the private and voluntary sector to develop comprehensive plans to promote the best outcomes for children with special needs;

- local authorities and children's information services should provide information to parents of children with special needs that is easily understood, helps them choose appropriate child care and tells them about useful sources of support;

- the DfES should work with local authorities to establish strategic partnerships between local children's services that enable early years providers to access the funding and the coordinated multi-agency support they require to promote positive outcomes for children with special needs across all areas of the country;

- in training programmes, local authorities should tackle attitudinal barriers, raise awareness and inform providers of high quality national educational guidance, such as Birth to three matters, Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and the Special Education Needs Code of Practice;

- local authorities should encourage specialist services to build productive links and outreach support to mainstream providers and disseminate examples of good practice.

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