

Documentary Research of statements of Special Educational Needs: a Protocol

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Abstract

All formal statements of Special Educational Needs and their subsequent annual reviews contain significant information about children's learning needs, and how they are met. The SEN Codes of Practice for England and Wales permit research of statements of SEN. However, it is important to reassure parents and LAs so that interrogation of this source is acceptable to them. This paper describes the process of one such small, documentary, research project. The research considers eleven children with statements of SEN identifying Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder as a primary learning need, and focuses upon particular aspects, including literacy difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, gender bias and medication. The research further notes an educationally under-researched group of children (three within the sample of eleven) who experience ADHD together with autistic spectrum disorders. The steps in the research process are described, with the intention of establishing a protocol for possible future statement research. The support of the LA, particularly the involvement of the SEN administrative team, is noted as an important element in the project. It is concluded that with an appropriate protocol in place, documentary research of this type has both longitudinal study potential and case-finding potential.

## Documentary Research of statements of Special Educational Needs: a Protocol

### Introduction

Statements of Special Educational Needs are legally binding contracts designed to identify and provide for all of a child's particular learning needs. Since their introduction following the 1981 Education Act, statements have been produced by Local Education Authorities, now referred to as Local Authorities (LAs), to support children with the most significant learning needs. Although LAs vary in the way that they provide for children with special educational needs, every English and Welsh Authority will have a number of statements in place.

Statements are made after a detailed multi agency assessment, and since the process is detailed and time consuming, they usually remain in place for a number of years. Each year the statement is updated by an annual review process, and this means that statements and their reviews can provide a source of good quality information, gathered over time to describe a child's progress.

The SEN Code of Practice permits statements of SEN to be used for research purposes, stating that:

LEAs may also give access to the statement to persons engaged in research on special educational needs on the condition that the researchers do not publish anything derived from, or contained in, the statements that would identify the child or parents concerned (DfES 2001; para 8:112).

It was to explore this facility within the Code that a small documentary research project was carried out. The research took a particular focus upon Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, with additional consideration of emotional and behavioural difficulties, academic and particularly literacy difficulties, medication, and gender. In this way the project sought both to explore a topic that would lend itself to

statement research, and to identify a way of carrying out such research in a way that would reassure partners, rather than raise sensitivities.

### The Background to the Research

Percie-Smith, Burden, Darlow, Dowson, Hawtin and Ladi (2002) have pointed to a lack of clarity about research in the local government context. They noted that Authorities differed in their use of, and approach to, research, and that dissemination was often varied. They found too that front-line staff members did not always have access to the findings, and considered that generally the impact upon policy was small. Later, McCullum and Fowler found a much more developed research culture within LAs, with only a small number of respondents (three out of eighty-five) lacking a designated research team (McCullum and Fowler 2004;60) . Nevertheless the authors found that within the area of SEN, both a monitoring role and an analysis role were carried out by “other staff” rather than these teams (op.cit; 29). It may be that SEN research continues to take something of a marginalised role in the Local Authority.

Writing in the context of the management of special educational needs, Blandford and Gibson refer to the need for ‘recognising the ‘messes’ of reality and using a holistic approach to dealing with them’ (Blandford and Gibson 2000; 12). Statementing is a process that sets out to understand and make provision for such complex educational realities. The information contained within LA records of statements and annual reviews should contribute towards an understanding that supports the recommended holistic approach and informs front line staff; this is their intended purpose for individual children, and may yield valuable information when considered as a group.

The SEN Code of Practice, however, states that LAs *may* permit research, not that they *must* do so; permission is therefore at the LA’s volition. It is

understandable that busy LAs might not wish to get involved in the additional tasks represented by research of their records. In addition the area of special educational needs is a sensitive one, sometimes resulting in difficult relationships between schools, parents and LAs. For these reasons it was felt important to reassure parents and LAs that the purpose of the research was not to criticise, compare, or consider the cost-effectiveness of interventions, but to work out a methodology that would satisfy all parties, and meet ethical considerations.

#### A focus upon statements of SEN

Periodically, since their inception in the 1981 Education Act, both the concept and material of statements of special educational needs have come under scrutiny. In 2002 the Audit Commission consultation document “Statutory Assessment and statements of SEN: in need of review (Audit Commission 2002a)” criticised the statementing process in quite strong terms. However the subsequent report “Special educational needs-a mainstream issue (Audit Commission 2002b) moderated this view, turning instead to a focus upon inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream education.

More recently, both Warnock (2005), and MacBeath et. al. (2006) have been critical of statementing. The House of Commons Education and Skills Committee (2006), has also looked closely and critically at the statementing process, recommending the separation of assessment and resourcing. Government declined to take up this challenge, considering that:

“A major review of SEN policy and radical change to the present statutory framework at the present time would not be helpful and would lead to prolonged uncertainty” (The Stationery Office 2006; .37).

This response was in turn challenged by the Education and Skills Committee itself. A press release was issued (The United Kingdom Parliament 2007) inviting

further consideration of the separation of assessment and provision of resources. Similarly, the Opposition published its view on the statementing process, criticising it in strong terms and recommending its replacement by a system of Profiles (The Conservative Party 2007).

It is worth considering why statements of SEN attract so much criticism. One reason is that they are hard to get, another is that they are hard to control. A statement of SEN represents a powerful guarantee that a child will have his or her needs met. They represent the outcome of a formidable assessment process calling on all the agencies and parties involved, and in making arrangements for a child's additional educational provision they are required to be specific and quantified (DfES 2001;103). It is not permitted to restrict provision in order to try to control SEN expenditure; the legislative framework is based on the great humanitarian expectation that a child's learning needs shall be met, although both the Human Rights Act 1998 and the SEN Code of Practice include the caveat that this shall not represent unreasonable expenditure. (What, is, or is not considered to be 'unreasonable' is the foundation of many appeals to the SEN and Disability Tribunal).

It is possible that as an administrative tool, statements have come to seem unwieldy; critics consider the process to be excessively lengthy, expensive and bureaucratic. The inclusion agenda, with its increasing awareness of human rights and social justice, reflected in policy and legislation, plus the devolving and delegating of SEN funding directly to schools, have all made for a changed educational ethos for children with special education needs. The further reflections of government may give rise to changes. However, the strength of the guarantees made in statements of SEN is too great for them to be given up lightly, unless they are replaced by something that is demonstrably more advantageous to children, their parents and carers, and their schools. It seems possible that statement research could remain a viable concept for some time. Even if the making of statements were

to cease, LAs will need to maintain archives of statements and their related documents for many years.

#### A focus upon Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder

In seeking a focus for this research project, ADHD was chosen because of its particular interest to the researchers. The SEN Code of Practice does not refer directly to Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, describing instead children with emotional and behavioural difficulties who are 'hyperactive and lack concentration' (DfES 2001 para 7:60). The British Psychological Society (2000) points out that while there remains some controversy about the existence and nature of ADHD, there is now sufficient evidence from research to support its recognition as a true condition. There remains a tension between treating ADHD as a biological, that is medical, condition and an environmental, or behavioural one (Frederickson and Cline 2002, p.111./112). The British Psychological Society seeks to resolve this by describing ADHD as occurring at the interaction between biological and environmental factors (British Psychological Society 2000).

Hughes and Cooper (2007) point out that difficulties in meeting the needs of children who experience ADHD are compounded by the complexity of social and learning interactions that are involved, and their impact upon children's behaviour. One LA makes the point that it is only when predispositions such as a shortened attention span or high activity become a problem and hamper learning that they should be thought of as a disorder (North Lincolnshire Council 2002).

Nevertheless ADHD is now part of the special educational needs discourse, and related learning needs seem to fall into the areas of emotional and behavioural difficulties (Kewley, 2001) and academic failure, particularly in the area of literacy. The relationship of these learning characteristics is not clear. Using the USA identification of learning difficulty (LD), Mayes, Calhoun and Crowell (2000; 417)

found a significant level of literacy difficulty, particularly in the area of written expression, within their sample of 119 children, concluding that learning and attention difficulties form a continuum, and usually occur together. However, Pisecco et.al. consider that reading disabilities (RD) and ADHD are better described as distinct disorders that frequently co-occur (Pisecco et.al 2001; 98). Nevertheless their research also identifies an overlap with receptive language and behavioural difficulties.

Generally, children who experience ADHD are seen as falling within the normal range of intelligence distribution (Kaplan et.al, 2000), although Hughes and Cooper point out that there is some debate about this (Hughes and Cooper 2007; 9), located both in the characteristics of the assessment process, and in the impact attributed to ADHD. Estimates of the incidence of ADHD vary, the British Psychological Society placing it at between one and six per cent of the population, and Korn (2001) as between three and six per cent, while Hazelwood, Bovington and Tiemens (2002; 301) cite DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association 1994) as describing a prevalence of three to five percent.

Boys have been thought generally to outnumber girls identified with ADHD. However, Willcutt and Pennington's (2000) twin study suggests that gender disparity might result because boys identified with ADHD seem more likely to manifest hyperactive, impulsive and disruptive behaviours than girls with ADHD. Biederman et. al. (2002) concur, reporting from their research of clinical and community-based identification of 140 girls and 140 boys with ADHD, that identification of girls as experiencing ADHD depended on the assessment protocol, in this case, upon which version of the APA's Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM III or IV) had been used to supply the diagnostic criteria (Biederman et.al. 2002;37). They concluded that:

"the lower likelihood of girls to manifest psychiatric, cognitive and functional impairment than boys could result in gender-based referral bias unfavourable to girls with ADHD" (Biederman et.al. 2002; 36).

Where ADHD has been identified as a condition that seriously hampers both education and everyday living, medication, often in the form of methylphenidate (Ritalin), has been used to minimise behaviours. This can raise ethical and professional issues for educators, both in principle and practice (Farrell, 2004; 51, Hughes and Cooper, 2007; 28/29). The use of medication remains controversial, with Keen (2005) reporting a response rate of 80%, while Daniels (2006) cites Rose (2005) in challenging the conventional pharmacotherapy view.

From these and other questions that the subject raises, ADHD can be seen as presenting a much larger area for enquiry than can be encompassed within this small project. However, the longitudinal data called for by Diller and Goldstein (2006; 572) and the possibility of “discrepancy between theory and practice experience” in multimodal methods of working with children with ADHD, encountered by Hazelwood et.al (op.cit; 303) might be augmented by such research. Further, there is “case-finding” potential; when Raberger and Wimmer (2003) sought to study children with ADHD and overlapping learning characteristics, the researchers found that they needed to approach 40 classrooms before being able to identify a sample of 11 children. It is possible that, had they been able to conduct their research through UK statements of special educational needs, their sample might have been found more easily.

### Planning the Research

Five LAs were approached before one LA gave permission to carry out the research. Reasons given for refusal included restrictions felt to be imposed by the Data Protection Act - although part IV section 33 of the Act allows for research provided that the principles, ethics and protection required by the Act are respected - and the



claims that the research would make upon the time of the already busy SEN administrative team. This is an important point, because SEN teams work to critical deadlines. While it might be possible to research LA statement records without the help of the administrative team, their assistance was seen as necessary and in the event, proved to be an important part of the research process, since they were fundamental to the identification of pupil records and the requesting of parental permission, and then later were an important source of validity in clarifying interpretation.

McCulloch (2004; 4) considers that documentary research is neglected and underrated, considering that, "To understand documents is to read between the lines of our material world" (op.cit; 1). McCulloch cites Mills' (1959) sociological perspective, focusing upon contexts where personal and public issues interact. He points out that documents can shed light on such issues, providing insight into the relationship of past and present, and private and public. In this context statements of SEN and their Annual Review records are a combination of background, present position and way forward. They are documents that are both private to learners and their parents or carers, and yet public in their availability to relevant practitioners. They could, if interrogated in detail, be a rich source of data and insight.

In carrying out documentary research, McCullough describes rigour as residing in "some basic, well established rules...these are generally discussed in terms of authenticity, reliability, meaning and theorisation" (op. cit; 42). Both Duffy (2005) and Cohen et. al (2000) discuss the importance of external criticism in establishing the authenticity of the documents. This is not a problem with records of statements held by the Authority, since they are original documents and are vouched for by the SEN administrative team.

Another issue is that of internal criticism (Duffy, op. cit.; 131), which requires the documents to be rigorously analysed and subjected to scrutiny for bias. In this research project bias that might arise from the researchers' desire to find suitable examples was controlled by the fact that it was the SEN administrative team that identified a possible sample, and parents' agreement that self-selected the final sample. Rigour in the analysis was supported by the use of a proforma concentrating upon issues identified in the literature, and by the researchers cross referencing with each other and with the SEN team if questions arose. The manner of making the statements themselves operates against possible contributor bias and supports reliability because of the number of sources, processes and judgements involved. Since the content of statements of SEN have legal power and can be challenged, points made in the statement have to be supported by robust evidence.

With regard to meaning, McCulloch discusses not only the quality and clarity of the documentary evidence, but also the importance of taking into account its context and social relevance. The researchers' understanding, including his or her beliefs and conceptualisations, also provide context. This leads to considerations of theorisation, and McCulloch cites Jupp and Norris (1993) in identifying three broad areas for documentary analysis, represented as: "positivist, interpretive and critical" (McCulloch, op.cit; 46). The statement research in this project is not critical; it was part of the agreement under which the research as carried out, that it would not seek to criticize. Nor is the research interpretive, focusing on the "nature of social phenomena such as documents as being specially constructed" (McCulloch, ibid.)

In terms of this analysis statements of special educational needs, while to some extent interpretive, are largely positivist, relying as they do on normative test scores, percentiles and rates of progress, and the research project follow suit. Perception of this point opens a way to a future consideration of statement research

that might take a critical, deconstructionist approach, exploring hidden ideologies, hierarchies and frameworks. However this was not the basis on which access for the present project was agreed.

### Method

The research was planned to reassure parents and the LA by acting in accordance with ethical guidelines (BERA 2004), therefore parental consent was sought before the records were viewed, and confidentiality was maintained. The research was carried out in the LA offices because this too maintained confidentiality.

The steps in the research process were as follows:

1. To begin the selection of pupil examples the SEN administrative team was asked to identify thirty children with statements of SEN made with ADHD as the primary need. Thirty was felt to be the maximum number of records that the researchers could read in detail on their single visit to the LA. (In the event this was nearly the whole complement of the LA's thirty seven statements for ADHD).
2. The SEN team were provided with a letter that included a permission slip. This was sent to all the parents identified by the team, requesting permission for the researchers to look at their child's records. The team also received a blank stamped envelope, since only they knew the family addresses, and a stamped addressed envelope to return the permission slip, for each family contacted. Extra copies were provided for parents who had separate households. The SEN administrative teams sent the letters out to the parents of the identified children, but the researchers only knew the names of those who returned the permission slip, thereby maintaining confidentiality. The only statements perused were for children whose parents had thereby actively agreed.

3. The researchers prepared a proforma covering the aspects of information sought, derived from the research interest and from the literature. This provided a profile of learning characteristics, support provided by the LA and the school, and rate of progress (Figure 1).

Figure 1: data collection form (fictionalised example)

Pupil	<i>(X anon.)</i>
Age	<i>9 now, 10 in July</i>
Gender	<i>M</i>
When was the statement first finalised?	<i>(three years previously)</i>
What is the statement for?	<i>1 ADHD 2 Asperger's Syndrome 3</i>
Support level and type in the statement	<i>Given number of. hours of additional support per week</i>
Additional support provided by the school	<i>Bringing this up to full time support  X. Benefits from frequent changes of task, differentiation, constant reinforcement, positive feedback</i>
Attendance	<i>89.5 percent</i>
Are emotional and behavioural difficulties evident?	<i>Yes</i>
Are literacy difficulties evident?	<i>No</i>
Is specific learning difficulty/dyslexia identified?	<i>No</i>
Are any other difficulties evident?	<i>Social and communication difficulties, impulsivity without medication</i>
Is the pupil receiving or have they received medication? (details)	<i>Yes- Ritalin</i>
Ability/achievement level (from Educational Psychologist's report)	<i>With support, within expected range for age.</i>
Rate of reading progress	<i>Within expected range; NC Level 2C</i>
Anything else	<i>X experiences sleep problems He used to have speech and language therapy</i>

4. On an agreed day the researchers went to the LA offices with the permission slips, and the SEN administrative team made the agreed records available. The researchers worked in the same location as the SEN team and were able to seek

clarification and explanations where necessary. The actual amount of time spent in the LA offices was half a day.

5. Information gathered from the records was entered on the prepared forms, to be processed separately. Names and addresses of the children were not recorded. The data were analysed separately at a later date, following the documentary analysis process described by Blaxter et. al. (1996), whereby important and relevant elements are grouped and their relationship established. Grouping data in this way also protected the anonymity of the children.
6. A summary of the findings was returned to the LA for information and to be passed to the parents who had given their permission for the research.

### The Sample

There were eleven children whose records were made available. This may be described as a purposive, 'snowball' sample. Cohen et al (2000; 104) explain snowball sampling as a process whereby knowledgeable individuals are used to identify others; this is helpful for sampling a population where access is difficult. In this process, Cohen et. al. point out that the important task for the researcher is to identify the key informants with whom initial contact must be made. In this research the key informants were the SEN administration team, once permission had been gained from the LA to approach them.

Of the LA's thirty-seven current statements for ADHD, only three had been made for girls, confirming the gender bias noted in the literature. No parents of girls gave permission to view the statement records, so it was not possible to gain information about them. All the children sampled were therefore male, between the ages of nine and sixteen years with a mean age of twelve years and seven months, and all had been formally diagnosed by a clinical psychologist as having ADHD.

Their statements were first made between five years and one year before the research took place.

The children for whom research was permitted were either attending special or mainstream schools, with additional support provided. In the LA there was a banding system for funding special educational needs; this both described the child's learning needs within categories, and allocated particular levels of support. The children were recorded as having special educational needs requiring resources at between level two (high) and five (low). For children in mainstream schools this banding controlled the level of additional support made available. Special schools, in contrast, were funded through a different application of the banding principle.

## Results

The results of the research confirmed the complex and overlapping nature of the children's learning needs. In addition to the identification of ADHD, the children in the sample were described as having the following learning characteristics:

- Nine of the eleven children were identified as falling within the average ability range, whereas two were considerably below the average, with IQ levels being described as falling at the 50 and 62 levels. This would place them between the first and second percentile of the pupil population.
- Six of the children had literacy difficulties, although only one had these difficulties identified as dyslexia;
- Five children were described as having emotional and behavioural difficulties together with literacy difficulties;
- Three children had emotional and behavioural difficulties and ADHD;

- Three children were recorded as experiencing delay in receptive or and expressive speech and language, although linguistic difficulties were more generally pervasive, being present in six of the children;
- Two children had ADHD with Asperger's Syndrome;
- One child had a statement that identified autism and literacy difficulties;
- One child had another significant neurological, medical condition, plus emotional and behavioural difficulties and literacy difficulties.

From this statement evidence it was clear that ADHD often coexisted with other learning difficulties, particularly difficulties of behaviour and literacy. The most frequent overlap of learning needs consisted of ADHD and emotional and behavioural difficulties. This was present in eight out of the eleven sets of statements and annual review records. Some of the children had been permanently excluded from a school because of inappropriate behaviour of a serious nature.

All of the eleven children whose statements were sampled were taking prescribed medication, and of these ten were receiving Ritalin therapy. One other child received medication in the form of Carbamazepine (Tegretol) because he also needed medication for another medical condition. Medication was prescribed in all cases to reduce anger, impulsivity or aggression.

With regard to their recorded ability and achievement levels, most of the children in the sample had made reduced progress and showed a delay in their educational attainment. Five were described as falling within the average National Curriculum level for their age range, while five were working at a lower than average National Curriculum level, and one was described as experiencing a moderate level of delay.



Apart from the medical treatment, the statements and annual reviews reported specific approaches to support the learning needs of the children in the sample. These included: differentiation and a multi-sensory approach (for six children); repetition and frequent changes of tasks (for three children); constant motivation and reinforcement to improve self-esteem (for four children); and home and school cooperation to provide supportive and structured environment (four children). While all the children sampled received all of these interventions to a certain extent, the numbers reflect emphases in the statements.

### Discussion

The documentary research of statements of special educational needs and their annual reviews confirmed a number of the points made in the literature. These included the preponderance of identification of males with ADHD, the prevalence of medication, the co-occurrence between ADHD and emotional and behavioural difficulties and literacy, and the general ability range of children experiencing ADHD. Beyond medication, the educational strategies recommended in the statements reflect what is known about how to meet the needs of children with ADHD.

The evidence also showed the range of learning difficulties that can be associated with ADHD. These included autism and Asperger's Syndrome, other medical conditions, developmental delay, and speech and language difficulties either of a specific nature concerning expressive and receptive language delay, or of a more general nature. The sample, although small, reflected the complex and varied nature of learning needs to be found co-occurring with ADHD.

It should be emphasised that only information recorded in the documents was analysed and reported. Representing data by grouping it in the way described here cannot give a clear picture of any one pupil's needs. However, it demonstrates some

of the information that can be gleaned from statements and annual reviews without offending sensitivity or confidentiality.

An unforeseen but useful point arising from the research is the attention it draws to the small group of children, consisting of three out of the sample of eleven children, who are identified as experiencing ADHD together with autistic spectrum disorders. Writing in an autism context, Keen and Ward cite Kadesjö and Gillberg, 2001, in considering that, “The ASD with ADHD group is important to recognize because of high rates of other associated problems” (Keen and Ward, 2004; 45). While ADHD co-occurring with ASD might be recognised in the neuropsychology context, educationally this is an under researched group of learners, representing children who experience considerable difficulty in school, and who deserve more inquiry as to how best they may be aided.

There is scope for further development of documentary research of statements and annual reviews, following the protocol described here. While this project itself does not add a great deal to understanding of ADHD, its use of real examples reveals the complexity of relevant learning characteristics, and highlights an under researched group. More usefully, it succeeds in indicating a way that the valuable experience recorded in statements of SEN may be accessed through empirical research.

The protocol could be used to explore an extended sample, as large as access would permit. It could be augmented to include qualitative information gathered through related interviews. As has been noted, attention might usefully be given to taking a critical, deconstructionist approach to statements so that their wider ramifications are more fully comprehended. Such an approach might have relevance for a consideration of how statements are made and written, within the parameters of the SEN Codes of Practice.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this research project was two-fold, to explore the possibilities of documentary research of statements of special educational needs and their annual reviews, and to see what could be learned from this source about the nature of the learning needs of children experiencing ADHD. Researching the pupil records in this way confirmed the complexity and variability of the learning characteristics associated with ADHD. Gender and intelligence distribution, overall ability range, and co-occurrence of reading difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties with ADHD, corresponded to descriptions in the literature, although it is accepted that as understanding about ADHD grows, so these descriptions are challenged.

The children's learning needs were not clear-cut, and were perhaps more complex than might at first have been expected. The potential for further research about the extent and nature of overlapping learning characteristics is supported by the range of different learning needs manifested amongst even this small group of children sharing the common characteristics of male gender, secondary age range, and formal diagnosis of ADHD. Of particular interest is the under researched group of children who experience ADHD together with autistic spectrum disorders.

The experience of carrying out this research project led to a methodological protocol that could support further research. Firstly, for research of this kind the agreement of the LAs is needed, and this is helped if LAs can be reassured. They need to know exactly what the research is for and how it will be carried out, and they need feedback in a simple, brief form, as Percie-Smith et. al (2002) suggest. They need to know that the actions of the researchers are not going to alarm parents or elected members of the council, and that the research is not going to inconvenience greatly their officers and administrators in their daily work.

Secondly, the involvement of the SEN team is also needed. This is helped if the LA and the SEN team are treated as partners, if the contribution to the research by the SEN team is acknowledged, and if the researchers liaise with the team to pick a time when they are not at their busiest. It is important to value the knowledge and experience of the SEN administration team. It would also be an advantage if at least one of the researchers had experience of working with pupil records of this kind.

Thirdly, the agreement of parents is needed. While this is not a requirement in the Code of Practice, courtesy, openness, and modern approaches to partnership working, require it.

Fourthly, once access is agreed it is important to make the most of the research opportunity by being prepared and being focused upon the task. Researchers looking at pupil records are likely to be supervised by a SEN team member, to ensure the security of the records. This takes that person away from their regular work, and it is courtesy to minimise this by being clear about the information being sought. Knowing what is being sought means that the information-gathering part of this research can be relatively efficient, and not take too much time.

With these considerations in mind, it is hoped that further research of statements of special educational needs and annual reviews will prove possible, and that following the protocol described here might enable LAs to feel confident in permitting it. Research of these significant documents has the potential to aid the understanding, support and management of children's special educational needs, and could be particularly relevant for longitudinal study, or 'case - finding' opportunities.

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