

# Effective service provision and partnerships in service providers for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Key messages

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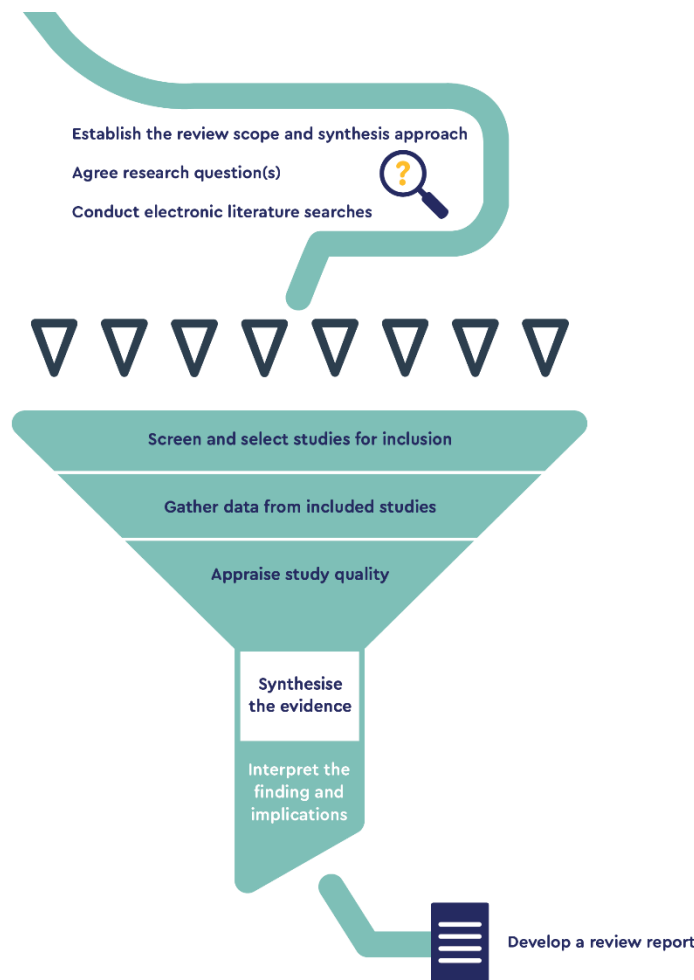
This resource summarises key messages from a full academic review which is available to read on the What Works in SEND website.

## What is a mixed method systematic review?

A type of research study that aims to give an up-to-date summary of the state of research knowledge on a topic. A systematic review will answer a specific question or questions. This type of review looks at lots of different literature, including at both qualitative and quantitative studies.

Researchers from the University of Warwick searched for literature on the topic of *effective service provision and partnerships in service providers for children and young people with SEND*. Colleagues from the RISE Partnership, Department for Education and other organisations worked with researchers to understand what the questions for this review should be.

## What were the stages of the review?



## What questions was this review answering?

1. In relation to health, social care, and education services for those aged 0 – 25 years with SEND, what are the **effective interventions that lead to service improvements**, and the **conditions for success** in the local area?
2. What are the **key ingredients for effective partnership**, or joint commissioning, of health, social care, and education services to those aged 0 – 25 years with SEND?
3. Where service providers do work together to provide these services for those aged 0 – 25 years with SEND, what are the **most effective ways of achieving improved outcomes** (as defined by the individual literature)?

## What did the review find?

The researchers read nearly **9000** papers on the topic, but only **138** studies were included in the final review and were considered to answer the research questions being asked.

The studies that were included were categorised as:

- 74 interventional studies, reporting something that worked for generating service improvement, these have been grouped by agency/setting;
- 38 partnership studies, showing what partners were actually doing that helped the partnership work and improve outcomes;
- 34 types of service models that were shown to be effective for children and young people with SEND.

From the research that was included, the researchers then wanted to know why what they had found works, which is the synthesis as shown below:



## What recommendations are there for local areas and policy makers?

### 1. Consideration of the advantages of flexible SEND service delivery

We advocate for local and tailored SEND services, but we recognise that elements of SEND service delivery could be standardised to improve provision for children and young people and their families. In particular, what is available and what services are commissioned.

### 2. Promotion of effective partnership observed through policy change

While national policy changes can be seen as disruptive and potentially difficult to navigate within organisations, our findings highlight the added benefits they can create for partnership members. We found that policy change could act as a catalyst for improvement in organisations that may have worked in parallel, not in partnership.

### 3. The need for focused partnership work to develop local SEND partnerships

An overarching finding from the review is that effective partnership is an act which requires dedicated effort and organisational support from all involved. When establishing SEND partnerships, local areas should look for areas of good practice, where informal partnerships have developed through networks and training, and seek to improve and solidify these relationships.

## Further Information

Professor Amy Grove - Warwick University, describes the review process and findings in this recording [here](#) (presentation starts at 56 minutes into the recording).

You can read the Systematic Review [here](#).

