

**FACTORS AFFECTING THE PLACEMENT OF PUPILS WITH SEVERE
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES IN A MAINSTREAM OR SPECIAL SCHOOL.**

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ED.D, 2006

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the factors that influence the placement of pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties in mainstream schools and why some are still placed in special schools. In examining 31 case studies in 6 LEAs in the North East of England, the results identify five main reasons why mainstream placements are agreed. These are the wishes of parents, the behaviour of the individual child, the experience the schools previously had of successful inclusion, the inclusive ethos of the schools involved and the importance of the child's access to learning. In many of the cases specific issues, which could not be replicated, were important factors in placement. Among these were the pupil's ability to communicate, LEA policy, the views of professionals, family circumstances and the child's religion. The findings also lead to proposed guidelines for LEAs to consider should they wish to include further pupils with SLD in the mainstream system. These recommendations are offered to LEAs and other stakeholders in the hope of increasing the number of young people with SLD who are able to access appropriate education in their local community.

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