Summarise the roles and responsibilities of national and local government for education policy and practice

National government roles and responsibilities

The national government is split into departments that have responsibilities for specific areas of daily life and organisation. The one that is responsible for education is the Department for Education (DfE).

The DfE is not only responsible for education, but for children's services in general. This means that they get a very thorough overview of the position of children and the way in which they should be developed to become well-rounded adults who can contribute to society.

For example, the DfE draws up education policy - this means that it develops things like the National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage upon which the provision of nurseries and schools is based. It also stimulates and develops good quality services that are made available to children under the outcomes of Every Child Matters. School league tables are also set up and administered by the DfE.

The DfE also funds research into projects that have an educational aim or are based within educational establishments, and especially those that directly affect children and young people.

From its overarching viewpoint, the DfE is well-positioned to develop workforce reform; that is, to suggest new ways of working, research these, and then to draw up standards and processes that enable schools to change the ways they work if the research showed them to be better and more effective than the old ways.

An example of this type of reform is the way in which schools and all external agencies and professionals now work in a more 'joined-up' and communicative way. The DfE also helps to develop the way the third sector works and what its role is with regards to children and young people. The third sector are non-governmental organisations, usually voluntary and community organisations, charities and social enterprises.

You can find more information about the way the DfE works on their website.
Roles and responsibilities of National and Local Government.

**Local government roles and responsibilities**

Local governments have a number of departments that more or less mirror those held within the national government. The one that is responsible for education is known as the local education authority (LEA).

The LEA's role includes providing accessible advice and support for things like staff training and development, all aspects of the curriculum including special educational needs, and the promotion of community cohesion, including signposting schools to the right community groups for the right projects. The LEA also advises on things like school management, behaviour management, and the development of school policies.

LEAs have their own vision and plans for the way in which they will develop government initiatives and the information about these will be disseminated or made available to the public through documents such as the Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) plan. [Click here for an example of the Gloucestershire CYPP.](#)

The CYPP describes the way in which children's services are linked and integrated together, and how improvements will be made locally. It should also contain dates for each action, so that whoever reads it understands when those changes will be implemented.
Local authorities also provide advice and guidance for schools around areas of difficulty, such as the use of restraint or the administration of medicines. They often have their own policies on these types of issues, and these should be accessible on their website.

LEAs often employ specialist advisors who can advise on specific curriculum areas or on things like special educational needs or the EYFS. These people either advise the LEA or the LEA may signpost enquiries to a specialist for better support.

Specialist teachers are also contracted to the LEA to provide support to pupils and schools in areas such as behavioural management, or special educational needs assessments, such as dyslexia. In some cases, these services are provided to the school free-of-charge (because the LEA already pays the teacher), but depending on the task in hand, the school may be asked to pay for the service, particularly if the teacher visits the school.

Whenever there is a change in the national educational policy, the LEA is expected to provide schools in their area with the relevant information. If training is needed in order to implement the changes, the LEA also provides this through their local education development centre. Sometimes they may also visit schools and deliver on-site training to all affected staff.