



SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First

Explaining the Consultation (and other documents)

for Warwickshire's Parent Carers

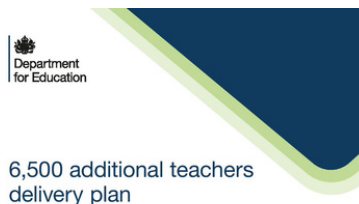
Introduction

On 23rd February 2026 the government published:

The Schools White Paper
Every Child Achieving and Thriving



A strategy
6,500 additional teachers delivery plan



The *SEND Consultation*
SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First



A white paper is a government plan that sets out proposals to go to parliament. It is NOT a change in the law

A consultation is a formal process where a public body asks for views before making decisions

The white paper and delivery plan are NOT being consulted on but you can read them here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/every-child-achieving-and-thriving>

The document *SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First* is what is being consulted on. You can find the consultation documents here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/send-reform-putting-children-and-young-people-first>

Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice have made this guide to explain the consultation - it highlights where the 39 consultation questions are being asked and identifies what is not being consulted on. Our aim is to help you feel able participate in the consultation by contributing to our submission, completing your own response or both. We hope that you find it useful.

SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First

The consultation document that sets out the proposals to reform the special education needs and disabilities (SEND) system. We have used the pdf version of the consultation when referring to page numbers in this document https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69986263b33a4db7ff889ecb/SEND_reform_putting_children_and_young_people_first_government_consultation.pdf. There are also alternative formats - an easy-read version and a version specifically for children and young people, a British Sign Language video, large print and Braille copies available.

The document asks 39 questions on key aspects of the proposed reforms. The government is not seeking feedback on all of the proposed changes which means you can influence some of the reforms but not all of them. The questions are embedded throughout the document (a complete list can be found in Appendix C Part B).

You can respond to the consultation online or you can submit your response by email or post. Details of how to respond can be found here:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/send-strategy-division/send-reform-putting-children-and-young-people-first/>

Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice are keen to know your views so that our local response can represent you. More details can be found at the end of this document or on our our padlet <https://padlet.com/warwickshireparentcarervoice/SENDReformConsultation> (feedback closes on 15th May).

The consultation closes on 18th May 2026.

There are several key documents that accompany the *SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First* consultation document:

- SEND Reform: Equalities Impact Assessment
- SEND Reform: Child's Rights Impact Assessment
- Background on Projections
- Specialist Provision Packages - a link to a summary page outlining the proposed specialist provision packages <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/send-reform-putting-children-and-young-people-first/specialist-provision-packages>

There is also a document series designed for parents, carers and professionals working across the sector that summarises the proposed reforms set out in the white paper and the SEND consultation. The key documents for parent carers are:

- What parents of children and young people with SEND need to know
- What to expect from your child's journey through education
- What every parent can expect from the reforms
- Information on SEND reform for parents and caers of children with Education, Health and Care Plans
- Information on SEND reform for parents and carers of children and young people in special schools

These can be downloaded here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-send-reforms-sheets>.

Investment

The Department for Education released a press release on the day the Schools White Paper and SEND Consultation was published which outlines the key investment: **DfE Press release: Specialist SEND support in every school and community**. Published 23rd February 2026. An extract from the press release states:

“Every child with additional needs will benefit from better, more tailored support, as government unveils landmark £4 billion investment to make every school truly inclusive and transform outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The investment comes with the government set to unveil its schools white paper, Every child achieving and thriving, a blueprint for opportunity for all children, including generational reforms to the SEND system”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/specialist-send-support-in-every-school-and-community>

Summary of Investment

This summary is based on the *SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First* consultation document and the related press release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/specialist-send-support-in-every-school-and-community>

Funding is mentioned throughout the consultation document and, in some cases, repeated in different sections. To make this easier to understand, we have pulled out the main funding commitments as proposed by the DfE and organised them under the key sections where they are most relevant.

Please note that some of these funding amounts may also appear elsewhere in the document. Under each funding commitment, we've included the page number and section it relates to, so you can easily find and read the original information if you'd like more detail. We've also highlighted any consultation questions in that section. Please note that the consultation questions may not always be directly linked to the funding itself.

Funding	Amount	Purpose
Best Start Family Hubs	£200 million	Dedicated SEND offer
Training Package on Inclusion	£200 million	Teaching staff training
Experts at Hand	£1.8 billion	To commission specialist support
Inclusive Mainstream Fund	£1.6 billion	Support inclusive provision
Local Authority SEND Services	£200 million	Support Local Authority Delivery of SEND Reforms
High Needs Capital Investment	£3.7 billion	Capital funding for SEND infrastructure and buildings
High Needs Stability Grant	£4.5 billion (90% of projected deficit)	Resolving 90% of Local Authorities' Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Deficit

Best Start Family Hubs: £200 million

Page 36: Support for children and families in the earliest years of life

Questions 9 and 10 in the consultation are asked in this section.

£200 million over three years to ensure every Best Start Family Hub has a dedicated offer for children with additional needs and their families, and a SEND practitioner to offer direct support to children and families. This is in addition to the over £700 million for Best Start Family Hubs and the Health Babies programme announced in *Giving Every Child the Best Start in Life* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/giving-every-child-the-best-start-in-life> in partnership with the Department for Health and Social Care.

Training Package on Inclusion: £200 million

Page 46: National Training

Questions 12, 13 and 14 in the consultation are asked in this section.

£200 million over three years to launch a new training package on inclusion so that from September 2026 all staff nationwide will benefit from training across early years, schools and colleges supported by government backed training materials developed with experts. Staff will be supported to engage with parents, develop skills in building inclusive learning environments and spotting needs early so that children receive timely support. There will be a new requirement in the SEND Code of Practice for all settings to ensure that staff receive training on SEND and inclusion and to signpost to government funded training.

Experts at Hand: £1.8 billion

Page 57: Experts at Hand

Question 20 in the consultation are asked in this section.

£1.8 billion over three years for 'Experts at Hand' - Local Authorities working with Integrated Care Board(s) to commission local professionals - educational psychology, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and more - so that they are available in every early, whether or not children have an EHCP. Special and alternative provision schools to provide expert training, direct interventions with children and short-term placements in their schools. Once rolled out an average secondary school will receive over 160 days of specialist time each year.

Inclusive Mainstream Fund: £1.6 billion

Page 68: Inclusive Mainstream Fund

Questions 30 and 31 in the consultation are asked in this section.

£1.6 billion in additional funding over three years to supplement the existing core funding for SEND, with over £500 million per year over the next three years going to mainstream schools, early years and post-16 settings. This will support settings in investing in a more inclusive system and build confidence that children and young people receive the right support as early as possible as set out in *Giving Every Child the Best Start in Life* before legislation.

Local Authority SEND Services: £200 million*

*NNPCF are seeking clarification if this is additional funding or part of wider funding

Page 100: Local Area Accountability

Questions 34, 35, 36 and 37 in the consultation are asked in this section.

£200 million to ensure all Local Authorities have capacity to undertake transformation planning and delivery while maintaining current SEND services. This funding will be provided to Local Authorities as a single payment alongside funding for Experts in Hand with a proportion allocated to transformation which includes a focus on strategic planning in SEND local reform plans, commissioning, leadership capacity and engaging with the education sector.

High Needs Capital Investment: £3.7 billion

Page 54: Targeted Plus Support

Questions 18 and 19 in the consultation are asked in this section.

£3.7 billion high needs capital investment between 2025 and 2030 aiming to create tens of thousands of new places in Inclusion Bases in mainstream settings, make buildings accessible and create new special school places. The Government want early years settings, schools and colleges to be able to develop strong specialist support, expanding on good practice in SEN units, resourced provision, and pupil support units. This will create tens of thousands of places in mainstream settings, delivering the right support for children and young people that need it.

High Needs Stability Grant

The government will resolve 90% of Local Authorities' Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs deficits accrued to the end of 2025-26, projected to be worth over £5 billion. All Local Authorities with a SEND deficit will be eligible to receive grant funding subject to submitting and securing the Department for Education's approval of a *local SEND reform plan*.

Not explicitly referenced within the documents but is detailed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-note-on-the-governments-approach-to-dedicated-schools-grant-deficits/explanatory-note-on-the-governments-approach-dedicated-schools-grant-deficits>

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Part two: new targeted and targeted plus support that is within the law	46
Part three: specialist support for those with complex needs	62
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Consultation Questions Summary by Section

This is a summary of the questions, organised by sections as shown on page 3 of the *SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First* document. The main headings of each section have been identified, and beneath them it is clearly indicated where consultation questions are included and where no consultation questions are provided.

Consultations Questions are identified as: Q1, Q2, Q3 as they are shown in the consultation document (pdf version).

Forward

Pages 6-7

There are no questions within this section.

Executive Summary

Pages 8-23

Our Vision

There are no questions within this section.

Our Plan

There are no questions within this section.

Case for change

There are no questions within this section.

Co Creation

There are no questions within this section.

What we heard

There are no questions within this section.

Next Stage of the National Conversation

	Question	Page
Q1	We want children, young people and their families to be involved in making better, evidence-based decisions about SEND, both in their local area and across the country. How can we make sure children, young people and their families have a genuine say in these decisions?	21
Q2	How can we make sure that high-quality evidence and best practice inform decisions about SEND? Please share examples.	21

Part One: Putting children and young people first

Pages 24-45

The Universal Offer

	Question	Page
Q3	How can we ensure that children are best supported by the Universal offer?	26

Three Layers of Support: Targeted, Targeted Plus and Specialist

	Question	Page
Q4	How can we ensure that children in the Targeted layer, are best supported?	28
Q5	How can we ensure that children in the Targeted Plus layer, are best supported?	28
Q6	How can we ensure that children in the Specialist layer are best supported?	29

Please note that this is also covered in “Part Two: New targeted and targeted plus support that is written into law”.

Updating the SEND Code of Practice

	Question	Page
Q7	How do you think early years settings, schools, and college can best support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people?	33
Q8	Do you agree that the refreshed ‘areas of development’ will support educators to understand and address barriers to learning and participation? Please explain your answer.	33

Data and technology

There are no questions within this section.

Support for children and families in the earliest years of life

	Question	Page
Q9	What arrangements would best support effective joint working between early years providers, Best Start Family Hubs, health, local authorities, and parents for children with SEND in the early years?	38
Q10	How can the early years foundation stage (EYFS) two-year old progress check and the Healthy Child Programme development review be improved so that children’s needs are identified and supported more quickly? Please share examples.	38

National Inclusion Standards

	Question	Page
Q11	What should the top three priority areas be for building and sharing evidence within the National Inclusion Standards?	40

Reasonable adjustments

There are no questions within this section.

National training

	Question	Page
Q12	What are the most important issues for national training to cover, to help support children and young people with SEND?	44
Q13	What practical actions can help teachers, educators and leaders manage workload whilst implementing these changes?	45
Q14	How should the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) role evolve to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND?	45

Part Two: New Targeted and Targeted Plus support that is written into law

Pages 41-61

Targeted support

There are no questions in this section.

Individual Support Plans (ISPs)

	Question	Page
Q15	What would provide assurance for families that an Individual Support Plan (ISP) is high-quality and contains the essential information?	48
Q16	How can we ensure Individual Support Plans are clear, concise and practical for professionals to use?	48

Effective curriculum delivery and adaptations

There are no questions in this section.

Transitions between early year, schools and colleges

From Early Years to School

There are no questions in this section.

From School to College

There are no questions in this section.

Transitions into post-16 education

There are no questions in this section.

Transitions into adulthood

	Question	Page
Q17	How can we best support transition for young people with SEND, so that they are well supported into post-16 provision and further education, training or employment?	53

Targeted Plus Support

Inclusion Bases

	Question	Page
Q18	How can we make sure that every area can meet the full range of the needs of children and young people through Inclusion Bases?	55
Q19	How can we make sure that Inclusion Bases help children and young people succeed in mainstream settings?	55

Experts at Hand

	Question	Page
Q20	Through the Experts at Hand offer, we want to ensure that mainstream settings can get quick specialist support for children and young people. What arrangements are needed between local area partners (education, health, social care) to deliver this Experts at Hand offer effectively?	59

Educational Psychologists and Speech and Language Therapists

There are no questions in this section.

Part Three: Specialist Support for those with complex needs

Pages 62-81

Specialist Provision Packages

	Question	Page
Q21	What needs to be in place so that children and young people with low incidence, highly complex needs can always access the right specialist placement?	65
Q22	How can Specialist Provision Packages be designed to effectively support the main types of need we currently recognise?	65

Education, Health and Care Plans

	Question	Page
Q23	We propose that EHCPs will guarantee educational provision set out in a Specialist Provision Package, with day-to-day provision captured in Individual Support Plans. What is needed to make these proposals work effectively?	69
Q24	We propose creating a more direct route to Specialist Provision Packages and EHCP assessments for children under 5 with complex needs. How can we make sure this works in practice?	69
Q24	What would you expect to be considered as part of the needs assessment, for example evidence and expert or professional input?	69

Parental Preference

	Question	Page
Q26	What factors should LAs take into account in proposing to parents and young people a list of potential settings to name on a plan?	71
Q27	What information and support do parents need to make a decision about which setting will be best for their child?	71

Transition to the new system

There are no questions in this section.

The Specialist Sector

There are no questions in this section.

Alternative Provision (AP)

	Question	Page
Q28	What do you think is the right maximum length of time for a temporary placement in Alternative Provision (AP) schools? Please explain your rationale.	79

Independent Specialist Schools (ISS)

	Question	Page
Q23	We have set out our plans to regulate Independent Special Schools (ISS) sector. Do you agree that these proposed changes will lead to suitable placements being available at a fair cost? Please explain why.	81

Part Four: Reforming the system to reward inclusion

Pages 82-110

Funding Reform

There are no questions within this section.

Rebalance funding towards mainstream settings

There are no questions within this section.

Streamlined funding allocations

There are no questions within this section.

Inclusive Mainstream Fund

	Question	Page
Q30	How should settings be held accountable for how they spend their Inclusive Mainstream funding?	88
Q31	Do you agree that more SEND funding should sit directly within mainstream budgets? Please explain why.	88

Pooled Funding in schools for SEND

	Question	Page
Q32	In relation to pooled funding, we propose that every school becomes part of a local SEND group. Do you agree that this proposal aligns with our aim for all schools to be part of high quality, community-based trusts?	93
Q33	How should disagreements about membership, provision, or funding in groups of schools for SEND be resolved?	93

Specialist funding reform

There are no questions within this section.

Early Years funding

There are no questions within this section.

Accountability

Accountability for individual support

There are no questions within this section.

Education setting accountability

There are no questions within this section.

Local area accountability

	Question	Page
Q34	How can we ensure the most effective use of these local partnership groups?	102
Q35	Which stakeholders are important for the success of local partnership groups, and why?	102
Q36	How can we build stronger collaboration and a culture of improvement through local SEND strategic plans?	102
Q37	What information, advice and guidance can best support children, young people and their families to ensure greater fairness across the system?	102

Resolution and legal framework

Resolving concerns about the Universal offer and Targeted layer of support

There are no questions within this section.

Strengthening the scrutiny of complaints data

There are no questions within this section.

Resolving concerns about specialist provision

	Question	Page
Q38	Do you agree that a SEND specialist (e.g. a SENCO) should sit on the school complaint panel, when the complaint relates to SEND support and provision? Please explain why.	107

Information, advice and guidance for parents and independent oversight of the system

Plans for improved family support and engagement

There are no questions within this section.

Independent oversight

	Question	Page
Q39	This consultation outlines a series of measures intended to reform the SEND system. Some of these measures have already been finalised, and this is clearly indicated within the document. With this in mind, is there anything further you would like to contribute to help inform the remaining proposals that are still under consideration?	110

Part Five: Building an inclusive system together

Pages 111-115

There are no questions within this section, but the chapter headings have still been listed for ease of reference.

Phase one: 2026 to 2028

Investing in mainstream inclusion

Backing the workforce

Phasing reforms

Using the best evidence

High standards for the specialist system

Phase two: 2028 to 2029

Supporting families through the transition and protecting existing support

Meeting needs through the mainstream instead of EHCPs

Rebalancing funding

Keeping the system evidence led

Phase three: 2029 onwards

Figure 12: Timeline of reforms

Appendices

Appendix A: Table and infographics and case studies

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Appendix B: Consultation

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Information about the consultation process

Appendix C: Summary of consultation questions

Page 120

Appendix D: Summary of proposed areas of development

Page 124



WARWICKSHIRE PARENT CARER VOICE

Get Involved and have your say in the Consultation

Shape Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice's Response

Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice are keen to know your views so that our local response can represent you - you can add your thoughts to our padlet:

<https://padlet.com/warwickshireparentcarervoice/SENDReformConsultation>. We will use the feedback on here to write our response to the consultation. We will be turning off comments on the padlet at midday on Friday 12th May to give us time to write our consultation response.

Or book a spot via eventbrite to join us online to discuss the consultation:

Wednesday 29th April 1pm

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/national-send-consultation-shaping-wpcvs-response-online-tickets-1985901069558>

or

Thursday 7th May 7.30pm

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/national-send-consultation-shaping-wpcvs-response-online-tickets-1985899954222>



Respond as an Individual

Details of how to respond to the consultation can be found here:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/send-strategy-division/send-reform-putting-children-and-young-people-firs/>

You can respond online

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/send-strategy-division/send-reform-putting-children-and-young-people-firs/consultation/intro/>

or you can respond by sending an email to SENDreform.CONULTATION@education.gov.uk, or by post to: SENDAP Reform, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice are keen to know your views so that our local response can represent you - you can add your thoughts here:

<https://padlet.com/warwickshireparentcarervoice/SENDReformConsultation>

The consultation closes on 18th May 2026.