



HM Government

SEND Review:

Right support

Right place

Right time



SEND Review:

**Right support, right place, right time
Government consultation on the SEND and
alternative provision system in England**

**Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Education
by Command of Her Majesty**

March 2022

CP 624

Executive summary 1

1. The reforms to the SEND system introduced in 2014 had the right aspirations: an integrated 0-25 system spanning education, health and care, driven by high ambition and preparation for adulthood.
2. But despite examples of good practice in implementing the 2014 reforms, this is not the norm and too often the experiences and outcomes of children and young people are poor. There are growing pressures across the system that is increasingly characterised by delays in accessing support for children and young people, frustration for parents, carers, and providers alike, and increasing financial pressure for local government.
3. The government commissioned the SEND Review in September 2019 as a response to the widespread recognition that the system was failing to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people, that parental and provider confidence was in decline, and, that despite substantial additional investment, the system had become financially unsustainable.

Executive summary 2

4. As the Review progressed it became clear that alternative provision is increasingly being used to supplement the SEND system; to provide SEN Support; as a temporary placement while children and young people wait for their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment; or because there is insufficient capacity in special schools. We have therefore looked at the specific challenges facing the alternative provision sector as part of this Review.
5. We have also considered how this Review can be best implemented alongside reforms to health and social care –overlap between the cohort with SEND and those who interact with the care system.

Key Facts: the SEND and alternative provision system in numbers

15.8% of all school pupils – 1.4 million – were identified with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

12.2% of pupils were identified as requiring SEN Support

A further 3.7% of all pupils had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), receiving more support than available through SEN Support

82.7% of children and young people in alternative provision were identified with SEN

The high needs budget has risen by more than 40% over three years

Of the 141 local area inspections published by 21 March 2022, 76 resulted in a written statement of action, which indicates significant weaknesses in SEND arrangements

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3 Challenges

Challenge 1: outcomes for children and young people with SEN or in alternative provision are poor

Challenge 2: navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for children, young people and their families

Challenge 3: despite unprecedented investment, the system is not delivering value for money for children, young people and families

A vicious cycle of late intervention, low confidence and inefficient resource allocation is driving these challenges

We need to
turn this
vicious cycle
into a
virtuous
one

- We are clear that in an effective and sustainable SEND system that delivers great outcomes for children and young people, the vast majority of children and young people should be able to access the support they need to thrive without the need for an EHCP or a specialist or alternative provision place.
- We are setting out proposals for an inclusive system, starting with improved mainstream provision that is built on early and accurate identification of needs, high-quality teaching of a knowledge-rich curriculum, and prompt access to targeted support where it is needed. Alongside that, we need a strong specialist sector that has a clear purpose to support those children and young people with more complex needs who require specialist or alternative provision.
- Greater national consistency in the support that should be made available, how it should be accessed and how it should be funded. We need a system where decision-making is based on the needs of children and young people, not on location. This must be underpinned by strong co-production and accountability at every level, and improved data collection to give a timely picture of how the system is performing so that issues can be addressed promptly.

Summary delivering change for children and families through

a single national SEND and
alternative provision system

excellent provision from early years
to adulthood

a reformed and integrated role for
alternative provision

system roles, accountabilities and
funding reform

Chapter 1 The case for Change

- The current SEND system means that too many children and young people with SEND are achieving poor outcomes. Parents and carers are facing difficulty and delay in accessing support for their child. Providers have to navigate a complex system where it is not clear what support should be provided or who should pay for it. Despite a more than 40% increase in high needs funding between 2019-2020 and 2022- 202335, local government spending is outstripping funding and the system is financially unsustainable.
- 2. In this chapter, we set out the key findings from the SEND Review and what is driving these challenges. We set out our vision for what needs to change to ensure that more children and young people are set up to succeed in a sustainable, less bureaucratic system. And finally, we set out our plan for action for how we propose to deliver the improvements the system needs.

Chapter 2: A single national SEND and alternative provision system

- establish a **new national SEND and alternative provision system** setting nationally consistent standards for how needs are identified and met at every stage of a child's journey across education, health and care.
- review and **update the SEND Code of Practice** to ensure it reflects the new national standards to promote nationally consistent systems, processes and provision
- establish **new local SEND partnerships**, bringing together education (including alternative provision), health and care partners with local government and other partners to produce a local inclusion plan setting out how each local area will meet the national standards

Chapter 2: A single national SEND and alternative provision system

- introduce a **standardised and digitised EHCP process** and template to minimise bureaucracy and deliver consistency
- support parents and carers to express an informed preference for a suitable placement by providing a **tailored list of settings**, drawn from the local inclusion plan, including mainstream, specialist and independent, that are appropriate to meet the child or young person's needs
- streamline the redress process, making it easier to resolve disputes earlier, including through **mandatory mediation**, whilst retaining the tribunal for the most challenging cases

Chapter 3: Excellent provision from early years to adulthood

- increase our total investment in schools' budgets by **£7 billion** by 2024-25, compared to 2021-22, including an additional **£1 billion in 2022-23 alone for children and young people with complex needs**
- consult on the introduction of a new **SENCo National Professional Qualification (NPQ)** for school SENCos, and increase the number of staff with an accredited Level 3 SENCo qualification in early years settings to improve SEND expertise
- commission analysis to better understand the support that children and young people with SEND need from the **health workforce** so that there is a clear focus on SEND in health workforce planning
- **improve mainstream provision**, building on the ambitious Schools White Paper, through excellent teacher training and development and a 'what works' evidence programme to identify and share best practice, including in early intervention
- fund more than **10,000 additional respite placements** through an investment of £30 million, alongside £82 million to create a network of family hubs, so more children, young people and their families can access wraparound support

Chapter 3: Excellent provision from early years to adulthood

- invest £2.6 billion, over the next three years, to deliver new **places and improve existing provision** for children and young people with SEND or who require alternative provision. We will deliver more new special and alternative provision free schools in addition to more than 60 already in the pipeline
- set out a clear timeline that, by 2030, all children will benefit from being taught in a family of schools, with their school, including special and alternative provision, in a **strong multi-academy trust** (MAT), or with plans to join or form one, sharing expertise and resources to improve outcomes
- invest **£18 million** over the next three years to build capacity in the **Supported Internships Programme**, and improve transitions at further education by introducing Common Transfer Files alongside piloting the roll out of adjustment passports to ensure young people with SEND are prepared for employment and higher education

Chapter 4: A reformed and integrated role for alternative provision

- make **alternative provision an integral part of local SEND** systems by requiring the new local SEND partnerships to plan and deliver an alternative provision service focused on early intervention
- give alternative provision schools the **funding stability** to deliver a service focused on early intervention by requiring local authorities to create and distribute an alternative provision-specific budget
- build system capacity to deliver the vision through plans for all alternative provision schools to be in a strong **multi-academy trust**, or have plans to join or form one, to deliver evidence-led services based on best practice, and open new alternative provision free schools where they are most needed

Chapter 4: A reformed and integrated role for alternative provision

- develop a bespoke **performance framework for alternative provision** which sets robust standards focused on progress, re-integration into mainstream education or sustainable post-16 destinations
- deliver greater oversight and transparency of **pupil movements** including placements into and out of alternative provision 16
- launch a call for evidence, before the summer, on the use of **unregistered provision** to investigate existing practice