

## Summary of Green Paper – March 2022

Ministers want to simplify the education, health and care plan (EHCP) process and change "the culture and practice in mainstream education to be more inclusive" as part of plans to improve provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The Department for Education has published its long-awaited plans in a Green Paper more than two years after its SEND review was launched.

The government says that the SEND and alternative provision Green Paper, published today, "sets out a vision for a single, national SEND and alternative provision (AP) system that will introduce new standards in the quality of support given to children across education, health and care".

The Green Paper identifies three key challenges facing the SEND system. These are: that outcomes for children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision are poor; navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for children, young people and their families; and that despite "unprecedented investment, the system is not delivering value for money for children, young people and families".

### **Simplifying the EHCP plan process**

Proposals in the Green Paper include creating a "simplified education, health and care plan (EHCP) through digitising plans to make them more flexible and reduce bureaucracy".

It claims this will support parents to make informed choices via a list of appropriate placements tailored to their child's needs, meaning less time spent researching the right school.

Other proposals in the Green Paper include:

- A new legal requirement for councils to introduce "local inclusion plans" that bring together early years, schools and post-16 education with health and care services.
- "Improving oversight and transparency" through new "local inclusion dashboards".
- A new national framework for councils for banding and tariffs of high needs, which the government claims will offer clarity on the level of support expected and put the system on a financially sustainable footing in the future.
- "Changing the culture and practice in mainstream education to be more inclusive and better at identifying and supporting needs, including through earlier intervention and improved targeted support".
- Improving workforce training through the introduction of a new Sendco NPQ for school Sendcos and increasing the number of staff with an accredited level 3 qualification in early years settings.
- A reformed and integrated role for alternative provision (AP). The DfE says AP will form an integral part of local SEND systems with improvements to settings and more funding stability.

The government has said that its proposals are backed by the equivalent of £70 million in new funding.

The plans to reform the system will now be open for a 13-week public consultation.

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi said: "Every child has the right to excellent education - particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities, who often need the most support.

"We are launching this consultation because too often this isn't the case. We want to end the postcode lottery of uncertainty and poor accountability that exists for too many families, boost confidence in the system across the board and increase local mainstream and specialist education to give parents better choice.

"I want to make sure everyone knows what to expect, when to expect it and where the support should come from. I know there are strongly held views and I want to hear from as many parents, teachers and children with experience of the system so they can help shape a future policy that works for them."

### **A breakdown of all proposals in the Green Paper**

#### **A single, national SEND and alternative provision (AP) system**

- Establish new, nationally consistent standards across provision, process and systems for how needs are identified and met at every stage.
- Establish new local SEND partnerships across education, health, care and local government to produce a local inclusion plan setting out how each area will meet the national standards.
- Review and update the SEND Code of Practice to ensure consistent systems.
- Introduce a standardised and digitised EHCP process and template to minimise bureaucracy and deliver consistency.
- Support parents and carers to make an informed preference for suitable placements for their child by providing a tailored list of settings, including mainstream, specialist and independent, that are appropriate to meet the child and young person's needs.
- Streamline the redress process, including through mandatory mediation, and retaining the tribunal for the most challenging cases.

#### **Support from early years to adulthood**

- Increase core schools' budgets by £7 billion by 2024-25, compared with 2021-22, as set out in the recent Spending Review.
- Consult on the introduction of a new Sendco national professional qualification (NPQ) for school Sendcos and increase the number of staff with an accredited Level 3 Sendco qualification in early years.
- Commission analysis to better understand "the support needed from the health workforce by children and young people with SEND need to inform strategic planning".
- £2.6 billion over the next three years to deliver new and improve existing specialist and alternative provision.
- By 2030, all children will benefit from being taught in a family of schools, with special and alternative provision part of a strong multi-academy trust.

- Fund more than 10,000 additional respite placements and spend £82 million to create a network of family hubs.
- Introduce common transfer files to improve transitions to further education.
- Invest £18 million in the supported internships programme over the next three years.
- Pilot the rollout of adjustment passports to prepare young people with SEND for employment.

### **Alternative provision (AP)**

- Make alternative provision an integral part of local SEND systems and require new local SEND partnerships to plan and deliver an alternative provision service focused on early intervention.
- Give alternative provision schools funding stability by requiring local authorities to create and distribute an alternative provision-specific budget.
- Build system capacity through plans for all alternative provision schools to be in a strong multi-academy trust, or have plans to join one, and open new alternative provision free schools where they are most needed.
- Develop a bespoke performance framework for alternative provision schools, setting robust standards focused on children and young people's progress and re-integration into mainstream or post-16 education.
- Launch a call for evidence on the use of unregistered provision before the summer to investigate existing practice.

### **System roles, funding and accountability**

- Deliver clarity in roles and responsibilities with every partner across education, health, care and local government having a clear role to play and being equipped with the levers to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Equip the DfE's new "regions group" to hold local authorities and MATs to account for delivery including through new funding agreements between local government and the department for high-needs funding.
- Introduce a new national framework of banding and price tariffs for funding, matched to levels of need and types of education provision set out in the national standards.
- Introduce new inclusion dashboards for 0-25 provision, offering a picture of system performance at a national and local level across education, health and care.
- Work with Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on their plan to deliver an updated local area SEND inspection framework, with clear accountability in place showing where agencies can improve.

### **Delivering change for children and families**

- Stabilise local SEND systems by investing an additional £300 million through the 'safety valve' programme' and £85 million in the Delivering Better Value programme, over the next three years, to support local authorities with the biggest deficits.
- Support delivery through a £70 million SEND and alternative provision change programme to test and refine key proposals.
- Establish a new National SEND Delivery Board, bringing together relevant government departments and partners, to hold partners to account for delivery.

- Publish a national SEND and AP delivery plan, setting out the government's response to the public consultation.