

# Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability

## The case for change

- Around **two million children and young people** identified as having a special educational need or who are disabled;
- Their life outcomes are **disproportionately poor**;
- Post-16, young people with SEN are **more than twice as likely** to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) as those without.
- They can feel frustrated by a **lack of the right help** at school or from other services;
- Children's support needs can be **identified late**;
- Parents say the system is **bureaucratic**, bewildering and adversarial; and
- Parents have **limited choices** about the best schools and care.

## DfE vision

A radically different system that:

supports better life outcomes for young people

gives parents more confidence by giving them control

transfers power to front-line professionals and to local communities

Department for  
**Education**

The Green Paper proposes:

a new approach to identifying SEN

a single assessment process and 'Education, Health and Care Plan'

a local offer of all services available

parents to have the option of a personal budget by 2014

giving parents a real choice of school

greater independence to the assessment of children's needs

## The Green Paper – Five Chapters

Support and aspiration:  
A new approach to special educational needs and disability

A consultation

Department for  
**Education**

Department for  
**Education**

Chapter	Title
1	Early identification and assessment
2	Giving parents control
3	Learning and achieving
4	Preparing for adulthood
5	Services working together for families

## 1. Early identification and assessment

Children's needs should be identified as early as possible so that the right support is put in place for them and their family. Proposals to:

- **help professionals identify problems as they emerge**, with a robust system of early checks for children involving education, health and social care
- **put in place a reformed assessment process** for children with complex needs, with a single multi-agency approach and giving parents the same statutory protection as the current statement of SEN

## Early identification and assessment

To work towards this, DfE will:

- test how to reform the statutory SEN assessment and statement system to create an ['Education, Health and Care Plan'](#) through local pathfinders
- in the meantime, speed up the process for families, by reducing the time limit for statutory assessments to 20 from 26 weeks

## 'Education Health and Care Plan'

- By 2014, all children who would currently have a statement of SEN or learning for further education and skills training should have a single statutory assessment process and 'Education, Health and Care Plan', from birth to 25.
- Makes clear who is responsible across education, health and social care for which services and includes a commitment from all parties to provide their services.
- Like a statement sets out needs but also set out learning and life outcomes
- Would be transparent about funding for support package

## Local Pathfinders

- Two main purposes-to explore:
  - Less bureaucratic approach where agencies work together
  - whether the voluntary and community sector could coordinate assessment and bring greater independence to the process
- Plus looking at:
  - Personal budgets
  - Mediation
  - Transition between phases and areas

## 2. Giving parents control

Parents to be at the heart of decisions made about their child and feel confident that support will be put in place.

DfE propose to:

- **make services more transparent for families**, with local services publishing a 'local offer' of what is available –change to *Provision of Information regs.* Includes information on [school provision](#)
- give parents **transparent information about the funding** which supports their child's needs
- strengthen the choice and control given to parents, with the option (*with limits*) of **personal budgets** by 2014 for all families with children with a statement of SEN or a new single plan
- **support families through the system**, with trained key workers to help parents navigate services-funding for voluntary sector to provide this training
- ensure parents have a real **choice of a range of schools**
- ensure that parents and local authorities **always attempt mediation** before making an appeal to the Tribunal-*will consult on how.*

## Information on school provision

- Four key areas of school provision in local offer:
  - Curriculum
  - Teaching
  - Assessment and identifying barriers to learning
  - Pastoral support
- Plus will simplify the requirements for publication of SEN policy from current 17. Consulting on what, but could be:
  - Statutory responsibilities
  - Approach to SEN
  - How it was consulted on
  - Normally available SEN provision

## 2. Giving parents control

To work towards this, DfE will:

- local authorities and health services will explore how to extend the scope of **personal budgets**
- we will give parents of children with statements of SEN the right to express a preference for **any state-funded mainstream or special school**, including Academies and Free Schools. This will remove bias towards inclusion that obstructs parental choice
- Giving parents possibility of setting up their own Free special school

## 3. Learning and achieving

All children must receive a high quality education whether in mainstream or special schools.

DfE propose to:

- **address over-identification** of SEN with a **new single early years- setting and school-based SEN category** to replace School Action and School Action Plus. New guidance for schools provided.
- **sharpen accountability** on progress for the lowest attainers, introducing a **new measure** into school performance tables
- better equip teachers and support staff to address SEN and poor behaviour through **training & CPD**
- **give schools more autonomy** to innovate and transform SEN provision, and allow special schools to become Academies.

### 3. Learning and achieving

To work towards this, DfE will:

- produce **clearer guidance** on SEN identification
- support the best schools to **share** their practices including allowing special schools to become Teaching Schools or members of a Teaching School Partnership
- expand NLEs, LLEs and new specialist Leaders in education (**5,000 SLEs by 2014**)
- continue funding of SENCO training in 2011/12

### 3. Learning and achieving

- introduce an indicator in **performance tables** that gives parents clear information on the progress of the lowest attaining pupils
- ensure that all maintained special schools will in due course have the **opportunity to become Academies**
- Growing **Free special schools** plus consideration of “mixed” special and mainstream Free schools
- Rolling out **Achievement for All** including developing a quality mark for innovative /excellent support

### 3. Learning and achieving

- introduce an indicator in **performance tables** that gives parents clear information on the progress of the lowest attaining pupils
- Remove advice on using **IEPs**
- Ensure new **National Curriculum** takes account of needs of all pupils
- ensure that all maintained special schools will in due course have the **opportunity to become Academies**
- Growing **Free special schools** plus consideration of “mixed” special and mainstream Free schools and “flexible” placements without the need for a statement
- Rolling out **Achievement for All** including developing a quality mark for innovative /excellent support

### 3. Learning and achieving

#### • Behaviour

- Work with **Anti Bullying Alliance** to share best practice
- Evaluate the trial of the **delegated funding** to schools for **alternative provision** on pupils with SEN
- **Exclusion guidance** will suggest schools trigger **multi-agency assessment** for pupils not responding to normally effective behaviour management techniques
- Support and build the capacity of **voluntary sector** to contribute to **TaMHS**

## 4. Preparing for adulthood

All young people should make a successful transition to adulthood and enjoy making a full contribution to society.

DfE propose to:

- increase the range and quality of **learning opportunities**;
- provide effective help for young people to move into **employment**;
- **improve joint working** across paediatric and adult health services, with GPs providing annual health checks for disabled young people over 16; and
- help young people to **live independently** by working across government to build on the Independent Living Strategy.

## 4. Preparing for adulthood

We will take forward a programme of action so that by 2015 disabled young people and young people with SEN will have:

- **early and well-integrated support** for, and advice on, their future as part of the proposed Education, Health and Care Plan
- access to **better quality** vocational and work-related learning options so that they can progress in their learning post-16
- **good opportunities and support** to get and keep a job
- a **well-coordinated transition** from children's to adult health services.

We will set out **more detail** on these plans by the **end of the year**.

## 5. Services working together for families

The Green Paper vision requires a strong role for local government alongside schools, health agencies and social care.

DfE propose to:

- set out a strong role for **local authorities as champions** of families and vulnerable children: strategic planning, securing provision, enabling informed choices
- enable frontline professionals to have the freedom to work together to develop better services
- make **funding mechanisms** for services support **collaborative approaches, secure better value and be more transparent** –mutuals? Cooperatives? Employee led teams

## 5. Services working together for families

To work towards this DfE will:

- explore with **GP consortia pathfinders** how best to commission healthcare services for disabled children and those with SEN
- **reduce bureaucratic burdens** by simplifying and improving the statutory guidance for professionals
- encourage **greater collaboration** between local authorities and between services in local areas
- work with the educational psychology profession and local commissioners to review future training arrangements for **educational psychologists**

## Supporting the development of a high quality educational psychology profession

- EPs can make a significant contribution to supporting families and enabling children and young people to make progress with learning, behaviour and social relationships.
- However, the ways in which the **expertise and skills** of EPs are utilised **vary** between LAs.
- We want to encourage EPs, as well as LAs and schools that commission their services, to work in a **more flexible** manner that is **responsive** to the needs of the local community.

## EP Training

- At present, the contributions towards funding and the availability of trainee placements are unevenly spread across the country.
- To address this, the DfE will work with the profession and local commissioners to review the future training arrangements for EPs.
- While the review is being carried out, DfE are making provision for the current training arrangements to continue. The final year of the current arrangements will be for those whose courses commence in September 2012.
- To inform this review, DfE is consulting on the ways in which EPs can be deployed most effectively, the current and future roles of EPs in supporting children, young people and their families and the implications of this for local commissioning and service delivery.

## 5. Services working together for families (contd)

- provide targeted funding to **voluntary and community sector** organisations and publish a **national SEN and disabilities voluntary sector prospectus** indicating where we will make funding available
- Explore with a group of LAs whether/how a **national framework** for funding specialist provision for children with SEN that **improves consistency** across areas, **transparency** and allows continued **local flexibility**.
- explore how the different **funding arrangements for special provision** pre-16 and post-16 might be better aligned.

## Next steps

**Four-month period of consultation and a period of testing proposals in local areas from September 2011.**

By June DfE will invite expressions of interest from groups of local authorities to:

- Start piloting a new approach involving a single assessment process and plan, including testing how the voluntary and community sector can support this process
- Join the existing Individual Budget Pilots and how the scope of personal budgets could be increased

**Government will set out detailed plans by the end of the year.** This will form the basis of any necessary legislative changes to be taken forward from May 2012.

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