

The SEND White Paper

Area SENCo Briefing Summer 2026

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What is the White Paper

The white paper is a consultation document and a list of proposals. After a 12 week consultation period, the Government will release any changes.

It proposes significant changes to the code of practice and so the SEND laws and processes we are all expected to follow.

Law will not change until 29-30 but they will expect people to move towards changes before law changes. There are 3 phases phase one starts this year

There is an early years focus in the White Paper



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Key Messages themes of the paper



An approach that is **needs lead** not diagnosis lead



Reduce bureaucracy and access correct level of support at correct time



Focus on setting improving ability to meet needs of commonly occurring SEND



Schools and setting having more funding directly paid to them to support SEND needs



Less EHCPs with needs being met in schools and settings instead

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Changes to language

There will be new areas of SEND called areas for development

Executive Function

Motor and physical

Sensory

Social and emotional

Speech and Language

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Figure 5: Proposed areas of development



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Change of language continued:

There will be new levels of support	Universal
	Targeted
	Targeted plus
	Specialist

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New paperwork

There will be a **digital Inclusion support plan ISP**. All settings will use the same paperwork across the country, also a government-imposed **formats for all EHCPs** across the whole country.

Changes to who gets an EHCP

There will be a **fast track to EHCPs for under 5s** with significant and complex needs, however they are not saying yet what that looks like, but it sounds medical? This is to ensure children can access early support and access specialist provision if needed. Possibly it's removing need for graduated approach for obvious cases, but that's speculation.

Changes to Funding SEND

Will increase notional budget in school. Early years setting are to get more direct inclusion fund for them to use for all send needs so not directly linked to children as it is now..

Talking about **simplifying funding** i.e. removing DAF Pupil premium etc. Inclusion fund being more directly given to early years settings but not saying how.

The LA will still be responsible for checking inclusion fund is spent appropriately in early years setting.

Its not clear if early years settings will have to write a SEND inclusion report/ plan as schools will but they are expected to plan for **commonly occurring SEND**

The National Training Offer

This has already gone out to tender All settings will be offered a nationally designed training package to upskill all staff in there understanding of commonly occurring SEND in early years. Said to be 200 million across early years and schools

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Inclusion fund

They expect early years settings to use the Inclusive Early Years Fund to strengthen inclusive practices across the whole setting. This may include freeing up staff time to participate in continuing professional development (CPD), collaborate on inclusive planning, or engage in early assessments. The funding can also support activities such as adapting the curriculum, improving the learning environment, or implementing targeted, evidence-based interventions for groups of children. These approaches aim to embed inclusive practice into everyday provision, reducing the need for individual applications or formal diagnoses.

7 SEND Packages

There is a lot of talk of **SEND packages** these appear to be broad offers to meet a variety of send needs. It says they predict **7 different broad packages** these are based on need not diagnosis so moving away from special schools for diagnosed need i.e. autism units

The packages will be based on **evidence based approaches** and written by experts? Lots of talk of Nelly in early years being a great example of the sort of evidence based package? .

Legal protections

It will be a legal requirement to write an ISPs for all children on the SEND register They will be written and managed by schools/ settings. EHCPs are reviewed end of a key-stage. Children with EHCP will also have an ISP for day-to-day targets

If parents are unhappy with ISP they suggest there will be an improved **school complaints procedure** for parent to use all **early year's setting must have a written complaints procedure in place.**

There will still be **tribunal for EHCP** but they will be able to say which type of setting not agree a specific setting. LA are now only able to argue if setting is able to meet need in future they are allowed to argue if setting is value for money and if cost will impact other children i.e. mean less left for other children

Inclusion Support bases

There is a strong emphasis on schools having Inclusion support bases they foresee two types of base: one is run by the LA and children will be placed there by the LA , others are managed by schools with school staff managing who attends but they may take children from surrounding schools still?

It does not talk about these in PVI settings, but some settings are looking at the possibility, and we are looking at guidance on how these should work.

Experts at hand

The white paper is providing funding for additional experts to work directly with setting to improve their ability to support children with SEND in the setting. This would be SALT Educational Psychology and possibly others We do not yet know exactly how this will work?

We have been given the example of around 40 hours for an average primary school we do not know what that would be for a PVI setting.

Best start inclusion practitioners BSIP's

The government is funding a Best start inclusion practitioner (BSIP) in every family hub so at least 4 in Solihull

There role should be to support families of children with SEND and to work alongside existing services such as our own

They are suggesting they run stay and plays for SEND needs and other activities

There is some discussion around supporting transition?

Guidance around use of funding

Not every setting seem to understand the complicated guidance and law around how the different SEND funding needs to be spent so we are going to do a quick recap on how funding should be spent.

Inclusion Fund

This is applied for and is designed to meet the cost for children with emerging SEND it is to pay for any additional support or interventions the child needs so if a child has an identified SEND they should have a SEND support plan (in the future an Inclusion Support Plan) and the funding should be supporting what you have written on the plan i.e. the strategies you have identified the child needs.

You should not use it for additional resources that do not relate to the support specified on the plan or for cost of things the child has damaged or for things the child will enjoy e.g. pepper pig toys

Coming soon

In the near future, most settings will receive a top up of inclusion fund that may be £1000 or more dependent on a few factors. We are still looking at the guidance.

It's important this is spent in an appropriate way. It is to be used to upskill your staff in ways to meet the needs of children with **commonly occurring SEND**, so we would suggest you use it to release staff to have training for example, The Area SENCo Shorts, Dingleys Promise, Makaton or to have our team in to do free training (you can pay staff to attend)

DAF

If a parent has received disability living allowance DLA a setting can apply for DAF it's a one off payment and it needs to be spent on something that supports the child's SEND needs so again some thing identified on the SEND plan You can buy specialist equipment the child needs (if its specified on a report about the child) or resources or fund training on approaches recommended for the child, or support enhances staffing ratios for transition in to setting.

EHCP funding

If you have a child with an EHCP and they are allocated funding, you can **ONLY** spend the money on things directly specified in section F of the EHCP. You can't, choose how to spend the money. You can't decide the child needs something different than is in section F. You can only change it at annual review and then only if a professional has submitted a report saying the child needs are for something new.

And if it says you need to provide something in section F you are legally obliged to provide it, for example it may say 1-1 at all times you can't say we don't have staff to for that it's a legal requirement. If it says private speech and language therapy, you are responsible for sourcing and paying for the speech and language therapist from the EHCP funding.

Any questions

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