



Solving the SEND crisis

Summary of the latest evidence to the SEND Inquiry

The summary is two parts

- Evidence from parents and carers
- Evidence from schools and professionals

Codes in brackets are the references from the inquiry's [publication list](#), where you can see the full submissions.

Evidence from parents and carers

Parent (SEN 102)

- There should be a standardised, nationwide approach to EHCPs/SEND to eliminate the postcode lottery effect.
- I have spent over £44,000 on two tribunal appeals. Allow parents to claim their legal costs in order to incentivise local authorities to deliver the necessary provisions without tribunal orders.

Grandmother (SEN 101)

- We need more special schools.
- Multi-agency support needs to be less disjointed.
- Provide specialist on-demand drop-in SEND advice and support for parents and schools pre-EHCP to put in place support that may eliminate or delay the need for an EHCP.

Parent (SEN 94)

- Increase tribunal capacity
- Ensure there are enough trained and not overburdened SEND caseworkers in councils.
- Have more accountability for LAs that break the law.

Parent (SEN 92)

- SEND is increasing and I believe is the product of a world that is now faster paced, more complex and over stimulating. Possibly diet, genetics and environmental reasons have a role as well.
- There needs to be some realistic future projections of SEND numbers and associated planning.
- Have more special schools for mild-moderate needs.

Parent and SEN charity volunteer (SEN 91)

- Train all attendance officers in SEND
- Create a parliamentary SEND delivery unit to pilot ideas.

Carer (SEN 90)

- Reduce class sizes.
- Build more special schools.
- Provide learning that is less sitting behind desks.

Parent (SEN 83)

- Improve awareness of sensory needs.
- For many pupils who have SEND, 'learning to live life well' is their priority- particularly as exam subjects may be out of reach for them. Develop a true life skills curriculum.

Parent (SEN 78)

- Expand respite care services
- Require LAs to publish data on waiting lists for respite care.
- Provide better legal aid for families taking cases to SEND tribunal.

Parent (SEN 77)

- Give more money to schools that can show successful outcomes for SEND learners and, in doing so, incentivise inclusion.

Parent (SEN 66)

- If inclusion is the way to solve the SEN crisis then a vital solution is to mount a huge information campaign informing neurotypical people about neurodivergence.
- If special schools can't be increased then we need more specialist groups within schools.

Parent (SEN 61)

- Have more neurodivergent teachers and TAs and counsellors in schools.
- SENCOs need training from neurodivergent individuals.

Parent (SEN 59)

- Eliminate or significantly reduce the frequency of annual EHC Plan reviews.
- Prioritize early intervention and support in primary schools.
- Provide schools with readily available tools and temporary support to address suspected SEND needs.

Parent (SEN 55)

- Not enough funding for special needs and the current funding is not being wisely spent... The priority for the limited funding should be educating and training staff so that they understand special needs individuals.
- Support can be improved by liaising with Birmingham University Special Needs, Autism West Midlands and the National Autistic Society.

Parent (SEN 54)

- Pay early years staff more money.
- If parents can't find anywhere to meet a child's needs, pay parents to educate them.
- Introduce the proposed ban on cousin marriage.
- Introduce streaming into EHCPs – as parents we are aware that there is increasing demand but children with multiple and complex disabilities must come first above mild learning disabilities. Move suspected and mild cases of autism/ADHD into a different stream so that children with complex disabilities can access services sometimes for the first time in their lives.

Parent (SEN 53)

- Central Government must provide the funding for SEN direct via a specialist body.
- In addition, a separate body is needed for policing of EHCP implementation.

Submissions from schools and professionals

Former SENCo (SEN 69)

- Each local authority needs specialist ADHD teams.
- Early screening in the primary school (years 3-5) is critically needed.
- Treat SEND funding like Pupil Premium funding and ring fence it.

Teacher (SEN 103)

- Provide daily exercise (e.g. the daily mile) to boost mood, cognitive function, social skills and much more.

Author of book about colour blindness (SEN 97)

- Reinstate screening for colour blindness into NHS eye test that are offered as part of the healthy child programme.

Ex teacher (SEN 96)

- When the ratios are higher in nursery, children with SEND are supported well as there are more adults to give support. Unfortunately, this means that nursery staff are less likely to submit paperwork to help support children with SEND. Nursery staff must become more forward thinking to support the reception staff who have these children in a far less supported environment (ratios of 15:1).
- Make paperwork simpler for parents and less arduous for staff.

SENCo (SEN 84)

- Have a digital system where everything to do with a child's EHCP is in one place.
- Have mediation before things turn become disputes.
- LAs need to have long range forecasts for SEND demand (i.e. next 10 years).

Creative arts therapists (SEN 75)

- Investing in creative arts therapies can provide long-term value by improving student outcomes, reducing exclusions, and enhancing staff retention.
- Therapeutic interventions can support young people in developing healthier relationships with technology and their peers.
- Inspections should evaluate how schools address both the academic and social-emotional needs of students with SEND.

SENCo (SEN 73)

- Redefine the definition of SEND and how an EHCP must be applied for - it's too open to interpretation.

- Take your time on this. This needs serious national consideration but must be linked to wider issues including issues within the NHS and the over identification of needs.
- Make it clear that plans are not kept to the age of 25 without need- that caveat has been lost it seems.

Former teacher (SEN 72)

- Roll out whole-school emotional regulation curriculum and the TEACCH program.
- Both represent practical, low-cost, flexible solutions to some of the most pressing challenges facing children with SEND in mainstream schools.

Deputy head in SEND school (SEN 71)

- Create a SEND PGCE to create more skilled workforce for special schools.
- Better systems for families who refuse support;
- Families need to be offered consultation/counselling regarding their own needs, whether they have any known or unknown neurological differences or mental health needs.

Primary School (SEN 70)

- Local authorities need more man power at every level of the EHCP chain.
- Staff need to be recognised, valued, paid well and encouraged to do the amazing job they do to change lives every day.
- Allow pupils who have severe learning difficulties to go to special school without needing an EHCP.

Charity (SEN 68)

- A child with an EHCP should be protected against permanent exclusion unless a fully independent SEND panel agrees that the school has exhausted all possible avenues to support the child and has fully complied with the EHCP.
- SEND Auditor should be able to inspect schools and investigate failings by the school to implement EHCP's and have the power to direct the school to comply. This would move the burden of enforcing SEND provision from parents to the state.

Leader in Integrated Care Board and parent (SEN 64)

- Make a new organisation, in one building, to integrate health and local authority.
- Wouldn't it be so much better if SEND diagnosis, advice and funding came from one combined, single organisation? When a concern arises, the child accesses a single building where a need is identified, then someone in that building draws up a support plan and then that organisation's single, dedicated budget is used to implement that support plan? No, referrals; no funding applications; no High Needs Block; less bureaucracy. A parent would only ever have to contact one service.
- The child's school would also only have to deal with one service.