Supporting outstanding outcomes for children and young people in Barnet

Every Child Achieving and Thriving

A summary of the Government's 2026 Schools White Paper

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A white paper

- A White Paper explains the **government's plans and direction for the future**.
- It **does not mean immediate changes** to the law or to children's current rights.
- The ideas in a White Paper are usually **consulted on and developed over time** - this White Paper refers to a number of current and future consultations.
- Because of this, changes take place **gradually over several years**.
- Many of the proposed SEND reforms are **not expected to take effect until 2029**.

The big picture – Inclusion as a default

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Our shared vision for children

- High standards and inclusion go hand in hand for every child
- Every child can achieve and thrive, whatever their background or needs
- Every child deserves a high quality, inclusive education close to home where they can feel they belong, have friends and are part of the community
- Schools at the heart of communities, working closely with families to ensure evidence-based support is provided early
- Love and support at home built on by inclusive, enriching school experiences
- Integrated support across education, health and family services ensuring needs are addressed early
- Services working together to prepare children for a fast-changing, digital world
- Increased investment upfront



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What the White Paper Aims to Do

- The government's view is that the education system works well for some children, **but not for all**.
- The aim of the White Paper is to **spread opportunity and good practice**, so the system works better for every child.
- The White Paper is based on the belief that **children do best when they feel included, supported and that they belong**.
- Schools are seen as the core of a wider community, **working alongside families and services to support children's learning, wellbeing and inclusion.**
- It focuses on SEND, disadvantage, schools working together, **strong partnerships with parents and carers**, and positive behaviour and attendance.



What this means in practice

- **Inclusion in mainstream schools will be the expectation**, and this will be monitored through Ofsted.
- Schools will be expected to **identify needs earlier**, using clearer digital **Individual Support Plans (ISPs)**.
- Mainstream schools will be **better supported and funded** to meet children's needs more consistently, including **£1.6bn of Inclusive Mainstream Funding over three years**.
- There will be **clear national standards for inclusion**, setting consistent expectations across the country.
- The focus is on **better outcomes for all children**, including closing the disadvantage gap.
- **Attendance and belonging** are central, with schools expected to understand how children and young people feel about school and whether they feel included.
- Children should experience a **broad, knowledge-rich curriculum**, with enrichment opportunities beyond exams.
- There will be **more focus on recruiting, retaining and training the workforce** to support children well.

Layers of support

Universal

- All children.
- Upskilled teachers, New and enhanced training across new and existing teachers.
- Inclusion standards
- High quality teaching and inclusion for all.

Targeted

- Children who require some targeted additional support from the setting.
- Individualised Support Plans (ISP) will outline the personalised materials or scaffolded supports.

Targeted Plus

- Children who require further additional support to include education and healthcare professionals outlined in an ISP.
- Improved access to external professionals – Experts at Hand.
- Inclusion bases (SEND spaces, additional resource provisions)
- Barnet currently has an extensive offer.

Specialist

- Children with the most complex needs which cannot be met, even with a high level of support in a mainstream setting.
- Specialist provision packages to be outlined by the DfE.
- EHCP's.
- Specialist bases
- Special schools places.

Legal Rights for C/YP remains

EHCP	There are **no immediate changes** to EHCPs, legal rights or current support Parents and carers will continue to have **a voice, clear rights, and routes to challenge and support**
Legal Rights	**EHCPs remain in place**, and children's **legal rights are protected** There are **no immediate changes** to current entitlements or support Any changes proposed are **future-focused**, with a new Code of Practice expected from **2029** Changes will happen **gradually over several years**
Changes	Changes will happen **gradually over several years**, with safeguards in place **Individual Support Plans (ISPs) do not replace EHCPs** - EHCPs remain for children with the most complex needs
Transition Phase	Over several years and focused at KS2-KS3 transition

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SEND Reform timelines – gradual change

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Phase 1: 2026-2028 Building the foundation

- Training programmes introduced for all staff working with children and young people
- Schools, colleges and early years settings receive £530m per year from the Inclusive Mainstream Fund to strengthen inclusive practice
- Experts at Hand support becomes available to all settings
- National Inclusion Standards published
- Specialist Provision Packages published
- New mainstream inclusion legislation introduced

Phase 2:2028 – 2029 Improving support

- First children supported through Individual Support Plans
- First assessments take place under the reformed system
- Controls introduced on independent special school fee

Phase 3: 2029 onward The future system

- EHCPs, National Inclusion Standards and Individual Support Plans fully in place
- First children supported using **Specialist Provision Packages**
- **60,000 new SEND places** created nationally

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Strengthening relationships - parents and stakeholders

The White Paper places a strong focus on **building positive, trusting relationships between parents and stakeholders.**

New minimum standards for parental engagement, to support meaningful and consistent home-to-school partnerships

New school profiles that bring together Ofsted outcomes with other information

A **reformed complaints process,** designed to rebuild parent confidence while also reducing unnecessary workload for school staff

An **independent panel member** for complaints in maintained schools

Clearer timescales and updated guidance on managing repeated or vexatious complaints

The consultation

- **What is the consultation asking?**
- The consultation includes **39 questions**.
- These questions focus on **key parts of the proposed SEND reforms**, including:
    - Individual Support Plans (ISPs)
    - National Inclusion Standards
    - Specialist Provision Packages
    - How and when EHCPs would be used in the future
    - Funding, accountability and consistency of support
- The government is **not asking for feedback on everything in the White Paper**. Instead, the 39 questions focus on **specific areas where views can still influence how reforms are designed and implemented**.
- The questions are spread throughout the consultation document, with a **full list included in Appendix C (Part B)**.
- We have put the questions onto a word document that can be accessed through via the **chat and on the local offer parent page.**
- **A link to the online questionnaire is here: https://consult.education.gov.uk/send-strategy-division/send-reform-putting-children-and-young-people-firs/**

Areas to consider going forward

- Clear communication about the flexibility of support packages and their essential components
- Comprehending health and social care responsibilities in delivering effective support
- Clarifying complex needs and differentiating between individuals requiring specialist support and those identified with EBSA
- Strategies for expressing concerns while preserving positive relationships
- Securing adequate funding and sustained resources
- Tackling challenges related to workforce recruitment and retention
- Creating more opportunities for parent carers to share their experiences and insights throughout the process

White paper and Consultation guidance

Every child achieving and thriving and SEND consultation supporting information - GOV.UK

The 39 Steps: SNJ's guidance to help you respond to the White Paper SEND Consultation - Special Needs Jungle



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