

# School's White Paper – SEND Reform

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee

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# Schools White Paper

## Vision

- Inclusive Mainstream System
- Specialist Support for Children that need it
- Effective and efficient local delivery.
- Stretching, enriching and inclusive school experience for all.
- North East Mission – emphasis on disadvantaged, white working class children.

# Curriculum

- Every teacher a teacher of SEND
- National curriculum refreshed for first teaching from 2028
- Updated GCSEs from 2029.
- Changes include: integrating oracy, digital and media literacy, financial literacy.
- Introduction of a new enrichment entitlement
- Reform of Progress 8 to place greater weight on creative, language, and humanities subjects alongside core academic subjects
- Investments: money to go in over three years to support up to 400 schools in deprived areas meeting enrichment benchmarks.

# SEND Reform

## Consultation Phase

- Strong universal offer for SEND
- Schools to produce inclusion strategies backed by national inclusion standards and changes to complaints process re: SEND Support.
- Updated 0-25 SEND Code of Practice and new primary areas of need.
- Universal – Targeted – Targeted Plus – Specialist
- Updated Tribunal Powers
- Experts at Hand
- SEND Practitioners in Family Hubs
- Schools to have their own inclusion hubs – no more SEND Units & ARPS

# Attendance & Suspensions

- Target: Improve overall attendance by 1.3 percentage points by 2028–29
- Introduction of pupil engagement framework measuring belonging and engagement
- Behaviour reforms include Reintegration Support Partnerships, Attendance and Behaviour Hubs, and new suspension supervision options

# School Governance

- Gradual movement of all schools into trust structures, with new Trust Standards and systemic inspection
- Enhanced local authority role for strategic planning, admissions, SEND sufficiency, and attendance oversight.
- LA or groups of un-academised schools can create trusts - but doesn't give a date of when this needs to happen by.
- New independent school standards.

# What does this mean for The Council?

## Local Area SEND Reform Plan

- Local area partnerships are to deliver LARPs
- Govt will use these plans (and from regular progress reviews) will support decision making.
- When each LA has approval for their LARP from the SoS; investment will be put in place to clear 90% of SEND debt through a debt relief offer
- Local Area SEND Reform Plan must include Vision, Strategy, the Plan, Monitoring, Governance
- Plan to be jointly owned by the LA and the ICB but written by the LA.
- Must be an ongoing and embedded plan deployed across all educational settings, EAH offer to be in place by 2028/29
- Key Expectations – EAH offer, Sufficiency and place planning, Universal offer, Effective partnerships, Effective co-production strategies
- Year One expectations – clear, testable workstreams, robust financial baseline, steps toward the experts at hand,; strengthened governance and partnership arrangements; workable system for monitoring and evaluation
- Experts at Hand - provide a defined route for mainstream settings to access specialist support (EPs, Ots, SALT); shifts away from 1:1 to group offers; build embedded capability within mainstream
- Health ICB role in developing plan: Joint vision and KPIs, Commissioning plan and funding approach, Workforce and Capacity plan, Pathways and access standards; Assessment and review participation

# Key Dates

Response to consultation deadline – 18th May 2026

LARP Deadline – 1<sup>st</sup> Draft – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026

Planning & Legislation Changes – 2026-2028

Experts at Hand to commence - 2028/29

Assessments under new framework to begin 2029

ISP to be in place from 2030

# Next Steps

- DFE Advisor - monthly
- Change of Governance and oversight arrangements i.e. SEND Operational Group.
- Briefings & Webinars
- High Needs Funding Deficit – Statutory Override
- Expert at Hand Guidance – expected late May
- High needs Capital Allocation – expected late May
- Guidance on Inclusion Bases – expected late May
- Submit Local Area SEND Reform Plan

# Questions?