

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

A consultation

March 2011

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.

Our 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

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

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.

We propose 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 'Education, Health and Care Plan' for 0-25, focusing on outcomes, giving parents the same statutory protection as the current statement of SEN
- in the meantime, **speed up the process** for families, by reducing the time limit for statutory assessments



1. Early identification and assessment

To work towards this, we will:

- ✓ test how to reform the statutory SEN assessment and statement system to create an 'Education, Health and Care Plan' through **local pathfinders**
- ✓ explore whether the **voluntary and community sector** could coordinate assessment and bring greater independence to the process



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.

We propose to:

- **make services more transparent for families**, with local services publishing a ‘local offer’ of what is available
- strengthen the choice and control given to parents, with the option 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
- 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



2. Giving parents control

To work towards this, we 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



3. Learning and achieving

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

We 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
- **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, we will:

- ✓ produce **clearer guidance** on SEN identification
- ✓ support the best schools to **share** their practices
- ✓ 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**
- ✓ enable parents and members of local communities to establish **new special Free Schools**



4. Preparing for adulthood

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

We 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
- help young people to **live independently** by working across government to reflect this in the forthcoming disability 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.

We propose to:

- set out a strong role for **local authorities as champions** of families and vulnerable children
- encourage **greater collaboration** between local authorities and between services in local areas
- explore a national framework for funding specialist provision for children with SEN that **improves consistency** across areas and allows continued local flexibility



5. Services working together for families

To work towards this we 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
- ✓ work with the educational psychology profession and local commissioners to review future training arrangements for **educational psychologists**
- ✓ provide targeted funding to **voluntary and community sector** organisations
- ✓ 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 we 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

We 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.

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

www.education.gov.uk/consultations/

www.education.gov.uk/