

My ref:
Your ref:

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People and Communities
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Dear Parent/ Carers and Young People,

On 29th March 2022 the government published a consultation paper named:

[SEND Review: Right support, right place, right time](#)

This represents a really important opportunity for us all to have our say in how we would like the future of SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) and practice to be organised. The consultation document outlines how the government propose to reform the systems that manage, and support SEND and AP in a way that will seek to address 3 main identified challenges:

- poor outcomes for children and young people with SEN or in **alternative provision**
- navigating the SEND system and **alternative provision** is not a positive experience for children, young people, and their families and;
- despite unprecedented investment, the system is not delivering value for money for children, young people and families.

Since the publication of the consultation the LA has been working with all our stakeholders and run a number of workshops including input from family forums, young people support groups and schools and settings in order to write a full and representative response to the 22 questions set out by the document.

There are some very detailed proposals within the document, but the main highlights include:

- The creation of new national standards for:
 - SEND Provision
 - Alternative Provision
 - Funding allocation
 - Training for SENCo's
- The development of a standardised Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which will be provided digitally to improve timescales and consistency

- The implementation of mandatory mediation as a part of an appeals process before tribunal
- The development of approved lists to help parent carers, young people decide which provision is most suitable
- The increase of responsibilities for LAs in regard to working with Multi Academy Trusts.

These are highlights from a long a detailed consultation document, which are shared to help you understand the scope and importance of the opportunity to communicate our thoughts and responses.

Attached to this letter is a copy of the Local Authority's comprehensive response so you can take the opportunity to see how we have responded to support the process. You will see that generally we welcome the opportunity for reform in both SEND and AP, however, the LA feels there needs to be clear guidance, supported by robust legislation and adequate funding to enable the proposed reforms to have the impact we wish to see within the system.

I appreciate that the consultation document is long and detailed, however, responses to the DfE can be short and limited to the areas of interest and focus. I would ask that you consider the questions and the LA response and if you have a view either different or in agreement on the aspect, please do consider sharing this view with the DfE. Consultations of this kind do not come around very often, we need to ensure our voice, and your voices are clearly heard to get the right outcomes for our SEND and AP children and young people in the future.

Responding is easy - just highlight the question you would like to respond to and then provide your response underneath e.g:

Q4 What components of the EHCP should we consider reviewing or amending as we move to a standardised and digitised version?

- A standardised EHCP format that is digitalised and easier to administer would be an excellent idea. It is hoped that the design and outline for this standardised format is constructed under consultation with practitioners and case work officers who will have to manage the new format. It would be good to find a format that was shorter in length and that had a balanced focus on abilities and strengths without an over reliance on the deficit model. The introduction of a system that includes pictures and film is a very positive aspect, however, the cost of the new system and in the maintenance of a system that incorporates these aspects must be provided to LAs to enable them to implement this ideal.
- There is also room to standardise the initial application for Assessment of need and for a full suite of standardised forms for professional to use as part of the EHCP creation and review process. This will aid cross border communications and avoid any miscommunications when young people move local areas

- It would be useful to provide guidance on how to complete new templates with a focus on the level of specificity required and who is responsible for adding the required information at the agreed levels
- The proposal to create multi-agency panel to increase confidence for parent carers is innovative and rooted in positive theory. There will need to be a great deal of structure and robust legislation and guidance to ensure that a panel that reviews needs assessment can include school, colleges, health, social care and parents and it will need to be very clear about who is responsible for such assessment needs.

Send to the DfE via this email address: SENDReview.CONULTATION@EDUCATION.GOV.UK

You do not need to answer every question and you do not need to write any more than one bullet point. Any and all input is valuable.

If you agree with what the LA has written, you can copy and paste the comments and send them/ or you can edit them if you wish? That would be great and help us to push forward our views. The more people respond the more likely we will support change and the count made by the DfE for impact, comes from the number of different email addresses so your email address is an important tool for change!

Thank you so much for your support.

I look forwards to impact we can all have together to make things better for our most vulnerable children and young people,



Toni Bailey
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Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council