FAQ: PARENT GUIDE TO THE PROPOSED SEND REFORMS

1. Is my child's EHCP being taken away?
No. Children who already have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are expected to keep it while the new system is introduced. The Government has said there will be protections during the transition, although the exact details have not yet been published.

2. Will children still get SEND support if they don't have an EHCP?
Yes. Schools will continue to have a legal duty to identify and support children with Special Educational Needs. The Government wants more children to receive the right support earlier, without always needing an EHCP.

3. What is changing?
The Government wants to make the SEND system:

- easier for families to understand
- more consistent across the country
- quicker to access support
- focused on meeting children's needs earlier
- less dependent on families having to fight for support.

Many of the details are still being developed.

4. What is an Individual Support Plan (ISP)?
One proposal is that many children who currently need an EHCP for educational support may instead have an ISP. The Government says these plans should provide clearer support without families having to go through the full EHCP assessment process. The ISP could describe:

- your child's needs
- the support they should receive
- how progress will be reviewed.

5. Does this mean fewer children will have EHCPs?
Possibly, in time. The Government has said it wants EHCPs to be focused on children and young people with the most complex needs where coordinated education, health and care support is required. Exactly how this will work has not yet been confirmed.

6. Will parents still be involved?
Yes. Schools will continue to work with parents and carers when planning support. Parents should still be involved in decisions, reviews and discussions about what will help their child.

7. Will schools get more funding?
The Government has announced additional investment alongside the reforms, including funding for:

- earlier intervention

- staff training
- improving mainstream inclusion
- specialist provision.

How this funding will be distributed locally is still being worked through.

8. Will my child lose access to a teaching assistant?
Not necessarily. Support should always be based on a child's individual needs. Schools are increasingly focusing on making classrooms inclusive through skilled teaching, adaptations and targeted interventions, with teaching assistants used where they make the biggest difference.

9. Will children still be able to attend specialist schools?
Yes. Special schools will continue to play an important role for children whose needs cannot be met in mainstream schools, although the Government hopes that more children will be successfully supported within mainstream settings where appropriate.

10. What if I disagree with decisions?
Parents will continue to have rights to raise concerns, request reviews and use formal processes where appropriate. The Government has said it wants disagreements to be resolved earlier and more collaboratively, reducing the need for lengthy appeals.

11. When will these changes happen?
There are no immediate changes. The reforms will take place over several years, until around 2030. Existing arrangements remain in place while legislation is developed and introduced.

12. What should parents do now?
There is nothing you need to do differently now. If your child already receives SEND support or has an EHCP:

- continue to attend review meetings
- speak to school if you have concerns
- continue working with your child's teachers and SENDCo.

If your child is waiting for assessment or support, current legal processes still apply.

13. How will our school keep us informed?
As more information becomes available from the Department for Education, we will share updates with families.

We know that changes to SEND can feel worrying. Our commitment remains the same: to work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure every child receives the support they need to thrive.