



Department
for Education

Department for Education
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Mr Howard Lamb D.C
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Dear Mr Lamb

Thank you for your letter dated 20 April addressed to the Prime Minister, regarding your concerns about the support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) receive. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister is unable to respond to all of the correspondence he receives, and your letter has been passed to the Department for Education (DfE) where the SEND policy is situated. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying.

We want all children and young people, no matter what their SEND to be able to reach their full potential and receive the right support to succeed in their education and as they move into adult life.

The SEND Code of Practice (the Code) explains the duties of local authorities, health bodies, schools and colleges to provide for those with SEN under part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Under this Code every school is required to identify and address the SEND of the pupils that they support to enable them to achieve their best, become confident individuals living fulfilling lives and make a successful transition into adulthood. All schools should apply the 'graduated approach' that is outlined in the Code, which means identifying a child's needs, planning appropriate support, implementing that support, and reviewing it regularly to ensure it continues to meet the identified needs. Through this, schools should develop personalised approaches to supporting the unique needs of individual pupils.

If parents are dissatisfied with the support being given to their child, there are systems in place for them to raise a complaint by using the school's published complaints procedure. The school's SEN Information Report should include arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEN about the provision made at the school.

As part of their initial training, qualified teachers must have demonstrated their ability to recognise and respond to a wide range of pupils' needs. There continues to be an emphasis within Qualified Teacher Status on meeting the individual needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. Teachers and other professionals working in schools will work closely with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator based in their school when supporting children with SEND.

There are a number of professional development opportunities that are available to teachers to ensure that a focus on SEND is embedded across schools. Through DfE's contract with nasen, we have funded the Whole School SEND consortium to produce resources and deliver training to schools. In addition, the DfE is funding the Autism Education Trust (AET) to deliver autism training and good practice support to the education workforce. The AET contract includes specific resources and training for school leaders, which are focused on establishing a supportive ethos and environment for autistic children within mainstream schools.

I hope this response help to assure you of the importance that schools and their workforce place on supporting children and young people with SEND.

Yours sincerely

Paula Simpson
SEND Policy Division