

September 22nd 2022

The Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP
Secretary of State for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Secretary of State for Education,

SEND Reform must follow these six basic principles

We are writing to you as a group of organisations and professionals who are concerned about the possible impact that SEND reform could have on children and their families across England.

We believe that the Government's proposals as they stand do not address the accountability gap and could worsen delays and access to support across the country. Based on our engagement with parents and carers, professionals, and organisations in the sector, we believe that reform must:

1. Be co-designed with children and families

There must be meaningful opportunities for children and families who have lived experience of navigating services to shape SEND reform.

2. Strengthen compliance with the law

The Department for Education should clarify the roles and expectations of stakeholders delivering SEND services, such as local authorities and health services. Families must know who is accountable for delivering what, when, and their rights for redress if things go wrong.

3. Ensure parental choice is retained

Families should continue to have the right to request a particular school or college within their child's EHC plan. Their options should not be limited to a tailored list. Children and young people's views should actively be sought and heard within the decision-making process.

4. Make post-16 support a priority

The Department for Education should consider additional proposals on independent advocacy and supported internships and apprenticeships. Children with SEND must have meaningful opportunities with regards to training and employment.

5. Not squeeze children's needs into funding bands

A one size-fits-all funding approach risks a loss of provision in expensive areas of the country. Needs change over periods of time and are by nature different from child to child. This proposal is dangerous and should be dropped.

6. Address existing gaps in the Green Paper

The Green Paper does not discuss how proposals will impact children in care and care leavers, children who have a physical disability, experience school-based avoidance or diagnostic overshadowing. The Minister should address these gaps.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with the relevant Minister and discuss our recommendations further.

Yours sincerely,



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Together Trust
Chief Executive



Steven Kingdom
Disabled Children's
Partnership
Campaigns Manager



Tom Madders
YoungMinds
Campaigns Director



Caroline Stevens
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Kate Steele
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Sue Millman
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Michael McGrath
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David Coe
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Louise Griew
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Sarah Pugh
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Jane Harris
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Helen Hewitt
Chailey Heritage
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Chief Executive



Rita Waters
National Youth Advocacy Service
Group Chief Executive



Kevin Williams
The Fostering Network
Chief Executive



Zillah Bingley
Rainbow Trust Children's
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Katie Ghose
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