



Manifesto for Early Years Inclusion

Manifesto Progress and Future Plans

Funding to support children with SEND is difficult to access, is not given in a timely manner and is often not sufficient to enable settings to support children fully.

- We met with Minister David Johnston and as a result the DfE committed to communicating to all local authorities that High Needs Funding should be used in the early years.
- We are supporting the DfE in their review of SENIF (Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funds) funding through membership of the Early Years SEND Expert Advisory Group.

Skills and knowledge of early educators in inclusive practice is inadequate across the country with many practitioners lacking the confidence to support children with SEND in an inclusive environment.

- We are delivering practical early years inclusion courses to over 14,000 learners. The courses have been shared by the DfE with the National Directors of Children's Services group and we are supporting local authorities to promote the courses to learners locally.
- We are working with Ofsted to review the inspection process so that it recognises and values inclusive practice, and actively assesses whether settings are inclusive.
- We have created new national early years SEND assessment toolkit for the DfE, that will give practitioners a clear way to identify needs and deliver early intervention.

Settings are overwhelmed with rising numbers of children with SEND and there are insufficient places across the country, particularly with the recent introduction of new entitlements.

- We have created papers and webinars for local authorities covering how they can measure sufficiency for children with SEND in the early years, and then how to improve sufficiency.
- We have established monthly check ins for local authorities to discuss inclusion and give support on sufficiency issues – including how to gather data to demonstrate sufficiency.



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While good progress has been made, we need you to keep the pressure up, and make sure all children in the early years have equal opportunities to thrive.

Our next priorities:

Delinking of DAF and DLA

Currently Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is the proxy used to unlock Disability Access Funding (DAF). If a family has not secured DLA, the setting cannot receive DAF to enable the child to attend. We would recommend a di-linking of these current funding streams or redevelopment of the funding structure to improve speed and ease of accessibility.

Mandatory Inclusion Training for all Early Years Educators

Of over 14,000 educators on our national inclusion training, 96% say they can support more children with SEND as a result. This builds on the recent roll out of level 3 training for SENCO's whilst also ensuring wider support within the setting and greater confidence from families. We need inclusion training to be mandatory across the country so that every educator feels confident and knowledgeable in supporting children with SEND effectively. It will improve the quality of provision for the child, build parent trust, and also take pressure off the SENCO.