

Westminster Education Forum policy conference:

Next steps for SEND provision in England

Timing: Morning, Friday, 27th February 2026

Taking place online



Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **The future of the SEND system in England and identifying priorities for policy implementation**
Gary Aubin, Member, Curriculum and Assessment Review Group; Consultant, SEND; and Author, *SEND Matters UK blog*
Lorna Beard, Strategic Director, Education and Deputy CEO, Nasen
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.40 **Developing effective early support and intervention mechanisms**
managing increased demand for EHCPs / mitigating inequalities in access to support / workforce capacity / multi-agency collaboration / access to training and support for the early years and teaching workforce / implementing early identification measures and effective practice in interventions / primary school transitions / potential impact of Early Language Support for Every Child / co-design with children, parents and teachers
Catherine Mole, Chief Executive, Dingley's Promise
Georgina Durrant, National Inclusion Lead, Twinkl
Deborah Smith, Assistant Director, SEND and Inclusion, Oxfordshire County Council
Jane Elvidge, Senior Inclusion Consultant and Lead Officer, SEND Strategic Early Intervention Team, Oxfordshire County Council
Senior representative, primary school
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.30 **Building capacity in local SEND provision - support for local systems and collaboration between health, social care, and education**
reviewing progress in delivering 10,000 new special school places / funding for specialist units in mainstream schools / financial sustainability of local authority SEND services and funding proposals / future of independent provision / parental involvement in decision-making processes and formal co-design approaches / strengthening local provision and integrated EHC pathways / building trust in the SEND system / availability of specialist services and one-to-one support / monitoring delivery using clear local indicators of progress
Jackie Fieldwick, CEO, Brunel Academies Trust
Councillor Anya Sizer, Deputy Cabinet Member, Families, Early Years and SEND, Hackney Council
Senior representative, parents group
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.15 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.20 Break
- 11.30 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.35 **Accountability and oversight within the SEND system**
inspection and oversight mechanisms / options for inspection frameworks and quality assurance measures / improving transparency and consistency across regions / addressing geographic and socio-economic disparities in SEND support / priorities for new Ofsted inspection frameworks and implications of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill / accountability for schools and local authorities / streamlining dispute resolution
Hilary Cook, Head, SEND, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Simon Marshall, Director, SEND, Trinity High School, Worcestershire
Laxmi Patel, Partner and Head, Education, Boyes Turner
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.05 **Improving school and post-16 outcomes for learners with SEND**
priorities for digital tools and technology in supporting inclusion and attainment / teacher training and professional development opportunities / defining and measuring attainment / managing transitions to further study and employment / inclusive and supported work experience opportunities / potential impact of the Curriculum and Assessment Review / qualification options and curriculum adaptation
Gerry McDonald, CEO and Group Principal, New City College
Dr Daniel Stavrou, Assistant Director, National Children's Bureau
Amanda Cheney, National SEND Education and Career Development Manager, Talentino
Senior representative, school
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.50 **SEND provision in England moving forward**
Dame Christine Lenahan, Strategic Advisor, SEND, Department for Education
Questions and comments from the floor
- 13.15 **Chair's and Westminster Education Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Education Forum