

News story: £45m boost for young people with SEND

The Government today announced a package of support worth nearly £45 million to provide additional help for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Minister for Children and Families Robert Goodwill confirmed the additional funding for councils and organisations to continue transforming SEN provision and put families at the heart of the system.

The reforms which began in 2014 introduced Education, Health and Care plans which are tailored to the individual needs of the child or young person.

In addition to the funding to bolster the roll out of these reforms, a new £9.7million fund has been set up to create new supported internships, helping to bridge the gap for some of the most vulnerable young people between education and employment. The announcement has been welcomed by the National Children's Bureau

Minister for Children and Families Robert Goodwill said:

We have taken action to fundamentally reform support for children with special educational needs, making sure that families are at the heart of the process and care plans are tailored to individuals – and our survey of parents tells us that this has made a difference to so many of these families.

Councils are making encouraging progress, but there is still work to be done to fully embed this improved system across education, health and care sectors.

That's why I am pleased to announce this additional investment for councils and other groups who have been instrumental in getting us to this positive stage. Their hard work is raising the aspirations of these young people and giving them access to the same opportunities as their peers, helping them fulfill their full potential as adults.

The package of funding announced today includes:

- £29 million to support councils and their local partners to continue pressing ahead with implementation of the reforms to the SEND system;
- £9.7 million to establish local supported internship forums, which will create work placements for young people with SEND to provide them with

the skills and confidence they need to move into paid work. The funding could also be used to train job coaches, who are vital to the success of supporting those with learning difficulties into paid work; and

- £4.6 million for Parent Carer Forums, which bring parents together with local decision makers and help to provide them with a voice in the process.

Annamarie Hassall MBE, Director of Practice and Programmes at the National Children's Bureau, said:

The funding announced today will help more children with disabilities and special educational needs get the support they need to live normal lives in their home communities. In particular, we welcome funding for internships, which will provide young people with valuable work experience as they make the transition to adulthood.

The Minister also confirmed that further funding would be available to build capacity in the system and support the ongoing delivery of the SEND reforms over the next two years. Invitations to bid for these contracts, which will include providing families with access to information, advice and support, continuing support for the SEND workforce, and expert support to local areas, will be published online shortly.