

GMB responds to SEN plan

GMB School Support Staff have warned the Government not to neglect the needs of SEN pupils.

The Government is proposing big changes to SEN provision in England:

- replacing the SEN statement with "Education, Health and Care Plans". The Government says this will improve co-ordination across services.
- changing the assessment process to end what the Government claims is the "over-identification" of SEN.
- replacing School Action and School Action Plus with a new single category of SEN.
- clearing the way for special schools to become academies.

The proposals have been closely scrutinised by GMB's National Schools Committee, which is made up of GMB members working in schools across the country.

In our response, GMB has warned the Government not to let concern about "over-identification" of SEN get in the way of *early* identification.

GMB members were adamant that children who *do* have additional needs must not be neglected by the system.

They also felt that the Government had failed to recognise the vital roles played by school support staff in supporting SEN pupils.

The Union called for urgent clarification about what the new "Education, Health and Care Plans" will look like, to end the uncertainty for statemented children and staff. We also raised the issue of medical provision in schools, which we think needs urgent attention.

The Government says it will start piloting its SEN reforms in a selection of local authorities in September.

SEN: KEY FACTS

Over 1.6 million children are identified as having SEN. That's 20% of all pupils.

200,000 SEN children have a statement, while **1.4 million** are at School Action or School Action Plus.

The most common type of SEN is:

- for children **under 7**: speech, language and communication difficulties
- for children **aged 7 to 11**: moderate learning difficulties
- for children **aged 12-17**: behavioural, emotional and social difficulties

2.4% of **boys** and 0.9% of **girls** have a statement. Boys with a statement are most likely to have an autistic spectrum disorder. Girls with a statement are most likely to have moderate learning difficulties.



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