

LOCAL AREA CASE STUDY

The **Yorkshire & Humber SEND and AP Change Programme** is working with schools across Wakefield, Bradford, Calderdale, and Leeds to make education more inclusive. Through equipment investment and practical support, the programme helps schools trial Assistive Technology and resources that meet the needs of all learners - making classrooms more accessible, supportive, and empowering for children and young people with SEND.

Background & Aim

Background

Across Yorkshire & Humber, schools are working together to make education more inclusive for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). As part of the national SEND & Alternative Provision Change Programme, local authorities in the region have teamed up to explore new ways to support pupils in mainstream settings.

One exciting development is the launch of **Assistive Technology (AT) Lending Libraries**, which allow schools to borrow specialist equipment to trial with pupils before making long-term investments.

Aim

The aim of this initiative is simple: to give every child the chance to succeed in school by making sure the right tools are available when they're needed. By offering schools access to a wide range of assistive technology, the programme helps pupils overcome barriers to learning, boosts confidence, and supports teachers in creating inclusive classrooms. It's already making a difference - schools are trialling new tools, attending training, and working together to build environments where every learner feels supported and included.

What was the challenge?

Many schools wanted to support pupils with SEND but didn't always have the right equipment or confidence to know what would work best. Buying technology without trying it first could be costly and risky. Teachers and families needed a way to explore options and find the right fit for each child.

How Schools got involved

The Pilot was seen as a fantastic opportunity for children and young people in our region who will benefit from having a range of AT products to trial to support their learning. Schools across 32 local authorities, including those in the Yorkshire & Humber, were given the chance to borrow assistive technology and try it out in real classrooms. This included tools like:

- Speech-to-text software for pupils who struggle with writing.
- Sensory tools to help children regulate emotions and focus.
- Communication devices for non-verbal learners.
- Mobility aids and adaptive furniture for physical access.

Schools could borrow equipment for a few weeks, attend training sessions, and decide whether it suited their pupils before making long-term investments. SENCOs, teachers, and advisory teams supported the process, helping schools build confidence and make informed choices. Leadership teams and classroom staff worked together to trial tools in real settings – mainly within mainstream schools - ensuring they were practical, effective, and tailored to each school's needs.



LOCAL AREA CASE STUDY

Impact

A wide range of schools across Wakefield, Bradford, Calderdale, and Leeds are actively involved in this Pilot. While we don't have an exact number, schools in all four areas are taking part in different parts of the programme, showing strong interest in making education more inclusive. Many schools have already received support through equipment funding panels, and others are using shared tools like EHCP templates.

There is a real sense of enthusiasm, with schools keen to learn and improve - some even asking for extra training to help them do more.

Teachers reported feeling more confident, and pupils were more engaged. Schools were able to make informed decisions, saving money and improving outcomes

Looking Ahead

The programme continues to grow, with more schools joining and more equipment being added. Future plans include:

- Expanding the lending libraries to reach more areas.
- Sharing success stories and best practice across the region.
- Supporting schools to embed inclusive approaches into everyday teaching.

Conclusion

The SEND Change Programme is already making a meaningful difference in how schools support children and young people with SEND. By investing in inclusive equipment, encouraging collaboration, and listening to the voices of young people and families, the programme is helping to build more confident, capable, and inclusive school communities. While there's still more to do, the enthusiasm from schools and the positive feedback from participants show that change is not only possible – it is already happening!

