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| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  | | --- | |  | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Updates on the Change Programme** | |  | |  | |  | | **Policy headlines**  Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, has been clear about her commitment to delivering inclusive mainstream education. In her recent [speech to the Confederation of School Trusts](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fncb.us9.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D93ca41ab24380caf57761bd37%26id%3D40cd222a0a%26e%3D3f62d95026&data=05%7C02%7Cewilcock%40wakefield.gov.uk%7Ca05d0a24eac54636500b08dd137706f8%7Cd76faab796b740c79b253d2fbd4ac1f1%7C0%7C0%7C638688124128700707%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=I1kjtyHYoc1SCIGbe8V9LW%2BJFMYdEpZeOk0Zrao1Ro0%3D&reserved=0), the Secretary of State spoke about the need for ‘bold reform’ in the provision of education for disabled children and young people, and children and young people with Special Educational Needs, adding ‘the direction of that reform is inclusive mainstream’.  The government has told Parliament that ‘the work of the Change Programme continues to provide valuable insights and learning across the SEND & AP system. This includes informing the Department’s thinking about effective inclusive mainstream practice’.  **Budget headlines**  The Autmn Budget contains a number of key commitments for disabled children and young people and children and young people with special educational needs, as well as the broader education system. These included:   * £2.3bn increase to schools budget, including £1bn increase for SEND and AP * £6.7bn increase in capital investment for DfE for 2025/26, including £1.4bn for rebuilding schools most in need * £2.1bn for school maintenance   **Updates from REACh and the DfE**  In the run up to Christmas, REACh has planned a series of activities as part of the test and learn approach with CPPs, ensuring that policy decisions are informed by evidence of what is and isn’t working for local areas on the Change Programme.  REACh and DfE continue to provide on the ground support to strengthen practice-sharing between local areas on the programme and build connections and capacity across the Change Programme Partnerships (CPPs) to test changes locally. Regular ‘Practice Sharing Forums’ bring together practitioners from all 32 Local Authorities (LAs) participating in the Change Programme to share their learning supported by Subject Matter Experts who will co-facilitate with REACh, using their expertise to support LAs, respond to any questions, and share advice for implementing ideas into practice.  REACh has also embedded dedicated time to bring Lead LAs from CPPs together to share key messages about the Change Programme to their partner LAs and stakeholders, reflect on and provide feedback about how the Change Programme fits within the wider SEND and AP system, and to provide steer to REACh in developing delivery support and sharing knowledge and insights.  Finally, to ensure the evidence base around what has and hasn’t worked for areas is as robust as possible, and to build on all of the learning so far, we have been holding a series of focus group discussions with CPPs to refine key insights. | |  | |  | | | | |
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| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Local area approaches to supporting inclusive practice** | |  | |  | |  | | Ensuring that local areas have the tools and guidance that they need to support inclusive practice is important to embedding it. Below we highlight examples that local authorities have been sharing with each other as part of the Change Programme in relation to supporting inclusive practice in mainstream settings:   * Central Bedfordshire’s local offer page has a [section for professionals](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fncb.us9.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D93ca41ab24380caf57761bd37%26id%3Df559173713%26e%3D3f62d95026&data=05%7C02%7Cewilcock%40wakefield.gov.uk%7Ca05d0a24eac54636500b08dd137706f8%7Cd76faab796b740c79b253d2fbd4ac1f1%7C0%7C0%7C638688124128746280%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gLaQKOM6NRfLpcCyQmiCGhBGznvSNaDuuP5I4W5xfmM%3D&reserved=0) containing resources which are continually being updated with strategies linked to their graduated approach * East Sussex’s website [contains a section for SENCos](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fncb.us9.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D93ca41ab24380caf57761bd37%26id%3D211e9ab155%26e%3D3f62d95026&data=05%7C02%7Cewilcock%40wakefield.gov.uk%7Ca05d0a24eac54636500b08dd137706f8%7Cd76faab796b740c79b253d2fbd4ac1f1%7C0%7C0%7C638688124128768525%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gw5uK1w5eB1VIQhJ9R6QgWqbMnfIrgPeyHBC3Y9uYro%3D&reserved=0) and others, including a range of resources such as their Quality Mark for Inclusion, inclusion grants, and information about conferences * Portsmouth’s local offer page [includes updated information](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fncb.us9.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D93ca41ab24380caf57761bd37%26id%3D210a6f2f4f%26e%3D3f62d95026&data=05%7C02%7Cewilcock%40wakefield.gov.uk%7Ca05d0a24eac54636500b08dd137706f8%7Cd76faab796b740c79b253d2fbd4ac1f1%7C0%7C0%7C638688124128790065%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=SX%2F40PH3SIZFEFzxMJ2AIQc96ODryJYQF3mz%2B2XYPNs%3D&reserved=0) on schools, inclusion centres and special schools. The pages were recently published and have received positive feedback from families and professionals | |  | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [**Read more**](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fncb.us9.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D93ca41ab24380caf57761bd37%26id%3D92e6419510%26e%3D3f62d95026&data=05%7C02%7Cewilcock%40wakefield.gov.uk%7Ca05d0a24eac54636500b08dd137706f8%7Cd76faab796b740c79b253d2fbd4ac1f1%7C0%7C0%7C638688124128812207%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=IuTr1WvcmBt2KTX6lmUoU0nDvlsQOXhEZrfKvzhdMTI%3D&reserved=0) | | | | | | | |
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This process provides a view on the strengths of the LA’s current system, its alignment to the intentions set out in the SEND and AP Improvement Plan, and opportunities for development (seen through the lens of the three-tier AP model) based on the information provided.  **Summary of Rapid Review findings**  **SEND/AP Strategic Plans**  For most of the LAs there is an opportunity to bring the strategic plans for SEND and AP together into one visionary document. For some there is a timely opportunity, particularly as part of the CPP, to put a renewed emphasis and importance on AP and the continuum for SEND and AP. Whilst, for others, though their actions have demonstrated the priority the LA has given to AP, there is an opportunity now to codify and explicitly articulate this work to support and strengthen its future.  Key learning: Take the time and opportunity to engage stakeholders as part of this process so that everyone is a part of the visioning and plans for the SEND and AP system. Where these strategies exist, but are separate, consider bringing them into one SENDAP strategy so that the link and continuum between SEND and AP is built into the foundations of LA practice.  **Fair Access Panels**  There is great diversity within each LA as to how the Fair Access (FA) process and panel system is set up and operates. This ranges from areas which have different panels for their different tiers of provision; those managed by the LA, to those run by the schools and the LA have minimal engagement. Where they are not working effectively there tends to be an over-reliance on Tier 3 provision and limited input at Tier 1 and 2, as well as the LA having limited intelligence on numbers accessing AP and whether the AP is the appropriate support at the right time.  Key learning: Ensure there are Terms of Reference (TOR) in place which enable open and transparent conversation with schools and where, through management of the FA body, the LA can appropriately challenge and support schools to access the full tiered model of AP available to support the child at the right time. Where the FA process works most successfully there is strong buy-in from schools, demonstrated by regular attendance from the most senior colleagues in the schools.  **Sustainable Development of Tier 1 Provision**  A key priority for some of the LAs who have engaged in these Rapid Reviews is to explore how a 3-tiered model for AP is achievable, but also sustainable in a challenging financial climate. Typically, the increase in Education, Health and Care Plans, increase in permanent exclusion, numbers in Tier 3 placements, limited provision/use of Tier 1 and 2, are causing significant pressures on High Needs Budget spend.  Key learning: This is the reality for many LAs and the pressures on the system should not be underestimated. Nor, that there is a quick fix and may require an ‘invest to save’ model and approach.  **Co-construction of Tier 1 Provision**  In LAs where permanent exclusions have increased and there is significant pressure on the Tier 3 provision, there are identifiable limitations with the provision available at Tier 1. In some cases, there is not the availability of expertise in the LA at this Tier, and for others it is because there is a strain on Tier 2 and 3 that results in resources not reaching, or being withdrawn from, Tier 1. There is also a correlation between LAs where Tier 1 and 2 provision is limited and LAs where SLAs are not in place with AP Providers. As a result of not having TOR and SLAs there is neither the clarity and transparency of expectation, nor the means to enable monitoring and accountability.  Key learning: Co-constructing SLAs with the schools to engage all stakeholders with the vision and purpose will support key provisions being ringfenced and prioritised. There are some good examples of creative thinking by LAs to address availability of Tier 1 provision e.g. where schools are working together, the AP Specialist Taskforce is being utilised, or funding is being deployed in a different way.  **KS2-3 Transition**  Where there was limited provision at Tier 1, this was often specific to availability at secondary because primary Tier 1 provision was available and successful. This is, however, creating a longer-term problem for LAs where primary exclusions are low but there is a sudden spike in KS3.  Key learning: Providing early assessment and early intervention is critical. However, the transfer of knowledge and information, as well as this support into the secondary phase, is equally critical.  **LA AP Governance**  The majority of the LAs within these Rapid Reviews have now established some form of central LA oversight board, or governance system. These have generally been created to ensure a strategic oversight of AP. However, there can be a lack of clarity about their purpose, what should be being brought to the meetings and covered in agendas, what the scope of the group is and even who is part of the group. As a result, many are having a limited impact on the system.  Key learning: Agree the purpose for a LA governance system and this should be dependent upon an evaluation of what is currently lacking and needed in the system. This clarity of purpose for LA oversight will ensure that the right information, at the right time, is provided to the group so that governance can successfully support the LA strategy. Moreover, where this is strong, governance is supporting the current strategy whilst also looking forwards, seeing future need, and ensuring the system is prepared and able to adapt if necessary.  **Intervention not a destination**  Tier 2 is intended to provide short-term placements in AP schools that deliver a re-engagement curriculum which assesses and addresses pupils needs but with the clear expectations that these are time-limited placements, and the pupils return to their mainstream school. In many of the LAs reviewed, the reality is that Tier 2 is seen as a destination and not an intervention and the vision for the Tier needs to be challenged and reversed so that all stakeholders understand that these placements are interventions and not destinations.  Key learning: Engage with stakeholders so that their understanding of, and buy-in to, the three-tier system is grown. Furthermore, strategies such as developing a successful and focused re-engagement curriculum and establishing a resource base provision, are ones that have helped LAs with successful Tier 2 models. | |  | |  | | | | |
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