



Department
for Education

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Reform

Specialist provision packages

February 2026

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Summary

Set out below is an outline of the draft Specialist Provision Packages which will be developed as part of our reforms to the system of support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Packages will underpin Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) which will provide a legal entitlement to the support a Package sets out. Children will be able to have a Package and associated EHCP in either a mainstream or specialist setting depending on their preferences and the best way to meet their needs.

This initial list has been developed by panels of experts drawn from the specialist sector and with input from members of the Expert Advisory ¹. It is indicative and is likely to change. There may be a need for further Packages as well as changes to the below, to ensure these capture the full range of support children and young people with complex needs require to thrive.

We will appoint an expert panel with an independent chair, who will be responsible for improving the quality of SEND evidence, as well as developing the new specialist provision packages that will underpin the specialist system. These will be tested with wider professionals and parents.

Every child is unique and their needs can be complex and over-lapping. Children may therefore need elements of support from more than one package. We will work with the expert panels to reflect this in the design of packages as they are developed.

Once established Specialist Provision Packages will be regularly reviewed by the independent panel.

¹ The Expert Advisory Group was established by the Department for Education in December 2024 to advise ministers on how to improve mainstream education outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND.

Packages based around heavily adapted curriculum

Profound and multiple learning difficulties

This package will support children and young people with more than one disability, including a profound cognitive impairment, significant difficulty communicating, and additional conditions, such as physical disability, sensory impairment, sensory processing differences, and medical needs.

It will provide learning, care, therapy, and health support operating together as one coherent system.

Significant executive function

Significant executive function (known as severe learning difficulties in the current terminology) will support children and young people with a severe and permanent global learning disability, or life-long speech or language disorder, affecting some, or all, areas of speech, language and communication, executive function, social and emotional, motor and sensory development.

This package will provide an educational offer which is structured, consistent, and highly individualised, alongside integrated therapies and any clinical support (as determined by health) as appropriate.

Complex executive function and communication

This is an emerging profile based on recent research evidence. This package will support children and young people with significant permanent learning disability affecting some, or all, areas of speech, language and communication, executive function, social and emotional, motor skills and sensory development. Children who need this package often manifest with behaviour that challenges.

It will provide expert support to develop their initiation, persistence and exploration with learning opportunities that are closely matched to their complex learning needs, as well as ongoing support with their personal care needs, nutritional requirements and physical development.

Packages based around adapted delivery of the curriculum, including providing a different environment

Social and emotional development focused on externalising behaviour

This package will support children and young people whose social and emotional needs manifest in behaviour which challenges.

They may be autistic, have ADHD or have a language disorder, and may have other learning needs or speech, language and communication needs.

Where a child or young person has wider mental health needs, these would be addressed by health services as deemed appropriate. The package will provide an educational experience that is highly structured, consistent, and responsive, and which integrates therapeutic inputs, such as speech and language therapy, counselling, and evidence-based emotional literacy programmes.

Social and emotional development focused on internalising behaviour

This package will support children and young people whose social and emotional needs manifest as withdrawal, disengagement or 'shut down'.

They may be autistic, have a language disorder or have wider mental health needs (which would be addressed by health services as deemed appropriate). The package will provide an educational offer which is grounded in trauma-informed, relational pedagogy, and which integrates therapeutic inputs, such as speech and language therapy, counselling, and evidence-based emotional literacy programmes.

Packages based around the provision needed to enable access to the curriculum

Sensory impairment

This package will support deaf children and young people, those with a visual impairment, and those with multi-sensory impairment.

It is primarily focused on access to specialist services including qualified Teachers of the Deaf/Visual impairment /Multi-Sensory Impairment, audiology, habilitation, speech and language therapy, and resources/equipment/technology to allow access to the curriculum and communication and connection to the world around them.

Physical disability

The physical disability (without significant learning difficulties) package will support children and young people with physical disabilities, who are able to access the mainstream curriculum.

It is primarily focused on access to specialist services such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy (and speech and language therapy where needed) and resources/equipment/technology to support physical well-being, motor development and access to the curriculum.

These outlines will be developed by the independent expert panel to set out the full breadth of education, health and care support children with complex needs may require. They are not final nor comprehensive but designed to provide an initial picture of the needs that Specialist Provision Packages and EHCPs will capture. Parents, families and other experts will have a range of opportunities to engage in the design of the Packages as they are developed.



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