

Ask the Minister



Last month we asked CDC members what questions they would like to put to the Minister for Children and Families, Vicky Ford.

Does the Government remain committed to the SEND review?



Yes. Rest assured that completing our review of the SEND system, promptly and thoroughly remains a priority for me, my officials and the Government. The areas we aim to improve through the Review are long-standing, but we are determined to deliver real, lasting change.

How broad is the review?

The review is very broad, largely because of the size and complexity of the SEND system. The Department for Education is leading the review, but is working closely with other government departments and partners in education, health and social care. Our officials work closely with a range of partners across the length and breadth of country that are involved in and impacted by the SEND system, to ensure that the voices of families and representatives are heard and inform their policy making.

Will it cover children and services from 0-25?

The review is covering children and services between the age of 0-25 however, it is naturally further reaching than that because we are looking at improving the lifelong outcomes of children and young people.

How are Health involved? Is it about schools or will it cover social care and family support?

We recognise that for the review to bring about real and positive change, we must look beyond schools and consider other services that play a vital role in the SEND system. To that end, we are working closely with our health partners, including the Department for Health and Social Care, NHS England and Public Health England, as well as other key stakeholders. In particular, we are working to identify how we can make best use of the resources that are available across education, health and care so that children, young people and their families, can more easily access the right support at the right time.



How will the voice of parents, children and young people be central to the review?



Much like the 2014 reforms, co-production with children, young people, their families, and carers will continue being the underpinning principle of any future reform and remains central to the review's thinking. Practically speaking, we have worked with a range of stakeholder groups who represent young people and their families, including of course the National Network of Parent Carer Forums and the many organisations that are members of the CDC.

When will we hear more about it?

We are working intensively to deliver the review and will publish our findings as soon as we can practicably do so. As you are aware, the pandemic has and continues to be extremely challenging for many families of children with SEND and the services that support them. My officials have worked closely with external partners to fully understand the impact of the pandemic, in order that any changes to the SEND system to reflect the significant impact that Covid has had.

How can everyone get involved in contributing to the review?

The team have spoken to a wide range of stakeholders already, and I am always happy to meet with groups to hear their suggestions for how we can deliver better outcomes, experience and value for money for the huge investment we are making in the SEND system. I expect to publish proposals for consultation early next year.

