

Parent Summary of White Paper on SEND February 2026

The Big Picture

The government wants to improve how children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are supported.

The aim is to:

- Identify needs earlier
- Provide support in local mainstream schools
- Make support more consistent across the country
- Reduce long waits for help

The changes will happen gradually over the next 5–10 years.

What Will Change?

1. Every Child with SEND Gets a Plan - All children with identified SEND will have an Individual Support Plan (ISP). This plan will outline your child's needs and the support they should receive. This applies even if your child does not have an EHCP.
At Hambleton CE School this is already the case so nothing will change for us.
2. Support in Layers, not Just EHCPs (Education Health & Care Plans) - Instead of relying mainly on EHCPs, support will work in levels:

Targeted support – help in the classroom or small groups (interventions, daily readers, Thrive etc.)

Targeted-plus support – help with specialist involvement (CAHMS, Selby SEND Hub, Emotional Resilience Team, OTs, Physiotherapists, SALT)

Specialist support – for children with the most complex needs (Alternative provision etc.)

The goal is to give help sooner, without needing a long statutory process.

Mostly, this already happens at Hambleton CE School, we support the needs of the child rather than wait for assessments or diagnostics.

3. Changes to EHCPs - EHCPs will still exist but they will focus on children with the most complex needs. New EHCPs will be digital and follow national standards. Over time, fewer new EHCPs are expected to be issued.

Important: Existing EHCPs

- Current EHCPs remain valid.
- No child will lose their special school place.
- Reassessments will only happen at natural transition points (e.g., moving to secondary school).
- Children currently in Year Three or above with existing EHCPs should keep their current EHCP until age 16 before moving to the new system. Children with existing EHCPs in Year Two or below will be reassessed at the transition point between Year Six and Seven.

More Support in Mainstream Schools

Schools must publish how they support SEND pupils.

More specialists (educational psychologists, speech and language therapists) will work directly with schools.

Some mainstream schools will develop specialist inclusion bases.

Funding

The government has announced £4 billion over three years to:

- Increase mainstream SEND capacity
- Train staff
- Develop new national specialist packages

What This Means for Families

Potential Benefits

- ✓ Earlier support
- ✓ Clearer planning for all children with SEND
- ✓ More help available in local schools
- ✓ National consistency

Tribunal rights will remain for EHCP disputes.

When Will This Happen?

Reforms are being consulted on.

Major changes begin from 2026 onward.

Full transition expected between 2029–2035.