

Is the SEND system working?

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The Ombudsman's report highlights issues around significant delays in issuing EHCPs, far in excess of the 20 weeks set out in the SEND Code of Practice, poor partnership working across different agencies and poor planning to enable needs to be met. These problems are exacerbated by poor communication with parents. The report suggests that the end result is that vulnerable children (and their families) are left without the support that they need which has consequential impacts on education and development.

It is noted that the number of EHCPs continues to grow with 11% growth over the last year alone and in a situation where funding for SEND still remains an issue despite additional funds being made available by the government.

For schools and local authorities, the level of funding is key to ensure that appropriate provision can be made to support children effectively. However, there is a need for improved partnership working in order that appropriate provision is made when required and greater disadvantage for the pupil and others in the school can be avoided.

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