



Parent  
Carer  
Community  
Shropshire

# SEND Reforms Newsletter

## September 2026

Hello and welcome to the new PaCC SEND Reforms Newsletter. This newsletter will be published each term to provide more detailed information on the SEND Reforms and the work being done in Shropshire to support these. The newsletter will provide a summary of proposals and activity, with links to further information to read if you want to.

We also want to use the newsletter to answer any questions you might have about the Reforms. If you send questions to [enquiries@paccshropshire.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@paccshropshire.org.uk) they will be answered in the next newsletter to be published.

We know that periods of change are very unsettling for our families, and we hope that this additional newsletter will help you to understand what changes are being proposed, what work is happening now and how you can influence this work with your feedback. The important thing to remember is that the legal framework is not changing until 2030 at the earliest. If you need any help or information about current support options, you can also book a call with our Navigator Service.

[READ MORE](#)



### **The key aims of the SEND Reforms is improved mainstream support and inclusion.**

The Reforms are focused on supporting more children and young people with SEND in mainstream settings (nurseries, schools and colleges), more effectively. This will mean that less EHCPs will be needed. Those who need specialist support via an EHCP will still have the option to be supported in mainstream or specialist settings, with a Specialist Support Package if appropriate.

Mainstream education staff will receive improved training in SEND and there will be better access to specialist SEND practitioners, educational psychologists and occupational and speech and language therapists. This new support will be known as Experts at Hand and aims to identify needs and provide support quicker (without diagnosis being required), meaning that placements will not breakdown and children, young people and their families will not go into crisis.

It is important to remember that the SEND Reforms only apply to part of the support system which SEND families rely on. Work still needs to happen in other areas such as Social Care support, diagnosis pathways, mental health support and support after education etc to deliver improved life outcomes for members of the SEND Community.

## Key Milestones and Timeline

- February 2026 – Government published white paper ‘Every Child Achieving and Thriving’ alongside SEND Reforms Consultation which ran until May 2026.
- Summer/Autumn 2026 – [Education Other Than At School \(EOTAS\)](#) Consultation open until Sept 18th 2026. You can read a summary of EOTAS proposals [here](#).
- Findings and responses to both consultations to be published in Autumn 2026.
- Phase 1 Build & Invest (2026 – 2028) – National SEND Workforce Training programs begin, Inclusive Mainstream Fund rolls out direct to education settings, National Inclusion Standards developed and published, local plans developed including delivery of Experts at Hand programme and Ordinarily Available Provision. This work is intended to create a more inclusive and supportive mainstream education environment before the new legal process is introduced and changes made.
- Phase 2 Change in Law (2028 – 2029) – Creation of new legal framework for 4 tiers of support (Universal, Targeted Support, Targeted Support Plus, Specialist Support), Individual Support Plans, Specialist Provision Packages linked to EHCPs and new reviews at key points (end of Primary, Secondary and Post 16)
- Phase 3 Future System Role Out – All existing EHCP’s and legal protections remain fully valid until this point and there should be no sudden disruption for families.

## Key Concerns Raised about the proposed SEND Reforms

- Possible weakened legal rights through the introduction of Individual Support Plans, how will families hold settings and local authorities to account if support is not delivered as agreed?
- Possible tightened EHCP criteria
- Lack of specialist staff to deliver Experts at Hand
- More responsibility placed on education settings when they already have limited capacity

**You can read more about the proposed SEND Reforms, including some of the concerns raised about the possible changes, on the linked boxes below**

**SEND reform: putting children and young people first**

**IPSEA: Government SEND reform: what you need to know**

**The schools white paper & SEND reforms**

## What is Happening Now?

- Shropshire has developed its **Local SEND Reform Plan** as required by the Department for Education and it is awaiting approval. The plan identifies local aims covering improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND, improving parent carer confidence in the SEND system and achieving good value for money. It includes actions to develop baseline data and identifies how success will be measured. PaCC contributed to the development of this plan, but short timescale limited our involvement.
- The local development of the '**Experts at Hand**' programme has started, this will bring specialist support into education settings to spot and address difficulties early and before they escalate. No diagnosis will be required, and this is an additional service which doesn't replace existing support, SEN Support duties or EHCPs. Initially support will focus on small groups, whole class interventions, staff coaching and light touch assessments. An Experts at Hand Steering Group has been established in Shropshire which PaCC is part of.
- A **survey** has been coproduced with PaCC, IASS Shropshire, Shropshire Council and the local Integrated Care Board (NHS) to gather baseline data on Parent / Family Carer Confidence in the Shropshire SEND System and the planned Reforms. You can complete the survey [here](#).
- Information on '**Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision**' (OAIP) is being updated so that settings and families are clear about what support should be available for any child. PaCC is providing input to this process ensuring that any information is accessible and reflects what Shropshire SEND families have told us.
- **Nurseries, schools and colleges have received additional funding** to support Inclusion and remove barriers to learning and support without waiting for a formal diagnosis. Settings should be working with SEND families to plan how this additional funding will be used and must publish an Inclusion Strategy by 31st Dec 2026. PaCC is delivering training to Shropshire secondary schools and colleges on developing positive relationships with SEND families and coproduction, building on work already done with primary schools.

**If you have any questions about the SEND Reforms, what changes are being proposed to the legal framework, and what is happening now to improve mainstream inclusion, please send them to [enquiries@paccshropshire.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@paccshropshire.org.uk)**

The next edition of the SEND Reforms Newsletter will be published in January 2027 and will have a focus on 'Inclusion Bases' in mainstream settings. Inclusion Bases will be central to helping children and young people access the right support, in the right place, as early as possible.

