

## Changes to the way that children and young people are helped at school or college



Children and young people go to **school** when they are young so that they can learn new things and get skills they might use when they are older.



When they have finished at school, they can go on to learn in a **college**



Some children and young people need more help to learn new things when they are at school or college.



This could be help with their reading or writing, help with talking and listening, or help to understand things better.



If someone needs help with these things, they are said to have Special Educational Needs, or **SEN** for short.



The way that children and young people with SEN get this support is changing.



This is because the government thinks that it doesn't give children and young people the support they need.



They also think that people like parents do not get enough help at the moment to make sure their child gets the help they need.



The government is changing the law to try and make sure that this doesn't happen. This is called the **Children and Families Act 2014**.



These changes will happen from September 2014.

## What are the changes?

### Children, young people and parents can have their say



The government wants children, young people and parents to have more chance to say what they think about their support.

This means that children, young people and their parents should be asked about what support they need and to say what they want to happen.



If a young person is over the age of 16, they will be asked if they want to make the decision before their parents are asked.

This could be a decision about what school or college they want to go to, for example.



Most of the time young people will choose to involve their parents, but they will have the final decision.

### There will be more information available



To help children, young people and parents say what support they want, they will be given information about their rights and what support they can get to help them.

This could be someone like an **advocate**. An advocate is someone who can help people to say what they want if they find it difficult to do so.



They will also be given information about what support they can get in their local area. Your local area is the area you live in.

This information will be called a **local offer**.

## There will be a different way of supporting children and young people



Children and young people with SEN need different amounts of support to help them learn. Some will need more help and others may need a little less help.



Children and young people who need more help in school or college will get a plan to help make sure they get all the support they need.

This is called an Education, Health and Care Plan, or **EHC Plan** for short.

At the moment, children and young people who need more help to learn get a plan called a **Statement** so they can get all the support they need.



The EHC Plan will help children and young people to get support across all parts of their life, including with their health needs.

Health needs could be things like if someone needs help with their breathing or to move around.



Children and young people who need a little less help to learn will get support from their school or college.



The school or college will decide how they can help these children and young people, like making sure they have an extra teacher in the classroom to support them.



Sometimes schools and colleges might decide to get help from someone who works outside of the school, like a **Speech and Language Therapist**.



A Speech and Language Therapist helps people to be able to communicate if they have trouble with things like speaking.

### **There will be new ways to say if you don't agree with a decision**



When a young person does not agree with a decision about things like the support they are given or what school or college they should go to, they can say so.

Parents can also do this.



There are 2 things that young people and parents can do if they don't agree with a decision.



One is for the young person or a parent to try to talk to the people who made the decision to see if they can find a way to agree about a decision.

This is called **mediation**.



The other thing they can do is to ask someone else to look at whether the decision is the right one.

This could be done by a **Judge** in a **Court**, for example.



If it is not the right decision, sometimes the decision can be changed.



Young people have never been able to do this before.