



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Report

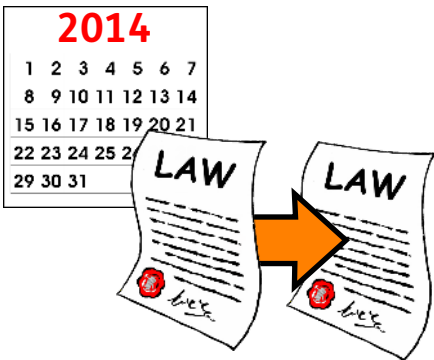


Special educational needs and disabilities report



EasyRead version

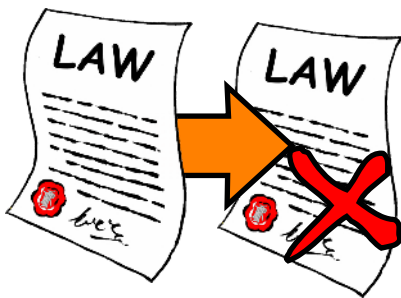
What this Report is about



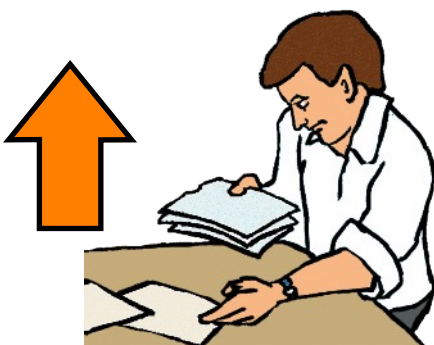
In 2014 Parliament made changes to the law for children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities.



The changes wanted to make sure children and young people were put first.



We think a lot of the changes have not happened.



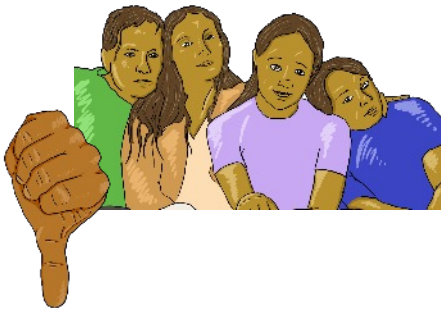
They have been confusing and caused too much paperwork.



We think people have not done what they should have.



There has been more pressure on services.



And children and families have had bad experiences.

What we did



A law called the Children and Families Act 2014.

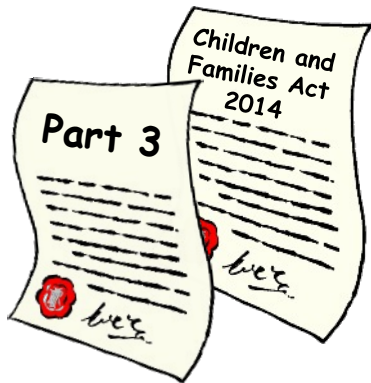


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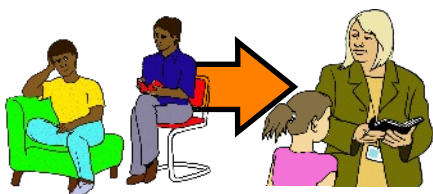


In 2011 the Government wanted to make a lot of changes to special educational needs and disability services.



These changes ended up becoming part 3 of a law called the Children and Families Act 2014.

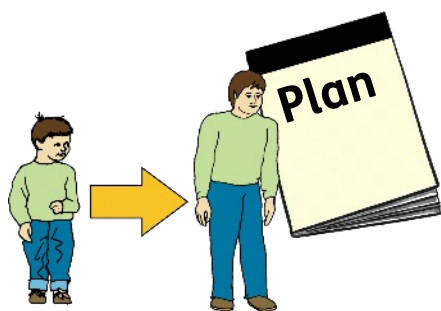
The Government talked about a number of actions it wants to be taken to make services better including:



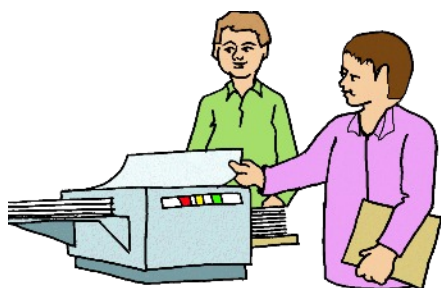
- changes to assessing children's educational and health and care needs



- make sure people who plan services work together and talk more



- make sure some plans help prepare children to be adults



- support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to use **internships**. This is like work experience. To help them get jobs.



The Government asked some local authorities to try out these changes to see how they worked.

They were called 'Pathfinder Champions'.



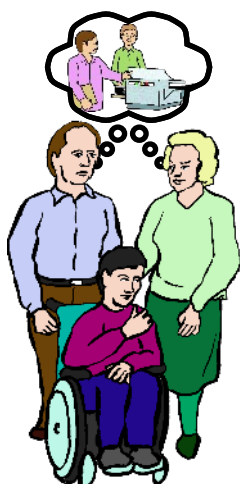
A report was published about this work in 2015.



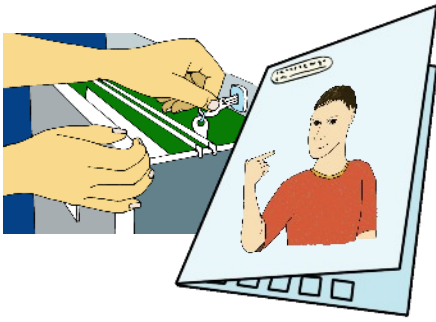
Pathfinder Champions started helping other local authorities learn about the changes.



In April 2018 we started looking into this part of the Law to find out more about it. This is called an **inquiry**.



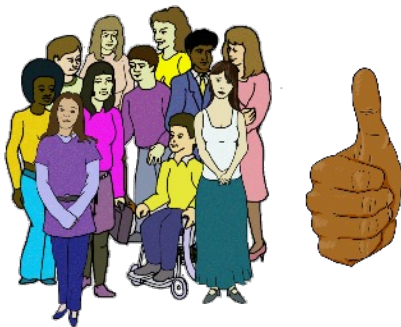
We received over 700 accounts about what people thought. For example, from parents and carers.



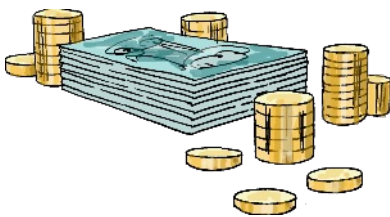
We were careful to look after people's personal information.



We also held sessions where people could say what they thought.

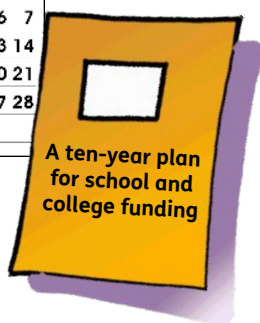


We would like to thank everyone who got involved or gave their support.



One of the main issues that was raised was funding.

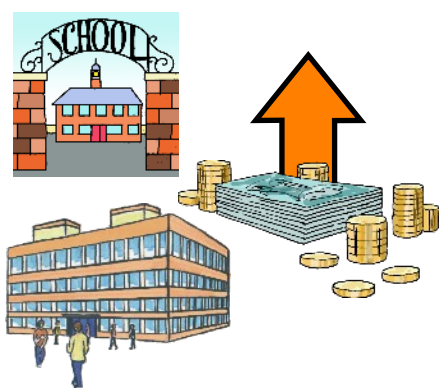
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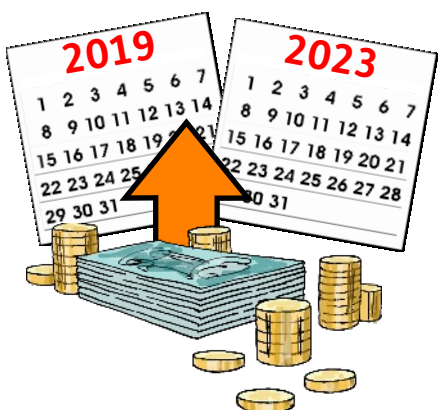
In 2019 we wrote a report called **A ten-year plan for school and college funding**.



This was about how funding is given to different schools.



We asked the Government to increase the funding to all schools and colleges.



On 30th August the Department of Education said there was going to be an increase in funding between now and 2023.



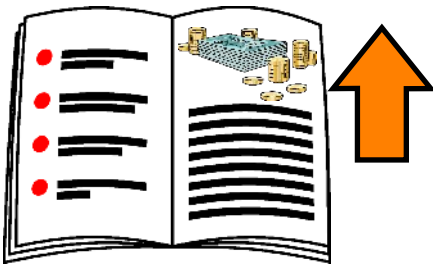
They said this would be for 14 billion pounds.



700 million pounds of this money would be for SEND. This was for the years 2021 and 2022.



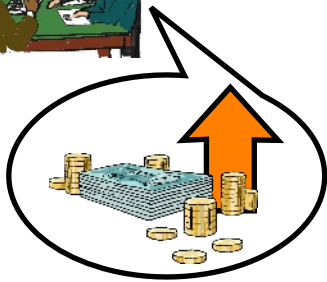
We were not happy that this would not start until next year.



We would like more information about how this money will be used.



We are pleased about the funding. But we are worried that money alone will not be enough to make changes.



On 4th September the Government said they were going to give an extra 1 billion pounds for children's and adult social care.



We are pleased with the funding but think the Government needs to do more.



This report has taken a long time to make.



We have tried to look closely at what is working in the system and what will make things better for children.



In this report we use the terms Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).



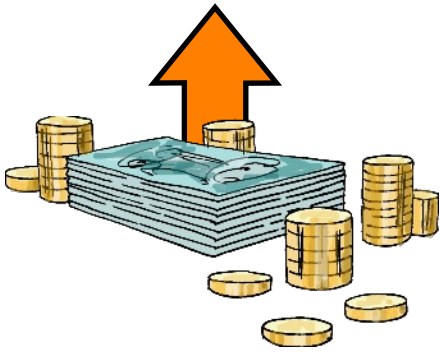
Some changes have been announced by the Government since this inquiry started.



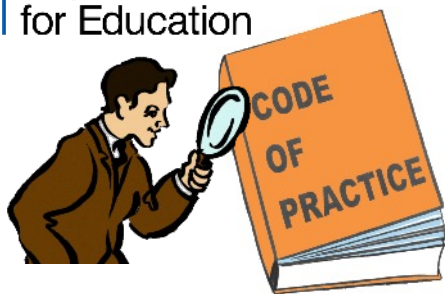
For example, a group are working together to look at the best ways to work with SEND.



And to set up some special free schools, which are a type of school not run by a local authority.



And more funding.



This year the Department of Education is going to review some rules about how to support children and young people under SEND. The rules are called the Code of Practice.

What we think



Many people think that the law changes in 2014 were good.



We think the changes made were the right ones.



We think if the problems are dealt with, local authorities will be able to do their jobs well.



But we think the Government needs to be careful about the changes it makes.



We think there have been huge pressures to local authorities about funding.



But the Department of Education made bad decisions about how grant money given to local authorities was spent. This means it has not been used in the best ways.



There needs to be big changes with how the Government thinks about how funding is spent and about how SEND works to make sure money is used well.



One of the problems has been to do with young people having an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) up to the age of 25.



For example, the ways in which this was meant to be managed was confusing.



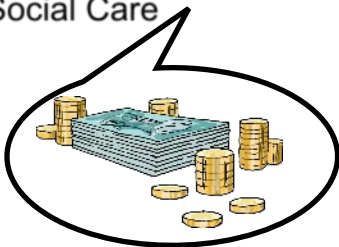
Problems like these have affected the support children and young people have received.



Department of Health & Social Care



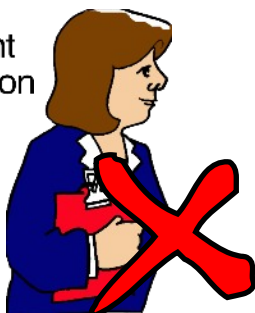
Department for Education



We think the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care should talk more about how money is spent.



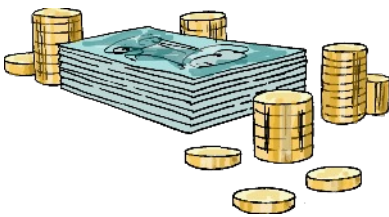
Department for Education



We don't think the Department for Education is checking how well SEND is working properly. Not enough is being done.



We think inspections should be carried out by the organisations Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted every year.



They should get funding to do this.



The inspections should make it clear about what local authorities need to do when there are problems.



We would also like organisations who look into complaints (for example the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman) to have more power to look at how schools are being managed.



We think the inspection organisations should have say more about laws being broken in schools.



Department
for Education



We don't think the Department of Education is doing enough to check the changes they've made are happening properly.



Parents and schools should be able to report to the Department for Education if they think a local authority is breaking the law.



Department
for Education



The Department for Education should also be checking how well local authorities are following the changes.



The way they work at the moment is causing problems for children getting the support they need.



We want the Department for Education's review of SEND to look at the needs children have and the support that is actually available.



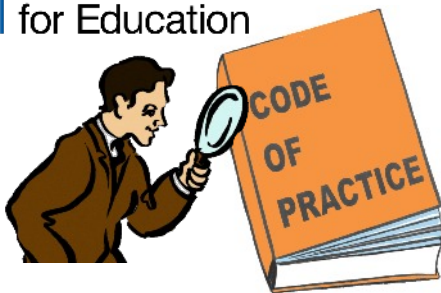
Funding plans need to think about the future more.



We want these issues to be sorted out as soon as possible.



The Government should find local authorities who are working well to give examples to other local authorities.



We are pleased that the Department for Education is reviewing the Code of Practice rules by 2020. These are the rules for how to work well.



We are worried that the way local authorities work can mean children don't always get the support they need.



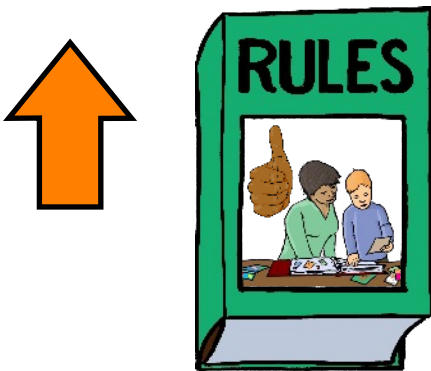
Children who need Special Educational Needs support rely on their schools for help. We are glad that inspections are now also looking at these children.



We do not think enough is being done to make sure children with SEND receive the best education.



We think inspections should happen to make sure this is checked.



We think the Department for Education needs to make more rules for how to best support children with SEND.



They should also make new rules about using the Education Health and Care Needs Assessment and Plans. Because they need to be easier to use.



We think the staff who have the job called SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) do an important role.



They need enough time and support to do their jobs well.



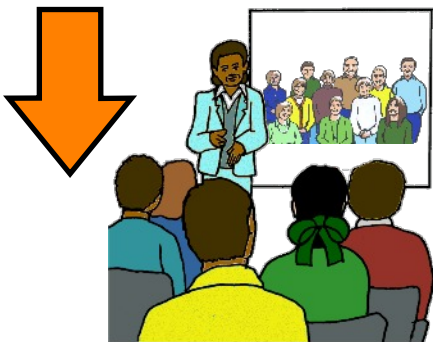
We also think they need to do the training for the job as soon as they start the job.



The Department of Education should also do a review to look at the costs of every school having a SENCO.



And what size schools only need a part-time SENCO.



We don't think staff who work in SEND teams in local authorities have enough training.



We think inspections need to check that staff working in SEND are training properly.



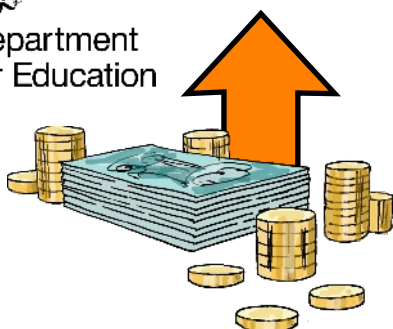
We think SENCOs in each area should work together to talk about how to do things well.



There are not enough therapists working in SEND.



Department
for Education



We are pleased the Department of Education is giving more funding to change this.



We think the Government needs to look at what therapy exists in which areas. Then find out what's missing.



We think it can be very difficult for families to find out what services exist and to work with the local authority.



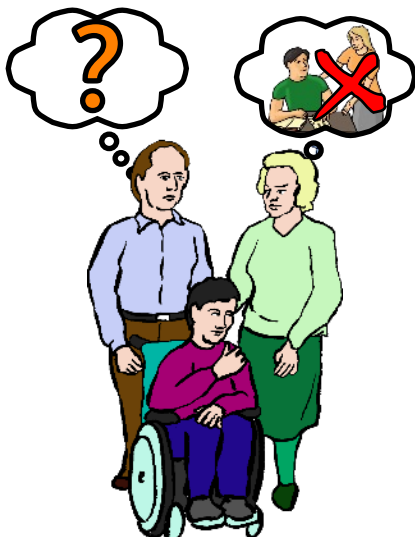
We think someone independent needs to work with families to help them get the support they need.



Parents have been told that the changes to the law would mean they would only need to tell people once about their situation. This has not happened.



They thought the support they received would be more organised than it has been.



A lot of parents find it very difficult to get the support their children need. It is a very confusing system.



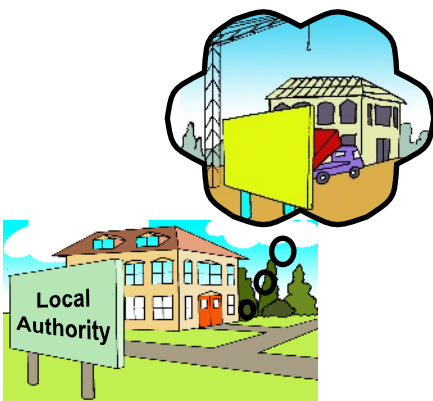
Children are often not getting the right support for their level of needs.



Children end up going to the wrong type of school for their needs.



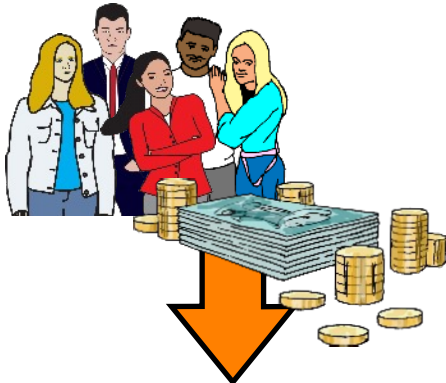
If changes were made, like more funding for schools and better services it would help with these issues.



We think local authorities need more freedom and control to build the types of schools they think are needed.



But it is important to make sure children with SEND feel included at regular schools.



There has not been enough funding or support for young people over 19 years.



This has put a lot of pressure on other services.



Department
for Education

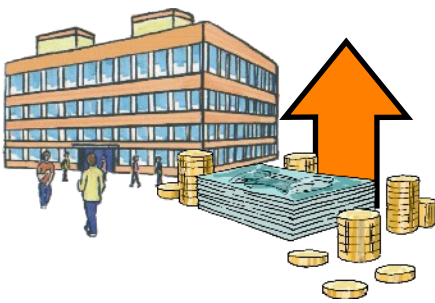
The Department for Education gave advice about working with this age of young people. But it is confusing because there is already a Code of Practice.



Department
for Education



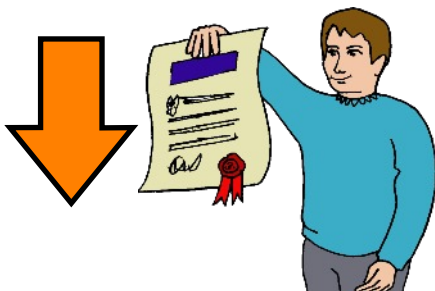
We would like the Department for Education to change this when they review the Code of Practice.



Colleges need more funding for young people over 19 years with SEND.



And if local authorities work in the same way it will make things easier for colleges.



There are not enough opportunities for young people with SEND.



A lot have said there has not been enough support to think about their future or goals.



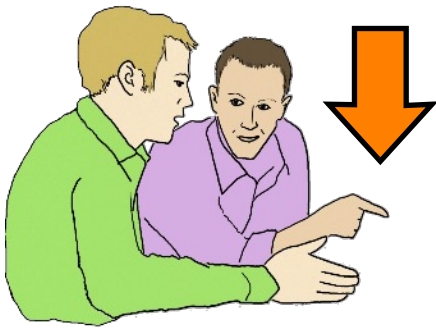
And that their support plans don't look at these things properly.



More needs to be done to make sure children and young people are involved with their support plans and making decisions.



There should be rules about this. And making sure children and young people come first.



There are not enough opportunities for things like apprenticeships.



And some young people cannot access them because they do not have the right type of support plan.



There is not enough support for people with things like apprenticeships.



Lots of employers do not understand their needs.



There should be a review of this and changes must be made.



The Department of Education has not given enough thought to young people with SEND over the age of 16.



This group needs more support to find jobs and independence.



Different departments of the Government should work together to make changes here and create new plans.



We think a review needs to take place about these issues by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. They make sure people are treated fairly and equally.



All local authorities are meant to have a role called 'Designated Medical Officer' or 'Designated Clinical Officer'. But this has still not happened everywhere.



The Government needs to try and change this as soon as possible.



Different departments in the Government and departments in local authorities are not working together as well as they should be. This needs to change.



Government departments need to work together to say what they want local authorities to achieve. And they should check this is happening.



Local authorities make a 'local offer'. This is the information about the services it has for people with SEND.



The Government must make sure families are involved with what is provided in the local offer. And that information is accessible.



The Department for Education should check what services each local authority offers.



And make a plan for putting services in place.



And reviews should take place of the local offer by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care.



Children, young people and families should be able to get involved with these reviews.

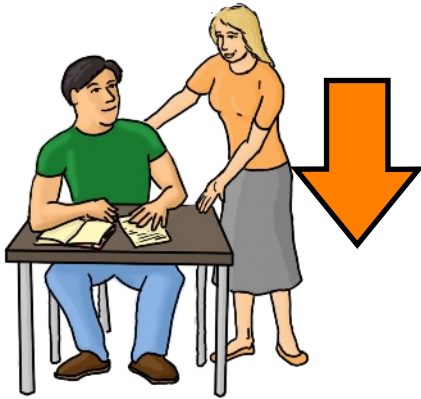


We are very concerned about the amount of complaints families make about local authorities because they are not getting the support they need.

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A report needs to be made every year by the Ministry of Justice about these complaints. So we can learn more about the issues.



Not enough has been done to make sure people get the support they need.

Or that the system works well.

Credits



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