



## Children in School with Special Educational Needs QSD on 4 March 2020

On 4 March 2020, Lord Addington (Liberal Democrat) is due to ask Her Majesty's Government "what assessment they have made of the problems of and possible solutions for children in the school system with dyslexia and other neurodiverse conditions".

### Summary

Conditions such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or autism can be referred to as neurodiverse conditions. Some children who are affected by these conditions are entitled to extra support in schools. This can take the form of a special learning programme, help communicating with other children, or extra encouragement in their learning. The Government refers to this support as special educational needs (SEN) support.

[Statistics from the Department of Education](#) found that 14.9% of pupils in England in January 2019 had a special educational need (SEN). If a child needs further support, they may receive an education, health and care (EHC) plan. In January 2019, 3.1% of pupils had an EHC plan. Both SEN support and EHC plans are overseen by the local authority.

In September 2019, the Government [announced a review](#) into support for children with special educational needs and disabilities. The review will consider the impact of reforms that were introduced in 2014. In response to a written question on 4 February 2020, the Government stated that further information about the review will be published shortly.

In addition to the review, the Government [also announced £700m of funding](#) to help pupils with the most complex needs for school year 2020 to 2021, and a pilot scheme of new assistive technology to be used in up to 100 schools and colleges.

In October 2019, the House of Commons Education Committee [published a report](#) on special educational needs and disabilities which evaluated the reforms that were put in place in 2014. The committee acknowledged that the reforms were needed but said that their implementation was "badly hampered by poor administration" and a "challenging funding environment".

The National Audit Office (NAO), in their [report from September 2019](#), has said that the current system of SEN support is not financially sustainable. Similarly, the Local Government Association has stated that the current system is at a "tipping point", as demand for SEN services has risen much faster than funding has been made available.

Sally Dray | 27 February 2020

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## Further Information

- HM Government, '[Overview](#)'; '[Special Educational Needs Support](#)'; and '[Extra Help](#)', accessed 26 February 2020

*Overview of how special educational needs and disabilities can affect a child and information on what Government support is available for those children who are affected.*

- Department for Education, '[High-Tech Products to Level the Playing Field for Disabled Pupils](#)' 22 January 2020; and '[Major Review into Support for Children With Special Educational Needs](#)', 6 September 2019

*Information on an assistive technology pilot scheme for pupils with special needs, and on the review into services available for children with special educational needs.*

- Department for Education, '[Special Educational Needs in England: January 2019](#)', 4 July 2019

*Statistical briefing on numbers of pupils with special educational needs in schools in England, developed through data from the January 2019 school census. The number of pupils with SEN support has risen for the third consecutive year. Currently, 14.9% of pupils are recorded as having SEN support.*

- House of Commons Education Committee, '[Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#)', 23 October 2019, HC 20 of session 2019, pp 3–4

*Summary from the committee's report into the effectiveness of reforms implemented in 2014, which were intended to improve the educational experiences of children with special educational needs and disabilities. The report outlines various problems that the committee identified with the way the reforms were carried out, including a lack of necessary funding and "bureaucratic nightmares".*

- National Audit Office, '[Support for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in England](#)', 11 September 2019

*Summary report by the National Audit Office evaluating how well pupils with special educational needs are being supported in schools in England. The NAO concluded that it was concerned many pupils with SEN are not being supported effectively.*

- House of Commons Library, '[Special Educational Needs: Support in England](#)', 17 December 2019

*Briefing outlining what support is available for children with SEN, how it is funded and several stakeholders' reports on the system.*

## Parliamentary Debate and Questions

- [Debate on 'Special Educational Needs and Disability Funding'](#), HC Hansard, 29 January 2020, cols 313–39WH
- A selection of written questions from both Houses: [18397](#) (26 February 2020); [HL598](#) (4 February 2020); [HL141](#) (16 January 2020); [7064](#) (4 November 2019); [HL55](#) (24 October 2019); [245974](#) (30 April 2019); and [HL12253](#) (20 December 2018)

## Press Articles and Comment

- May Bulman, '[Surge in Families Seeking Help for Children With Special Needs, Figures Show](#)', *Independent*, 28 December 2019
- Sally Weale, '[Support for Children with Special Educational Needs "in Crisis"](#)', *Guardian*, 4 October 2019
- Eleanor Busby, '[Children With Special Needs Forced Out of School for Years as Funding Fails to Meet Demand](#)', *Independent*, 15 April 2019
- Camilla Turner, '[Schools Should Take More Special Needs Children, Government's Spending Watchdog Says](#)', *Telegraph* (£), 11 September 2019
- Katherine Sellgren, '[Families Lose Challenge Over Special Needs Funding](#)' BBC News, 7 October 2019
- Local Government Association, '[SEND Crisis: 130 Extra Children With Special Needs Being Supported by Councils Every Day](#)', 5 June 2019
- British Dyslexia Association, '[Department for Education to Fund Assistive Technology Trials for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#)', 22 January 2020
- IPSEA, '[Government to Launch Major Review into Support for SEND](#)', September 2019