

ADDRESSING THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEN(D)) CRISIS

Guide for Child Health Colleagues

The problem

- Over 1.5 million children in England have SEN(D), yet many wait years for assessment and support, harming education and wellbeing.
- Access to SEN(D) support is deeply unequal, with outcomes varying based on location, family income, gender, and ethnicity.
- Fragmentation of health and education systems prevents timely identification of need and delivery of support.

What you can do as a child health practitioner

- **Advocate for cross-sector data sharing** (i.e., health information for schools) to help support early SEN(D) identification.
- **Support the rollout and use of tools** like the Electronic Developmental Support Passport (EDSP) to identify and respond to children's non-academic needs early.
- **Help implement school-entry vision, hearing, and developmental screening**, particularly in areas where uptake is low or inconsistent.
- **Participate in multi-agency development of Education Health and Care Plans** (EHCPs) to ensure health needs are accurately reported and provision is appropriate.
- **Provide training or consultation to schools** on common health-related SEN(D) concerns, such as sleep, toileting, motor skills.

Evidence-based insights

Only **49%** of EHCPs were issued within the statutory 20-week timeframe in 2022.

The average wait time was **194 weeks** for an ADHD assessment for young people aged 19-25 years in a local authority in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Examples of good practice that you may wish to explore:

Bradford Alternative Provision Academy

BAPA provides support to children and young people (CYP) permanently excluded from secondary schools, operating via a multidisciplinary approach to help identify and support those with SEN(D).

Empowering schools to identify SEN(D)

Profiling initiatives such as the EDSP can help school staff identify barriers to education at an early stage in a child's life.

Trafford Emotionally Based Non-Attendance Working Group

The group brings together representatives from education, health, and social care, alongside families who advocate for young people's voices, supporting improved outcomes for CYP.

Beaumont Hill Academy

The school works with a family wellbeing team and uses a case allocation system to implement innovative early help initiatives and develop stronger partnerships with the local authority to improve outcomes for all CYP.

Check out the innovative approaches outlined in this briefing and **consider taking inspiration from these approaches to reflect on how you can help create positive change.**



Scan the QR Code for the report

Please share this guide and start a discussion with your colleagues about how we can all play our role in building a country that works for all children and young people.