

EDUCATION AUTHORITY

A Framework for Specialist Provision in Mainstream Schools

Easy read guide



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1: Who are we?



- The Education Authority (EA) is responsible for education services in Northern Ireland including schools and support services.
- The EA's job is to ensure that children and young people's needs are being met.

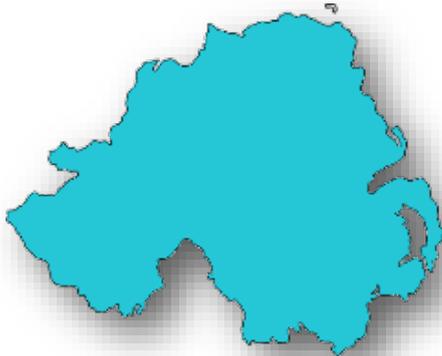


2: What do we want to do?



- The EA is asking for your views on the proposed changes to specialist provision in mainstream schools.

3: Background



- Children with special educational needs need more help with learning than many other children of the same age.
- There has been a steady rise in the number of pupils with special educational needs.
- Currently over 19,000 pupils in Northern Ireland have a Statement of Special Educational Need.
- Some pupils have their special educational needs met by going to a special school.
- Some pupils go to mainstream school and have their special educational needs met by having extra help or by going to specialist provisions.
- Specialist provisions are classes with smaller numbers of pupils and specialist teachers.



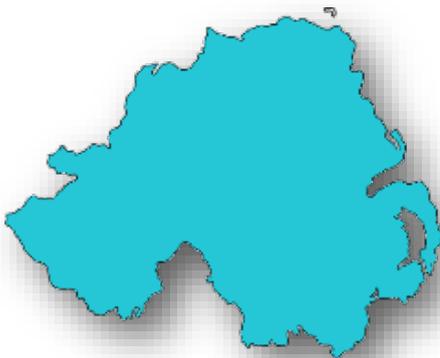
- Children are placed by the EA in these specialist provisions as a result of a Statement of Special Educational Needs.
- These specialist provisions offer special help for children with a range of difficulties.



- These classes allow children with special educational needs to be educated within a local mainstream school.
- They provide a more supportive environment for the pupils to learn in.



- The pupils benefit from inclusion within mainstream classes, and the opportunity to experience social and leisure activities alongside their peers.



- There are currently 93 schools in Northern Ireland with specialist provisions.
- Not everyone has the same access to specialist provisions, with some areas in Northern Ireland having none or not enough.



- Some pupils have to travel long distances if they want to attend specialist provisions.



- Some pupils can only attend specialist provisions until they reach a certain age and then either need to change schools or attend a mainstream class full-time.



- Not all areas offer support to the full range of special educational needs.



- There has been rise in the number of pupils needing a place within specialist provisions.

- This has put stress on the number of places available.



- To help meet this demand the EA has set up temporary specialist provisions.

4: What do we intend to do?



- We want to provide pupils and parents with better access to specialist provisions across Northern Ireland.



- We want to improve outcomes for children and young people with special needs attending mainstream schools.



- We want to ensure there are enough specialist provisions for now and for the future.



- We want to ensure that pupils don't have to travel long distances to go to school.



- We want to ensure schools can meet a wide range of special educational needs.

5: Getting people's views



- To find out what people think about the proposals we are holding a public consultation. Everyone will be able to give us their opinions and comments on the proposals.



- We especially welcome the views of children and young people to make sure their voices are heard and their opinions taken into account.

6: How can I put forward my views and opinions?

You can...



- Complete an online questionnaire at [EA's consultation website](#)



- Attend an online consultation meeting being held by EA's Area Planning Team and give your opinion.



- Write directly to the EA to give your opinion.

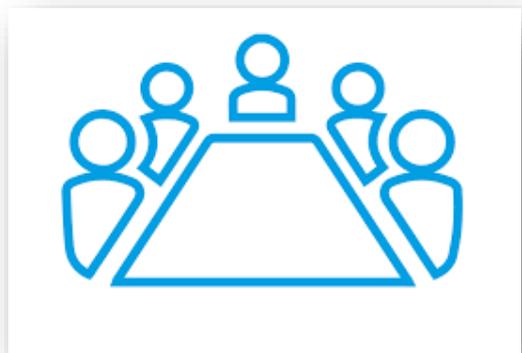
Or by email to:

mainstreamconsultation@eani.org.uk

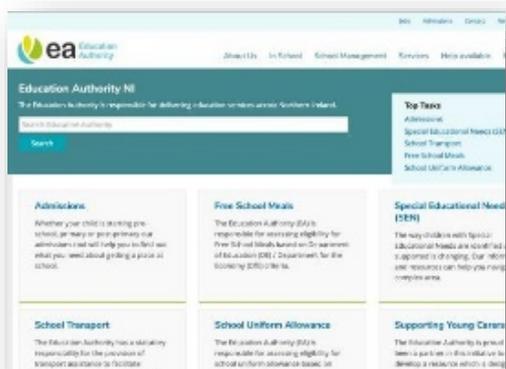
7: What happens next?



- The consultation will be running from Friday 16 October 2020 at 9am to Friday 11 December 2020, extended to Thursday 11 February 2021 and further extended to Monday 12 April 2021 at 5.00pm (document updated on 8 December 2020 and 20 January 2021).



- All your views will be considered by the Education Authority board.



- A report on what everyone said will be made available to the public at www.eani.org.uk.

