



How we are responding to the parent and carer findings on inclusion bases

We are very grateful to the parents and carers who took the time to share their experiences of SEND bases in mainstream schools.

This research shows that inclusion bases can be highly effective. Many parents described positive, even life-changing impacts, supporting their child's learning, confidence and wellbeing. However, it also highlights that experiences are not consistent. Where provision does not meet children's needs, the consequences can be significant, including disengagement from education and negative impacts on wellbeing.

Parents and carers were clear about what drives both positive and negative experiences. They told us that children need to feel part of their school community, not separate from it; that the quality and expertise of staff is critical; that support must be tailored to individual needs; and that environments, communication, and consistency of provision all matter.

We have listened carefully to these messages. Alongside this report, we have published new guidance for schools and local authorities on inclusion bases. This guidance is designed directly in response to what parents and carers told us and sets out how we will address the key issues raised.

- Where parents and carers told us that bases can feel isolating, we are setting clear expectations that inclusion bases must promote belonging and participation in mainstream school life, and help maximise the time children and young people spend in mainstream classes
- Where parents and carers raised concerns about staff expertise, we are strengthening expectations around skilled, teacher-led provision with access to specialist support, and continuing to roll out national inclusion base peer networks as part of the RISE inclusive mainstream programme
- Where parents and carers highlighted that needs are not always met, we are ensuring that provision is designed around individual children, with regular assessment and review
- Where environments were unsuitable or overcrowded, particularly in secondary schools, we are setting expectations for calm, well-designed spaces that properly support learning and wellbeing, alongside clear guidance to help schools make their estates more inclusive, backed by our £3.7bn high needs capital investment between 2025 and 2030
- Where communication with families was inconsistent, we are emphasising strong partnerships with parents and carers as a core part of effective practice
- And where experiences varied widely, we are introducing clearer national expectations to support more consistent, high-quality provision across the country, and are working with Ofsted to ensure that high-quality inclusion bases are recognised and celebrated, while also being held to account for delivering high-quality provision

Our ambition is clear: that every child who accesses an inclusion base receives high-quality, tailored support that enables them to thrive academically, socially and emotionally, within their local mainstream school.

This report is an important step in strengthening the evidence base and ensuring that guidance to schools is grounded in the real experiences of families. We will continue to listen to parents and carers, so that inclusion bases deliver consistently positive outcomes for every child and family.

© Crown copyright 2026