

What to expect from your child's journey through education

We want every child to achieve and thrive at school. We're making changes to give children a richer and broader education, better support earlier, and calmer classrooms where they can do their best. Here's what these reforms mean for your child at each stage of their education.

Before School: Ages 0 to 4

Family support from the earliest days

- Best Start Family Hubs in every community providing open access to early support and advice
- A trained SEND practitioner in every hub to help parents understand their child's development
- Information and support on how you can help your child learn at home, such as reading or learning to count together.

High-quality early education

- 30 hours of government-funded childcare for working parents
- Expansion of school-based nurseries
- Enhanced training for early years staff so your children get the best early learning

Better support from your early years setting

- Quicker and easier access to experts
- Upfront funding to meet needs from day one
- Better trained staff delivering evidence-based support
- Partnerships between early years settings and schools for smooth transitions

Reception and Primary School: Ages 4 to 11

A knowledge-rich, broad curriculum

- A new curriculum which ensures every child builds strong foundations. You can have your say in a consultation later this year. Reading, writing and speaking skills supported in every subject
- Strengthened arts, music and PE
- Free breakfast clubs providing a supportive start to the day

High standards for all

- Target: 90% of children meeting the expected standard in the phonics check
- Target: a record proportion of 11-year-olds meeting expected standards in reading, writing and maths
- Every teacher trained to support children with SEND

This will take place alongside a focus on building children's engagement and sense of belonging in school — a new Pupil Engagement Framework will help schools understand how children are feeling and take action, because we know that children who feel they belong attend more and achieve more.

For children with special educational needs (SEND)

- New Individual Support Plans tracking children's needs and the support they receive
- Specialist and Support Bases within mainstream schools, which includes sensory spaces, breakout rooms and accessible facilities
- Access to educational psychologists and speech and language therapists without fighting for an EHCP, through a new service available to all schools called Experts at Hand

For primary and secondary school

Enrichment for all

- Civic engagement - volunteering, school and college democracy, community engagement
- Arts and culture - taking part in music, art, dance and other arts, and visits to museums or galleries
- Nature, outdoor and adventure - time outdoors, climate education and sustainability projects

- Sport and physical activity - participating in individual and team sports, and physical and fitness activities
- Developing wider life skills - STEM-related enrichment, cooking, debating, and managing finances

Informed choices

- New School Profiles giving a rounded picture of your child's school or college, presenting the latest useful information about schools together in one place.

For children with additional needs

- Alongside a strong Universal offer of high-quality, inclusive teaching and early help for all children and young people, backed by extra funding for schools, additional layers of support include:
- Targeted: structured support from the school, like working in smaller groups
- Targeted plus: help from education and health professionals in mainstream settings such as speech and language therapists, through a new 'Experts at Hand' service
- Specialist: support for children with the most complex needs through an EHCP backed by new Specialist Provision Packages, which will end the postcode lottery by setting national standards for support

Secondary School: Ages 11 to 16

Supported transition from primary

- Better data-sharing between primary and secondary schools
- A new Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence (RISE) KS3 Alliance supporting schools to develop excellence in Years 7 to 9
- Working with feeder primary schools before your child arrives

A broader secondary experience

- More subject specialist teachers
- Continued enrichment opportunities

- New Year 8 reading assessment ensuring no child falls behind
- Focus on building children's engagement and sense of belonging in school

Adaptations to qualifications

- Refreshed GCSEs from September 2029 ensuring the best curriculum for all children
- Improved school performance measures enabling greater choice so young people can study subjects they enjoy alongside an academic core

Preparation for the future

- High-quality careers advice and work experience
- Two weeks' worth of work experience during secondary education
- Clear pathways into post-16 education, apprenticeships or employment

For children with additional needs

- Individual Support Plans continuing from primary
- Inclusion bases – including sensory spaces, breakout rooms and accessible facilities - in every secondary school
- Educational psychologists and therapists available through Experts at Hand without needing an EHCP
- Targeted support for those at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

Post-16 and Beyond: Ages 16 to 25

Clear pathways

- Every child has a planned destination before leaving school
- Every young person will get an offer for education or training after Year 11. In some areas, we're testing new ways to make sure young people who need extra support have a local place ready for them

- New 'V Levels' – practical, work-focused qualifications that sit alongside A Levels and T Levels, giving your child more choices for how they learn after 16

Improved transitions

- Improved data-sharing between schools and post-16 providers
- Personalised transition packages for students with SEND with a 12-month planning period before leaving school

Building on existing, inclusive practice in mainstream provision

- Fair access to support in mainstream colleges through Experts at Hand (education psychologists, speech and language therapy)
- SEND support continuing to age 25 via EHCPs for those with the most complex needs
- Upskilling staff to support learners through the £200 million funding package, ensuring a skilled workforce for generations to come
- Clear pathways into supported employment or further study

Skills for life

- Digital literacy and media literacy skills
- Financial literacy and citizenship education
- Preparation for employment, independent living and adult life

Investment in every child and young person

- Funding for pupils increasing each year with inflation - £1.6 billion over the next three years for schools to deliver universal support with high quality teaching and include support for all
- Over £200 million on national training for all staff on inclusion
- Over £200 million funding for SEND support in Best Start Family Hubs
- Over £40 million to boost the numbers of educational psychologists and speech and language therapists

- £3.7 billion for 60,000 new places in special schools and Inclusion Bases delivered over four years
- £1.8 billion for Experts at Hand to bring professionals like educational psychologists, speech therapists and occupational therapists into mainstream nurseries, schools and colleges without needing a statutory assessment or an EHCP

Have your say and more information

Visit gov.uk/dfe/send-reform

- [Every Child Achieving and Thriving Schools White Paper](#)
- [SEND Consultation](#)
- [Further information and fact sheets](#)