



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
HM Treasury  
1 Horse Guards Road  
Westminster  
London  
SW1A 2HQ

1 March 2024

Dear Chancellor

On 11 January this year, the House of Commons heard in detail about the crisis in provision of support for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The debate was remarkably well attended, with 30 MPs contributing from across the House. Members shared their constituents' experiences of a system in crisis, and in some cases related their own personal family stories. Many of these cases made for truly heart-breaking listening.

The House resolved that SEND provision should be reviewed.

At present, the cumulative deficit in local authority high needs budgets is estimated to be £2.3 billion, and is expected to reach £3.6 billion by March 2025.

The f40 group, representing some of the worst-funded local education authorities in England, is calling for £4.6 billion in additional annual funding – the minimum necessary merely to stop the crisis spiralling further out of control.

Whilst we recognise that High Needs Funding has increased substantially since 2019, there is ample evidence that what is currently being provided is failing to meet the level of need.

This has been compounded by parallel challenges in children's social care and school transport budgets which increase the pressure on councils and children and families with SEND.



Furthermore, in order to prevent a repeat of the crisis in a few years' time and to meet the aspiration of the command paper, '*Right support, Right place, Right time*', there must also be a significant increase in capital funding, over and above what has already been promised. This will allow local authorities to invest in the infrastructure and workforce that children with SEND rely on.

The level of need has increased dramatically in recent years. The total number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and statements of special educational need has more than doubled since 2015. But Government support has not kept pace.

For example, successive spending settlements have provided funding for teachers' pay increases but not for teaching assistants and non-teaching staff – both are roles that play a vital part in supporting inclusion for children with SEND. This is leading to unsustainable pressure on staffing budgets.

In addition, the funding allocations for SEND provision are unfairly skewed, and do not reflect the relative needs of each area. A reassessment of these allocations is long overdue and, as the f40 group has long argued, a fair funding system should be about meeting the needs of pupils according to their characteristics, not where they happen to be in the country.

We would be grateful if you would consider this matter as you draw together your plans for the Budget, increase the funding for SEND education, and ensure SEND pupils are properly supported.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Sir David Davis KCB MP  
Sir Peter Bottomley MP  
Rt Hon Sir Jake Berry MP  
Rt Hon Dame Priti Patel DBE MP  
Rt Hon Sir Jeremy Quin MP  
Rt Hon Sir Jeremy Wright KC MP  
Rt Hon George Eustice MP  
Rt Hon Sir Robert Buckland KC MP  
Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood MP  
Rt Hon Sir Desmond Swayne MP  
Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP  
Dame Andrea Jenkyns DBE MP  
Rt Hon Greg Clark MP  
Rt Hon Sir Greg Knight MP  
Rt Hon Sir John Whittingdale MP  
Rt Hon Wendy Morton MP  
Rt Hon Kelly Tolhurst MP

Rt Hon Mark Francois MP  
Andrew Selous MP  
Pauline Latham OBE  
Ben Bradley MP  
Andrew Lewer MBE MP  
Tim Loughton MP  
Robin Walker MP  
Peter Aldous MP  
Richard Drax MP  
Ian Liddell-Grainger MP  
Laurence Robertson MP  
Rob Butler OBE MP  
Sir Gary Streeter MP  
Tom Randall MP  
Anne Marie Morris MP  
Siobhan Baillie  
Steve Tuckwell MP



Adam Holloway MP  
Alberto Costa MP  
Alicia Kearns MP  
Andrew Rosindell MP  
Bob Blackman CBE MP  
Sir Bob Neill KC MP  
Damien Moore MP  
Dr Dan Poulter MP  
Duncan Baker MP  
Elliot Colburn MP  
George Freeman MP  
Kevin Foster MP  
Gordon Henderson MP  
Greg Smith MP  
Helen Grant OBE MP  
Henry Smith MP  
Holly Mumby-Croft MP  
Jane Hunt MP

Jason McCartney MP  
Darren Henry MP  
John Howell OBE MP  
Julian Sturdy MP  
Julie Marson MP  
Kate Kniveton MP  
Maggie Throup OBE MP  
Nick Fletcher MP  
Nickie Aiken MP  
Paul Scully MP  
Rehman Chishti MP  
Simon Fell MP  
Simon Jupp MP  
Stephen Hammond MP  
Steve Brine MP  
Steve Double MP  
Tom Hunt MP  
Tracey Crouch CBE MP