

Dear Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister

Parents of disabled children and young people regularly contact us to talk about their fears for the future of their children. They are concerned that they are getting a worse start in life than other children and that their development, both socially and educationally, is suffering as a result of their needs not being met.

When the Government published its plans to reform the way disabled children and young people are supported throughout their education, the announcements were widely welcomed. The Green Paper aptly entitled 'Support and Aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability' promised a better future for this group of children and young people.

However, two years on from the vision set out by the Government, many feel the reforms, in their current state, will not deliver on the promise to make the system less stressful for families.

The Green Paper promised families a much better system for all disabled children, yet as it stands 25% of disabled children and young people who do not have special educational needs will not benefit from the reforms.

Disabled children, young people and their families were also promised that the rights that they currently have will be protected, that services will work together to meet the needs of disabled children, and that they will have greater choice and control.

Instead, the Bill at present risks undermining the right to an inclusive education and to the provision of services they are currently entitled to. In addition, it provides parents with a local offer which, as currently drafted, is likely to mean that they will have to continue to fight for the services they should be able to take for granted, despite the government's stated intention of reducing the battle for services.

We believe that the Government's intent has always been to do the right thing for disabled children, young people and their families. But the reforms as they currently stand are unlikely to enable disabled children and young people to fulfil their aspirations and potential, the outcome the reforms hoped to achieve. We therefore urge the Government to listen to disabled children, young people and their families and those who support and work with them and address these issues within the Children and Families Bill. We particularly want the Government to:

- Protect existing rights of disabled children and young people
- Create a truly joined-up system for disabled children and young people with health and social care services fully integrated
- Make local authorities accountable for the services they offer to disabled children and young people
- And ensure all disabled children and young people benefit from these improvements

We would be delighted to discuss our concerns with you in person. Please feel free to get in touch via [beatrice@edcm.org.uk](mailto:beatrice@edcm.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Action for Children

ADD-vance, St Albans

ADHD North West

Afasic

Aidexcel Support  
Services

Aireborough Summer  
Activities Scheme

Airedale & Wharfedale  
Autism Resource

Amaze

Ambitious about  
Austism

ASD ASHFORD Support  
Group

ASD Family Help

ASD New Forest

Asperations, South  
Devon Aspergers Group

Association of  
Educational  
Psychologists

BACPAC  
Barnet Mencap

BATOD

Children's Services and  
Open Door

Breaking Barriers NW

Brighton & Hove Parent  
and Carer Council

British Association of  
Teachers of the Deaf

Campaign for State  
Education

Centre 404

Centre for Studies of  
Inclusive Education

Children's Heart  
Federation

CLIC Sargent

Community First New  
Forest

Contact a Family

Social Care Institute for  
Excellence

Devizes & District  
Opportunity Centre

DownSouth Down's  
syndrome support  
group

Downs Syndrome  
Association

Down Syndrome  
Training & Support  
Service Ltd, Bradford

Dyslexia North East  
England

Dyspraxia Foundation -  
Worcester Parent  
Group

Every Disabled Child  
Matters Campaign

Families of Pre-school  
Hearing Impaired  
children that attend the  
Oxfordshire Family  
Support Group for  
Hearing Impaired pre-  
school Children

Family Carer Support  
Service (FCSS) at Hft

Family Support Service  
and parents at Medina  
House School, Isle of  
Wight

Fareham ASD Support  
Network

Friends of EarlyBird,  
Bracknell

Frome Autistic Support  
Team

Guide Dogs

Halton Autistic Family  
Support Group Limited

Huddersfield Down  
Syndrome Support  
Group

I CAN

Include Me TOO

Interface Parent Forum  
Redbridge

IPSEA

Learning Disability  
Carers Community,  
Derbyshire

Lowestoft Dyslexia and  
Dyspraxia Support  
Group

mASCot

The Maze

Mencap

NAHT

National Autistic  
Society

National Association for  
Special Educational  
Needs

National Autistic  
Society, Bexhill &  
Hastings Branch

National Blind  
Children's Society

National Family Carer  
Network

NCB

NDCS (National Deaf  
Children's Society)  
Newark and Sherwood  
autism support group

New Forest Asperger  
Support Group

Newham Deaf  
Children's Society

North East Lincolnshire  
Down's Syndrome  
Family Support Group

PACSEN (Parents and  
Carers of Children with  
Special Educational  
Needs), Tower Hamlets

Parents Action Group  
for Special Play,  
Rushmoor

Parent Carers' Council

Parents for Inclusion

Parents' Forum for  
Children with  
Disabilities, Rochdale

Peterborough Area  
Downs Syndrome  
group

Positive Parents  
Havering

Plymouth and District  
Deaf Children's Society

Portsmouth Autism  
Support network

Portsmouth Down  
Syndrome Association

Portsmouth Parent  
Voice

Positive Parent Action

Positive Parents  
Havering

The Pre-school  
Learning Alliance

Rainbow Parent Carer  
Forum,  
Nottinghamshire

Rainbow Trust  
Children's Charity

Reading Mencap

Royal National Institute  
of Blind People (RNIB)

Rushcliffe Parents  
Autism Support Group

Rutland Parent Carer  
Voice

Scream Dyslexic  
Support Group

Sense

SNIPS at Peartree  
School, Welwyn Garden  
City

South Hampshire Deaf  
Children's Society

SPACE Support  
Chesham & The Fragile  
X Society's Uxbridge  
support group

Special Educational  
Forum

Special Educational  
Consortium

Special Voices, parent  
carer forum, Slough

Spelthorne Asperger  
Support Group

Stepping Stones Downs  
Syndrome Support  
Group, Surrey

The Children's Society

The Children's Trust

Together for Short  
Lives

Together Trust

Ups and Downs  
Southwest

United Kingdom  
Disabled Peoples  
Council

Warrington Aspergers  
Society

WellChild

Wokingham, Bracknell  
& Districts Mencap

Working Families

World of Inclusion Ltd

