

Special Educational Needs and Disability survey

This week a survey released by Mencap has found that 65% of parents of children with Special Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are convinced that their children are receiving a poorer education than those without SEND. The survey of 1,000 parents found that 81% of the parents were not confident their child's school is helping them do their best. Worryingly, 64% say their child has been taken out of class or activities because of their disability.

The survey also revealed a shift away from special needs children attending mainstream schools. At the beginning of 2013/14, the number of pupils entering special schools increased by nearly a third amongst 10 and 11 year olds.

Governing boards have a statutory responsibility to “use their best endeavours” to ensure that the needs of children with SEND are met. Governing boards should be asking questions about how the needs of SEND children are met and how the staff ensure they are included in class activities. The new SEN Code of Practice places much more emphasis on how the system involves pupils and parents in the development of provision. Governors should ensure that the views of parents with children with SEND are sought.

Mencap has also worked with the Department for Education (DfE) to develop two [easy to read guides for parents and young people](#) with learning disabilities. This will help explain the changes to special educational needs and disabilities support in England. As part of the SEN information, the governing board is required to ensure that links to these guides are included on the school website.

The DfE [also announced](#) this week an additional £37.1m to assist in the implementation of the SEND reforms. High Needs block funding in the Dedicated Schools Grant has also been increased by £47m to take account of population growth.