

MASUWT THE
TEACHERS'
UNION

**NEW DEAL
FOR
TEACHERS**

POLITICAL BRIEFING

**SEND Consultation
and the Schools
White Paper**

Purpose

This briefing sets out NASUWT's initial assessment of the Government's SEND consultation and Schools White Paper, alongside the Union's analysis of the implications for teachers, pupils and families, and key issues requiring parliamentary scrutiny.

Context

The Government has launched a wide-ranging SEND consultation alongside a Schools White Paper outlining long-term structural reform of the school system. Together, these proposals signal significant changes to inclusion, accountability, workforce expectations and school governance. While NASUWT supports changes that improve outcomes for children and young people, members have serious concerns about whether the proposals address the real pressures facing schools.

NASUWT supports a renewed SEND system and school improvement agenda that is properly funded, developed with the profession and grounded in classroom reality. Reform must recognise teachers as central to inclusion, match training with investment in staffing and time, rebuild wider children's services and ensure changes to accountability reduce pressure on teachers.

Key SEND consultation proposals

The consultation proposes a reformed SEND system built around early intervention and increased mainstream inclusion. This includes a new layered model of universal, targeted and specialist provision, expectations that more pupils with SEND will be educated in mainstream schools, tighter controls over Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and greater use of school-led plans, expanded training and new accountability arrangements, and structural reform linked to wider multi-academy trust (MAT) developments.

NASUWT concerns on SEND reform

- **Workforce pressures ignored:** Teachers and SENCOs risk being treated primarily as delivery mechanisms rather than professionals whose working conditions determine whether the proposals succeed.
- **Inclusion without resourcing:** Expanding mainstream provision without smaller classes, specialist staffing and therapeutic support risks creating inclusion without the infrastructure needed to make it work.
- **Workload risks:** New planning processes could increase administrative burdens and divert time from teaching.
- **Funding gap unresolved:** Proposals do not fully address long-term funding pressures affecting SEND provision or wider children's services.
- **Teachers compensating for system failures:** Schools are already absorbing pressures caused by delays in health and social care support.

SEND reforms concerns – risks to schools and staff

NASUWT is concerned that the proposed SEND reforms risk setting schools up to fail if workforce capacity, funding and external services are not addressed. The Union stresses that expanding mainstream inclusion must be matched by investment in staffing and specialist support. Teachers and SENCOs are already operating at capacity and further expectations without resources risk increasing workload pressures and undermining delivery.

Key Schools White Paper proposals

The White Paper sets out a long-term direction of travel for the school system, including an ambition for all schools to become part of MATs over time, new accountability and performance measures, capital investment and training initiatives, limited workforce measures such as potential maternity pay changes, and increased collaboration between schools and local systems.

NASUWT concerns on the White Paper

- **Structural reform without workforce strategy:** Continued academisation does not address recruitment, retention or workload challenges.
- **Accountability pressures:** New performance measures alongside a high-stakes inspection system risk increasing stress rather than reducing it.
- **Investment focused on infrastructure rather than people:** Capital spending and training alone will not resolve staffing shortages or excessive workload.
- **Governance and democratic accountability:** Movement towards universal MAT structures raises questions about local accountability and national bargaining arrangements.

Academisation and governance

NASUWT has raised concerns about proposals suggesting all schools may ultimately join MATs. The Union argues that structural reform must be developed transparently and in partnership with the profession, and that collaboration between schools should not be equated with compulsory structural change.

Conclusion

NASUWT has warned that current plans lack the ambition and sustained investment needed to address the structural challenges facing schools. The Union believes that teachers' voices must be central to reform and that additional training or structural change cannot compensate for systemic underfunding or workforce pressures.

Implications for MPs

Parliamentary scrutiny will be essential to ensure reforms deliver genuine improvement rather than shifting pressures onto schools and teachers.

MPs may wish to seek clarity from Ministers on how expanded mainstream inclusion will be resourced, what safeguards will prevent increased workload, how reforms will address recruitment and retention challenges, whether accountability changes will reduce pressure, and how democratic accountability will be maintained.



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About Us

NASUWT is The Teachers' Union and is the voice of the teaching profession.

Our aim is to improve and protect the status, morale and working conditions of the teaching profession so that teachers and headteachers can provide the best education and support to children and young people.

We are committed to ensuring that teachers and headteachers are recognised and rewarded as highly skilled professionals with working conditions that enable them to focus on their core role of leading teaching and learning.

NASUWT – The Teachers' Union – is proud to be led by teachers for teachers. Our democratic structures ensure that we are the voice of the profession and our decisions are rooted in the concerns of our members.

Our members are teachers and headteachers working in schools, early years settings and post-16 colleges.

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