

GREAT MINDS TOGETHER

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Great Minds Together is an organisation supporting families, schools and services to ensure better outcomes for children and young people with SEND and SEMH needs.

Goal:

The Inspection and Resolution Service (The I & R) is formed in 2020 as part of a reform within education and children's services for children and young people with SEND and/or SEMH needs and their families. The I & R establishes increased scrutiny and accountability across schools, local authorities and services, with an emphasis on true multi-agency support. Offering scrutiny of both funding and practice standards, the I & R works alongside community and volunteer initiatives, the public and private sectors, and importantly alongside parents to offer a resolution to support some of the most vulnerable children in our society.

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Achievable Outcomes

THE SEND 7

1

Effective Inspection & Resolution framework for SEND & SEMH needs

Ensuring true reporting of figures on attendance and spend and a 'real' multi-agency approach and use of community

2

Create a SEMH Code of Practice

Develop a support framework for the many children with SEMH needs who do not meet threshold for an EHCP, and ensuring strict adherence to both the SEMH and SEND code of practice.

3

Provide equal elements of funding to all schools

Abolish the postcode lottery of funding and centralise / ring-fence all funding that relates to SEND & SEMH needs

4

Ensure a sustainable wraparound support for families and schools

Teach LA's how to make best use of their community - Introduce a strong new Framework that encourages parent to parent support

5

Ensure affordable & effective training for teachers

Cap training costs that relate to SEND & SEMH needs & increase percentage of SEND and SEMH training at degree level for teachers and other professionals

6

Reduce Intervention costs for schools

Cap Intervention costs that relate to students with SEND or SEMH needs & replicate the Great Minds Together model that encourages LAs to make use of services within their own community, re-designing the 'Procurement Process' and ensuring the allocated funding available is spent effectively to support students directly in all cases

7

Improve EHC Plan timescales

Make more use of the 'Parental request' system - allowing parents to write their own EHC Plans, with a strong parent to parent support programme. Encourage support from within professional communities to increase timescales.

Let down by failures of implementation, the 2014 reforms have resulted in confusion and at times unlawful practice, bureaucratic nightmares, buckpassing and a lack of accountability, strained resources and adversarial experiences, and ultimately dashed the hopes of many

House of Commons Education Committee

Poor administration and a challenging funding environment in which local authorities and schools have lacked the ability to make transformative change.

House of Commons Education Committee

There is too much of a tension between the child's needs and the provision available.

House of Commons Education Committee

Unless we see a culture change, within schools and local authorities and the Government, any additional money will be wasted and make little difference to their lives.

House of Commons Education Committee

DIFFICULTIES

"We are letting down an entire generation of young people"

House of Commons Education Committee

We have found a general lack of accountability within the system.

House of Commons Education Committee

The absence of a rigorous inspection regime at the beginning set the tone of a hands-off approach.

House of Commons Education Committee

There must be greater oversight—we want to see a more rigorous inspection framework

House of Commons Education Committee

There should also be a greater focus on SEND in school inspections: at present, children who receive SEN Support are being let down by schools failing to meet their needs at this level.

House of Commons Education Committee

We recommend that parents should be able to report directly to central Government when local authorities fail to follow processes set out in statute and guidance.

House of Commons Education Committee

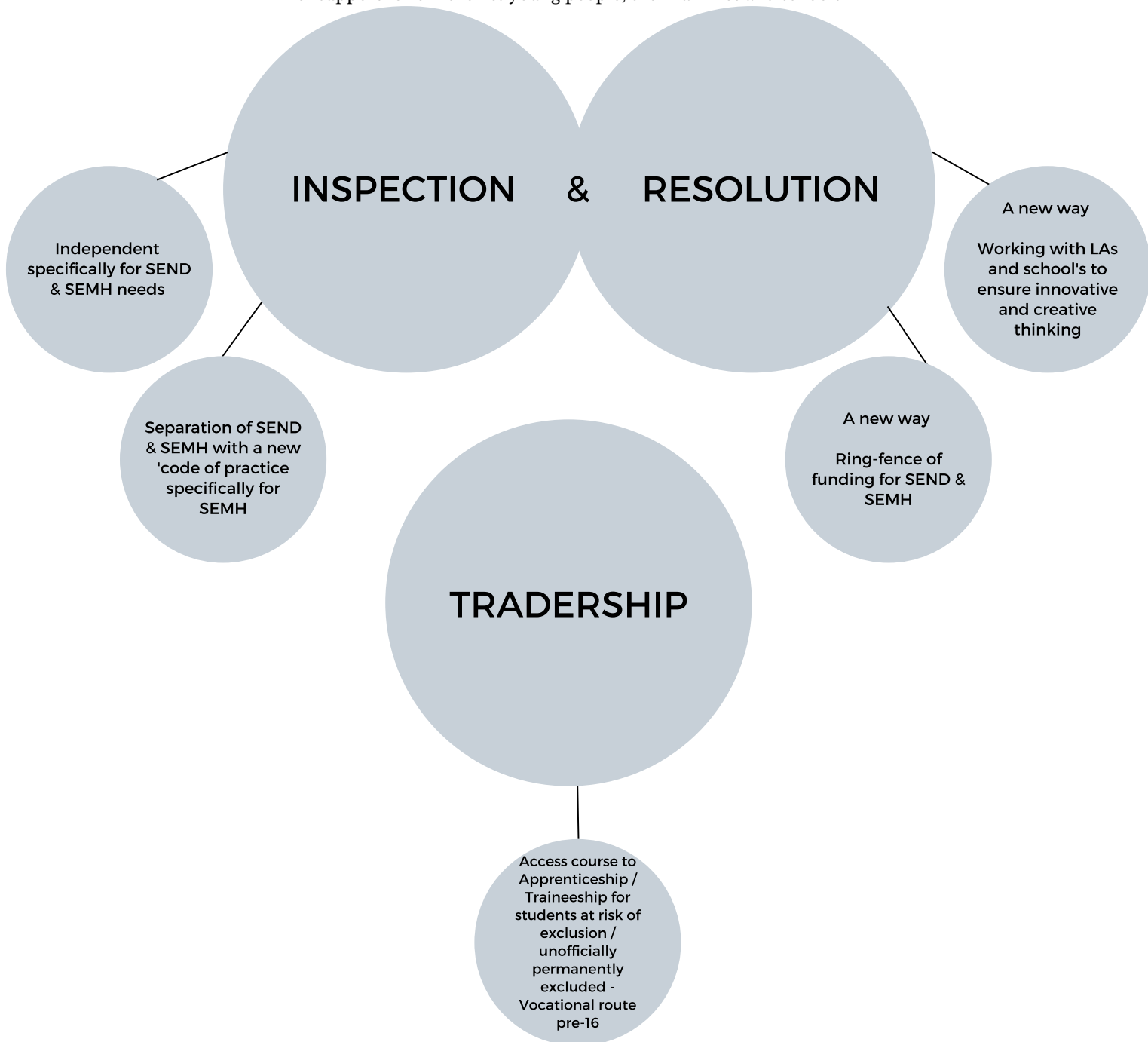
The Department should create a mechanism specifically for parents and carers of children with SEND, beyond what currently exists. The distance between young people's lived experience, their families' struggles and Ministers' desks is just too far.

House of Commons Education Committee

THE SOLUTION

THE I & R

An independent Inspection & Resolution Framework specifically for SEND & SEMH needs that sits separately from OFSTED but works alongside OFSTED & the Department for Education to ensure accountability and the best level of support for children & young people; their families and schools



THE I & R

Integration of services

Quality of support

Real family input

INSPECTION

Wraparound support

- Local Authority
- Schools
- Children's Services
- Health

Ensures accountability for SEND providers

Shared learning

'Real' Data Collection

Scrutiny of funding allocation - LAs & Schools

Quality of training for SEND & SEMH providers

THE I & R

Ring-fence
funds for
SEND / SEMH

Creation of
SEMH code
of practice

Cap
intervention
& training
costs for
SEND

RESOLUTION

Integration of
services

Better use of
existing funding

Real
multi-agency
approach

Shared
learning

Centralised
management of
accurate data
and statistics

Better use
of staff
within local
authorities

Community
input & links
with
universities

HOW WILL WE IMPLEMENT THE RESOLUTION

Recognition and support plan for students with SEMH needs

Schools have identified that an increasing amount of their time is taken up by students with what schools identify as SEMH needs. Where these students do not meet threshold for an EHC Plan, ensure there is a code of practice to adhere to. This will also ensure students that do have SEND, but are not treated as such receive a full assessment, and subsequent support. The I & R will be responsible for ensuring that all schools and LAs adhere to the SEND and SEMH code of practices. There are no accurate statistics relating to students with SEMH needs that do not have SEND. The I & R will collate this information to ensure the best support for all involved.

Action: Write SEMH Code of Practice

Ring-Fence allocation of additional funding for SEND

We will be suggesting ring-fencing or ideally centralisation of funds for SEND. By centralising additional funding elements, each student's case can be assessed on a needs basis.

This can also prompt direction / support from the I & R in how to support inclusion, with a review of the school's financial situation on a means tested basis.

Assess postcode lottery of funding

Assess whether applying a set 'per pupil' figure should be adopted nationwide, regarding the initial amount all schools receive per pupil. (not relating to high needs elements). In relation to additional SEND funding; ensure all is allocated on a 'needs' assessed basis.

Re-design the procurement process within Local Authorities

This will enable 'creative and innovative' thinking across services, ensuring they are adopting a 'real' multi-agency approach and removing bureaucracy. All providers for SEND and SEMH needs should be regulated by OFSTED or the Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Cap Intervention costs for private organisations offering intervention for SEND & SEMH needs

Currently there are few providers of these interventions, and those that exist charge schools high rates. By capping the costs of interventions for private organisations, schools are able to support more students more effectively, utilising their funding in a more practical way. By re-designing procurement this will allow schools and LAs to access more affordable intervention programs.

Cap training costs for private organisations teachers that relate to SEND / SEMH needs

As with interventions, currently there are a limited number of training providers, charging schools high rates. As well as capping the cost of additional training for teachers, create a national framework of shared learning, linking with universities would also be recommended as part of the resolution programme as per the Great Minds Together model.

HOW CONT'D

Promote prevention programs

Whilst helping to solve the 'National Crisis' in SEND and SEMH needs, create a national mindset of 'prevention is better than a cure'. Encourage schools to access the many prevention programs that exist as part of their 'per pupil' funding, and link with OFSTED on ensuring an outstanding school not only promotes inclusion, but also promotes prevention - thus tackling the problem from both sides.

Assess best use of staff / departments

Where Local Authorities are severely struggling with SEND, allow the I & R to make recommendations on best use of spend, in order to increase better practice on SEND and SEMH needs. Encourage 'shared learning' across local authorities, where some are showing good practice and creative thinking. The demonstration of shared learning to be included in OFSTED's criteria for recommending an 'Outstanding' judgement in area inspections.

Independent review of school expenditure

Where schools are rated by OFSTED as less than 'Outstanding', offer an independent assessment of the use of the schools budget when it comes to SEND and SEMH, ensuring school leaders are aware of affordable agency interventions in their area, and are making best use of their staff - adopting a creative approach to inclusion.

Encourage working with their local community

Local authorities and schools are too restricted on the services they can use; which in turn limits creative thinking and 'real' multiagency approach. We need to revert back to a community and working together approach, and renew trust between parents and schools and local authorities. Removing bureaucratic 'red tape' will allow communities to start repairing the divide that currently exists and address the 'them & us' mentality that comes from a lack of transparency.

Speak to large organisations that have an interest in social change

Build relationships with large organisations that want to influence children and young people's outcomes. See how they can help with additional funding / free training / work experience initiatives for young people, encouraging them to learn by getting hands on experience, and helping to address anti-social behaviour and depression.

Effective integration of services and schools

Make use of existing software providers to come up with a national framework of communication. Ensure 'outstanding' providers as rated by OFSTED are able to evidence excellent and consistent information sharing specifically across children's services, education, LAs and schools.

Assess 'inclusion'

Where specialist provisions are 'bottle necking', assess how inclusion is adopted as a mindset across schools and local authorities. Acquire 'reliable' data on students in specialist or alternative provision, best use of funding and successful multi-agency relationships. Ensure all students are allocated a place in a setting that is suited to their needs.

HOW CONT'D

Tradership

Create a nationally recognised Tradership to act as an 'access course' onto traineeship / apprenticeship and T-Levels for students whose outcomes are best achieved via a vocational and holistic approach to education. Train local authorities, apprenticeship providers and local colleges on the Tradership. This will enable more young people to access work-based learning schemes, whilst providing a CPD certification in the chosen industry, ensuring better outcomes and reducing the number of post 16 year olds being without education or direction. Align this with a Growth Mindset programme. This in-turn will alleviate mental health conditions and the strains on other services.

Thorough & effective inspection of data and statistics

Scrutinise the data provided by schools and local authorities, to ensure effective understanding of the services provided in the area. This must include detailed assessment of 'unofficial permanent exclusions' where schools and/or local authorities are not providing the legally required 25 hours of education, but are reporting otherwise. Create open access surveys for parents in every area, share these via local social media SEND support groups, as well as when meeting and speaking to families. Training for local authorities and schools on creative approaches to ensure inclusion and reduce social isolation / anti-social behaviour.

Support for 'Home Educated' children

Create a more comprehensive offering to support home educators within their local community and build closer relationships with their local authority and local schools, with the focus on support rather than judgement.

Make the EHC Plan process more effective

Make more use of the 'Parental request' system - supporting and encouraging parents to write their own EHC Plans, and submit for approval backed by a strong parent to parent support programme in place. Encourage links within professional communities to reduce timescales for EHC Plans.

Review the Local Offer concept

To encourage the use of community support services, private organisations and volunteer initiatives, along with partnerships with local universities and the introduction of Parent Champions, to promote best use of community experience to support children and their families with SEND and SEMH needs.

The I & R

Outline what is expected of local authorities, school's and children's services as the I & R is introduced along with positive multiagency relationships. Set expectations and ensure transparency at all times. Provide regular updates to evidence success and encourage others to adopt the same approach. This will result in a reduction in the number of tribunals as LAs are supported to work in a less confrontational way with parents.

WHAT WILL THE I & R SERVICE LOOK LIKE?

Ring-fence additional funding elements for SEND

Equal 'per pupil' funding for schools

Yearly (minimum of 3 week) Inspections per LA & reliable data collection

Additional funding requests from schools and local authorities to be assessed on a 'needs' basis

Creation of the SEMH code of practice

Support with EHC Plan process - encouragement of Parental Request & Parent to Parent support programme

Best use of funding that already exists - Savings - (Prevention is better & more cost effective than a cure)

Reform of 'The local offer to enable access to community support services, private organisations & volunteer initiatives & introduction of Parent Champions

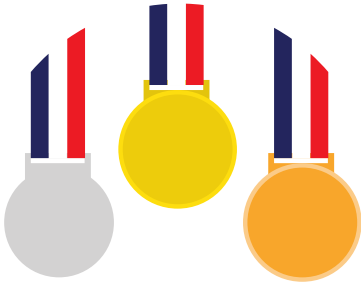
Strong relationship with OFSTED and continual work with the Department for Education & all SEND community groups to ensure better outcomes for children & young people with SEND & SEMH needs

Training schools and local authorities as part of the 'resolution' in adopting a creative, multi-agency and community approach to supporting their families

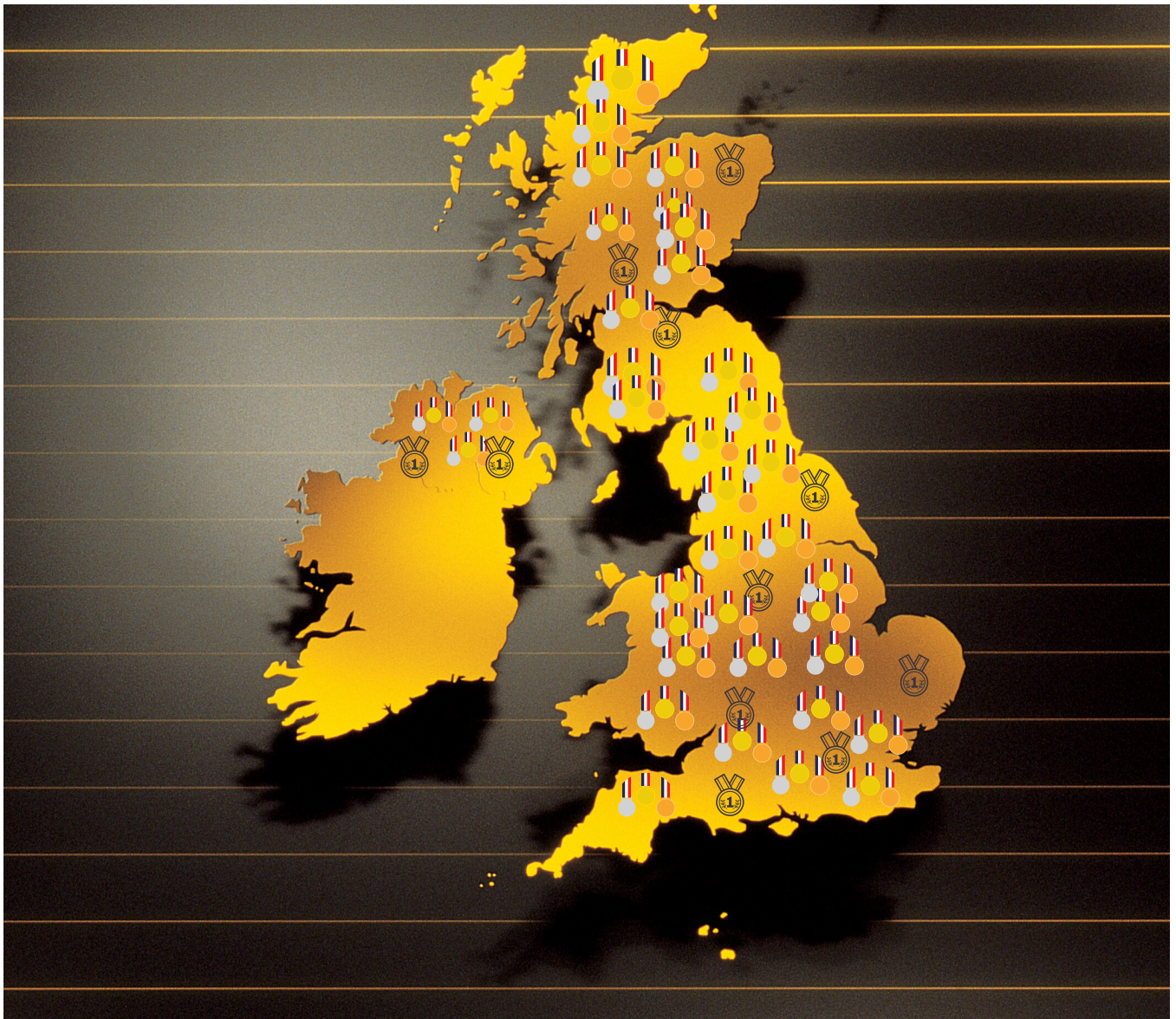
Accountability for schools & local authorities re; SEND & SEMH support - somewhere for families to contact and talk

Tradership

WHAT WILL THE I & R SERVICE LOOK LIKE?



BRONZE
SILVER
GOLD
PLATINUM



A rating system that can be published so local authorities & schools can easily view 'Platinum' LAs or Schools near them; so that they can link and learn how they achieved platinum via the I & R to promote shared learning across districts