



Robert Goodwill MP
Minister of State for Children and Families

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Tuesday 12th September 2017

Dear Director of Children's Services,

TRANSITION TO THE NEW SYSTEM OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

I am writing about the work local authorities are currently engaged in to complete transfer reviews for children and young people with statements of special educational needs (SEN).

As you know, all local authorities are under a statutory duty to complete transfer reviews of statements of SEN by 31 March 2018. We have been gathering information, every month, from local authorities to assess progress and I am grateful for your cooperation in providing us with this data. Based on this data, it is encouraging to see the progress many local authorities are making. I understand, of course, the pressures on local authorities and recognise that this is a challenging task.

It is important that all local authorities meet this deadline, and achieve it in a way that ensures good quality assessments are undertaken and high quality plans are in place. It is vital that families have a good experience of the new Education, Health and Care needs assessment process and that this leads to clear outcomes and appropriate support to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

I would like to clarify the legal position in relation to transition. The statutory deadline for transition is 31 March 2018. In the event that any local authority is unable to meet this deadline, the Department will consider what action to take to best ensure that children and young people are not disadvantaged.

It is also important to note that any statement of SEN for which a transfer review has not been completed by 31 March 2018 will continue to remain in force from 1 April 2018, until a transfer review has been completed and a decision is made about future provision. This ensures that children and young people who have statements, for which a review has not been completed by 31 March 2018, do not lose support. For these children and young people, local authorities will remain responsible for ensuring that provision in their statements is met.

I am grateful for the hard work and commitment that local authorities are putting into this task. The Department will continue to provide support and, where necessary, challenge to local authorities to ensure that they are in the best possible position to meet the 31 March 2018 deadline.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Goodwill MP
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