

## The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms Information for parents and carers

The government has changed the law. The new Children and Families Act will change the way in which children and young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities are supported at school and in the community. The Act will be implemented in stages starting in September 2014. A new SEND Code of practice for all maintained educational settings, local authorities and health partners has been published in July

What does it  
mean in real  
life?

**Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)** will replace Statements. From September 2014, no new statements will be available. In stages, over the next year, children with an existing statement will have their statement transferred to an EHCP. Parent/ carers and young people will be involved in the transition process. New EHCPs for children with complex needs will be drawn up in cooperation with all agencies involved with the child. Parents'/carers' as well as the child's views on the personal goals and what kind of support is best to achieve them will be included in the plan. EHCP can start from **birth** and continue to support young people up to the age of **25 years**. **No child should lose their statement because of the changes to the system**. Families with children going through statutory assessment leading to an EHCP may also be able to get help from an **Independent Supporter** - someone who doesn't work for the local authority who can help parents and carers, and young people, through the process.

**School Action & School Action Plus** will be replaced with **Special Educational Needs support (SENs)**. Schools will still be required to identify children who need additional support, involve parent/carers and children and young people in planning how to meet these needs and call on specialists from outside the school when they need to.

**Local offer** from September 2014 every local authority will be required to have a "local offer" which informs parent/carers and young people with SEN or disabilities what is provided in their local area, including what to expect from local early years providers, schools, colleges, health and social care. In addition it will include information on how decisions are made about how services are allocated, how to request a personal budget, how to access more specialist support and how to complain or appeal. Local authorities must involve parent carers, children and young people in developing their local offer.

