

Comments from an experienced mainstream Primary School Principal in a large school on current SEN provision:

- Teachers are not highly enough trained. I intend to use TPL money to do this but haven't heard if I've got it yet. Outside of this schools have been asked not to use sub teachers due to the budget.
- The training for non-teaching staff is even worse and some CAs have zero training in dealing with SEN pupils. Schools cannot sort this themselves.
- Class sizes in primary are big and this affects a teacher's ability to support children with SEN
- Teachers and non-teaching staff are being hit, kicked and bitten by some SEN pupils. No one seems to care about this. The adults are just expected to get on with it. This is no way to treat and maintain the workforce.
- Some of these SEN children are misplaced in mainstream which is not the right environment for them to thrive
- Teachers are expected to prepare children for SEAG but also manage the most extreme of SEN behaviours. This range of ability within one classroom is impossible to manage.
- Many parents of SEN pupils expect mainstream schools to have the facilities / resources to provide for SEN pupils. We only have these because we have fundraised for them ourselves. That is disgraceful.
- The new local impact teams are putting barriers in front of SENCOs seeking help with more hoops to jump through than ever before. I am hearing from colleagues that they can't get anyone to do the role of SENCO. This is concerning because Principals cannot do this role. The role of SENCO within a school needs to be non-teaching if SEN pupils within mainstream are going to be properly supported
- Other pupils are being put at a serious disadvantage because some SEN pupils are taking the Teachers time. Educational standards are going to keep falling if this is going to be the norm.
- Statemented pupils are only given hours for class learning but some of these pupils desperately need adult help in the playground. I am having to use the money in my own school budget to ensure playground time is covered to keep these children safe.
- Statemented pupils are also trying to access things like breakfast clubs / after schools clubs and it is their right to access these but their hours of support don't cover these things leading to possible discrimination and yet again schools having to use their own budgets to supplement this.

- Moving a child from mainstream to a spim unit is far too complicated especially when it is obvious the child isn't coping in mainstream.

- I have adults who are refusing to work with a particular child because that child is so difficult. As Principal, this is a disaster to manage.

- I am very happy to talk to the committee about this so that controlled mainstream primary schools are represented. The situation is a mess and teachers / classroom assistants within mainstream are going to leave; that is already happening.

[REDACTED]

Carrickfergus Model Primary School

Sent from my Galaxy