

I work in a Splm class in a primary school. All 7 children have ASD, some are non verbal, some have behaviours that challenge. These children benefit from smaller class sizes and additional adult support within our class. That's it. There's no additional training for the adults required - I have paid for additional training for myself the other adults have not. There is no provision for the non verbal children in terms of communication devices or additional training for adults in other methods of communication. The link officer from the education authority provides 'advice' but no resources. The adults in the room are all effectively the teachers to the child as it is not like mainstream class, yet only the teacher receives extra money for the extra challenges of the role. The teaching assistants are paid the same amount per hour as the teaching assistants working one to one in the mainstream classrooms. The role is very different and much more demanding. The adults deserve to be paid the additional sen rate that assistants receive in special schools and the additional training that they receive also. The children deserve to have adults who are adequately trained and paid. It is not enough to have just additional adults in smaller class sizes, paid less than their counterparts - behind locked doors.