

Dear Education Committee

I want to draw your attention to a cohort of children that I will name as inbetweeners. They do not fit in mainstream, or Learning support units within mainstream and also special schools.

My back ground. I am a social worker currently employed by Northern trust as a SEN project manager and also Chairperson for Causeway Neurodiversity. But most importantly I am a mum of a child with SEN diagnosed ADHD, awaiting assessment for autism, SEN category SBEW and moderate Learning Difficulties..we live in Northern Trust area more specifically Causeway area.

I am writing about my daughter's situation but also to let you know that she is not the only one.

My daughter is 13 in year 9 at a really good school () she is mainstream with 1:1 support 27.5 hours. She has been moved to a smaller class called nurture class. Her behaviours at school are deteriorating rapidly. The school have stated that they are unable to meet her needs and lots have been tried and attempted. She is on a RAMP and is very impulsive. School do not have resources to deal with challenging behaviour and this is the best main stream school for children with SEN in my area. EOTAS was discussed but it was not felt that this would be appropriate placement given her vulnerabilities.

Discussion also taken place about special school however she has Moderate learning difficulties and given the demographics have changed on special schools this is also most likely not deemed appropriate. Therefore she is in no man's land. would be most appropriate school that could possibly meet her needs but it is 40mins drive away without the morning traffic and this would involve having to get taxi at 7am and not home until 4.30pm which is an extremely long day. Other placement they are thinking is again this would be similar and would be for children with SLD.

I know my daughter is not the only one as my charity have supported a family who's child was at a special school and his behaviours were so concerning he was 2:1 and school got him reassessed by educational psychology and he was deemed to no longer have a learning disability and therefore he was recommended a behaviour unit within mainstream with no 1:1

I wanted to highlight these cohort of children as they can learn and may not have learning difficulties but mainstream schools have little to no training to manage these behaviours and also are not trained in team teach or de-escalation techniques. They have very little training on neurodivergence. I feel that its unfair on children and schools that they have been left in these situations.

I have a fear that my daughter will be out of school very soon, in fact it's getting increasingly difficult to get her out in the morning and its exhausting so I know and empathise with families whose children are out of school.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Kind regards

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