



#SENDInTheSpecialists: update and next steps

23rd February 2023



Before we start...

Thank you!

2 November 2022

- 114 organisations wrote to Gillian Keegan and Steve Barclay in November
- The organisations cover education, health and care
- They include charities, royal colleges, professional bodies, professional associations, trade unions, parent and carer groups and others
- Social media moment on 3 November



The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Department for Education
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
Department for Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

02 November 2022

Dear Secretaries of State,

Investing in the specialist workforce for children and young people

We're writing to you as a broad coalition of over 110 charities, royal colleges, professional bodies, professional associations, trade unions, parents and carers and others who want the very best for children and young people - including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Firstly, we'd like to congratulate you both on your new positions. We look forward to working with you and your ministers to ensure that all children and young people can achieve their potential, both at school and in life, including through ensuring that those with SEND can access the support they and their families depend on.

#SENDInTheSpecialists

From November on...

- Coalition has increased in size
- Now has 125 members
- More always welcome!

Email us if you want to join:

elissa.cregan@rcslt.org

peter.just@rcslt.org



#SENDInTheSpecialists

14 November 2022

- Robin Walker mentioned the letter in a debate on early years childcare



8 December 2022

- 16 APPGs wrote to Gillian Keegan and Steve Barclay
- Echoed our calls about the need to invest in the specialist workforce
- **APPGs cover:** Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Childcare and Early Education, Children who Need Palliative Care, Disability, Dyslexia and Other Specific Learning Difficulties, Eye health and visual impairment, Muscular Dystrophy, Oracy, Penal Affairs, Prevention of Childhood Trauma, Psychology, Social Mobility, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Speech and Language Difficulties, and Stroke.

 **Geraint Davies**  @GeraintDaviesMP · 8 Dec 2022

Grateful to parliamentarians from 16 APPGs who've signed a letter to @GillianKeegan @SteveBarclay @ClaireCoutinho on investment in specialist workforce. Children & young people need support from specialist workers to get the best possible chances in life. #SENDInTheSpecialists

The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Department for Education
25 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
Department for Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

Sent via email - please respond to geraint.davies.mp@parliament.uk

8 December 2022

Dear Secretaries of State,

Investing in the specialist workforce for children and young people

As officers of 16 All-Party Parliamentary Groups, we are writing in support of the letter of over 110 charities, parent and carer organisations, trade unions, royal colleges, professional bodies, professional associations, and others, sent to you last month urging you to invest in

backgrounds who are at risk of experiencing a range of inequalities.

We are keen to work with you and your ministers on these issues going forward. We are particularly keen to work with you so that the forthcoming SEND and AP Improvement Plan to ensure it addresses gaps in the specialist workforce, including through ensuring the long-term future of the specialist workforce through greater workforce planning so that children and young people now, and in the future, can access the support they need to thrive.

We would be grateful for an early opportunity to discuss with you how modest investment in early intervention results in overwhelming returns in higher tax revenues and lower social & health costs downstream.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Geraint Davies MP
Chair, APPG on Speech and Language Difficulties
Sir Robert Buckland KBE, KC, MP
Member, APPG on Autism

From December on...

- Geraint Davies has tabled written questions on the specialist workforce
- So has Munira Wilson
- The questions are collated in our three-month news story accessible below
- If you have parliamentary contacts, please ask them to table similar questions to Munira's

<https://www.rcslt.org/news/send-in-the-specialists-coalition-three-month-update/>

Geraint has also tabled a series of written parliamentary questions on:

- Whether the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has undertaken an [assessment of gaps in the specialist workforce](#)
- What [plans DHSC has to undertake](#) such an assessment as a follow-up to his previous question
- Whether the Department for Education (DfE) has undertaken an [assessment of gaps in the specialist workforce](#)
- What gaps the DfE has [identified in the specialist workforce](#)
- What [discussions DHSC and DfE have had](#) with each other about gaps in the specialist workforce
- When DHSC [plans to respond](#) to the coalition's letter
- When DfE [plans to respond](#) to the coalition's letter
- When DHSC [plans to respond](#) to the APPGs' letter
- When DfE [plans to respond](#) to the APPGs' letter

Munira Wilson MP has also tabled some relevant written questions on:

- The [additional SEND workforce needed](#)
- [Specialist workforce in her constituency](#)

January 2023 – DfE responds to the APPGs

- Claire Coutinho responded to the APPGs in January
- A meeting is being scheduled
- DHSC is yet to respond



Geraint Davies ✓
@GeraintDaviesMP

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Delighted to receive this response from [@ClaireCoutinho](#) [@educationgovuk](#) to the 16 APPGs' [#SENDInTheSpecialists](#) letter. We look forward to meeting with her next month to discuss how we can ensure children & young people get the support they need from the specialist workforce



February 2023 – DfE responds to the coalition

- Claire Coutinho responded to the coalition earlier this month
- A meeting is being scheduled



Next steps

- Preparing for Govt's publication of the SEND and AP Improvement Plan – statements drafted
- E-action for contacting MPs to follow
- Labour Policy Forum submission
- Possible Westminster Hall debate
- Possible debate in the House of Lords



How you can help

- Join the coalition if you haven't already
- Encourage others to join
- Reference the coalition in meetings
- Share the letter with MPs/Peers you are meeting
- Encourage parliamentary contacts to table written questions about the specific specialist workforce you are interested in
- Highlight on social media your support for #SENDInTheSpecialists



Questions



Thank you!

Thank you!



rcslt.org



peter.just@rcslt.org & elissa.cregan@rcslt.org



[@RCSLTpolicy](https://twitter.com/RCSLTpolicy) [@PeterDJust](https://twitter.com/PeterDJust) [@elissacregan](https://twitter.com/elissacregan)

