



Edward Timpson MP

Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families

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To: Directors of Children's Services

Dear Director,

27 March 2017

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND): FINALISING
TRANSFER REVIEWS FOR EXISTING STATEMENTS OF SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS BY 1 APRIL 2018**

Reforms brought in by the Children and Families Act 2014 represent the biggest change to special educational needs and disability (SEND) support in a generation. They are transforming the support available to children and young people by joining up services for 0-25 year olds across education, health and social care.

As you are aware, under the Children and Families Act 2014, the transitional period in which all local authorities must complete their Transfer Reviews for children and young people with Statements of SEN, is ending on 31st March 2018. This means that local authorities must have transferred all those who meet the criteria for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan to the new SEND system, or, decisions not to produce an EHC plan communicated to families, before 1 April 2018. We have already announced funding support to each local authority to assist with this activity.

As we are only a year away from the statutory deadline to complete Transfer Reviews, we need to assure ourselves that all local authorities are on course to achieve what the law requires. Some of the key elements of the SEND reforms are to ensure that services consistently deliver a positive experience of the system for children, young people and their families and to see improved outcomes for children and young people. Therefore, meeting the deadline is important to promote confidence in the new system.

As already referenced in the January 2017 SEND Newsletter, in order to minimise the risk of a local authority missing the deadline, from April 2017 to April 2018, working via the team of SEND advisers we want to monitor the transition process closely, by collecting monthly data. This will help the Department assess whether we are on track to meet this requirement, and to determine what further support local authorities may need to undertake the transfer process effectively.

The monthly on-line survey will consist of two simple questions:

- How many transfers of SEN statements have yet to be completed¹?
- Of those remaining, how many does the LA expect to complete by 31 March 2018?

The survey will be issued on the first working day of every month. We would expect that these questions will already be ones that your officers are using internally to monitor progress. The questions will remain the same for the duration of the data collection period and should only take a few minutes to complete. Local authorities will have 10 working days to complete the return.

While the survey is voluntary, I would strongly encourage you to take the time to complete it as the data will be invaluable in helping to monitor progress and target resources where needed. A full data collection schedule has been attached at Annex A to this letter.

Thank you for your assistance and co-operation.

Kindest regards,

Edward

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¹ 'Completed' means an EHCP is in place, or a decision not to produce an EHCP has been communicated to the family.