

**STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING
ON TUESDAY 21st OCTOBER 2025**

SEND Review

Thank you for the assembly time today in order that I make this statement addressing the findings of the Independent SEND Review conducted earlier this year.

This review marks a pivotal moment in our journey toward a more inclusive, equitable, and responsive education system for all children and young people in Jersey.

Between January and June 2025, a team of independent experts visited 20 schools, spoke with leaders, staff, parents, and pupils, and examined our systems, policies, and practices.

Their work was thorough, thoughtful, and deeply respectful of the efforts already underway across our island. Let me begin by acknowledging the many areas of strength highlighted in the review.

Across Jersey, we see passionate educators, committed support staff, and creative school leaders working tirelessly to meet the needs of children with SEND. Pupils have told us they feel supported and safe in their schools. Many parents have shared positive relationships with their schools, and we've seen promising developments in:

- early years identification
- SENCo networks
- teaching assistant training
- and improvements in the use of data.

These examples of good practice are not just encouraging they are the foundation on which we will build. However, the review also makes clear that we must do better. It identifies inconsistencies in leadership, strategy, and communication. It highlights the need for a clearer shared vision, stronger accountability, and more transparent budgeting. And it reminds us that **too many** families still feel unheard, unsupported, and forced to seek help outside the system. This is not the experience I want for families in Jersey.

We accept these findings in full. And more importantly we are acting on them.

Already, we have made changes to the leadership of our inclusion services. We have seconded experienced headteachers into the department to strengthen collaboration between schools and the central team. We have appointed a transformational lead to drive improvements in our Educational Psychology Service.

This is not about quick fixes. It is about building a responsive system. One that places children's needs at the centre of every decision.

If we want **sustainable**, inclusive education, we must build it **with** our teachers not around them. Their voice must be heard, their role respected, and their capacity strengthened. The future of inclusion in Jersey depends on a confident, well-supported teaching workforce. That is why training, collaboration, and professional autonomy are at the heart of our response.

I know that there need to be improvements in communication between the centre, schools, and families. We will work with schools and parents to co-create a new, shared approach for inclusion one that puts children's needs at the heart of every decision.

I know that change will not happen overnight. But we are making the next steps to get there. We're moving from pockets of good practice to a system where every child, in every school, gets the support they need. Staff must receive the training and support they need.

And we will listen - really listen - to the voices of professionals, parents, carers, and young people.

Jersey is not alone in facing these challenges. A recent cross nation summit made this very clear. But we have a unique opportunity to lead the way. With declining pupil numbers and budgetary pressures, we must be bold, creative, and united in our approach. Protecting funding and using it as effectively as possible. We must move away from a culture of complaint and toward a culture of partnership to ensure that every child regardless of need feels supported, valued, and empowered to thrive.

This review confirms what many of us already know: the solutions we need are not distant or out of reach **they already exist within our schools**, our professionals, and our communities. We have skilled and committed staff, experienced leaders, and engaged parents. The challenge is not simply a lack of capacity it is a need for clearer direction, stronger coordination, and better support.

This review is a turning point - a clear, honest reflection that gives us the roadmap for real improvement. Although some good work came from the NASEN review, we must remember that moving to truly inclusive education is a continuum and will be incremental. Success will be a system where no child is left behind, and no parent feels they must fight for support. We will not move forward in an atmosphere of competition or blame. We will move forward with a culture of upskilling and coordination. I want to empower our teaching profession.

Finally, I reiterate this key point. There is strong practice in Jersey schools. It must be consistent and system wide.