

Appendix 1

Notice of Motion Referred to Scrutiny Board at Full Council on 12 November 2025

The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education regarding the SEND review

Proposer - Cllr Barbara Brodigan
Seconder - Cllr Andrew Timothy

Council notes that:

- In December 2024 the Government introduced the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, with an overall aim to better protect children and raise standards in education.
- The Government also announced £740 million in new funding to support SEND pupils and those needing alternative education within mainstream schools. Inclusion remains the overarching policy, so that our children and young people are educated together with their peers in their own community, where appropriate.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system is under severe strain, with some families struggling to secure vital support for their children which is compounded by some schools and councils struggling to provide the necessary support.
- Children with SEND deserve the same opportunities as every child, including access to the support they need to thrive both in school and in life.
- Research commissioned by the Liberal Democrats has revealed that private equity-backed SEND providers are making over £100 million a year in profits, with some achieving margins of over 20%.
- Many of these companies are backed by firms registered in tax havens or foreign sovereign wealth funds.

Council believes that:

- Profiteering from the needs of children with SEND is unacceptable and must end.
- Children with SEND are not commodities for profit and should never be treated as such.
- Resources must be directed into improving provision and outcomes for children, not into shareholder dividends or inflated executive pay.
- North Yorkshire Council should be supported to provide sustainable, high-quality inclusive SEND provision within both their mainstream and specialist settings; including by building and operating their own schools to accommodate those with the most complex needs if necessary.

Council welcomes:

- Government action to curb profiteering in children's social care. Through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, it has introduced powers to cap the profits of providers of illegal or exploitative children's homes, alongside enhancing financial transparency and greater enforcement by Ofsted.
- The Government review of the SEND and Alternative Provision system which is due to be published in the Autumn.
- The proactive work of hard-working officers in North Yorkshire Council to improve our SEND services.

Council resolves to:

- Call on the Government to eradicate the profits of private SEND providers, including sanctions against providers who breach this, with any profits returned to local authorities.
- Support further reforms to boost the SEND system, including strong financial oversight of providers, transparency, and new powers and funding for councils to build and manage local mainstream and specialist provision directly.
- Endorse the principle that Government SEND reforms must put children first—not corporate greed.
- Request the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education to ask that the SEND review consider action in line with the above.