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Dear Parents and Carers,

You may be aware that the government has asked all councils to create a SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) Reform Plan. This plan will set out how we will improve services across the borough to make sure children and young people get the right support at the right time. The deadlines for the plan are incredibly tight and we need to send our first draft to the Department for Education by **15 May 2026**.

We know that, while there are many good things happening locally, families do not always have a consistent experience. A recent inspection highlighted that we need to improve in some key areas, including waiting times for support and how different services work together.

We want to be open about this and clear about what we are doing next. Our plan will bring together work that is already happening across the borough and will set out how we improve things further. It will focus on:

- getting help to children earlier,
- making sure support is available closer to home,
- making the system fairer and easier to understand,
- and improving how education, health and care services work together.

We are also required to produce four key pieces of work:

- a review of how well the current system is working,
- the SEND Reform Plan itself
- data showing where we are now and how we will measure progress,
- and a plan for how we listen to and involve families.

Listening to parents and carers is a really important part of this. We have already started speaking to families and will continue to do so as the plan develops. We intend to share proposals from the draft plan with you and to invite your feedback by survey in w/c 18 May.

We know how important it is to get this right. Our aim is to build a system where children feel supported, included and able to thrive.

Thank you for your continued support and for sharing your experiences with us.

Best wishes.

Steve