



Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

2001 CHAPTER 10

PART 1

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Mainstream education

1 Education in mainstream schools of children with special educational needs

In the Education Act 1996 (“the 1996 Act”), for section 316 substitute—

“316 Duty to educate children with special educational needs in mainstream schools

- (1) This section applies to a child with special educational needs who should be educated in a school.
- (2) If no statement is maintained under section 324 for the child, he must be educated in a mainstream school.
- (3) If a statement is maintained under section 324 for the child, he must be educated in a mainstream school unless that is incompatible with—
 - (a) the wishes of his parent, or
 - (b) the provision of efficient education for other children.
- (4) In this section and section 316A “mainstream school” means any school other than—
 - (a) a special school, or
 - (b) an independent school which is not—
 - (i) a city technology college,
 - (ii) a city college for the technology of the arts, or

(iii) a city academy.

316A Education otherwise than in mainstream schools

- (1) Section 316 does not prevent a child from being educated in—
- (a) an independent school which is not a mainstream school, or
 - (b) a school approved under section 342,
- if the cost is met otherwise than by a local education authority.
- (2) Section 316(2) does not require a child to be educated in a mainstream school during any period in which—
- (a) he is admitted to a special school for the purposes of an assessment under section 323 of his educational needs and his admission to that school is with the agreement of—
 - (i) the local education authority,
 - (ii) the head teacher of the school or, if the school is in Wales, its governing body,
 - (iii) his parent, and
 - (iv) any person whose advice is to be sought in accordance with regulations made under paragraph 2 of Schedule 26;
 - (b) he remains admitted to a special school, in prescribed circumstances, following an assessment under section 323 at that school;
 - (c) he is admitted to a special school, following a change in his circumstances, with the agreement of—
 - (i) the local education authority,
 - (ii) the head teacher of the school or, if the school is in Wales, its governing body, and
 - (iii) his parent;
 - (d) he is admitted to a community or foundation special school which is established in a hospital.
- (3) Section 316 does not affect the operation of—
- (a) section 348, or
 - (b) paragraph 3 of Schedule 27.
- (4) If a local education authority decide—
- (a) to make a statement for a child under section 324, but
 - (b) not to name in the statement the school for which a parent has expressed a preference under paragraph 3 of Schedule 27,
- they shall, in making the statement, comply with section 316(3).
- (5) A local education authority may, in relation to their mainstream schools taken as a whole, rely on the exception in section 316(3)(b) only if they show that there are no reasonable steps that they could take to prevent the incompatibility.
- (6) An authority in relation to a particular mainstream school may rely on the exception in section 316(3)(b) only if it shows that there are no reasonable steps that it or another authority in relation to the school could take to prevent the incompatibility.

- (7) The exception in section 316(3)(b) does not permit a governing body to fail to comply with the duty imposed by section 324(5)(b).
- (8) An authority must have regard to guidance about section 316 and this section issued—
 - (a) for England, by the Secretary of State,
 - (b) for Wales, by the National Assembly for Wales.
- (9) That guidance shall, in particular, relate to steps which may, or may not, be regarded as reasonable for the purposes of subsections (5) and (6).
- (10) “Prescribed”, in relation to Wales, means prescribed in regulations made by the National Assembly for Wales.
- (11) “Authority”—
 - (a) in relation to a maintained school, means each of the following—
 - (i) the local education authority,
 - (ii) the school’s governing body, and
 - (b) in relation to a maintained nursery school or a pupil referral unit, means the local education authority.”