

SEND Reform:

YOUR VOICE HEARD

The NFF's contribution to the Department for Education 2026 consultation on SEND Reform reflects lived experiences from across the Naval community, highlighting challenges, insights, and priorities for change. Thank you to all who shared their feedback.

Clear and Consistent Information

Families need clear, honest and standardised information about schools, SEND support and local provision. Misleading or inconsistent advice can affect decision-making and access to support. Stronger national standards, improved guidance and better awareness of support services would help reduce regional variation and improve fairness.



The impact of Naval life on Mental Health

Naval life can intensify SEND-related challenges which may lead to anxiety, emotional distress and burnout. These needs can be misunderstood in educational settings. Training for professionals on the realities of Service life, combined with earlier intervention and flexible support, would improve outcomes.

Fragmented Early Years support

A more joined-up approach is needed, including named points of contact within local authorities, clearer accountability, and stronger communication between agencies. Best Start Family Hubs could play a key role in providing continuity and local support.



Families excluded from decisions

Naval families need more involvement in reforms, flexible participation (such as online engagement), and access to independent advocacy would help families contribute more effectively and make informed choices about support and education settings.

Starting again after every move

Families often have to restart assessments, plans and support arrangements, with previous evidence or EHCPs not always recognised. This causes delays and can disrupt education pathways, particularly at key transition points such as post-16. Greater continuity, better transfer of records, and earlier transition planning are needed.

Find out more about the NFF and how we can support you: nff.org.uk