

24th March 2026

Dear School Leader,

We last wrote to you on Thursday 12th March to advise you of the Public Consultation on the Enhanced Support Model (ESM). We are pleased to announce that this consultation is **now open** and will remain open until **Friday 22nd May**. You can access the Public Consultation, as well as a Consultation Document and other resources here <https://www.eani.org.uk/publications/consultations/enhanced-support-model-public-consultation>. Easy-Read and Irish Medium versions of the Consultation Document will also be added to the website in the coming days.

The feedback provided through this consultation will help shape the changes and give you the opportunity to have your say. A series of workshops, online sessions and in-person conversations for classroom assistants, parents and carers, wider school staff and other stakeholders will allow you to share your views. Please keep an eye on our social media channels and website for more information over the coming weeks.

The planned classroom support changes will improve outcomes for our children and young people with SEN and are part of the wider Department of Education's SEN Reform Agenda and Delivery Plan.

The consultation webpage will also include testimonials from settings who are already using an alternative model for providing support to children with special educational needs, Frequently Asked Questions, comparisons of the ESM with the current model and other jurisdictions, and other supporting information. You can also access this here: <https://send.eani.org.uk/send-transformation-programme/enhanced-support-model>.

This will be a phased improvement programme – and plans will evolve in the coming years with input from you, our classroom assistants, parents and carers, children and young people, teachers and school leaders.

Please share this letter with your Board of Governors, SENCOs, teaching and classroom support staff, parents and carers, and relevant groups within your school community. Your voices will help us design a model that works for all our children and young people with SEN.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tomas Adell', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tomas Adell

Chief Transformation Officer – SEN

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“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”

Education Authority

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