



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

**Rt Hon Lucy Powell MP**

**Secretary of State for Education**

**27 August 2026**

**Re: Concerns around loss of Alternative Provision and Education Otherwise Than At School**

Dear Secretary of State,

This evening, *the BBC* ([BBC SE EOTAS](#)) broadcast ongoing reports that dozens of Surrey children with recognised special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may not have access to Alternative Provision (AP) or Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) for this upcoming academic year.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, we wrote to Surrey County Council, raising concerns first raised by the organisation, Measure What Matters, that the council had failed to complete the commissioning and contractual agreements needed to confirm education provision for a number of children receiving either alternative provision or Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) for September. Providers also warned that Surrey had ‘explicitly instructed’ them to stop provision once existing approvals expired, even where replacement approvals had not yet been issued.

In its response, the council did not provide evidence to reassure that provision is guaranteed and called these claims ‘unfounded’.

Yet, with just days to go before schools starts, it seems families are still waiting for provision for their SEND children. Given the response to the BBC report, we are worried that many more children who have not yet made themselves known to our offices, could be facing avoidable interruption to their education provision which we understand may constitute statutory breaches.

In response to our letter on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, Surrey’s Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning, Helyn Clack, confirmed that as of July 2026, 362 children are accessing provision commissioned directly by the Council through AP and EOTAS. Alongside this, 168 children access provision through personal budget arrangements for parts or all of their AP/EOTAS provision.

Many of these children are acutely vulnerable and have already been subjected to serious and repeated statutory failures by this council, resulting in prolonged gaps in education and acute mental health crisis. Stable provision is essential to ensure their continued engagement in education and reduce the risk of mental health collapse and of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) later in life.

Please can you confirm the following:

- What steps can be taken to ensure that the council will meet its statutory duties in respect of these children from September onwards?
- Assurance the Department has sought sufficient information to establish that statutory provision will not be at risk of avoidable interruption?
- That you will provide direction to Surrey County Council to enforce the performance of its duties with regard to this matter?



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We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

**Chris Coghlan**  
**Dorking & Horley**

**Will Forster**  
**Woking**

**Zöe Franklin**  
**Guildford**

**Monica Harding**  
**Esher & Walton**

**Helen Maguire**  
**Epsom & Ewell**

**Al Pinkerton**  
**Surrey Heath**