



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability in Wokingham

Funding to support Learners who have Special Educational Needs

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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out, in one place the arrangements made for funding the resources which are used to support children and young people with special educational needs in their learning provision.

What do we mean by special educational needs?

National figures continue to suggest that as many as 1 in 5 of children and young people are, at some stage, considered to have special educational needs. This means that mainstream schools, in particular, will always be employing a range of strategies to stimulate the learning of individual or groups of children. For the most part they will do this using the additional funding which is delegated to them based on a range of indicators. These indicators are not based on individual children who have special educational needs but are based on the likely levels of pupils who have additional learning needs. How this funding is allocated is described later in the document.

The fact that we are talking about 1 in 5 children and young people means that there is a wide range in the level of need (continuum) and the length of time it is needed for. Schools and settings respond to the difficulties which learners are presenting in a way which is proportionate to the need. This is often referred to as 'the graduated response'. The Children and Families act 2014 has created a single 'stage' called SEN Support, to describe this type of support.

There are some children and young people whose needs are so complex/severe that they require an Education, Health and Care needs assessment. A description of when this might be needed is in the document 'Guidance on when an Education, Health and Care needs assessment/plan is required'

Most children and young people can have their learning needs met within their mainstream provision at SEN Support. As part of the Local Offer which all local authorities must now publish Wokingham has set out what it expects should be available in all mainstream settings to meet the needs of children and young people without recourse to an Education, Health and Care needs assessment. This document, SEN Support: the Local Offer can be found at: www.wokingham.gov.uk

The Local Offer is much wider in scope than support within learning settings. It is a description of support and services which are available to children and young people who have SEND, and their families, how services can be accessed and any criteria for accessing them. It is the opportunity to bring together in one place, information about provision, including how this can be accessed from a wide range of statutory and non-statutory providers including voluntary organisations. Wokingham's Local Offer can be accessed at: www.wokingham.gov.uk

How are schools funded to meet the special educational needs of their pupils/students?

The funding available to maintained schools comes into the local authority as the Dedicated Schools' Grant (DSG). Funding to academies and free schools is made direct to them by central government. School budgets are built up by using a number of different elements. The School Forum, (a group made up of representatives from early years settings, schools, including free schools and academies, governing bodies and supported by local authority officers) makes a decision on how the budget will be allocated. They use a number of factors from a short list which central government allows them to consider the first part of the budget is 'pupil led', it is decided by:-

- the number of pupils on roll
- the number of those pupils who attract additional funding
- where the school is situated i.e. how isolated it is and whether there is high 'mobility' of the school population

'those pupils who attract additional funding' – these figures are based on how deprived the area is in which the pupil lives, their prior attainment levels and whether they have English as an additional language.

In addition to this budget, schools are given a 'lump sum', an amount agreed each year by the Schools Forum. This is a different amount depending on whether it is a primary, secondary or, all through school. Local authorities have some flexibility on which indicators they use to make up the formula and these decisions are made by the school forum. The school forum decides which, from a nationally prescribed list, allows the fairest distribution of funding to reflect the needs of Wokingham schools.

The Local Authority receives another element of the DSG called The High Needs Block to support pupils/students who have more complex needs. The new High Needs block funding for schools has three elements. Elements 1 and 2 are notional amounts considered to be within the funding delegated to schools

Colleges and Sixth Forms also receive their funding to include the notional Elements 1 and 2 directly from the Education Funding Agency. This funding allows colleges to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils who have special educational needs.

Wokingham expects both elements 1 and 2 to be used to provide a range of interventions to support learner outcomes which the setting, learner and family have agreed. Whilst elements 1 and 2 will meet the needs of most children and young people with special educational needs, those with the most exceptional needs in mainstream schools may require additional funding. This funding stream is called Element 3 or 'top up' and comes from a funding stream which is part of the High Needs Block held on behalf of pupils and students in Wokingham aged 0-25. This

funding provides resources for a Statement of SEN or an Education Health and Care plan.

Local context: exceptional needs funding for pupils who have special educational needs at SEN Support stage

Wokingham has developed an Exceptional Needs funding model which can provide the additional resources to meet learning needs in mainstream settings. The exceptional needs process uses existing school partnership clusters which come together to look at individual cases where a school feels that the support needs for that pupil are exceptional. In addition to providing a process which is transparent and supports school based decisions, this process allows for the sharing of the wide pool of expertise within Wokingham. Cluster moderation meetings are an opportunity to share ideas and expertise about best practice approaches, provisions and interventions could be used effectively. Further information can be found in the document 'Exceptional needs funding: Procedures and guidance'.

This removes unnecessary burden from schools and allied professionals and avoids unnecessary 'labelling' of children and young people. This funding stream is particularly helpful where the learning needs of the child/young person are exceptional but do not require a special school or significant levels of intervention from health or social care.

In order to ensure that there is equity, the cluster groups are represented at a borough wide moderation meeting which is able to agree funding for individual pupils who have support needs which are exceptional or to a school which is experiencing exceptional circumstances related to the learning needs of pupils who have special educational needs. This group considers representations from the individual cluster moderations and makes decisions about allocating this funding. Where appropriate the borough wide group may also recommend a request is submitted for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

Early Years

The Schools Forum also allocates the funding to the Early Years Block to provide for 0-4 year olds. This funding is then divided between participation funding and support funding. The support funding is allocated using the Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) process, which mirrors the Exceptional Needs Moderation process.

At any point the setting can make termly application EYIF, should they feel that they are unable to meet the child's needs from their current resources, and strategies haven't resulted in adequate progress. This is a sum of money which is used either to support specific training for staff, to provide structured focused one-to-one work by an experienced adult for part of the time the child attends and/or occasionally specialist play resources (where evidence shows this is necessary). Specialist access equipment such as a 'walker' can be applied for separately via the

Exceptional Needs Funding – ENF for schools – see para above). In some circumstances, EYIF can be applied for the term before the child starts, so it is in place from day one.

Funding for Special Schools, School with Resource Units and Alternative Provision

Funding for the above is based on a place plus funding methodology. Each setting attracts an amount per place, irrespective of whether the place is filled. When a pupil takes up a place additional funding is allocated to meet their individual needs as a 'Top Up' to the place funding.

Most special schools operate banding systems to ensure that groups of children with similar needs attract a level of funding appropriate to meet their individual and collective needs.

Funding for FE Colleges and Sixth Forms

The above receive their funding including the notional Elements 1 and 2 directly from the Education Funding Agency. This funding allows colleges to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils who have special educational needs. Element 3 or 'top up' funding is allocated from the Wokingham High Needs Block held on behalf of pupils and students aged 0-25. This funding provides resources for learners with needs identified in either a S139a, a Statement of SEN or an Education Health and Care plan.

Funding for HE (University) Education

Support is available for learners with disability through the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). DSA's are available to help learners in Higher Education with the extra costs they may incur on their course due to their disability. This can include an ongoing health condition, mental health condition, or specific learning difficulty such as Dyslexia. Learners need to make an application to the Student Loans Company, providing accompanying medical evidence.

Funding available to Schools for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The funding elements are:-

