

SEND Mainstream School Funding – Interim Model – September 2022

The Local Authority together with Locality Lead Headteachers and Sheffield Parent Carer Forum have been working on a review of how high-needs funding to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is allocated to Sheffield mainstream schools. High-needs funding supports both pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans and those at levels 3, 4 and 5 on the [Sheffield Support Grid](#) (SSG) where their needs cannot be met from the resources ordinarily available to schools.

This document briefly explains the different types of funding that supports pupils with SEND in mainstream schools and the changes we are making from September 2022.

What funding do schools receive to support pupils with SEND?

Funding for pupils in schools covers:

- a. **Core funding** - Schools receive funding for all pupils in the school called the 'age weighted pupil unit' (AWPU). This is also referred to as element 1 funding or place funding. This amount varies slightly at different ages but it is roughly £4000 per pupil.
- b. **Notional SEND funding** - Schools receive an additional allocation of money called the notional SEND budget. This is also referred to as element 2 funding. This money is to be used to fund provision for all pupils with SEND across the school. Schools are expected to fund up to £6000 of provision per pupil from this budget.
- c. **High-needs funding** – Local authorities manage an additional budget of high-needs funding to fund the provision for pupils with SEND costing over £6000. This is also referred to as element 3 funding. In Sheffield, the management of high-needs funding has been delegated to [localities](#). Locality lead headteachers have led the processes for this in each of their areas. There has also been some additional funding retained and managed by the local authority, referred to as the 'exceptional needs' budget.

Reasons for changes in funding processes

Schools have faced challenges in certainty, timeliness, and sufficiency of high-needs funding to meet the provision outlined in pupils' plans. The different models for distributing funding across the city have led to inconsistencies.

Some pupils receiving high-needs funding have EHC plans, and the local authority must make sure that special educational provision that is outlined in an EHC plan is secured. Local authorities also have the flexibility to provide funding for high-needs SEND provision outside of the statutory assessment process for all pupils with high-needs up to the age of 19.

Changes from September 2022

Locality Lead Headteachers have worked with the LA to develop an interim way of working for the next academic year, whilst we continue to develop processes for the longer-term. The aim is to create an interim arrangement that enables consistency, certainty, and efficacy of initial funding, and allows us to target the pupils with greatest need. Depending on the previous model in place, some localities will see slight changes to the approach whereas in others the changes will be more noticeable.

Locality lead headteachers and the local authority team will be in contact with schools over the year to review the processes and identify lessons learned. We will also look to complete audits of how the funding has been used. Individual pupils' provision maps will support schools' applications for additional funding and show how initial block funding has been used.

The interim model is explained over the page.

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Interim high-needs SEND funding model for the academic year 22/23

1. Schools will receive initial SEND high-needs block funding allocation based on their Sheffield Support Grid data from January 2022.

This is a block allocation to fund provision across the high-needs SEND cohort for the school, for pupils with EHC plans and at SEN Support. This funding must for provision in excess of £6000 notional SEND funding for pupils with EHC Plans and those at levels 3, 4 and 5 on the Sheffield Support Grid.

This funding will be allocated to schools directly by the local authority. We will write to schools in July 2022 to inform them of their allocation and how the funding will be issued.

For some schools, the initial high-needs block coupled with notional SEND funding may fully fund the provision in place across the school. For others, it is expected that additional funding will be needed.



2. Schools can request targeted high-needs funding where provision is not funded from the notional budget and initial block funding.

This money will be managed within localities. Panels will take place to consider requests and allocate funding. Locality lead headteachers will provide information about funding panels in your locality from September.



3. There is a small amount of emergency targeted funding reserved for specific circumstances.

This funding is managed by the local authority and is referred to as 'exceptional needs funding'. Further guidance will be available on what this funding is for and how it can be accessed. This can be discussed with the SENDSARS locality manager for your area.

Longer term funding plans

We are starting to build a model to fund provision specified in an EHC plan at the point of issue. This ensures that EHC plans are appropriately funded so that the specified provision can be in place. This reduces the time it takes for schools to receive funding and provides certainty of funding year-on-year. Alongside the model for funding EHC plans, we are working with localities to provide flexible funding and specialist support to meet the needs of pupils with high-needs SEND who do not have an EHCP.

We are aware of the recommendations in the SEND Green paper and await the outcomes of the consultation. Our work is in line with the recommendations at present and is adaptable to future developments in this area.

If you have any questions, please contact the funding review team at SEnDFundingReview@sheffield.gov.uk.