

General questions and answers

1 *How are statements of SEN funded?*

All of the provision specified in the statement has to be provided for the child. Funding for all statements is delegated to school budget shares through the SEN funding formula. There is an element of additional funding for low incidence statements (see question 3 below), which is allocated on a termly basis from the centrally held discretionary exceptions budget.

2 *Should a child on either School Action or School Action Plus receive a specific level of support?*

If a child has a statement he/she must receive the provision identified within his/her statement. Both School Action and School Action Plus cover wide bands of need. Schools must meet identified needs, but they do not have to spend precise sums of money on individual children.

3 *How are low incidence statements funded?*

Low incidence statements (severe learning difficulties (SLD), visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), physical disabilities (PD) and severe and complex communication difficulties/severe and complex autism) will continue to be “topped up” from the old Step 3, uprated for inflation. In 2008/09 that is £1,733 for primary and £1,548 for secondary.

4 *When was it agreed that all the resources for high incidence statements should be delegated to schools and who agreed?*

Following a full consultation with primary and secondary mainstream schools in 1995, the Education Committee approved the delegation of resources to support children with high incidence statements (moderate learning difficulties (MLD), behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) and specific learning difficulties (SpLD)) as from April 1996. There had been a majority response from governing bodies in favour of this further delegation. The delegation of funding for high incidence statements was confirmed in the revised SEN mainstream funding formula, implemented in April 2006.

5 *Was a level of resource held back to cover high cost, high incidence statements?*

No. All of the resources for high incidence statements were delegated and it was also explained to schools at that time that any resources required for exceptional or emergency situations would have to be met from the school's delegated budget. **A centrally held contingency for high incidence statements does not exist.** This arrangement was entered into with the agreement of primary and secondary representatives, who indicated that they did not want a centrally held contingency, which would inevitably reduce delegated funds.

6 *A school indicates that a child or young person with a high incidence statement has just arrived in the area and is being admitted on Monday. The head is concerned about meeting the child's needs without some additional money...*

The SEN funding system includes an allocation of money for high incidence statements and is given on an annual basis according to the children and young people in school on the September PLASC enumeration date. This whole school resource can then be used to support all children with SEN. It is a whole system approach and as such it is impossible to transport funding across the system to shadow pupil movements from one school to another. There has to be a balance between a sustainable workload, administrative costs for schools and the Local Authority (LA) and the precision with which we would like to reflect levels of need within the school. Funds are not recovered from the school if a child or young person leaves within the financial year. Mid-year adjustments are not made for leavers and joiners.

7 *Under what circumstances can exceptional arrangements be made over and above the SEN funding in budget shares?*

If a child or young person is transferring from a special school to a mainstream school the Trial Inclusion Grant (TIG) and Full Inclusion Grant (FIG) schemes apply. Revised papers were circulated to schools in March 2002. From 1 April 2001, TIG and FIG payments have been enhanced to reflect more accurately the educational costs of children and young people transferring from special schools, e.g. special school funding minus the age weighted pupil unit minus the old Step 3, uprated for inflation. In 2008/09 that is £1,733 for primary and £1,548 for secondary.

8 *What happens if a pupil from another LA attends a Hampshire school and has a high incidence statement?*

The SEN funding mechanism is applied universally to all pupils in Hampshire schools, irrespective of the home LA. There is no differentiation. This includes the fact that for other pupils from “across the border” Hampshire County Council Children’s Services provides funding without any recoupment taking place. Schools should not be entering into negotiation with other LAs about funding as this is strictly a ‘Local Authority to Local Authority’ discussion.

It should be emphasised that all children being educated in a Local Authority’s schools are funded and educated under the policies and practices of that Local Authority. This is a national statutory arrangement, not one local to Hampshire.

9 *What about exceptional circumstances such as small schools and turbulence?*

The formula is applied to all children and young people in all schools according to those on roll on the September enumeration date. Other funding in the budget share covers these issues.

10 *What happens when a school says that the provision for qualified teacher assistance within a child’s statement is essential to the employment of the SENCo?*

The basic element of SENCO funding for each school is provided from within the teacher staffing (line Ba) of each mainstream school budget share. In a school of 1,200 pupils there would be the cost of one full time equivalent teacher. In a primary school of 300 pupils there would be the cost of 25% of one full time equivalent teacher. Details of funding arrangements can be found in the guidance notes for budget shares. Please see

www.hants.gov.uk/education/schools/budgetshares/

11 *Is it possible for a school to arrange part time attendance for children with SEN, with or without a statement?*

It is the responsibility of a school’s governing body to meet fully the special educational needs of all pupils on roll and there is the expectation that this will involve full-time attendance.

12 *Where can schools go to access funding for specialist equipment, laptops, adapted seating etc?*

For Low Incidence needs, mainstream schools should contact the specialist teacher adviser for the type of need (PD, HI, VI). Resources for equipment in respect of High Incidence needs are held by the school. Special schools have money delegated within their budget shares for more expensive pieces of equipment.

13 *Should parents be involved in discussions/decisions as to whether a statement is High or Low Incidence?*

No. The important aspect for parents is the overall provision specified in the statement, as it is this level of support that has to be provided for the child. The question of either high or low incidence is simply a matter of how the resources are allocated to the school and is something for schools to discuss directly with the SEN Service. These terms are not used on the statement and do not affect the description of the child's SEN or the specification of provision.

Revised SEN funding formula – questions and answers

- 14 Is there still any transitional protection for schools that were affected by the revised SEN formula operative from April 2006?*

There is no transitional protection in 2008/09 financial year budget shares.

- 15 Does this mean that schools are subject to big fluctuations in SEN funding from year to year thus affecting the organisation of SEN staffing?*

With effect from the 2008/09 financial year the data used for primary school SEN funding is a three year rolling average of the propensity model results. This change was sought by primary schools and approved by Schools Forum. The evidence in secondary schools was of a stable pattern of propensity results and so annual data is still used.

- 16 Is this an opportunity to redefine the SEN profile in my school?*

The SEN funding for mainstream schools is a whole school resource to support children and young people with significant needs that are additional to and different from their peers. However, schools may wish to review their current SEN profile.

- 17 How will it impact on my Wave 2 provision?*

Unless the school is using a Wave 2 approach that has been significantly adapted to meet the special educational needs of children and young people and therefore it becomes a Wave 3 approach, Wave 2 provision is not seen as something to be wholly funded through the additional SEN funding.

- 18 Will it mean I have to significantly change my learning support department/SEN staffing?*

The budget allocation is for the school to use for children and young people who present the greatest priority of need related to their learning difficulties and how that impacts on their progress. Schools will undoubtedly wish to review the number of children and young people who are not making progress and target available provision accordingly.

19 *How does the SEN Funding formula relate to the SEN Code of Practice School Action/ School Action Plus?*

These need to be regarded separately in terms of financial resources. The revised system does not identify individual children and young people according to their level of SEN needs. It should be remembered that schools identify their own School Action and School Action Plus children and young people within the context of the school. You may find it helpful to refer the Criteria for SEN School Action and School Action Plus booklet issued in September 2005.

20 *Is SEN funding affected by the fact that not all Year R children are full-time in September?*

We recognise that not all Year R children attend school full-time on the enumeration date in September. However, the revised formula works on the basis of the number of pupils in Year R, not full-time-equivalents.

21 *Will this affect the role of the SENCo?*

Good practice suggests that the cost of the SENCo should be funded from the school staffing budget unless they carry a significant teaching role for individual children and young people with complex SEN. With the revised method of SEN funding the SENCo is no longer having to carry out extensive work during the Autumn term preparing submissions. This will inevitably free up more time to manage SEN provision across the school and advise colleagues in their work with individual children and young people.

22 *To what extent are the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Free School Meals (FSM) factors taken into account?*

IMD and FSM factors are built into the propensity formula. However, in order to recognise the extent of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties in some schools 15% of the primary budget and 30% of the secondary budget has been allocated by these factors.

23 *To what extent has the overall funding increased or decreased?*

The method of distributing the funding has changed but the overall resource remains the same as for the previous year with the addition of the annual increase for inflation.

24 *What do Funding Units A, B and C mean?*

Funding Unit A – reflects the ‘propensity’ for pupils within a school to have SEN at a level higher than School Action, based on FSP, KS test results, Yr 4 QCA reading test results and gender. It also reflects the element in the formula for both the pupils at each school identified as School Action Plus in the Physical and Sensory moderation, and, those with low incidence statements. Since the quoted number of units of funding is formula generated, it should not be regarded as reflecting an actual number of pupils.

Funding Unit B – reflects the ‘propensity’ for pupils within a school to be at School Action based on FSP, KS test results, Yr 4 QCA reading test results and gender. Since the quoted number of units of funding is formula generated, it should not be regarded as reflecting an actual number of pupils.

Funding Unit C – reflects the elements included in the formula for indices of multiple deprivation and eligibility for free school meals. This was agreed by Schools Forum in February 2006 to recognise that at school level there is a link between these factors and the proportion of pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

25 *Is there an enumeration date?*

Yes, with the new method this date is the same as the Autumn PLASC census date. For the FY 2008/09 this was 4 October 2007 and for 2009/10 it will be 2 October 2008.

26 *Will this system be kept under review?*

The funding system will be kept under review and monitored for effectiveness and efficiency. Mechanisms for dialogue are already in place through Primary and Secondary Resources Committees and Children and Families Steering Groups.

27 *Can I appeal?*

No, during the consultation it was agreed that there would be no appeal process. Since the formula is applied to all children and young people in all schools based on ratified data there are no subjective judgements being made with the exception of the Physical Disability and Sensory moderation. **Also, there is no centrally-retained contingency fund.**

28 *Is the data refreshed for future years?*

The formula is applied to renewed annual data for prior attainment, IMD/FSM and gender. This will produce a refreshed profile each year based on current NOR.. However as indicated in 15, above, primary schools have chosen a three year rolling average of propensity model results in the calculation of Units A and B. Thus in financial year 2008/09 data from 2007, 2006 and 2005 is used whereas in 2009/10 the data from 2005 will be replaced by data from 2008 when the calculation is done.

You may also find it helpful to refer to the following Children's Services publications:

- **Use of resources in Primary Schools for children with Special Educational Needs.**
- **Use of resources in Secondary Schools for children with Special Educational Needs.**

These publications are available to download from the Children's Services (Education) Intranet at:
www.education.hants.gov.uk/intranet/teaching/sen/handbook/

If you have any queries that are not covered in this series of questions and answers, please contact:

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