



Use of resources in Primary Schools for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

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Use of resources in Primary Schools for children with SEN

The purpose of this document is to provide information and to clarify issues about funding to support children with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream primary schools.

Sources of SEN funding in a school

There are four main elements which make up the SEN resource allocation in mainstream primary schools in Hampshire:

- per pupil (teacher staffing)
- SEN funding formula for mainstream schools (including the physical and sensory audit)
- physical and sensory audit (School Action Plus only)
- low incidence statement top-up.

Hampshire County Council delegates all of the funding that is available to meet provision for SEN pupils at School Action, School Action Plus, and with Statements of SEN. Only funds used for the low incidence statement top-up are held centrally.

These notes should be read in conjunction with Local Management of Schools – guidance for primary schools, which accompany budget shares in March each year. These are available on the web at:
www.hants.gov.uk/education/schools/budgetshares/

Per Pupil (teacher staffing)

An element exists within the basic staffing allocation to each primary school to meet the cost of some of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator's (SENCo) responsibilities and duties. The Main Per-Pupil element (£29.42 per-pupil for FY2009-2010) in the SEN Notional Budget Share is intended to support the management of SEN in the school. Money from the SEN funding formula for mainstream schools does not, therefore, need to be used to meet the full cost of the SENCo's salary. Account should be taken of the multi-faceted role of the SENCo (who in some cases, might also be one of the special needs teachers), as he/she will need time to plan, assess, monitor, liaise, support, inform, organise, administer, review and report. In addition, the SENCo may, for example, be involved in providing direct teaching or the release of the class teacher for "in class" support, and may also work with individuals/groups of children who have SEN. (Please see the SEN Code of Practice 2001 (SEN CoP) – paragraphs 5.30 to 5.36). Where a class teacher/senior manager also fulfils the role of SENCo, there will be a need to differentiate between the designated SENCo time and other duties and allocate funding accordingly.

SEN funding formula for mainstream schools (including the Physical and Sensory Audit)

The SEN funding formula for mainstream schools dates from April 2006 and delivers funding which is part of the whole school budget. This funding is intended to contribute to the costs of providing interventions which are “additional to and different from the normal differentiated curriculum” (SEN Code of Practice 2001) using assessments and priorities identified by the school. It is acknowledged that those working at school level are best placed to determine how the available resources should be used and, once in the school’s budget, the SEN allocation should be seen as part of the whole school resource to be used as flexibly as possible to meet identified needs.

The SEN funding formula uses data and information provided by schools and held by the County Council. In primary schools this currently includes:

- prior attainment data relating to Foundation School Profile, the results of Key Stage 1 SATS and the Year 4 QCA reading test results
- gender balance within the school (as there is a significantly higher number of boys than girls with SEN)

(These two data sets generate funding nationally focussed on supporting learning needs.)

- data relating to the eligibility of pupils for free school meals (FMS)
- data related to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) based on the home postcode of each child.

(These two data sets are used as proxy indicators of social deprivation. As such they acknowledge the link between social deprivation and children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and generate funding notionally focussed on supporting children with these needs.)

The use of the above data and information provides a profile of need for each school. This is then used to allocate SEN funding in the school budget share for each school.

Physical and Sensory Needs Audit: because children with physical and sensory needs are distributed more randomly across Hampshire, schools are invited to submit evidence for children with these significant needs, at School Action Plus, in order to secure additional funding. This evidence includes information on the extent to which the school has asked for help from outside agencies and how far the identified needs create a barrier to learning. Submissions will, subsequently, be moderated by a specialist professional panel. Once a child has been identified as having a significant or complex, physical or sensory need at School Action Plus, which is unlikely to decrease, the funding will be allocated for the whole of the child’s key stage.

Once allocated, the SEN resources become part of the whole school budget which, in its totality, should be managed to meet the needs of all children

within the school. Whatever method is used by the school for allocating SEN resources, a process to monitor impact and effectiveness is needed.

Children with statements of SEN must receive what is specified in their statement but, where appropriate, needs can still be met within a group setting. If there are two or more children with statements working regularly within the same group, the additional hours of support provided should reflect the total of all the hours of the statements concerned.

For example: Child A with a SEN statement for 10 hours of LSA support work in a group with Child B with a SEN statement for 7.5 hours of LSA support. As the pupils are both working within the same group, a total of 17.5 hours additional support should be provided, but this support can also be made available to others within the group who do not have statements of special educational needs, as long as the specifications of provision in both statements are met in full.

Children without a statement can have their needs met in whatever ways the school considers appropriate. **Clearly, it is essential that needs are met** and schools should be able to show how they have been met. This can, for instance, be demonstrated through records of staff deployment and through the achievement of educational targets identified in the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Whilst SEN funding delegated to mainstream schools via the SEN funding formula should be seen as part of a whole school resource it is broadly intended to support provision for children with SEN as defined in the SEN CoP. This definition does not encompass gifted and talented children and while every school will want to do the best for their most able children, the SEN formula funding for mainstream schools is not targeted on them. Schools will, therefore, need to identify other resources for their support. If the SENCo also has responsibility for gifted and talented children, it must be made clear what percentage of time is given to able children.

Funding of Statements

In Hampshire, statements are divided into two specific categories, high and low incidence.

High Incidence Statements

Statements for moderate learning difficulty (MLD), specific learning difficulty (SpLD), behavioural, emotional and social difficulty (BESD) and mild autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) are categorised as high incidence. In April 1996, resource for these categories of statement was delegated to schools via an increase to the then Step 2 and 3 units of resource. This position has been maintained in the introduction of the revised SEN funding formula from April 2006. **Schools have, therefore, to meet the needs of all pupils with high incidence statements from within their delegated resources.**

Low Incidence Statements

Statements for severe learning difficulty (SLD), visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), physical disability (PD) and severe and complex communication difficulty/severe and complex autism are categorised as low incidence and a budget is retained centrally by the LA to provide 'top-up' funding for low incidence statements to the full cost of the statement. This top-up funding is allocated to schools on a termly basis for specific pupils. Account should be taken of low incidence statement resource when establishing the SEN budget, but it must be remembered that if a child with a low incidence statement leaves a school the additional resource will cease at that point.

Whether a statement is of high or low incidence, and how it is funded, should not be part of any discussion with parents or carers. This is a matter for discussion between the school and the SEN Service.

How should SEN funds be spent?

There is a legal duty that the requirements of a statement of special educational needs are met in full. In addition, the governors and headteacher of a school need to be able to demonstrate that the needs of all children with SEN identified through School Action and School Action Plus are being met effectively. Details of expenditure should show clear benefit, for example, through matching achievement against previously set success criteria stated in the school's SEN policy.

It is good practice for the costs of the SENCo's dedicated time to be met from the core or base budget (SEN CoP 5:35) rather than from any additional funding allocated to meet the needs of individual children. The role of the SENCo remains key in managing assessment, planning for intervention, maintaining records, liaising with colleagues in other phases or settings and co-ordinating the work of LSAs.

Where good practice is well established, the SENCo will be well placed to advise the headteacher/governing body on how funding can be most effectively allocated. It is essential that the SENCo and SEN governor have full access to budget details in order to do this (see paragraph 1.22 of the SEN CoP). Inspectors and advisers are available to schools in order to advise on provision for individual children and the overall allocation of SEN funding within the school.

Once in the school's budget, SEN resources should be used flexibly and proactively to respond to individual needs and to promote early and effective intervention. The system for allocating funds should be clearly recorded within the school's SEN documentation.

SEN good practice - ideas about deployment from headteachers, SENCOs and inspectors

Although, within the legal framework of local management, the headteacher and governors have the right to determine the deployment of all resources, the following issues relating to SEN are strongly recommended for your consideration:

- whenever possible, it is helpful to involve SEN governors and staff in decisions on policy and resource allocation
- small group work is often more effective, both educationally and financially, than individual support and can often take place within the whole class setting
- it may be helpful to ask the following questions:
 - a) What has happened previously? Has one teacher/year group been more successful in addressing SEN than another? If so, why, and what can be learned and passed on to others?
 - b) Is the school more successful in working with one type of SEN rather than another? If so, why? Does this have implications for staff training and how can they be addressed?
 - c) Is there a particular demand in any one year group? Children with similar needs can sometimes be grouped together and this can be beneficial both educationally and financially
 - d) Has the effectiveness of any interventions for SEN to support pupil progress (e.g. Wave 3 literacy programmes/ approaches) been evaluated to inform future practice?
- before allocating teaching or non-teaching support throughout the school on the basis of either individual children or group support, consider top slicing to enable some proactive work, e.g.
 - a) You might find that you have behaviour problems with a particular group of boys. Top slicing the budget could allow you to take action such as buying in additional outside agency support, providing some additional LSA time or implementing a behavioural management programme
 - b) You might identify problems with mathematical understanding in a particular year group. Setting aside funding for resources to boost progress could contribute towards resolving the problem effectively
 - c) Following evaluation you might need to review your literacy interventions against pupil needs and progress and allocate resources to trial different approaches

- you will be expected, as part of school self-evaluation and for OFSTED, to have a clear written statement of what you expect to be achieved and measurable targets against which progress can be evaluated.

For example - for the three examples just discussed, measurable targets could be as follows:

- a) The reduction/elimination of fixed term/permanent exclusions, or the movement of an identified number of BESD pupils from School Action Plus to School Action
- b) A reduction in the number of pupils in the identified year group with mathematical problems - you should set a specific and attainable target for improvement
- c) A number of pupils receive Wave 3 literacy interventions over a set period of time. This is identified on a provision map and progress tracked against ratio gains in reading and spelling as well as National Curriculum levels.

It is advisable to consider setting aside an amount for emergencies e.g. a pupil moving in with complex needs. Don't forget that the SEN funding formula for mainstream schools provides a whole school resource for the full financial year. There is no adjustment for pupils who leave or join the school or whose needs change within the year.

Glossary

BESD	Behaviour, emotional and social difficulty
DfE	Department for Education
FSM	Free school meals
FTE	Full time equivalent
FY	Financial Year
HI	Hearing impairment
IMD	Indices of Multiple Deprivation
LA	Local Authority
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
MLD	Moderate learning difficulty
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PD	Physical disability
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEN CoP	Special Educational Needs Code of Practice
SLCN	Speech, language and communication needs
SLD	Severe learning difficulty
SpLD	Specific learning difficulty
VI	Visual impairment

Contact details

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This leaflet is available to download from the SEN website at:
www.hants.gov.uk/sen-parentpublications.

