



Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Consultation

Mainstream Schools Funding Guidance

Darlington Borough Council is committed to providing additional resources for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) to supplement schools' own resources (not instead of them).

This document has been produced following responses to the Consultation to date. It is aimed at identifying the differences between the current system and the proposed system which forms part of the consultation.

Current Funding Arrangements

Financial support for pupils with SEND is made up of three elements which should be used by settings to meet individual needs.

Element 1 - The Age Weighted Pupil Unit. Schools receive an allocation per child/young person, based upon actual numbers of children/young people in October each year which is reported by schools through a 'school census'.

Element 2 – Notional SEN budget. This is an identified amount of money within a school's overall budget that is to contribute to the special educational provision of children with SEN or disabilities of approximately £6000. This is not allocated on a named pupil basis but through a formula, based on factors in the school budget using data from the school census.

Element 3 – Top up funding. This represents the additional funding provided by the Local Authority to the school from 'high needs' funding where the cost of supporting a pupil's needs is deemed to exceed £6,000. The expectation is that a mainstream school must provide Element 1 and 2 before they can access this top up funding. There are currently bands for top up's applied and the Local Authority also delegated 'lump sum' funding to mainstream schools which was not linked to individual children and young people's needs under this element. This lump sum was worked out, not on the number of children and young people with SEND, but based upon a formula including factors such as deprivation. Therefore the 'Element 3' was not directly linked to the individual children and young people's needs. A complicated model existed in that Primary schools received a lump sum plus top up funding and secondary schools received a lump sum with no top up funding.

The SEND Ranges

The Local Authority have introduced the SEND ranges to ensure that there is a 'graduated response' to identifying and planning to meet each child and young person's individual needs. The ranges are based on national best practice on the four areas of the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and on the 'golden thread' of the graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review. The SEND ranges provide an evidence base of the assessment of need, the range of interventions that a school can put into place and the impact and outcomes expected.



Proposed Funding Arrangements

Elements 1, 2 and 3 will remain as previous. It is proposed however to link the SEND ranges to the Elements 1, 2 and 3 funding so that there is greater emphasis on accountability and targeting of the resources to meet each pupil's needs. This is what is commonly understood as 'money following the child' - a needs led approach.

The Local Authority are proposing a change to the way the 'Element 3' top up funding is applied so that the funding is **directly related to the assessed and identified needs of the child or young person according to the SEND ranges**. The lump sum will be phased out and the top up funding will be allocated according to the SEND ranges.

The proposed changes to the existing system are as follows:

Proposed Top up Bands

Bands 1-3 are needs that can be met in the mainstream school/setting, funded through Elements 1 and 2. Where the needs of children are more specialist, such as requiring enhanced mainstream support, Element 3 or 'top up funding' can be accessed and this relates to those bandings of 4a and above in the box below.

Bands 1-3	No top up
Band 4a	£3,000
Band 4b	£6,500
Band 5a	£8,500
Band 5b	£10,000
Band 6a	£12,500
Band 6b	£15,000

The previous bandings in mainstream primary settings for Element 3 or 'top up funding' were as follows:-

Banding 7	£2,251
Banding 8	£4,502
Banding 9	£6,753
Banding 10	£9,004

[Bandings 1 – 6 related to Elements 1 and 2 and therefore no top funding was applicable].

Please note that the previous model also included lump sum payments to schools. The two models cannot be compared like to like.