

WIRRAL SEND PARTNERSHIP

Information Advice and Support Service

Funding for Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Mainstream Schools

This information is about funding for special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools.

This includes academies and free schools.

What is SEN funding for?

The SEND Code of Practice (6.2) says:

Schools must use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people’s SEN.

Schools should use some of their budget to buy resources and make provision for children who need additional help. This can take many forms.

For example, children with SEN might need:

- Changes to the curriculum
- special equipment or teaching materials
- the use of additional information technology
- small group work
- support in the classroom
- a base to work in or have quiet time
- individual support
- assessment or support from an outside agency

Where does funding for SEN come from?

All mainstream schools receive money for special educational needs support and resources. Schools can decide how to spend this money.

The SEN part of the school’s income is sometimes called the “notional” SEN budget because it is not based on the school’s actual numbers of pupils with special needs, but on a formula.

Element 1 is the amount of money schools get for each pupil who attends.

Element 2 is the money schools use to provide SEN support for children who need it. This is support that is additional to or different from the support that most other children get.

Government guidance says schools should provide up to the first £6,000 of additional or different support for those children who need it, including those with or without an **Education, Health and Care plan** (or a **Statement of Special Educational Need**). This does not mean that the school will spend £6,000 on every child with SEN.

Sometimes schools use funds to help groups of children. Some children will need less help – and some children may need more.

You can ask your school how it uses its SEN budget to support your child and whether it is enough to meet your child's needs. This may be called a costed provision map.

The local authority also publishes a **Local Offer** (<http://localofferwirral.org/>) that explains what type of resources this money might be spent on.

Element 3 funding (sometimes called the “high needs block”) is used to make specific provision for an individual child, if the school or academy can show it is necessary. This is usually provided by the Local Authority for children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or PFA (Pupil Funding Agreement).

You can find details of how this funding is allocated in the **Local Offer**.

These funding arrangements do not override the local authority's duty to your child to ensure they receive any necessary provision that the school itself cannot make.

The law says that the local authority must find out via an **EHC needs assessment** whether an EHC plan is needed when a child or young person may have SEN that may need the local authority to secure provision. So if your school is unable to make all the provision your child needs, both you and school have the right to ask for an EHC needs assessment.

School governors are responsible for the school's policy on SEN. The head teacher and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) ensure that the policy is put into practice.

The SENCO organizes support for individual children, but every teacher is responsible for making sure that your child's special educational needs are met in the classroom.

The SEN Information Report on the school's website tells you more about the arrangements for SEN support and how to contact the SENCO.

Some groups of children, such as looked after children, or those whose families are on low income, receive pupil premium which is used by schools to raise attainment and improve outcomes.

Talk with your child's teacher or the SENCO to find out what additional or different support your child is getting. This may be at a parents' evening, a support plan meeting or a review. You can ask for a written copy of any support plan in place for your child. This may be called a SEN Support Plan, Additional Needs Support Plan (ASP), Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Person-Centred Plan (PCP).

Where can I get further information, advice or support?

Look for the SEN Information Report on the school website. The **Local Offer** is the place to find out about services available locally and the arrangements that schools and others are expected to make for children and young people with SEN.

If your child has an Education, Health and Care plan (or Statement of Special Educational Need) it must set out the support and resources that must be provided.

Wirral SEND Partnership can also give you:

- More information about SEN support and funding and advice about what to do if you are not happy with the support your school is providing
- Information about other organisations, support groups and information services that could help
- Information and advice about your rights to request an EHC Needs Assessment if your child might need more than school can provide

For Further Information Please Contact:

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