

High Needs Block Funding for Pupils

1. Introduction

1.1 This section covers funding for high needs pupils in the following education provision:

- additional funding to mainstream schools and early years providers for pupils with high needs
- special schools
- resource bases in mainstream schools
- pupil referral units
- post 16 provision for special needs

1.2 Funding for high needs pupils will be on a 'place plus' model, with schools or settings receiving an amount per place from the main school formula with the remainder paid as 'top-up' on a per-pupil basis.

1.3 The Local Authority is keen to work with head teachers to take forward the approach to distribution of the High Needs Block to best meet the needs of young people with SEN (0-25 years). It is proposed that the associated risk of the additional financial responsibility for children from 0 and up to 25 years is best managed through the local authority and schools working together in partnership. The Local Authority is keen to enable head teachers to share the management of the effects of spending decisions on the system as a whole and encourages collective ownership of the high needs block for the benefit of all RBKC's children and young people with high needs.

1.4 It is proposed that the Local Authority and representative head teachers form a High Needs Reference group, to monitor the distribution of high needs spend against pupil distribution and to jointly manage a top sliced SEN 'contingency' for those schools with limited high needs budget. The focus of the High Needs Reference Group will be support for the inclusion of children with SEN in exceptional circumstances. The effect of a small top slice will be included in the High Needs Block modelling.

2. Funding for High Needs pupils in mainstream schools

2.1 High needs pupils in mainstream schools will be funded through three elements:

- Element 1 – the basic per-pupil entitlement (per-pupil funding) funded through the main school formula ('place' funding),

- Element 2 – additional educational support funding from the school’s notional SEN budget set at £6,000 (for additional support provision over and above the standard offer of teaching and learning). The expectation is that per pupil funding + £6000 = approx. £10K, the benchmark for ‘high needs’ (‘place’ funding).
- Element 3 is top-up funding which is paid by the relevant local authority from their high needs block on a per-pupil basis (‘plus’ funding).

2.2

3. **Mainstream Schools – reception to year 11 ‘place plus’ funding.**

- 3.1 Schools will receive funding for high needs pupils through Elements 1 and 2 (in the schools block and received by schools in their budget) see diagram in Appendix.

The schools’ block notional SEN funding is intended as an allocation to meet the needs of pupils with predictable additional learning needs and is to cover the cost of children’s provision up to £6,000 per pupil (a figure determined by Government and excludes the base (AWPU) funding received for all pupils).

- 3.2 Top up funding is for those pupils’ whose provision costs over and above £6,000 (Element 2). This is referred to as ‘high needs top-up’.
- 3.3 The Authority will delegate a proportion of the Top Up funding for pupils who are RBKC residents and have a need for provision that costs over and above £6000 and up to a total of £12,000 (£6K Schools’ Block and £6K High Needs Block delegated). The formula by which this resource is distributed is outlined below, is to be discussed with Schools Forum and has been the subject of working group consideration.
- 3.6 The retention of a formula to distribute part of the high needs top-up is seen by the authority as key in targeting support and accountability for provision for individuals with high needs and retains autonomy in organising provision through resources delegated to schools for children with predictable additional learning needs.
- 3.6 The formula for distributing the delegated part of the high needs top-up will be as follows:
- 60% prior attainment – weighting on individual learning needs to reflect targeted top-up for individual additional learning support (one year or a three year average)
 - 40% number on roll – individual targeted support for children with syndromes, conditions which are not related to deprivation and/or necessarily prior attainment

The Local Authority proposes accounting for the delegated High Needs Block through an agreement with schools about expectations of the

service delivered for children with SEN. This agreement will form the basis of part of the Local Authority's published Local Offer.

- 3.4.1 For RBKC/Westminster/Hammersmith and Fulham pupils with exceptional needs requiring provision costed at over £12K plus AWP, funding will be distributed on the basis of placement of children with a Statement of SEN (from September 2014 an Education, Health and Care plan), according to two bands (Band 1; Band 2) top up funding.
- 3.3 As mentioned above, under the new model, if a high need pupil from another borough attends a RBKC/Westminster/Hammersmith and Fulham school, then the school will be responsible for charging the relevant local authority direct for any additional costs over and above the £6,000. This replaces the current system of inter-authority recoupment, whereby RBKC/Westminster/Hammersmith and Fulham funds all pupils with a Statement of SEN and then reclaims funding from other authorities on behalf of schools. If schools would like support in charging other Boroughs, a recoupment service can be bought-in from the Local Authority (charged at 5% of the value for mainstream).

4. Special Schools

Special schools and resource bases will not in future have delegated budgets on the same basis as mainstream schools. They will get £10,000 per place pre-16 plus top-up funding for each pupil they have.

- 4.1 Future funding will be based on a place-plus model as required by the Government. The authority will continue to agree with each school the number of places to be provided for the year ahead. An initial £10,000 funding per place funding will then be provided by the authority from the High needs Block, for maintained special schools. The balance of funding, referred to as 'top up', will come from the home authority of each pupil and only paid for actual pupils in school. The amount of top-up can in theory vary according to the needs of the individual pupil.

Special schools will themselves be responsible for collecting the top up funding from relevant authorities, unless the school chooses to buy-in the services of the Local Authority to undertake charging other LA's on its' behalf.

- 4.3 Special school and/or resource bases could be supported in managing temporary vacancies through the agreement of schools forum to fund vacancies at a fifty per cent top up value for a time-limited period e.g. two years.

6. Pupil Referral Units

- 6.1 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) will be subject to the same funding arrangements as special schools, except that the base funding will be £8,000 rather than £10,000 per place. The figure of £8,000 has been set by the Government and reflects their research into the cost of PRUs vs special schools.

6.2 Our proposal for RBKC is to fund PRU provision as a combination of place-plus and a service to reflect the combined places and outreach nature of the service.

6.3 PRUs funded as place-plus will receive £8,000 base funding for each place, with top-up funding from the local authority for each pupil in place, when they are in place. The numbers of pupils actually occupying the provision would be reviewed on a termly basis. It is understood that the PRU population by its' nature is fluctuating, as such it is proposed that provided the actual number of places filled is not less than and/or does not exceed the agreed place number by 20% that a total budget is agreed for a total number of places. As with special schools, we would actively review each special school's income during the year and may, depending on circumstance, consider with them where other services could be commissioned from them in the event of predicted shortfall.

7. Resource Bases in Mainstream Schools and Outreach Services

7.1 Under the new system, resource bases/units in mainstream schools will be funded in the same way as special schools. Pupils attending a resource base will no longer be included in the mainstream main funding formula. Instead all funding for that pupil will be provided from the high needs block under the place plus model, i.e. £10,000 base funding for each agreed place plus top up on a pupil by pupil basis.

7.2 We propose funding resource base places on the 'place plus' model, whilst funding the outreach service aspects of resource bases as a service funded from the high needs block.

8. Early Years (pupils in nursery provision)

8.1 The main funding for pupils in nurseries will continue to be provided via the early years single funding formula. This provides funding calculated on an hourly rate up to 15 hours a week (the national free offer) or 25 hours if the child is allocated one of the full time places. Additional funding will be provided on a pupil by pupil basis to cover the cost of special needs.

9. Post 16

9.1 Under separate proposals, the government is transferring the responsibility for 16-19 high needs provision to local authorities. These proposals introduce a place-plus approach to post-16 high needs provision. All providers catering for post-16 high needs pupils and students, in mainstream and specialist settings, will receive mainstream per-student funding through the national 16-19 funding system.

9.2 Mainstream FE providers and school and Academy sixth forms will be expected to contribute the first £6,000 to the cost of additional support

provision required by a high needs pupil or student, the same as with primary and secondary age mainstream schools, funded from the national 16-19 funding system. Specialist FE providers will receive additional support funding of £6,000 for each student placed in the institution from the EFA.

- 9.3 Top-up funding for students placed in either mainstream or specialist settings will be provided by the commissioning local authority from within its HNB, paid on a per-student basis according to the assessment of the student's needs. In order to fund this, funding previously held by the EFA has transferred to the DSG. The Local Authority proposes developing a banded funding model for high needs students whose Top Up provision costs more than £6K (Elements 1 & 2) and £19K. For those students whose provision costs more than £19K resources will be allocated on a case by case basis, through the Local Authority's SEN Panel decision-making process.

Funding model for SEN in Mainstream schools



