

Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) top-up funding consultation

Introduction to EHCP funding

We want children and young people with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities (SEND) to have the best possible start in life and access to the support they need.

If a child or young person, between the ages of 0 to 25, has Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) they may require additional support. For most children and young people that support can be given in a mainstream classroom, with small changes. But in some cases, an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be needed, it sets out what support the child or young person needs to be able to access their education.

Additional costs to meet the needs of children with EHCPs are funded by local councils. Schools cover the first £6,000 of support from their own budgets then if a child needs more help, the council provides top-up funding to cover the extra costs. This ensures all necessary support is available to meet the child's needs.

This top up funding is also called Element 3 funding, and in mainstream schools its sometimes called Named Pupil Allowance (NPA). Councils are responsible for deciding how this funding is distributed.

Glossary for quick reference:

- **Top-Up funding:** This is extra money provided by the local authority to a school when a child with an EHCP needs more support than the school needs to fund from its own budget.
- **Element 3 or NPA:** Another term for Top-Up Funding, which is the additional financial support given by the local authority for children with an EHCP.
- **SEND:** Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) refers to children who need extra help because of learning difficulties or disabilities.

- **Special school:** A school specifically designed to support children with higher levels of SEND. These schools provide tailored education and resources to meet the unique needs of each student.
- **Resource base:** A specialised unit within a mainstream school that offers additional support for students with specific needs. It allows students to spend part of their time in regular classes and part in the resource base, receiving targeted help.
- **Mainstream school:** A regular school that educates children of all abilities. Mainstream schools aim to include students with SEND in regular classes, providing support as needed to help them succeed.

Why are we proposing to change it?

We need to change how we fund EHCPs to help schools support students with special needs better. The current system has been the same since 2016 and doesn't cover today's costs. Schools are having to ask for more money to cover their running costs, rather than the help that children and young people need.

By updating the funding, we can give schools the right amount of money based on what students actually need. This will help Wiltshire schools stay financially healthy and able to meet the needs of more students locally. This will be better for children and young people and reduce the need for expensive independent special school placements.

Our goal is to improve support for students and manage costs better.

1. **Match money to needs:** Give money based on what students actually need.
2. **Fair and simple funding:** Make sure all schools get fair and clear funding.
3. **Support special schools and resource bases:** Give enough money to keep them running well.

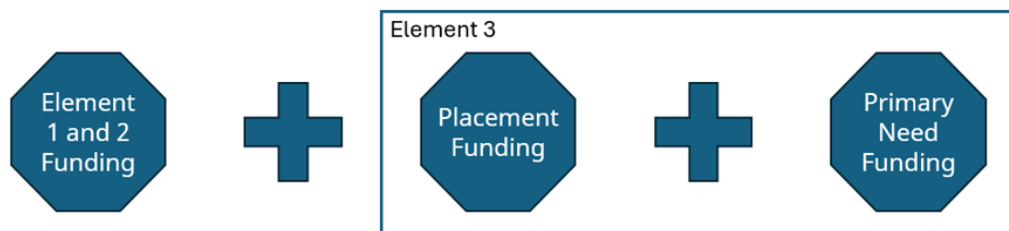
Questions

1. On a scale from 1-5, how well do you think the current funding system meets the actual needs of students with special needs? (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very well)
2. On a scale from 1-5, how clear and easy to understand is the current funding model? (1 = Not clear at all, 5 = Very clear)

3. On a scale from 1-5, how much do you agree that the current funding system needs to be updated? (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree)
4. Do you agree with the aims and reasons for changing how we fund EHCPs? (Text)

What are we proposing?

We are proposing to divide the “Element 3” Top-Up funding into two parts.



The first part of this funding will be based on where the child or young person goes to school or college.

This is to help support our schools because the Element 1 and 2 funding, which is decided by government, has not increased in line with the rising costs in schools.

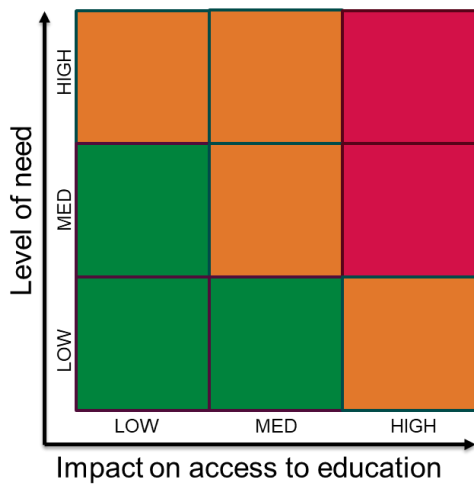
The other part of the Element 3 funding will be linked to the individual child or young person’s needs by understanding:

1. The level of need that should be supported
2. The support needed to enable their access to education

The current model applies a 0-4 band based solely on a description of need. The new model aims to demonstrate the funding required by including the level of need and how it affects access to education.

This helps show that some children or young people might have low needs but still need a lot of support to go to school. For example, a child with mild anxiety and depression who is avoiding school has low needs, from a clinical point of view, but really struggles to access education.

There might also be children with a high level of “clinical need” which is being managed well and does not impact them as much. For example, a child with severe hearing loss who is experienced in using a cochlear implant has high clinical needs but can access education more easily.



We have defined low, medium, and high categories for “need” and “impact”.

We want to make the categories shorter and clearer than the old ones, while still covering all needs. The aim is then to have three clear bands, shown in a nine-box grid.

Each “primary need” will have a different grid to show the support needed and to allow the Discussion and Decision (DaD) group to decide how much funding to allocate

to each EHCP.

Questions

1. On a scale from 1-5, how well do you understand the proposal? (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very well)
2. On a scale from 1-5, how much do you agree with the proposal? (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very well)
3. What do you think will be the effects of assessing both the level of need and access to education?
4. Do you think this funding model will help us meet our objectives? (match money to needs, fair and simple funding, support special schools and resource bases) (open text)
5. How could we make this funding model even more effective in meeting our objectives? (open text)

Descriptions of need

The next set of questions are about the descriptions of SEND needs. There are eight sets of descriptions, for different types of need. These questions get into the detail, and each ‘need’ could take 5-10 minutes.

You can answer questions about as many or as few as you want, or you can skip completely.

1. Please tick the boxes for the types of need that you want to review as part of this:

Multiple choice tick boxes (Cognition and learning, Hearing impairment, Visual Impairment, Speech Language and Communication Need, Physical Disability and Medical, Social Emotional and Mental Health, Specific Learning Difficulty)

For each one, the draft descriptors will appear on the screen and the questions below will be repeated.

2. On a scale from 1-5, how well do you think this describes need? (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very well)
3. On a scale from 1-5, how much do you feel this describes the impact on access to education? (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very well)
4. What do you like about the descriptors? (free text)
5. What could be improved about the descriptors (free text)

Questions

1. Do you have any final comments on the proposed EHCP funding model?

Demographic questions

Tell us whether you are a parent or if you work in SEND (Education Professional, Parent Carer, Healthcare Professional, Voluntary Sector, School/Setting Finance or Leadership, Other)

- a. What ages are your children?
- b. What kind of school/setting do you teach in? (for teachers)
2. Are you a Wiltshire resident?
3. What is the first part (e.g. SN3) of your postcode? (This information helps us