

SEND Finance Workshop

6th May 2025

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 18/12/2024 (£M)

- Schools Block
- High needs block
- Central School Services Block
- Early years block



DSG Block	Total Allocation	Deductions	Paid to LA
SB	£299.426M	£3.102M	£296.323M
HNB	£71.633M	£11.944M	£59.689M
CSSB	£2.511M		£2.511M
EYB	£48.177M		£48.177M
Total	£421.747M	£15.046M	£406.700M

For the latest budget allocation use link below:
<https://skillsfunding.service.gov.uk/view-latest-funding/local-authority/statement/312>

High Needs Block Funding

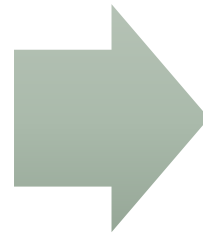
High needs block funding is a funding stream within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which is a **ring-fenced** grant provided by the central government to fund education provision and services.

Purpose: To fund the additional educational support needed (SEND and AP) by pupils and students whose needs cannot be met from the standard resources of mainstream schools or colleges.

	Department of Education(DfE)	Local Authority
Funding (Two formulas)	High Needs National Funding Formula	Local Funding Arrangements
Basis	Historic/Lagged	Real time/ Current
Payment	- DfE holds back and directly pays the place funding to all educational settings that is maintained by the Local Authority. - Balance is paid to the Local Authority.	Place Funding for maintained schools, top up funding for all settings and commissioned services.

High Needs Block Funding

Department
of Education



Local
Authorities

High Needs National Funding Formula (HNNFF)

Introduced in financial year 2018-19 after two consultations.

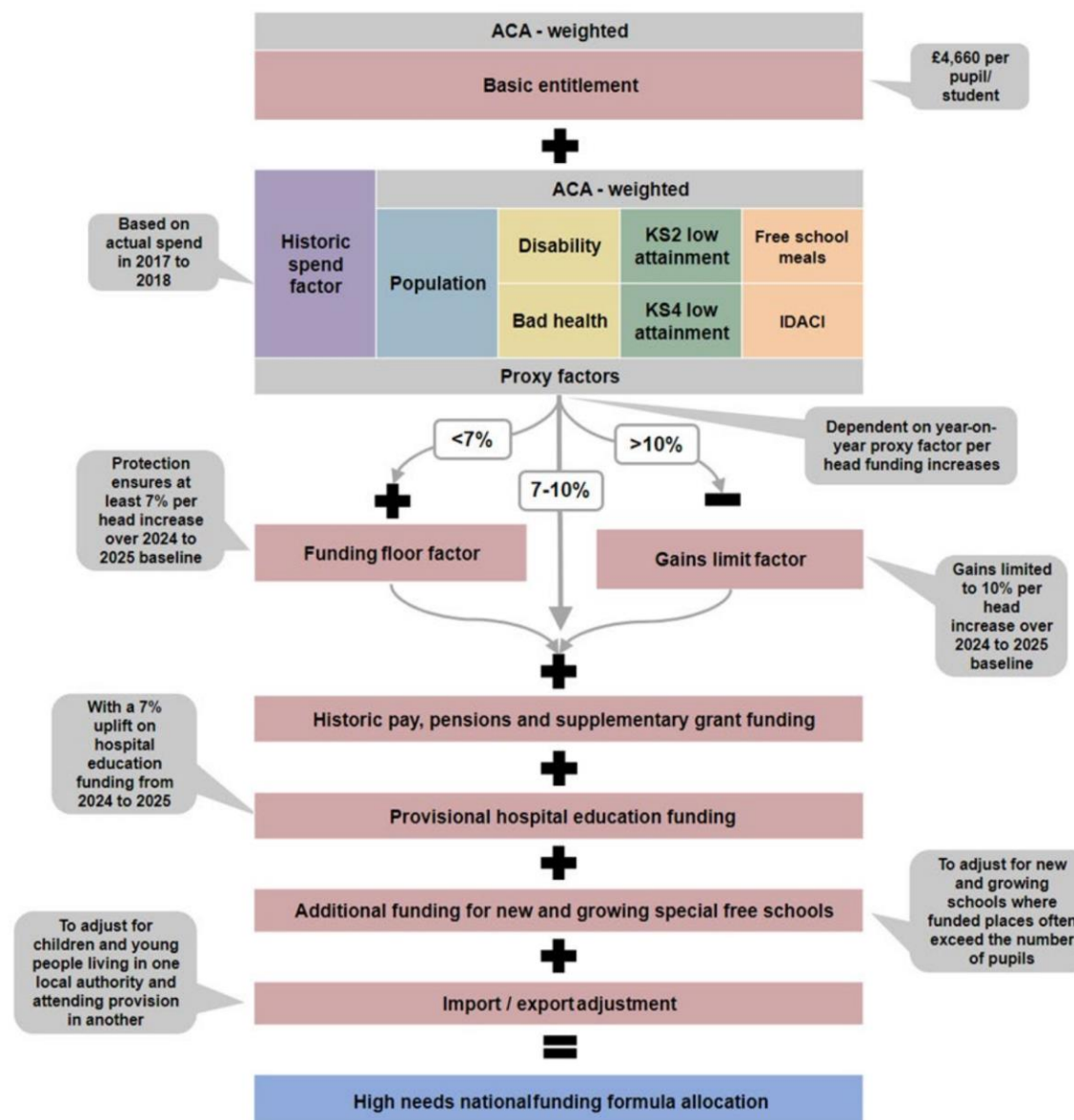
First stage in Spring 2016, which introduced the funding principles and structure, and then the second stage in December 2016, which looked at the detailed proposals.

National Consistency: The HNNFF was introduced to create a fairer and more consistent way of distributing funding for children and young people with high needs across all local authorities in England.

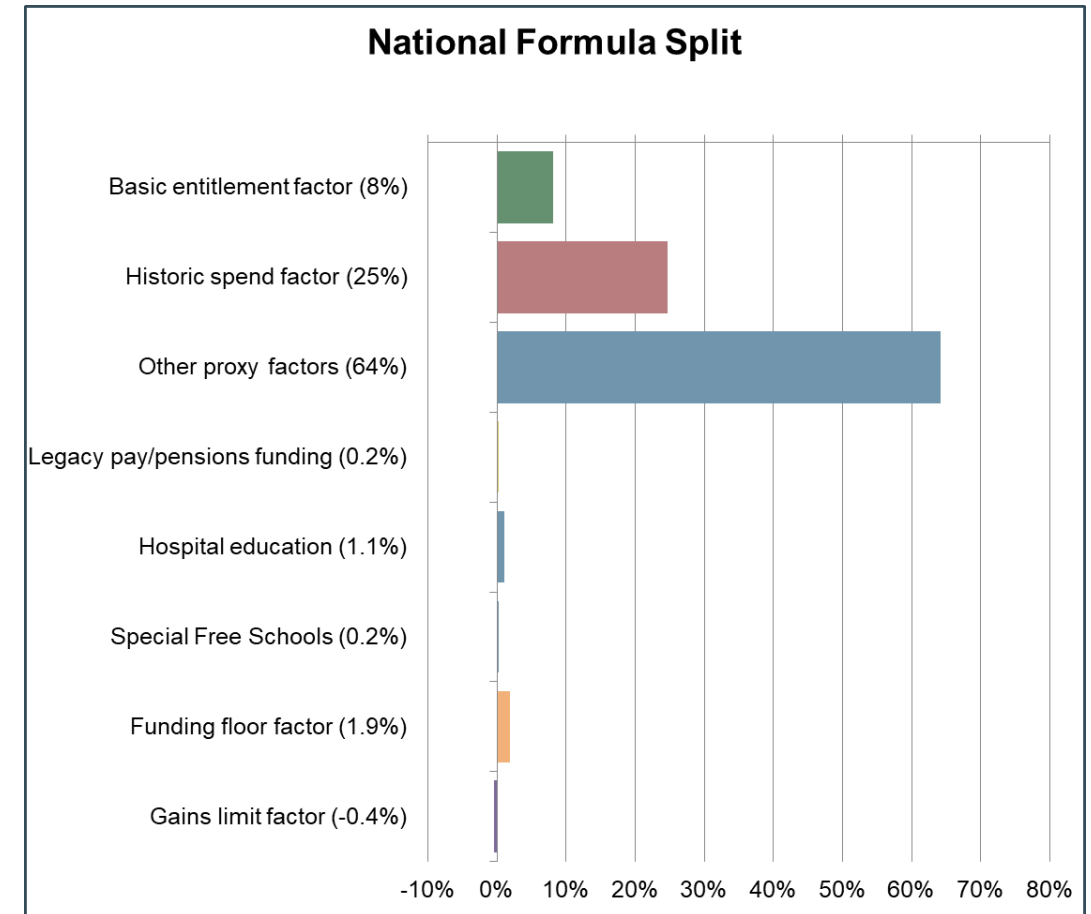
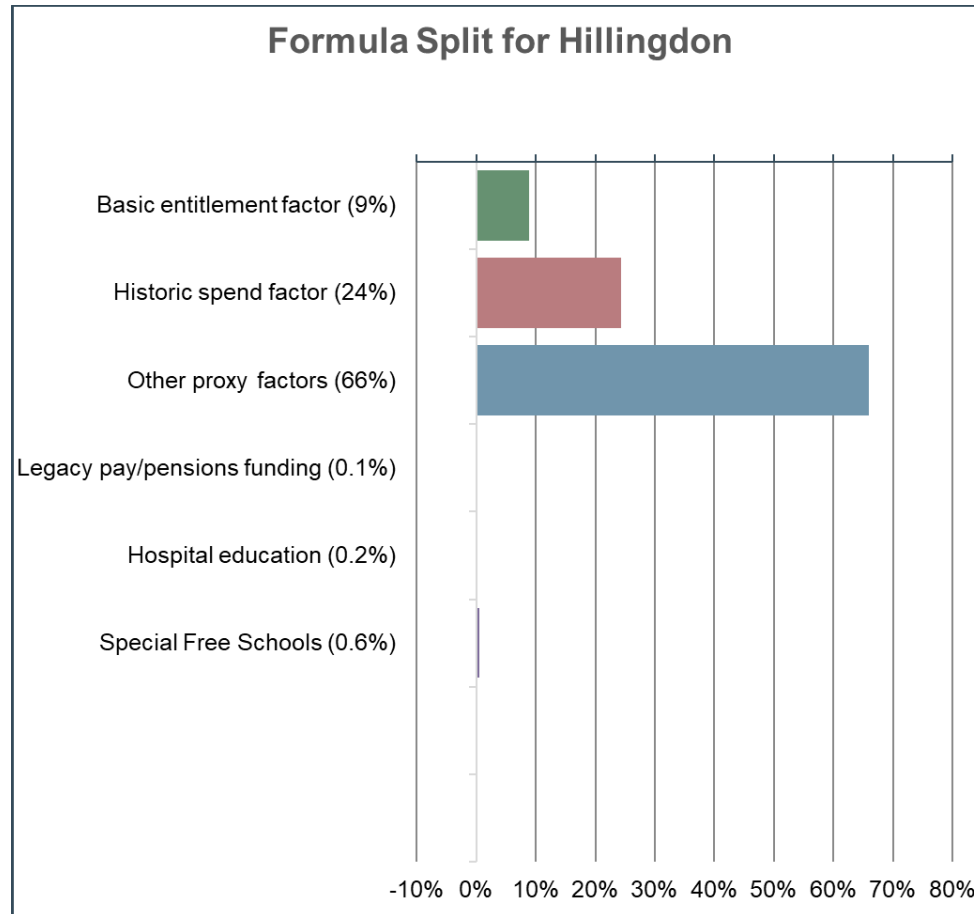
Formula-Based Allocation: The formula has 15 factors to that drives the funding for each local authority.



HNNFF elements and factors comprising the formula



High Needs National Funding Formula



Import Export Adjustment

- Most high needs funding is allocated based on where pupils live, not where they are educated. However, local authorities that educate more high needs pupils from outside their area (net importers) incur higher costs, while those whose residents are educated elsewhere (net exporters) have lower costs.
- The import/export adjustment in the high needs NFF ensures that funding is fairly distributed to reflect where high needs pupils are actually educated, not just where they live. This mechanism supports local authorities in meeting the real costs of SEND provision and maintains equity across the system

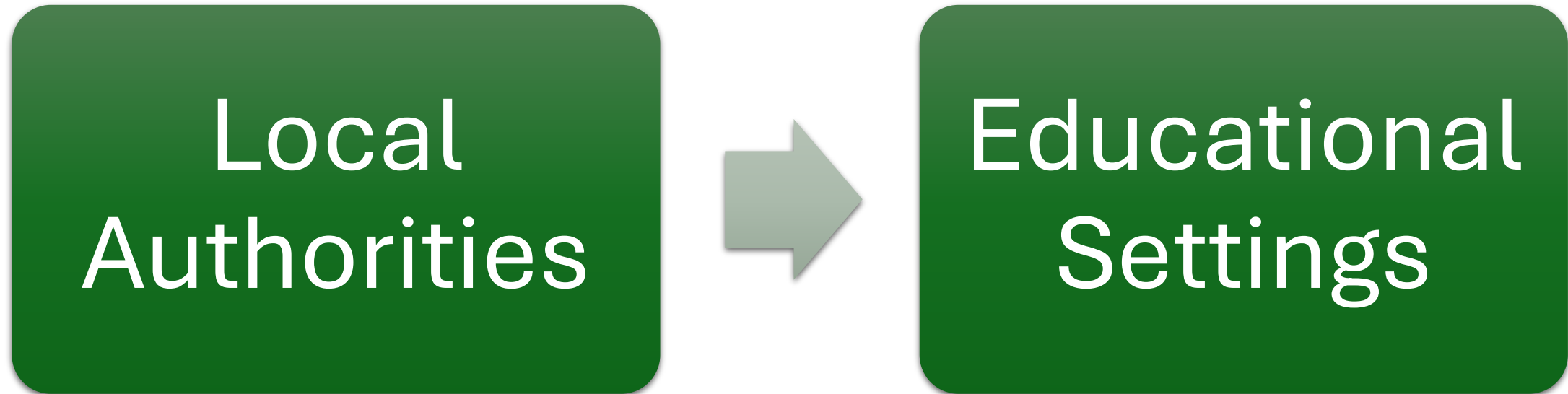
Import Export Adjustment

- The import/export adjustment calculates the net difference between:
 - a) The number of high needs pupils and students educated in a local authority area (regardless of where they live), and
 - b) The number of high needs pupils and students who actually live in that area.
- The net figure (imports minus exports) is multiplied by a set amount (£6,000 per pupil/student) to adjust each local authority's funding.
- If a local authority is a **net importer** (educates more high needs pupils than live in their area), they receive extra funding.
- If a local authority is a **net exporter** (more of their residents are educated elsewhere), their funding is reduced accordingly.
- The adjustment is recalculated annually using school census and individualised learner record data to reflect the latest patterns of pupil movement.

Import Export Schools Role

- Usually where there is a data error, either an institution has not recorded the right number/any pupils or students as in receipt of top up funding or they missed some.
- The impact could be that the data 'overstates' the number of pupils being exported to another local authority or 'understates' the number being imported.
- If this is incorrect, it impacts on Hillingdon's income.

High Needs Block Funding



High Needs Operational Guide



High Needs Operational guide lays out the framework and the mechanism for how high needs funding should operate locally across different educational settings



Guidance is updated annually by Department for Education and Local Authority is responsible for ensuring funding is allocated inline with the guidance.



The guidance is available on the Gov.uk web site.

Link: [High needs funding: 2025 to 2026 operational guide - GOV.UK](#)

High Needs Funding



Managing and Decision Making: Local Authority makes funding decisions relating to High Needs Block in consultation with key partners. e.g. educational settings, parents, young persons etc



Spend : On average, over 91% of High Needs spending in the last two years has been spent on placements. Currently, the total placement cost exceeds the local authority's total High Needs allocation each year.



Excluded spend: Statutory services relating to SEND are not part of the High Needs Block. e.g. EHC Team, EPS



Inter-block transfer: For the FY 2025-26 £1,497,132 (0.5% of Schools Block) transferred to High Needs Block.



Monitoring: Local authority monitors the High Needs Block monthly. School's forum receive regular updates on the High Needs budget and the spend.



External Reporting: The Local Authority must confirm to DfE that the High Needs Block is spent in line with the Dedicated Schools Grant conditions. Also, the High Needs Block budget and outturn form part of the Section 251 submissions.



Schools Block Transfer to High Needs Block

LA	Requested Cash	Requested percentage	Ministerial Approval	Schools Forum approval
Hillingdon	£5.7m	1.90%	Partial approval of 0.5%	No
Norfolk	£9.7m	1.43%	Yes	Yes
Cambridgeshire	£6.3m	1.25%	Partial approval of 1%	No*
Kent	£16.5m	1.20%	Yes	Yes
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	£2.9m	1.00%	No	No
Essex	£12.5m	1.00%	Yes	Yes
Barnsley	£2m	1.00%	Yes	Yes
Hammersmith & Fulham	£1.2m	1.00%	Yes	Yes
Kirklees	£3.6m	1.00%	Yes	Yes
North Somerset	£1.7m	1.00%	Yes	Yes
South Gloucestershire	£2.2m	1.00%	Yes	Yes
Surrey	£9m	1.00%	Yes	No
Bedford Borough	£1.6m	0.91%	Yes	Yes
Bracknell Forest	£900,000	0.85%	Yes	Yes
Merton	£1.3m	0.80%	Yes	Yes
Cheshire East	£2.1m	0.70%	Yes	No
Haringey	£1.3m	0.55%	Yes	Yes
Leicestershire	£2.6m	0.50%	Yes	No
North Yorkshire	£2.3m	0.50%	No	No
Staffordshire	£3.3m	0.50%	Yes	No
Trafford	£1Mm	0.50%	Yes	No
Devon	£2.8m	0.50%	Yes	No
North Tyneside	£766,000	0.50%	Yes	No

DfE's Safety Valve Programme

The Safety Valve Programme, introduced in 2020-21, is a **targeted intervention** by the Department for Education to help local authorities with the **largest and most persistent overspends** in their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), particularly relating to High Needs funding for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The programme aims to:

- Support councils to return their DSG budgets to a sustainable position.
- Provide additional funding, contingent on councils implementing agreed reforms to improve the efficiency and quality of their SEND services.
- Ensure that councils meet their legal obligations to balance their DSG budgets and deliver improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND

Due to the high DSG Deficit, Hillingdon Council joined the Safety Valve programme in 2021-22, entering into a five-year agreement with the DfE which is scheduled to run until March 2026.

Currently, Local Authorities are allowed to report their DSG deficit separately from their main accounts (ring-fenced). This is referred to as the “Statutory Override” and expected to end in March 2026.



Hillingdon DfE's Safety Valve Programme Objectives

The programme requires the local authority to meet the following 12 objectives to meet during the 5-year period.

1. Reduce the cumulative deficit.
2. Standardise good practice and inclusivity across the mainstream sector by promoting the use of SEND self-reviews.
3. Continue the use of 'Early Support Funding', to promote early intervention and reduce the escalation of children's needs.
4. Further progress integrating a process of reviewing existing EHCPs.
5. Further develop and implement a new Early Health Notification Process, to improve the identification of SEND from birth to ensure appropriate services and support are provided in a timely manner.
6. Continue developing temporary and permanent provisions for SEND through Hillingdon capital, in conjunction with effective use of capital grants.
7. Continue reviewing all placements in independent and non-maintained schools to optimise the use of mainstream settings.
8. Explore different models for alternative provision and continue to review existing commissioned places.
9. Conduct a review of banding arrangements.
10. Further increase the educational psychology service, to increase systematic, pre-statutory support to settings.
11. Regularly meet with the Schools Forum and the DSG delivery group as part of the revised school engagement approach.
12. Review healthcare contributions.

SEND Funding Streams for Educational Settings in Hillingdon

Statutory Funding

- Place Funding
- Top-up Funding
- Notional SEN Budget
- Minimum Funding Guarantee for Special Schools
- SEND Early Years Inclusion Fund (Currently under review)

Non-statutory Funding

- Threshold Funding (LBH mainstream schools)
- Early Support Funding(ESF) for primary and secondary pupils
- SENDEX (temporary suspended for FY 2025-26)



Overview of Funding Elements of SEND Funding

Core Funding

All state-funded schools receive core funding for each pupil on roll, primarily allocated through the National Funding Formula (NFF) or the LA's local funding formula. This funding, part of the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), covers the basic costs of educating any pupil, including general provision for pupils with SEN. This core funding has been supplemented by various additional funding streams, which have remained as separate annual allocations and grants.



Top-up Funding

This funding comes from the LA's High Needs Block within the DSG. It is used to provide 'top-up' funding to mainstream schools for individual pupils whose additional support costs exceed the £6,000 threshold covered by Element 2. This funding is typically associated with pupils with EHCPs. High Needs funding also covers 'place funding' for special schools (typically £10,000 per place) and specialist units or resourced provision (RP) within mainstream schools (£6,000 or £10,000 per place depending on occupancy), plus associated top-up funding for the individual pupils in those places.



EHCP Funding: Type of Educational Setting

	Mainstream schools (Maintained, Academy & Free Schools)	SRPs & Designated Units	Special Schools (maintained, Academy and Free schools) and NMSS	PRUs (Maintained, Academy and Free Schools) , Alternative Provisions.	Independent Schools	FE (GFE, SFE, SPI,ILP)
Core Funding	Nursery Classes and Nursery schools receive their core funding via the Early Years FF. Schools receive the core funding for their pre-16 pupils via their ISB. This funding includes the Notional SEN budget which is used to meet additional educational need. Post 16- pupils received their core funding via the 16-19 funding formula and £6,000 per high needs place.	Occupied places in SRPs receive Element 1 through their schools budget plus £6,000 per pupil on roll and £10,000 per vacant place.	£10,000 per place based on the number of commissioned places.	£10,000 per place based on the number of commissioned places.	N/A	Element 1 funding is part of the FE funding and £6,000 per high needs student determined by the local authority.
Top up funding	Agreed and paid by the Local Authority					

Funding available for a pupil as they advance through education

Funding	Primary Mainstream	Primary SRP	Secondary Special	College
Lora's educational journey	Lora's primary education as provided through the main school budget with additional support was funded through the notional SEN budget. When Lora was in year 2 an assessment was carried out that resulted in issuing an EHCP. The school met the first £6,000 from the school's budget and top up was paid by the LA where Lora lived.	In Lora's next annual review, it was decided that her needs would be better met by an SRP placement. Lora occupied a vacant in the SRP at the same school. As Lora was part of the SRP, her top up payment reflected the relevant SRP top up. Also, her element 2 funding is now coming from the SRP place funding and not the notional SEN budget.	When Lora continues to secondary, a special academy placement was secured. The special school was already receiving £10,000 per commissioned place and in addition schools will receive top up funding for the Lora's placement.	Lora decides to study at an FE college in the neighbouring LA. The college received the Element 1 and 2 from DfE via their post -16 funding. The top up funding was directly paid to the college by the LA where Lora lived.
Element 1	Schools Block	Schools Block	High Needs Block	Post -16 funding
Element 2	Schools Block	High Needs Block	High Needs Block	Post -16 funding
Element 3	High Needs Block	High Needs Block	High Needs Block	High Needs Block

Top-up funding

- Top up is paid per pupil for the duration at the setting; but place funding is based on commissioned number of places and fully funded irrespective of the occupancy.
- **The department does not expect top-up funding to contribute to or subsidise**
 - overheads attributable to other budgets within the school or college, and funded from other sources, for example, residential accommodation funded from the local authority's social care budget or adult education provided by a college
 - costs that would have had to have been met even if it had no pupils or students with high needs, for example, the salary of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) required by all mainstream schools
 - the costs of legal action against local authority decisions on assessment, provision, and top-up funding, including support for parents seeking SEN tribunal judgments on such local authority decisions
 - the cost of educational and other assessments (both non-statutory and EHC needs assessments), for example, by Educational Psychologists

Notional SEN Budget: What is it?

Under the regulation 11(3) of the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2023, Local Authorities must identify for each mainstream school a notional amount using the funds from the schools' block to guide schools in their spending to meet the costs, up to £6,000 per pupil, of additional support for the school's pupils with special educational needs (SEN)

- The notional SEN budget is not a separate budget.
- It is an ***identified amount within a mainstream school budget share. (Notional)***
- It is ***intended as a guide*** for a school's spending decisions and is ***neither a target*** nor a constraint on a school's duty to use its 'best endeavours' to secure special provision for its pupils with SEN.
- This budget is not intended to provide £6,000 for every pupil with SEN, as most support costs less.

Notional SEN Budget: Calculation

Most Local Authorities calculate their schools' notional SEN budget using a combination of factors from its schools funding formula. It is expected the calculation of the notional SEN budget to include:

- a) a small part of the basic entitlement funding
- b) a larger part of deprivation funding, reflecting the higher prevalence of lower-level SEN amongst disadvantaged pupils
- c) the majority or whole of the low prior attainment factor funding, as this is the best proxy we currently have for pupils with low-cost, high-incidence SEN

Hillingdon uses the following percentages and the national funding formula factors in calculating the notional SEN budget.

School Funding Formula Factors	Primary Notional SEN		Secondary Notional SEN	
	Notional SEN (%)	Amount '000	Notional SEN (%)	Amount '000
1) Basic Entitlement Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)	3.6%	£4,064	2.3%	£2,564
2) Deprivation	45.0%	£6,265	34.0%	£5,196
4) Mobility	18.0%	£99	15.0%	£28
5) Low prior attainment	94.0%	£9,827	81.0%	£6,055
6) Lumpsum	3.7%	£398	1.6%	£55
Total		£20,652		£13,897

Notional SEN Budget: Utilisation

Schools Responsibility

- All schools are expected to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, in accordance with their duties under the Equality Act 2010, **whether they have SEN or not**. The revenue cost of any special educational provision of such arrangements may be met from the school's SEN notional budget.
- The SENCo is expected to be aware of their school's notional SEN budget and to be actively engaged with the senior leadership of the school in deciding what to spend on SEN support and provision.
- **Duty:** Produce and publish an annually updated SEND information report on the school's website. (Ref: SEND code of practice 2015)

Hillingdon Top up values

- As part of the Safety Value Requirements, Hillingdon has been reviewing all its mainstream, special and SRP banding.

Ref. Safety Valve Plan – Specific condition - 3.8 *Conduct a review of banding arrangements.*

To ensure that there is a **fair, transparent and effective funding system** that supports:

- the right provision / support being in place at the right time linked to evidenced needs;
 - efficient and effective use of funding / resource
- Hillingdon has completed the banding review for mainstream schools and special schools.

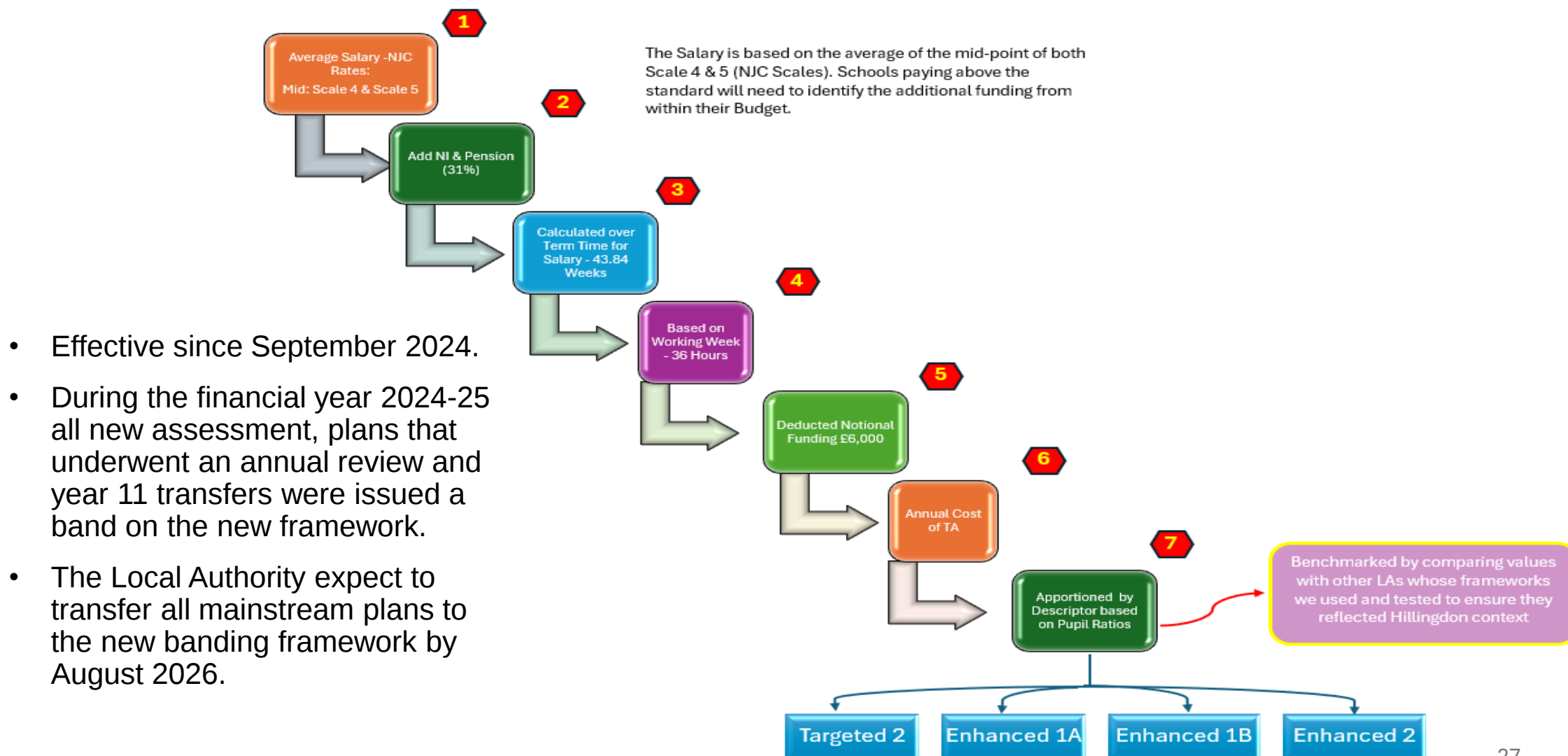
Mainstream Top up funding : Levels of Need

Targeted 1 Early Support Funding (No EHCP but will meet guidance for Early Support Funding)	Children and young people whose needs require support beyond quality first teaching and school-based targeted support and intervention, as set out in the OAP Guidance for Hillingdon. The level of resourcing exceeds what the school can provide from its SEND budget. However, if these needs can be addressed through short term funding early and quickly, it could result in the child / young person making good progress, prevent needs from escalating and enable them to access the curriculum within the ordinary offer at the school. May also be used to support transition from EHCP to SEND Support.
Targeted 2 EHCP £2,390	Children require a level of additional or different SEN support at times throughout the day (up to 1/3 of lessons), including moderate interventions.
Enhanced 1 EHCP A £4,787 B £9,101	Children and young people who need ongoing strategies and support across a large part of the day (up to 2/3 of lessons), including some specialist interventions specifically designed for their needs. They need a mix of support at whole class, group and individual level but may need lower (A) or higher (B) levels of support at times.
Enhanced 2 EHCP £12,877	Children and young people who need ongoing strategies and support across the majority / all of the day, including specialist and frequent interventions specifically designed for their needs. This may be delivered in different ways. The level of resourcing required is at a higher level than that required for provision at the Enhanced 1 support level.
Exceptional EHCP	Children and young people who require the highest levels of support in a mainstream setting and are likely to meet the admissions guidance for a specialist setting (SRP or special school) or have very high levels of need due to specific circumstances.

Full details of the new mainstream banding framework can be found here: [Hillingdon Mainstream SEND Banding Framework](#)



Mainstream Top up funding : How the rates were calculated



Special School Top up Funding

- Hillingdon co-produced a new set of special school descriptors with special school leaders which came to effect on 1st April 2025.
- This model replaces the previous banded model that was 10 years old
- To ensure fairness and transparency, Hillingdon commissioned a specialist SEND consultant to lead the review.
- Local special school leaders helped create the new framework, ensuring it accurately represents the range of needs
- Benchmarking against other authorities
- Special schools and LA officers have worked together on moderation to ensure descriptors are understood by all in the same way (CYP moving from one school on C will remain on the same descriptor in other school until progress is made and changes can apply)
- Implementation Guidance – published on Local Offer

Special School Top up Funding Bands

Band	Summary Descriptor
A	Extremely complex and very challenging lifelong behavioural needs that significantly impact on all aspects of learning and living. Severe learning disabilities (SLD) and likely to have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or on a pathway to diagnosis.
B	Very early developmental stage. Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities. Some pupils will be learning at very early developmental stage but show potential for greater progress once their very complex physical, sensory and health needs are met.
C	Very early developmental state. Co-existing profound learning disabilities and ASD or similar presenting needs without a diagnosis and associated additional needs, including behavioural that can frequently be dysregulated.
D	Early developmental state and sensory processing needs. May have a diagnosis of ASD or similarity presenting needs without a diagnosis and associated additional needs, including behaviours that can frequently be dysregulated.
E	Severe or moderate learning disabilities with severe physical and / or medical / health (including emotional health) needs. Some will have severe or moderate learning disabilities and severe emotional health related needs and associated difficulties that need short term additional support to learn to be part of larger class learning in a specialist context.
F	Substantial and lifelong learning disability needing support into adult life - potential for supported living and work arrangement.
G	Learning disabilities and additional complex needs that impact significantly on learning and development - possible pathways to accreditation and work
SEMH 1	Social, emotional and mental health needs that have impacted on social and emotional development and access to learning and process. With the right early support will make good progress and are likely to be able to transition back to mainstream education. These pupils are most likely to be in primary provision.
SEMH 2	High levels of social, emotional and mental health needs, including anxiety that may manifest in internalised behaviours (withdrawal) or externalised behaviours (including masking) that impacts access to learning and progress
SEMH 3	Profound / extreme levels of behaviour that places them and those around them at serious risk.

Special Schools Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) 2025-26

- **Protection Against Budget Reduction:** The core purpose of the MFG is to ensure that the total budget of a special school, based on per-pupil funding, does not decrease from one financial year to the next providing financial stability.
- For 2025-2026, the MFG percentage is 0%. This means LAs cannot set top-up funding rates that would result in a lower overall budget for the school compared to the previous year, without a disapplication process.
- MFG Calculation excludes TPAG, TPECG 2024 and CSBG.
- **Disapplication Process:** If an LA believes it has exceptional circumstances that necessitate reducing a special school's top-up funding, leading to a budget decrease, they must formally apply for a disapplication of the MFG condition from the Secretary of State. These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Early years SEND inclusion fund (SENIF)

- This funding is intended to **support the low-level and emerging needs** of children with SEN who are taking up the early year's entitlements.
- Hillingdon's SENIF is **allocated from the Early Years Block** of the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- Who can receive SEN Inclusion Fund:
 - Any child who is below compulsory school age with a level of SEN and / or disability who attend an Ofsted registered early years provider that provides government funded places in the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - Any child with SEN who is eligible for the entitlements, are of school age, and have deferred their entry to reception. This should have been agreed by the headteacher, Local Authority Admissions Team and the parent. This should be recorded on the Council data system as being educated out of year group.
- The Local authority has initiated a review of SENIF criteria, application process and the funding levels which is currently being coproduced with early years education providers.
- Existing arrangements will operate until such time the new guidance is introduced.

Non-Statutory EHCP Exceptional Threshold Payments

- Additional funding to support schools with disproportionately high number of pupils with SEN needs.
- Exceptional Threshold Funding is provided at the LA's discretion based on DfE guidance and reviewed annually.
- Considered part of the core funding to support all SEN pupils rather than being allocated to individual pupils
- **Eligibility & Calculation:**
 - **Eligible Schools:** Hillingdon Mainstream academies and maintained schools.
 - **Basis:** Calculated using total FTE of Hillingdon EHCP pupils over schools October census (excludes pupils in resource provisions)
 - **Qualifying Threshold:** Any LBH school where the mainstream EHCP percentage of LBH pupils is above 3.5% (FY 2024-25)
 - **Funding calculation:** £6,000 is allocated to every pupil above the 3.5% threshold

Non-Statutory Early Support Funding (ESF) and SEND Exceptional Funding (SENDEX)

ESF

ESF is used to allocate High Needs Block funding to mainstream schools for pupils who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) but have significant additional needs that require support beyond what is typically funded through the school's SEND Notional Budget.

This funding is intended to provide short-term additional support to help these children make progress mostly limited to two terms.

The child or young person must have a "My Support Plan" in place with at least one cycle of the "Assess, Plan, Do, Review" process documented

SENDEX

SENDEX is allocated from the High Needs Block and is reserved for applications from educational settings where children or young people are presenting with exceptional and unexpected circumstances.

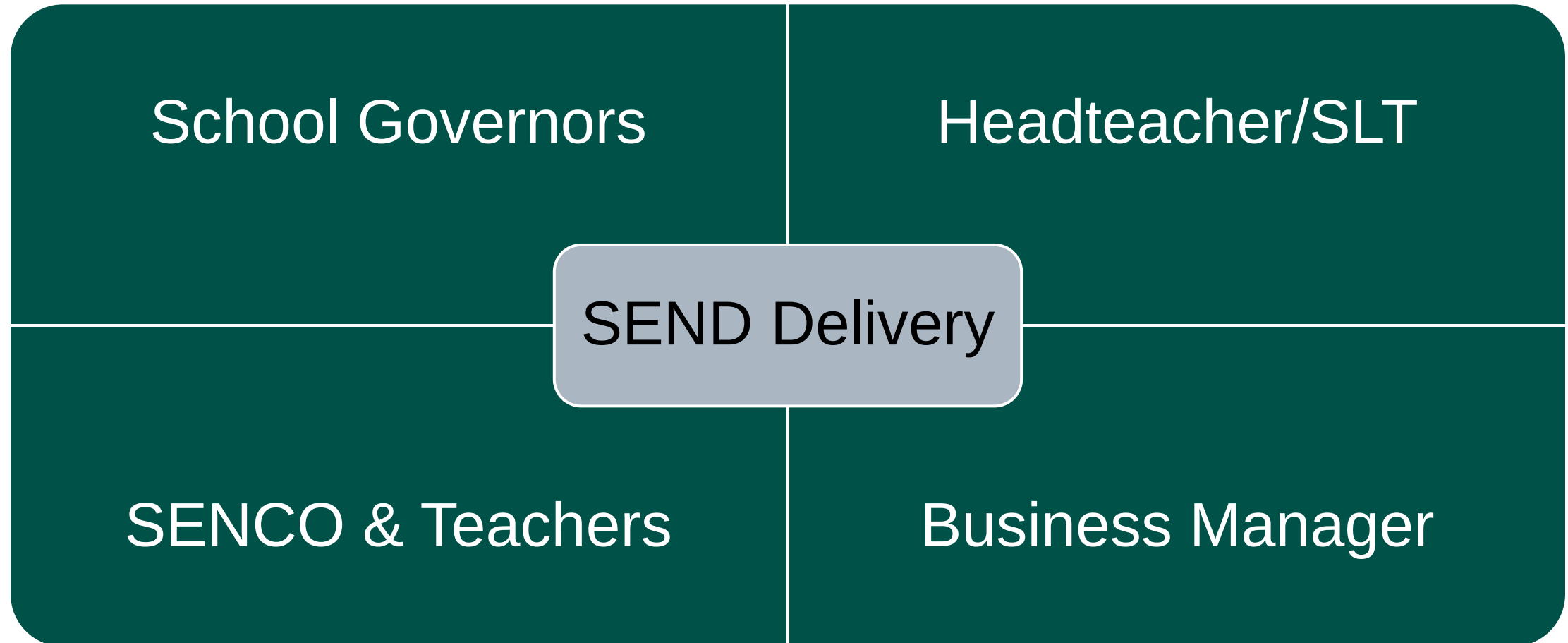
Their needs might not be fully identified yet due to unknown factors, or they are likely to meet the threshold for an EHCP needs assessment, or an assessment has just been initiated.

Therefore, SENDEX is a short-term immediate funding allocation for a maximum of 26 weeks.

This funding is temporary suspended for the FY 2025-26.

Effective SEND Delivery: Principles & School's Duties

Roles in SEND Education in Schools



Business Managers Role

How could the school support and strengthen the Business Manager's role in delivering value in SEND?



Business Manager

1

Strengthen Collaboration and Communication

Establish formal, regular communication channels and joint planning meetings specifically focused on SEND resource management, involving the SBM, SENCO, Headteacher, and a designated SEND Governor.

This ensures a shared understanding of needs, priorities, budget constraints, reporting and responsibilities, fostering a cohesive approach to resource allocation.

Business Manager

2

Invest in Targeted SBM Professional Development

Ensure SBMs have access to high-quality Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

Specifically addressing the complexities of SEND funding (including Notional SEN Budget calculations, High Needs top-up processes, and place funding), procurement regulations for specialist equipment and services, relevant SEND legislation (Children and Families Act 2014, Equality Act 2010), and effective contract management for therapeutic services.

Business Manager

3

Embed SEND in Strategic Financial Planning

Move beyond treating SEND funding as a separate budget line. Fully integrate SEND resource planning into the school's overarching strategic financial planning cycle and the School Development/Improvement Plan.

This process should be led collaboratively by the Headteacher and SBM, ensuring long-term financial sustainability for SEND provision is considered alongside whole-school priorities.

Business Manager

4

Leverage Resource Management Tools and Benchmarking

Actively promote and utilise available tools for efficiency and VfM analysis.

This includes consistent use of the DfE's financial benchmarking service to compare SEND-related spending (e.g., staffing ratios, per-pupil support costs) with similar schools, employing Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning (ICFP) principles, and using tools like the SFVS/SRMSAC checklists and contract management software to drive efficiency and evidence compliance.

Business Manager

5	Clearly Defined Role	Governing body should ensure the SBM role is appropriately resourced (in terms of time allocation and support) to effectively manage the significant and complex duties associated with SEND
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Use of Teaching Assistants in delivering SEND

Recent report by **Education Endowment Foundation** on deployment of teaching assistants makes the following five recommendations.

Effective practice

1. Deploy TAs in ways that enable all pupils to access high-quality teaching

2. Deploy TAs to scaffold learning and to develop pupils' independence

3. Deploy TAs to deliver well-chosen, evidence based, structured interventions where appropriate

Effective implementation

4. Prepare and train staff around effective TA deployment

5. Engage all staff in the process of implementing effective TA deployment

Recommendations

1

Deploy TAs in ways that enable all pupils to access high-quality teaching

TAs should supplement – not replace – the teacher. This means that pupils who struggle most should spend at least as much time with the teacher as other pupils, if not more.

- Ensure all pupils have access to high-quality teaching with their class teacher.
- Ensure working relationships between teachers and TAs meet all pupils' needs, with the teacher retaining responsibility for all pupils.
- Support teachers and TAs to identify practices which inhibit pupil learning and engage in effective alternatives.

Recommendations

2

Deploy TAs to scaffold learning and to develop pupils' independence

Leaders should ensure TAs are prepared to engage in scaffolding practices that support pupils' learning and ability to learn independently. Supporting pupil independence should be a key consideration of TA deployment.

- Equip TAs with a range of scaffolding strategies appropriate to the age, subject, and specific individual needs of pupils they work with.
- Remove scaffolds over time to promote independent learning, with teachers supporting TAs to make those judgements.
- Ensure pupils have the opportunity to attempt tasks independently before intervening appropriately when they can't proceed.

Recommendations

3

Deploy TAs to deliver well- chosen, evidence based, structured interventions where appropriate

The evidence shows that TAs can support pupils effectively through structured interventions. However, these need to be carefully considered, monitored, and linked to the classroom to ensure positive outcomes for pupils.

- Reflect on the purpose of interventions and engage with the evidence base before deploying TAs to deliver structured interventions.
- Monitor progress to be sure the benefit of the intervention outweighs time away from the classroom.
- Support teachers and TAs to engage in bridging practices that connect learning between interventions and the classroom.

Recommendations

4

Prepare and train staff around effective TA deployment

School leaders should ensure staff are on the same page about the role of the TA and how they can most effectively support pupils. Ensuring teachers and TAs are well prepared to work in these roles increases the likelihood that TA deployment can have a positive impact on pupils.

- Provide clarity on the role of the TA for all in the school.
- Enable TAs to be effective in their role and teachers to work effectively with TAs, through effective professional development.
- Develop ongoing coordination and communication so that teachers and TAs are prepared for their day-to-day roles.

Recommendations

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Engage all staff in the process of implementing effective TA deployment

Effective TA deployment is complex and dependent on a range of factors. School leaders should focus on implementation as they look to embed effective practices.

- Ensure TA deployment is informed by both the underpinning evidence and the challenges of putting it into practice.
- Engage and align the school community to build a shared understanding of good TA practice.
- Be deliberate about deployment decisions, which should be taken in the context of the school and its current priorities.