

Questions submitted for SEND Finance Workshop 6th May 2025

Question Received	Response
How the LA plan to meet the increasing level of need in mainstream primary schools when so many EHCNA's are being unlawfully rejected at the panel phase	By offering additional support to schools at the pre-statutory level through SAS advisory service training, OAP workshops, and the ESF funding stream, we aim to address needs as early as possible. The SEND Partnership is developing a SEND QA framework to enhance the quality of EHCNAs through comprehensive training and support. Additionally, we strive for greater school participation in the SEND Panel to ensure transparency and consistency in decision-making, with all members adhering equally to SEND legislation.
How schools can make best use of the new banding since EHCP funding has been significantly decreased	The EHCP funding has been aligned with other local authorities and values for some children have gone up, so it has not been a decreased for all. The funding mechanism has changed to reflect mainstream school and special school environment as well as the type of needs that are expected to be met. But it is important to acknowledge that this is a financially challenging time for all and that everyone is required to work ensuring efficient use of resources. Hence the best holistic approach is to ensure that all settings use the descriptors to match the pupil's needs with the appropriate band, ensuring that the level of support is justified and clearly documented. Allocating resources to pupils may involve re-evaluating current support plans and making adjustments based on the new banding descriptors. Implementing group interventions where possible to maximise the impact of available resources is also something that should be looked at in line with the banding framework guidance. For example, small group sessions for pupils with similar needs can be more cost-effective than one-on-one support. Another way forward can be fostering collaboration among staff to share best practices and strategies for supporting pupils with SEND. Regular training sessions can help staff stay informed about the new banding model and how to apply it effectively building on OAP guidance.
How the notional budget actually works in reality as the numbers just don't add up	workshop covers this
The justification of the hourly rate allocated for EHCPs when it doesn't cover the level of staff needed to meet the child's needs.	The new banding model is designed to address the needs of children and young people (CYP) through a variety of interventions, not just one-on-one support. Please refer to the banding guidance for more details. The values for each band have been calculated based on staffing costs provided by schools and benchmarking with other local authorities, including both inner and outer London. More details in the workshop.
General SEND e.g. the notional £6000.00 as well as funding for those with EHCPs	workshop covers this
How are EHCPs banded when the schools are no longer required to submit costing provisions maps?	Workshop covers this. For more details, please consult the banding guidance for detailed information on how the values for each band have been determined. Note that the banding working group collaboratively developed the descriptors, so there is no need to cost the provision map. If a pupil's profile matches a specific descriptor, the funding is automatically linked to that profile.
How are we supposed to provide Early Intervention when funding to Early Years is so limited (no notional budget, no ESF,	SENDEX is not for early intervention Appropriate funding streams explained in the workshop should be used to provide early intervention. ESF and EYIF

pause in SENDEX, long time to get EHCP, tiny fund for EYIF)	is not part of new banding model with descriptors to support allocation of resources in a fair and transparent way
Delivering early interventions with very limited funding	workshop covers all available funding streams
Anything to do with how children are identified for each band	Banding framework provides all details and workshops covers the details of all elements of funding CYP attract in a particular type of educational setting
The shortfall of funding for Sen pupils with high needs awaiting a Sen specialist placement	The new banding model implements exceptional funding which is currently being developed. The descriptors are worked on with educational settings.
What are the new banding for SRP Units please?	The banding framework for SRPs and DUs will be reviewed, and descriptors will be coproduced to ensure that it is aligned with other type of provision
Minimum funding guarantee	workshop covers this
All funding streams	workshop covers this
Questions may arise during the workshop in relation to implications for schools. Given the recent changes to ESF not being renewed, this has huge implications in relation to supporting pupils, staffing and budgets and personally I feel this was not made transparent to schools during the restructure	workshop covers funding streams
Can we discuss virements? I think this would be an interesting topic for conversation	this is a financial term and not relevant to this workshop
Funding available	workshop covers this
Info on the new funding model	workshop covers this
Does the threshold payment get calculated automatically or do we need to apply for it?	This is calculated automatically
What is the reason for the ESF funding - is it to get them back on track or funding before an EHCP is granted	Please refer to the new ESF Framework available on Local Offer Non-statutory funding - Hillingdon Council under Early Support Funding bottom of the page with the clarification. This funding is intended to provide short-term additional support to help close the gap for statutory school aged children with needs that exceed what would ordinarily be expected at SEND support but with short term intensive support, will help children for their needs to be met. It is not intended to be a stop gap before an EHCP but rather prevent needs escalating by closing gaps at an earlier point.
The ratios TA to pupil only works if there are peers of similar provision/needs. - what if there are no others?	As per the banding working group discussions it is expected from schools to meet the range of needs within group interventions.
How do we access exceptional funding? What happen if a mainstream school is named on the EHCP? but the needs would be of that normally met in special. How is this documented and does panel decide this? Do the special school top up funding bands guide the exceptional funding?	The exceptional funding is being worked on, and the calculation will take into account the mainstream environment but also greater needs. It will be banded model as others hence it will require evidence to show that CYP meets special school descriptors. Special schools will not top up anything as the CYP will not be on special school roll, hence the separate banding allocation to ensure mainstream school have sufficient resources to meet the needs.
Who decides/moderates schools' judgements of the special school funding band	All special schools do it together and will be doing it via regular SEND panel to ensure consistency, fairness and transparency.

SENDCo costs can't be accounted from top-up funding, can it be allocated against notional funding?	The SEND Code of Practice makes clear that the notional SEN budget is not ring-fenced – it forms part of the school's overall budget. Hence, the salary and associated costs of a SENCO can legitimately be met from the notional SEN budget. However, most of the schools chooses to use the notional SEN budget to meet the element 2 cost of send support and EHCP pupils.
Can we have the special school bands?	These will be shared shortly with all
How we access backdated exceptional funding for those children who fall into the exceptional descriptor	The LA will confirm this after the exceptional funding is finalised.