

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, you have the right to ask for an EHC needs assessment.

[How can I find out what support and resources my child is getting?](#)

The first step is to talk with your child's teacher or the SENCO. 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. 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.

[Where can I get further information, advice or support ?](#)

The 'Local Offer' is the place to find out about the services available locally and the arrangements that schools and others are expected to make for children and young people with SEN.

Who to contact

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Please contact us to request translation of Council information into Braille, audio tape or a foreign language.



A valuable source of advice and information offering support to parents/carers/young people by listening to their concerns around SEND.



St. Helens Council

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St. Helens



Funding for SEN in mainstream schools



St. Helens Council

What is SEN funding?

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

The SEND code of Practice 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” 6.2

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, this is called “delegated” funding because it is given (delegated) to schools by the local authorities or the **Educational Funding Agency** from money they receive from central government. 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 members of pupils with special needs. Funding for SEN provision is from three sources (Elements):

Element 1

Schools get money for each pupil, based on actual pupil numbers. This is called the **Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)** and it is part of schools’ delegated funding. Some of this money is for general SEN provision. This might, for example, include the cost of providing the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and some other resources. Each local authority sets the AWPU for their schools, and the Education Funding Agency sets the AWPU for academies and free schools. The AWPU differs according to whether the school is primary or secondary etc.

Element 2

Element 2 funding is SEN-specific, and is 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. SEN support is for children who used to have help through **School Action** and **School Action plus**

The local authority provides this funding for schools it is responsible for using a formula that determines the amount of money the schools get. The formula gives more money to schools that in the past had more children on free school meals and more children who were not doing as well as others in English and Maths. The **Educational Funding Agency** provides this funding for academies and free schools.

Element 2 funding is also part of schools’ delegated budget.

Government guidance says schools should provide up to the first £6,000 (on top of the AWPU) of additional or different support for those children who need it, including those with an **Education, Health and Care plan**. 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 help.

Element 3

Where a school has children needing very expensive provision which might absorb a lot of SEN support funding, the school can request additional funding. The local authority is responsible for managing **Element 3** funding (sometimes called the ‘high needs block’), which can be used to make specific provision for an individual child or group of children, if the school or academy can show it is necessary.