**SEN Funding**

**Mainstream schools (LA-maintained schools and academies)**

Funding for pupils’ education is delivered using a 'place-plus' approach. Place-plus means that schools receive funds based on their pupil numbers (place) and additional funds based on other factors, such as deprivation and low prior attainment (plus).

There are three elements to funding for pupils with SEN:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element 1***(place)*  AWPU  Universal funding | Age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) **(Pupil Led Funding)**  This is funding received by all schools based on actual pupil numbers. This represents core budget associated with general provision for all pupils in the school including pupils with SEND. Therefore, it relates to costs that the school would have to meet even if it had no pupils with high needs. |
| **Element 2***(plus)*  Targeted  **Notional SEN budget** *(this is described as a ‘****notional****’ budget because schools can decide how to use this funding to meet the needs of those children with special educational needs in their school)* | This is funding received by all schools and is based on a national funding formula, taking into consideration income deprivation and low prior attainment. Schools are required to use **up to** £6000 of their budget per pupil to meet the needs of children with SEN. This doesn't mean that they have to spend £6000 on every pupil with SEN, but should identify the provision required as part of their graduated approach to meeting need. |
| **Element 3***(plus)*  Targeted/specialist  Top-up funding from 'High Needs Block'. The High Needs Block comes from the government to the local authority, and can only be used to fund the education provision of children who have a ‘high’ level of need. | This is funding to meet the needs of individual pupils with SEN. This is in **addition** to elements 1 and 2. The local authority is responsible for allocating this funding to schools. In Dudley this is allocated through **an education, health and care plan (EHCP).** This is to meet the needs of children with complex or significant SEN whose needs can't be met through elements 1 and 2 alone.  A **matrix** is used to determine the level of funding that mainstream schools will receive based on the assessed needs of individual children. |

Core Funding

(Per Pupil Funding Delegated Budget covers all pupils inc. SEND)

Notional SEN Funding (up to £6,000 and included within Schools Budget)

EHCPP

Top Up Funding (over £6,000 and funded via Local Authority High Needs Block)

Accountability for High Needs Funding is through the local schools forum. Dudley [**Schools Forum**](https://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/community-forums/dudley-schools-forum/) members retain oversight of, and regularly review, the high needs budget. Whilst responsibility for decision making sits with the LA, schools forum members support LA officers to make decisions about how funding is allocated to best need the needs of all children in Dudley who require access to high needs funding to access their entitlement to education.

**The SEND Matrix**

The level of funding required to support an EHCP is determined by a multi-agency panel using evidence provided by the school as well as information that has been gathered during the EHC needs assessment process. Funding is allocated based on a point scoring matrix that converts into a financial value based on the level of assessed need.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Matrix Group** | **Points** | **Notional SEN**  Element 2 | **Top-up Funding**  Element 3 | **Total Funding**  Elements 2 & 3 |
| 1 | 4 - 34 | £6,000 | £0 | £6,000 |
| 2 | 35 - 47 | £6,000 | £2,000 | £8,000 |
| 3 | 48 -58 | £6,000 | £3,000 | £9,000 |
| 4 | 59 -69 | £6,000 | £4,000 | £10,000 |
| 5 | 70 - 84 | £6,000 | £6,000 | £12,000 |
| 6 | 85 - 99 | £6,000 | £8,000 | £14,000 |
| 7 | 100+ | £6,000 | £10,000 | £16,000 |

For more information about the matrix and how it is used to allocate funding. please refer to the Matrix Guidance.

**Funding in maintained special schools**

Funding to support the seven special schools in Dudley is transferred from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs (HN) block. The funding is determined based on the designation and unique characteristics of each school.

Funding is transferred on a unit cost per agreed place for each school, the average unit cost for 2021/22 for Dudley special schools is £23,200, but this differs between the designation of each school with a range between £16,500 and £28,500.

Funding is reviewed annually and follows prescribed and assessed requirements of each school, based on up to date designation requirements and commissioned placements.

[**Funding in mainstream special units and resourced provision, and pupil referral units (PRUs)**](https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/special-educational-needs-sen-support/how-is-sen-funded-in-schools/)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Place funding | All schools receive £10,000 per commissioned place. This is paid in two ways, the first £4,000 (approx.) is included within the delegated budget, as long as the place is occupied on census day, the remaining £6,000 is topped up from the 'High Needs Block' of funding that is allocated to each local authority. Local authorities must determine the number of commissioned places that are required each year. |
| Top-up funding | This is funding allocated on a per pupil basis to meet individual needs of pupils. Top up funding is allocated by a multi-agency resource panel using a banding criteria which takes into account a range of needs. Top up values will vary across settings. |

**Pupil premium**

Schools may be entitled to additional funding through the pupil premium where they have pupils who meet the criteria for this. This funding is intended to improve outcomes for those children eligible for it, and isn't linked to SEN. Where a child is eligible and has SEN, schools should ensure that pupil premium is taken into consideration when planning support and provision to meet the child’s special educational needs.

| **Pupil eligibility criteria** | **Amount of funding for each primary-aged pupil per year** | **Amount of funding for each secondary-aged pupil per year** | **Funding is paid to** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Pupils who are eligible for free school meals, or have been eligible in the past 6 years** | £1345 | £955 | School |
| **Pupils who have been adopted from care or have left care** | £2345 | £2345 | School |
| **Children who are looked after by the local authority** | £2345 | £2345 | Local authority |

\*Figures are as at September 2021.

**Independent Special Schools**

Occasionally Dudley local authority SEN Team may place a child in an independent specialist setting that has been approved for this purpose by the secretary of state, or in a non-maintained special school. These types of schools are specially organised to make special educational provision for children/young people with special educational needs. A [**list of these schools**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-special-schools-and-colleges) is published by the Department for Education (DfE). Where parental preference is for an independent special school to be named in Section I of the EHCP, Dudley SEN Team will only name a school from either of these lists if local mainstream schools or maintained specialist schools/specialist academies aren't able to meet assessed need and where this represents an efficient use of resources (generally this will mean that there is not a more cost effective option that could be considered locally). In Dudley decisions about whether an independent special school placement is required will be made by a placement panel.

Where the local authority name an independent special school in an EHCP this is funded through the High Needs Block. The cost of placing a child in an independentspecial school is determined by what the school charges. A school's charge may be regulated by the West Midland Regional Framework and the level of assessed need.

When the local authority makes decisions about funding high cost independent special school places, it has a duty to ensure best value for money. By that we mean that we need to strive to secure effective and efficient provision at the best price.

[**Independent mainstream schools**](https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/special-educational-needs-sen-support/how-is-sen-funded-in-schools/)

Parents may choose to pay for their child to attend an independent mainstream school. The local authority is not under a duty to name that school in the EHCP. However, it must have regard to the general principal that children should be educated in accordance with their parents’ wishes, as long as this doesn't mean unreasonable public expenditure (Section 9 of the Education Act 1996).

In Dudley this means that where the local authority has prepared an EHCP, and has identified a state-funded mainstream school or academy that can meet the child’s assessed special educational needs, parents may choose to arrange for their child to be educated in an independent mainstream school. However, Dudley local authority will not fund the cost of the school placement in these circumstances or any cost associated with the child’s special educational needs where this would normally be met through the resources available in a maintained mainstream school or academy.

[**Residential overnight stays**](https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/special-educational-needs-sen-support/how-is-sen-funded-in-schools/)

Occasionally children may attend a local special school that offers a residential element. Overnight board and lodging will only be funded where this provision is written into an EHCP, and where the assessment has identified that an overnight stay is necessary to meet an identified need. It's expected that all educational provision will be provided at the school during the course of the normal school day.

## [Elective home education](https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/special-educational-needs-sen-support/how-is-sen-funded-in-schools/) (EHE)

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents have the right to educate children, including those with SEN, at home. Home education must be suitable to the child’s age, ability, aptitude and SEN.

Where parents have chosen to home educate a child with an EHCP and the SEN Team is satisfied that the arrangements made by the parents are suitable, Section I of the EHCP will be amended to name the type of school that would be suitable if the child were to continue to attend a school. In addition, Section I and will also state that parents have made their own arrangements under section 7 of the Education Act 1996. The LA has a duty to continue to review the EHCP annually to ensure that the child’s special educational needs continue to be met. However, where parents have chosen to educate their child at home and where there is an education provision or type of provision available to meet the assessed SEN of the child, the LA is not under a duty to arrange or fund the special educational arrangements set out in Section F of the EHCP. This means that the cost of education provision won't be met by the LA.

Our[**Elective Home Education**](https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/education-support-service/educating-your-child-at-home/)policy provides more information about EHE in relation to children with SEND.