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EDUCATION PROVISION AND FUNDING FOR PUPILS WITH SENSORY IMPAIRMENT IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this briefing paper is to help local authorities develop and/or review their arrangements for funding pupils with sensory impairment in mainstream schools by:
- bringing together funding guidance issued by the government with the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and
 - providing case examples that illustrate the different approaches that are used by some authorities to supporting children with a sensory impairment.

Key points:

Most readers will be familiar with the basic structure of SEND? funding with its 3 elements of funding and the requirement on schools to fund the first £6,000 of additional support before a LA provides additional top up funding. They will also be familiar with the definition of additional support: *“the additional education provision that a pupil needs in order to access the school’s or Academy’s offer of teaching and learning”*. They may be less familiar with the detail:

- Element 1 core funding in 2014/15: Over 80% of Local Authorities set AWPU values within the range £2,250 to £3,250 for primary schools. For key stage3 AWPUs, 73% of local authorities are allocating between £3,500 and £4,500 per pupil. For key stage 4, the majority (77%) are allocating between £4,000 and £5,000. (paras 2.3-2.4)
- Element 2 - notional SEN budgets:
 - In 2014/15 on average 10% of the schools block was allocated to notional SEN budgets but there was substantial variation between LAs. (2.13-2.14)
 - The DfE required LAs to delegate an “appropriate” level of SEN funding. But it emphasises that the level of notional SEN budgets is for local determination and it is not prepared to provide further guidance on the amount that should be allocated

other than making *“sure that schools have sufficient resources to meet those costs up to the £6,000”* (paras 2.10-2.11)

- The notional SEN budget is notional and it *“should not be regarded by schools and academies as a substitute for their own budget planning and decisions about how much they need to spend on SEN support, or as a fixed budget sum for spending by schools”*. (para 2.12)

3. Element 3 – Top up funding:

- Top up rates should not only reflect the pupil’s needs but the cost of provision: *“top-up funding must, however, reflect a pupil’s needs and the cost of the provision they receive in a particular setting. This is likely to mean that the level of top-up funding will be different in different settings”* (para 2.19)
- LAs are able to use the high needs block funding to top up the budgets of schools which have a disproportionately high number of high needs pupils on roll (2.22-2.24)
- LAs are able to use resource bands to help determine levels of top up but the majority are using an individualised approach. The relative merits of both approaches are discussed in paragraph 2.20-2.21)

4. SEND Code of Practice:

- The Code stresses that the notional SEN budget is *“not a ring-fenced amount, and it is for the school to provide high quality appropriate support from the whole of its budget schools consider their strategic approach to meeting SEN in the context of the total resources available”*
- There is a requirement for the local offer to provide information on funding arrangements for SEN in mainstream schools including what schools should be expected to fund from delegated budgets and targeted and specialist support over and above that normally provided by schools.

2. THE ELEMENTS OF FUNDING FOR PUPILS WITH SENSORY IMPAIRMENT IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

- 2.1 Schools receive 2 elements of funding for pupils with sensory impairment with low levels of SEN. For those pupils with higher levels of SEN they will receive a third element (known as “top up”). The 3 elements are described below:

Element 1 - Core Education Funding

- 2.2 This is the delegated mainstream per-pupil funding.

Basic Pupil Entitlement and Age Weighted Pupil Numbers

- 2.3 All local authorities must use a “basic per-pupil entitlement” in their formula budget for schools. Local authorities are able to choose different age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) rates for primary pupils, for key stage 3 pupils and for key stage 4 pupils; but they must specify a primary AWPU of at least £2,000, and key stage 3 and key stage 4 AWPU values of at least £3,000.
- 2.4 The majority (82%) of primary AWPUs selected by local authorities in 2014/15 were between £2,250 to £3,250, although in some areas it was over £4,000. Twenty-one of the 22 local authorities with the highest primary AWPUs are in London.
- 2.5 For key stage 3 AWPUs, 73% of local authorities are allocating between £3,500 and £4,500 per pupil.
- 2.6 For key stage 4, the majority of LAs (77%) allocated between £4,000 and £5,000 per pupil. The authorities with the largest secondary AWPUs are mostly in London.

Other formula factors for the core allocation

- 2.7 In addition to the AWPU local authorities use a range of other factors to allocate funding to mainstream schools including deprivation factors, lower prior attainment, lump sums, English as an additional language, sparsity factors, pupil mobility, looked after children etc.

Element 2: Additional Support Funding

Definition of additional support

- 2.8 Schools receive a notional SEN budget based on proxy indicators of need such as lower prior attainment and indicators of social deprivation. From the delegated budget elements it meets the first £6,000 of the cost of additional support of meeting the needs of a high needs pupil in a year. The DfE defines additional support as:

“the additional education provision that a pupil needs in order to access the school’s or Academy’s offer of teaching and learning”. (Para 92 School Funding Reform Arrangements for 2013-14).

Purpose of the notional budget and requirements on local authorities and schools

- 2.9 DfE guidance sets out the purpose of the notional budget and requirements on local authorities:

“Whichever way local authorities choose to allocate funding for low cost, high incidence SEN, they will still be required to give mainstream schools a notional SEN budget from the Schools Block. This might be made up of funding from the basic per-pupil entitlement, deprivation and low cost, high incidence SEN factors. It is from this notional budget that mainstream schools will be expected to:

- a) meet the needs of pupils with low cost, high incidence SEN; and*
- b) contribute, up to a certain level set by the local authority¹, towards the costs of provision for pupils with high needs (including those with high cost, low incidence SEN) (para 35 School Funding Reform Arrangements for 2013-14).*

“Mainstream settings will be expected to contribute the first £6,000 of additional educational support for high needs pupils. This additional support is provision over and above the standard offer of teaching and learning for all pupils or students in a setting. Pre-16, schools and Academies will continue to receive a clearly-identified notional SEN budget from which to make this contribution” (paragraph 50 2013-14 Revenue Funding Arrangements: Operational Guidance for Local Authorities)

Determining the level of notional SEN budgets

- 2.10 There is a requirement on LAs to provide “an appropriate” level of SEN funding:

“In considering their funding formula for mainstream schools and academies, and the appropriate level of delegation of SEN funding, local authorities must make sure that the budget shares of schools and academies have an appropriate amount that enables them to contribute to the costs of the whole school’s additional SEN support arrangements, up to the mandatory cost threshold of £6,000 per pupil”. Para 88 Schools revenue funding 2015 to 2016 Operational guide

- 2.11 The DfE emphasises that the “appropriate level” is for local determination:

“Local authorities will need to take a view on the level of additional support costs that can be met from each school’s notional SEN budget in order to make sure that schools have sufficient resources to meet those costs up to the £6,000 threshold and to determine which schools might need additional funds from their high needs budget. Despite requests to the Department and EFA that more guidance is given on how much to include in schools’ notional SEN budgets, we think that under the

¹ For 2014/15 all LAs were required to set this contribution at £6,000

current system these decisions are best taken at local level, involving schools forums as appropriate. (Para 89 [Schools revenue funding 2015 to 2016 Operational guide](#))

The notional budget is notional

- 2.12 The DfE also stresses the notional nature of the budget:

This is a notional amount of funding, and should not be regarded by schools and academies as a substitute for their own budget planning and decisions about how much they need to spend on SEN support, or as a fixed budget sum for spending by schools. Para 88 [Schools revenue funding 2015 to 2016 Operational guide Version Dec 14](#)

Levels of Notional SEN Budget and factors used to calculate the budget

- 2.13 Local authorities must specify how much of the funding a school receives through its formula budget constitutes its notional SEN budget.
- 2.14 On average across all LAs, 10% of the total schools budget was allocated to the notional SEN budget in 2014/15. But the amount allocated by individual LAs ranged from 2% to 23%.
- 2.15 Prior attainment is the factor most commonly contributing to notional SEN; 146 of the 147 authorities using the factor in their formula are doing this. Additionally, 126 of these 146 are allocating all prior attainment factor funding to notional SEN budgets. The majority of authorities are also assigning a percentage of their basic entitlement and deprivation funding into notional SEN.
- 2.16 Further detail for the enthusiast is given in appendix 2

Element 3 - Top up Funding for Pupils with High Needs in Mainstream Schools

- 2.17 This funding comes from the local authority (commissioner) to whom the pupil belongs² to help schools provide education support with additional cost which is more than £6,000pa. The purpose of high needs funding is described as:

“In line with the SEND reforms being introduced from September 2014, the high needs funding system is designed to support a continuum of provision for pupils and students with special educational needs (SEN), learning difficulties and disabilities, from their early years to age 25.

High needs funding is intended to support the most appropriate provision for each individual, taking account of parental and student choice, providing appropriate provision in a range of settings, and to avoid perverse incentives”. Paras 77 and 78 [Schools revenue funding 2015 to 2016 Operational guide Version Dec 14](#)

² Normally the LA where the pupil resides or with responsibility for the child if the child is in public care

Definition of High Needs

2.18 The DfE defines high needs as follows:

*“we have defined the threshold between needs that we would expect to be met through mainstream funding and those where additional funding is required. We have set this threshold at **around** £10,000 of education provision per year. We have deliberately defined high needs with regard to a financial threshold, as opposed to an assessment-based threshold, to avoid creating a potential pressure for additional statutory assessments.....*

mainstream schools, academies and colleges will be expected to contribute the first £6,000 of the additional education support costs of a high needs pupil” (para 90 of School Funding Reform Arrangements for 2013-14)

Determining the level of top up – needs and context/cost of provision

2.19 In its guidance the DfE stress that the top up levels must be based on the pupil’s assessed needs and that **top up levels may vary depending on the school the pupil attends**. There is a recognition that top up funding needs to reflect different contexts so while a pupil’s needs may for example match the descriptors for a particular resource band the level of funding may differ depending on the context or provision:

“Top-up funding will be provided on a per-pupil or per-student basis, based on the assessed needs of the pupil or student, and agreed between the commissioner and provider. Top-up funding will flow directly between the commissioner and provider: there will be no need for inter-authority recoupment. It will be paid in or close to the real-time movement of the pupil or student, and we intend to set conditions-of-grant to ensure that this will happen.

The way top-up funding is set and agreed is a matter for local determination. Local authorities will need to work with providers to develop suitable arrangements. Top-up funding must be provided in a way that reflects a pupil’s or student’s needs and the cost of the provision they receive in the setting in which they are placed. It is unlikely that a standard approach that did not take account of the different costs of provision in different settings would do this adequately” (paras 56 and 57 of 2013-14 Revenue Funding Arrangements: Operational Guidance for Local Authorities” 2013-14 Revenue Funding Arrangements: Operational Guidance for Local Authorities

*“Top-up funding is a matter for local determination, and that local authorities may choose to use local banding frameworks to manage top-up funding. **Top-up funding must, however, reflect a pupil’s needs and the cost of the provision they receive in a particular setting. This is likely to mean that the level of top-up funding will be different in different settings.** (Para 109 of School Funding Reform Arrangements for 2013-14)*

“Top-up funding rates are for local authorities to agree with the schools and academies making the provision, and can reflect both the needs of the individual and the cost of meeting those needs in the school or academy”. Para 90 Schools revenue funding 2015 to 2016 Operational guide Version Dec 14

Individualised and Banded Approaches to Top Up – Pros and cons

- 2.20 The guidance recognises that some local authorities may use a banded approach. However, it is important to remember the requirement is on local authorities to fund individual needs. It can be difficult in developing a banding system for individual pupils with sensory impairment attending a mainstream school as each band may still cover a significant range of need so that the top up payment may be higher than is required for a pupil at the lower end of the band and lower than is required for a pupil whose needs are at the upper end of the band.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the two approaches

Individualised approach - Top up based on a child's individual needs and specific to that child	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Ensures funding is more precisely targeted on each child's needs. Helpful where there is only one child in an EY setting. Greater compatibility with the person centred approach required in the SEND Code of Practice</p> <p>It is more capable of recognising context and making necessary adjustment to reflect the fact that the cost of meeting a child's needs in different establishments may vary (see para 57 of <i>2013-14 Revenue Funding Arrangements: Operational Guidance for Local Authorities</i> and para 109 of <i>School Funding Reform Arrangements for 2013-14</i>)</p>	<p>Less transparent system. Assessment has to be very precise and requires tight moderation to ensure consistency across a LA.</p>
Resource Bands	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>There is a greater degree of transparency. Parents and providers can see from the descriptors the level of support/top up the provider will receive for the child. Easier to administer with less reliance on in depth assessment and possibly easier to achieve consistency across an LA area.</p>	<p>Level of top up funding less likely to meet the child's needs particularly if the level of need is at the upper level of the band. Therefore more suited to providers where there are a number of children with top up attending (i.e. where the needs of children at the top end of the resource band are balanced by children with needs at the lower end of the resource band so overall the provider has sufficient funding to meet needs).</p> <p>Less compatible with person centred approaches.</p> <p>Likely to be less flexible in recognising that the cost of support for a child may vary depending on context and characteristics of the establishment. (see para 57 of <i>2013-14 Revenue Funding Arrangements: Operational Guidance for Local Authorities</i> and para 109 of <i>School Funding Reform Arrangements for 2013-14</i>)</p>

- 2.21 NatSIP's straw poll of 14 LAs indicated that the majority (64%) used an individualised approach. In some cases LAs may use resource bands as general guidance but will exercise a degree of discretion and professional judgement on occasions to ensure the pupil's needs can be met.

Adjustments for schools with a disproportionate number of high needs pupils on roll

2.22 Local Authorities can provide additional funding to schools that have a disproportionate number of high needs pupils on their roll:

“Local authorities should continue to provide additional funding outside the main funding formula for mainstream schools and academies on a consistent and fair basis where the number of their high needs pupils cannot be reflected adequately in their formula funding and they should define the circumstances in which additional funding will be provided from their high needs budget.

Similarly, additional funding can also be provided where there are a disproportionate number of pupils with a particular type of SEN. For example, a primary school may have developed a reputation for meeting the needs of high achieving pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, or pupils with physical disabilities, where it is not possible to target additional funding to the school through the prior attainment or other factors.

Based on local authorities’ experience of distributing such additional funding to their schools and academies in 2014-15, local authorities should develop a formula or criteria, agreed with schools well in advance of the next financial year, and should include a clear description of this on the APT³, with the amount of the budget they intend to set aside (and record on the section 251 budget statement) for this purpose. For their formula or criteria, local authorities may consider the number of high needs pupils for whom the school received top-up funding in the previous academic year, and will wish to make sure that their approach does not create perverse incentives for schools to identify additional high needs or SEN pupils solely to generate additional funds for the school. In all cases the formula or criteria should be simple and transparent, and should be devised so that additional funds are targeted only to a minority of schools which have particular difficulties because of their disproportionate number of high needs or SEN pupils or their characteristics.

Paras 92-95 Schools revenue funding 2015 to 2016 Operational guide Version Dec 14

³ Authority Proforma Tool - A LAs formula funding return to the Education Funding Agency

- 2.23 Thus, for example, in Gloucester the number of high needs pupils for whom schools are expected to contribute will be restricted to one for every 75 pupils on roll, rounded to the nearest whole number. For 2014/15 Herefordshire introduced a scheme to limit any primary school's extra SEN costs as follows

Number of primary pupils	Maximum cost of "£6,000" SEN – primary schools
50	£3,000
100	£6,000
150	£9,000
200	£12,000
250	£15,000
300	£18,000
400	£24,000
500	£30,000
600	£36,000

- 2.24 Further examples can be found on page 34 of 2014-15 Revenue Funding Arrangements: Additional information for local authorities 12 December 2013

3 REQUIREMENTS OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE WITH REGARD TO FUNDING

- 3.1 The Code of Practice describes the funding arrangements in mainstream schools echoing funding guidance issued by the DfE. The Code emphasises that the delegated additional support funding (element 2) is "notional" and that schools should be looking to their whole budget to meet the needs of pupils with SEN

"All mainstream schools are provided with resources to support those with additional needs, including pupils with SEN and disabilities. Most of these resources are determined by a local funding formula, discussed with the local schools forum, which is also applied to local academies. School and academy sixth forms receive an allocation based on a national funding formula."

Schools have an amount identified within their overall budget, called the notional SEN budget. This is not a ring-fenced amount, and it is for the school to provide high quality appropriate support from the whole of its budget.

It is for schools, as part of their normal budget planning, to determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEN. The SENCO, head teacher and governing body or proprietor should establish a clear picture of the resources that are available to the school. They should consider their strategic approach to meeting SEN in the context of the total resources available, including any resources targeted at particular groups, such as the pupil premium.

This will enable schools to provide a clear description of the types of special educational provision they normally provide and will help parents and others to understand what they can normally expect the school to provide for pupils with SEN.

Schools are not expected to meet the full costs of more expensive special educational provision from their core funding. They are expected to provide additional support which costs up to a nationally prescribed threshold per pupil per year. The responsible local authority, usually the authority where the child or young person lives, should provide additional top-up funding where the cost of the special educational provision required to meet the needs of an individual pupil exceeds the nationally prescribed threshold. (SEN Code of practice Paras 6.95 to 6.99).

Local Offer and SEN Funding

- 3.2 The SEND Code of Practice sets out the requirement for the local offer to provide information on funding arrangements for SEN in mainstream schools including what schools should be expected to fund from delegated budgets and targeted and specialist support over and above that normally provided by schools

The Local Offer should cover:

- *Support available ... from universal services such as schools ...*
- *Targeted services for children and young people with SEN or disabilities who require additional short-term support over and above that provided routinely as part of universal services*
- *Specialist services for children and young people with SEN or disabilities that require specialised, longer term support.*

*The local authority **must** set out in its Local Offer an authority-wide description of the special educational and training provision it expects to be available in its area and outside This includes information about the arrangements the local authority has for funding children and young people with SEN, including any agreements about how providers will use any budget that has been delegated to them. (Paragraphs 4.31 and 4.32)*

APPENDIX 1 - CASE EXAMPLES OF LA GUIDANCE RELATED TO THE TOP UP FUNDING FOR PUPILS WITH A SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

- A1. Many LAs have established descriptors of needs based on a graduated approach; for each descriptor of need there is usually a description of the provision to be made under various headings such as assessment and planning, curriculum and teaching arrangements or intervention and support, resources required to support that need, evaluation and review. The headings used to describe the provision vary between LAs but they all follow a graduated approach and describe what a school needs to provide with element 1 and 2 funding.
- A2. This appendix gives some examples of need that may trigger additional support. It is not possible to give details of provision without creating an excessively long document but hyperlinks are given to enable readers to see the full documentation. If the links become broken over time you may need to type in the title of the document into a search engine to find the document.
- A.3 It should be noted that:
- (i) while some LAs provide descriptors of a pupils needs by type of SEND some LAs have decided to use generic descriptors of need but put more emphasis on the provision to be made (Medway is an example of using a generic description of need)
 - (ii) the descriptors below are the thresholds for generating top up at a low level. Some LAs have developed descriptors of need and required provision for attracting higher levels of funding sometimes using resource bands
 - (iii) NatSIP has not evaluated and therefore does not recommend a particular approach. The purpose of this appendix is to provide examples of different approaches that LAs may find helpful in comparing and evaluating their approach
 - (iv) So far NatSIP has been unable to identify examples of descriptors specifically for multi-sensory impairment
 - (v) A number of LAs stress the descriptors are broad guidance to help assess whether additional support is required and not strict criteria
 - (vi) Specialist support for education sensory support services is provided at "SEN support" and often to pupils with SI at universal level (e.g. *"All CYP identified with sensory impairment require input from teacher with the mandatory qualifications in the relevant field of sensory loss to regularly assess their needs and advise on support required"*). (Bristol's SEN guidance)

Bradford's Funding of SEN Provision (<http://bit.ly/18B1dWN>)

Bradford uses a banded approach which it refers to as ranges. There are 7 ranges but with range 4 having 4 sub ranges (a-d). Ranges 1-3 set out what schools should provide with their delegated budgets. Top up is provided at Range 4. For the financial year the lowest range 4a for attracted top up funding of £985 while the highest range 7 attracted top up funding of £23,658.

Hearing Impairment⁴

Bradford has developed descriptors for hearing impairment for ranges 1-6 with range 6 attracting top up funding of £14,398 in 2014/15. The descriptor of need to trigger top up funding at range 4 is:

- *"Bilateral moderate or severe permanent hearing loss with no additional learning difficulties"*⁵
- *Severe difficulty accessing spoken language and therefore the curriculum*
- *May have additional language delay associated with hearing loss*
- *Will have hearing aids and may have radio aid*
- *Speech clarity likely to be significantly affected*
- *Difficulties with attention, concentration, confidence and class participation*
- *Auditory Processing Disorder/Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder"*

Visual Impairment⁶

Like HI, descriptors are given for ranges 1-6 with range 7 being reserved for children with multiple complex needs. Descriptors are given for range 4b upwards. The descriptor for range 4b is

"Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI). Range 4 will be those pupils in mainstream with CVI who are experiencing mild, moderate or severe difficulties.

CVI must be diagnosed by an Ophthalmologist. The pupil will typically have good acuities when tested in familiar situations but this will vary throughout the day. A key feature of CVI is that vision varies from hour to hour with the pupil's well-being.

All pupils with CVI will have a different set of difficulties which means thorough assessment is a key aspect. The pupil may have difficulties associated with Dorsal processing stream, Ventral processing stream or a combination of both.

Dorsal stream difficulties include:

- *Difficulties seeing moving objects*
- *Difficulties reading*
- *Difficulties doing more than one thing at a time (e.g. looking and listening)*

⁴ SEN Guidance 2014 Hearing Impairment

⁵ Note profound hearing loss is features in the description for higher funded ranges

⁶ Guidance for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment 2014

Ventral Stream Difficulties include:

- *Inability to recognise familiar faces*
- *Difficulties route finding*
- *Difficulties with visual clutter*
- *Lower visual field loss*

This is not an extensive list, and difficulties may be mild, moderate or severe”.

Bristol: Descriptors of Need

Bristol uses a banded approach which is set out in its guidance “Special educational needs provision for Bristol pupils - Bristol universal descriptors”

Hearing Impairment

Bristol’s guidance on when additional funding is required states:

Additional Funding is likely to be required for children for whom a hearing impairment has been identified and where this has been shown to interfere significantly with the child’s development, particularly speech and language acquisition. These children will mainly be diagnosed as having a permanent sensori-neural hearing impairment and generally, this diagnosis will have been made before the child reaches a pre-school setting. There will be a minority who, because of an illness (such as meningitis), or late diagnosis, will be identified at a later stage. Also, for some children, their hearing impairment may be progressive.

The degree of hearing impairment alone is not an adequate predictor of the likely progress. Such factors as the age of onset of hearing impairment, age at which diagnosis is made, appropriate intervention together with the child’s need for more visual approaches to communication (e.g. British Sign Language) will contribute to this progress and must be taken into account.

The vast majority of these children will have severe language delay and/or lip reading difficulties and/or be lacking in confidence in communicating independently in the classroom.

Cognitive skills of these pupils will cover the full range. Access to a broad and balanced curriculum commensurate with their cognitive skills is required. These pupils are most likely to use personal hearing aids and/or have cochlear implant and FM systems.

Any request for High Needs Band Funding for a child with hearing impairment will need to include the following:

- a) A report from appropriate medical/audiological sources indicating that the child has severe sensori-neural hearing impairment or long term, chronic conductive hearing impairment. As an indicator, a severe sensori-neural hearing impairment would be indicated by an audiogram showing ~~of~~ an average hearing impairment in the better ear of 71-96 dbHL*

- b) A report from an appropriate professional indicating that the hearing impairment is associated with significant delay or disorder in receptive and/or expressive language skills.*
- c) Evidence that the child's hearing difficulties significantly impairs his/her access to the curriculum.*

N.B. If a child suffers traumatic loss of hearing, in the first instance, evidence of (b) only will apply.

Vision Impairment

Bristol's guidance on when additional funding is required states:

Any request for High Needs Band Funding for a child with visual impairment will need to include the following:

- a) A report from appropriate medical/ophthalmology sources indicating that the child is educationally blind or significantly visually impaired. As an indicator distance acuity between 6/24 – 3/60 or near visual threshold of between print size N12/14 – N24/36 depending on the pupil's age.*
- b) A report from an appropriate professional indicating that the child has progressive visual impairment that is likely to cause a deterioration in functional vision and therefore in access to the curriculum.*
- c) Evidence that the child's vision loss significantly impairs his/her access to the curriculum.*

N.B. If a child suffers traumatic loss of vision, in the first instance, evidence of (b) only will apply.

Doncaster

Doncaster's graduated response guidance for sensory impairment is set out on pages 88-97 in its SEN Descriptors document (<http://bit.ly/1x009Hr>)

Hearing Impairment

The criteria for additional top up funding for pupils with HI are:

The pupil:

- Will have a severe to profound hearing loss and use personal hearing aids, and/or cochlear implants, radio aids and possibly a sound field system.
- Will require the language demands of the curriculum to be targeted and differentiated with advice and support from external specialists.
- Will require a Total Communication approach, British Sign Language or Auditory Oral approach
- May or may not have progressed at nationally expected levels linked to prior attainment

- The curriculum will need extensive modification or they will require intensive support in order to access it.
- Regular audiological reviews and monitoring will be undertaken by the Health Authority.
- Will require support with social emotional needs linked to deafness; a peer group/deaf identity will be important.

Visual Impairment

The criteria for additional top up funding for pupils with VI are:

The pupil:

- *“will have a severe level of visual impairment which may include cerebral visual impairment and/or perceptual or processing difficulties (visual acuity 6/60 or less);*
- *will use LVAs and will need planned 1:1 support;*
- *visual impairment has a severe impact on their ability to function independently in the school environment and in their everyday life;*
- *will require mobility and independence programmes are required at least 3 times a week;*
- *will always need practical tasks, activities and experiments modifying. The significant modification of materials and presentation will allow access to the majority of the curriculum;*
- *will require significant 1:1 planned intervention, support to manage personal access equipment and specialist teaching of life skills to access age appropriate activities independently: money management, shopping, personal hygiene, cooking and cleaning;*
- *may have extreme difficulties in making and maintaining relationships resulting in frequent social isolation and vulnerability, with some disengagement requiring extensive adult support”.*

Herefordshire (<http://bit.ly/1MN4tM9>)

Herefordshire has developed the High Needs Matrix to support decisions relating to additional funding. The matrix can be downloaded

<https://beta.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/7923258/highneedsmatrixfinalversionseptember2014.pdf>

The Matrix was developed by carrying out detailed sampling and testing in schools and colleges to ensure the tool was sufficiently accurate in determining an appropriate level of additional funding in the majority of cases. The LA will apply professional judgement in the few cases where the High Needs Matrix doesn't appear to reflect the individual circumstances.

The High Needs Matrix will be used to support the decision making for all allocations of additional education funding for special educational needs regardless of the setting.

The matrix contains 10 columns for types of SEN including a column for HI and a column for VI (but not MSI). There are then 4 rows relating to severity of need in the High Needs Matrix - these are further subdivided to give 10 columns describing need with 4 being the highest level of need.

The four main categories of need are given a weighting:

- Sensory and/or Physical – x 4
- Communication and Interaction – x 2
- Emotional, Social and Behavioural Development – x 4
- Cognition and Learning – x 4

An extract from the High Needs Matrix relating to VI and HI is given in the table below. However please note a pupil's needs are assessed with reference to all 10 types of need as illustrated later in this section

Extract from Herefordshire's High Needs Matrix

Level of need	Hearing Impairment	Visual Impairment
1	Mild loss of hearing (e.g. conductive or unilateral loss). Can hear clear voice without aids/amplification	Mild impairment. 6/12 - 6/18 (LogMAR 0.3 – 0.48). Reads N12 print. Mild bilateral field loss or adapted to monocular vision. Independent mobility. Wears patch 1-2 hours daily
2	Moderate hearing loss; uses post-aural aids, non-verbal cues for communication.	Moderate impairment, needs some work modified. 6/18 – 6/36 (LogMAR 0.5 – 0.78.) Moderate bi-lateral field loss. Independent mobility in familiar areas. Moderate level of specialist equipment required
3	Severe hearing loss needs aids (e.g. radio aids/sound field systems) for curriculum access. May use signing as aid to communication	Severe impairment. 6/36 – 6/60 (LogMAR 0.8 – 1.00). Registered Sight Impaired (partially sighted). May require short term specialist support and training for mobility and independent living skills. Significant level of specialist equipment required
4	Very limited functional hearing for speech despite aids. Signing as first language.	Profound impairment: Less than 6/60 (LogMAR 1.02). Registered SSI (Blind) alternative/tactile methods of text access (e.g. Braille) Needs on-going specialist support and training for mobility and independent living skills. High level of specialist equipment required

The pupil or student is plotted against the High Needs Matrix and the combined scores in all columns converted into a Top up Tariff.

Tariff	Assessment points	Tariff amount
Local Offer	0-9	£0
A	10-19	£1,300
B	20-29	£3,200
C	30-49	£5,375
D	50-69	£8,400
E	70-89	£11,975
F	90+	£16,100

Herefordshire's [website](#) gives a worked example for a pupil with HI to illustrate how the High Needs Matrix is used. It shows that the needs in each of the 10 columns are considered and a decision reached on which description best describes the pupil. On occasion, descriptors in more than one row seem to apply so best judgement is used to decide which one is the best fit. For the example below 6 of the needs columns applied to the deaf pupil:

Area of need	Level of need	Weighting	Points	Description of area of need from the high needs matrix
Hearing	3	X4	12	Severe hearing loss, needs aids (e.g. radio aids/ sound field systems) for curriculum access. May use signing as aid to communication
Speech and Language	1	X2	2	Pupil has moderate delay in expressive and/or receptive language and/or pupil has a mild speech sound disorder.
Emotional well being	2	X4	8	Often shows inappropriate emotions and responses. Often shows little empathy with others. Often unhappy, withdrawn, disengaged, shows mood swings. Often upset by change.
Social behaviour	1	X4		Sometimes has poor interactions with pupils. Sometimes is disrespectful to staff or property. Sometimes seeks attention inappropriately or is unable to wait for rewards.
Learning behaviour	1	X4		Sometimes gets distracted from tasks. Sometimes inattentive to staff. Sometimes shows poor organisation skills. Sometimes does not work well in a group.
Cognitive ability	1	X4		Pupil presents with some learning delay, shows some difficulties with conceptual understanding, in one or more areas of the core curriculum and attainments are more than 1 year below average
Total			34	

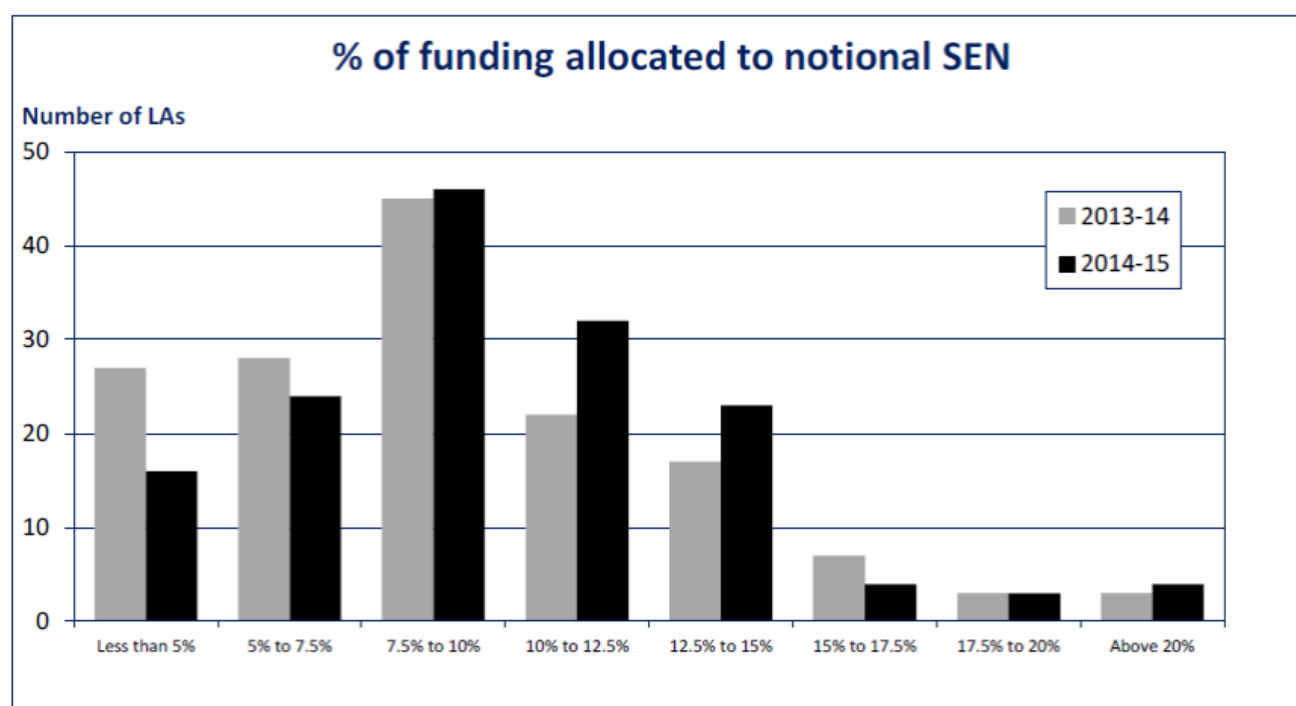
In the example, the points total of 34 converts to a Top Up of £5,225 (2014/15)

APPENDIX 2: Levels of Notional SEN Budget and Formula Factors Used To Calculate the Budget

Local authorities must specify how much of the funding a school receives through its formula budget to constitute its notional SEN budget.

The chart below shows how, overall local authority level, the notional SEN budget in 2014-15 varies as a percentage of the total schools block formula allocation (before the application of the minimum funding guarantee, capping and scaling). They range from 2% to 23%, with 57% of authorities allocating below 10% of schools block funding as notional SEN. The overall percentage of formula allocation which is designated as the notional SEN budget across all local authorities is 10.0%, compared with 9.0% in 2013-14. The median notional SEN allocation is 9.2%.

However, when considering this variation, it should be noted that the SEN budget is notional and the SEND Code of Practice makes it clear that it is not a ring fenced budget and schools need to meet the needs of pupils with SEND from its whole budget (see para 3.1 of this briefing above).

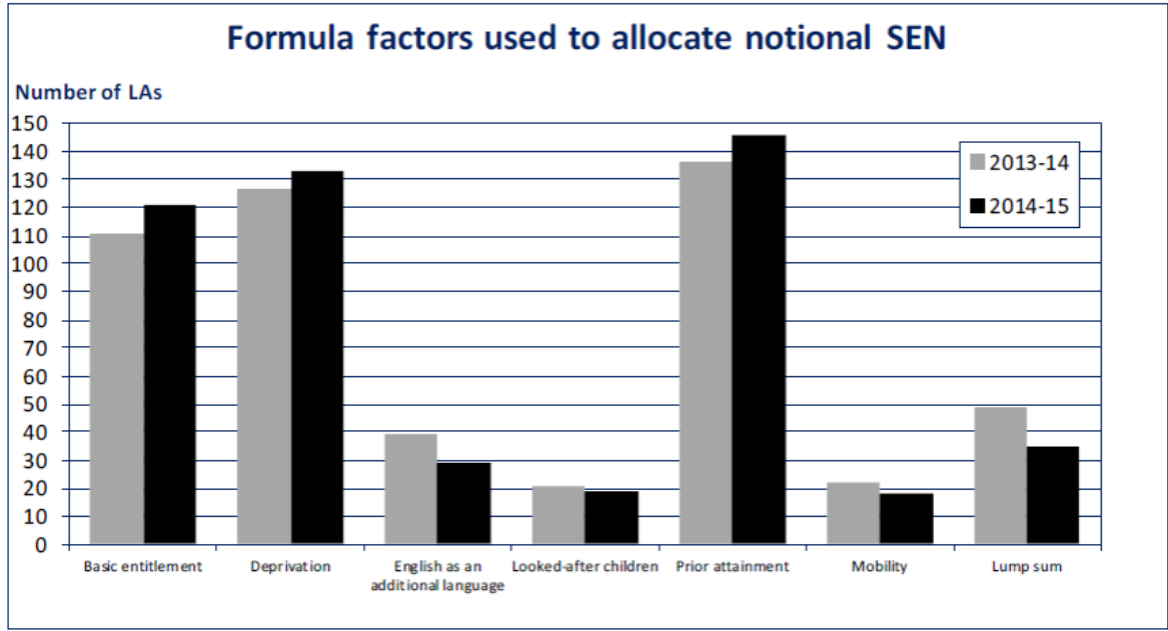


Source: [Schools Block Funding Formulae 2014 to 2015](#) (DfE)

Formula Factors Used to Calculate the Notional Budget in 2014/15

The diagram below shows factors used by local authorities to determine schools' notional SEN budgets. Prior attainment is the factor most commonly contributing to notional SEN; 146 of the 147 authorities are doing this. Additionally, 126 of these 146 are allocating all prior attainment factor funding to notional SEN budgets. The majority of authorities are

also assigning a percentage of their basic entitlement and deprivation funding into notional SEN.



Source: [Schools Block Funding Formulae 2014 to 2015](#) (DfE)