

Funding - Other Local Authority (OLA) pupils in Mainstream Schools High Needs

The use of the word school in this note applies to both school and academy.

Background

Prior to 2013-14 there was an inter area recoupment policy for High Needs. If a high needs pupil from a different LA was attending a school in another LA, the pupil would be funded under the High Needs funding criteria of the LA where the school was located. The funding for the High Needs pupil would be paid to the school by the LA where the school was located and then recouped from the OLA at the end of the financial year.

The school funding reforms in 2013-14 removed inter area recoupment from the regulations and placed the responsibility with the school to collect any high needs funding directly from the placing LA.

As the majority of schools were supportive of the historic recoupment arrangements and did not want the additional burden of now collecting high needs funding from the home LA it was pretty much universally agreed by LAs and schools that LAs would continue with the recoupment process under the instruction of the school. In Kent we operate the recoupment process unless a school instructs us not to and therefore the school charges the OLA direct.

Currently there are 87 OLA high needs pupils in mainstream schools. 45 (£302k) of the 87 (£457k) fall under Kent's definition of 25 hours and the remaining 42 are pupils with statements that are less than 25 hours (£145k).

Proposed process for funding OLA pupils 2015-16

The high needs application form will require a disclosure stating the pupil is either a Kent pupil or an OLA pupil. By default as the school has submitted an application for high needs funding they will be instructing the LA to collect the funding from the OLA.

The DfEs definition of high needs pupil is a pupil that requires additional support of £6,000 or more, it is now a monetary value. It is our understanding that many other LAs will be issuing EHCPs for all high needs pupils, therefore potentially recoupment from another LA for a pupil that has not got EHCP could be problematic. We will only know the level of compliance from OLAs after our new process for classifying a high needs pupil is introduced from April 2015.

Recommendation

Payment will only be made to the school on the basis that the funding can be recouped from the OLA. The school will need to provide the LA with the relevant details to confirm that the OLA agree to fund, required information will include contact name and billing address.