

Paul Hewitt
Corporate Director
People Services

20th January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Consultation response on the proposed Funding Model for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) in mainstream schools, academies and free schools in Harrow

Back ground

On the 1st November 2019 I wrote to you to inform you of a proposed funding model for EHCPs and to invite you to have your say on the proposals. The consultation period was from Monday 4th November to Friday 29 November 2019.

Consultation documents were sent to parents / carers of children and young people who are subject to an EHCP and attend a mainstream school, to schools and to the Harrow Parent Forum.

The proposal was to introduce a new banding model to the additional funding allocated to a pupil who has an EHCP in a Harrow mainstream school. A banding approach is widely used by many other local authorities, including our neighbouring boroughs.

The banding model is designed to give schools more flexibility to support a pupil with an EHCP and to reflect the wide range of strategies and interventions that are used in schools to support a pupil's learning.

There was no saving attached to the proposal. The proposal was embedded within the wider context of the SEND Strategy and reflects the Council's commitment to enhance local provision, and so that as many as possible of our children are educated in local schools.

Responses received

The response rate from parents to the consultation was relatively low with only 26 responses received from a targeted group of 538 families. However, the Harrow Parent Forum arranged an information session which was well attended and also issued an informative Frequently Asked Questions factsheet on the proposals.

The overall view of the proposed changes to SEND funding and a banding model were well received with the proposals receiving 61% of parent / carer responses in favour. All responses received have been read and considered and we are grateful to all those who provided feedback.

From the responses received concern was raised with wider matters in relation to how children are supported in schools, the lack of specialist provision and the overall SEND funding.

The main concern among parents was that a banding system may make it more difficult to understand how EHCP funding is used to support their child in school. Secondly, that the banding model seemed unlawful due to the lack of specification.

A banding approach is something the schools have supported for a period of time as it reflects how schools use EHCP funding. As part of the annual review process schools have a duty to explain the strategies and intervention used to support a pupil. The annual review is also the time for parents to ask questions and put forward their views and comments on the progress their child is making.

The Council also consulted with schools, academies and free schools in Harrow. The overall view of the proposed changes to SEND funding and a banding system were very well received with the proposals receiving 97.5 % in favour.

A banding model is not unlawful. The Council has a duty to be specific and detailed about the type of support and help each pupil will receive and we will continue to do this. We will not be changing the format of the EHCP. In the EHCP there will still be the description of the type of support to meet specified outcomes. However, instead of stating Teaching Assistant hours in section F of the EHCP the Local Authority, it is proposed, will specify a band.


The Council's decision to proceed with the proposals and next steps

Following consideration of all responses and in light of the positive response to the banding model, the Council will proceed with implementing the proposed changes from April 2020.

If your child has an EHCP and attends a mainstream school in Harrow the change to a banding model will happen, over the coming year April 2020-March 2021, following your child's annual review. The normal annual review process will be followed by the school and the SEN Assessment and Review Service will make the decision as to the banding level based on your child's EHCP and the information gathered as part of the annual review process. An officer in the SEN Assessment and Review Service will write to you following the annual review detailing any changes and offer to talk through any matters you may raise.

If you have any questions about the implementation of the banding model please email: senassessment.reviewservice@harrow.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,



Patrick O'Dwyer
Divisional Director Education Services