

High needs funding (During Covid19)

1. Local authorities have an important role in making sure that the high needs funding they receive as part of their DSG is used effectively in making educational provision for children and young people up to the age of 25 with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, and other vulnerable children and young people. Authorities will continue to receive their high needs budgets and should continue to pay top-up and other high needs funding so that the employment and payment of staff supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and those requiring alternative provision, can continue. High needs funding will therefore continue to be paid to the following types of setting, whether from local or central government:
 - local authority-maintained schools (mainstream, special and pupil referral units)
 - academies and free schools (mainstream, special and alternative provision)
 - non-maintained special schools
 - independent schools, including independent special schools
 - independent alternative provision
 - high needs places in further education (FE) colleges and sixth form colleges
 - special post-16 providers
 - hospital schools
2. Funding will be maintained and will not be reduced because some or all children and young people are not in attendance (because of sickness or self-isolation, or where the institution has temporarily or partially closed).
3. Similarly, where settings pay top-up or other funding for pupils attending alternative provision, or pay for other SEND or alternative provision services, these payments should continue to be made so that teachers and other staff in all types of setting can be paid in accordance with their existing employment contracts. If placements and services for the summer term have not yet been agreed, settings should be willing to fund on the basis of previous patterns of placements and commissioning. Where changes to the delivery of special provision and alternative provision are required, the first response should be to redeploy existing resources, if necessary between settings and other institutions as well as within settings.
4. Teaching and non-teaching staff (administration, operations, maintenance and catering) should not be furloughed where they are funded from continued high needs funding, and where necessary and feasible, should be available for redeployment within settings and in other settings to assist in maintaining provision for vulnerable children and young people, and the children of critical workers.
- 5. Residential special schools**
 - 5.1 State-funded residential special provision is delivered in various types of setting, including state-maintained schools, non-maintained special schools, independent schools and special post 16 institutions. While the educational costs will continue to be funded from the DSG, the residential costs are met from social care budgets. Local authorities will continue to receive funding for social care provision and should continue to pay residential

costs so that the employment and payment of staff supporting children and young people who require residential provision can continue.

6. Independent schools

6.1 Mainstream independent schools

6.2 In line with other settings, independent schools have been asked to remain open for the children of critical workers and the most vulnerable children. Independent schools are, in general, funded by fee income paid by parents. Since schools have closed to the majority of pupils, they, like other businesses, may be facing a sudden and substantial loss of income. These institutions should access the support schemes referred to above, in order to retain staff and enable the school to reopen fully in due course.

7. However, if there are any activities for which schools continue to receive public funding, such as looked after children placed by a local authority, or local authority support for pupils with EHC plans, we expect schools to use that money to continue to pay those staff in the usual fashion – and therefore not furlough them or seek support via the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

8. Independent special schools

8.1 The majority of pupils in independent special schools have been placed there by local authorities under an EHC plan, funded from the high needs block of the DSG.

8.2 As noted above, local authorities will continue to receive their high needs budgets and should continue to pay top-up and other high needs funding to independent special schools, so that the employment and payment of staff supporting children and young people with SEND can continue. Some independent special schools also have pupils who are funded privately instead of under an EHC plan. These institutions should only access the support schemes identified above in relation to the proportion of staff that is not supported through public funding, and only to the extent that the school is facing a loss of income because the children have been withdrawn by their parents leading to a loss of fee income.