



March/April 2021

PROGRAMME UPDATE

Keeping stakeholders, parents and carers informed about Dudley's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement Programme

8. SEND needs funding matrix for schools

Dudley undertook a consultation exercise on the proposed SEND Needs Funding Matrix from the 14th January 2021 to the 21st February 2021. In addition, two question and answer sessions took place on the 1st and 8th February 2021 to give schools an opportunity to seek clarification on the SEND Needs Funding Matrix and its application.

Following the conclusion of the consultation and from feedback from the sessions, this resulted in the council receiving a number of comments, questions and challenges from schools and parents/carers.

The questions we received are very complex and in order to really consider each response we need the time to work through each point and further test the Matrix. We want to review and reflect on every single response which stresses the importance of getting this right for Dudley as this is a significant transformational change in funding arrangements.

Looking at the responses, the council needs to ensure that it develops sufficient training, undertakes targeted testing of the Matrix alongside having a detailed set of guidance for the SEND Needs Funding Matrix.

Parents/carers have also asked we give them more time to understand the SEND Needs Funding Matrix.

With this in mind, we will now approach this change in two phases:

- Phase 1 – Special School Budgets Place-Led funding – 1st April 2021
- Phase 2 – Mainstream and Academies Needs-Led Funding Matrix – from 1st September 2021

Therefore, we will work in the following way from the 1st April 2021:

- Schools will need to use the existing banded framework until the 31st August 2021.
- Those students in primary mainstream and academies currently subject to 'Exceptional Funding' will have the summer term amount paid as normal.
- Students who have Annual Reviews during the summer term will go ahead as normal and schools will provide the 'Needs-Led Evidence Supporting Form' alongside the completed Matrix as part of the testing and funding decisions for the 1st September.
- All Annual Reviews from the 1st September will be subject to the SEND Needs-Led Funding Matrix.
- It will be the Multi-agency SEND Panel that will consider all evidence presented to determine the final level of funding.
- Any new draft EHC Plan that ends in the summer term will be subject to banded framework to the end of August and then the SEND Needs-Led Funding Matrix from the 1st September.
- For any Emergency Annual Review during the summer term where additional funding is being requested, the school will be expected to provide the Needs-Led Evidence Supporting Form alongside the completed Matrix.

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