**Information for Mainstream Schools Regarding Top-Up Funding Payments from April 2025**

With effect from April 2025, all mainstream schools will receive the bulk of Top-Up Funding for pupils with EHCPs through their ***School Budget Share*** for the period April to March.

Maintained schools have always received their funding in this way so this change will only affect academy schools. The change will mean that all mainstream schools will receive funding in equal monthly instalments for the year April to March.

We are hoping that this will help schools with cash-flow as funding will be released regularly through the year.

**Process**

The SEN Provision Team make payments to schools for Pupil Top-Up funding, based on information that the SEND Operations Teams have added to the Local Authority’s ‘Capita’ system.

During February/March time, a download of that information is taken and used to inform the value of funding that will be paid through school Budget Shares. Funding for future starters may already be recorded, and where that is the case, funding for those pupils will be included in the Budget Share funding.

The value of the payments will not be amended as pupils start, leave or have changes made to their Banding. Instead, payments or reclaims will be made in year (see ‘Changes to Pupil Funding’, below).

In most cases, the value of Pupil Top-Up funding paid through the Budget Share will not be the final value of the funding due.

**Individual Pupil Information**

Data regarding the funding allocated for individual pupils can be accessed via the secure area of the Schools Infolink.

Amounts paid through the Budget Share will be clearly identifiable. Schools should be able to reconcile the funding shown on the Infolink back to their Budget Share.

**Changes to Pupil Funding**

SEND Operations teams make changes to Capita where a pupil starts, leaves or has a change made to their allocation.

The SEN Provision Team will endeavour to take a download of the funding information every five weeks and will use that data to determine if further payments or reclaims are required. We have scheduled these downloads for:

14/04/25

19/05/25

23/06/25

28/07/25

01/09/25

06/10/25

10/11/25

15/12/25

19/01/26

23/02/26

23/03/26 (subject to financial year-end deadlines)

The process of cleansing the data and preparing it for payment can be lengthy. The SEN Provision Team will aim to have the ‘Payment Run’ completed in two to three weeks, but this can take longer at certain times of the year where a significant number of changes have been made to pupil funding.

If the information added to Capita is incorrect, the SEN Provision Team will inform the SEND Operations Teams that a correction is required. Where that is the case, the funding will not be included until the correction has been actioned, usually the next download.

Once complete, the Payment Run is sent to Corporate Finance for processing. The SEN Provision Team have no control over how long the payment take to process and for the funds to be paid into school banks accounts.

The Schools Infolink will be updated after each Payment Run, to show the value of funding paid for each individual student. Funding paid on the Payment Runs will have a different description so schools will be able to identify the payments made outside of the Budget Share.

The SEN Provision Team will endeavour to reclaim any overpaid funding made to academies that relates to the summer term, and prior terms, at the end of the Summer, in line with their financial year. All other reclaims will be actioned by the end of March.

**Backdated Funding**

Any funding added to Capita by the SEND Operations teams, that predates the start of the financial year, will be included in the Payment Run process, described above.

**IPRA Funding**

IPRA Funding is not yet included in the Budget Share. Currently this type of funding is not recorded in the same way as EHCP funding on our Capita system and we are working to bring this in line.

This funding will continue to be paid in the Payment Run process and the information regarding individual pupil allocations will be added to the Schools Infolink.

**Contacts**

If you have a query regarding individual pupils listed on the Infolink information, for example, the wrong band has been funded, pupil funding is missing, you’ve received funding for a pupil who has left etc, please contact the relevant SEND Operations Team.

Data shown on the Schools Infolink relates to the Local Authority financial year, April to March. A pupil will continue to show on the report, even if they have left, as it reflects all payments/reclaims processed during that time period.

The information on the Schools Infolink will show which quadrant the pupil belongs to.

Mid - **sendoperations.mid@essex.gov.uk**

North-East - **sendoperations.ne@essex.gov.uk**

South - **sendoperations.south@essex.gov.uk**

West - **sendoperations.west@essex.gov.uk**

Telephone: **0345 603 7638** (all quadrants)

If you have a query regarding the payment process, please contact: **SENEssexMainstream@essex.gov.uk**