

Your reference
Our reference
Date 21 November 2023



City of
Stoke-on-Trent

Children and Family Services
Civic Centre
Glebe Street
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 1HH

To Be Opened by Addressee Only

Dear
Parent/Carer

Re: Consultation on the new guidance document for SEND and high needs funding arrangements for children with special educational needs and EHCPs

As a parent / carer of a child who has special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) / or an education health and care plan (EHCP), I am writing to you to seek your views on proposed changes to High Needs Funding arrangements for children with additional needs.

The High Needs Funding formula is the local process that is used to allocate funding that the council receives from the government, to the schools and settings that support children with additional needs in the city of Stoke-on-Trent.

Stoke-on-Trent SEND services have been working with Stoke-on Trent schools and partner services to review our approach to High Needs Funding arrangements, with the overall aim of developing a new approach for allocating the funding so that it is:

- child-centred
- needs based
- transparent
- equitable and
- affordable.

A new draft guidance document (Stoke-on-Trent SEND Banding Matrix Guidance and banding document) has been developed which has two main aims. Firstly, it is intended that the guidance document will help Stoke-on-Trent schools and settings to effectively identify and meet the needs of children with special educational needs. Secondly, it provides a banding model which identifies children by their primary area of need and level of need. The banding will identify the level and type of support a child needs in school and this will inform

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the level of funding that will be provided to the child's school for children with more complex needs who have an EHCP.

The funding schools receive for children with an EHCP will transfer to the new model from 1st April 2024 if the model is agreed and implemented. Children's progress and provision will still continue to be reviewed and changed as required through the statutory Annual Review process.

As the model is needs based, it should mean that all children with special educational needs in Stoke-on-Trent schools will get the right support for their type and level of need. It should also help to make sure that all children with special educational needs experience a 'graduated approach' which is a requirement of the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Have your say

Before the Stoke-on-Trent SEND Banding Matrix Guidance and banding document is finalised we want to hear your views and invite you to have your say by completing the online questionnaire on our Local offer website: <http://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk/>

There is a concise summary version of the proposed SEND Banding Matrix and Guidance on this web page to highlight the changes proposed to be made. **A detailed and full document is available in schools through designated Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs)** who have been involved in the exercise and can be contacted for further advice.

The closing date for responses is midnight on 19 December 2023.

As well as seeking feedback from parents and carers, we are also consulting Head Teachers, school Governors, partner services and our internal SEND services. All feedback and other information will be used to inform, and if needed, further develop the proposals prior to the Stoke-on-Trent SEND Banding Matrix Guidance and banding document being adopted on 1 April 2024.

On behalf of the School Forum High Needs Banding Review Task and Finish Group, we look forward to hearing your views.

Kind Regards



**Natalie Williams,
Strategic Manager - SEND**

Sent on behalf of the School Forum High Needs Banding Review Task and Finish Group

Tel: (01782) 232310

Email: natalie.williams@stoke.gov.uk

If you have any questions about the survey please email SEND@stoke.gov.uk or call 01782 234234 and leave a message.

For more information on Stoke-on-Trent's Local Offer visit: <http://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk/>

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