



TOP-UP HIGH NEEDS FUNDING (HNF) IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

HANDBOOK 2024/25



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION – HERTFORDSHIRE’S APPROACH TO TOP-UP FUNDING

1.1 THE RESOURCE ALLOCATION PROCESS

The model of funding prescribed by the DFE/Education Funding Agency (EFA) is described below.

Formula allocation

For the vast majority of children, resources are provided routinely through the annual budget share process. Funding is decided through a formula which allocates resources between schools. This includes the first two elements of SEND funding.

Element 1: age weighted pupil unit (AWPU)

Funding is allocated according to the number and ages of pupils the school each October. This is the main source of funding for teacher and teaching support costs. It is intended to enable the delivery of a curriculum that is appropriately organised to meet the needs of all children on roll. It is also expected to cover the SENCo’s salary. A percentage of the AWPU funding is notionally identified as SEND funding.

Element 2: additional support

Additional support funding relates to the characteristics of the pupils in the school. The amount of additional support a school receives in its budget share is determined by a range of indicators: (The data on pupil characteristics for schools’ budget shares is notified to local authorities by the DFE.)

- Deprivation
- Prior attainment
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Looked After Children
- Mobility

The notional SEND budget

A school’s notional SEND budget is an amount of money delegated as part of the whole school budget to meet the needs of all its pupils with SEND, at all but the most exceptional levels of need. It is not linked to individual pupils.

It is a DfE requirement that a notional SEND budget is identified for each school. This does not impact on a school’s responsibility to decide individually how much of their delegated budget share should be allocated to different purposes within the school. Schools may therefore choose to allocate more or less to SEND than is identified in the notional SEND budget.

A school’s notional SEND budget comprises:

- 1.59% of the AWPU in both primary schools and secondary schools
- 30% of the free school meals allocations
- 0%, 0%, 50%, 60%, 75%, 75% respectively for IDACI bands F to A allocations

- 100% of the prior attainment allocation
- 16% of the mobility allocation
- 2.75% of the lump sum (for SENCo activities)
- London Fringe uplift where applicable.

Although the notional SEND allowances are grouped under the headings above, it is not intended that schools will separate the resources out and manage them in this way. The aim of this resource is to enable schools to offer focused curriculum support and interventions for all pupils with SEND, including teaching support in small groups and moderate levels of individual work with pupils who need it.

All of the above formula allocations are made annually without any need for schools to take action other than ensuring that their annual pupil census is accurate and up to date. The formula allocations are made for a whole financial year based on the pupil numbers collected in the preceding October. Each year a cohort of pupils, including those with SEND, will leave the school in July and another will join in September. As with all other annual funding allocations, schools are expected to manage the effect of changes between the cohorts by use of the multi-year budget planning approach and, where appropriate, the use of balances.

Under the national high needs funding system, mainstream schools (Local Authority maintained and academies) are expected to meet up to the first £6,000 of additional support costs for pupils with high needs from their core school budget share. When the cost of additional support for any individual pupil exceeds £6000 additional top-up funding is made available by the Local Authority to put appropriate provision in place. This is called top-up funding. Top-up funding also applies to early years and private and voluntary institution (PVI) nurseries although these settings do not have additional support funding in their core budgets, therefore the top-up funding provides the full funding required.

“Top-up Funding - High Needs Funding in Mainstream Schools”, known as HNF, is additional funding provided to support inclusion and meet the needs of CYP with needs identified as requiring support at targeted levels or above in mainstream schools and settings. HNF has been designed collaboratively by the Local Authority, schools and settings and parents working together. HNF is a transparent system that allocates additional funding according to the needs of the individual child or young person using the draft EHCP.

There is also a local system delivered through DSPL (Delivering Special Provision Locally) and managed and chaired by the DSPL managers but involving local schools and external professionals in the decision making. This is a system for CYP and with emerging needs and is called “Local High Needs Funding” or LHNF.

This handbook contains all the relevant information, guidance and documents to enable schools, settings, parents and Local Authority professionals to understand and engage in the systems.

SECTION 2: TOP-UP HIGH NEEDS FUNDING (HNF) SYSTEM

2.1 OUTLINE

HNF is Hertfordshire's system for top-up funding for CYP in mainstream schools in Hertfordshire. HNF is designed to enable the delivery of the educational provision in section F in an EHCP.

The HNF system is designed to involve all stakeholders in the decision-making process. As HNF is for CYP with significant needs, the needs outlined in Education Health and Care plans (EHCPs) are used to determine the level of top-up funding. A set of Descriptors of Need and Provision are used to do this. There are seven levels which are aligned to the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need and Provision and Graduated Response:

- Universal
- Universal Plus
- Targeted
- Targeted Plus
- Specialist
- Specialist Plus
- Exceptional (for certain areas of need)

Each level (except Exceptional) attracts a different amount of funding. Universal and Universal Plus are resourced through the school or setting's allocated funding.

When a CYP undergoes a statutory Education Health and Care needs assessment, between week 15 and 16 of the process, if it is agreed that an EHCP is required, the SEND service assesses the CYP's needs using the draft EHCP and the Descriptors of Need and Provision .

There will be an opportunity for schools and settings, together with parents, to indicate the CYP's level of need during the process.

This is designed to be a robust and transparent process which involves all stakeholders.

The processes are detailed below and throughout this handbook.

2.2 HNF FUNDING JOURNEY

The process below explains how information collated for children undergoing a new statutory assessment will be considered to determine whether an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is required and, if so, for the amount of funding required for CYP with needs identified at targeted support or above.

This is a process involving co-production from all stakeholders. The Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need and Provision will be used during this process. The descriptors are presented in the following areas of need and aligned to terminology used in the Code of Practice 2015:

- Communication and Autism
- Cognition and Learning
- Speech and Language
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Vision Impairment
- Physical and Neurological Impairment
- Multi-Sensory Impairment (Deafblindness)
- Hearing Impairment.

The difficulties experienced by CYP who have challenges in each of these areas are broken down into 6 different levels, each one indicates progressively more challenging needs than the previous one. These are defined as:

- Universal,
- Universal plus,
- Targeted,
- Targeted plus,
- Specialist,
- Specialist Plus,
- Exceptional (for certain areas of need)

There are descriptors for each area of need and at each level account is taken as to how these needs may present differently for different phases of education up to secondary level.

These descriptors are for use within mainstream and special schools. Parents have a legal right to have their children educated in a mainstream school whatever their need, if that is what they require, and therefore these descriptors cover all needs which may be encountered. Whilst they are progressive from Universal to Specialist Plus (Exceptional) it does not signify that if a child's needs are at specialist or specialist plus that they should then be considered for a special school.

The process is as follows:

STEP 1

The Local Authority receives a request from either parent, school or both for a statutory assessment. This is considered by a Local Multi-Agency Group (LMAG) and, if assessment is agreed, relevant professionals are requested to undertake this assessment and provide input to the assessment of needs. This assessment will be undertaken within the statutory timescales.

STEP 2

The professionals involved will provide input regarding the child's additional needs, the provision required and the outcomes to be achieved as a result which will be shared with the Education Health and Care Co-ordinator (EHCCo), the school and the parents/carers within statutory timescales.

STEP 3

Once the advice is received the SEND Team will consider whether written feedback or an EHCP is necessary. Should an EHCP be required, schools and professionals will be requested to assess the needs of the CYP.

STEP 4

The assessment process will continue with the draft EHCP being issued to parents by week 16. It should be noted that the levelling, which is not part of the statutory EHC needs assessment process, will not be included in the EHCP and that agreeing a level does not replace the requirement for specification and quantification of provision within the EHCP.

STEP 5

At week 15 of the assessment process. The draft EHCP will then be used to determine level of need. The levelling will be done by the SEND Service. The Education Health and Care Needs Co-ordinator (EHCCo) will level the advice but will confirm the levelling with either their manager or the operational lead for their area, as appropriate.

STEP 6

Should there have been any changes to the needs outlined in the EHCP between the draft and final being issued the EHCCo will ensure that the level remains appropriate. This will not delay the issuing of the final EHCP within statutory timescales.

STEP 7

At week 20, when the final EHCP is issued a separate letter will be sent to the school or setting and parent detailing the level and any accompanying funding.

Funding will be paid to the school or setting after week 20 of the process and reviewed annually should changes in the level of identified needs which may require higher or lower amounts of funding. These changes will only be made in line with professional advice. HNF is used by the early years setting or schools (in addition to the £6,000 from the school budget) to deliver the provision set out in Section F of the EHCP. The cost of some provision, such as therapies may be funded directly through health providers.

2.3 VALUES OF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

This is the top-up funding provided to schools for any additional funding required to ensure that the needs of children and Young People (CYP) are met. Values of additional funding for the year 2024/2025 are as follows:

Targeted	£1,855	Support for additional needs to complement the school's interventions
Targeted Plus	£4,945	Supporting complex needs that require significant interventions but where independence plays a key part in enabling the CYP to succeed
Specialist	£8,271	Supporting complex needs that require significant interventions in all learning situations
Specialist Plus	£11,450	Supporting complex needs throughout the school day that require significant interventions in all learning and social situations

Universal and Universal plus do not attract any additional funding and should be provided for out of a setting's own resources.

Early years settings and post 16 provision in schools do not have funding in their core budgets to pay the first £6000 and therefore they will receive an element of the £6,000 in addition to the top-up funding.

2.4 ADDITIONAL TARGETED FUNDING (ATF)

Under the national high needs funding system, per pupil top up funding is paid by the local authority to meet the needs of children which are in addition to those funded from the setting's own resources. In Hertfordshire this is the funding based on agreed levels. In addition, local authorities can award additional funding where schools have a disproportionate number of pupils with high needs.

In order to provide additional financial support to schools with comparatively higher levels of pupils who require additional top-up funding a system is in place called "Additional Targeted Funding (ATF).

The Local Authority has had regard to DfE guidance that allocations should only be made to a minority of schools.

The number of CYP on roll rather than forms of entry is used to calculate the funding as this is more effective in supporting schools that are not at full capacity.

All pupils with EHCPs will count towards the eligibility for ATF except for those at Universal and Universal+.

Eligibility thresholds will be set based on the number of pupils on roll in each school. If the number of ATF eligible pupils exceeds the threshold, there will be an allocation of £5k (24/25 value) per ATF pupil above the threshold. The ATF is part of the school's core funding for supporting all pupils with SEND and is not allocated to individual children.

The table below sets out the thresholds for attracting ATF for the financial year 2024-2025. It is based on the number of pupils on roll in reception to year 11. Nursery and 6th form pupils fall outside ATF.

Primary (pupils on roll)	0-100	101-190	191-379	380+								
Secondary (pupils on roll)					0-569	570-676	677-811	812-946	947-1081	1082-1216	1217-1351	1352+
Threshold	1	3	5	7	8	11	14	17	20	23	25	30
cases												
1												
2	£5k											
3	£10k											
4	£15k	£5k										
5	£20k	£10k										
6	£25k	£15k	£5k									
7	£30k	£20k	£10k									
8	£35k	£25k	£15k	£5k								
9	£40k	£30k	£20k	£10k	£5k							
10	£45k	£35k	£25k	£15k	£10k							
11	£50k	£40k	£30k	£20k	£15k							
12	£55k	£45k	£35k	£25k	£20k	£5k						
13	£60k	£50k	£40k	£30k	£25k	£10k						
14	£65k	£55k	£45k	£35k	£30k	£15k						
15	£70k	£60k	£50k	£40k	£35k	£20k	£5k					
16	£75k	£65k	£55k	£45k	£40k	£25k	£10k					
17	£80k	£70k	£60k	£50k	£45k	£30k	£15k					
18	£85k	£75k	£65k	£55k	£50k	£35k	£20k	£5k				
19	£90k	£80k	£70k	£60k	£55k	£40k	£25k	£10k				
20	£95k	£85k	£75k	£65k	£60k	£45k	£30k	£15k				
21	£100k	£90k	£80k	£70k	£65k	£50k	£35k	£20k	£5k			
24	£115k	£105k	£95k	£85k	£80k	£65k	£50k	£35k	£20k	£5k		
26	£125k	£115k	£105k	£95k	£90k	£75k	£60k	£45k	£30k	£15k	£5k	
31	£150k	£140k	£130k	£120k	£115k	£100k	£85k	£70k	£55k	£40k	£30k	£5k
32	£155k	£145k	£135k	£125k	£120k	£105k	£90k	£75k	£60k	£45k	£35k	£10k

As an example, a primary school with 210 pupils on roll (NOR) would have a threshold of 5 and would receive additional targeted funding for the sixth case and above. See table below for further examples.

Sector	NOR	Threshold	ATF payable
			No of cases
Primary	76	1	2 & above
Primary	210	5	6 & above
Primary	420	7	8 & above
Secondary	900	17	18 & above

Secondary	1200	23	24 & above
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The thresholds are different for primary and secondary sectors as funding in schools is primarily determined by the AWPU and, given that secondary schools receive a higher AWPU in comparison to primary schools, this has been factored into the threshold calculation. For all-through schools a combination of primary and secondary thresholds will provide an equitable system.

It is intended that thresholds will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the system keeps within the DfE guidelines of a minority of schools being in receipt of ATF and to keep within the approved budget.

In order to help schools plan, the funding will be calculated on an annual basis (matching the local authority financial year) and will be paid termly to eligible schools. In calculating funding, the October census will be used for the pupil number on roll and the number of pupils with EHCPs (as used for school budget shares).

Schools will be notified of their funding allocations during the Spring term.

FAQ: How is ATF calculated for each school?

ATF is calculated using the following information:

- A. ATF Threshold – Calculated using the number on roll ATF Threshold – Calculated using the number on roll using the October census information (this identifies the threshold after which ATF is attracted).
- B. The number of EHCPs at above using the October census information (excluding any funded places in units/bases).
- C. The number of pupils resident Out of County with an EHCP.

To calculate the amount of funding the following formula is applied:

$$\text{ATF} = (\text{B} + \text{C} - \text{A}) \times \text{£}5,000^*$$

(*£5,000 = 24/25 value for one unit of ATF)

2.5 ANNUAL REVIEWS

Funding Process alongside Annual EHCP Reviews

At the start of each academic year, the SEND Team sends out a list of all annual reviews and the date they are due to be completed. This list goes to schools and settings, social care and the District Medical Officer.

A further list is sent termly, thus providing the school/setting with time to plan and consider relevant professional input.

1. The EHCCHO advises the school/setting of the date by which the Annual Review Report is required (as above).

2. The school/setting, having liaised with the parent/carer(s), sets the date of the Annual Review meeting and invites relevant professionals, parents and school/setting staff. At the same time, reports/updates are requested from professionals, parents and school/setting staff.
3. A copy of the Levelling Summary Sheet is downloaded from The Grid by the SENCO for use at the Annual Review meeting.
4. At the end of the Annual Review meeting, the question is asked, 'Are there any significant changes in need as indicated by recent (within one year) professional advice?'
5. If the answer is 'no' then the levelling summary sheet is returned with 'no change' recorded on it.
6. If the answer is 'yes' then those present use the Descriptors of Need and Provision to assess the CYP's needs and complete the Levelling Summary Sheet.
7. If the Levelling Summary Sheet indicates an increase or reduction in the overall level, then this is sent to the EHCCo along with the 'Change to Level Request Form'. The 'Change to Level Request Form' will set out a recommended new level and the primary reason for this recommendation together with the supporting evidence quoted from the Descriptors of Need and Provision and the professional report(s).
8. All documentation relating to the Annual Review and the level is sent to the EHCCo within ten working days after the Annual Review meeting.
9. The EHCCo, with the support of his/her manager, assesses whether there has been a recommendation for a change in level of need. If this is the case, then the SEND service provides a level in line with the change in need.
10. Although the levelling process is not part of the statutory annual review process it provides the opportunity for a review of the level of funding required to support the needs of the CYP on an annual basis. HNF is therefore responsive to changes in CYP needs as set out in the EHCP.

2.6 CYP WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT (VI)

In November 2018 Hertfordshire Schools Forum agreed to expand the VI Curriculum Access Specialist (CAS) Team to address the needs of the growing population of severely sight impaired (blind) children who are Tactile (Braille) Learners in Hertfordshire schools and settings.

Tactile learners (as identified by the VI team) will be automatically given a level at the exceptional level.

Tactile learners will have the remainder of their support provided by Curriculum Access Specialists (CAS) from the VI Team

Tactile (Braille) Learners are supported by highly skilled staff who are also able to effectively train and advise adults working with these pupils.

These learners will be able to 'access to learn', and to 'learn to access'.

- Accessing to learn:

This means that pupils will have equal access to all aspects of school life including the curriculum via the use of well-adapted materials prepared in advance from the teacher's lesson plans, from texts and other sources. Many of these materials will be tactile including Braille and raised diagrams, others will be prepared from texts and listened to via audio means. These learning materials must be prepared well and accurately so that pupils effectively learn the intricacies of finding their way around tactile information and are well prepared when confronting these in national exam situations.

- Learning to access:

This refers to the skills that pupils need to develop in order for them to independently access the material and information they need in order to have the fullest possible opportunities to learn. This includes learning to read braille, learning to type braille, learning to type on a laptop and access the internet, learning to manage speech reading software and the array of specialist technology which provides them with the tools to store and retrieve their work. They need to develop their skills in listening to the computer at the same time as the teacher and others in their lessons. Criteria for Tactile (Braille) Learners

If a student cannot attain a functional reading speed using large print or low vision devices to read regular size print, then tactile learning is appropriate and Braille is considered as the main tool for literacy. However, it is not only essential for the CYP to have the required cognitive abilities and foundational concepts, but it is also important to have finger sensitivity and fine motor coordination to maintain sustained touch and systematically track across paper. The CYP's intellectual capabilities will determine if the focus should be on functional braille or traditional braille. The student's tactile and perceptual abilities and skills are critical to learning to read Braille. CYP with a history of strokes may not have the finger sensitivity to discriminate the small differences in Braille characters. The pupil's age and additional disabilities will also play a large part in determining the way to instruct the student in Braille.

2.7 TOP-UP HIGH NEEDS FUNDING IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS (HNF)

Pupils Funded from Other Sources

To ensure that Top-up High Needs Funding (HNF) effectively supports CYP in their mainstream setting it is important to ensure that the CYP is not already receiving funding/support from other sources or not attending that school. Pupils who are attending settings outside of Hertfordshire or who are attending Independent settings in Hertfordshire are not funded with Top-up High Needs Funding. The following areas have been identified as possible sources of duplicate funding/support or reasons for a pupil's non-attendance and guidance is set out to clarify any duplicate funding/support.

Pupils attending an ESC

1. Pupils who have an EHCP and are single registered at an Education Support Centre (ESC) are not able to receive Top-up HNF. The only exception is CYP with a visual impairment who may require a bespoke package of support from a qualified teacher for sensory impairment.
2. Pupils who have an EHCP and are dual registered at an ESC attending full-time provision are not funded with Top-up HNF if their placement is the result of a decision of an Integration Panel or they have been permanently excluded.
3. Pupils who have an EHCP and are attending an ESC as part of an alternative provision commissioned by the CYP's school, are able to receive Top-up HNF. This is payable to the CYP's school.

Pupils who are Electively Home Educated (EHE)

1. Pupils who have an EHCP but who are now classed as 'Electively Home Educated' are not able to receive Top-up HNF.

Pupils attending Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRPs) or Bases

1. Pupils who have an EHCP but are attending an SRP or base attached to a mainstream school are not able to receive Top-up HNF as their funding is provided through that provision. These pupils are not included in the ATF calculation.

Pupils attending a Primary Behaviour Base

1. Pupils who attend a primary behaviour base/provision part/full-time for a designated period of time of more than a term and are not attending the school where they are on roll, are not able to receive Top-up HNF for the duration of their attendance.

Pupils who are not attending (School Refusers)

1. Schools where a CYP is refusing to attend should only receive Top-up HNF equivalent to two terms to enable systems and strategies to be put in place to enable that CYP to return to school. Top-up HNF should be withheld after two terms but be reinstated should the CYP return to school in the future.

SECTION 3: LOCAL HIGH NEEDS FUNDING (LHNF)

3.1 THE PURPOSE OF LHNF

The Local High Needs Funding system is a non-statutory, discretionary funding system designed to support children and young people (CYP) with emerging high needs or for CYP who have needs that fall outside the EHCP process. It is managed locally within the nine different “Delivering Special Provision Locally” (DSPL) areas although funding is paid out centrally into school budgets. This is top-up funding to provide the cost of provision which exceeds the first £6000 which should be provided from the school’s Notional SEN Budget. It is for time-limited interventions and provision which go beyond quality first teaching and reasonable adjustments. Children should be attending a school in Hertfordshire to be eligible to receive this funding.

Panels may decide that further professional input/support may be more appropriate than a funding allocation. This may include behaviour services, special school outreach, ISL teams etc.

LHNF will focus on the following:

- a) A CYP entering the education system (including PVI) who has needs identified as requiring additional support from the outset as identified by at least one professional and who would not be able to access the setting without a high level of support. The Descriptors of Need and Provision would indicate at least a Targeted Plus description of need. (Targeted is not included in this scheme as it is a small resource that can be met from a school/setting’s own resources in the short term).
- b) A CYP within the education system (including PVI) for whom there has been a life-changing event that has significantly impacted their access to education/learning.
- c) A CYP for whom an additional amount of short-term resource (one term) would enable them to make progress in their current mainstream setting and mitigate challenging educational circumstances. This could be preventing a CYP with SEMH needs from refusing to attend school/setting or at being at significant risk of permanent exclusion.
- d) A CYP in the education system who does not have an EHCNA underway or EHCP and, as a result of a change in need, is now exhibiting needs at Targeted Plus or above.
- e) CYP from another Local Authority moving to Hertfordshire with an EHCP who exhibit a level of need at Targeted plus or above and for whom funding is needed before the annual review takes place.

The LHNF system is a specific annual budget amount managed by the DSPL managers and considered by a panel, the terms of reference for which are below.

3.2 LOCAL HIGH NEEDS FUNDING (LHNF) PANEL

The decisions regarding the allocation of LHNF will be taken by a panel managed by the DSPL manager. Below are the terms of reference for the LHNF Panel:

1. Name of Group: Local High Needs Funding Panel (LHNF Panel)

Scope and Purpose:

- To provide a robust and transparent decision-making process for allocation of High Needs Funding at a local level for children and young people who have emerging needs.
- To ensure that there is local involvement in this process as well as involvement from a range of educational professionals.
- To consider applications for LHNF from schools and PVI settings and to agree funding, make arrangements to provide support to schools and settings in the event of the application being declined, or both.

2. Membership of the Group:

Chair- DSPL Manager

- Co-ordinates agenda
- Oversees the progress of the meeting (including time keeping), managing group dynamics and ensuring all are heard (a joint responsibility of all members)
- Finalises all decisions and communicates these to the school and Shared Services along with any further professionals required to support.
- Implements quality assurance mechanisms for the decision-making process on a termly basis.

Core Members:

- 6 school/setting representatives from each phase of education – EYs, KS1, KS2 and secondary schools.
- A representative from SEND Specialist Advice and Support Service (SEND SAS) and/or Early Years Team.

Associate Members:

- Representative from the local Education Support Centre (ESC) (to be determined locally).
- Representative from Special School Outreach (to be determined locally).
- DSPL SEND Lead

Quoracy: DSPL Manager plus five members including at least one LA representative.

3. Role of Admin Support

Prior to each meeting ensures:

- Electronically circulates agenda/papers ahead of meeting at least 5 working days ahead and receives apologies.
- Maintains spreadsheet during panel and notes anything required to be communicated to schools or HCC.

4. Responsibilities of the LHNF Panel

- To read all school/ setting applications prior to the panel.
- To take responsibility for joint decision making as a group.
- To ensure confidentiality of discussions and decisions taken within the group.
- To consider the needs of the child/young person in accordance with the Descriptors of Need and Provision.
- If the needs of the child or young person are at the level of targeted plus or above, consider if funding is appropriate and decide the length of the allocation which should be no longer than one year and may be less.
- Whether or not funding is allocated, agree whether it is appropriate to provide extra support from either ISL or local services such as an ESC or special school outreach.
- If the needs of the child/young person are considered to be at targeted or below, agree whether further support is appropriate from HCC or local services as above.

5. Accountability

The decisions of the panel are the result of co-production between schools/settings, ISL professionals and the DSPL manager. The panel is responsible for the monitoring of the HCC delegated budget and to ensure that it is not overspent. The panel will prepare a report using the agreed format for the DSPL board.

6. Confidentiality and Transparency

No formal minutes are taken however the decisions and actions are noted. The ToR are open to the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and, for transparency, are included in the Local Offer Website. The decision regarding funding allocation and support will be communicated by the DSPL manger to schools and Shared Services. Parental consent is required before an application is made and schools are responsible for communicating any resulting decision to parents.

7. Frequency

Panels take place monthly (9 panels per year) in accordance with a schedule agreed by all DSPL managers.

8. Lifespan of Terms of Reference

This process will be reviewed annually and the ToR updated accordingly.

3.3 THE LHNF FUNDING JOURNEY:

Once a school or setting decides to make an application for LHNF, which must be in line with the criteria above, it should complete the application form which is available on the Hertfordshire Grid. There is also a copy in this handbook.

There is accompanying guidance, which is also on the Hertfordshire Grid and in this handbook. There is also extra guidance in this handbook.

Once completed it should be sent via SchoolsFX or secure e-mail to the dedicated LHNF address at the school/setting's local DSPL area.

Applications will be considered by the panel as detailed in the above Terms of Reference.

When considering the application, the panels will ensure that it meets the criteria detailed in 3.1. In addition, it will consider whether there has been involvement of external professionals and whether that advice has been implemented and reviewed and what impact it has had. There is an expectation that this will be the case – if not, unless there are exceptional circumstances, then it is likely that funding will not be allocated but advice will be given about what the next steps should be. All Early Years applications should have the involvement of an Early Years Area Lead.

Information that describes the needs will be taken from a range of sources including professional reports and advice from focussed consultations. For CYP who may require funding at specialist and specialist plus with a sensory impairment, advice and guidance would be expected from a specialist teacher holding the mandatory qualification in hearing impairment, visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment. This advice should be used to determine the level.

The panel will also consider whether an application for an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) has been made. If it has, if the assessment is past week 15 of the process, funding may not be allocated. If it is at less than week 15 or if an EHCP is not going to be issued, then the application will be considered. (See LHNF flow chart and Panel Brief in section 4.)

If the application is being made for a CYP who is at targeted+ or above and they are not new to the education system or have had a sudden or life-changing experience, there is an expectation that a short-term piece of funding will enable the CYP to make progress or mitigate challenging circumstances such as providing support to avoid exclusion or integrate into school or setting. This funding is for specific interventions designed to have a measurable impact. The panel would not normally be considering an application for a CYP in Year 1 or above undergoing an EHCNA unless there has been a sudden change in need.

The chair of the panel will inform the school of the panel's decision as detailed in the Panel Terms of Reference in 3.2

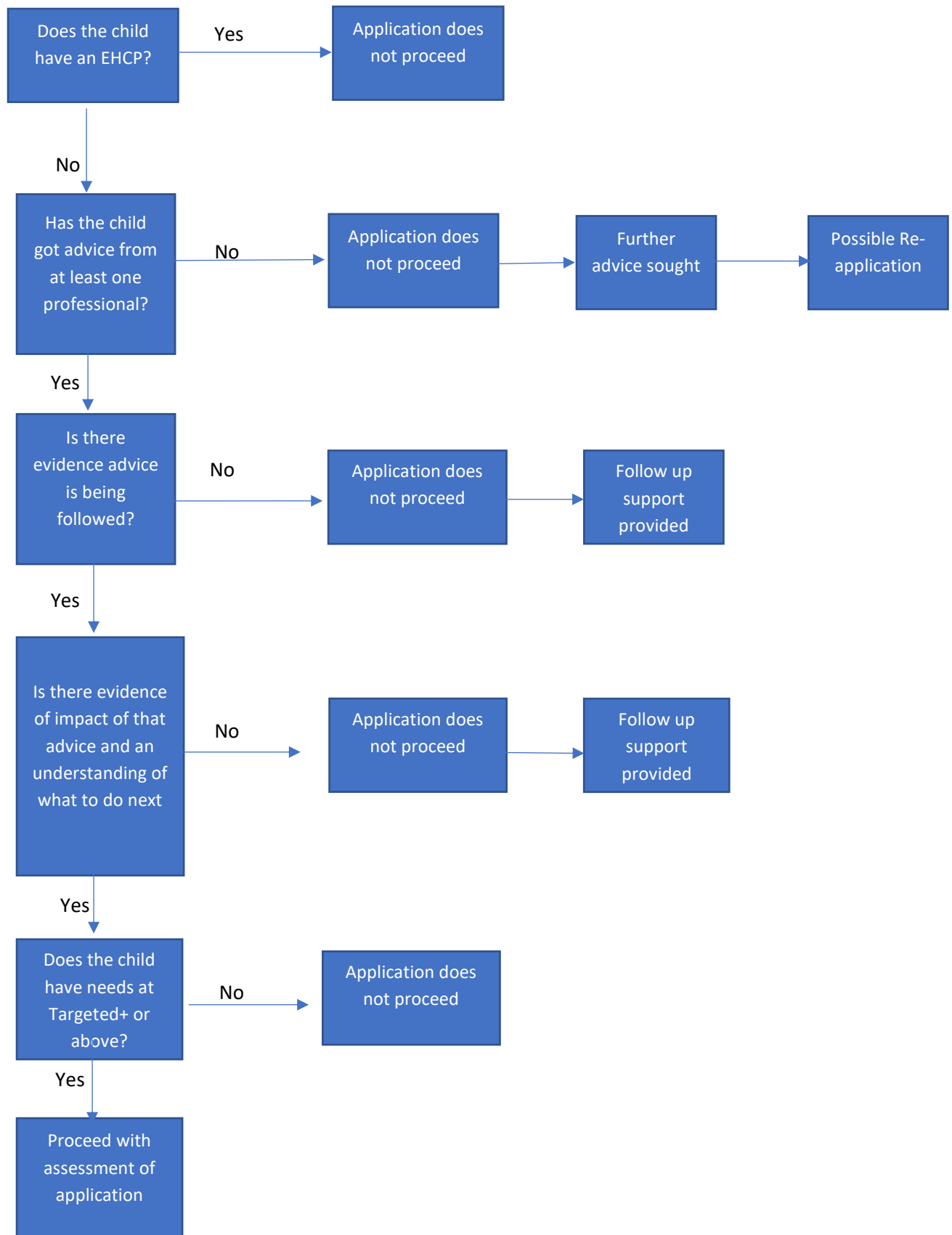
Contact will be made by the DSPL manager to the school or setting during the period of allocation to track the impact of the funding.

As this is designed to be short term funding, there is an expectation that there will be no further applications for the same child for LHNF

If an application has been submitted and the panel decide that an allocation of funding is not appropriate then, unless there is a change in need which can be demonstrated by professional advice, a resubmission will not be considered until the advice from the panel has been followed and the impact of this can be demonstrated. There is no right of appeal.

The panel process is robust with the involvement of a number of experienced professionals. If the school or setting disagree with the amount of funding allocated, i.e. the agreed level, there is no right of appeal and a resubmission will not be considered.

Local High Needs Funding – Process for Assessing Applications



Other reasons that may lead to the rejection of an application;

- Health needs should not be met from this resource
- Significant resources are in place from other agencies (funding or people)

How to prioritise applications

1. Remove all those as per flowchart
2. Put aside those that don't meet one of the five criteria for application
 - a. A CYP **entering the education system** (including PVIs) who has needs identified at Targeted plus or above from the outset, as identified by at least one professional, and who would not be able to access the setting without a high level of support. The Descriptors of Need and Provision would indicate at least a Targeted Plus description of need. (Targeted is not included in this scheme as it is a small resource that can be met from a school/setting's own resources in the short term).
 - b. A CYP within the education system (including PVIs) for whom there has been a **life-changing event** that has significantly impacted their access to education/learning.
 - c. A CYP for whom an additional amount of short-term resource would enable them to make progress in their current mainstream setting and **mitigate challenging educational circumstances**. This could be preventing a CYP with SEMH needs from refusing to attend school/setting or at being at significant risk of permanent exclusion.
 - d. A CYP in the education system who does not have an EHCNA underway or EHCP, as a result of a change in need, and is **now** exhibiting needs at targeted plus or above.
 - e. CYP from another Local Authority moving to Hertfordshire without an EHCP who exhibit a level of need at targeted or above.

3.4 LOCAL HIGH NEEDS FUNDING (LHNF) - FUNDING GUIDANCE

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the general guidance for LHNF.

At the start of each financial year, panels will be advised of the total amount of funding available for the next financial year. There is no carry forward of any underspend from the previous financial year (in line with all other SEND budgets). Panels will be advised of any previous year commitments that impact on the resources available for the new financial year (these should already be available via the panel spreadsheets).

Previous year commitments should be deducted from the amount of the new budget before using any of the financial planning guidance below.

Funding is allocated on a termly basis.

Annual funding amounts are (24/25 values):

Targeted Plus £4,945

Specialist £8,271

Specialist+ £11,450 (This is unlikely to be allocated for LHNF due to high level of need it supports. Less than 3% of CYP with HNF are allocated this resource)

Due to the monthly nature of panels, a decision will need to be made whether to start the funding at the beginning of the next term or to backdate to the beginning of the current term. This decision should be based on whether the CYP is in the setting and whether provision at a similar level to that requested is already in place.

When funding is allocated, the calculation is based on the financial year.

- For funding agreed from 1st April (3 terms), the cost will be the full value of the level.
- For funding agreed from 1st September (3 terms) the cost will only be for the two terms left in the financial year.
- For funding agreed from 1st January (3 terms), the cost will only be for the last term of the financial year.

So, as the year goes by, the cost for a decision decreases as the remainder of the 3 terms of funding will fall into a new budget in the next financial year.

To plan how to use LHNF across the year, panels should consider the following to enable there to be enough resource for all panels:

- For decisions that start from 1st April, the panel should allocate approximately half of their available budget (after deducting any prior year commitments). This would be used in the May, June and July panels.
- For decisions that start from 1st September, the panel should allocate approximately one third of their available budget (after deducting any prior year commitments). This would be used in the September, October and November panels.
- For decisions that start from 1st January, the panel should allocate approximately one sixth of their available budget (after deduction any prior year commitments). This would be used in the January, February and March panels.
- The panel spreadsheet is updated each time a panel is held and will indicate how much resource is available.

Panels can only be held nine times a year in the following months:

- Summer term - May, June, July
- Autumn term - September, October, November
- Spring term - January, February, March

(April, August and December do not have any panels as much of the month falls in school holiday time).

In making any financial decision, applying the guidance fairly and consistently, according to the criteria is essential to ensuring the resource gets to those CYP who need it. LHNF is a small resource for a specific purpose. There are other sources of funding/support for children who do not meet the criteria.

When a CYP moves from nursery to reception the funding will be amended using the existing level to reflect attendance in a school.

3.5 LOCAL HIGH NEEDS FUNDING (LHNF) PANELS

Support for schools/settings to enable SENCOs to participate in the decision making

- To ensure the success of LHNF panels there is the need to engage with appropriate professionals to establish a professional view on the cases being presented.
- Those who sit on the panels are primarily SENCOs who are employed by schools and settings, not the Local Authority.
- Engaging in this activity is a good way of building an understanding of the process and the range of needs CYP have. This is good Continuing Professional Development.
- SENCOs are asked to read and assess the papers in advance and then attend a panel (at least one half day's work).
- As the school or setting need to release these professionals from their role to do this work and supporting schools and settings to release their SENCO recognises the time and expertise that SENCOs can give to LHNF Panels it has been agreed that:
 - A payment of £100 is made to the school/setting to enable the SENCO to read the papers and attend the panel.
 - Panels can have up to 6 SENCOs in attendance that are funded.
 - Funding is only paid if papers have been read in advance and the SENCO attends for the duration of the panel.
 - The funding is paid to each DSPL which then arranges payment to each school/setting.

The funding to deliver this is as follows:

- 6 SENCOs x 9 Panels* x 9 DSPL areas x £100
Total value £48,600

*no panels to be held in April, August and December

SECTION 4 – GUIDANCE

4.1 SEND FUNDING IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS:

How to Use the Descriptors of Need and Provision

[Hertfordshire's Descriptors of Need and Provision](#)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This document is designed to accompany Descriptors of Need and Provision and sets out Hertfordshire's approach to funding the special educational provision expected for children and young people from a mainstream school's or early years setting's budget.

1.2 ORGANISATION OF THE DESCRIPTORS

The Descriptors of Need and Provision are organised into three age groups:

- Early Years (0-4 years)
- Primary
- Secondary

The descriptors are organised into the four broad areas of need and support specified in The Code of Practice 2015. There are eight discrete sets of descriptors as follows:

Cognition and Learning

Communication and Interaction:

- Speech and Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Communication (social) and Autism

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Sensory and/or Physical Needs

- Physical and Neurological Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Multi-Sensory Impairment

There are six booklets available on The Grid – two for each of the age phases. One booklet contains descriptors for Cognition and Learning, Speech Language and Communication (SLCN), Communication and Autism (C&L) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

(SEMH). The other booklet contains descriptors for Visual Impairment (VI), Hearing Impairment (HI), Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) and Physical and Neurological Impairment (PNI). In both booklets the different needs are in parallel columns with the Level descriptors reading across.

There are also separate booklets for each area of need. In these booklets the different age phases run down in parallel columns whilst the levels run across.

Each set of descriptors are organised into 6 levels of need which describe increasing levels of need.

Universal

Universal Plus

Targeted

Targeted Plus

Specialist

Specialist Plus

As individual children and young people may have a range of needs which cut across all areas each descriptor must be completed, and an overall level decided upon.

1.3 HOW TO LEVEL A DRAFT EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHCP)

The descriptors are used to assess each plan based upon the needs of the child or young person.

Section B of the plan describes the child or young person's special educational needs and is relevant to the decision making. Sections A and F may also be referred to in order to gain a more rounded view of the child or young person.

- **Section A:** The views, interests and aspirations of the child and his or her parents or the young person.
- **Section F:** The special educational provision required by the child or the young person.

STEP 1

On the Summary sheet available on Hertfordshire Grid for Learning enter the child or young person's details

STEP 2

- Read the first part of Section B
- Using the age-appropriate descriptors identify which level corresponds to the needs described in Section B. The decision will be based on a best fit.

STEP 3

Repeat step 2 for each area of need described in Section B. A level must be agreed for each set of descriptors. If the child or young person does not have an identified need in one or more of the sets, **select U** against the appropriate SEN levelling. There will be overlaps of need and it is important to read all of the sections when providing a level. For example, a child's communication and autism needs may impact on their ability to access the curriculum and their SEMH needs. Appendix 3 includes a document called "The Artemis Rating Scales for Cognition and Learning Progression which has been used to inform the Cognition and Learning Descriptors of Need and Provision. In addition there is a document called the "FID Framework" which supports the understanding of Frequency, Intensity and Duration of behaviours which also helpful in determining the appropriate descriptor.

STEP 4

Please return the completed summary sheet to the appropriate e-mail address.

1.4 ASSESSING THE LEVEL OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE A PLAN

The process for providing a level for children and young people who do not have a plan will follow the same process described above. However, the information that describes the needs will be taken from a range of other sources, including professional reports. For children and young people who may require funding at Specialist and Specialist Plus, advice would be expected from a specialist within the field. For children and young people with a sensory impairment advice and guidance would be expected from a Specialist Teacher, holding the mandatory qualification in hearing impairment, visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment.

1.5 TIPS

- It may be helpful to jot down the child or young person's age when referring to assessments.
- If the child or young person has a speech and language and communication need (SLCN) it may be helpful to cross reference this with Section F to determine the level of therapy specified by health professionals. This may support a clearer understanding of the severity of need.
- Consider the educational impact of statements within an EHCP which focus on presenting needs within the home environment.
- A paper copy of the descriptors and summary sheet may be easier to navigate and change as your assessment progresses.

4.2 EMERGENCY REVIEW OF HIGH NEEDS FUNDING

- In most cases where funding has been agreed in line with the High Needs Funding system, this will be in place for the time specified at the point of agreement. For children and young people (CYP) with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) funding arrangements will not ordinarily be reviewed within the same year. However, there may be a very small minority of CYP whose situation and needs unexpectedly change within the timeframe, necessitating a higher level of funding sooner in order to meet their learning needs including physical access to the environment. When a CYP's needs significantly increase an early funding review will be undertaken in liaison with the school/setting, professionals from health, education and/or social care and parents/carers. An emergency review can only be instigated by the main professional working with the CYP and in liaison with the SENCo.
- A few examples of when an emergency review will be needed are provided for illustrative purposes. However, each unique case will be reviewed, and funding arrangements increased as appropriate.

Examples

1. A child with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy has a sudden loss of mobility which is not in line with the typical projected deterioration associated with this medical condition. The school requires immediate additional funding to put the support measures in place to facilitate inclusion.
2. A CYP has a rare, undiagnosed condition whereby long-term outcomes are unknown by health professionals internationally. Sudden changes in cognitive impairment and/or physical skills require immediate intervention to support inclusion in a mainstream setting.
3. A CYP requires emergency surgery on a brain tumour which has previously been stable. Subsequent brain damage results in impairment to cognition and gross/fine motor skills necessitating a higher level of one-to-one support to facilitate inclusion within a mainstream school/setting.
4. A CYP has a diagnosed visual impairment or cancer of the eye which results in sudden loss of vision. A higher level of specialist strategies is required to enable access to learning.
5. A child has 'childhood dementia' and the loss of memory requires ongoing assessment to ensure appropriate strategies are in place to support the deterioration of cognition. A higher level of funding may be needed to facilitate a personalised learning programme and increasing levels of one-to-one support.

4.4 GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING THE LHNF FORM

Introduction

Local High Needs Funding (LHNF)

The Local High Needs Funding system is to support children and young people (CYP) with emerging high needs or for CYP who have needs that fall outside the EHCP process. The Descriptors of Need and Provision will be used by the LHNF panel to determine the amount of funding to be allocated and therefore the LHNF form requires the school or setting to use the Descriptors of Need and Provision when completing the LHNF form. There is a requirement to use the descriptors to assess the application, but the descriptors are also useful to help complete the various sections when describing need.

The importance of the form is to give the LHNF panel a detailed picture of the needs of the CYP, how they are being met in school and what impact interventions have had. There should be enough detail so that the panel members can make an informed decision. However, this should be concise without duplication and, in order to assist schools and settings, should come from information freely available already in the school or setting.

LHNF panels may decide that further professional input/support may be more appropriate than a funding allocation. This may include behaviour services, special school outreach, Specialist Advisory Service, Early Years teams etc. Should this be the case there is an expectation that this advice will have been followed with evidence of impact through the Assess, Plan, Do Review process before any further request for funding is received.

THE LHNF FORM

The purpose of the Local high Needs Funding form is to enable providers to demonstrate clearly the full range of measures that have been taken to meet the child or young person's special educational needs/disability (SEND), the impact of those measures and to identify what additional provision is needed to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person (CYP). The information on the form needs to make clear that all reasonable adjustments have been made by the setting.

NB The word 'setting' refers to schools and PVI settings.

1. CHILD DETAILS

Home address and postcode: The CYP MUST be resident in Hertfordshire to receive funding. Cases are directed to LHNF panels according to the DSPL area of the school attended.

DSPL Areas are as follows: The choices are: Watford, St Albans, Three Rivers, Dacorum, Stevenage, North Herts, East Herts, Hertsmere, Broxbourne, Welwyn/Hatfield

Ethnic origin codes:

Black African	Italian	White-British	Any other Asian background
Black-Caribbean	Gypsy/Roma	White-Irish	Any Other Black background
Caribbean	Bangladeshi	White+Black-African	Any other ethnic group
Chinese	Indian	White Asian	Any other mixed background
Turkish Cypriot	Pakistani	White Black Caribbean	Refused to identify
Turkish	White-other	Traveller of Irish Heritage	

2. SCHOOL/SETTING DETAILS

Name of setting: Where the application spans a change of setting, both schools/settings should be named, including their HCC school numbers. Good practice would suggest both schools/settings are involved in the completion of the form, but the application can come from either. The application should reflect the provision in both settings.

School Number/NEG number: this is the 6 digit number on the headcount form that identifies PVI settings of the free place funding. For schools, this is the HCC school number.

PVI Application: If a child in a PVI setting is not attending for their full allocation and is going to build up their hours over a period of time, please give details of this (including dates against increased hours planned).

3. DETAILS OF EXTERNAL PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Please list all involvement of external professionals. This involvement would normally have been within the last 18 months. Professionals could include: Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Early Years Advisory Teacher, Children's Services. Please specify any others not on this list. Please ensure that the name of the professional and role are included.

4. MAIN PRESENTING NEED

The child or young person's main presenting need/s should be selected out of one of the following categories:

- Specific Learning Difficulty
- Moderate Learning Difficulty/disability
- Severe Learning Difficulty /disability
- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty
- Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Hearing Impairment

- Vision Impairment
- Multi-Sensory Impairment
- Physical Disability
- Other Difficulty/Disability
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- No Specialist Assessment

Please pick one or more of the subdivisions above. If the main presenting need is Communication and Interaction or Sensory and/ or Physical needs, please select the relevant needs from within the description.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING CONTEXT

Please select one of the criteria listed in section 5, explaining how the CYP meets the individual criterion. If this is a life changing event, please indicate what this is and how it has impacted on the CYP's access to education. If the child has needs which are at Targeted Plus or above and they are not new to the education system or Hertfordshire, please indicate what has changed for the CYP which has now necessitated extra funding.

Please also indicate whether there is a current application for an Education Health and Care needs assessment in progress. If so, indicate the date. Please note that this funding is **not** designed to be a stop gap until funding can be obtained via an EHCP. If the CYP is in KS1 or above, there is an expectation that needs will be met from the school's own resources until the EHCNA is complete unless there has been a significant change in need as detailed above. There is an expectation that any funding obtained through LHNF will have an impact which can be demonstrated (see section 8 below).

If this is a resubmission please state the date of the previous application, what advice was given in response to the application and what has changed.

6. CURRENT ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGETS

Where appropriate there may be reference to any of the following:

- Relevant school/setting assessments and whether these are supported or unsupported. Please clarify these assessments if these are not in common usage.
- Speech and language levels of functioning
- Percentiles
- Age-appropriate comparisons – please ensure that there is more detail than just below age related expectations.
- Specific vocabulary used by professionals in advice e.g. hearing or visually impaired children who are described as “severe”.
- Strategies implemented from Hertfordshire Therapeutic Approach (formerly STEPS).

You may also include reference to:

- Access to learning
- Attendance
- Social inclusion

If a CYP is on a reduced timetable there should be a clear reintegration plan which includes a timetable of when full time provision will be accessed.

There should be reference to support provided which has been suggested by external professionals and how this has been implemented.

7. CHALLENGES, SUPPORT, NEXT STEPS and LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

This section is broken down into the different areas of need and requires, for the relevant descriptors, what the challenges are for the child in those areas along with the support which is in place and what the next steps will be. The school's Assess, Plan, Do, Review process should be used in this section. There is an expectation that there will be evidence of at least one cycle of APDR.

Reference should be made to the Descriptors of Need and Provision whilst completing this section and a level included for each descriptor which has been completed. Avoid cutting and pasting from the descriptors as this can inhibit the panel from understanding the needs of the individual CYP. You do not need to fill out every section – only those relevant to the child's needs. Again, please note that, when using the descriptors, there is evidence to support this. Where 1:1 support is given please indicate how this is used. Where there is a personalised curriculum, please indicate how this is personalised. There is an expectation that reasonable adjustments will have been made to support the CYP and should be detailed. However please note that these in themselves would not qualify for further funding. Please include any specific strategies and interventions used to support the child which are over and above quality first teaching. There is an expectation that the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need and Provision documents will be used to ensure that appropriate provision is in place.

Next steps should include details of all planned support and interventions that would not normally be available from the school's own resources (please use a bullet point format) and what the desired impact will be. Again, there is an expectation that the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need and Provision documents will be used to support this.

You should be specific about the type of provision required referring to its duration, frequency and method of delivery. It may include some of the following:

- Staffing
- Curriculum
- Physical resources
- Access to the environment of the setting

- Intervention programmes such as speech and language, behaviour etc. (excluding those normally provided in an inclusive setting)
- Advice given by professionals
- Adaptations
- Other

As above please be detailed in the description of the planned support and interventions. Please also note that there is an expectation that the planned provision will match the level of the level requested and that this will not be just reasonable adjustments.

8. LEVEL OF FUNDING REQUIRED

Please state the level of funding required and for how long. This would normally be the highest of the levels you have set out in section 7 and for one, two or three terms.

9. IMPACT

Please give details of the expected Impact of the funding.

When complete please e-mail this, via SchoolsFX or secure e-mail, to your local DSPL manager at the appropriate dedicated e-mail address.

4.5 FURTHER GUIDANCE FOR APPLICATIONS FOR LHNF

Professional Advice

It is important when making the application that professional advice has already been sought and there is appropriate evidence of implementation and impact of that advice using the APDR (Assess Plan Do Review) cycle. As already stated above if the proposed level is either specialist or specialist plus the professional needs to be a specialist holding a mandatory qualification in the field. This also applies to those entering the education system and it is expected that advice will be sought and obtained before making an application.

Education Health and Care Needs Assessment

As this is a system providing funding for CYP with emerging needs there will not have been an application for an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment in process. Exceptions to this would be children entering the education system for the first time where it is evident that needs are very complex and funding is required in the short term to enable needs to be met.

Emerging Needs

As this is a system for providing funding for CYP with emerging need, where needs are Targeted Plus in older CYP there should be evidence that needs have **changed** and that they are **now** at Targeted+ or above. It is expected that there would have been advice sought and implemented and that the request should be for specific interventions which can make an impact. This should not be viewed as interim funding before an EHCP is issued. As this is short term funding and will only be allocated for a maximum of three terms PVI settings should liaise with the next phase of a child's education regarding next steps to allow for the impact to be continued.

Life- Changing Events

Where a child has suffered a life changing event there should be evidence of how this has had an impact on their access to education. Some children suffer trauma and, whilst it is acknowledged that there could be an impact, funding cannot be requested for the fact that there has been a trauma without such evidence of impact.

Transition from one phase of education to another, whilst sometimes being very difficult, cannot be classed as a life-changing event.

Detailed Provision

When detailing provision, it should be clear as to how the funding will be used. It is not sufficient to put 1:1 support without explaining how that support is used. There is an expectation that this will not include duties that a Teaching Assistant would ordinarily carry out. If a highly differentiated curriculum is required, again there should be detail as to what this would look like.

There is an expectation that the provision for which funding is requested matches the need of the level selected. If provision detailed is what would be described as reasonable adjustments this would not match Targeted Plus and would therefore not be allocated. Provision for such adjustments would come out of the school or setting's allocated budget.

The Form

When completing the form ensure that there is a full description of the needs of the child so that the panel has a complete picture. It is not sufficient to rely on using excerpts copied and pasted from the Descriptors of Need and Provision – there needs to be evidence of how these reflect the actual needs of the child. Be precise when describing the difficulties.

Ensure that the child meets the eligibility criteria, taking the points above into consideration, describing the circumstances.

List evidence and examples of behaviour/ need. Ensure that next steps are sequential and clear and that evidence is at the level requested.

As this is short -term funding, detail the expected impact for the duration of the allocation.

Please note that if a CYP is on a reduced timetable there must be a reintegration plan supplied detailing what the plan is to get the CYP in school full-time.

Resubmissions

Where a panel recommends that further support is given, a resubmission should not be made until it can be demonstrated that any advice has been used and there is evidence of impact through at least one cycle of APDR. This is expected to be at least one term.

Where a panel makes an allocation of funding which is not in line with the request from the setting – i.e. where the panel considers that the needs described and/ or the proposed provision are not in line with the level requested, then a resubmission cannot be made.

There is no right of appeal.

4.6 LHNF CONFIDENTIALITY AND PANEL BRIEF

Below is the brief read to panels at the start of every panel

- The panel are reminded that all discussions and information within the panel are confidential and that representatives should not advocate for the school, parent or child but consider the evidence available within the paperwork and provide any professional views from their area(s) of knowledge and expertise.
- Colleagues attending panels are expected to recognise the sensitivity and confidentiality of matters discussed which should not be discussed or shared outside of the meeting, unless in relation to the decision once circulated by the DSPL Manager

- If the panel is held with panel members in the same room, any papers/notes should remain in the room at the end of the meeting for confidential disposal by the DSPL manager. Any information stored electronically by panel members should be deleted at the end of the meeting.
- All discussion is confidential and will not be shared beyond the panel meeting.
- Should any panel members have any queries, these should be raised during panel or with the chair immediately following panel, as appropriate.
- Before each case is considered a vote will take place to determine whether there is consensus among panel members regarding whether the level of need is at or above Targeted Plus
- If the answer is yes, then a discussion should take place as to what provision the CYP needs. This could be support from a service, funding to the school/setting or a combination of both.
- If funding is appropriate, then a discussion will take place to agree the amount and length of the award – this should not be longer than a year.
- If the answer is no, then discussion will follow to reach consensus about the position.
- If the CYP is not to be supported with LHNF then a discussion will take place as to the reasons for this including any recommendations for support from a service.
- Throughout the panel, the funding spreadsheet will be maintained with the panel regularly updated as to the current spend. Notes will be made on the spreadsheet as to the reasons for the decision.
- Should it be established that professional support is required the wording of the communication with schools will be agreed and recorded on the spreadsheet.

APPENDIX 1 LEVELLING SUMMARY SHEET

Top-up Funding – High Needs Funding (HNF) in Mainstream Schools

Levelling Summary Sheet

Name of child or young person _____

Need	Level U	Level U+	Level T	Level T+	Level S	Level S+
Cognition and Learning						
Speech and Language and Communication Needs						
Communication and Autism						
Social, Emotional and Mental Health						
PNI						
Hearing						
Vision						
MSI						

Overall level _____

Date Completed _____

Role of Person completing the assessment

Key: U=Universal Support, U+ = Universal Plus Support, T=Targeted support, T+= Targeted Plus support, S= Specialist Support, S+= Specialist Plus support

For Annual Reviews only:

No change to level

Change to recommended (see above) *

APPENDIX 2 LOCAL HIGH NEEDS FUNDING FORM

Local High Needs Funding (LHNF)

Application Form

Please read the guidance notes carefully before completing this form. If you require any advice, please contact your DSPL Manager.

SECTION 1		CHILD/YOUNG PERSON'S DETAILS	
Name			
DOB			
Age (in years and months)			
Year Group			
Gender			
Home address			
Postcode			
District/ Borough Council area			
Ethnic origin			
First language			
SECTION 2		SCHOOL/SETTING DETAILS	
Name of school/setting			
School No. or PVI NEG No.			
Address of school/setting			
Contact no. of school/setting			
PVI/ Maintained Nursery application – no. of hours attending (see guidance notes)			
Date child started or is expected to start			
UPN (if applicable)			
SECTION 3		DETAILS OF EXTERNAL PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT	
Professional Name/role	Date of advice	Brief details of work/ ongoing support	
SECTION 4		PROFILE OF THE CHILD/YP'S SEND	
Main presenting need/s			
SECTION 5		DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING CONTEXT	
<p>This should detail why the child is eligible for LHNF funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new to the education system • life changing event • new to the Hertfordshire • needs which are at targeted+ or above • needs short term funding to access school 			

<p>(See guidance on specific purposes of LHNF) Please indicate whether there has been an application for an EHCNA. If so, please indicate the date of the application. Please also indicate whether this is a resubmission, whether there has been previous funding from LHNF or another source and, if so, what was the impact. (Please see guidance regarding resubmissions)</p>				
SECTION 6				
<p>Details of current attainment, progress and targets.</p>				
<p>SECTION 7 (Complete all relevant areas)</p>	<p>WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR THE CYP</p>	<p>SUPPORT IN PLACE</p>	<p>NEXT STEPS</p>	<p>LEVEL of NEED</p>
<p>COGNITION AND LEARNING</p>				
<p>SPEECH AND LANGUAGE</p>				
<p>COMMUNICATION AND AUTISM</p>				
<p>SEMH</p>				
<p>PHYSICAL AND NEUROLOGICAL IMPAIRMENT (PNI)</p>				
<p>HEARING IMPAIRMENT</p>				
<p>VISUAL IMPAIRMENT(VI)</p>				
<p>MULTI-SENSORY IMPAIRMENT (MSI)</p>				
SECTION 8				
<p>LEVEL OF NEED</p>				
<p>Please state the level of funding required and for how long. (This would normally be the highest of the levels you have set out in section 7 and for one, two or three terms)</p>				
SECTION 9				
<p>DESIRED OUTCOMES OF ADDITIONAL SUPPORT</p>				
<p>What will be the impact of the support you are requesting? (Please use a bullet point format. This does not need to duplicate any information already in section 7)</p>				

Name of Person completing the form _____
 Role of person completing this form _____
 Name(s) of parent _____
 Date of completion _____
 (Parents must be involved and agree with the contents of this form)
 Please email this form to your DSPL Manager

The Artemis Rating Scales for Cognition and Learning Progression (TARS-CLP[©])

SUMMARY of COGNITION and LEARNING Progression Rates

Within education, health and social care work there is an ever-increasing demand, often driven by legal imperatives, to have accurate evidence-based results when it comes to cognitive assessment (sometimes using standardised norm-referenced tools) to help guide the apportioning of resources within education, health and social care. Additionally, there is also the subsidiary legal requirement of whether a level of individual capability is achieved so that evidence in court can be heard or used in civil and criminal court proceedings.

Therefore, it seems appropriate to begin the work of refining, codifying and providing a coherent definition of cognitive descriptors should begin with *The Mental Health Capacity Act (2005)* which is the law within England and Wales and which itself is informed by the National Health Service (NHS) that states the following:

'A learning disability affects the way a person understands information and how they communicate. This means they can have difficulty:

- *Understanding new or complex information*
- *Learning new skills*
- *Coping independently*

Around 1.5 million people in the UK have a learning disability. It's thought up to 350,000 people have a severe learning disability. This figure is increasing.'

The NHS also quantifies the detail of severity as follows:

- Mild learning disabilities indicates an IQ = 50-70, or mental age of 9-12 years*
- Moderate learning disabilities indicates an IQ = 35-49, or mental age of 6-9 years
- Severe learning disabilities indicates an IQ = 20-34, or mental age of 3-6 years
- Profound learning disabilities indicates an IQ = 20, or mental age below 3 years

Average IQ is 100. The arbitrary cut-off to indicate learning disabilities is 70.

Source NHS.

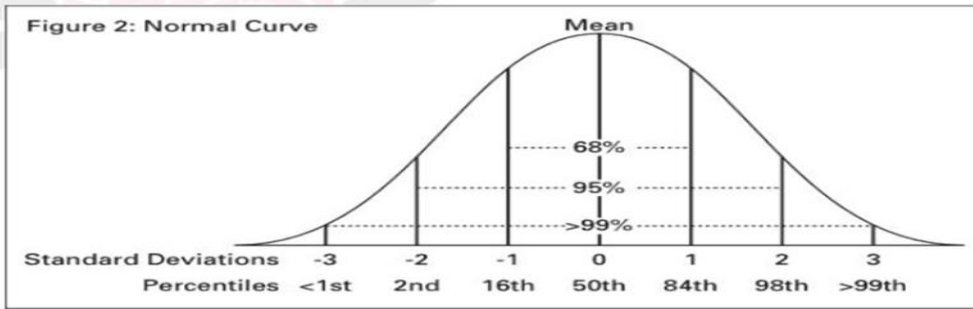
(*Educationalists use the term developmental age (DA) as opposed to the medicalised usage of mental age)

These learning disabilities or learning difficulties as psychologists prefer to describe them are termed mild, moderate, severe and finally profound and multiple learning disability (PMLD) or sometimes called profound and complex learning difficulties (PCLD). The terms are interchangeable, and the use is dependent on the profession that is using the description.

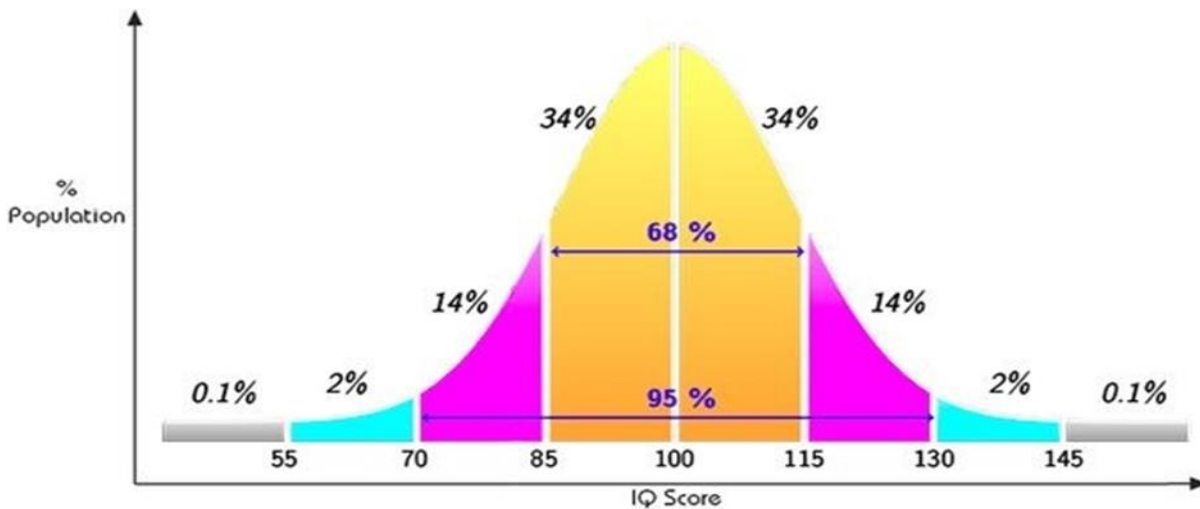
The means by which an individual falls into a mild/moderate learning difficulty (MLD), severe learning difficulty (SLD) or PMLD category is determined by a statistical measure, which is then distributed against the normal distributive curve. The concept of the normal distribution curve is the most important continuous distribution in statistics. The normal distribution curve plays a key role in statistical methodology and applications.

Typically, up to one standard deviation (SD) below the *mean* would be indicative of '*average*' whilst two SDs would be *mild* or *moderate learning difficulties* dependent on the standardised score (SS), and up to three SDs from the *mean* would signify *severe learning difficulties* and anything beyond that would be an indication of *profound and multiple learning difficulties*.

Normal curve



IQ Score Distribution



* The colours used in the graph above are for illustration, whilst the colours in the rest of the document relate to specific levels of severity

The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children 5th UK Edition (WISC-V) is an example of a frequently used psychometric tool intended to measure a child’s intellectual ability which uses a Standard Deviation of 15 and applies the following descriptors. Other tools within the Wechsler stable of assessments use the same SD’s and descriptors. Various psychometric tools may use a different SD.

FSIQ Range	Descriptive Classification	Traditional Descriptive Classification (“Old”)
131 and above	Extremely High	Very Superior
121 – 130	Very High	Superior
111 - 120	High Average	High Average
91 - 110	Average	Average
86 - 90	Low Average	Low Average
70 - 85	Low	Borderline
69 and below	Extremely Low	Extremely Low

Cognitive and Learning Level 5

The long-term developmental age (DA) will most likely plateau 18 months in all four areas of the Code of Practice (COP).

PMLD Sector

PMLD Early Years Cognition & Learning LD in months						12 months = 3 months (<25%)			
CA	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
DA	3	4.5	6	7.5	9	10.5	12	13.5	15

PMLD 0-18 years Cognition & Learning				1 year = 3 month (<25%)		
CA	3 years	6 years	9 years	12 years	15 years	18 years
DA	9 months	18 months*	27 months	36 months	45 months	54 months

*Nationally empirically this would in most cases be the generally accepted maximal developmental ceiling for most PMLD children and young people. Typically, this would level at between 0-6 months.

The child and young person (CYP) will be profoundly compromised functioning across all developmental areas which will remain unchanged throughout their life span. This will include several co-occurring difficulties e.g., sensory, physical, communication and cognition and learning (such as thinking and reasoning skills). There are many rare conditions that fall into this unique population. The markers or features may be as follows.

The CYP may have severe and complex medical needs, which potentially impacts on access to daily activities and have a life-limiting and/or a degenerative condition. The condition may lead to a gradual loss of skills and awareness.

The CYP may have conditions which make them vulnerable to infections or respiratory failure which may cause sleep or drowsiness during the day or be unable to access activities due to continued seizures. Over time the effects will mean the CYP will lose skills and competencies. The CYP may be in pain or discomfort or feel generally unwell and their overall needs will require life-long constant adult intervention and supervision

- **Cognition:** The CYP will be functioning at a sensory level and have a restricted developmental age (DA) between 6-12 months, with some exceptions up to 36 months. The Engagement Profile Model, proposed by B. Carpenter 2011, provides a framework for assessing CYP who are not able to engage with subject specific learning e.g., literacy, numeracy science etc. It has been adopted in schools for children with the severest level of learning difficulty following the Rochford Review in 2018.
- **Communication:** The CYP will be non-verbal although they may be able to make audible sounds or noises to indicate discomfort, distress or delight. The interpretation of the differences will require someone who is familiar with the CYP. Communication will vary between pre-intentional behaviour and concrete symbolic communication. Some children will remain at a pre-intentional stage throughout their life. and dependency on technology including augmentative and alternative communication such as Makaton, PECS and signing.
- **Physical:** The CYP will be non-ambulant and may also be experiencing cerebral palsy (CP) and classified on the Gross Motor Function Classification System (GMFCS) at Level 4's or 5's. Generally, a CYP with CP over the age of 5 years will not improve their GMFCS level so, for a classification at a level IV at the

age of 6 then it is likely they will need to use mobility aids throughout their life. This might be hoists, lifts, flat-bed or wheelchairs.

- **Sensory:** Visual acuity and auditory processing might technically exist but the link to cognitive competence will inhibit an understanding of incoming visual or auditory stimuli. The curriculum offer will be based on incremental progression and will require sensory stimulation using light, sound, smell and tactile approaches.
- **SEMH:** Typically, social experiences will be provided and brought to the CYP by adults.
- **Self-care and Independence:** All self-care needs will be life-long adult dependent. This will include feeding, hygiene and intimate personal care needs as will dressing and undressing. All mobility and movement will be overwhelmingly mechanically or technologically dependent.

Cognitive and Learning Level 4

The long-term developmental ceiling will most likely plateau between 60 - 72 months in all four areas of the COP.

Specialist Plus and SLD Sector

Severe Early Years Cognition and Learning LD in months						36 months = 12 months (33%)			
CA	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
DA	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20

Severe 0-18 Cognition and Learning LD				3 years = 1 year (33%)		
CA	3	6	9	12	15	18
DA	1	2	3	4	5	6

The CYP will be experiencing substantial, complex, persistent and enduring learning difficulties across all domains indicated by developmental assessments or cognitive profiling, as opposed to the less useful curriculum attainment measures which measure taught skills and retention capability.

Individual incremental progress is possible, but peer comparative accelerated rate of progress is unlikely, and the developmental ceiling will be significantly below CA.

Overall, curriculum subject models will require substantive adjustment in differentiation and outcomes with individualised adjustments which should allow for a shallow and gentle incremental rate of progress. National public examinations and attainments models would not be developmentally appropriate.

Cognitive and Learning Level 3

The long-term developmental ceiling will not correspond to CA in some or many areas of the COP and depending on severity will plateau between 6-12 years of age.

Specialist and LD Sector

Moderate EY Cognition and Learning LD in months						12 months = 6 months (Range 34% - with a maximum 50%)			
CA	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
DA	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30

Moderate 0-18 Cognition and Learning LD						1 Year = 6 months (Range 34% - with a maximum 50%)			
CA	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18
DA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

The CYP has moderate, persistent and life-long difficulties in developing taught skill acquisition to acquire knowledge, strategies and skills to access learning. This will require a differentiated and modified curriculum, a simplified language approach delivered at an adjusted pace with extended processing time.

Overall, curriculum models will require significant adaptations/scaffolding and outcomes and variable adjustments which should allow for a low and gentle incremental rate of progress. There will also be implications regarding national public examinations and attainments with a need to reconsider the utility of national attainment expectation models.

Cognitive and Learning Level 2

Outcomes will remain for the most part in the low range between one and two SDs of the mean.

Targeted Plus

Mild EY Cognition and Learning LD in months						12 months = 7.2 months (60%)			
CA	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
DA	7.2	10.8	14.4	18.0	21.6	25.2	28.8	32.4	36.0

Mild 0-18 Cognition and Learning LD						1 Year = 7.2 months (60%)			
CA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
DA	0:07	01:02	1:09	2:04	3:00	3:07	4:02	4:09	5:04

Mild 0-18 Cognition and Learning LD (cont'd)						1 Year = 7.2 months (60%)			
CA	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
DA	6:00	6:07	7:02	7:09	8:04	9:00	9:07	10:02	10:9

The child will be exhibiting some delay and difficulties in areas which are impacting on skill acquisition and learning, which require Targeted Support. The CYP will require some intermittent or blocks of support to maintain progress across the curriculum. It is possible for functional literacy and numeracy to be achieved but will remain low. The rate of progress will be below CA but will sit within the lower end of the normal distributive curve.

Cognitive and Learning Level 1

There is evidence of some delay in meeting expected milestones. These can be supported through Inclusive High-Quality Teaching and reasonable adjustments with no limitation to their developmental ceiling.

Targeted

Mild 0-18 Cognition and Learning (mainstream)						1 Year = 9 months (75%)			
CA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
DA	0:09	1:06	2:03	3:00	3:09	4:06	5:03	6:00	6:09

Mild 0-18 Cognition and Learning (mainstream) (cont'd)						1 Year = 9 months (75%)			
CA	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
DA	7:06	8:03	9:00	9:09	10:06	11:03	12:00	12:09	13:06

Universal Plus

EY Cognition and Learning (mainstream) in months						12 months = 9.6 months (80%)			
CA	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
DA	9.6	14.4	19.2	24	28.8	33.6	38.4	43.2	48

Cognition and Learning (mainstream)						1 Year = 9.6 months (80%)			
CA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
DA	0.09	1:07	2:04	3:02	4:00	4:09	5:07	6:04	7:02

Cognition and Learning (mainstream) (cont'd)						1 Year = 9.6 months (80%)			
CA	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
DA	8.00	8:09	9:07	10:04	11:02	12:00	12:09	13:07	14:04

The CYP may require some one-off, intermittent or blocks of support to maintain progress across the curriculum although the outcomes will remain for the most part in the lower average range within 1 SD of the mean. The rate of progress will be below CA but will sit across the low end of the normal distributive curve.

APPENDIX 4 FREQUENCY INTENSITY DURATION (FID) FRAMEWORK

FID Framework

<h2>Frequency</h2>				
Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
1	2	3	4	5
Occasional episode	Weekly episodes with occasional multiple episodes on some days	Daily occurrence with some multiple episodes on some days	Multiple episodes in almost every session or lesson or multiple events in some sessions or lessons	Persistent and/or non-stop without any abatement throughout every session or lesson whether in structured or unstructured environments

<h2>Intensity</h2>				
Very low	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
1	2	3	4	5
Some inappropriate behaviour with low grade irritating off-task behaviour	Resistant behaviour with some defiance and off-task behaviour	Disruptive and non-compliant behaviour with some intrusive aspects with significant off-task behaviour	Significant physical and/or verbally intrusive behaviour towards peers, adults and/or property	Extreme and immediate danger to themselves and others which requires immediate physical restraint and/or physical removal

<h2>Duration</h2>				
Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
1	2	3	4	5
Momentary and lasts for a few seconds and usually dissipates within 30 seconds	Lasts for 1-3 minutes with refocussing possible	Lasts for extended period of 5 minutes or more with occasional extended periods	Long-lasting over 20 minutes in duration and sometimes lasting an entire session or lesson	No discernible end to episode and often lasting throughout a significant part of the day or even all day