

SEND banding tool in Richmond upon Thames: frequently asked questions

**(This document is currently relevant
for children and young people in local
special schools)**



**achieving
for children**

Providing finance to support children and young people with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) in Richmond, to achieve their maximum potential and thrive.

How are resources made available to support children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND)?

All schools receive money based on the number and age of their pupils. This pays for a curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils in the school.

Additional funding is made available to meet the needs of SEND learners who need support above the universal offer.

Where more resources are identified in an EHCP, to enable a pupil to achieve and thrive, further 'Top-up' funding is made available from the borough's high needs budget. This is provided for children and young people with the most complex needs. Who should receive this funding, how much they should receive and for how long is decided by a group of professionals with experience and expertise in SEND who work together for the best interests of the child. To determine how much additional funding is made available to a school for individual pupils, in Richmond, we use a 'banding' tool.

What is 'banding'?

Banding is a way for local authorities to allocate top-up funding for securing special educational provision described in children's and young people's EHCPs. Each local authority has its own mechanism for allocating top-up funding, but banding is the most common approach across England.

Why do we use this approach in Richmond?

Our banding tool allows us to allocate top up funding in a fair and transparent way ensuring that children and young people with similar needs are receiving a similar level of support while allowing for specific individual needs.

Our approach enables us to offer:

- a fair and transparent process that generates a fair offer across schools
- a consistent and needs-based approach to support the allocation of top-up funding
- objective decision making
- proven best-practices in place in other local authorities in England
- the right amount of top-up funding to each EHCP - this will deliver the provisions needed to achieve the outcomes agreed for each individual

Do we use this approach to banding for all pupils with an EHCP?

Currently we use the banding tool to help us allocate resources in our special provision, ie maintained special schools, special free schools and special academies in the borough.

We will be extending the use of this more individualised approach during the 2023/24 academic year for pupils and students with an EHCP attending mainstream schools.

After that we will explore using the banding tool with pupils and students in further education, alternative provision and other special provision.

How is the individual 'band' decided?

Richmond has chosen an IT-based tool that is also used by other local authorities. The local authority SEND case managers answer a series of standardised questions in different categories, assessing the individual against each, using information from the EHCP. The banding tool then recommends a band.

There are 10 bands, some broken down into sub groups. Each band has a financial value and that sum of money will be made available to the school attended by your child.

Therapy provision, delivered by a therapist, would not be funded through the high needs budget and so is not covered by the band for your child. It would either be arranged through the local health care providers in the local area or agreed through a spot commissioning arrangement as set out in the Local Offer. Please see the [Local Offer](#) for contact details for your local therapy provider.

How do I find out more?

The school's special educational needs co-ordinator can explain more about how resources are used to support your child.

Because the band reflects meeting the needs described in your child's EHCP with updates from annual reviews, the band will provide the resources to meet those needs. Bands can only change to reflect changes in need.

Richmond engaged with SEND stakeholders in preparing this document and will continue to do so. Please feed any thoughts through to the parent and carer forum.