

What to do if you are not happy with the decision

If the Joint Agency Panel does not agree that your support plan will meet the identified outcomes, your support broker will work with you review the plan. If you do not agree with the decision and explanation provided you have a right to appeal.

The appeals process has three stages as follows:

Stage 1

Appeals to the decision should be made in writing to the Special Educational Needs Team. Initially, you should state clearly the reasons for disagreeing with the decision. The brokerage service will work with you to provide any further supporting evidence and re-present a proposal to the Joint Agency Panel.

Stage 2

If the multi-agency panel upholds their original decision and you are still not happy with the decision and explanation provided, an independent mediator from KIDS Mediation will work with you and the Council to negotiate a solution.

Stage 3

If a solution still cannot be found and you wish to take it further, you may wish to consider contacting the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal or the local NHS Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 020 8339 8000 or 020 8339 8107.

Key points of contact

Special Educational Needs Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BZ
Kingston SEN T: 020 8891 7262
E: sen-rbk@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Richmond SEN T: 020 8891 7541/7591
E: afc.sen.team@richmond.gov.uk

Personal budgets for children and young people

A guide for parents and carers



What is a personal budget?

A personal budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority of Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver some or all of the provision set out in the education, health and care plan (EHCP). A personal budget gives a level of flexibility and room for innovation and creativity in the way the money is used.

Who can have a personal budget

If a child or young person meets the criteria for one or more of the following areas of support, then they are entitled to request a personal budget.

- Top-up education funding (also known as Element 3) and attends a mainstream school
- Support from the local Disabled Children's Social Care Team
- NHS continuing care

If the child or young person is eligible for more than one funding stream, it may be possible to bring them together into a single personal budget.

Will I have to have a personal budget?

No. You are entitled to request a personal budget but they are not compulsory.

How do I request a personal budget?

If a child or young person requires support to help them get the most from their education and meet their goals as independently as possible, then their needs will be assessed by education, health and social care professionals. In partnership with the child's parents or the young person they will produce an education, health and care plan.

As part of the planning process to produce the EHCP and before it is finalised, the child's parents or the young person may request a personal budget, if they want one, by contacting their special educational needs case manager.

How much money will I get?

The amount of money allocated to a personal budget depends on the needs of the child or young person and will be set out in the education, health and care plan.

The personal budget amount is based on all of the support needed for one year and will be reviewed annually.

Who will help me find the support I need?

If you want to you may ask a local brokerage service to help you draw up a support plan that shows how the personal budget will be used to meet the outcomes in the EHC Plan and how achieving those outcomes will be measured.

Details of local brokerage services may be found on the Local Offer website.

What can I spend the money on?

Personal budgets give a child's parents or a young person the opportunity to spend the money in a flexible way that meets the agreed outcomes and learning objectives set out in the Education, Health and Care Plan.

A personal budget can be spent on support and services from a range of health and social care organisations including the council, on equipment, on respite care, on assistance with accessing the community, on learning new things and on personal care.

A personal budget may not be used to pay for bills such as rent or mortgage, for food or shopping, or for an activity or service for someone else.

What can't spend the money on?

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How will I look after the money?

The allocated personal budget can be looked after in different ways and your support broker will discuss the option or options most suitable to your needs.

- Notional budget: the Council will look after and buy the services, support or equipment on your behalf
- Third party managed budget: an organisation separate to the Council will look after and buy the services, support or equipment on your behalf
- Direct payment: the money is paid to you, your son or daughter directly and you buy the services, support or equipment directly.
- A combination of the above.

Who will decide?

A multi-agency panel will meet on a regular basis to review all personal budget requests. The panel will have representatives from education, social care, health and independent members separate from the Council.

The support broker will present your proposed support plan to the panel on for a decision.

How long will it take?

The joint assessment and EHC Plan, including the defining of outcomes and personal budget arrangements will be agreed within 20 weeks of the request for EHC needs assessment being received by the SEN Team.