

Quarrydale Family Of Schools

SEND Policy 2025



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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that practice is clear and understood by all who work within the Quarrydale Family of Schools. It is also the aim of the policy to ensure that funding decisions for all pupils with complex special educational needs in the Family of Schools are fair and transparent. This policy aims to formalise our agreed practice into a working document for all relevant Family colleagues.

Family Aims

- To ensure parity and consistency of provision for pupils with similar levels of need.
- To develop a shared understanding of the Local Authority's (LA) descriptors of need.
- To recognise, acknowledge and value our joint responsibilities as SENCOs for Family decisions.
- To continue to develop and share good practice so that provision improves for all pupils with Special Educational Needs in the Family.
- To ensure SENCOs are aware of new initiatives (both local and national).

Roles and Responsibilities

The person responsible for overseeing the provision for children with SEND in each school is the Head Teacher. The person co-ordinating the day-to-day provision of education for pupils with SEN is the SENCO. Across the family of schools, the person coordinating the role is the Family SENCO. The divisions of responsibilities within the Family systems and processes are as follows;

The Family SENCo will:

- Provide ongoing support for all SENCos, especially those who are new to the role, to help them to understand the different SEND systems, pathways and processes.
- Support SENCos to understand national and local changes to SEND processes and practices.
- Ensure that schools are aware of statutory guidance and accordance with SEND reforms, such as annually updating the school SEND policy and SEN information report.
- Support SENCos in improving and maintaining quality, continuity and consistency for pupils with SEND within their school.
- Liaise with the LA on behalf of the Family and attend LA meetings/training and disseminate information accordingly.
- Provide information to the LA and Head teachers as required.
- Call regular meetings to discuss SEND in the Family and ensure relevant people are invited to attend, including termly Springboard meetings (both Primary and Secondary) with staff from SFSS and EPS services.
- Co-ordinate the Family moderation process, ensuring that it is a fair and transparent system, e.g. through school visits, discussions with SENCo's, leading the moderation meetings and collating the relevant paperwork.
- Support SENCO's in their understanding of procedures for requesting additional funding and submission form completion requirements.
- Keep accurate records of budget decisions and disseminate this information to schools,
- Ensure that HLN bids are moderated as meeting HLN criteria.
- Liaise with Outside Agencies e.g. regarding pupils due to start school who are known to the SFSS.
- Support the transition systems for pupils with SEND who are moving to new settings.
- Contribute to LA monitoring and accountability processes e.g taking part in district moderation meetings and school self-evaluation systems.
- Attend and support the SEMH specialist teaching teams, through attendance at meetings, jointly with other family sencos.
- Observe pupils across the family, as required, especially linked with the moderation of bids.
- Lead or co-ordinate Family Training opportunities and keep a record of this.
- Support SENCos in sharing good practice so that provision for pupils with SEN within the Family can be maintained or improved.
- Attend District and County Family SENco meetings and networks termly, feeding back to the SENco's as required.

Family SENCo time allocation model

The current Family SENCo's time is allocated in the following way;

- Visits to each school within the family on a termly basis.
- Observations of pupils who require AFN/HLN funding.
- General support time for SENCOS with bid writing, EHCPS, referrals, specific SEND advice, signposting etc.
- Mentoring of new SENCo's
- Attend meetings alongside SENCo's where cases may be complex or challenging.
- Lead termly springboard meetings for Primary and Secondary, including any additional meetings called.
- Attend termly Family senco network meetings and district network meetings.
- Attend termly SEMH team meetings with heads and other family sencos.
- Regular meetings with EPS to offer support across the family.
- Lead and organise moderation for the family, supporting the writing of bids.
- Manage and maintain the AFN and FNF budget, alongside the budget co-ordinator.
- Attend termly meetings with the family of heads to disseminate information around SEND in the family and linked with the LA.

NB Family SENCo time allocations are based on needs, rather than being fixed to specific days each week. This enables the Family SENCo to work in a flexible and more efficient way but also ensures that each setting/family is provided with a protected level of allocated support.

The School SENCos will:

- Ensure that statutory guidance and accordance with SEND reforms is followed, such as annually updating the school SEND policy and SEN information report.
- Identify children with SEN and liaise with Outside Agencies.
- Attend Family SEN meetings including termly Springboard meetings.
- Determine whether requests for AFN or HLN funding might be appropriate and discuss these with the Family SENCo.
- Write funding bids for both AFN and HLN as discussed above.
- Ensure HLN requests are agreed by the Family SENCo before submission.
- Contribute to Family moderation and other Family meetings.
- Provide information to the Family Group as required.
- Provide pupil information as required for LA funding documentation.
- Inform the LA and Family of Schools if a pupil moves or their needs change.
- Inform the head teacher and school budget manager of allocations of funding.
- Provide the Family SENCo with updates of pupils receiving AFN/HLN funding.
- Alert the Family of Schools if they believe a pupil with significant SEN, and likely to need additional funding, is to attend their school in the future.
- Organise transition meetings and plans; liaise with colleagues and provide appropriate information when a pupil with SEN transfers to another school.
- Alert family SENCo of significant concerns with a pupil.

- Seek advice from family SENCo, if required for bid writing, ECHP requests, referral processes etc.

The Head teachers will:

- Approve the appointment of the Family SENCo
- Ensure that school documentation relating to SEND has been completed and published in accordance with statutory guidance of SEND reforms, such as annually updating the school SEND policy and SEN information report.
- Have an overview of SEND systems within the Family
- Receive feedback of relevant views or information, particularly regarding funding decisions, from the Family SENCO
- Support their school SENCO wherever possible by facilitating their attendance at meetings and enable them (through release time) to carry out their role within the Family SENCo group effectively
- Support their school SENCO with sufficient time to write bids and carry out paperwork associated with these.
- Ensure good value for money in regard to SEND across the Family.
- Meet termly with the Family SENCO and other heads within the family to discuss wider send support, funding updates and other shared needs.

SEND Systems, Processes and Pathways to Agency Support

SEND Code of Practice and the Graduated Approach

All schools must refer to the statutory SEND Code of Practice (2014) for guidance relating to the identification and provision for all pupils with SEND. There are four categories of need;

- Communication & Interaction **(C&I)**
- Cognition & Learning **(C&L)**
- Sensory, Physical and/or Medical **(SMP)**
- Social, Emotional & Mental Health **(SEMH)**

Each school is required to have a SEND policy and SEN Information Report, which must be published on their website. These documents state in detail how pupils with SEND are identified and will explain the steps taken to remove barriers to learning, through effective provision decisions. Support for pupils with SEND will follow a Graduated Approach. This is a four-part cycle of assess, plan, do and review, through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited and revised, to support the pupils to make good progress and secure good outcomes.



Graduated Approach – Steps to follow

Each school will have its own systems to ensure that Graduated Response. Further support for identifying need are available on the East Midlands Education Support website and can be accessed by following this link [The East Midlands Education Support Service \(emedsupport.org.uk\)](http://emedsupport.org.uk).

Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) - Statutory assessment process for pupils with complex SEND who require more specialist support than is available through school SEN support provision. Requests are made through the EHCP Hub managed by the ICDS (Integrated Children's Disability Service).

Schools and Families Specialist Services (SFSS) - Teams of specialist education practitioners provide support for pupils across all areas of SEN. Each Family has an SFSS link who attends Springboard meetings (see below) where support requests are discussed, e.g regarding provision, assessment. SFSS practitioners are grouped in the following teams;

- **FS and KS1 pupils** – EYSFSS - Early Years Team,
- **KS2 and above** – 3 Teams grouped by areas of SEND – C&I, C&L, Sensory (For pupils with visual or Hearing impairments).

Physical Disability Specialist Service (PDSS) - Members of this team work in close collaboration with colleagues from the Children and Family Specialist Service and health service to support the inclusion of pupils with physical disabilities.

Inclusive Technology Service - Provision of specialist IT equipment or software for pupils with complex SEND, usually AFN high or HLN funded pupils.

Educational Psychology Service (EPS) - An EP colleague will attend termly Springboard meetings (see below). The EP might accept referrals for support following the pupil discussions.

Schools Behaviour and Attendance Partnership (SBAP) (SEMH specialist teachers) - These partnerships are locality based and are managed by the LA. The team provides support for pupils with challenging behaviour.

Early Help Unit (EHU) – supporting school and home regarding behaviour issues, including access to Targeted Support for families and the Early Years & Early Intervention Service for children below the age of 5 accessed through **Sure Start Children’s Centres**.

Neurodevelopmental Support team (formerly small steps)– Supporting children and young people and their families where there are concerns relating to ASD/ADHD difficulties. This is also the route to a referral to a Community Paediatrician for an assessment of these difficulties.

Healthy Families Team – Supporting pupils and families where there are health & Emotional Health and Well Being concerns.

Primary Mental Health Team – Advice for schools supporting children and young people with Emotional and Well-being concerns and, where appropriate, advice regarding referrals to Children & Adults Mental Health Service (**CAMHs**)

Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) – Support for pupils with speech and/or language difficulties, communication or eating and drinking difficulties.

Nottinghamshire’s SEND Local Offer website - The Local Offer brings together useful information across education, health and social care within one website where you can find information, advice and guidance and a range of provider services listed who support children and young people with SEND.

Ask Us Nottinghamshire - Advice for families with a child with a disability or special educational need. Ask Us offer a range of advice from signposting, helpline support and one-to-one advice for intensive support for complex issues, including education, EHCPs and health and social care issues. <https://askusnotts.org.uk>

Springboard Termly Meetings

Family Springboard meetings are held on a termly basis (one for Primary and another for secondary) and are attended by the Family SENCo, all school SENCO’s (Primary), an Educational Psychologist and at least one representative from the SFSS.

The main purposes of the meeting are;

- To identify organisational/group level work or development needs within individual schools or the Family, which could be supported by the EPS, SFSS or a specific training event.
- To provide updates on individual pupils to currently access ongoing support.
- To discuss and/or submit new requests for involvement for individual pupils with complex needs. (Completion of referral form and signed parental consent forms are

required). Referrals are passed onto the appropriate team according to the pupil's age or category of need. An SFSS colleague will contact the school to discuss the referral and an offer of support may be agreed.

- To facilitate an opportunity for SENCOs to discuss cases with other professionals around the table, to seek advice and share expertise. (SENCO's are able to bring unnamed children to the table if parental permission has not been obtained).

NB. It is possible to make an emergency request for involvement from EPS or SFSS and other LA professionals outside of the Springboard meetings. For example, if there are new pupils with complex special educational needs who are admitted to a school within the Family or where there is a significant change in a pupil's need. This can be done by contacting the appropriate service directly.

Funding Systems and Processes

The Local Authority publishes information each year regarding targeted blocks of funding, budget statements and descriptors of need.

Elements of School Funding for pupils with SEND

- **Element 1** - Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)
- **Element 2** Targeted SEND spending also known as Place Funding (PF) or 'Notional SEND Budget'
- **Element 3** High Needs Block – This element of funding is used to deliver a range of SEND services and learner specific top up funding; Additional Family Needs (AFN) and High Level Needs (HLN).

Element 1

AWPU is the basic entitlement for all pupils, though allocation amounts per pupil vary between different school phases. Allocations are based on the numbers of pupils in each settings. This funding is used for Quality First teaching provision to address the learning needs for all pupils, including those with SEND, and the cost of appointing a SENCO, with time for them to undertake their responsibilities.

Element 2

Place Funding is an element of funding delegated to each school to support SEN pupils within their setting. It is based an agreed formula of factors, including prior attainment, deprivation and the number of children who are Looked After. Schools do not need to demonstrate how this amount is used but it is intended that PF resources will, together with the AWPU, be used to support the majority of pupils who face moderate barriers to their learning, through additional targeted learning approaches such as:

- focused curriculum support and interventions for some underachieving groups of pupils;
- small group teaching and support; and
- some individual support.

In applications for top up funding (Element 3) schools are required to demonstrate how they have utilised the £6,000 of place funding (Element 2) in the provision map section of the submission form.

Element 3 – AFN

AFN funding is devolved to Families of Schools using a formula based on: A sum of money for each Family, the number of schools the Family, the total number of pupils attending schools in the Family and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. Family resources are intended to support pupils with more complex special educational needs and to provide the financial equivalent of up to 8 extra hours of teaching assistant time for targeted pupils. This level of funding is intended to meet the costs of support that is additional to provision through AWPU and PF arrangements, such as:

- structured small group learning opportunities where the targeted child is the main focus;
- teacher or teaching assistant support to address individual targets;
- opportunities for peer support and interaction;
- support for equal access to break, lunchtime, out-of-hours learning and other opportunities.

These arrangements will be made; within the classroom/setting; through limited periods of withdrawal; and/or through out-of-hours learning opportunities.

AFN funding is a finite amount that changes each year. Pupils who are moderated to this level are placed in three bands of funding; High, Medium and Low. Allocations for these 3 band levels will vary from year to year depending on the number of pupils who meet the criteria and the money available, though allocations will aim to be as close as possible to the LA guide of High 6K, Medium 4K and Low 2K.

Termly allocations are based on 52 weeks and these matches the terms lengths of HLN Allocations;

- Summer (April to August) - 22 weeks,
- Autumn (September to December) - 17 weeks,
- Spring (January to March) - 13 weeks

To ensure bid funding is consistent and fair across the family, SENco's will base their costing on the AFN guidance of £17.35 per hour, which is an averaged costing for teaching assistants.

A contingency will be held to support new pupils who might arrive with complex needs or current pupils whose needs increase significantly. In an emergency it may be necessary for the Family SENCo to consult the School SENCo s in order to make a temporary allocation.

If a pupil transfers to a school within the Family, AFN funding should transfer to the new school. If a pupil accessing AFN moves into a school from another Family their moderated level of funding will be honoured for the rest of the financial year. If a pupil leaves the

Family of Schools, the school SENCo should inform the Family SENCo as AFN funding should cease.

Element 3 - HLN

Pupils accessing this level of LA funding will have exceptionally complex and enduring SEN. The Panel meets each term to allocate funding at three different sub levels, reflecting the extent of need. HLN resources are designed to supplement resources already allocated through AWPU and PF and in some exceptional cases AFN allocations might still be required.

Applications to the HLN panel for LA funding should be agreed with the Family SENCo and moderated by the Family of Schools. The highest level of AFN must be held as a contingency in case a request is not successful.

For pupil's with SEMH needs that lead to challenging behaviours, the HLN panel would expect the school to provide details of the allocation and effectiveness of the SEMH resources in a HLN submission. Without this information, it is unlikely that a submission would be successful.

HLN funding has 3 tiers; HLN1, HLN2 and HLN3. HLN 1 is the most common allocation, whereas levels 2 and 3 are rare. HLN 3 is awarded for the learners in mainstream schools with the most complex SEND.

HLN Funding may be allocated for more than a year and schools will be informed about review arrangements. Pro-rata HLN funding is likely to be allocated for pupils who are attending part time.

Schools are expected to use the funds only for the purposes described in the HLN submission and the local authority retains the right to audit the use of HLN funds.

HLN Funding follows the pupil if they move to a new school within the LA. If a pupil receiving HLN funding leaves a school or does not take up their placement the LA should be informed immediately. Funding will be discontinued after one month and LA may need to recoup an amount of funding.

Interim exceptional HLN Funding

There may be occasions where schools may seek a HLN resource decision to be made outside the normal panel arrangements. These may arise in the following circumstances.

- A pupil with high needs arrives from another LA e.g a CYP who is subject to an EHCP, which requires a level of individualised support above levels of AFN provision.
- There is a sudden accident or unexpected deterioration in a child's medical condition or health, including their mental health
- Funding is required for early years children with known complex needs, whose school has yet to be determined
- Funding is required for:

- Children in Care
- Pupils who are hard to place, or whose placement is at risk

If a pupil meets one or more of the above criteria, they should either contact the Family SENCo or a HLN panel colleague to discuss making an exceptional HLN funding request. Schools will be required to provide information so that a request can be considered and this may involve the submission of a partially completed AFN HLN Submission Form. Interim decisions, which are likely to be for 2 terms, will be made by the Chair of the High Level Needs Panel.

Requests to extend this funding will be made to the relevant main HLN panel. If this is turned down the provision needs for the pupil should be met through school or Family resources. There is no expectation that the Family of Schools should automatically make a High AFN allocation for pupils whose exceptional or interim funding has come to an end.

Funding for Alternative Provision and supporting non-attenders.

- The AFN budget is to support mainstream provision.
- If a child is accessing ongoing alternative provision, AFN cannot be used to fund this. An HLN bid may be appropriate in these circumstances, however the costings for this should be at the rate of £20.88 per hour.
- Requesting top up funding will not be appropriate if pupils are not attending or if costs remain below place funding levels.
- In order to be supported by AFN there needs to be a clear plan for re-integration back into mainstream, and this will need to be monitored carefully to ensure the continuation of AFN funds.
- In these instances, AFN may be used to cover a set period of alternative provision. It may only be used to cover practitioner time, not provision hire or travel.
- If children are following a reduced timetable, AFN money will be pro-rata.

Schools should complete Section 8 of the submission Form (Appendix C) when requesting AFN-HLN. This chart sets out the LA's best practice guide principles when accessing Alternative Provision.

Additional Funding Sources

Additional targeted funding is provided to schools in respect of:

- Pupils who have been designated as Looked-After Children/Post looked after (LAC/PLAC)
- Pupils who are or have been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM 'Ever 6')

Access to these additional funding streams should not affect decision-making regarding the allocation of AFN or HLN, though schools should record how this funding is used on AFN HLN submission forms.

Family Budgets

There are two streams of funding available to the Family of Schools;

AFN - Additional Family Needs (allocated to support pupils as described above)

FNF - Family Network Funding

These budgets are cash-limited, so there cannot be any overspends. An unspent balance at the end of the financial year will not automatically be carried forward, although there may be exceptional circumstances when this is possible with the agreement of the LA.

With the consent of the head teachers, the Family SENCo Group makes funding decisions. Other LA staff may also attend and support the process; such as the Family springboard link, District SENCo or an EP.

Family Network Funding (FNF)

FNF funding is allocated to Families of schools using the same formula as AFN

FNF can be used flexibly and will be agreed at a Family SENCo meeting and this may be used for a range of purposes, including providing funding for;

- an agreed allocation for the Family SENCo to fulfil the role
- covering administration costs
- costs of Family training initiatives events and development initiatives- Family SENCos must send their training plans for the year to District SENCo's in Sept.
- pupil transition – to support key or other new school transfers
- cover costs for SENCo s to prepare funding requests and attend Family meetings
- purchasing SEND resources

Family Moderation Protocol

From April 2025, a trial will take place around our existing model for AFN.

Bid writing process:

- School SENCo s identify those pupils who may need AFN funding using the LA descriptors (**NB** Many complex pupils meet the descriptors of more than 1 category. Pupils should be at least at SEN Support of the Code of Practice and there is likely to be current, or recent, Outside Agencies involvement.
- Sencos to complete moderation spreadsheet on the family sharepoint, with the list of pupils they intend to bid for, usually **early March**.
- The Family SENCo will aim to observe and discuss **as many new pupils as possible**, that SENCo's are considering bringing to the moderation process, during the spring term.
- SENCos will complete the current *AFN submission form using the LA Guidance* alongside the additional Family advice/ supervisions.

- School office staff to collate and populate pupil information and attendance data into bids **before** senco puts in provision/needs.
- Where possible SENCOS will be allocated funding from FNF to give them additional non-contact time to write bids. **Heads will also need to support with additional noncontact** to allow time to write bids and observe pupils.
- Family SENCO to hold **supervisions to support bid writing**, one to one over teams, sencos to put a session to discuss their bids and seek additional support. Example bids to be shared with sencos before hand to give confidence.
- Where possible **staff meeting time allocated** for **class teachers** to review provision ready for bids, either by looking at last years bid, if existing funding or onto a new bid format, this will help inform sencos of the specific needs, as class teachers should be best placed to advise.
- Completed AFN forms to be submitted onto the Family sharepoint, usually before the Easter break.

After bids are received:

- Family senco to group sencos to moderate allocated schools' bids, where possible schools that feed into each other i.e Infants to Juniors etc. Bids will be reviewed, and pupils observed where this might be helpful.
- Once SENCOS have reviewed the bids and observed some of the pupils, they will **complete the moderation feedback form** and send this to the family senco, dates for this on the family diary.
- Family senco will collate this feedback and identify those pupils who may need **further discussion** at the family moderation meeting.
- Bids that are agreed by the majority of SENCos will be allocated funding. **Bids that do not meet these criteria will be discussed at the moderation meeting.** The Family SENCo will provide a summary of all decisions and anonymised feedback for professional development purposes.
- The moderation meeting, will be to discuss those bids that received **mixed feedback/didn't have a consensus.**
- Initially allocations may be **recorded as band levels**, especially if the values of the AFN and FNF have not been released or if the Family are waiting for the outcomes of HLN panels or confirmation of potential pupil movements.

- When insufficient information is available, an interim allocation may be made with a date set for review or a **resubmission requested**.
- A contingency fund will be held to support new pupils in schools or where known pupils' needs have changed significantly. New requests will be presented to the SENCo 's in an agreed format either at a meeting or through emails. Allocations will be made in line with the collated views.

During the year pupils will be observed to support and review the impact of this funding.