



SCHOOLS FORUM

CHARGING FOR HEARING AND VISION SUPPORT SERVICES TO SCHOOLS

June 2016

Content Applicable to;		School Phase;	
Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools	X	Pre School	
Academies	X	Foundation Stage	X
PVI Settings		Primary	X
Special Schools / Academies	X	Secondary	X
Local Authority		Post 16	X
		High Needs	X

Content Requires;		By;	
Noting	X	Maintained Primary School Members	
Decision		Maintained Secondary School Members	
		Maintained Special School Members	
		Academy Members	
		All Schools Forum	X

Purpose of Report

1. This report is to set out to Schools Forum the implementation of charging for hearing and vision support services to schools.

Recommendations

2. That Schools note the intention to charge schools for some hearing and vision support services from September 2016.

Introduction

3. Previous reports to Schools Forum have set out the issues surrounding the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) overspend within the high needs block and the

actions being taken to address this position. Additionally reports have been received setting out the move to personal budgets as part of SEND reform and the necessity to move to a charging system for accessing support services.

4. At Schools Forum on 22 February a report was presented setting out the intention to charge for Specialist Teaching Services, notably for autism outreach services from April 2016. This report sets out the process and charges for hearing and vision support services from September 2016

BACKGROUND

5. Previous School Forum reports have set out the drivers behind the high needs overspend. In brief these are as follows;-
 - There is a disproportionate number of children with an EHC plan/statement awarded top up funding compared with other LA's
 - There is a disproportionate number of children and young adults being identified with SEND where there are other factors leading to the pupils under achievement compared with other LA's.
 - More children are being placed in the special school sector
 - Children are under performing at the SEN support stage (Projections of these trends are attached as appendices)
 - Increased demand for special school and unit placements and 'top up funding'
 - Increased demand for top up funding from mainstream schools
 - Rigidity in allocating top up funding
 - SEN Alternative provision costs due to increased complexity of need and high costs of providers particularly for pupils with ASD and mainstream ability
 - Increased numbers of pupils where top up funding is required attending general FE colleges
 - Increased demand for specialist college placements
 - Reliance on the independent school sector for children with EBSD and for children with Asperger's/severe Autism
 - Lack of parental confidence in local provision leading to parental preference for specialist provision
 - High cost joint education and social placements for children in care
 - Changing financial structure of the independent school sector
6. Schools receive a notional SEN budget as a sub-set of the delegated budget in order to meet the cost of low cost high incidence SEN. Where the cost of additional SEN support exceeds £6,000 schools are able to access element 3 top up funding. School budgets are based on lagged census pupil numbers; when children are placed in specialist provision the High Needs Block funds the full cost for each child but schools funding is not reduced for these pupils.

Specialist Teaching Services

7. In coming to the decision to move to a charging policy, the following principles applied to the charging for autism outreach services have been applied;
 - Re inforce the requirements under the SEND Code of Practice to develop a self-sustaining school system, able to meet needs at the earliest stages of the graduated response within its own funding

- Maintain and develop equitable high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN.
 - A focus on schools developing inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
 - The shift in the local authority to no longer being the sole provider of such services and expertise.
 - Address the overspend in the high needs block and that current demand for services is in excess of current resource.
 - Be aligned to the review and remodelling of Specialist Teaching Services as part of SEND reform.
8. Under SEND reform there is a requirement for schools to meet needs at the earliest stages of the graduated response and hence optimise the school's 'offer'. The code of practice sets this out as follows;-

'The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN, and the progress made by pupils, should be a core part of the school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. School leaders and teaching staff, including the SENCO, should identify any patterns in the identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching. Many aspects of this whole school approach have been piloted by Achievement for All'. Ref. Code of practice 6:4

'High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.' Ref. Code of practice 6:37

9. The issue across Leicestershire schools is that there are discrepancies in how far schools have developed and invested into improving and extending their 'universal and targeted offer' from within their own resources. As a consequence, those schools who have invested in their own provision receive a lower level of service from specialist teaching services than a school that has not invested in its own offer, where a child's needs are the same. Therefore it is necessary to create a more equitable system of expectation and fulfil the expectations as set out in the local offer and the SEND Code of Practice.
10. Specialist Teaching Services deliver the local authority's responsibilities in this area but also provide support for teaching and learning in schools. School delegated budget should meet the cost of all teaching and learning for SEN unless the cost of additional support exceeds £6,000. Some services are currently double funded in that schools have delegated budgets yet services are provided free of charge. This position is no longer financially sustainable.
11. The intended roll out for charging of the Specialist Teaching Services and devolving Specialist Teaching Service activity when specified on an Education Health and Care plan/statement of SEN/ SEND support plan is as follows;

- April 2016; charging for some Autism Outreach and Outreach and Autism Outreach Intensive Support activity.
- September 2016; charging for some Hearing Support and Vision Support service activity.
- September 2016; provide schools with notional figure for Specialist Teaching Service input as part of element 3/top up funding.
- April 2017; user group established to monitor and evaluate impact these changes.
- April 2018, Specialist Teaching Service in SEND support plan/EHC plan devolved to schools.

Hearing and Vision Support Services

12. The proposals for the Vision Support and Hearing Support Services would continue to be funded for a 'core offer' that would include the following activity;
 - Responding to notifications from Health, school and other involved professionals where a child is under investigation or has a confirmed diagnosis of sensory impairment
 - Early Years intervention for early years settings in the private and voluntary sector
 - Out of authority monitoring of placements
 - Provision of aids and equipment
 - Critical incident work where a placement is in crisis or safe guarding issues
 - Expert advice and witness role for SENDist Tribunal appeals, other legal action, SEND panel and LA strategic work for children with a sensory impairment
 - Quality assurance and partnership with other specialist providers and training
 - Educational audiology and associated technician input
 - Joint clinic work with health professionals
 - Mobility, orientation and independent living skill training
 - The provision of select resources in alternative formats including braille, Moon and modified enlarged print and resource production training to schools.
 - Specialist teacher support for children who use tactile literacy mediums of braille and moon.
13. For activity outside of this core offer then there will be charges applied. The attached appendices give an indication of the levels of intervention. These interventions are based on children's sensory needs and are recommended by The National Sensory Impairment Partnership

<https://www.natsip.org.uk/index.php/eligibility-framework/685-natsip-eligibility-framework-2015>

14. The role out of the charging policy will be graduated where by the charges applied will be subsidised by the existing Hearing/Vision Support Services budget over three years until there is full cost recovery;-

Intervention	Charge 16/17	Charge 17/18	Charge 18/19
Teacher hours	£28	£55	£83
Practitioner hours	£12	£23	£35
VI Touch Typist Hours	£16	£31	£47

15. This system incentivizes schools to invest in their own provision to avoid escalating costs. For children at higher levels of need, a personalised package of support within their school setting without recourse to a placement in the independent and non-maintained special school sector can be devised.
16. It is anticipated that for a small number of children, the costs incurred by the school will be in excess of £6,000, i.e. the required contribution from schools to make SEND provision under school funding reform. Consequently, in recognition of this and the likely multi agency approach required to meet the child's needs holistically, then the school may be required to undertake a person centred and multi-agency review with the family and child, to draw up a SEND support plan, thereby accessing element 3 top up funding.

Resource Implications

17. Schools will be required to utilise their notional SEN funding to access some hearing and vision support services from September 2016, the cost of which is set out in this report.
18. Schools will be able to access element 3 top up funding where the cost of additional SEN support exceeds £6,000

Equal Opportunity Issues

19. The proposed changes set out in this paper will address the inequality within the system where children and young adults with SEND are doing less well in terms of outcomes when compared to national comparators. These proposals will also promote more inclusive practice that is in accordance with the legal presumption that all children attend a mainstream school.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Hearing Support Services, Pathway to Services
 Appendix 2 – Vision Support Services, Pathway to Services
 Appendix 3 – Hearing Support Services, Levels of Intervention
 Appendix 4 – Vision Support Services, Levels of Intervention

Background Papers

Report to Schools Forum 22 February 2016 – Charging for Autism Outreach Services
<http://cexmodgov1/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1018&MId=4457&Ver=4>

Officers to Contact

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