South Tyneside

Short Term Exceptional Provision Funding Guidance

This guidance document outlines the Short-Term Exceptional Provision (STEP) Funding available to Schools to make appropriate provision for early years, primary and secondary aged children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND). It includes an overview of the funding available as well as the eligibility for and application process to access additional funding.

Settings should use this document in conjunction with the SEND Ranges and South Tyneside’s Ordinarily Available Provision Guide. Before considering an application for STEP Funding, settings are encouraged to explore all support available to them, including referrals to the Inclusion Service, EP Specialist Teachers and any other relevant external professionals to obtain advice and support. Any recommendations and reports resulting from this external involvement should be submitted as part of the application process.

The national expectation is that schools will provide up to £6,000 of additional provision from within their delegated budget (Element 2). This is often referred to as the SEN Notional Budget[[1]](#footnote-1).

**Therefore, the majority of children with SEND will have their needs met without requiring additional funding via the Local Authority.**

There may be circumstances were, on a short-term basis, additional support may be necessary. This may be during a transitional period or where an emerging need will not impact on the child’s education long term if early intervention is in place and gaps in learning are closed.

**This guidance refers to STEP Funding only and should not be used for those who have an EHCP.**

The purpose of STEP Funding is to:

* Ensure positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND through early intervention and support.
* Support the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream settings.
* Reduce bureaucracy while promoting equity and fairness.

**STEP Funding will only be provided, where the setting agrees to provide reports on the impact of the funding and progress that the CYP has made.**

STEP funding is not suitable to provide provision or intervention on a long-term basis. In cases where it is felt that a high level of support over and above notional funding will be required over a long period an Education Health & Care Needs Assessment **may** be appropriate.

Where the setting is considering a request for an Education Health & Care Needs Assessment and this is agreed, any funding attached to the EHC Plan will only be provided from the point of issue. Therefore schools/settings may wish to consider applying for STEP Funding in the interim.

## STEP Funding Eligibility

* Child must be accessing their Early Education Entitlement Funded Hours, in reception or above to be eligible for STEP Funding. In exceptional circumstances.
* The child being applied for, must be resident in South Tyneside and attending a setting within its locality (please contact us if child is attending a setting outside of the Borough).
* Application has been discussed and signed by parents/carers.

## Requesting STEP Funding

It is expected that prior to making an application for STEP Funding the setting has implemented universal and targeted SEN Support through a graduated approach as set out in the South Tyneside Ranges 2022 document and the OAP guide.

Input should be sought from relevant professionals where appropriate, e.g. Educational Psychology Service, the Inclusion Service, Portage and Preschool, etc with recommendations delivered and monitored for impact.

Following consultation with settings we have aimed to reduce the administrative burden by utilising information they already have. Making a request involves:

* Completing the STEP Funding Request form which includes details of past and current attainment, with a clear, succinct description of the child’s SEN.
* Timetable outlining interventions/strategies being implemented beyond OAP. (See STEP Funding Timetable Exemplar)
* Providing copies of supporting information (examples of relevant supporting information provided below).
* Agreement of implementation of support/intervention and providing report to evidence the impact this has had on the child’s progress.

### Application Windows

Applications will only be accepted during the application window for each term, if you do not submit the application during this window, you will not be able to apply until the following window.

Funding may be backdated to the beginning of the term in which the window you are applying only.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Applications Open | Applications Close |
| Window 1 | 2nd September 2024 | Friday 4th October 2024 |
| Window 2 | Monday 6th January 2025 | Friday 31st January 2025 |
| Window 3 | Monday 28th April 2025 | Friday 23rd May 2025 |

**Applications should be submitted via secure e-mail with all evidence to:** [**sen@southtyneside.gov.uk**](mailto:sen@southtyneside.gov.uk)

## The Use Of STEP Funding

STEP Funding is not provided based on support hours. We encourage you to be creative and flexible in the use of funds when outlining your proposed use of funding.

All proposed used of funding should be evidence-based and lead to a specific outcome for the child or young person to ensure they develop independence in learning.

Money may be spent on materials, resources, group support etc., where notional funding has been exceeded, if it will improve the outcomes for the child and enable them to progress.

## Determining whether to allocate STEP Funding

To ensure consistency of decision making, requests for STEP Funding, will be considered by the STEP Panel, made up of Local Authority Officers.

When making the decision on whether to allocate STEP Funding, the Panel will:

* Assess how the setting has used the SEN Notional Budget and the graduated approach via detailed, targeted provision and how this has/has not supported the child to make progress.
* Assess any involvement from other agencies and the implementation of recommendations they have provided and how this has/has not supported the child to make progress.
* Determine the proposed provision is additional to or different from provision that would be ordinarily available.
* Assess the proposal for use of STEP Funding and the outcomes this will achieve. Ensuring that there is a clear link between the identified needs of the child and proposed provision.

Where it is determined that STEP funding is appropriate the amount provided will be agreed, with the underpinning principle that the cost of provision is the same regardless of the setting in which it is delivered. Providing equity and transparency across the range of settings.

## Outcomes of Application

There are three possible outcomes of an application:

1. An allocation of STEP Funding for a time-limited period this will vary according to the child’s needs, but it funding will not be provided for more than two academic terms.
2. No allocation of STEP Funding, in this event the setting will be provided with specific reasons why any allocation was not made.
3. Recommendation to refer to the Inclusion Service or other external agency/professional, where it is felt additional strategies and intervention can be utilised within ordinarily available provision.

## Monitoring the use of STEP Funding

Where STEP Funding has been agreed, the requesting setting will be required to sign an agreement to complete the STEP Funding Impact Form to demonstrate the impact of provision and outcomes achieved. The timescales for this will be determined on the level of STEP Funding provided and the duration of its use.

Where appropriate, if the Local Authority feels that additional support to implement the use of STEP Funding is appropriate, the setting must agree to a monitoring visit from a Local Authority Officer.

## Appealing the Decision

As STEP Funding is not a statutory requirement you are not able to appeal any decision made by the panel. All settings are advised not to make staffing decisions made on the possibility of funding. Every effort will be made to ensure that decisions are fair, transparent and equitable and it is expected that if significant new information becomes available the setting will re-apply.

## Short Term Exceptional Provision Helpful Hints

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| --- | --- |
| **Apply for STEP Funding if:** | **Do not apply for STEP Funding if:** |
| The child with SEN does not have an EHCP and you can demonstrate that the child is receiving support over and above the setting’s normally available resources | The child has an EHCP, or the child’s needs could be met from within your normally available resources |
| The child is resident within and attends a setting within South Tyneside  (For Early Years the child is accessing their early education entitlement) | The child lives in South Tyneside but attending a setting outside of the local area. |
| You have identified the child’s barriers to learning and provided developmental levels in all curriculum areas | You have not evidenced the child’s barriers to learning. There is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the child is below age related expectations |
| You have correctly identified the child’s SEND Ranges and can provide evidence of this | The child’s Ranges have not been appropriately identified or there is no evidence of how the child meets the identified Ranges |
| You have provided specific details of advice and guidance offered by professionals | There is no evidence of advice and guidance sought from professionals or this has not been followed |
| You can demonstrate the interventions that you have already put in place to address any barriers to learning – Timetable to be provided | There is no individualised timetable that provides details of interventions in place |
| You can provide evidence of your graduated approach and the impact of this, demonstrating how the child has made progress as a result of planned and specific interventions | You cannot provide details of the impact of your graduated approach, specifically how you have adapted and altered where appropriate if progress is not being made |
| There is evidence that the child’s parents/carers have been involved in the assess, plan, do, review cycle and they have signed the application form | Your SEN Support Plans provide details of the parent/carer views and they have signed the application form |
| You have agreed Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant & Timely (SMART) outcomes for a six-month period with parents/carers | Outcomes do not correlate to the identified needs of the child  Outcomes are not SMART |

## STEP Funding Timetable Exemplar

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 08.45 - 09.00 | 09:00 – 09:20 | 09:20 – 09:30 | 09:30 – 10:30 | 10:30 – 10:45 | 10:45 – 12:00 | 12:00 – 13:00 | 13:00 – 14:00 | 14:00 – 14:15 | 14:15 – 15:15 | 15:15 – 15:30 |
| Monday | Soft start  **PfA Breakfast & Emotional**  **Check-In**  1:4  15 mins | Assembly  **Sensory Regulation as Required**  1:2  20 Mins | Sensory Circuits  **End with calming activity**  1:4  10 Mins | English  **Flexible small group support**  **(scaffolding / adaptation of learning)**  1:6  40 Mins | Break  **Access to quiet space**  1:6  15 Mins | Maths  **Emotional**  **Check-In**  1:2  5 Mins | Lunchtime  **Nurture Group**  1:5  30 Mins | Plus 1  **Maths intervention**  1:1  10 Mins | Break  **Access to quiet space**  1:6  15 Mins |  | Soft Exit  **Emotional**  **Check-In**  1:2  15 mins |
| Tuesday | **Write From The Start / Small Group Guided Reading**  1:4  15 mins | PE  **Emotional Regulation as Required**  1:4  60 Mins | Lego Therapy  1:4  20 Mins |
| Wednesday | **SPaG Small Group**  1:4  15 mins |  |  |
| Thursday | **Write From The Start / Small Group Guided Reading**  1:4  15 mins | Plus 1  **Maths intervention**  1:1  10 Mins | Lego Therapy  1:4  20 Mins |
| Friday | Assembly  **Sensory Regulation as Required**  1:2  20 Mins | PE  **Emotional Regulation as Required**  1:4  60 Mins |  |

1. [The notional SEN budget for mainstream schools: operational guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2023-to-2024/the-notional-sen-budget-for-mainstream-schools-operational-guidance) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)