

A Guide to Personal Budgets for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)



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This information is about personal budgets for children and young people with special educational needs.

What is a Personal Budget?

A Personal Budget for SEN is money set aside to fund support as part of an **Education Health and Care Plan** (EHC plan) for a child or young person with special educational needs. It can include funds from Education, Health and Social Care.

Parents or the young person must always be involved in planning the Personal Budget.

Sometimes the local authority, school or college will look after the Personal Budget for the parents or young person. This is called an *Arrangement* or a *Notional Budget*.

Sometimes the parents or the young person may manage all or part of the Personal Budget themselves. The money to do this will come from a **Direct Payment**.

Sometimes someone else will manage the Personal Budget for the parents or young person. This is called a *Third Party Arrangement*.

Sometimes the parent or young person will have a mixture of some or all of these arrangements.

Who can have a Personal Budget?

Parents of a child with an EHC plan, or a young person who has an EHC plan, can ask for a Personal Budget. You can also ask for a Personal Budget if your child has been assessed as needing an EHC plan, but this has not yet been finalised. However, you do not have to have a Personal Budget.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

*Local authorities **must** provide information on Personal Budgets as part of the Local Offer. This should include a policy on Personal Budgets that sets out a description of the services across education, health and social care that currently lend themselves to the use of Personal Budgets, how that funding will be made available, and clear and simple statements of eligibility criteria and the decision-making processes.*

9.96

You can see Wirral Council's policy on Personal Budgets on Wirral's [Local Offer](#) (on the Money Matters page)

A young person with an EHC plan can ask for their own Personal Budget after the end of the school year in which they become 16.

Sometimes the local authority may not agree to a Personal Budget. If that happens the local authority should tell you why.

What can a Personal Budget be used for?

A Personal Budget can be used only to pay for the support set out in an EHC plan. This can include funding for the special educational, health and social care support that will help to achieve the outcomes set out in the EHC plan.

You can find out what can be included in an SEN Provision Personal Budget on Wirral's [Local Offer](#). You can also contact us on 0151 666 4224 or email [Paul Atherton](#) or [Jane Power](#).

A Personal Budget cannot cover payment for a place at the school or college, or the general provision for children or young people including those who need **SEND support**. A Personal Budget does include any top up funding (known as Element 3 funding) that is for provision specified in an EHC plan. It can also include support that is managed by the school or college—but only if the Headteacher or Principal agree.

You can find out more about what can be included in a Personal budget in sections 9.95 to 9.118 of the [SEND](#)

Are there other kinds of Personal Budget?

Yes—some people have had Personal Budgets for health provision (a Personal Health Budget) and for social care provision. They may have managed some or all of the provision using a Direct Payment. But this is the first time that Personal Budgets have become available for SEN provision.

Further information about Personal Health Budgets is available on Wirral 's [Local Offer](#) (on the Money Matters page).

Where can I get further information, advice or support?

Wirral's SEN Team can give you :

- More information about Personal Budgets
- Advice on whether you may be able to get a Personal Budget and how you can apply for it
- Information and advice on local services, organisations, and resources that may be able to help
- Information, advice and support on what you can do if you are unhappy with the local authority's decision on your Personal Budget

For more information on Personal Budgets please contact Special Educational Needs Team on 0151 666 4224.

Wirral SEND Partnership provide information and advice on all aspects of the law surrounding Special Educational Needs and Disability, including Personal Budgets to help parents, carers, children and young people have clear, accurate and relevant information.

