

## Personal Budgets for Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Swindon

**This is a quick guide for families who are interested in finding out more about Personal Budgets for SEN.**



### What cannot be bought using a Personal SEN Budget?

- Anything that is not identified on the child/young person's Education, Health and Care plan
- Education, health or social care provision that will not achieve identified educational outcomes on the child/young person's Education, Health and Care plan
- Part funding of independent school fees

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Would a Personal budget affect any other benefits I receive?

No, Personal budgets are not a "benefit" so it would not affect any other social security benefits you may receive.

#### Do I pay tax on a Personal Budget?

No, personal budgets and direct payments are not classed as income so you don't pay tax.

#### What do I need to do if I receive the Personal Budget directly (a direct payment)?

If you decide to have the money paid to and managed by yourself you will need to:

- Open a separate bank account just for your direct payment to be paid into.
- Keep proper records and receipts on how you have spend your funds – these will be monitored by the Local Authority and requested during the year (this is called an Audit)

### Further information/support

#### SEND Team

SENAT@Swindon.gov.uk

www.thelocaloffer.co.uk - 'Local Offer'

Tel. 01793 464641 (8am-5pm Mon

- Thurs, 8-4.30pm Friday)

**SENDIASS** (*Special Educational Needs & Disability Information, Advice and Support Service*)

www.swindon.gov.uk/SENDIASS Tel. 01793 466515 (10-2 Mon & Weds)

### Explaining Personal Budgets for SEN in Swindon

**Children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) may attract additional funding known as high needs top ups (also called Element 3).**

This works together with the funding already available in the educational setting (SEN support budget or Element 2).

A Personal Budget is the funding available to deliver the provision described in the Education Health and Care Plan. The broader purpose of personal budget arrangements is to increase the participation of children, their parents and young people in decision making in relation to special educational provision.

You can discuss how it could be used to meet needs and achieve outcomes outlined in the EHCP with your SEN Officer and decide how you want the funding managed.

Some of the support and provision for your child or young person may be funded through contracts or provided by us (Speech and language Therapy for example). This funding won't be available as part of a Personal SEN Budget.

## Who can request a Personal SEN Budget?

Young people or parents of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan can request a personal budget once Swindon Borough Council has confirmed that it will prepare a draft Education, Health and Care Plan. If you already have an existing Education, Health and Care Plan, you can request a Personal Budget at your /your child's annual review.

## What happens next?

When the local authority agrees to a request for a personal budget, they will allocate an indicative personal budget. The indicative personal budget is an additional and individual estimate of the funding required to meet the child or young person's educational needs.

If you are interested in a Personal Budget to meet your child / your needs you can discuss your options with your EHCP Coordinator when the draft EHCP is being discussed or at an annual review.

Each request is considered on its individual merits, and a personal budget will be prepared in each case, unless the sum is part of a larger amount and separating out an individual payment would have

- an adverse impact on services provided or arranged by the local authority for other EHC plan holders
- it would not be an efficient use of the Local Authorities resources.



Thinking about meeting your child's SEN needs differently?

Talk to your EHCP Coordinator or school / college about ideas you may have

Your EHCP Coordinator and the school / college will look into your request and work out if it is possible

## What can be bought using a Personal Budget for SEN?

Any spend must be detailed in the agreed Education, Health and Care Plan and must be set against an identified educational outcome.

Examples include:

- Some activity or staffing to be delivered in the education setting (with permission of the Head Teacher or Principal) or elsewhere.
- Equipment
- Something bought specifically for an individual child/young person e.g. play therapy (Individually commissioned services)
- Advice and assistance from an organisation to help manage a Personal Budget as a direct payments (if there is a reasonable charge by the organisation)
- In some circumstances a personal budget may be available, if you are electively home educating. However if the local authority can meet the child or young person's needs within a school or college setting, but the parents choose this option, a Personal SEN Budget will not be available.