

Personal Budgets and Direct Payments

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 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.

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.”

Further information about Personal Budgets in West Northants can be found [here](#). As well as further information from the Local Offer [here](#). West Northants Council’s Personal Budget policy can be found [here](#).

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.

A Personal Budget can be used only on 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 Plan.

A Personal Budget does not cover payment for a place at the school or college, or the general provision for children or young people, including those who need SEN 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.

The LA must review both the making and use of the direct payments whenever changes are made in relation to the qualifying goods and services and in any event:

- at least once during the first three months of the payments being made
- when conducting a review or a re-assessment of an EHC plan under section 44.

The recipient of the direct payments can also request a review.

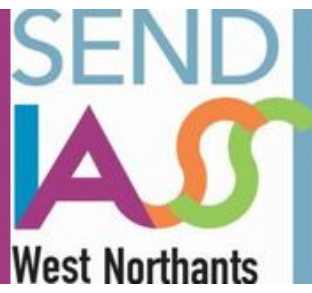
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