

LOCALITY SEND SUPPORT IN CROYDON MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

A detailed Guide for parents and carers

Details of the Locality SEND Support way of working

Over the past two years Croydon LA have been introducing a rapid response Locality SEND Support process (LSS) to ensure that SEND support provision in schools for Croydon resident children is robust and consistent. This is being done in order to help local schools be better able to support pupils with SEND and their families. From September 2022 all schools in Croydon who have accepted their invitation to be part of LSS will have the chance to access additional resources to support early intervention. Under LSS, provision for pupils with SEND should therefore improve. LSS will also develop partnerships and networks that support school-led improvement, promote school collaboration and enhance inclusive practice. Existing EHCPs in schools will continue to be honoured and ELPS and Special Schools are outside of this initiative.

All schools and colleges have a delegated level of funding which can be used to meet a child's learning needs once the child is identified on the school special educational needs register, this is known as notional SEND funding.

Under LSS, additional support (Locality Additional Needs Funding) can now be requested by schools, with parental involvement. This local funding may be awarded after schools have demonstrated that they have used all the notional resources available to them and further demonstrated that additional resources are necessary to fully support the child's needs effectively in mainstream schools.

Schools will work together in localities of around 15 schools. Each locality will be overseen by an Area SEND Lead who will be working closely with school SENDCOs. The Area SEND Lead will also chair a monthly Locality SEND Support Forum, attended by all SENDCOs, a Headteacher from the Locality and professionals including EPs and therapists will also be present. This forum will share best practice and discuss individual cases for 'Locality Additional Needs Funding'. Funding or resources awarded at this level may be up to an additional £6,000 per academic year.

If a child's needs are deemed as 'exceptional' (complex and severe) at a Locality SEND Support Forum, then the Locality SEND Lead will refer and present this child's case, with the school SENDCO, for an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) assessment. Similarly, if it has been demonstrated that Locality funding is still not meeting need then a forum could also make the decision to apply for an EHCP assessment.

What is a Locality SEND Support Agreement (LSSA)?

This is an agreement between the locality, the school and the parents where the level of support in school for the child requires additional funding up the level that can be allocated by the locality.

This enables individual pupils' learning needs to be met quickly, in a targeted way at SEND support level in school.

A LSSA is a non-statutory agreement. Although parents do not have the same statutory rights that an EHC Plan brings, the advantage is, that this allows the support to be given in a faster and more flexible way, avoiding the 20-week assessment period.

However, if after a period of locality funded school-based intervention, the resources provided are found to be insufficient, then a review can be undertaken by the school SENDCo, parent and teacher along with child/young person's views. As a result of the review a decision to apply for an EHCP assessment can be made. In such a case the pupil would still be supported with locality funding during the EHCP assessment period up to the point where the plan is issued.

None of this affects the parent's right to instigate an EHCP assessment although we would have hoped to have worked closely with parents during the locality process to support children and young people.

Involving you and your child

The council will support all families, children and young people to participate as fully as possible in decisions relating to their lives and to be at the centre of the new system, irrespective of the level of need.

As parents and carers you will be fully involved in making decisions about the nature of the help and support your child receives.

Locality SEND Support reflects Croydon's aim to promote early intervention in Mainstream schools through working together with families, children and young people with SEND needs.

Moving to an EHC assessment

LSSAs are regularly reviewed and an EHC Assessment and Plan may be recommended should your child's needs change.

An LSSA is a formal statement of the support being provided to a child or young person and is a non-statutory agreement. Parents do not have the same statutory rights that an EHC Plan brings. For example, parents or carers would not be able to express a preference for a school for their child, appeal decisions through the first-tier tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), or to request a personal budget.

All schools within the Locality SEND Support system can **only** receive additional SEND resources or funding through the Locality SEND Support panel or, if necessary, through a formal ECHP.

APPENDIX 1.

Flowchart of Locality SEND Support Process

LSS Funding Process 2022

