

Establishing Specialist Provisions

"Working Together on SEN Provision"



Objectives

- **Promoting Inclusive Education** - Integrating Specialist Provisions ensures equitable access and supports all pupils regardless of their needs.
- **Access to Education Authority Support** - The EA provides resources, training, and guidance to help schools implement and sustain Specialist Provision classes.
- **School Support** - Gaining commitment from school principals is essential to establish Specialist Provision classes successfully.



Understanding Specialist Provision

- **Definition of Specialist Provision**

Specialist Provisions are dedicated small group classes within mainstream schools supporting pupils with specific SEN profiles through tailored education in line with their individual needs.

- **Integration and Collaboration**

This model promotes both mainstream and reverse integration, providing whole school access to additional support, enabling shared learning and participation across student groups.

- **Role of SARS and Placement**

SARS determines placements in consultation with schools and parents, ensuring where possible balanced distribution across year groups.

- **Benefits of Specialist Provision**

Specialist Provision enriches schools by fostering empathy, collaboration, and enhancing inclusive learning environments.



Type of Provision

There are 7 different types of Specialist Provision Classes each of which address diverse SEN profiles with tailored interventions and support mechanisms in line with the identified needs of our children and young people.



Learning

Special

-Formally Early Years and Foundation

Social Communication / Autism

Sensory Support

Physical Support

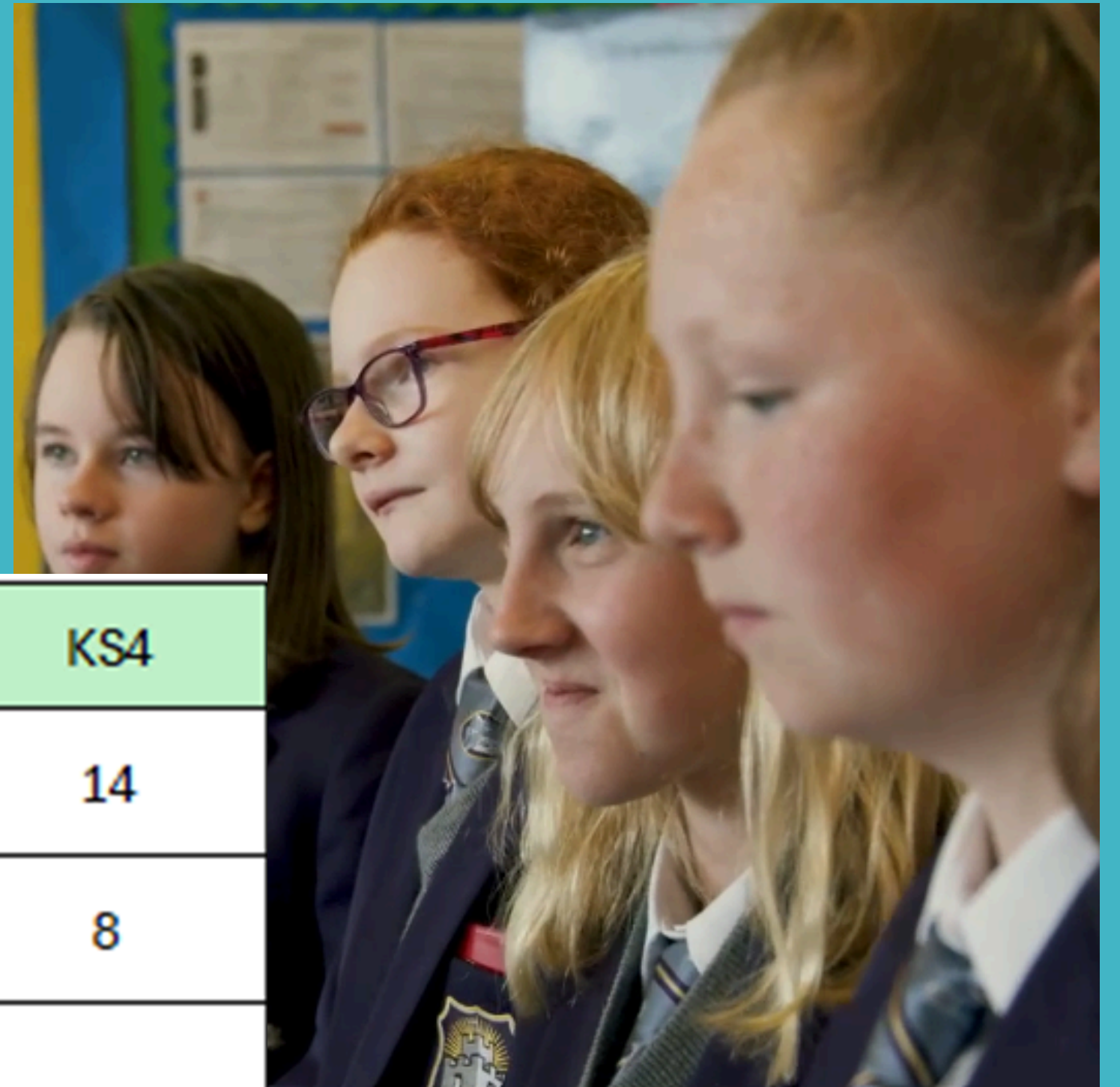
Speech and Language Support

Behaviour Support

Pathways

Generally, classes operate across Key Stages to create a pathway of provision for pupils as they progress along their educational journey.

***Class size will retain a degree of flexibility based on the overall profile of the children placed.*



Key Stage	F/KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
No of Pupils SPL	12	12	14	14
No of Pupils SPSC	8	8	8	8
No of Pupils SPS	8			

Specialist Provision (Learning) Class (SPL)

Pupils

12 pupils (Primary)
14 pupils (Post Primary)

The Provision is for statemented pupils only with the following recommendation on their Statement: 'Pupil needs can be met within Specialist Provision in a Mainstream School'

Staffing

1 Teacher and 1 Classroom Assistant (JE2)

An allocation of up to two additional SEN points is available for teaching staff. Specialist Provision Classroom Assistants are paid as follows:

- JE2- Classroom Assistant (Special Educational Needs) NJC pts 11-14
- Classroom Assistant hours can be allocated to one or more members of staff

EA Support Services

- Support with Individual self-evaluation and Action Plans.
- Provide Professional learning development.
- Facilitate cluster groups.
- Signpost to other services.
- Dedicated Link Officer with access to support from specialised teachers and Intervention Officers.
- Pre and post set up support.
- Interface links with SEN Support Services and other multi-disciplinary agencies.

Set up allowance

Each newly set-up class receives a lump sum of £3,000 to purchase resources, paid into the school's LMS account in the Autumn term of the year the new class becomes operational.

Equipment

The EA will provide an initial budget of approximately £20,000 for furniture and equipment associated with any set up works required.

Finance

Teaching and non-teaching staff costs are paid from the EA central budget however, recruitment and management of staff is a school function. LMS budget allocations shown below are based on classes with the pupil numbers indicated above and include an annual allocation of £3,000 per class.

In accordance with the Common Funding Scheme for the Local Management of Schools, the budget allocations for Specialist Provisions use a reduced Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) weighting to reflect the fact that the Education Authority meets the full staffing costs.

Based on a full class approximate LMS allocations are detailed below:

- £25K (Primary)
- £46K (Post Primary)



Specialist Provision Special Class (SPS)

Pupils

8 pupils per class (Nursery and Primary)

Specialist Provision Special (Formerly Early Years and Foundation) Classes are for pupils with a profile of Severe Learning Difficulties.

Staffing

1 Teacher and 2 Classroom Assistants (JE3)

An allocation of up to two additional SEN points is available for teaching staff. Specialist Provision Classroom Assistants are paid as follows:

- JE3- Classroom Assistant (Additional Special Educational Needs) NJC Pts 17-20
- Classroom Assistant hours can be allocated to one or more members of staff

EA Support Services

- Support with Individual self-evaluation and Action Plans.
- Provide Professional learning development.
- Facilitate cluster groups.
- Signpost to other services.
- Dedicated Link Officer with access to support from specialised teachers and Intervention Officers.
- Pre and post set up support.
- Interface links with SEN Support Services, Special School practitioners, Allied Health professionals and other multi-disciplinary agencies.

Set up allowance

Each newly set-up class receives a lump sum of £3,000 to purchase resources, paid into the school's LMS account in the Autumn term of the year the new class becomes operational.

Equipment

The EA will provide an initial budget of approximately £20,000 for furniture and equipment associated with any set up works required.

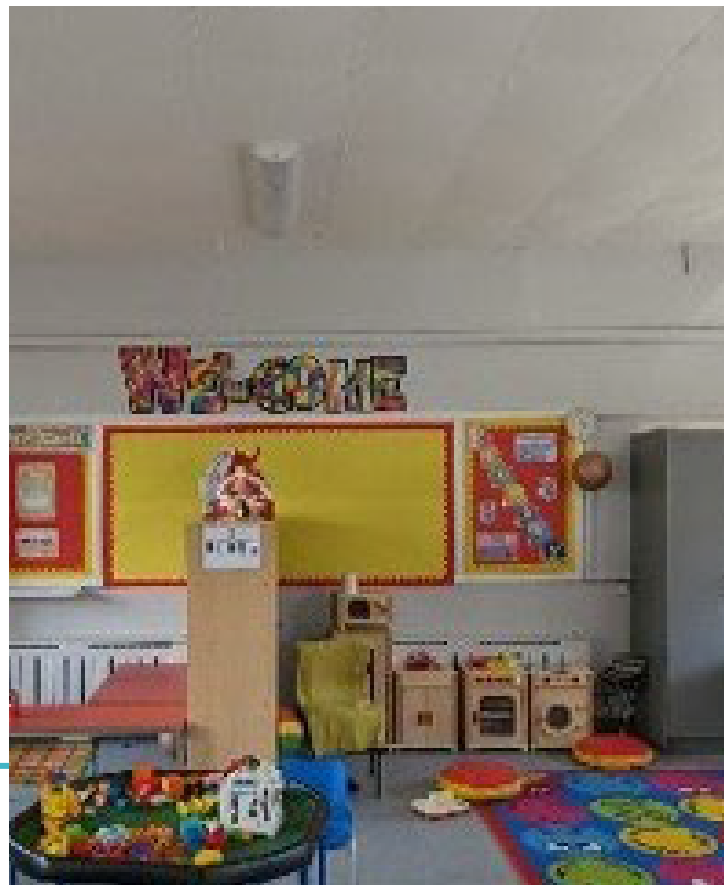
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In accordance with the Common Funding Scheme for the Local Management of Schools, the budget allocations for Specialist Provisions use a reduced Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) weighting to reflect the fact that the Education Authority meets the full staffing costs.

Based on a full class approximate LMS allocations are detailed below:

- £18K (Nursery/Primary)





Specialist Provision (Social Communication / Autism) Class (SPSC)

Pupils

8 pupils per class (Primary and Post Primary)

Social Communication placements are primarily for pupils with a diagnosis of ASD and an identified SEN of social communication needs and have the following recommendation on their statement: 'In a specialist setting where he/she will be taught by teachers experienced in teaching pupils with a profile of needs outlined in Part 2 of the Statement with opportunities for [the pupil] to integrate into mainstream classes as appropriate'. Pupils with social communication needs undergoing assessment for ASD may be considered.

Staffing

Teacher and 1 Classroom Assistant (JE2) for classes with between 1 and 4 pupils

1 Teacher and 2 Classroom Assistants (JE2) for classes of 5 pupils or more.

An allocation of up to two additional SEN points is available for teaching staff. Specialist Provision Classroom Assistants are paid as follows:

- JE2- Classroom Assistant (Special Educational Needs) NJC pts 11-14
- Classroom Assistant hours can be allocated to one or more members of staff

EA Support Services

- Support with Individual self-evaluation and Action Plans.
- Provide Professional learning development.
- Facilitate cluster groups.
- Signpost to other services.
- Dedicated Link Officer with access to support from specialised teachers and Intervention Officers.
- Pre and post set up support.
- Interface links with SEN Support Services, and other multi-disciplinary agencies.

Set up allowance

Each newly set-up class receives a lump sum of £3,000 to purchase resources, paid into the school's LMS account in the Autumn term of the year the new class becomes operational.

Equipment

The EA will provide an initial budget of approximately £20,000 for furniture and equipment associated with any set up works required.

Finance

Teaching and non-teaching staff costs are paid from the EA central budget however, recruitment and management of staff is a school function. LMS budget allocations shown below are based on classes with the pupil numbers indicated above and include an annual allocation of £3,000 per class.

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Based on a full class approximate LMS allocations are detailed below:

- £25K (Primary)
- £46K (Post Primary)

Facilities and Construction

- **Construction and Refurbishment Timeline**

Once projects begin on site the average time to completion is between 4 to 12 weeks - some may take additional time depending on the complexity and scale of works required. As far as practicable works are managed to minimise disruption to learning and daily school operations. In addition to the classroom projects may include:

- **Accessibility and Security Enhancements**

Improved facilities include ramps, level access, CCTV, and access controls to enhance safety and accessibility.

- **Specialist Learning Spaces**

Sensory rooms, multi-purpose areas, and life skills spaces support diverse educational needs.

- **Modern Infrastructure Upgrades**

Electrical, thermal, IT upgrades, acoustic improvements, and modern furnishings enhance learning environment.



Steps to Delivery

Pre-Construction

- Design proposals agreed with Board of Governor/Principal
- Rooms/Areas for refurbishment are to be cleared by the school
- Contractor will be introduced to the school and programme agreed

Construction

- Construction can last on average between 4 –12 weeks depending on the project and complexity of work required.
- EA staff manage the construction contract and all site operatives
- EA staff keep clear lines of communication with the school on the programme of the works

Post-Construction

- School are given demonstrations on how to operate any new technology provided
- School is provided with new accommodation to be utilised to the benefit of all pupils.
- EA staff continue to support the school

Enhanced Support Package

Whole School L&D Offering

20% of teaching staff in mainstream and up to 5 Classroom Assistants avail of specific SEN training. Up to 5 days release. To be completed between April and June 2026

Administrative Support

£10k to be provided to each school to cover additional administrative tasks associated with the created and maintenance of specialist provisions

SENCO Release

1 month for stabilising Specialist Provision embedding processes/workload In addition to a further 1 day per month per class

Principal Champions

To release 5 Principals that have implemented Specialist Provisions to provide support, advice and guidance to new schools (1 Post Primary, 4 Primary)



Next Steps



- **Engage with Board of Governors**
Principals should collaborate with their Board of Governors to seek their approval, discuss design proposals and select suitable school spaces.
- **Construction and Setup Management**
The Education Authority oversees construction and resource setup, ensuring all infrastructure needs are met effectively.
- **Staff Recruitment and Integration**
Principals must prepare for recruiting staff and integrating them to support smooth transition into specialist provision.
- **Access Support Services**
Leveraging professional development opportunities enhances the effectiveness of the provision and wider school community whilst promoting inclusion.



For more information visit

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or email:

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