

Element 3 Funding Update

The new needs-led funding matrices were unanimously approved by Schools Forum in October 2023. This was initially piloted with several early years providers, schools and with South Devon College.

In 2024–25 the approach was rolled out to all new plans.

In 2025–26 it has also been extended to phase transfer plans, including Early Years to Reception, Year 6–7 and Year 11–12.

Deep dive audits have been undertaken over the past 18 months to ensure the robustness and consistency of the matrix system.

The attached policy document seeks to write down the process and proposed amendments for the element 3 policy (there was previously no policy for the new system when it was implemented). This will enable SENDCos to receive this policy along with their “SEND Handbook” pack of resources and ensure all colleagues know how the matrices system is applied.

This update seeks to give an update on the **process of awarding element 3 funding** and explain some **amendments to the matrix weighting of bands** which have been proposed following the deep dive audits:

Process Overview

The following is a short summary of how Element 3 is awarded:

- Decision on EHCP needs following assessment or phase transfer review.
- Completion of funding matrix using draft EHCP and professional advice.
- Senior management quality assurance and moderation.
- Final allocation determined by matrix score under Element 3.

Proposed Changes to band weightings from Original SLIP model

- Increased SLCN multiplier from 2 to 4.
- Removal of Cognition & Learning restrictor (maximum now 32 points).
- Weighting caps in SEMH and Physical/Sensory categories.
- Introduction of age-based funding factor which was absent from original.
- Additional banding linked to Provision F thresholds (0 hours, <15 hours, >15 hours).