



Lewisham

SEND

Personal Budgets

Guidance for parents & carers in Lewisham

- lewishamlocaloffer.org.uk
- lewisham.gov.uk
- local.offer@lewisham.gov.uk

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Explaining Personal Budgets for Parents & Carers in Lewisham

This guidance explains Personal Budgets for Special Educational Needs, and how they can be used to help support reaching the outcomes agreed within your child's EHCP.

The Right to Request

The SEND Code of Practice states that parents/carers and young people have the right to request a Personal Budget at any time whilst the draft EHCP is being prepared or reviewed.

What is a Personal Budget?

A Personal Budget is a notional amount of money identified by the local authority or health partners to deliver provision set out in an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan where the parent/carer or young person is involved in securing that provision.

A personal budget is a sum of funding available for children and young people where it is clear that they need additional provision above that available to most children and young people through local services. An EHC personal budget is not the total amount of money that is available to support a child.



Why would I want a Personal budget?

A personal budget could help you to pay for additional services or activities that will help you reach your goals and aspirations, as set out in your EHC plan.

Choosing to have a personal budget does not mean that you will receive any more or less support than if you choose not to have a personal budget.

Choosing to have a personal budget offers more flexibility in deciding how you would like to be supported.

Managing a Personal Budget

There are four ways a personal budget can be provided to you:

1. Direct Payments – A direct cash payment which is paid into a named family or guardian account for the family to buy & manage the services themselves.
2. A notional budget – where the local authority, school or college holds the personal budget and buys support identified in the assessment to meet needs
3. A third party budget – Where a service provider, user-led organisation or broker manages the budget on behalf of the family
4. A combination of the above.



What can it be used for?

Depending on individual needs, a personal budget may be provided to support with:

Education / learning needs – an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) should be clear about the amount of money to be spent to meet a child/young person's needs. As part of this, the amount of money that can be made available as a personal budget could be identified and you will be able to decide whether to request a personal budget.

Social care – children and young people with disabilities who are supported by Disabled Children's Social Care, may be offered a personal budget where a child needs additional and individual support at home, break from caring or the opportunity to have the same experiences as other families.

Health – a personal health budget may be available for those with complex, long-term and /or life limiting condition.

In each circumstance, the person helping you to complete the EHC plan will be able to tell you whether a personal budget can be provided, and if not, what the reasons are. There are some cases where a personal budget – particularly a direct payment request may not be agreed.



Tell me more about direct payments

A direct payment is a type of personal budget. Once a family has asked for a personal budget, they may request a direct payment to pay for services that they want

What are the criteria for getting a direct payment?

Before giving a direct payment, the Council must be happy that;

- It will be used for outcomes in the EHC plan, not for anything else!
- It will not negatively impact other services provided by the Council
- It will not cost anymore than if the Council were to buy it
- If it will be used to pay for a service in a school or college that the head teacher or principal agrees
- The person receiving the money isn't barred from direct payments due to regulations
- It will not be used to fund a school or college place.

What happens when a direct payment is agreed?

The council has a responsibility to ensure the direct payment is used for the specific purpose intended. It will therefore be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure they are being used responsibly.

You will need to sign a Direct Payment agreement, and the person helping you to complete your EHC plan will be able to give you more information.



How much money is available?

A personal budget is a notional amount of money given to children and young people who need a high level of extra support.

Notional means the amount is estimated based on the services which you use and should be provided to you

The amount available will therefore be dependent on the individual needs of the child and the outcomes within the EHC Plan

What happens if a request for a personal budget is not agreed?

If a parent/carer or young person has requested a personal budget but this has not been agreed by the Local Authority, or if a decision has been made to withdraw the personal budget, the reason for the decision will be provided to the parent or young person in writing.

In giving its decision, the Local Authority will advise the parent/carer or young person that they may request a review of the decision. The timescales and arrangements for considering a review of the decision will be set out in the letter.



Lewisham

How do I find out more?

Visit the Lewisham Local Offer:
www.lewishamlocaloffer.org.uk

Contact Lewisham SENDIASS
(Special Educational Needs
Information, Advice and Support
Service) on:

0203 319 2163 or via e-mail at:
Lewisham@kids.org.uk

Contact your school or education
settings **SENCO**