

**Action
Required**

- Response to consultation on conversion from matrix to top up funding levels from September 2015 to be returned by **13 March 2015**

Consultation on Conversion from Matrix to Top up Funding Levels from September 2015

I am writing to you to ask for your views regarding a proposal to amend the statements of pupils who remain on the old matrix levels to new 'top up bands' from September 2015.

Following the Education Funding Reform changes introduced by the Department for Education (DfE) to the schools national funding formula in 2013, Bromley Council has been working hard to bring greater transparency into the funding process and had introduced a banding system of £2,000 increments in 2013 to support pupils with high level needs above the delegated budgets already given to schools.

The majority of pupils with statements have already moved onto the new 'top up' bands following the annual review process however some pupils do currently remain on the old matrix levels. The volume of pupils still funded by Bromley in this way in mainstream schools and academies has steadily reduced and is now 230 compared with an overall volume of statements of 1,719. This proposal does not affect pupils with an EHC Plan as these pupils are already on the new 'top up' funding rates as are pupils placed in special schools and units.

For these pupils only, we have reviewed the funding levels awarded under the matrix banded system and plan to adjust these from 1 September 2015 to align them with the top up rates in the table below. The matrix levels will be converted to the closest top up band. By moving to a single resource mechanism we hope this will be clearer and simpler to operate for schools supporting pupils with high needs.

It is worth noting that the annual review process which schools are already operating for pupils with statements of special educational needs will continue and that this change will only affect those pupils in mainstream schools and academies with matrix levels at 1 September 2015. It will not affect any pupils who already have agreed 'top up' band levels in their statements. The table below sets out the converted rate for each matrix level from 1 September 2015.

Current annual primary matrix level after delegation	Top up annual rate from September 2015 after delegation
5A £714 per year	No Top Up funding as this should be met from delegated budgets
5B £1,676 per year	£2,000 Top Up Band 2 per year
5C £2,763 per year	£2,000 Top Up Band 2 per year
6 £3,981 per year	£4,000 Top Up Band 3 per year
6A £4,812 per year	£4,000 Top Up Band 3 per year
6B £5,911 per year	£6,000 Top Up Band 4 per year
7 £6,864 per year	£6,000 Top Up Band 4 per year
8 £8,678 per year	£8,000 Top Up Band 5 per year
8A £9,285 per year	£10,000 Top Up Band 6 per year
9 £10,087 per year	£10,000 Top Up Band 6 per year
10 £12,862 per year	£12,000 Top Up Band 7 per year

Current annual secondary matrix level after delegation	Top up annual rate from September 2015 after delegation
5A £399 per year	No Top Up funding as this should be met from delegated budgets
5B £1,293 per year	£2,000 Top Up Band 2 per year
5C £2,235 per year	£2,000 Top Up Band 2 per year
6 £3,502 per year	£4,000 Top Up Band 3 per year
6A £4,271 per year	£4,000 Top Up Band 3 per year
6B £5,315 per year	£6,000 Top Up Band 4 per year
7 £6,220 per year	£6,000 Top Up Band 4 per year
8 £7,944 per year	£8,000 Top Up Band 5 per year
8A £8,521 per year	£8,000 Top Up Band 5 per year
9 £9,304 per year	£10,000 Top Up Band 6 per year
10 £11,920 per year	£12,000 Top Up Band 7 per year

For the purposes of the model, and to see the effect on Bromley's local authority schools finance budgets, I have removed all pupils where other local authorities are funding the matrix levels.

This exercise shows that based on current figures the overall effect will be a saving to the High Needs Funding Block of £5,833. However, the intention is not to make savings but to move to a more transparent system of financing support in the schools budgets. At present, there is disparity as a minority of pupils are funded against the old matrix levels with the majority having already moved onto the new top up bands following their annual reviews.

The model is only a snap shot in time and therefore indicative only. There will always be movement, and significant churn in year against the 'top up' budgets as new pupils start and older pupils leave. In addition, the Additional Resources Panel meets weekly to review existing cases and to look at new placements which also affects the 'top up' support funding distributed to schools.

The attached table shows a breakdown by school:



Model for
Consultation.pdf

This was based on the snapshot of matrix funding at 20 February 2015 and modelled forward for the 2015-16 financial year.

The table appears to favour secondary schools over primary, and the reason for this is because the old matrix funding levels in secondary are slightly less than those awarded to primary, so by moving to universal top up rates, the majority of secondary schools appear to have a slight gain in their budgets.

In addition, secondary schools also have a larger volume of pupils with statements who still attract matrix funding compared to primary.

The model does not show any significant winners or losers as the overall difference in funding for all schools is £5,833. Should you have any queries about how this will affect particular pupils at your school, please contact me via e mail to jennifer.stanley@bromley.gov.uk in the first instance giving details of the pupils that you are enquiring about and your contact information and I will respond.

I would be grateful if you could consider the above and tick one of the boxes on the attached consultation form and **return to me via e mail by 13 March 2015**:



Top up consultation
template.doc

For further information, please contact:

- **Jennifer Stanley, SEN Data and Finance Manager**
- **E-mail:** jennifer.stanley@bromley.gov.uk
- **Telephone:** 020 8313 4161

Audience for this Circular

To:	For information (cc):
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Head Teachers of all Bromley Maintained Schools and Academies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secretaries of Staff Associations• Councillor Stephen Wells, Executive Member for the Education Portfolio• Councillor Nicholas Bennett, Chairman of the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee• Councillor Robert Evans, Executive Member for the Care Services Portfolio• Councillor Stephen Carr, Leader of the Council• Terry Parkin, Executive Director of Education, Care and Health Services• Kay Weiss, Assistant Director (Children's Social Care) (ECHS)• Jane Bailey, Assistant Director (Education) (ECHS)• Anne Watts, Assistant Director (Strategic and Business Support Services) (ECHS)• Lorna Blackwood, Assistant Director (Commissioning) (ECHS)• David Bradshaw, Head of Education, Care and Health Services Finance (ECHS)• Angela Huggett, Human Resources Manager (CEX)