



# **PERSONAL BUDGETS PILOT LOCAL OFFER STATEMENT**

Reference: Children & Families Act 2014 (Part 3)

**Children and Young People**

**0 – 25 years with Special  
Educational Needs &  
Disabilities (SEND)**

**Children Schools & Families**

## **Merton Children Schools & Families Policy Statement**

Merton has embraced the changes enshrined in the Children and Families Act 2014 and this document sets out our local arrangements for personal budgets.

Merton is committed to keeping children and young people at the heart of our services and to working in partnership with parents and carers. Parents and carers of children and young people with complex needs have been integral to our planning and development of our local response to the act and we are grateful for their contributions.

Many of our children will continue to be subject to a single agency assessment and planning and this will continue. Young people who are looked after by the local authority including those where parental responsibility is shared with parents will continue to be subject to the statutory processes for looked after children.

Arrangements for children with complex needs on child protection plans will also continue. The lead agency for these children will continue to be social care. Some children will have health needs which do not impact on their educational needs or progress and health will continue to provide the lead in responding to these children's needs. Schools and settings will continue to support children and young people with special educational needs through their own local offer and through sign posting to the wider local offer. Where support is provided through a single agency we will still work hard to ensure that we are working together and responding to children and young people's needs holistically.

A number of Children & Young People will however meet our eligibility criteria for a joint EHC assessment and plan and this document sets out our local arrangements for how elements of services can be accessed, planned, implemented and managed as part of a Personal Budget.

## Personal Budgets

Personal budgets are one element of a personalised approach to supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities; and are a critical part of the policy reform for children and young people receiving education, health and care services as set out in the [Children & Families Act 2014 \(Part 3\)](#) and the [Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) (July 2014 Final version).

The [Children & Families Act 2014 \(Part 3\)](#) gives parents and young people the right to request the local authority prepare a personal budget and the new statutory requirements emphasise the need for local authorities to increase the pace of personalisation and transformation including offering personal budgets to children, young people and their families who are in receipt of an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan.

The Department for Education has not set any specific national targets for personal budgets in local authority children's services although Pathfinder research indicates that for some services approx. 8-10% of people have taken up the offer of a personal budget during the initial 12 month period.

Personal budgets, both SEND-specific and otherwise, should not be seen in isolation but as an integral part of the coordinated assessment and education, health and care planning process; aligned to and with a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

A personal budget is one of a number of ways of achieving increased personalisation and learning shows this can be provided and managed in a number of ways.

The initial personal budget offer in Merton will be implemented from September 2014 on a planned and manageable scale starting with [Transport](#). From January 2015 [Short Breaks](#), will be introduced with the aim of extending the offer in April 2015 to look at [Return to Borough from Residential Education placements](#) (historical placements where children and young people's outcomes may now be better achieved locally).

The future expectation is that as personal budgets develop, with increased consultation from children, young people and parents/guardians, improved joint commissioning with local authority partners and the natural expiration of contracts; there will be further opportunities to periodically review and potentially increase the personal budgets offer. In line with the above, the [Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) and the Care Act 2014 this policy will be reviewed and updated, at least annually, as and when required

This policy sets out how Merton will offer personal budgets, to those that meet the eligibility criteria, and assist children young people and their parents/guardians to have real choice and control, whilst empowering them to take more control of their services.

Our next planned statement and policy review: **April 2015** by which time we hope to include more specific information and health personal budgets.

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## Version Log

Revision	Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Description of Changes
01	02-06-2014	First draft issue
02	07-07-2014	Multiple changes - post consultation with PB workstream (parent, SEN, finance, social care)
03	10-07-2014	Update from CSF DMT
04	28-08-2014	September 2014 – Draft published version – to be reviewed by LB, SP, ML, LT.
05	03-09-2014	Reviewed by DMT members: JM & PB - FINAL VERSION

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## 1. What is a Personal Budget

A personal budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority or a Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver all or some of the provision set out in an Education Health & Care Plan.

By having a say in the way this budget is used, a young person or parent or can control elements of their support.

## 2. What services will be available as a Personal Budget?

The London Borough of Merton's Children Schools and Families department are in the early stages of developing the local Personal Budgets offer for appropriate families.

In line with the Children & Families Act 2014 (Part 3) we are proposing the following services are available for personal budget request from September 2014:

	Services	Implementation Date
1	Transport (Personal Travel Assistance Budget)	Sept. 2014
2	Short Breaks	Post Jan. 2015
3	Return to borough from Residential Education Provision	To be confirmed

### Future Personal Budgets

Merton will shortly seek the views of parents and work together to consider other services for personal budgets. However this will need to consider financial feasibility and are subject to the ending of current contractual commitments.

### 2.1 Transport

To qualify for a Personal Travel Assistance Budget (PTAB) a child or young person must first meet the eligibility which is identified within the [Merton SEN Travel and Assistance Policy](#).

A Personal Travel Assistance Budget (PTAB) is only available for eligible children and young people aged 2-16 years and will be appropriate to the individual needs and circumstances of child/ren and young people, encouraging them to grow in confidence and independence wherever possible.

In accordance with the 2006 Education and Inspections Act, Merton's Personal Budgets transport offer will encourage and promote sustainable travel options and will aim to improve the physical well-being of those who use them and/or the environment. To this end, priority will be given to walking, cycling, public transport, and shared transport.

Starting from September 2014 in Merton the offer for transport personal budgets will be as follows:

### **Option 1**

**A rate per mile for transporting a child or young person to their main education setting, paid to a young person or parent via a direct payment.**

The payment offer will depend on the distance travelled to the education setting and the needs of the child or young person. It will be offered as a lump sum, although paid in 11 equal monthly amounts across a 12 month period.

**Example:** John travels 4 miles to school and returns home each day. The personal budget offer would be for a mileage rate to be paid for John based on the following example calculation:

8 miles per day (two journey's) x PB rate per mile offer x 180 days (no. of school days per annum) = Total Personal Travel Budget offer

### **Option 2**

**A direct reimbursement of travel costs for a child or young person's journey to their main education setting.**

The payment offer will depend on the weekly or monthly public transport costs for the required journey. It could be offered as a monthly or annual sum, although paid in 11 equal monthly amounts across a 12 month period.

**Example:** Mark has a journey of 8 miles to school and returns home daily. Mark's complex needs require an escort for his journey, so Mark's grandmother agrees to take him to school and collect him via public transport.

The personal budget offer could be for a payment card that has the costs of paying for a weekly, monthly or annual oyster card for both Mark and his grandmother to and from school.

The above options are being run as an initial pilot launch and will be subject to review to make sure they meet the needs of our local personal travel budget population.

**NOTE:** The current [Merton SEN Transport Policy](#) explains who is eligible and other requirements.

## 2.2 Short Breaks

“Short Breaks” is the umbrella term through which disabled children are supported, so short breaks includes:

- Domiciliary Care
- Holiday play schemes (both specialist which are commissioned and mainstream which are spot purchased)
- Overnight short breaks and any other commissioned Access to Resources Team overnight accommodation
- Local Offer “short breaks”
- Direct Payments

The overall purpose of the short breaks with Children’s Social Care is to provide a continuum of support for children and young people and their families which most appropriately meet their needs and agreed outcomes.

Social workers within the Children with Disabilities Team have a particular role in enabling disabled children and young people to achieve these outcomes within their families as part of the support package identified via an assessment process.

Short breaks also give children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities domiciliary care and support they need and/or the chance to do something they enjoy. They give parents time away from caring for the physical and emotional challenges of a child or young person. A short break can be offered by a wide range of providers or families may choose to organise their own short breaks through a personal budget or direct payment.

Post January 2015 the Merton offer for “Short Breaks” will be published for the following areas:

- i. Domiciliary Care: Personal care, support within the home, escort in the community.**
- ii. Holiday play schemes**
- iii. Local Offer Short Breaks: Respite provision for parents/carers**

These options are currently being developed with Service Managers via consultation with the Personal Budget work stream and will be supported via development of a local Resource Allocation System tool (RAS). An example of a RAS can be found on the [Mott Macdonald Personal Budgets page](#); although Merton is in the process of designing a local version.

For further information on Merton's Short Break's eligibility criteria refer to the following:

[Short Breaks Statement](#) & [Merton Children with Disabilities Practice](#)

**NOTE: We anticipate Short Breaks to be operational post January 2015.**

### **2.3 Return to borough from Residential Education Provision**

Merton has a number of children and young people with SEN in out of borough special and residential school placements.

We are discussing options for a child or young person in a residential education placement several miles away from home who may wish to receive their education or social care provision in borough or closer to the family home; to receive a personal budget to meet all or part of their education, health and care needs.

Merton is in the early phase of assessing the suitability of this being taken in part or full as a personal budget and anticipate being able to clarify further details post April 2015.

#### **Top-up Funding**

There are currently no arrangements for the Council to consider "top up" or "part funding" parent contributions towards personal budgets to meet their children or young person's needs. This will be reviewed at a later stage as part of the personal budget pilot offer however this remains the council's current position.

### **3. Who qualifies to request a Personal Budget**

Children, young people, parents and guardians must meet any of four main criteria to be eligible to request a personal budget:

- i. A personal budget is being sought from [what services will be available as a personal budget list](#) (see Section 2)
- ii. A child, young person or parent/guardian has a Multi-Agency Decision Making Group approved Education Health & Care needs assessment, usually issued no later than 6 weeks after a statutory assessment request.  
(See SEN Code of Practice section 9.98)
- iii. If the additional funding for the personal budget is held by the main education setting above the standard SEN allocated child or young person funding (known as the high needs budget – Code of Practice section 9.112 & 9.113).

**Please Note:** If a personal budget request is for a service that plans to take place within the education setting; the written approval of the school or college must also be obtained before final approval can be granted.

- iv. A child, young person or parent/guardian already receives a direct payment or personal budget prior to September 2014 and implementation of the Children & Families Act 2014

#### **4. Who does not automatically qualify for a Personal Budget**

The following children, young people, parents/guardians and families will not automatically qualify to request and/or receive a personal budget:

- i. Children and young people in possession of a Statement of special educational needs rather than an EHC plan. Further information on when Statements of special educational needs are due to transfer into plans can be found in the Transfer Plan document in the Local Offer..
- ii. Children and young people in custody
- iii. Children or young people with a Child Protection Plan (reviewed on a case by case basis)

#### **5. Personal budget request considerations**

The services listed in 2.1 – 2.3 and any future personal budget services will be made available in good faith. Upon implementation however, it should be noted that for all of the above the Council reserves the right to reject individual requests if the services:

- i. Are already provided via commissioned services available as part of the Local Offer that meets the needs of the child or young person; versus using a unsuitable provider

Example 1 - Provider organisation X is commissioned to provide short breaks for the Council that meets the needs of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Parent A requests a personal budget for the same short breaks service and wants to use Provider Y who does not have either suitably trained staff or does not meet the minimum regulatory body standards.

- ii. Will cost significantly more than the current or standard market price for the same service, with the same level of service or allocated hours of provision

Example 2 - The average price for a child or young person's school transport is calculated at £8.00 per day for a journey of 4 miles. Parent A's child or young person (who meets transport eligibility) is able to source a friend or relative that can provide the same transport service for £12.00 per day.

Example 3 - Provider organisation J is delivering 10 hours of domiciliary care at a rate of £12.50 per hour to a child or young person escorting them into the community for social inclusion and to meet their cultural needs. Parent A has sourced an alternative provider who can deliver the same or very similar service for their child or young person at a rate of £25.00 per hour; meaning only 5 hours could be delivered to meet the child's needs within the same budget allocation which does not adequately meet the needs or outcomes of the child or young person.

## 6. How will it work

There are four key elements required for the delivery of a personal budget.

### i. An Education Health & Care (EHC) Plan

In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 the London Borough of Merton will implement a 20 week assessment process for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This will include a child or young person's education, health and social care needs; and may result in an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) being issued.

Initial discussions regarding personal budgets will start during the first few weeks of an education, health and care assessment and will be led by the **keyworker or lead professional**. In preparing children, young people and parents for personal budgets the **keyworker or lead professional** will:

- Provide a verbal explanation of what it means to have a personal budget, including a brief explanation on how a person may receive or manage a personal budget
- Provide directions on where to find personal budget information as part of the local offer
- There are plans to share a young person and parent friendly personal budget leaflet in the near future

If an Education Health & Care assessment is approved and where specific outcomes have been identified in the plan; children, young people and parents of children who have EHC plans will have the right to request a personal budget; providing it is in the list on offer from the Council and they meet the

eligibility criteria. This request will be calculated and agreed in a fair and transparent manner in line with a Merton Resource Allocation System.

**ii. A Merton Resource Allocation System (RAS)**

Following approval of the identified outcome/s in an EHC plan a child/young person and or their parent/guardian will need to complete a simple Personal Budget Questionnaire (PBQ) based on their individual circumstances and specific needs.

A **keyworker or lead professional** will discuss needs with the individual child young person and their parent/guardian or representative and will complete the PBQ together..

The PBQ will be part of the Merton RAS and has a simple calculator embedded within it. This means that the information about needs is linked to a points system and this generates a score which in turn will indicate a range of money that the Council is likely to spend on someone with similar needs. This amount of money is called the Indicative Allocation and is used for support planning purposes within the EHC plan.

The indicative allocation is **a guide not a definitive amount of money**. (The full amount of money must be agreed and signed off as part of the final EHC plan).

There may be some occasions where support/care services can be arranged for less than the indicative allocation and there may be the odd occasion when a top up may be required to keep people safe and well, particularly during time of significant ill health or transitions.

This RAS will help families to make informed choices as they will know in advance how much money they are likely to receive to meet one or more outcomes identified in the EHC plan.

This information can then be used by a family, with help from their keyworker / lead professional or co-ordinator or family supporter (if desired); to decide how to use the money to set up the support they need to meet the outcome. (This part of the process is known as support planning).

Post July 2015 we aim to have the PBQ questionnaire embedded within our I.T. system so that a **keyworker or lead professional** will be able to generate the following information with the child or young person

- A summary of the child or young person's personal budget requirements
- An indication of how much the child or young person is likely to receive to spend on the agreed personal budget outcome/s in the EHC plan

- A record of the resource allocation questions and answers that can be printed if desired

**Please Note:** The RAS will help the Council to allocate available resources in an equitable manner as the RAS system allocates money based on needs and outcomes not on services which should result in a fair transparent and consistent way.

There are a number of RAS in use across the UK and Merton will utilise a RAS system based on best practice from In Control (DFE partner), Merton Adult Social Care, and East Sussex models that include needs across both education and social care.

An evaluation (via the pilot plan) of our the Merton RAS will take place to ensure a high level of confidence that the tool is effective at allocating resources based on need and that the “pound for points” currently in use is fair and sustainable.

**The chair of the Multi Agency Decision Making Group** (previously known as the Panel) will be responsible for ensuring clear operational policies are in place for the approval of Personal Budgets and any supporting plans in line with the council’s scheme of delegation.

### iii. **Support Planning**

As part of the support planning process young people and parents will have the following options for arranging how to utilise their personal budget:

- a. To conduct their own support planning, including sourcing, procuring and setting up of services to meet outcomes
- b. Utilise the Merton’s Direct Payments Team to manage this on their behalf
- c. Commission a third party person or organisation or person to manage this on their behalf (associated costs must be met by the personal budget holder)

Whatever option is selected, support planning arrangements should where possible be concluded within 4-6 weeks of the personal budget approval.

During the support planning process a child, young person or family must agree how they want to receive the personal budget and can be assisted by either:

- A direct payments team support worker
- A commissioned 3<sup>rd</sup> party person or organisation, whose costs must be met by the personal budget holder
- An independent advisor

#### iv. **Personal Budget Approval**

We will shortly publish flow chart diagrams (Appendices 1 and 2) that provide an overview of the personal budget approval process for children young people and parents who want to request and receive a personal budget.

If you require further information on the approval process you should discuss this with your keyworker or lead professional.

#### 7. **Payment Methods**

There are four recognised methods of receiving a personal budget payment

- **Direct Payments (DP)** –Where individuals receive the cash to source, purchase and manage services.

Previous surveys of people with personal budgets, shows that people taking their personal budget as a DP, report consistently better outcomes than people receiving a Council managed or commissioned service. This includes areas such as physical and mental wellbeing and being supported with dignity.

As part of the design of the new operating system and the upgrade of the Carefirst IT system we are now using preloaded payment cards to manage direct payments.

A preloaded card is similar to a debit card and will allow a young person or parent to pay providers, suppliers and employees. It negates the need for a person to open a separate bank account and this removes one of the greatest barriers to people wanting to take up a DP. The preloaded card system is very efficient to operate and is quick to set up. It provides an easy, real time monitoring system while money is credited to a customer's card. There is no requirement to raise invoices for a customer and cards will be tailored to restrict use with certain suppliers or products and for cash withdrawals. The risk of financial abuse through the preloaded card scheme is significantly reduced.

An agreed personal budget will be credited to the person's individual card at regular intervals; probably 4 weeks in advance (following initial approval), though this can be tailored to an individual if necessary.

- **An arrangement** – whereby the local authority, school or college holds the funds and commissions the support specified in the plan (these are sometimes called notional arrangements)
- **Third party arrangements** – where funds (direct payments) are paid to and managed by an individual or organisation on behalf of the parent or young person
- **A combination** of the above

Merton will be championing the use of **Direct Payments**, which is the current system being already in use by Merton Adult Social Care.

The Direct Payments team are able to assist and support young people and parents in managing a personal budget by each of the previously mentioned 4 payments.

## 8. Personal Budget Reviews

Personal budgets will be reviewed as part of the child or young person's annual review by a lead professional or co-ordinator.

Following a review and in consultation with families a personal budget may be withdrawn if is not delivering the expected outcomes for a child or young person. Additionally if proving successful further requests may be made for additional outcomes to be met via personal budgets. This will need to be made via the standard process and approved by the Multi Agency Decision Making Group.

For timescales for responding to requests please refer to the [Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#).

Appeals to any changes post review may be made as per section 13 of this policy.

## 9. Commitments and Responsibilities

### Young People and Parents

As part of the personal budget offer we would ask that young people and parent/s comply with the following:

- Young people and/or parents have the time and capability to select and manage their personal budget
- Young people and/or parents have a responsibility to ensure that allocated personal budget funds are being spent to meet the agreed outcome/s in the EHC plan

- iii. Young people and/or parents are required to inform the Council of any changes in their circumstances that may affect their eligibility for receiving or maintaining a personal budget
- iv. Young people and/or parents must inform the Council immediately of any changes to their contact details
- v. Young people and parents must fully complete an annual personal budget report form based on their services and experience
- vi. Parents will either encourage their child or young person OR a third party agent to, where realistic and possible, move towards actively managing part or all of their personal budget

### **Education Settings**

- i. Education settings will make sure they consider and try to accommodate the request for children and young people personal budgets within their environment
- ii. Education settings will work with children, young people and parents to minimise any disruption to others possibly affected by the use of a personal budget
- iii. Education settings will encourage positive behaviour and respect for others so that SEN children or young persons and their assistants / employees working within the school setting are better understood by other children and young people
- iv. Schools will include personal budgets as part of the child or young person's annual review, if the child, young person or parent/s wishes.
- v. Education settings will help the Council to establish child or young person's needs and help to identify **eligible** children and young people who may benefit from personal budget

### **Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group**

The Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group personal budget responsibilities can be viewed as part of the [Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) . These are a statutory requirement for us to follow.

## **10. Risk Enablement**

A personalised way of working requires a fresh approach to the management of risk. A governing principle to choice and risk is “...*that people have the right to live their lives to the full as long as that does not stop others from doing the same. Fear of supporting people to take reasonable risks in their daily lives can prevent them from doing the things that most people take for granted.*”

In guidance to Councils the government is clear that professional perspectives on risks should not be used to restrict the way people choose to live their lives.

Merton's underpinning risk enablement principles are to ensure that we:

- Keep the child or young person at the centre of their services
- Treat family and friends as partners
- Focus on what is important to the child or young person
- Build connections with the community
- Are prepared to go beyond conventional service options
- Continue to listen and learn with the person

Merton's aim is to help decision making in relation to the management of risk and to support those involved to explore the issues and make arrangements which go as far as possible towards meeting the individual's outcomes, whilst balancing the needs and risks to themselves, others and the Council. We want to ensure that specific risks are identified and that subsequent appropriate action is then taken.

In the majority of new EHC plan personal budget requests any issues of risk will be identified during the pre EHC plan approval phase (up to week 15/16). These discussions will be led by a professional and in most cases this will be a **keyworker / direct payment worker**. The keyworker will help the person to consider their outcomes and will discuss and / or provide information and advice on how risks could be managed.

However there are occasionally situations where different views may be held by the young person, parent, family representatives or the professionals. The Council has a duty to keep people safe and in some circumstances we will exercise this by not agreeing aspects to a personal budget support plan if there are serious safeguarding concerns that it will not meet an individual's *specific outcome* or if it places the individual at unacceptable and *specific* risk of harm.

It is important to note that should this situation occur every effort will be made to support the individual's choices in the context of their legal rights.

## 11. Capacity Consent and Decision Making

To implement and receive their personal budgets entitlement a young person or parent/s will need to authorise consent and agree and confirm decisions.

This means that a person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that he/she lacks capacity. Capacity will be determined in line with the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

A young person or parent who has the mental capacity to make a decision, and chooses voluntarily to live with a level of risk, is entitled to do so. The law will treat a young person or parent as having consented to any risk associated with receiving a personal budget and so there will be no breach of the duty of care by professionals or public authorities; provided the agreed outcome and personal budget has been identified, recorded and approved as part of the EHC plan.

However, the Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group remains accountable for the proper use of public funds, and whilst a young person or parent is entitled to live with a degree of risk, the Local Authority is under no obligation to fund it. The Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group has an important distinction to consider between putting people at risk and enabling them to choose to take reasonable risks

## **12. Commissioning & Quality Assurance**

To ensure a common approach to risk enablement and to safeguard children and young people, commissioners may choose to develop framework agreements for services based on the principles of risk enablement set out in this document.

Currently the following provider organisations will be considered as being quality assured by the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group:

- i. Provider organisations with a current formal contractual agreement providing Merton commissioned services.
- ii. Provider organisations providing services who meet the minimum standards as part of being a registered or member of a industry recognised UK/EU regulatory body (e.g. Care Quality Commission)
- iii. Provider organisations who meet the minimum standards set out in a Merton quality assurance framework as part of a separate accreditation or tender process post September 2014

The published Local Offer will shortly clarify what quality assurance organisations are accredited to children, young people and parents; however this does not affect young people and parental right to commission from non-accredited providers as part of a personal budget. Until such a time persons may request via a manual request.

## **13. How to Appeal**

If a young person or parent/guardian is not satisfied with the decision of the Council regarding their personal budget request they can appeal for the case to be reviewed. Appeals are dealt with in 2 stages.

**Stage 1** – to be made within **15** working days of the original personal budget decision

If a young person or parent's application for a personal budget is not approved or they feel that the assistance offered is unsafe or otherwise inappropriate for their child, they may appeal.

Appeals should be in writing and must set out in detail the reasons for requesting a review of the decision.

The appeal should be sent to

**Multi Agency Decision Making Group Panel Chair**  
Merton SEN & Disabilities Integrated Service  
London Borough of Merton  
Civic Centre  
London Road  
Morden, Surrey  
SM4 5DX

Parents may wish to access the **Parent Partnership Service** (Phone 020 8274 5819 or email [chris.wilson@merton.gov.uk](mailto:chris.wilson@merton.gov.uk) ) for advice and support, and can ask their independent supporter for assistance in preparing for the appeal.

Following consideration of the appeal, the Council will again make a determination on the personal budget ruling within a further 15 working days .

If, during an appeal, additional evidence is gathered that indicates that the child or young person is entitled to the requested personal budget, the **Multi Agency Decision Making Group** Chair will refer this to the **Multi Agency Decision Making Group** (previously known as the SEN panel) to reconsider the decision as soon as possible.

**Stage 2** – To be made within 7 working days of the Stage 1 outcome

If the young person or parent / guardian remains dissatisfied with the outcome following their initial appeal, they may refer their appeal to:

**Assistant Director**

Children Schools & Families  
London Borough of Merton  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor Civic Centre  
London Road  
Morden, Surrey  
SM4 5DX

The evidence presented will be reconsidered at this stage and a determination made whether the original decision in stage 1 was correct.

Following consideration of the appeal, the Assistant Director will again consider the evidence and make a determination on the personal budget ruling within a further 15 working days

**Stage 3** – To be made within 7 working days of the Stage 2 outcome

If the young person or parent remains dissatisfied with the outcome following their Stage 2 appeal, the external mediation route will be offered and it will then be possible to appeal to tribunal if they choose to do so.

#### **14. Personal Budget Management Complaint**

Young people and parents/carers who have any concerns or complaints regarding their personal budget management should, in the first instance, discuss them with either the direct payments support worker and/or lead professional to see if the complaint can be reasonably resolved.

Personal budget management refers to the management of personal budget available funds whether accessed via payment cards or direct debit payments.

Should the young person or parent wish to take the matter further we would ask that you write to:

**Direct Payments Team Manager**  
London Borough of Merton  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor Civic Centre  
London Road  
Morden, Surrey  
SM4 5DX

**APPENDIX 1 – Personal Budget Flowchart (New EHC plans)**

**Please see attached documents**

**COMING SHORTLY**

DRAFT

**APPENDIX 2 – Personal Budget Flowchart (Existing Statements)**

**COMING SHORTLY**

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## APPENDIX 3 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Please note not all of the terms in the glossary are currently in use however as the policy statement will be updated we expect to use these terms in the future

AF	Assessment Framework
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
BESD	Behaviour, Emotional Social Difficulties
CAMHS	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group who are primarily responsible for the commissioning of local health services
COP	Code of Practice, (Statutory Guidance for Merton Children Schools and Families)
CWD	Children with Disabilities
CYP	Children and Young People
DFE	Department for Education
EHC	Education Health and Care
EHC plan	Education Health & Care plan
FE	Further Education
Keyworker	A worker who is involved in helping children, young people and parents to navigate the new EHC assessment or transfer process
Lead Professional	A worker who takes the lead in helping children, young people and parents to navigate the new EHC assessment or transfer process
LA	Local Authority
LDA	Learning Difficulty Assessment or S139a

LO	Local Offer
Multi-Agency Decision Making Group	A group of education, health and social care professionals who meet to discuss EHC plan requests, and agree provision for CYP with SEND
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NHS	National Health Service
Personal Budgets Questionnaire	Personal Budgets Questionnaire's are part of the Resource Allocation System. These are the key questions that lead to a score being accumulated which will equate to an indicative range of money available to meet the needs of a child or young person via a personal budget.
PFA	Preparation for Adulthood
Provider/s	Organisations commissioned to provide education health and care services to Merton Council and / or the CCG
PTAB	Personal Travel Assistance Budget (PTAB) is the name of a successful personal budget application
QA	Quality Assurance – how organisations demonstrate they practice and deliver services to good or minimum standard
RAS	Resource Allocation System – used to calculate fairly and transparently what is the indicative amount of money you may receive for a personal budget
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator – usually works in the education setting and may also be the head teacher
SI	Sensory Impairment
S139a	Section 139a of the Learning Skills Act 2000