

Department for Education

Funding, staffing and legislation for pupil referral units (PRUs) from 1 April 2013.

General article

Updated: 09 November 2012

The Government is committed to raising standards in alternative provision and believes that the varied needs of pupils and schools can be best met by giving education professionals greater autonomy.

As part of this, the Government is giving PRU management committees delegated budgets and control of staffing, as outlined in the schools White Paper 2010 and, in part, enacted by the Education Act 2011.

This will essentially give PRUs similar autonomy to maintained schools. In addition, PRUs now also have the opportunity to take advantage of the freedoms and benefits offered by academy status. Following his review of alternative provision, Charlie Taylor recommended that most PRUs convert to academies by 2018.

Next steps on funding

Amendments to primary legislation giving PRU management committees delegated budgets from 1 April 2013 have already been made (Education Act 2011). We expect to lay regulations setting out more detail (School and Early Years Finance Regulations) in November 2012. This will allow PRUs to allocate and spend the budgets delegated to them without seeking consent from their local authority and take actions such as prioritising their spending and making quicker decisions so they can better respond to the needs of parents.

PRU funding arrangements will be changing from 1 April 2013, in line with changes to 2013/14 school finance. All direct state-funded AP institutions (including PRUs) will receive base funding of £8000 per place, topped up by funding from the commissioning LA or school for each pupil admitted to the PRU.

It is important that PRUs prepare for this change now, and start to engage actively with their maintaining LA to make sure that they and the LA prioritise clarification of:

- budgets, based on current costs;
- place numbers, base funding and top-up funding arrangements that will give them their budgets for the next year; and
- support arrangements they can expect from the LA in managing and administering their budget.

The full related **guidance** on the new funding arrangements is available on this page.

On staffing

Regulations will be laid during January 2013 to give PRU management committees control over staffing from April 2013. This will allow PRUs to make decisions about staffing – for example, appointing and managing staff, without needing to seek agreement from the local authority.