

# Parents lose special needs funding case

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Education Editor

Three families of children with serious special educational needs have lost a High Court battle over their schooling after judges ruled that the government did not break the law when it cut high-needs funding.

The campaigners argued that budget decisions were leaving councils unable to fulfil their legal obligation to provide education to pupils with special needs.

Nico Heugh Simone, 15, from Robertsbridge in East Sussex, Dakota Riddell, 9, from Birmingham, and Benedict McFinnigan, 14, from Scarborough in Yorkshire, brought the case through their mothers. They have needs and disabilities including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, autism and cerebral palsy.

Anne-Marie Irwin, representing the families, said they were disappointed. "How services are funded is still an incredibly important issue affecting tens of thousands of families, and one that needs addressing," she said.

Special needs funding has been cut in real terms by 17 per cent in three years.

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