

West Berkshire Schools' Forum	
Title of Report:	Additional SEN Funding Proposal
Date of Meeting:	7th October 2013
Contact Officer(s)	Claire White & Ian Pearson
For Decision	

1. Introduction

1.1 Local authorities can provide additional targeted support to schools from its high needs block where it would be unreasonable to expect the first £6,000 of additional support for all high needs pupils to be provided due to an exceptional number of such pupils on roll.

1.2 In 2013/14 West Berkshire made a payment to schools where the actual SEN formula funding received plus top ups was less than the actual cost of statements (recalculated once a term). The difference was paid plus an allowance for non stated pupils based on the size of the school.

1.3 For 2014/15 the DfE has stated that the additional funding paid to schools should be formulaic based on the number of high needs pupils in each school. The formula or criteria should be simple and transparent, and should be devised so that additional funds are targeted only to a minority of schools which have particular difficulties because of their disproportionate number of high needs pupils or their characteristics.

1.4 Heads Funding Group considered three options for consideration (each set out below). Each use 2013/14 funding data and the October 2012 census for pupil numbers. The final calculation would use the most up to date information.

1.5 All formula options target mostly the same schools as the current "actual" method. Heads Funding Group recommendation is to use Option 1.

2. Option 1

2.1 A payment to schools where the actual number of high needs pupils is significantly above the average.

2.2 Where the actual number of high needs pupils per school is above 2% primary (1 high needs pupil in every 50) or 4% secondary (1 high needs pupil in every

100), rounded up, each additional pupil will attract the first £6,000 as additional funding alongside the top up.

2.3 This is the simplest of the three options, and by calculating on whole pupil numbers it ensures that schools receive the full funding for all high needs pupils they have on roll *above the average number that can be expected* and for which they are unlikely to have been funded in full for through the formula. Although it is the method which least correlates with the current additional funding it is more transparent as it clearly states how many pupils it is assumed each school is funded for and what each school then receives for additional pupils over this.

3. Option 2

3.1 A payment to schools where the actual number of high needs pupils is significantly above the average.

3.2 The actual number of high needs pupils per school is expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils. Where the percentage is greater than 0.75% above the average (2.35% primary, 3.09% secondary), the school receives a payment of £6,000 per percentage point above that.

3.3 Although more complex, this method funds on a sliding scale according to percentage points above the average, rather than in multiples of £6,000.

4. Option 3

4.1 A payment to schools where the total cost of their high needs pupils is above the average notional SEN budget allocation.

4.2 Of the total delegated budget allocation, 5% is the total notional SEN budget. If 1.5% is allowed for non-statemented pupils needs below £6k, this leaves 3.5% of the allocation for the first £6k of high needs pupils. For schools where the cost of the first £6k of its high needs pupils cannot be met from 3.5% of their total budget allocation, the difference is paid (if allowed by DfE rules) or a calculated amount.

4.3 Although simplistic and the closest correlation to current additional funding, it assumes an average level of low needs costs, and the funding for SEN per school is based on an average, which could result in schools receiving additional funding when they are already adequately funded through their SEN formula.

Recommendation: Schools' Forum to approve Option 1 as a means of funding schools with disproportionate SEN costs in 2014/15

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional SEN Funding Options per School compared to current method.