

West Berkshire Heads Funding Group	
Title of Report:	PRU funding update
Date of Meeting:	13th July 2015
Contact Officer(s)	Cathy Burnham
For Information / Discussion / Decision	

1. Background

1.1. The way our two PRUs (Reintegration Service and Alternative Curriculum) receive their funding changed in April 2013 in line with the Government's school funding reforms for High Needs pupils.

Schools were briefed about the financial changes for 2013/14 and in Nov 2013 and July 2014 were consulted again on alterations to the arrangements to fund Top Ups.

1.2. Four funding Top Up bands were agreed based on pupil need and staffing ratio requirement. This was agreed when the High Needs Block was *under* spending. However, the effect on the High Needs Block 2014/15 was a forecast *over* spend of £410k and for this pressure to remain in 2015/16.

1.3. The Reintegration Service and Alternative Curriculum both declared surpluses of £135k and £265k to be held as contingency for future running costs and building repairs.

1.4. Therefore, in Jan 2015 Schools' Forum agreed the adoption of a single Top Up funding band as a way of reducing overspend.

n.b. For 2015/16 Government have changed the place funding rate from £8k to £10k per pupil which is now in line with Special School rates.

Figure 1: PRU Budgets Financials Years 2010-11 through to 2015-16

	FY10-11	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15	FY15-16
90320 Pupil Referral Units – place funding	1,207,310	1,421,250	1,455,830	672,000	672,000	840,000
90625 Pupil Referral Units – Top Up Funding	0	0	0	812,610	1,205,500	1,061,000
	1,207,310	1,421,250	1,455,830	1,484,610	1,877,500	1,901,000
Change in budget year on year		213,940	34,580	28,780	392,890	23,500

2. Current funding methods for Top Up only

2.1. In the short term it was agreed that in financial year 2015/16 a single band is used. The new daily rate is £103.25. This is based on the average of the four previous funding bands and amended to reflect the change in place funding from £8,000 to £10,000.

2.2. By implementing this proposal it is estimated that there will be no increase required to the High Needs PRU top up budget, so a saving of £476,500.

2.3. Schools' Forum agreed that the cost to schools and duration of payment remain unchanged.

2.31. For a pupil entering RS, primary schools would pay the current rate of £38 a day and the LA High Needs Block £65.25 a day for the first 12 weeks after which the LA pays the whole £103.25 through the High Needs Block.

2.32. Secondary schools would pay the current rate of £76 a day and the LA High Needs Block £27.25 a day for the first 6 weeks after which the LA pays the whole £103.25 through the High Needs Block.

2.33. Where a pupil is in the KS4 Alternative Curriculum (AC) the school pays £1,500 a term, which is the equivalent of the AWPU, for a maximum of 2 years and the High Needs Block pays the difference between the AWPU and the actual band.

2.34. For AC, schools would continue to pay £1,500 per term (£4,500 per year) with the balance (£15,117.50 per year) met by the high needs block.

2.4. For all permanent exclusions the LA High Needs Block will continue to meet the full cost, though the relevant AWPU funding is removed from the school.

2.5. Currently SEN top up funding comes out of the PRU top up funding. There is an exceptional rate on a case by case basis.

2.6. The long term proposal from 2016/17 is that the PRU top up funding budget be delegated to the schools who directly commission services from the PRUs, alternative providers or develop their own resources. The current Joint Strategic Review is considering options for this proposal and will be delivering a Formal Consultation in the Autumn Term.

2.7. The Joint Strategic Review is currently at the stage of early consultation with Head Teachers, who are considering their favoured options. These will be taken into consideration at the next JSR meeting 21st July, when an option will be agreed to take forward to formal consultation with all relevant stakeholders and interested parties.

2.8. At the formal consultation stage (autumn 2015) the preferred option will be fully costed, including staffing, premises, pupil numbers and potential delegation to schools.

3. Financial Update

3.1. The Reintegration Service claims Top Up funding every short term.

Top Up claim	2014/15	2015/16
Term one	113,267	85,000

Reduction from 2014/15 £28,267

3.2. The Alternative Curriculum claims Top Up funding every long term and therefore has not submitted their first claim yet.

Therefore, whilst it is too early to forecast savings on the Top Up Budget the early indication is that the single banding arrangement, as agreed by Schools' Forum Jan 2015, may be working to reduce overspend on the High Needs Block.

Further reports to the Schools' Forum are proposed in Autumn and Spring Terms to monitor the High Needs Block Spend.