

High Needs Block Budget 2019/20

Report being considered by:	Schools' Forum		
On:	21 st January 2019		
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Item for:	Decision	By:	All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report sets out the current financial position of the high needs budget for 2018/19 and the position known so far for 2019/20, including the likely shortfall.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To note the predicted shortfall and consider options for savings.

Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Council or the Executive for final determination?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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3. Introduction

3.1 Setting a balanced budget for the High Needs Block continues to be a significant challenge; funding received for this block has only seen minimal increases for several years, yet the demand in terms of numbers of high needs pupils and unit costs of provision has continued to rise. Place funding has remained static in spite of increasing numbers, and in 2015/16 local authorities took on responsibility for students up to the age of 25 with SEND in FE colleges without the appropriate funding to cover the actual cost. The number of children with EHCPs is increasing, mainly, but not entirely due to the change in age range up to 25 years.

3.2 Up until 2016-17, West Berkshire was setting a balanced high needs budget. Since then, the budget has been under pressure on an annual basis, with savings identified each year to reduce the overspend. A decision was made to set a deficit budget for the first time in 2016/17.

3.3 Savings of £219k were implemented in 2017/18 and a further £306k in 2018/19. Despite these savings a budget was set in 2018/19 which included a planned overspend of £703k. This budgeted over spend has been revised to £447k as a result of a better than forecast deficit brought forward from 2017/18.

3.4 The pressure on the high needs block is a national issue, and many local authorities have significant over spends and have also set deficit budgets. South East regional benchmarking data shows that in West Berkshire overspending on the HNB as a % of the total HNB budget is one of the lowest in the region, but nevertheless it is an issue of ongoing concern.

3.5 Tables 2, 3, 4 and 5 in Appendix A show where the predicted 2019-20 costs exceed 2018-19 budgets.

3.6 The net shortfall in the 2019-20 HNB budget, as estimated at this stage, is £2.6m. This includes an overspend of £876k which is forecast to be transferred to reserves in 2018/19 and paid back in of £876K in the next financial year.

3.7 An extensive review of SEN provision and services took place during 2018, with full involvement of all stakeholders, including parents and schools. This resulted in a new 5 year SEND Strategy for West Berkshire which was approved by West Berkshire Council and the Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group in November 2018. The Strategy seeks to address rising costs in the High Needs Block. It has 5 key priority areas:

- Improve the capacity of mainstream schools to meet the needs of children with SEND
- Expand local provision for children with SEND in order to reduce reliance on external placements
- Improve post 16 opportunities for young people with SEND, including better access to employment
- Improve preparation for adulthood, including transition from children's to adults' services in Social Care and Health
- Improve access to universal and targeted Health services for children with SEND

3.8 Work is now under way to implement the strategy, which should achieve savings in the High Needs Block over the next five years, but savings will take time to be realised. It is likely that in the short term (starting in 2020-21) costs will actually increase whilst new provision is being set up, as there will be an element of double funding whilst new provision grows before out of area placements start to reduce.

3.9 Details of the services paid for from the high needs budget and the corresponding budget information are set out in Appendix A, together with an explanation of the reasons for budget increases.

4. Summary Financial Position

4.1 The latest estimate of expenditure in the High Needs Block budget for both 2018/19 and 2019/20 is set out in Table 1. This will continue to be refined over the next few months, particularly in relation to the largest variable element, which is top up funding. The figures are based on all services continuing at current staffing levels and contract costs, with no change in the funding rates for top ups and the current/known number and funding level of pupils.

4.2 Most of the DSG allocation for the high needs block is now confirmed. Part of it is estimated and will be based on the actual number of pupils in special schools in the October 2018 census, and import/export adjustments based on the January 2019 census and February 2019 ILR. A funding increase of 1% on the 2017 baseline is expected in 2019/20.

4.3 The Department of Education announced in December 2018 an additional £381k of high needs funding for 2018-19 and 2019-20 in recognition of the cost pressures that Local Authorities are experiencing on the high needs block. This has been included in the forecast figure.

TABLE 1	2018/19 Budget £	2018/19 Forecast £	2019/20 Estimate £	2020/21 Estimate £
Place Funding	5,841,830	5,841,830	6,062,000	6,062,000
Top Up Funding	11,227,150	11,033,411	11,921,930	11,921,930
PRU Funding (Top Ups Only)	542,950	884,030	1,089,100	1,089,100
Other Statutory Services	1,262,500	1,431,900	1,434,680	1,434,680
Non Statutory Services	774,320	780,120	801,470	801,470
Support Services Recharges	127,290	127,290	127,290	127,290
Total Expenditure	19,776,040	20,098,581	21,436,470	21,436,470
HNB DSG Allocation - confirmed	-19,664,777	-19,557,777	-18,921,309	-18,921,309
HNB DSG Allocation - estimated			-768,000	-768,000
Additional high needs funding	-381,000	-381,000	-381,000	
Transfer to Other Blocks	27,000	27,000		
HNB DSG Overspend from previous year	308,635	308,635	495,439	1,861,600
Total DSG Funding	-19,710,142	-19,603,142	-19,574,870	-17,827,709
Shortfall	65,898	495,439	1,861,600	3,608,761

4.4 There is a forecast shortfall of **£1.86m** in the 2019/20 HNB which may change as the budgets are finalised. The position will be clearer at the time of the next report to the Heads Funding Group / Schools Forum, both in terms of the 2018-19 out turn ie over spend and also the 2019-20 budget requirements. However, there will be a significant shortfall in the budget which will need to be addressed.

Appendix A sets out the detail of the budgets included within the High Needs Block, and the reasons for the pressure on the 2019-20 HNB budget. Options for savings are included in Appendix B.

5. Appendices

Appendix A – High Needs Budget detail

Appendix B – Saving Proposals

Appendix C – Impact Data

Appendix D – Paper on HNB from Headteacher representative on Schools Forum

High Needs Budget Detail

1. PLACE FUNDING – STATUTORY

- 1.1 Place funding is agreed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and has to be passed on to the institution, forming their base budget. Academy and post 16 places are included in the initial HNB allocation but the agreed place numbers are then deducted and paid to the institution direct (DSG top slice). From 2018/19 pre 16 resource unit place funding is reduced from £10,000 to £6,000 per place, and each pupil within the unit is included in the main school formula funding allocation.
- 1.2 The ESFA will not fund any overall increases to places. If additional places are needed in academies or post 16 institutions, a request can be made to the ESFA. However, any additional places agreed would be top sliced from West Berkshire's HNB allocation in 2019-20.
- 1.3 Requests have been made for the following:
- 1 additional place at West Berkshire Training Consortium to reflect actual student numbers
 - 1 additional place at the Trinity ASD Resource to reflect actual pupil numbers.
 - 43 additional places at Newbury College to reflect actual student numbers.
- 1.4 The reason it has been necessary to request a significant increase in planned places for Newbury College is that new regulations require the Local Authority in which an FE College is based to pay for planned places for all students with high needs, regardless of where they are resident. An import / export adjustment will be made to the HNB in 2019-20 based on January census data, so this funding should be recouped from the relevant Local Authorities.
- 1.5 It should be noted that the Fir Tree ASD Resource continues to grow in size and is likely to need more than its current 5 planned places. Additional places have not been requested from the ESFA *as it is not yet clear how many places will be needed for September 2019?* Any additional places needed will be funded from the top up budgets.
- 1.6 The actual number of places occupied in West Berkshire's special schools is greater than the planned places which are funded. There continues to be an increase in demand for places in special schools. **Table 1** currently shows no increase to special school planned places, as there is no additional planned place funding to allocate unless there is surplus planned place funding in other institutions which can be reallocated. If no place funding can be released from other institutions, and if it is decided that additional planned places should be funded at the special schools, this is a pressure on the High Needs Block.

TABLE 1 – Place Funding Budgets	2018/19 Budget			2019/20 Estimate		
	No. of Places Funded	£	Current No. of Pupils	Proposed No. of Places Funded for 19/20	£	Difference in number of places
Special Schools – pre 16 (90540)	286	2,860,000	-296	286	2,860,000	0
Special Schools – post 16 (DSG top slice)	79	790,000	-94	79	790,000	0
Resource Units Maintained – pre 16 (90584)	35	242,000	-30	35	210,000	0
Resource Units Academies – pre 16 (DSG top slice)	95	599,830	-89	96	576,000	1
Mainstream Maintained – post 16	8	40,000	-5	5	30,000	-3
Mainstream Academies – post 16 (DSG top slice)	13	80,000	-11	13	78,000	0
Further Education	95	570,000	-149	139	858,000	44
PRU Place Funding (90320)	66	660,000	-66	66	660,000	0
TOTAL	677	5,841,830	-740	719	6,062,000	42

2. TOP UP FUNDING – STATUTORY

2.1 Top up funding is paid to the institutions where we are placing pupils who live in West Berkshire (we do not pay our institutions top up funding for pupils who live outside West Berkshire). **Table 2** shows the budget and forecast for 2018/19 and the estimate for 2019/20.

TABLE 2	2017-18 Budget		2018-19 Budget			2019-20 Estimate	Difference 18-19 budget & 19-20 prediction
	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 09)	Over/ (Under) £	Estimate £	
Special Schools Maintained (90539)	3,237,280	3,262,595	3,300,420	3,372,050	71,630	3,463,450	163,030
Non WBC special schools (90548)	1,086,890	1,050,611	1,098,070	959,970	-138,100	968,130	-129,940
Resource Units Maintained (90617)	202,620	240,168	293,020	276,890	-16,130	270,350	-22,670
Resource Units Academies (90026)	768,370	723,750	854,270	808,580	-45,690	946,530	92,260
Resource Units Non WBC (90618)	55,000	105,340	107,000	147,260	40,260	160,190	53,190
Mainstream Maintained (90621)	534,010	574,177	541,560	648,221	106,661	666,360	124,800
Mainstream Academies (90622)	191,410	193,660	185,170	244,810	59,640	267,460	82,290
Mainstream Non WBC (90624)	66,960	78,694	75,000	80,330	5,330	66,480	-8,520
Non Maintained Special Schools (90575)	891,130	717,499	840,100	804,040	-36,060	981,570	141,470

TABLE 2 - continued	2017-18 Budget		2018-19 Budget			2019-20 Estimate	
Top Up Budgets	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 09)	Over/ (Under) £	Estimate £	Difference 18-19 budget & 19-20 prediction
Independent Special Schools (90579)	2,012,700	1,954,571	2,436,400	2,348,460	-87,940	2,652,250	215,850
Further Education (90580)	1,309,980	1,155,852	1,396,140	1,269,330	-126,810	1,379,160	-16,980
Disproportionate HN Pupils (90627)	100,000	100,972	100,000	73,470	-26,530	100,000	0
TOTAL	10,456,350	10,157,889	11,227,150	11,033,411	-193,739	11,921,930	694,780

2.2 Most top up budgets are under pressure, with the type of placement creating the greatest pressure shown below in order of cost.

- Independent special schools
- West Berkshire maintained special schools
- Non maintained special schools
- Resourced units in academies

2.3 The predictions of cost for 2019-20 take in to account known pupils whose needs can no longer be met in local schools, together with some cases which are due to go to the SEND Tribunal. It is not possible to predict all pupils who may need placements in 2019/20. The figures assume a middle ground between the best case scenario and the worst case scenario (financially) in terms of Tribunal outcomes.

2.4 Independent and non-maintained special schools

Both of these budgets are currently underspent, but will be under pressure in 2019-20. This is partly due to the full year costs of placements made during 2018-19 hitting the budget in 2019-20. There was also one case upheld by the SEND Tribunal with an annual cost of over £100,000. Pressure continues to be mainly for SEMH and ASD placements, plus some HI placements.

2.5 West Berkshire maintained special schools

This pressure reflects both increasing numbers in our special schools and the need to compensate for inadequate planned place funding through the top up budget.

2.6 Resourced units in academies

This pressure is mainly due to numbers at Trinity and Fir Tree ASD resources growing, as planned. These additional pupils may have been otherwise placed in more expensive special school placements. In fact it is likely that the decrease in non-West Berkshire special school placement costs is partly attributable to the increasing numbers in these provisions.

2.7 EHCPs in maintained mainstream schools and academies

There is also pressure on the budgets for EHCPs in mainstream schools (both maintained and academies). This relates more to an increase in the average cost of

an EHCP in a mainstream school, rather than a very significant increase in overall numbers of EHCPs.

2.8 Non West Berkshire resourced units

This increase is mainly created by increasing use of an ASD Resource in Bracknell for young people whose needs cannot be met in our own ASD Resourced units. These placements are more cost effective than specialist ASD school placements.

2.9 Non West Berkshire special schools

Costs against this budget have been going down, due to two pupils leaving a special free school, one to be electively home educated and one to attend a PRU. Additionally, two pupils have been placed at the Fir Tree and Trinity ASD Resources who would otherwise have attended a special free school.

2.10 Resourced units in West Berkshire maintained schools

These costs have been reducing slightly, due to smaller numbers than expected in the Winchcombe Speech and Language Resource and some movement of children out of the West Berkshire area from other resourced units.

2.11 FE Colleges

There is a current underspend of £126, 810 on this cost centre. This is due to three post 16 high needs pupils being supported in alternative provision. However this needs to be treated with caution as FE Colleges are only just returning their 18-19 student numbers. We are not recommending reducing this budget by as much as the current underspend as we are predicting three possible Independent Specialist FE Placements for September 2019. Based on current predictions, the recommendation is that this budget is reduced by £16,980.

We are looking to open a new post 19 provision in conjunction with the Castle School. The course would be a supported internship with the aim that pupils on the course move into employment after one year. The top up effect should be neutral as the pupils would have received equivalent top up at FE College.

2.12 EHCPs in Non West Berkshire mainstream schools

These costs should be slightly reduced next year due to two pupils in non-West Berkshire mainstream schools moving to special schools. However, it is a budget which is based on a small group of pupils and can fluctuate significantly.

3. PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS (PRU) – STATUTORY

3.1 **Table 3** shows the budgets for PRU top ups.

TABLE 3	2017/18 Budget		2018/19 Budget			2019/20	Difference 18/19 budget & 19/20
	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 09)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	
PRU top up Budgets							
PRU Top Up Funding (90625)	875,870	1,086,906	542,950	757,700	214,750	757,700	214,750
PRU EHCP Pupils (90628)	0	0	0	126,330	126,330	331,400	331,400
Non WBC PRU Top Up Funding (90626)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	875,870	1,086,906	542,950	884,030	341,080	1,089,100	546,150

3.2 The current year budget was based on schools making an agreed 80% contribution for pupils that they placed. Permanent exclusions and sixth form are funded 100% by the High Needs Block less the average pupil led funding contribution recovered from schools. The estimate for 19/20 PRU Top Up Funding is based on the current year forecast as at period 7. The 18/19 forecast is based on an estimate of the current mix of placements. Further details can be found in a separate report.

3.3 The number of pupils with EHCPs being placed in PRUs is increasing as this can be an appropriate and cost effective provision for some young people. Under the new funding arrangements for PRUs these placements have to be funded from the SEN budget. Our estimate of these costs is £331,400 for 2019-20. However, these placements are more cost effective than independent and non-maintained special school placements.

4. OTHER STATUTORY SERVICES

4.1 **Table 4** details the budgets for other statutory services.

TABLE 4	2017/18 Budget		2018/19 Budget			2019/20	
Other Statutory Services	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 09)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	Difference 18/19 budget & 19/20
Applied Behaviour Analysis (90240)	76,000	52,850	75,000	114,440	39,440	90,820	15,820
Sensory Impairment (90290)	215,710	221,312	172,750	246,330	73,580	236,000	63,250
Engaging Potential (90577)	455,160	456,177	456,000	491,670	35,670	527,150	71,150
Equipment for SEN Pupils (90565)	10,000	3,397	0	0	0	10,000	10,000
Therapy Services (90295)	267,460	266,257	240,760	261,470	20,710	261,470	20,710
Elective home Education Monitoring (90288)	27,660	23,482	27,990	27,990	0	28,240	250
Home Tuition Service (90315)	345,000	320,100	245,000	245,000	0	245,000	0
Hospital Tuition (90610)	45,000	1,646	45,000	45,000	0	36,000	-9,000
TOTAL	1,441,990	1,345,221	1,262,500	1,431,900	169,400	1,434,680	172,180

4.2 Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

4.2.1 This budget supports a small number of children with EHC Plans for whom the Authority has agreed an ABA programme. ABA is an intensive intervention programme for children with autism which aims to modify behaviours which are typical of ASD in order to allow children to function more successfully in school and in society.

4.2.2 This budget also covers the cost of children with EHC Plans accessing other bespoke educational packages where this is the most appropriate and cost effective way of meeting their needs including SEN Personal Budgets.

4.2.3 The increase in costs represents a small number of children with ASD and high levels of anxiety who were school refusers and required a bespoke package to support elective home education provided by parents.

4.3 **Sensory Impairment**

4.3.1 Support for children with hearing, visual and multi-sensory impairments is purchased from the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service. This includes support from qualified teachers of HI and VI, audiology and mobility support.

4.3.2 This budget is under pressure because of an increase in the number of children with severe hearing and visual impairments who require a high level of visits from teachers of the deaf / visually impaired.

In 2017 there were 154 in total on the caseload (HI and VI combined). This included both children with and without EHCPs. In 2018 there were 175 on the caseload, an increase of 21 or 14%. What is even more significant is the increase (within the overall increase) of children with severe and profound HI or VI who need the highest level of support on the Sensory Consortium Service matrix. In particular, there has been an increase from 6 to 15 children with very severe VI – these children need an extremely high level of support (eg, braille teaching) to be maintained in mainstream schools. They would obviously be much more costly if placed in specialist VI schools.

4.4 **Engaging Potential**

4.4.1 Engaging Potential is an independent special school commissioned to provide alternative educational packages for 14 young people in Key Stage 4. Students placed at Engaging Potential are those who have Statements or EHC Plans for social, emotional and mental health difficulties and whose needs cannot be met in any other provision. This can include young people who have been excluded from specialist SEMH schools. The unit cost of a place represents good value for money compared to other independent schools for SEMH which typically start at around £70K per annum. The increase in cost for 2019-20 relates to reduced income for young people placed by other Local Authorities.

4.5 **Equipment for SEN Pupils**

4.5.1 This budget used to fund large items of equipment such as specialist chairs and communication aids for pupils with EHC Plans. The budget has been reduced a number of times in previous HNB savings programmes and was removed entirely in 2018-19 on the basis that schools would meet these costs. However, this created a pressure for nurseries as they do not have delegated SEN budgets, and for resourced schools which have a disproportionate number of children with specialist equipment needs. It was agreed in 2018-19 that a one off amount of £10,000 would be made available to meet these needs. It is recommended that a £10,000 per annum budget is restored for this purpose.

4.6 **Therapy Services (Contract with Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust)**

4.6.1 The therapy services budget covers the costs for children with SEN who have speech and language therapy or occupational therapy in their EHC Plans.

4.6.2 Therapy services are provided by the Authority solely to children who have the need for a service stipulated and quantified in their EHC Plan. It is a statutory duty for the Local Authority to provide these therapies in these circumstances.

4.6.3 A number of reductions have been made to this budget in previous HNB savings programmes. In 2018-19 this budget was reduced in anticipation of a 10% reduction in the contract cost but only a 5% reduction was achieved, so there is a pressure for 2019-20.

4.7 Elective Home Education Monitoring

4.7.1 The Elective Home Education monitoring sits in the Education Welfare and Safeguarding Service and consists of one part time teacher who monitors children who are electively home educated. There is a statutory duty to monitor arrangements for EHE made by parents. Elective Home Education numbers are growing, both locally and nationally. This may be a pressure in due course.

4.8 Home Tuition

4.8.1 The Home Tuition Service is a statutory service providing home tuition to children with medical conditions and illness that prevent them accessing full-time school. It is currently commissioned by WBC from the iCollege.

4.8.2 Details of changes to this service will be brought to the next cycle of meetings.

4.9 Hospital Tuition

4.9.1 Hospital tuition is a recent addition to HNB funding. WBC is now obliged to pay the educational element of specialist hospital placements, usually for severe mental health issues. These placements are decided by NHS colleagues and we have no influence over the placement or duration of stay. We are negotiating with the settings to ensure we are only charged for the education a young person actually receives and would benefit from. As numbers and costs are impossible to predict, it is proposed that the 2019-20 budget is based on the 2018-19 projected spend.

5. NON STATUTORY Services

5.1 **Table 5** details the non statutory service budgets for 2017/18, 2018/19 and estimates for 2019/20. The latest forecast is that in the majority of cases these budgets should be on-line, other than the LAL Service (see paragraph 5.3 below). These services are non statutory so there is more potential scope to make savings, although a reduction in any of these budgets is likely to increase pressure on statutory budgets.

5.2 The table shows the budget for these services in 2019/20 assuming that the services continue and there are no changes to staffing levels.

5.3 The LAL budget was reduced by 50% in 2018-19 on the basis that schools would pay 50% of the cost of these places. As a result of charging being introduced, referrals to LALs reduced for the first time. Only 33 of 48 places were taken up, resulting in a shortfall in income. Assuming that the status quo remains, and charging continues at 50% in 2019-20, and assuming that the rate of take up would be similar next year to this, there would be a shortfall of approximately £16,000 in 2019-20.

TABLE 5	2017/18 Budget		2018/19 Budget			2019/20	
Non Statutory Services	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 9)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	Difference 18/19 budget & 19/20
Language and Literacy Centres LALs (90555)	116,200	116,200	82,400	91,700	9,300	98,400	16,000
Specialist Inclusion Support Service	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	0	50,000	0
PRU Outreach Service (90582)	77,000	77,000	61,200	61,200	0	61,200	0
SEN Pre School Children (90238)	In Early Years	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cognition & Learning Team (90280)	311,840	314,449	319,170	315,670	-3,500	325,660	6,490
ASD Advisory Service (90830)	139,560	139,567	141,550	141,550	0	146,210	4,660
Vulnerable Children (90961)	63,980	63,980	50,000	50,000	0	50,000	0
Early Development and Inclusion Team	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	0	40,000	0
Dingley's Promise (90581)	0	0	30,000	30,000	0	30,000	0
TOTAL	798,580	801,196	774,320	780,120	5,800	801,470	27,150

5.4 Language and Literacy Centres (LALs)

5.4.1 This budget funds the primary LALs at Theale and Winchcombe schools. The LALs provide intensive literacy support for primary children with severe specific literacy difficulties. 48 places per year are available across the two LALs.

5.4.2 See also paragraph 5.3 above.

5.5 Specialist Inclusion Support Service

5.5.1 This service provides outreach support from West Berkshire's special schools to mainstream schools to support the inclusion of children with learning and complex needs in their local mainstream schools.

5.5.2 This budget has been subject to reductions in the previous financial years with the special schools providing the service absorbing the cost.

5.6 PRU Outreach

5.6.1 The PRU Outreach Service offers consultancy / outreach support mainly to students who have been attending the iCollege and are starting to attend a mainstream school. Schools may request Outreach for any pupil causing concern but it is dependent on capacity.

5.7 SEN Pre School Children

5.7.1 This budget provides one to one support to enable children with SEN to access non maintained and voluntary pre- school settings.

5.8 Cognition and Learning Team

5.8.1 The Cognition and Learning Team (CALT) provides advice, support and training to mainstream schools to help them to meet the needs of children with SEN. Staff are experienced SENCOs with higher level SEN qualifications.

5.8.2 Many primary schools are reliant on this service to supplement their own SEN provision and expertise, especially schools where the Head has to act as SENCO or where there is an inexperienced SENCO.

5.8.3 This is a partially traded service. All schools receive a small amount of free core service, but the majority of support now has to be purchased by schools.

5.9 ASD Advisory Service

5.9.1 The ASD Advisory Service provides advice, support and training for mainstream schools on meeting the needs of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The purpose of the service is to enable children with ASD to be successfully included in mainstream schools wherever possible.

5.9.2 The context for this service is vastly increasing numbers of children with ASD diagnoses and mainstream schools having more and more difficulty meeting the needs of these children. The majority of our placements in non West Berkshire special schools, independent special schools and non maintained special schools are for children with ASD.

5.10 Vulnerable Children

5.10.1 The Vulnerable Children Fund is a small budget used to help schools support their most vulnerable pupils on an emergency, unpredicted or short term basis.

5.10.2 The budget has gradually been reduced from £120K over the past few years. The criteria have strengthened, with funding allocated for shorter periods and fewer extensions. However this is a well used resource that helps schools support vulnerable pupils with complex needs.

5.11 Early Development and Inclusion Team

5.11.1 The service comprises of 1.7 teachers who are specialists in early years and SEND. Children under 5 who are identified by Health professionals as having significant SEND are referred to this service. Staff initially visit children in their homes (if they are not yet in an early years setting) in order to promote their educational development and model strategies and resources for parents to use to support their child's progress.

5.11.2 EDIT teachers also assist with the transition to early years settings and schools, providing support and training for staff to help them to meet the child's needs, and continuing to visit for a period of time to provide ongoing support and advice. They also help to coordinate support which the family is receiving from other professionals.

5.11.3 The service is currently supporting approximately 100 children. It has been reduced in size in recent years from 3.4 to 1.7 staff.

5.12 Dingley's Promise

5.12.1 Dingley's Promise is a charitable organisation which provides pre school provision for children under 5 with SEND in West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham. It is the only specialist early years SEND setting in the private, voluntary and independent early years sector in West Berkshire. It provides an alternative to mainstream early years settings, where experience and expertise in SEND can vary greatly. Parents are able to take up their early years entitlement at Dingley's Promise, rather than at a mainstream early years setting, if they wish. However, Dingley's Promise are only able to claim the standard hourly rate for providing the early years entitlement as mainstream settings, in spite of offering specialist provision, higher ratios and more one to one support.

5.12.2 Historically, Reading and Wokingham Local Authorities gave grants to Dingley's Promise from their HNB budgets to top up the hourly rate, in recognition of their specialist offer, but West Berkshire did not. In 2017-18, the service was running at a loss and there was a risk it would cease to be viable in this area without some Council funding. Dingley's Promise as an organisation is active in funding raising and seeking grants but these sources of funding are unreliable. It was agreed in 2018-19 that a grant of £30,000 would be made to Dingley's Promise in order to maintain the service in this area.

5.12.3 An option would have been to place these children at our maintained special schools as an alternative to supporting Dingley's Promise, but this would have had the following disadvantages:

- We would still need to provide planned place and top up funding to the special school for these children
- This would increase numbers in our special schools both in the short term and the longer term, at a time when there is already significant pressure for places
- Parents may not yet be ready to consider special school for their child

5.12.4 If Dingley's Promise had closed, children may have been admitted to mainstream early years settings which might have struggled to meet their needs. Alternatively, parents may have chosen to keep them at home until they reached statutory school age, which could have result in primary schools receiving children with SEND who were ill prepared for the transition to school. Parents may also sought EHC Plans earlier than they might otherwise have done, with associated costs to the HNB budget.

Savings Proposals

6. Option 1 - Language and Literacy Units (LALs)

LALs offer specialist part time provision for primary pupils with significant specific literacy difficulties.

In 2018-19 a decision was taken to introduce a charge for LALs of £1300 per place. This has resulted in a drop in referrals and only 33 of 48 places being filled. Some Headteachers have written to express the view that the decision to charge for LAL places should be reversed as they cannot afford to place children who require the specialist provision.

See Appendix C(v) for a report from the LAL teachers in charge about the implications of charging.

There are a number of potential options for the LALs (including variations not listed here).

- Remove LAL charging, as requested by some Headteachers. This would generate a funding pressure of £33,800.
- Reduce LAL charging to 25% of the cost of a place. This would create a pressure of £4,750 but could make LAL placements more affordable for schools at approximately £600 per place.
- Continue with 50% charging. This is likely to result in a further reduction in numbers in the LALs as some schools have said they honoured placements last year for children who had been referred prior to the decision to introduce charging, but will not be able to afford placements this year.
- Remove LAL charging but reduce the capacity of the LALs, eg. to 50% or 66% of current capacity. This would reduce the number of children who can access LAL, and / or the number of sessions / duration of LAL placements, but at least the available placements would be allocated on need rather than on the school's ability to pay. A reduction to 50% of current capacity would save **£24,300**. A reduction to 66% of current capacity would save **£4,934**.
- Combine a reduction in capacity with a 25% charge for places. A reduction to 50% capacity combined with a 25% charge could generate a saving of **£38,700**. A reduction to 66% capacity combined with a 25% charge for places could generate a saving of **£24,134**.

Implications / Risks:

- (1) If charging for LAL places continues, children at schools which cannot fund LAL places would be denied access to LAL provision, creating inequity across the Authority and a "postcode lottery" of provision. A number of schools have indicated that they would not be in a position to purchase LAL places for their pupils

- (2) There is a risk that children who cannot access LAL will not have their needs met if schools are not able to replicate the quality and intensity of provision which LALs offer. Few schools are likely to be able to offer equivalent provision in house. This could result in more children moving in to secondary schools with very low literacy levels.
- (3) There is a significant risk of increased EHC requests from parents and schools for children who are unable to access a LAL place. This is considered to be a high risk and would impact directly on the Mainstream School Top Up budget.
- (4) Risk of appeals to the SEND Tribunal for specialist school placements, with associated costs. This is considered to be a high risk and would impact directly on the budget for non maintained and independent special school places.
- (5) Feedback suggests that LALs are highly regarded by parents and schools. A reduction in LAL provision would create significant anxiety on the part of parents and negative publicity. The Parent SEN Survey carried out in 2017 showed that support for children with dyslexia is a particular concern for parents who responded.
- (7) If charging for LAL places continues and insufficient schools purchase LAL places in 2019-20, the savings target will not be achieved.

7. Option 2 – Specialist Inclusion Support Service

This service supports children with learning difficulties and associated needs in mainstream schools. The budget for this service was reduced from £70,000 to £50,000 in 2017-18. Like other SEN support services, this service receives consistently positive ratings in evaluations. See Appendix C

Consideration could be given to removing or reducing this service further.

Removal of the service would generate a saving of **£50,000**.

Reducing the service by half would generate a saving of **£25,000**.

Implications / Risks:

- (1) Possibility of schools / parents seeking more special school placements, with associated costs.
- (2) Children / staff in mainstream schools unable to access suitable support.
- (3) Additional pressure on other SEN services such as CALT and the ASD Service.

8. Option 3 – PRU Outreach

From Sept 2017 an outreach facility is part of the iCollege.

A cut of £80k was made to this separate budget in 2015/16, with a further cut of £40,000 in 2017/18 and £15,800 in 2018-19. The budget is now £61,200. Consideration could be given to removing or reducing this service further.

Removal of the service would generate a saving of **£61,200**.

Reducing the service by half would generate a saving of **£30,600**.

Implications/Risks

- (1) Increase in the number of permanent exclusions
- (2) Less support to schools in reintegrating young people who have been permanently excluded from another school
- (3) Greater demand for iCollege places
- (4) Possibility of charging for this provision

9. Option 4 – iCollege

The financial modelling of this service will require further review so that proposals can be put forward that result in expenditure balancing against income. A report on proposed changes will be brought to the next cycle of meetings. One saving proposal that could be made is in relation to the iCollege sixth form provision. This service is not a statutory requirement so could therefore cutting the eleven 6th form places at iCollege would generate a saving.

Implications/Risks

- (1) Increase in the number of NEET students.
- (2) A number of the 6th form students at iCollege are SEND so cutting the service might mean that these students are less likely to have their needs met.
- (3) Greater demand for costly out of county provision which would place increased pressure on the High Needs Block.

10. Option 5 – Home Tuition

There are plans to bring this service in-house from September 2019. Doing so would enable the service to be run with less overheads. iCollege charge £60,000 for managing the service. It is estimated that the service could be run in house at a cost of £40,000 in the first year with further reductions in future years. Bringing the service in-house would provide a **£23,000** saving in 19/20 and a **£17,000** saving in 20/21.

11. Option 6 – CALT

CALT has been working to an income target since April 2015 which has achieved a saving in the HNB. Evaluations of the service are consistently very positive, but some schools report they cannot afford to buy the service or to buy as much support as they would like. See Appendix C for impact and evaluation data.

Staffing has been reduced to bring the expenditure in the trading budget in line with the likely income to be generated by the team.

It is unlikely to be realistic that an increased income target could be met. Savings could therefore only be made by reducing the size of the service. Reducing by 0.5 of a post would make a saving in the region of **£27,500**. Reducing by a full time post would make a saving in the region of **£55,000**.

Implications / Risks:

- (1) The core service provided free to all schools who do not buy in would be reduced or removed
- (2) Reduced support for children and impact on levels of SEN expertise and training of staff in schools. Reduced support for SENCOs.
- (3) Reduced capacity to address concerns about some mainstream schools' SEN provision raised by parents in the 2017 Parent SEN Survey and in the 2018 Local Area SEND Inspection.
- (4) Increase in EHC requests, with associated costs. This is considered to be a high risk as parental requests for EHCPs often arise from dissatisfaction with the school's provision.

12. Option 7 – Vulnerable Children Fund

The Vulnerable Children's Fund of £50k pa (reduced from original 120k fund) is a highly appreciated, relatively small fund, especially for small schools who have unexpected additional financial pressures due to in-year admissions of children with challenging behaviour. It is specifically devised to promote social inclusion, reduce exclusions and take the pressure off SEN budgets by providing temporary funding.

It is possible to remove completely or reduce the fund i.e. only being available for primary schools and / or funding given for shorter periods, or no funding extensions. The criteria have been strengthened, with funding allocated for shorter periods and fewer extensions.

Previously, Heads Funding Group has indicated its reluctance to further reductions of this fund, but a reduction of £10,000 could be considered.

Implications/ Risks:

If schools, particularly smaller primary schools, cannot access this support in the future it could lead to:

- (1) Increased movement between schools, with schools being asked to admit more pupils with behaviour difficulties
- (2) Higher exclusion figures
- (3) Pressure on the iCollege as more schools ask for primary placements at Inspiration
- (4) Greater pressure on the costs associated with EHC plans and expensive statutory provision

(5) Increased pressure on the capacity of specialist support services

13. Option 8 – Transfer of early years SEND costs to the Early Years Block

The Early Years Block funds one to one support for children who attend private and voluntary early years settings and who have SEND but do not have EHCPs. This budget used to be part of the HNB and was transferred to the Early Years Block. This funding is allocated through the Early Years Inclusion Team. Funding is also provided to maintained nurseries and primary schools for children under 5 who have SEND but do not have an EHCP. If these costs could be transferred to the Early Years Block there would be a saving to the High Needs Block.

Heads' Funding Group Recommendations

The Heads' Funding Group on 8th January 2019 recommended that the only savings which should be taken from the High Needs Block in 2019-20 were those which would not have a negative impact on children with SEND and on schools.

- Option 5: Bringing the Home Tuition Service in house – estimated saving **£23,000**
- Reducing the charge to schools for PRU places from 80% of the cost to 50% of the cost is likely to increase take up of PRU places and could therefore achieve a saving by reducing the HNB spend on PRU Top Ups. - It needs to be noted that this could only be achieved after the existing Excluded Pupils (costing the local authority 100% of cost) leave and are replaced with 50% charges. As to whether how soon we will see a change in the PRU places is an unknown risk that is difficult to predict. Thus, the success of the saving for 19/20 relies upon goal congruence being achieved specifically for the schools in particular as the change to 50% / 50% split is more beneficial to schools than the existing charge.

A brief analysis of the position on the High Needs Block, and the rationale for not making further savings, produced by a Headteacher representative on the Forum, is attached at Appendix D.

Impact Data

Cognition and Learning Team (CALT)

The Cognition and Learning Team sends out an evaluation survey to schools every other year. The last one was done in summer 2017 and the next one is due in summer 2019. Ratings from schools in the 2017 survey were as follows (x schools responded):

Overall rating of the service	93% scored good or excellent
Quality of reports	100% scored good or excellent
Identification of pupils' needs	100% scored good or excellent
Recommendations	92% scored good or excellent
In school training	100% scored good or excellent

The survey also asked whether the team had had an impact on staff and pupils. The responses were as follows:

	Yes	No	N/A
Improved staff confidence	12 86%	0	2
Improved staff knowledge and skills	11 79%	0	3
Improved attitudes towards pupils with SEN	5 36%	1	8
Improved inclusion of pupils with SEN	11 79%	1	2
Promoting pupil progress	12 86%	0	2
Supporting pupil self esteem	9 64%	3	2

It is notable that a high percentage of respondents felt there had been an impact on staff and pupils, including pupil progress. Where respondents did not answer yes it was generally because they felt the question was not applicable in relation to the type of support they had received, rather than that there had not been a positive impact. A summary of comments from survey respondents is attached at Appendix C(i)

The CALT Team has also supported the delivery of specific intervention programmes in schools, including SNAP on 2 Maths, STAR/Catch Up and FFT Wave 3 / Sprint. Pupils were assessed before and after starting the programme. Progress was as follows:

SNAP on 2 Maths	2.5 months progress for every month on programme
STAR/Catch Up	3.5 months progress for every month on programme
FFT Wave 3 / Sprint	
Word Accuracy	3.2 months progress for every month on programme
Comprehension	2 months progress for every month on programme
Spelling	1.8 months progress for every month on programme

Training delivered by the team is consistently rated as 4 (good) or 5 (excellent), with the majority of attendees giving scores of 5.

Specialist Inclusion Support Service (SISS)

The SISS Service sends out an evaluation survey to schools every other year. The last one was done in summer 2017 and the next one is due in summer 2019.

Ratings from schools in the 2017 survey were as follows (15 schools responded):

Overall rating of the service	84% scored good or excellent
Quality of reports	84% scored good or excellent
Recommendations	100% scored good or excellent
In school training	100% scored good or excellent

The survey also asked whether the team had had an impact on pupils, staff and parents. Respondents were asked to rate the level of impact on a scale of 0 (no impact) to 5 (high impact). The responses were as follows:

	0	1	2	3	4	5	% score 3 or above
Pupils	8%	0%	0%	23%	62%	8%	93%
Staff	8%	0%	0%	8%	54%	31%	93%
Parents	8%	8%	0%	31%	38%	8%	77%

When considering impact, respondents were asked to consider:

Pupils: Progress, self- esteem, inclusion

Staff: Confidence, knowledge & skills, attitudes

Parents: Partnership with parents

93% of respondents felt that there had been a positive impact on pupils and on staff. A summary of comments from survey respondents is attached at Appendix C(ii).

ASD Advisory Service

The ASD Advisory Service sends out an evaluation survey to schools every other year.

The last one was done in summer 2018 and the next one is due in summer 2020.

Ratings from schools in the 2018 survey were as follows (21 schools responded):

Overall rating of the service	76% scored good or excellent
Quality of reports	67% scored good or excellent
Recommendations	81% scored good or excellent
In school training	90% scored good or excellent

The survey also asked whether the team had had an impact on pupils and staff.

When considering impact, respondents were asked to consider:

Pupils: Progress, self- esteem

Staff: Confidence and resilience

This question was not scored; comments are included in Appendix C(iii).

Respondents were also asked:

Does the ASD Advisory Service meet your needs as a school?

12 of 21 respondents said yes. Where schools felt the service was not meeting their needs, this appears to relate mainly to the limited capacity of the service (1.95FTE teachers to a caseload of approximately 700 children in mainstream schools), for example, some schools wanted more frequent visits.

Are there any other needs you have that are not being met?

8 out of 21 respondents said no. Respondents who said yes wanted a level of service which would be difficult to provide from existing resources.

A summary of comments from survey respondents is attached at Appendix C(iii).

Language and Literacy Centres (LALs)

The Language and Literacy Centres collect data annually on the average progress, in months, of children who have attended the centre, at the end of a 7 month intervention. The table below shows the data for the last 3 years.

	Single Word Reading	Sentence Reading	Spelling
2018	13.5m	18m	18.5m
2017	12m	14m	18.5m
2016	14m	17m	21.5m

Early Development and Inclusion Team (EDIT)

An evaluation survey on the EDIT Team is due in summer 2019.

In 2017, parents were surveyed on the effectiveness of the Lollipops groups. These groups were set up when the team was reduced in size by 50% and it became necessary to offer more group support and reduce the number of home visits.

8 parents responded.

Parents were asked to rate the following 7 positive statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree	Number who agree
My child and I get a warm welcome	0	0	0	8	8/8
My child has been learning to do things he hasn't been able to do before	0	1	1	6	7/8
EDIT staff are friendly and approachable	0	0	0	8	8/8
EDIT staff are knowledgeable and have been able to help me when I've needed advice	0	0	0	8	8/8
There is a good range of activities for my child to try out and take part in	0	0	0	8	8/8
I feel more confident about helping	0	0	1	7	8/8

my child to play and learn					
I like having the opportunity to meet other parents and share experiences	0	1	1	6	7/8

The comments made by parents as part of the survey are included at Appendix C(iv).

PRU Outreach

Impact data is not currently available for PRU outreach service as the service has changed considerably this academic year. The iCollege Headteacher has reported that the service is well used by secondary schools and that the take up by primary schools has improved as a result of the changes. The service will look to gather impact data regarding the service at the end of the academic year.

Appendix C(i)

Cognition and Learning Team Service Evaluation for the Academic Year 2016-17 Summary of comments

1. Use of Service

- CALT carried out assessments for LAL. JW came in weekly and did some 1:1 teaching with one of our Year 4 pupils. She then provided a programme and resources for this to be followed up daily by a TA in school
- Start of year meeting only
- Only used LAL service
- Only used the LAL service
- SENCO change over so uncertain of any further information

2. Overall Rating of the Service

- The service is invaluable to our school and we have been using it for over 18 years
- This service is an essential resource for my SENCO Role
- The member of the CALT has made herself available in a relatively short time scale to provide assessments. When follow up observations have been required following recent training attended by the teaching assistants, effective feedback has been given by a member of CALT to support the school and the individual declaring the intervention.
- Our C< teacher is always ready to help in any way she can
- The service provided by CALT this year has been invaluable to our school. The knowledge and breadth of knowledge in this area has made providing support and provision for the pupils with C&L difficulties. Prompt feedback following an meeting with a Note of Visit which summarises your meetings/discussions with clear actions for both parties. They are friendly and approachable and nothing is too much trouble. They make you feel good about yourself and boost your confidence that you know what you are talking about!
- Continues to provide a great service, supporting us effectively as required. Great colleague to work with, especially for a SENCo in a small school.
- Really useful guidance and support. Has helped us to signpost next steps for children. Training for staff- both teachers and teaching assistants has also been beneficial.

3a. Quality of Reports

- Clear, easy to read
- Not used this year
- Good summary of what has been discussed in meetings with next steps. Make for an easy document to refer to when looking at next steps and actions.
- Reports are always very thorough, clear and provide a lot of practical advice to support the child in school.
- The reports are comprehensive and easy to navigate. The recommendations are practical and easy to implement with helpful strategies for both whole class and individual support. The reports are supportive to what is already happening and are tailored to each individual child.
- Always has sound advice which is possible to achieve within a Mainstream classroom.
- The quality of reports that have been provided have been clear and informative
- Excellent, detailed reports delivered quickly
- The reports are comprehensive and useful for staff and parents alike
- Only LAL reports received. These varied in length and quality depending on who wrote them.

3b. Identification of pupils' needs

- Sometimes we just need confirmation of the needs that we ourselves have already identified. However, it is good to have that professionally confirmed and sometimes other needs are successfully identified by CALT
- All children put forward for assessment have been expertly and effectively supported
- Reports have stated areas of difficulty and strengths
- The qualifications of the CALT teacher enables accurate identification of need. The advice provided for each child enables parents and professionals to be clear about a child's areas of difficulty.
- The reports clearly identify needs and explain them in depth
- Reports and discussions extremely helpful and I think that parents benefit from them too. Helpful in planning next steps in a child's provision

3c. Recommendations for provision

- Provision identified always clear, occasionally dependent on resource/funding which can prove difficult!
- Recommended provision needs to be discussed with SENCO before the report is written to ensure it is realistically able to be put in place
- Usually tailored to resources which we have in school which is useful. Other recommendations are sometimes made and if possible within our budget we will look into them.
- Reports always provide a variety of different strategies or recommended provision, aimed at both in class support and interventions.
- Despite our school not having trained staff in all the interventions the CALT teacher was able to tailor the recommendations to the school's capacity to deliver the intervention whilst still ensuring good progress for the child. They are supportive in training and working alongside a number of TA's who are working in the children's classes.
- Effective advice has been given including recommended interventions
- Recommended provisions are always appropriate and easy to deliver
- A lot of advice is given and it is true that not all of it can be used but we choose what can be reasonably applied to that pupil.
- In the current climate of budget cuts, we are not able to offer as much TA time or interventions as we do not have the funding. I think in the coming terms, provision will need to be more focussed on what children can do independently and/or with little adult support.

4a. Did the team respond to queries in a timely manner?

- Easy to contact. Prompt responses to any queries or referral
- All queries were responded to swiftly and fully
- SW always responds very quickly to emails and messages
- Yes, very efficient response and support
- They were extremely prompt and your queries (however big or small or already been told to you) are answered with professionalism and support. They are normally answered within 24 hours.

- Yes. Always contactable and flexible in appointment times etc
- The member of the CALT associated with the school responded quickly to emails/phone call and appointments were made in the diary at appropriate times.
- Yes
- All dealings with the team have been promptly and efficiently dealt with
- Definitely yes

4b. Were reports received within 2 weeks of assessment?

- Yes – often within a few days
- LAL – yes
- Write up of meeting same week
- These days definitely yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Throughout the year, 10 reports have been received. 3 were received within 2 weeks, 4 took 3 weeks and 3 took 4 weeks
- Yes
- Yes – a BIG well done to this as parents and teachers are always anxious following an assessment!
- Yes, vast majority were within a week/2 weeks
- Reports always received promptly
- Yes
- Yes

5. In school training

- Individualised programmes modelled for LSAs and follow up visits planned to observe delivery and amend where necessary.
- Training is taking place at the end of this term but has been discussed fully and planned well between SENCO and CALT
- SNAP maths training was great- not only introduced TAs to a new intervention (we'd only had one person previously trained and they had left) but also gave chance to give out a few key messages about working with children/ how they learn maths.
Teachers enjoyed session on dyslexia and strategies. Gave them things to think about for all children in class and how to address parental concerns.
- Training with a member of support staff for delivering a 1:1 bespoke intervention created by CALT
- Training for TAs in individual programmes for children
- None delivered by CALT this year
- Catch up FFT – refresher. Support for spelling

6. Impact

	Yes	No	N/A
Improved staff confidence	12	0	2
Improved staff knowledge and skills	11	0	3
Improved attitudes towards pupils with SEN	5	1	8
Improved inclusion of pupils with SEN	11	1	2
Promoting pupil progress	12	0	2
Supporting pupil self-esteem	9	3	2

Comments:

- The CALT teacher is really respected within our school. The relationships that they have built with the staff (teachers and TAs) mean that the provision being provided for the children has been invaluable. They have been supportive but challenging in their approaches.

- Both of our TAs have received training and refresher training this year and have benefited greatly from the input and observations
- Sometimes staff can feel overwhelmed by the amount of advice but once they realise that they can pick what is deemed appropriate for them it is better

7. Any other comments

- Due to our buying choices, school has had little input from CALT. The teaching input for one Year 4 child from JW was very much appreciated. He has made some progress but is beginning to refuse the extra intervention. We will continue to implement strategies and suggested provision and to build the picture for EHC application, which the EP has suggested would be appropriate
- Would love to access more of CALT service but no money
- Our setting is very small and SENCO time is limited to less than a day a term. Sue is fantastic support for me with help and advice readily given. Amazing!
- Hayley has always been supportive and so willing to work around the school timetable. I wish I could afford more
- The CALT teacher has been a life line for me this year supporting the many children with cognition and learning needs. They have helped me to change the view of SEND within the school and have motivated and kept us going with reflective, challenging and supportive meetings about the provision. The CALT teacher has helped me to reach teachers that are not always on board with the recommendations and been encouraging.
- Great VFM, knowledgeable, approachable team, thank you ☺

Appendix C(ii)

SISS Evaluation 2016-17
Comments

Have you made referrals to SISS for any children/young people?		
Yes	No	Don't know
14	0	0

Comments (Yes):

- 2015 &16
- 2016 & 17
- 2015-16
- Each year
- 3 Foundation Stage children
- 2016
- 2016
- 2017
- Every year
- Year 6 & 5
- 2015-16
- Every year
- Academic year 2016-17
- 2017
- 2014-15

Comments (No):

- N/A

Were the referrals accepted?		
Yes	No	Don't know
13	1	1

1. Use of service “Other” comments:

- Staff were able to look around Brookfields school and talk to staff. We were also given useful resources that might help the children and given practical solutions to problems. We were also given resources for staff to look at to help with planning and assessment.
- Didn't use the service at this school this year.
- Borrowing of equipment
We have used all of the above plus advice sheets/book recommendations and one member of staff has visited Brookfields to talk with the maths dept. Re. Individual maths curriculum being put into place.

2. Rating the service comments:

- Staff have always been responsive and have always sought further advice from colleagues if they could not help on the day.
- We have continued to find this service very useful in helping us to support 3 pupils within our school. K has again been very useful and knowledgeable, providing us with information, advice, support, resources and strategies that we have found much harder to locate/create ourselves. It does feel as though the service is being stretched unfortunately, as the staff appear to have less and less time for each child.
- S was very helpful when sharing ideas and resources for us to use and follow at school. S sought advice from her colleagues before providing us with information to ensure it was accurate and suitable for our purposes. Communication was very good.
- I have always found the SISS service to be excellent. Staff respond promptly to queries and have a wealth of knowledge and are very generous in sharing this both practically and through discussion.
- Gave realistic ideas to manage behaviour and how to improve her language skills e.g. 'now' and 'next' language.
- Any queries are dealt with fully and swiftly. Good contact is maintained throughout the school year. Excellent resources are shared.
- S came to meet the pupil first so he was more familiar with her. She was thorough in her work and adapted resources so he was able to show his skills in the way he communicates.
- SISS has been extremely supportive in assessing one of our pupils and in providing advice and training for staff. I always get a fast response when I contact them. The pupil's mum has valued their input and their honest assessment of what sort of school would be suitable for her son for his secondary education.
- K is very supportive for both staff and pupils when she comes in.
- I was very disappointed that the most recent referral did not include any support as a follow up, not even any recommendations on how to support the child. Previously we have received assessment, recommendations and additional visits, I understand that it was only the assessment referral that was accepted and I was not aware that the same level of support would be forthcoming.
- We referred a child in the summer term of 2016, several meetings were planned in the summer term, including our teacher going to x School to meet with SISS but this never happened. At the beginning of the autumn term, somebody from SISS met with the class teacher and discussed brief action plan and I was to get back in touch with SISS when actions had taken place and attendance of pupil had improved. Following the advice from the EP, we sought support from the ASD team rather than SISS, not both. After a lot of emails, advice led us to seeking support from SISS again and an assessment was done after a few months. We are nearly a year since the first referral was made and only one small assessment has been done on the child, with no further communication from SISS, despite R telling us that they would be in touch again this summer term.

3a. Reports, advice and recommendations comments (Quality):

- Reports are thorough and clear, very useful for staff.
- All of S's recommendations could be used or adapted for our purposes.
- Reports are received promptly and are clear.
- Unable to comment – no report received as yet.
- Advice always appropriate.
- A report was received which gave us accurate information and was ready for the pupil's annual review.
- I have not received any reports following visits this year.
- A report was received which gave us accurate information and was ready for the pupil's annual review.
- Very limited report stating an assessment on the P scales, covering approximately 12 points.
- The advice given has been very useful. The reports have limited use and don't reflect the advice and support we have received.

3b. Reports, advice and recommendations comments (Recommendations):

- 4- recommendations for one child, 1- recommendation or lack of for another child
- Recommendations that we have been suggested and given have been useful.
- A report was received which gave us accurate information and was ready for the pupil's annual review.
- Verbal recommendations helpful at meeting.
- Recommendations have been very useful. It was great being able to visit the school and see the advice in action.
- Recommendations are clear, manageable and practical.
- All of S's recommendations could be used or adapted for our purposes.
- Again, very thorough and clear, with some resources provided to support their implementation

4(a) Did the service respond in a timely manner?

- YES
- Yes, very efficient
- Yes
- Yes
- We sent the referral in January and received the outcome for our referrals in March. The initial visit was then at the end of March. It basically took 3 months from our referral to receive help. This was too long – basically a whole term!
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Appropriate
- Yes it was very quick and worked around the time frame we had for annual review contributions.
- Yes
- It all happened within this timescale
- Yes
- Yes
- Still waiting to hear the outcome
- Results of referral within a short time. The initial visit was made within approximately 6 term time weeks

4 (b) Was written advice received within 2 weeks?

- Yes
- Haven't got that far yet
- Yes
- Yes

- Yes
- No – we have not received any written reports
- Yes – report emailed within 2 weeks
- Yes
- Yes
- Don't know
- Yes
- Yes
- Just over but S contacted me to tell me she was seeking more advice for the report hence the minor delay.
- Mostly, Follow up emails/advice were always quickly sent out but reports occasionally took longer
- All but one occasion when I knew it would take a few more days

5. Training comments:

- We have not had staff training as such but information received has always been very useful (4) and the visit to Brookfields particularly so. (4)
- The type of language to be used with the pupil.
- Specifically in relation to Down Syndrome.

6. Impact comments:

- Staff have been able to explore some different behavioural strategies and talk through difficult behaviours – in some cases this was reassuring for the school to know we are “on the right track!” In one case in particular it has enabled access to a maths curriculum that the pupil can engage with and a little progress has been seen, which is “good” as the syndrome she has makes long term progress challenging. Staff are more confident in following what is right for the child and the child is having more success.
- The involvement of SISS has very much helped out staff with supporting children with levels of SEN that need a higher and more differentiated level of support. The support from SISS has helped with the inclusion of these pupils within their classes and has improved staff knowledge and confidence when working with these children.
- Staff are able to implement strategies which promote inclusion and progression in learning through curriculum differentiation and assessment advice.
- Staff are more knowledgeable in how they can work with children and this has impacted on their skills and initiative. This has also helped other children in the class.
- Gave staff ideas to be able to improve the pupil's outcomes.
- Promotes pupil progress, improves partnership with parents.
- Unable to comment as involvement very recent!
- Information, resources and support have been useful especially in dealing with parents.
- The assessment helped us to moderate our own judgements, and will help the school to plan for next learning steps.
- Improved staff confidence – K has given good advice to staff about how they can support the children. Improved staff knowledge and skills – as above. Attitudes towards pupils with SEN – n/a. Improved inclusion of pupils with SEN – n/a. Promoting pupil progress – through assessment it has been clear the progress children have made and what they need to work on further. However we usually receive a booklet and a report outlining what children need to be working on and this year we have not. Supporting pupil self esteem – K was very supportive when one of our pupils was attempting transition and although it was not successful she visited the child in class and reassured him. Improved partnership with parents – n/a.
- Involvement focused the teacher's attention more on the needs of this particular pupil. It took a long time for his EHC plan to come through and for the SLT to recruit a TA to work with the child so the teacher had a tough job juggling the needs of this child with the needs of the rest of the class. There has been greater impact from the advice and support from SISS since there has been an additional adult in class to help implement it. Mum has been

very receptive to reports and advice given. She valued the very honest appraisal of her son's ability level and advice on suitable secondary placement. She specifically requested that SISS should be represented at her son's annual review because she values their input.

- Change of staffing has impacted on quality of advice but maybe this is to be expected with a time to gain experience.
- Excellent support on puberty education for an SEN child.
- No involvement yet.
- None as yet.

Further comments:

- K has visited the 2 children we receive the Outreach for twice this year and has carried out PACE assessments in March – however we have not received any reports from these visits for staff to follow up and work from. I know that everyone is extremely busy and we really value the support that K has given to the staff and the children when she has been in to school – but we really need a written report to follow up on. On another note I visited Brookfields with another one of our parents earlier this year and we were able to share how supportive we had found the outreach service and how the parents had felt supported too – Thank you.
- Thank you – it was really helpful and very well organised ☺
- New SENCO has been in place since the beginning of the summer term.
- I really value the support and advice that SISS are able to offer regarding specific children. They are frequently able to give immediate ideas and strategies when they visit school but when this is not possible they respond quickly by email or phone once they have found out further information.
- S was very helpful. She came in to see me to go through the report and the recommendations. She also acknowledged that had our pupil received 1:1 support she would have been able to offer more suggestions.
- Thank you!

Appendix C(iii)

**ASD Advisory Service Evaluation
for the Academic Year 2017-18**

Number of responses: 21

Please tick to indicate type of school:

Primary 18 **Secondary** 2

1. Use of service

Which of the following tasks have been undertaken in your school by the Advisory Service in the past academic year?

Observations of pupil	20
Training for TAs	7
Training for teachers	8
Support for SENCOs	8
Meetings with Staff	12
Meetings with Staff/Parents	15

Other 3

Please specify:

- Phone calls with parents
- Meeting with Year 5 child, rather than observation for a Year 5 discussion.

2. Rating the service – *please rate and comment*

On a scale of 1 – 4 how would you rate the service overall?

1 poor	1
2 satisfactory	4
3 good	8
4 excellent	8

- Conversations with ASD service and CT are useful to discuss child/difficulties/tasks to develop child.
- Efficient responses to questions and queries. Good training and support for all staff.
- The conversations with parents were useful to give an insight into individuals within a school setting. Discussion of possible strategies was beneficial and written reports were mostly useful.
- When support is available it is good, it is a shame that it is limited due to high demand.
- We had a very difficult child. There were no quick fixes but support was on hand & frequent (which is what we needed).
- Service is good. A fantastic service that provides valuable support to schools, families and most importantly the pupils. Just wish that there was more than 1 person covering all Primary Schools.
- I would rate the service as a 4 as our ASD support this year has been amazing. We have really appreciated the consistent support and guidance.
- Sensible and “do-able” advice.
- For such a stretched service, the team do an excellent job. They offer so much between them and I know they are there if I need them at any time.
- Highly valued service for staff, parents and pupils.
- Support for both staff and parents useful and relevant. However, sometimes expectations of support to be provided within the classroom can be challenging especially in a large class with high SEN needs. It would be useful to have support categorised into order of importance.
- Visits are usually timely, reports are completed in good time and delivered efficiently.
- Our reason for giving a 2 is due to the repetitiveness of the advice given after a quick conversation with staff members. On occasion, observations of no more than 10 minutes occur which doesn't always give a true reflection of the challenges or difficulties a pupil is having. Conversations with staff are not enough to give the staff an insight as to the reasons behind the behaviour they are struggling to manage.
- Support is provided quickly and feedback given promptly compared to most other services. Meeting every newly diagnosed pupil meet the adviser is often unhelpful and in fact can be detrimental.
- Some of the observations of pupils have been very short due to the support teacher arriving late to the school.

3. Reports, advice and recommendations – *please rate and comment*

Please rate on a scale of 1 – 4

(1 poor, 2 satisfactory, 3 good, 4 excellent)

a) Reports

1 poor	0
2 satisfactory	7
3 good	7
4 excellent	7

- Picture of child accurate, written observation of what child doing accurate.
- Very quick turnaround of reports after observation!
- Some felt brief/not personal to individual pupils.
- These are usually sent promptly and are sensitivity written.
- Always received promptly.
- I would rate this as a 3 as the advice and recommendations have been invaluable to both staff and parents this year. It has helped us to move particular things forward more quickly and with more success. Reports have been received quickly and with detailed recommendations that can be clearly understood by all adults.
- Swift return so recommendations are in place that term.
- Detailed.
- Promptly received and clear to read.
- Always clear and thorough.
- Reports arrive quickly.
- Little information given that isn't known but reports are written quickly.

b) Advice/Recommendations

1 poor	0
2 satisfactory	3
3 good	6
4 excellent	7

- Good advice – accurate to the children including asking.
- Useful and relevant. Parents may benefit from meeting to discuss the report with the person writing it.
- A range of recommendations made.
- It is always clear and possible to implement.
- Very clear advice and recommendations which have usually been discussed with staff.
- Recommendations discussed so we can use them – i.e. not something on a report that we cannot manage.
- Easy to follow.
- There were no recommendations beyond what was being done already.
- Occasionally some advice seems a bit generic.
- Advice is repetitive for multiple children and previous reports, often advice given are strategies the teachers are already implementing.
- Pupil comments are often reported as in fact; some strategies cannot be implemented in a mainstream school. Advice given without discussion with pastoral team so often support has been put in but the pupil does not report this to the service, reports then sound like school is not acting on information. Strategies suggested are usually commonly known and used in school, we would like new strategies. Advice given directly to parents about what school can offer – this can be misleading, things are offered that we cannot provide without prior discussion with the school.

4. Training – *please rate and comment*

Please indicate type(s) of training received by staff:

Specific pupil related	4
General ASD	6
Specific ASD related subject (eg Sensory, Behaviour, etc)	6
Other	1

Please rate on a scale of 1 – 4

1 poor	0
2 satisfactory	1
3 good	7
4 excellent	3

- Not in school this year.
- Staff require more training on helping general ASD and it needs to be delivered in a powerful way.
- Clear calm manner delivering sound & solid advice when needed the most.
- It was a great overview of ASD/ADHD behaviours. Maybe in the future more pupil specific whole school training would be great.
- Staff all really enjoyed the training session and was keen to implement the strategies recommended. I think all adults appreciated the ‘well-being’ aspect too!
- Not used this year.
- The academic access training was very helpful and relevant. Staff were given lots of practical ideas.
- TA training well received and up to date research interested staff who have been in the job a long time. The workshops are more discussion based rather than actively providing strategies.

5. Impact

Has the involvement of the **ASD Advisory Service** had an impact on pupils and staff?

Comment on:

- a) Building staff confidence
- b) Building staff resilience
- c) Promoting pupil progress
- d) Supporting pupil self esteem

- Yes to all, several children this year.
- Staff have been using breathing techniques shown themselves and with children (where appropriate).
- (a)
- Staff confidence & awareness of strategies to use has improved.
- Staff are more confident in understanding the needs of children with ASD.
- Staff have become more aware of how to meet the needs on a basic level, this now needs strengthening, along with their resilience. Pupils (with ASD) have made good progress.
- Staff confidence & resilience – a big impact. Able to calm staff and offer realistic advice when needed. Pupil progress & self-esteem – limited.
- It ticks a box.

- Supports onward referrals for the pupils. Provides staff with clear recommendations to support pupils' progress in areas of concern. Supports teachers/TAs ability to feel confident about supporting an ASD child which has an impact on their relationships with the ASD pupil.
- I think the ASD Service has helped us with all of the above and more this year.
- It is always good to talk through and adapt approaches if needed. It is good to know what you are doing is good practice. This builds staff confidence and resilience. This in turn supports the pupils. It is really important as a teacher/SENCo that at the point you are running out of ideas someone can offer something new to try – it can give the bit of hope to keep trying in hard circumstances.
- I feel the staff are more confident due to all the recommendations given, which in turn has built resilience although this has only been seen in staff who have fully taken A's advice on board. Pupil progress and increased self-esteem, is variable but this is inevitable for children with Autism.
- The training sessions for teaching staff on ASD and staff well-being was done as part of our INSET. It was helpful to staff in making them aware of their own needs. It was not intended to train staff for our ASD pupils beyond providing a general information session.
- Building staff confidence by confirming that strategies used in the classroom are good.
- The service has helped build rapport between families, students and staff and enabled us as a school to implement suitable support strategies and resolve problems before they become major ones.
- It always useful to have opportunities to discuss any concerns or achievements with those who are more skilled in this area. It is good to have reassurance that what we are doing is right or advise on what we could do to improve and make things easier for all involved.
- Support from the ASD Advisory Service makes us feel that we are able to get advice from someone quickly and easily who knows the school and the constraints we are under as well as knowing the child.
- No impact since as a result of advice and recommendations from the ASD team.
- Provides the pupils with an outlet and someone impartial to speak to. Useful for parents, however it can be unhelpful when parents contact directly without consultation with the school.
- Support reassures staff that they supporting pupils well. We do not learn anything new from the report that we have not already put into place.

6. Does the Advisory Service meet your needs as a school?

- Yes x 12
- Mostly. Staff need further training about teaching to ASD needs within a while class.
- No
- Yes – although I wish visits were more frequent and not reactive to some situations.
- Yes, I find A very accommodating.
- One of the challenges we are facing is that the parents have very high expectations of what the school can offer their children with ASD. In several cases this means that they expect all their desires to be met, these are not always in keeping with what the child wants or what is best for the child. The written reports do not always say what the school is doing towards these issues or support the school if parental requests are not the best option. We sometimes find that the Advisory Service suggestions conflict with those made by other organisations such as the Emotional Health Academy.
- Unfortunately not.
- It does offer support to some but would benefit from some more bespoke programmes.

7. Are there any other needs you have that are not being met?

- No x 8

- More contact/meetings with parents and staff, not just staff. Parents like to hear advice from an expert. ASD team can help support staff when parents don't always agree/accept point of view.
- Undiagnosed – little support.
- Staff training may be beneficial in the future.
- Parents have requested drop in sessions, in groups, with an ASD specialist.
- Yes
- Further discussion with pupils 1-1 would be of benefit to some pupils and hearing their thoughts.
- No, our needs are being met.
- Not that I can think of.
- Drop in sessions for parents to discuss on a regular basis. Drop in sessions for staff especially TA's who are working with the children on a daily basis. Longer observations of pupils to help support staff in identifying triggers and environmental changes they can make to support pupils.
- It would be more beneficial if the service could provide social skill groups. Meet with individuals, based on need, not just because they have a diagnosis. Work with individuals over a few sessions to support with a particular issue e.g. school reusing.

8. Please add any further comments you wish to make.

- Thank you for advice and support.
- A recent transition meeting was useful to try and ensure appropriate provision & support was in place.
- I am eternally grateful for A's continued support and professional approach and M's help this year to support parents.
- Reports are repetitive and offer few real options to use day to day.
- Parents appreciate a dedicated ASD advisory service. Parents always feel listened to and supported well by the teachers.
- Very valuable service – Thank you. With budgets as they are, it is good to be able to have a service to support a very vulnerable group of pupils that is "free" to access. I am sure this service supports children become more happy and secure and therefore successful learners. In an ideal world, an extension of the service might be to support schools who have children on the pathway as this is often the time support before diagnosis – this means potentially more "trial and error" which is stressful for staff and the child. If the team could come in they might be able to narrow down strategies/offer support that might support the individual child at an earlier point.
- Thank you for all your help and support this academic year.
- The staff who provide this service are all very friendly and approachable. They are brilliant with our young people and have helped to unpick some tricky situations. They are also hugely supportive of both staff and parents and working together as we do has really helped to settle some students and allow them to flourish.
- Thank you to A for all your help and support this year.

Appendix C(iv)

We want to make sure we're helping you and your little one in the best possible way.

*If you have been to more than one **LOLLIPOPS** session, please could you let us know if we're getting it right for you and your child?*

8 responses

Please circle a number to tell us how much you agree with the following, from 1 (disagree strongly) to 4 (agree strongly)				
My child and I get a warm welcome	1	2	3	4
				8
My child has been learning to do things he hasn't been able to do before (such as sitting for group-time, or taking turns, etc.).	1	2	3	4
		1	1	6
EDIT staff are friendly and approachable.	1	2	3	4
				8
EDIT staff are knowledgeable and have been able to help me when I've needed advice.	1	2	3	4
				8
There is a good range of activities for my child to try out and take part in.	1	2	3	4
				8
I feel more confident about helping my child to play and learn.	1	2	3	4
			1	7
I like having the opportunity to meet other parents and share experiences	1	2	3	4
		1	1	6

**After watching what goes on at LOLLIPOPS, what have you tried at home ?
Do you do anything differently to help your child learn ?**

Pro-prioception before play to help engage William. How to engage in books and play techniques.

We do more puzzles and encourage more language I believe.

I have learnt to make story time more interesting by using objects and toys that relate to the story being told.

Using Makaton more often, ready steady go games.

Climbing stairs, he loves the Sensory Room.

Signing Makaton. Ready, steady go.

Separate areas for toys. Encouraging things he wouldn't always play with.
Encouraging eye contact.

Is there anything in particular an EDIT has been able to give advice or help you with ? How has this made a difference for you and your child ?

(It could be advice on starting school, help with toilet-training, helping you make contact with another service such as Speech and Language or Dingley's Promise, etc.)

Advice on starting school, researching Brookfields School, setting up visit, extremely helpful with all areas engaged with all professionals.

We have had a lot of advice & guidance re: schools for which I am extremely grateful.

Help with nursery choices what does on and how to get things started. Help with speech and language.

A stay & play sessions more suited to J's needs (Lollipops).
Introduction to Dingley's Promise.

His Makaton has certainly improved, he seems to be more confident doing it in a group.

Communication skills. Help Nursery Schools.

Helping with starting pre-school and obtaining a grant to help my son settle.

Any other comments...

Without JG, CA and team we wouldn't have seen the progress in W we have seen and such a huge support for our family. They are very much needed in West Berkshire.

This is a wonderful service. H would really miss it if it wasn't there.

Lollipops is a great help to me. It is a place for me and my daughter to go to socialise and interact with others.

The ladies have all made us feel so welcome, both J & I are very relaxed at Lollipops. I have been given lots of helpful advice by everyone. I feel much more positive about our future.

L loves it here and is always sad to leave at the end of a session.

It is a wonderful friendly and helpful place. They have provided a plan of action so we know what's happening. J loves the staff and is very comfortable and happy with them.

All 4 of the EDIT team are wonderful with both me & my son. Very approachable & willing to help wherever they can.

A relaxed environment and I like learning from watching the professionals

Appendix C(v)



Response from Language & Literacy (LAL) Teachers to 2018 Funding Changes

The Teachers in Charge of the LALs would like to express their concerns about the impact of charging schools for places at the LAL; a move resulting from funding cuts to the High

Needs Block Budget 2018/2019. These funding cuts were finalised at the Schools Forum meeting of 12/03/18. Referring to the documentation from that occasion, the Cognition and Learning Team

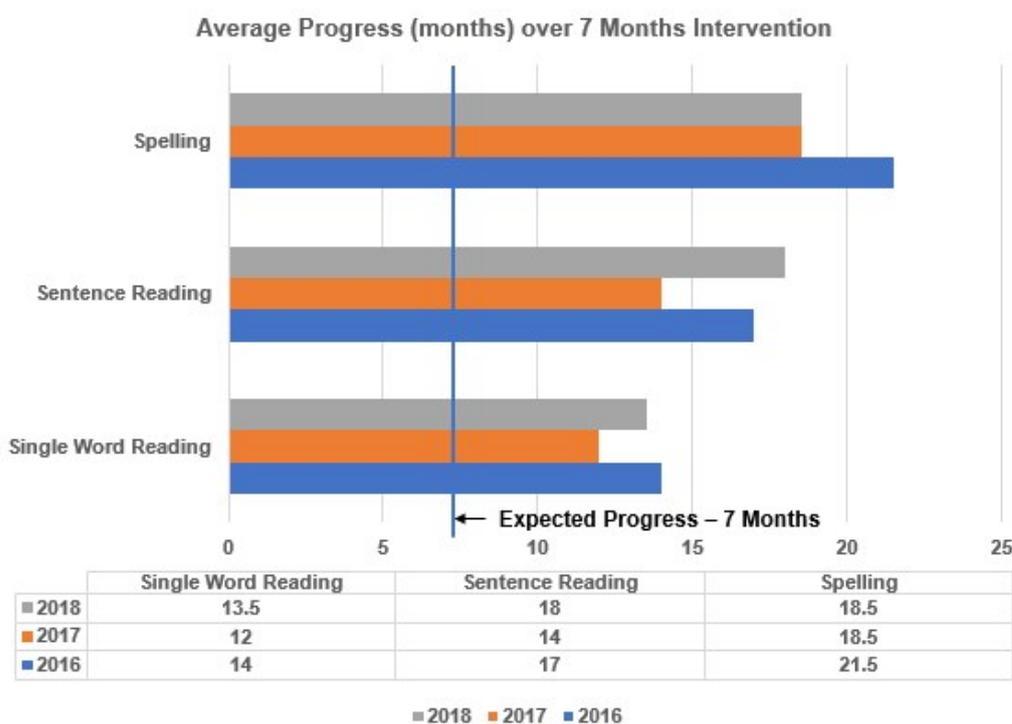
(CALT) had identified that the largest area of Special Educational Needs and Disability for West

Berkshire was Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which made up 24.1% of all Special Educational Needs children identified. Of this 24.1%, up to 10% of children experience severe, significant and specific difficulties with literacy which are not resolving despite external professional advice and extra provision made by school. These children are supported by the external specialist provision provided by the LAL Resources; a service which offers both professional advice to schools and targeted teaching intervention. Historically, this service has been free at the point of delivery.

Research attests to the fact that SpLD is often co-morbid, sitting alongside other learning differences such as speech and language impairment, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder and autistic spectrum profile. To meet this need, the training of the Teachers in Charge of the LALs necessitates Masters level training in SpLD, and experience as Special Needs Co-ordinator. The combination of width of experience and specificity of approach mean that the Teachers in Charge are uniquely able to address children for whom normal school interventions and programmes have failed to make an impact.

LAL Progress Data

The needs of these children have been well met over the years, as has been well evidenced by exit data for each child, from yearly parent questionnaires and from incidental comments from schools to the LALs (see appendix 1). In addition, West Berkshire is in the unusual position of having had a single tribunal for SpLD in a period 15 years as a result of providing specialist placements in the LALs.



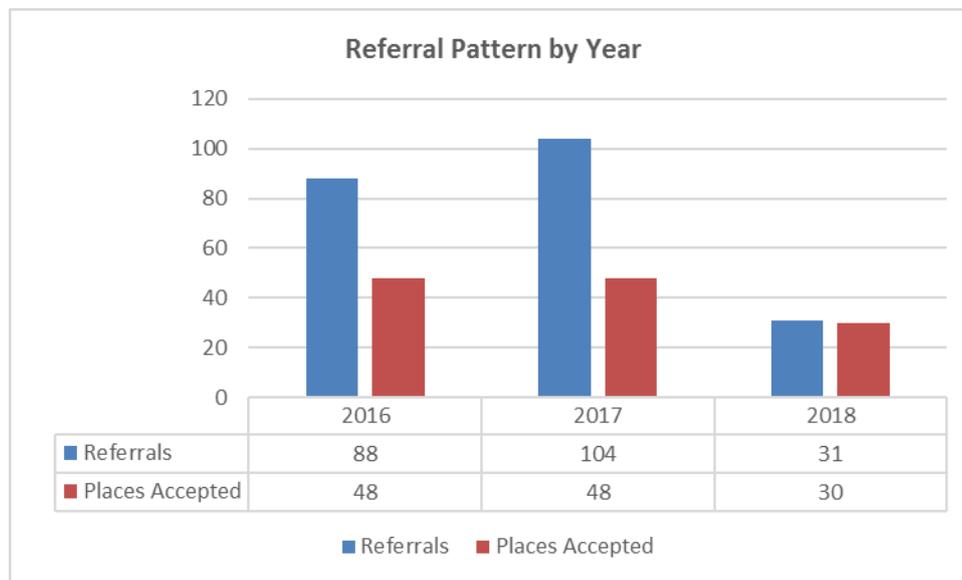
Source: Yearly LAL Data from Winchcombe and Theale Schools.

Current Financial Position:

This year, following the changes to funding arrangements (see Appendix 2), there were 30 successful applications for the LALs meaning that 14 places remained unfilled. Based on an expected £1,300 per child, this represented a **funding shortfall of £18,235** against expectation.

Change in Referral Pattern as a result of Funding Changes

The decision to make changes to the LAL funding arrangements had an immediate impact on the referral numbers that one would normally expect to see:



Source: LAL Admission Panel Records

This downward trend will worsen in future years because in 2018 a number of referrals were made and parents informed before the funding position was communicated to schools. This meant that schools were obliged to refer some children before they had ascertained the availability of funds.

Inappropriate Referral Pattern

In addition to the financial shortfall for LAL:

1. There remains a number of children needing support in the authority who have now had no specialist intervention during year 5.
2. Some of the children who were admitted to LAL were admitted on the basis of filling the resource and could have been said to displace those children who should have been referred who had more `specific' needs.

Impact on LAL Assessment Process

At the selection panel, the feedback from schools was that they had many for referral but could not afford to put them forward. There were unexpected outcomes:

1. There were not enough referrals to fully utilise the LAL resource.
2. The nature and number (35%) of EHC/PPG referrals was that their needs were far more complex than would normally be seen in what is a short focus placement.
3. The LALs needed the funding and so all referrals had to be taken irrespective of whether or not the provision was suitably matched to the need.
4. The complexity of some children's needs was such that different packages had to be created which, under normal circumstances, would have been considered financially untenable (1-1 teaching in an off-site placement.)

Impact on Secondary Provision

Children in the community who did not get the normal opportunity to attend LAL in 2018-19 will now be transferred to the Secondary Schools. The impact will be:

1. The Secondary Schools will face growing numbers of children functioning at the year 1 level of literacy.
2. Need will have been compounded year on year as lack of access to the curriculum increases due to literacy failure.
3. Needs may increase to the point where comprehensive assessment and wave 3 intervention will be required. Intervention may need to become long term and of a specialist nature.

Actual projected costs to Future Secondary Schools:

- Schools are expected to use the local funding formula to put in up to £6000 worth of provision per child before the Local Authority will consider additional funding. They will now be called on to do this to a greater extent than has been necessary before.
- Should Secondary Schools have to buy in Specialist Provision, the current hourly rate is £66 hr (source Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre).
- Once those children who have missed out on LAL provision move into secondary school, the cost of additional provision combined with the LAL shortfall identified above will offset the projected cost saving within 3 years.
- In addition to cost, Secondary Schools will have the management and administrative burden of a replacement provision for that previously provided by the LAL's.
- Research has shown that lack of academic progress due to literacy failure also incurs greater costs in terms of social/emotional (SEMH) outcomes for the individual. These individuals usually incur more resource provision in terms of SEMH provision in the school setting. These costs in Secondary would be consequently impacted.

Conclusion

The need for the LAL provision has not gone away. The literacy needs of children are now not being met in Primary Schools because of the LAL funding decision. Furthermore, the provision is currently inequitable, as some schools are able to finance places and some are not. Without the reversal of this funding decision we expect a cycle of further

reduction in the uptake of LAL places as School budgets remain under pressure. This in turn will pass the problem onto Secondary Schools.

We believe it is in the interests of the children, the schools and the Authority to reverse the funding decision of 2018 and fully fund the LAL places for those in need. Any failure to do so will result long term greater cost implications for Secondary Schools and the Authority together with a compounded pattern of failure for an already vulnerable group of young people within our community.



Alison Morse
Winchcombe LAL Teacher-in-charge
14th September 2018



Dawn Dance
Theale LAL Teacher-in-Charge
14th September 2018

Appendix 1 – 2018 Comments from Schools, Parents and Children

School

- (1) Can I also say thanks for all the hard work and effort you have put into supporting our LAL children over the last couple of years. They have made so much progress both academically and personally. **I am so disappointed that we cannot afford to continue sending our children to LAL as it is such a super resource for children.**

Parents

- (1) Having benefitted from it so much we feel it would be wonderful if the programme to even more children in West Berkshire. A huge thank you to Mrs **! It has been a wonderful programme for **.
- (2) LAL is an excellent programme and just what my child needed so I would not change anything about LAL. I just think that it should be for the child in Year 5 and 6. Every school would benefit from Mrs** and her knowledge for the kids that don't learn the same as others. (its not one size fits all)...Lal has definitely worked for

....., the difference in his school work is amazing. ... he's grown in confidence and that his reading is getting really good!

- (3) He has thoroughly enjoyed attending LAL and knows he will miss his weekly LAL visits with you. He has gained so many skills, whilst I know he can struggle with taking direction, he has applied himself to learning. This is mainly down to your ability to make and provide an ideal environment and techniques that work. I am so pleased we embarked on this journey and we will continue your good work.
- (3)
- (4) Thank you for all your support and help you have given to ** and to both my husband and myself. I can finally sit and listen to ** read with confidence and hopefully this will be the start of a love of books.

Children

- (1) I've loved it! I think it's helped me because when we went to this place there was this sign and Dad would ask me to read it. I could never read it – now I can. 'Do not climb on this tree because it is ancient.'
- (2) We don't go too fast.. you stop and wait so I can get it.. at school people help me but it's busy so people can't always explain.'
- (3) I think it's helped because I remember when you first came in I wasn't that good at reading and spelling and now I'm more confident. I'm curious about what books I can read next.

KH Notes on High Needs Budget for Heads Funding Group

	2015/16	2018/19	2019/20		% Change 2015- 2018	% Change 2015- 2019	% Change 2018- 2019
Place Funding	6,285,400	5,841,830	6,062,000		-7.1%	-3.6%	3.8%
Top up funding	8,507,580	11,227,150	11,921,930		32.0%	40.1%	6.2%
PRU Funding	2,201,000	884,030	1,089,100		-59.8%	-50.5%	23.2%
Other Statutory	1,213,860	1,431,900	1,434,680		18.0%	18.2%	1.9%
Non Statutory	858,570	780,120	801,470		-9.1%	-6.7%	2.7%
Support service	515,750	127,290	127,290		-75.3%	-75.3%	0.0%
Total Expenditure	19,582,160	20,292,320	21,436,470		3.6%	9.5%	5.6%
HNB DSG Allocation	19,100,550	19,557,777	19,676,682		2.3%	3.0%	0.6%
Total DSG Funding	19,455,500	19,222,142	18,800,243		-1.2%	-3.4%	-2.2%
Shortfall	-126,660	-876,439	-2,636,227		592.0%	1981.3%	200.8%

The table above indicates the key issues with the high needs budget from 2015/16 to the proposed budget for 2019/20.

Issues that are evident are as follows:

- Allocation has increased by 2.3% from 2015/16 to 2018/19 whilst inflation over that period of time has increased by 8.8%. This means that for the allocation to be worth the same as in 2015/16 the allocated amount should have been £20,781,398
- Areas where savings have been identified have shown clear improvements in budgets. I.e. PRU, non-statutory and support services had a total budget of £3.6 million in 2015/16 compared with £1.8 million in 2017/18, a reduction of 50%.
- Top up funding has increased significantly from 2015/16 and is predicted to be 40.1% higher in 2019/20 than it was in 2015/16. The table below shows the breakdown of this budget and how it has changed. It is evident from the table that the biggest pressures on the budget over time have been independent school top ups, maintained special school top ups, further education top ups and academy resource unit top ups. These have increased from a total budget of £5.7 million in 2015/16 to £7.8 million in 2018/19, an increase of 37% :

High Needs Block Budget 2019/20

	2015/16	2018/19	2019/20		% Change 2015- 2018	% Change 2015- 2019	% Change 2018- 2019
Maintained Special Schools	2,766,940	3,372,050	3,464,450		21.9%	25.2%	2.7%
Non West Berkshire Special Schools	1,085,240	959,970	968,130		-11.5%	-10.8%	0.9%
Non LEA Special Schools	855,320	804,040	981,570		-6.0%	14.8%	22.1%
Independent Special school place and top up	1,565,720	2,348,460	2,652,250		50.0%	69.4%	12.9%
Further education colleges	950,040	1,269,330	1,379,160		33.6%	45.2%	8.7%
Maintained school resource units	339,230	276,890	270,350		-18.4%	-20.3%	-2.4%
Academy resource unit	378,730	808,580	946,530		113.5%	149.9%	17.1%
Non WBC resource	44,240	147,260	160,190		232.9%	262.1%	8.8%
Maintained mainstream	469,980	648,221	666,360		37.9%	41.8%	2.8%
Academy mainstream	183,240	244,810	267,460		33.6%	46.0%	9.3%
Non WBC mainstream	66,650	80,330	66,480		20.5%	-0.3%	-17.2%
Disproportionate High Needs Pupils	70,000	73,470	100,000		5.0%	42.9%	36.1%

Conclusion

The cuts that have been implemented in the high needs budget have had the desired effect and budgets in these areas remain considerably lower than they did in 2015/16. There is a strong pressure on top up budgets, possibly caused by a need for more specialised provision than in 2015/16. It is possible that the cuts in non-statutory provision have led in some way to the increased need for top up funding. This is added to the fact that the high needs budget has not kept pace with inflation over the period.

My view is that to cut further would undermine the non-statutory services and lead to a higher level of need for EHCPs, Therefore, despite the predicted shortfall, I would recommend maintaining the current budget to offset further rises in top up budgets.