

Notice of Meeting

Schools Forum

Monday 25th January 2021 at 5.00pm
On Zoom

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Date of despatch of Agenda: Tuesday, 19 January 2021

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Jessica Bailiss on (01635) 503124
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Agenda - Schools Forum to be held on Monday, 25 January 2021 (continued)

Forum Members: Reverend Mark Bennet, Dominic Boeck, Jonathon Chishick, Catie Colston, Jacquie Davies, Emily Dawkins, Keith Harvey, Jon Hewitt, Brian Jenkins, Hilary Latimer, Sheila Loy, Ross Mackinnon, Maria Morgan, Julia Mortimore, Ian Nichol, Janet Patterson, Gemma Piper, Chris Prosser, David Ramsden, Campbell Smith, Graham Spellman (Vice-Chairman), Jayne Steele and Charlotte Wilson

Agenda

Part I

		Page No.
1	Apologies	
2	Minutes of previous meeting dated 7th December 2021	1 - 10
3	Actions arising from previous meetings	11 - 12
4	Declarations of Interest	13 - 14
5	Membership	

Items for Decision

6	Schools Funding Formula 2021/22 (Melanie Ellis)	15 - 20
7	Central Schools' Services Block Budget 2021/22 (Melanie Ellis/Ian Pearson/Lisa Potts)	21 - 26
8	Growth Fund 2020/21 Payments (Melanie Ellis)	27 - 30
9	High Needs Block Budget 2021/22 (Jane Seymour)	31 - 86
10	High Needs Block - Resourced Schools (Jane Seymour)	87 - 88

Items for Information

11	Vulnerable Children's Grant 19-20 (Michelle Sancho)	89 - 92
12	Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22 (Melanie Ellis)	93 - 96
13	Early Years Budget 2021/22 (Lisa Potts/Avril Allenby)	97 - 98



Agenda - Schools Forum to be held on Monday, 25 January 2021 (continued)

14a	Deficit Schools (Melanie Ellis)	99 - 102
14b	The Impact of Covid-19 on School Budgets	103 - 106
15	DSG Monitoring 2020/21 Month 9 (Ian Pearson)	107 - 114
16	Forward Plan	115 - 116
17	Date of the next meeting <i>Monday 8th March 2021, 5pm on Zoom</i>	

Sarah Clarke
Service Director: Strategy and Governance

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Moira Fraser on telephone (01635) 519045.



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Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2020**

Present: Reverend Mark Bennet (Church of England Diocese), Councillor Dominic Boeck (Executive Portfolio: Children, Young People and Education), Jonathon Chishick (Maintained Primary School Governor), Catie Colston (Maintained Primary School Governor), Jacquie Davies (Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher), Keith Harvey (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Jon Hewitt (Maintained Special School Headteacher), Brian Jenkins (Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent Provider Representative), Hilary Latimer (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Councillor Ross Mackinnon (Executive Portfolio Holder: Finance and Economic Development), Maria Morgan (Maintained Nursery School Headteacher), Julia Mortimore (Academy School Headteacher), Ian Nichol (Maintained Primary School Governor), Janet Patterson (Maintained Primary School Headteacher), Gemma Piper (Academy School Headteacher), Chris Prosser (Maintained Secondary School Headteacher), Graham Spellman (Roman Catholic Diocese) and Charlotte Wilson (Academy School Headteacher)

Also Present: Avril Allenby (Early Years Service Manager), Melanie Ellis (Chief Accountant), Mike Lindenburn (Health and Safety Manager), Ian Pearson (Head of Education Services), Leah Rinaldi (Insurance Manager), Jane Seymour (Service Manager, SEN & Disabled Children's Team), Jessica Bailiss (Policy Officer (Executive Support)), Stephen Chard (Principal Policy Officer) and Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Antony Gallagher, Richard Hawthorne, Sheila Loy, David Ramsden, Jayne Steele and Gary Upton

PART I

41 Minutes of previous meeting dated 19th October 2020

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th October were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

42 Actions arising from previous meetings

The Chairman drew the Schools' Forum's attention to the actions for the last meeting on 19th October 2020. All actions were completed or were in hand.

Oct20-Ac4, Early Years Block Budget – Deficit Recovery Plan: Councillor Dominic Boeck stated that he had raised the issues regarding the early years sector with local MP Laura Farris who felt strongly about the matter. The area would be discussed at Westminster on Thursday 10th December 2020. Councillor Boeck would share the outcome of the debate with the Schools' Forum.

RESOLVED that Councillor Boeck would share the outcome of the debate at Westminster with the Schools' Forum.

43 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

44 Membership

Jessica Bailiss read out the following updates with regards to Membership:

- Campbell Smith had been duly elected to the role of academy school governor representative on the Schools' Forum.
- As well as the election for the academy governor position an election had also been held for a maintained primary school business manager. There had however, been no nominations received and therefore the election would be run again in the New Year.
- No Schools' Forum Members were approaching the end of their term of office.

45 Final School Funding Formula 2021/22 (Melanie Ellis)

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 6) which aimed to set out the results from the consultation with all schools on the proposed primary and secondary school funding formula for 2021/22 and to make a final recommendation.

The Schools' Forum noted the outcome of the consultation with schools and the recommendations listed under section two of the report.

The Chairman invited the relevant members of the Forum to vote on each of the recommendations as follows.

Recommendation (1):

To mirror the DfE's 2021/22 National Funding Formula to calculate the funding allocations

Catie Colston proposed that the Forum approve the above recommendation and this was seconded by Ian Nichol. At the vote (with school members and the PVI nursery representative only), the vote was carried.

Recommendation (2):

To award a lower increase to the schools sparsity factor in the local formula.

Hilary Latimer proposed that the Forum approve the above recommendation and this was seconded by Ian Nichol. At the vote (with school members and the PVI nursery representative only), the motion was carried.

Recommendation (3):

To address any surplus or shortfall in funding by adjusting the AWPU values.

Keith Harvey proposed that the Forum approve the above recommendation and this was seconded by Jon Hewitt. At the vote (with school members and the PVI nursery representative only), the motion was carried.

Recommendation (4):

To apply a top slice of 0.25% to the schools' funding, in order to support High Needs.

Hilary Latimer proposed that the Forum approve the above recommendation and this was seconded by Jon Hewitt. At the vote (with school members and the PVI nursery representative only), the motion was carried.

Recommendation (5):

To approve the criteria for additional funds as per the consultation.

SCHOOLS FORUM - 7 DECEMBER 2020 - MINUTES

Hilary Latimer proposed that the Forum approve the above recommendation and this was seconded by Jon Hewitt. At the vote (with all Forum members), the motion was carried.

Recommendation (6) would be considered under agenda item eight – Delegations 2021/22.

RESOLVED that recommendations (1) to (5), as listed under section 2.1 of the report, were approved by the Schools' Forum. Recommendation (6) would be considered under agenda item eight – De-delegations 2021/22.

46 **Budgets and Criteria for Additional Funds 2021/22: High needs (Melanie Ellis)**

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 7) which set out the proposed budgets for additional funds for 2021/22 in relation to high needs only. The full report was agreed at the Schools Forum in October 2020, but the budget for high needs required further discussion.

The recommendation had initially been to set the budget at £100k for schools with disproportionate numbers of high needs pupils. It had however been noted at the Schools' Forum in October 2020 that there had been an underspend in this area over previous years. Following further analysis it was proposed that a lower amount of £40k be agreed.

The Chairman invited members of the Forum to consider the proposal under section 4.1 of the report. Keith Harvey proposed that the recommendation be approved and this was seconded by Catie Colston. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the Forum agreed that the budget for additional high needs funding be set at £40k in 2021/22.

47 **De-delegations 2021/22 (Ian Pearson/Melanie Ellis)**

Ian Pearson introduced the report (Agenda Item 8) which set out the details, cost, and charges to schools of the services on which maintained school representatives are required to vote (on an annual basis) whether or not they should be de-delegated. The report came to the Schools' Forum on an annual basis.

Ian Pearson highlighted section two of the report, which detailed each of the recommendations that would need to be considered by maintained school representatives. A summary of each proposal was shown within Table A on page 22 of the agenda. The third column of the table showed that the Heads Funding Group (HFG) had supported each of the de-delegation proposals. The HFG had supported one of the two options available for health and safety and this had been the enhanced support option. Fluctuations in price for each service was normally due to efficiency savings or inflation.

The area that had historically required further discussion was health and safety. Ian Pearson suggested Mike Lindburn provide further detail on this area, particularly on the enhanced level of service, which had been supported by the HFG.

Mike Lindburn explained that the report provided a great deal of detail on the area under Appendix G. In the past, schools had been offered two levels of service. Level One had been provided through the de-delegation of the service and then Level Two, a higher level of service, was offered through an optional buy back by schools. The aim of the proposal was to have a unified service across all maintained schools. If all schools bought into this unified service then it reduced the overall cost of the service.

SCHOOLS FORUM - 7 DECEMBER 2020 - MINUTES

Mike Lindburn drew attention to Table 1 under Appendix G, which showed the 2020/21 cost to schools for the Level 2 Service, compared to the cost of the unified service for 2021/22 if all schools agreed to it.

Ian Pearson highlighted that although the discussion related to services for maintained schools, the services were also available to academy schools if they wished to purchase them.

Keith Harvey commented that the Health and Safety Service had provided an enhanced level of service to all maintained schools throughout the pandemic and therefore in his view, it seemed the right time to increase the level of service to enhanced for all schools.

The Chairman invited the relevant members of the Forum to vote on each of the recommendations as follows.

Recommendation 2.1:

That representatives of maintained primary schools should agree to de-delegate funds in the 2021/22 financial year for:

- *Behaviour Support Services*
- *Ethnic Minority Support*
- *Trade Union Representation*
- *Schools in Financial Difficulty*
- *CLEAPSS*
- *Statutory and Regulatory Duties comprising:*
 - *Statutory accounting functions in respect of schools*
 - *Internal Audit of schools*
 - *Administration of pensions for school staff*
 - *Health and Safety (enhanced support – level one plus a top up level two)*

Jonathan Chishick proposed that the recommendation be approved by maintained primary school representatives and this was seconded by Ian Nichol. At the vote the motion was carried.

Recommendation 2.2:

That representatives of maintained secondary schools should agree to de-delegate funds in the 2021/22 financial year for:

- *Behaviour Support Services*
- *Ethnic Minority Support*
- *Trade Union Representation*
- *CLEAPSS*
- *Statutory and Regulatory Duties comprising:*
 - *Statutory accounting functions in respect of schools*
 - *Internal Audit of schools*
 - *Administration of pensions for school staff*
 - *Health and Safety (enhanced support – level one plus a top up level two)*

(It was proposed that the vote go ahead with one of the two maintained secondary representatives present. This was in line with the constitution where at least 40% need to be present from a phase to be quorate. There were no objections raised to this proposal by members of the Forum.)

Chris Prosser proposed that the recommendation be approved and at the vote the motion was carried.

Recommendation 2.3:

That representatives of maintained special, nursery and PRU heads should agree to de-delegate funds in the 2021/22 financial year for:

- *Statutory and Regulatory Duties comprising:*
 - *Statutory accounting functions in respect of schools*
 - *Internal Audit of schools*
 - *Administration of pensions for school staff*
 - *Health and Safety (enhanced support – level one plus a top up level two)*

Jon Hewitt proposed that the recommendation be approved by maintained special, nursery and PRU representatives and this was seconded by Maria Morgan. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that each of the recommendations set out under section two of the report were agreed.

48 Update on RPA For Schools (Leah Rinaldi)

Leah Rinaldi introduced the report (Agenda Item 9) which sought to update Schools' Forum on the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) for maintained schools.

The RPA was run by the Department for Education (DfE) and had initially only been available to academy schools however, had now become available to maintained schools. Leah Rinaldi clarified that the RPA was not insurance but was a risk transfer mechanism and therefore was not a like for like replacement of the insurance scheme offered by the Local Authority. Schools' would need to carefully assess cover options and make informed individual decisions on whether to remain within the Local Authority's insurance arrangements or switch to the RPA.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

49 DSG Funding Settlement Budget Overview 2021/22 (Melanie Ellis)

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 10) which set out the provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation for 2021/22. The final allocation would be available once the DfE had updated the information following the October 2020 census data.

Melanie Ellis drew attention to section 4.1 which provided the initial allocations and the increase from the previous year. It showed that the Schools' Block was increasing by £8.8m compared to the previous year and the High Needs Block was increasing by £1.9m. The budget for the Central Schools Services Block was decreasing by £20k. The figures for early years were not yet known.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

50 Draft Central Schools Block Budget 2021/22 (Melanie Ellis)

Ian Pearson introduced the report (Agenda Item 11) that set out the budget proposal for services funded from the Central Schools' Services (CSSB) block of the DSG and to propose measure to enable the budget for this block to be balanced.

The CSSB covered funding allocated to Local Authorities (LAs) to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies in England. This included special schools, maintained nurseries and pupil referral units.

Ian Pearson referred to the table at the top of page 68 of the agenda. Funding within the CSSB had been reduced year on year over the last three years. A variety of different methods had been used to balance the block over this period of time, including savings against various teams. In 2018/19 the block was balanced by a small transfer from the

SCHOOLS FORUM - 7 DECEMBER 2020 - MINUTES

Early Years and High Needs Blocks. The reason for this transfer was that the CSSB is calculated on pupil numbers, but only the numbers attending primary and secondary schools. However, both nursery and special schools benefitted from some of the services provided by the block. A report would need to be brought back to the next meeting of the Schools' Forum which included proposals on how to balance the block. Each area would need to be looked at in time for the meeting in January 2021 to see what potential savings could be delivered.

Catie Colston noted from the table at the top of page 68 that the current cost for Education Welfare was higher than it would be in 2021/22, whereas the cost for the Provision of Education Data would increase going into 2021/22. Catie Colston questioned the reasoning behind these figures and whether the balance was right. Regarding the Provision of Education Data whether this was as important as children's welfare, Ian Pearson responded that he had discussed the matter with the Data Manager to see if costs could be reduced in this area. Data costs fell into two areas, firstly the costs for the contract with Capita to deliver the education data modules and secondly costs relating to staffing. It was possible that the figure for 2021/22 might change in time for the meeting of the Forum in January 2021.

Reverend Mark Bennet raised a question regarding Education Welfare and queried if an aspect of this service would be impacted on by Covid-19. Ian Pearson explained that the Welfare Team were responsible for elected home education, which was an area that had been impacted on by the pandemic. The number of children being educated at home had already increased three fold. If the number of children being home educated continued to rise then there would be an increased pressure on this area.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report and that a further report with recommendations on how to balance the block would be brought to the next cycle of meetings in January 2021.

51 **Draft High Needs Budget 2021/22 (Jane Seymour)**

Jane Seymour introduced the report (Agenda Item 12), which set out the current financial position of the high needs budget for 2020/21 and the position known so far for 2021/22, including the likely shortfall.

Jane Seymour drew attention to section three of the report, which provided some background and detailed how the budget had not kept pace with demand. This was an issue being faced by West Berkshire and nationally. A number of savings had been implemented across the block in 2017/18 and 2018/19 and these were set out in section 3.3 of the report. It had since been found that some of these savings had been counterproductive and had led to an increase in expenditure on strategic SEND services.

There had been a significant increase in the number of children with SEND, both in those children below the threshold for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and also in those requiring an EHCP. In particular there had been a rise in the number of children with autism and social and emotional mental health (SEMH) needs. Jane Seymour reported that over the last five years there had been an increase of 26% in children needing an EHCP however, in mainstream schools there had only been a rise of 5%. The largest rise was within specialist settings, which were very expensive.

Jane Seymour drew attention to section 3.7 of the report which detailed the net shortfall for the HNB budget. The deficit included an overspend that had been rolled forward for three years, which took the total net shortfall for 2021/22 to £3.9m. If these overspends had not needed to be rolled forward then the shortfall in 2021/22 would be around £849k.

Jane Seymour reported that although savings had been made against the HNB in recent years, the Local Authority had a number of statutory duties that it had to provide children

SCHOOLS FORUM - 7 DECEMBER 2020 - MINUTES

with SEND in line with the 2014 Children and Families Act and therefore expenditure was needs driven. If a child met the criteria for an EHCP then this provision had to be put in place regardless of budgetary restraints.

Jane Seymour drew attention to section 3.9 of the report, which provided detail on the SEN Strategy and the five key priority areas. The aim was to bring costs down in the block in a range of ways. One aim was to improve local provision through the strategy and this would involve improving provision within mainstream schools and creating more in house provision, particularly for children with Autism and SEMH. A new provision was planned to open in September 2022, or possibly earlier.

Jane Seymour drew attention to Appendix A which provided more detail on each of the budgets included within the HNB and the reasons for the pressure on the 2020-21 budget. Regarding Place Funding, 12 additional places were required and funding for this would need to be top sliced from the HNB budget. More detail on this was included under section one to Appendix A.

Jane Seymour explained that Top Up Funding was the largest pressure within the block, with placements at independent special schools and maintained special schools causing the greatest pressure. This could be seen in detail under section two of the report.

Jane Seymour reported section 2.6 of the report included a proposal for special schools for 2021/22 that they should be paid the full £10k for each additional place and this had been allowed for in the projected 2021-22 costs. Special Schools had also put forward a case for further additional funding, which would be brought as a report to the next Schools' Forum in January 2021.

Jane Seymour explained that the report detailed the other areas of pressure within Top Up Funding from section 2.7 of the report.

Section three of the report provided detail on the pressure facing Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). There was a pressure of about £14k in this area for children requiring EHCPs. A new provision for pupils with EHCPs was set up in 2019 and placements at this setting were usually more cost effective than independent and non-maintained special schools placements.

Detail on other statutory services and non-statutory services could be found under section four and five of Appendix A. Jane Seymour referred to Table 5 on page 83 which showed the non statutory costs and currently included the additional funding that was agreed in 2020/21 for invest to save projects. This funding had not yet been agreed for 2021/22 and therefore this information could be removed if necessary.

A report would be brought to the next round of meetings in January 2021, which included savings options for consideration. Ian Pearson added that the report was not for decision at this time. Dialogue would be kept with the different schools phases to discuss how the issues could be addressed. Dialogue would also be required with the DfE.

Ian Pearson referred to the decision taken to transfer funding from the Schools' Block the HNB in 2020/21. Consultation had taken place with the Schools' Forum regarding what this funding should be spent on. Going forward here was not an assumption that this money should be used for what it was assigned to previously and schools would ultimately be able to decide what the funding was used for in 2021/22. The overall aim was improve service whilst ensuring they were more efficient and cost effective.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report, which would be brought back to the next meeting in January 2021 for decision.

52 Outline Early Years Forecast 2020/21 (Avril Allenby)

Lisa Potts introduced the report (Agenda Item 13) which updated the Schools' Forum on the forecast position for the Early Years Block (EYB) for 2020/21.

Lisa Potts reported that additional payments had been made to providers for the autumn term to ensure they did not miss out on funding due to lower numbers as a result of Covid-19. Lisa Potts added that there had been a reduction in the number of hours being taken up by children in early years settings. There were still parents who were not working due to the pandemic and therefore there had been a reduction in the take up of the 15 free hours, particularly for the autumn term.

There was not yet any guidance from Government regarding how hours calculated through the January 2021 census would be funded. It was hoped that the guidance would be received by the end of December 2020 as this would be required to calculate the income stream for the year. Estimates currently had to be used.

The net forecast for the block had been anticipated to be around £1m however, this had increased slightly to about £1.2m and this was a cumulative deficit. The table under section 4.1 of the report showed this in more detail.

Brian Jenkins stressed the volatility of the sector, particularly with regards to numbers. This was an issue faced on an annual basis and it was an impossible task to set near to accurate predictions.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

53 Financial Impact of Covid19 on the Early Years Block (Avril Allenby)

Avril Allenby introduced the report (Agenda Item 14) which updated the Schools' Forum on the financial impact of COVID-19 on the Early Years Funding Block. Avril Allenby explained that the report linked to the earlier report on the Early Years Block Budget.

Similar to schools, the majority of early years providers had remained open throughout the period of Covid, working with vulnerable children and children of key workers. There was a direct impact in that funding for many early years settings was split between funding from the early years Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and private income generation. Increasingly it was becoming apparent that the impact would be long term rather than short term. Avril Allenby stressed the impact of the issues being faced on vulnerable children.

Avril Allenby referred to section 3.8 of the report and highlighted that there were also other hidden costs, for example there had been no additional funding given to early years settings for PPE. There were a lot of challenges to deal with, with limited resources.

Avril Allenby drew attention to section 3.10 of the report and stated that the hours and number of total funded children for autumn 2019 had been viewed in comparison with the hours for autumn 2020. It could be seen that extended hours had dropped considerably and to some extent universal hours had dropped too. Avril Allenby explained that parents were still not accessing the same level of hours as they were prior to the pandemic. This was partly due to more parents working from home and not requiring the wrap around aspect of childcare.

Since lockdown there had been three confirmed closures of early years settings. Avril Allenby stressed that many others were struggling financially and were facing a range of issues including redundancy costs. Providers most at risk were community run settings, which were non-profit organisations.

Avril Allenby reported that settings would have been funded for the current term based on levels from the previous autumn term, which had been a great support to sector. There

SCHOOLS FORUM - 7 DECEMBER 2020 - MINUTES

was uncertainty however, regarding what would happen going forward. Positively the early years market in West Berkshire was a buoyant one and providers worked very well with the Local Authority.

Avril Allenby commented that the report gave a picture of what was being faced by the early year's sector and the difficulty of budget constraints.

Brian Jenkins reiterated his point regarding the volatility around numbers within the sector. He asked that members of the Forum use the two reports that had been presented on the Early Years sector as a tutorial regarding what the sector was faced with. Unlike schools, most of the organisations in sector were privately run with any losses impacting directly on owners. Those within the sector were being constructive in their approach and were doing their best in a very difficult situation, but were very dependent on Covid-19 being defeated. Early years settings often ran at a loss during the winter period and made up costs over the summer. As a result of Covid-19 settings had been faced with two winter periods and had missed out on the financial benefit of the summer due to it being spent in lockdown. The Early Years Funding Group were due to meet on the 14th December and would be discussing the issue again in time for the Schools' Forum meeting in January.

Maria Morgan concurred with Brian Jenkins and stressed the huge impact upon all types of settings across the board, including large settings like Victoria Park and Hungerford Nurseries. She stressed the impact on private billing, which was an issue that had been raised by MP Laura Farris in Parliament.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

54 **Scheme for Financing Schools (Melanie Ellis)**

Melanie Ellis introduced the report (Agenda Item 15), which advised of the consultation responses on the updated Scheme for Financing Schools. There had been two responses to the consultation for this area and both had been in support of the suggested amendments.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report and that the adopted Scheme for Financing Schools would be adopted from 1st April 2021.

55 **DSG Monitoring 2020/21 Month 7 (Ian Pearson)**

Ian Pearson introduced the report (Agenda Item 16), which aimed to forecast financial position of the services funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), highlighting any under or over spends, and to highlight the cumulative deficit on the DSG.

Ian Pearson drew attention to the table under section five of the report, which showed the forecast position at the end of October 2020 for each of the funding blocks. Explanations for each of the blocks was provided under sections six to nine of the report.

Section nine of the report looked at the High Needs Block and helpfully listed the main variances against expenditure. Some of the savings achieved were of high value.

RESOLVED that the Schools' Forum noted the report.

56 **Forward Plan**

The forward plan was noted.

57 **Date of the next meeting**

Monday 25th January 2021 at 5pm.

(The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and closed at 6.20 pm)

SCHOOLS FORUM - 7 DECEMBER 2020 - MINUTES

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

Agenda Item 3

Actions from previous meeting

Ref No.	Date of meeting(s) raised	Item	Action	Responsible Officer	Comment / Update
Dec20 - Ac1	7th December 2020	Actions from previous meeting - Early Years Funding	Councillor Boeck had spoken to MP Laura Farris regarding the issues raised at the Forum meeting on 19th October. The matter was being discussed at Westminster on Thursday 10th December and Councillor Boeck would share the outcome of the debate with members of the Schools' Forum.	Cllr Boeck	Education Officers and Councillor Boeck are meeting with Laura Farris on 20th January to discuss early years funding. A verbal update will be provided at the Schools' Forum meeting on 25th January 2021.

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Agenda Item 4

Schools' Forum - Declarations of Interest

Name	Key Role on the Forum	School / Organisation	Any other interests
Brian Jenkins	Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Years Representative	Proprietor – Jubilee Day Nursery	
Campbell Smith	Academy Governor Representative	St Bartholomew's School	Treasurer of St Bartholomew's School Parents' Association. Vice-Chair and Finance Governor at St Bartholomew's School.
Catie Colston	Maintained Primary Governor Representative	LA Governor at Enborne C of E Primary School	Co-Chair of Governors at St Bartholomew's School. Governor at Highwood Copse Primary School. Director of Colston Consultants, Research and Consultancy Co. Husband is Leader of Newbury Town Council.
Charlotte Wilson	Academy Headteacher Representative	Headteacher - Trinity School	
Chris Prosser	Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher – Trinity School	No other interests to declare.
David Ramsden	Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher – Little Heath School	No other interests to declare.
Emily Dawkins	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher – Garland Primary School	No other interests to declare.
Gary Upton	Trade Union Representative	NASUWT	
Gemma Piper	Academy Headteacher Representative	Kennet School	Executive Head of Kennet School Academies Trust including Kennet School, Francis Baily Primary School and Whitelands Park Primary School.
Graham Spellman	Roman Catholic Diocese Representative	Diocese of Portsmouth	No other interests to declare.
Jacque Davis	Pupil Referral Unit Representative	Headteacher – iCollege	Vice-Chair and Safeguarding Governor Basildon C of E Primary School. Secretary MD3D Ltd (SALES, SUPPORT & TECHNICAL CONSULTING IN METROLOGY DEVICES FOR HIGH ACCURACY 3D DATA)
Janet Patterson	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher – Brightwalton Primary school	

Jayne Steele	Non School Post 16 Providers	Director of Finance and Estates – Newbury College	Director, Newbury College Academy Trust Ltd (Highwood Copse Primary School).
Jon Hewitt	Maintained Special School Headteacher Representative	The Castle School	No other interests to declare.
Jonathan Chishick	Maintained Primary Governor Representative	Maintained Primary Foundation Governor at Englefield C of E Primary School	No other interests to declare.
Julia Mortimore	Academy Headteacher Representative	Headteacher - St Bartholomew's School	No other interests to declare.
Keith Harvey	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Headteacher – St Nicholas' C of E Junior School	Acting Executive Headteacher St Nicolas and St John the Evangelist Schools. Wife is a teacher at the iCollege.
Ian Nichol	Maintained Primary Governor Representative	Chair of Governing Board LA Governor, Robert Sandilands Primary and Nursery School	Parsons Down Partnership of Schools Vice Chair of Governing Board - Co-opted Governor. Victoria Park Nursery School and Children's' Centre - LA Governor. Volunteer Centre West Berkshire Trustee LGovPolicy Limited Director
Maria Morgan	Maintained Nursery Schools	Headteacher at Victoria Park Nursery School	No other interests to declare.
Hilary Latimer	Maintained Primary Headteacher Representative	Head of School Englefield C of E Primary School	No other interests to declare.
Reverend Mark Bennet	Church of England Diocese Representative	Diocese of Oxford	Appointed Governor and Kennet School.
Richard Hawthorne	Academy Headteacher Representative	Head of School John O'Gaunt, Hungerford	No other interests to declare.
Sheila Loy	Academy Governor Representative	Community Governor – Newbury Academy Trust	No other interests to declare.

Schools Funding Formula 2021/22

Report being considered by:	Schools Forum on 25 January 2021		
Report Author:	Melanie Ellis		
Item for:	Decision	By:	All School Members/PVI Representative

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To agree the final school funding formula allocations for 2021/22.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note that the 2021/22 growth fund allocation of £604k is not required for growth, as the cumulative balance on the fund is sufficient. As a result a decision needs to be made either,
- (a) To put the full 2021/22 allocation of £604k growth funding into the school formula and allocate to schools, or,
 - (b) To use £274k of the 2021/22 growth fund allocation to increase the High Needs Block transfer from 0.25% as previously agreed, to 0.5%, and put the balance of £330k into the school formula and allocate to schools. The HNB additional funding would be on a spend to save basis supporting initiatives that will support the block to reduce its annual expenditure over time.
- 2.2 To note the final formula rates and allocations to schools, subject to political ratification and allocation to schools by 28th February 2021. The allocations have been made according to the principles agreed by Schools' Forum in December and in relation to the total funding available from the Schools Block DSG allocation.

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 2021/22 is the fourth year of the National Funding Formula (NFF). As in previous years, the Local Authority (LA) continues to have discretion over their schools funding formulae, in consultation with local schools. The LA is responsible for making the final decisions on the formula. Political ratification is required for the LA to be able to issue budgets to maintained schools before the 28th February 2021.
- 3.2 A consultation was held between 21.10.20 and 11.11.20. The responses were considered by the Schools Forum in December 2020, and the following agreed:
- (1) To mirror the DfE's 2021/22 National Funding Formula to calculate the funding allocations

- (2) To award a lower increase to the schools sparsity factor in the local formula
- (3) To address any surplus or shortfall in funding by adjusting the AWPU values
- (4) To apply a top slice of 0.25% to the schools' funding, in order to support High Needs
- (5) To approve the criteria for additional funds as per the consultation
- (6) To approve the proposed de-delegations.

4. Final School Funding

4.1 The final schools block DSG funding allocation for 2021/22 is £114.83m, and after the 0.25% HNB transfer of £0.27m, there is £114.56m available for schools, comprising £113.96m pupil/premises funding and £0.6m growth funding.

Final DSG Allocation	2020/21		2021/22	
		£		£
Primary schools unit of funding (£s)	£4,088		£4,443	
Number of pupils in primary schools	13,190		13,122	
Primary funding		53,921,775		58,296,060
Secondary schools unit of funding (£s)	£5,108		£5,537	
Number of pupils in secondary schools	9,621		9,832	
Secondary funding		49,146,132		54,436,539
Premises		1,487,173		1,495,197
Growth funding		756,100		603,831
Total allocation including pay and pensions		105,311,180		114,831,627
0.25% HNB transfer		-263,285		-274,284
Total school funding		105,047,895		114,557,343

5. Growth Funding 2021/22

5.1 The main DSG funding for schools is lagged and based on pupil numbers from the previous October census. Since 2019/20, growth funding is allocated to the local authority by formula and forms part of the Schools Block DSG. The formula for allocating growth funding to each LA is based on actual growth in pupil numbers.

5.2 The growth is measured within each 'middle layer super output area' (MSOA). In West Berkshire there are 22 MSOAs. Changes in pupil numbers between October 2019 and October 2020 are identified for each MSOA, although only positive increases are counted. A growth factor value is then applied:

- (1) £1,505 for each primary growth pupil
- (2) £2,250 for each secondary growth pupil
- (3) £71,082 for each new school which opened in the previous year.

5.3 As it is within the schools block, a movement of funding between the schools formula and the growth fund is not treated as a transfer between blocks. If funding is not required for growth, it can be added into the school formula, but if there is a shortfall, this needs to be met from a top slice of the main schools' block allocation.

5.4 The cumulative balance on the growth fund was £666k at 31.3.2020. The 2020/21 DSG growth fund allocation of £756k was all put aside for growth, but with an estimated spend of £150k, the fund could total £1.27m by 31.3.2021.

Growth Fund	Budget £	Spend £	Cumulative Balance £
2018/19	280,710	87,500	193,210
2019/20	655,800	183,048	665,962
2020/21	756,100	150,000	1,272,062

5.5 The DSG growth funding allocation for 2021/22 is £604k. The projected balance of the growth fund is sufficient to meet growth, and therefore it is proposed to put all of the 2021/22 allocation into the school formula and not use it to further increase the growth fund. There are two options being proposed:

- (a) To put the full 2021/22 allocation of £604k growth funding into the school formula and allocate to schools, or,
- (b) To use £274k of the 2021/22 growth fund allocation to increase the High Needs Block transfer from 0.25% as previously agreed, to 0.5%, and put the balance of £330k into the school formula and allocate to schools. The HNB additional funding would be on a spend to save basis supporting initiatives that will support the block to reduce its annual expenditure over time.

5.6 The impact on overall school funding is shown below.

	Growth Fund increase & 0.25% transfer	A) 2021/22 No Growth Fund & 0.25% transfer	B) 2021/22 No Growth Fund & 0.5% transfer
DSG Allocation	£	£	£
Total allocation including pay and pensions	114,831,627	114,831,627	114,831,627
less Growth Fund	-603,831	0	0
	114,227,796	114,831,627	114,831,627
HNB transfer	-274,284	-274,284	-548,568
Total school funding	113,953,512	114,557,343	114,283,059

6. Formula Rates

Factor	National Rate	WBC National Rate (with ACA)	Final rate	National Rate	WBC National Rate (with ACA)	A) Rate at 0.25% transfer	B) Rate at 0.5% transfer	Final Total funding	A) Total Funding 0.25% transfer	B) Total Funding 0.5% transfer
	2020/21			2021/22				2020/21	2021/22	2021/22
Basic per pupil funding										
Primary AWPU	£2,857	£2,956	£2,941	£3,123	£3,231	£3,245	£3,230	£38,848,003	£42,643,505	£42,437,881
KS3 AWPU	£4,018	£4,157	£4,137	£4,404	£4,557	£4,569	£4,547	£24,956,306	£28,286,309	£28,149,921
KS4 AWPU	£4,561	£4,719	£4,696	£4,963	£5,135	£5,149	£5,124	£16,862,164	£18,762,507	£18,672,063
Minimum per pupil										
Primary	£3,750			£4,180						
Secondary	£5,000			£5,415						
Additional needs funding										
Deprivation										
Primary FSM	£450	£466	£466	£460	£476	£476	£476	£4,042,914	£4,459,755	£4,459,755
Secondary FSM	£450	£466	£466	£460	£476	£476	£476			
Primary FSM6	£560	£579	£579	£575	£595	£595	£595			
Secondary FSM6	£815	£843	£843	£840	£869	£869	£869			
Primary IDACI A	£600	£621	£621	£620	£642	£642	£642			
Primary IDACI B	£435	£450	£450	£475	£491	£491	£491			
Primary IDACI C	£405	£419	£419	£445	£460	£460	£460			
Primary IDACI D	£375	£388	£388	£410	£424	£424	£424			
Primary IDACI E	£250	£259	£259	£260	£269	£269	£269			
Primary IDACI F	£210	£217	£217	£215	£222	£222	£222			
Secondary IDACI A	£840	£869	£869	£865	£895	£895	£895			
Secondary IDACI B	£625	£647	£647	£680	£704	£704	£704			
Secondary IDACI C	£580	£600	£600	£630	£652	£652	£652			
Secondary IDACI D	£535	£554	£554	£580	£600	£600	£600			
Secondary IDACI E	£405	£419	£419	£415	£429	£429	£429			
Secondary IDACI F	£300	£310	£310	£310	£321	£321	£321			
Low Prior Attainment										
Primary LPA	£1,065	£1,102	£1,102	£1,095	£1,133	£1,133	£1,133	£3,879,823	£3,754,603	£3,754,603
Secondary LPA	£1,610	£1,666	£1,686	£1,660	£1,718	£1,718	£1,718	£3,373,235	£3,693,631	£3,693,631
English as an Additional Language										
Primary EAL	£535	£554	£554	£550	£569	£569	£569	£469,603	£458,637	£458,637
Secondary EAL	£1,440	£1,490	£1,490	£1,485	£1,537	£1,537	£1,537	£136,152	£125,342	£125,342
Mobility										
Primary Mobility	£875	£905	£905	£900	£931	£931	£931	£53,507	£19,555	£19,555
Secondary Mobility	£1,250	£1,293	£1,293	£1,290	£1,335	£1,335	£1,335	£0	£0	£0
School led funding										
Lump Sum										
Primary	£114,400	£118,370	£118,370	£117,800	£121,885	£121,885	£121,885	£9,065,145	£9,334,360	£9,334,360
Secondary	£114,400	£118,370	£118,370	£117,800	£121,885	£121,885	£121,885			
Sparsity										
Primary	£26,000	£26,902	£26,902	£45,000	£46,562	£35,000	£35,000	£193,689	£257,078	£257,078
Secondary	£67,600	£69,946	£69,946	£70,000	£72,428	£72,428	£72,428			
Premises										
Primary	18/19 estimate			19/20 estimate				£1,495,196	£1,566,240	£1,566,240
Secondary	18/19 estimate			19/20 estimate						
Total Allocation (excluding minimum per pupil funding level and MFG funding total)								£103,375,737	£113,361,523	£112,929,067
Additional funding to meet the minimum funding level								£777,576	£1,061,934	£1,202,627
Total Allocation including minimum funding adj								£104,153,313	£114,423,457	£114,131,694
MFG adjustment								£138,484	£133,887	£151,366
Post MFG budget								£104,291,797	£114,557,344	£114,283,060
Growth fund								£756,100	£0	£0
Total for Schools Block allocation								£105,047,897	£114,557,344	£114,283,060
Transfer to High Needs Block								£263,285	£274,284	£548,568
DSG Schools Block DfE allocation								£105,311,182	£114,831,628	£114,831,628

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Central Schools' Services Block Budget 2021/22

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum on 25th January 2021

Report Author: Melanie Ellis/Ian Pearson/Lisa Potts

Item for: Discussion **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set out the budget proposal for services funded from the Central Schools' Services (CSSB) block of the DSG and to propose measures to enable the budget for this block to be balanced.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To agree to the 2021/22 budget for the Central Schools Services Block.

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 The Schools Funding Regulations for 2018/19 introduced a new Central Schools' Services Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This block consists of centrally retained services:

- (1) Admissions, licences and servicing of Schools' Forum, which were previously funded from the Schools Block, and
- (2) Education welfare, asset management, and statutory & regulatory duties, which were previously funded from the Education Services grant which was withdrawn in 2017/18.

- 3.2 The CSSB covers funding allocated to Local Authorities (LAs) to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies in England. All the services funded by this block are statutory and have to be carried out.

- 3.3 The final allocation of funding for the Central Schools Services Block for 2021/22 is £1,009,288 which is an increase of 5% on the previous year.

4. Budget Requirement for the Central Schools Services Block

- 4.1 The following table shows the budget requirement for the services that fall within the Central Schools Services Block for 2021/22 compared to 2020/21.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)		2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget Requirement	Increase/Decrease	Change
		£	£	£	%
	Budget Requirement:				
1	School Admissions	213,020	216,663	3,643	2%
2	National Copyright Licences	140,190	150,494	10,304	7%
3	Servicing of Schools Forum	51,290	52,640	1,350	3%
4	Education Welfare	214,890	203,900	-10,990	-5%
5	Statutory & Regulatory Duties:				
a	Provision of Education Data	207,510	213,089	5,579	3%
b	Finance Support for the Education Service	84,060	81,071	-2,989	-4%
c	Strategic Planning of the Education Service	96,770	99,900	3,130	3%
	Total Budget Requirement	1,007,730	1,017,756	10,026	1%

4.2 For 2021/22, costs have increased overall by 1% or £10k. There have been staff reductions in Finance support and the Education Welfare Service. The Support Service Recharges have been reallocated accordingly.

4.3 The cost of copyright license for schools is determined by the relevant national agencies. Details of all the other services included in the Central Schools Services Block (including a breakdown of costs) is given in Appendix A.

5. Funding

5.1 There has been a funding shortfall on the block since it was established.

- (1) In 2018/19, the shortfall was £251k and was balanced by transfers from Early Years and High Needs blocks and one off Council funding.
- (2) For 2019/20, costs were brought down by £135k, mainly from staffing reductions, and the block was balanced using under spends and some remaining ESG funding.
- (3) The 2020/21 grant funding for the CSSB reduced by £24k to £952k. This was balanced following a review of all the budgets and removing £9k of services budgets as well as re-coding staff time. There was an underspend from 2019/20 of £54k which will be used to off-set the in year budget shortfall of £49k.
- (4) For 2021/22, the final grant allocation is £50,562 higher than 2020/21, which is a 5% increase.

5.2 The table below shows how the block has been balanced.

Central Schools' Services Block Budget 2021/22

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget Requirement	Increase/ Decrease from 20/21	Change
	£	£	£	£	%
Total Budget Requirement	1,108,030	1,007,729	1,017,756	10,026	1%
Funding:					
Central Schools Services Block DSG	-976,226	-958,730	-1,009,288	50,558	5%
Underspends from CSSB 20/21			-8,468		
Copyright underspend 18/19 & 17/18 cf	-53,155				
Capita 1 underspend 18/19	-15,000				
Release of ESG unutilised grant	-63,649	-49,000			
Total Funding	-1,108,030	-1,007,730	-1,017,756		
Balance	0	0	0		

Appendix A

Details and Costs of Central Schools' Services

	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2021/22 £
School Admissions			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Administration of admissions process for maintained schools and academies			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Service Manager	1.00	5%	
Admissions and Transport Manager	1.00	80%	
Admissions Officers	2.50	80%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			137,670
Employee Expenses			18,700
Supplies and Services			1,320
Capita One recharge			22,221
Support Service Recharges			36,751
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR ADMISSIONS			216,663
Servicing the Schools Forum			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Setting agendas, minute taking, co-ordination and distribution of papers for Schools Forum and its sub groups			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Head of Education	1.00	10.00%	
Schools Finance Team	2.46	5% to 10%	
Schools Forum Clerk			
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			43,680
Room hire, consumables and members expenses			1,610
Support Service Recharges			7,350
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR SERVICING THE SCHOOLS FORUM			52,640

	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2021/22 £
Education Welfare			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Tracking of children who can be legally removed from the school roll.			
Monitoring of elective home education.			
Issuing and monitoring of child work permits and performance licences.			
Attendance at core group meetings for specific pupils			
Advice on keeping registers			
Progress cases to court where appropriate. Maintain up to date knowledge of legal processes and			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Principal Education Welfare and Safeguarding Officer	1.00	40%	
Senior Education Welfare Officer	0.40	90%	
Education Welfare Officers	4.30	35%	
Assistant Education Welfare Officer	1.00	100%	
Administrative Assistant	0.40	100%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			151,743
Employee expenses/car allowances			6,150
Other non staffing costs			3,380
Income from fines			-11,350
Capita One Recharges			9,877
Support Service Recharges			44,101
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR EDUCATION WELFARE			203,901
Provision of Education Data			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Statutory returns to DfE			
Data analysis and reporting e.g. Exam results, performance			
School census administration and reports			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Staffing	2.00	100%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			96,950
Capita One recharge			101,438
Support Service Recharges			14,700
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR PROVISION OF EDUCATION DATA			213,089

	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2021/22 £
Finance Support for the Education Service			
Description of Statutory Duties covered			
DSG services budget preparation, monitoring, and year end			
Education services budget preparation, monitoring, and year end			
School funding formula and early years funding formula			
Administration of funding allocations to all schools for early years and high needs			
Statutory returns e.g. APT, S251, CFO deployment of DSG			
Staffing Structure			
Chief Mgt Accountant	1.00	5%	
Education Finance Manager	0.81	15%	
Education Senior Accountant	0.61	50%	
Education Accountant	0.50	75%	
Accountant	1.00	50%	
Breakdown of Costs			
Staff salary costs			59,020
Support Service Recharges			22,051
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR FINANCE SUPPORT			81,071
	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2021/22 £
Strategic Planning of the Education Service			
Description of Statutory Duties covered			
Strategic planning and management of the Education service as a whole			
Staffing Structure			
Head of Education	1.00	80%	
Other staffing	1.00	42%	
Breakdown of Costs			
Staff salary costs			97,100
Other staff costs			2,800
Support Service Recharges			0
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR PLANNING OF EDUCATION SERVICE			99,900

Growth Fund 2020/21 Payments

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 25th January 2021

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Item for: Decision **By:** All School Members/PVI Representative

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To review the growth fund applications and decide whether to award payments to schools from the growth fund in 2020/21.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To vote on the applications made to the growth fund for 2020/21

<b style="color: #008080;">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 Growth funding is based on a formula and is within the Local Authorities' Schools Block DSG allocation. As it is within the schools block, a movement of funding between the schools formula and the growth fund is not treated as a transfer between blocks. Therefore, if the funding is not required for growth, it can be added into the school formula.

3.2 The purpose of the growth fund is to support maintained schools and Academies which are *required* to provide extra places in order to meet basic need within the authority, and to meet the cost of new and reorganised schools including pre-opening and diseconomy costs. It can also fund schools where very limited pupil number growth requires an additional class *as set out by infant class size regulations*. It cannot be used for general growth in pupil numbers.

3.3 The growth fund is also to support new schools with pre-opening costs and diseconomies of scale. We have a commitment to pay for the opening of the new school Highwood Copse.

3.4 Following the receipt of the final October 2020 Census data, all schools were invited to make a funding request if they felt that their circumstances met the growth fund

Growth Fund 2020/21

criteria. To support their applications, schools were asked to submit information regarding increases in class and teacher numbers between the two academic years. Only growth in relation to basic need requirements in the area (and thus increases in PAN or bulge years approved by the local authority for this purpose) qualifies for this funding.

4. Applications Made 2020/21

- 4.1 Only one school applied for growth funding: Whitelands Park Primary School, which is part of the Kennet School Academies Trust.
- 4.2 The basis of the Whitelands Park application is 'Extra class in September to meet basic need'. There is an increase of 17 pupils overall. However, the school has not agreed with the authority to provide an extra class in order to meet basic need in the area and, therefore, this criteria is not met.
- 4.3 Whitelands Park has a PAN of 60 and this has not changed. The school had been running with 2 classes per year group with the exception of one year group that was particularly small (varying as it progressed in the school from 30 to 32 for the last 3 years). This year group was managed as one class but has now moved to secondary school and therefore the total number of pupils at the school has increased.
- 4.4 The expectation is that where schools are operating below their PAN and see an increase in pupil numbers within their existing capacity, essentially growing back towards their planned admission number, that this would be managed within their lagged funding.
- 4.5 The school has employed an additional teacher from September and are running, therefore, with 2 classes per year group. Based on the pupil numbers, a decision could have been made to operate with 3 mixed year classes (in years 4 and 5) for one year until the lagged funding was in place.
- 4.6 Although the Whitelands Park application does not meet the 2020/21 growth fund criteria, the lagged funding is significant in value and as an academy will take a year to 'catch up'. Based upon the pupil-led school's funding data 2020/21 this would amount to a funding shortfall £59,630 (£3,507 x 17 pupils) for the academic year. Therefore, a decision needs to be made concerning the schools access to the growth fund.

5. Budget and Payments 2020/21

- 5.1 The growth fund awarded for 2020/21 was £756,100.
- 5.2 The criteria for growth fund 2020/21 states that 'Funding will be total Basic Needs Entitlement per additional pupil in the new class up to a maximum of £60,000 per class (approx. 20 pupils in primary, 14 pupils in secondary) pro rata for the remainder of the financial year. £60,000 will pay for a full time teacher at mid scale, a term time

Growth Fund 2020/21

only Teaching Assistant, and approximately £9,000 for other costs. (Academies are paid a full year).’

- 5.3 If the decision was made to pay growth funding for Whitelands Park at 17 pupils, the allocation would be £50,252 (17 pupils @ £2,956).
- 5.4 We also have a commitment to pay for the start-up costs of Highwood Copse, which will be opening in September 2021. The Growth Fund criteria states that funding will be actual cost of staff appointed and in post prior to the opening of the new school up to a maximum of £75,000, plus a fixed one-off lump sum of £25,000 for all other purchases necessary before the school opens.
- 5.5 It has been agreed by Schools’ Forum that any unspent balance on the growth fund will be carried forward and added to next year’s growth fund, to ensure that there is enough funding being built up for future growth and in order to provide funding for the new primary school, Highwood Copse.

Appendix A

Growth Fund Calculation 2020/21

Whitelands Park Primary School									
Please tick the box that forms the basis of your application									
a)	Extra class in September to meet basic need							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
b)	Increase in Admission number in September by 5 or more to meet basic need							<input type="checkbox"/>	
c)	Infant Class size - Additional class required in autumn term as total number of R, yr 1 and yr 2 pupils has now exceeded a multiple of 30							<input type="checkbox"/>	
Year Group:	Pupil Numbers			No. of Classes			No. of Teachers FTE		
	Oct-20	Oct-19	Change	Oct-20	Oct-19	Change	Oct-20	Oct-19	Change
Reception	60	48	12	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 1	45	59	-14	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 2	59	57	2	2	2	0	2	2	0
SUB TOTAL Infant Cls	164	164	0	6	6	0	6	6	0
Year 3	53	50	3	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 4	47	43	4	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 5	42	52	-10	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 6	52	32	20	2	1	1	2	1	1
TOTAL All Classes	358	341	17	14	13	1	14	13	1

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High Needs Block Budget 2021/22			
Report being considered by:	Schools Forum 25 th January 2021		
Report Author:	Ian Pearson, Jane Seymour, Michelle Sancho, Linda Curtis		
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 2020/21, the position known so far for 2021/22, including the likely shortfall, together with savings options for 2021-22 and recommendations on the continuation of Invest to Save projects agreed by the Schools Forum for 2020-21.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the predicted shortfall
- 2.2 To consider savings options
- 2.3 To consider recommendations on Invest to Save projects

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, in spite of the threshold for an EHCP remaining the same and being applied robustly.

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. The budget set for 2019/20 included a planned overspend of £1.6M. The budget set for 2020/21 included a planned overspend of £1.18m.

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 The Local Authority's statutory duties for children with SEND are effectively open ended in that if a child requires an EHC Plan it must be provided regardless of budgetary constraints. Criteria for initiating an Education, Health and Care assessment are robustly applied by the SEN Panel (which has Headteacher representation on it). EHC assessment requests are only agreed if there is clear evidence that the child has complex and persistent needs which persist in spite of the school having followed the "graduated approach" set out in the SEND Code of Practice, and having invested its own resources to support the child. However, in spite of robust management of demand, the number of children with EHCPs continues to rise. The total number of EHCPs has risen from 822 in 2015 to 1078 in 2020, an increase of 31%. Appendix D shows that most of this increase is in EHCPs in specialist placements rather than mainstream schools, which is primarily what is driving the HNB budget pressure. The increase by 41% in non maintained and independent special school placements during this period is also having a significant financial impact.

3.6 The creation of more local provision for children with SEMH and autism, through the SEND Strategy, will alleviate these pressures to some extent as local maintained provision will be more cost effective than independent and non maintained provision. However, it is also critical that mainstream schools are supported to maintain more children with SEND in mainstream settings if the HNB overspend is to be effectively addressed. This includes in particular children with SEMH and autism. The invest to save projects set out in section 6 of this report aim to reduce exclusions and demand from schools for children to be placed in alternative specialist placements.

3.7 Tables 2, 3, 4 and 5 in Appendix A show where the predicted 2021-22 costs exceed 2020-21 budgets.

3.8 There will be an in year import / export adjustment to the HNB budget which is difficult to estimate at this stage. The current year import / export adjustment was £24,000

3.9 The net shortfall in the 2021-22 HNB budget, is **£3,960,618**. This includes a predicted 20/21 overspend of £1,037,198 and carried forward overspends of £1,279,122 in 19/20 and of £521,000 in 18/19. (Total carried forward overspend of £2,837,320). Without the carried forward overspends, the shortfall in 21-22 would be **£1,123,298**.

3.10 The increase can be explained as follows:

- Overspend of £521,000 in 2018-19, carried forward
- Overspend of £1,279,122 in 2019-20, carried forward.
- Estimated overspend of £1,037,198 in 2020-21, carried forward
- Additional anticipated pressures in 21-22, over and above the deficit budget set in 2020-21, which relate to mainly to top up funding for children with EHCPs in a variety of settings. See Appendix A sections 2 and 3 below for more detail.

3.11 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

3.12 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.

3.13 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 2020/21 and 2021/22 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 2020 census, and import/export adjustments based on the January 2020 census and February 2020 ILR.

TABLE 1	2020/21 Budget £	2020/21 Forecast £	2021/22 Estimate £
Place Funding	6,082,000	6,082,000	6,141,000
Top Up Funding	12,865,755	12,772,712	14,566,950
PRU Funding (top ups only)	1,375,920	1,455,796	1,393,370
Other Statutory Services	1,541,640	1,550,544	1,621,260
Non Statutory Services	1,063,270	944,120	1,111,530

Support Service Recharges	186,330	186,330	188,790
Total Expenditure	23,114,920	22,991,502	25,022,900

HNB DSG Allocation	-21,667,304	-21,691,304	-23,625,318
0.25% Schools Block Transfer	-263,285	-263,000	-274,284
In year overspend	1,184,331	1,037,198	1,123,298
HNB DSG Overspend from previous year	1,800,122	1,800,122	2,837,320
Total cumulative deficit	2,984,453	2,837,320	3,960,618

4.3 There is a forecast shortfall of **£1,123,298** in the 2021/22 HNB which may change as the budgets continue to be finalised.

4.4 Proposals for savings will be brought to the next meeting of the HFG / Schools' Forum. Any savings are likely to have to come from non statutory services, though the impact on statutory budgets will need to be taken in to consideration.

4.5 A consultation took place with schools in November 2020 on whether to transfer 0%, 0.25% or 0.5% from the Schools Block to the HNB. This was voted on and confirmed at the last Schools Forum meeting as 0.25%, which amounts to £274k.

Appendix A sets out the detail of the budgets included within the High Needs Block, and the reasons for the pressure on the 2020-21 HNB budget.

5. Appendices

Appendix A – High Needs Budget detail

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 FE 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 was 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 FE colleges, a request can be made to the ESFA. However, any additional places agreed would be top sliced from West Berkshire's HNB allocation in 2021-22; no additional funding is made available.
- 1.3 In total the allocated planned places in 2020-21 are 723 (see Table 1 below).
- 1.4 Requests have been made for an increase of 15 post 16 places in academies in 21-22, but this is offset by a reduction of 3 pre 16 places in academy resourced schools, so the net increase is 12. This net increase reflects an increase in placements in resourced provision in academies.
- 1.5 The increases and reductions in planned places for 21-22 are shown below by establishment.

Establishment	Current planned places	Proposed planned places	Change
Fir Tree ASD	7	8	+1
Trinity ASD/SpLD	49	54	-1 Pre 16 +6 Post 16 Net +5
Kennet PD/Hi	32	36	-2 Pre 16 +6 Post 16 Net +4
St. Bart's Post 16	3	5	+2
Total	93	105	+12

- 1.6 Planned places at establishments not listed above will remain the same for 2021-22.
- 1.7 It is not possible to increase planned places in maintained schools unless there are surplus planned places available for reallocation, which is not the case. There is a shortfall in planned places for children with EHCPs attending West Berkshire maintained special schools and PRUs, so this funding will need to be taken from the maintained special school and PRU EHCP top up budgets, creating additional pressure in those areas.

TABLE 1 - Place Funding Budget	2020/21 Budget			2021/22 Estimated Budget		
	No. of Places	£	Current No. of Pupils	Proposed No. of Places	£	Difference in number
Special Schools pre 16 (90540) –	286	2,860,000	409	286	2,860,000	0
Special Schools post 16 (90546) –	79	790,000		79	790,000	0
Resource Units Maintained pre 16 (90584) –	35	230,000	30	35	242,000	0
Resource Units Academies pre 16 (DSG top slice) –	103	684,000	101	101	634,000	-2
Mainstream Maintained post 16 –	5	25,000	6	5	38,000	0
Mainstream Academies post 16 (DSG top slice) –	16	96,000	19	30	180,000	+14
Further Education	133	737,000		133	737,000	-6
PRU Place Funding (90320)	66	660,000	72	66	660,000	0
TOTAL	723	6,082,000		735	6,141,000	+12

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 2020/21 and the estimate for 2021/22.

TABLE 2	2019/20 Budget		2020/21 Budget			2021/22	Difference 20/21 budget & 21/22 prediction
Top Up Budgets	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 9)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	
Special Schools Maintained (90539)	3,463,450	3,749,817	3,986,360	4,122,320	135,960	4,275,750	+289,390
Non WBC special schools (90548)	1,065,960	920,557	1,194,300	966,165	-228,135	1,324,500	+130,200
Resource Units Maintained (90617)	270,350	312,583	313,650	291,220	-22,430	314,000	+350
Resource Units Academies (90026)	946,530	826,870	948,280	979,460	31,180	1,058,470	+110,190
Resource Units Non WBC (90618)	143,580	164,744	130,600	162,974	32,374	170,540	+39,940
Mainstream Maintained (90621)	667,330	822,349	779,450	796,680	17,230	818,660	+39,210

Mainstream Academies (90622)	267,460	360,616	389,600	398,366	8,766	423,560	33,960
Mainstream Non WBC (90624)	73,030	79,555	70,590	138,450	67,860	160,510	89,920
Non Maintained Special Schools (90575)	1,030,380	911,178	1,068,200	1,008,830	-59,370	1,007,880	-60,320
Independent Special Schools (90579)	2,683,020	2,205,989	2,797,000	2,837,582	40,582	3,535,280	738,280
Further Education (90580)	1,408,870	1,141,252	1,087,730	1,039,405	-48,325	1,437,800	350,070
Disproportionate HN Pupils (90627)	100,000	68,001	100,000	31,260	-68,740	40,000	-60,000
TOTAL	12,119,960	11,563,511	12,865,760	12,772,712	-93,048	14,566,950	+1,701,190

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
- Maintained special schools
- Resource units academies
- Mainstream non West Berkshire
- Non West Berkshire special schools
- Resource units non West Berkshire
- Mainstream maintained
- Mainstream academies

2.3 However, there are also savings on two of the top up cost centres:

- Non maintained special schools
- Disproportionate high needs budget

2.4 The predictions of cost for 2021-22 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 2021-22. The figures assume a middle ground between the best case scenario and the worst case scenario (financially) in terms of Tribunal outcomes.

2.5 Independent special schools

This is by far the greatest pressure in the top up budgets. The pressure reflects a number of factors including the fact that some highly complex children have needed to be placed in very expensive placements in 20-21 and so have only incurred part year

costs this year, but will incur full year costs in 21-22. In addition there are a number of children with very complex SEMH (including ASD in some cases) who are very likely to need specialist places in 21-22. A number of these children would be suitable for the new planned SEMH/ASD provision but it is not possible for their current placements to be sustained until the new provision is available. Every effort is being made to avoid independent specialist school placements if it is possible to do so, but realistically the chances of doing so are low.

2.6 **West Berkshire maintained special schools**

This pressure reflects increasing numbers in our special schools, the need to compensate for inadequate planned place funding through the top up budget and some very high needs pupils needing additional support to maintain their placements. As there is no additional planned place funding for special schools, the extra planned place funding has been allowed for in this budget. Historically, special schools have only been paid £7,500 per extra place over and above the ESFA agreed planned places, which has placed an increasing strain on special schools as their numbers have increased. It is proposed that special schools from 2021-22 should be paid the full £10,000 for each additional place, which has been allowed for in the projected 2021-22 costs. *In addition, it should be noted that the special schools have put forward a case for further additional funding which will need to be considered. It is proposed that this should be the subject of a report to the next HFG / Schools Forum.*

2.7 **Resource Units Academies**

This pressure reflects a small number of young people with extremely complex physical disabilities attending our PD resourced provisions who would otherwise be in much more costly specialist placements. It also includes increased funding for several other children in our PD resources, as the needs of this cohort have become much more complex over time. In addition, the Fir Tree ASD Resource has been increasing its numbers up to the full capacity agreed when it was set up.

2.8 **Mainstream top ups (non- West Berkshire schools)**

This increase reflects a higher number of families opting for cross border secondary placements, including two high cost young people who might otherwise be in specialist provision.

2.9 **Non West Berkshire special schools**

This budget funds placements in special schools maintained by other Local Authorities and also special Free Schools. The increase is due to 4 students needing to move in to SEMH provision, including three currently in I-College and one currently in mainstream.

2.10 **Resource units (non- West Berkshire)**

This increase reflects one additional student requiring a place at The Rise ASD provision in Bracknell.

2.11 **Mainstream top ups (maintained and academies)**

This increase is due to a small increase in the number of EHCPs in mainstream schools, combined with an increase in the average cost of an EHCP.

2.12 **FE Colleges**

The figures above assume the same level of budget requirement for FE College placements in 21-22 as currently. More detailed work is being done on this and it is

possible that the budget requirement will be lower. An updated figure will be included in the next report to the HFG / Schools Forum on the HNB.

3. PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS (PRU) – STATUTORY

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

TABLE 3	2019/20 Budget		2020/21 Budget			2021/22	
PRU Budgets	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 9)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	Difference 20/21 budget & 21/22 prediction
PRU Top Up Funding (90625)	757,700	871,370	818,400	884,346	65,946	821,920	+3,520
PRU EHCP SEMH Placements (90628)	331,400	505,724	557,520	571,450	13,930	571,460	+13,940
Non WBC PRU Top Up Funding (90626)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,089,100	1,377,094	1,375,920	1,389,850	13,930	1,393,370	+17,450

3.2 The current year budget was based on the previous year's forecast. Schools Forum agreed to pilot a 50% contribution from schools for pupils that they placed. Heads have requested that this contribution remains until a review in March 2022. 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 21/22 PRU Top Up Funding is based on the profile of pupils at I-College in the summer term.

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. A new provision for pupils with EHCPs was set up in autumn 2019, The Pod. These placements are usually 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 Other Statutory Services	2019/20 Budget		2020/21 Budget			2021/22	Difference 19/20 budget & 20/21 prediction
	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 9)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	
Applied Behaviour Analysis (90240)	119,120	136,178	136,580	164,935	28,355	150,470	+13,890
Sensory Impairment (90290)	236,000	228,079	227,590	245,633	18,043	247,860	+20,270
SEN Commissioned Provision (90577)	527,150	515,446	567,650	567,041	-609	584,480	+16,830
Equipment for SEN Pupils (90565)	15,000	8,429	15,000	26,258	11,258	15,000	0
Therapy Services (90295)	261,470	244,291	261,470	259,327	-2,143	314,500	+53,030
Elective home Education Monitoring (90288)	28,240	21,603	28,240	28,240	0	28,240	0
Home Tuition Service (90315)	102,080	71,277	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Home Tuition (90282)	119,920	90,601	205,000	159,000	-46,000	172,730	-32,270
Hospital Tuition (90610)	36,000	16,345	39,050	39,050	0	39,280	+230
SEND Strategy (DSG) (90281)	56,200	33,015	61,060	61,060	0	68,700	+7,640
TOTAL	1,501,180	1,365,264	1,541,640	1,550,544	8,904	1,621,260	+79,620

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 an increase in Personal Budgets.

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 The budget requirement will be higher next year due to increased teachers' pay and pension costs.

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 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 2020-21 relates to the contract having been retendered in January 2020. The previous cost had remained fixed for several years under the previous contract so an inflationary increase was necessary. There have also been increased premises costs.

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 budget of £10,000 would be made available to meet these needs. In 2019-20 it was agreed that the budget should be increased again to £15,000 as demand for equipment for children in nurseries and resourced schools was increasing. The budget will overspend this year, mainly due to one exceptionally high need student in one of our PD resources. It is recommended that the budget stays the same for 2021-22 as although this is a budget which does come under pressure, we have successfully negotiated with Health to fund 50% of specialist seating in schools in future which should reduce pressure on this budget.

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. The service is commissioned from the Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust.

4.6.3 We are currently in the process of extending the contract for one year with a view to a potential joint commissioning arranging with other neighbouring Local Authorities at the end of the 12 month period.

4.6.4 The costs for 2021-22 are the provider's estimated costs for next year and have not yet been agreed, so this figure may reduce. The contract price has been fixed since 2018 so some uplift for increased staffing costs will be reasonable. The provider has also requested an additional part time post due to the increasing volume of Tribunal cases which require involvement of a speech and language or occupational therapist. This is still under discussion.

4.7 **Elective Home Education (EHE) Monitoring**

4.7.1 There is a statutory duty for Local Authorities to monitor arrangements for EHE made by parents. The EHE monitoring sits within the Education Welfare and Safeguarding

Service. The Elective Home Education Officer is 0.6fte and was a new post for September 2019. EHE numbers have been growing, both locally and nationally over recent years but September and October 2020 have seen a steep rise in numbers due to COVID-19. In September 2019, eleven students were deregistered from schools; September 2020 saw 34 students deregistered.

4.8 Medical Tuition Service

4.8.1 The Medical Tuition Service (previously Home Tuition Service) is a statutory service providing home tuition to children with medical conditions and illness that prevent them accessing full-time school. This service was moved from i-College to the Local Authority with effect from September 2019 with savings and the following year's budget already agreed by Schools' Forum. £40K saving has been achieved as a result of transferring this service in house. Further savings have been proposed for 21/22

4.9 Hospital Tuition

4.9.1 The Local Authority is 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. As numbers and costs are impossible to predict, it is proposed that the 2021-22 budget remains the same as 2020-21. There is a small increase due to inflation increases in salaries for the proportion of staff time administering this service

4.10 SEND Strategy Officer

4.10.1 In 2019-20 the Schools Forum agreed to fund a SEND Strategy Officer for three years initially to support implementation of the SEND Strategy 2018-23. Agreement was given by the Schools Forum in October 2020 that this post could be made permanent in order to attract and retain candidates of a suitable calibre.

5 NON STATUTORY Services

5.10 **Table 5** details the non-statutory service budgets for 2019-20, 2020-21, and estimates for 2021-22. 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.

5.11 The table shows the budget for these services in 2021/22 assuming that the services continue and there are no changes to staffing levels.

5.12 Table 5 also includes ongoing funding for the "invest to save" initiatives agreed in 2020-21; an increase in the Vulnerable Children Grant and investment in the Therapeutic Thinking initiative in order to ensure it is sustainable.

TABLE 5	2019/20 Budget		2020/21 Budget			2021/22	
Non Statutory Services	Budget £	Outturn £	Budget £	Forecast £ (Month 9)	Over/ (under) £	Estimate £	Difference 20/21 budget & 21/22 prediction
Language and Literacy Centres LALs (90555)	98,400	81,595	116,200	116,200	0	122,000	+5,800
Specialist Inclusion Support Service (90585)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	0	50,000	0
PRU Outreach Service (90582)	61,200	61,200	61,200	61,200	0	61,200	0
Early Years Inclusion Fund (90238) moved to EY Block	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Needs Support Team (90280)	325,660	319,240	308,130	308,130	0	328,100	+19,970
ASD Advisory Service (90830)	146,210	153,307	208,390	157,240	-51,150	229,970	+21,580
Vulnerable Children (90961)	50,000	50,000	179,400	129,400	-50,000	179,400	0
Early Development and Inclusion Team (90287)	40,000	40,000	51,950	39,950	-12,000	56,560	+4,610
Dingley's Promise (90581)	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	0	30,000	0
Therapeutic Thinking (90372)	0	0	58,000	52,000	-6,000	54,300	-3,700
TOTAL	801,470	785,342	1,063,270	944,120	-119,150	1,111,530	+48,260

5.13 Language and Literacy Centres (LALs)

5.13.1 In September 2018, charges were introduced for placements at the Language and Literacy Centres at Theale and Winchcombe schools. Charges were based on 50% of the real cost of the place. These charges were introduced in order to alleviate pressure on the High Needs Block.

5.13.2 The LALs can provide 48 places per year for Year 5 students who have persistent difficulties with literacy and need an intensive programme delivered by a teacher qualified in specific literacy difficulties. Outcomes data for pupils who have attended the LALs shows that they make very significant progress prior to returning to Year 6 and then transitioning to secondary school.

5.13.3 Prior to the introduction of charging, all 48 LAL places were taken up every year. When charging was introduced, the number of children accessing the LALs reduced to 33 in 2018 and 26 in 2019.

5.13.4 A survey of primary school head teachers clearly demonstrated that a large number of primary schools would have liked to refer pupils to LAL but could not afford to do so. 77% of schools who responded said that they had referred

children to LAL in the three years prior to charging being introduced, but only 36% had made referrals since charging was introduced. A number of schools commented that they would like to refer to LAL but the charge was prohibitively expensive, especially for small schools.

5.13.5 There is some evidence that the reduction in children being able to access LAL is linked to an increase in requests for EHCPs and an increase in potential appeals to the SEND Tribunal for places in specialist schools for children with dyslexia, with associated costs.

5.13.6 It is also possible that secondary schools will begin to see an impact of the reduction in children accessing LAL in terms of literacy levels of Year 7 cohorts and the numbers of children needing intensive support for literacy.

5.13.7 It was therefore agreed in 2020-21 that the charges for LAL places would be removed so that all children who need this provision can access it and in order to avoid pressure for EHCPs and specialist placements for children with literacy difficulties.

5.13.8 The increase proposed to the LAL budgets relates to the budgets not currently meeting costs of the host schools. In previous years this has been covered off by carried forward amounts but these funds have now been exhausted.

5.14 Specialist Inclusion Support Service

5.14.1 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.

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

5.15 PRU Outreach

5.15.1 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.

5.16 Cognition and Learning Team

5.16.1 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.

5.16.2 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.

5.16.3 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.

5.16.4 The additional cost represents teachers' salary increases, pension and NI.

5.17 ASD Advisory Service

5.17.1 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.

5.17.2 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.

5.17.3 In 2020-21 it was agreed that there would be investment in the service to provide two HLTAs. Recruitment to these posts was delayed due to Covid 19, but both posts have now been filled successfully and staff will start in January.

5.17.4 The increase in cost represents teachers' salary increases, pension and NI, plus a vacancy being filled by a teacher on UPS (previous post holder not on UPS).

5.17.5 *See also section 6: Invest to Save Projects 2020-21*

5.18 Vulnerable Children

5.18.1 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.

5.18.2 The budget was gradually reduced from £120K over a number of years. This has always been a well used resource that helps schools support vulnerable pupils with complex needs.

5.18.3 It was agreed in 2020-21 that this budget would be increased, as an invest to save initiative, in order to support the roll out of Therapeutic Thinking in West Berkshire schools.

5.18.4 It is proposed that the increase agreed in 2020-21 is maintained in 2021-22. This would be the equivalent of using one year's funding for three permanently excluded pupils to attend the PRU. This additional sum would have the potential to support approximately 20 pupils and help prevent exclusions for each of them.

5.18.5 *See also section 6: Invest to Save Projects 2020-21*

5.19 Early Development and Inclusion Team

5.19.1 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.

5.19.2 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.

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

5.20 Dingley's Promise

5.20.1 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 year's settings, where experience and expertise in SEND can vary greatly. Parents are able to take up their early year's 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.

5.20.2 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. 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.

5.21 Therapeutic Thinking Officer

5.21.1 Over 120 school staff and West Berkshire employees have attended engagement days which helped them to understand how to support children and young people in schools in a trauma informed way. In addition, over 70 school staff and LA employees attended three day train the trainer training in order to upskill themselves to deliver training in therapeutic thinking in their own settings. Other local authorities that have adopted a similar approach have seen impressive outcomes. For example, one local authority found that in schools where head teachers were trained as trainers there was a 60% reduction in fixed term exclusions, an 89.5% reduction in exclusion days and no permanent exclusions. This was achieved within a year.

5.21.2 Both the engagement day training and the 3 day training have been evaluated positively. The evaluation is outlined below.

5.21.3 The Therapeutic Thinking Invest to Save Project have had a significant impact on staff skills and reported practice. In order to sustain change across West Berkshire It is recommend that HNB funds a 3year fixed term post of Therapeutic Thinking Officer to lead network meetings for school leads, develop policy and practice within West Berkshire and in schools and to continue to deliver the engagement and train the trainer courses.

5.21.4 The appointment of a dedicated lead has enabled the authority to start to embed this approach. Due to Covid restrictions it has been necessary to adapt the training to online modules. This has been well received by schools.

5.21.5 In order to ensure that therapeutic thinking can be moved forward in a timely way, it is proposed that the Therapeutic Thinking Officer post continues to be funded from the High Needs Block. In order to retain candidates of suitable calibre, and in order to maintain momentum on Therapeutic Thinking projects, it is suggested that the post be offered on permanent basis.

5.21.6 Without this post there is a serious risk that the potential of the Therapeutic Thinking to realise savings in the HNB will not be realised. It is difficult to be precise about the savings which could be achieved through creation of new provision. However, the following should provide a broad illustration of potential savings from one of the projects in the strategy.

5.21.7 A reduction in permanent exclusions by 25% maintained for three years would equate to approximately 17 less permanent exclusions in that time period which would result in a saving of £340K. Some students from this group go on to be placed in schools which cost an average of £62,000 per place per year, therefore there is the potential to save £428K over 3 years if for example 2 of the 17 students spend one year in such provision.

5.21.8 See also section 6: Invest to Save Projects 2020-21

6. Invest to Save Projects 2020-2021

The Schools Forum agreed, in January 2020, to fund the following Invest to Save projects with the aim of achieving savings in the longer term.

6.1 Recruitment of Therapeutic Thinking Officer £54,000

6.1.1 In order to ensure that therapeutic thinking could be moved forward in a timely way and embedded in schools, it was agreed that a new post of Therapeutic Thinking Officer would be created and offered as a three year temporary contract initially. This is a Band K post with agreed annual funding of £58K.

6.1.2 Evaluation data

See Appendix C(i)

6.1.3 Success Criteria

- Therapeutic Thinking Training offered face to face or online to Head Teachers and key staff 6 weekly
- Therapeutic Thinking surgery held for schools weekly
- Therapeutic Thinking newsletter distributed monthly
- Therapeutic Thinking network meetings held termly
- Face to face support meetings held with schools (as requested)

- TT Vlogs introduced Nov 2020 in response to Secondary HT feedback to be distributed fortnightly)
- Bid writing with schools to ease workload (as requested)
- Impact report writing with schools to ease workload (as requested)

Method of measuring impact:

- Monitoring by Therapeutic Thinking Officer
- Quarterly report from Therapeutic Thinking Officer

6.1.4 Recommendation

It is recommended that this funding is agreed for 2021-22 and made a permanent commitment in the HNB so that a permanent appointment can be made to the post. This is considered necessary in order to attract / retain candidates of the necessary calibre.

6.2 Increase in Vulnerable Children Grant £125,000

6.2.1 The Vulnerable Children Grant was increased from £50,000 to £179,400 in order to:

- Provide VCG funding for more children and / or for longer periods
- Provide funding to schools when they admit a child who has been permanently excluded from another school
- Support schools with implementation of Therapeutic Thinking approaches, eg. funding to support implementation of personalised therapeutic plans

6.2.2 Evaluation Data

See separate report

6.2.3 Success Criteria

- Attendance of child/children has improved
- A decrease in incidents of anti-social behaviour
- Child/children are more emotionally and socially aware and are seeking the support of an adult rather than demonstrating dysregulation
- Child/children is having less conflict with others
- Child/children are able to remain in class more
- Child/children have no or fewer exclusions

Method of measuring impact:

- Feedback surveys from schools

6.2.4 Recommendation

It is recommended that this funding continues in 2021-22 and is reviewed for 2022-23.

6.3 Expansion of the ASD Advisory Team to include 2 x Specialist Higher Level Teaching Assistants for deployment in schools £57,800.

6.3.1 Due to the significant rise in children with ASD in schools and the inability of the ASD Team to provide intensive, targeted work due to resource constraints, it was agreed that funding of £57,800 would be made available in order to build capacity and expertise in schools, help schools to meet need effectively, maintain children in mainstream wherever possible and to support joint working between home and school, working alongside the Autism Adviser for Families.

6.3.2 Evaluation Data

Recruitment to these posts had been planned for April 2020 but had to be put on hold due to the pandemic. Recruitment took place in the autumn term with one member of staff starting in December 2020 and one in January 2021. Plans are in place to start work on two targeted projects in January 2020, one in primary schools focusing on improving behaviour by reducing anxiety and one in secondary schools focusing on emotionally based school avoidance. As the projects have not yet started there is no evaluation data available yet.

6.3.3 Success Criteria

Secondary schools project - young people with autism who are emotionally based school avoiders

Outcomes/success criteria for pupils:

- Those at Level 2 move to Level 1 or better (these levels are from the EPS EBSA guidance)
- Those at Level 1 move to very few instances of reluctance to attend and/or anxiety around attending is reduced
- Data on attendance improves

Method of measuring impact:

- Pupil questionnaires (pre and post intervention)
- Parent feedback (pre and post intervention)
- School feedback (pre and post intervention)
- Attendance data

Primary schools project – improving behaviour by reducing anxiety

Schools will identify personalised outcomes for individuals in conjunction with the ASD team

Outcomes /success criteria for pupils:

- Improved attendance
- Fewer incidents of behaviour that causes concern
- Levels of anxiety reduced

Method of measuring impact:

- Pupil questionnaires (pre and post intervention)
- Parent feedback (pre and post intervention)
- School feedback (pre and post intervention)

6.3.4 Recommendation

It is recommended that this funding continues in 2021-22 and is reviewed for 2022-23.

Savings Proposals

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 resulted in a drop in referrals and only 33 of 48 places being filled. Some Headteachers made representations that the decision to charge for LAL places should be reversed as they could not afford to place children who required the specialist provision. There was also an increase in Tribunals for specialist dyslexia schools. It was decided that LAL funding would be restored in 20-21. All 48 places have been allocated for the current year.

Reinstatement of charging for LALs is not an option given recent history. Other options could include:

- Reduce the capacity of the LALs, eg. to 50% of current capacity. A reduction to 50% of current capacity would save **£61,000**.
- Close both LALs. This would save **£122,000**.

Implications / Risks:

- (1) 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.
- (2) 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 2019 showed that support for children with dyslexia is a particular concern for parents who responded.

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

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
- (3) Possibility of charging for this provision

Option 4 – iCollege

The financial modelling of this service will require further review so that proposals can be put forward. A report funding arrangements 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 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.

Option 5 – Medical Home Tuition

The budget for 2021/22 has already been shown in the 2021/22 budget estimates as being reduced from £205,000 to £172,730 following previous discussions around school income, so a saving of £32,270 has already been incorporated into the figures.

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 **£33,200**. Reducing by a full time post would make a saving in the region of **£65,000**.

Implications / Risks:

- (1) The core service provided free to all schools who do not buy in would be reduced or removed. This includes one annual visit to advise on SEN provision and promoting achievement of children with SEND and termly SENCO network meetings.
- (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 2019 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.

Option 7 – Vulnerable Children Fund

The Vulnerable Children's Fund is a highly appreciated, relatively small fund, 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. The 50K fund was increased to 179K for the Invest to Save initiative. The extended funds have been used to support several schools in maintaining pupils with challenging behaviour in mainstream and supporting the implementation of a therapeutic thinking approach.

It is possible to remove the funds 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. It has been positively evaluated as part of the Invest to Save arrangements as well as the traditional VCG .

Previously, Heads Funding Group has indicated its reluctance to further reduce this fund. A reduction in the Invest to Save increase could be considered. The fund could be increased by £65K rather than by £129. A reduction of 50% on the 2020-21 Invest to Save increase.

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
- (6) Less schools able to create provision for pupils with challenging behaviour
- (7) Less schools able to fully implement therapeutic thinking

Evaluation and Impact Data

Vulnerable Children Grant

See separate report

Therapeutic Thinking

See Appendix C (i)

PRU Outreach

This data covers 2017 to 2020.

Number of pupils accessing the service

Year	Primary Pupils	Secondary Pupils
2017-2018	13	7
2018-2019	21	10
2019-2020	12	3
2020- present	6	3

Breakdown by age

Year	EY FS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
18/19		1	4	7	5	2	2	2	1	4	2	1
19/20	1	1	2	2		3	2			3		
2020		1		1		1	3	1	1	1		

% of pupils with EHCP

Year	% of pupils with EHCP
2018-2019	38%
2019-2020	41%
2020- present	50%

Permanent exclusions of pupils accessing the service

Since Sept 2018 only 4 of the 54 pupils supported by Outreach (7%) have gone on to receive a permanent exclusion.

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 2019 and the next one is due in summer 2021.

Overview of survey results

Ratings from schools in the 2019 survey were as follows (37 schools responded):

Overall rating of the service	100% scored good or excellent
Quality of reports	94% scored good or excellent
In school training	100% scored good or excellent
Timeliness of response	97% 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	89%	3%	8%
Improved provision for pupils with SEN	94%	0%	6%
Improved outcomes for pupils	81%	0%	19%

It is notable that a high percentage of respondents felt there had been an impact on staff and pupils, including pupil outcomes. 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.

The comments from survey respondents are set out in Appendix C (ii)

The CALT team supported some schools to deliver the SNAP intervention programme. Children were on the programme for an average of 16 weeks.

Average progress made was as follows:

Word Accuracy - 4.5 months gain for every one month on the programme

Reading Comprehension – 3.3 months gain for every one month on the programme

Specialist Inclusion Support Service (SISS)

The SISS Service evaluation survey was last sent to schools in summer 2017. A further evaluation will be carried out in January 2021.

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

Overview of survey results

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%
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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 (iii).

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 was due in summer 2020.

Please note that the summer 2020 service evaluation was not carried out due to Covid 19.

Due to the pressures on schools at that time it seemed that service evaluation surveys would not have been welcomed by schools and may not have had much response.

Overview of survey results

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(iv).

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 2018-19 academic year.

Test	Salford Reading	WRAT Reading	HAST Spelling
Average gain in months	15.7	12.5	15.2
Average gain in Standardised Score points	3.7	6.0	8.9

A summary of comments from parents and schools is attached at Appendix C (v)

It was not possible to assess the 2019-20 LAL cohort at the end of the intervention in summer 2020 due to lockdown.

One group were assessed in March 2020 after 7 months in LAL. Children in the other group were due also to be assessed in March but this did not take place due to Covid. This group were assessed in December 2019 after 4 months in LAL.

Group 1 - Average progress over 7 months			
Test	Salford Reading	WRAT Reading	HAST Spelling
Average gain in months	17.6	10.7	17.6

Group 2 - Average progress over 4 months			
Test	Salford Reading	WRAT Reading	HAST Spelling
Average gain in months	11.8	6.5	11.3

Therapeutic Thinking Progress Report Autumn 2020

Overview

The Therapeutic Thinking Vulnerable Children's Grant (VCG) is a small DSG funded budget, allocated by Schools Forum and put in place to enable schools to further enhance their therapeutic offer for those children in West Berkshire Schools that really need it. The

The budget is allocated through a stringent application process and allocated in line with three specific levels on the Support and Signpost (SAS) Stepped Approach, which are School Intensive Approach (SIA); Local Support Services (LSS); and Local Intensive Approach (LIA).

The School Intensive Approach (SIA) bid, is to enable schools to provide personalised support to a particular child; the Local Support Services (LSS) intended to provide sustainable support to a small group of children, to create a small garden and the Local Intensive Approach (LIA) focussed on ensuring specific provision and support to children that join them from another school on a Fresh start.

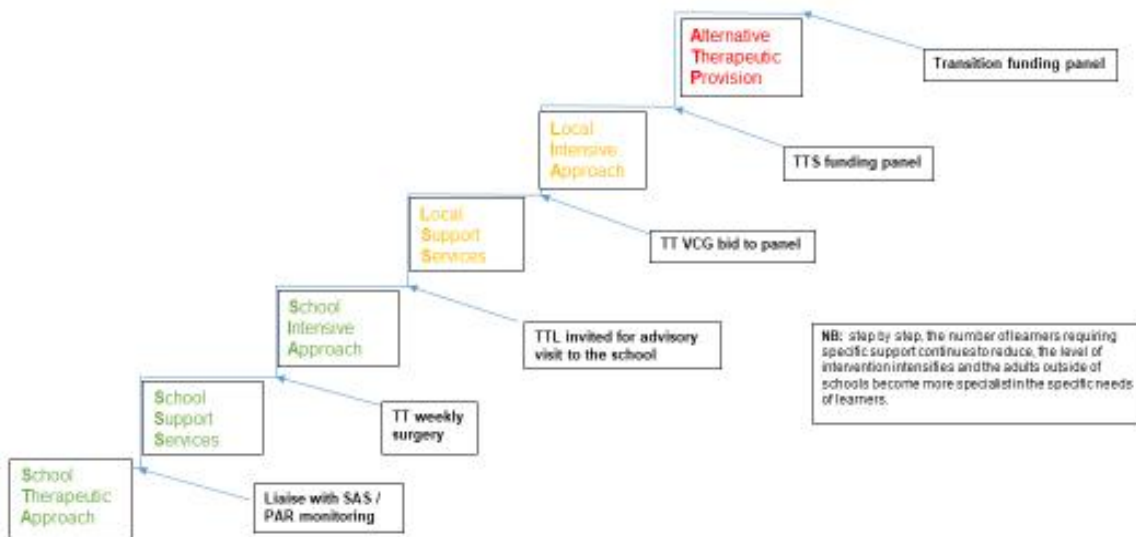
Bids for SIA and LSS, are reviewed fortnightly by Lucy Hillyard (Therapeutic Thinking Lead) and Dr Beth Cartwright (Senior EP and TTST Lead) and schools are required to complete the relevant documentation prior to submission and by the agreed deadline. LIA bids for fresh starts are reviewed by Lucy Hillyard (Therapeutic Thinking Lead) and Ros Arthur (Exclusions officer) as appropriate.

Support and Signpost (SAS) Stepped Approach

This was developed to offer a structured and progressive approach to intervention, with financial support available at each level for those schools that felt individuals or small groups could benefit from additional therapeutic provision. Guidance has been produced for each level which colleagues in schools can consult when making decisions about provision for all and needs led intervention for the most

vulnerable.

West Berkshire Therapeutic Thinking Support and Signpost (SAS) Stepped Approach



Bid outcomes summary

September 2020 – December 2020

	SIA £500	LSS £2000	LIA Fresh Starts	Other
Primary	8	6	0	
Secondary	4	3	1	1

Primary and Secondary Schools have applied for funds to support individuals with:

- 1:1 reduced timetable building to full time
- 1:1 outdoor provision
- Art therapy materials
- Fish tank and fish
- Weighted blanket and weighted snake
- Calming toys
- CD player and mindfulness CDs
- Kinetic sand
- Sensory colourful stacking tyres
- Bubble lamp
- Rainbow canopy
- Wipe able bean bags
- Science tutoring (secondary)
- English and maths tutoring (secondary)
- Outreach support iCollege

- Therapeutic Sensory Musical Sculpture

Primary and Secondary Schools have applied for funding to support small gardens such as:

- Outdoor academy external provision (1 child primary)
- Outdoor learning (sports focussed) provision (4 boys secondary)
- Spiral gardens (6 to be created for whole school access primary)
- Counselling EHA (1 child)
- Small garden resources to support timetable including cooking materials, vice and drill (primary)
- Appointed Therapeutic Manager (will lead and monitor multiple small gardens-secondary)
- Rushall Farm external alternative provision (8 children for 12 weeks secondary)
- Creation of sensory rooms, fully resourced bespoke to need

Current and projected spend

At the beginning of the new academic year in September 2020, schools were notified of the SAS Stepped Approach and the financial support that was available to support them with the development of additional provision. As the autumn term has progressed, and more colleagues have engaged with the wider therapeutic support available, including the surgeries and network meetings, the number of bids received has steadily increased. In line with this and to build capacity in schools, since November 2020, several Headteachers and other school leaders have been assisted with the completion of the bid paperwork, which has been beneficial to schools in terms of accessing the fund with limited additional work load, as well as providing them with a clear action plan to meet the needs of their most vulnerable.

Due to the pandemic, we are now at the mid-point for this financial year and with 6 bid deadlines remaining, we have spent 60% of the budget. With the emphasis on supporting schools with bid writing, coupled with more and more colleagues accessing the various communication networks, the likelihood is that the full budget will be fully spent, if not through improving individual provision and/or creating small gardens, but through an increasing need to provide support for other therapeutic needs or fresh starts.

Reporting of impact

Due to the nature of the process, reporting quantitative data with meaning is not possible in this initial report. Fortnightly bid deadlines have been set across the academic year and therefore, as submission dates are staggered, gathering outcomes from the provision will be too. Therefore, reporting the impact of the support provided in schools following their successful bid, will be qualitative in the first year as there will not be any significant measurable data from the school returns.

Each report however, will build on the previous report, to show the progress and impact of Therapeutic provision over time, likely demonstrating a shift in culture in schools and resulting in happier and more confident children and young people, who are able to both co and self-regulate and who therefore through pro-social experiences have fewer negative incidents, exclusions and part time timetables.

The next report will be completed by February half term, and will capture the impact of successful bids submitted in November/December 2020.

Impact of SIA bids £500 September/October 2020

Following the implementation of provision, school leaders are asked to review its impact. Although the impact forms request greater detail than is featured, below are two tables, included in the relevant documents, which enable leaders to evaluate their work and the effectiveness of the funding.

Impact of provision - SIA £500

Please tick all that apply and elaborate on each one below with specific detail where possible, eg if negative/anti-social incidents have decreased, by how much and state the period measured? For the 'other' category, please provide detail of how the provision has improved the experience for the child/children.

- Attendance of child/children has improved
Please give detail (from – to)
- A decrease in incidents of anti-social behaviour
Please give detail (from – to)
- Child/children are more emotionally and socially aware and are seeking the support of an adult rather than demonstrating dysregulation
Evidence base:
- Child/children is having less conflict with others
Evidence base:
- Child/children are able to remain in class more
Evidence base:
- Child/children have no or fewer exclusions
Please give detail (from – to)
- Other

Summary of impact

Impact of the provision – LSS £2000

For each child in the small garden please complete the table below reviewing the impact of every child in the small garden as per the original bid. Please also provide an overall summary on the data provided. (add as many children as you need to)

Child (in this column please)	Attendance of child has improved	A decrease in incidents of	Child is more emotionally and socially	Child/children is having less conflict with others	Child are able to remain in class more	Child/children have no or fewer exclusions
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record year group and gender)	(from – to)	anti-social behaviour (from – to)	aware and are seeking the support of an adult (evidence base)	(evidence base)	(evidence base)	(from – to)

Key point summary:

Primary feedback

Attendance of child/children has improved

- Move from part-time timetable of 2 hours 20 mins to full day in 6 weeks

A decrease in incidents of anti-social behaviour

- Before the small garden-child unable to complete a full lesson (hour) session within her classroom, without a significant incident of anti-social behaviour which usually resulted in her peers having to be removed from the classroom. Now, the child is able to move between the classroom and the planned small garden provision successfully. There have been no reports of anti-social/crisis behaviour.

Child/children are more emotionally and socially aware and are seeking the support of an adult rather than demonstrating dysregulation

- The child is able to follow adult direction and her displays of attention needing behaviours have significantly reduced. She is learning how to gain the attention she needs appropriately.

Child/children is having less conflict with others

- Managing conflict skills are much improved. She rarely responds physically and is enjoying having an increased friendship circle to play with. The small garden has been key in developing these skills in a small, safe and supported way.

Child/children are able to remain in class more

In *September*, the child was taught solely within the small garden and she had no access to the classroom. *Now*, two planned sessions each day, in the small garden focussed on key subjects with 4 peers and the rest of the day she is in the classroom.

Child/children have no or fewer exclusions

- No exclusions

What learning has taken place for the school leaders in implementing this provision?

- Make sure key leaders are trained
- Plan the training carefully to the wider staff for impact
- Access wider support on offer, surgeries, networks, literature

What provision is now in place to ensure the pro social experiences and support for this child/children continues and FTE's are further avoided?

- Continue with small garden approach
- Regular reviews of provision as senior leaders
- Strong communication across the whole staff and continue revisit of modules

Secondary feedback

Attendance

- Has improved from 0% to 80% (of reduced timetable, online sessions). Two sessions were missed due to mental health concerns and being away from the family home again.

A decrease in incidents of anti-social behaviour

- By engaging in online learning, she has not needed to enter school site – this in turn has reduce the anti-social behaviour as she is not having to deal with additional demands of the school day.

Child/children are more emotionally and socially aware and are seeking the support of an adult rather than demonstrating dysregulation

- Showed awareness in one of her sessions with the tutor where she guided her area of needs and development – suggesting they look at her timetables.

Child/children is having less conflict with others

See above

Child/children are able to remain in class more

- Has remained engaged for each 30 minutes session she attended; it was reported she had good punctuality.

Child/children have no or fewer exclusions

Has had no exclusions during this term.

What learning has taken place for the school leaders in implementing this provision?

School has already put into place a new member of staff to run our Small Garden and Therapeutic Thinking provision.

- Consider whether in extreme cases tutoring can be offered by school staff (currently not possible due to COVID) but longer term could this be covered by cover supervisors or under allocated staff.
- Continue to review curriculum provision.

What provision is now in place to ensure the pro social experiences and support for this child/children continues and FTE's are further avoided?

- EHCP granted with suggestion of an alternative provision.
- Support from CAMHs and Social Services.
- AHT continues to be working alongside all agencies and the family.
- There is still some funded from them original £500 for further online tutor sessions – this is due to us setting 30 minutes to ensure quick success for Ella as she had not attended any schooling for the majority of last academic year.

Impact of LSS bids £2000 September/October 2020

Small gardens implemented in primary schools (3 schools represented)

- Improved confidence in the child, learnt to be respectful and reflect making them more emotionally and socially aware
- Decreased incidents of anti-social behaviour and less conflict with others
- Children remain in class more and are able to use their small garden to self-regulate and return to the big world when they are able to
- Development of relationships school wide as there is a shared understanding of individual need
- No exclusions have occurred from any school
- Through offering limited choice, more appropriate responses have been observed

What learning has taken place for the school leaders in implementing this provision?

- How determined a young person can be after an experience such as this, and the confidence he has found
- Collaboration and togetherness of the school community around a project where everyone has a part to play

What provision is now in place to ensure the pro social experiences and support for this child/children continues and FTE's are further avoided?

- The school must continue with a joined up approach to language and practice in order to nurture the new found confidence in order to help him get stronger and believe in himself even more. There is no need for any exclusion to occur.
- Continue to appropriately identify those children who might be overwhelmed and enable their progress through the small garden which from the outset was designed for sustainability.

A small garden implemented in a secondary school (1 school represented 3 children)

Attendance of child/children has improved

- 0/3 – no improvement in attendance (1/3 covid related absences)

A decrease in incidents of anti-social behaviour

- 2/3 have had a reduction incidents since the start of the small garden

Child/children are more emotionally and socially aware and are seeking the support of an adult rather than demonstrating dysregulation

- 3/3 have developed a stronger connection with staff and are more accepting of consequences

Child/children is having less conflict with others

- 3/3 have had less or no conflict with peers

Child/children are able to remain in class more

- 1/3 has been able to remain in class more than prior to the small garden

Child/children have no or fewer exclusions

- 3/3 have experienced exclusion during the project
1/3 – 7 days 1/3 – 6 day 1/3 – 1 day

Summary:

- Pupils have engaged really well with the prosocial experiences that the school have put in place via this project, though this has not translated to more positive behaviours around site or in mainstream lessons for two of the boys. More work is needed around the whole school approaches to ensure that projects such as these can have impact over the long term.

What learning has taken place for the school leaders in implementing this provision?

School staff completed whole school training in October on ACES and scripted language and this has had an impact. Feedback from staff was overwhelmingly positive about the session and we have seen staff starting to use the limited choice language and a calmer approach to our pupils with ACES around school. We have started to consider how we can resource the prosocial experiences for more pupils moving forward.

I think some of the projects need to happen more with the collaboration with class targets and potentially at an earlier stage in a pupil's disengagement with the classroom environment.

What provision is now in place to ensure the pro social experiences and support for this child/children continues and FTE's are further avoided?

The school will continue the gardening project two afternoons a week for pupils and some lunchtime activities. Two of the pupils have EHCPs (or in progress) and we are therefore liaising with the local authority in order to ensure they are able to have pro social experiences as part of their provision. The school will continue to review pupil timetables and complete anxiety mapping and therapeutic trees in order to try to remove barriers to pupils.

Impact of LIA bids Fresh Starts (1 secondary FS supported this term)

- A Year 10 girl moved schools due to anxiety issues.
- Maths was identified as something that was overwhelming the young person at her current school. Therefore to support her transition, tuition was set up and funded for 18 weeks, so that it could continue following the conclusion of the 6 week placement, and enable prosocial feelings to develop over the longer term.
- The young person has reported feeling more confident, the work is mirroring classroom work which is really helping and, because it is 1:1 she says she feels safe to make mistakes, knowing she will have time and space to unpick any errors and see where they might have gone wrong. Although she has not yet had any classroom assessments, she comments that she feels that the tutoring is helping and already making a difference to how she is working in class.
- Confidence in lessons overall has increased and this student is now thinking about post-16 options as they are beginning to think that they can get better grades than they previously thought and that therefore they may have more options open to them.

Other financial support provided:

- A mid-year admission was supported through the SAS stepped approach as it fell outside of the fresh start process and was judged to be a complex case. A bid was completed and funds awarded to enable EP assessments for two siblings who moved schools due to housing changes. The impact of the support cannot be evaluated at this time as the EP only made contact at the start of December, 2020.

Additional support offered to schools in response to Covid-19 in the Autumn term 2020:

- TT surgery (weekly)
- TT newsletter (monthly)
- TT training offered online or face to face (at least 6 weekly)
- TT network meetings (termly)
- Face to face support meetings (as requested)
- TT Vlogs introduced Nov 2020 in response to Secondary HT feedback (fortnightly)
- Bid writing with schools to ease workload (as requested)
- Impact report writing with schools to ease workload (as requested)

School uptake to online training (July 2020 – December 2020)

	New schools trained	HT	Other school staff	Total trained
Primary	12	16	12	27
Secondary	4	2	6	8

- 58 schools across the LA now have someone who has completed the full Therapeutic Thinking training
- Schools are signed up for face to face in January and online in March 2021

Number of sessions led: 5

Session Colleagues setting	Primary	Secondary	Other (incl iCollege and Special schools)	WBC	Total
June pilot	1	2	0	3	6
July training	5	2	2	1	10
September training	7	0	0	1	8
November training	5	0	1	4	10
December training	9	4	0	4	17

CALT Evaluation Survey Comments 2019**1. How would you rate the reports, advice and recommendations provided by the service?**

- a. It's all very sound, based on evidence of what works. There is often quite a lot of recommendation and I wonder if it should be made more overt to parents that it may not be possible to put all the recommendations in at the same time.
- b. xxx will always go above and beyond. In what has been a challenging year she has been a force of calm for children, parents and staff.
- c. Feedback is also given to parents where it was deemed to be helpful and supportive.
- d. xxx will always go above and beyond. In what has been a challenging year she has been a force of calm for children, parents and staff.
- e. Clear reports detailing difficulties and strategies on how to support in class as well as interventions. As usual it can be difficult with lowering numbers of TAs to implement one to one interventions, so the class strategies are very useful.
- f. xxx has produced very thorough reports which details the needs of the children.
- g. "Reports are extremely useful and parents appreciate the level of detail provided.
- h. Reports contain a variety of suggestions that we can work through and try with the children."
- i. "Support and guidance is always well explained and provisions/interventions suggests can usually be applied with minimal cost. As with all things, staffing to deliver can be an issue, but obviously this is not a fault of CALT!
- j. xxx is always happy to guide and support me, especially over the last few months when things have been tricky for me personally."
- k. the reports are clear and to the point without lots of jargon. We use the reports as working documents using the recommendations and resources.
- l. "Reports are prompt and informative.
- m. Pupils needs are clearly identified, discussed and advice /support materials provided."
- n. Reports are very detailed and thorough.
- o. Reports are clear and easy to navigate. The advice provided for the provision and next steps for the pupils is supportive and relevant.
- p. Brilliant service - always really helpful and can answer any questions SEN related! Reports are completed quickly so that we can implement the advice soon after a child has been seen.
- q. Very thorough reports and the recommendations are achievable and realistic to be implemented.
- r. The programmes devised have shown impact for reading and spelling.
- s. "Highly efficient and accurate
- t. Really helpful and friendly "
- u. Reports are very clear and easy to read, making them useable for staff and parents.
- v. Not used the service directly
- w. "The support is invaluable to us as a school, widens my knowledge and enables me to support our more complex children. The provision advised has been useful and enabled me to look at free alternatives that I was not aware of.

- x. Reports are always comprehensive and enable me to have really useful conversations with parents. In some cases with parents the report validates what we offer as a school is good practise. "

2. How would you rate the usefulness of the pupil reports?

- a. The team produce easy-to-read, easily understandable reports that are highly informative and very accurate in their precise support.
- b. Not only do they give a clear picture of strengths and difficulties but they are also used as working documents with strategies and recommendations for classroom practice and individual support.
- c. It gives a detailed view of the children's needs and provides important evidence for future assessments needed. It also helps us to plan the interventions the child requires and how to help them reach their potential.
- d. Some of the report recommendations can be very similar even though the children can present differently in class.
- e. See previous response!
- f. Can be used to support writing of SAPs and as a discussion focus for parents. One report helped child get the correct referral to paediatrics following a physical assessment.
- g. "Very useful for informing SAP targets and provision.
- h. Used to support access to other services e.g. recommendations for SISS involvement.
- i. Always interesting to read the pupil voice when they are talking to someone less well known to them."
- j. CALT speak to the school about what capacity they have to provide intervention and tailor it to our school. There are specific interventions that pupils can be supported individually as well as in small groups which makes planning the provision easier. They provide good evidence to support onward referrals or EHCP request for assessment.
- k. Gives clear advice for what we should do next and the specific difficulties/gaps a child has.
- l. They are clear and explain the needs of the pupil found through assessments. They give teachers some guidance and parents a clearer picture of their child's needs.
- m. Provision recommendations and accompanying resources have resulted in children making rapid progress.
- n. Very accurate and bespoke and full of suggestions
- o. Not used the service directly
- p. With a lack of support staff it can be difficult to complete 1:1 interventions, class based interventions where the teacher can be trained to deliver are useful
- q. The reports are very comprehensive and are used to inform differentiation in the classroom, SAPS, and any further external professional involvement. They provide an outline for a productive meeting with parents to move forward with the support needed in school and helpful to guide parents to support at home.

3. Did the team respond to queries from you in a timely manner?

- a. Emails and calls are always responded to promptly.

4. Were reports received within 2 weeks of assessment?

- a. Sometimes the same day & when just the data was required for a meeting it was returned very quickly
- b. Always -often sooner

5. How would you rate the in-school training provided by the team?

- a. N/A

- b. xxx provided training during an Inset day and for an upcoming staff meeting around SAP's and their quality due to new members of staff and as an outside voice.
- c. xxx has met with all teachers and provided each one of them with recommendations, sharing her expertise and knowledge.
- d. We have not used this service this year
- e. Not applicable
- f. Tailored to meet the needs of pupils and teaching assistants.
- g. None received this year
- h. The team continues to respond to our needs when requested to provide in-school training, ensuring that the training matches our setting.
- i. Not used this year but in previous years has been excellent.
- j. The staff are very informative and are able to adapt their style of training to the audience.
- k. We have had several intervention refreshers which have been very useful.
- l. The training is bespoke and because our CALT teacher knows our setting and the children, she can include this in training to explain how/why a particular child would benefit from an intervention.
- m. Highly skilled
- n. When we have received this service it has been okay and staff have been able to implement it.
- o. Training delivered by two CALT employees for Precision Teaching intervention to be led by Teaching Assistants. They took on board some of the staffing difficulties I had come across to ensure some elements of the training were emphasised. Good resources were supplied to staff as part of the training.

6. How would you rate the service overall?

- a. Just fantastic, xxx always replies to emails, calls and my regular flapping.
- b. xxx is always prompt in responding to queries, she sees children quickly and helps us to improve our provision for these children. She is always willing to support the SENCo and is very understanding of the financial boundaries of the school, as well as the practical and logistical constraints we are under to fulfil the needs of the children. xxx is knowledgeable on a wide range of SEN needs and has never been unable to answer a question. She always has practical and achievable suggestions to make and is very approachable. She is well respected by all staff in school and everyone enjoys working alongside her.
- c. Really informative -I feel like I can always ask questions however daft they might seem. Great sounding board at meetings to talk about what we are trying with some pupils.
- d. All aspects of the service - staff, admin, training, service, advice etc are provided at the point of need. communication is quick and effective - emails answered very promptly.
- e. "Always answer any queries no matter how small.
- f. Case load meetings are really useful and give helpful pointers of both a longer term view as well as how to support children in the short term. "
- g. Sue Whiting is brilliant at supporting me as a SENCo. Her knowledge and experience within her role is useful and she keeps us informed of all relevant updates following research updates. The assessments are completed in a calm and supportive manner - all pupils are happy to work with Sue and other CALT teachers. The reports are comprehensive and there is a consistency in the standard of training they deliver.

- h. A really valuable service that I have found incredibly useful. It's been good to know that support and advice is at the end of an email.
- i. Instant responses to queries, programmes of intervention that have resulted in rapid progress, problem solving approach to identifying barriers and how to overcome them, assessments and reports completed in a timely manner.
- j. For all the reasons stated so far
- k. xxx is so professional and so helpful - it is a pleasure to work with her and I do hope that she remains as our CALT team link next year so we can continue to benefit from her support
- l. I have found this service invaluable as a SENDCo and knowing you are there when I have a query is a very useful.

7. Has the involvement of the Cognition and Learning Team had an impact on pupils and staff?

- a. We have had little contact with CALT this year apart from the LAL assessments
- b. Due to this year and the changes and challenges we have not yet reviewed the intervention data.
- c. xxx met with each teacher across the Partnership, with the SENCo and discussed the children on the SEDN register and other 'concern' children. She provided suggestions and shared her knowledge and expertise with staff, which provided them with a lot of confidence and skills. She has also worked alongside ESAs on improving the quality of interventions. xxx shares knowledge with the SENCO who then is able to adjust provision for individuals accordingly. She has also worked with the SENCO on assessment across the school which is having an impact on outcomes, tracking and staff awareness of the needs of children. xxx is always happy to suggest appropriate provision and provide ideas if it isn't having the impact expected.
- d. If you can identify a barrier and support the difficulties attached to it the above can happen!
- e. It has helped to give direction about where the interventions may be directed. It may be helpful to direct staff with which gap in knowledge should be worked on first. This is because some children have many gaps and it would be helpful for NQTs and parents to have an order on to what to work on first.
- f. "To be reassured that what you believe a child's issue is and that you now have support, if needed, to assist the child with their learning.
- g. To help establish the barriers to a child's learning and have strategies to support that individual child's needs rather than a generic intervention."
- h. advice and resources continue to have an impact on pupils learning - especially spelling. This year support staff have had refresher training for several interventions enabling them to deliver quality support.
- i. Support and provision is more targeted.
- j. Staff always feel well supported and always welcome advice and recommendations from CALT. Pupils are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are on the correct provision and are making expected progress. CALT teacher is able to recommend alternatives if interventions are not working.
- k. Children making, for example, at least 6 mths progress in 3 mths following intervention. Teachers report that they are confident in leading an intervention that is being delivered by a TA.
- l. We have seen an increase in the confidence of staff delivering the recommendations and those targeted children have progressed.

- m. Over the year the team have supported with two more complex children where parents have benefitted from the reports, school have been able to put in individualised interventions and outcomes have been really positive for the learner. Progress data for these children has been good for the school.

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

- a. Just an incredible service from xxx, to share her knowledge and expertise. This year her positive outlook has been a real ray of sunshine and really valued.
- b. I have learned so much from Cxxx over the last 3 years and it is privilege to work with her. She is approachable, supportive and knowledgable. xxx is a huge asset to the school and the pupils within it. She has enabled us to provide our SEND pupils with provision that allows them to fulfil their potential and gain in confidence.
- c. I would like to say a big thank you to xxx for all her support this year in the children she has seen, the reports she has written and how she has supported me and my colleagues. Thank you :-)
- d. "Thank you!
- e. Network meetings are useful too and important to those who cannot afford the level of service they might like to choose - so thank you for keeping those open to all.
- f. Always appreciative of xxx's useful advice and willingness to support when resources are stretched. "
- g. Looking at the validity of the Salford test because it is very deceiving when being used as an assessment tool by itself. This is because I have had experience of children being diagnosed with dyslexia or significant Literacy difficulties but not meeting threshold for LAL because of the Salford test.
- h. Every year I continue to find the Cognition and Learning team are a must for a busy SENDCo they are friendly, professional and experienced offering practical and workable advice and solutions, I find the planning meeting at the beginning of an academic year particularly useful.
- i. Thank you for all the support this year!
- j. CALT is an invaluable service for our school. The training and updates at SENCO network meetings keep us up to date. The reports and support for the pupils and teachers is fantastic and tailored to the individuals that CALT are supporting. The availability of the CALT teacher via email is a great support and all reports are sent within the 2 weeks.
- k. You are one of the best services I work with - thank you.
- l. Fantastic service - so efficient and always happy to help.
- m. Thank you for all the support you provide!
- n. I would not be able to do my role confidently without the support of the C&L advisor.
- o. If we had the money we would definitely make use of the team.
- p. Brilliant service! We love CALT!

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 (iv)

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 (v)

Comments from Schools, Parents and Children about LAL Provision

Schools

- (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.
- (2) One of my Year 6s had LAL in Year 5 and then got a place in the ACE unit. The transition from LAL to ACE was managed superbly by your team. Our pupil was privileged enough to receive regular visits from * in preparation to moving into Year 7. This helped her enormously in building confidence and familiarity with what would be expected of her. The pupil struggled right through primary, but showed us that, with support, she could progress and succeed. As a Head, I am delighted and confident that she will continue to thrive at secondary.

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.
- (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.

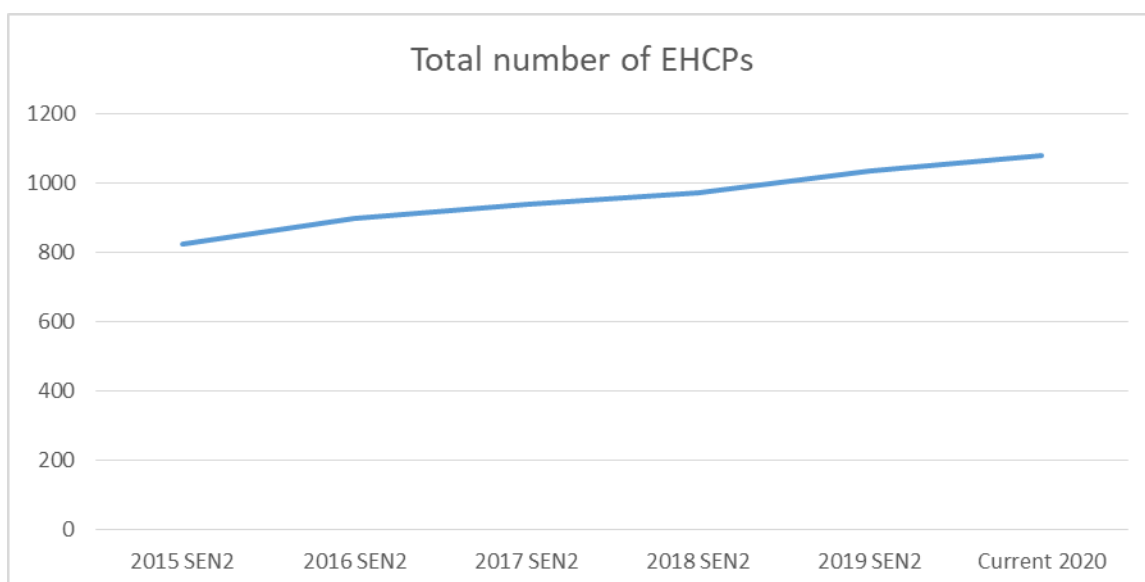
Children

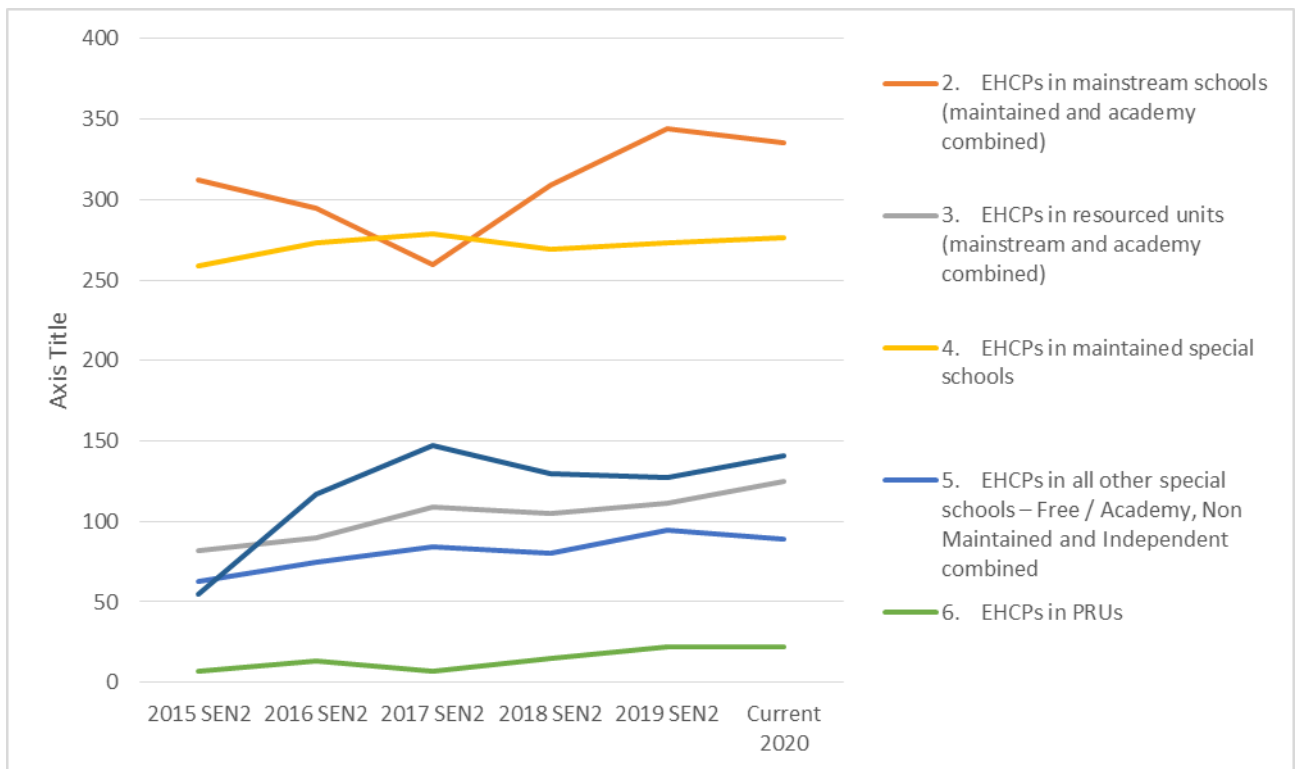
- (1) I've loved it! I think it's helped me because when we went to this place there was this sign and Dad would ask me to read it. I could never read it – now I can. 'Do not climb on this tree because it is ancient.'
- (2) We don't go too fast.. you stop and wait so I can get it.. at school people help 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.

Appendix D

Increase in EHCPs since 2015 and analysis of placement type

	2015 SEN2	2016 SEN2	2017 SEN2	2018 SEN2	2019 SEN2	Current 2020	Rise in number	% rise
1. Total number of EHCPs	822	897	938	971	1034	1078	256	31%
2. EHCPs in mainstream schools (maintained and academy combined)	312	295	260	309	344	335	23	7%
3. EHCPs in resourced units (mainstream and academy combined)	82	90	109	105	111	125	43	52%
4. EHCPs in maintained special schools	259	273	279	269	273	276	17	7%
5. EHCPs in all other special schools – Free / Academy, Non Maintained and Independent combined	63	75	84	80	95	89	26	41%
6. EHCPs in PRUs	7	13	7	15	22	22	15	214%
7. EHCPs in FE (General FE and specialist FE combined)	55	117	147	130	127	141	86	156%





Heads Funding Group Recommendations:

Resourced Schools

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum on 25 January 2021

Report Author: Jane Seymour

Item for: Decision **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Schools' Forum to adopt an additional funding band for resourced units for children with physical disabilities

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Schools' Forum approve an additional funding band for children in PD resourced provisions with very high level needs.

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

- 3.1 Some mainstream schools with resourced units have raised concerns about the formula for funding resourced units, in that they say funding does not meet their budget requirements and they have, in some cases, been relying on carried forward underspends which are now running out, or that they have having to subsidise the resourced unit budget from their mainstream school budget.
- 3.2 It is important that resourced units are funded in a fair way which allows schools to meet the needs of the pupils and does not impact negatively on the school's mainstream budget.
- 3.3 As information from schools about these pressures was largely anecdotal, it was agreed that a survey of schools with resourced units should take place to ascertain in more detail what the specific funding pressures were. All schools with a resourced unit were therefore asked to complete a spreadsheet in the spring of 2020 setting out a range of information, including their staffing ratios, staffing costs against their budget and use of historic carry forwards.
- 3.4 Returns were received for 7 out of 10 resourced provisions.
- 3.5 Four resourced provisions reported spending in excess of their budgets in 2019-20, whilst three reported spending within their budgets and with a modest underspend. Three provisions did not respond to the survey.
- 3.6 There were no specific patterns which could be identified from the information received. Funding pressures were not consistent across specific types of resourced provision in terms of the type of SEN catered for.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Due to the inconsistent picture across resourced provisions, there does not appear to be a case for a general funding uplift across all resourced provisions.
- 4.2 There does appear to be one exception to this which relates to children with physical disabilities. There are currently three funding bands for children with physical disabilities in PD resourced schools, PD1, PD2 and PD3. Children with the highest level of needs would be allocated PD3 funding. Due to the increasingly complex nature of children with physical disabilities being placed in PD resources, it has become apparent that PD3 does not generate sufficient funding for the high level of personal care required by some of these children. It has therefore become necessary to make exceptional funding arrangements for an increasing number of children in PD resources so that their needs can be appropriately met. As this has become necessary in several cases, and is likely to be necessary in the future, it is proposed to introduce a new funding band, PD4.
- 4.3 PD3 funding provides access to the core provision of the resource, ie. the basic teaching and TA ratios available for all children, plus an additional amount notionally to provide individual TA support for 50% of the pupil's timetable. PD4 would provide additional funding in order to provide full time individual TA support where that is required.
- 4.4 It is proposed that a further report is brought to the next meeting of the HFG with a proposed value for PD4.
- 4.5 There would be no additional costs immediately associated with this change as children with this level of need in our PD Resources are already receiving additional funding over and above PD3 and this has been allowed for in the 2021-22 budget estimates.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 That a new funding band, PD4, is incorporated in to the funding scheme for resourced units for children with physical disabilities.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 There is evidence to support the introduction of a new funding band for PD Resources.
- 6.2 There is currently insufficient evidence to support additional funding for schools with resourced units more broadly.
- 6.3 An increase in the value of funding bands for resourced units could be justified on the basis that there has been no inflationary increase since the funding bands were introduced, but the same case could also be made in respect of funding bands for children with EHCPs in mainstream schools and special schools and may not be considered affordable in the context of pressure on the HNB.

7. Consultation and Engagement

- 7.1 Consultation has taken place with West Berkshire Council's Accountancy Service.

Vulnerable Children's Grant 19-20

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum on 25th January

Report Author: Michelle Sancho

Item for: Information **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 Review of Vulnerable Children's Grant 2019/20

2. Introduction/Background

- 2.1 The Vulnerable Children's Grant (VCG) is a highly appreciated, relatively small fund, 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 reduce the pressure on SEN budgets by providing temporary funding.

3. Supporting Information

3.1 Budget

The VCG budget for 2019-20 was £50,000.

3.2 Allocation of Fund

The table overleaf shows an overview of the allocation of funding over the past 4 years. The number of requests for the Vulnerable Children's Grant (VCG) has reduced slightly although the number of pupils supported has remained similar. The number of schools accessing the support has decreased from 36 last year to 29 this year though many of the schools made and received more than one successful application.

Of the 50 applications, 15 were refused. The primary reason for refusal was that the need was not an unexpected one and schools would have had the ability to plan.

Of the 35 successful applications, 29 were from primary schools, 1 from an Early Years' setting and 1 from a secondary school. The grant supported 33 primary aged pupils, 1 secondary aged pupil and 2 early years' pupils. In keeping with previous years the majority of the schools used their VCG to fund additional teaching assistant support.

Table 1 - Allocation of VCG 2016-2020

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Requests Agreed	67	48	27	35
Requests Refused	4 (2 EHCs and 2 repeats)	10	8	15
Schools Accessing Fund	31	36	35	29
Primary	29 (94%)	34 (94%)	34 (97%)	27 (93%)
Secondary	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	1 (3.5%)
Early Years				1 (3.5%)
PRUs	0	0	0	0
Students Supported	53	55	27	36
Primary	51 £69,980	53 £62,230	26 £49,300	33 £45,849
Secondary	2 £5,300	2 £1,750	1 £700	1 £2139
Early Years				2 £2012
PRUs	0	0	0	0
Requests Extended Beyond Initial Term	14 (21% of total)	1 (2% of total)	0	0
Type of Support:				
Additional TA	79%	90%	88%	86%
External Package	5%	6%	6%	8%
Holiday Support	0	4%	0	0
Medical Support	16%	0	6%	0
Other				6%
Total spend	£75,280	£63,980	£50,000	£50,000

3.3 Feedback

Schools were asked for feedback per individual pupil who had received the grant. The questions asked were:

Q1. How has the funding helped the pupil and/or the school?

Q2. What is the current rating on the Worry Scale? Is this an increase, a decrease or has it stayed the same?

Q3. Have there been any exclusions since you received the funding? Is this an increase, a decrease or has it stayed the same?

Q4. Has the pupil made progress since the receipt of the funding? Please comment.

The 'Worry Scale' is an opportunity for the school to rate their level of concern for the pupil in the application if nothing changes.

Feedback was received for 6 pupils. Please note that this evaluation was requested during the coronavirus pandemic so there were fewer returns than usual. 67% reported a decrease in their level of worry. 33% reported that their level of worry remains the same. There was no reports of an increase in worry levels. Only 2 of the 6 pupils had received further fixed term exclusion following funding. None of the pupils received a permanent exclusion.

Excerpts from feedback from schools are below:

"A settled into the Willows and formed secure and positive peer relationships within the year group. This helped with transition to Secondary School. It had a positive impact on his wellbeing – socially, emotionally and academically"

"Good progress made. B is a bright boy and has the potential to achieve well when he is emotionally secure and plans are in place."

4. Conclusion

4.1 The VCG aims to be fair, equitable and simple to request. Feedback from schools indicates that it is valued and has significant impact. Indeed, all of the evaluations reported an impact on the pupil once funding had been accessed. If schools, particularly smaller primary schools, cannot access this support in the future it could lead to increased movement between schools, higher exclusion figures and increased pressure on the capacity of specialist support services.

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Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 25th January 2021

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Item for: Information **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To set out the final Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation for 2021/22.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To note the final funding allocation for the 2021/22 budgets.

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 The National Funding Formula (NFF) is used by the Department for Education (DfE) to calculate the blocks within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) that will be allocated to local authorities for 2021/22.

3.2 The DSG consists of four blocks: Schools, High needs, Central school services and Early years. 2021/22 is the fourth year of the NFF for schools, high needs and central school services. The early year's block of the DSG is determined by the separate national formula for early years.

4. Overall position

4.1 The following table shows the final 2021/22 DSG allocation based on the October 2020 census pupil numbers. Pay and pensions will be funded as part of the DSG for 2021/22 and not by separate grant.

DSG funding allocation	Schools block (incl. growth fund)	Central school services block	High needs block	Early years block	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
2020/21 final allocation	105.31	0.96	21.67	9.65	137.59
2021/22 final allocation	114.83	1.01	23.63	10.36	149.83
Increase on last year	9.52	0.05	1.96	0.71	12.23
Pay and pensions element	(5.12)	(0.07)	(0.20)	0.00	(5.39)
Comparable increase	4.40	(0.02)	1.75	0.71	6.85
% increase	4%	-2%	8%	7%	5%

5. Schools Block

5.1 The final DSG Schools Block allocation for 2021/22 is shown below:

	2020/21		2021/22	
		£		£
Primary schools unit of funding (£s)	£4,088		£4,443	
Number of pupils in primary schools	13,190		13,122	
Primary funding		53,921,775		58,296,060
Secondary schools unit of funding (£s)	£5,108		£5,537	
Number of pupils in secondary schools	9,621		9,832	
Secondary funding		49,146,132		54,436,539
Premises		1,487,173		1,495,197
Growth funding		756,100		603,831
Total Allocation including pay and pensions		105,311,180		114,831,627
<i>Pay and Pensions element</i>		0		-5,118,061
Total before pay and pensions		105,311,180		109,713,566

5.2 The approved block transfer of 0.25% will reduce the schools block allocation by £0.274m, resulting in available funding of £114,557,344. After setting aside a growth fund allocation, the funding will be allocated out to schools as per the formula principles agreed by Schools Forum in December, which will be politically ratified in January 2021.

6. High Needs Block (HNB)

6.1 The 2021/22 allocation for West Berkshire is £23.63m (2020/21 £21.67m). The approved 0.25% schools block transfer will increase this by £0.274m to £23.91m.

7. Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)

7.1 Responsibilities held by local authorities for all schools are funded from the CSSB, with the agreement of schools forums. This covers Statutory and Regulatory duties, Education Welfare, asset management and other duties such as licences, admissions and servicing of Schools' Forum.

7.2 The CSSB DSG funding for 2021/22 is £1.01m, an increase of £20k from last year. The CSSB block expenditure requirement has increased by just 1% or £11k from last year. The block has been reviewed in the light of the available funding, and proposals made for balancing the block.

8. Early Years Block

8.1 The new Early Years formula was introduced in 2017/18 with new funding rates to local authorities, and a revised simplified formula for allocating funding to providers was also brought in. All providers are now on the same rates.

8.2 Provisional funding for 2021/22 is £10.36m (2020/21 £9.65m).

9. Timetable for Setting the Budget

9.1 The proposed timetable for setting all the elements of the DSG budget is set out below:

Date	Who	Item
20.7.20	DfE	Operational guidance published
July to Sept 2020	DfE	NFF illustrative allocations published and APT issued
Sept 2020	LA	Modelling of new primary & secondary school formula (once received national formula rates from ESFA)
6.10.20	HFG	Approve consultation proposals
tbc		School Admin (finance staff) briefing
19.10.20	SF	Approve consultation proposals
21.10.20	Schools	School funding formula consultation with schools.
Nov 2020	LA	High needs and Early years initial budget proposals worked on by officers
24.11.20	HFG	Review school formula consultation responses and make recommendation to Schools' Forum.
7.12.20	SF	Review central schools budget proposals.
Mid Dec 2020	DfE	DSG funding allocations and APT issued with updated census data
Mid Dec 2020	LA	Updating by officers of formula and the funding rates in light of actual DSG funding
13.1.21	HFG	Review final SFF. Review final budget proposals for central schools in light of funding announcement.
25.1.21	SF	Review HFG recommendations, final calculations and final funding formula. Agree final budget for Central Schools Block.
21.1.21	LA	Deadline for submission of final APT to ESFA
31.1.21 to 18.2.21	LA	Finalisation by officers of high needs and early year's budget proposals.
By 28.2.21	Political ratification	Approval of School Formula
28.2.21	LA	Statutory deadline for providing primary and secondary maintained schools with funding allocation
8.3.21	SF	Agree final budgets for Early Years and High Needs Block.

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Early Years Budget 2021/22

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum on 25th January 2021

Report Author: Avril Allenby and Lisa Potts

Item for: Information **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Schools Forum on the funding rates for the Early Years Block for 2021/22.

2. Grant funding rates 2021/22

- 2.1 The guidance for the Early Years funding for 2021/22 has recently been published, including details of the new funding rates.
- 2.2 The new funding rates are shown below, along with their increases:

	2020/21 rate	increase	2021/22 rate
2 year old funding	£5.82	8p	£5.90
3 to 4 year old funding	£4.78	6p	£4.84
Early Years Pupil Premium	£0.53	0	£0.53
Disability Access Fund	£615	0	£615

3. Census information to determine grant levels

- 3.1 The normal process for determining funding allocations for local authorities for the early years entitlements is to take an annual census count of the number of hours taken up by children in each local authority in January. This is the mid-point of the academic year and so balances the relatively lower numbers eligible for the free entitlements in the autumn term and the higher numbers in the summer term. This means that local authorities would in normal circumstances be paid for the spring term 2021 based on the January 2021 census data.
- 3.2 For the January 2021 census, the process will remain the same. However, the DFE have recognised that the number of children attending childcare may not have returned to normal levels in all areas when we take the January 2021 census, and it may not therefore represent the mid year point in the normal way. Therefore if attendance is below 85% of our January 2020 census levels, a top up will be applied.
- 3.3 The final allocations will be updated in July 2021 as normal.

4. Grant funding 2021/22

- 4.1 The grant allocation for 2021/22 has been confirmed as £10,360,415

5. Maintained Nursery Schools

- 5.1 For 2021 to 2022, part of the supplementary funding allocations are published as indicative, and part as conditional.
- 5.2 The allocations for April 2021 to August 2021 are indicative and will be updated on the same basis as the universal entitlements.
- 5.3 The maintained nursery school supplementary funding allocations for September 2021 to March 2022 are conditional: they may be subject to change and local authorities should therefore treat them as unconfirmed.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Whilst we have seen a real terms increase in this grant funding, it is unsure how this will impact on the current deficit on the block since we are still seeing an ongoing decline in numbers due to Covid.
- 6.2 The Early Years Funding Group will be considering the impact of this rate change along with the deficit recovery in due course.

Deficit Schools

Report being considered by: Schools Forum
On: 25th January 2021
Report Author: Melanie Ellis
Item for: Information **By:** All Maintained Schools Representatives

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides details of:

- (a) The five schools which submitted deficit budgets for 2020/21,
- (b) The two schools which ended the 2019/20 financial year with unlicensed deficit balances,
- (c) Schools that have submitted deficit forecasts for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

1.2 A separate report has been written summarising the impact of Covid-19 on school budgets, and the possibility of more schools ending the 2020/21 financial year with an unlicensed deficit balance.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the report be noted.

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. Deficit Schools 2020/21

3.1 Five schools submitted a WBC Deficit Budget License Application for the financial year 2020/21. Two of the five had licensed deficits in the financial year 2019/20.

3.2 Four of the five schools submitted their period seven Budget Monitoring and Forecast report, which have been reviewed by Schools Accountancy and feedback emailed to each school. The period seven submissions are shown in the tables below with two schools in a better financial position and three in a worse position than budgeted.

3.3 The fifth school has not had a Finance Officer in post since early 2020. West Berkshire Council Schools Accountancy has provided what support they have been able to. The latest figures available for the Main School Budget are P6 and figures are not available for the other fund codes.

School	Main School Budget (MSB)			Out of Hours Clubs (OoHC)			Combined
	2020/21 Budgeted Year-end balance	2020/21 P7 Forecast Year-end balance (* P6)	Variance	2020/21 Budgeted Year-end balance (# Not submitted)	2020/21 P7 Forecast Year-end balance (^ Not able to submit)	Variance	2020/21 P7 Total Forecast Year-end balance
	A £	B £	B-A = C £	A £	B £	B-A = C £	£
Beenham Primary	109	(5,279)	(5,388)	224	(5,066)	(5,290)	(10,345)
Bradfield Primary	(8,352)	(2,447)	5,905	N/A	N/A	N/A	(2,447)
Hampstead Norreys & The Ilsleys Federation	(18,845)	(7,421)*	11,424	(650)	^	-	(7,421)
Mrs Blands Nursery & Infant	(36,808)	(52,829)	(16,021)	0	13,873	13,873	(38,956)
St Finians Primary	(34,319)	(47,477)	(13,158)	#	(1,378)	-	(48,855)

Figures in red brackets indicate a deficit

4. Schools ending 2019/20 with an unlicensed deficit

4.1 Two schools ended the financial year 2019/20 with unlicensed deficits.

4.2 Both schools submitted their period seven Budget Monitoring and Forecast report, which have been reviewed by Schools Accountancy and feedback emailed to each school. The period seven submissions are shown in the table below with one school forecasting to end 2020/21 in a slightly worse financial position than budgeted.

Schools	2020/21 Budgeted Year-end balance	2020/21 P7 Forecast Year-end balance	Variance
	A £	B £	B-A = C £
Bucklebury Primary	Main School Budget (MSB) Only		
	55	22	(33)
Compton Primary	Main School Budget, Pupil Premium and PE & Sport Premium Grants		
	6,130	15,160	9,030

5. Schools that expect to end 2020/21 with an unlicensed deficit balance

5.1 In addition to schools reported above, other maintained schools have started to contact West Berkshire Council Schools Accountancy team to discuss the significant financial pressures they are experiencing this financial year which may result in possible unplanned year end deficits.

5.2 A separate paper is being tabled in relation to this.

5.3 Each year all maintained schools are required to submit a robust period Nine Budget Monitoring and Forecast report to West Berkshire Council Schools Accountancy team. A full summary of this will be provided at the March meeting.

6. Summary of schools that submitted deficit forecasts for 2021/22 and 2022/23

6.1 Annually all schools are required to submit a budget and a two year forecast. The table below shows a summary of the 2020/21 submissions.

Submission 2020/21	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Forecast
Total Number of Deficits	4	24	31
Total Number of Surpluses	55	37	30
Total Number of Nil Balances	2	0	0
Total Number of establishments	61	61	61
Total Value of Submissions	£2,269,684	(£29,288)	(£3,454,269)

6.2 Historically schools do not spend a significant amount of time on the two years of forecast (2021/22 and 2022/23) as the funding information available is not robust, the time available to the schools to work on the forecasts is limited and it has been noted that some schools are no longer preparing three year School Development Plans to support three year budget and forecasting. As a result when the first year of the forecast becomes the budget the number of deficits has previously dropped significantly.

6.3 The table below shows the equivalent table last year. It showed 40 schools forecasting a deficit in 2020/21 but only 5 actually submitted one.

Submission 2019/20	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Forecast
Total Number of Deficits	4	40	46
Total Number of Surpluses	58	23	17
Total Number of Nil Balances	1	0	0

7. Budget Monitoring and Forecast Submission Dates

7.1 Submission deadlines for the remainder of the 2020/21 financial year are shown below for licensed deficit schools 2020/21 and those that ended 2019/20 with an unlicensed deficit.

SUBMISSION TIMETABLE					
All submissions should be emailed to sarah.reynard@westberks.gov.uk					
Period covered by Agresso Report	Budget Monitoring	Bank Statement, FMS Reconciliation and Historical Unreconciled BankTransactions reports	Forecast	FMS Outstanding Purchase Order report	Submission Deadline (midnight)
Period 9 / December	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	18/01/2021
Period 10 / January	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	12/02/2021
Period 11 / February	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	12/03/2021

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The Financial Impact of Covid-19 on School Budgets 2020/21

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 25th January 2021

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Item for: Information **By:** All school representatives

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To review the financial impact of Covid-19 on school budgets 2020/21 and discuss any possible funding streams that could be used to support schools in financial difficulty.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 For discussion.

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/Background

- 3.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on school budgets. The Department for Education (DfE) confirmed that state-funded schools would continue to receive their funding for 2020/21 regardless of any periods of closure. However, schools have incurred a myriad of additional costs and the greatest financial concern for some has been the loss of income streams.
- 3.2 Exceptional costs funding for mainstream and special schools was offered by the DfE, covering a limited period of March to July 2020. However, strict parameters limited the number of schools who could apply for this funding. Additionally, the stringent criteria applied to this financial support restricted the costs for which schools could apply for financial reimbursement.
- 3.3 Costs that schools have incurred for the wider and continued opening have had to be met using existing budget.
- 3.4 In order to gauge the impact upon schools, in September, the 59 schools that are supported by Schools' Accountancy were requested to submit their P6 budget monitoring and forecasting for their main school budget and for their out of hours provision, if applicable. 51 schools responded.

4. Supporting Information

Main School Budget (MSB)

- 4.1 24 schools reported a reduction in their forecasted year end position, eight of whom are now predicting an unlicensed deficit year end forecast (Appendix B)

- 4.2 A common theme for additional costs incurred for Covid-19 were:
- Higher premises costs, in particular additional cleaning costs (cleaners, cleaning and hygiene supplies)
 - Purchasing of PPE equipment
 - ISS charges for additional Free School Meals
 - Teacher, support staff and supply costs (covering 3rd trimester pregnancy cover)
 - Online learning and resources costs
- 4.3 Many schools rely on lettings as an additional income stream, and this has been significantly impacted by Covid-19. Additionally, PTA financial support has been reduced due to the inability to fund raise.
- 4.4 A number of schools reported some savings during the summer term:
- Reduced staff costs including supply/agency costs
 - Lower occupancy costs eg energy, oil, refuse collection
 - Decrease in educational supplies.

Out of Hours Provision

- 4.5 31 maintained schools run an out of hours provision that is maintained on Agresso using a separate cost centre, and 29 of these schools submitted a P6 year end forecast. 23 of these schools reported a reduction in their forecasted year end position, 13 of whom forecast to end the year in a deficit position on this cost centre.
- 4.6 Additional costs incurred due to Covid-19
- Increased cleaning costs
 - Purchase of PPE equipment
 - Increased playworker costs covering absent staff
- 4.7 Income has been significantly impacted. Out of Hours Clubs (OOHC) were not able to operate during lockdown, and since reopening the provisions have had a decrease in the number of pupils regularly attending. Therefore, there has been a significant shortfall of income to date, and in many cases reduced income forecast to March 2021. No funding has been available for this loss of income, with the expectation being that staff involved in running the clubs could be furloughed.
- 4.8 13 of the schools furloughed one or more of the staff members that work in the OOHC. Advice from HR providers differed, and some schools were advised that some or all of the relevant staff members could not be furloughed due to having other roles in the school (eg a Teaching Assistant). To date £61K furlough funding has been received for the period April – July 2020.
- 4.9 A number of schools have, in previous years, transferred a significant part of their year end balance to the MSB, and will have budgeted to do so this year. This will, therefore, have an adverse impact on their MSB balance.
- 4.10 10 schools are forecasting a year end unlicensed deficit when combining the forecasted outturn for MSB and the OOHC combined. The forecast deficit for these 10 schools totals £124K. With the ongoing impact of the pandemic, the position for schools is unlikely to improve in this financial year.

Covid-19 Exceptional Costs Funding

- 4.11 In July 2020 schools were able to claim for exceptional costs arising as a result of Covid-19. However, the conditions and criteria set for this funding were both stringent and restrictive. Funding was for costs incurred between March and July 2020.
- 4.12 There were three categories
- (a) Increased premises related costs of keeping schools open over school holiday periods (Easter and the May half term), for vulnerable children and children of critical workers
 - (b) Support for free school meal (FSM) children who were not attending school, other than through the national voucher scheme
 - (c) Additional cleaning, over and above existing cleaning arrangements, where schools had a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus.
- 4.12 A fourth category 'Other' allowed schools to apply for funding for other extraordinary costs. However, it was made clear in the guidance that if schools claimed using this fourth category then these claims could take longer to process as they would need to be individually assessed. The DfE have subsequently stated that they were unable to reimburse any of these additional claims.
- 4.13 Schools submitted claims directly to the DfE so there is no data as to how many WBC schools submitted bids nor any detail as to the value of the bids.
- 4.14 31 schools (federated schools being referred to as one school) submitted a claim for exceptional costs funding. Total funding received was £132K.
- 4.15 A second claims window was opened on the 7th December, but the three categories has not been expanded.
- 4.16 Schools continued to receive their core funding allocations for the 2020/21 financial year. The DfE confirmed that those schools incurring extra costs during the wider reopening would have to use their existing budget to manage any additional costs.

5. Options for Consideration

- 5.1 The criteria for accessing the exceptional costs fund appear to have been very limited and the list of eligible costs too restrictive. Lost self-generated income was not covered by this grant. Some WBC schools have suffered financially during the current pandemic and will continue to do so.
- 5.2 The Primary Schools in Financial Difficulty fund (SIFD) is a de-delegated contingency. Consideration could be given as to whether the unforeseeable costs incurred to manage Covid-19, together with the loss of income, could be considered as reasonable use of this fund for those primary schools who will be facing an unplanned deficit 2020/21. Any claims would come under the one off exceptional costs criteria.

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Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring Report 2020/21 – Quarter Three

Report being considered by: Schools Forum

On: 25th January 2021

Report Author: Ian Pearson

Item for: Information **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report the forecast financial position of the services funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), highlighting any under or over spends, and to highlight the cumulative deficit on the DSG.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 That the report be noted.

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. Background

3.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring fenced specific grant which can only be spent on school/pupil activity as set out in The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2018. The Local Authority and Schools' Forum are responsible for ensuring that the DSG is deployed correctly according to the Regulations. Monitoring of spend against the grant needs to take place regularly to enable decision making on over spends/under spends and to inform future year budget requirements.

3.2 There are four DSG funding blocks: Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years Block and Central Schools Services Block. The funding for each of the four blocks is determined by a national funding formula.

4. 2020/21 Budget Setting

4.1 The 2020/21 Dedicated Schools Grant allocation is £138m. This includes £41m which funds Academies and post-16 high needs places which is paid direct by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to schools. The DSG budget for 2020/21 has been built utilising the remaining grant of £97m.

4.2 The schools block is ring fenced but the Local Authority can transfer up to 0.5% of the funding out of the schools block with Schools Forum agreement. The other blocks are not subject to this limitation on transfers. For the 2020/21 budget, Schools Forum agreed to transfer 0.25% of the Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block amounting to £263k.

4.3 The DSG expenditure budgets required for 2020/21 total £99m, which is £2m more than the funding available. As a result, a £2m in-year efficiency target has been set against this in order to balance the DSG budget. £1.2m of the target is allocated to the High Needs Block and £0.8m to the Early Years Block in accordance with the 2020/21 budget agreed by Schools Forum at the meeting held on 09/03/2020.

4.4 There is a brought forward deficit on the DSG of £1.691m.

5. Quarter Three Forecast (31 December 2020)

5.1 The forecast position at the end of December is shown in Table 1. A more detailed position per cost centre is shown in Appendix A.

Table 1 - DSG Block forecast	Original Budget 2020/21	Budget Changes	Amended Budget 2020/21	Quarter 1 Forecast	Quarter 2 Forecast	Month 7 Forecast	Quarter 3 Forecast	Quarter 3 Forecast Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools Block (inc ISB)	65,221		65,221	65,221	65,221	65,221	65,221	0
Early Years Block	10,381		10,381	10,381	10,381	10,572	10,564	183
Early Years Block In-Year efficiency target	(795)	577	(217)	0	0	0	0	217
Central School Services Block	834		834	883	880	831	813	(21)
High Needs Block	21,387		21,387	21,343	21,566	21,259	21,313	(73)
High Needs Block In-Year efficiency target	(1,185)	24	(1,161)	0	0	0	0	1,161
Total Block Expenditure	95,843	601	96,445	97,828	98,049	97,883	97,911	1,466
Support Service Recharges	444	0	444	444	444	444	444	0
Total Expenditure	96,287	601	96,889	98,272	98,493	98,327	98,355	1,466
Funded by:								
DSG Grant	(96,287)	(601)	(96,889)	(96,287)	(96,287)	(97,037)	(97,037)	(148)
Net In-year Deficit	0	0	0	1,985	2,205	1,291	1,319	1,318
Deficit Balance in reserves	1,691		1,691	1,691	1,691	1,691	1,691	1,691
Cumulative Deficit	1,691	0	1,691	3,676	3,896	2,982	3,010	3,009

5.2 The Quarter Three forecast shows an in-year forecast deficit of £1.3m. This comprises £88k against in-year expenditure and an unmet £1.4m efficiency target. Adjustments to the DSG funding in year has reduced the overall deficit to £1.3m in year. When added to the cumulative deficit of £1.691m, the forecast year end deficit on the DSG is £3m

6. Schools Block

6.1 There are no forecast variances within the Schools block at Quarter Three. There is however a risk of overspend in this block due to business rates, where properties may be revalued (as schools are funded according to their actual rates bill).

6.2 De-delegated budgets within the Schools Block will be forecast as on line during the year. Any over or under spends are carried forward as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process as balances are only attributable to these specific services and cannot be allocated generally across the DSG. The de-delegated balances are detailed below:

Schools Block De-Delegated balances	1.4.2020	change in reserves	Q3 position	31.3.2021 Est
	£k	£k	£k	£k
Schools in Financial Difficulty	(200)	0	28	(172)
School Improvement	(41)	0	0	(41)
EMTAS	(41)	0	10	(31)
Therapeutic Thinking	(2)	0	0	(2)
Total balance	(284)	0	38	(246)

7. Early Years Block

- 7.1 The Early Years Block is forecasting a £400k overspend at Quarter Three; £183k against expenditure and £217k against the in-year efficiency target. Additional grant of £577k has been received relating to the Early Years Block, as shown in Table 1.
- 7.2 Due to the nature of the volatility in this block, it is difficult to forecast as the funding (the final grant allocation will be determined by the January 2021 census), and payments to providers (payments are made according to actual number of hours of provision each term) are unpredictable.

8. Central Schools Services Block

- 8.1 The Central School Services Block is forecasting an underspend of £21k at Quarter Three. This comprises a £20k in-year underspend on staffing.

9. High Needs Block

- 9.1 The High Needs Block is forecasting an in-year underspend of £73k but the efficiency target of £1.2m remains unmet. The main variances against expenditure are as follows:
- £68k pressure relating to 13 new placements at Non WBC Mainstream schools
 - £176k pressure relating to an increase in use of Independent Special Schools and Special schools.
 - £228k saving from 1 successful tribunal and children being placed in local mainstream and local specialist provision.
 - £114k savings have been achieved on the Disproportionate High Needs costs and the Medical Home Tuition service, which transferred in-house in Sept 2019.
 - Other over and under spends within the Top Up funding areas are demand led and can be as a result of pupil movement from one setting to another.
 - Further work needs to be undertaken to ascertain which of the current year savings are ongoing or one off. This will help in compiling a recovery plan for 2021-22.

10. Deficit Position

- 10.1 The DSG forecast is a £1.3m overspend in year.
- 10.2 When added to the prior year deficit, the total forecast deficit on the DSG amounts to £3m. The DfE recognises that some authorities still cannot afford to pay off the historic deficit from the DSG over the next few years. In these cases, the DfE expects to work together with LAs to agree a plan of action to pay off its deficit. The DfE expects to approach selected authorities to begin discussions during 2020 and expand discussions to other authorities during 2021/22 and subsequent years.
- 10.3 The deficit sits largely within the High Needs and Early Years blocks, and reports will be presented to Schools Forum on plans to address the deficits.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1 The total forecast deficit on the DSG amounts to £3m, comprising £1.7m from previous years and a further £1.3m forecast overspend in year. The forecast position will be kept under review and updates provided to Schools' Forum Appendices

Appendix A – DSG 2020-21 Budget Monitoring Report Quarter Three

Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2020/2021 Budget Monitoring Month 9

Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget 2020/21	Net Virements in year	Amended Budget 2020/21	Forecast	Variance	Comments
90020	Primary Schools (excluding nursery funding)	47,677,060		47,677,060	47,677,060	0	Pessure on Theale business rates
DSG top slice	Academy Schools Primary	0		0	0	0	
90025	Secondary Schools (excluding 6th form funding)	16,115,140		16,115,140	16,115,140	0	
DSG top slice	Academy Schools Secondary	0		0	0	0	
90230	DD - Schools in Financial Difficulty (primary schools)	19,000		19,000	19,000	0	
90113	DD - Trade Union Costs	47,090		47,090	47,090	0	
90255	DD - Support to Ethnic minority & bilingual Learners	224,660		224,660	224,660	0	
90349	DD - Behaviour Support Services	216,390		216,390	216,390	0	
90424	DD - CLEAPSS	3,070		3,070	3,070	0	
90470	DD - School Improvement	0		0	0	0	
90423	DD - Statutory & Regulatory Duties	172,930		172,930	172,930	0	
90235	School Contingency - Growth Fund/Falling Rolls Fund	756,100		756,100	756,100	0	
90054	Efficiency Target	-10,070		-10,070	-10,070	0	
	Schools Block Total	65,221,370	0	65,221,370	65,221,370	0	
90583	National Copyright Licences	140,190		140,190	140,190	0	
90019	Servicing of Schools Forum	43,940		43,940	43,940	0	
90743	School Admissions	176,270		176,270	176,270	0	
90354	ESG - Education Welfare	170,790		170,790	150,790	-20,000	
90460	ESG - Statutory & Regulatory Duties	351,590		351,590	350,360	-1,230	
90054	Efficiency Target	-49,000		-49,000	-49,000	0	
	Central School Services Block DSG	833,780	0	833,780	812,550	-21,230	

Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2020/2021 Budget Monitoring Month 9

Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget 2020/21	Net Virements in year	Amended Budget 2020/21	Forecast	Variance	Comments
90010	Early Years Funding - Nursery Schools	938,110		938,110	892,120	-45,990	
90037	Early Years Funding - Maintained Schools	1,650,420		1,650,420	1,651,970	1,550	
90036	Early Years Funding - PVI Sector	6,423,350		6,423,350	6,314,040	-109,310	
90052	Early Years PPG & Deprivation Funding	188,380		188,380	208,390	20,010	
90053	Disability Access Fund	23,370		23,370	23,370	0	
90018	2 year old funding	756,830		756,830	691,340	-65,490	
90017	Central Expenditure on Children under 5	258,450		258,450	258,450	0	
90287	Pre School Teacher Counselling	51,950		51,950	51,950	0	
90238	Early Years Inclusion Fund	90,000		90,000	82,000	-8,000	
various	Additional payment re Autumn term	0		0	390,380	390,380	
90054	Efficiency Target	-794,570	577,447	-217,123	0	217,123	
	Early Years Block Total	9,586,290	577,447	10,163,737	10,564,010	400,273	
90026	Academy Schools RU Top Ups	948,280		948,280	979,460	31,180	
90546	Special Schools - Place Funding Post 16	790,000		790,000	790,000	0	
90539	Special Schools - Top Up Funding	3,986,360		3,986,360	4,122,320	135,960	
90548	Non WBC Special Schools - Top Up Funding	1,194,300		1,194,300	966,170	-228,130	One tribunal saving; children placed in local special schools and local independent
90551	Mainstream Maintained - post 16 SEN places	0		0	38,000	38,000	
90575	Non LEA Special School (OofA)	1,068,200		1,068,200	1,008,830	-59,370	
90579	Independent Special School Place & Top Up	2,797,000		2,797,000	2,837,580	40,580	
90580	Further Education Colleges Top Up	1,087,730		1,087,730	1,039,410	-48,320	
90617	Resourced Units top up Funding maintained	313,650		313,650	291,220	-22,430	
90618	Non WBC Resourced Units - Top Up Funding	130,600		130,600	162,970	32,370	
90621	Mainstream - Top Up Funding maintained	779,450		779,450	796,680	17,230	

Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2020/2021 Budget Monitoring Month 9

Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget 2020/21	Net Virements in year	Amended Budget 2020/21	Forecast	Variance	Comments
90622	Mainstream - Top Up Funding Academies	389,600		389,600	398,370	8,770	
90624	Non WBC Mainstream - Top Up Funding	70,590		70,590	138,450	67,860	13 new placements
90625	Pupil Referral Units - Top Up Funding	818,400		818,400	884,350	65,950	
90627	Disproportionate No: of HN Pupils NEW	100,000		100,000	31,260	-68,740	
90628	EHCP PRU Placement	557,520		557,520	571,450	13,930	
High Needs Block: Top Up Funding Total		15,031,680	0	15,031,680	15,056,520	24,840	
90320	Pupil Referral Units	660,000		660,000	660,000	0	
90540	Special Schools	2,860,000		2,860,000	2,860,000	0	
90584	Resourced Units - Place Funding (70)	230,000		230,000	242,000	12,000	
High Needs Block: Place Funding Total		3,750,000	0	3,750,000	3,762,000	12,000	
90240	Applied Behaviour Analysis	136,580		136,580	164,940	28,360	
90280	Special Needs Support Team	308,130		308,130	308,130	0	
90281	SEND Strategy (DSG)	61,060		61,060	61,060	0	
90282	Medical Home Tuition	205,000		205,000	159,000	-46,000	
90287	Pre School Teacher Counselling	51,950		51,950	39,950	-12,000	
90288	Elective Home Education Monitoring	28,240		28,240	28,240	0	
90290	Sensory Impairment	227,590		227,590	245,630	18,040	
90295	Therapy Services	261,470		261,470	259,330	-2,140	
90372	Therapeutic Thinking	58,000		58,000	52,000	-6,000	
90555	LAL Funding	116,200		116,200	116,200	0	
90565	Equipment For SEN Pupils	15,000		15,000	26,260	11,260	
90577	SEN Commissioned Provision	567,650		567,650	567,040	-610	
90582	PRU Outreach	61,200		61,200	61,200	0	
90585	HN Outreach Special Schools	50,000		50,000	50,000	0	
90610	Hospital Tuition	39,050		39,050	39,050	0	

Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2020/2021 Budget Monitoring Month 9

Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget 2020/21	Net Virements in year	Amended Budget 2020/21	Forecast	Variance	Comments
90830	ASD Teachers	208,390		208,390	157,240	-51,150	Saving £43,350 as a result of two HLTAs ASD Support posts now running 1 Jan 21 - 31 Dec 21, so funds to be carried forward
90961	Vulnerable Children	179,400		179,400	129,400	-50,000	
90581	Dingleys Promise	30,000		30,000	30,000	0	
High Needs Block: Non Top Up or Place Funding		2,604,910	0	2,604,910	2,494,670	-110,240	
90054	Efficiency Target	-1,184,910	24,000	-1,160,910	0	1,160,910	
High Needs Block Total		20,201,680	24,000	20,225,680	21,313,190	1,087,510	
Total Expenditure across funding blocks		95,843,120	601,447	96,444,567	97,911,120	1,466,553	
SUPPORT SERVICE RECHARGES		444,000	0	444,000	444,000	0	
TOTAL DSG EXPENDITURE		96,287,120	601,447	96,888,567	98,355,120	1,466,553	
90030	DSG Grant Account	-96,287,120	-601,447	-96,888,567	-97,036,582	-148,015	
NET DSG EXPENDITURE		0	0	0	1,318,538	1,318,538	

Agenda Item 16

Schools Forum Work Programme 2020/21

	Item	HFG Deadline	Heads Funding Group	SF Deadline	Schools Forum	Action required	Author
Term 4	Work Programme 2021/22	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Decision	Jessica Bailiss
	iCollege Review	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Discussion	Michelle Sancho / Jacquie Davies
	Final DSG Budget 2021/22 - Overview	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	Final High Needs Block Budget 2021/22	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Decision	Jane Seymour
	Impact of Covid-19 on the High Needs Block	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Discussion	Jane Seymour
	Special Schools - Additional Funding	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Decision	Jane Seymour
	Final Early Years Block Budget 2021/22 and Deficit Recovery Plan	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Information	Avril Allenby
	Transfer of electricity meters from BGB to EDF	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Decision	Christopher Harris / Phil Newton
	Deficit Schools (<i>standing item</i>)	16/02/21	23/02/21	01/03/21	08/03/21	Information	Melanie Ellis
	DSG Monitoring 2020/21 Month 10			01/03/21	08/03/21	Decision	Melanie Ellis
	Schools in Financial Difficulty Bids (TBC)						

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