

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

Monday 10 February 2020
4.30pm – 6.00 pm

To be held at

Queen's Park High School
Queen's Park Road
Handbridge
Chester CH4 7AE

Refreshments will be available from 4pm

Schools Forum Clerk
Children and Families
Cheshire West and Chester Council
Telephone 01244 972901



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Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum

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Agenda for Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum 10 February 2020

1.	4.30	Introductions and apologies		
2.	4.35	Minutes and matters arising of last meeting 2.1 To agree the minutes held 14 January 2020 2.2 Matters arising		Page 4-10
3.	4.45	Council budget setting update	Anna Jones	Presentation
4.	5.00	Early Years funding for 2020-2021	Sue Lawson Natalie Cole	Page 11-14
5.	5.30	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Funding for Mainstream and Special Schools – Funding from the High Needs Block 2020-2021	Debbie Freeman	Page 15-19
6.	6.00	Central Spend budgets 2020-2021	Natalie Cole	Page 20-25
7.	6.20	Letter to schools 2019-2020 budget planning	Natalie Cole	Circulated separately
8.	6.25	Any Other Business		
9.	6.30 Finish	Next meeting: Tuesday 7 July 2020 Queen's Park High Schools Forum and finance sub group meeting schedule and forward plan		Page 26

**Cheshire West and Chester
Schools Forum
10 February 2020**

Agenda Item 2

Minutes of Cheshire West and Chester Schools Forum, held at Queen's Park High School, Chester, on 14 January 2020

Members	Representing	Attendance
Schools and Academies		
Alan Brown	Primary headteachers	Attended
Julie Chambers	Primary headteachers	Absent
Sarah Curtis	Primary headteachers	Attended
Ian Devereux Roberts	Primary headteachers	Apologies
Kate Docherty	Primary headteachers	Attended
Duncan Haworth (Chair)	Primary governors	Attended
Helen Hill	Primary governors	Attended
Paul Healey	Primary governors	Attended
Kath Lloyd	Primary governors	Apologies
David Nield	Primary governors	Attended
David Curry	Secondary headteachers	Attended
Mike Holland	Secondary headteachers	Attended
John Freeman	Secondary governors	Attended
David Rowlands	Secondary governors	Attended
Mike McCann	Special headteachers	Attended
Phil Hopwood	Special governors	Absent
Katie Tyrie	Nursery headteachers	Apologies
Andy Stewart	PRU	Attended
Vacancy	Academies - mainstream	Vacancy
Vacancy	Academies - mainstream	Vacancy
Luci Jones	Academies - mainstream	Attended
Jason Lowe	Academies - mainstream	Absent
Helen Studley	Academies - mainstream	Attended
Lyndsay Watterson	Academies - mainstream	Attended
Marie Allen	Academies - special	Attended
Non Schools		
Paula Adolph	PVI early years providers	Absent
Sue Anderson	PVI early years providers	Apologies
Kathryn Magiera	Diocese	Absent
Caroline Vile	Diocese	Absent
Greg Foster	Unions	Attended
Geoff Wright	Unions	Absent
Rob Pullen	CWAPH	Attended
Vacancy	16-19 providers	Vacancy
Non-voting Observers		
Councillor Nicole Meardon	Cabinet Member for Children and Families	Absent

Officers in attendance

Mark Parkinson	Director of Education and Inclusion (job share)
David McNaught	Director of Education and Inclusion (job share)
Natalie Cole	Finance Manager
Charlotte Fenn	Clerk
Debbie Freeman	SEN Manager

1. Introductions and apologies

Apologies were noted.

Duncan Haworth introduced and welcomed to the meeting three new representatives:

Helen Studley	The Samara Trust representing mainstream Academies
Helen Hill	Eaton Primary representing primary governors
Paul Healey	Woodlands Primary representing primary governors

Duncan reported the following Academy representative resignations:

Amanda Harrison	The Winsford Academy (The Fallibroome Trust)
Stephanie Cade	Concordia Multi Academy Trust

It was noted that the Clerk would seek nominations and conduct an election to fill the vacancies.

2. Minutes and matters arising of last meeting

2.1 To agree the minutes from the meeting held 10 December 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10 December 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

2.2 Matters arising

2.2.1 Item 2.2.3 Implementing mandatory minimum per pupil funding levels Government consultation

Natalie Cole reported to Schools Forum on the DfE's response to the recent consultation on implementing mandatory minimum per pupil funding levels. The DfE had acknowledged the issues raised by many LA's, including CW&C, about the lack of funding for small and rural schools. It was noted that the DfE were considering ways to ensure the NFF (National Funding Formula) better supported these schools.

2.2.2 Item 2.2.5 Early Years Provider Hub

Natalie Cole reported that a communication had not been sent to PVI settings as there was nothing new to communicate. The current Early Years

Provider Hub had agreed to process the January payments to Early Years settings, as normal, whilst the LA was seeking a new provider.

2.2.3 Item 5 Any Other Business - Funding Gypsy Romany Traveller (GRT) Pupils

Mark Parkinson reported that a letter had not yet been drafted as Officers were awaiting a response from Sharon Wyatt, Horn's Mill Primary School. Officers would follow this up.

3. High Needs Review

Mark Parkinson introduced the report which broadly outlined the potential financial implications of the outcomes from the High Needs Review.

Mark summarised the background to and phases of the High Needs review as outlined in paragraphs two to eight. It was noted that work would continue on the outcomes of the review over the next few years making sure SEN pupils were better supported. Mark reported the 10 recommendations related to key areas of development but were by no means all that was being done around SEN. It was acknowledged that the number of SEN pupils continued to rise and finances were stretched but in raw terms the LA was in a better position than many other authorities.

Mark referred Forum members to paragraph nine, which outlined the 10 recommendations, and went through the financial implications.

It was noted that the 0-25 Inclusion Framework (ref recommendation one and two) had been well received by SENCOs and parents, providing transparency and ensuring SEN funds were used fairly and equitably. Mark made reference to appendix 1 which gave an example of the post 16 framework as an illustration of what was being done to clarify needs and the level of provision.

Mark made reference to a proposed £200,000 transfer from the Schools block to High Needs block (recommendation three) to develop models and demonstrate what works to increase levels of outreach from special schools and promote inclusion in mainstream. It was noted that, following the 2013 review, high quality local provision had been developed reducing out of borough placements but special schools were now full.

Debbie Freeman informed Forum that recommendations three and four were closely linked; as well as looking at outreach models they would be looking at resource provision and how to support primary pupils transferring to secondary schools rather than special schools.

Mark acknowledged David Curry's concerns for the need to frame the language used differently so as not to infer blame; in some cases secondary schools did not take pupils as it was not the right setting for them.

It was noted that with the right match, MLD pupils could have their needs met in secondary schools; however, it was acknowledged that secondary staff were becoming deskilled as most MLD pupils went to Special school MLD provision.

Sarah Curtis raised an issue regarding not receiving additional element two funding when taking a SEN pupil in year and cited a recent case in her school. Mark acknowledged the comment; it was something that would need to be worked through as part of the modelling to solve practicalities.

Mike McCann responded that there was also a perverse disincentive as special schools lost top-up funding when a pupil moved to mainstream, though this would not prevent a pupil moving when appropriate.

Mark reported that recommendation five and changes to top-up funding would be included in a further High Needs paper to be presented at the February Forum meeting.

Mark made reference to recommendation seven and remodelling residential provision. It was acknowledged that the authority's residential provision was good or outstanding and well received by parents. Mike McCann was keen to engage with the remodelling as the need had been identified in a previous review but not moved forward. It was noted that Sarah Banks, Senior Manager, Disable Children's Service, would be addressing this area.

Mark informed Forum, referencing recommendation eight, that the challenge for his team was to develop a post-16 offer, similar to that offered out of borough, locally and cheaper.

It was acknowledged that continued investment in workforce development at all levels and building confidence in our staff was important (reference recommendation nine). It was noted that no specific financial provision had been put in place yet but would be looked at alongside addressing how to sustain resources moving into the future.

Mark reminded Forum that governors and leaders need to engage with the process and investing in staff.

Resolved that the Schools Forum agreed to the direction of travel outlined in the report in response to the High Needs Review recommendations.

4. Indicative Dedicated Schools Grant Allocations for 2020-2021 and Budget Setting Proposals

Natalie Cole introduced the report which confirmed the indicative DSG allocation for 2020-2021 and the budget proposals for the next financial year.

Natalie explained that the paper was the same as the one discussed at the December Forum but now had the revised allocations subsequently provided by the ESFA.

Natalie referred Forum members to the budget planning proposals on page 48 and the proposal to transfer £200,000 from the Schools block to the High Needs block that had been referenced under the High Needs review, item three.

Sarah Curtis questioned what impact the two proposed independent special schools opening in Chester would have on the high needs budget. It was noted that these schools provided provision for autistic children. Mark Parkinson responded that this could increase demand on the high needs budget especially if there was a year on year increase in demand for autism provision.

Natalie drew Forums attention to the continuation of funding the Duke of Edinburgh programme proposal in paragraph 11. David Curry reported that CWASH unanimously supported and valued the Duke of Edinburgh programme. Lyndsay Watterson added that her school could not have done without the risk assessment and support network provided through Edsential. It was noted that there was also a strong drive from parents for pupils to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh programme, if there were additional costs this might discourage pupils from participation. No other alternatives to funding other than via the Schools block were put forward by Forum.

The Chair put the proposals set out in the paper to the vote.

Resolved that the Schools Forum:

- i. approve the draft DSG budget proposals in Appendix B (vote: unanimous);
- ii. approve the transfer of £200k from the schools block to high needs block to create a fund to develop new models of provision to promote inclusion in mainstream schools especially for children with MLD in line with the outcome of the High Needs Review; (vote: unanimous)
- iii. agree to transfer £25,000 from Schools block to fund the Duke of Edinburgh programme for one year and review funding options next year (vote: unanimous); and
- iv. note the next steps for confirming the DSG budget proposals for 2020-2021.

5. Draft of 2020-2021 School Funding Formula for January Submission

Natalie Cole introduced the report which detailed the draft School Funding Formula for 2020-2021 and tabled the draft 2020-2021 school allocations compared with 2019-2020 for illustrative purposes only and not to be circulated further.

It was noted that the draft school allocations did not include premises factor rates, PFI or split sites factors which were still to be confirmed. Natalie drew Forum members' attention to the prior attainment allocations which showed that a number of schools would receive a reduction in this funding. A change in the data set resulting in a drop in pupils attracting this funding would adversely affect primary schools. It was noted these schools would be protected by a positive MFG (0.5%) but would not get the 4% promised by the DfE.

Natalie referred Forum members to appendix B which summarised the funding by factor for each sector and pointed out that this was the first time for some years

that there had been a reduction in primary pupil numbers. It was noted that, broadly, the number of primary pupils had stabilised, pupil growth was now moving into secondary. Natalie Cole informed Forum that the primary/secondary funding ratio of 1:25 was now average.

Natalie provided an update on the recent review of the split site criteria and proposed changes. It was noted the criteria and values had been in place since 2013. Two schools were eligible for funding under the current criteria, Hartford High and Darnhall Primary.

It was noted that as part of the review Natalie had sought, from the two schools, their evaluation of additional costs of operating a split site and benchmarked them against similar schools to ascertain what was additional.

Having reviewed split site criteria used by other authorities it was proposed that

- The additional allowance will continue to apply only in exceptional circumstances and will be limited to schools operating sites separated by an adopted highway.
- The value of the allocation would include a consideration of the additional costs associated with the duplication of facilities, supplies and services, additional staffing resources and inter-site travel.
- The criteria will recognise where increasing distance and number of buildings increases the additional costs to the school
- any revisions to this formula factor remain affordable from within the premises and growth allocation rather than from the NFF factors funding all schools.

Mike Holland raised concerns that changing the criteria might open the authority to challenge.

It was noted that Hartford High was having a new building next financial year resulting in a level of savings; although it would still be a split site it would not fall into the new criteria.

Natalie proposed that Hartford High be allowed a transitional year for 2020-2021 with the allocation reducing in September and the allowance being removed in full in 2021-2022.

It was noted that Darnhall Primary and Woodlands Primary would be eligible under the new criteria and the proposal was to allocate £35,000 to each school.

Resolved that the Schools Forum (School, Academy and PVI representatives) approve:

- i. the principles on which the funding formula is based for final submission to the ESFA, as outline in the paper: and
- ii. the changes to the split site criteria and transitional funding for Hartford HS.

6. Combined Budgets Expenditure

Natalie Cole introduced the report which outlined the proposed allocation of the combined budgets element of the DSG for 2020-2021 which also included the former miscellaneous budget items.

Natalie drew Forum members' attention to the reduction of the Schools' Improvement and Intervention team DSG funding, as outlined in table 1. It was noted that the LA was putting in funding to reinstate most of the reduction (subject to Council approval).

Resolved that the Schools' Forum agree the allocation and configuration of the combined budgets element of the DSG and the miscellaneous expenditure for the 2020-2021 financial year as outlined in the paper, (for the Duke of Edinburgh programme funding refer to item 4 resolution).

7. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2019-2020 Forecast Outturn at Third Review

Natalie Cole introduced the report which provided an update on the financial forecast outturn position for 2019-2020 for centrally held DSG as reported at the Third Review.

It was noted that the position had significantly improved from the forecast overspend position at the Second Review (not previously reported) due to the updated costs for post 16 high needs students.

Natalie reported that the SEN team were reviewing why the funds put aside for post 16 high needs students had not been required.

Resolved that the Forum note the Third Review position on the DSG.

8. AOB – Agree Chair for 11 February 2020 meeting

Duncan Haworth reported that neither he nor the vice chair were able to attend the February meeting therefore a Chair needed to be agreed. It had also been brought to his attention that there was a clash with the CWAPH conference. With the resulting low attendance there was also the possibility of the Forum not being quorate.

It was noted that the meeting might be moved to Monday 10 February and Forum would be informed once a decision had been made.

9. Next meeting

February date to be confirmed.

Agenda Item 4

Early Years Funding for 2020-2021

Purpose of the report

1. This report details the proposed budget allocation for the early years block and funding of the two, three and four year old entitlements for 2020-2021 through the Early Years Funding Formula (EYFF) and Early Years Inclusion Support Fund (EYISF). Schools Forum's views are sought on the proposed changes within the report.

Recommendations

2. That Schools Forum review the proposed allocation of the early years block allocation and approve the increase in base rate funding for 2020-2021.

Previous reports to Schools Forum

3. This report follows the principles agreed in earlier reports to Schools Forum on the local authority's early years block allocation for 2020-2021. There are no changes proposed to the local Early Years Single Funding Formula from 2019-2020 when the following decisions were implemented:
 - To retain the current funding formula and use of the deprivation, quality and rurality funding supplements.
 - Quality Supplement - School readiness data submitted by 88% of Early Years providers in Summer 2019 (including School Nurseries), demonstrates that 68% of children are working within age related expectations (ARE) across all seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) prior to starting in Reception. The number of children eligible for two year funding doubled and the percentage of these children attaining ARE across all areas of learning increased by 3% (71% 2018). The gender gap in 2019 was 6% and this closed by 3% from 2018. We will continue to monitor this data to further review the impact of this funding supplement for 2020-2021.
 - To use the January census point to verify eligibility criteria for rurality and quality supplements.
 - To retain the current payment methodology to providers with some improvements to timings, provision of information and bridging payments for funding exceptional circumstances.

Early Years Block allocation

4. In September 2019 as part of the Spending Round the Chancellor announced an additional £66m nationally for early years and childcare funding in 2020-2021. Since then the DfE has confirmed an increase in the hourly funding rates for all

local authorities for the two-year-old entitlement and for the vast majority of areas for the three and four-year-old entitlement. For CW&C this has led to a £0.380m (1.8%) increase in the two year old and three and four year old funding rates in the early years block. This increase is to be applied to base rates in funding formula to increase funding to all providers.

- Initial early years block allocations for 2020-2021 are shown in the table below. Allocations will be updated in July 2020 from the headcounts taken at the January 2020 census.

Early Years Block	Pupil Numbers	Amount per pupil £	Allocation 2020-2021 £000
Three and four year old universal entitlement	5,083	2,497	12,690
Maintained nursery supplementary			80
Extended 15 hours	2,313	2,497	5,775
Total three and four year olds			18,545
Two year olds	825	3,055	2,522
Early Years Pupil Premium	0	0	130
Disability Access Funding		615	69
Total Early Years Block			21,266

Budget proposals for 2020-2021

- The proposed EYSFF for three and four year old entitlements is detailed in Appendix A. Following a review of the affordability of the formula and allowing for increases in central spend previously agreed; it is proposed to increase the base rate to all providers from £3.65 to £3.72 for 2020-2021.
- Following the increase in funded rate for two year olds, it is proposed to increase the base rate to all providers from £5.15 to £5.22 for 2020-2021 passporting all of the increase in funding.
- The following sources of funding will also continue to be made available for providers in line with current funding allocations and eligibility criteria.

Budget	2020-2021 Budget £000
Early Years Pupil Premium	130
Disability Access Funding	60
Early Years Inclusion Funding	719
Total	909

- Further detail on the budgets held as central spend are shown in the table below.

Budgeted central spend on early years	£000
Two year old Placement Officer	25
Commissioning Officers	96
Early Years Consultants and Early Years Childcare Advisors	439
Early Years Workers	271
Ongoing maintenance for the provider hub (agreed October 2019)	8
Total	839

Next Steps

10. To implement the EYFF funding rates for 2020-2021 and notify providers in accordance with the statutory timeframe of 31 March 2020.

Appendix A EYSFF for 2020-2021

National Requirement	Funding	Formula	Proposed Cheshire West and Chester 2020-2021 Early Years Single Funding Formula
			Base rate of £3.72 per child per hour
		Mandatory supplement	<p>Additional payment based on the number of children attending the Setting who reside in the 30% most disadvantaged areas in England on the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (“IDACI”) or in the 30% most disadvantaged areas in Wales on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. Payment of £0.005 per child per hour will be made based on the percentage of Eligible Children residing in such an area attending the Setting (e.g. if 40% of Eligible Children attending the setting live in a 30% IDACI area, the Provider will receive (£0.005x40) £0.20 per child per hour).</p>
		Discretionary supplements	
		<p>Rurality/sparsity: A rurality/sparsity supplement is permitted to allow local authorities to support providers serving rural areas less likely to benefit from economies of scale.</p>	<p>Rurality supplement - £2,000 lump sum if the Setting is defined as being in a Rural or Pre-dominantly Rural Census Output Area under the Council’s Rural / Urban Classification; is more than two miles from the next nearest providers and has below 77% occupancy according to the January 2020 census.</p>
		<p>Quality: A quality supplement is permitted to support workforce qualifications</p>	<p>Qualification Supplement - Additional payment based on the highest qualified staff member at the Setting. If the highest qualified staff member holds an appropriate Qualified Teacher Status the Provider will receive £0.25 per child per hour.</p> <p>If the highest qualified staff member holds Early Years Professional Status the Provider will receive £0.15 per child per hour.</p> <p>Eligibility to be verified at the January 2020 census and includes the provision of progress and tracking data.</p>

Agenda Item 5

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Funding for Mainstream and Special Schools – Funding from the High Needs Block 2020-2021

Purpose of the Report

- 1. The purpose of this report is to update Schools Forum on proposed changes to allocations from the High Needs Block for 2020-2021 for commissioned places and top up funding.

Recommendations

- 2. Schools Forum is asked to provide a view on the proposals within the report on financial arrangements for pupils with special educational needs in 2020-2021 for the following.
 - i. Increase of 3% to mainstream top up funding bands.
 - ii. Introduction of Post 16 Banding funding for colleges to reflect mainstream top up levels using 0-25 Inclusion framework
 - iii. Changes to Resource Provision funding
 - iv. Additional high needs support criteria
 - v. Changes to commissioned special school place numbers
 - vi. Top up funding agreed to be in place for one year instead of two before review.

Background

i. Revision of mainstream top up funding bands

Proposed increase of 3% in top up rates to support mainstream and resource provision schools meet the needs of more learners with SEND in mainstream settings in line with recommendations the High Needs Strategic Review.

Band	Current Funding Rate 2019-2020	Funding rate September 2020-2021
3A	£4,365	£4,500
3B	£6,911	£7,125
3C	£10,731	£11,062

ii. Introduction of Post 16 Banding funding for colleges to reflect mainstream top up levels using 0-25 Inclusion framework

The Post 16 section of the 0-25 Inclusion Framework developed through the college network meetings has now been completed. This will now be used to

offer advice and guidance in mainstream settings and the funding will follow the banding structure agreed above. This will enable transparency and consistency in meeting the needs of learners with SEND across age phases and educational settings.

iii. Changes to Resource Provision funding

Commissioned places are recommended to stay the same in resourced provisions for 2020-2021 with a review of Service Level Agreements in 2020 in order to make further recommendations for 2021-2022.

The High Needs Strategic Review raised the issue of the sustainability of Resource Provisions, particularly those with seven places due to the rising costs of staffing and supporting pupils with a higher level of need. The impact of this is that staffing within the resource provision needs to be maintained at a level to accommodate pupils who are able to access mainstream provision at differing levels. As such, staffing ratios in most resource bases are now higher than specified in the Service Level Agreements with those schools.

In February 2019 Schools Forum it was felt that the top up rates would not be revised at this time however an additional lump sum payment would be made available to those provisions in 2019-2020. This would be pro-rata according to the size of the provision so that smaller units received a higher lump sum. This was funded from the mainstream top up funding budget. The additional lump sum payment to Resource Provision schools 2019-2020 was £69,397.

Proposed funding changes Resource Provisions for 2020-2021:

CMLD resourced provisions: The proposed increase in top up of 3% will provide an increase in place funding for each pupil attending the provision.

For ASC and SEMH Resourced Provisions the proposal is to fund the majority pupils at a 3b top up level with consideration of 3c top up when required for pupils that need an enhanced level of support beyond the usual resource provision offer. This would provide a higher level of support for some individual pupils which would be evidenced by need.

The cost of providing the additional support for approximately 25% of learners accessing the ASC or SEMH resourced provision, together with the additional funding provided for all other resource provision pupils, would be the equivalent of the additional lump sum funding given out last year of £69,000. This would recognise the higher staff ratio required in ASC/SEMH resourced provisions due to the complexity of some individual pupil needs.

School	Current commissioned places Academic Year 2019-2020	Proposed increase Academic Year places Sept 2020	Commissioned places Academic Year 2020-2021
Resource Provision			
Barnton Primary	7	0	7

Upton Westlea Primary School	10	0	10
Frodsham Weaver Vale Primary	7	0	7
Darnhall Primary	7	0	7
Acresfield Primary	9	0	9
Dee Point Primary	9	0	9
Lache Primary	9	0	9
The Acorns Primary	7	0	7
Willow Wood Primary	7	0	7
St Nicholas Catholic High	12	0	12
The Catholic High, Chester	15	0	15
Total Resource Provision	99	0	99
School and academy 6th forms			
Christleton High	0	0	0
Neston High	1	-1	0
The Catholic High, Chester	3	-3	0
The Whitby High	0	0	0
Upton by Chester High	1	-1	0
Total School and academy 6th forms	5	0	-5
Further Education			
Sir John Deane's College	0	0	0

High Needs places in sixth form will be provided on an individual needs led basis.

iv. Additional high needs support criteria

Additional funding from the High Needs block will be distributed under the following criteria.

Notional SEN must be sufficient to meet the first £6,000 of each high needs pupil on roll recognising any part year effect of starters and leavers. For schools up to and including 150 pupils, the notional SEN must also be sufficient to cover £6,000 for every 1:50 pupils. Therefore, additional funding will be made available from the high needs block if Notional SEN < (number of high needs pupils * £6,000) + (£6,000 for every 1:50 pupils for schools with 150 or fewer pupils). Reviews will be carried out on a termly basis

- £50,000 budgeted for additional targeted funding
- In 2019-2020, £6,311 allocated to Kingsley St John only under this criteria

Proposal to review issues encountered raised on the inclusion of pupils moving from special to mainstream settings as the funding of element two for in year admissions is not recognised in formula funding and when in year moves take place from specialist to mainstream provision. The issue of special schools losing funding when pupils move into mainstream settings mid-year has also been

raised. Although it is recognised this is also an issue for all schools when mid-year admissions take place. The suggestion is that this is looked at as part of a wider look into developing a process that supports the movement of pupils from specialist settings into mainstream settings when appropriate.

ESFA guidance states: Local authorities can provide additional funding outside the main funding formula for mainstream schools and academies on a consistent and fair basis where the number of their pupils with SEND and/or high needs cannot be reflected adequately in the funding they receive through the local funding formula. They should define the circumstances in which additional funding will be provided from their high needs budget.

Additional funding may be provided where there are a disproportionate number of pupils with a particular type of SEND. For example, a primary school may have developed a reputation for meeting the needs of high achieving pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, or pupils with physical disabilities, and it's not possible to target additional funding to the school through factors in the school funding formula.

Local authorities should have a formula or other method, based on their experience of distributing additional funding to their schools and academies. This should be agreed with schools and described on the authority proforma tool (APT). In all cases the distribution methodology should be simple and transparent, and devised so that additional funds are targeted only to a minority of schools which have particular difficulties because of their disproportionate number of pupils with SEND or high needs or their characteristics.

Special school top up rates

A special schools protection will continue to apply to maintained special schools and special academies (including special free schools) in 2020 to 2021. In the context of the increase in high needs funding noted above, the protection is being raised from minus 1.5% to 0% next year.

v. Commissioned places for 2020-2021

In view of the pending consultation on the recommendations of the High Needs Strategic Review, there were no changes to commissioned place numbers from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020. However, as our special schools are nearly all oversubscribed and are unable to offer any additional places, unless they are able to meet the current needs, our expenditure on out of borough placements will rise sharply.

Therefore, in order to support our current pupils access a local special school placement the proposal is to increase our commissioned places at Hebden Green and Dorin Park on a temporary two year basis, until we can start to see the impact of the high needs review recommendations.

The main area that we need to develop availability of provision, is within our specialist SEMH provisions in Archers Brook and Cloughwood, due to a growth in identified SEMH need which has been demonstrated year on year.

The final small increase proposed is in ASC Primary provision at Hinderton where demand for placements is consistently growing and we need local placements for complex Early Years children.

Table 1 Proposed Commissioned Places in Special Schools

School	Current commissioned places Academic Year 2019-2020	Proposed increase academic Year places Sept 2020	Proposed Commissioned places Academic Year 2020-2021
Archers Brook School	75	+10	85
Cloughwood Academy	60	+10	70
Dee Banks School	110	0	110
Dorin Park School	130	+5 - for a two year period	135
Greenbank School	99	0	99
Hebden Green School	112	+7 - for a two year period	119
Hinderton School	42	+3	45
Oaklands School	155	0	155
Rosebank School	49	0	49
The Russet School	113	0	113
Total	945	35	980

vi. Top up funding agreed to be in place for one year

The high needs review identified a recommendation that top up funding should be allocated for one year rather than the current two years in order to use the funding more flexibly. This included exploring the use of top up funding for cohorts of students for specific projects such as enhancing transition.

Therefore, the proposal is to change top up allocated to one year, after which a review should be held to discuss progress towards outcomes. At this point settings may identify needs can be met at School Support level, an EHC needs assessment can be requested if required, or a further year of top up requested. This would support the good practice of annual reviews and allow for the development of projects between schools on developing inclusion.

Next steps

- Proposed changes are to be implemented from September 2020 for the 2020-2021 academic year and included in High Needs budget allocation notifications to schools and academies to be distributed after the Forum meeting.

Agenda Item 6

Central Spend budgets 2020-2021

Purpose of the report

1. Following from the agreement of the Dedicated Schools Grant budgets at the January Schools Forum meeting, this report outlines the proposed level of prescribed central spend budgets for 2020-2021 for agreement by the Schools Forum.

Recommendations

2. That the Schools Forum approve the proposed changes to the level of central spend budgets for 2020-2021 for the activities defined in the Section 251 statement.

Background

3. Under the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2019, the Schools Forum have the responsibility for deciding on the budgeted level of funding for a list of central spend activities as defined and reported in the Section 251 budget statement. The relevant extract from the Schools Revenue Funding 2020-2021 Operational Guidance September 2019 which details the approvals required is included in Appendix A. Decisions are required on the budgets for the following activities for 2020-2021 under the section of Central Provision for the Schools Budget.

- 1) Central expenditure on children under five
- 2) Contribution to combined budgets
- 3) School admissions
- 4) Servicing of schools forums
- 5) Termination of employment costs
- 6) Falling Rolls Fund
- 7) Capital expenditure from revenue (CERA)
- 8) Prudential borrowing costs
- 9) Fees to independent schools without SEN
- 10) Equal pay - back pay
- 11) Pupil growth/ Infant class sizes
- 12) Central provision within schools budget (former ESG retained duties)

Proposed Budgets

4. As outlined in Appendix B below, there are changes proposed to five of the centrally held budgets in 2020-2021 in line with the budget setting agreed with Forum in January 2020.

5. Some central spend lines are subject to restriction in that the School and Early Years Finance Regulations specify they may not exceed the value committed for 2013-2014 for the purpose for which expenditure has already been committed. In all cases where restrictions apply, the proposed value of the budget has not been increased since 2013-2014.

Next steps

6. To include the central spend budgets in the 2020-2021 Section 251 Budget statement submission to the DfE for April 2020.

Appendix A

Extract from Schools Revenue Funding 2020-2021 Operational Guidance July 2018

Annex 3 – Schools forum approvals for centrally held funding

A number of the services that are covered by funding that is held centrally are subject to a limitation of no new commitments or increases in expenditure from 2019 to 2020.

This limit does not apply to admissions or the servicing of schools forums.

Schools forum approval is required each year to confirm the amounts on each line.

When using centrally held funding, local authorities must treat maintained schools and academies on an equivalent basis.

The following sections set out the level of approval required for each centrally retained service and for funding of brought forward deficits.

Schools forum approval is not required (although they should be consulted)

- high needs block provision
- central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State

Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis

- funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement
- back pay for equal pay claims
- remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies
- places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils
- admissions
- servicing of schools forum
- contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools
- contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools (voted on by relevant maintained school members of the forum only)
- de-delegated services from the schools block (voted on by the relevant maintained school members of the forum only)

Schools forum approval is required

- central early years block provision
- any movement of funding out of the schools block
- any deficit from the previous funding period that is being brought forward and is to be funded from the new financial year's schools budget (this should be specifically agreed at the time the budget is set, using the latest estimated outturn position)
- any brought forward deficit on de-delegated services which is to be met by the overall schools budget

Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis – the budget cannot exceed the value agreed in the previous funding period, and no new commitments can be entered into

- capital expenditure funded from revenue
- projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013; no new projects can be charged
- details of the remaining costs should be presented
- contribution to combined budgets
- where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources
- existing termination of employment costs
- costs for specific individuals must have been approved prior to April 2013; no new redundancy costs can be charged
- prudential borrowing costs
- the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013
- details of the remaining costs should be presented
- SEN transport where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget (this is now treated as part of the high needs block but still requires schools forum approval as a historic commitment)

Schools forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis, including approval of the criteria for allocating funds to schools

- funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy
- funding for good or outstanding schools with falling rolls where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years.

Appendix B

Line Description	Restriction to previous year's expenditure	2020-2021 £000	2019-2020 £000	Change £000	Reason for Change
Central expenditure on children under five	No	839	796	43	Increase for national pay awards for central staffing budgets and for maintenance cost of the provider hub agreed by Schools Forum January 2020
Contribution to combined budgets	Yes	607	835	-228	Reduction in School Improvement and CWEIB budgets following reduction in CSSB allocation as agreed at January 2020 Schools Forum. £153k LA funding is to be allocated to School Improvement (subject to Council approval) which does not require approval in this report.
School admissions	No	760	710	50	Increase to staffing of admissions function agreed by Schools Forum January 2020
Servicing of schools forums	No	48	48	0	No change proposed
Termination of employment costs	Yes	0	0	0	No expenditure
Falling rolls fund	No	0	150	-150	Reduction in budget requirement as no schools will be eligible for funding in 2020-2021. Budget has been reallocated in Schools Block funding formula.
Capital expenditure from revenue (CERA)	Yes	0	0	0	No expenditure
Prudential borrowing costs	Yes	430	430	0	No change proposed
Fees to independent schools without SEN	No	120	120	0	No change proposed. Please note that this is a nominal budget should such places be required and this budget will be used flexibly for high needs provision in year.
Equal pay - back pay	No	0	0	0	No expenditure
Pupil growth/ Infant class sizes	No	307	307	0	No change proposed
Central provision within schools budget (Education Welfare, Asset Management and Statutory Duties)	No	729	769	-40	Retained funding for services previously funded from the ESG retained duties rate applicable from April 2017. Reduction in budgets to meet reduction in CSSB funding.

Line Description	Restriction to previous year's expenditure	2020-2021 £000	2019-2020 £000	Change £000	Reason for Change
Central provision within schools budget(Education Welfare, Asset Management and Statutory Duties)	No	0	0	0	Retained funding for services previously funded from the ESG general duties rate applicable from April 2017. No change proposed.

Agenda Item 9

Schedule of meetings 2019-2020

Schools Forum – all meetings 4.30pm – 6.30pm (refreshments at 4pm) unless otherwise stated.

Date	Venue	Provisional agenda
Tuesday 7 July 2020	Queen's Park High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School funding arrangements –national data comparison 2020-2021 • School funding arrangements for 2021-2022 • Directed revisions to schemes for financing schools • DSG 2019-2020 outturn • Financial year 2019-2020 analysis of schools balances (including Academies) • Annual review of Schools Forum membership, constitution and terms of reference • Basic needs capital programme

Schools Forum finance sub group – all meetings 2pm – 4pm unless otherwise stated

Date	Venue	Provisional agenda
Tuesday 16 June 2020	Nicholas House G2	To be confirmed