

Agenda Schools Forum

**Monday, 26 September 2022 at 2.30 pm
in the Council Chamber - Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

3 Minutes 11 - 40

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2022 as a correct record.

3.1 To elect Deborah Steen to fill vacant Maintained Primary Governor position on the Forum for a 4-year term of office

4 Special Educational Needs High Needs Block 2022/23 August 2022 Monitoring Report (JG) 41 - 48

To note the contents of the report in relation to the 2022/23 HNB Grant budget monitoring for the period 1 April – 31 August 2022.

5 School Funding 2023-24 (ET / AA) 49 - 56

To note the changes to the National Funding Formula and approve the approach and modelling options to the 2023-24 Local Formula.



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| 6 | De-Delegated Education Functions & Central Schools Services Block - Impact 2021-22 and Funding 2023-24 (WT /AA) | 57 - 98 |
| | To consider the Impact Reports presented by Officers on the 2021-22 spending on De-Delegation and Education Functions and to agree to the requests for funding for 2023-24 from the De-Delegated and Education Functions. | |
| 7 | Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) 2023/24 (AA) | 99 - 102 |
| | To note the contents of the report and to consider and approve the provisional 2023/24 CSSB budget. | |
| 8 | Response to Consultation on Implementing the Direct National Funding Formula (NFF) (AA) | 103 - 108 |
| | To note the council's response to the Government Consultation on Implementing the Direct NFF and make any necessary and appropriate comment. | |
| 9 | A.O.B. | 109 - 140 |
| | Specialist Place Strategy Document (MT) | |

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Distribution

N Toplass (Chair)

J Barry, M Arnull, S Baker, J Bailey, D Barton, L Bray, E Benbow,
K Berdesha, D Broadbent, C Handy, D Irish, W Lawrence, S Mistry, E Pate,
B Patel, D Steen, J Topham and Union

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Schools Forum Distribution to Members:

Body / Number of positions on Forum	Nominated Member	Nominated Substitute
Head Teachers Advisory Forum – Maintained Primary Schools (5)	Ms S Baker Mr J Barry Ms W Lawrence Vacancy Mrs S Mistry	Nomination awaited A Connop Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited
School Governors – Maintained Primary Schools (3)	Mrs D Steen Mrs E Benbow Mr B Patel	Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited
Head Teachers Advisory Forum – Maintained Secondary Schools (1)	Christina Handy-Rivett	Mike Smith
School Governors – Maintained Secondary Schools (2)	Mrs D Broadbent Vacancy	Nomination awaited Nomination awaited
Academies (4)	Ms L Bray Mr D Irish Mr M Arnull Mr J Topham	Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited
Head Teachers Advisory Forum – Special School (1)	Mr N Toplass	Nomination awaited
Trade Union (1)	Mr. D Barton	Phil Jones
Early Years Partnership (1)	M E Pate	Nomination awaited
14-19 Provider (1)	Ms J Bailey	Nomination awaited
Pupil Referral Unit (1)	Ms K Berdesha	Ms K Hazelwood

Schools Forum: Voting Blocks (Who can vote and on what?)

Secondary Maintained Block	Voting
	Can vote on all business except primary school de-delegation.
Headteachers	
J Christina Handy-Rivett	
Governors	
Mrs D Broadbent	
Vacant	

Primary Maintained Block	Voting
	Can vote on all business except secondary school de-delegation.
Headteachers	
Sally Baker	
Jamie Barry	
Vacancy	
Wendy Lawrence	
Seema Mistry	
Governors	
Ms L Howard	
Mrs E Benbow	
Mr B Patel	

Special Block	Voting
Neil Toplass	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and education functions.

Academies Block	Voting
James Topham (Secondary)	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and education functions.
Dave Irish (Secondary)	
Mark Arnall School Appeal Panel Member Training N(Secondary)	
Lucy Bray (Primary)	

Schools Forum: Voting Blocks (Who can vote and on what?)

Continued...

Pupil Referral Unit	Voting
Kuldip Berdesha	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and education functions.

NON-SCHOOL MEMBERS

Early Years Partnership	Voting
Emma Pate	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and education functions.

Trade Union	Voting
Darren Barton NUT	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and school funding formula.

16-19 Provider	Voting
Jane Bailey	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and school funding formula.

Schools Forum: Quorum

- (a) A meeting will only be quorate if 40% of the total active membership is present (Voting Members Only). Where a nominated substitute member is in attendance on behalf of a duly appointed member, he/she shall be included in the number of persons present for the purposes of determining if a quorum has been achieved.
- (b) If the meeting is inquorate, it will be able to proceed but cannot legally take decisions (E.g. Election of a Chairperson, or a decision relating to funding conferred by the funding regulations). An inquorate meeting can respond to authority consultation and give views to the authority. The authority can take account of such views

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Minutes of Schools Forum

Monday 4th July 2022 at 2.30pm
At the Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury

Present: N Toplass

M Arnull, J Bailey, S Baker, E Benbow, D Broadbent, C Handy-Rivett, W Lawrence, S Mistry and J Topham.

Officers: R Kerr, M Tallents, A Timmins and F Hancock (A Asimolowo virtual).

25/22 Apologies:

Apologies were received from J Barry, K Berdesha, D Irish and B Patel.

26/22 Declarations of Interest

None received.

27/22 Minutes

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2022 be approved as a correct record.

Matters arising:

The Chair, in referring to Minute No. 17/22, referred to a meeting of the Special Head Teachers Group regarding the figures around



students accessing the Primrose Centre, SCS and Albright. The Group held some concern in relation average occupancy rates, which were inaccurate. Whilst it was acknowledged that the figures presented were an average taken across the year from data supplied by the establishments (and cross referenced against the data held on SYNERGY), the Chair requested that in future if these figures could be corroborated directly with the Heads of these special schools.

M Tallents advised the info provided had come from these schools directly, but that this request could be accommodated in the future.

The Chair, furthermore, stated that the Special Heads Group were also concerned how this would impact upon budget allocations, in relation to SCS in particular.

M Tallents advised that with SCS, a funding document had been put in place to make it clear which pupils would receive commissioned places with the commission top-up and which would be prevented from going forward. The draft had been agreed by SCS and it would be put in place from September 2022 onwards. The same also applied to Primrose. Albright, however, was slightly different in view of the fact that their funding came from the High Needs Block.

Furthermore, also in relation to Minute No. 17/22, the Chair sought an update in relation to the following: *'M Tallents agreed to investigate further in relation to all PRUs and feedback to the next meeting on this very matter'*.

M Tallents advised that she would bring a report back to the next meeting to address this matter.

28/22 To elect new Member(s) to fill vacant on the Forum for a 4-year term of office

A Timmins advised that appointments to vacant positions would come back to the next meeting, as the nomination process had not yet concluded in time for this meeting.



29/22 School Forum Members' Attendance Report 2021/22

The Forum received a report, for information, which provided details of Members' attendance at Forum meetings for the period 2021/22.

Agreed that the report be noted.

30/22 School Forum Forward Plan 2022/23

The Forum received a report, for information, which detailed the dates of future meetings during 2022/23, along with the forward plan of items for each meeting.

The Chair referred to High Needs Block Outturn 2022/23 item listed against the 19th June 2023 meeting and enquired if it was possible to also have a report on the High Needs Budget update detailing spend since the end of the financial year. In the absence of this report, such information would not be presented to the Forum until September when approx. a third of the financial year had already passed.

R Kerr advised that this could prove difficult because of it being during period 2 monitoring but a draft report could be possible, although it would be tight and may need to be tabled.

Agreed that dates of future meetings, as set out below, and the Forward Plan of items be noted.

- 26th September 2022
- 7th November 2022
- 12th December 2022
- 16th January 2023
- 20th March 2023
- 19th June 2023

31/22 DSG Outturn Report 2021/22



The Forum received a report for information which detailed the actual expenditure incurred for the Dedicated Schools Grant blocks of funding; Early Year Block Central School Services Block, centrally retained and the de-delegated budgets in financial year 2021/22.

The Early Years Block allocation for 2021/22 was £22.715m. The actual grant allocation income received was £22.156m because of an early adjustment; the net effect of which was £0.559m.

Table 1 detailed the actual expenditure incurred during 2021/22 regarding the use of the Early Years Block.

Table 1 – Early Years Block

Service Area	Budget 2021/22 £,000	Actual Expenditure £,000	Variance £,000
Early Learning 2-year olds	4,025	4,128	103
Early Years - PVI	9,165	10,454	1,289
Early Years - Schools	7,749	6,941	(808)
EY – Pupil Premium	293	295	2
SEN Inclusion Fund	480	550	70
Disability Access Fund	88	11	(77)
Central Services	915	915	0
Early Years Adjustment	(559)	0	559
Total	22,156	23,294	1,138

Table 2 detailed the actual expenditure incurred regarding the use of the Central School Services Block.

Table 2 – Central School Services Block

Service Area	Budget 2021/22 £,000	Actual Expenditure £,000	Variance £,000
School Forum	3	0	(3)
Pension Administration	182	182	0
Stat/Regulatory/Education Welfare/Asset Mgt	1,288	1288	0
Admissions & Appeals	453	453	0



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Total	2,249	2,246	(3)

Pupil Number Growth Funding

The Pupil number growth allocation agreed by Schools forum was £1.091m. The DfE made a positive adjustment for pupil number growth funding paid to academies for the period April to August of the previous financial year. The academies adjustment for 2021/22 was £0.605m giving total in year funding available of £1.696m.

Table 3 – Pupil Number Growth Funding

Service Area/budget Description	Budget 2021/22 £,000	Actual Expenditure £,000	Variance – £,000
Pupil number growth	1,696	2,477	781

A surplus balance of £1.117m was brought forward from 2020/21, this with the in-year overspend of £0.781m, the carry forward balance into 2022/23 was £0.336m.

De-delegated Budgets

Table 4 detailed the breakdown of the de-delegated budgets, expenditure, and variance.

Table 4 – De-delegated Budgets

Service Area	Adjusted Budget 2021/22 £,000	Actual Expenditure £,000	Variance – £,000
Health & Safety Licenses	28	5	(23)
Evolve Annual License	6	0	(6)
Union Facilities Time	199	194	(5)
School Improvement	100	100	0
Schools in financial difficulty	246	0	(246)
Total	579	549	(280)



Education Functions

Table 5 provided a breakdown of the Education Functions budgets, expenditure, and variance.

Table 5 – Education Functions

Service Area	Budget 2021/22 £,000	Actual Expend iture £,000	Variance – £,000
Education Benefits Team	175	175	0
Children’s Clothing Allowance	33	33	0
Safeguarding & Attendance	264	264	0
Total	472	472	0

The Chair enquired if, in relation to schools facing financial difficulties, any school had requested additional support.

R Kerr advised that there were certain criteria a school would first have to meet to qualify, including posting a deficit in the close down of their previous years budget and there was only one school in this position in 2021/22. However, having worked with the school concerned, this had since been resolved and a balance budget had now been submitted.

Agreed that: -

- (1) the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) it be noted that a further report will be taken to the School Forum meeting on 26th September 2022 which will set out the impact of the de-delegated budget expenditure with recommendations on the use of any carry forwards.

32/22 Special Educational Needs High Needs Block 2021/22 Outturn

The Forum received a report for information in relation to the High Needs Block (HNB) 2021/22 Outturn position.



The Final HNB Grant settlement for 2021/22 was £53.555m after deductions for academies recoupment and direct funding of high needs places by Education Skills and Funding Agency.

The carry forward balance on the HNB as at 31st March 2021 was £0.597m surplus.

Table 1 provided a breakdown of the HNB budget of £53.555m; the gross expenditure as at 31st March 2022 was £52.075m; with HNB grant and other income of £55.409m, giving an in-year underspend of £3.333m.

Table 1 - HNB 2021/22 Outturn

Budget Heading	Budget 2021/22 £000	Gross Expend iture £000	Income £000	Net Expenditure £000
1) Out of Borough Placements	6,821	7,047	(7,300)	(253)
2) Pupil Top Up and Place Funding	32,430	33,680	(33,678)	2
3) Post 16 Colleges	3,079	2,550	(3,095)	(545)
4) Hospital PRU	1,298	1,300	(1,298)	2
5) SEN Support Services	1,380	1,315	(1,380)	(65)
6) Support for Inclusion	4,642	4,112	(4,674)	(561)
7) Alternative Provision	843	413	(922)	(509)
8) SEN Developments	1,139	220	(1,139)	(919)



9) Other SEN Funding	1,771	1,363	(1,771)	(407)
10) Exclusions & Reintegration	153	75	(153)	(78)
TOTAL	53,555	52,075	(55,409)	(3,333)

The main variances were as follows: -

- Out of Borough Placements – An underspend of £0.253m was due to a delay in pupils being placed in independent educational establishments and pupils leaving during the spring term.
- Post 16 Colleges – When the budget had been prepared an allowance was made for new students and in year admittances. The underspend of £0.545m related to a reduction in the amount of Element 3 top up claimed by some mainstream colleges and a reduction in the request for funding to attend college.
- Support for Inclusion – the underspend of £0.561m was due to staff vacancies and part-year vacancies due to staff turnover as well as maternity leave. Also included monies for Secondary Preventing Exclusions team which would transfer from 1st April 2022 to the Fair Access + Exclusions and Secondary Reintegration Team.
- Alternative Provision – the underspend of £0.509m was due to the close monitoring and decisions made at the LA Alternative Provision Panel which had been instrumental in reducing expenditure during the year and controlling the number of pupils placed in alternative provision settings.
- SEN Developments – was showing an underspend of £0.919m. This budget head currently covered independent appeals and reports, and any funding agreed that did not clearly fit onto any other budget head. The variance was predominantly the HNB balancing figure of £440k, which was the difference between the calculated budgets as at 1 April 2021 and the HNB Grant initial settlement 2021/22 and a favourable amendment to the Grant of £315k



- Other SEN Funding – The underspend of £0.407m was due to resolution not to fund CWD and underspend in non-statutory services.

The cumulative carry forward balances for 2021/22 was £3.930m surplus after accounting for the £0.597m surplus from 2020/21.

M Arnall requested an update on the current status of the Alternative Provision / Fair Access Panel in view of the underspend, in terms of recruiting to vacant posts.

M Tallents advised that adverts for those posts had now gone out and interviews would be taking place in the near future.

D Broadbent, in referring to the underspend on children with Special Education Needs, enquired why there was underspend, as such funding was urgently required in schools.

M Tallents advised that the underspend related to vacant positions and recruitment was currently underway to employ an Educational Psychologist (EP). It was envisaged that one EP would be recruited this year and a further two next year. In addition, she confirmed that the underspend would be carried forward to next year for this reason and due to the fact that EHCPs and specialist places were increasing. However, M Tallents advised that there was a national shortage of EPs, so this may impact upon such plans.

The Chair referred to the modelling and that Government supported and funded the requirement for specialist places. Within the financial assumptions, the Chair enquired how the models predicted the increase in the number of children issued with EHCPs.

M Tallents advised that the models had looked at the increase in such matters over the last 5 years. In addition, the models also consider the increase in populations over time to predict the requirements going forward. The models suggested that by 2025 there would be approx. 3500 EHCPs. This model had not specifically looked at special placements, as the figure received for such matters tended to even out over time. However, within in the Specialist Placement Planning Strategy there had been an



increase in order to model the budget accurately. In addition, the DfE had indicated as an increase next year for the HNB would be 0.5%. The LA had, therefore, within the latest modelling for Specialist Placement Planning Strategy, added a 0.5% increase year on year.

Agreed that the report be noted.

33/22 School Balances 2021/22 and Budget Plans 2022/23

The Forum received a report for information which detailed the balances held by schools at the end of 2021-22 and the projected balances for 2022-23.

Appendix 1 to the report showed the total school balances by phase as at the end of 2021-22. This was summarised below and compared to the position at the end of 2020-21.

	2020-21 £m	In Year Movement £m	2021-22 £m
Budget Share	30.323	0.081	30.404
Capital	0.704	(0.220)	0.484
Other Funds	0.682	(0.245)	0.437
Total	31.709	(0.385)	31.325

There was one school closing with a deficit budget share. There were four schools which had converted to an academy during the financial year 2021/22: Hateley Heath Primary school, Lightwoods Primary, St John Bosco Primary and Perryfields High School.

The conversion of these schools into academies and the transfer of balances to them was reflected in the reduction of balances held by the primary schools as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.



Although one secondary school had converted in year the secondary school balances had increased overall.

Budget Plans 2022-23

Appendix 2 to the report showed the RAG rating of the projected balances for 2022-23, as indicated by the Budget Plans received from schools. Percentages were highlighted according to the following criteria: -

	Primary/Special	Secondary
Red	Less than 1% or greater than 10% balance	Less than 1% or greater than 8% balance
Amber	1%-2% OR 8%-10% balance	1%-2% OR 5%-8% balance
Green	2%-8% balance	2%-5% balance

Thirty two primary schools had projected to hold balances above 10% and three primary schools were projecting to hold balances below 1% at the end of 2022-23. This was a decrease of 3 schools projecting balances above 10% and a decrease of one school projecting balances below 1% based on their 2021-22 budget plans.

There was one secondary school projecting to hold balances above 8% and no secondary school was projecting holding balances below 1% at the end of 2022-23. There was no change in the number of schools projecting balances above 8% and a decrease of one school projecting balances below 1% based on their 2021-22 budget plans.

There was one special school projecting to hold a balance above 10% and no special school was projecting to hold a balance below 1%. There was no change in the number of schools projecting balances above 10% and there was no change in the number of schools projecting balances below 1% based on their 2021-22 budget plans.

There was one school projecting a deficit balance at the end 2022-23. The authority would be working with this school to review their budget plan and agree a licensed deficit plan where appropriate



and it would also put plans in place to regularly review the financial position of the school going forward.

Agreed that the balances held by schools at the end of 2021-22 and the RAG ratings of the projected balances for 2022-23.

34/22 **Scheme for Financing of LA Maintained Schools: Updates**

The Forum received a report for information which provided Members with the updates to be made to the Scheme for the Financing of Schools.

Local authorities were required by the Department for Education (DfE) to publish schemes of financing setting out the financial relationship between them and the schools they maintain.

The Fair Funding Scheme provided guidance to all maintained schools on the process to follow when undertaking the outsourcing of services with consequent TUPE transfer of staff.

That Schools Forum members noted the updates and changes to the Scheme for the Financing of Schools outlined in the report and Appendix 1 to the report.

A number of maintained schools had recently outsourced services and transferred staff. Appendix 2 to the report provided further clarity on the requirements that schools would need to follow to proceed with outsourcing.

Schools Forum Members had raised a question regarding the technicalities in changing provider once an original contract had come to an end. The LA response had now been added into section 11.12, as outlined in Appendix 2 to the report.

Agreed that the contents of the report be noted.

35/22 **Completing the reforms to the National Funding Formula – Government Consultation Response**



The Forum received a report for information which provided Members with an outline of the government response to the consultation feedback on “Completing the reforms to the National Funding Formula”.

The government had held a consultation on proposed changes to school funding and moving to a “direct” schools national funding formula (NFF). The document entitled “Completing the reforms to the National Funding Formula” had been consulted on between 6th July 2021 to 30th September 2021.

The schools NFF was a single, national formula that allocated the core funding for all mainstream primary and secondary schools, both maintained and academies, in England. Since its introduction, the NFF had been a ‘local authority-level’ formula.

The proposals consulted on were:

- The aim should be that all NFF funding factors – pupil-led and school-led are included in the formula and that all funding distributed by the NFF should be allocated to schools on the basis of that formula, without further adjustments by LAs
- To amend the premises factors within the NFF in advance of the introduction of the direct formula, so that allocations were based on a consistent, objective assessment of current need
- To reform the approach to funding schools experiencing significant growth in pupil numbers
- From 2023-24, to progressively tighten rules governing LAs’ flexibility over schools funding, so that schools’ allocations through local formulae moved closer to the NFF distribution
- To reform the approach to funding for central school services delivered by LAs, to support LAs to deliver their remaining responsibilities and services and ensuring a greater voice for schools in receipt of these services.
- An open question on the potential value of moving to a consistent funding year across maintained schools and academies.

The Government had confirmed the following: -



The approach for 2023-24 would be to require all LAs to use each of the NFF factors, and no others, in their local formulae, and moving each LA's local formula factor values (at least) 10% closer to the NFF values.

LA's to use the NFF definition for the English as an Additional Language (EAL) factor.

The approach to transition in subsequent years would be dependent upon the impact in the first year.

The Government also seemed to suggest it would set a requirement that LA's cannot overshoot the NFF value. Sandwell already had several of its factor values which were above the NFF factor values and two NFF factors which it did not currently use; IDACI Band F and the mobility / pupils starting school outside of normal entry dates (as set out in Appendix 1 /to the report).

The full details and requirements for LAs would be provided alongside the July 2022 NFF announcement in the schools funding operational guide. This provision would be included in the relevant School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. The government had also stated it would maintain the protections within the funding system; e.g. the minimum funding guarantee to minimise disruption for schools.

The Government had intended to move to a formulaic basis for the allocation of funding through the premises factors; specifically split site, schools with PFI contracts and other exceptional circumstances.

The consultation also outlined proposals to reform growth funding to a national standardised system.

Over the coming year, the Government would:

- Consult on an approach to the split sites factor and to the PFI factor in the NFF.
- In the second stage consultation, include proposals for the revised growth and falling rolls factor to include some options which would allow a degree of local flexibility.



- In the second stage consultation, include proposals for an exceptional circumstances factor.

This report provided a high-level overview of the government response to the consultation and further insight into each proposal and the feedback received was set out in the response.

J Topham referred to last year's final transition formula where the primary and secondary ratio had been looked considered. Primary colleagues had wanted a 'stand-still' option. However, reading the current report, a stand-still option would no longer be available. J Topham, therefore, enquired if that meant it would be necessary to move closer to the National Funding Formula.

R Kerr advised that in July the Government would issue the National Funding Formula provisional allocation. Then in September it would also issue the Operational Guide for School Funding. In view of this, it would be required to move 10% closer to where it had been previously. How this would work in practice remained unclear at present, as the Guidance, when issued, should provide the necessary clarification.

S Baker, in referring to the stand-still option no longer being available, requested if this could be discussed at Primary Partnership soon so all who need to be were made aware of this matter.

R Kerr stated that this would not be a problem. A Timmins stated that he would take it through JEG and then the Partnerships.

Agreed that the contents of the report be noted.

36/22

Implementing the Direct National Funding Formula – Government Consultation

The Forum received a report which informed Members of the Government's proposal on the detail of the implementation of the direct National Funding Formula (NFF).



In 2021 the government had held their first-stage consultation on the direct NFF for schools. Fair school funding for all: completing our reforms to the National Funding Formula.

The Government had confirmed that they would begin moving towards the direct NFF from the 2023-24 funding year.

This consultation had been issued on 7th June 2022 and closes on 9th September 2022. It set out proposals for the continuation of two current elements of funding for special educational needs (SEN), and for alternative provision, but considered how these would need to change in operation as the government moved to the direct NFF: first, continuing to have some flexibility within the funding system to move funding to local authorities' high needs allocations and second, the determination of notional budgets for mainstream schools' SEN and disability support, within their direct NFF allocations.

The consultation also set out proposals for how funding for schools experiencing significant growth in pupil numbers, or falling rolls, could operate under a direct NFF.

As the government moves to the direct NFF, it set out how the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) would operate. The MFG protected schools against excessive year-on-year changes in its per-pupil funding. In the current system, the "funding floor" in the NFF mirrored the operation of the minimum funding guarantee in the local formulae. When the direct NFF was introduced, the MFG and the NFF funding floor would merge into one single funding protection mechanism, which would continue to be referred to as the MFG.

Lastly, the government set out proposals on how the funding cycle should operate in the direct NFF; that was, the regular timescales for gathering data to calculate funding allocations, and then confirming these allocations to schools. The government was considering how it could support schools' budget planning, by giving them early indication of future funding levels.

The government had stated that whilst this consultation set out a detailed picture of how it proposed that the direct NFF would work



in practice. They “were not setting a definitive final end date at which the direct NFF would be implemented, as it would be important to continue to be guided by the impact of the initial transition towards the direct NFF, before deciding on the further pace of change.”

The government had, however, tried to provide a sense of the likely timescales to inform schools’ and local authorities’ planning, and had also set out that it expected to have moved to the direct NFF within the next five years; which was by the 2027-28 funding year. The government further went on to say, “We hope that we may be able to move to the direct NFF sooner than this – but not later”.

Further consultations are also planned as follows:

- The additional reforms required to high needs funding arrangements which would be based on the outcomes and government response to the consultation on the SEND and alternative provision green paper.
- The funding for local authority services through the central school services block (CSSB), as government moved to the direct NFF, and in light of the future role for local authorities as set out in the Schools White Paper, Opportunity for all.

The interaction between the direct NFF and funding for high needs

The Government had published the SEND and alternative provision green paper, “Right support, right place, right time” on 29th March 2022. The consultation deadline was 22nd July 2022.

The government had stated in future consultations that it planned to cover the operation of funding bands and tariffs to support the development of a national framework for SEND provision. This would involve addressing a range of complex issues, and potentially making significant changes to the current system of place and top-up funding for specialist provision, as well as the current expectation that mainstream schools would provide for the first £6,000 of additional expenditure on pupils with SEND, before they became eligible for high needs top-up funding.



Flexibility to transfer funding to high needs

In the current funding system, local authorities had a degree of flexibility to transfer funding between the blocks of their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations. Local authorities could transfer up to 0.5% of their schools block with the approval of the Schools Forum, but transfers above 0.5%, or where the Forum did not agree, must be decided by the Secretary of State.

In the Government response to the first stage of the direct NFF consultation, it committed to retaining the flexibility to transfer funding from mainstream schools to local authorities' high needs budgets in the direct NFF.

The government proposed that local authorities should continue to have responsibility for preparing and submitting any applications to the Secretary of State for funding to be transferred to their high needs budgets, via an adjustment to the NFF allocations for mainstream schools in their area.

Indicative SEND budget

The SEND and alternative provision green paper set out proposals for an inclusive system, starting with improved mainstream provision that was built on early and accurate identification of needs, high-quality teaching of a knowledge-rich curriculum, and prompt access to targeted support where it was required. The government believed there should be a national expectation on how much of the additional costs of supporting pupils with SEN mainstream schools should meet from their formula funding, so that schools and local authorities could plan their budgets appropriately.

The direct NFF would include a number of factors that acted as a proxy for the incidence of SEN in mainstream schools. The government were keeping under review whether the current factors would remain appropriate in future (for example, considering the disruption to the flow of usable attainment data as a result of the pandemic, and in the context of future changes to assessment).



The government had proposed to continue the concept of identifying for each school a budget for the costs of additional support for its pupils with SEND. This would be calculated by the Department under the direct NFF, rather than by local authorities.

Growth and Falling Rolls funding

In this section of the consultation, the government set out its proposals on how revenue funding for schools experiencing significant growth, or significant decline, in pupil numbers would operate under the direct NFF.

Local authorities had a statutory responsibility to ensure there were enough school places available in their area for every child aged 5 to 16.

Local authorities currently had discretion as to whether or not to operate a growth and / or falling rolls fund. If they did, it must be used only in specific circumstances. These were outlined in the consultation document.

The Education, Skills and funding Agency (ESFA) had also provided “popular growth” revenue funding where schools experience significant growth in pupil numbers due to increased popularity, to reflect their increased costs. At present, this funding was available for academies with significant forecast growth in pupil numbers, not for maintained schools, however. Agreements were made on a case-by-case basis, on application by academy trusts.

The ESFA allocated a notional growth funding element to local authorities each year using a formulaic approach, as part of the DSG. Growth funding was currently based on the actual pupil growth that local authorities experienced, at the level of Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA); these were smaller geographic areas within the local authority with an average population of 7,200.

Local authorities did not have to allocate all of the growth funding that they received and can spend more or less on growth funding than they received through the DSG for that purpose. Sandwell had traditionally set pupil number growth funding more or less



equivalent to the growth funding received. However, in the last 2 years they have set funding at less than the funding received because of the balances that had accumulated.

Analysis of falling rolls funding.

Only 24 authorities had set funding aside for a falling rolls fund in 2022-23, with half of these in London.

This consultation outlined two options for growth funding under the direct NFF: -

- The first option would allow some continuing local flexibility in how growth funding was distributed to schools, but with “significantly greater consistency than in the current system”.
- The second option was a national, standardised system without local flexibility, where the ESFA allocated growth funding directly to schools as part of their allocations based on information provided by local authorities.

The government’s favoured approach was the first option, which retained local control.

Popular Growth

Not all growth in schools was to meet demographic need. Growth could also occur where a school became more popular with parents and children locally. The ESFA currently made funding available for academies with significant forecast growth to reflect their increased costs. Academies that were entitled to this funding provided the ESFA with an estimate for their number of pupils in the coming year, which they provided funding for subject to an adjustment process based on the actual, in-year autumn census. Agreements were made on a case-by-case application basis at academy trust level.

The government had confirmed their intention to retain a system of popular growth for academies which had seen an increase in popularity, after being recently sponsored by a multi-academy trust which had improved the school’s performance.



The government had stated that they recognised that a number of respondents had raised concerns about “popular growth” being available only to academies, and not local authority-maintained schools. However, in order to address these concerns, it was consulting on whether maintained schools should also be able to access popular growth funding by basing their funding allocation on estimates. This would be through a case-by-case application process where local authorities could apply for this funding on behalf of particular maintained schools where there was clear evidence of expected significant popular growth, along with evidence of recent improvements in school performance through pupil assessment data.

Premises Funding

In the Government’s first stage consultation, Fair school funding for all, it asked for views on reforming “premises” funding under a direct NFF. The premises factors in the NFF included additional revenue funding for PFI schools, schools with split sites, and schools which faced costs relating to exceptional circumstances (such as rental costs for their premises).

In the Government’s response to the consultation, it recognised respondents’ concerns about the complexity of PFI contracts and plan to work closely with the sector to develop an appropriate approach to PFI schools under a direct NFF, to be consulted on at a later date.

Premises: Split sites

The split sites factor was intended to account for the extra costs associated with a school operating, and needing to duplicate services, across a number of separate sites. Extra costs may be incurred from requiring additional reception facilities, travel time for teachers, and travel costs for pupils.

The government proposed to develop a split site factor which recognised costs through a basic eligibility criteria that attracted a lump-sum payment, and a distance eligibility criteria that attracted an additional lump-sum payment.



Basic eligibility: The proposal was that sites should be counted as 'split' where they were separated by a public road or railway as a clear marker of separateness. The site must have a building and would exclude "ancillary buildings" e.g. storage sheds, and would exclude playing fields.

Distance eligibility: To meet the distance eligibility criterion, the site would have to meet the basic criterion and meet a distance threshold of 500 metres (0.3 miles) by road. Further detail could be found in the consultation document.

Premises: Exceptional circumstances

The exceptional circumstances factor was intended to account for additional premises costs that the majority of schools did not face. Currently, local authorities could apply to the ESFA to use an exceptional circumstances factor in their local formulae.

The ESFA believed that some costs currently being funded through exceptional circumstances arrangements would be better funded through formula factors. Therefore, it was proposing changes to the following categories: -

- Building Schools for the Future (BSF) school: The BSF factors would be incorporated into a modified PFI factor.
- Amalgamating school: Local authorities could currently support schools with 85% of the combined lump sums of their predecessors as temporary support while cost structures adapted to the new arrangements. In its proposals, this would be automatically allocated through the lump sum factor. These schools may also become eligible for split site funding.
- Super-sparse school: Local authorities could also provide additional funding to very small, rural secondary schools, on top of existing sparsity funding to be viable. The government had proposed to automatically incorporate this into the sparsity factor.

There was a proposal to change the current criteria from that the cost is greater than 1% of the school's budget and affected fewer than 5% of schools in the area. Another proposal was to raise the exceptional circumstances funding threshold to account for at least 2.5% of a school's budget, up from the current 1%. The



government wanted to significantly reduce the number of schools receiving exceptional circumstances funding “so that we target funding only to schools where costs are exceptional and meaningful, and are not maintaining the significant differences in funding between local authorities which reflect historic decisions”.

The government had stated that to ensure that it was flexible to changing needs in future, it would accept new requests that met their criteria where a school had clear, newly arising needs, which had fallen within the proposed criteria; however, it would expect this to apply in very rare circumstances.

The minimum funding guarantee (MFG) under the direct NFF

Under the current funding arrangements, local authorities had set a minimum funding guarantee (MFG) which protected schools from excessive year-on-year losses in per-pupil funding. The NFF funding floor mirrors the MFG in the local formulae, and was important for ensuring the affordability of the MFG in the local formulae.

As government moved to a direct NFF, the NFF floor and the MFG in the local formulae would merge into one single protection mechanism, which would continue to be referred to as the MFG. The MFG in the direct NFF would continue to play a crucial role for ensuring sufficient stability for schools funded above their “core” formula allocations, so that they did not see sudden drops in their per pupil funding levels.

Moving to a simplified pupil-led funding protection under the direct NFF

The NFF had school-led and pupil-led factors. The school-led factors; the lump sum and sparsity funding were determined by the school’s characteristics, with one amount calculated per school through each factor. Whereas, the pupil-led factors; basic per pupil funding additional needs factors, such as FSM, FSM6 and low prior attainment, were allocated in respect of the number of pupils, and their characteristics, in a school.



The aim of the NFF's funding floor, and the MFG, was to protect schools from sudden losses in their pupil-led funding, per pupil:

- It was a per pupil protection which allowed funding to go up and down with pupil numbers;
- It protected pupil-led funding only (not total funding per pupil) as school-led funding should not increase or decrease with pupil numbers.

There were complications in the way the floor and the MFG currently worked and so the government was proposing moving to a simple pupil-led protection to avoid "perverse results". A worked example was included in the consultation document in Annex B.

The annual funding cycle

This section of the consultation asked questions on the proposed high level timeline for the annual funding cycle under the direct NFF; what early information would be most helpful for schools to aid them in their budget planning; and the timing and nature of information the ESFA would continue to collect from local authorities.

Data collected from local authorities

The ESFA had proposed to collect information in relation to: -

- PFI
- Exceptional circumstances
- Split Sites
- Growth Funding
- Transfers to the High Needs Block.

Further detail on the proposals could be found in the consultation document.

De-delegations

The ESFA had used information on de-delegation to make an adjustment to the funding academies received. The proposal sought preference on whether to undertake on single data collection in March or several smaller data collections for mid-year



converters, as well as any other comments on the timing and nature of data collections to be carried out under a direct NFF.

Agreed that: -

- (1) the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) the following representative be elected to sit on a Working Group to respond to the consultation: -
 - C. Handy-Rivett;
 - D Broadbent; and
 - A representative from Great Bridge Primary (A Timmins / R Kerr to consult with the school to determine an appropriate representative).

37/22 DSG Allocation update 2022/23

The Forum received a report for information which detailed the latest Dedicated schools Grant (DSG) allocation for 2022/23.

The table, below, set out the authority's latest DSG allocations for 2022/23. Two updates had been issued since December 2021. The first update was in March 2022 and the second in May 2022.

DSG Allocation 2022/23	Indicative DSG Allocation at December 2021 £m	Indicative Allocation at May 2022 £m	Change in Allocation since December 2021 £m
Schools Block	308.463	317.516	9.053
Central Schools Service Block	2.283	2.283	0
High Needs Block	61.267	63.568	2.301
Early Years Block	23.387	23.387	0



Total DSG	395.400	397.701	11.354
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The 2022/23 initial Indicative DSG allocation which was presented to Schools Forum in March 2022 had changed as follows:

The schools block allocation of £308.463m included £157.827m for academies recoupment which was retained by the ESFA and funding paid direct to academies / Trusts; the remaining amount of £150.636m was for Sandwell maintained schools.

The mainstream schools had been allocated additional funding within the Schools Block of £9.053m via the schools supplementary grant (SSG).

There was also an increase to the High Needs Block (HNB) of £2.301m given as Special supplementary grant.

The December 2022 allocation detailed a HNB recoupment for place deductions amounting to £3.130m. The May 2022 HNB recoupment was now set at £3.412m, which was an increase of £0.282m for ESFA directly funded places.

The changes in place deduction were broken down as follows:

- An increase of 12 Pre-16 Focus provision places funded at £6,000 amounting to £0.042m in Mainstream Academies from September 2022.
- A decrease of 2 Post 16 SEN places funded at £4,000 amounting to (£0.008m) in Mainstream Academies from September 2022.
- A decrease of 12 Pre-16 Focus provision places funded at £10,000 amounting to (£0.070m) in Mainstream Academies from September 2022.
- An increase of 36 places for Pre-16 SEN places in Special free schools amounting to £0.210m.
- An increase of 27 places from September 2021 in Further Education and Independent Learning Providers £0.108m.



Response to Special Schools and PRU

The Forum received a report which was tabled, for information, in relation to the information regarding a query which had been raised by Special Schools and PRUs with reference to finance.

In March 2022, Special Schools and PRUs had submitted a paper for discussion at Schools Forum around their budgets. This paper was submitted too late for discussion and it was agreed that it would be forwarded to the meeting in June 2021.

The Special Schools and PRUs felt that the consultation on the HNB held in December 2021 omitted a proposal to increase top up funding to Special schools and PRUs only by 2%.

The Special Schools and PRU had not had an increase in top-up funding for 5 years despite the HNB receiving significant increases. They felt that contextual information around their funding was not presented.

The Special Schools and PRUs would like to be consulted on how the Special School Supplementary Grant would be distributed and receive a 4% increase.

Local Authority Response

The proposals within the SEND and HNB consultation in December 2021 had been formulated through initial steering group meetings with Primary, Secondary and Special School / PRU / FP schools. These proposals were then further refined and ratified by a steering group from Schools Forum. The Schools Forum steering group consisted of Head Teachers from a mainstream Secondary School, a mainstream Primary School, a mainstream Secondary School with Focus Provision, a Special School and 2 PRUS. The steering group considered the inclusion of a proposal whereby the top-up funding for pupils in Special Schools and PRUs only would increase. This proposal was voted on by the group and had been discounted from the final consultation.

Although the total funding provided by the HNB had risen over the last 5 years, the additional funding had been used on supporting



the increasing numbers of C/YP with EHC Plans, increasing specialist places and increasing access to SEN Support. Surplus monies would be used to further support the increase in Specialist Places going forward and prevent the HNB from going into deficit.

An independent review of HNB funding in May 2022 had used a benchmarking exercise to measure Special School funding in Sandwell against similar special schools nationally. It found that Sandwell special schools had a comparatively high spend per head compared to national. This suggested that Special Schools still received adequate funding to provide for their students.

Moving forward the LA would await the results of the DfE SEND and AP Green paper consultation before reviewing the banding structure for Special School top-up funding. The SEND and AP Green Paper was consulting on introducing a new national framework of banding and price tariffs for funding, matched to levels of need and types of education provision set out in the new national standards. This would impact on all additional funding received by all Special Schools including academies and independent schools.

Schools supplementary grant was awarded to Special Schools and PRUS through an increase in the HNB funding (2.3 million). Unlike mainstream schools, there was not a formula to base distribution on. Local authorities could choose how they allocated funding. In Sandwell, this was done through consultation with Special Schools and PRU. The schools were provided with different models to base the funding allocation (FTE staff, NOR etc) and they had voted on a final model.

Each Special school and PRU received more than a 4% increase to their total budget through the supplementary grant.

Further methods of distribution would be reviewed and agreed during the next financial year.

M Arnall referred to paragraph 3.6 of the report where it stated that the proposal has been voted down. In paragraph 3.9 it stated that a model was awaited. In paragraph 3.11 it stated the special schools had received money through the supplementary grant in



any case. In view of this, he enquired why a vote had been taken, as referred to in 3.6, when the schools received the money in any case, via a different means.

M Tallents advised that at the point when the vote referred to in 3.6 had taken place, the supplementary grant had not yet been released. The LA had not realised that this grant would be coming through at that point in time. The supplementary grant, when received, had indicated that special schools would be dealt with differently to maintained mainstream schools.

Agreed that the contents of the Report be noted.

Further AOB

D Broadbent enquired if there was any additional funding for PE grants.

R Kerr advised that an email on this subject had recently arrived and that she would include the detail in the next Head Teachers' letter.

The dates of future Forum meetings were noted, as set out below:-

- 26th September 2022
- 7th November 2022
- 12th December 2022
- 16th January 2023
- 20th March 2023
- 19th June 2023

The Next Meeting of Schools Forum: 26th September 2022 @ 2.30pm.

Meeting ended at 4.09pm

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk



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Schools Forum

26 September 2022

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS HIGH NEEDS BLOCK 2022/23 AUGUST 2022 MONITORING REPORT

This report is for Information

1. Recommendations:

That Schools Forum members:

- 1.1 Note the contents of the report in relation to the 2022/23 HNB Grant budget monitoring for the period 1 April – 31 August 2022.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To provide Schools Forum with the HNB monitoring position as at 31 August 2022 projected to 31 March 2023.

3. HNB Budget 2022/23

- 3.1 The HNB original indicative grant for 2022/23 reported to Schools forum on 14 March 2022 was £61.267M. After deductions of £3.130M the grant available was £58.137M.
- 3.2 The balance bought forward as at 1 April 2022 is £3.930M surplus.
- 3.3 The DFE updated the HNB Grant in July 22 which showed an increase of £2.671m from the figure reported to The Forum in March 2022. This is usual practice and Table 1 shows the updated grant figures and where there are differences from March figures.

Table 1 Updated 2022/23 HNB Grant

	HNB Indicative Grant £M	HNB revised Grant July 2022 £M	Difference £M
Indicative Grant December 2021	61.126	61.126	0
Import/Export Adjustment	0.141	0.318	0.177
Special Supplementary Grant		2.300	2.300
Funding Re Free Schools		0.482	0.482
Deductions	-3.130	-3.418	-0.288
Total	58.137	60.808	2.671

3.4 The updates to the Grant can be explained as follows;

- Import adjustments are for pupils that are educated within Sandwell but reside outside in another Local Authority. The data is extracted from January Census and an adjustment is made to reduce Other Local Authority's (OLAs) HNBs and increase Sandwell's. Export adjustment are for pupils that reside in Sandwell but are educated in OLAs. The figures are combined to give a net adjustment. Sandwell are an overall net importer. The adjustment of £0.177M relates to adjustments following the data extracted from the January 2022 Census. This data is checked, and errors are submitted in July. Errors that are identified and agreed will be notified to Sandwell and the HNB will be adjusted again around December 2022.
- The Special Supplementary Grant had already been notified to the LA but had not been incorporated in the December

2021 Indicative Grant. This has already been allocated to Special Schools and PRUs.

- Funding for free schools of £482K was not included in the indicative grant but the funding for pupils in Free Schools was budgeted for by Sandwell in the original budget figures so this additional funding will increase/decrease any in year deficit or surplus.
- Deductions are made for place funding for mainstream Academy Schools with a Focus Provision or Post 16 pupils with an EHCP, Academy Special Schools, Free Special School, Colleges, and Training Providers where Sandwell is the lead authority. The deduction is £10K per place if unoccupied or £6K per place if occupied, for school placements. It is £6k per place for Colleges and Training providers based on the number of commissioned places. The LA agree the deductions each November via a place change notification process. The £288K adjustment is represented as follows :
 - Changes in Mainstream Academy occupied/unoccupied Places - £28K Increase
 - AP Academy and Free school place - £6K deduction
 - Additional Free School places requested by the LA via the place change notification - £210K deduction
 - Additional Training Provider places requested by the LA through the place change notification - £108K deduction
 - Reduction in Post 16 SEND places in mainstream schools requested through the place change notification - £8K increase

3.5 The anticipated in year surplus as at 31 August 2022 projected to 31 March 2023 based on the updated Grant is £1.040M

3.6 Appendix 1 shows the 2022/23 High Needs Block Budget Allocation, the actual expenditure as at 31 August 2022 and the variance from budget.

3.7 The Variances are explained below;

Variation 1

Out of borough placements, show a £456K pressure due to an increase in the number of placements in out of borough and Independent schools. This pressure may reduce as there is a contingency of £355K built into the predictions to support placements that will be made from September 2022 to March 2023.

Variation 2

There has been an increase in EHCP assessments which has resulted in a projected overspend of £108K on the delegated funding provided to Focus Provisions.

Variation 3

There are more pupils on roll at High Point from 1 September 2022 than was anticipated when the budget was prepared. Therefore, there will be a pressure of £186K.

Variation 4

An amount of £480k from the Early Years Grant is used to offset the early support for pupils in private provider settings and those in mainstream early years settings. Predicted costs in private provider settings is £660K. The support for pupils in mainstream schools is set against the schools' delegation and not shown separately. The £480k will be insufficient to cover the full costs of meeting the needs of the pupils in the early years settings, so there is a pressure of £110K against private providers alone.

Variation 5

The total variances equate to a saving of £89k across 9 service areas. These are mainly due to staff turnover, maternity leave, opting out of the LA superannuation scheme and full time budgeted posts covered by staff on reduced hours and the inclusion of 2022/23 pay awards.

Variation 6

SEN Developments is showing an underspend of £939K – This budget head currently covers independent appeals and reports. It also holds the HNB surplus balancing figure of £630K, which is the difference between the calculated budgets as at 1 April 2022 and the HNB Grant initial settlement 2022/23 as well as the additional grant received in July 2022.

4. Recommendations

4.1 That Schools Forum note the contents of the report.

Date: 9/9/22 Contact Officer: Michael Jarrett Tel No: 0121-569-8204

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Appendix 1
HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

	BUDGET ALLOCATION 2022/23 £	SPEND as at 31/8/22 £	PREDICTED END OF YEAR OUTTURN £	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET £	VARIANCE REF	NOTES
1 Out of Borough Placements						
Independent schools	5,976,700	1,930,077	6,432,973	456,273	1	Lack of Provision in Borough has meant more Independent Placements.
OLA Maintained & Academy Schools	1,823,000	-288,095	1,823,000	0		OOB placements in OLA maintained and academy mainstream and special schools now reflects Phase transfers
Alternative Providers	240,000	110,882	240,000	0		This is for Pupils with EHCPs that attend NTAS and Targeted Provision which are tuition services
Other associated costs	40,000	0	40,000	0		Room hire for the support of Students receiving NTAS support while awaiting a school placement
	8,079,700	1,752,863	8,535,973	456,273		
2 Pupil Top up & Place						
Mainstream Schools	11,093,600	9,333,564	11,093,600	0		
Focus Provisions	3,105,200	3,104,053	3,213,800	108,600	2	Assumes full occupancy
Special Schools	17,672,000	16,124,721	17,672,000	0		
Primary PRU	516,400	516,400	516,400	0		
Secondary PRU	2,435,500	2,435,500	2,435,500	0		
High Point	670,000	0	856,500	186,500	3	Increase in pupil numbers from Sept 2022
ELMS	281,400	0	281,400	0		
Early Years Private Providers	550,000	325,637	660,000	110,000	4	This is offset by support from EYS funding
Early Years Grant	-480,000	0.00	-480,000	0		
Other Support	200,000	79,822.12	200,000	0		
Post 16 Colleges & Specialist Providers	3,078,700	140,747	3,078,700	0		
Alternative AWPU Prov	410,000	-84,757	170,000	-240,000		
Schools Supplementry Grant	2,300,500	2,250,309	2,300,500	0		
Recoupment	-697,000	75,869	-1,199,000	-502,000		This is recoupment of top up for OLA pupils placed in Sandwell Schools. The increase is due to an increase in OLA pupils placed in Sandwell schools.
	41,136,300	34,301,866	40,799,400	-336,900		
3 Albright Hospital PRU	1,593,200	1,593,200	1,593,200	0		
4 SEN Support Services	1,461,200	513,109	1,384,900	-76,300	5	Maternity Leave, staff turnover and reduced hours and other associated expenditure following COVID
5 Support for Inclusion						
Lace	388,400	169,162	387,000	-1,400	5	Full time Budgeted post but post holder reduced hours
Inclusion Support	1,102,400	431,958	1,050,930	-51,470	5	Staff turnover
Sensory Support Team	904,900	363,291	903,700	-1,200	5	
CCD Team	506,000	185,090	497,400	-8,600	5	1 Vacancy
Early Years Admin	706,400	287,761	736,000	29,600	5	Maternity Leave and 0.5 vacancy
Preventing Primary Exclusions team	224,500	74,423	201,700	-22,800	5	Staff turnover
SEMH Team	641,700	255,577	641,600	-100	5	Full time Budgeted posts but post holders reduced hours
Fair Access Reintegration Officers	164,400	10,177	131,500	-32,900	5	Vacant post
	4,638,700	1,777,438	4,549,830	-88,870		
6 SEN Develpments	2,126,300	137,273	1,187,245	-939,055	6	Initial Surplus on calculation of budgets was £630K and additional grant received of £370K
7 Other SEN Funding						
Central Recharges	508,500	0	508,500	0		
SALT SLA	7,600	25,015	7,600	0		
OT & Physio SLA	64,600	0	64,600	0		
Equal Pay other SS	50,400	0	50,400	0		
Mediation	30,000	5,190	30,000	0		
Hospital Recoupment	30,000	9,339	30,000	0		
Medical Malpractice	15,000	0	15,000	0		
Non SEN Statutory	838,100	0	838,100	0		
ITT Staff Contribution	23,000	0	23,000	0		
Joint Commissioning	48,500	0	48,500	0		
SENDIASS	0	0	0	0		
Sensory Pilot	0	12,238	13,000	13,000		
	1,615,700	51,782	1,628,700	13,000		
8 Exclusions & Reintegration	156,900	18,722	88,800	-68,100	5	Vacant post
TOTAL	60,808,000	40,146,254	59,768,048	-1,039,952		
Data Check	60,808,000	40,146,254	59,768,048			
	0	0	0			

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Schools Forum

26 September 2022

School Funding 2023-24

This report is for decision

All Forum Members can vote on this item

1. Recommendations:

That Schools Forum members:

- 1.1 Note the changes to the National Funding Formula
- 1.2 Approve the approach and modelling options to the 2023-24 Local Formula

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Following on from last year's consultation on the reforms to the National Funding Formula (NFF) the Schools Operational Guide 2023-24 was published on the 19th July 2022. This report aims to provide members with an update on the Government's plan to implement a direct NFF (where funding will be allocated directly to schools based on a single national formula) and to seek the basis on which consultation on the formula should be undertaken later in the autumn.

3. Links to School Improvement Priorities

- 3.1 Sandwell has an ambition to ensure that all schools and academies in the borough are rated as Good or Better by Ofsted. To achieve this during times of austerity will require astute and prudent usage of finite, and reducing, resources.
- 3.2 There remains significant financial challenges in the education sector at present. It is clear that proposed schools funding arrangements will not fully offset the effects over the last 10 years of inflation, the national pay awards, the apprenticeship levy, recent cost of living pressures and changes to employers pay

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contributions. Equally, schools will also have to source many services once provided free by the council.

- 3.3 Given that these factors have impacted, over time, detrimentally on local budgets, the decisions taken by the current School Forum need to consider how the factors contained within the school's budget formula deliver an equitable spread of resources to all schools, which targets areas of need whilst protecting those that are most financially vulnerable.
- 3.4 Schools Forum will need to consider the impact of a "direct" National Funding Formula, if and when implemented, and the continued steps the borough should take to move towards this; taking in to account minimum funding guarantees to allow schools time to prepare for, and manage, future changes in funding.

4. Report Details

- 4.1 In 2023-24 each local authority can continue to set a local schools funding formula, however, they will be required to bring their own formulae closer to the schools direct NFF. There is an expectation that the full move to the NFF will be completed by 2027-28.
- 4.2 It has been confirmed that from 2023-24 local authorities will only be allowed to use NFF factors in their local formulae. This means that the looked after children (LAC) factor will no longer be an allowable factor.
- 4.3 From 2023-24 Local authorities must use all NFF factors – except for the locally determined premises factors which remain optional. This means that local authorities will have to use all 3 deprivation factors (FSM, FSM6 and all IDACI bands), as well as Low Prior Attainment, English as an Additional Language, Mobility, Sparsity and the Lump Sum.
- 4.4 From 2023-24 Local authorities must move their local formula factor values at least 10% closer to the NFF, except where local formulae are already mirroring the NFF. This is called "***tightening***".
- 4.5 For the purpose of the tightening criteria, local factor values within 2.5% of the respective NFF values are deemed to be mirroring the NFF. This means that local authorities which had factor values within +/- 2.5% of the NFF values in 2022-23 will be allowed to set their 2023-24 factor values anywhere within +/- 2.5% of the 2023-

24 NFF values. At the end of the transition period, no Local Authority will be required to move their factor values away by more than +/- 2.5% of the 2023-24 NFF because of the 10% tightening requirement

- 4.6 The 10% movement is calculated such that local authorities are required to bring their local formula factor values 10% closer to the NFF, compared to the difference between the local factor value and the NFF value in 2022-23. For example, if the difference between a local factor value and the NFF factor value was £500 in 2022-23, the maximum difference from the NFF value in 2023-24 is £450 (10% less than £500).
- 4.7 Appendix A below is an exemplification of indicative SMBC formula factor under tightening rule (i.e. 10% movement) whilst Appendix B showed the range of possible SMBC formula factors if decision is made to move to direct NFF.
- 4.8 Split site factor is subject to a separate consultation. This is covered in another report to the forum.
- 4.9 The schools supplementary grant is being rolled into the schools NFF from 2023-24.
- 4.10 The Minimum Funding Guarantee will continue in 2023-24 between +0.0% and +0.5%.
- 4.11 The basic structure of the high needs NFF for 2023-24 is not changing.
- 4.12 For 2023-24 the purpose of the Central Schools Services Block will follow the same approach as in 2022-23 and any changes / review will be for future years.
- 4.13 In light of the changes to the funding process it is proposed that 3 modelling options are undertaken for the schools block funding only which can be presented to the November meeting:
- (1) Minimum Transition (using the maximum transition period)
 - (2) Accelerated Transition (using a 2-year transition period)
 - (3) National Funding Formula

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 That Schools Forum note the changes to the local funding process for 2023-24.
- 5.2 That schools forum approve the approach to the modelling options

Elaine Taylor, Business Partner – Children’s Services

Date: 20/09/2022

Contact Officer: Elaine Taylor

Email: elaine_taylor@sandwell.gov.uk

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Appendix A – MAXIMUM SMBC VALUE UNDER “TIGHTENING”

Description	NFF FACTOR VALUES 2023/24 1		NFF FACTOR VALUES 2022/23 2		SMBC FACTOR VALUES 2022/23 3		SMBC MAXIMUM FACTOR VALUES 2023/24 4	
	Primary amount pp	Secondary amount pp	Primary amount pp	Secondary amount pp	Primary amount pp	Secondary amount pp	Primary amount pp	Secondary amount pp
Primary (Years R-6)	£3,394.00		£3,217.00		£3,512.00		£3,659.50	
Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	£4,785.00		£4,536.00		£4,977.00		£5,181.90	
Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)	£5,393.00		£5,112.00		£4,977.00		£5,271.50	
Prim Minimum PP funding	£4,405.00		£4,265.00		£4,265.00		£4,405.00	
Sec Minimum PP funding	£5,715.00		£5,525.00		£5,525.00		£5,715.00	
Description - Additional Needs Funding	Primary amount pp	Secondary amount pp	Primary amount pp	Secondary amount pp	Primary amount pp	Secondary amount pp	Primary amount pp	Secondary amount pp
FSM	£480.00	£480.00	£470.00	£470.00	£176.00	£176.00	£215.40	£215.40
FSM6	£705.00	£1,030.00	£590.00	£865.00	£161.00	£372.00	£318.90	£586.30
IDACI Band F	£230.00	£335.00	£220.00	£320.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
IDACI Band E	£280.00	£445.00	£270.00	£425.00	£77.00	£350.00	£106.30	£377.50
IDACI Band D	£440.00	£620.00	£420.00	£595.00	£485.00	£676.00	£498.50	£692.90
IDACI Band C	£480.00	£680.00	£460.00	£650.00	£551.00	£771.00	£561.90	£788.90
IDACI Band B	£510.00	£730.00	£490.00	£700.00	£602.00	£855.00	£610.80	£869.50
IDACI Band A	£670.00	£930.00	£640.00	£890.00	£630.00	£900.00	£661.00	£939.00
EAL	£580.00	£1,565.00	£565.00	£1,530.00	£846.00	£1,227.00	£832.90	£1,292.30
Mobility	£945.00	£1,360.00	£925.00	£1,330.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Low Prior Attainment	£1,155.00	£1,750.00	£1,130.00	£1,710.00	£1,225.00	£1,776.00	£1,240.50	£1,809.40
Lump Sum	£128,000.00	£128,000.00	£121,300.00	£121,300.00	£129,057.00	£129,057.00	£134,981.30	£134,981.30
Split Site					£129,057.00	£129,057.00		

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Appendix B – RANGE OF POSSIBLE SMBC VALUE UNDER DIRECT NFF

Description	NFF FACTOR VALUES 2023/24		NFF FACTOR VALUES 2022/23		SMBC FACTOR VALUES 2022/23		SMBC INDICATIVE FACTOR VALUES 2023/24			
							LOWER LIMIT	UPPER LIMIT		
Primary (Years R-6)	£3,394.00		£3,217.00		£3,512.00		£3,309.15	£3,478.85		
Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	£4,785.00		£4,536.00		£4,977.00		£4,665.38	£4,904.63		
Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)	£5,393.00		£5,112.00		£4,977.00		£5,258.18	£5,527.83		
Prim Minimum PP funding	£4,405.00		£4,265.00		£4,265.00		£4,294.88	£4,515.13		
Sec Minimum PP funding	£5,715.00		£5,525.00		£5,525.00		£5,572.13	£5,857.88		
Description - Additional Needs Funding	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Primary Lower Limit	Primary Upper Limit	Secondary Lower Limit	Secondary Lower Limit
FSM	£480.00	£480.00	£470.00	£470.00	£176.00	£176.00	£468.00	£492.00	£468.00	£492.00
FSM6	£705.00	£1,030.00	£590.00	£865.00	£161.00	£372.00	£687.38	£722.63	£1,004.25	£1,055.75
IDACI Band F	£230.00	£335.00	£220.00	£320.00	£0.00	£0.00	£224.25	£235.75	£326.63	£343.38
IDACI Band E	£280.00	£445.00	£270.00	£425.00	£77.00	£350.00	£273.00	£287.00	£433.88	£456.13
IDACI Band D	£440.00	£620.00	£420.00	£595.00	£485.00	£676.00	£429.00	£451.00	£604.50	£635.50
IDACI Band C	£480.00	£680.00	£460.00	£650.00	£551.00	£771.00	£468.00	£492.00	£663.00	£697.00
IDACI Band B	£510.00	£730.00	£490.00	£700.00	£602.00	£855.00	£497.25	£522.75	£711.75	£748.25
IDACI Band A	£670.00	£930.00	£640.00	£890.00	£630.00	£900.00	£653.25	£686.75	£906.75	£953.25
EAL	£580.00	£1,565.00	£565.00	£1,530.00	£846.00	£1,227.00	£565.50	£594.50	£1,525.88	£1,604.13
Mobility	£945.00	£1,360.00	£925.00	£1,330.00	£0.00	£0.00	£921.38	£968.63	£1,326.00	£1,394.00
Low Prior Attainment	£1,155.00	£1,750.00	£1,130.00	£1,710.00	£1,225.00	£1,776.00	£1,126.13	£1,183.88	£1,706.25	£1,793.75
Lump Sum	£128,000.00	£128,000.00	£121,300.00	£121,300.00	£129,057.00	£129,057.00	£124,800.00	£131,200.00	£124,800.00	£131,200.00
Split Site					£129,057.00	£129,057.00				

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Schools Forum

26 September 2022

De-Delegated Education Functions & Central Schools Services Block - Impact 2021-22 and Funding 2023-24

This report is for decision

Only Maintained Schools can vote on this item.

1. Recommendations:

That Schools Forum members:

- 1.1 Consider the Impact Reports presented by Officers on the 2021-22 spending on De-Delegation and Education Functions.
- 1.2 Agree to the requests for funding for 2023-24 from the De-Delegated and Education Functions.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To present impact reports on the 2021-22 spending on the De-Delegated and Education Functions and to approve requests for funding in these areas for 2023-24.

3. Report Details

- 3.1 Appendix 1 contains all impact reports for your consideration
- 3.2 Appendix 2 contains all funding requests.
- 3.3 A Summary is as follows:

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REF	Full Title of Proposal	Lead Officer	Budget 22-23	REQUEST 23-24
De-delegated - Maintained Schools only				
DD1	Health and Safety Licenses and Subscriptions	Andrew Timmins	£5,990	£5,990
DD2	EVOLVE Annual Licence Fee	Chris Davies	£6,300	£6,300
DD3	Union Facilities Time	Andrew Timmins	£177,000	£159,000
DD4	School Improvement Services	Andrew Timmins	£100,000	£150,000
DD5	Schools in financial difficulty	Andrew Timmins	£88,000	November 22
	TOTAL DD		£377,290	£321,290
Education Functions - Maintained Schools only				
EF1	Education Benefits Team	Sue Moore/Joy Djukic	£175,000	£134,000
EF2	Children's Clothing Support Allowance	Sue Moore/Joy Djukic	£33,000	£33,000
EF3	Safeguarding	Ramsey Richards	£264,000	£159,000
EF4	Attendance	Ramsey Richards	£0	£105,000
	TOTAL EF		£472,000	£431,000

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That Schools Forum consider the details within the Impact Reports and agree to the requests for funding for 2023-24 from the De-delegated and Education Functions.

Elaine Taylor, Business Partner – Children’s Services

Date: 20/09/2022

Contact Officer: Elaine Taylor

Email: elaine_taylor@sandwell.gov.uk

DSG CENTRALLY RETAINED PROPOSAL 2023-24			NO: DD1
Title of Proposal	Health & Safety Licences & Subscriptions - CLEAPSS	Date	Sept 2022
Lead Officer	Andy Timmins	Contact Tel.	0121 569 8302
Annual Funding Proposal (£)			
		£5,990	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)?		Primary	Secondary
		✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear? Please state as an amount per pupil.		Primary	Secondary
		Service to be apportioned on an amount per pupil, subject to confirmation of 2022-2023 subscription formula from CLEAPSS. An individual charge of £55 will also be made for the radiation protection advisor subscription (RPA) for the 3 Sandwell MBC secondary schools	
Is the service provided a statutory function? (Please provide detail below if yes)		Yes	
As detailed in the 'benefits to schools' forum' section below			
How has this proposal been calculated?			
<p>This proposal has been calculated based on the subscription and licence cost for the service outlined below, with a support element (salary costs) to administer the associated functions. Please note that costs included in this proposal have been estimated, based on 2022 - 2023 subscription rates as costs for 2023-24 have not yet been confirmed, so may be subject to change. However, based on the current subscription rate the cost would be around £0.20 per pupil.</p> <p>CLEAPSS: subscription to the national school science and design and technology advisory body.</p>			
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)			
<p>CLEAPSS; membership allows access to termly newsletters, a wide range of free safety publications, model risk assessments, and a telephone helpline. An additional element of the subscription for Secondary schools meets the statutory duties as required by the Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999, of having an appointed suitable Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA) and ensuring the safe management of radioactive substances.</p>			
What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?			

(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)

All elements of the subscription proposal relate to statutory requirements

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

Employers have specific responsibilities to ensure the safety of their employees who work with ionising radiations (and others affected by their work). Schools are not exempt and if the practical work comes within the scope of the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017, schools must comply with the regulations. Failure to comply with their statutory duty could result in action being taken by the Enforcing Authorities (Health and Safety Executive), Head Teacher and Governing Body.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)	£1200	
Services (£)	£4789.75 + £165	
Schools (£)		

How will expenditure be monitored?

Expenditure will be monitored by Andy Timmins, on behalf of the schools.

How will impact be evaluated?

The proposal facilitates specialist advice and support for safe Design & Technology and Science curricular activities across both primary and secondary phases.

Please detail any income generated by the service?

N/A

DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2021-22	
Impact report	
Title of the Budget	Health and Safety Licences and Subscriptions
Lead Officer:	Andy Timmins
2021-22 Funding:	£5,990
A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)	
<p>CLEAPSS: subscription to the national school science and design and technology advisory body.</p> <p>CLEAPSS guidance documents, chemical data, and example risk assessments are just a few examples of resources available to aid schools in ensuring that activities in the areas of design & technology and science are managed in a safe manner. As a service utilised by schools nationwide, wider guidance on matters such as keeping animals in schools is of relevance and invaluable assistance to schools in the primary phase as well as secondary schools. A helpline run by qualified staff in a variety of disciplines provides additional support to schools as required throughout the school year.</p> <p>Schools continue to report that where they have used the CLEAPPSS guidance and documentation, they have found it a useful resource.</p>	

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DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2023-24		
Full Title of Proposal	Renewal of EVOLVE Licence – educational visits.	
Lead Officer	Christopher Davies	
Reference Number		
Annual Funding Proposal	£6,300	
Date of Funding Proposal	14/9/2022	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)	Primary	Secondary
	✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear Please state as an amount per pupil.	Primary	Secondary
	14 pence (£4.7k)	14 pence (£1.6k)
Is the service provided a statutory function	Yes	
The software being licensed is not a statutory requirement, but it is an essential tool used to ensure the Council fulfils its H&S duty in respect of its employees, and those in their care.		
How has this proposal been calculated?		
This is the license fee for the EVOLVE software provided by eduFOCUS.		
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)		
Schools and LA use this software to ensure the safe and robust management of off-site educational visits.		
What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only? (Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)		
N/A		
What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?		
Schools will lose access to a key mechanism used to safely plan and deliver learning outside of the classroom.		

How will the amount be deployed?		
Salaries	£	
Services	£	6300
Other costs	£	
How will expenditure be monitored?		
This is an annual license.		
How will impact be evaluated?		
By the number of schools and children attending off-site visits.		
Please detail any income generated by the service?		
Income is not generated solely through the license. Income is generated by Service Level Agreements – of which access to the software is an element – and also training delivered by the LA Educational Visits Advisers to teachers and visit leaders. The SLA revenue equates to approximately £44kp/a		

DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2021-22			
Impact report September 2022			
Title of the Budget	EVOLVE Annual License Fee		
Lead Officer:	Christopher Davies	Reference no:	DD2
2021-22 Funding:	£6,300		
A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)			
<p>To renew the licence for the LA and all schools to access the computerised EVOLVE system supporting the safe and effective management of Educational Visits; and fulfilling the Council's H&S duty in respect of its employees, and those in their care.</p>			

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DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2021-22	
Impact report	
Title of the Budget	Union Facilities Time
Lead Officer:	Andy Timmins
2021-22 Funding:	£202,000
A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)	
<p>Facilities Funding was distributed between the unions represented on the Joint Union Partnership in line with the 2016 agreement on facilities time</p> <p>Facilities funding enables the local authority to negotiate directly with trades unions on behalf of all contributing, maintained schools. This means individual schools do not have to spend time being involved in a similar process on their own. As a result, this saves both, significant time and money, allowing more to be achieved in the long run.</p> <p>In conjunction with Sandwell HR a clear programme of policy review has been established for the forthcoming year (this takes account of issues raised by schools). As made clear above, this allows for a LA-wide policy to be negotiated via Joint Union Panel (JUP) and avoids individual schools having to follow the same time-consuming and costly process.</p> <p>JUP continues to play a key role in reviewing and updating a range of key policies and guidance documentation. In the recent past this has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary • Management of Absence • Grievance • Redundancy • Model Pay Policy • Appraisal • Leave of Absence <p>Facilities funding enables local union representation to work with the LA on a number of other matters for all maintained schools. Policies that have been reviewed over time include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single Managing Allegations policy in conjunction with LADO • School Complaints Procedure • Social Media guidance for schools • A policy for supporting employees from malicious behaviour • A Workload Charter (in conjunction with JEG) • Place planning and school expansions • Maintaining an overview of the way the Apprenticeship Levy is being used • School Amalgamations 	

- Academy conversion
- Physical Intervention/Restraint policy
- Redundancies
- Drugs, Alcohol and Substance misuse policy

Facilities funding also allows unions to meet regularly with LA Health and Safety representatives via the Central Safety Committee to both monitor a range of things and create additional support packages. This has included work on an updated Educational visits policy, development of a new Stress policy and guidance, work on zero tolerance and the monitoring of incidents and absence statistics.

Facilities funding also ensures local casework can involve a local rep, who, unlike regional reps, will usually be available at short notice and have good local knowledge. This frequently enables issues to be resolved more quickly and effectively.

The number of meetings that union officials attend is significant with twice termly JUP meetings, 3 Health and Safety Committee Meetings per year as well as a significant number of side panel committees. This is in addition to the numerous meetings, phone calls and the preparation needed to cover individual casework.

Throughout the current pandemic unions have met remotely with the Local Authority Officers on a regular basis, initially this was daily but then reduced to take place twice a week. This continues to provide an important forum to discuss immediate concerns in a timely manner, allowing for quick resolution of issues.

DSG CENTRALLY RETAINED PROPOSAL 2023-24		
Title of Proposal	Union Facilities Time	Date
		September 2022
Lead Officer	Andy Timmins	Contact Tel.
		0121 569 8302
Annual Funding Proposal (£)	£136k	£23k
Which phase of school does this support (✓)?	Primary	Secondary
	yes	yes
What proportion will each phase bear? Please state as an amount per pupil. This year Academy MATs have made contributions to the Facilities Fund enabling the per pupil cost to be further reduced from £207k to £172k. The contributions of secondary schools last year has enabled us to reduce this figure further to £136k for 2023-24 for maintained schools.	Primary	Secondary
	£5.42	(£5.42)
Is the service provided a statutory function? (Please provide detail below if yes)	Yes	Yes
<p>Facilities time is for 'trade union representatives' i.e. "employees who have been elected or appointed in accordance with the rules of [their] union to be a representative of all or some of the union's members in the particular company or workplace, or agreed group of workplaces where the union is recognised for collective bargaining purposes." (ACAS)</p> <p><u>The legal position:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Union representatives have a statutory right to reasonable paid time off from employment to carry out trade union duties and to undertake trade union training." (ACAS) • "You must give appointed [by a trade union] safety representatives the paid time necessary to carry out their functions [and to] undergo training in these functions, as is reasonable under the circumstances." (Health & Safety Executive) <p>There is no definition of "reasonable" other than that it should be enough time for representatives to "perform effectively", taking into account factors such as the size of the organisation and its workforce and the need for workers to be able to access their union representatives.</p>		
How has this proposal been calculated?		
<p>The spend in 2012-13 was £350k. For 2013-14 and 2014-15, Schools' Forum decided that it would de-delegate £238k (Primary phase only) and £0k (Secondary phase). This meant a one-third reduction in the overall funding available to fund facilities time (since 2012-13) and also meant 100% of the central arrangement was funded by the Primary phase. In 2015-16 & 2016-17 & 2017-18, this was reduced to £199k with a slight increase to £202k in the last three years.</p>		

The total amount has been increased slightly this year to £207k to take into consideration increases in staffing costs.

The proposal is to request reduced funding for 2023-24 of £136k for the Primary phase and figures have been included for the Secondary phase should they decide to continue their UFT funding. As stated above, in light of MAT contributions and the inclusion of the secondary contribution, the per pupil cost is reduced for maintained schools.

In 2016, The JUP agreed a re-distribution of funding within the unions. This takes account of union membership numbers and a commensurate allocation of facilities time for representatives that reflects those numbers.

**What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal?
(Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)**

- The benefit to Primary and Secondary schools of agreeing to de-delegate funding is that it will enable a single central arrangement to be administered by the LA on behalf of all contributing, maintained schools in Sandwell. Otherwise individual schools will have to arrange and fund their own negotiations, whilst staff will not have recourse to local officials.
- Local officials have local knowledge and are available quickly. The current 'local officials and a central arrangement' provides a mechanism for resolving issues at a local level that could otherwise escalate.
- Local Union Officials play a key role in updating key policies and guidance documentation through Joint Union Panel meetings (JUP), Central Health and Safety Committee meetings and side panel meetings
- Facilities funding also ensures local casework can involve a local rep, who, unlike regional reps, will usually be available at short notice and have good local knowledge. This frequently enables issues to be resolved more quickly and effectively.

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

- The statutory aspect of this policy relates to the facilities time that union representatives are entitled to. Please see below for impact if forum do not agree to the proposal.

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

- Facilities funding enables the local authority to negotiate directly with trades unions on behalf of all maintained schools. This means individual schools do not have to spend time being involved in a similar process on their own. As a result, this saves both, significant time and money, allowing more to be achieved in the long run.
- The impact would be that LA maintained schools where the governing body is the employer – Trust and Voluntary Aided schools - have sole responsibility for providing "reasonable" union facilities time but may choose to exercise this through participation in a centrally-run system.

- For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, funding and employer powers rest with governing bodies whilst the LA remains ‘employer of last resort’ – therefore there is a joint responsibility to ensure “reasonable” facilities time.
- If Schools Forum do not agree to fund a central arrangement, each school would become individually responsible for meeting the legal requirement to give union officials representing their staff reasonable paid time off for their union duties.
- School-level union representatives are not necessarily accredited by their unions to carry out the full range of union duties. If school reps without appropriate accreditation are used to represent members during a dispute this can adversely affect both the member and the school. The union has the responsibility to ensure that the rep is correctly accredited or they leave themselves vulnerable to being sued by their members for incorrect support and advice.
- The loss of area reps, who have local knowledge of and relationship with both members and school leaders would push the work onto the regional reps who do not have those relationships or time to provide the service that the current system allows for.
- The LA would still need to maintain a much smaller ‘residual function’ covering Community and VC schools ie a central forum for borough-wide policies so funding for this would have to come from reducing funding for other services, as there is no other alternative funding source.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)	100% on salaries	The LA would allocate this funding amongst the unions in accordance with the agreed funding formula
Services (£)		
Schools (£)		

How will expenditure be monitored?

- The salaries and on-costs are maintained in a single cost centre and subject to regular monitoring.

How will impact be evaluated?

- The proposed central arrangement enables employers and those with delegated employer responsibilities to fulfil their legal responsibilities in a simple and cost-effective way.
- The arrangement also enables union officials to perform their essential duties as defined by ACAS.
- An outline of the strategic work undertaken by unions over the past year.

Please detail any income generated by the service?

- None. However, income has been received from a number of Academy MATs and this has been re-invested in the Facilities funding allowing for a per pupil reduction in the charge to maintained schools.

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DE-DELEGATED OUTTURN 2021-22 Impact report	
Title of De-Delegated Budget	School Improvement Services
Lead Officer:	Andy Timmins
2021-22 Funding:	£100,000
A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (eg KPI's, service statistics, etc)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core visits were undertaken to all maintained schools over the year. • Feedback received from headteachers confirms that they continue to value this support <p>Monitoring and evaluation confirmed the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant evidence of high quality evaluative writing in many reports • Helpful comments included in many reports which support school improvement. • Reports indicate a wealth of activities taking place in termly visits, which support school improvement. • Reports confirm that activities that are relevant and appropriate to individual schools • Clear evidence that SIA's know their schools well and discussion is focused on relevant key priorities, providing support as well as challenge <p>Feedback from schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We have found the meetings to be really productive and your advice really useful</i> • <i>Thank you for all of your support over this term. It has been a challenging one in different ways, but your time and support really are appreciated.</i> • <i>As a new head, the support has been invaluable. You have helped me to shape my strategic approach and provided useful guidance.</i> • <i>We couldn't have done it without you. You helped us translate the requirements for Ofsted inspections so that we could reflect it in our practice.</i> • <i>I always value your support and insights into school improvement and being there as a point of contact when we need advice.</i> • <i>We found the process very supportive and helpful</i> • <i>Thank you for all your support this year... I don't know what we would do without you!</i> 	

- *You helped us translate the requirements for Ofsted inspections so that we could reflect it in our practice.*

Ofsted inspections:

- The latest data (September 2022) shows that there has been an increase of 4% in the proportion of primary schools and academies rated good or better by Ofsted (September 2021 - 81%; September 2022 – 84.9%). The proportion of secondary schools has increased by 5% (September 2021 - 74%; September 2022 – 78.9%) and has remained the same in Special Schools/PRUs (100%).

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2023-24			NO: DD4
Title of Proposal	School Improvement Service	Date	September 2022
Lead Officer	Andy Timmins	Contact Tel.	0121 569 8302
Annual Funding Proposal (£)		£150,000	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)?		Primary	Secondary
		Yes	Yes
What proportion will each phase bear? Please state as an amount per pupil.		Primary	Secondary
		£5.11	£5.11
Is the service provided a statutory function? (Please provide detail below if yes)		Yes	No
No			
How has this proposal been calculated?			
The amount requested is a contribution to the current School Improvement Service and would contribute towards the cost of advisory support, including 3 core visits per term to each maintained school.			
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)			
<p>Aa a minimum entitlement, all maintained primary, secondary, special schools and PRUs to receive a termly visit from a School Improvement Adviser (SIA). Each visit will have a clear focus and an agenda which has been prepared and sent to schools in advance of the visits. Visits will focus on the school's self-evaluation. Where appropriate, support packages will be developed in discussions between leaders, managers and governors of schools to help schools to improve standards and provision.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support school self-evaluation processes offering support and challenge where appropriate to ensure every school is at least a 'good' school using the current Ofsted criteria • Support schools to improve at any stage of their development from inadequate to outstanding • Early identification of those schools that need particular levels of support and those that may be able to offer support to other schools and providers • Target resources to narrow the gap between vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people and their peers 			

- Take decisive action to address poor performance, by providing a programme of targeted support to enable standards to improve
- Promote high standards in education by supporting effective school-to-school collaboration through a range of options including Learning Communities, Learning Hubs and Teaching Schools
- Support schools to deliver an appropriate curriculum, including the National Curriculum
- Provide support to leadership at all levels including senior and middle leaders as well as governing bodies
- Support schools in becoming autonomous, self-evaluating and successful inclusive institutions.
- Support schools by providing up to date information on Ofsted Inspection. Helping schools before, during and after an inspection
- Provide a service of quality assurance to schools relating to all aspects of school improvement
- Support school leaders and governors in recruitment processes
- Support for school improvement costed at a very competitive rate

Through this arrangement, School Improvement Advisers are able to monitor schools and ensure that they can:

- be an evaluative friend: facilitating opportunities for leadership to reflect on the school's performance, identify strengths and priorities for improvement and plan for effective change and improvement;
- provide an external perspective on aspects of the school's performance, development and improvement through joint evaluation activity;
- provide an objective review of the school's performance data by considering its most recent national test results, trends over time, other pupil achievement and well-being data, and the views of pupils, parents and carers and elected councillors;
- discuss and agree priorities for the forthcoming year to ensure that they are suitably ambitious to meet the school's and community's aspirations
- challenge the school on its capacity to improve and its priorities for improvement;
- signpost to effective provision and practice;
- agree the overall school effectiveness category;
- evaluate the impact of any brokered support package.

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

N/A

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

- School will need to purchase school improvement support from other providers to provide all the above, which may be less cost-effective
- Potential for individual school performance to decline
- Schools are more likely to slip into Ofsted categories without school improvement support
- Greater responsibility on schools to resolve significant issues which may occur e.g. underperformance or a sudden decline in leadership capacity.
- Reduction in the information advice and guidance that is provided to schools over the year including Ofsted updates.
- Schools will need to find alternative ways to ensure effective quality assurance across all aspects of school improvement including governor support and challenge
- Less effective signposting to effective provision and practice;
- Reduction in guidance for governors

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)	£150,000	Contribution to the total SIA salaries budget
Services (£)		
Other costs (£)		

How will expenditure be monitored?

- Existing budget meetings with LA finance officers
- Quality assurance of visits to schools by senior officers
- Quality assurance of visit reports by senior officers

How will impact be evaluated?

- End of year performance of schools across the Local Authority
- Outcomes of Ofsted inspections across the year

Please detail any income generated by the service?

- Income will not be directly generated from this funding although the service as a whole generates some additional income through a variety of ways including support to other schools and academies both in Sandwell and in other local authorities.

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EDUCATION FUNCTIONS PROPOSAL 2023-24			NO:
Title of Proposal	Education Benefits Service	Date	September 2022
Lead Officer	Sue Moore/Joy Djukic	Contact Tel.	8329
Annual Funding Proposal (£)	2023/24		
	£134,000		
Is the service provided a statutory function? (Please provide detail below if yes)	Yes	No	
<p>There is a statutory duty for eligibility for FSM to be checked There is a statutory duty for Home to School transport entitlement to be assessed</p>			
How has this proposal been calculated?			
<p>Reduction in cost resulting from staffing efficiencies and additional schools that have converted to Academy status (who are charged via SLA's.)</p> <p>Calculations based on the number of pupils in maintained schools eligible for FSM's as at October 2022. Funding will be deducted from each school based on the number of pupils eligible for FSM.</p> <p>Academies will be charged separately cost of service per eligible pupil.</p>			
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)			
<p>The service has been enhanced to support schools to maximise income for schools from Pupil Premium and offer support above and beyond normal service provision. This has been beneficial to schools particularly as it ensures they secure additional funding. However, the removal of Education Service Grant (£2.9m) by DfE has had significant impact on the council's ability to maintain services at the current enhanced level. It is not the council's intention to pass the entire loss of this grant on to schools but will make significant savings to ensure that minimal requests are passed to schools for funding. The Education Funding Agency requires the council to negotiate with schools on the amount that can be held back as a de-delegated proposal for this service. Given the current financial climate the council is proposing that a proportion of these costs are met by schools. The above DSG de-delegated proposal is based on schools contributing to of anticipated costs for financial year commencing Apr 2023.</p> <p>£14.9 million FSM Pupil Premium is received by Sandwell's maintained schools.</p>			

Administration for FSM eligibility is undertaken by Education Benefits Team and the team's performance targets are to **increase FSM eligibility and maximise Pupil Premium for Sandwell Schools.**

Provides an auditable system to schools that has reduced the bureaucracy for school's administrators regarding FSM eligibility applications

- a) FSM eligibility is determined and instant eligibility checks done for schools/families, removing requirement for benefit evidence to be produced.
- b) Education Benefits check for new FSM claims each month to ensure continuous auditable eligibility for schools. Schools are updated weekly, using secure data transfer systems, of new and discontinued eligibility to FSM's
- c) All administration for the roll out of Universal Credit ensuring schools benefit from accurate 'protection' period dates to ensure Pupil Premium is maximised. No renewal/checking system for schools to administer.
- d) No need for families to reapply and claim continues until pupil leaves school if parent/carer remains in receipt of eligible benefits. Those families that are not eligible will continue to be checked on a monthly basis so that if circumstances change and they become eligible, school/family will be notified and there will be no need for family to make another application.
- e) Real time updated eligibility to schools.
- f) on-line application facility available for parents/carers
- g) Schools benefit from the increased FSM applications which have been generated by the following initiatives:
 - School Clothing Scheme now generates FSM applications for those families who apply for clothing vouchers and do not have a current live FSM's claim. (395 New FSM apps 21/22 generating £506,000 in Pupil Premium for Sandwell's schools)
- h) Continued awareness campaign and promotion of FSM's at events throughout the Borough.
- i) Universal FSM's for all KS1 pupils – eligibility checks on all KS1 pupils to ensure that all Pupil Premium pupils can be identified for those families entitled to a Universal meal.
- j) Eligibility checks, appeals and policy development for statutory Home to School transport entitlement
- k) Administration of School Clothing Scheme
- l) Administration of Home to School Transport (mainstream)

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

Schools will have to administer an auditable system for new FSM applications and all revisions of current applications as they would have no access to the Eligibility Checking System and Inland Revenue support for queries.

Evidence/proof of benefits will need to be obtained by school to determine eligibility for FSM's, Universal meals pupils eligible for Pupil Premium and Early Years Pupil Premium (nursery).

Schools will not benefit from the increased eligibility to FSM created by initiatives managed by the LA/Education Benefits Team (See (g) above)

Loss of expertise and knowledge from the Education Benefits Team who provide an advice/guidance service to schools and families.

School clothing support would need to be administered and managed by schools who would need to set up their own schemes to support low income families who cannot afford to purchase school uniforms.

Schools would need to administer all changes of eligibility and eligibility protection periods within the legislation re the roll out of the Universal Credit benefit scheme.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)	134,000	
Services (£)		
Schools (£)		

How will expenditure be monitored?

Ongoing budget monitoring procedures

How will impact be evaluated?

Numbers eligible to FSM's and Pupil Premium generated

Please detail any income generated by the service?

Academies are charged for service and costs to maintained schools are reduced pro rata
Income generated from external customers is offset against costs to reduce costs of service to Sandwell maintained schools.

DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2021-22 Impact report	
Title of the Budget	Free School Meals Eligibility Checking / administration Service and School Clothing Scheme
Lead Officer:	Sue Moore/Joy Djukic
2021-22 Funding:	£175,000 / £33k School Clothing Scheme
A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)	
<p>The Education Benefits Team has continued to provide this service to all Sandwell maintained schools and has secured £14.9 Million in Pupil Premium funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSM eligibility is determined and instant eligibility checks done for schools/families, removing requirement for benefit evidence to be produced. • Education Benefits have checked all FSM claims to ensure continuous auditable eligibility for schools. Updates are issued weekly, using secure data transfer systems, of new, protected and discontinued eligibility to FSM's. • Claims that are not eligible are continually checked so that if circumstances change the school/family are automatically notified of eligibility with no need for the family to re-apply • There are no renewal/checking system for schools to administer and no need for families to reapply as claim continues until pupil leaves school if parent/carer remains in receipt of eligible benefits. • Schools now have access to data via SAMS • An on-line application process has been developed to improve the timescales from application to meal take up. • All applications are processed same day in most cases. • Schools benefit from the increased FSM applications which have been generated by the following initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Clothing Scheme now generates FSM applications for those families who apply for clothing vouchers and do not have a current live FSM's claim. (395 New FSM apps generating £506,000 in Pupil Premium for Sandwell's schools) • Continued awareness campaign and promotion of FSM's at events throughout the Borough and schools • Universal FSM's for all KS1 pupils – systems developed to enable eligibility checks on all KS1 pupils to ensure that 	

all Pupil Premium pupils can be identified and eliminating the need for them to apply once they are no longer eligible to receive a Universal meal.

- **New systems developed** to enable continuous checking of those not eligible so that schools are aware of eligibility as soon as their circumstances change and no need for families to re-apply.
- All protection dates calculated and transferred to schools re the roll out of Universal Credit Benefits Scheme
- All application methods compliant with GDPR requirements

EDUCATION FUNCTIONS PROPOSAL 2023-24			NO:
Title of Proposal	School Clothing Allowance	Date	September 2022
Lead Officer	Sue Moore/Joy Djukic	Contact Tel.	8329
Annual Funding Proposal (£)		2023-24	
		33k	
Is the service provided a statutory function? (Please provide detail below if yes)		Yes	No
<p>No</p> <p>Sandwell Local Authority (LA) has traditionally provided a contribution towards the purchase of school clothing to parents on a low income with children transferring to, or in, secondary school and to those starting school for the first time, where there is a requirement for them to have a uniform (year reception and years 7 to 11).</p>			
How has this proposal been calculated?			
Cost of £20/£25 vouchers for school uniform issued to low income families entitled to receive FSM			
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)			
<p>Assists families most in need of financial support who struggle with the cost of school uniform. Generates FSM application – Criteria is the same as for FSM's and an application is generated by the clothing application thus identifying those who have not made an application for FSM.</p> <p>The scheme captures those families who are unwilling to apply for FSM's but do apply for the clothing voucher.</p> <p>The Clothing Scheme generated 395 new FSM applications in 21/22 and generated £506,000 in Pupil Premium for Sandwell schools (plus continuous payments under Ever 6 regulation and the protected status regulations for Universal Credit benefits)</p>			
What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?			

(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)

N/A

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

Schools will not benefit from the additional FSM/Pupil Premium generated by the Sandwell scheme.

Risks identified

- May have impact on attendance for those pupils no longer entitled if they are unable to purchase a uniform;
- Could result in pupils being unable to purchase a uniform and subject to bullying;
- Pupils from low income families in Sandwell would be affected.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)		
Services (£)	33k	Clothing vouchers
Schools (£)		

How will expenditure be monitored?

Secure vouchers issued are monitored on a weekly basis

How will impact be evaluated?

Number of new FSM applications /Pupil Premium generated

Please detail any income generated by the service?

£506K pupil premium
 Academies are charged for this service and have not been included in the 33K figure which is for maintained schools only
 Administration costs are absorbed by the Education Benefits Service

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2023-24		
Full Title of Proposal	Safeguarding: Schools Attendance Support Service (Formerly – Attendance & Prosecution Service)	
Lead Officer	Sue Moore / Ramsey Richards	
Reference Number		
Annual Funding Proposal	£159,000 (60% of £264,000)	
Date of Funding Proposal	September 2022	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)	Primary	Secondary
	✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear Please state as an amount per pupil.	Primary	Secondary
	Unknown	Unknown
Is the service provided a statutory function	Yes	
<p>1. Safeguarding</p> <p>MASH – Pre-referral advice and Strategy Discussions Domestic Abuse screening & notifications plus MARAC Support for designated safeguarding leads – MARFs and Forum etc. Position of Trust / Child death and serious case reviews Quality Assurance and SSCB s175/s157 safeguarding audits Single and multi-agency training plus Chair – DSP Forum and L&D Sub-group Safeguarding Policy Advice and Guidance E.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education.</p> <p>Child employment & entertainment licensing</p> <p>Children Not in School: Children missing education / Children missing from education plus Welfare Support (during and post covid) Children Educated Otherwise than at school: Elective Home Education and Alternative Provision</p>		
How has this proposal been calculated?		
<p>The Safeguarding and Attendance DSG Education Functions proposals are based on 17.5% of total anticipated costs for the financial year commencing Apr 2022. (Previous requests were based on 25%)</p> <p>Cost of current safeguarding service delivery (financial year commencing Apr 2022)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> £297,000 – Safeguarding (including Service line management / supervision) £220,000 – Child employment & licensing plus Elective home education £278,000 – Children not in school / Welfare (pre-legal intervention) Support & Removals from Roll <p>Total: £795,000</p>		
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)		
<p>Continuity of service delivery: Safeguarding including children not in school and attendance are inextricably linked. Since the inception of the MASH (Nov 2013) the Service has increased its commitment to the MASH, from 1 post to 5.</p>		

We have also taken the decision as from September 2022 to enhance our support for schools' DSPs by retaining experience gained due to maternity cover and releasing Lisa to work directly with schools in need of additional support, guidance advice and training.

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

Safeguarding is a statutory function as determined by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (revised July 2022)

The requirements of the Education White Paper also place significant resource demands on local authorities as from September 2022 with expectations rising further in September 2023:

All LA's must have regard to the guidance, published May 2022, which applies from September 2022 - even if not statutory until September 2023.

New multi-agency "Educational Neglect" strategy (7 minute briefing) being launched via the "School Attendance is everyone's business" event on 29 September 2022 at the Hawthorns.

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

Based on available data, any reduction in capacity / resources and/or loss of income is likely to have a detrimental impact of the Local Authorities ability to maintain and enhance support as required by the Education White Paper.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries	£105,000	= 20% of Safeguarding salaries 2021/22
Services	£	
Other costs	£	

How will expenditure be monitored?

Finance / Quality standards programme executive

How will impact be evaluated?

Quality standards programme executive.

Please detail any income generated by the service?

The LA will charge for any additional support / training providing outside of the "working together" remit. As this is the first year of this new delivery model we have no projected costings.

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DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2021-22**Impact report September 2022**

Title of the Budget	Safeguarding / Schools Attendance Support Service (Formerly – Attendance & Prosecution Service)		
Lead Officer:	Sue Moore / Ramsey Richards	Reference no:	
2021-22 Funding:	£159,000 (60% of £264,000)		

A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)

As section 1 above.

Please see data below for academic year 2021/22:

Type of Referral	Number
MASH	2627
Operation Encompass	7771
TOTAL	10398

Outcomes for MASH/STRAT	2021/22
Section 47 (Joint and single agency)	1032
Single Assessment	558
Early Help/Targeted Support	29
Universal Services (Single Agency Responses)	14
NFA: No Role for services	54
Total – MASH involvements	1687

Type of Referral	Number
EHE RfR	262
EHE	525
RfR	1257
Welfare Referrals	1274
CME Active @ yr end	133
CME Actioned	1841
Child Employment	612
TOTAL	5904

Snapshot - Impact of other duties completed by MASH education staff:

- Advice support and guidance including Sample policy development has been offered to all education providers
- Onsite school audits have also been carried out this academic year.
- 12 Single agency training sessions have been delivered including Threshold moderation and Safeguarding awareness sessions
- Support provided to CDOP via the completion of child death returns liaising with schools and supporting rapid reviews etc
- LH chairs the L & D Subgroup and represents LA education on the neglect strategy subgroup. This will help drive the Attendance is everyone's business / Educational Neglect agendas.
- LH has delivered 20 Multi Agency Safeguarding courses (including GCP2, Core working together and Neglect) over the academic year 2021/22 and has supported the development of courses and training events over the year.
- QPPA support via engagement and information gathering from education providers around key themes
- 7 -minute briefing and guidance has been developed and will be uploaded onto the SCSP website following the "School Attendance is everyone's business event – 29th September 2022.

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2023-24		
Full Title of Proposal	Attendance - Schools Attendance Support Service (Formerly – Attendance & Prosecution Service)	
Lead Officer	Sue Moore / Ramsey Richards	
Reference Number		
Annual Funding Proposal	£105,000 (40% of £264,000)	
Date of Funding Proposal	September 2022	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)	Primary	Secondary
	✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear Please state as an amount per pupil.	Primary	Secondary
	Unknown	Unknown
Is the service provided a statutory function	Yes	
<p>2. Attendance School support to improve & maintain pupil attendance (data plus guidance, and advice). Legal action - penalty notices and prosecution of irregular attendance. Monitoring and enforcement of pupil registration regulations.</p>		
How has this proposal been calculated?		
<p>The Safeguarding and Attendance DSG Education Functions proposals are based on 17.5% of total anticipated costs for the financial year commencing Apr 2022. (Previous requests were based on 25%)</p> <p>Cost of current attendance service delivery (financial year commencing Apr 2022)</p> <p>£643,000 – Schools Attendance Support (front facing plus court; duty and admin)</p> <p>Total: £643,000</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>1 post vacant and being recruited to currently.</p> <p>2 additional attendance support posts requested, but not yet approved and budget not confirmed following structure realignment). If approved this would increase above total costs by £84,000 (including on-costs)</p>		
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)		
<p>Continuity of service delivery, assuming adequate staffing to meet expectations based on the consultations with schools in recent months and the significant changes made to the proposed delivery model – see attendance support pack issued 02 September 2022.</p>		

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

The requirements of the Education White Paper place significant resource demands on local authorities as from September 2022 with expectations rising further in September 2023: E.g. Termly attendance audit conversations / monitoring visits etc.

All LA's must have regard to the guidance, published May 2022, which applies from September 2022 - even if not statutory until September 2023. The DFE expects all LA's to have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services as from September 2022.*

*School Attendance is everyone's business" including joint Education Neglect strategy (29 September 2022 at the Hawthorns)

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

Based on available data, any reduction in capacity / resources and/or loss of income is likely to have a detrimental impact of the Local Authorities ability to maintain and enhance support.

The table (HT5 2021/22 academic year) shows 12,274 children categorised as **persistently absent** < (less than 90% attendance including 1,046 children classified as "severely absent" (less than < 50% attendance)

%	ALL 54364	Escalation of involvement / support pathway (tbc)
0-49.99%	1046	Consideration of threshold for "educational neglect" failure to engage (CP / CiN) and/or "Supervision Order" via the family court (must be agreed with social care / legal services). 11 CP/CiN plus 4 Targeted Services cases open July 2022
50-69.99%	1103	School + (2 or more agencies + Strengthening Families / Horizons) MASP + Attendance Support (Leading to prosecution if continued failure to engage / improve Parenting Contract (formal) 25 CP/CiN plus 9 Targeted Services cases open July 2022
70-89.99%	10125	School + another = early help E.g. School nursing / Inclusion Support / Behaviour Support / Attendance Support / Education Psychology / SEND etc. Parenting agreement (informal) 115 CP/CiN plus 52 Targeted Services cases open July 2022
90-100%	42090	School - single agency response

Sandwell is currently under resourced. The National average for front facing attendance support officers is 1 ASO per 5000 pupils (excludes CNiS / CME). Sandwell has 54, 300 pupils and only 4 front (locality) facing attendance support officer posts = 1 ASO per 13575 students.

This is not sustainable and is contrary to the welfare of staff and the safeguarding of the students of Sandwell.

How will the amount be deployed?		
Salaries	£105,000	= 16% of attendance salaries 2021/22
Services	£	
Other costs	£	
How will expenditure be monitored?		
Finance / Quality standards programme executive		
How will impact be evaluated?		
Quality standards programme executive.		
Please detail any income generated by the service?		
<p>Penalty notices – income used for “the administration of justice” as allowed by legislation.</p> <p>Used to off-set additional necessary staffing costs to process</p> <p>PN income was significantly impacted by covid and the suspension of statutory powers between March 2020 and March 2021 plus the decision to adopt of a welfare based approach for much of the academic year 2021/22.</p>		

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DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2021-22**Impact report September 2022**

Title of the Budget	Safeguarding / Schools Attendance Support Service (Formerly – Attendance & Prosecution Service)		
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Lead Officer:	Sue Moore / Ramsey Richards	Reference no:	
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2021-22 Funding:	£264,000
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A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)

Based on available data, any reduction in capacity / resources and/or loss of income is likely to have a detrimental impact of the Local Authorities ability to maintain and enhance support.

The table (HT5 2021/22 academic year) shows 12,274 children categorised as **persistently absent** < (less than 90% attendance including 1,046 children classified as "severely absent" (less than < 50% attendance)

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This is not sustainable and is contrary to the welfare of staff and the safeguarding of the students of Sandwell.

Attendance

School support to improve & maintain pupil attendance (data plus guidance, and advice).

Legal action - penalty notices and prosecution of irregular attendance.

Monitoring and enforcement of pupil registration regulations.

For further information please see relevant position statement reports for the academic 2021/22 academic year.

Schools Forum

26 September 2022

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) 2023/24

This report is for information

1. Recommendations:

That Schools Forum members:

- 1.1 Note the contents of the report.
- 1.2 To consider and approve the provisional 2023/24 CSSB budget.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To inform members on 2021/22 CSSB outturn, provisional 2023/24 allocation and to seek approval for same.
- 2.2 Forum members should note that 2023/24 will change when the October 2022 census figures is finalised.

3. Report Details

- 3.1 In 2023/24 the central schools services block (CSSB) will continue to have two distinct elements:
 - ongoing responsibilities, which funds all local authorities (LA) for central functions they have to deliver for all pupils in maintained schools and academies;
 - historic commitments, which funds some LAs for commitments they made prior to 2013-14 that are unwinding.
- 3.2 Funding for ongoing responsibilities includes a protection to ensure no LA sees losses of greater than 2.5% per pupil, compared to 2022-23. The gains cap will be set at 5.86%, the highest possible value within the limits of the available budget.
- 3.3 Funding for historic commitments is being reduced by 20% from LAs' 2022-23 allocations, in line with our previously announced intention to begin to reduce this funding.

- 3.4 The Schools Forum received provisional 2021/22 CSSB outturn at its meeting on 20th July 2022. The outturn table as well as latest 2022/23 allocation is repeated at Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Central School Services Block

Service Area	Budget 2021/22 (£'000)	Actual Expenditure (£'000)	Variance (£'000)	2022/23 Allocation (£'000)
School Forum	3	0	(3)	3
Pension Administration	182	182	0	146
Stat/Regulatory/Education Welfare/Asset Mgt	1,288	1288	0	1,358
Admissions & Appeals	453	453	0	453
Copyright Licenses*	323	323	0	323
Total	2,249	2,246	(3)	2,283

*Copyright Licenses costs are paid for directly by the DfE and the DSG grant allocation paid to the authority is adjusted accordingly.

- 3.5 The provisional 2023/24 was announced in July 2022 by the DfE. The allocation is £2.297m. This is made up of £2.18m of on-going responsibilities and £0.117m of historic commitment.
- 3.6 The only known figure is the 20% reduction in historic commitment. Where possible, we have retained proposed allocation same as 2022/23 levels and any additional allocation has been earmarked against Statutory responsibilities.
- 3.7 The initial allocation of 2023/24 CSSB is as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – 2023/24 Central School Services Block Budget

Service Area	2023/24 CSSB Budget (£'000)
School Forum	3
Pension Administration Historic Commitment	117
Stat/Regulatory/Education Welfare/Asset Mgt	1,518
Admissions & Appeals	453

Copyright Licenses*	323
Total	2,297

3.8 Copyright licenses will change to actual sum and will be advised by the DfE sometime early in 2023. In addition, the October census will inform the overall CSSB. Once known, the School's Forum will be updated and informed.

4. Recommendations

That Schools Forum

4.1 Note the contents of the report.

4.2 To consider and approve the provisional 2023/24 CSSB budget.

4.3 Be advised that the CSSB is still subject to further changes when the actual Copyright licenses fees and outcome of October 2022 census becomes known. The Schools forum will be updated once this is known.

<p>Abioye Asimolowo, Head of Finance Business Partnering - People Date: 26/09/2022 Contact Officer: Elaine Taylor</p>

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ILO - UNCLASSIFIED

Schools Forum

26 September 2022

Response to Consultation on Implementing the Direct National Funding Formula (NFF)

This report is for decision

1. Recommendations:

That Schools Forum members:

- 1.1 Note the council's response to the Government Consultation on Implementing the Direct NFF.
- 1.2 Make any comment they consider necessary and appropriate.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this paper is to appraise the School Forum members of the Council's response to the recently concluded consultation on implementing the Direct NFF.

3. Report Details

- 3.1 The government launched the above consultation on 7th June 2022 with a closing date of 9th September 2022¹.
- 3.2 Officers met with a select group of Headteachers on 18th July 2022 where some of the responses to the consultation were discussed and some of these were documented.
- 3.3 Officers also received a briefing note from The Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA).
- 3.4 These two documents formed the basis of the final response submitted to Government on the 8th of September 2022.
- 3.5 A copy of this response is attached as Appendix A to this report.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/implementing-the-direct-national-funding-formula>

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That Schools Forum note the council's draft response to the above consultation and make necessary comment.

Abioye (Abi) Asimolowo, Head of Finance Business Partnering – People

Date: 26/09/2022

Contact Officer: Elaine Taylor

Email: elaine_taylor@sandwell.gov.uk

Submitted to Implementing the direct national funding formula
Submitted on 2022-09-08 14:19:06

Introduction

What is your name?

Name:
Abioye Asimolowo

What is your email address?

Email:
abi_asimolowo@sandwell.gov.uk

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Organisation

What is the name of your organisation?

Organisation:
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

What type of organisation is this?

Please pick the organisation you belong to.:
Local Authority

What local authority area are you or your organisation based in?

Please select:
Sandwell

Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?

No

Reason for confidentiality (optional):

Interaction between the direct NFF and funding for high needs (1)

1 Do you agree that local authorities' applications for transfers from mainstream schools to local education budgets should identify their preferred form of adjustment to NFF allocations, from a standard short menu of options?

No

If you have any comments on this question or on other aspects of the operation of transfers of funding from mainstream schools to local authorities' high needs budgets, please give these below. Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

High Neds Block (HNB) budget is under significant pressure nationally and Sandwell is not immune to this. Until there is relative stability in funding this pressure nationally, government should not place restrictions on how this flexibility should be utilised when requesting transfer of funding from Schools Block to HNB.

Interaction between the direct NFF and funding for high needs (2)

2 Do you agree that the direct NFF should include an indicative SEND budget, set nationally rather than locally?

Yes

If you wish to explain your answer, please do so here. Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

We agree it would be useful to include an indicative SEND Budget which allows individual calculations at Schools level to be easily calculated. Most importantly, the new system should reinforce the expectation that mainstream schools should maximise this notional funding to support their pupils with SEND before seeking additional high needs funding.

3 Do you have any comments on the proposals to place further requirements on how local authorities can operate their growth and falling rolls funding?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

Placing further requirement will further narrow Councils ability to flex their budgets for local circumstances and removes local judgement and input from Schools community. We are in support of more flexible approach taking into account local circumstances and working closely with our Schools to derive the best outcome for our residents.

4 Do you believe that the restriction that falling rolls funding can only be provided to schools judged "Good" or "Outstanding" by Ofsted should be removed?

Yes

5 Do you have any comments on how we propose to allocate growth and falling rolls funding to local authorities?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

Covid has impacted the entire country significantly and education is not immune from this. Our main concern therefore will be the data sets that will be used as baseline by the Department. To mitigate this, it may be worthwhile to incorporate views from diverse representation of LAs when deciding on the baseline data set.

6 Do you agree that we should explicitly expand the use of growth and falling rolls funding to supporting local authorities in repurposing and removing space?

Yes

7 Do you agree that the Government should favour a local, flexible approach over the national, standardised system for allocating growth and falling rolls funding; and that we should implement the changes for 2024-25?

Yes

8 Do you have any comments on the proposed approach to popular growth?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

In principle we agree as all schools should have access to the same opportunities of funding. This should be based on place planning whether falling rolls or growth, and should not be creating unhealthy competition among schools. We will not support a system that pits schools against each other but growth/falling roll funding should be targeted at areas where there are strategic need rather than at individual schools level. In addition, there should be transparency in the criteria used and the results openly shared and reported.

Premises funding

9 Do you agree we should allocate split site funding on the basis of both a schools' 'basic eligibility' and 'distance eligibility'?

Yes

10 Do you agree with our proposed criteria for split site 'basic eligibility'?

Yes

11 Do you agree with our proposed split site distance criterion of 500m?

The distance criteria should be shorter

12 Do you agree with total available split sites funding being 60% of the NFF lump sum factor?

That is about the right amount of funding

13 Do you agree that distance eligibility should be funded at twice the rate of basic eligibility?

That is about the right weighting

14 Do you agree with our proposed approach to data collection on split sites?

Unsure

15 Do you have any comments on our proposed approach to split sites funding?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

On distance criterion, the DfE should consider other factors including (but not limited to) "separated by a building of Xm2 size or more and unconnected with the school and with no connecting access other than by public highway". Limiting the split-site funding to 60% of total lump sum may not work in the odd occasion where the secondary site approaches the size of the main building.

As LA do not have full responsibility for Academy and VA, the requirement to collect information from these sources has to be made mandatory otherwise, it may result in incomplete information being provided.

16 Do you agree with our proposed approach to the exceptional circumstances factor?

Yes

17 Do you have any comments on the proposed approach to exceptional circumstances?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

The DfE should allow more flexibility around exceptional premises funding e.g. in PFi/BSF where schools contribution in index marked to RPIx for example. This is placing inordinate additional burden on those schools.

The minimum funding guarantee (MFG) under the direct NFF

18 Do you agree that we should use local formulae baselines (actual GAG allocations, for academies) for the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) in the year that we transition to the direct NFF?

Yes

19 Do you agree that we should move to using a simplified pupil-led funding protection for the MFG under the direct NFF?

Yes

20 Do you have any comments on our proposals for the operation of the minimum funding guarantee under the direct NFF?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

Pupil-led funding protection does not automatically protect schools where there are falling rolls and such schools do not attract falling roll funding. Any changes to the current system should allow for this discrepancy. It is even important if the DfE is going ahead with growth funding for popular schools.

The annual funding cycle

21 What do you think would be most useful for schools to plan their budgets before they receive confirmation of their final allocations: (i) notional allocations, or (ii) a calculator tool?

Unsure

22 Do you have any comments on our proposals for the funding cycle in the direct NFF, including how we could provide early information to schools to help their budget planning?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

We believe that both would be of use to schools so that they can assess their DfE calculated allocations and flex those to see what factors are driving allocations.

In addition, it is important that LA and other interested parties are able to see aggregated authority level allocations for their mainstream schools to compare themselves to near neighbours.

The DfE should not use the introduction of direct NFF as an excuse to further reduce LA education funding (either in RSG or CSSB). From the reading of this consultation, the requirement on LA to supply information to the DfE/ESFA has not significantly reduced. Although APT will no longer be required, there are additional requirements to supply information to DfE/ESFA and consult wider on other changes.

23 Do you have any comments on the two options presented for data collections in regards to school reorganisations and pupil numbers? When would this information be available to local authorities to submit to DfE?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

If the DfE will still be able to meet current timelines for publication of High Needs Block allocation (usually in December), we would favour the delayed option where information are provided incorporating the October Census data. This will minimise additional work currently undertaken in revalidating figures in early January. Although delaying this till December will put pressure on LA budgeting process/deadlines.

24 Regarding de-delegation, would you prefer the Department to undertake one single data collection in March covering all local authorities, or several smaller bespoke data collections for mid-year converters?

One single data collection

25 Do you have any other comments on our proposals regarding the timing and nature of data collections to be carried out under a direct NFF?

Please limit your answer to 200 words.:

SPECIALIST PLACE PLANNING STRATEGY 2022- 2027

SANDWELL MBC

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Introduction

The aim of the Sandwell SEND Specialist Place Planning Strategy is to ensure that there is sufficient capacity within our Sandwell schools, so that children with more complex Special Educational Needs & Disabilities have access to high quality provision.

Our **vision** for children and young people in Sandwell with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is that they will be able to:

- Achieve their aspirations for a healthy ordinary life through meaningful employment and fulfilling relationships within the community of their choosing.
- Have choice and control over decisions about their health, education, employment, friendships and relationships.
- Successfully participate in the community and access meaningful occupation, employment and life-long learning opportunities.

We have high aspirations for all our children and young people and want to ensure they have the **right support**, that is provided in the **right place** and at the **right time** so that they can thrive and be the best they can be.

Sandwell's SEND Strategy 2021 – 2025 outlines our priority areas ([link to SEND Strategy here](#)). The Specialist Place Planning Strategy reflects the outcomes of the workstreams identified by the following priority areas:

Quality Assurance of Statutory responsibilities: Ensure that a multi-service integrated approach is used when working with children/young people and their families to identify their needs and aspirational outcomes and provide the support required in a timely manner.

Workforce Development: To ensure that we have a well-led and properly supported multi-agency workforce development programme so that the whole workforce have the knowledge and skills to support children and young people with SEND to reach their potential and realise their ambitions.

Improving Provision: To promote alignment, collaboration and creative solutions across all services in the Local Area to make best use of available resources so that children and young people can be supported locally to achieve their aspirations.

Improving Progress and Attainment: To identify and address key improvements in Sandwell that will help ensure children and young people are able to achieve their best possible

educational outcomes leading to meaningful occupation, employment and life-long learning opportunities.

Based on these principles we will strategically plan based on evidence of what is required now and in the future to provide a flexible continuum of support that will:

- Focus on local resources to enhance the total provision so that children and young people can be supported in or close to the community where they live.
- Ensure families report that there is a good and appropriate local choice for children and young people in all but the most exceptional cases
- Ensure that there are sufficient mainstream and specialist school places to meet the forecast demand and achieve best value for money

The specialist place planning strategy is informed by evidence-based analysis of need and demography which has forecasted the number of specialist places to 2027. This data has also been used to predict the impact on the High Needs Block finances.

Meeting the educational needs of children with SEND

Our vision for all children in Sandwell with SEND is that they will have their needs met within a range of inclusive provision available through our mainstream schools, specialist resources bases (Focus Provision) and SEN Units and special school provision.

Children with SEND will have access to a high quality, broad and balanced differentiated curriculum which holistically supports their education, health and social care needs.

This strategy looks at meeting the demand for specialist school places in Sandwell, however this demand cannot be viewed in isolation.

We need to further develop a continuum of provision, with a focus on further enhancing inclusion within mainstream provision yet having a sufficiency of specialist places for our children/young people with the most complex needs.

The government has recently published DfE SEND and AP Review and Green Paper proposals.

The review has identified 3 key challenges facing the SEND and Alternative Provision system.

1. Navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for too many children, young people and their families.
2. Outcomes for children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision are consistently worse than their peers across every measure.
3. Despite the continuing and unprecedented investment, the system is not financially sustainable.

We believe that this strategy will be in-line with the governments Green Paper on how

they will address issues and modify established practice implemented by SEND Reforms in 2014. This strategy will require updating once the national consultation within the Green Paper is complete and any resulting changes to the SEND Code of Practice (2015) are completed.

The focus on inclusive schools, collaborative partnerships and increasing local provision to meet the needs within our community is a shared vision within the strategy.

Sandwell Continuum of Provision

In recent years our C/YP have been presenting with increasingly complex needs. Currently the most prevalent needs for C/YP with EHC Plans are autism spectrum disorder (ASD), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).

Our challenge is therefore to support and further develop the existing inclusive practice of our mainstream schools whilst commissioning sufficient additional specialist places for those with the most complex needs. We are bound by a strong community ethos through our networks and partnerships and it is imperative that we ensure best value in terms of outcomes for our C/YP.

Priority One

Inclusive mainstream schools where staff are trained and have the right resources to educate the majority of children and young people with SEND, including those with EHC Plans.

Priority Two

High quality, specialist places within our local communities for children / young people with the most complex SEND

Universally Available Offer.

This is the offer that all Sandwell mainstream schools will provide to pupils with SEND following the SEND Code of Practice. Universal provision forms the foundations for all other provision or support in schools, colleges and other settings and comprises of high quality teaching that is available to all. This includes strategies, resources and adaptations to the curriculum and environment.

This offer is then further personalised to support the specific needs of groups or individual children /young people through an effective identification, assessment and provision management cycle. This includes promoting high quality inclusive education for C/YP with more complex needs.

Focus Provision / SEN Units in Mainstream Schools

Mainstream schools with Focus Provision or resource bases receive additional funding to provide pupils with a higher level of support. Focus Provisions (FPs) support

children/young people with specified types of needs and have specialist support staff and equipment in place to do this. Most FPs have specific areas within school to discreetly teach the pupils according to their needs and expected outcomes. Pupil places with an FP are allocated by the SEN Team through either an EHCP needs assessment or Annual Review. The placement is agreed at Placement and Provision Panel, a panel of senior SEN officers and senior Inclusion Support staff (Education and Child Psychologists and Specialist Teachers).

This strategy seeks to increase the number of schools with Focus Provision / SEN Units so that there is sufficient FP resource with each learning community. This will support pupils with SEND to stay within the community where they live.

Special School

All pupils in Special School will have an Education Health and Care plan that requires very high level of specialist provision. Special Schools provide small classes and a peer group to support both learning and social and emotional development in a nurturing environment. They have highly personalised learning programmes taught by specialist staff with specialist resources.

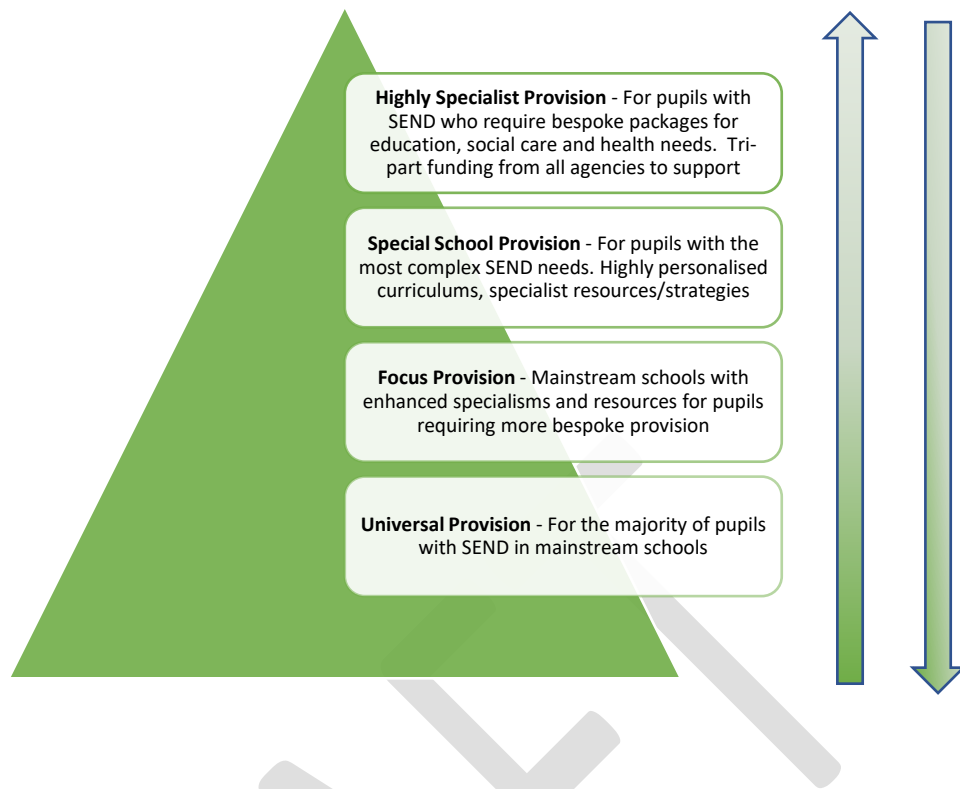
This strategy seeks to increase the number of Special school places for those children / young people with the most complex needs. We need to re-evaluate and review our Special School estate in order to ensure we have provision for the increasing complexity and holistic needs of complex children.

Going forward Sandwell needs to reduce its dependence on independent settings by creating additional provision; especially for children / young people where are current specialist settings are struggling to adapt to their increased level of need.

Highly Specialist Provision

A very small amount of children / young people will require highly specialist provision due to the severity of their education, health and care needs. These children / young people will probably require residential packages providing 24hr care and provision for 52 weeks in the year. These packages are tri-part funded through education, health and social care.

Our continuum of provision should use a flexible approach. Whilst most children and young people will continue to need specialist provision throughout their education, some children, through specialist intervention at the right time may require less specialist support as their independence grows.

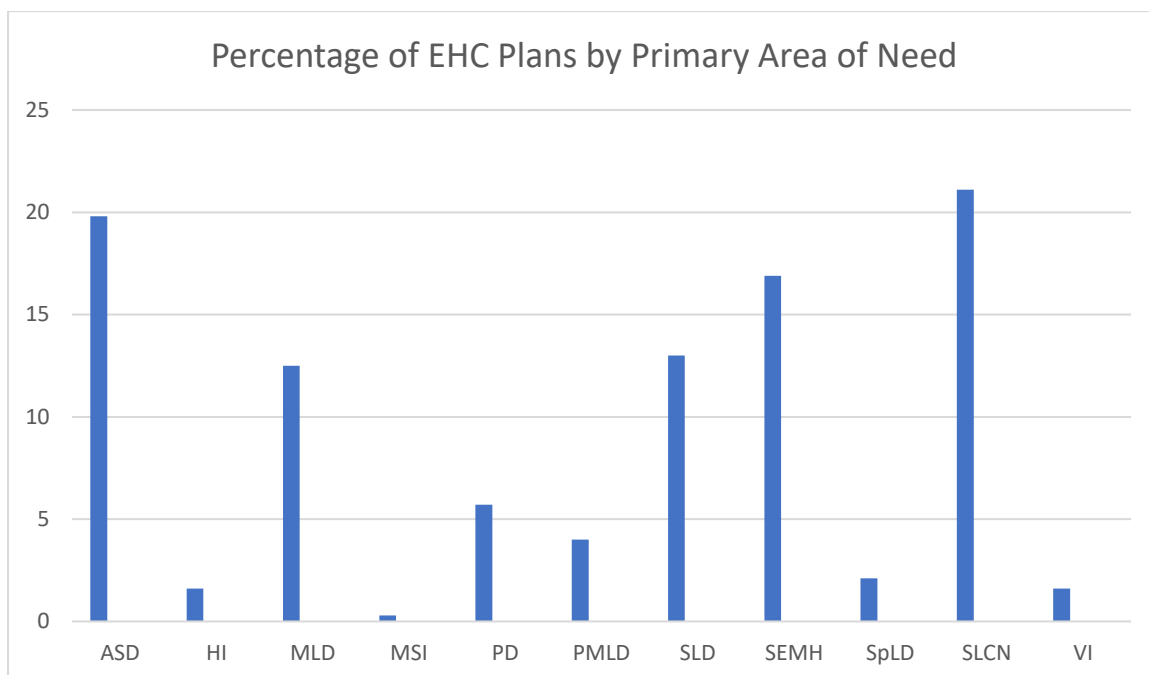


The Rising Demand for Specialist Places

Sandwell has seen a significant rise in the numbers of children and young people (C/YP) with SEN requiring additional support through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan). Since the introduction of the SEND Reforms, the number has doubled and we currently maintain over 2850 plans for our young people. There has been a significant increase in requests for support since the return to school following Covid. If the current growth in population continues we predict that there could be an estimated 3500 C/YP with EHC Plan by 2025

Please see Appendix 1 for Sufficiency Data Analysis

It is also reported by schools and professionals that the level and complexity of the children's needs are also increasing. The Covid pandemic and the disruption to education and other services has had a negative impact on children/young people with SEND. There has been a significant increase in referrals to Inclusion Support and partners such as CAMHs, therapies and school nurses in order to meet the needs of our pupils. Currently the most prevalent needs for pupils with EHC Plans are autism spectrum disorder (ASD), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)



The population of children and young people with EHCP has risen significantly in the last 2 years. An additional 500 children and young people have plans. Mainstream schools are struggling to meet the needs of the children / young people and there is a lack of capacity within Specialist settings. One new special free school for Secondary aged pupils with ASD and associated learning needs has opened within Sandwell in Sept 2021 and a new Primary aged free school for pupils with ASD will open in Sept 22. However, even with this increased capacity there will be a short fall in Specialist Provision going forward.

Sandwell Council has a duty to promote high standards of education, fair access to education and a general duty to secure sufficiency of school places. In addition, it must consider the need to secure provision for children with SEND, including the duty to respond to parents' representations about school provision. These are referred to as the School Place Planning Duties (S13-14 Education Act 1996).

Currently funding to support children and young people with SEND through the High Needs Block is not overspent. However, recent projections show that without significant increases, we will start to go into deficit soon if the forecasted rise in population of pupils with EHCPs continues. In the SEND and AP Green Paper, the government expresses concern that the current system is financially unsustainable. During the SEND and HNB review in December 2021, schools voted to fund the incremental increase of Specialist places to meet demand as a priority.

The DfE recently announced plans to provide Local Authorities with further capital monies for building works. This is to support accessibility and inclusion in mainstream schools as well increasing specialist places. Sandwell will be provided with:

- £4, 012, 902 - 2022 / 2023
- £4, 955, 529 – 2023 / 2024

The DfE has also announced a new round of applications for Local Authorities to bid for new Special Free Schools. LAs must enter the preliminary bids in July 2022. Our previous new free special schools took approximately 4 – 7 years to be built and open to children. A new special free school would be a long-term solution, however the authority still needs to support a specialist programme in the short-term to address immediate need.

Specialist Provision Forecasts 2022 – 2027

Figure 1 shows the rise in children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans and predicted increases to 2025. The forecast uses predicted general school population data and the average percentage increase of C/YP with an EHCP for the statutory school population and post 16 data. This data will need to be reviewed and updated each year, as it predicts the forecasted need through historical data sets which does not show a sudden surge in need and demand.

Figure1. Forecast for increases in Children / Young People with an EHCP

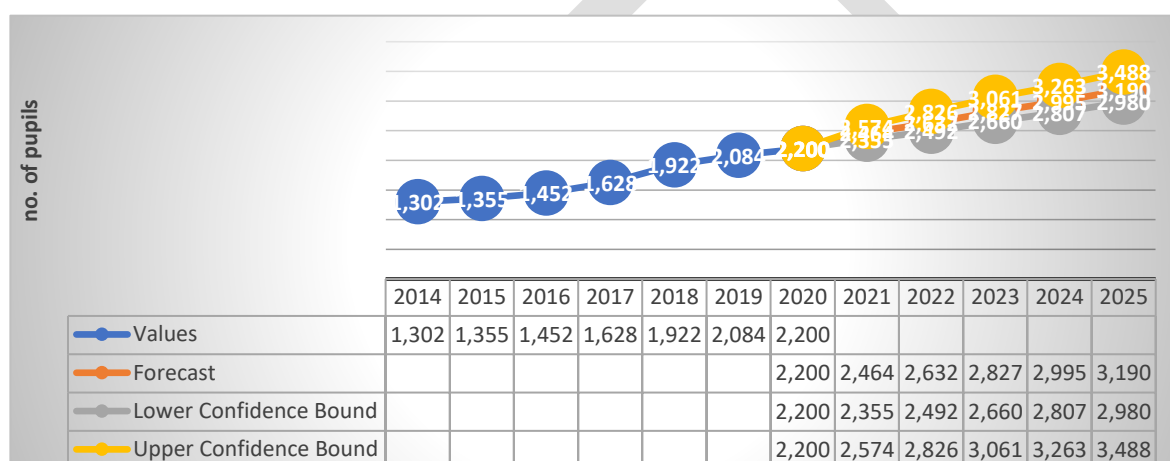


Figure 2. Projected Specialist Place requirements

The table below shows projected specialist placement requirement based on current percentages of pupils within specialist settings (33%) and predicted increases in the population of C/YP requiring an EHCP (Figure 1). These figures do not include independent specialist provision, mainstream schools in Sandwell with Resource Bases or Sandwell PRUs.

		2022	2023	2024	2025
Predicted number of pupils with EHCPs (upper + lower confidence bands)	lower	2632	2827	2995	3190
	upper	2826	3061	3263	3488
Predicted Specialist place requirements (upper + lower confidence bands)	lower	868	933	988	1043
	upper	933	1010	1077	1151
Planned places in Sandwell Special schools		791	845	899	899

Planned places in Focus Provision		212	232	242	242
Predicted shortfall in Specialist Places	lower	77	88	89	144
	upper	142	165	178	252

Currently the shortfall in Special school places in Sandwell is found within the independent sector. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to place children within this sector due to competition from neighbouring authorities and lack of capacity. The Local Authority cannot direct an independent school to take a child, even if they can meet their special educational needs.

By 2027, the planned extension of specialist places for students with ASD through the new free schools should be complete. High Point Academy will offer a total of 90 places and Elm Tree Primary Academy will offer 126 places. The free school programme will offer much needed additional capacity.

Figure 3. Commissioned places within Mainstream Schools with FP and Special Schools

Designation	Focus Provision	Commissioned Places
MAINSTREAM MAINTAINED		01/04/2022-31/3/23
ASD	Christ Church C.E. Primary	11
PD	Crocketts Lane Primary	12
ASD	Ferndale Primary	10
MLD	Galton Valley Primary	10
ASD	Grace Mary Primary	18
ASD	Great Bridge Primary	12
HI	Hargate Primary (HI)	12
SEMH	Hargate Primary (SEMH)	10
SEMH	St Martin's CE Primary	5
SLCN	Uplands Manor Primary	2
	St Michaels C.E. High (PD)	20
	Total	142
MAINSTREAM ACADEMY		
ASD	Devonshire Infant Academy)	5
ASD	Devonshire Junior Academy)	5
ASD	Ocker Hill Academy	10
ASD	Bristnall Hall High	25
	Wodensborough Ormiston	
ASD + HI	Academy	25

Total	70
Total FP Places	212

Designation	SPECIAL SCHOOLS	Places
		01/09/2022
	Maintained	
	Orchard	147
	Meadows	215
	Westminster	241
	Westminster Specialist Post 16 Institution	10
	Academy	
	Brades	37
	Shenstone	58
	Free Schools	
	High Point	70
	Elm Tree	18
	Total	796

For a full data analysis for sufficiency planning please see Appendix 1

Early Years Provision

Context

Under 5's accounted for just 2% of the total number of Education, Health and Care Plans in 2021, in 2017 this figure was 5%. The percentage has decreased in the past 2 years which shows the impact of the pandemic and younger pupils not accessing nursery provision.

14.3% of new EHC Plans in 2021 were for pupils under 5, compared to 29.3% nationally. However, Sandwell, unlike other local authorities, will additionally fund EYS pupils without an EHC Plan through EYS Intervention Grant Funding from Nursery until the Easter term in their Reception year.

Feedback from Primary schools suggest that more resource should be allocated to the Early Years Sector to support identification and earlier applications for EHC statutory assessment when needed.

In total there has been a 138% increase in referrals to the Inclusion Support Early Years Team (ISEYS) this year (2022) compared to 2 years ago.

Currently of the 135 pupils known to ISEYS who will be transitioning into Reception in September 2022, 25 pupils have EHC Plans, 17 pupils have statutory assessments underway and 64 pupils have additional Early Years Intervention Grant Funding in place.

Currently children with SEN are supported within their early years settings with support from Inclusion Support Early Years Area SENCos and Development Workers. Specialist assessment “playgroups” have reconvened following the pandemic so that pupils with sensory needs, physical needs and complex communication needs can be observed and assessed by multi-agency teams.

There has been a large focus on multi-agency working and early identification and intervention through the CLASS strategy and the Early Years Transformation Programme (see below) with private day nurseries are becoming increasingly inclusive.

Private day nurseries also receive training on statutory SEN (SEND Code of Practice, EHCP applications, managing provision) as well as specific intervention strategies to support needs (e.g. SEMH, speech, language and communication)

At times children are referred into the Inclusion Support EYS service just before entering school. Mainly this is due to new children entering the area, however the Covid pandemic has impacted on the number of late referrals into the service for children already living within Sandwell.

Early Years Initiatives – Universal Provision

Early Years Transformation Academy

Currently pre-school children with additional needs are supported by multi-agency teams through the child development centre at Coneygre Centre in Tipton. Multi-agency teams, including **Community paediatricians**, Speech and Language, Physio and Occupational therapists as well as health visitors have worked together through the Early Years Transformation Academy to look at further developing provision. There has been a specific focus on development of Speech, Language and Communication skills within the pre-school cohort, as data shows that our children require additional support to develop. This will supplement the work of the CLASS strategy (Communication, Language and Social Skills) and the Early Years Transition Plus Pathway that has already been established. It will enhance the universal offer to all children within PVI settings using the WELLCOM assessment at 18 months and providing targeted intervention for pupils who need “the watchful eye” to improve their Language and Communication skills. 18 Libraries have also received training in language development to extend support through additional play groups. A Speech and Language Therapist has joined the Health Visiting Team to provide earlier identification and support for intervention as early as possible.

Early Years Multi Agency Assessment (MAA) Pathway and Autism Education Trust Training

Through joint working with health colleagues Sandwell has also implemented an Early Years Multi-Agency Assessment pathway to support earlier diagnosis of autism differences. 35

pre-school children received a diagnosis last year with a further 100 on the pathway for assessment.

Inclusion Support Early Years Team are trained to deliver accredited Autism Education Trust training to private day Nurseries. The roll out of the training “Making Sense of Autism” will start in the Summer Term 2022. This will help develop the skills of the early years workforce.

Early Years Well-Being Charter Mark

Public Health are currently funding the pilot of the Well-Being Charter Mark for early years settings. The successful schools charter mark has been revised and piloted to support a whole setting approach to mental health and well-being for very young children and nursery staff. This will establish a universal bench-mark for good practice in Early Years settings.

Covid Funding

Covid funding has supported a small refurbishment of the Child Development Centre at Coneygre Centre. This has provided additional areas for clinics and playgroups by creating multi-functional spaces.

Additional funding has also been used to temporarily increase staff capacity to help mitigate the significant rise in referrals. Two further Early Years Development Workers have been employed as well as a Family Support Worker for children who have hearing loss to support language and play skills in the family home

Future Universal Provision

0-5 CAMHS Service

Commissioners in the CCG have announced that they will fund a 0 – 5 CAMHS Service for pre-school children with Social and Emotional difficulties. Referrals will be through the IS EYS team and further the work already established at the Coneygre Centre.

Family Transformation Hubs

Funding has been gained to create Family Hubs at 7 children centres across in town localities across Sandwell. The Family Hubs will use an Early Years model of multi-agency working but widen the age range so that all children are included . Key activities will include:

- Development of one single family offer across the full age range, promoted through a communications campaign and branding. Information will be available online, through social media and leaflets. Local portals will be revised to reflect the single offer and provide digital access to services. Impact of branding and communications will be evaluated.
- Redesign of further pathways: initially, the Health Pregnancy Pathway.
- Continuation of work to identify opportunities for integrated working, co-location, multi-agency teams, data sharing and aligning of ICT systems, drawing on best practice from the Early Years and Child Development Centre, which has very effective integrated working with health visiting and school nursing.

- Analysis of user and service data will be improved to ensure hubs are reaching vulnerable families and this will inform outreach.
- Partnership working will be strengthened, drawing on models of systems leadership to obtain buy-in, improve relationships and embed cultural change.
- The hub offer will be broadened through work with the voluntary sector, mental health services, debt and housing advice.
- Town-based Prevention Networks, co-chaired by Targeted Early Help and Children centres to promote preventative work, currently include education, police and voluntary sector, but will be broadened to include children's social care.
- Family hubs will align to the new children's social care locality model to strengthen transitions.

The new family hubs model will comprise:

- 7 physical family hubs based on core children's centres.
- An eighth specialist SEND hub (the current Early Years Child Development Centre).
- A ninth midwifery hub based at The Hawthorns/Football Stadium.
- Both SEND, and midwifery will provide outreach into children's centres, and children's centres will provide outreach of a broader range of services into specialist hubs.
- Flexible outreach in community venues such as schools, libraries, community centres and voluntary agencies – based on demand and community need.
- A virtual offer, building on Covid experiences of what works, but remaining mindful of safeguarding requirements and digital poverty.
- Key staff across all hubs trained in the 'one single offer' who support families to access services, signposting, arranging meetings and facilitating face to face handovers where appropriate.

Extension of Universal Provision - Inclusion Support Early Years Service into School Nurseries / Reception

Primary Head Teachers have requested that the current Inclusion Support Early Years Service includes early years pupils who attend school nurseries and Reception classes. This would support greater early identification and intervention as pupils start their statutory education. The team would also further support schools and nurseries to help individual children transition into full time education.

This would be achieved by an expansion of the current team by an additional Area SENCO, 4 early years development workers and additional specialised Education and Child Psychology Support. This would cost approximately £250,000 which would be funded through the high needs block.

Future Specialist Provision

Once Elm Tree Special Primary Academy are established on their new site (Sept 2023), the new facilities at Connor Education Centre for EYS/ KS1 children will become vacant. This will provide opportunities to develop further provision within this age range. This could provide

a second child development centre in different part of the borough to meet the needs of pupils.

Provision for pupils with ASD

Context

There has been a significant rise in the population of pupils diagnosed as having autism differences. ASD and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) are the primary areas of need in the majority of EHCPs (ASD 19.8% and SLCN 21.1%). Despite the Early Years Multi-Agency Assessment pathway being implemented, there was a further 264 school aged pupils requiring multi-agency assessments of school aged children last year. This figure is expected to rise to approximately 300 this year.

Over the past 5 years Sandwell has opened 3 new Focus Provisions for pupils with ASD within mainstream primary schools and significantly increased another existing provision. This has resulted in an additional 44 places. However even with these additional places, there is very little capacity to meet the growth in demand. Individual ASD FPs have increased by 2 or 3 places over commissioned numbers to support the LA in meeting the rising demand.

C/YP with autism differences are also educated within Sandwell Special Schools.

The research showed that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the challenges many of our autistic children and young people already faced, such as social isolation and anxiety. Many of our autistic children and young people have been communicating their anxiety through their behavioural responses. Despite things returning to a 'more ordinary' school life, some of our autistic young people have continued to feel distressed, fraught, anxious and unsafe. These are the young people that need extensive planning and preparation for transition and change. Many of them had to try to adapt to new rooms, new staff and in some cases, new schools, without this robust pre-preparation. Schools have struggled to keep the young person, their peers and staff safe, meaning increases in requests for change of provision and the threat of permanent exclusion.

ASD Initiatives – Universal Provision

Autism Education Trust (AET) Training

Inclusion Support (Complex Communication and Autism Team and Inclusion Support Early Years) have become accredited trainers for AET training. Making Sense of Autism training will be free to all schools through Learning Communities and Nursery settings within the Summer Term 2022/ Autumn Term 2022. We plan to provide all schools and settings opportunities to become accredited Autism friendly. Further specialist training and higher levels of accreditation will be available to individual schools, groups of schools and learning communities on request.

Sensory Difference Pilot

NHS Charitable Trust and Education Directorate have jointly commissioned a pilot to support Sensory Processing Difference using the partnership for change model. The model looks at supporting pupils and families by using a tiered approach. Universal support will provide training opportunities to all to schools and parents on Sensory Processing. Targeted support will be through auditing classroom environments and observing pupils within pilot schools and providing whole class strategies and group intervention to support pupils with their sensory learning. Individual support will be for identified pupils within target school who require a more detailed sensory assessment, strategies and advice. Pilot schools are a mix of both Secondary and Primary and data from the Complex Communication and Autism Team and Occupational Therapy is used to identify schools with possibly high numbers of pupils with difficulties. Impact data from the pilot will be used by both agencies to inform future commissioning.

Covid Funding

Additional Covid funding has secured the temporary recruitment of two Specialist Teachers for Complex Communication and Autism and two additional Specialist Development Officers for the next 2 years. This will help to increase the capacity of the team in providing on-site support to schools for individual children/YP, implementing AET training and further support the multi-agency assessment for diagnosis.

Future Universal Provision

Head Teachers have requested that the Complex Communication and Autism Team is permanently increased to meet the rising numbers of children with ASD / social interaction difficulties. The team are part of the Multi-Agency Assessment process for diagnosis, and therefore are currently a needs lead service. Head Teachers have requested that the CCAT Team move to a school allocation model, however to ensure that work continues additional time would need to be dedicated to the diagnostic pathway. Further capacity would not only support individual pupil casework, but would also support the development of good practice throughout the LA through additional training opportunities and quality assurance of existing and future ASD provisions. Please see Appendix 2 for a full business case.

As stated above a temporary increase of the team is currently being funded to Sept 2024 through Covid funding.

The cost of expansion of the team would be approximately £283,000 whilst Covid funding is in place and then £649, 596 thereafter. This expenditure would be through agreement of schools and schools forum through the HNB.

Future Provision

Special Free Schools

The LA have commissioned the opening of 2 new special free schools within Sandwell to meet the rising need of pupils with ASD and associated learning difficulties. High Point Academy opened in September 2021. It has been agreed that the school will gradually fill places over 3 years until full. The school has capacity for 90 pupils from Yr.7 to Yr.11.

Currently school has provision for Yr.7 to Yr.9. Last year school went over numbers in Yr.7 to accommodate need, this year the Yr.7 cohort is full.

Elm Tree Special Primary Academy is due to open in Sept 22. Due to delays in the construction of the new school, the DfE has funded the refurbishment of an alternative site at Connor Education Centre so that school can open with its first cohort (18 places for Rec/Yr. 1 aged pupils). Elm Tree Primary Academy will also progressively fill their places over the next 4 years.

All pupils have significantly been impacted upon due to the Covid pandemic and the resulting lockdowns. Schools and other professionals are reporting that more C/YP with autism are displaying associated challenging behaviours. This is clearly signalling the need to provide more specialist places at the right time.

The table below (Figure 4) shows how High Point Academy and Elm Tree Primary Academy will fill to their capacity over time. It also shows the number of additional specialist places.

Figure 4. Free school population growth and additional specialist places by year

	2021 / 2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
High Point Academy	38	72	92		
Elm Tree Primary Special Academy		18	54	90	126
Total additional places combined		56	58	36	36

Increase in Focus Provision / SEN Units for ASD pupils

Currently, not all towns have mainstream primary schools with a focus provision or SEN unit for pupils with ASD. It is proposed that additional focus provisions are established within West Bromwich Central and Wednesbury learning communities so that children in each locality have opportunities for this provision closer to their home.

Provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

Context

Currently there is 1 special school for SEMH in Sandwell offering 95 places for KS2 – KS4 across 2 sites. The primary site is in Staffordshire whilst the Secondary site is in Oldbury. The Primary site was expanded in 2020 through SEND Capital funding to increase by 10 places. However, there is currently a large percentage of pupils on the primary site are from other local authorities. The primary site has retained a cohort of Yr.7 pupils as they cannot be accommodated on the Secondary site.

The site also has a residential facility, which is open from Monday – Thursday. Some pupils will stay between 2 – 4 nights a week. The cost of a full-time residential placement was £59,550 per pupil in addition to the cost of their day placement in school. Currently the LA

pays £200,000 to school as part of a stabilisation fund, this provides 4 full time places in residence.

The Secondary site within Sandwell is a converted community centre and has limited classroom sizes and capacity to expand. Currently this site does not admit girls although the Primary site does. This makes it difficult to provide females who require specialist SEMH provision a place within Sandwell.

Many secondary aged students with SEMH difficulties requiring specialist places are placed within independent schools. Some of these schools are in or near Sandwell. The costs of these provisions vary however some are extremely expensive (£80,000 – £100,000 per year).

Sandwell also has 1 Primary aged SEMH Focus Provisions (10 places in total) and a primary aged Pupil Referral Unit (Primrose Centre). However, there is currently no similar Focus Provision within the secondary sector. This makes it difficult to transition some pupils who have made great progress with regulating their emotions so do not require special school but require additional therapeutic support during transition.

Albright Education Centre is Sandwell's home / hospital provision but also provides support to pupils with emotionally based school refusal and mental health issues such as anxiety. The provision was expanded in 2019/2020 to 50 places to provide support for KS2 children. The provision is also piloting a small Post 16 provision which is funded through dual registration with schools. Due to the increase in pupils who need additional support with their mental health there is now a waiting list for pupils to access the provision. The Centre moved to new premises in Tipton to support the further expansion of The Westminster special school in 2018, however they now have limited space to bring additional pupils onto site. They currently rent accommodation to support their Post 16 cohort.

Sandwell has a PRU for secondary aged pupils with sites located in Smethwick, Wednesbury, West Bromwich and Tividale. Currently the PRU are part of the AP Task Force project funded by the DfE. They have received additional funding to support the development of multi-agency teams such as Speech and Language Therapy, Mental health support, attendance teams and post-16 advisers to provide holistic support to their vulnerable cohort. The project will be reviewed next year.

Initiatives – Universal Provision

Senior Mental Health Leads and Whole School Approaches

Following the return to school, there has been a large emphasis on emotional health and well-being. Sandwell has a well-established whole school approach through the Well-Being Charter Mark which has currently been awarded to 83 schools. Schools are also taking the opportunity of grant funding provided by the DfE to train staff to become a Senior Mental Health Leads.

Mental Health Support Teams

36 schools are also supported through Mental Health Support Teams, with an identified Education Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP) to work in school providing evidence based psychological intervention to pupils with mild to moderate mental health needs. Further schools will be included in Wave 7, expanding the programme. The EMHP will work with the education and child psychologist and school staff to strengthen whole school approach and targeted intervention to support mental health and well-being.

The Link Programme

School representatives are also working with multi-agency partners including CAMHs, Reflections Teams, Community Organisations, Early Help and Inclusion Support through the Link Programme. This programme aims to deliver sustainable change in the delivery of children and young people's mental health services through building better understanding and communication and sharing good practice

Trusted Adult Training

Schools and the wider workforce can still access Trusted Adult Training

Covid Funding

Additional Covid monies (£1 million) has been given to selected Volunteer and Community groups to provide support to children and families with their mental health within their local area. The impact of this funding is being monitored through the Thrive Board. Provision to support Mental Health can be found on Sandwell Family Life website.

www.sandwallfamilylife

Funding has also been given to temporarily extend the Preventing Primary Exclusions team to support schools and add an additional Assistant Educational Psychologist.

Future Initiatives – Universal Provision

Emotion Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Currently the EP team are researching and developing a training programme for schools to understand and support pupils with EBSR. A small pilot is taking place. The training will be launched across schools in September 2022.

Behaviour Recovery and Trauma Informed Behaviour Policies

Currently a steering group of schools, Inclusion Support and Primrose Centre staff are reviewing and refreshing the Behaviour Recovery whole school approach. This is to include support for children with more complex SEMH/SEND needs using Trauma Informed, relational and restorative approaches. The reviewed model and guidance on Trauma Informed Behaviour Policies will be ready for further roll out to schools in September 2022

Future Specialist Provision

Shenstone Lodge / Brades Lodge

The LA is working with Manor Academy Trust to extend the Brades Site using a stand-alone 8 classroom block. This will add a significant amount of capacity to the school as it will almost double the available teaching and learning space. Place numbers will increase year on year over the next 3 years in agreement with the Trust and LA. School will be able to teach Yr. 7 on-site, releasing capacity at the Shenstone site for more primary school places. The new site will also enable girls to be taught at Brades.

A smaller 10 place extension will be place for September/October 2022 in order to accommodate some of the current Yr.7 and Yr.8 cohorts.

The LA will also begin a consultation with parents, residents and schools to determine the future need for the residential places for KS2 pupils at Shenstone Lodge. This would provide additional space to reconfigure the school site.

SEMH Focus Provision – Primary and Secondary

The LA plans to open further focus provision / resource based for pupils with SEMH needs. As previously stated, a provision for secondary pupils is required to support the transition of Yr.6 leaving our current FPs who will still need enhanced additional support but do not require a special school place.

Additional Mental Health Provision

Albright Education Centre are currently experiencing a high amount of referrals since the return to school following the pandemic. The attendance and CmE teams are also reporting a higher level of C/YP who are struggling to go back to school due to mental health issues. It is proposed that a further expansion is necessary to accommodate the rising needs of pupils within this area. A suitable alternative site will need to be found to accommodate any increase in numbers, as there is limited physical capacity in the current building.

Provision for pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and Moderate Learning Difficulties

Sandwell has 2 special schools for severe learning difficulties and complex needs. The Orchard Special School is a 147-place school for primary aged pupils, whilst Meadows Special School is a 215-place school for Secondary / Post 16 aged pupils.

A new 3 classroom block has recently been built at Meadows Special School to increase place numbers by 18. However, even with this expansion the capacity for the school is tight. The school has space for all pupils to transition from Orchard in future years based on current numbers, however does not have further capacity to take additional pupils identified from mainstream schools.

The Orchard Special School has limited capacity to grow on-site. It has been expanded in the past and any further expansion will encroach on playground space. Currently the LA are discussing solutions for storage of large equipment needed by the children within the school as this is becoming increasingly problematic.

Currently primary and secondary aged pupils with SLD/ASD/PMLD are the hardest to place, as capacity within the independent sector is tight and very expensive (£60,000 to £120,000 per place). The LA will try to avoid sending children out of borough where at all possible.

The Westminster Special School caters for pupils with MLD and other associated needs. Their cohort has changed over recent years as children / young people with more complex learning needs and ASD are being admitted. The school was expanded in 2018 / 2019 as it took over the adjoining Whiteheath building to establish a new Post 16 provision. This was to develop their supported internship programme. Numbers could increase to 250, however this is dependent on students being able to access supported internships

School has recently embarked on setting up a pilot programme for Post 19 pupils to access supported internships. This is through the establishment of a specialist independent college or SPI. Currently the SPI only takes 10 pupils.

Future Specialist Provision

SLD SEN Unit

The LA is in discussions with a mainstream school to establish a new 20 place SEN Unit to cater for pupils with SLD and other associated needs. The planned provision is estimated to open in Sept/Oct 2022. This should relieve some of the capacity issues for pupils the Orchard School.

SLD / PMLD Secondary and Post 16 / 19 Provision

There is a need to create a Secondary Satellite school for pupils with SLD / Complex needs as there is limited capacity for the increasing number of pupils transitioning from mainstream primary settings where secondary mainstream would not be appropriate.

A new Post 16 / Post 19 provision for pupils with SLD is also being considered. This would free spaces within the Meadows schools for KS3 and KS4 pupils. The Post 16 / Post 19 provision would focus on life skills and creating independence for pupils with SEND who could not access the supported internship programme already established at the Westminster school.

International New Arrival SLD/PMLD Assessment Resource Base

Sandwell has created the STEPs Centre, to support pupils and their families who have recently arrived in the country. The STEPs manager co-ordinates multi-agency support for those pupils who may have social care, mental health needs, health and SEN needs. STEPs and the Education and Child Psychology team work closely together to identify pupils who may require additional support through an EHC Plan to enter mainstream education. However, there are some pupils, with very complex needs, who require a specialist environment straight away in order to provide specialist opportunities for accessing education whilst education, health and social care colleagues carry out assessment.

SLD / PMLD Free School Application (subject to approval)

The Local Authority are currently in discussion around submitting a bid to the next wave of Special Free Schools programme. This is currently not decided upon and would be subject to DFE approval.

Post 16 / Post 19 Provision

Context

Currently Sandwell has specialist provision for Post 16 and Post 19 pupils within Westminster and Meadows schools. As stated above, Westminster have piloted the SPI provision this year.

Wodensborough Ormiston Academy provide Post 16 provision for pupils (and others) who were accessing their Focus Provision pre-16. Albright Education Centre have also piloted a very small Post 16 provision this year for students who could not access mainstream college courses due to their anxiety / mental health difficulties.

Pupils with SEND also attend mainstream college courses with additional support. Sandwell College is currently our only local provider, however pupils with SEND access courses in colleges in the region (Halesowen, Dudley, Walsall)

As a local authority, we want to support as many young people with SEND as we can into further education or employment. With partners, we want to expand supported employment opportunities into different settings so more young people have access to vital support to succeed in the workplace.

Initiatives

Project Search

Project Search is an internationally recognised, best practice model for supporting young people into paid employment. Project Search will commence in Sandwell in September 2022 and is a partnership between the Local Authority, Project Search, the Westminster School and DPD. Initially the project will start with 8 students. The LA plan to expand the project in coming years to include students from different schools into the model.

SEND Post 16 Steering Group

A multi-agency Post 16 steering group has been established through the SEND Operations Group. The focus of the group is to identify gaps and support developments in preparing our young people for adulthood. The group have produced a pathway for young people and parents to support entering Post 16 education which has been published on the local offer. They are also focusing on promoting collaboration between schools and colleges to support transition.

Future Provision

Westminster SPI

A small pilot programme for Westminster SPI will be reviewed and decisions to take this forward as a permanent solution will be made. The SPI is focussing on supporting students into employment through supported internships.

Expansion of SLD Post 16/19 Provision

As stated above, suggested satellite provision to support independence and life skills for young people who would not access supported internship programme.

Summary

The LA proposes to use monies from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Grant (HNPCA) and SEND Capital Grant to expand provision in the following ways (see chart below). If Sandwell is accepted onto the new special free school programme this will release capital in order to make further adaptations to mainstream schools to improve inclusion

The places for the new ASD free special schools have already been accounted for within the HNB budget. During the SEND Review in 2021, schools voted in favour of providing further specialist places. With the increase in funding announced for April 2022, the LA is in a better position to continue to further increase specialist provision going forward.

The chart below shows possible expansion opportunities, however not all have been agreed and ratified by schools' forum or cabinet.

The LA will continue to review funding and sufficiency each year and update future planning accordingly. Annual updates will be added to appendices of this strategy showing completed developments, sufficiency analysis and expenditure

Projected capital programmes

Provision	Location	Number of places	Capital Cost	Revenue cost	Expected completion date
EYS provision	Connor Education Centre	Based on referral	£20,000	Additional staffing costs Approx. 100,000	Sept 2023
Secondary Specialist Places	Brades Lodge, Oldbury	Phased implementation over 3 years TBA. Possible 50 places	Approx. £1,000,000 Academy Trust to pay contribution	10 places = 100,000 + 247,370	First phase – January 2023 if planning/build agreed
Storage solutions – H & S	Orchard		Approx. £40,000		Sept 2022
SLD / SLCN SEN Unit	Uplands Manor Primary School, Smethwick	20	Approx. £250,000	20 places = 120,000 + 262,500	October 2022
SLD Satellite school	TBA	30 – phased implementation	TBA		2023 / 2024
Secondary SEMH FP / Mental Health Provision	TBA	10	TBA	10 places = 60,000 + 131,290	2023
Primary SEMH FP	TBA	10	TBA	10 places = 60,000 + 131,290	2023
ASD Focus Provision / SEN Unit	TBA	20	TBA	20 places 120,000+ 262,500	2023
INA SEND Assessment Provision	TBA	10	TBA	10 place – 100,000 + 132 500	2023

Appendix 2 - CCAT: 2021-22 and beyond

The trend of increasing learner complexity

The increase in numbers of children and young people with complex learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD) is widely recognised by the Government,¹ independent researchers,² academics,³ Ofsted⁴ and educators themselves.

Research commissioned by the Government in 2011 indicated year-on-year rises of 4-5 % in the numbers of young people with severe and complex learning disabilities and formed the backdrop to the introduction of the Engagement Scales as well as establishing a definition of complex learning Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

Children and young people with Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (CLDD) have conditions that co-exist. These conditions overlap and interlock creating a complex profile. The co-occurring and compounding nature of complex learning difficulties requires a personalised learning pathway that recognises children and young people's unique and changing learning patterns. Children and young people with CLDD present with a range of issues and combination of layered needs – e.g. mental health, relationships, behavioural, physical, medical, sensory, communication and cognitive. They need informed specific support and strategies which may include transdisciplinary input to engage effectively in the learning process and to participate actively in classroom activities and the wider community. Their attainments may be inconsistent, presenting an atypical or uneven profile. In the school setting, learners may be working at any educational level.

The predictions in the 2011 national research describes our local picture, particularly when considering the autistic population. Lived experience, backed by data shows an exponential rise in the numbers of children and young people with autism and complex learning needs with the demand for specialist support far outstripping capacity of both services and specialist places.

Trend data from July 2018 to July 2021 evidences the exponential rise in our autistic population. The rise in the number of CYP with an EHCP in mainstream illustrates the rise in complexity of need which is characterising our autistic population and creating a significant challenge for schools.

Comparison July 2018- July 2021

		Mainstream Primary	Mainstream Secondary	Special	Out of Borough Special	Out of Borough Mainstream
Jul-2018	EHCP	192	121	169	38	14
	Total EHCP and SENS	270	218	169	38	33
Total-728						

		Mainstream Primary	Mainstream Secondary	Special	Out of Borough Special	Out of Borough Mainstream
Jul-2021	EHCP	368	177	213	58	27
	Total EHCP and SENS	574	305	213	58	45
Total-1,195						
64% increase		112.5% increase	39.9% increase	26% increase	52% increase	36% increase

The Pandemic and aftermath has further exacerbated the issues of rising numbers and complexity of need. In the Summer 2020, the Government commissioned the Policy Innovation and Evaluation Research Unit at the London School of Economics to undertake rapid research to improve understanding of autistic people’s experiences during the Covid period.

The final report from this study echoes our experience of the local impact on our autistic children and young people and their families.

The research showed that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the challenges many of our autistic children and young people already faced, such as social isolation and anxiety. Many of our autistic children and young people have been communicating their anxiety through their behavioural responses. This has often been very difficult for school colleagues to understand; despite things returning to a ‘more ordinary’, some of our autistic young people have continued to feel distressed, fraught, anxious and unsafe. These are the young people that need extensive planning and preparation for transition and change and many of them had to try to adapt to new rooms, new staff and in some cases, new schools, without this robust pre-preparation. Schools have struggled to keep the young person, their peers and staff safe, meaning increases in requests for change of provision. This has impacted right through the system, from CCAT’s capacity to provide sustained specialist support and SEN’s sourcing of specialist places. Every request for a change of provision needs considerable support for parents and an Annual Review with professional report. This against the backdrop of having tried to support school colleagues to stabilise the situation Many of our young people have anxieties borne out of worries, fears and perceptions about things which others might consider innocuous or trivial. There has been a rise in the number of young people experiencing crippling anxiety which is impacting significantly on their usual everyday routines and ability to participate in the community. Our local experience mirrors the findings of the research study.

Service Delivery

Under Inclusion Support’s service delivery model every school has an identified link officer from each of the professional groups.

CCAT specialist teachers have 3 core aspects to their role:

1. Casework model relating to the plan, do, review assessment cycle of the code of practice
2. Workforce development and training

3. Education lead for the Multi- Agency Assessment diagnostic pathway

Casework model relating to the plan, do, review assessment cycle of the code of practice

The Pandemic occurred against a backdrop of a significant and year on year increase in the numbers of autistic young people and an increasing complexity of need. This has impacted the work of CCAT and further compounded by other factors arising from the local and national context including the drive for specialist places.

In 2021-22, CCAT specialist teachers have been supporting an average patch of 21 schools each.

Children and Young People are referred through to CCAT by the school delivery teams of Specialist Teachers for Learning or Social, Emotional and Mental Health, as well as Educational Psychologists, through an internal service mechanism called IS3. Although the IS3 referrals had remained steady at around 50, from 2018-19 to 2019- 20, there was a 25% increase and from 2019-20 to 2020-21 a 40% increase.

There was a total of 115 IS3 referrals in 2020-21; at the end of May 2022, the figure was 170 for the academic year 2021-22.

There are significant numbers of children coming through the early years with autism and complex learning needs. Generally, the greater number are supported through EIG requiring consideration of statutory assessment during the reception year. This does not include those children who are already in a school setting. CCAT carry caseloads in all year groups; these CYP need reviews, consideration of statutory assessment and specialist support.

87 YP with a diagnosis of autism will be starting in Y6 in our mainstream schools in September 2022. This represents a 33% increase from 2021-22. These young people need reviews, transition planning and a focus on preparation for adulthood.

During 2021-22 CCAT has been involved in over 40 annual reviews requesting a mid-key stage change of provision.

CCAT also has 2 primary specialist development officers who provide more intensive and direct support for school staff and the CYP they work with.

In October 2020, we established a key specialist development officer role in the secondary sector. This role has a focussed brief, to work intensively 'for as long as it takes' with young people who are not able to engage in their usual daily routines and participate in their community, including attending school, usually as a result of overwhelming social anxiety. The impact of the officer's work has been remarkable with increased community engagement by several young people including one young person who was able to attend school after three years at home. There has been a considerable and powerful impact on parents who feel empowered, supported and heard.

The Pandemic has contributed to a surge in demand for this intensive support which is beyond the capacity of a single officer.

The primary officers have had to dilute the amount and frequency of support to individual young people and the staff who support them to try to stabilise and maintain a greater number of school placements. Schools are reporting that they are unable to attract quality staff to work with their pupils and want specialist support at the right time.

It is important to reflect on the specialist skills of the CCAT team and the creative solutions employed by staff to support our autistic children which falls outside the remit of other services.

This includes holistic support spanning school and home to support with the establishment of routines and transitions between places.

CCAT have been supporting 5 schools with developing their own 'hub' provision for their young people who need a personalised and attuned curriculum in a small group setting.

One Primary School that is developing a hub provision was recently subject to an Ofsted Inspection and retained their status as a 'good' school.

'Leaders identify pupils' additional needs as soon as they become clear. They are ambitious for pupils with SEND and make sure they study the full curriculum. Staff have taken particular care to meet the complex needs of a group of pupils with autism spectrum disorder'.

Workforce development and training

In July 2021, the Government released the All Age Autism Strategy, including Children and Young People for the first time.

CCAT are leading on the development of the Strategy and aligning it with work already started in 2019 on the Adult Strategy commissioned through Changing Our Lives.

CCAT provides both central training and bespoke training in individual or clusters of schools.

This training has consistently been well evaluated at 98.7% good or better. In order to promote the concept of the whole workforce trained to at least a level of understanding and awareness, CCAT are co-ordinating training and development through an Autism Education Trust training hub. This is launching through the learning communities during the Summer term and beyond but has required significant team planning and training the trainer preparation. CCAT are also co-ordinating the inclusion of Early Years and Post 16 as well as the wider agency workforce. As an AET hub we are bound by key performance indicators which relate to training quality and number of participants.

Multi- Agency Assessment diagnostic pathway

Data over a 10-year period shows an increase in demand for and completion of, diagnostic assessments through the pathway. The pathway is an example of embedded multi- agency collaboration, based on an inclusive community ethos that autism is everyone's business.

Year	Number of assessments	% increase	Commentary
2011-12	62		
2012-13	70		
2013-14	64		

2014-15	155	142	MAA Agencies committed to increasing number of assessments due to time well in excess of NAPC and NICE guidelines.
2015-16	162	4.5	
2016-17	172	6.1	
2017-18	183	6.3	
2018-19	197	7.6	
2019-20	222	12.6	
2020-21	264	18.9	
2021-22	Predicted around 300		

CYP referred onto the pathway have an assessment period, rather than being placed on a waiting list. NICE guidelines state that the assessment should be started within 3 months of the referral to the autism team. As Sandwell's MAA is a community-based model, the assessment is already underway at the point of referral with an aim to complete within 30 weeks.

Fractured attendance patterns of CYP and the restrictions placed on services during the Covid period, affected completion of MAA assessments. In 2019- 20, 80.6% of assessments were completed, rising to 82.1% in 2020-21, but this has caused a rolling surge with professionals completing postponed assessments as well as initiating assessments for and assessing new referrals.

Staffing

The School Delivery Model for the 3 of Inclusion Support's Professional Groups is based on a Time Allocation Model. Primary schools are allocated hours based on a graduated quintile system. Secondary schools currently receive a 'flat' allocation of hours, although a current consultation may see the introduction of a graduated model.

Mainstream Head teachers have indicated for CCAT to work a time allocation system. The CCAT team has historically been too small to run a time allocation model. Having secured additional temporary Covid money, two teachers have been recruited on 2-year fixed term posts. Temporary Covid money has also been secured for a year to extend a 0.8 FTE position to fulltime.

The following time allocation model is based on 8.0 FTE,

Phase	Rank	Hours
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Secondary	Flat	50
Primary	A	40
	B	38
	C	36
	D	34
	E	32

Increasing the CCAT team by 1.6 FTE specialist teachers as well as securing the 2 temporary posts would bring CCAT in line with the other teaching teams increasing time allocation capacity,

Phase	Rank	Hours
Secondary	Flat	65
Primary	A	60
	B	55
	C	50
	D	45
	E	40

Time allocation places all the capacity for service delivery through the schools which impacts on equality of access for all Children and Young People to the MAA Diagnostic Pathway.

Several factors suggest that capacity for the MAA Diagnostic Pathway should be commissioned separately to school delivery capacity;

- Parents have raised through their forums that they are unable to secure an assessment if it is not seen as a priority by the school. While CCAT has adjusted process to manage this, it would not be possible without capacity outside of school allocation
- CYP are referred onto the Pathway who attend non- mainstream or out-of-borough schools and settings or are EHE. None of these schools and settings form part of a time allocation model

Based on a notional average of 8 hours for an MAA, two additional specialist teachers would service the MAA Diagnostic Pathway without encroaching on the school delivery model

Following the promotion of an SDO internally, the Primary SDO team will be at full FTE of 3 in September 2022. An additional 4 FTE SDO would enable the provision of more intensive support and greater equity of access across the Learning Communities. 1 of these posts will be recruited on a temporary basis using Covid funding.

An additional Secondary SDO will be recruited on a temporary basis using Covid funding.

Costings

School Delivery

Staff	Cost £	Number	Total £
Specialist Advisory Teacher- Complex Communication and Autism	61,110	1.6	97,776
Specialist Advisory Teacher- Complex Communication and Autism- securing temporary posts from 09.24	61,110	2	122, 220
Specialist Development Officer- Complex Communication and Autism	37,032	3- Primary	111,096
Specialist Development Officer- Complex Communication and Autism - securing temporary posts from 09.24	37,032	1-Primary 1-Secondary	74,064

MAA Diagnostic Pathway

Staff	Cost £	Number	Total £
Specialist Advisory Teacher- Complex Communication and Autism	61,110	2	122, 220

Jane Campbell
CCAT Team Manager

06.22

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