

Schools Forum

19 June 2023

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS HIGH NEEDS BLOCK
PROVISIONAL OUTTURN REPORT 2022-2023

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 Provisional Outturn Report for the 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To provide Schools Forum with the HNB provisional outturn report for the Financial year 2022/23.

3. HNB Budget 2022/23

- 3.1 The HNB budget for 2022/23 reported to Schools Forum on 26 September was £60.808m, net of the usual recoupment by the DfE.
- 3.2 The balance brought forward as at 1 April 2022 is £3.930m surplus.
- 3.3 An additional grant amount of £0.082m was received from the DfE in March 2023
- 3.4 The anticipated surplus reported to Schools Forum on 20 March 2023 was £0.197m.
- 3.5 The current provisional outturn position is £1.723m surplus.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 shows the 2022/23 High Needs Block budget allocation, the 2022/23 provisional outturn, the monetary and percentage variance from budget, and the movement from figures reported in March 2022.

- 3.7 The overall balance in the HNB as at 31 March 2023 is £5.653m. This will be discussed as part of the School's Forum HNB working group and be part of further consideration by the LA and Schools Forum.
- 3.8 The Variances are explained below;

Variation 1 – Independent Schools

Out of borough placements, closed with an overspend of £0.761m. There has been slippage in the dates when pupils were expected to take up places and a reduction in the anticipated tri-partite funded places following a meeting in January 2023 with Sandwell Children's Trust.

Variation 2 – Mainstream Schools

There has been an increase in both EHCP assessments and the funding of early years pupils which has resulted in an overspend of £0.730m in delegated funding to school for individual pupil support.

Variation 3 – Focus Provision Schools

There has been an increase in EHCP assessments which has resulted in an overspend of £0.173m on the delegated funding provided to Focus Provisions.

Variation 4 – SEN Special Unit

A new Special Unit was opened at Uplands Primary School. It was previously budgeted for within the SEN Developments cost centre when the budgets for 2022/23 were finalised, as discussions were still underway with the school at that point. More Pupils have been placed in the provision than was expected and the outturn is £0.207m overspend.

Variation 5 – High Point Special School

There are more pupils on roll at High Point from 1 September 2022 than was anticipated when the budget was prepared. This has resulted in an overspend of £0.156m.

Variation 6 – Early Years

An amount of £0.480m 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. The funding to private providers out turned at £0.874m resulting in an overspend of £0.324m. The support for EYS pupils in mainstream schools is set against the schools' delegation and not shown separately. The £0.480m will be insufficient to cover the full costs of meeting the needs of the pupils in early year's settings.

Variation 7 – Recoupment

The Element 3 top up for pupils placed in Sandwell schools that are the responsibility of a neighbouring LA are funded by Sandwell for all pupils in the special schools and LAC pupils placed in mainstream schools. This is recouped from the relevant authority. There has been an increase in pupils being placed which has resulted in an increase in recoupment income, with Shenstone being the highest importer of pupils due mainly to the location of the school. This has resulted in an additional £0.837m since the budgets were produced. This budget for recoupment is always set with prudence as the income is not guaranteed and should pupils leave in particular at phase transfer and are replaced with Sandwell responsibility pupils, the income would cease

Variation 8 – Albright Education Centre

A small number of pupils have been placed temporarily at Albright Education Centre pending a permanent placement being agreed. These have been funded element 3 top-up for the period of occupancy. It was also found that the centre had been overfunded following an incorrect budget allocation which has now been recouped.

Variation 9 – SEN and Support for Inclusion Services

The total variances equate to a saving of £0.493m 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. Early year's have also received income of £0.060m from the Early Year's Block for 2-year olds trajectory funding to provide specialist equipment that was not utilised in 2022/23. This will remain in the overall HNB balances and be available to set spend against in 2023/24.

Variation 10 SEN

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SEN Developments is showing an underspend of £1.546m – The underspend is as follows

- HNB surplus balancing figure of £0.629m, which is the difference between the calculated budgets as at 1 April 2022 and the HNB Grant initial settlement 2022/23
- Additional grant of £0.37m received in July 2022.
- Additional grant of £0.082m received in March 23
- The funding for the Special Unit was held here and is now accounted for in variance 4 Above equating to £0.27m
- Slippage on planned expansions for specialist places, that have been accounted for in 2023/24 of £0.195m

4. Recommendations

4.1 That Schools Forum note the contents of the report.

Date: 14/6/23

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