

Agenda Item 6 - Appendix 3

Specialist Teaching Environments in Mainstream Schools Grant Application

The Local Authority has received additional capital money from the DfE through the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Grant (HNPCA) to support with meeting the Special Educational Needs of pupils within Sandwell. The aim of the funding should enable local authorities to invest in providing new places or to improve existing provision for pupils and students with high needs across a range of different educational settings.

Sandwell LA are investing the majority of the grant in developing new specialist places, however we would like to invest approximately £500,000 of the £1.48 million pounds received to support access to mainstream placements for pupils with high needs.

Purpose

The purpose of the grant is to enable mainstream schools in Sandwell to become 'even more inclusive' and meet the growing complexity and range of pupils with Special Educational Needs entering school. The grants are for one-off capital funding to be used to enhance the physical accommodation of the school site, to provide specialist teaching and/or intervention spaces to enhance school provision to meet the developing needs of their pupils. Examples include:

- Low stimulus structured teaching environments to support pupils with complex communication and/or ASD needs
- Sensory rooms
- Nurture or therapeutic environments to support pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs
- Showers / hygiene rooms to support pupil's medical / physical needs
- Specialist rooms to support developing independent life skills

The grant would support the refurbishment or reconfiguration of exiting spaces in school.

Who can apply?

Any maintained mainstream primary or secondary school in Sandwell is eligible to apply for this grant funding. Mainstream schools with Focus Provision will also be considered if the school has not previously received significant additional funding under the SEND Capital Provision scheme or has already been identified for further expansion of specialist places through HNPCA.

Funding

- Allocated through a bid process and schools would be expected to match fund the amount through their own capital monies.
- Upper limit of funding to an individual school = £10,000
- Limited to 1 bid per school

- To be used for capital works only
- Schools will not be able to make retrospective bids for capital money

Criteria

Schools would make bids for the grant using the following criteria and providing supporting evidence

1. School can evidence growth in their pupil population with the specific area of Special Education Needs that the specialist environment will support e.g. Complex Communication and ASD needs, SEMH needs
2. School provides a clear plan of how the environment will be used to enhance the “ordinarily available provision” within the school. School will submit their current provision map and a plan that specifies the evidenced based teaching approaches / intervention that will be delivered through the new environment. The plan will include the number and age range of pupils the new provision will support as well as the expected outcomes for the children.
3. School will demonstrate how delivery of the specialised intervention/ teaching strategies will be established, staffed, quality assured and sustained for 3 years.
4. Proposed bids should be discussed with Inclusion Support delivery staff in order to identify and support the workforce development required to successfully deliver the specialised intervention / teaching strategies planned.
5. School will demonstrate that the bid is fully supported by their governing body, parent/carers and school community. School’s governing body will be expected to commit to a formal written agreement. New provision will be included within SEN Information Report on school’s website.
6. School can demonstrate that they can match fund building works from their own financial resources
7. The school will provide an output specification for building works supported by 3 written quotes to ensure procurement regulations are followed.
8. The development of the specialised teaching environment will not impact on the overall capacity of the school (PAN) but enhance school’s SEN provision

Allocation of funding

The allocation of funding will be determined by a panel which has representation from

- Schools
- School organisation and development team
- Inclusive Learning Service
- Parent / Carers

Panel will sit on a monthly basis

Monitoring of Provision

- School will include monitoring the impact of provision within their quality assurance cycle
- Inclusion Support staff will gather evidence from school on the use and impact of provision on identified cohorts of pupils with specific needs

- School with similar provisions for specific needs will be invited to share good practice through steering groups to encourage peer collaboration and support
- Schools not using provision as specified in funding agreement will be challenged by LA officers
- Update report to schools forum

Allocation of Resource Grant to support the development of Specialist Teaching Environments

A resource grant of up to £2000 will be made available to schools that have developed Specialist Teaching Environments to support revenue cost. This will include schools where they can evidence that they have developed spaces through their own capital investment in the academic year 21/22.

The resource grant will be allocated through a bid process. It can be used to support costs in:

- Training staff on specific strategies / evidence based intervention
- Specific assessment materials to measure impact against outcomes
- Specific equipment / resources / furniture to establish the specialist teaching environment
- Software to support delivery of strategies

Criteria

- Schools must evidence how resources / training will help establish the specific strategies / interventions within the specialist teaching environment
- A breakdown of resources / training and the associated costs must be itemised in full

Allocation

Bids for the resource grant will be considered by the panel in conjunction with the evidence to support the development of a specialist teaching environment.