

Report to: Schools Forum

Date of Meeting(s): 27th June 2017

Subject: School Funding 2017/18 – High Needs Block

Report of: James Winterbottom – Director Children and Families

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Summary: To update Schools Forum on the High Needs DSG position

Implications:

*What are the **financial** implications?* Current projected overspend of £442k on special school places.

*What are the **staffing** implications?* n/a

Risks: n/a

Please list any appendices:-

Appendix number or letter	Description
N/A	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the last meeting of Forum it was requested that reports be presented to the next meeting providing the latest position regarding Special School Funding and the LA's SEN strategy.
- 1.2 The main issue highlighted by the special school representative was the over admission of pupils and a delay in agreement of the place funding.

2. Latest Position 2017/18

- 2.1 The authority has tried to negotiate with special schools as there is no budget to meet the demand and increase in numbers. It has now been agreed to pay schools at the minimum band CN (£10k place + £6k top up). There was already a financial pressure of £208k due to the increase of numbers at Newbridge. The current agreed numbers, though special schools have yet to confirm with finance would cost a further £234k. In addition to this special schools are asking for additional 1:1 support which is further adding pressure to the position. It is likely that the overspend on special school placements will be in excess of £0.5m for 17/18.
- 2.2 Any overspend will need to be funded from the Schools Block. A budget monitoring report will be brought back to Forum in September on the full High Needs Block position. As reported previously we are still experienced significant demand around Post 16 Provision which may result in a further overspend within that area.

3. Local Authority's SEND Strategy

A significant amount of work has been undertaken already to reduce the pressures on the high needs block. Including:

- Review of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service with a reduction of £200k
- Review of Outreach with a reduction of £100k
- Sensory support is currently under review
- Charges for the additional use of alternative provision above notional places.
- Introducing a charge of the AWPU (pro rata) for any student accessing medical needs.
- Introduction of a charge for all students that access alternative provision at three towers for any reason Introduced April 2017
- Increased provision at Newbridge to provide movement from three towers and to prevent out of borough placements.
- CAMHS pilot.
- Buy back income generation being used to support more schools through Educational Psychology Service and Targeted Education Support Services support and programmes.

For the future there are a number of bigger challenges:

- Review of Special School provision to look at expanding our current schools and their offer to reduce the number of children going to more costly OOB provision.
- Review of resourced provision to prevent unused placements

- A new alternative provision intensive early intervention offer at KS3 to prevent pupils failing through the system and 'ending up' in special schools.
- Full strategic review of all service and support funded through high needs including EHCP payments.
- Review of medical needs provision offer – currently high cost provision through Three Towers. Too many pupils accessing.
- Emotionally friendly schools roll out.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 Forum members to note the contents of the report and the financial implications.