

AGENDA



SCHOOLS FORUM

Date : Thursday 14th September 2017

Time : 4.30pm

Place : Badminton Road Offices, Ground Floor, Room 0012

Distribution

Members of the Committee

Rhona Allgood	Keith Lawrence (Chair)
Dave Baker	Louise Leader
Penny Chislett	Jim Lott
Mark Dee	Sarah Lovell
Jo Dent	Diane Owen
Mark Freeman	Lisa Parker
Kim Garland	Ann Reed (sub)
Elizabeth Gibbons	Max Reed
John Goff	Peter Smart
Clare Haughton	Susie Weaver
Geoff Howell	Bernice Webber
Liz Jardine	
Emma Jarman	

Appropriate Officers

Peter Murphy
Mustafa Salih
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Councillors

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Trevor Jones

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AGENDA

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|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS | 5 mins |
| 2 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | 5 mins |
| 3 | EVACUATION PROCESS | 5 mins |
| 4 | ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT | 5 mins |
| 5 | MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY 2017 | 5 mins |
| 6 | SCHOOL FUNDING 2018/19 – UPDATE AND OPTIONS FOR LOCAL CONSULTATION | 20 mins |
| 7 | OUTLINE THE PROPOSED PILOT FOR A NEW FUNDING MECHANISM FOR SCHOOLS FOR ELEMENT 3 FUNDING (TOP UP) – SEND READY RECKONER | 15 mins |
| 8 | INVOLVING HEADTEACHERS IN MULTI AGENCY RESOURCES AND PROVISIONS PANEL (MARP) DECISIONS | 15 mins |
| 9 | DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND THE SCHOOLS FORUM WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18 | 5 mins |
| 10 | ANY OTHER BUSINESS | 5 mins |

SCHOOLS FORUM
Thursday 13th July 2017
Badminton Road Offices

PRESENT:

Dave Baker	Executive Headteacher, Olympus Academy Trust and Ridings Federation
Kim Garland	Headteacher, Brimsham Green School
Elizabeth Gibbons	Diocese of Bristol
John Goff	Governor, New Horizons Learning Centre
Trevor Jones	Councillor
Keith Lawrence (Chair)	Governor, Culverhill, School
Jim Lott	Governor, The Tynings Primary School
Sarah Lovell	Finance Director, Cabot Learning Federation
Diane Owen	Chair, Kings Oak Academy
Lisa Parker	Headteacher, Warmley Park School
Max Reed	Ridge Junior

Officers:

Mustafa Salih – Interim Head of Financial Management and Business Support
 Helean Hughes – Acting Head of Education, Learning & Skills & Virtual Headteacher
 Sonya Miller – Head of Integrated Children’s Services
 Suzanna Hinnell – Managing Director, Integra
 Tamsin Moreton – Schools Finance Team Leader, Integra
 Davina Gibbon – Corporate Finance

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees were welcomed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mark Dee, Adrian Vye, Toby Savage, Anne Reed, Bernice Webber and Liz Jardine

3. EVACUATION PROCESS

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure

4. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT

None

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 MAY 2017

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Sonya Miller provided an update on the Involvement of schools in decisions on placement of SEN pupils. A Headteacher (Kim Garland) had been attending MARP which has been useful for the Panel while providing the Head with an insight into the challenges including financial. Kate East will produce summary report on issues arising from pupil placement.

SM asked Schools Forum to consider how Headteachers should be included in decisions of the more complex cases to place mainstream pupils direct to out of county placements.

Agreed

HH to take this forward as part of the SEND pier review in the Autumn Term

7. UPDATE ON DSG DEFICIT RECOVERY PLAN

Mustafa Salih provided an update. 2016/17 DSG deficit at outturn was £1.246m less than forecast. The LA has begun to implement actions to reduce the overspend. Most of the improvement was on Post 16 which is a high pressure area and an area of focus. No decisions for Schools Forum at this stage, but possible future budget planning options which have been discussed with the High Needs Working Group include:

- utilising the £1.2m as a contingency for high needs demand fluctuations;
- minimise funding turbulence in schools by feeding the £1.2m back into the plan and reducing the savings target;
- effect of Central Government introduction of Fair Funding

JG asked whether Post 16 savings was likely to be an ongoing trend. MS responded that a key focus had been finding better more cost effective provision, additionally this has been a high cost growth area and the forecasts were prudent. This is still an area of concern and focus. SM reaffirmed that this continues to be an area of challenge and work is going on to provide a whole system approach to enable the need of young people post 16 to be met including improving existing provision, development of the range of provision available and looking at options other than college including internships.

MS reported that it was the fourth time the Council has written to the Secretary of State or Minister regarding the council's level of funding. Ministers have announced that Fair Funding will be introduced from 2018/19 but it is unclear at this stage how this will be implemented and what this means for South Gloucestershire. Ministers have indicated that school funding system will be increased by £4b nationally but Institute of Fiscal Studies and the Education Policy Unit have indicated that this would still leave a real term per pupil cut of 2.8%. This means that schools will face a challenging financial future in the short to medium term. The Chief Executive & Leader of the Council have asked for an urgent meeting with Ministers on two separate occasions but there has not yet been a response. F40 group are still campaigning strongly and have developed a funding model which has been presented to Ministers.

KL commented that the Council letter to SoS was thorough and covered several points and was pleased that this has been sent..

MS reported that maintained schools balances reduced during 2016/17 and that school budget plans project that balances will reduce by £3m by the close of 2017/18. Beyond this balances are projected to go into £2.2m deficit by the close of 2018/19.

DB commented that academies were not allowed to set deficit budgets. MS responded that maintained schools cannot plan to go into deficit but in exceptional circumstances they can be granted a licenced deficit for a short period of time to allow them to make adjustments. There are several challenging issues which means that a number of schools are going to have a difficult short to medium term. The Council wants to put in place measures to support these schools to ensure that schools can stay within budget. The LA no longer has funds like the Education Service Grant which it previously used to fund intervention. Schools Forum is asked for approval that £30k from Schools In Financial Difficulties funding is used to help the Council support schools.

DB commented that there is a maintained schools with a large deficit and how does this £30k resolve this problem. MS responded if a school has a large deficit then it is top of the Council's list for priority action. The £30k is to help the Council coordinate its actions and provide some expertise to go into schools to help guide them through the process and options that they can put in place to ensure they can stay within budget.

SL commented that maintained schools are already four months into the financial year and intervention now means there is reduced scope for savings during the year. Need to address issues before the start of the year. MS said that although there is a reduction in balances by the end of 2017/18 only a small number of schools will dip into deficit. The more worrying picture is for 2018/19 so the earlier we can start supporting schools in making decisions about 2018/19 budgets the better. Most schools will have budget prudently and put plans in place for 2018/19. It is likely to be only a small number of schools that will need intervention.

DB commented that there was experience and good practise available to share amongst schools

Agreed

£30k to be used to from the Schools in Financial Difficulties budget to support the development of intervention measures to support schools with deficit budgets

8. STRATEGIC SEND PUPIL PLACE PLANNING

MS reported that the paper is a follow up from the previous Schools Forum where there was an initial project plan of areas under review to control high needs

expenditure. One of the challenges from schools and the High Needs Working Group is the planning for SEN expenditure and forecasting it accurately. The report is an update of that piece of work and looks at:

- How many places will be needed in the next 10 years
- Strategically plan a way of delivering those places including expanding existing provision and new schools etc.
- The resourcing implications of SEN demand over the next 10 years

This is the initial stages of the strategic planning review and requires further development and will coincide and form a key component of a broader piece of work to develop the SEN Strategy. Initial projections currently show a growth of 600 places over the next 10 years. The basis and assumptions used in the projection model have been shared with the High Needs Working Group. Some of the key questions are what interventions can we do to affect the numbers and where these numbers go. Schools Forum are asked for any views on the assumptions used in the model and how the model can be changed to make it more sophisticated.

JG commented that the assumption is that every type of need is uplifted by the same percentage. MS responded that this the next thing that will be looked at e.g. ASD is growing area and is probably understated in the current model. When the projection model is used to plan provision this will be brought Schools Forum and High Needs Working Group to ensure the council is making the correct decision.

9. INTEGRA UPDATE

Suzanna Hinnell provided a verbal update. The services has completed the first year of trading as Integra. Integra has looked at the range of services provided including where there are new requirements from schools. This has included reviewing services provided to MATs, a new Speech and Language Service has been brokered and the negotiation with an internet monitoring and filtering company to get better value for the network of schools rather than schools negotiating individually.

The financial challenges faced by schools in 2017/18 is reflected in service uptake with Integra. The priority has been to make the service more robust by lower overheads and working more efficiently. This includes trading with other local authorities whilst not losing the focus that the service is here to support South Gloucestershire schools. This will help to keep high cost services remain viable and retain expertise whilst unpinning services to South Gloucestershire schools.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Agreed

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Appointment of Vice Chair to be decided at next meeting

The meeting closed at 17.35

SCHOOL FUNDING 2018/19 – UPDATE AND OPTIONS FOR LOCAL CONSULTATION

To follow

OUTLINE THE PROPOSED PILOT FOR A NEW FUNDING MECHANISM FOR SCHOOLS FOR ELEMENT 3 FUNDING (TOP UP) – SEND READY RECKONER

Purpose of Report

To outline:

- The benefits of a transfer to the SEND Ready Reckoner for the allocation of SEND pupil funding for maintained schools and academies. The SEND Ready Reckoner would replace the current allocation process using the 'matrix' for Element 3 (Top Up) high needs funding;
- A phased implementation process.

Policy

1. DfE state that 'high needs' funding is intended to provide the most appropriate support package for a pupil with special educational needs (SEND) in a range of settings, taking account of parental and child's choice, whilst avoiding perverse incentives to over identify high needs pupils. It is also intended to support good quality alternative provision for pupils who cannot receive their education in schools.
2. The 'high needs' funding system supports provision for pupils with SEN and disabilities (SEND), from their early years to 25. A range of providers, including maintained nursery schools, maintained schools, academies (including free schools), non-maintained special schools, further education and sixth-form colleges, as well as those independent special schools and specialist post-16 institutions named on the section 41 approved list, have a duty to cooperate with the local authority on arrangements for children and young people with SEND (with a reciprocal duty on the local authority) and a duty to admit a pupil if the institution is named in an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan.

Local authorities and institutions are encouraged to collaborate on all aspects of high needs funding to develop more efficient ways of working and better outcomes for children and young people.

3. The Schools Forum has a responsibility to act as a consultative body with the local authority on the strategic financial management of the Schools Budget and the DSG. A key priority in this area is to collaborate on all aspects of high needs funding and to develop more efficient ways of working delivering better outcomes for children and young people.

Background

4. The 'matrix system' for SEND funding has been in place for in excess of 15 years. At the time of introduction during the existence of Avon local authority, the 'matrix system' was perceived as objective, standardised and transparent method of allocating SEND pupil level funding. A variation of the same system is still in place; it has been amended over time to cover more recently identified SEN categories but can no longer be described as objective or transparent and does not cover the complexity of needs that are now often identified in children and young people (i.e. sensory needs/diet). Each local authority can decide how they best allocate high needs funding. In South Gloucestershire a child must have a statement or an EHC plan in order to access 'matrix units' and funding.

The needs of the pupil are assessed using the SEND category and the 'matrix' descriptors. If the 'matrix' level is on or below 105 units there is no allocation of funding; if over 106 then the 'matrix units' are confirmed and the school/setting and parents are informed as to the level of units and funding to be delegated to the school. The systems also supports number of 1:1 hours provided to a child or young person, not a holistic package (i.e. mentoring, Forest Schools).

The 'matrix' system is used for the calculation of funding for all pupils in early years settings, maintained primary and secondary schools and all academies where the child has a statement or EHC plan and the child's needs are severe and calculated to be above the 106 matrix unit level.

5. The matrix system is not used for the calculation of funding for pupils placed at specialist provision including resource bases and units at mainstream schools/academies or special schools. Funding allocations for these pupils are made using SEND bands that were consulted on and agreed with the Schools Forum in 2015/16. The proposed introduction of the SEND Ready Reckoner does not impact on the current banding arrangements for specialist provision or the level of funding applied to the current banding levels.
6. There is sometimes confusion in terminology. High needs funding is referred to in terms of three elements; core funding is used to describe Element 1 (AWPU) and Element 2 (the notional SEND element) of £6,000 funding. Element 3 is the top up funding calculated in South Gloucestershire by the use of the matrix system (or banding for specialist provision). Element 3 is accessed from the High Needs Block held within the Local Authority.

DfE state that top-up funding rates should mainly reflect the additional support costs relating to individual pupils and students, in excess of core funding, that the institution receives (i.e. Elements 1 and 2). Top-up funding can also reflect costs that relate to the facilities needed to support a pupil's or student's education and training needs (either for individuals or on offer to all), and can take into account expected place occupancy levels and other factors.

For Pre 16 funding

Type of provision	Core funding	Top up funding – element 3
Mainstream schools, Mainstream academies	Element 1 is the AWPU. Element 2 is the funding to meet first £6,000 of additional support costs, delegated within school budget and academy grant derived from local formula.	Agreed per-pupil top up paid by commissioning local authority (LA) using the matrix system.
SEN units and resourced provision in mainstream schools. SEN units and resourced provision in mainstream academies (including free schools)	£10,000 per place based on number of places to be funded.	Agreed per-pupil top-up paid by commissioning LA using the bandings for specialist provision.
Maintained special schools. Special academies.	£10,000 per place based on number of places to be funded	Agreed per-pupil top-up paid by commissioning LA using the bandings for specialist provision.
Nursery schools	Place funding system does not operate in 0-5 yr. only settings.	Agreed per pupil funding paid by commissioning LA.

The SEND Ready Reckoner

7. The SEND Ready Reckoner has been designed by the Schools Forum SEND Working Group and has drawn on good practice that exists in other local authorities; it provides a transparent method of calculating the additional costs that are above the core funding. Schools will be asked to identify the costs, within a framework that prescribes the cost of staffing, and possible training requirements and equipment. This will result in a higher level of transparency and ensure that the local authority can be more accountable for the high needs funding for individual pupils.
8. In the development of the SEND Ready Reckoner it has become clear that:
 - Schools are unclear as to what the core funding should cover and therefore when to request or expect access to element 3 funding; there is also a reluctance in some schools to accept that the notional element (element 2) exists within the school budget;
 - There is variance in the cost of staff in similar roles across schools. As a result, an allocation of matrix funding might support X level of hours of a Teaching Assistance in one school but Y level in another.
9. The SEND Ready Reckoner represents a change in practice in that the local authority will now ask the school what level of funding (element 3) they feel they need in order to meet the needs of the pupil with SEND. Currently, the local authority identify a level of matrix units and inform the school. The SEND Ready Reckoner represents a partnership model where costs are discussed with the school, although there will always be a need to challenge schools if they make an inappropriately high request for funding. Appendix A is a draft document providing guidance to schools on high needs funding. Ready Reckoner

allocations will be moderated by the SEND Panel and approval by the Head of Service.

The SEND Ready Reckoner (an excel spreadsheet) requires the school to identify the type, nature and level of staffing/provision needed for interventions alongside training and equipment costs to meet the needs of learners who SEND is significant so that it could not be met within the delegated element 1 and 2 funding streams. The school will base their input of data on the pupil's provision map which should highlight all interventions, training and equipment that is required. The SEND Ready Reckoner tool is set up in a way that costs are fixed (e.g. cost of a teacher, HLTA, TA per hour is already inputted). The tool identifies an overall cost for the programme of support; the £6,000 notional SEN or element 2 is deducted leaving the level of element 3 funding that is required by the school.

10. The benefits of the SEND Ready Reckoner are that all costs and funding are transparent; schools, parents and the local authority can be clear on what is being allocated and measure impact in terms of outcomes by level of funding. The local authority can audit the effectiveness of the funding allocation which is difficult to do at the current time. The SEND Ready Reckoner has been piloted on a limited basis in schools linked to the Schools Forum SEND Working Group. Further piloting is outlined in phase 1.

Implementation Plan

Action - Phase 1	Detail
During September 2017 the SEND Ready Reckoner will be tested by the LA to ensure it is robust.	0-25 will compare the results of using the matrix allocation and SEND Ready Reckoner.
During October - Nov 2017 the SEND Ready Reckoner will be tested with a significant sample of schools to test with headteachers and SENCOs	Feedback will be used to improve the tool prior to the starting to trial it with children with new EHC plans in October 2017
During Dec 2017 the Finance team will analyse the data and ensure that the tool is robust and provide information on the financial impact of the tool on SEN funding.	Any differences in the allocation of funding between the SEND Ready Reckoner and the matrix system will be reviewed.
From January 2018 all funding for new EHC plans ¹ will be costed using both the SEND Ready Reckoner (involving schools) and matrix units (by the SEND Panel). Funding to schools will be based on the matrix system.	0-25 Assessment Coordinators will provide advice to schools on how the SEND Ready Reckoner is used if needed. The intention is that the SEND Ready Reckoner is self-explanatory. On average there are approximately 150 EHC plans issued over this two month period.
All funding currently attached to Early Years EHC plans will remain as previously stated using the existing system (matrix).	No suggested change

¹ This will not include statements that are converted to EHC plans

Action - phase 2	
The High Needs Working Group will by end of February review the feedback from schools and other stakeholders and make recommendations to the School Forum for implementation of the SEND	The Finance team will analyse the difference in funding levels to provide a financial analysis to the Schools Forum. Further communication will be shared with schools in terms of guidance as to how the £6,000 notional SEN (element 3) is utilised in schools – see Appendix A
The High Needs Working Group will ensure that the guidance and tool is ready for launch at a time agreed by the Schools Forum.	At the start of the full roll out: All new EHC plans will have support calculated using the SEND Ready Reckoner. Careful planning will be required for existing EHC plans and the change in funding approach will be considered as part of the annual review process
Action – phase 3	
Review and agree a plan for early years funding as this is currently based on the matrix funding process	Develop an EY SEND Ready Reckoner.

Financial Implications

This paper is not suggested any change to the current process in place. The use of the SEND Ready Reckoner will be used in parallel allowing the Schools Forum to evaluate the potential financial impact prior to implementation of phase 2. The current practice of the allocation of high needs funding using the matrix system for every child will continue; each case is discussed at a multi-agency panel which includes representation from health and schools (headteacher) before being approved (or not) by the Head of Integrated Services.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications at this point – i.e. phase 1. There are legal implications from the start of phase 2 as some EHC plans identify matrix units or funding levels. Changes to the EHC plan open up the right of tribunal for the child, young person, young adult or parents. Careful management of this process with the support of schools will be required to avoid an increase in tribunal and legal redress. A risk assessment will be included as part of the feedback after phase 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Schools Forum to receive the Guidance for schools on SEND funding in maintained schools and academies (see Appendix A)
2. For the Schools Forum to approve the pilot phase (phase 1) of the introduction of the SEND Ready Reckoner and agree a planned implementation and start date (assuming feedback broadly positive on the tool).
3. For the Schools Forum to approve phase 2 via a report to the Forum (based on the evaluations of phase 1 and a financial forecast of any potential financial impact of a change from matrix to SEND Ready Reckoner.

Appendix A: Guidance on SEND Funding for maintained primary, secondary schools and academies in South Gloucestershire

Schools and academies have asked for more guidance on what funding is available for pupils with SEN and disability and what funding is already within their budget. The majority of pupils with SEND will be identified at SEN Support and the school will use their own funding to meet the pupil's individual needs. Where a pupil is assessed to have complex and severe SEND they may be provided with a level of funding as a result of an EHC needs assessment and the issuing of an EHC plan. It is important to note that not all pupils with an EHC plan will result in the school being provided with additional funding. The allocation of funding is linked to the severity of need not the issuing of an EHC plan.

The information in this document relates to children and young people attending mainstream schools and academies and not those placed in resource bases & units attached to mainstream schools or special schools. The DfE are moving towards a shared goal of national consistency and greater transparency in the way school budgets are determined through a pupil led funding system. However, at present the way SEN Funding is determined is agreed locally, through the Schools' Forum and is allocated to schools against three main headings:

What is Element 1 - AWPU

Schools are allocated most of their Pre 16 funding based on the total number of pupils in the school. Every pupil in a school attracts an amount of money. This is called the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU). The amount varies from one local authority to another. More funding is allocated for each pupil in a secondary school than in a primary school.

For the financial year 2017-18 the agreed Age Weighted Pupil Unit amount in South Gloucestershire is £2,475.39 for primary aged pupils, £3,919.19 for pupils in Key Stage 3 and £4,172.17 for pupils in Key Stage 4.

This budget is used to make general provision for all pupils including pupils with SEN. Schools also attract an amount of money based on social deprivation indicators and prior attainment as well as the number of children on roll who have English as an additional language and children in care.

For Post 16 pupils, Element 1 is calculated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA) using a nationally consistent methodology for all institutions delivering 16 – 19 provision. The formula is based on: student numbers, a national funding rate per student, retention factor, programme cost weighting, and area cost allowance and disadvantage.

What is Element 2 –Notional SEN

Some schools say that they find it difficult to understand what support or interventions should be funded from element 2 or the SEN notional element of their funding. Some suggestions are given in table A.

For Pre 16 pupils every school receives an additional amount of money to meet the needs of children with SEN and disability, including some children with EHC plans. This amount of money is called the '**notional SEN budget**'. The amount provided to the overall school budget is based on a formula which is agreed between the Schools' Forum and the local authority.

Each school has a School Funding Report which is issued at the start of the financial year (ie April). The Notional SEN is identified on the "School Block" tab at the end of the tables. An example screen shot is below. In this example, the notional SEN or element 2 level is £101,790 but this will change across all schools.

Total Funding for Schools Block Formula (excluding MFG Funding Total) (£)	£751,915	
10) Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG is set at -1.5% loss, gains are capped above a 16% ceiling)		
MFG Funding Total	£8,384	1.10%
Notional SEN included in figures above	£101,790	13.54%
Total Funding For Schools Block Formula	£760,299	
% Distributed through Basic Entitlement	60.57%	
% Pupil Led Funding	75.60%	

The 'notional SEN budget' is formed, in part, by the funding that comes into school under the 'Prior Attainment' factor. In previous years this had been called funding for high incidence/low cost SEN. As the title suggests the prior attainment factor generates an amount of funding based on the prior attainment of the pupils who were registered at the school when the Autumn Census took place.

- For children in the primary phase of education it is based on Years 1 - 4 pupils not achieving a good level of development and for Years 5 to 6 pupils who scored below 78 points on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Going forward, this will include all those who had not achieved the expected level of development in all 12 prime areas of learning as well as maths and literacy by the end of Year R.
- For secondary phase, the amount is based on Year 7 pupils below the expected standard in reading or maths tests or writing teacher assessment and Years 8 – 11 pupils who had not attained a Level 4 in either English or maths at the end of Key Stage 2.

The DfE expects these measures to identify around 21% of pupils. This may not recognise the additional needs of some groups of pupils, for example those who have attained well but have physical needs or behavioural difficulties. However this method is considered by the DfE to be a best-fit model at the current time.

For the financial year 2017-18 a primary aged pupil who did not attain a good level of development at the end of the Foundation Stage would contribute £1,096.69 into the prior attainment element of the school's budget and a secondary aged pupil who had not achieved the expected level of development at the end of Key Stage 2 would contribute £1,798.22. Part of Element 1 goes towards forming the notional SEN budget (alongside the prior attainment funding). It is expected that 4% of the overall Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) funding, referred to above, should also be used to support SEN across the school. A list of formula factors contributing to the 'notional SEN budget' are:

AWPU (Basic Entitlement)	4%
Deprivation (FSM's)	1%
Prior Attainment	100%
Lump Sum	13.5%

Pupil Premium grant funding may also help to support some groups of children who have barriers to learning, although not necessarily SEND. See the note on Pupil Premium below.

Most pupils with SEN and disability will have their needs met through the "notional SEN budget", especially where their needs are high incidence/low cost. Schools commonly use the notional SEN budget to fund lunch time clubs for vulnerable pupils, additional support to access after school activities, purchasing equipment such as laptops or specialist software, running small teaching groups in core subjects or providing in class teaching assistant support. The 2015 SEN Code of Practice states that many schools will commission services (such as speech and language therapy, pastoral care and counselling services) to support pupils from their notional SEN budget (para 3.66). Most of the provision for pupils with SEN can be met through the notional SEN budget. More detail is provided in table A.

The notional SEN budget in each school will vary based on the indicators described above. In 2017/18 the range in the primary sector is £35,987 (50 pupil school) to £238,165 (660+ pupils) and in the secondary sector £257,422 (530+pupils) to £696,800 (1000+ pupils).

The government has stated that schools should use their notional SEN budget to pay for up to £6,000 worth of special educational provision to meet a child's SEN.

Most children with SEN require special educational provision that comes to less than £6,000. Pupils requiring provision totalling in excess of £6,000 per year are considered to be high needs pupils. **The DfE definition of a 'high needs pupil' is one where the educational provision cost, including the basic provision given to all pupils exceeds the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) plus £6,000 (i.e. element 1 and 2).**

Not all pupils with EHC plans are termed 'high needs pupils' and not all plans will bring additional resources to the school. South Gloucestershire has delegated funding to schools so that schools can meet the needs of pupils with EHC plans but

who have a lower level of need. Based on the *matrix funding* arrangement pupils who have an EHC plan with less than 106 units are supported by element 2 funding.

For Post 16 pupils, the EFSA allocates Additional Education Support funding based on £6,000 per high needs student.

Schools and academies have asked for more guidance as to what should be provided from element 2 funding. Table A provides some examples of the type of interventions that schools might decide to provide. Groups of schools may wish to commission services across their locality and across a group (or Trust) of schools. Element 2 funding is identified as support costs for a child/young person with an emerging SEN within the notional SEN £6k in schools budgets.

Table A – possible interventions that could be funded from core funding (element 1& 2)

Area of input	Further explanation
Additional individual or small group support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In class support to support in specific areas of the curriculum - Support for toileting - Structured phonics programme - Structured maths programme - Individual reading - Small group literacy daily - Small group numeracy daily - Handwriting - Social skills group - Anger management programme - Occupational therapy programme - Speech and language programme - Counselling support - Friendship programmes - Support for PE and/or dyspraxia programmes - Mentoring support - Support for school trips - Family support for a targeted programme - Lunch time support
Additional individual or small group support	This could be up to 15 hours and may include some of the interventions listed above (up to £6,000)
Commissioned services EP, teaching, attendance, behaviour and therapy assessments	Educational psychologist, advisory teachers (Autism, behaviour, learning etc.), therapists (speech and language)
SENCO input / interventions	Intervention programme delivery/reviews Implementation of the plan do review cycle. Preparation and attendance at IEP reviews Preparation and attendance at annual reviews
Preparation and attendance at annual reviews	Attendance by key staff – teacher, teaching assistant, SENCO, school leaders
Liaison with parents and family	Ongoing liaison

SENCO or management time from senior leaders should not be costed as part of interventions covered by element 1 & 2 as these roles are funded by the school to meet the needs of all pupils.

Element 3: Top-Up Funding

If it is determined that a pupil with SEN and disability requires in excess of £6,000 worth of special educational provision, in addition to the basic provision available to all pupils, the local authority in which the pupil lives can provide Top Up funding to meet the cost of that provision.

The Top Up funding is provided to Pre and Post 16 pupils from the high needs block element of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) held by the local authority and would require a statement or an EHC plan to be in place for it to be made. The level of need would be assessed as 106 units plus or equivalent on the *matrix funding* arrangement.

For financial year 2017/18 South Gloucestershire resident pupils with 106 matrix units and over will be funded on two rates:

- i. Units 0 to 105 will be funded at £32.16 per unit²
- ii. Units from 106 upwards will be funded at £96.50 per unit

The Schools Forum is considering a change in the SEN and disability funding system moving from the matrix system to a Ready Reckoner. For new EHC plans we will be piloting the use of the Ready Reckoner but the matrix funding system stays in place for existing funding linked to statements and EHC plans.

Schools will be provided with support to complete the Ready Reckoner by the Assessment Coordinator in the 0-25 Team.

Schools are expected to use this funding to supplement the funding in the 'notional SEN budget' to make provision for that individual pupil. Element 3 or Top Up funding is paid monthly, so if the pupil receiving Top Up funding left the school part way through the year the funding would cease. If a pupil is year group leaver e.g. Year 11 funding will continue until the end of August.

It is easy to identify the amount of money that comes into school through Top Up funding as this is linked to named children using their Unique Pupil Number (UPN). That amount, combined with the notional SEN budget makes up the Schools' SEN budget. Academies receive their Element 1 and Element 2 funding based on an academic year whereas maintained schools receive their funding based on a financial year.

Schools with a high incidence of high needs pupil may attract additional funding. For financial year 2017-18 there are two payments based on:

² The Schools Forum will be asked to consider amendments to these arrangements with potential changes made in the 2018/19 financial year

- i. if the number of November 2016 pupils in receipt of top up funding compared to the autumn 2016 school census (excluding resource base pupils) exceeds a threshold of 1.3%. This will form a 5/12ths allocation for the Summer Term.³
- ii. if the number of November 2017 pupils in receipt of top up funding compared to the Autumn 2017 school census (excluding resource base pupils) exceeds a threshold of 1.3%. This will form a 7/12ths allocation for the Autumn and Spring Terms⁴.

This measure was put in place in South Gloucestershire to protect schools with a disproportionate number of high needs pupils. This additional protection is agreed by the local authority and Schools Forum and is not a statutory DfE requirement. It is currently under review.

Pupil Premium – (this is NOT SEN funding)

Your school may also receive additional funding called Pupil Premium based on the Spring Census preceding the financial year. This allocation is payable for each reception to year 11 pupil who has been eligible for free school meals at any time in the last six years, or is looked after / adopted from care after 2005, or who has been a service child in any of the last four years (including children whose parents had died in service) and who are in receipt of pensions under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and the War Pensions Scheme.

Allocation is based on the spring census preceding the financial year. Rates are paid at a national level and for financial year 2017-18 are:

- £1,320 Primary age pupils
- £ 935 Secondary age pupils
- £1,900 Looked-after children / adopted from care
- £ 300 Service children

Some pupils with SEN will also attract the pupil premium but many do not.

Note for SENCOs

Make sure you are aware of the funding streams for all pupils with SEN and disability in your school, especially those with statements or EHC plan who are identified as having element 3 or Top Up funding. These will be your most complex pupils and their progress will need to be reviewed regularly. This needs to be evidenced on your provision map.

Make sure you are aware of pupils with statements or EHC plans that also attract Pupil Premium.

You will also need to ensure that whatever provision is written in the statement or EHC plan it is in place. Funding can be used to provide a range of provision and services and does not have to only support additional teaching assistant time. Be creative in the support you put in place but ensure that the needs and provision are addressed as identified on the statement or EHC plan and record this on your provision mapping.

³ As above

⁴ As above

Personal Budgets

The 2015 SEN Code of Practice introduces the facility for parents to request a personal budget which they can then use to procure services for the child or young person. A personal budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority to deliver provision set out in an EHC plan where a parent or young person is involved in securing their own provision (Para 9.95). Local authorities must provide this information to parents. Personal budgets should reflect the holistic nature of an EHC plan and can include funding for special educational, health and social care provision.

There are a number of ways that the child's parent can be involved in securing provision. One is called direct payments – where the family receive the cash to contract, purchase and manage services themselves. Where a direct payment is proposed for special education provision, local authorities must secure agreement of the school if any of the provision is to be delivered on the school's premises (Para 9.104).

Notes to SENCOs

Personal budgets are a new area for education and SEN although they have existed in adult social services for some time.

If a parent approaches your school asking for information on personal budgets or expressing a view that they would like to fund a professional to work in your school (e.g. a speech therapist working with their child) it would be sensible to contact the 0-25 Service to seek advice. Personal budgets are only available to pupils with an EHC plans.

INVOLVING HEADTEACHERS IN MULTI AGENCY RESOURCES AND PROVISIONS PANEL (MARP) DECISIONS

Purpose of Report

To outline:

- options to increase headteacher involvement and/or scrutiny of MARP decisions to place young people in independent non maintained schools and colleges and;
- agree a phased implementation process to increase scrutiny of placement decisions.

Policy

1. The Schools Forum has a responsibility to act as a consultative body with the local authority on the strategic financial management of the Schools Budget and the DSG. A key priority is the efficient use of the DSG in respect of the high needs funding and specifically high cost placements at non-maintained special schools and colleges.

Background

2. Our Local First framework supports the placements of pupils in schools within the local area and wherever possible in our South Gloucestershire schools both mainstream and special schools. This allows the young people to have full access to their local communities and access local services when needed.

The Schools Forum (Update in the DSG Recovery Plan in July 2017) report identified an overspend on the independent non-maintained schools budget of £1,140,000 in 2016/17. Recent analysis of the average DSG costs for non-maintained special schools indicates that an average cost is £63,405 per annum (excluding transport).

3. A number of interventions have been put in place to reduce spend against this budget. Experience in South Gloucestershire and other local authorities highlights that it is difficult to end these placements and the more effective strategy is to prevent placement in the first instance by offering local provision that can meet the young person's needs. Unless the young person and/or parents support a return to local provision it is difficult to succeed as the disagreement between the local authority and family can be taken to an SEND Tribunal which will usually support placement at the existing school in line with parental/ young person preference.

Interventions already in place to manage this budget include:

- Development of local provision (as examples - SGS Pegasus School opening in September 2017 for 30 places for pupils with ASD rising to 80 by 2019 and

- Lyde Green Unit opening in September 2017 for 4 pupils and rising to 12 places);
- Introduction of the MARP panel chaired by the Head of Integrated Services. Representation from education, social care and health. A secondary head has recently attended and represents the school view in MARP discussions. Clearer terms of reference for the panel are in place and all decisions are agreed by the panel and approved by the Head of Integrated Services;
 - Direct approaches (by 0-25 managers) made to headteachers who say they are unable to meet the needs of referred pupils has been implemented. An escalation process including the Head of Education Learning and Skills (ELS) to approach schools is in place;
 - Access to a higher level on funding to support creative programmes in mainstream schools and therefore reducing the need for placement in non-maintained special schools.
4. An example of a placement this September includes a placement of a pupil with ASD at a non-maintained special school in Year 6. The placement cost is £75,000 per annum and is likely to result in an estimated spend against the DSG of £450,000 (excluding travel) over the next six years as this pupil is likely to remain at the school until the end of KS4. One pupil is in effect taking up a disproportionate amount of the DSG budget. In some situations these placements are appropriate such as low incidence high needs children and young people however, practitioners who attend MARP are increasingly feeling that on occasions a placement at a local school is appropriate and could meet the needs of the pupil. The local authority can and does offer access to a higher level of funding in order to support our principle of local first. There is resistance from headteachers to take children and young people where their needs are perceived as complex. Where a headteacher disagrees with this view of MARP they can refuse to accept the pupil and the local authority has to decide whether to direct the school to take the pupil and name the school on the EHC plan or to place in the alternative non-maintained special school. The local authority can be faced with a parent requesting an independent non-maintained school placement and not being able to identify a local school even though the view of the MARP panel is that a local school can meet identified needs.

Suggested Options

These could include:

1. Inviting a primary or secondary headteacher to attend each MARP panel in order to provide a headteacher perspective in discussions about placements as well as to brief headteachers on the key themes arising from the panel. This can be set up on a rota basis, MARP meetings are every two weeks for two hours. This has been trialled and felt to be beneficial;
2. Agreeing an escalation process is shared with primary and secondary headteachers which identifies the stages of discussion between the local

authority and headteacher/Chair of Governors where a pupil may be placed and directed by the local authority;

3. Developing a greater understanding via regular updates among headteachers and Governing Bodies of the costs of non-maintained special schools placements and the impact on the wider DSG;
4. Defining what additional support headteachers can access to meet the needs of these pupils; support to be commissioned to support complex placements in local schools especially for ASD;
5. Implementing a headteacher group:
 - a. to discuss complex placements and to monitor spend against budget and to look for trends and alternative options to non-maintained special school placements (under 16);
 - b. to pilot a similar approach to Fair Access Panel where headteacher representatives are involved in the placement of pupils that have been permanently excluded. The panel could agree to “name” a school in line with the Local First framework and in discussion with the local authority.
6. Providing the School Forum, primary and secondary headteacher executive groups with a termly update on the number, type, year group and costs of placements in non-maintained special schools.

Financial Implications

This paper seeks to explore actions that can be implemented to (1) reduce the number of placements at non-maintained special schools (under 16) and therefore impact on the overspend in the high needs funding element of the DSG (2) involve headteachers more proactively in the decision making process for high cost placements and providing a higher level of accountability of the DSG spend.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Schools Forum to comment on the suggested options listed above and to indicate which options should be considered and implemented.

SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN

<p>14th September 2017 @ 4.30pm Room 0012 Ground Floor</p>	<p>19th October 2017 @ 4.30pm (Additional Meeting) Interactive Theatre Room, Winterbourne International Academy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE Consultation on School Funding 2018/19 • Outline the proposed pilot for a new funding mechanism for schools for element 3 funding (Top UP) – SEND Ready Reckoner • Involving Headteachers in Multi Agency Resources and Provisions Panel (MARP) decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>7th December 2017 @ 4.30pm Room 0012 Ground Floor</p>	<p>18th January 2018 @ 4.30pm Room 0012 Ground Floor</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integra Update by Suzanna Hinnell • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>1st March 2018 @ 4.30pm Room 0012 Ground Floor</p>	<p>10th May 2018 @ 4.30pm Room 0012 Ground Floor</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>12th July 2018 2018 @ 4.30pm Room 0012 Ground Floor</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	

ANY OTHER BUSINESS