

Agenda Item 3

TITLE	Current Status of HNB resources, SEND Improvement Programme and Written Statement of Action
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Schools Forum on 11 December 2020
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Children's Services - Carol Cammiss

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

This report forms part of regular reporting to Schools Forum, informing areas of statutory decision making and improving visibility and consultation on wider Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) financial matters.

RECOMMENDATION

Schools Forum is asked to note and comment on the detail presented.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The report provides Schools Forum with an update on the current status of High Needs Block resources, ongoing actions associated with the SEND Strategy and Written Statement of Action, and an update on the high-level financial plan.

**SEND & High Needs Block Budget & Improvement Programme Update
December 2020****.01 Purpose of the Report**

To provide Schools Forum with an update on the current status of High Needs Block resources, ongoing actions associated with the SEND Strategy and Written Statement of Action, and the high-level financial plan.

.02 Recommendation

Schools Forum is asked to note and comment on the detail presented.

.03 Background

In March 2020, a report was presented to Schools Forum outlining key areas of activity underway in relation to the SEND Improvement Programme and Deficit Management Plan.

Since that time, progress against a number of key actions has slowed due to the impact on organisational capacity from covid-19.

This report seeks to address some of the information gaps that Schools Forum have highlighted, providing further analysis on the SEND position within Wokingham and an update on the significant programme of work ongoing.

.04 SEND Improvement Programme & Written Statement of Action

In March 2019, Wokingham Borough Council was subject to a joint inspection of its SEND services by the CQC and OFSTED. As a result, the Local Authority, with its partners, prepared a written statement of action to address concerns outlined in the inspection report.

The Local Authority, with its partners, established a SEND Improvement Board to oversee the delivery of the action plan. There are a significant number of developments taking place as a consequence of the work of the Board.

Over the course of the last twelve months we have delivered and continue to deliver against all of the key actions contained within the Written Statement of Action (WSoA) following the Ofsted and CQC Inspection of our local area in 2019.

The timeliness and quality of EHCP's has dramatically improved over the course of the last twelve months, with quarterly performance being sustained at above regional and national comparators (2020/21 Q2 72.1% timeliness remains well above the averages for England, the South East (46.4%) and Wokingham's statistical

neighbours (61.5%). This is a fantastic achievement with improvements across the system leading to this change.

We have published a SEND strategy and worked together to co-produce a SEND strategy befitting our shared aspirations for children with SEND. It is anticipated that this new strategy will be approved by the SIB in January and will lead us forward in developing the right provision and the right services for this cohort of children and families.

We have designed and developed a co-production charter and guidance that supports multi-agency working and the engagement of children and families at both a strategic and operational level.

We have delivered on our commitment to transparency by virtue of our SEND Dashboard that is regularly updated and reviewed within the SIB. This Dashboard enables us to understand our data better and focus on areas of shared concern or shared celebration as it relates to performance across the system.

Our multiagency working arrangements have also moved forward. We have engaged in regular multi-agency quality audits of EHCP's, developed (and will pilot in January) arrangements to support children accessing the right needs led support at the right time in the right place and are finalising our approach to having a well-publicised co-produced Ordinarily Available/ Graduated Response document including education, health and social care. We have also developed a shared approach to training and development and are creating a good practice guide for partners e.g. paperwork standards/consideration of communication/ access needs of the family.

We have also improved arrangements for young people with SEND as they transition into adulthood. We have reconfigured our service arrangements to better support the long term provision for young adults with SEND, we have developed a pathway that more clearly articulates the engagement of agencies and timeframes for support and review and continue to develop materials to explain what is available to young people and families as they move into adulthood.

.05

SEND Strategy

Over the past six months, a significant amount of work has progressed with partners and stakeholders to develop a refreshed three-year SEND Strategy (0-25) for Wokingham. A separate paper accompanying this report shows the current draft of the SEND Strategy which will develop further in the coming weeks.

Progress with the SEND Strategy has been steered by the Area 1 Task and Finish Group and reported at regular intervals to the SEND Improvement Board (SIB). The final SEND Strategy will reflect the key areas of work relating to SEND improvement including the commitments in the Written Statement of Action, and will build on these to deliver better outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.

.06 Children & Young People with SEND in Wokingham

As reported previously to Schools Forum, the number of children and young people with an EHCP in Wokingham has risen significantly in recent years. While the main driver of this relates to the extension of duties brought about by the Children & Families Act 2014, this comes at a time when the local population is also on the increase.

The 2019/20 academic year saw a 21% rise in the number of EHCPs, with 209 additional plans in place for August 2020 when compared to the same point in the previous year, and that number has continued to rise.

Data from 2017-19 showed that approximately 2.5% of school-age children had EHCPs, which as of August 2019 compared favourably with data from Regional and Statistical Neighbours. However, based on increases in numbers of children and young people with EHCPs in 2020 so far (+8%), which is significantly above the rate of overall population growth, it is expected that this proportion will increase over the coming years.

In August 2019, the percentage of the school population with a Statement or EHCP was 2.5%, a rate which had been stable since 2018. This figure put Wokingham 0.6% below the national and regional average (3.1%) for the same period.

Regional and Statistical Neighbours have seen increases over the past few years in line with the national average, with figures above the Wokingham proportion by 0.8% and 0.45% respectively. (Source: SEND2 Survey 2019)

Although trend data from 2017-19 showed that the proportion of the school population with EHCPs was holding at approx. 2.5%, current 2020 data indicates that funded EHCPs have increased by 8% over the first six months of FY20-21, whilst the local population has grown by an estimated 4% (Wokingham JSNA).

On the basis of this trajectory, it is predicted that over the coming years the absolute number of children and young people with EHCPs is likely to increase, as is the proportion of the school population with an EHCP.

Table 1 – Percentage of school population with an EHCP 2017-2019

	2017	2018	2019	% point change from 2018
Wokingham	2.4%	2.5%	2.5%	0%
South East	3%	3.1%	3.3%	0.2%
Statistical neighbours	2.75%	2.81%	2.95%	0.14%
England	2.8%	2.9%	3.1%	0.2%

EHCP Analysis by Primary Support Need

Analysis in Table 2 below shows the number of EHCPs by primary need type for the total EHCP cohort aged 0-25, from 2018-2020.

Table 2: Breakdown of EHCPs by Primary Support Need (Source: SEN2 Returns)

Primary Need	2018		2019		2020	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
ASD	342	39	374	40	440	41
Hearing impairment	23	3	26	3	26	2
Moderate LD	96	11	91	10	97	9
Multi-sensory impairment	2	0.2	2	0.2	2	0.2
Other difficulty/disorder	4	0.5	4	0.4	6	0.6
Physical disability	50	6	50	5	53	5
Profound and Multiple LD	33	4	35	4	38	4
SEMH	156	18	170	18	215	20
Severe LD	77	9	89	10	96	9
Speech, Language and Communication needs	60	7	69	7	80	7
Specific LD	20	2	21	2	20	2
Visual impairment	2	0.2	3	0.3	3	0.3
Not recorded	2	0.2	0	0	2	0.2

The table shows that the top three primary needs have remained consistent over the past 3 years:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (39-41%)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (18-20%)
- Moderate Learning Difficulties (9-11%)

EHCP Analysis by Setting Type

Table 3 shows the proportion of EHCPs at each type of education setting from 2017 to 2019.

Table 3: Breakdown of all EHCPs by setting type

Type of Education Provider	2019			2018			2017		
	ENG%	SE%	WB%	ENG%	SE%	WB%	ENG%	SE%	WB%
Mainstream incl. EY	33.64	29.92	32.76	34.50	30.90	32.60	39.01	33.04	42.39
IND Mainstream	1.02	1.18	1.28	1.00	1.10	1.80	1.14	1.24	0.50
Special incl. Resource bases	38.60	39.70	34.05	39.90	40.00	35.40	39.80	42.63	29.93
Independent Non - Maintained incl. Post 16	6.35	7.48	8.89	6.20	6.60	9.10	6.25	7.24	11.60
AP/PRU	0.80	0.45	0.32	0.80	0.40	0.40	0.80	0.39	0.62
FE College	15.59	16.52	17.13	13.20	14.80	17.30	10.11	11.03	13.47
OTHER	3.32	3.94	1.82	2.20	2.40	0.80	2.89	4.42	1.50

The High Needs Block funds both place and top-up funding for a range of settings and services that support children and young people with SEND.

For different types of setting identified as part of the High Needs Block financial model, further analysis has been undertaken to provide activity and demand trends, detail on funding arrangements and average unit costs, alongside information on ongoing strategic and improvement activity. Analysis on indicative trends over the past 3 years was reviewed, based on the annual SEN2 return undertaken in January each year, alongside a snapshot for the current academic year.

Further information for each setting type is provided below.

.07 Mainstream

Around 451 pupils with EHCPs are currently supported in mainstream school settings (including Early Years), with this having risen by around 60% since 2017/18.

The table below provides a snapshot of current mainstream placements by Primary Support Need and Key Stage.

Table 4: Breakdown of all Mainstream placements by PSN

Primary Support Need	Nursery	Reception	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	Post-16	Grand Total	% of Total
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	2	8	22	64	45	24	10	175	39%
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	0	2	5	27	27	20	6	87	19%
Physical Disability	0	2	5	9	4	8	1	29	6%
Vision Impairment	1	0	2	2	0	0	1	6	1%
Hearing Impairment	1	1	3	0	4	3	1	13	3%
Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty	0	20	22	15	7	3	1	68	15%
Severe Learning Difficulty	0	0	1	4	2	0	0	7	2%
Specific Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	1	2	5	1	9	2%
Moderate Learning Difficulty	0	1	6	20	11	9	1	48	11%
Medical	0	0	3	1	3	1	1	9	2%
	4	34	69	143	105	73	23	451	100%

Included in the figures above are 31 children and young people who are placed in a mainstream school out of borough.

Table 5: Breakdown of Other LA Mainstream placements by PSN and Key Stage

Primary Support Need	Nursery	Reception	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	Post-16	Total	Total
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	0	0	2	1	3	2	3	11	35%
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	0	0	0	1	2	5	1	9	29%
Physical Disability	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	6%
Vision Impairment	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3%
Hearing Impairment	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3%
Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	10%
Severe Learning Difficulty	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3%
Specific Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3%
Moderate Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	6%
Total	0	1	4	3	8	9	6	31	100%

Current Funding Arrangements

Where mainstream schools support an individual with an EHCP, funding is made up of 3 ‘elements’:

1. AWPU – per pupil funding allocated as part of the school’s core budget funded from the Schools Block – notionally £4k
2. Notional SEN – part of the funding formula for the Schools Block allocation which takes account of the prior attainment factor + 35% of the lump sum factor – notionally £6k
3. Top-up – funded from the High Needs Block on a named pupil basis

Of the 451 children and young people with an EHCP who are supported in a mainstream setting, around 345 (76%) receive ‘top-up’ funding from the High Needs Block.

For Wokingham, top-up funding is calculated based on the number of hours agreed for the child or young person, funded at a set annual rate, currently £422.38. This is then adjusted for the Notional SEN allocation.

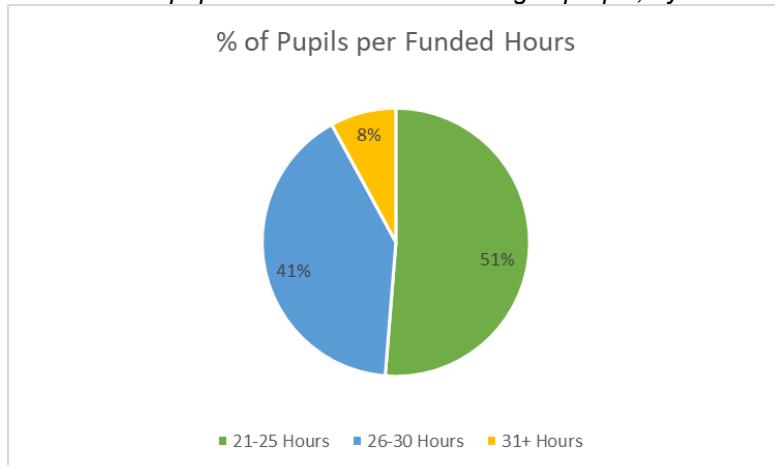
$\text{£ Annual Top-Up Funding} = (\text{number of hours} \times \text{£422.38}) - \text{£6,000}$

Where agreed hours are 20 hours or less per week then no top-up is payable under the current funding model as this is deemed to be covered by element 1 & 2 funding.

The current top-up funding model has not been reviewed for a number of years, and it is recognised that financial sustainability in this area is critical in supporting inclusion for local children and young people.

An analysis of current funded hours for those supported in Wokingham mainstream schools is provided below.

Chart 1: % of pupils in mainstream receiving 'top-ups', by funded hours



Mainstream Improvement Programme Actions

⇒ **Review of Funding Model**

As reported to Schools Forum in March, a review of funding for mainstream top-up arrangements was due to take place during the 2020/21 financial year as part of the planned improvement programme. Work in this area has not yet commenced due to the impact of covid-19 but remains part of the planned activity over the coming months.

⇒ **Review of Notional SEN**

A review of the Notional SEN factor in the Schools Block Funding Formula has been identified as a recommendation for the Task & Finish Group for the 2022/23 financial year.

.08 Resource Bases

A resource base is specialist provision for children with SEND within a mainstream school, sometimes known as a SEN unit or specialist resource base ([SEND Code of Practice, 2015](#)). It is designed for children who struggle to cope with mainstream without additional support, but who do not require the intensive interventions of a special school.

Resource bases allow a child to stay in mainstream school by having the opportunity to access the resource base for some of the time, in addition to attending their timetabled classes. This varies from child to child and school to school; in rare cases, children will access the resource base for 100% of their class time, but generally the proportion of time spent in the resource base is somewhere between 20% and 80%. To be placed in a resource base, a child must have an EHCP that names the resource base as the required provision.

Around 65 pupils with EHCPs are currently supported in resource base settings, with this having risen by around 33% since 2017/18. This increase reflects an increase in those individuals placed in other LA resource bases, and the increasing profile of the local ASD secondary resource.

The table below provides a snapshot of current placements by Primary Support Need and Key Stage for Wokingham resource bases.

Table 6: Breakdown of Wokingham Resource Base placements by PSN and Key Stage

Primary Support Need	Nursery	Reception	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	16+	Grand Total
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	0	0	4	6	14	5	0	29
Hearing Impairment	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Medical	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Moderate Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Physical Disability	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	5
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty	0	2	4	6	0	0	0	12
Total	0	2	10	19	15	5	0	51

For the small number of Wokingham children and young people supported in resource bases in other LA areas, the majority are placed at Garth Hill College. The table below provides a snapshot of current out of borough placements by Primary Support Need and Key Stage.

Table 7: Breakdown of Other LA Resource Base placements by PSN and Key Stage

Primary Support Need	Nursery	Reception	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	16+	Grand Total
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	0	0	0	2	5	2	3	12
Hearing Impairment	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Moderate Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	0	0	0	2	6	3	3	14

Current Funding Arrangements

Where a resource base supports an individual with an EHCP, funding is made up of 3 ‘elements’:

1. AWPU – per pupil funding allocated as part of the school’s core budget funded from the Schools Block – notionally £4k
2. Place funding – funded from the High Needs Block at the nationally set rate of £6k per annum
3. Top-up – funded from the High Needs Block on a named pupil basis

The LA commissions a number of places within local resource bases, with national funding guidance requiring this to be informed by both local need and those of other neighbouring LAs. The host LA is therefore responsible for paying the annual place funding to settings, based on the number of commissioned places, regardless of

where children and young people placed there originate from, or indeed whether the places are filled or not. The DfE adjusts for this through the Import / Export adjustment of the High Needs Block Funding Formula.

Top-up funding is paid for by the LA responsible for the EHCP of the child or young person.

Where a commissioned place is 'empty' at the time of the October census and therefore the school would not attract AWPU (element 1) funding in their core budget allocation for the following financial year, the commissioning LA is also responsible for making up the funding gap from their High Needs Block. This equates to £4k per empty place per annum.

Wokingham currently commissions 78 primary resource base placements, and 20 secondary placements in local schools. For the 2020/21 financial year, 37 of those places (all primary) were empty at the October 2019 census date.

Current top-up arrangements for local primary provision are based around the following bandings:

Table 8: current top-up rates for Wokingham Primary Resource Bases

SEN Band	Rate
ASD1	£13,037
ASD2	£16,320
ASD3	£19,603
HI2	£15,625
HI3	£20,645
PD1	£4,220
PD2	£7,503
PD3	£10,786
SL1	£0
SL2	£2,894
SL3	£6,177

Current local secondary provision is funded on a flat rate basis of £20,000 per place.

For those children placed in out of borough resource base placements, the top-up paid by Wokingham is generally dictated by the local arrangements of that school.

For the 14 current placements, the annual top-up varies by school and need, however the average payable by Wokingham for the 2020/21 financial year is £32,500.

Resource Base Improvement Programme Actions

⇒ Resource Base Funding Review

This review commenced in Autumn 2019 and was initially due to be complete by April 2020. The global pandemic and changes to staff have brought inevitable delays in the completion of the project, but a more detailed plan is in place to ensure this project is

completed in a timely manner with the involvement and engagement of all the key stakeholders.

Background

The project was initiated to review the roles of Wokingham's resource bases, with a focus on their funding, which appears to result in an inequity between different types of provision. The review also considered the apparent funding of vacant places alongside a need to move towards a more needs led funding formula.

In order to address a short term funding issue prior to the completion of this project and in order to ensure that there was adequate funding to enable placements to be made in the resource bases, an interim funding model was implemented following consideration of funding formulas in use in neighbouring authorities. This interim funding model is based on a model in place in West Berkshire Local Authority. Because the review has taken longer than was anticipated, the interim arrangement was extended to March then September 2020. As the review remains incomplete, these interim arrangements will be in place to March 2021 after which the new funding arrangements will be implemented as outlined below.

In both the interim and proposed arrangement, the element one and two place funding totalling £10,000 remains in place, supplemented with top-up funding that is calculated according to each child's needs. A proposed major needs assessment/sufficiency project anticipated as taking place during 2021 may determine that the nature of provision and number of places within each resource base needs revision but the principles established in delivering this project will remain the same with a particular focus on funding being needs led.

Project Activity to Date

In December 2019 schools were asked to complete a matrix outlining the primary and secondary needs of each of the young people placed with them. This information was then collated for each young person against a scoring matrix. The matrix is based on points scores which assess the needs of each young person as fitting within one of six bands, which will subsequently relate to a level of top-up funding.

It was anticipated that this work would be completed by schools in Spring 2020 and be concluded by a moderation meeting which would enable agreement to be reached on the assessed need level. Not all schools responded so the moderation meeting did not take place at that time. Unfortunately, the COVID situation meant that the work was paused due to the pandemic creating the need for numbers of workers to redirect their time. There were subsequently a number of staffing changes which has resulted in the work recommencing following new members of staff bringing themselves up to speed on where the project had got to.

Consideration of the situation has resulted in a revised timetable being determined and an action plan developed to ensure completion of the project by April 2021.

The current situation is that individual meetings have been held with the headteachers of schools that host primary resource bases, to introduce the commissioning lead and for her to outline the next stages of the project and to confirm and ensure their engagement through the remainder of the project. For those schools who had not completed the matrix referred to above, its purpose was explained, and the completed information has now been received.

For any child whose special educational needs are assessed in future as needing a resource base placement, their level of need will be determined by the SEND Panel at the point of the EHCP being issued, using the matrix to assign a band. This band will determine the appropriate level of top up funding in respect of the child.

When a proposed financial value for each draft band is available, a moderation meeting will be held with all resource base heads to ensure that all involved are given the opportunity to participate and for the assessed level of needs to be confirmed.

At the same time, work is taking place to determine the financial implications of the implementation of the revised model. This is considering the level of funding used to date in relation to resource bases, how the top up element can be better allocated according to the six levels of need and the specific implications for each school affected. A proposed funding model and the implications for individual schools will be discussed with each school so they are aware of how the proposal will affect them and have the opportunity to raise any concerns prior to the finalising of the project.

When these exercises are complete, a recommendation will be made to the Children's Services Leadership Team which includes a proposed funding model and the immediate implications for each of the schools affected. Once agreed, the new formula will be applied. It is anticipated that the new arrangements will be implemented in April 2021. The model will initially only apply to schools with resource bases, but it is anticipated that in the longer term, a singular funding model may be applied across all Wokingham's specialist provision.

⇒ [ASD Secondary Resource Base Provision](#)

The Council is in discussion with schools about developing a new resource base for secondary aged children (years 7 – 11) with ASD and SEMH needs to open in September 2021. The resource base will be hosted by a Wokingham secondary school and will take five children in its year 7 intake, every year from September 2021, until they reach a full complement of 25 children in years 7 – 11 by September 2025.

The resource base will be funded in line with the resource base funding model currently being developed as referred to in the other report.

The new resource base would have the following requirements:

- The resource base will offer places for five children per year group over and above the school's agreed admission number
- The places will be available for Wokingham children meeting the admissions criteria set out below
- The aim is for students accessing this new resource to take part in the school's main curriculum
- Students accessing this resource will normally be in mainstream classes with opportunities to access some individualised learning to meet sensory needs which cannot be addressed in mainstream classes, as they arise
- The resource base will only be available to young people diagnosed with ASD, whose EHCP specifically indicates the need for resource base provision.
- Children will be allocated to the resource base by Wokingham Borough Council's Special Educational Needs Service based on the following criteria:

- Any child deemed suitable for a placement within the resource base will receive support:
- to manage access to a broad and balanced mainstream curriculum
- delivered by specialist subject teachers
- with social skills, pastoral support, extracurricular activities including support to address Social, emotional and mental health related issues
- with information, advice and guidance about future education and work options tailored to meet his/her specific needs
- Access to supervised break and lunchtime activities
- Within an inclusive environment which demonstrably values all of its children
- from agencies and organisations which are external to the school
- in ensuring a close relationship between his/her home setting and the school

In order to benefit from a place in this resource base, it is expected that an allocated child will:

- Have the cognitive ability suitable for a mainstream placement
- Have sufficient understanding to recognise appropriate social behaviours, including the effect of actions on the feelings of others
- Have the ability to develop friendships and other appropriate relationships
- Have the ability, with help when necessary, to appropriately undertake sensory processing
- Have the ability, with help when necessary, to develop interests and process information, which require the need to absorb and recognise information and concepts, with the ability to process information and develop opinions
- Have a need for support with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues but not demonstrated significant and recurring behavioural issues which would normally be unacceptable in a mainstream secondary school

The Council intends to reach agreement with a school to deliver such provision on the following basis:

- the school and local authority will enter into an agreement to deliver the resource base provision for a minimum period of five years.
- The funding for the resource base will consist of a place based element to cover minimum costs to be incurred by a school in the delivery of the provision supported by top up funding, based on an assessment of needs in accordance with funding bandings for children with special educational needs attending resource bases which are currently being developed
- It is intended that the school will provide five places per year group in the resource base for Wokingham children, over and above the school's published admission number.
- It is intended that the resource base will admit 5 children to Year 7 in September 2021 and 5 children to each year 7 group annually until it becomes "full" in September 2025.
- The funding formula will be effective for each academic year period i.e. September to August. The place based element of funding will be applied to the number of available places (5 in 2021 increasing by 5 per year) while the top up banding will be applied to the specific children within those places based on their assessed needs. Should a child in placement leave in year, they may be replaced with a child nominated by the SEND department with the top-up element being determined by the grading relating to the child's assessed level of need.

All Wokingham secondary schools have been invited to express an interest in delivering the resource base and an application process will take place in Winter 2020/21.

.09 Special Schools

Special schools form a key and significant part of SEND provision, providing a range of interventions to meet the needs of our children and young people.

Currently around 405 Wokingham children and young people with an EHCP are currently supported in a special school setting, with this having risen by around 12% since 2017/18.

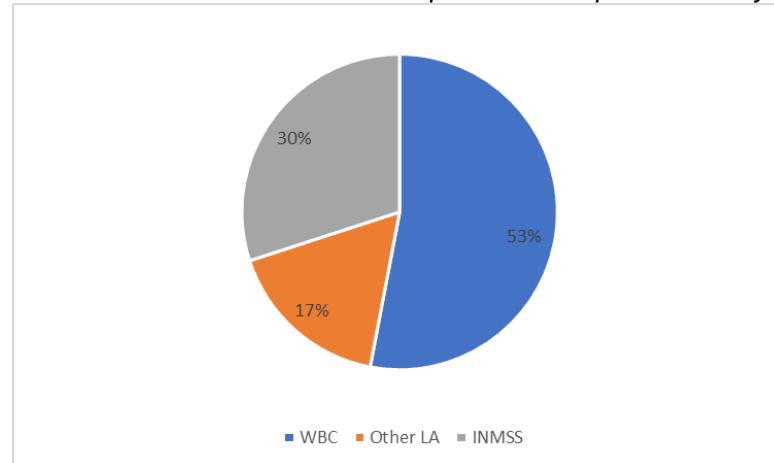
The table below provides a snapshot of current special school placements by Primary Support Need and Key Stage.

Table 9: Breakdown of Special School placements by PSN and Key Stage

Primary Support Need	Nursery	Reception	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	Post-16	Grand Total	% of Total
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	0	0	14	50	58	20	27	169	42%
Hearing Impairment	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	6	1%
Medical	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0%
Moderate Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	7	6	4	5	22	5%
Multi-Sensory Impairment	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0%
Physical Disability	0	0	0	2	2	1	7	12	3%
Profound and Multi Learning Difficulty	0	1	1	12	11	1	5	31	8%
Severe Learning Difficulty	0	2	11	19	10	11	17	70	17%
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	0	0	2	16	25	23	10	76	19%
Specific Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	1%
Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty	0	0	1	3	4	2	1	11	3%
Vision Impairment	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0%
Other	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0%
Total	0	3	29	111	120	66	76	405	100%

Of those, 53% are within Wokingham Special Schools, a further 17% in other LA Special Schools, with around 30% in Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schools.

Chart 2: Breakdown of number of Special School placements by setting type



Current Funding Arrangements – Wokingham Special Schools

Where a special school supports an individual with an EHCP, funding is made up of 2 ‘elements’:

1. Place funding – funded from the High Needs Block at the nationally set rate of £10k per annum
2. Top-up – funded from the High Needs Block on a named pupil basis

Responsibility for the payment of place and top-up funding works in a similar way to resource bases, in that the ‘host’ local authority is responsible for commissioning arrangements to ensure sufficiency.

Addington Funding Model:

Currently top-ups for Addington range from £14,392 to £37,779, with around 73% on the lower banding.

Chiltern Way Funding Model:

Following the change from Northern House to Chiltern Way, a revised funding model has been put in place recognising the significant improvement activity required. In the short-term top-ups will be paid on a flat rate basis, allowing financial sustainability as the new Trust drives forward the changes. For the first year this has been set at just over £30k but will reduce over the coming years, in line with agreed commissioning arrangements.

Independent & Non-Maintained

Currently around 125 Wokingham children and young people with an EHCP are currently supported in an independent or non-maintained special school setting, with this having risen by around 16% since 2017/18.

The table below provides a snapshot of current INMSS placements by Primary Support Need and Key Stage.

Table 10: Breakdown of INMSS placements by PSN and Key Stage

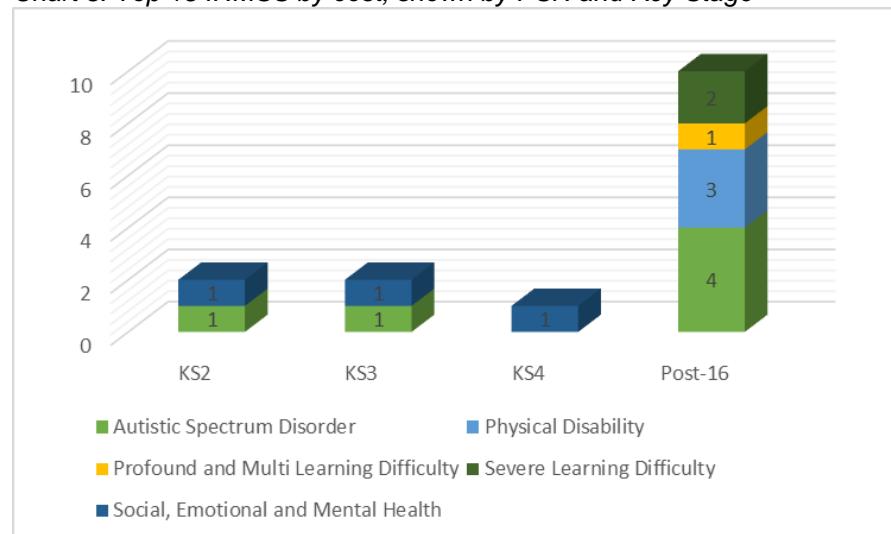
Primary Support Need	Nursery	Reception	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	Post-16	Grand Total	% of Total
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	0	0	2	11	24	6	15	58	46%
Hearing Impairment	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	4	3%
Moderate Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	3	1	2	3	9	7%
Multi-Sensory Impairment	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1%
Physical Disability	0	0	0	1	1	0	4	6	5%
Profound and Multi Learning Difficulty	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	2%
Severe Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	2%
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	0	0	1	6	8	12	10	37	30%
Specific Learning Difficulty	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1%
Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	2%
Vision Impairment	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1%
Other	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1%
Total	0	0	4	24	37	23	37	125	100%

As with the overall EHCP analysis, ASD and SEMH account for the most significant % of placements, in this case representing a more significant proportion of the cohort at a combined position of 76%. The analysis also demonstrates a more significant weighting in secondary and post-16.

The average cost of an INMSS placement is around £60k, however within the current cohort there is a significant range of costs. A small number of placements are more than £100k per annum with the top 15 costed placements accounting for over 25% of overall spend.

Further analysis of this group shows that there is a particular weighting in the post-16 age group.

Chart 3: Top 15 INMSS by cost, shown by PSN and Key Stage



Around 20% of INMSS placements are jointly funded with social care and/or health, with this cohort largely reflective of those above. This equates to funding of around £880k per annum. This continues to be an area of review with a focus on tripartite arrangements as part of the improvement agenda. Discussions are ongoing with the CCG to ensure there is a more robust process for agreeing shared costs, with consideration of a single arrangement spanning the 3 LAs in the West Berkshire CCG area.

Special School Improvement Programme Actions

⇒ New Free School

In 2019, Wokingham Borough Council submitted a proposal to develop a Free Special School to the DfE. This bid was not successful, but at the same time, Reading Council also submitted a proposal for a 150 place Free Special School for children with Autism to serve Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire, which was approved by the DfE.

This school would meet a major Wokingham need, reduce place and transport costs and be much closer to Wokingham than most independent and non-maintained school sites.

However, since the DfE's approval of the Reading scheme, a number of changes occurred:

- Reading BC found that their proposed site was not available. The land they were proposing to use is leased to a third party who wished to retain it for their own use. Reading BC were unable to offer a satisfactory alternative.
- Wokingham BC supported Reading BC by identifying land at Winnersh Farm which could be used to accommodate this school. Other land was considered, including on the Hatch Farm Dairies site, but due to development challenges was not adopted for use.
- Wokingham and Reading would be able to commission 75 places each (rather than the original 70 places for Reading and 40 each for Wokingham and West Berkshire) following West Berkshire's withdrawal from the project. This is to Wokingham's benefit, as the 40 places that would otherwise have been available would have met a smaller proportion of the Council's current and expected future provision.

As a consequence, Wokingham Borough Council, in partnership with the Brighter Futures for Children Trust (acting on behalf of Reading Council) and the Department for Education (DFE) is currently developing a new Special School for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities at Winnersh Farm.

The new school will help the Council meet its statutory duties to Children and Young People with Special Education Needs. The school will be a special free school, for 150 pupils (all ages), for children with autism (ASD) and Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Difficulties. It is anticipated that half the places will be used by Wokingham children and young people. The other half being used by children and young people from Reading.

The school will be built and funded by the Department for Education. An academy trust has been appointed by the DfE to run the school. Revenue funding will come from the councils' High Needs Block Budget resulting in a lower cost than alternative out of borough independent and non-maintained school places.

The Council is currently negotiating with the Brighter Futures for Children Trust about the terms of a memorandum of Understanding which will ensure that any unanticipated additional costs will be funded on an equal basis and that the places available in the school will be funded in the same way for Wokingham and Reading. This is to ensure that neither party is effectively subsidising the other.

⇒ *ISS and Non-Maintained*

A significant programme of work is ongoing in this area, recognising the large proportion of HNB spend wrapped up in these placements. Commissioning arrangements, funding contributions from both social care and health, internal planning and review processes, and how information is captured and recorded to inform improved management information is a key deliverable under the improvement agenda.

.10 Post 16 Colleges / FE / Training

In addition to those post-16 pupils supported in mainstream, resource bases and special school settings, a number of young people are also currently within further education / college settings or undertaking an apprenticeship / training opportunity.

Around 216 young people with EHCPs are currently supported in FE / post-16 college settings, with this having risen by around 44% since 2017/18. This increase largely reflects the extension of SEND regulations to those aged 25 as part of the 2014 reforms.

The table below provides a snapshot of current placements by primary support need and age supported in post-16 colleges and further education.

Table 11: Breakdown of Post-16 FE College placements by PSN and Age Group

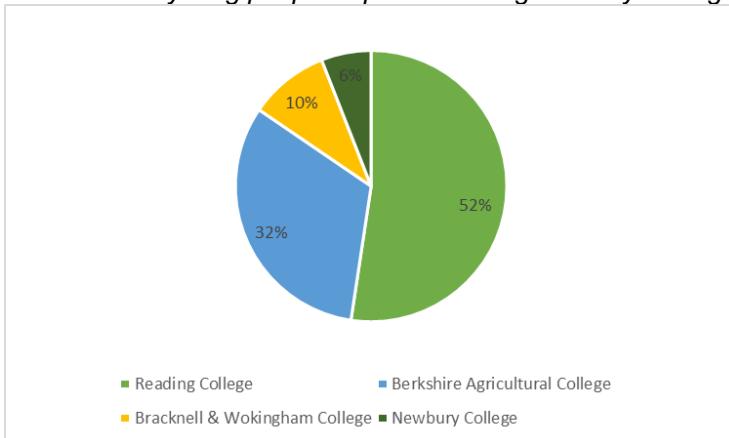
Age	16-19	20+	Grand
			Total
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	51	46	97
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	32	8	40
Hearing Impairment	2	3	5
Moderate Learning Difficulty	16	18	34
Physical Disability	3	4	7
Profound and Multi Learn Diff	1	4	5
Severe Learning Difficulty	3	9	12
Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty	9	3	12
Specific Learning Difficulty	0	1	1
Vision Impairment	1	0	1
Total	118	96	214

Current Funding Arrangements

Of those young people supported in these settings, around 84 of those attract individual funding from the High Needs Block. This effectively works like an element 3 ‘top-up’ as with other setting types.

The majority of these ‘funded’ placements are at Reading College and Berkshire Agricultural College, with around 71 young people attracting ‘top-up’ funding in these 2 settings.

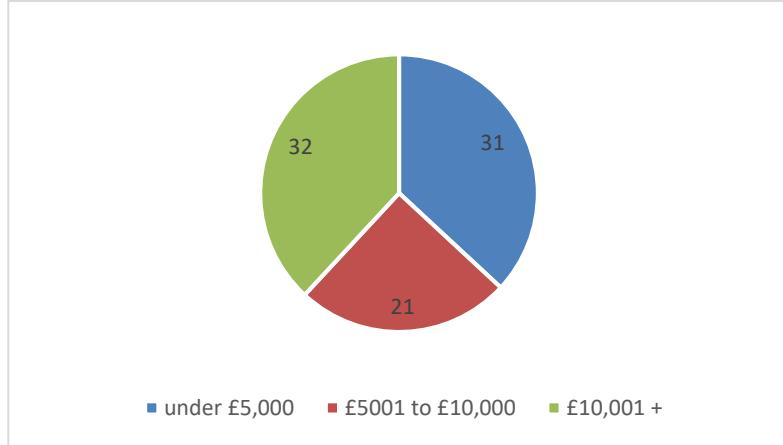
Chart 4: % of young people in post-16 college / FE by setting



The level of funding paid for each young person varies significantly depending on need, attendance model and establishment.

The chart below groups annual funding levels to give an indication of cost spread.

Chart 5: number of young people in post-16 college / FE by 'top-up' level



Post 16 Colleges / FE / Training Improvement Programme Actions

⇒ *Commissioning Arrangements*

The process for planning and commissioning future need in relevant educational establishments requires to be more clearly set out, and work is being undertaken with the post-16 lead in the SEND Team to improve visibility and understanding of this.

⇒ *Understanding the peak of demand from legislative changes*

Work remains ongoing to ensure that activity and financial modelling correctly interprets the peak of the increase resulting from the regulation changes in 2014 and identifies key data for monitoring going forward.

.11 Pupil Referral Unit

As previously reported to Schools Forum, recent capital investment from the LA in Foundry College has provided for expanded and improved facilities. However annual revenue funding for the school, provided from the High Needs Block, has not been reviewed for a number of years. An inflationary uplift was applied for the 2020/21 financial year in recognition that funding had remained stagnant for some time.

There are 47 places notionally funded at Foundry (32 medical/vulnerable and 15 permanent exclusions), however the actual number on roll varies with demand, with peaks and troughs across the year having to be managed by the school.

Funding for the 2020/21 financial year consist of the following elements:

1. Place Funding £470k
2. 'Top-Up' £519k
3. Outreach Service £64k

In addition, transport costs of £82k are funded from Home to School Transport budgets held in the Council's General Fund.

Pupil Referral Unit Improvement Programme Actions

⇒ Review of Foundry Model

In conjunction with colleagues at Foundry, the LA has recently commenced a review of funding arrangements that will seek to provide a clear funding base moving forward ensuring future strategy for the school is aligned with financial planning. As part of that review the objectives outlined in Foundry's 5-year vision will be considered:

- Centrally funded Early Years and Primary Outreach Provision
- Provision for Post-16 pupils who require on-going support in line with the raising participation agenda
- Provision for Medical / Vulnerable pupils irrespective of the source of diagnosis
- Provision for the re-engagement and reintegration of Children Missing in and from Education
- Emergency support for looked after children
- Specialist provision for primary aged pupils with an EHCP (SEMH)
- Specialist provision for secondary pupils with an EHCP (ASD)
- Development of on-site Alternative Provision for KS4 pupils in vocational and work related learning

.12 Therapy

The High Needs Block funds a range of therapies for children and young people with SEND through both broader commissioned arrangements and a small number of pupil specific arrangements such as Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA).

Children and Young People's Integrated Therapies (CYPIT)

In accordance with the SEND Code of practice, the Provision of Therapy Services is a key component of Wokingham's Special educational, health and social care local offer for children and young people in the Borough with SEN and/or disabilities.

The Council commissions Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT) to deliver a Children and Young People's Integrated Therapy Service (CYPIT) (Occupational Health, Physiotherapy and Speech and Language Therapy) for children and young people in Wokingham where therapy provision has been identified in the educational provision section of their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

West Berkshire Council and Reading Borough Council also commission BHFT to deliver CYPIT services for their local populations under separate agreements. Berkshire West CCG funds BHFT to provide therapy services for children and young people aged 0-19 without an EHCP, across the Berkshire West area under a separate agreement. WBC Early Help also provides funding in the region of £12K per annum to BHfT to provide Speech and Language drop-ins to children's centres across the Borough.

The CYPIT service consists of Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists working alongside assistant therapy staff. Teams are managed by a Manager and supported by a Professional Lead within each Profession.

CYPIT delivers a three tiered service model:

- Universal: includes training to school staff, provision of advice regarding strategies to use in schools, advice regarding the classroom environment, preventative work
- Targeted: for example, setting up targeted groups, which would then be run by school staff
- Individualised: personalised and coproduced therapy plans with SMART objectives, direct and indirect intervention, tailored to the individual child's needs at that time.

Speech and Language: Every LA mainstream school within the Wokingham LA area has a dedicated Speech and Language Therapist (SLT). The therapist meets with the SENCO to discuss and map the needs of the pupils and agree how these will be addressed and also contribute to the EHCP assessment process for children being considered for an EHCP. Work carried out will differ from school to school depending on the balance of each school's needs. In addition to this support provided to all LA mainstream schools and named free schools and academies, there is dedicated SLT provision at Addington School, All Saints complex needs resource, Lambs Lane complex needs resource, Wescott and Westende ASD resources, Highwood Speech and Language Resource and Emmbrook Infant and Junior Hearing Impaired Resource.

Physiotherapy: Paediatric Physiotherapy is commissioned to provide assessment and intervention to school aged children who present with a non-acute condition affecting their physical development and/or function with an EHCP requiring specialist physiotherapy support and to contribute to the EHCP assessment process for children being considered for an EHCP. In addition to support to all LA schools, there is dedicated provision at Addington School and All Saints and Lambs Lane complex needs resources.

Occupational Therapy (OT): Paediatric Occupational Therapy is commissioned to provided assessment and treatment management to school aged children with an EHCP and to contribute to the EHCP assessment process for children being considered for an EHCP. In addition to support to all LA schools, there is dedicated provision at Addington School, and All Saints and Lambs Lane complex needs resources.

The Council recently extended the contract with Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust for the provision of Children and Young People's Integrated Therapies (CYPIT), with effect from the 1 April 2021 with a contract value of £389,520 for 2021/22. With effect from the 1 April 2020 and following consultation with the Schools Forum in March 2020, funding for CYPIT is charged against the High Needs Block (HNB).

During the year, the Council will be exploring the opportunities for jointly commissioning CYPIT in future with neighbours in Reading and West Berkshire and with West Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

The CYPIT service is working jointly with LA partners, other local providers and the CCG to strengthen the 'ordinarily available' provision and ensure that education staff and parents are aware of how to find advice and strategies to try before referring to

specialist services. This includes the development of a shared Training Directory, which CYPIT will continue to contribute to as they further develop their training offer.

Education and Training: Delivery of ‘live’ training as business as usual has been challenging to arrange during the COVID pandemic. CYPIT are in the process of devising some online training packages with the aim of recording these and provide links on their website, so that professionals can click a link to watch or re-watch training sessions.

CYPIT has developed a School Support Resource pack, containing advice, information and resources for working with children and young people with Speech Language and Communication Needs. This was well-received by education colleagues.

In addition to training for parents and school staff, clinicians have used the reduction in travel time to ensure that all staff internally have necessary skills and training.

Areas covered have included:

- Makaton (an alternative communication system) – for both mainstream and special schools therapy staff
- Dysphagia – to ensure that all SLTs working in special schools have the necessary knowledge to support young people with swallowing difficulties and to understand when to seek specialist support from the Dingley team.
- Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) – understanding the range of AAC and how to support a child who uses AAC

.13 **SEND Sufficiency Project**

It is recognised that while there are a number of related activities taking place to address the Written Statement of Action and to ensure that the Council is meeting its statutory obligations, in order to effectively address its medium and longer term needs it is necessary for there to be a detailed sufficiency project undertaken which is complementary to the action plan and will specifically address issues relating to:

- the current and future special educational needs of Wokingham’s children and young people
- existing provision currently available and accessed to meet current needs
- the nature of required future provision
- the costs and funding methodology associated with existing provision and
- proposals for future funding arrangements which ensure value for money and focus on meeting individual needs, locally wherever possible

Detailed proposals are currently in discussion; however it is proposed the project will consist of a number of phases.

Phase 1 will consist of:

- a detailed assessment of current needs based on an analysis of the needs of children/young people identified with SEND without an EHCP, those children with current existing EHCPs, engagement with professional staff within education, early years, health, social care, the engagement of schools/colleges, parent/carers and young people representatives

- A detailed assessment of the nature of all provision currently available and accessed by Wokingham children/young people with SEND
- A detailed assessment of the current funding methodology for all provision accessed by Wokingham children with SEND

Phase 2 will consist of:

- Using the information obtained to prepare a detailed analysis of need for the next 5 years, using early years information to inform primary aged projections, primary aged information to inform secondary projections and secondary aged information to inform post 16 projections.
- Using this information to determine the nature of provision required for the next 5 years including the specific needs to be addressed, the type of provision required and the likely number/volume of places and/or support required within each provision type to meet each category of need.

Following consultation on the identified needs and types of services proposed to meet those needs, Phase 3 will consist of:

- Assessing the financial implications of delivering/commissioning services of the nature indicated, including any costs associated with changes in required building provision as well as increases or decreases in existing service levels
- developing proposed funding methodology for the proposals which is seen to be fair to those providing the services and which is primarily led by the needs of each child/young person

Following completion of the three phases, a detailed recommendation will be produced consisting of:

- The type of provision required to meet the special educational needs of Wokingham's children and young people aged 0 to 25 for the period September 2022 to August 2027
- The financial implications of delivering these recommendations, including any proposed building related costs and any increase or decrease in delivery of particular services or creation of any new services
- The specific effects of implementing these recommendations on individual providers or institutions.
- A proposed implementation plan subject to acceptance of the proposals

The Project will not duplicate other activity taking place on behalf of the SEND Improvement Board but will, in particular, take account of activity relating to:

- "ordinary available" provision in mainstream schools
- Review of Resource Based Funding
- Any changes to the decision-making processes of the SEN Panel
- Any revision to decision-making processes for jointly funded posts between education, health and/or social care (often known as tripartite arrangements)

In order to obtain as comprehensive and detailed a picture as possible, there will be liaison throughout the project with those responsible for assessing the special educational needs of young people, those responsible for the commissioning of placements and services to meet the assessed needs, those responsible for the delivery of those placements and services, those responsible for the performance management of those providing related placements and services and those responsible for associated funding issues, including the Schools' Forum. The liaison

may take the form of group discussions, questionnaires, one to one conversations and consideration of any written material produced relating to the needs of the young people involved.

It is currently proposed that the sufficiency project will take place during the period January to July 2021.

.14 **Financial Planning**

As reported to Schools Forum previously, in summer of 2019, Wokingham was one of 32 local authorities required to submit a deficit recovery plan to the DfE.

Since then, additional funding provided nationally has gone some way in recognising the increasing and significant financial pressures local authorities face in managing SEND budgets, while appropriately supporting vulnerable children and young people through their education journey.

However, for Wokingham, over the course of this financial year, costs have continued to outstrip available funding with initial forecasts being outpaced by both a significant increase in demand and rising costs for local settings.

The current forecast in-year deficit for the High Needs Block is £2.9m, which represents 14% of available funding for the year. This takes the forecast cumulative deficit position to £6.26m at the end of 2020/21.

Previous discussion has highlighted the need for a two-stage journey of recovery. Firstly, seeking to balance the in-year position, aligning provision needed to meet need to available resources, while ensuring financial sustainability of local settings. Secondly, seeking to identify any further actions that would allow the deficit built up over the previous years to be managed down.

Previous projections undertaken within Wokingham had sought to forecast the number of children and young people with EHCPs for Wokingham over the coming years, informed by population projections, house building and other demographic factors. However, the significant increase over the past academic year has meant that current actual position is already above that previously forecast for the 2021/22 academic year. The significant programme of work outlined across the agenda of this meeting demonstrates the complexity of financial planning assumptions at this time.

Activity & Financial Reporting

Currently financial information on individual EHCPs is not held within the case management system used by the SEND Service. Financial information is largely spreadsheet based and requires significant manual effort and intervention to maintain and ensure accuracy. This also means that producing robust management information that links activity and pupil led data to costs is currently difficult and time consuming to produce.

Improvements in this area have been identified as part of the overall improvement programme. In the interim, improved internal processes and information sharing within the SEND Service, supported by the Children's Services Finance Team are being taken forward.

Financial Planning for 2021/22

Nationally, High Needs Block funding is increasing by a further £730m, or 10%, in 2021/22. The National Funding Formula will ensure that every local authority receives an increase of at least 8% per head of population compared to this year.

The provisional budget for Wokingham is £22.6m, an increase of £2.1m on 2020/21 levels. In addition, following consultation with schools and with the support of Schools Forum, 0.5% of the Schools Block will be transferred to the High Needs Block for 2021/22. While final figures will be confirmed following receipt of final budget figures later in December, this is expected to be around £589k.

While this combined increase in funding of around £2.73m is welcome news, significant challenge remains to deliver a sustainable financial position for SEND in Wokingham, particularly against the backdrop of an in-year deficit of £2.9m.

Schools Forum will be consulted on the detail of the High Needs Block budget for 2021/22 in the new year, however some key considerations are outlined below.

Full Year Impact of the 2020/21 Academic Year

Given changes in HNB forecast over recent months, the full year impact of the current academic year will increase the cost base for the 2021/22 financial year when compared to current forecast figures. Detail of this is being worked through for the draft budget consultation.

Impact of 2021/22 Academic Year changes

Experience in 2020/21 financial reporting has shown that initial assumptions of movements associated with the new academic year were significantly understated. While this was largely influenced by the significant increase in EHCPs issued over a relatively short period of time, areas for improvement in this have been identified. A more detailed model of tracking and projecting likely costs for those at key transition points, such as primary to secondary and post-16, is being worked through to inform the draft budget consultation for 2021/22.

Inflation assumptions

Consideration of annual inflation uplifts have not been routinely considered for HNB funded settings, however this commitment has been given as changes to funding models have been rolled out e.g. on the revised Addington top-up bandings. Appropriate options are being considered across HNB expenditure headings to inform the draft budget for 2021/22.

As an indicative example, a 1% inflation uplift on top-ups and other commissioned arrangements within the High Needs Block would equate to around £200k.

Pay and Pension Grants

Grants previously paid directly are now rolled into the HNB allocation for the coming financial year and will need to be considered as part of budget setting to ensure continuity of funding for relevant settings.

As an indicative example, the grants received for local HNB settings for the current financial year was just over £285k.

Stepped formula changes – Hospital Education

An increase to the Willow House budget was actioned for 2020/21 as part of a stepped change to reflect relevant funding factors more closely behind the HNB. A further increase is planned for the 2021/22 financial year to bring local arrangements in line with national funding formula calculations.

While detail of the 2021/21 HNB settlement is still awaited, based on the information used for 2021/22 budget setting, it was anticipated that a further circa £25k from HNB funding available would be allocated to the local hospital education budget for next year.

Impact of ongoing reviews

Given the ongoing nature of reviews for mainstream, resource bases and Foundry, the financial impact of outcomes in those areas is not yet known. Financial planning assumptions are being reviewed to inform scenarios for the draft budget consultation for 2021/22.

Financial Planning 2022/23 Onwards

Future funding levels across local government finance are uncertain. The government has been clear they would keep plans under review given the unprecedented uncertainty of Covid-19, and as such a one-year Spending Review was announced by the Chancellor in late November. While schools were identified as one of the ‘cornerstone(s) of society’, funding levels beyond next financial year are unclear.

As part of the deficit management plan submitted to the DfE in the summer of 2019, a 5-year model was developed, seeking to project activity and costs against potential available resources. For the reasons outlined earlier in this report, those projections have been significantly outstripped by local demand. A revised model is therefore part of the key deliverables of the improvement activity underway and will be informed by the wealth of data coming from the strategy work, needs analysis and other programme workstreams.

A major national review into support for children and young people with SEND was announced in 2019 by central government and it is therefore likely that future activity locally will be influenced by outcomes from that.

The content of the strategy and the programme activity underway will contribute to cost containment and deficit reduction over the course of the period of the strategy and beyond. As that work remains ongoing, costed implications are not yet fully worked through.

It is worth noting that whilst the major priorities and key actions in the SEND Strategy are intended to help address budget pressures and challenges (for example by strengthening local provision; improving the efficiency of the way services operate; and strengthening strategic commissioning and forward planning); the Strategy will be delivered in the context of significant challenges arising from demographic pressures, increasing trends in levels and complexity of need, and complex legislative requirements which restrict the number of options available applying reasonable limits to levels of spend. The aspiration is that the final SEND Strategy enables partners and stakeholders to work together to address these challenges in the most effective ways.

Schools Forum will be kept fully updated on the implications for longer term financial strategy as outcomes from the complex programme of work inform and update planning assumptions.