



Wirral Schools Forum

Date:	Tuesday, 20 October 2015
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Council Chamber, Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**
2. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH JULY 2015 (Pages 1 - 6)**
3. **FREE SCHOOL MEALS (Pages 7 - 10)**
4. **POST 16 AND 19-25 HIGH NEEDS PROVISION**
Presentation from Wirral Met. College
5. **TRADED SERVICES UPDATE (Pages 11 - 12)**
6. **BUDGET MONITORING UPDATE (Pages 13 - 18)**
7. **EARLY YEARS UPDATE AND EXTENSION TO 30 HOURS (Pages 19 - 22)**
8. **SCHOOL INTERVENTION (Pages 23 - 24)**
9. **LACES (Pages 25 - 28)**
10. **PFI AND PPM BUDGETS (Pages 29 - 30)**
11. **SCHOOL FUNDING 2016-17 (Pages 31 - 32)**
12. **HIGH NEEDS FUNDING FORMULA CHANGES 2016-17 (Pages 33 - 54)**

13. SCHOOL REDUNDANCY COSTS (Pages 55 - 58)

Paper to be circulated.

14. SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS (Pages 59 - 60)

15. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE (Pages 61 - 62)

16. WORK PLAN (Pages 63 - 64)

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM

15th July 2015

MINUTES

Present: Richard Longster (Chair)

Schools Group

L Ayling	D Marchant
J Devine	A Moore
S Duggan	M Morris
K Frost	G Pritchard
L Ireland	M Walker
B Jordan	A Donelan (substitute)

Non-Schools Group

S Davies	B McGregor
D Fitzpatrick (substitute)	N Prance

In Attendance:

S Ashley	J Hassall
P Arista	C McGowan
S Blevins	I McGrady
J Bevan	R Ghataora
C Chow	A Roberts
Cllr W Clements	A Simpkins
S Dainty	P Ward
A Davies	

Apologies:

E Cogan	D Stenhouse
B Cummings	K Podmore
I Harris	J Pierce
S Higginson	L Wheatley
C Hughes	A Whiteley
S McNamara	P Young
J Pearson	G Zsapka

The Chair welcomed Andy Simpkins, SEN Consultant, to the meeting.

1. Minutes from the Meeting held on 29th April 2015

The minutes from the meeting were accepted as a true record.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3. Schools Budget Outturn 2014-15

Christine McGowan outlined the year end position for the 2014-15 Schools budget and the DSG carry forward of £934,400, which will be applied to future years budgets. The outturn is higher than previously reported due to additional DSG received for Early Years numbers and reduced contingency costs.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

4. School Balances as at 31st March 2015

Sue Ashley reported that the school balances reduced at 31st March 2014 to £10.7m, a reduction of £371k. There were 12 schools with deficit budgets at the end of the 2014-15 financial year. Six schools require a licenced deficit in 2015-16 and there are a further 2 schools in the second year of their 3 year deficit recovery plan.

There are 39 schools with balances above the DfE thresholds of 8% of their delegated budget for primary and special schools and 5% for secondary schools.

Resolved

- Forum noted the report
- School balances will continue to be monitored.

5. Schools Budget Monitoring 2015-16

Christine McGowan informed the Forum that although there are no specific variations to the Schools Budget 2015-16 at present there are a number of cost pressures identified within High Needs. The budget will be monitored closely throughout the year.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

6. School budgets 2015-16 and 2016-17

Andrew Roberts highlighted the need for schools to consider their budget plans in the medium term due to continued cost pressures. In 2016-17 the school pay bill is likely to increase by 5% due to changes in Teachers Pensions, Employers National Insurance contributions and expected pay awards of 1-2 %.

Based on indicative estimates from schools if no action is taken balances will reduce by half to £5.5m at the end of March 2016, then fall a further £8m to an overall deficit in March 2017.

The report highlighted the need for early planning by schools to consider what actions are required.

Resolved

- i. Forum noted the report
- ii. Forum Representatives to take this information back to their Headteacher and Governor meetings.

7. De-delegated Services

Andrew Roberts brought this report to the Forum to inform the group about the de-delegated services held centrally and how budgets are currently applied.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

8. Trade Union Costs Update

Sue Blevins updated the Forum on the provision of TU Facilities Time for school employees. TU Facilities Time is a legal requirement for schools to support employees and enable collective consultation and negotiation with employers. The Facilities funding comes from maintained primary and secondary de-delegation of funds and buy-back of service from special schools and some Wirral academies. A list of the activities carried out over the last 12 months by the union representatives was highlighted.

The secondary and academy representatives requested an SLA for TU Facilities time to include how funds should be spent and a grievance procedure. Sue Blevins agreed to develop and to discuss best practice with other LAs.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

9. Review of High Needs Funding Formula

Andy Simpkins presented a report reviewing the High Needs funding formula in Wirral. The report will contribute to a consultation with schools to be prepared over the summer. The main areas of the report were highlighted covering the banding structure and top ups as follows:-.

Support in mainstream schools – Most support is met from the notional element in the delegated budget, Low Cost High Incidence (LCHI). In Wirral this is based on prior attainment only, but could be based on a number of other elements. Additional funding is allocated where more than 90% of the LCHI element is used to cover the first £6k of costs (Element 2).

High needs banding in specialist provision - Wirral has 5 high needs funding bands. Compared to other North West authorities Wirral's band 1 is the lowest at £1k. The LA should consider a Band 1+ in certain circumstances to deliver extra resource for an agreed fixed period.

High needs descriptors – Wirral's descriptors should take account of the 4 areas of need in the Code of Practice – cognition and learning, communication, physical sensory needs and social, mental and emotional health.

Exceptional Needs budget – This currently provides financial support for 36 pupils with exceptional/complex needs. This funding is provided in addition to the existing funding bands. Consideration may be given to embedding this budget within existing bands.

Double top ups – This is used to recognise the intake of pupils between census dates and provides head teachers funding to support staffing commitments from the start of the academic year.

Maintained special schools – A time limited band 4+ could be considered to allocate the exceptional needs funding in a more structured way.

Early Years and post 16 funding was not reviewed in detail, however work is required around the differential funding provided to Private Voluntary Independent and Maintained Nurseries.

The report outlined 10 questions to be considered as part of the High Needs consultation that will take place in the Autumn term. Forum requested for a piece of work to be undertaken around the differences in pupil numbers and funding between Band 1 in special schools and bases compared to provision in mainstream schools. Another member suggested the value of Band 5 should be reviewed.

The consultation paper will be considered at the next Forum High Needs Working Party in September.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

10. Early Years and Children's Centres

Rajinda Ghataoura reported the current position in respect of Early Years and Children's Centres to the Forum. The following points were highlighted:

- Day nursery provision will cease in summer 2015.
- 3 schools have agreed to deliver the 2, 3 & 4 year old education offer, with another school still in discussion. Some trajectory funding has been provided to support the transition of these facilities to a school setting.
- Schools are no longer required to register separately for 2 year old provision with Ofsted as long as required exemptions are met.
- An Early Years Portal is to be purchased to enable funding applications and paperwork to be processed more efficiently.
- The remaining trajectory funding will be used to target 2 year old funding in the lowest take up areas.
- The take up of 2 year old places has increased from 65% to 70% in the summer 2015 term.
- An Early Year Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2015 providing approximately £300 a year per eligible 3 & 4 year old child.

The PVI representatives recorded their disagreement with the use of the trajectory funding in schools. However, providing funding for this purpose is in accordance with the DfE's agenda to expand 2 year old provision.

A consultation paper will be published by the DfE concerning the increases in nursery hours from 15 to 30 hours in autumn 2016 the details of which will be considered at the next meeting. The PVI sector is concerned that based on current funding levels this will not be sustainable. It was noted that this issue has been raised nationally.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

11. School Traded Services

Ian McGrady updated the Forum on the set up of the new company Edsential. It is still on track to launch operationally in September, with the business plan to be finalised at the end of July. Ian has been visiting schools in Wirral and is piloting some new initiatives developed from customer feedback.

12. Pensby High Schools Amalgamation

Colin Chow informed the group that school funding guidance allows amalgamating schools to receive 85% of their combined lump sum in the following year. The Pensby High Schools amalgamate in September 2015. For the second year after amalgamation the Local Authority can apply to the EFA for a further 85% lump sum protection to support budget management.

Resolved

Schools Forum agreed that the LA should apply for an exceptional factor for the additional lump sum for Pensby High School in 2017-18.

13. Workplan

The workplan was provided for information.

The dates of the meetings for the next academic year are:-

Tuesday 20th October 2015

Wednesday 13th January 2016

Wednesday 27th April 2016

Wednesday 6th July 2016

14. Any Other Business

Julia Hassall thanked Richard Longster, the Chair, for all his work on the Wirral School's Forum both as a member and then Chair. This was his last formal meeting as chair as he is retiring. The appreciation for Richard's work was endorsed by the Forum members.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM

20 OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES

MAXIMISING FREE SCHOOL MEALS TAKE UP IN WIRRAL

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report sets out the current position on Free School Meals and the additional work that is being undertaken by Wirral's Benefit service to increase numbers on Free School Meals and attract additional Pupil Premium for Wirral schools. Given the additional work undertaken has had to be met from the benefit budget this report requests if an additional contribution to offset the spend on this element of work can be made by the Schools Forum as has occurred in Calderdale Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Free Schools Meals at Wirral are administered by the Benefits Service. The application process has for a number of years been part of the main Housing or Council Tax Benefit process. Until recently the Welfare Benefits form contained a separate section requesting applicants to indicate their wish to apply for Free School Meals. If that section was completed and the assessment process showed eligibility the schools and applicants were alerted and the child / children are able to access free school meals.
- 2.2. Free school meal eligibility is also a consideration in schools and the authority in accessing government funding, as the number on this benefit are a contributory factor in the payments of pupil premiums. Primary schools receive £1,320 (pupil premium) per child in receipt of Free School Meals and the secondary school receives £935 (pupil premium) per child in receipt. No Pupil Premium is payable for 6th form students who receive Free School Meals. This money is used to narrow the gap in attainment for children from disadvantaged areas or families via extra teaching time / resources etc. There is then a clear benefit in maximising numbers of eligible children.
- 2.3. Some parent / guardians who could access free school meals choose not to and this is sometimes attributed to the perceived stigma for the child when accessing a free meal. However the service also finds on contact there is as much resistance to registering as the child takes a packed lunch or dislikes school meals which is when the Pupil Premium issue is emphasised.
- 2.4. Both legislation and guidance state that an application has to be made before assessing eligibility for benefits including Free School Meals. Specific take up campaigns in Wirral have been made to encourage take up, both within the main benefits application process, as well as schools running their own campaigns. The campaigns lead by Wirral Benefits Team have focused on the benefits that the award brings, not just to the family income position, but the overall income benefits

to the school. At Wirral we have worked proactively for a number of years on an ongoing basis, with every claimant who doesn't apply for FSM being contacted and encouraged to apply. There has also been a programme of targeted campaigns which has allowed the authority to address take-up maximisation whilst retaining the necessary level of confidence and assurance as the controller of both financial and personal sensitive data.

- 2.5. In Wirral at the end of September 2015, 7,979 children (including 6th form) were in receipt of FSM. Traditionally numbers rise weekly after the start of the school academic year (having dropped when the changes are applied for pupils leaving and moving school in the summer). Numbers tend to fluctuate during the school year and have overall decreased over the last three years from 9,252 in April 2013 to 8,839 in April 2014 and at April 2015 8,376. Whilst this may reflect changes to school numbers it does reflect numbers of people moving onto working tax credit that no longer qualify for free schools meals.
- 2.6. From September 2014 all infant children receive a free meal regardless of income or circumstances under the governments Universal Free School Meals programme. At Wirral in the six months prior to the Universal programme introduction the service worked on an accelerated take up campaign, both directly with claimants and also in partnership with all of the schools. Managers attended the Head Teachers group and consulted on changes to the publicity approach and the application form and letters sent. This was moving the focus from applying for a Free School Meal to applying for the Pupil Premium for the school. Unfortunately there is no motivation for parents / carers to apply for something they are getting for free.
- 2.7. Wirral has continued the take up campaign after the start of the academic year, making phone calls and sending letters out to potential qualifiers. After consultation with the Data Protection Officer named letters were sent into the schools for them to be passed out to specific parents as it indicated that parents eligibility and as such their income criteria to the schools.
- 2.8. Wirral also targeted specific schools; those who had had a more significant drop in applications. The Benefits Team were supplied with names and dates of births of the children in Reception who were not in receipt of FSM from the CYP Department Admissions Team and after a benefits check on data specific take up letters to these parents were sent via the school as it was felt that the schools would be able to encourage and remind the parents to apply.
- 2.9. From a service perspective the take up work has not revealed a large additional number of entitlements and this work has been undertaken with schools and CYP support.
- 2.10. Other authorities are now reporting that due to Universal Free School Meals they too are seeing a loss in numbers of claimants. Alongside this the Government's Welfare Reform programme affects benefits for those parents and carers who either claim out of work, disability or pensionable age benefits and the national initiative to move people into work, has a very real impact on the numbers of people who qualify for FSM. Those in receipt of working tax credit are not entitled; with many families encouraged into lower paid employment and losing their FSM award. Whilst at present we are seeing increasingly fewer families qualify for FSM as their

income does not meet the qualifying criteria for the reasons above, a positive aspect of the Welfare Reform programme, in relation to FSM, is the roll out of Universal Credit as receipt of UC confers FSM eligibility whether in work or not.

- 2.11. There is a view that FSM recipient numbers in Wirral could still be significantly increased and Frank Field MP also identified this as part of his Poverty Review. This has seen the authority asked to look additional ways of increasing this number in Wirral such has been seen in Calderdale and Liverpool recently with the adoption of some different processes to that at Wirral. It is understood that Calderdale may not have not been as proactive in Free School Meal take up as in Wirral and needed to maximise take up and Pupil Premium grant.
- 2.12. A review of how Wirral promotes and administers its Free School Meals was undertaken in the light of changes publicised at Calderdale and Liverpool Council earlier this year. It was considered that if Wirral could adopt these activities it would increase Free School Meal (FSM) take up and Pupil Premium grant paid to Schools.
- 2.13. When first raised in March 2015 officers reviewed both authorities work to compare them with what we do and if any should be utilised here. The contact work with potential claimants once underway is set to take six to eight weeks to complete, dependent upon the number of cases identified.
- 2.14. Given the additional work and focus Wirral has had in the past on maximising Free School Meals this exercise was projected not to have in Wirral the significant effect seen in Calderdale where an additional 600 cases were added. As an example in 2014 figures from August to the end of September saw an increase of 565 cases but in 2015 in the same period there has been an increase of 750. This may be indicative of a number of issues, easier on line application process, the mandatory requirement for children from year 11 having to remain in full time education, if not in work or apprenticeship and the take up work carried out by schools with new parents for Reception children.
- 2.15. The Opt-Out Project process involves proactively searching the Housing Benefit caseload, writing to families with children who would qualify and then put eligible claimants onto Free School Meals, only removing anyone who asked not to be given this award.
- 2.16. Wirral undertakes a range of proactive take up work in this area and this may affect how much any new activity increases numbers. The take up work in Wirral and our ongoing processes at least equals, if not exceeds that of the named authorities with the exception of the automatic registration initiative at Calderdale.
- 2.17. On a cautionary note, nationally the advent of the Universal Free School Meals programme in September 2014 means parents have no real incentive to apply. Authorities are seeing a reduction in claims for this reason as well as those people in receipt of Working Tax Credit no longer qualifying for Free School Meals. This is expected in the future to be offset by automatic eligibility under Universal Credit. In the months prior to the Universal Meals introduction Wirral Benefits Service in tandem with our Schools and Children and Young Persons Department saw the focus of take up work promoting application as a way of helping school funding as well as the support for each child.

- 2.18. Wirral already does all the activities Liverpool Council detailed and our on-line application form was changed to the opt out version for Free School Meals in March 2015.
- 2.19. Wirral looks to deal with Free School Meals quickly during the school year recognising the importance of the child accessing this facility and on receipt of benefit applications identifies queries and has a dedicated contact point for our 120 schools. We also check separately potential qualifier lists, school admission lists as well as information from Job Centre plus for our Universal Credit claims and also cross check our benefit claims for children within a claim that do not appear to be in receipt of Free School Meals and we do then actively ask the claimant to confirm they wish to apply for Free School Meals.
- 2.20. The already mentioned easier on line application process combines the Government's Eligibility Checking Service into the FSM application process, this gives an immediate eligibility response to the applicant.
- 2.21. To expedite this work a temporary officer has been recruited to focus on the Opt-Out Project, having received training in eligibility and award processes the work started in mid-September 2015 and the monthly review of successful numbers will start from the end of October. In the first week 209 letters covering 258 children were issued which if success levels are repeated here will translate to qualifying recipients and work will continue on these until complete.
- 2.22. Calderdale received £15,000 funding from their Schools Forum given the increased income for their schools and the cost of the additional staff over and above that already funded and dedicated to the normal FSM operational work.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. The additional work being undertaken by Wirral in the Opt-Out Project to increase Free School Meals take up and consequential increase in Pupil Premium is noted.
- 3.2. Given the additional staffing cost incurred to undertake this work that a contribution of £15,000 is made to offset the shortfall in the amount already given by the Schools Forum in the light of this successful one off task.

Malcolm Flanagan
Head of Business Processes

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM 2/10/15

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Progress update on the schools traded services company - Edsential

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The company is on track for a December launch with catering successfully launched as a single service from 2nd September

2. BACKGROUND

Edsential received a renewed mandate from the cabinets of both Wirral and CWaC in early September to launch on 1st December.

Catering was successfully launched at the beginning of term ahead of the other services as we had significant improvements to deliver. Wirral schools now benefit from:

- New menus voted for by pupils
- New food supplier & supply chain
- All fresh meat and produce
- Fresh baked bread every day
- Meals cooked from scratch
- 'What good looks like' photographic standards in place
- Parent engagement leaflets sent out
- Additional on-site support from CWaC development chef team
- Extending CWaC central support team to cover Wirral schools

The new kitchen management system will be rolled out to a further 80 schools in November, with all schools being live by Easter.

All services are now in detailed transition planning to ensure they are not interrupted on change over, as we move out of council systems and use our own.

The teams are also working on the improvements to the service offers we will be rolling out in 2016, these have been based on extensive conversations with heads across both counties. We will be addressing many of the challenges you have set us and in January we will be visiting you to discuss 2016 offers.

Ian McGrady
Managing Director
Edsential Ltd.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 20th OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SCHOOLS BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2015/16

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Forum on the Schools Budget position and anticipated variations in the current year. There is a projected over spend half way through the year which is currently estimated to be £250,000 over a number of school budgets that are managed at the Centre.

2.0 ANTICIPATED BUDGET VARIATIONS

2.1 The table attached compares the Schools Budget with the indicative spend for the year. The main variations are set out below.

2.2 Early Years Grant

There is an Early Years budget of £15.7m which includes the funding for 2, 3 and 4 year olds entitled to receive free Early Education and Early Years Pupil Premium. The Summer Term census has been used as the basis for projecting take up for 2 year olds for the rest of the year with an increase to 75% in Autumn and 85% in Spring. Overall this activity will reduce projected spend by £545,000, it is assumed that DSG is reduced by a matching amount. The trajectory funding of £0.5m brought forward from 2014/15 will be fully committed towards the expansion of the 2 year old provision.

2.3 Schools Forum

There are no commitments to date against this budget of £10,600.

2.4 Contribution to Combined Budgets

The combined budgets of £2.1m are expected to be fully spent across the following areas:

	Budget
	£
School Improvement	359,900
Discretionary Rate Relief Top Up	106,600
LCSB contribution	30,000
Governors Forum	2,200
Wellbeing & School Staff Surveys	44,600
PFI Support Team	61,800
LACES	140,500
School Intervention	674,500
City Learning Centres	694,700
Total	2,114,800

2.5 School Specific Contingencies

At this stage there is no variation expected to the £104,300 budget which takes into account any specific costs that need to be met including the adjustments to High Needs Funding.

2.6 Special Staff Costs

The budget of £667,600 is expected to be fully committed in the following areas:

	£
Maternity, Paternity & Other Staff Costs	565,000
TU Facilities	95,700
Insurance & Recharges	6,900
Total	667,600

2.7 Special Education Needs Top Ups

A budget of £11.8m represents the Top Up High Needs funding. Independent non-maintained special schools currently show a forecast over spend of £250,000 largely attributable to pupils continuing into 6th form education where the cost of provision can range from £20k to £45k. In relation to the Emslie Morgan Top Ups the Summer Term census figures had 133 pupils resulting in extra costs of £140,000. Within the Post 16/FE area there is a small overspend expected of £30,000. Taking account of an uncommitted contingency balance of £140,000 there is a net projected overspend of £280,000 in this area.

2.8 Special Education Needs Statements/Plans

Numbers do fluctuate during the year. Exceptional Needs costs have increased and are projected to be £0.7m against a budget of £0.5m. There is a net potential overspend of £160,000 in this area.

2.9 Support for SEN

The under spend of £180,000 within Support for SEN and the Special Education Support Service is mainly due to uncommitted balances and is helping to offset pressures within High Needs and Statements.

3.0 DSG - £171,413,300

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2015/16 was published in July 2015 indicating that the allocation to Wirral will be £170,386,000. The budget also includes £894,900 of DSG carried forward from 2014/15. This report makes an assumption that the reported Early Years reduced spend is matched by a reduction in the DSG received.

4.0 LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOLS BENCHMARKING DATA 2015-16

4.1 At the end of September the EFA published comparative benchmarking data for the overall schools budget, central costs. This has been included as a table below for information.

Net £ per capita	Wirral	Statistical Neighbours (median)	England Average
	£	£	£
Individual Schools Budget (before academy recoupment)	4,157	4,408	4,407
De Delegated Items	45	30	32
High Needs Budget	282	271	302
Central Expenditure on Children Under 5	23	35	22
Contribution to Combined Budgets	41	3	22
School Admissions	7	5	8
PPM/PFI	58	17	11
Other	3	29	44
Total School Budget (before academy recoupment)	4,737	4,945	5,025

Note: Totals are not the sum of the reported items due to differences in population figures used. Schools budgets use population 0 – 19, whilst central items use pupils aged 3 – 19 in maintained schools only.

5.0 UPDATE ON SPECIFIC RESERVES

5.1 The final figure of DSG reserves carried forward into 2015/16 was £3.5m of which £0.9m has been applied to the 2015/16 budget as described above.

5.2 To date there are the following earmarked reserves in the accounts:

Job Evaluation and Pay Harmonisation Reserve - £0.7m

DSG Reserve - £1.3m

	£
DSG Carry Forward from 2014/15	2,057,500
Use of Reserve in 2015/16	(894,400)
Transfer Nursery Education unapplied funding	108,000
Transfer Schools AST Contingency Reserve	1,200
	1,272,300

Defibrillators Reserve - £0.04m

All schools have been equipped with defibrillators however there is £36,000 that remains which could fund any related costs i.e. training.

City Learning Centres - £0.12m

This reserve will be used to meet any large equipment failure/replacement costs or potential unfunded summer term costs.

High Needs MFG - £0.07m

Reserve to fund remaining academy MFG costs in 2015/16.

Early Years - 2 Year Old Funding - £0.5m

Reserve created to continue expanding the 2 year old provision in 2015/16.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 Efforts are being made to contain the additional indicative budget costs; progress will be reported at the next meeting.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That the Forum notes the report and estimated position of the Schools Budget for 2015/16.

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

Appendix 1 – Budget Variations 2015/16

	Adjusted Budget 2015/16 £	Forecast Spend 2015/16 £	Variation 2015/16 £
Individual Schools Budget			
Primary Schools	93,028,400	93,028,400	0
Secondary Schools	26,045,600	26,045,600	0
Special Schools	8,733,400	8,733,400	0
SEN Bases	1,616,800	1,616,800	0
Wirral Hospital School	1,352,300	1,352,300	0
Early Years	15,750,000	15,205,000	(545,000)
Individual Schools Budget Total	146,526,500	145,981,500	(545,000)
Central School Costs			
Early Years	378,700	378,700	0
Admissions	341,800	341,800	0
School Closure / retirement costs	126,000	126,000	0
Licences & Subscriptions	254,000	254,000	0
Schools Forum	10,600	600	(10,000)
Contribution to Combined Budgets	2,114,800	2,114,800	0
PPM	249,000	249,000	0
PFI affordability gap	2,736,500	2,736,500	0
Costs De-Delegated from schools			
Library Service	191,700	191,700	0
Insurances	32,300	32,300	0
MEAS	244,600	244,600	0
School Specific Contingencies	104,300	104,300	0
Special Staff Costs	667,600	667,600	0
Milk & Meals	13,600	13,600	0
Behaviour Support	92,200	92,200	0
High Needs Pupils			
SEN Top Ups / Independent School Fees	11,803,100	12,083,100	280,000
Statements	4,458,800	4,618,800	160,000
Support for SEN	2,031,500	1,851,500	(180,000)
Home Tuition	308,900	308,900	0
Special School Transport	58,200	58,200	0
Non Delegated School Costs	26,218,200	26,468,200	250,000
Dedicated Schools Grant	(171,413,300)	(170,868,300)	545,000
DSG Carry forward from Reserves	(894,900)	(894,900)	0
Grand Total	436,500	686,500	250,000

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM - 20th October 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Early Years

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report gives an update on funded early learning for 2year olds, Early Years Pupil Premium and the extension of the childcare entitlement to 30 hours for 3 / 4year olds of working parents.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Take up of funded early learning for two year olds

The Chief Executive received a letter from Sam Gyimah, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Childcare and Education, thanking the Authority on the work undertaken in delivering the funded early learning for 2 year olds. Based on the take-up figures of 1283 children who took up provision from the April term and reported in June, this showed that 74% of 2 year olds in Wirral were accessing early education provision. This was an increase in 9 percentage points from the previous period (February 2015) and above the national average which is 63%. Within the North-West region the average take up was 69%, placing Wirral 9 out of 23. For the Authority, the end of year (March 2016) target for take up is 85% (1091 out of 1283 as at June 2015 headcount).

2.2 Update on Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

We are now in the second term of EYPP, which was introduced in April 2015. Take up for the Summer Term is shown in the Table below. This table does not include children who qualify for EYPP under LAC criteria which is administered directly through the Virtual Head. The provision of EYPP during the Summer Term was for 18 Children Looked After.

	Forms	Parents on forms	Children Eligible	% children eligible	Pupil Premium Summer Term £
PVI	766	1042	314	41%	32,452
Maintained Schools	744	1056	405	54%	41,857
TOTAL	1510	2098	718	48%	74,205

The high level of applications that were not eligible reflects providers approach with distributing forms to all families and not just those that were potentially eligible. This term a new on-line application process has been adopted which providers are reporting has improved the position. Applications are still being processed to date though, anecdotally, whilst there have been fewer online applications thus far, a greater proportion are eligible.

2.3 Introduction of 30 hours free childcare

The Childcare Bill introduced made provision for an extended free childcare entitlement for working parents of three- and four-year-olds which will provide eligible parents with a total of 30 hours of free childcare per week, over 38 weeks or the equivalent number of hours across more weeks per year from September 2017. A number of early implementer sites will roll out provision from September 2016.

A review of average childcare funding is currently taking place led by Sam Gyimah MP with the indication that average funding rates that providers receive for delivering the entitlement will be increased. In addition and prior to the Bill going to Report stage Consultation has been taking place with parents and providers. Early findings can be found on a policy statement released on the 2nd October and can be accessed through the following link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childcare-bill-policy-statement>

From parents the indication are in summary:

- around 89% of respondents would take up the additional hours if available now
- respondents expected to use around 14 hours of the additional entitlement; and
- the most useful factor would be a stretched offer (full-year and covering normal working hours).

Three themes emerged on what influences the choice of childcare:

- convenience (either location or opening hours); and
- quality of staff and provider (either high staff qualifications, Ofsted rating or reputation)
- opportunity for their child to socialise.

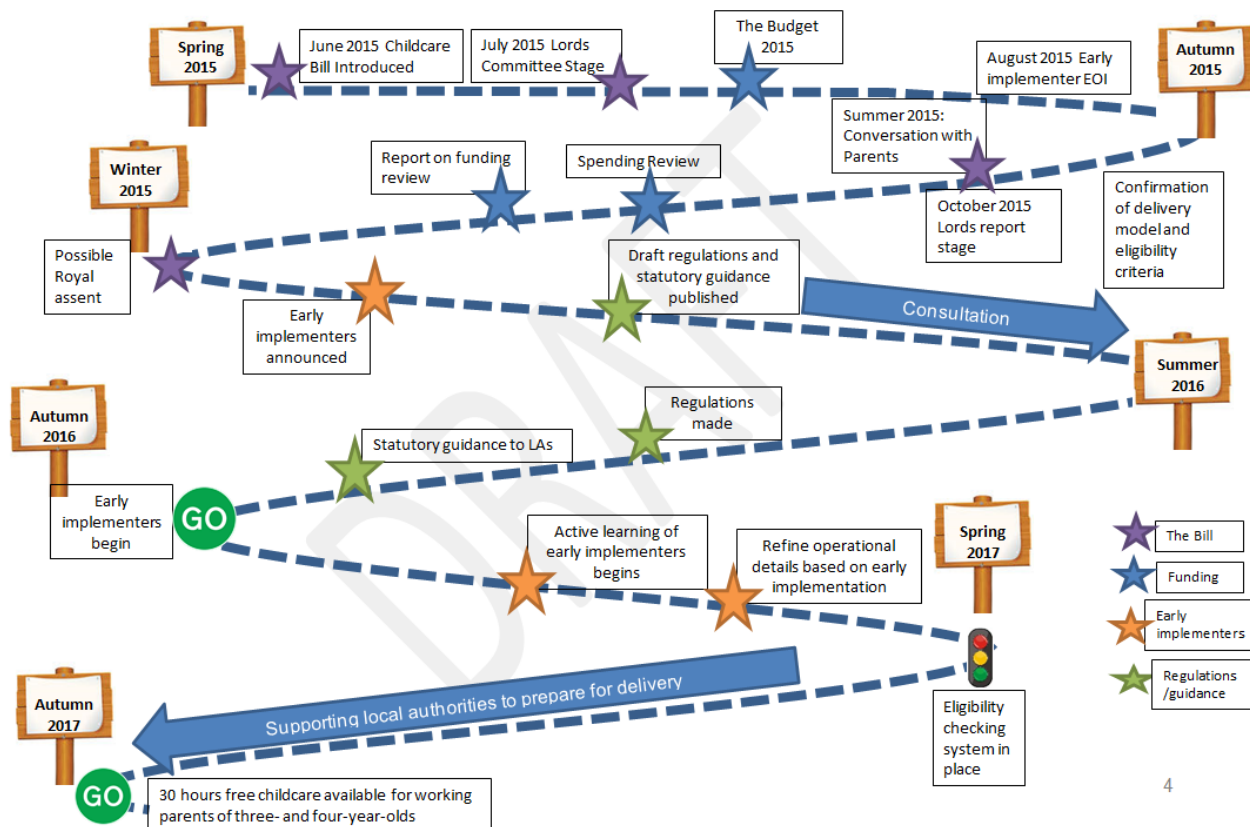
Parents reported using a wide range of providers but most popular were day nurseries (45%), relatives (29%), childminders (15%) and playgroup or pre-schools (15%).

From providers, the concerns are in the main around funding and sustainability;

- How the new offer will fit with the existing offer for two-, three- and four-year-olds;
- Eligibility – who and how this will be assessed;
- Quality – the impact of increasing the offer to 30 hours and ensuring children remain safe and their development is supported; and
- Capacity - How to create additional places if they are needed. Many providers believe they would have to cut the number of children they take in order to offer 30 hours of childcare.
- Funding – many report the current funding is not sufficient to cover the cost of places.

A survey conducted in July 2015 by the NAHT raised key issues for schools including funding, impact on schools moving away from providing nursery provision and concern around the impact of the policy and the reduction in the number of children that could be accommodated attending half a day to a full day. Building capacity was also highlighted in the survey recommendations, with the need for capital funding to extend capacity within schools seen as key to success of the policy. Schools will need time and support to implement the policy including building relationships with other providers where alternative provision may have to be sought which would have to be handled carefully to ensure that there was a smooth transition for parents and children within this type of arrangements. (An early years place for all, NAHT September 2015)

Delivering 30 hours free childcare: A Road Map to September 2017 SECTION 2



4

(taken from the Childcare Bill: Policy statement October 2015)

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- To note the update with regards to 2 year old offer and Early Years Pupil Premium and the current information with regard to the extended offer for 3 and 4 year olds of working parents.
- It is recommended that a small task group be developed, including member of the Schools Forum, to maintain an overview of the implications of this policy and its implementation across the sector.

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM October 20th 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The impact of the School Intervention Grant and Combined Budget Contributions to School Improvement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the expenditure and impact of School Budget contributions in 2014-15 in the following areas:

- School Intervention £674,500
- School Improvement £359,900

BACKGROUND

1. School Intervention

The School Intervention contribution of £674,500 continues to be spent on two main areas of support for schools:

1.1 Primary School Intervention	£355,500
1.2 Secondary School Intervention	£319,000

1.1 Primary School Intervention

A total of £355,500 was allocated for raising standards in primary schools. £45,000 was allocated to raise standards in Early Years. £15,000 of this Early Years allocation was used to support a second cohort through the Alistair Brice Clegg training programme. The outcome of which contributed to the percentage of children attaining a Good Level of Development (GLD) increasing by 7% to 70%. Attainment continues to be 3% above the national average.

A substantial amount of this money, £,209,000 has been used to support vulnerable schools identified as Band 2 or Band 3 in line with the Local Authority School Improvement Strategy. Each school receiving financial support was required to work with a member of the School Improvement Team to generate a Raising Attainment Action Plan with clear measureable milestones. Progress towards achieving the milestones was reviewed each term through the School Causing Concern process. All schools supported demonstrated improvement. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has increased.

A pilot was conducted with regard to using School to School support. Specialist Leaders in Education (SLE) were commissioned to provide support and challenge in specific primary schools. A total of £25,000 was used to fund this process.

The Anti-Bullying Strategy has been supported, through £3,000 funding an Anti-Bullying conference for all schools. £8,000 was allocated to supported anti-bullying projects in schools.

£36,200 was used to support the primary headteacher consultant post.

1.2 Secondary School Intervention

There were two elements to secondary intervention contribution:

1. Support for mainstream maintained secondary schools who were categorised as Band 2 and 3 in line with the Local Authority School Improvement Strategy.
2. Support for the Pupil Referral Unit
3. A contribution towards the secondary consultant Headteacher post.

A total of £98,000 was used to commission support from Teaching Schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools. The majority of work focused on supporting English and Mathematics departments. A further £106,000 was allocated to Band 2 and 3 schools to raise the quality of teaching and learning. £8,000 was allocated to support anti-bullying strategies in secondary schools.

£44,000 was allocated to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the Pupil Referral Unit. This included a pilot of NISAI learning to support harder to engage pupils with GCSEs in English, Mathematics and ICT.

£40,000 was allocated to support the secondary consultant headteacher post.

2. School Improvement

The school improvement contribution of £359,900 has been spent on the following areas:

- Early Intervention Managers (Early Years, Mathematics, English) who work with targeted schools
- Entitlement School Improvement Associates
- Contribution towards Governor Support Services
- Evolve
- The delivery of training, resources and equipment

IMPACT

This year's funding by the Schools Forum and the amounts previously agreed have supported the aggregated school outcomes which are:

1. Provisional attainment results at the end of Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 show an increase on 2014 results.
2. 50% of primary schools in Band 3 exited into a higher band requiring less support and challenge. 46% of Band 2 schools exited into a higher band.
3. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 for 5 A* - Cs including English and Mathematics (61.6%) exceeded FFTB estimates, showing an increase of 1.6% from 2014. The free school meal gap has closed by 6%.
4. At the time of writing this report at least 87% of primary, 68% of secondary and 100% of special schools have been judged as good or better by Ofsted which is well above national average.
5. Due to bespoke intervention by the School Improvement Team four schools were prevented from going into an Ofsted category.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Schools Forum to note the contents of the report.

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM 20 October 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Update on the changes to The Looked after Children's Education Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The way in which the Looked after Children's Education Service (LACES) is delivered and supports the education of children in the Councils care was reviewed as part of the Future Council process in 2014.

The report informs Schools Forum of the current position of the Wirral Looked after Children's Education Service (LACES) in assisting to discharge the local authority's statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of young people in care.

Introduction

Statutory Guidance

The Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of children in care.

This requires local authorities to:

- Rigorously track and monitor the school placement and educational performance of each child in care.
- To ensure that their education is seen as a priority by all those who work with them
- To act, where necessary, to address underachievement and to promote improvement in outcomes
- To ensure that heads and designated teachers in schools know who is looked after and what can be done to support and enhance their attainment and to ensure access to any initiatives which will help with this
- Ensure that they have a high quality PEP
- Share effective practice with colleagues to improve behaviour, and attendance, and to promote improved outcomes and school stability and address barriers to learning.

"Discharging the duty on a day to day basis means that the local authority should do at least what any good parent would do to promote their child's educational aspirations and support their achievements"

The Statutory Duty on Schools Governing Bodies

- The Children and Young Person's Act 2008 "places a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to designate a member of staff as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of looked after children who are registered pupils at the school. This includes those aged between 16 and 18". The Regulations requires that this person should be a senior teacher (The Designated Teacher)

- The governing body must ensure that the Designated Teacher undertakes appropriate Training
- The role of the Designated teacher “needs to be understood as part of the wider responsibilities on local authorities for looked after children both in terms of their care and to promote their educational achievement”

Designated teachers lead within the school in promoting the educational achievements of children in care by ensuring that their “personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritized”. As well as this strategic role they have a duty to ensure that Personal Education Plans are effective and that they are implemented within the school. They are the primary contact co-ordinating the work of external agencies in relation to promoting the educational achievement of looked after children on the school’s role.

Current arrangements

The roles and responsibilities within the LACES team have been reviewed and restructured in 2011, 2012 and 2014. The outcome of the 2014 Future Council process resulted in the full time senior educational progress officer post being made redundant. From September 2015, the LACES team will consist of one Virtual School Headteacher, five (3.8 FTE) educational progress officers and one admin assistant. The Virtual School Headteacher role will be part of the role of one of the current General Inspectors.

The focus of the roles of the LACES team is to:

1. Track, Monitor and Challenge

To track attainment, progress, attendance and exclusions of all Wirral Children Looked After. The Educational Progress Officers will review the educational progress of each Child Looked After on a termly basis. The results of these reviews will be shared with social workers to enable them to update the Personal Education Plan between annual PEP Meetings. These results also lead to challenging schools who are not meeting the needs of Children Looked After by recommending that meetings should take place between the school, Social Worker and Carer based on the data collected from schools – this aspect of the role is at an early stage of development.

2. Personal Education Planning

The statutory responsibility for Personal Education Planning is shared by schools and social workers.

Social workers will manage Personal Education Plans using the social care database, Liquid Logic. Social Workers liaise directly with schools’ designated teachers. In exceptional circumstances, if invited by the social worker or schools designated teacher, the LACES team will support the completion of the PEP.

There is a statutory requirement to monitor the quality of the Personal Education Plan. This role will be performed by the LACES Team. This is achieved via the Liquid Logic system. Completed PEPs are “sent to” the Virtual School and “finalized” by the LACES Progress Officers.

3. Training

The Virtual School Head will commission and deliver training that supports the educational needs of children in care for school and local authority staff (Designated Teachers, Social

Workers and Foster Carers). Training for Foster Carers is achieved via direct courses where Foster Carers are invited to attend. Training for Designated Teachers is achieved via the one to one contact the Progress officers have with the Designated Teachers. Training for Social Workers is achieved via the Progress Officers being based in the Social Care Offices for part of their working week.

4. Supporting Pupils

Schools requiring a service that delivers direct support to pupils are able to purchase a bespoke service direct through the LA traded service EQ. This facility has not been taken up by any school.

Arrangements remain in place to allocate and distribute the PEA (Personal Education Allowance) for those children who have fallen behind considerably and who need additional support programmes beyond those normally available in school. Applications for PEA are managed and administered by the LACES team and recommendations are made to the appropriate Social Care manager for agreement.

Pupil Premium Plus (£PPP) – the Pupil Premium Plus for Children Looked After is allocated to schools via the Virtual School. Pupil Premium Plus payments to schools are directly linked to PEPs and appropriate targets for each Child Looked After. An agreed procedure to do this was introduced and agreed from April 2014. Just over £1 million was devolved to schools via this process in the Financial Year 2014-15.

Funding

The LACES budget for 2014-15 is £1,277,300. It is funded as follows:

	£
School's Budget	140,500
Children's Services	135,500
Pupil Premium (est)	1,001,300
Total	1,277,300

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Schools Forum notes the report.

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM - 20 OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDRENS SERVICES

REVIEW OF SCHOOL PFI AND PPM COSTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates the Forum on School PFI and Planned Programmed Maintenance (PPM) costs from within the centrally managed school budget.

2. PFI COSTS

2.1 The Council is now in its fourteenth year of a 30 year PFI Agreement, originally signed by the School Governing Bodies and the PFI Contractor in March 2001. The scheme involved the rebuild of one Primary and one Secondary School and extensive refurbishment at seven other Secondary schools. The Contract is due to end in July 2031.

2.2 The major investment to those schools that were in the worst condition in the late 1980's, the grouped PFI scheme has allowed the redirection of subsequent capital funding to the remaining school estate which has seen significant improvement over the years and continues to do so.

2.2 An annual sum continues to be paid to the PFI Contractor for the cost of the PFI Services. This "Unitary charge" payment represents the repayment of Capital costs and a payment for the provision of Facilities Management, Catering and Grounds Services for the nine Schools. The contract makes provision for the total costs to increase each year by the Retail Prices Index less 10%.

The summarised School PFI costs for 2015-16 are as follows:

	£000s
Contract payments	11,037
PFI Grant	5,472 cr
School Contributions	3,025 cr
PFI Net Cost (Affordability Gap)	2,703

The PFI Affordability Gap is partly funded by the central schools budget (£2.3m) and partly by the council (£0.4m). In addition Schools Budget contributes £61,800 to the cost of a small team administering the PFI contract.

3.0 KEY PFI ACHIEVEMENTS 2014/15

3.1 It has been a busy year for PFI with the completion of the first Benchmarking exercise, which is carried out every five years for the life of the contract, on the "Tested Services" i.e. caretaking, grounds, cleaning. The process involved an eighteen month negotiation period between the Council and PFI partners to ensure we achieved an agreement that delivered best value to the schools and also satisfied the requirements of the contract.

The largest increase as part of the benchmarking process impacted on cleaning charges, however, the Council managed to offset the cost of this uplift with a credit note of £137,000 which was refunded directly to schools for costs they had been paying for additional services procured since the contract started in 2001. The PFI team also managed to secure an additional one off £20,000 discount for schools as part of this process.

3.2 The first reconciliation of Profit Sharing which is an aspect of the contract whereby a budget is set as part of the Benchmarking Process and then each year, a Profit and Loss account based on actual cost is shared by the Catering provider, with any profit being shared on a 50:50 basis. The PFI team agreed a profit share of £40,365 with the PFI Catering Provider, this was split amongst the PFI schools for the 2013-14 financial year, and are due to meet to discuss the profit share for 2014-15 imminently.

3.3 A utilities reconciliation has recently been completed, and due to the PFI team negotiating an advantageous Utilities Target for Schools, this has generated a refund of £44,000 for the 2014-15 financial year.

3.4 A small piece of work has recently been commissioned by the LA to compare the FM unit costs in PFI schools (cleaning, caretaking etc.) with equivalent costs in non-PFI schools. The aim of this is to better understand the differences in costs between similar schools and the reasons why they may have arisen. The findings from this exercise will be reported to the Schools Forum when the work is completed.

4.0 PPM £249,000

4.1 The Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) £249,000 school budget supports a range of projects and unforeseen costs arising from general school maintenance including; school closures, ground maintenance, safeguarding issues, health and safety requirements and structural works. Whilst there has been a significant reduction in this budget this is being managed successfully.

A three year DfE Capital Maintenance allocation has allowed better project planning at schools which in turn reduces the burden on reactive and emergency maintenance funding. Significant investment in school building fabric has also resulted in a decrease in the demand on this budget.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report is noted and that further reports be brought for further discussion and consideration as required.

**WIRRAL COUNCIL
SCHOOLS FORUM 20th OCTOBER 2015
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDRENS SERVICES**

School Funding Arrangements 2016-17

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises a paper issued by the EFA over the summer with proposals for School funding in 2016-17.

2.0 SCHOOLS REVENUE FUNDING 2016-17 OPERATIONAL GUIDE

The Schools revenue funding 2016-2017 Operational Guide and School Block units of Funding 2016-2017 Technical Note were published by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) over the summer.

These documents provide LA's with information that enables them to start making arrangements for next year's Schools Budget, including guidance on:

- The make-up of the Dedicated Schools Grant and the funding blocks within that
- The allowable elements within the schools funding formula including the Minimum Funding Guarantee
- Provision that may be made within centrally held budgets
- Arrangements for High Needs (reported elsewhere)

3.0 Dedicated Schools Grant

The schools block per pupil unit of funding in 2016-17 will be the same value as in 2015-16 with an adjustment to take account of former non-recoupment academies (Birkenhead Girls High School) and the Carbon Reduction Commitment.

This announcement confirms that the Flat Cash settlements of the last 4 years (no inflationary increases) will continue in 2016-17 within the Schools Block. There has been no detail provided about a national funding formula and this will not be introduced in 2016-17. However the ministerial statement in July confirmed a commitment to make funding fairer and to put forward proposals "in due course".

Funding for the Early Years block will be confirmed after the Spending Review in November, together with details for Pupil Premium, Universal Infant Free School Meals and the Education Services Grant.

4.0 Schools Funding Formula

There are no changes to the permissible elements within the schools funding formula. The elements allowed are:

- **Basic Entitlement**
- **Deprivation (compulsory)**
- **Prior Attainment**
- **Looked After Children**

- **English as an Additional Language**
- Pupil Mobility
- Sparsity
- **Lump Sum**
- **Split Sites**
- **Rates**
- PFI
- London Fringe
- Post 16
- **Exceptional Premises**

Those used in the Wirral formula are highlighted. Data for these elements will be updated by the EFA and provided to LA's.

The Minimum Funding Guarantee (funding protection for schools) in 2016-17 will continue at minus 1.5%

5.0 Centrally Held Budgets

The controls over the purpose and level of central school budgets remain. These include:

De-delegated budgets. De-delegation is not an option for academies, special schools, nurseries or PRU's, although there is a presumed offer of buyback by the LA.

High Needs Budgets – Schools Forum should be consulted

Licences - Schools Forum should be consulted

Admissions – the existing budget provision cannot be increased

PFI, PPM, Combined budgets, SEN transport – budget and commitments cannot increase.

Where the Forum or the LA is looking to operate outside this framework approval is required from the Secretary of State.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Schools budget is prepared in accordance with the arrangements described in this report

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services



Department
for Education

Research on funding for young people with special educational needs

Research report

July 2015

**Natalie Parish and Ben Bryant – Isos
Partnership**

Executive summary

Introduction and background to the research

Over the past five years, there have been significant reforms to education funding arrangements to make them more transparent, consistent and fair. Changes to the way in which support for young people with special educational needs (SEN) is funded have been an important aspect of this, and these changes have been designed to support wider reforms of the SEN and disability (SEND) policy framework. In particular, the changes have brought much closer alignment between the funding of high needs in schools and in other post-16 institutions.

The Children and Families Act 2014 places important new statutory duties on local authorities. These include replacing SEN statements and learning difficulty assessments with integrated 0-25 education, health and care needs assessments and plans, bringing parity of rights for those in early years settings, schools and post-16 institutions. Local authorities will also publish a local offer setting out the support for children and young people with SEN and disabilities, and work with health and social care to jointly commission support services.

In the summer of 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned Isos Partnership to undertake research into SEN funding arrangements and practices. The aim of this research was to provide insights into the way funding for young people with SEN is spent, the reasons for differences between spending patterns in different local authorities, and the options for changing the ways in which high-needs funding is distributed in future. We were asked to provide an analysis of how well the current SEN funding system was working and to suggest ways in which it might be improved in future.

To carry out the research, we worked with a small but broadly representative group of 13 local education systems. We have used the term 'local education systems' to refer to the connections between local authorities, schools, colleges and other settings, and parents, carers and young people within a geographical area based on local authority borders (Sandals and Bryant 2014). During our fieldwork visits to each of the 13, we met representatives from early years settings, mainstream schools, special schools, groups of parents and carers, and post-16 institutions, as well as local authority officers and their strategic partners. Later in the research, we held workshops with representatives from the local authorities and with a small number of national experts on SEN to test our emerging findings. The research project ran from September 2014 and concluded in April 2015. We have framed our proposals within the current SEND statutory framework.

Key findings and proposals

National-to-local distribution of high-needs funding

The dedicated schools grant (DSG), allocated from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to local authorities, comprises three parts: the schools block, the early years block and the high needs block. The high needs block is the element of the DSG from which the majority of funding for SEN, and particularly high-needs SEN, is provided. When the high-needs funding reforms were introduced in 2013, a decision was taken, in the interests of maintaining stability, to continue to allocate the high needs block to local authorities on the basis of historic spending levels.

Our analysis has shown, however, that historic spend does not appear to match very closely with current levels of need. Furthermore, there was a strong feeling among the local authorities that took part in our research, and many of the national stakeholders, that the current distribution of the high needs block funding was not sufficiently transparent, objective or fair. We judged, therefore, that there was a strong argument in favour of moving from a distribution based on historic levels of spending to a formula-based allocation.

Through our research partners at Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion, we carried out a detailed regression analysis of the potential factors which might be included in a formula for allocating high-needs funding to local authorities. This identified a small basket of indicators covering deprivation, prior attainment, children's disability and children's general health. Individually and in combination these indicators had a significant explanatory power across a range of different measures of SEN. Through a simple process of standardising and weighting these factors we were able to illustrate an approach to formula funding that would achieve:

- a better fit with the percentage of children attracting a statement or at School Action Plus than either the current high-needs allocation or local authority reported SEN budgets;
- a better fit with the percentage of children with high needs attracting top-up funding than local authority reported spend on SEN budgets; and
- a reasonably strong match with both the current high-needs allocation and the SEN budget.

Importantly, this work demonstrates that a simple funding formula based on objective, published data can perform at least as well as, and in some aspects better than, the current methodology for allocating high-needs funding in terms of the correlation with underlying levels of need. This is, however, just the first stage in developing a formula-based approach to distributing high-needs funding. More detailed modelling work is needed to finesse the final basket of indicators and their relative weightings. It is also needed to work out how much of the high needs block the formula should be applied to (our analysis has only covered the SEN aspects), to understand the impact on different local authorities, and to ensure a measured transition.

We propose that, subject to more detailed modelling, the DfE should consider moving to a formula for the allocation of the high needs block to local authorities. Our analysis suggests a range of factors that might be used in such a formula, including factors related to deprivation, prior attainment, disability and children's general health. We consider that a formula-based approach would be more objective, and easier to explain and understand, than the current arrangements. It could be rebased annually if desired, and would correlate better with a wider range of measures of need than the current funding distribution.

Core funding for mainstream schools pre-16

In some local education systems there was a high degree of confidence in how the new funding arrangements were working and how limitations in funding arrangements could be overcome. They recognised that the new approach to core funding for children and young people with SEN in mainstream schools had brought a degree of clarity and transparency that had hitherto been lacking. In other local systems, however, we encountered confusion about how the new arrangements should work and deep-rooted concerns about whether, under the new system, the needs of children and young people with SEN could adequately be met.

We focused particularly on three elements of the current funding system:

- 1) how effectively schools are providing the first £6,000 of additional support;
- 2) how well notional SEN budgets are functioning; and
- 3) local authority practices in allocating money outside the formula.

How effectively schools are providing the first £6,000 of additional support

The vast majority of local authorities reported that the introduction of a clear national high-needs threshold was a positive development. Many local authorities felt that the £6,000 threshold had created greater clarity in the system about what schools should be providing for pupils with SEN and had sharpened the ability of local authorities to hold schools to account for this.

This view was reinforced by some of the most confident headteachers to whom we spoke, who welcomed the sense of parity this had created and valued the better quality of dialogue they were having with local authorities about resources. Some schools had used the impetus of the funding reforms to reshape their provision in order to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEN.

Clearly, if schools are to provide the first £6,000 of additional support effectively then their core budgets must adequately reflect the needs of the children and young people on roll. The permitted formula factors that local authorities can use to target funding at need include both prior attainment and deprivation, which are two of the most powerful factors in predicting SEN. Our analysis suggests that it may be possible to improve the accuracy

with which SEN is modelled through the formula with the addition of a disability-related funding factor.

However, neither schools nor local authorities feel that it is possible to use proxy factors to model the incidence of SEN with 100% accuracy. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that schools' attitudes towards, and aptitude for, meeting the needs of children with SEN is very varied, leading to an uneven distribution of pupils with SEN. The funding challenge is that any formula-based method of allocating resources will not be able to reflect differences in the size of a school's SEN population where these are driven to a large extent by the culture of the school in question, rather than underlying demographic and contextual factors that can be measured, such as deprivation or prior attainment.

Consequently there are some schools in the system which are struggling to meet the first £6,000 in support costs from their base budgets. Typically the schools which are most likely to find themselves in this position are schools which are disproportionately inclusive and small schools. Those schools that report a genuine pressure on funding say that the pupils losing out are those whose needs fall just below the threshold for top-up funding. Nonetheless, we must be cautious about over-stating the number of schools which are finding themselves genuinely disadvantaged in funding terms by the introduction of the £6,000 threshold.

The local offer has a key role to play in setting out a shared commitment about what all mainstream schools, in the context of a schools-led education system, will provide as a core entitlement for any child with SEN. Nevertheless, at the time of our research, few of the local offers of the local authorities we visited set out this shared commitment explicitly in a way that would enable poor practice to be identified and challenged, for example by parents and carers. Most local offers provided a list of services that were offered locally and directed readers to the individual school information reports. While there were examples of emerging good practice with regard to the local offer, the local authorities and other stakeholders engaged in the research advocated strongly for much clearer national direction, to reinforce local decision-making, on what all mainstream schools should provide as a matter of course for children with SEN.

First, to reduce the funding inequities between schools which are highly inclusive and those which do not have a strong culture of inclusion, we suggest that local authorities should work with their schools to agree a "core entitlement" that *all* schools in a local area will provide for children and young people with SEN as a matter of course. This agreement should be published as part of the local offer. The DfE should also consider publishing clearer national directions on this subject to provide a consistent national framework against which local offers and agreements might be developed. Greater local transparency, particularly if reinforced by sharper national direction, should have the effect of clarifying expectations of the system and create greater consistency in what schools should be looking to do within the first £6,000 of additional support.

Second, to ensure that the base level of funding a school receives better reflects the needs of pupils with SEN, we propose that the DfE should consider modelling the impact of using the 0-15 disability living allowance (DLA) claimant measure as an additional factor in school funding formulae to better reflect the needs of children and young people with SEN. Our local-authority-level analysis suggests that this indicator is the most likely to offer significant explanatory power over and above measures of deprivation and low prior attainment which already feature in the formula, is available at post-code level and is regularly updated.

How well notional SEN budgets are functioning

The notional SEN budget is a proportion of schools' base funding which is "notionally" set aside for meeting the needs of pupils with SEN. We heard from some that the notional SEN budgets could be a helpful lever for headteachers, and perhaps more often for SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs), in determining an appropriate level of spend on children and young people with SEN. Nevertheless, more headteachers were of the view that what was important in allocating funding was looking at the overall budget, assessing the needs of the pupils, and achieving the best distribution of support possible.

Further analysis we have carried out on how notional SEN budgets are calculated suggests that there are significant limitations associated with the current methodology. Too often notional SEN budgets appear to correlate poorly with levels of reported need in schools and vary greatly from school to school in the amount that each child with SEN is "notionally" allocated. At times, this has created confusion in the system. If schools were to use the notional SEN budget as a guide to how much they should spend, it would lead to some very inconsistent spending decisions. As such, we are not convinced that notional SEN budgets are performing the function for which they were designed.

To address this issue, we propose that the DfE should consider removing notional SEN budgets from the funding system for mainstream schools. We consider that setting out clearer expectations of what all schools should provide for pupils with SEN, communicating clearly how core funding is calculated, and a simple financial planning tool to guide schools' decisions about spending on SEN would mitigate the risk that the system is not yet mature enough in its approach to providing for SEN to enable notional SEN budgets to be removed.

Local authority practices in allocating money outside the formula

Since schools' formula allocations may not always be sufficient to enable a school to meet the first £6,000 of SEN support costs, current funding regulations give local authorities flexibility to provide additional resources. In theory, this should provide adequate protection for those schools that, for whatever reason, find that their formula funding does not enable them fully to meet the needs of pupils with SEN. We identified very inconsistent practice in whether, or how well, local authorities were using this local funding discretion. Only around a third of local authorities reported that they provide

funding outside the formula. Furthermore, local authorities apply very different criteria for whether they would allocate additional funding and how that might be distributed. In one or two areas, schools reported that local authorities significantly underused the facility to distribute additional funding from the high needs block.

We propose that the DfE should consider providing clearer direction for local authorities on the circumstances in which they can provide additional funding outside the formula to schools, and a short menu of options for the criteria that may be used for allocating this. This would ensure greater consistency in practice and mitigate the risk that some highly-inclusive or small schools will be unable to meet the costs of the first £6,000 of additional support from their budgets.

Core funding for SEN in early years settings

The early years sector plays a vital role in identifying children's additional needs and putting in place early support. In light of the variety and size of early years providers, it is important for local education systems to ensure that settings have access to the right expertise and support to meet the needs of children with SEN. While the majority of providers reported a reduction in central SEN support services, our fieldwork also identified a range of ways in which support was provided to early years settings, such as peripatetic services and access to top-up funding.

Two main sets of challenges were reported to us. The first related to access to additional support and resources. Specifically, there was a lack of clarity in local education systems about who was responsible for paying for additional support over and above the cost of the free entitlement. Providers in a minority of local systems reported that they had no recourse to additional funding through top-ups for children with complex needs. We considered the option of creating the equivalent of a notional SEN budget for early years settings, but concluded this would not be an effective way of targeting support and resources that would enable settings to meet the needs of children with SEN.

To address these issues, we propose that local authorities should work with providers to establish clear expectations about the support pre-school settings are expected to provide from within their core funding, and the circumstances in which additional advice, training or resources will be provided.

The second set of challenges related to the interaction of funding for SEN and for the free entitlement. Some providers reported that they were finding it difficult to fund the full free entitlement for children with SEN because there was no recognition in their funding that the cost of meeting their needs was greater than the standard per-child funding they received. A small number of local authorities reported that they were seeing increasing demands for statutory assessments for pre-school children as a result of parents' desire

to access free early education entitlement for two-year-olds, or access full-time early education for three- and four-year-olds.

Furthermore, there was also a lack of clarity about how local authorities could fund full-time places or unit-style provision in early years settings. Local authorities were also concerned that, as numbers increased in future, their early years and SEN funding would be under greater pressure, thus making it more difficult to use funding as flexibly as they had hitherto.

To address these issues, we propose that the DfE should set out, through existing published resources or webinars, a practical reminder of the ways in which local authorities can fund SEN provision in pre-school settings. Much of this information is already available, and some local authorities are using it effectively. Nevertheless, there would be value in providing practical reminders.

Core funding for special schools, resourced provisions and SEN units pre-16

Local authorities and schools reported to us that the new arrangements for funding specialist places had introduced greater consistency and fostered better dialogue about placements, funding and outcomes. These reforms have also placed greater importance on planning specialist places. Although in their early stages, some local education systems have begun to gather data and develop approaches to planning special school places, building on what has worked well in planning mainstream school places.

There were, however, a number of challenges reported to us. First, local authorities reported that they were facing increasing pressure on special school places, and that there was a lack of clarity for local authorities and schools about the process for planning and commissioning specialist places. At present, the EFA plays a part in managing this process, but it is difficult for decisions about specialist place-planning to be taken at a national level. An approach based on lagged numbers would be more data-driven and potentially less resource-intensive. Without an effective and responsive exceptions process, however, which could be very resource-intensive, a lagged approach could make local strategic place-planning more difficult at a time when better planning is needed to improve provision, outcomes and value-for-money.

To address this, we have proposed that there should be a more explicit role for local planning and commissioning of places in specialist settings, in which local authorities, in collaboration with schools, would play a central role. We envisage that this would be an explicit commissioning role in respect of designated specialist places in state-funded special schools, in resourced provisions and units in mainstream schools, and in early years settings. For non-maintained special schools, we consider that there could be a small co-ordinating role for the EFA to play, informed by the commissioning decisions of the local authorities. This would be in line with local authorities' statutory duties, and

would provide scope to plan provision strategically to meet in-year changes and longer-term needs. The DfE may wish to consider the steps to be put in place to enable local education systems to develop such approaches. We have also suggested that there should be a more explicit process for accessing capital funding to develop new SEN provision where it is needed. This last point applies equally to schools and post-16 institutions.

Second, some small, highly-specialist special schools, and those with highly-mobile pupil populations, reported that they were finding the new funding arrangements challenging. Suggestions were made to us that the place value for these providers could be increased or a lump sum paid to them. Such approaches would, however, cut across the principle of equivalence that is at the heart of the SEN funding system.

Instead, we consider that there is sufficient flexibility within the current arrangements to support these institutions. We propose that local authorities should use these flexibilities, through their banding frameworks and partnership approaches, to prevent small specialist providers from becoming unviable due to short-term fluctuations in pupil numbers.

Core funding for SEN post-16

SEN funding in post-16 institutions has undergone significant changes since April 2013, with local authorities taking responsibility for commissioning and funding SEN provision in post-16 institutions. Much of the feedback we gathered reflected this transition. We found positive signs of mature dialogue about commissioning and placements, flexible use of funding to support person-centred planning, and greater transparency of funding.

A number of challenges were also reported to us. First, there was some confusion about funding for low-level SEN in post-16 institutions and the scope for funding five-day packages of support. National policy on these two issues is set out clearly in EFA guidance and the SEND Code of Practice, but there may be value in further measures to ensure it is fully understood by local authorities and institutions. Some local authorities expressed concern about the unknown level of future need for support from young people with SEN aged 19 to 25. Again, the national policy is clear, but the DfE may wish to consider how to help local authorities analyse future demand, and to highlight examples of effective practice.

Second, post-16 institutions reported that inconsistent approaches to the criteria for determining top-up funding and associated administration were creating additional burdens for them. We set out our findings and proposals on top-up funding in the following section, but we note that inconsistent approaches to top-up funding are

particularly an issue for post-16 institutions since many work with multiple local authorities.

Third, there was widespread dissatisfaction with the process for planning and allocating funding for high-needs places in post-16 institutions. Specifically, the issue was that the timing of the process meant that funding was not always allocated in a way that accurately matched where young people decided to study. This was creating difficulties for post-16 institutions and local authorities. We also consider that the separate funding for high-needs students fosters a sense that SEN is an “add-on” to a post-16 institution’s core business and perpetuates perverse incentives to identify students as having high needs.

To address this issue, we propose that what is currently high-needs place-led funding for post-16 institutions (so-called “element 2”) should be included in the formula allocations for mainstream post-16 providers. This option would preserve the principle of equivalence in SEN funding across the different pre- and post-16 funding systems. It is also aligned with what we are proposing in terms of reforming SEN funding in mainstream schools, and would thus ensure equivalence between the school and further education (FE) sectors.

We considered the implications of this for how post-16 places in special schools and resourced provisions and units in mainstream schools; and special post-16 institutions (SPIs), are funded. For special schools (as now) and units, we considered that places should be funded at £10,000 so that there is consistency with their pre-16 places. For SPIs, we considered the introduction of a specialist programme weighting in the post-16 funding formula. This would mean, however, that SPIs were funded in a different way to both mainstream post-16 institutions and post-16 places in special schools.

Instead, we propose that places in SPIs should be funded at £10,000 per planned place, with top-up funding provided above this level, so that there is consistency with post-16 places in special schools and non-maintained special schools. We suggest that the same approach is used to fund designated resourced provisions and units in mainstream post-16 institutions.

Top-up funding

The funding reforms have introduced direct dialogue about placements, outcomes and funding between providers and local authorities placing young people with them. We heard positive messages in some local education systems about how this dialogue and top-up funding was facilitating more flexible and outcomes-focused approaches to SEN placements, in line with the new SEND framework. Some local education systems have

developed approaches for providers to access top-up funding that do not rely solely on the statutory assessment process and that provide support more swiftly. We also found examples of local authorities and providers working collaboratively to develop and moderate top-up funding systems.

Nevertheless, we also found inconsistent approaches to top-up funding within and across local education systems. Many local education systems use banding frameworks to help in assessing young people's needs and allocating funding (at different levels or bands) to meet those needs. Across local systems, we found that there was a lack of clear and consistent expectations around inclusion, differences in the provision available locally, and different ways of constructing local banding frameworks. This raises issues of equity, but providers also reported that inconsistent practice, and associated administration, was creating additional bureaucratic burdens that were detracting from their support for young people. We found limited support for a national banding framework as a means of addressing this, and little evidence that local authorities were working together regionally to align their banding frameworks.

We did, however, find strong support for a set of core principles about how top-up funding should operate. We propose, therefore, that the DfE should develop and publish a set of principles or minimum standards for the effective operation of top-up funding. This could entail bringing together existing published material on top-up funding, but the DfE may wish to consider whether additional principles or standards would enable more effective approaches to top-up funding. By the same token, we also propose that local authorities should publish information about their top-up funding arrangements, including both their banding or top-up values and their top-up *practices*, including named points-of-contact, timescales and review requirements.

Within local systems, the main issue reported to us was the time it took to access top-up funding, particularly where the only way of accessing additional resources was through the statutory assessment process.

To address this, we propose that local authorities should establish processes for accessing practical advice, capacity-building support and top-up funding so that the statutory assessment process is not the sole means of accessing this support. Such approaches could be applied across early years settings, schools and post-16 institutions to foster dialogue, build capacity and secure better outcomes.

Funding support for children and young people with very high needs

A very small proportion of the population of children and young people with SEN have needs so complex that they require a level of provision and support beyond that which

the majority of special schools would be able to provide. Ensuring that sufficient funding is in place to support the needs of these individuals can be challenging because the provision tends to be very high-cost. At the same time, the small numbers of such children and young people in any single local education system can make financial planning, commissioning and identifying suitable placements a complex process.

Through our fieldwork, we identified developing practice in pooling budgets between local health, social care and education services, and in these services agreeing criteria for accessing support and resources in advance. However, these examples of the system working in a joined-up fashion were the exception rather than the rule. Effective joint commissioning and joint funding with health services, and to a lesser extent social care, was one of the key challenges raised by local authorities in our fieldwork.

There were two specific issues that came to the fore. The first was that from the perspective of both local authorities and health professionals it proved very challenging to apportion costs consistently between health and social care for children with the most complex needs, and to a lesser extent for children with lower levels of need but a significant health component. Local authorities felt that too often the default position was that costs would be borne by the high needs block. Many health professionals to whom we spoke felt that they had not received sufficient guidance on what health services should and should not be funding, and consequently felt exposed.

To address this issue, we propose that the DfE should consider publishing joint guidance with the Department of Health (DH) and NHS England that clearly describes the role of clinical commissioning group (CCG) leads in SEN and sets out which aspects of provision should normally be funded by education services and which should be funded by health services.

The second issue that our fieldwork exposed was the challenges associated with effective commissioning for such a small group of children and young people. The very small number of individuals with profound and complex needs who present each year means that there tend to be few providers in a defined local area that are able to meet the needs of such children. This narrows the commissioning options of the local authority and leads to increasing numbers of children and young people being placed in residential provision a long way from their families. Some areas have begun to address this issue through joint commissioning of places with neighbouring local authorities, but were very much of the view that a more systematic approach would be of benefit to them and others.

We also interrogated the extent to which local authorities, and in particular smaller local authorities, were able to manage the uneven profile of demand for highly-specialist places and services given their high cost. Generally local authorities felt that despite the high costs of meeting the needs of this group of children and young people, they were

able to plan their provision and manage their high-needs budget accordingly. We believe that this is a situation which should be kept under review, and possibly explored on a wider scale than has been possible within the remit of this research, particularly in the context of possible changes to how the high needs block and the schools block are distributed.

We propose, therefore, that the DfE should consider piloting sub-regional or regional approaches to joint strategic commissioning of provision for very high-need low-incidence SEN. Doing this in areas where there is a history of successful collaboration would provide a basis for testing more systematic regional partnerships.

**WIRRAL COUNCIL
SCHOOLS FORUM 20th OCTOBER 2015
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDRENS SERVICES**

Arrangements for High Needs Funding 2016-17

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises papers issued by the EFA over the Summer about High Needs Funding and makes recommendations in respect of changes to high needs places in special schools with effect from September 2016.

2.0 SCHOOLS REVENUE FUNDING 2016-17 OPERATIONAL GUIDE

This paper as it relates to primary and secondary schools is reported elsewhere on this agenda. In respect of High Needs Funding (funding for special schools, bases, non-maintained special schools, independent special schools, alternative provision, EMAP and the Hospital School) the EFA have indicated the allocation for place funding and other high needs funding will remain at the same level as 2015-16. For Wirral this should therefore be based around the current budget as follows:

High Needs Budget 2015-16

Places	£
Maintained Special Schools	9,793,400
Independent Non Maintained Special Schools	942,000
Wirral Hospitals School	1,352,300
EMAP	733,400
SEN bases	2,816,800
	15,637,900
Top Ups	
Statements / EHCP's	4,458,800
Top Ups - Special Schools	6,141,200
Independent Non Maintained Special Schools	3,383,300
Home Teaching	308,900
EMAP	420,800
SEN bases	629,400
FE, 6th Form and other providers	742,700
Contingency	485,700
	16,570,800
SEN support	2,089,700
	34,298,400

Note there are currently 28 places (£280,000) funded from reserves.

There will be no move during 2016-17 to place funding being based on school census (lagged) data. The EFA still have concerns about the quality of data and the turbulence this change may cause. LA's may however adjust place funding so that the number of places allocated to schools and other institutions broadly reflects the anticipated take up. These adjustments may not be made to 6th form provision and adjustments should be discussed with those schools concerned. Overall changes should be planned to be cost neutral.

The EFA must be informed of changes as they affect academy schools and FE provision by 16th November.

There is no process planned to enable LA's or institutions to apply for additional high needs funding.

The appendix attached to this report, indicates the current places, pupils, changes and reasons for changes to high needs places. These have all been discussed with those schools affected. At this time the overall position is a net increase in places of 5 (£50,000). The implications of this change will need to be taken into account as part of next years budget. Prior to any submission to the EFA proposals will be discussed in Headteacher groups and will be part of a further report to the next meeting.

3.0 SEN FUNDING LONG TERM CHANGES

Earlier this year the DfE asked authorities and schools about alternative ways of distributing SEN resources as part of a national review of schools funding and a National Fair Funding Formula. This "Call for Evidence" was considered by a working party of the Forum and was reported to the January meeting.

Since then the EFA has looked at responses and published a summary paper
Some of the comments include:

1. What proxy factors offer the best way of distributing funds

Authorities felt that FSM data whilst relevant could be significantly flawed by UIFSM, others thought that links to numbers of statements or EHCP's should be avoided. Many respondents suggested using health data

2. How can allocations for SEN be fairer.

Authorities were keen for a transition phase and noted that current allocations reflect historic funding which may not be fit for purpose. Some favoured universal bandings and others supported changes to reflect growing populations.

3. How should SEN be handled where specialisms and costs exceed the level of individual authorities?

Comments that provision should be made in respect of multiple and complex needs, where costs exceeded £19,000, for High Cost Low Incidence SEN (HCLI), dual sensory loss, or regional brokerage systems.

4. What proxy indicators should be used for High incidence low cost SEND

SEN assessment data can create perverse incentives; however low attainment KS2 and social / mental health involvement were considered strong indicators. There was general agreement to the use of deprivation and prior attainment.

5. How should authorities get the right balance between pre-determined funding bands and the need to take account of individual circumstances?

Have a matrix for the level and type of need.

A needs led funding that follows the needs of the pupil.

Retain a contingency fund

Have a standard mechanism for requesting additional support within thresholds.

6. What funding systems reduce bureaucracy?

Using formulas

Using census data

The EFA stops overseeing place numbers.

7. How are LA's allocating funding to Early Years?

A variety of methods are being used (as on Wirral).

The consultation appears to have given some useful feedback and a variety of suggestions, but no clear direction.

4.0 RESEARCH ON FUNDING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEN – ISOS PARTNERSHIP.

This report was published by the DfE in July, summarising the work by ISOS who researched SEN funding arrangements and practices. The report's executive summary is attached. Some of its key points are:

- Historic high needs spend does not appear to match very closely with need.
- Distribution of the High Needs block is not transparent, objective or fair.
- It is likely that a simple formula based on deprivation, prior attainment, and disability and health data would result in a distribution of funding that as at least as good as the current system.
- There are concerns over notional SEN budgets and that they do not correlate to reported need.
- Early Years has too many different funding systems
- The use of lagged numbers for place funding may make the system more difficult.
- The post 16 sector reports problems matching places and pupils
- There is little support for a national banding framework and little evidence that LA's work regionally to align bandings
- Joint working of health, education and social care was the exception rather than the rule

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the published documents are considered in more detail in the Schools Forum SEN working group.
2. That this work helps inform a consultation paper on High Needs Funding in schools.

3. That the Schools Forum endorses the changes identified in agreed High Needs places.

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

Proposed Changes in High Needs Places - Maintained and Academy Schools

Appendix 1

	Pupils Summer 2015	Pupils Autumn 2015	Current EFA Place Number	Proposed Autumn 2016	Change	Reason
Special Schools						
Elleray Park	98	103	90	110	20	Pupil growth
Gilbrook	57	51	55	55	0	
Hayfield	102	95	120	120	0	
Orrets Meadow	72	70	66	66	0	
Stanley	107	108	90	120	30	Pupil growth
Lyndale	19	12	40	0	-40	Closure
	455	439	461	471	10	
Clare Mount	188	202	194	204	10	Pupil growth
Foxfield	112	122	133	133	0	
Kilgarth	52	45	50	55	5	205 increase
Meadowside	66	57	75	75	0	
Observatory	54	49	50	55	5	2015 increase
	472	475	502	522	20	
Bases						
Bidston Village EIB	17	13	24	24	0	
New Brighton EIB	10	11	12	12	0	
Dev Park Lang Unit	11	13	10	10	0	
New Brighton Lang Unit	10	10	10	10	0	
The Priory Lang Unit	11	12	10	10	0	
Dev Park ASC Base	13	13	16	16	0	
Eastway ASC Base	16	14	16	16	0	
Fender ASC Base	16	11	16	16	0	
Woodslee ASC Base	8	6	8	8	0	
Townfield HI Base	10	10	10	10	0	
					0	
Bebington High ERP	19	15	25	20	-5	Pupil reduction
Birkenhead Park ERP	14	8	20	10	-10	Phased reduction
Hilbre High ERP	10	12	15	15	0	
Kingsway Academy ERP	18	11	30	20	-10	Pupil reduction
Oldershaw ERP	10	12	20	20	0	
Woodchurch High ERP	13	12	15	15	0	
	206	183	257	232	-25	
Riverside SEBD Base	8	6	8	8	0	
St Michaels SEBD Base	8	5	8	8	0	
EMA	133	78	80	80	0	
Wirral Hospitals Schools			80	80	0	
			1396	1401	5	
Wirral Met	63	72	62	TBC		
Birkenhead 6th Form	56	59	66	TBC		

Special School Numbers as at September 2015

Primary

	Early Years		F1		F2		Yr1		Yr2		Yr3		Yr4		Yr5		Yr6		Yr7		Yr8		Total	Admission Number
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Elleray Park	2	0	6	3	14	1	9	1	10	2	14	5	6	4	11	5	6	4	0	0	0	0	103	99
Gilbrook	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	1	14	1	13	1	14	1	0	0	0	0	51	55
Hayfield	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	3	2	2	0	3	0	7	2	8	2	0	0	0	0	33	60
Hayfield CDU	0	0	0	0	4	1	5	3	7	0	4	0	9	2	9	1	14	3	0	0			62	60
Orrets Meadow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	6	2	10	1	12	4	2	0	0	0	40	42
Orrets CDU	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	2	3	4	2	5	9	1	0	0	0	0	30	24
Stanley	0	0	4	0	9	4	6	4	15	6	13	3	14	3	8	6	11	2	0	0	0	0	108	99
Lyndale	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	1	12	40
Totals																						439	479	

Secondary

	Yr5		Yr6		Yr7		Yr8		Yr9		Yr10		Yr11		Yr12		Yr13		Yr14		Total	Admission Number	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F			
Clare Mount	0	0	0	0	25	9	24	7	20	6	20	14	24	12	17	5	12	3	3	1	202	194	
Foxfield	1	0	0	2	14	6	14	4	6	6	15	8	13	5	5	3	5	3	8	4	122	133	
Kilgarth	0	0	0	0	6	0	10	0	6	0	12	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45	55	
Meadowside	0	0	0	0	3	3	1	2	2	1	2	3	4	2	9	3	2	7	8	5	57	75	
Observatory	0	0	0	0	9	0	11	3	3	0	11	2	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	49	55	
Totals																						475	512

Base & Enhanced Resourced Provision Numbers as at September 2015

Primary

	Early Years		F1		F2		Yr1		Yr2		Yr3		Yr4		Yr5		Yr6		Yr7		Yr8		Total	Admission Number
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
	Bidston Village EIB	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	4	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0		
New Brighton EIB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	11	12
Dev Park Lang Unit	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	10
New Brighton Lang Unit	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
The Priory Lang Unit	0	0	0	0	2	1	7	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	10
Dev Park ASC Base	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	4	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	13	16
Eastway ASC Base	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	3	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	14	16
Fender ASC Base	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	11	16
Woodslee ASC Base	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	6	8
Townfield HI Base	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10

Riverside
SEBD Base

St Michaels
SEBD Base

Secondary

	Yr5		Yr6		Yr7		Yr8		Yr9		Yr10		Yr11		Yr12		Yr13		Yr14		Total	Admission Number
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Bebington High ERP	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	2	0	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	15	25
Birkenhead High ERP	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	30
Hilbre High ERP	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	12	15
Kingsway Academy ERP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	30
Oldershaw ERP	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	12	20
Woodchurch High ERP	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	3	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	15
Totals																					70	135

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM - 20TH OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDRENS SERVICES

SCHOOL REDUNDANCY COSTS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report describes proposed changes to the funding of redundancy costs in schools that may be put in place from April 2016.

2.0 CURRENT POSITION

2.1 Redundancy costs in respect of staff in schools that are affected are based on statutory weeks, multiplied by average salary. Generally the average salaries in schools are significantly higher than the statutory entitlement.

2.2 Schools may seek to reduce their workforce and in certain circumstances to make staff redundant for a number of reasons including:

- School closure, merger, federation.
- Changes in school funding.
- Restructure.
- Falling school rolls.
- Other such as changes in school curriculum.

- o The Local Authority (LA) works closely with schools and governors to support changes in schools, ensuring that employment legislation and guidance is followed and that the intended outcomes are achieved.

Schools contribute 25% to the cost of redundancies and the LA fund the remaining 75%. This position is in respect of maintained schools only; academies pay all redundancy costs from their budget allocation from the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

2.3 In 2015-16 the LA has a budget of £128,300 to meet its share of school redundancy costs. This has been benchmarked with statistical neighbours as follows:

Spend per capita – Wirral	£4
Statistical Neighbours	£1
England average	£5

2.4 Redundancy costs in previous years are set out below:

School Redundancy Costs

	2013-14		2014-15	
	LA £000	Schools £000	LA £000	Schools £000
Falling Rolls	180	60	100	33
Restructure	22	6		
Deficit	1		70	24
Fund changes	6	2	4	1
Other	18	6	27	9
Total	227	74	201	67
Number	30		22	

3.0 SCHOOL FINANCE REGULATIONS

3.1 The Education Act 2002 sets out the legal framework for the treatment of redundancies' and associated costs in schools. The act states that costs incurred in respect of the dismissal of staff in school should not be met from school budget shares unless the authority has good reason for doing so.

3.2 The School Revenue Funding guide by the EFA provides further guidance and prevents any new redundancy costs being charged to central school budgets.

4.0 PROPOSED REDUNDANCY POLICY

4.1 It is proposed that Wirral's school redundancy policy is in future based on the LA funding 75% of redundancy costs where the following conditions are met:

- The school has or has had significant falling rolls.
- Falling rolls are evidenced.
- Evidence is provided that where there are falling rolls that there is a planned reduction / restructure.
- The decision to make redundancies in this situation is taken in consultation with LA finance, HR and School Improvement staff.

The LA will not consider funding redundancies and severance costs where:

- o The deficit has arisen for reasons other than falling rolls, such as formula changes or the impact of inflationary increases.
- o The school cannot demonstrate it has planned the reduction/restructure.
- o The school has not taken or followed LA advice.
- o The school has incurred unreasonable expenditure.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 A brief consultation paper is planned this term to obtain a broad view which will be reported to Cabinet in the New Year along with the views from the Forum.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Forum are asked for a view on this proposal

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM 20th October 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Scheme for Financing Schools – Revisions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report informs Schools Forum of revisions that are required to the Scheme for Financing Schools.

Directed revisions 2015

- 2.9: Requirement for maintained schools to publish a register of the business interests of their governors, along with any relationships to staff.

- 3.6: Clarification that borrowing includes the use of finance leases and is not allowable, with the exception of certain schemes approved by the Secretary of State. Currently only Salix loans have such approval.

Consultation

Schools will be consulted on the scheme change in October 2015 in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the results of which will be reported to the Forum in the spring term.

Recommendation

That Forum notes the report.

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM - 20th October 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Wirral Schools Forum Membership

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the representation on Schools Forum, and advises on terms of office, current vacancies and arrangements for electing new members.

2. Schools Forum Current Representation

The schools forum has 30 members made up as follows:-

Table 1

5	Primary Headteachers
5	Primary Governors
1	Secondary Headteachers
1	Secondary Governors
1	Special Headteacher
1	Special Governors
1	Nursery Representative
1	Pupil Referral Unit (EMAP)
16	Total Schools Membership
7	Academy Representatives
7	Total Academy Membership
1	Non-teacher representative
1	Teacher representative
1	Catholic Diocese
1	Church of England Diocese
1	Further Education
2	PVI Early Years Providers
7	Total Non-Schools Membership
30	Total Membership

3. Membership changes

Regulations governing the forum requires school/academy membership to take account of pupil weighting. Table 2 below details the total pupils in each school phase and the required number of school and academy forum members. The current membership is in accordance with these ratios:-

Table 2

Phase	Pupil Numbers (Jan 2015 Census)	Forum Representatives
Primary	24,109	10
Secondary	5,772	2
Academy	16,309	7
Total	46,190	19

4. Schools Forum Terms of Office

Generally forum members are elected to serve a 4 year term of office. The table below identifies when the current terms of office expire.

	2012-2016	2013-2017	2014-2018	2015-2019	Vacancy	Total
Total Schools Membership						
Primary Headteachers	2		1	2		5
Primary Governors	2	1	2			5
Secondary Headteachers		1				1
Secondary Governors				1		1
Special Headteacher			1			1
Special Governors					1	1
Nursery Representative	1					1
Academy Pupil Referral Unit (EMAP)				1		1
Total Academy Membership						
Academy Representative	1	3	1	2		7
Total Non-Schools Membership						
Non-teacher representative				1		1
Teacher representative			1			1
Catholic Diocese				1		1
Church of England Diocese					1	1
Further Education	1					1
PVI Early Years Providers	1			1		2
	8	5	6	8	3	30

5. Arrangements to Elect New Members in 2015

There are currently 2 positions that are vacant as at 1st September 2015. The arrangements put in place are as follows:-

Special School Governor Representative

Nominations were requested, but there has been no response, so this will be re-issued shortly.

C of E Diocese Representative

This is currently being discussed at the Dioceses Headteacher meeting.

6. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The position of Chair and Vice Chair are currently vacant. Schools Forum Guidance recommends that a Chair should be in post for no more than 2 years. With this in mind it is suggested that the Forum operates on a similar model to the School Headteacher Groups where the Chair and Vice Chair are elected for 12 months, then the Vice Chair becomes Chair and a new Vice Chair is nominated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Forum notes the report.

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM – 20th October 2015

WORK PLAN

Meeting Date	Wednesday 13th January 2016	Wednesday 27th April 2016	Wednesday 6th July 2016	Autumn Term
				Elect chair & vice chair Membership
Budget	Schools Budget 2016-17 Budget monitoring update Pupil Premium De-delegation of budgets	Schools Budget update 2016-17 School Budget Monitoring Update	Schools Budget Outturn School Balances and Reserves Budget monitoring update	Budget monitoring update Combined budgets Early Years
Consultation	High Needs Funding		Review of High Needs Funding Formula	National Fair Funding Formula for schools, High Needs and Early Years Local School Funding Formula, High Needs and Early Years proposals
DfE Regs & guidelines	School Finance Regulations			Scheme for Financing Schools
Working Groups	School Formula High Needs Early Years	School Formula High Needs Early Years	School Formula High Needs Early Years	School Formula High Needs Early Years
Other	Forum representation update Combined Budgets CLCs Alternative Provision Wirral Safeguarding Children's Board	School Admissions Early years budget MEAS Update Traded services Primary place planning	De-delegated services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency • Special Staff Costs • Library Service • Insurance • FSM eligibility • Behaviour Support Traded services	Membership Combined budgets PPM and PFI budgets High needs places and alternative provision Traded services 16-25 High Needs provision

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