

# **WIRRAL COUNCIL**

## **WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM**

**29<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2015**

### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

#### **REVIEW OF HIGH NEEDS FORMULA: SUMMER TERM 2015**

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##### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 An undertaking was agreed with the Forum for officers to review the High Needs Funding Formula for schools and academies in the summer term 2015. This report provides an update to the Forum on the arrangements being made to carry out this work.

##### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The current funding formula for High Needs was approved by the Schools Forum in November 2013 and Cabinet in January 2014. This formula is principally concerned with the distribution of High Needs Top Up Funding for schools ie the Plus element of the Place Plus funding system introduced by the DfE in 2013.

Top Up funding (the "Plus" element) reflects the additional support costs in excess of place funding for individual pupils and students and takes into account factors such as the pupils individual needs and facilities/support provided.

Wirral's approach introduced in 2014-15 a system of funding for particular types of need within bands. This has resulted in bands for:

- Students attending Specialist SEN provision: Wirral's 11 special schools, and 14 resourced provisions in mainstream schools
- Students attending independent non-maintained special schools and independent schools (only partially implemented);
- Students in mainstream schools with specialist SEN funding and /or statements of SEN;
- Students in post 16 provision with element three costs; Further Education Colleges, Sixth Forms and Independent Specialist Providers (ISP) (only partially implemented);
- Students attending alternative provision; two primary behaviour bases and Wirral's Alternative Schools Programme (WASP - KS3/4 Pupil Referral Unit - short stay school).

The system introduced took account of the need to:

- ensure stability of budgets by minimising as much as possible any disturbance to current levels of funding;
- take account of possible fluctuations to funding because of part year occupancy of places and the interest of the authority to have places available;
- not to be too simplistic;

- recognise the needs of a growing number of pupils with social communication needs with relatively stronger funding than has been the case to date;
- recognise the resource intensive nature of making provision for those with the most profound and multiple difficulties;
- honour existing commitments;
- take account of the fact that there was limited scope to redistribute monies without additional funding for pupils already in the system.
- vulnerability for SEN provision, both when pupil numbers and places fall. Proposals to help overcome this included a weighted spring and summer term top up for new arrivals and a contingency fund to support specialist provision experiencing financial difficulties whilst future options are considered

The following bands were agreed

Top Up	Cognition and Learning	Communication and Interaction	Behaviour, Emotional and Social	Physical, Medical and Sensory
<b>Band One (≈ £1,000)</b>	Hayfield, Clare Mount, Orrets Meadow			
<b>Band Two (≈ £6,000)</b>		Hayfield, Clare Mount, Orrets Meadow	Gilbrook	
<b>Band Three (≈ £7,000)</b>	Stanley, Elleray, Lyndale, Foxfield, Meadowside			
<b>Band Four (≈ £8,000)</b>	Stanley, Elleray, Lyndale, Foxfield, Meadowside		Kilgarth, Observatory	
<b>Band Five (≈ £16,000+)</b>	Stanley, Elleray, Lyndale, Foxfield, Meadowside	Stanley, Elleray, Lyndale, Foxfield, Meadowside		Stanley, Elleray, Lyndale, Foxfield, Meadowside

Previous reports noted that these changes were for a 2 year period, during which time the formula would be reviewed.

In 2015-16 there is a budget of £16.6m for SEN Top Ups split over the following areas:

Statements	Early Years	292,200
	Primary	1,325,700
	Secondary (including 6th Forms)	1,998,300
	Exceptional Need	449,200
	Other	383,100
Top Ups	Special Schools (and 6th Forms)	6,141,200
	Independent Non Maintained Special Schools	3,383,300
	Home Teaching	301,400
	EMAP/WASP	420,800
	SEN units - resourced and alternative provision	629,400
	Support costs	11,700
	Further Education, 6th Form College and other providers	742,700
	Contingency	500,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>16,579,000</b>

**Additional work** will also be carried out as part of the review, which is described below:

- 2.2 The eligibility criteria for determining thresholds as to whether to conduct an EHCP assessment needs updating. Schools and academies will be consulted on the final draft.
- 2.3 There is a requirement on Local Authorities to provide advice to schools on how it expects them to utilise their element 1 and 2 funding (Notional SEN Budget allocation to schools). Schools and academies via their consultative arrangements will be involved in this piece of work.
- 2.4 Given the new focus on supporting mental health and wellbeing for children and young people work needs to begin on looking at our commissioning of school places for pupils with Statements or Education, Health and Care Plans for Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties.
- 3.0 Additional capacity will be sourced for a period of up to 30 days to carry out this work during the Summer Term 2015. It is expected that there will be a range of meetings with schools and officers, together with the Schools Forum working group. The costs will be met from an additional SEN Implementation grant.

The final report will be brought to the Forum and will inform any future consultation with schools.

#### 4.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 That the Forum notes the report.

**Julia Hassall**  
**Director of Children's Services**