

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PRESSURES ON HIGH NEEDS FUNDING 2018-2019

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The number of children being identified with SEND and requiring specialist/ special schools continues to rise. The work that will be shortly completed by Sally Gibbs will provide a forecast of what the changing landscape will look like moving forward. The current picture (September 2017) is as follows:

SPECIAL SCHOOL FIGURES

The number of children within the special school sector is exceptionally high.

Primary School	Admission Number	Sept 2017 Numbers	Number Under	Number Over
Elleray Park	110	116	0	6
Gilbrook	55	60	0	5
Hayfield	120	129	0	9
Orrets	70	75	0	5
Stanley	120	122	0	2
Total	471	502	0	27

Secondary School	Admission Number	Sept 2017 Numbers	Number Under	Number Over
Clare Mount	216	232	0	16
Foxfield	133	132	1	0
Kilgarth	55	48	7	0
Meadowside	75	66	9	0
The Observatory	55	46	9	0
Total	534	524	26	16

2.2 SPECIALIST PROVISION: BASE NUMBERS – SEPTEMBER 2017

PRIMARY BASE NUMBERS

School/Base	Admission Number	Sept 2017 Numbers	Number Under	Number Over
Bidston Village	24	20	4	0
New Brighton S&L	10	9	1	
New Brighton MLD	12	11	1	0
Eastway	16	15	1	0
Devonshire Park S&L	10	10	0	
Devonshire Park ASC	16	12	4	0
Fender ASC	16	15	1	0
Woodslee ASC	8	7	1	0
The Priory S&L	10	9	1	0
Total	122	108	14	0

SECONDARY BASE NUMBERS

School/Base	Admission Number	Sept 2017 Numbers	Number Under	Number Over
Beb High	25	12	13	0
Hilbre	30	23	7	0
Oldershaw	20	14	6	0
Woodchurch	15	16	0	1
Total	90	65	26	1

The numbers in both the specialist bases and special schools will be closely monitored during 2017-2018 and should adjustments be required these will be brought to the attention of schools and Schools Forum later in the autumn term of 2017.

ADDITIONAL PRESSURES TO THE HIGH NEEDS FUNDING BUDGET

Analysis of Department for Education (DfE) data reveals that in the past four years there has been a substantial increase in the number of pupils with SEND who attend a specialist school setting, up from 5.6 per cent in 2012 to 8.5 per cent in 2016. The 2017 figure for those children with a statement or an EHCP attending a maintained special school or a special school academy in England 35%, Wirral 56.4%.

With increases in the High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant being limited in recent years, Wirral's High Needs budget has been under increasing pressure. Whilst there is additional funding coming into the High Needs Budget in April 2018, (around £800,000) there are already additional demands upon it. They are:

- Home Tuition Service - there is a need for this Service to be adequately funded from April 2018.
- Budget pressures both with secondary CLD provision and within primary/secondary SEMH provision. This is as a result of the complexity of the children increasing.
- The funding for EMA increased from 80 places to 100 places in September 2017 and these additional places will continue to require funding moving forward.
- The funding of additional post 16 places
- The increase in numbers in Secondary special school provision for ASC pupils.
- The Alternative Provision at the Hive that is being delivered by Progress Schools and the financial implications that this will have.
- The impact the increase in costs of the School Meals Service will have on the Special Schools budget.

- Requirements for additional Speech and Language support following assessment of need. Short term funding of £50,000 has been identified for the remainder of 2017/2018. This is for those children who have gone through the EHC assessment process and had identified SaLT needs linked to their educational outcomes. From April 2018, SALT support in schools following EHC Needs Assessment will have to be funded from existing Local Authority SaLT resources or from additional funding.
- Inflationary cost pressures across the sector

In light of these financial demands the Local Authority will arrange to meet with the High Needs Funding Group in October and discuss them in more depth.

There may be a need for School's Forum to consider whether it is appropriate to consider top slicing a small percentage off Primary and Secondary Schools' budget (up to 0.5%) to support the pressures within the High Needs block.

A further report will be brought back to the School's Forum in December 2017.

Recommendation

The Forum notes the report and refers it to the High Needs Working Group

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