

Item 13

Recommendations of the High Needs Block Working Group

Contact for further information:
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Brief Summary

On 13 June 2023, the High Needs Block Working Group considered a number of reports, including;

- **High Needs Block Supplementary Grant Task and Finish Group;**

A summary of the information presented, and the Working Group's views are provided in this report

Recommendation

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report
- b) Ratify the Working Groups Recommendations

Detail

On 13 June 2023, the High Needs Block Working Group considered a number of reports. A summary of the information presented, and the Working Group's recommendations are provided below:

1. High Needs Block Supplementary Grant Task and Finish Group

Following discussions with the Forum, it was agreed that the High Needs Supplementary Grant would be calculated in two parts:

- A payment to all Special Schools and PRU's as per the DfE guidance and conditions of grant.
- A further allocation of a WPN element of additional high needs funding for Primary and Secondary schools, as well as the FE Colleges, will follow a



similar process as last year but with additional consideration for Early Years settings for pupils with EHCP plans.

Using this methodology, £2.5m remained unallocated. During the Spring Term Forum meetings, it was agreed to set up a task and finish group to allocate the remaining funding.

In Summary the funding was allocated;

- £600k to create two central Inclusion Engagement Support Teams to support children without an Educational Health Care Plans, funded for one year.
- £400k allocated to Y11/12 transition teams for Alternative Provision schools, administered through SEND central team.
- £150k Support for transition between EYFS/Reception to be funded through the inclusion hub banker schools.
- £300k Support for transition between Y6/7 to be to be funded through the inclusion hub banker schools.
- £1,050,000 to be transferred back to Reserves for High Needs Block.

The letter found in Appendix B was sent to all schools on 30th March and the minutes, Appendix A, was distributed to members and will be reported at the Full Forum in July.

Following conversations with the High Needs and Early Years working group a number of concerns were raised regarding the distribution of the transitional funds by the Inclusion Hubs.

Originally the LA is proposed to reconvene the High Needs Block Task and Finish group to establish a best practice to distribute the transitional funding. Officers attended the Inclusion Hub District meeting on 22nd June 2023, each district hub in attendance provided a brief update on their plans for the funding. Once the information has been received from all district hubs, it will be provided to the schools Forum. A report will also be provided in December to review the funding.

In addition, the IEST Team for those with EHCP's is currently set up and is establishing ongoing support with schools. It's challenging but is successful. The Pre EHCP IEST Team is currently in the recruitment stage and should be operational by the Autumn

The Forum is asked to:

- a) **Note the information**

2. High Needs Block Commissioned Places

No changes proposed to the PRU process, with correspondence on indicative place numbers for 2024/25 being circulated in autumn term 2023, to include input from the service to refine the commissioned places, and the continuation of the additional place top up funding arrangements as a continued safety mechanism

Sapphire Murray shared a report around the current Alternative Provision service, this can be found in Appendix A.



The outcome of this report is to create a panel to make collective decision regarding allocation of intervention places at PRUs. Currently seeking representatives to set up a task and finish group to organise a more efficient process.

Thanks to those members who have volunteered to be part of the group. If any other members wish to be on the group, please let the Schools Forum Clerk know.

The Forum is asked to:

- a) **Note the Information**
- b) **Express any views and seek representatives for the task and finish group**

3. SEN Green Paper

[Link to Report](#)

Report added for information. The LA are awaiting any further updates.

The plan explains the proposals make sure more children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision get the support they need.

The plan includes:

- responses to the feedback we received
- the improvements following feedback
- the proposals to test and review

Members also raised concerns regarding the timescales and the lack of involvement with the review from the LA. Schools forum to email to enquire if we can provide any support or information to the review. Any responses will be reported back to the group.

The Forum is asked to:

- a) **Note the report**

4. EHCP funding challenges

Andrea Riley, Senior SEND Manager, presented a presentation to the Working Group around the challenges faced by schools around the SEND funding. Schools often feel the banding funding often does not meet the costs to provide the support needed.

It was noted that Lancashire follow the Nation Funding formula and in recent years increased the WPN figure year on year were there is capacity to do so. Schools also receive Notional SEN funding which should be the starting point of any queries.

To resolves these issues going forward, Schools Finance Officers will attend an Inclusion team meetings to provide funding training.

