



Briefing note

To: Schools Forum

Author: Mark Longstaff on behalf of the SEND Working Group.

Date: 16th November 2016

Title of Briefing: Position Statement – High Needs SEND Provision and Emerging Funding Pressures for 2017-18

1. Introduction

This Briefing Note sets out the forecast outturn for 2016, emerging pressures for 2017-18 and recommends that Forum requests that the SEND Working Group prepares a paper for the December meeting of Forum making specific recommendations for addressing funding pressures in 2017-18.

The SEND Working Group, a sub group of Schools Forum, is chaired by Scott Woodhouse, Strategic Commissioning Manager and includes representation from Special Schools, Mainstream Schools and the Local Authority.

2. Background

Local Authorities have the responsibility for ensuring that sufficient resources are set aside within the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) to meet anticipated demand in relation to High Needs SEND Provision. This requires strategic decisions to be taken, based on information and intelligence about needs, about how funding for 2017-18 should be distributed between the three funding blocks of the DSG, i.e. the Schools, High Needs and Early Years blocks.

Our strategy for investing in special education provision within North Tyneside has minimised the need for children and young people to be placed in more expensive placements outside of the borough which can also create difficulties for parents and families in maintaining contact with their child.

3. Position at the end of 2015-16

At the end of 2015-16, following the transfer of under spends from the Schools and Early Years blocks, the residual High Needs balance was -£0.785M. This was carried forward into 2016-17 as reported to Schools Forum and this was agreed to be addressed in future years.

4. High Needs Pressures 2016-17

High Needs Top Up allocations continue to be a pressure across all schools. At this point in time we can only estimate the amount of Top Up allocations as this is constantly changing throughout the year. The latest position takes into account the summer term SEND High Needs Top Up notification. The most recent High Needs Block monitoring position is forecasting an in year under spend of £0.069M taking into account current Top up pressures.

5. Emerging Pressures for 2017-18

The following areas of High Needs provisions are showing pressures for 2017-18.

Special School Places

In addition to overspends in Top Up budgets as mentioned earlier there are pressures in Special School places. Following the October census and the data from special schools, two of the special schools (Beacon Hill and Benton Dene) have admitted significantly more pupils than their planned places and are predicted to do so again in 2017-18. We are currently reviewing the level of need and are working with the Special Schools to establish the level of places required for future years. As each planned place is allocated £10,000 we are anticipating a pressure of £0.280M.

Special Schools /Mainstream / Academies Top Up

If the current trend continues into 2017-18, the forecast overspend in Top Up for all schools is estimated to be in the region of £0.181M.

Commissioned Services

Since the last meeting of the SEND Working Group on 9 November the Commissioning Team has received further correspondence from schools indicating pressures in Commissioning services. No discussion with the school or further analysis has been undertaken at the point of preparing this report for Forum.

The forecast balances do not take into account any clawback at this point in time. Further clarity is required with regard to these arrangements for 2017-18. Work is currently being undertaken with the SEND Working Group and data is being collated to review the current systems for clawback and will be shared with the School's Forum at a later date.

The Table below sets out the forecast level of balances taking into account known areas of pressure and an estimate cost associated with the pressures.

High Needs Block Emerging Pressures	£M
2015-16 Balance	-785
2016-17 Forecast outturn taking into account Emerging pressures	69
2017-18 Emerging Pressures	-461
Cumulative Balance 2017-18	-1177

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- Note the residual balance for 2015-16.
- Note the forecast High Needs Block outturn for 2016-17 and emerging pressures.
- Note the emerging issues that need to be considered and quantified in establishing the 2017-18 High Needs Block.
- Agree that the SEND Working Group should prepare a paper for consideration by Schools Forum at the December meeting.
- Highlight any specific points or principles they would like SEND Working Group to adopt or consider in preparing their recommendations.
- Be mindful of the DfE's Review of High Needs funding arrangements. Further details are awaited from DfE.