



**Schools Forum**  
21 February 2018

**Report from the Strategic Director  
of Children and Young People**

**Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block 2018/19**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	Three: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Need Block Budget for 2018/19</li> <li>• 2% Top up uplift by provision</li> <li>• Rebasing of Brent River College Place Plus funding for 2018/19</li> </ul>
<b>Background Papers:</b>	N/A
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## **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To report back to Schools Forum on the work of the High Needs Task and Finish Group, which has been asked to look at the 2018/19 High Needs block budget, and to consider options for investing the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserves earmarked for responding to High Needs pressures.
- 1.2 This report sets out the proposed 2018/19 High Needs Block budget, including changes from the 2017/18 financial year. It also makes two proposals for utilising DSG reserves.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Schools Forum confirms the detailed allocations within the High Needs Block budget for 2018/19.
- 2.2 The Schools Forum approves that a mapping exercise on high needs provision for 19-25 year olds is undertaken, utilising approximately £50k of DSG reserves. The mapping exercise will inform the joint commissioning strategy between the local authority and health partners.

- 2.3 The Schools Forum endorses the Task and Finish Group proposal to develop options for an Inclusion Support Fund, to be funded from DSG reserves.

### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 DSG allocations for 2018/19 were published by the DFE in December 2017
- 3.2 The high needs block allocation for 2018/19 is £54.8 million, which is a funding increase of £1.2M from the 2017/18 allocation.
- 3.3 The High Needs Task and Finish Group has met on three occasions since the October 2017 Schools Forum. It has considered the changes required to the High Needs budget for 2018/19 as a result of the pattern of demand and the inflationary cost pressures affecting all schools.
- 3.4 The Schools Forum has previously agreed to earmark £1M of the DSG reserves to meet the cost of investments or financial pressures for High Needs provision.

### **4.0 2018/19 High Needs Block Budget**

- 4.1 Appendix A is a table summarising the High Needs Block for 2018/19, and a comparison to the 2017/18 budgets. The proposed changes to the budget for 2018/19 were discussed and agreed by the high needs task and finish group. The main changes are outlined below.
  - 4.1.1 Manor School satellite provision (Hope Centre) will be budgeted for at 21 places from the 1st April 2018.
  - 4.1.2 The Avenue Special School provision will be budgeted for at 25 places from 1st September 2018.
  - 4.1.3 Fryent Primary School ARP will be budgeted for at 14 places from April 2018, rising to 28 places from September 2018.
  - 4.1.4 Sudbury Primary School ARP will be budgeted for at 3 places from September 2018.
  - 4.1.5 Top-up funding was reviewed and will be uplifted by 2% for 2018/19 (Appendix B)
  - 4.1.6 A single top-up rate for Brent River College was calculated, to provide consistency across the two sites (Appendix C)
  - 4.1.7 All salary budgets for High Needs support services have been uplifted by 1% as previously discussed at Schools Forum.

### **5.0 Early Years Inclusion Fund**

- 5.1 Schools forum has agreed that the early years Inclusion Fund will be increased by £400k in 2018/19, to £1.5m. Although this contribution will come from the early years block, the risk of overspend remains with the high needs block. This was discussed and accepted by the high needs task and finish group.

## **6.0 Ashley College**

- 6.1 The high needs task group recommended that the funding for Ashley College Pupil Referral Unit be remodelled, as the current 'place plus' funding formula does not reflect the commissioning arrangements at the PRU. The model will include a short term commissioning model and a longer term place funding model. A shadow budget will be set for 2018-19, and brought to the Schools Forum for approval for 2019-20.

## **7.0 19-25 Provision**

- 7.1 The high needs task and finish group highlighted the rising demand and increasing pressures in provision for 19-25 year olds.
- 7.2 It is apparent that those with very complex needs were, in the main, not remaining in educational settings. There is a question of where these young people move onto after leaving school.
- 7.3 There is a challenge to creating provision for this group, and this would involve working with partners such as the United Colleges - CNWL.
- 7.4 It is proposed to forum that DSG reserves are utilised to fund a mapping project on provision for 19-25 year olds. The required funding, based on staffing costs has been estimated at £50k. The project would aim to answer the following questions regarding provision for HN 19-25 year olds:
- i. What should the LA/Health partners be doing?
  - ii. What is currently being done?
  - iii. What level of demand is expected in the medium term?

## **8.0 Inclusion Support Fund**

- 8.1 The high needs task and finish group proposed developing a proposal for an Inclusion Support Fund. This was proposed as an investment fund to make use of the DSG reserve balances.
- 8.2 It was proposed that schools could make bids to access time limited funding which would be spent on improving their capacity to provide for high needs pupils.
- 8.3 This would improve the ability of mainstream schools to cater for High Needs pupils, and potentially reduce demand on the special schools.
- 8.4 A panel formed from member of the schools forum would approve the bids. The panel would also be able to consider joint commissioning from health partners.
- 8.5 For 2018/19 it is envisaged that £250k of DSG reserves could be utilised in order to provide funding for this.

## **9.0 Financial Implications**

- 9.1 The financial implications have been detailed in the body of this paper.

## **10.0 Legal Implications**

10.1 The proposals in this report have no legal implications.

## **11.0 Equality Implications**

11.1 The proposals in this report have no equality implications.

## **12.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

12.1 Not applicable.

### **Report sign off:**

**GAIL TOLLEY**

Strategic Director of Children and Young People