

## SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA ITEM

For Action

For Information



### **Brief Description of Item** (including the purpose / reason for presenting this for consideration by the Forum)

This report asks Forum members to consider the feedback received to the consultation on the 2024/25 High Needs Funding models.

### **Date (s) of any Previous Discussion at the Forum**

The consultation document was presented to the Schools Forum meeting 11 October 2023.

### **Background / Context**

The consultation document outlined the formula approach that the Authority proposes to use to delegate Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block funding to high needs providers, mainstream schools and academies and other settings in the 2024/25 financial year. In quick summary, we have proposed to:

- Uplift the rates of top up funding allocated via the existing EHCP Banded Model, as follows:

	(1) % Increase in Top Up Only	(2) % Increase in Top Up plus £6,000	(3) % Increase in Top Up plus £10,000
Band 3L	+ 3.6%	+ 1.0%	+ 0.7%
Band 3M	+ 2.5%	+ 1.0%	+ 0.7%
Band 3H	+ 2.0%	+ 1.0%	+ 0.7%
Band 4L	+ 2.1%	+ 1.3%	+ 1.0%
Band 4M	+ 1.9%	+ 1.3%	+ 1.1%
Band 4H	+ 1.7%	+ 1.3%	+ 1.1%
Protected 7	+ 1.7%	+ 1.4%	+ 1.3%

- Uplift the rates of funding allocated via the PRU / Alternative Provision Day Rate Model. Together, with the fixed £10,000 per place, a proposed 1.71% increase in the day rate will result in an overall 1.04% increase in funding per pupil for each occupied place.
- Continue unchanged the setting-led need factors that are applied in the funding of specialist provisions.
- Continue to pass through to special schools, special school academies, PRUs and alternative provision academies, the additional “3.4% place-element” funding that was allocated in 2023/24, as required by the DfE and the 2024/25 DSG Conditions of Grant.
- Continue to allocate the former Teacher Pay Grant and the former Teacher Pension Grant, separately from top up funding, using the method and values we used in 2023/24.
- Slightly amend our definition of Notional SEND budgets for mainstream schools and academies in 2024/25.
- Continue our SEND Funding Floor mechanism in support of Element 2 funding for SEND and EHCPs in mainstream primary and secondary settings.

The Authority presents separately to this Forum meeting, in Document QT, the annual SEND places sufficiency statement. This report was last presented to the Forum in December 2022. The Authority expects to present an annual update of the fuller DSG Management Plan, focusing on the High Needs Block, to the 10 January meeting.

### **Details of the Item for Consideration**

#### Consultation & Responses

The consultation ran between 11 October and 28 November. Responses could be submitted electronically via a web-based survey.

Forum members are encouraged to present their feedback from their discussions with colleagues.

### **Details of the Item for Consideration**

In support of the publication of the consultation document on Bradford Schools Online, School Funding Team attended the autumn term Chairs Governors session, the District Achievement Partnership (DAP), BSIP, the Secondary CEOs Group and the Primary & Secondary Business Manager Forums.

The Authority received two formal responses that was submitted using the web-based survey. One respondent only provided responses to the first two questions, to 'strongly disagree' with the proposals for uplifting the EHCP Banded Model, stating that the values of EHCP top-up funding are not sufficient to cover the increasing costs of staffing and resources. The other respondent agreed 'on balance' with the questions to which a response was provided, but also commenting that the values of EHCP top-up funding are not increasing at the same rate as salaries costs and that Government should be lobbied for more funds.

In presenting to various groups, the Authority did not receive any negative or other significant comments expressed in real time specifically about the proposals themselves. The District Achievement Partnership, whilst understanding that 1% is 'in line' with the mainstream funding settlement, expressed their continuing concern that it will be a challenge to manage budgets following a 1% increase in funding per occupied place, given the on-going rises in costs, especially salaries costs.

**Forum members are asked to consider whether any of the proposals should be amended and / or whether further information is required in order for the Schools Forum to make its recommendations, on 10 January 2024, on the Authority's High Needs Funding Model for 2024/25.**

### **Implications for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) (if any)**

As set out briefly in Document QR (DSG update). More detailed information will be presented on 10 January.

### **Appendices**

None

### **Recommendations**

- (1) The Forum is asked to consider the responses received to the consultation and whether any of the proposals on the 2024/25 high needs funding formulae, should be changed in the light of these responses.**
- (2) Members are asked to note that they will be asked to make final recommendations on High Needs Block formula funding on 10 January. As such, Members are asked to consider whether sufficient information has now been provided to enable these recommendations to be made.**

### **Contact Officer (name, telephone number and email address)**

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