

Blackpool Council

1 March 2021

SCHOOLS FORUM

Tuesday, 9 March 2021 at 9.15 am
MS Teams Meeting

A G E N D A

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 10)

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2021 as an accurate record.

To consider any Matters Arising not discussed elsewhere on the Agenda.

4 LOCAL AUTHORITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE (Pages 11 - 12)

Paul Turner, Interim Assistant Director – School Improvement and SEND to provide an update.

5 DSG BUDGET MONITORING 2020-21 (Pages 13 - 16)

Mark Golden, Finance Manager to provide an update.

6 HIGH NEEDS UPDATE (Pages 17 - 24)

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources to provide an update.

7 EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA 2021/22 (Pages 25 - 26)

Kirsty Thompson, School Funding Officer to provide an update.

8 DSG BUDGET PROPOSAL 2021/22 (Pages 27 - 30)

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources to provide an update.

9 COVID-19 (Pages 31 - 36)

Kirsty Thompson, School Funding Officer to provide an update on the financial support provided in the education sector during the COVID 19 pandemic.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To agree the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 15 June 2021.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Danielle Bowater, Democratic Governance Adviser, Tel: 01253 477202, e-mail danielle.bowater@blackpool.gov.uk

Copies of the agendas and minutes of the Schools Forum are available on the Council's website at www.blackpool.gov.uk

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

Present:

Maintained Primary School Head Teachers/Representative

Dr E Allen, St John Vianney
Ms H Moreton, Holy Family

Maintained Primary School Governor Representative

Ms M Lonican, School Governor, Our Lady of the Assumption

Special School Maintained Representative

Mr N Oldham, Highfurlong

Special School Academy / Free School Representative

Ms G Hughes, Park Community Academy

Academy School Representatives

Ms A Bailey, Highfield (Star Academies)
Mr S Eccles, St Mary's (BEBCMAT)
Mr R Farley, Westminster (FCAT) (Chair)
Mr M McIver, St George's/Baines Endowed (Cidari)
Mr E Vitalis, South Shore/Marton (Bright Futures)

Pupil Referral Unit

Ms W Casson, Educational Diversity

Non-Schools Members

Mr N Adams, Staff / Teacher Associations
Ms A Baines, Staff/Teacher Associations
Ms J Gray, Blackpool Sixth Form College
Mr R Rendell, Langdale Nursery, Early Years (left the meeting at 10am)

In Attendance:

Councillor K Benson, Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration
Mr M Golden, Finance Manager
Ms K Thompson, School Funding Officer
Mr P Thompson, Head of SEND
Mr P Turner, Head of Service for School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion
Mrs H Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources
Mrs D Bowater, Democratic Governance Adviser (minutes)

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Hilary Wood welcomed attendees to the meeting. It was acknowledged that there were a number of new members following the elections to Schools Forum and introductions were made, apologies were subsequently received from Graeme Dow (Anchorsolme / Sea View).

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

Formal thanks were extended to the Members who had left the Schools Forum Membership but contributed significantly to the group.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were noted.

3 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources presented the Membership Update to inform the group of the outcome of elections to Schools Forum for the term of office running from 1 January 2021 to 31 August 2023. The term of office would align with the academic year. It was noted that Jill Gray was the representative for Post 16 education not Jane Gray as indicated in the report.

There were no comments or questions and the report was noted.

4 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Forum considered the election of a Chairman of the Schools Forum until August 2021.

Resolved:

- **The Forum elected Roger Farley (Westminster / FCAT Academy School Representative) as Chairman of the Schools Forum until August 2021.**

5 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Having been elected, Roger Farley took the role of Chair from this point of the meeting. The Forum considered the election of a Vice Chairman of the Schools Forum until August 2021.

Resolved:

- **The Forum elected Edward Vitalis (South Shore / Marton / Bright Futures Academy School Representative) as Vice Chairman of the Schools Forum until August 2021.**

6 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 October 2020 were considered and agreed as an accurate record. At item 4, 'Review Forum Membership and Constitution', the term of office had been corrected from 2022 to 2023 as there had been an error in the date on the original report. The amended date was accepted.

Matters arising from the minutes not discussed elsewhere on the Agenda included:

Illuminate Funding – it was reiterated that the Illuminate Funding should be automatically provided with the child place. In cases where there was incomplete information relating to the child, a school could approach the Local Authority's Admissions Team and request the

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

funding.

Moving On Up Fund – it was noted that Roger Farley would chase up a response from the Opportunity Area to ascertain whether funding was available for the Moving On Up programme. It was noted that there had been delays in relation to the programme due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Unison Duties – following the recommendation at the October 2020 meeting, headteachers were consulted and chose proposal B in relation to the use of the accumulated union duty funds. Proposal B included:

- Inclusion of two days per week for a Unison school representative(s) to be released from school, funded at the lower rate of £150 per day;
- Increase in the per pupil rate payable by schools and academies by 20p per pupil each year (cost of £5 per pupil in 5 years is still less than the current combined charge of £5.75 per pupil for PTA and Unison service offers);
- An increase in the daily claim rate for teaching union representatives, from £180 in 2020/21 to £200 per day from 2021/22;
- Tapered reduction in accumulated reserves by the end of 5 years leaving a balance of approx. £11.7k, to be used for additional ad hoc claims.

7 LOCAL AUTHORITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE

Paul Turner, Head of Service for School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion provided an overview report. It was noted that since the time of writing the report and the subsequent national lockdown, all GCSE and Key Stage 2 examinations had been cancelled for 2021. Leaders were unsure of what the assessment process would include for 2021 and awaited guidance from the Department for Education.

It was further noted that Blackpool schools were supporting families with the lockdown and learning at home.

There were no comments or questions and the report was noted.

8 HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources, presented an update on the latest developments relevant to the High Needs budget for information. It was noted that Blackpool was facing financial pressures on the High Needs budget. The Medium Term Financial Plan had been developed to monitor forecast expenditure against the High Needs Budget.

Despite the additional government funding in 2020/21, pupil numbers in special schools, Out of Borough and post-16 placements continued to increase with forecast in-year overspend of £2.8million and a cumulative deficit against the DSG of £5.1million by the end of 2020/21. It was noted that the local authority had started to implement some of the proposals from its Vision for SEND and Alternative Provision where savings would accrue in

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

future years.

The Medium Term Financial Plan had been revised to include updated forecasts and provisional funding allocation for 2021/22. While no assumption had been made in the plan regarding increases in the High Needs funding for 2022/23, nor had cost increases been included, it was anticipated that an increase in funding would be received following the final year announcement of the three year settlement for school and High Needs.

The Medium Term Financial Plan assumed that a transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2021/22 would be made in line with the proposal presented to Schools Forum. This would lead to an in-year surplus of £84k on the High Needs Budget and would reduce the cumulative deficit to £4.4million by the end of the next financial year. On current assumptions, the cumulative deficit would reduce to £1.3million by the end of 2024/25.

The report highlighted more uncertain times financially.

Comments and questions were sought.

In relation to the deficit, it was asked whether the Government had made any indication of which Local Authorities they would target for intervention. It was noted that the Government had contacted a small number of local authorities with the highest deficit in 2020/21 and a similar number was expected in 2021/22. It was recognised that Blackpool were the Authority with the sixth highest deficit in the North West. There was not confirmation of which local authorities would be targeted next year.

9 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET MONITORING 2020-2021

Mark Golden, Finance Manager presented the report to show the budget position and reserves for the Dedicated Schools Grant as at 30 November 2020. The budget monitoring to the end of November 2020 forecasted a £811k over spend against a planned deficit of £1.231million. The total in-year shortfall was estimated at £2.042million. In addition to the brought forward deficit of £3.105million, the forecast for the cumulative DSG deficit by 31 March 2021 was £5.147million. This did not include the maintained schools reserves of £2.392million or the specific Union Duties reserve of £48k.

The pressures were recognised as those highlighted in the High Needs Block relating to special school numbers and costs of extended places due to the Covid-19 pandemic in out of borough provision and post-16 places.

Comments and questions were sought.

It was commented that plans to reduce the deficit in the DSG in Blackpool were ambitious with significant investment in inclusion and it would be detrimental to the ambitious plan for Government to intervene and look at spending before the plan was implemented.

Similarly, it was recognised that monitoring of the early years budget was difficult due to the

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Adjustments to payments to providers were to be made for the autumn term, and funding would be based on the the pre-covid January 2020 census. It was agreed that Mark Golden would request a report on the full implications of Covid-19 pressures on the schools budget and early years.

It was asked whether the local authority could claim back funding relating to Covid-19. It was noted that the local authority had been allocated some funding in response to Covid-19 but this was not specific to the DSG or early years. It was suggested that Blackpool could quantify the costs for schools and early years and share the information with North West colleagues. It was also agreed that Roger Farley would contact the Leader of the Council to determine if there was any funding.

Resolved:

- **Mark Golden to request a report on the full implications of Covid-19 pressures on the schools budget and early years budget.**
- **The Local Authority to quantify the costs relating to Covid-19 and share with North West colleagues.**
- **Roger Farley to contact the Leader of the Council to determine if any funding was available in relation to schools and early years relating to the impact of Covid-19.**

10 SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA 2021 - 2022 PROPOSALS

Kirsty Thompson, Schools Funding Officer presented the report outlining the local authority's proposal for the schools funding formula for 2021/22. It was reported that local authorities were required to consult with their Schools Forum members on decisions relating to Schools Funding Formula proposals. Relevant members including those from schools and early years were recommended to consider the following principles and approve the proposal of the school funding in 2021/22:

- Continue to apply the National Funding Formula unit value with the exception of Basic Entitlement values.
- Set a minimum funding guarantee of 2% per pupil funding;
- Transfer 0.50% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, by way of a reduction in the Basic Entitlement formula values;
- Transfer £91k from the growth funding contingency into the Schools Block.

It was noted that the first stage of the consultation received 23 responses in total. While the proposal to transfer 0.50% to the High Needs block was supported by a significant majority of respondents through the consultation, an alternative proposal was made regarding the methodology for calculating the contribution from individual schools. A second stage of the consultation was therefore carried out, asking for views on two alternative methods for releasing 0.5% from the Schools Block: a cap on gains, or a reduction in the Basic Entitlement factor value.

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

It was reiterated that the two parts of the consultation were based on illustrative data that was later updated in December 2020. It was acknowledged that it was difficult for the local authority to consult with schools on the formula when the data was received in late December and the government return was required for submission in January. Using the new data, it was noted that the original proposal to effect the 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block by way of a cap on gains would see a significant impact on one school. The local authority therefore proposed that the transfer was effected by way of a reduction to the Basic Entitlement. The impact of the two alternatives on individual schools was outlined in appendix 10a.

Questions and comments were sought.

It was commented that initially 23 responses were received however on the follow up consultation only nine responses were received and the response was split with five votes to four. Concern was raised regarding the lack of votes and whether schools understood the process or chose not to respond. A further comment agreed that it was a close vote.

It was asked whether there could be a further email to consult with schools. Hilary Wood indicated that ultimately, the local authority was responsible for the formula but were required to consult with schools. A further email to consult may lead to delays and the possibility of a further inconclusive response.

A further comment suggested that a response of nine people was not the lowest response rate received following a consultation exercise. It was also reiterated that a response was required in order to reduce delay in funding agreement.

Looking at the information outlined in Appendix 10a, members acknowledged that Option B was the fairest option, as it spread the required contribution over a larger number of schools. Hilary Wood confirmed that, given the significant impact of option A on one school, the local authority would recommend option B and would not support option A.

Relevant members including those from schools and early years were recommended to approve the proposal for the allocation of school funding in 2021/22 and all in attendance at the meeting agreed. The Early Years representative was not in attendance for this vote.

In addition, Councillor Benson was asked to give member approval for the proposal and agreed.

Resolved:

- **The Local Authority proposal for the allocation of school funding in 2021/22 was approved by members from school and early years who were in attendance.**
- **The Local Authority proposal for the schools funding formula in 2021/22 was given member approval by Councillor Benson.**

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

11 DRAFT DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2021-2022 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources presented the provisional estimates for the use of Dedicated Schools Grant in 2021/22 for information. It was noted that final proposals for the allocation of funding would be brought to the March 2021 Schools Forum meeting. It was noted that the increase in allocation was close to £10million.

It was noted that there would be a dedicated training session for Schools Forum members on 3 February 2021 to provide information on the DSG.

It was noted that the Schools Block funding was ring-fenced and had increased by £6.6million equating to almost 7.5%. The Local Authority was looking to add £91k to this from the growth fund contingency and also transfer 0.5% to the High Needs Block which amounted to £457k.

It was reported that the Central Schools Block had decreased by £140k, including a reduction of £160k in the historic commitment funding in line with the planned unwinding of this element of the grant by the Department for Education. The remaining £640k historic commitment funding could be used to help offset the cumulative deficit on DSG.

The High Needs block had seen an increase of £3.1million including £434k relating to the Teachers' Pay Grant and the Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant being included in the national formula. The remaining £2.7million represented an increase of 11.9% on the previous year's allocation. The estimated costs of the High Needs Budget exceeded the available funding of £373k. This would be covered by the proposed transfer of £457k from the Schools Block, resulting in a contribution of £84k towards offsetting the cumulative deficit on DSG.

It was proposed that the Early Years Block funding was fully allocated to the Early Years provision and serviced. The hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds had increased by 6pence to £4.50 (1.35%) and the rate for 2 year olds increased by 8pence to £5.36 (1.51%). There were no increases in the per pupil funding amounts for Early Years Pupil Premium or Disability Access Fund.

It was reported that with the proposed transfer of funding from the Schools Block, it was estimated that the in-year surplus on DSG would be £724k, reducing the forecast cumulative deficit at 31 March 2022 to £4,425k.

It was commented that it was positive news that the deficit was reducing.

12 DE-DELEGATION OF SERVICES AND RETENTION OF FUNDING FOR EDUCATION FUNCTIONS 2021 - 2022

Kirsty Thompson, School Funding Officer presented the report. Approval was sought from relevant members for the continued de-delegation of services and the retention of funding for Education Functions.

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

The local authority recommended that de-delegation be approved by maintained primary school representatives for 2021/22 in respect of Free School Meal (FSM) Eligibility Checks. In order to fund the current level of service the de-delegation amount per Free School Meal pupil would be set at £13 in 2021/22 compared to £12.65 in 2020/21. The increase equated to 2.75% in line with the local government 2020/21 pay award.

Following a vote, the maintained primary school representatives in attendance agreed to approve the de-delegation for 2021/11 in respect of Free School Meal (FSM) Eligibility Checks.

The local authority recommended that de-delegation was approved by maintained primary school representatives for 2021/22 in respect of Union Duties. Historically this budget had been held centrally in order to fund the facilities time of the teaching unions. Unison were now included in the collective funding arrangements meaning that members of both teaching and non-teaching unions could be supported by local representatives during the school day. To cover this, the de-delegation amount for 2021/22 would increase by 20pence per pupil to £4.20 compared to £4.00 per pupil de-de-delegated in 2020/21. A letter from the teaching unions NAHT, NEU and ASCL had been sent to all Directors of Children's Services outlining the benefits of de-delegation of facilities time funding.

Following a vote, the maintained primary school representatives in attendance agreed to approve the de-delegation for 2021/22 in respect of Union Duties.

Finally, maintained school representatives including primary, special and pupil referral unit members were asked to approve an amount to be retained from school budgets in respect of education function, previously funded by the Education Services Grant. The 2021/22 amount had been calculated at £36.30 per pupil equating to a 2.75% increase on the 2020/21 in line with the local government pay award.

Following a vote, the maintained primary school representatives including primary, special and pupil referral unit members in attendance agreed to approve the amount of £36.30 per pupil to be retained from schools budgets in respect of education function, previously funded by the Education Services Grant.

Resolved:

- **The maintained primary school representatives in attendance agreed to approve the de-delegation for 2021/22 in respect of Free School Meal (FSM) Eligibility Checks.**
- **The maintained primary school representatives in attendance agreed to approve the de-delegation for 2021/22 in respect of Union Duties.**
- **The maintained primary school representatives including primary, special and pupil referral unit members in attendance agreed to approve the amount of £36.30 per pupil to be retained from schools budgets in respect of education function, previously funded by the Education Services Grant.**

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING - TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021

13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was noted as Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 9.15am, not 2019 as indicated on the Agenda.

Chairman

(The meeting ended 10.28am)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
Danielle Bowater Democratic Governance Adviser
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E-mail: danielle.bowater@blackpool.gov.uk

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Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**

Relevant Officer: Paul Turner, Interim Assistant Director – School Improvement and SEND

Date of Meeting: 9 March 2021

LOCAL AUTHORITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide a high-level overview of recent developments within the Local Authority to the forum.

1.2 Action required – for information.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note for information.

3.0 Background Information

3.1 Local Authority update

Schools have continued to be open and they have had a relatively high percentage of attendance throughout the last half-term, with rates rising to above regional averages and closing in on national averages.

At the time of writing, schools are expected to return week beginning 8 March 2021. The expectation is that mass testing of pupils occurs in secondary schools in the first two weeks, to identify pupils who are asymptomatic. Pupils who consent will receive three tests over the first two weeks and will then receive two home tests each week.

The Council and school leaders are working collaboratively to ensure that Blackpool's actions in light of the new announcements are robust and pragmatic.

School Ofsted inspections are suspended until schools have handled the logistics of re-opening to all pupils.

3.2 Academies

No significant updates on Academies.

All schools are expecting to start back on the 8 March 2021, or within that week once testing has been completed.

3.3 **Statutory Assessment and Moderation**

There is no statutory assessment and moderation this year. It will recommence in the new school year.

3.4 **Inclusion update**

2 x PEx at time of writing in the secondary phase.

FTE numbers are lower than at this time last year.

PRU numbers are lower than expected.

EHE numbers are still very high at 350.

List of Acronyms:

SEND - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

PEX - Permanent Exclusions

FTE - Fixed Term Exclusion

PRU - Pupil Referral Unit

EHE - Elective Home Education

Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Mark Golden, Finance Manager
Date of Meeting: 9 March 2021

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET MONITORING 2020-2021

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To report the budget position of the 2020-21 Dedicated Schools Grant as at 31 January 2021 - Appendix 5(a).
- 1.2 To report the amount of Dedicated Schools Grant reserves as at 31 January 2021 – Appendix 5(b).
- 1.3 Action Required – for information.

2.0 Recommendation:

- 2.1 To note contents of the report.

3.0 Background:

- 3.1 The monitoring report at appendix 5(a) reflects the budgets as approved at the March 2020 Schools Forum.
- 3.2 Budget monitoring to the end of January 2021 is forecasting a £1.288m over spend against a deficit budget of £1.231m. Therefore, the total in-year shortfall is estimated at £2.519m. Added to the brought forward deficit of £3.105m the resulting forecast DSG deficit by 31 March 2021 is £5.624m. This excludes the maintained schools reserves (£2.392m) and the specific Union Fees reserve (£48k).
- 3.3 The major in-year variances are as follows:
 - Special school numbers are continuing to rise creating a pressure of £361k.
 - Costs are being incurred for the new Resource provision of £409k which should see a reduction in Out of Borough placements. This will be monitored as part of the High Needs Block Medium Term Financial Plan progress.
 - There have been one off COVID19 related costs within Out of Borough placements and Post 16 Education totalling £542k and non-COVID demand pressures of £169k.
 - Mainstream Top-up costs due to increased inclusion rates of £270k.
 - These pressures have been partially offset by an under spend on the Children’s Centres of £733k.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 5(a) - Dedicated Schools Grant 2020-2021 Budget Monitoring Report to 31 January 2021.
Appendix 5(b) - Dedicated Schools Grant Reserves as at 31 January 2021.

List of Acronyms:

- DSG - Dedicated Schools Grant
LA - Local Authority
HNB - High Needs Block
SSA - Special Support Assistant
ESFA - Education and Skills Funding Agency
SERF - Special Education Referral Unit
PRU - Pupil Referral Unit

Appendix 5(a) - Dedicated Schools Grant 2020-2021 Budget Monitoring Report to 31 January 2021

Service	2020/21						Comments	Covid	Non Covid
	Budget £000s	In Year Adj. £000s	Recoupment £000s	Adjusted Budget £000s	Forecast Outturn £000s	Variance £000s			
Schools Block									
Local School Budget									
- Delegated	88,191	0	(69,386)	18,805	18,805	0			0
- Third Party & Public Liability Insurance (de-delegated)	0	0	0	0	0	0			0
- Union Duties (de-delegated)	18	0	0	18	18	0			0
- Free School Meals Eligibility Checks (de-delegated)	14	0	0	14	14	0			0
- Education Functions (retained)	161	0	0	161	161	0			0
Pupil Growth Contingency	180	0	798	978	978	0			0
	88,564	0	(68,588)	19,976	19,976	0			0
Central School Services Block									
Servicing of Schools Forum	16	0	0	16	16	0			0
Licences & Subscriptions	88	0	0	88	88	0			0
School Admissions	160	0	0	160	138	(22)	Vacant post		(22)
Contribution to Combined Budgets - Children's Centres	800	0	0	800	67	(733)	Released Underspend		(733)
Former ESG Retained Duties									
- Education Welfare	212	0	0	212	212	0			0
- Asset Management	59	0	0	59	59	0			0
- Statutory / Regulatory Duties	80	0	0	80	80	0			0
	1,415	0	0	1,415	660	(755)			(755)
Total Schools Block	89,979	0	(68,588)	21,391	20,636	(755)			(755)
High Needs Block									
Special Schools									
Place Funding	5,000	0	(2,817)	2,183	2,337	154	Increase in numbers		154
Top-up Funding	3,047	0	0	3,047	3,254	207	Increase in numbers		207
SERFs									
Place Funding	320	0	(80)	240	180	(60)	Replaced by KS2 Provision		(60)
Top-up Funding	111	0	0	111	117	6	Replaced by KS2 Provision		6
Transport	48	0	0	48	20	(28)	Replaced by KS2 Provision		(28)
Resource Provision									
Place Funding	0	0	0	0	195	195	New Provision		195
Top-up Funding	0	0	0	0	214	214	New Provision		214
Pupil Referral Units									
Place Funding	2,208	0	0	2,208	2,208	0			0
Top-up Funding	1,112	0	0	1,112	1,340	228	KS2 Provision		228
Other AP	165	0	0	165	270	105	2019/20 Costs under Accrued		105
Mainstream Schools									
Top-up Funding	1,550	0	(6)	1,544	1,814	270	Updated Forecast based on Autumn Data		270
Exceptional Circumstances Funding	96	0	0	96	194	98	Based on Early Forecast 20/21		98
Post-16 Education	2,082	0	(784)	1,298	1,686	388	Additional Year for some Y11 (Covid)	344	44
Out of Borough	5,345	0	(60)	5,285	5,608	323	£226k - Additional Year for some Y11 (Covid), £140k Over Pressure based on Autumn Numbers	198	125
Specialist Advisory and Referral Service (SARS)	1,064	0	0	1,064	1,049	(15)			(15)
Access and Inclusion	698	0	0	698	796	98	Cost of Oracle building, £55k Resilience Coaches		98
Other High Needs Central Services (Management, Central Support Costs, Admin Support, Pension Top-slice)	772	0	0	772	772	0			0
Total High Needs Block	23,618	0	(3,747)	19,871	22,054	2,183		542	1,641
Early Years Block									
2 Year Old Grants	1,651	(15)	0	1,636	1,636	0			0
Early Years Pupil Premium	100	2	0	102	102	0			0
3 & 4 Year Old Grants	6,527	(58)	0	6,469	6,469	0			0
Early Years Inclusion Fund	30	0	0	30	30	0			0
Disability Access Fund	47	0	0	47	47	0			0
Early Years Central Services	377	0	0	377	377	0			0
Total Early Years Block	8,732	(71)	0	8,661	8,661	0		0	0
Total Expenditure	122,329	(71)	(72,335)	49,923	51,351	1,428		542	886
Dedicated Schools Grant Income	(121,098)	71	72,335	(48,692)	(48,692)	0			0
ESFA Free School Income	0	(140)	0	0	(140)	(140)	Lotus School Income		(140)
Total Income	(121,098)	(69)	72,335	(48,692)	(48,832)	(140)		0	(140)
In year (under)/over spend	1,231	(140)	0	1,231	2,519	1,288		542	746

Appendix 5(b) - Dedicated Schools Grant Reserves

Description	Brought Forward 1st April 2020	Total Forecast Expenditure FY 2020-21	Forecast Surplus / (Deficit) at 31st March 2021	Comments
DSG Reserve	(3,104,758)	2,519,000	(5,623,758)	
Maintained School Balances	2,392,362	0	2,392,362	
Union Fees Reserve	48,274	0	48,274	
	(664,122)	2,519,000	(3,183,122)	

Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources
Date of Meeting: 9 March 2021

HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To update Schools Forum members on latest developments relevant to the High Needs budget.
- 1.2 Action required – for information.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report.

3.0 Background Information

Medium-term financial plan

- 3.1 As reported in previous meetings, Blackpool, along with many other areas around the country, is experiencing financial pressures on its High Needs Budget. In order to better understand Blackpool's financial position, a medium-term financial plan has been developed to monitor forecast expenditure against the High Needs Budget, and factor in predictions of where savings may be achievable.
- 3.2 Despite additional government funding in 2020/21, pupil numbers in special schools, Out of Borough and post-16 placements are continuing their upward trend, leading to a position where costs are forecast to exceed High Needs funding allocations by £3.274 million, with the cumulative deficit against DSG reaching £5.625 million by the end of 2020/21. It should be noted, however, that the local authority has already started to implement some of the proposals from its Vision for SEND and Alternative Provision, with savings only accruing in future years.
- 3.3 The medium-term financial plan has been revised to take account of updated forecasts and the provisional funding allocation for 2021/22 (see Appendix 6(a) to this report). Assumptions have been made in future years about the continuation of funding for the contribution to combined budgets on a reducing basis. No assumption has been made yet in the medium-term financial plan regarding any increases in High Needs funding for 2022/23, nor have any cost increases been built

in; it is, however, anticipated that a further increase in funding will arise in the third and final year of the announced three-year settlement for schools and High Needs.

- 3.4 The medium-term financial plan now includes the approved transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2021/22. While this was expected to lead to a modest in-year surplus, increasing financial pressure now means that there is a forecast overspend on the High Needs budget of £967k, with the cumulative deficit at £5.952 million by the end of next financial year. On current assumptions, rather than reducing, the cumulative deficit would increase to £8.239 million by the end of 2024/25.
- 3.5 This worsening position places Blackpool at risk of intervention by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The deficit at March 2020 represented 2.76% of the overall DSG allocation, and ranked Blackpool 34th worst, based on percentage. The equivalent percentage at March 2021 could rise to 4.64% of overall DSG, which would have placed us 17th on the 2020 rankings.

Blackpool’s Vision for Exceptional SEND and Alternative Provision

- 3.6 The table below sets out progress so far against Blackpool’s Vision for Exceptional SEND and AP, as presented to recent meetings of Schools Forum. It should be noted that financial modelling within the Vision was based on start dates for each proposal of September 2021, given uncertainties around the impact of Covid-19 on plans. However, it has been possible to move ahead to start to implement some of the proposals sooner.

Proposal	Progress	Included in MTFP?
1) Enhanced SEND and inclusion advisory support	Completed. The new model will be in place for September 2021. The PRU advisory teacher will become part of the Inclusion Team within the local authority.	Yes
2) Secondary inclusion provision	Project underway	Yes
3) Primary behaviour provision	SERF provision ceased end of autumn term. KS2 provision commenced at Educational Diversity September 2020.	Yes
4) Revised PRU offer	Fixed budgets agreed for 2020/21 and 2021/22 academic years in line with medium-term plan and Vision for SEND/AP	Yes
5) Widened AP landscape	Alternative Provision Quality Assurance Panel now meets regularly to consider new Blackpool providers	N/A

6) Specialist vocational centres 14-16	Capital works planned for catering facilities at Highfield Day Centre and Pegasus	N/A
7) SEND Resource Provision	All Resource Provision now operational	Yes
8) Local post-16 specialist provision	Plans under discussion for use of Oracle, with ambition to commence in September 2021	No
9) Reduced number of other AP places	Underway	Yes

- 3.7 The original forecast recovery from the Vision of SEND and AP can be seen in the table below, shown against the latest forecast in the medium-term financial plan. There is now a growing disparity between the plans and forecasts, and future years' estimates show that the cumulative deficit could continue to rise, with £8.239 million still to recover by the end of 2024/25.

	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
DSG cumulative deficit as per SEND/AP Vision	3541	3416	2757	1663	531
DSG cumulative deficit as per MTFP	5625	5952	6070	6813	8239

- 3.8 Further drastic action is therefore needed in order to bring expenditure back within available funding. The local authority is carrying out detailed analysis and scrutiny of High Needs pupil number and cost trends over recent years, and will present findings at the next meeting of Schools Forum, with recommendations about areas that require further attention.

Revision to Equipment Policy

- 3.9 As part of a refresh of council SEND Policies, a revised Equipment Policy will be issued to schools before the end of March 2021. In line with the 2015 revised 'Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils Guidance for Schools in England', the new policy will require schools to meet the cost of equipment for pupils as reasonable adjustments. Currently schools are required to contribute a total of £300 towards any equipment purchased. Under the new policy, if a child has an Education Health and Care plan, schools will be expected to meet the first £500 towards the costs of equipment. Where the child has no Education Health and Care plan the schools will be expected to meet the full cost of that equipment. The equipment will be education based only and there is no expectation that schools will pay for equipment that pupils will use in everyday life, for example, hearing aids.

Consultation on High Needs National Funding Formula

- 3.10 On 10 February 2021, the Department for Education issued a consultation on specific proposals for a small number of changes to the national funding formula (NFF) used to allocate high needs funding to local authorities in the 2022/23 financial year. They are also seeking views on some of the longer term changes to the formula that could be considered in future.
- 3.11 This is the first stage of the planned review of the High Needs NFF, which was first introduced in 2018/19. At this stage, views are being sought about the way that high needs funding is allocated through the NFF, rather than about the overall level of funding. The consultation is closely linked to the SEND Review, which is considering the reforms introduced following implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014. A consultation on the findings of the SEND Review is anticipated this spring, with a subsequent further consultation, likely to be later in 2021, on changes to the distribution of high needs funding, consequential to the review.
- 3.12 The contents of the consultation are summarised below:

a) Historic spend factor: move to actual spend

The consultation is seeking views on changes to the historic spend factor in the high needs NFF for 2022/23. Since the introduction of the NFF in 2018/19, the formula has included the historic spend factor, which is designed to allow for the wide variation in local demand and supply constraints that can significantly affect local authorities' level of spend. The factor was based on the planned expenditure for 2017/18, and the consultation is now proposing that this data is replaced with actual expenditure in 2017/18.

The proposed change in the historic spend factor has the potential to result in an increase in funding for Blackpool. In 2021/22, all local authorities will receive an increase in the High Needs budget of between 8% and 12%, which is where the floor and ceiling have been set for allocations. The majority of local authorities are at either the floor or the ceiling, and the proposed change from historic spend to actual spend will not alter those allocations. For Blackpool, however, the actual increase in 2021/22 will be 11.4%, and the proposed re-distribution based on the changed baselines would have the theoretical effect of lifting that increase to the ceiling of 12%.

b) Historic spend factor: increase in proportion of spend

With the significant increases in high needs funding through the formula since 2018/19, the overall proportion of funding allocated through the historic spend factor has reduced considerably, down by 10 percentage points from 44% of

funding in 2018/19 to 34% in the 2021/22 formula. The consultation is seeking views on whether it would be appropriate to increase the proportion of funding through this factor.

Increasing the percentage of the 2017/18 actual expenditure amounts would increase the significance of this factor in the formula, reflecting a more gradual pace of change in the pattern of spending that it would be reasonable to expect from local authorities. As an illustration, if the percentage of actual expenditure had been set at 60% of 2017/18 spending levels rather than 50%, the historic spend factor would have made up 40% of the overall 2021/22 formula, representing a more modest four percentage point reduction since 2018/19.

c) Finding an alternative to the historic spend factor

The Department for Education (DfE) acknowledges that using the past level of spend as a factor in the funding formula is not a perfect long-term solution to how local issues are reflected in the funding arrangements. While historic spending represents local circumstances that should be acknowledged in the funding distribution, it can also reflect aspects of the local system – such as where there is poor value for money – that should not be reinforced through funding allocations. Past levels of spending also reflect the situation in a local area as it was, and, over time, will cease to be representative of current patterns of need or demand. Ideally, therefore, the DfE would prefer to replace the historic spend factor with an alternative factor or factors, that better reflect these local issues, and are able to be kept up to date.

While any changes would not be introduced until 2023/24, the DfE is asking now in its consultation for initial views on both the extent to which the funding formula should reflect the local demand for and pattern of SEND and AP provision, and the factors that might be used.

d) Attainment data used in the High Needs NFF

The High Needs NFF uses KS2 and KS4 attainment data as proxy indicators for low attainment in each local authority. Each year, this draws on the most recent five years of data. However, for the 2022/23 funding formula, there will be no 2020 key stage 2 test data or GCSE exam results for this purpose, because of the disruption caused by the pandemic.

For this reason, the DfE proposes to update the series using five years' data from 2016, and to substitute the most recent 2019 data in place of the missing 2020 attainment data. In view of continuing disruption to the 2021 tests and exams, it is likely that a similar approach will be taken in the 2023/24 funding formula, i.e. use the 2019 data in place of both 2020 and 2021 attainment data.

e) Effective proxies for SEND and AP in the High Needs NFF

As well as the historic spend and low attainment factors referred to in the previous sections, the High Needs NFF currently uses a measure of the local population of children and young people, two health and disability measures (the number of children in bad health and the number of families in receipt of disability living allowance) and two deprivation indicators (free school meals and IDACI).

At the next stage of consultation the DfE will consider whether there are new factors that could either replace existing factors, for example those that may have become out of date, or that could be added to the formula to address particular types or prevalence of identified need. In addition, the DfE will also look at how SEND support in mainstream schools is funded. The consultation is therefore seeking views on how the proxy factors within the High Needs NFF could be improved, which will then inform the thinking on potential changes to the NFF for 2023/24 onwards.

- 3.13 Full details of the consultation can be found at the following link: [High needs consultation document \(education.gov.uk\)](#). The consultation closes on 24 March 2021.

List of acronyms:

DSG – Dedicated Schools Grant
SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
AP – Alternative Provision
PRU – Pupil Referral Unit
SERF – Special Educational Resource Facility
KS2 / KS4 – Key Stage 2 / Key Stage 4
MTFP – Medium-Term Financial Plan
NFF – National Funding Formula
DfE – Department for Education

List of Appendices:

Appendix 6(a): High Needs Medium-Term Financial Plan

High Needs Block Medium-Term Financial Plan

Forecasts exclude inflationary impact, and costs and income are stated at 2021/22 levels

Service	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Notes Current Version
	Actual £000s	Forecast £000s	Budget £000s	Budget £000s	Budget £000s	Budget £000s	
High Needs Block							
New Free School (opening September 2020 - c£1m pa when full)	-						Assumes 24 places from September 2020, increasing to 40 from September 2021 & 48 places from September 22
Special Schools							
Place Funding	4,879	5,154	5,508	5,723	5,773	5,773	Special School places: from April 2020 290 (P), 85 (HF), 120 (W); from September 2020 24 (L); from September 2021 300 (P), 80 (HF), 120 (W), 40 (L); from September 2022 300 (P), 80 (HF), 120 (W), 48 (L) 2021/22 onwards includes £660 per place for TPG/TPECG
Top-up Funding	2,768	3,254	3,918	4,030	4,127	4,110	Special School top-up: based on Sept 2020 figures
SERFs							
Place Funding	320	260	-	-	-	-	Mereside SERFs decommissioned from Nov 2020; Boundary and Bispham Endowed SERFs decommissioned from Dec 2020
Top-up Funding	111	117	-	-	-	-	Mereside SERFs decommissioned from Nov 2020; Boundary and Bispham Endowed SERFs decommissioned from Dec 2020
Transport	54	20	-	-	-	-	
Resource Provision							
Place Funding		195	760	244	390	488	Mereside and Thames Resource Provisions opening Nov 2020; Boundary, Revoe and Marton Resource Provisions opening Jan 2021
Top-up Funding		214	585	570	570	570	Mereside and Thames Resource Provisions opening Nov 2020; Boundary, Revoe and Marton Resource Provisions opening Jan 2021
AP Provision							
PRU - Place Funding	2,533	2,208	1,913	1,850	1,850	1,850	Reduced from 250 places to 200 from September 2020, 185 from September 2021 2021/22 onwards includes £660 per place for TPG/TPECG
PRU - Top-up Funding	1,147	1,340	1,237	1,117	1,117	1,117	Forecast numbers:- September 2019 to March 2020 240, April to August 2020 272, September 2020 to March 2021 173, April to August 2021 215, September 2021 to March 2022 147, April to August 2022 178, September 2022 to March 2023 152, Less Proposal 4. Teachers Pay award./Superannuation Costs and New Services KS2, Engagement Coaches & Therapist & 4% Uplift.
Other AP	-	270	100	100	100	100	
Mainstream Schools							
Top-up Funding	1,250	1,821	2,353	2,691	3,030	3,368	2.75% Uplift 2020/21 & 0% Uplift in 2021/22.
Exceptional Circumstances Funding	119	194	165	165	165	165	
Post-16 Education	2,030	2,470	2,514	2,349	2,349	2,349	3% Uplift in 2021/22.
Out of Borough	5,081	5,666	4,994	4,626	4,454	4,516	based on 16 year-olds leaving, 40 new placements each year @ £30k per place, offset by transfers into new Free School starting in September 2020 and Resource Provision from Apr 21. 3% Uplift in 2021/22.
Specialist Advisory and Referral Service (SARS)	1,028	1,049	1,368	1,368	1,368	1,368	2.75% Uplift 2020/21 & 0% Uplift in 2021/22.
Access and Inclusion	508	796	941	729	729	729	2.75% Uplift 2020/21 & 0% Uplift in 2021/22.
Other High Needs Central Services	767	772	772	772	772	772	
(Management, Central Support Costs, Admin Support, Pension Top-slice)							
Total High Needs Block Expenditure	22,594	25,799	27,127	26,334	26,793	27,275	
Available High Needs Block funding	19,496	22,276	25,369	25,369	25,369	25,369	
ESFA Free School Income	-	140	333	447	480	480	
Additional High Needs Block allocation in-year	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Schools Block Transfer	431	101	457	-	-	-	
Central Schools Services Block	-	8	-	-	-	-	
Council Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	
HNB (Surplus) / Deficit	2,667	3,274	967	518	944	1,426	
Cumulative HNB (Surplus) / Deficit	3,016	6,291	7,258	7,776	8,719	10,145	
Cumulative Other Block (Surplus) / Deficit	89	(666)	(1,306)	(1,706)	(1,906)	(1,906)	
Cumulative DSG (Surplus) / Deficit	3,105	5,625	5,952	6,070	6,813	8,239	
Movement	2,684	2,519	327	118	744	1,426	

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Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Kirsty Thompson, School Funding Officer
Date of Meeting: 9 March 2021

EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA 2021/22

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 Schools Forum is asked to agree the local authority's proposed formula for Early Years funding for three- and four-year old early education, as well as the value of the Inclusion Fund for 2021/22, and to note the funding rate for two-year olds.
- 1.2 Action required – for approval by relevant member, voting is restricted to school and PVI members.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 It is recommended that Schools Forum agrees to the local authority's proposed formula for three- and four-year old early education for 2021/22, as outlined below. Voting is restricted to school and PVI members.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Early Years Inclusion fund for three- and four-year olds is maintained at £30,000.
- 2.3 Schools Forum is asked to note the local authority's funding rate for two-year olds at £5.17 per hour.

3.0 Background Information

Three- and four-year old funding rates

- 3.1 The Department for Education has announced an increase in the Early Years funding rates for Blackpool of 6p per child per hour for 2021/22. The rate has risen to £4.50 from £4.44 in 2020/21.
- 3.2 The local authority is permitted to retain up to 5% of early years funding towards the cost of central expenses for administration of the grant. The local authority proposes to pass through the full amount of the government increase to Early Years providers. This will bring the Base Rate up to £4.18 per hour, compared to £4.12 in 2019/20.

3.3 The 2021/22 funding proposals can be summarised as follows:

	£ per child per hour
Base rate	£4.18
Deprivation:	
Top 0-10% of deprived postcodes	16p
Top 11-20% of deprived postcodes	8p
Top 21-30% of deprived postcodes	4p
Quality supplement:	
Education led by staff with Early Years Teacher Status (or EY Professional), or other suitably qualified teacher (i.e. QTS foundation stage/primary)	8p

3.4 **Early Years Inclusion Fund**

The Early Years Inclusion Fund is set aside from the three- and four-year old grant in order to support settings to improve early learning and development outcomes for children with additional needs. It is proposed for 2021/22 that the value of the fund is maintained at £30,000.

3.5 **Two-year old funding rates**

Government funding for eligible two-year olds has also increased by 8p from £5.28 per child per hour for 2020/21, to £5.36 for 2021/22. The local authority proposes to pass through the full amount of the government increase, to Early Years providers and increase the rate to £5.17, from £5.09 in 2020/21.

Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Hilary Wood, Head of Business Support and Resources
Date of Meeting: 9 March 2021

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT BUDGET 2021/22

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To share with Schools Forum the proposals for the use of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2021/22.
- 1.2 Action required – for approval.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To agree the proposal for future use of DSG.

3.0 Background Information

- 3.1 At its meeting in January 2021, Schools Forum was presented with the provisional estimates for expenditure against Dedicated Schools Grant in 2021/22. The forecasts for 2021/22 have been updated, and are presented at the appendix (8a) to this report.

Schools Block

- 3.2 Blackpool's allocation for the Schools Block is £95.312m. As agreed by Schools Forum in January, a transfer of 0.5% equating to £457k has been made to the High Needs Block, and a transfer from the growth contingency of £91k has been added into the Schools Block. The total amount allocated to schools and academies through the local schools formula is therefore £94.946m.

Central Schools Block

- 3.3 The allocation in 2021/22 for this block stands at £1.283m, which is made up of £643k of ongoing funding, plus a reduced amount of £640k in respect of the historic contribution to combined budgets. The proposed allocation of the £643k can be seen in the appendix (8a) to this report, while the review of Children's Centres means that the £640k is surplus to requirements, and can be used to contribute to the offsetting of the DSG deficit.

High Needs Block

- 3.4 Forecasts of expenditure against the High Needs Block have been updated since the January meeting, and the position has worsened, with estimates now amounting to £27.127m. Funding for this is made up of £25.369m from the High Needs Block, the transfer of £457k from the Schools Block, plus £333k Free School funding, which will be paid directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This total of £26.160m still leaves a shortfall of £967k in this funding block.
- 3.5 The report at agenda item 6 gave further information about the longer-term forecasts for the High Needs Block, together with the actions agreed to date to seek to reduce expenditure in future years. These and other actions will continue to be implemented, with the objective of reducing the predicted overspend in the next and subsequent years.

Early Years Block

- 3.6 Expenditure against the provisional Early Years Block allocation of £8.783m is shown as a breakeven position. The allocations will be updated once the January 2021 and the January 2022 census have been processed. The funding rates from central government have been increased by 8p per child per hour for 2-year olds, and by 6p per child per hour for 3- and 4-year olds. As outlined in agenda item 7, it is proposed that these increases are passed onto providers in full.

Summary

- 3.7 In summary, the net pressure on the High Needs Block of £967k is partially offset by the surplus on the Central Schools Services Block of £640k, resulting in an anticipated in-year deficit of £327k. Action will be pursued during the course of the year to attempt to recover this overspend.

List of acronyms:

DSG – Dedicated Schools Grant

List of Appendices:

Appendix 8a – Draft DSG Budget 2021/22

	2021/22	2020/21	Movement	% Change	Notes
	Total	Total			
Schools Block					
Local Schools Budget	94,745,090	88,190,540	6,554,550		Includes £457k transfer to HN
- Union Duties (de-delegated)	18,938	18,192	746		
- Free School Meals Eligibility Checks (de-delegated)	17,875	14,383	3,492		
- Education Functions (retained)	163,676	160,681	2,995		
Pupil Growth Contingency	-	180,490	(180,490)		
	94,945,579	88,564,286	6,381,293	7.2%	
Central Schools Services Block					
Servicing of Schools Forum	16,771	15,600	1,171	7.5%	
Licences & Subscriptions	89,217	88,261	956	1.1%	
School Admissions	159,962	159,710	252	0.2%	
Contribution to Combined Budgets	-	800,000	(800,000)	-100.0%	£640k to offset against deficit
Former ESG retained duties					
- Education Welfare	228,084.84	212,160	15,925	7.5%	
- Asset Management	63,282.36	58,864	4,418	7.5%	
- Statutory / Regulatory duties	86,090.85	80,080	6,011	7.5%	
	643,408	1,414,675	(771,267)	-54.5%	
High Needs Block					
Special Schools					
Place Funding	5,507,500	5,000,000	507,500	10.2%	Includes TPG and TPECG
Top-up Funding	3,917,947	3,047,413	870,534	28.6%	Includes 4% uplift
Total Special Schools	9,425,447	8,047,413	1,378,034	17.1%	
SERFs					
Place Funding	-	320,000	(320,000)	-100.0%	Ceased December 2020
Top-up Funding	-	111,108	(111,108)	-100.0%	Ceased December 2020
Transport	-	47,676	(47,676)	-100.0%	Ceased December 2020
Total SERFs	-	478,784	(478,784)	-100.0%	
Resource Provision					
Place Funding	760,000	-	760,000		New provision 2020/21
Top-up Funding	585,180	-	585,180		New provision 2020/21
Total Resource Provision	1,345,180	-	1,345,180		
Alternative Provision					
Place Funding	1,912,500	2,208,333	(295,833)	-13.4%	Includes TPG and TPECG
Top-up Funding	1,237,418	1,112,164	125,254	11.3%	Includes 4% uplift
Other AP Provision	100,000	165,000	(65,000)	-39.4%	
Total Alternative Provision	3,249,918	3,485,497	(235,579)	-6.8%	
Mainstream Schools					
Top-up Funding	2,352,815	1,549,853	802,962	51.8%	
Exceptional Circumstances Funding	165,175	96,000	69,175	72.1%	Based on actuals 2020/21 to date
Total top-up for Mainstream Schools	2,517,990	1,645,853	872,137	53.0%	
Post-16 Education	2,514,294	2,081,769	432,525	20.8%	
Out of Borough	4,993,881	5,344,554	(350,673)	-6.6%	
Specialist Advisory and Referral Service (SARS)	1,367,612	1,064,006	303,606	28.5%	Enhanced advisory support
Access and Inclusion	940,541	697,550	242,991	34.8%	Cont of Prov/Resilience Coaches
Other High Needs Central Services (Management, Central Support Costs, Admin Support, Pension Top-slice)	771,865	771,865	-	0.0%	
	27,126,728	23,617,291	3,509,437	14.9%	
Early Years Block					
2 Year Old Grants	1,664,616	1,650,492	14,124	0.9%	
3 & 4 Year Old Grants	6,551,647	6,527,552	24,095	0.4%	
Early Years Pupil Premium	102,171	100,373	1,798	1.8%	
Disability Access Fund	50,430	47,355	3,075	6.5%	
Early Years Inclusion Fund	30,000	30,000	-	0.0%	
Other Early Years Central Services (Management, Central Support Costs, Training, Admin Support, Pension Top-slice)	383,918	377,324	6,594	1.7%	
	8,782,782	8,733,096	49,686	0.6%	
Total	131,498,497	122,329,348	9,169,149	7.5%	
DSG	(130,747,483)	(121,097,541)	(9,649,942)	8.0%	
ESFA special free school funding	(333,333)	-	(333,333)		
Transfer from growth contingency	(90,729)	-	(90,729)		
Dedicated Schools Grant Allocations	(131,171,545)	(121,097,541)	(10,074,004)		
Deficit / (Surplus)	326,952	1,231,807	(904,855)		

	Schools Block	Central Schools Services Block	High Needs Block	Early Years Block	Total
Original DSG Allocations 2021/22	95,311,830	1,283,408	25,369,462	8,782,783	130,747,483
Proposed transfers between blocks	(456,980)	-	456,980	-	-
ESFA special free school funding	-	-	333,333	-	333,333
Transfer from growth contingency	90,729	-	-	-	90,729
	94,945,579	1,283,408	26,159,775	8,782,783	131,171,545
Allocations as above	94,945,579	643,408	26,159,775	8,782,782	131,498,497
Reduction/(addition) to cumulative DSG deficit	-	640,000	(966,953)	1	(326,952)

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Report to: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
Relevant Officer: Kirsty Thompson, School Funding Officer
Date of Meeting: 9 March 2021

COVID FUNDING UPDATE 2021/22

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To make Schools Forum aware of the financial support provided in the education sector during the COVID outbreak.
- 1.2 Action required – for information.

2.0 Recommendations:

- 2.1 To note the contents of the report.

3.0 Background Information:

Summary of funding available:

- Catch-up premium: coronavirus (COVID-19)
- New education recovery package for children and young people
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) workforce fund for schools
- Exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Providing school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
- Coronavirus Job retention scheme Furlough
- Free early education entitlements funding during coronavirus (COVID-19)
- National Testing programme for Schools and Colleges

Catch-up premium: coronavirus (COVID-19)

- 3.1 This £1 billion package of support was announced in November 2020, and is made up of two elements: a one-off universal £650 million catch-up premium for the 2020/21 academic year to ensure that schools have the support they need to help all pupils make up for lost teaching time, and a £350 million National Tutoring

Programme to provide additional, targeted support for those children and young people who need the most help.

- 3.2 The total allocation of the universal element for Blackpool schools in 2020/21 is £1,637,960.
- 3.3 Schools should use this funding for specific activities to support their pupils to catch up for lost teaching over the previous months, in line with the curriculum expectations for the next academic year in actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak. While schools can use their funding in a way that suits their cohort and circumstances, they are expected to use this funding for specific activities which will help pupils catch up on missed education.
- 3.4 School allocations are calculated on a per pupil basis.
- Mainstream schools receive £80 for each pupil in from reception to year 11 inclusive.
 - Special, alternative provision and hospital schools receive £240 for each place for the 2020/21 academic year.
- 3.5 Schools will receive funding in three tranches: Autumn 2020, early 2021, and Summer 2021.
- 3.6 *For further information regarding this grant please follow the link below:*
[Catch-up premium: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/catch-up-premium-coronavirus)

New education recovery package for children and young people

- 3.7 On 24 February 2021, the Government announced further elements of the recovery support package to enable children and young people to catch up on missed learning and development due to the pandemic. The new £700 million package focusses on an expansion of one-to-one and small group tutoring programmes, as well as support for the development of disadvantaged children in early years settings, and summer provision for those pupils who need it the most.
- 3.8 Full details of the package are not yet available, but the main features include:
- A one-off £302 million Recovery Premium for primary and secondary schools, building on the Pupil Premium, to further support pupils who need it most. The average primary school will receive around £6,000 extra, and the average secondary school around £22,000 extra. This will help schools to bolster summer provision for their students, for example laying on additional clubs and activities, or for evidence-based approaches for supporting the most disadvantaged pupils from September.

- £200 million (from the £300 million announced in January to expand tutoring programmes). This will fund an £83 million expansion of the National Tutoring Programme for primary and secondary schools; a £102 million extension of the 16-19 Tuition Fund for a further year to support more students in English, maths and other vocational and academic subjects; and £18 million funding to support language development in the early years, supporting a critical stage of child development.
- £200 million (including the final £100 million from the January announcement) will be available to secondary schools to deliver face-to-face summer schools. Schools will be able to target provision based on pupils' needs but the government is suggesting they may want to initially target incoming year 7 pupils.
- A range of online resources will be available for teachers and pupils, starting from the summer term and throughout summer holidays. These will be provided by Oak National Academy, to help give pupils the confidence they are ready for the next academic year.

3.9 *For further information regarding this funding please follow the link below:*
[New education recovery package for children and young people - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-education-recovery-package-for-children-and-young-people)
www.gov.uk

Coronavirus (COVID-19) workforce fund for schools

- 3.10 The fund covers support for schools meeting the criteria to help them meet the cost of covering workforce absences experienced from 1 November 2020 until the end of the autumn 2020 term. Schools can backdate claims to 1 November 2020 where they met the eligibility criteria.
- 3.11 Schools can only claim for covering the absences of permanent staff who are on their payroll or those employed on a long-term contract (for example maternity cover, long-term sick cover) and not temporary staff.
- 3.12 Schools will be eligible for this additional funding if their reserves at the end of the funding year are down to a level of no more than 4% of their annual income. Trusts will be eligible to claim for any of their academies once their level of reserves is down to 4% of total trust income. Schools and trusts should be aware that through the assurance process funding can be clawed back where this criterion is not met at the year end.
- 3.13 The ESFA are asking schools to make the necessary payments from their existing budgets and record these in line with local finance policies. Schools and academy

trusts will be able to make claims for costs eligible for reimbursement through this fund in spring 2021.

- 3.14 *For further information regarding this grant please follow the link below:*
[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) workforce fund for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-workforce-fund-for-schools)

Exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19)

- 3.15 Funding is available to schools that are unable to meet such additional costs from their existing resources, or which they could only meet by drawing down on reserves and undermining their long-term financial sustainability. Schools cannot claim if they began the financial year with an accumulated historic surplus and expect to increase that surplus in year and thereby finish the year with a higher level of reserves than they started.

- 3.16 The ESFA reserve the right to audit the expenditure and claw back money if claims have not been made in accordance with the guidance, in order to protect public spending.

- 3.17 *Further details can be found on the link below:*
[School funding: exceptional costs associated with coronavirus \(COVID-19\) for the period from March to July 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-funding-exceptional-costs-associated-with-coronavirus-covid-19-for-the-period-from-march-to-july-2020)

Providing school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

- 3.18 Schools should provide meal options for all pupils who are in school, including vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. Meals should be available free of charge to all infant pupils and pupils who meet the benefits-related free school meals eligibility criteria.

- 3.19 Schools have the freedom to decide on the best approach for their pupils and have a range of options which include lunch parcels, locally-arranged vouchers or the Department for Education's national voucher scheme.

- 3.20 Vouchers will only be available through the national voucher scheme from the week The scheme commenced on 18 January 2021, however, any support provided since 4 January 2021 through lunch parcels or locally arranged vouchers can be claimed back from the DfE.

- 3.21 *Further details about how the scheme works can be found by using the following link below:*
[Providing school meals during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/providing-school-meals-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) for furloughed workers

- 3.22 CJRS is designed to support employers whose operations have been severely affected by coronavirus (COVID-19) by providing them with a grant to help them to continue paying part of their employees' wages who would otherwise have been laid off during this outbreak.
- 3.23 The scheme ensures that furloughed staff receive up to 80% of their usual monthly wage costs, up to £2,500 a month, plus the associated Employer National Insurance contribution and minimum automatic enrolment employer pension contribution on that wage.
- 3.24 Schools are not, in general, expected to furlough staff. However, in some instances, schools may have a separate private income stream (for example, catering, sports facilities lettings, or boarding provision funded by parents in state boarding schools). Additionally, schools may have a mix of public and private income from school-based nursery provision. Where this income has either stopped or been reduced and there are staff that are typically paid from those income streams, it may be appropriate to furlough staff. Schools should first seek to make the necessary savings from their existing budget or consider options to redeploy these staff before furloughing them. Only after all other potential options have been fully considered should schools furlough those members of staff and seek support through the CJRS.
- 3.25 *Further details about how the scheme works can be found by using the following link below:*
[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): financial support for education, early years and children's social care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care-2020)

Free early education entitlements funding during coronavirus (COVID-19)

- 3.26 During summer term 2020, early years providers were funded at pre-Covid rates in relation to free entitlements in order to help mitigate financial pressures while settings were closed to all but vulnerable and key worker children. Providers were also able to access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme if they were experiencing income shortfall from private fee payments.
- 3.27 During autumn term 2020, providers were funded based on typical autumn term levels, i.e. as if coronavirus had not happened. In order for this to be affordable, the DfE funded local authorities for this term based on the January 2020 census, rather than the January 2021 census, as should have been the case.

- 3.28 The DfE announced that it was their intention to return to the normal funding process from 1 January, and use the January 2021 census count to drive funding allocations for the 2021 spring term.
- 3.29 In addition to the funding allocations above the government announced a business rates holiday for many nurseries in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year. Properties that benefit from the relief are occupied by providers on Ofsted’s Early Years Register, and wholly or mainly used for the provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Billing authorities may not grant the relief to themselves.
- 3.30 *Further details about how the scheme works can be found by using the following link below:*
[Use of free early education entitlements funding during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-coronavirus-covid-19)

National Testing programme for Schools and Colleges

- 3.31 Rapid coronavirus testing of staff, pupils and students in secondary schools and colleges began in January 2021. Schools and colleges will receive funding to support them with costs they have incurred to conduct testing.
- 3.32 Within the guidance, the DfE have provided a link to a Workforce Planning Tool which illustrates workforce requirements and associated funding. Schools and Colleges can use this workforce planning tool to estimate the amount of funding they would be entitled to.
- 3.33 Actual allocations will be based on the number of bays/desks calculated as needed to deliver the number of tests completed (measured by the number of test results recorded on the school or college’s individual account on the Test & Trace Log Results Website).
- 3.34 *For further details on the funding for the national testing programme please follow the link below:*
[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) testing in schools and colleges: grant funding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-in-schools-and-colleges-grant-funding)

List of acronyms:

DfE – Department for Education
CJRS – Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
ESFA – Education Skills Funding Agency