

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY FINANCIAL SERVICES

TO:	Reading Schools Forum		
DATE:	13 th July 2017	AGENDA ITEM:	8
TITLE:	SEN BANDING FOR PRIMARY + SECONDARY SCHOOLS		
SERVICE:	Education & Children's Services	WARDS:	All
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1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report and its appendices set out descriptors to support simplifying the allocation of top up rates for statements of SEN and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The Council is seeking a view from Schools Forum regarding the attached proposals. Feedback regarding the current process for agreeing top up funding has been that it is overly complex, and schools have requested that a simpler process is introduced. It is proposed that the model is piloted as set out in section 6 of this report in order to manage the process effectively and efficiently.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION FOR SCHOOLS FORUM

- 2.1 Give a view on the proposed banding descriptors.
2.2 Give a view on the transition arrangements for moving from the current system to the new system.

3 POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council has strategic aims to establish Reading as a learning city and a stimulating and rewarding place to live and visit, to promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all. Education and the funding of education is a key factor in the achievement of this aim.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council currently has a system of allocating top up funding whereby schools provide a costed provision map if they require additional funding. This process has been cumbersome and time consuming for all parties, and has not resulted in consistent practices in linking the assessed needs in the EHCP to the provision required to meet those needs.
- 4.2 Schools have requested that this process is reviewed. The attached document has been developed in response to this feedback, with a key aim of providing transparency and consistency in decision making regarding top up funding to support pupils with a statement of SEND or EHCP.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that current statements of SEN will convert to EHCPs by April 2018 if required. The term statement has been used in the attached document to ensure that it is understood that the descriptors cover current statements for the interim period. The application of the funding model should support the conversion process to EHCPs.

5 THE FUNDING MODEL

- 5.1 The proposed funding descriptors are attached at Appendix A

6 TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 It is proposed that the funding model is piloted immediately for the following groups and the process and descriptors are reviewed and amended if required within 6 months to inform final implementation for all other pupils with a statement / EHCP from April 2018:
- All new EHCPs.
 - Current Band 6 statements that are being converted to EHCPs.
 - EHCPs that have retained historical Band 6 funding until this new process is implemented.
 - Existing exceptional needs funded pupils.
- 6.2 It is anticipated that the remainder of pupils will be allocated a funding band via the Annual Review process from April 2018 onwards. The review of the pilot groups will help inform the best process to achieve this.