



TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOLS' FORUM

March 09, 2023

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Notice of Meeting – Schools' Forum

A meeting of the Schools' Forum will be held on **March 9, 2023, at 5pm. This will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams, the link will be sent via email.** The agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA	
1.	Welcome and apologies <i>Chair</i>
2.	Minutes of the meeting held on January 19, 2023, including matters arising <i>Chair</i>
3.	Schools' Forum Membership Update <i>Chair</i>
4.	DSG Budget Monitoring 2022-23 <i>DSG Finance Business Partner</i>
5.	High Needs Budget 2023/24 <i>DSG Finance Business Partner</i>
6.	Early Years Budget 2023/24 <i>DSG Finance Business Partner</i>
7.	Falling Rolls Fund 2023/24 <i>Strategic Business Partner</i>
8.	Schools' Forum meeting dates for 2024/25
9.	Agenda items for next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSG outturn 2022/23 • Maintained school balances 2022/23 and budgets 2023/43 • Review of the Schools' Forum constitution • DSG Budget 2023/24 and update on deficit recovery plan • Scheme for Financing for Schools update • SEND update
10.	Any other business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Next Meeting: June 22, 2023, at 5pm – To be held virtually via Teams

Minutes of Schools' Forum Meeting

19 January 2023

Members Present

Justine McMinn – Head Teacher of EP Collier; Sophie Greenaway – Head Teacher of Thameside; Richard Rolfe – Governor at Micklands (Chair); Dave Dymond – Governor at Alfred Sutton; Dr S Uttley – Head Teacher of Blessed Hugh Faringdon; Howard Seymour – Head Teacher of Churchend; Symon Cooke – Head Teacher of The Avenue; Jo Budge - Executive Head Teacher of Reading Early Years Schools Federation; Lee Smith – Head Teacher of The Holy Brook; Karen Edwards – Head Teacher of The Heights; Dani Hall - Co-Chair of the Federation between Oxford Road Community School & Wilson School; Isabelle Sandy – Business Manager of Kendrick; ; Ita McGullion – Manager of Kennet Day Nursery; Cathy Woodcock – Finance Director of Reading School; Rachel Cave – Head Teacher of Highdown; Alison McNamara – NEU

Apologies

Brian Grady - Director of Education & Interim Executive Director of Children's Services

In attendance

Ann McDonnell – Business Manager of Blessed Hugh Faringdon; Steph Heaps – DSG Business Partner; Clare Warren – School Support Lead; Steven Davies – Strategic Finance Business Partner; Ohaz Ikedionu – Interim DSG Business Partner; Siobhan Egan - Head of IT and Performance Data; Corinne Dishington – Service Manager Under 5s; Victoria Hannington – School Admissions Manager; Vanessa Hurdle – minute taker.

	Item	Notes
1	Welcome and apologies - Chair	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Steph Heaps read out the protocol for the virtual meeting and confirmed that voting was required from all members for item 2 – the minutes, item 5 – Growth Funding and item 6 – Central Block and Early Years' retained budgets.</p> <p>Recording of the meeting commenced. The recording will be retained until the minutes have been approved.</p>
2	Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2022 - Chair	Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting from 8 December 2022.

		<p>Actions – The Schools’ Forum still requires a Vice-Chair, which will be discussed in item 3.</p> <p>Brian Grady to bring papers to the Forum on the impact of covid on behaviour in schools and the interventions delivered by the School Improvement Team.</p>
3	Schools’ Forum Membership Update - Chair	<p>Richard confirmed that there is still a vacancy for a Primary Head Teacher on the Forum. Members of the Primary Heads’ Association will be made aware of this, should anyone wish to join the Forum.</p> <p>The period of office for three members is due to end in March 2023 – Dani Hall, Howard Seymour and Julia Cottee. RR requested that they let him know if they still wish to continue in post.</p> <p>Vice-Chair – RR asked if anyone would be willing to take on the post of Vice-Chair to let him know. The Vice-Chair would only be required to step in should RR be unavailable to attend a Forum.</p>
4	Final School Formula for 2023/24 – DSG Finance Business Partner	<p>Steph Heaps presented</p> <p>SH confirmed that, although the paper does state that a decision is required, as this is the formula the decision lies with the LA and is just for information.</p> <p>Confirmation of the final gross allocation was received just before Christmas. The allocation for the Schools’ Block was just over £117m. £116m will be left after deductions for the growth funding and transfers to the High Needs Block.</p> <p>This is an increase of just over £9m from 22/23. £3m of this is due to an increase in pupil numbers. £5.9m (5%) is the remainder and is the real increase. What should be taken into account is that the current year’s (22/23) Supplementary Funding Grant will be added to next year’s base funding. This is included in the £5.9m and equates to approximately £3.21.4m. It has been announced that there will be another one-off grant in 23/24. It is similar to the Supplementary Grant but will be called Maintained Schools’ Additional Grant. This will be paid in addition to the formula and will then be incorporated in the base funding for 24/25.</p> <p>For 23/24, Reading is already mirroring the National Formula Funding (NFF) as closely as possible. This, therefore, means that the guidance has changed and Reading needs to stay within 2.5% of the value limits, or to move at least 10% closer.</p>

		<p>In order to be affordable, Reading has applied all the NFF rates, including the area cost adjustment and rounded them down to the nearest pound. The lump sum would then be used as the balancing figure, but as Reading is so far away from the values this year, this will have to be increased. It's currently set at £105k and under the new formula will be increased to £114.3k per school, an increase of £9.3k.</p> <p>The basic entitlement figures will decrease by around 0.36% in order to pay schools against these values. At the December Forum, it was agreed to transfer the maximum 0.5% (£570K) to the High Needs Block. As the vote was split, and in order to afford the formula, it is now proposed that the transfer should remain at this year's rate of £484k.</p> <p>There has been a significant increase in the deprivation factors, which will generate increased funding for schools, not only in terms of the formula, but also the main grants that will be received.</p> <p>Appendix 2 shows the allocation to schools. This is before the deduction of Business rates and the de-delegations. There has been a change to the rateable value for Business rates this year, but these will be paid by the LA, and no monetary payments will be made to schools. It should be noted that the percentages on the table for the overall changes for 22/23 and 23/24 are incorrect. The correct primary increase should read 5.13% and not 2.7%, whilst the correct secondary increase is 5.58% and not 2.95%.</p> <p>Indicative budgets will be sent to schools next week and actuals should be finalised the following month.</p>
5	Growth Fund 2023/24 – DSG Finance Business Partner	<p>Steph Heaps presented.</p> <p>Members need to vote annually on the annual in-year Growth Fund amount and the criteria used for this.</p> <p>The paper shows that the in-year growth amount is £1.3m, how it will be split and the criteria used. LAs receive growth funding to meet the cost of the increase in Pre-16 pupil numbers. In 22/23 this allocation was £900k. The reason for such a big increase is due to the formula used by the DfE. They only use positive increases and these are not off-set by reductions elsewhere in borough eg if one area has seen an increase this will be used for the formula, but any decreases are not counted.</p>

		<p>The formula values for pupils have seen a 2% increase and a 5% increase for the lump sum. Table 1 details Reading's Growth Funding since 2018 and predictions for future years. It is estimated that there will be a surplus of £316k by 2028/29. It is forecast that the allocation will be half of what is being received now and reducing again in 2027/28 to £500k.</p> <p>SD explained that a new Secondary school is due to open in September 2024 called River Academy. It can't be guaranteed that the Growth Funding received in future years will be able to pay for the Academy. For many years, a surplus has been carried over to be made available for the school. Reading is, therefore, trying to ensure that there will be enough money to pay for the school and that it will not be necessary to take from individual schools. The Table, therefore, shows the position in 28/29 when the school will have all year groups.</p> <p>Based on these figures, SD, therefore, requested that money for the Falling Rolls Fund should be agreed to be taken out of the Growth Fund and the criteria for Falling Rolls to be agreed at the March Forum.</p> <p>SH confirmed that no changes have been made to the criteria for the in-year Growth Funding allocation. Primary schools will be paid £4,405, whilst secondaries will receive £4,715. £77.3k will be given to new schools for pre-opening costs. Growth Funding can only be applied to those schools taking in enough additional pupils that require an additional class. Payments are made to schools in November, after the October census has been verified. Funding for a bulge class will be a one-off and will then be added to the formula for the following year,</p> <p>For the proposed allocation of £1.3m, it is suggested that £161k should be used for Green Park. This is a new school, which opened a few years ago. It was agreed that Reading would fund for full places for each Reception year. Also as the opening of River Academy has been delayed, it is prudent to make provision for bulge classes. Funding of £485k is being set aside for five bulge classes. This should leave a surplus balance of £2.3m at the end of 23/24, including carry-forwards from previous years and this year's underspend.</p> <p>The Forum was, therefore, requested to approve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The in-year allocation of £1.3m● Setting aside of £161k for Green Park● £485k for bulge classes● Any underspends to be carried into future years
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £250k to be used for Falling Rolls Fund in 23/24 • The unchanged criteria for the Growth Fund <p>Dani Hall asked what would happen to any money that was set aside for Bulge Classes, but was not used. SH confirmed that it would be carried forward to the next year as part of the Growth Fund.</p> <p>11 members voted. All agreed the proposals</p>
6	<p>Central & Early Years retained budgets 2023/24 – DSG Finance Business Partner</p>	<p>Steph Heaps presented.</p> <p>A vote is required from all members on this item, on the Central Schools Block (Table 2) and the centrally-retained budgets for the Early Years Block (Table 3).</p> <p>Central Schools’ Block - Reading has received the maximum funding for this year in terms of unit funding. This is a 5.86% increase from £38.21 to £40.45. Resulting in an overall increase of 8.7%. This is due to the increase in pupil numbers.</p> <p>There is a 20% reduction for historic commitments. This has been set nationally, and currently the reduction is 20% each year. The only increase in the budget this year is in relation to Admissions. This is to do with inflationary rate increases plus the introduction of a new post to assist the Team in managing current demands and responsibilities.</p> <p>Overall the budget has only decreased by £2k, which includes the 20% deduction in the historic commitments. None of the other budgets in Table 2 have changed, apart from Admissions and Copyright Licences.</p> <p>Isabelle Sandy queried the effect of the 20% reduction on historic commitments. SD explained that Reading is dealing with that themselves, whilst Brighter Futures for Children (BFFC) is not reducing its level of service within those budgets but is finding growth from within BFFC to plug the gap.</p> <p>12 members voted. All agreed the proposals</p> <p>Centrally-retained Budget for Early Years – This is increasing by just under £70k. This is mainly due to inflation, but also oncots and an increase in Portage staff as there is an increase in SEND cases in Early Years. An additional member of staff is</p>

		<p>required due to this. There has been no change to the Dingley contract. This remains at £16.8k.</p> <p>Table 3 needs to be agreed for the Early Years' retained budgets. The overall costs for the teams have increased by £69k.</p> <p>12 members voted. All agreed the proposals</p> <p>SH confirmed that the funding rates for Early Years were confirmed in December. The maximum increases will be 4.9% for three to four year olds and 10% for two year olds. Due to the Early Years Consultation there has been significant increases to the Maintained Nurseries Supplementary Grant. In 22/23 this was paid at £1.12 and will increase to £3.80 in 23/24, 239% increase.</p> <p>Table 5 shows both current rates and the proposed increases - £0.61 for two year olds, £0.27 for three to four year olds and £0.02 for pupil premium and deprivation top-up. The Disability Access Fund will also increase by £28. The Early Years' Budget cannot be set until verification of the January Census is received. This will be brought to the March Forum.</p>
7	DSG Budget Monitoring 2022/23 – Interim DSG Business Partner	<p>Ohaz Ikedionu presented</p> <p>OI explained that the High Needs' Block is predicting an overspend of £1.2m for 23/24, bringing the overall position to just over £4.6m overspend. This is a reduction from December's meeting when the predicted figure was £5.2m.</p> <p>Schools Block – This is predicted to be underspent by £1.5m, which will be used for the new school in 23/24.</p> <p>The overall increase in the overspend on the DSG budget is £0.9m, bringing the final total to £3m.</p> <p>The breakdown of the High Needs figures is as follows:</p> <p>£3.4m - overspend as at 31 March 22 £318K – import & export figures £493.5k - Top-up funding overspend £10k – Placement base-funding £31.5k – Central budgets</p>

		<p>£350K – Contingency</p> <p>This results in an estimated overspend at 31 March 23 of £4.6m. The import/export figure increased from £280k, whilst the contingency funding has decreased from £500k to £350k.</p> <p>Most of the overspend in the High Needs Block is due to placements in alternative independent provision such as The Avenue.</p> <p>There is currently no update on the Recovery Plan. It remains a work-in-progress. There has been a meeting in January on Delivering Better Value (DBV). There will be data collection in February and in April there will be a deep dive on EHCPs. This will be followed by a draft paper in June on how to try and tackle the situation on improving resource provision and placements. It is predicted that the overspend will increase to £30m without the intervention of the DBV.</p>
8	Agenda Items for Next Meeting	<p>The next meeting will be held on 9 March 2023 at 5pm as a virtual meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree High Needs Budget 2023/24 • Agree Early Years Budget 2023/24 • Falling Rolls Fund 2023/24 • Budget Monitoring Summary period 11 2022/23 • Agree Schools' Forum meeting dates for 2023/24
9	Any Other Business	<p>There were no other items. RR thanked all attendees.</p> <p>The meeting finished at 5.40pm.</p>

Summary of Actions Outstanding

SF Date & Item no.	Action Required	Responsible Person
13/10/22 – Item 3	Appointment of Vice-Chair	Richard Rolfe
8/12/22 – item 6	To provide relevant data to look at the impact of covid in schools	Brian Grady
8/12/22 – item 6	Report on the interventions delivered by the School Improvement Service	Brian Grady

Agenda Item 3

SCHOOLS' FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Mar-23

Group / Sub Group	Votes	Position	Name	School	First elected / appointed to SF	Last elected / appointed to SF	Period of office as member	Due for re-election / appointment	
School Members:									
Nursery (2)	1	Head teacher	Jo Budge	Reading EY Schools Federation	Jan-17	Jun-22	3 yrs	Jun-25	
	2	Governor	Julia Cottee	Reading EY Schools Federation	Mar-20	Mar-20	3 yrs	Mar-23	
Maintained Primary (7)	3	Head teacher					3 yrs		
	4	Head teacher	Justine McMinn	EP Collier	Nov-13	Jun-22	3 yrs	Jun-25	
	5	Head teacher	Nikki McVeigh	Christ the King	Jul-21	Jul-21	3 yrs	Jul-24	
	6	Head teacher	Sophie Greenaway	Thameside	Dec-22	Dec-22	3 yrs	Dec-25	
	7	Governor	Dave Dymond	Alfred Sutton	Dec-22	Dec-22	3 yrs	Dec-25	
	8	Governor *	Richard Rolfe	Micklands	Dec-16	Dec-22	3 yrs	Dec-25	
	9	Governor	Dani Hall	Oxford Road and Wilson	Mar-20	Mar-20	3 yrs	Mar-23	
		Observer/Substitute	Sarah Bernto	St Anne's					
Maintained Secondary (1)	10	Head teacher	Simon Utley	Blessed Hugh Faringdon	Jan-17	Jan-22	3 yrs	Jan-25	
Academy Primary (2)	11	Academy Member	Karen Edwards	The Heights	Jul-18	Jul-21	3 Yrs	Jul-24	
	12	Academy Member	Howard Seymour	Churchend	Mar-20	Mar-20	3 yrs	Mar-23	
Academy Secondary (5)	13	Academy Member	Isabelle Sandy	Kendrick	Feb-12	Jun-22	3 Yrs	Jun-25	
	14	Academy Member	David Littlemore	Propsect	Feb-12	Dec-22	3 Yrs	Dec-25	
	15	Academy Member	Rachel Cave	Highdown	Feb-12	Jun-22	3 Yrs	Jun-25	
	16	Academy Member	Annal Nayyar	Reading Girls	Dec-17	Jun-22	3 Yrs	Jun-25	
	17	Academy Member	Andy Johnson	Maiden Erlegh School	Sep-21	Sep-21	3 Yrs	Sep-24	
			Observer/Substitute	Louise Baker	John Madjeski				
			Observer/Substitute	Cathy Woodcock	Reading School				
			Observer/Substitute	Jonathan Nicholls	UTC				
		Observer/Substitute	John Salberg	The Wren					
Maintained Special (1)	18	Head teacher	Lee Smith	Holy Brook			On-going	n/a	
Academy Special (1)	19	Academy Member	Symon Cooke	The Avenue	Mar-18	Mar-21	3 Yrs	Mar-24	
Alternative Provision (1)	20	Head teacher	Ceri Burns	Cranbury College			On-going	n/a	
Non-School Members:									
Early Year's PVI (1)	21	PVIs	Ita McGullion	Kennet Day Nursery	Oct-17	Oct-21	3 yrs	Oct-24	
Trades Unions (1)	22	Trades Unions	Ali McNamara	NEU			On-going	n/a	
16 - 19 Provision (1)	23	FE College	Charlotte Morgan	Reading College (Activate Learning)	Oct-20	Oct-20	3 yrs	Oct-23	

Non Members

Observer	-	RBC	Cllr Lead Member for Education					
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* Chair

** Vice chair

Elected October 2020

VACANT



Reading Schools' Forum

March 9, 2023

Agenda Item 4

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)
Budget Monitoring 2022/23

For decision For discussion For information

SUMMARY

This report sets out the current position (month 11) of the DSG budget for 2022/23 and outlines the variances.

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VERSION

Version 1

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Recommendations

- NOTE: The current overall DSG allocation and budget position for 2022/23.

Background

1. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring-fenced specific grant and can only be used in support of the schools' budget and spent on school/pupil activity as defined by the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations (2020).
2. The DSG is split between four different funding blocks - schools, central school services, early years, and high needs. Each Council's allocation is largely based upon actual pupil numbers from the October pupil count proceeding the actual financial year. Although separate allocations are received for each block, transfers are allowed between blocks but subject to certain restrictions.
3. Overspends on the DSG are carried forward and are a first call on the following year's allocation of DSG. Underspends on the DSG are carried forward to support the future year's school's budget.
4. The Authority must ensure that DSG is correctly spent and has to report the outturn position to inform the impact upon the following year's budget position. The budget monitoring of the Authority distinguishes between how services are funded, namely by DSG or by the Local Authority.
5. The LA receives its DSG allocation gross (including allocations relating to academies and post 16 provision), and then the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) recoups the actual budget for these settings to pay them direct, leaving a net or LA allocation.

DSG Budget 2022/23 Month 11 Overall Position

6. Appendix 2 contains the 2022/23 budget and current (month 11) forecasts. This is split between the four funding blocks, broken down by the main reporting lines for the DSG. Appendix 3 contains brief notes on what is included in each line of the budget report.
7. Table 2 summarises the current budget and forecast per block. Note that the DSG allocation includes the deficit as of the 31st of March 2022 as this deficit includes ringfenced surpluses brought forward from 2021/22 and being utilised in 2022/23 and 2023/24 (for growth fund and early years).

Table 2: Summary Budget and Forecast 2022/23

DSG Block	Current Budget (£m)	2021-2022 C/Fwd (£m)	Forecast Month 11 (£m)	In Year Variance (£m)	Total Variance (£m)
Schools Block	49.554	(1.069)	49.038	(0.516)	(1.585)
Central Schools Block	1.134	(0.007)	1.140	0.006	(0.001)
Early Years Block*	12.445	(0.172)	11.895	(0.294)	(0.294)
High Needs Block	24.228	3.412	26.021	2.144	5.557
Total - Net Expenditure	87.361	2.164	88.094	1.340	3.677
DSG Allocation*	(87.010)	(2.164)	(86.754)	0.000	(0.172)
Balance Over/(Under) Allocated	0.351	0.000	1.340	1.340	3.505

*Adjusted for updated allocation

1. The deficit forecast for the end of the financial year has an in-year figure of **£1.340m** bringing the end of year position to **£3.505m**
2. The main concern is over the High Needs Block where the starting deficit was **£3.412m** and this has arisen to **£5.556m**, an in-year increase of **£2.144m** which is **£1.793m** greater than planned. There has been an increase of **£1.034m** in relation to Top up funding since what was reported in month 8. This is mainly due to the large increase in the number of EHCP's which have arisen since October 2022 to a total of 1587 (Increase of 182). Further Education has seen an increase of 89 pupils / **£0.305m**, and a large proportion of the increases are pupils placed in Mainstream settings which has increased by 59 pupils / **£0.395m**. Another area with increases to spend is Alternative Provision which has increased by **£0.242m**
3. In addition to the above increases to Top-Up costs in year, there has been a reduction in our forecast spend in relation to place funding by **£0.116m**. This is due to no new resource provisions opening from September 2022 along with no increases to existing settings.
4. The variances relating to the High Needs Block are summarised as follows:

High Needs Deficit as of the 31st of March 2022	£3,412,000
2022/23 Budget setting planned overspend	£315,273
Import / Export Adjustment	£36,000
Top Up funding - overspend	£1,878,392
Place Funding	(£116,743)
Central Budgets (Inclusion Activities)	£31,500
Forecasted High Needs Deficit as of 31st March 2023	£5,556,421

Variations, Current Risks & Emerging Issues

5. **Schools Block** - The Growth Fund budget will underspend (partly planned), with the in year surplus funding currently estimated at **£0.516m**. This will be carried forward towards paying for New secondary school and possible bulge classes in 2023/24 and beyond. The current budget allowed for bulge classes in 2022/23 has not been required this year.
6. **Central Schools Services Block** - Most of the central school services budgets are agreed contributions towards the full cost of a service and the majority will not usually have a variance.

7. **Early Years Block** - The majority of Early Years Funding (95%) is relating to the free early year's entitlement for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds. The budget is based on the hours funded in the previous financial year at the set hourly rates. The DSG funding which we expect to receive is based on an average of the January 2022 and 2023 census numbers, so in theory, as expenditure is based on the actual uptake of entitlement for each term, any increase or decrease in numbers during the year should be funded if the January census represents the average for the year. Funding is increased or clawed back (by the ESFA) in the following year (usually notified in July) if there has been an under or over allocation.

The Draft census data for January 2023 has enabled us to forecast our in year position and this is estimated to have a **surplus of £0.294m**.

8. High Needs Block - Approximately 84% (83% in 21-22) of the high needs block budget is payments for statutory top up fees for pupils/students with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). ***This is the area of highest risk due to the unpredictability of the number and level (cost) of plans. It is the continued growth in both the number and cost of these plans that has led to the DSG deficit.*** Recent investment in Non-maintained Special School places to accommodate high need pupils has occurred this term and has increased the pressure on the High Needs Block.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary DSG Budget and Forecast 2022/23 as of February 2023

Appendix 2 – Additional Information per Service for Appendix 2 table

Appendix 1 – Summary DSG Budget and Forecast @ Period 11 2022/23

DSG Budget for 2022/23

Line Ref.	Description	Current Budget (£m)	2021-2022 C/Fwd (£m)	Total Spending Power (£m)	Forecast (£m)	In Year Variance (£m)	Total Variance (£m)
Schools Block							
1	Individual Schools Budget - Maintained Schools	47.376	0.000	47.376	47.376	0.000	0.000
2	Growth Fund	0.845	1.069	1.914	0.219	-0.626	-1.695
3	Business Rates	0.900	0.000	0.900	1.010	0.110	0.110
4	Behaviour Support Services (de-delegation)	0.182	0.000	0.182	0.182	0.000	0.000
5	Staff costs supply cover (trade unions) (de-delegation)	0.043	0.000	0.043	0.043	0.000	0.000
6	School Improvement (de-delegation)	0.128	0.000	0.128	0.128	0.000	0.000
7	Statutory/regulatory Duties (ESG) (de-delegation)	0.080	0.000	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000
8	Sub Total Schools Block Net Expenditure	49.554	1.069	50.623	49.038	-0.516	-1.585
9	Schools Block DSG Allocation	49.554	1.069	50.623			
10	Balance Over / (Under) Allocated	0.000	-0.000	-0.000			
Central Schools Services Block							
11	Contribution to combined budgets	0.316	0.000	0.316	0.316	0.000	0.000
12	School admissions	0.229	0.000	0.229	0.229	0.000	0.000
13	Servicing of schools forum	0.020	0.000	0.020	0.020	0.000	0.000
14	Prudential borrowing costs	0.032	0.000	0.032	0.032	0.000	0.000
15	Other Items (copyright licences)	0.120	0.000	0.120	0.120	0.000	0.000
16	Statutory/regulatory Duties (ESG)	0.417	0.007	0.424	0.423	0.006	-0.001
17	Sub Total Central School Services Block Net Expenditure	1.134	0.007	1.141	1.140	0.006	-0.001
18	Central School Services Block DSG Allocation	1.134	0.006	1.140			
19	Balance Over / (Under) Allocated	0.000	0.001	0.001			
Early Years Block							
20	Early Years Funding (free entitlement)	11.717	0.172	11.889	11.176	-0.713	-0.713
21	Support for inclusion	0.050	0.000	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000
22	SEN support services (Portage/Dingley)	0.251	0.000	0.251	0.251	0.000	0.000
23	Central expenditure on early years entitlement	0.418	0.000	0.418	0.418	0.000	0.000
24	Sub Total Early Years Block Net Expenditure	12.436	0.172	12.608	11.895	-0.713	-0.713
25	Early Years Block DSG Allocation	12.273	0.172	12.445	12.189	-0.427	-0.427
26	Balance Over / (Under) Allocated	0.163	0.000	0.163	-0.294	-0.285	-0.285
High Needs Block							
27	SEN placements - Maintained Schools (first £10k/£6k place funding)	1.564	0.000	1.564	1.447	-0.117	-0.117
28	Top up funding - Special Schools	9.730	0.000	9.730	9.770	0.039	0.039
29	Top up funding - Resource Units	0.842	0.000	0.842	0.702	-0.141	-0.141
30	Top up funding - Mainstream	3.194	0.000	3.194	3.549	0.355	0.355
31	Top up funding - Nursery	0.111	0.000	0.111	0.076	-0.035	-0.035
32	Top up funding - FE Colleges	1.217	0.000	1.217	1.634	0.417	0.417
33	Top up funding - Alternative Provision	1.291	0.000	1.291	1.906	0.616	0.616
34	Top up and other funding - non maintained & independent schools	3.412	0.000	3.412	4.073	0.661	0.661
35	Top up Contingency (new placements)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
36	SEN support services	0.726	0.000	0.726	0.726	0.000	0.000
37	Hospital education services	0.203	0.000	0.203	0.170	-0.033	-0.033
38	Support for Inclusion	0.523	0.000	0.523	0.555	0.032	0.032
39	Inclusion Fund	0.484	0.000	0.484	0.484	0.000	0.000
40	Therapies and other health related services	0.520	0.000	0.520	0.520	0.000	0.000
41	SEN Transport	0.100	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000
42	Teachers pay & pension grants to special schools/PRU	0.311	0.000	0.311	0.311	0.000	0.000
43	DSG deficit from previous year	-0.315	-3.412	-3.727	0.036	0.000	3.763
44	Sub Total High Needs Block Net Expenditure	23.913	-3.412	20.501	26.057	1.793	5.556
45	High Needs Block DSG Allocation	23.877	-3.412	20.465			
46	Balance Over / (Under) Allocated	0.036	-0.000	0.036			
47	Total All Blocks Net Expenditure				88.094	0.998	3.503

Appendix 2 – Additional Information for Appendix 2 Table

SCHOOLS BLOCK

Line 1 - Individual School Budget – Schools formula budget for maintained Primary's and Secondary's.

Line 2 - Growth fund - The growth fund budget is for new/growing schools or bulge classes in response to basic need and is allocated to schools from the autumn term based on the criteria set by Schools' Forum. This also includes the newly agreed Falling Roles fund.

DE-DELEGATIONS – Maintained Primary or/and Secondary Schools Only:

Line 4 - Behaviour Support Services – Passported to Cranbury College to supply this service.

Line 5 - Staff Costs to Supply Union Cover – Pays for Union support and supply cover for staff engaging in union duties.

Line 6 - School Improvement – To fund staff and Projects within the service.

Line 7 – Statutory/regulatory duties - formally known as the Education Services Grant, for statutory duties carried out by the LA on behalf of all maintained schools such as internal audit, year-end accounts, central reporting, monitoring compliance with scheme for financing schools.

CENTRAL SCHOOLS SERVICES BLOCK

Line 11 - Combined Budgets - covers contribution towards Commissioning, school improvement advisors, MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), Early Help – children action teams that covers family workers, Welfare, CAMHs and Education Psychology.

Line 12 - School Admissions – contribution towards the statutory admissions service for all Reading Schools.

Line 13 - Servicing of Schools Forum – contribution towards officer time for preparation of reports and attendance at meetings; cost of room hire; arranging meetings, minute taking, web site.

Line 14 - Prudential Borrowing costs – Borrowing costs for schools capital programme has historically been and will be funded by borrowing over many years. This is a small contribution to the overall borrowing costs.

Line 15 – Other Items – Copyright licences – national contract, purchased on behalf of all schools.

Line 16 – Statutory/regulatory duties - formally known as the Education Services Grant, for duties carried out by the LA for all schools, including academies. Includes DSG budgets, school funding formula, payments to schools, statutory returns, education welfare.

EARLY YEARS BLOCK

Line 20 - Early Years formula funding – 2, 3 & 4 year old free entitlement funding including deprivation and early Years pupil premium and other early years grants relating to maintained nurseries and disability.

Line 21 - Support for Inclusion – Early Years Cluster funding and central staffing in Education department. Supports inclusion of children in early year's settings, supporting inclusive practices and resources that enable young children with SEND to have their needs met in these settings. There is also a contribution from the high needs block (in line 37).

Line 22 - SEN Support Services – portage and contribution to Dingley.

Line 23 - Central Expenditure on Children under 5 – Early Years Team Staff including compliance, data, sufficiency and performance.

HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

Line 27 - SEN Placements – Place funding for pre 16 maintained Resource units (first £6k), maintained special Schools (first £10k), and Cranbury College up to the date they became an academy.

Line 28 to 31 - Top-up funding for schools - EHCP top-ups for nursery, primary, secondary, special and alternative provisions within any LA that has a Reading financial responsibility for the EHCP. This also includes Pupils without EHCPs in Pupil referral units

Line 32 - Top-up funding for FE Colleges - EHCP top-ups for students in further education colleges.

Line 33 - 34 - Top-up funding and other funding – non maintained and Independents - EHCP Top-ups for Independent and non-maintained special schools, and placements in other alternative private provision for pupils with or without a EHCP.

Line 35 – Top up - Contingency – When the growth within the budget for top-ups have been met before the end of the year, then adding in contingency for new EHCPs and placements will sit here and reviewed monthly.

Line 36 - SEN Support Services – This includes Sensory Consortium (joint arrangement with other Berkshire LAs), virtual school, and ASD Outreach commissioned to Christ the King School.

Line 37 - Hospital Education Services – This includes Hospital Education unit at Royal Berkshire Hospital and Education for Pupils in Tier 4 CAMHS specialist independent mental health hospital provision which is commissioned by NHS England

Line 38 - Support for Inclusion – Funding for hard to place pupils (through Inclusion panel & Therapeutic Thinking approach), and central staffing (2 posts) in Education department, one for statutory functions including monitoring exclusions and one for ASD advisory support. The final year’s payment to Manor School for the inclusion project, a contribution to the early years inclusion panel, plus early years place funding at Snowflakes.

Line 39 – Inclusion Fund – Funding agreed by schools which has been transferred from the schools block to the high needs block to pay towards supporting schools with a higher percentage of pupils with EHCPs than the statistical neighbour average to support inclusion in mainstream schools

Line 40 - Therapies and other Health Related services – Contribution towards Speech and Language, Occupational and Physio therapy. Jointly funded with the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Line 41 - SEN Transport – Contributions to SEN School Travel

Line 42 – Teachers Pay and Pension grants to special schools/PRU

Line 43 - deficit – All of the 2021/22 deficit related to the high needs block



Reading Schools' Forum

March 09, 2023

Agenda Item 5

High Needs Block Budget 2023/24

For decision

For discussion

For information

SUMMARY

This report sets out a breakdown of the high needs block funding allocation and budget for 2023/24, and the latest update on the deficit recovery plan.

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VERSION

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REVIEW DATE

None

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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 NOTE: The high needs block funding for 2023/24 (paragraph 3.2).
- 1.2 NOTE: The proposed budgets for the high needs block in 2023/24 (section 4).

2. Background

- 2.1 The High Needs Block (HNB) supports the delivery of the Council's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy (2022 – 2027). The Strand 1 work stream which includes representative members of Schools Forum incorporates the analysis of data and information, including financial information, to inform future provision and joint commissioning.
- 2.2 The HNB is currently in deficit, and the monitoring of this position is updated in the budget monitoring report brought to each meeting of the Schools' Forum. The Forum also receives regular reports on the progress of the strategy. As the current year budget monitoring shows, the number of pupils receiving EHCPs which the Council is legally obliged to fund continues to grow, and the inflationary increases applied by external providers continue to rise, with both at a greater cost than the increase in funding received in each year.
- 2.3 Since 2021/22, there has been large increases in the HNB DSG allocation than in recent years, and in 2022/23 an additional grant was also awarded due to the vast increase in inflation since the initial budget was announced. The increases in the HNB continue in 2023/24
- 2.4 The local authority decides the high needs budget, but welcomes comments and suggestions from the Schools' Forum.

3. High Needs Block Funding 2023/24

- 3.1. The HNB element of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2023/24 was announced on 16th December 2022 and further information on the funding arrangements can be found in ESFAs High Needs Operational Guide. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-funding-arrangements-2023-to-2024>.
- 3.2. All local authorities are to receive a minimum increase of 9.8% per head for all authorities per head of the age 2 to 18 population based on their 2022/23 allocation. For Reading, the high needs block is increasing by £2.824m (10.2%) to £30.485m. This is subject to change as is based on 2022 data in relation to our import / export adjustment. It is also gross of any Academy place funding recoupment.
- 3.3. At the December 2022 meeting of the Schools' Forum, it was agreed to transfer up to the maximum 0.5% of funding from the schools' block to the high needs block, in order to financially support schools with disproportionate numbers of pupils with EHCPs. This has been set at the current contribution of £484k.
- 3.4. The allocation for 2023/24 is broken down as shown in Table 1 (also comparing to the 2022/23 allocation).

Table 1: High Needs Block Funding Allocation 2022/23 and 2023/24

HIGH NEEDS BLOCK	2022/23 ALLOCATION	2023/24 ALLOCATION
High Needs formula	£26,665,843	£29,121,762
Special School census pupil numbers allocation	£1,874,114	£1,993,081
AP Provision with AP Pay and Pension	£296,283	£307,798
Import/Export adjustment	-£2,274,000	-£2,274,000
Gross High Needs Allocation	£26,562,240	£29,148,641
Add transfer from schools' block	£484,000	£484,000
Supplementary Grant	£1,099,853	£1,337,081
High Needs Funding Available	£28,146,093	£30,969,722
Academies place funding top slice (recoupment) for ESFA to pay academies direct	-£4,269,167	-£4,533,000
Net High Needs Block Funding	£23,876,926	£26,436,722

The import/export adjustment for 2023/24 is £2,274,000 and will be re-confirmed by July 2023. This is based on the high needs' places provided in Reading to other LAs pupils less high needs places accessed by Reading pupils in other LAs (for Reading this is a deduction in funding as we are a net exporter).

4. High Needs Block Budget 2023/24

- 4.1. Table 2 sets out the current budget and forecast for 2022/23 and the proposed budget for 2023/2024. The paragraphs that follow set out further information for each budget line.

Table 2: High Needs Budget 2022/23 and 2023/24

REF to PARAGRAPH BELOW	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET 2022/23 £	FORECAST 2022/23 £	PROPOSED BUDGET 2023/24 £
5	Centrally Retained Budgets			
5.1	Inclusion support posts	273,100	297,100	250,300
5.2	Inclusion support – schools with higher proportion of pupils with EHCPs	484,000	484,000	484,000
5.3	Inclusion Support – Therapeutic Thinking	50,000	57,500	50,000
5.4	Inclusion Support – ASD outreach	41,000	41,000	41,000
5.5	Early years inclusion funding	100,000	100,000	250,000
5.6	Dingley Contribution	25,000	25,000	25,000
5.7	Contract - Sensory consortium	360,000	360,000	378,000
5.8	Contract - Speech/language & occupational	520,000	520,000	520,000

5.9	Virtual School – Children looked after	214,500	214,500	214,500
5.1	Transport contribution	100,000	100,000	100,000
5.11	Central overheads	85,000	85,000	79,000
5.12	Teachers Pay & Pension grants	310,700	310,700	296,000
5.13	Commissioning	100,000	100,000	134,000
5.14	Medical Tutoring (Children Missing Education)	-	-	50,000
5.15	Hard to Place Funding	-	-	50,000
5.16	Children Missing Education	-	-	146,000
5.17	SEND Resources for Schools from Sep 23 (e.g Teacher advisors)	-	-	-
	Total Centrally Retained Budgets	2,663,300	2,694,800	3,067,800
6.2	Maintained Schools			
	EP Collier RU (12 places)	76,000	76,000	84,000
	Christ The King RU (21 places)	142,000	142,000	146,000
	Southcote RU (8 Places)	81,332	55,334	64,000
	NEW Resource Provision x 2 (20 places Sept 23)	23,333	-	136,667
	Blessed Hugh Farringdon RU (25 places)	148,000	148,000	140,000
	Holybrook special school (32 places)	320,000	320,000	320,000
	Snowflakes (Early Years)	100,000	110,247	115,000
	Early Years resources	212,569	180,576	240,000
	Total Maintained Schools	1,103,234	1,032,157	1,245,667
6.3	Academy Schools (top sliced)			
	Prospect RU (30 places)	210,999	210,999	236,000
	Highdown RU (5 places)	39,667	40,667	42,000
	The Avenue special school (220 Places from Sept 23)	2,012,500	2,012,500	2,187,500
	The Avenue special school (Satellite Class 8 places from Sept 23)	-	-	46,667
	Additional Special Schools Places (Summer Term 23)	-	-	41,667
	Hamilton (56 Pre-16 and 8 Post-16)	686,667	640,000	640,000
	Cranbury College PRU pre 16 (100 places)	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
	Cranbury College PRU post 16 (SLA to be reviewed)	240,000	240,000	240,000
	Thames Valley special Free (54 places)	540,000	540,000	540,000
	Total Academy Schools (top sliced)	4,729,833	4,684,166	4,973,834
7	EHCP Top Ups			
7.1	Mainstream schools	3,194,400	3,549,047	3,220,382
7.2	Special Schools	9,730,300	9,769,718	10,142,426
7.3	Nursery	110,900	75,516	66,476
7.4	Resource units	842,300	701,742	880,730
7.5	Independent & Non Maintained Special	3,322,700	3,998,021	5,197,199
7.6	Further Education Colleges	1,217,300	1,633,976	1,801,473
7.7	PRU including Cranbury College	1,061,600	1,263,331	1,203,859
7.8	Other Independent Alternative Placements	229,300	642,057	801,296
7.9	Personal Budgets	89,100	74,827	134,289
7.10	Cranbury Hospital Funding	158,100	158,100	166,000
7.11	Medical Hospital Tuition (Tier 4)	45,000	12,000	30,000

	Total EHCP Top Ups	20,001,000	21,878,336	23,644,130
8	High Needs Block Expenditure Total	28,497,367	30,289,459	32,931,431
9	High Needs Block DSG Indicative Allocation (including £484,000 Transfer from Schools Block)	28,146,094	28,146,094	30,969,723
	Net Budget Variance (Deficit / Surplus)	351,273	2,143,365	1,961,708

- 4.2. The budget proposed for **2023/24 is £32.931m**, which is £1.962m (6%) above the in-year HNB DSG allocation of **£30.969m**, which will mean a continued increase to the deficit.
- 4.3. The additional new funding in 2023/24 is required to fund new place funding and additional top ups; the increase in numbers above the original 2022/23 budget (for which the increase in number of EHCP's during 2022/23 was unforeseen); there is also the assumed on-going increase in numbers in 2022/23; and an assumed average **5% inflationary** increase to the fees. There are also increases to the number of local places and inflationary increases to other high needs budgets. None of the deficit can therefore be repaid in 2023/24.
- 4.4. Reading is working closely with Newton Europe in relation to The Delivering Better Value Programme (DBV). This programme is commissioned by the DfE which supports 55 LAs to identify the highest impact, sustainable changes that the LA can make to better support local CYP with SEND. Reading is within of tranche 2 of this programme which launched January 2023.
- 4.5. As part of the DBV programme that is underway, the current SEND banding system will be reviewed with the intention for implementation in April 2024. It has been agreed that for the 2023/24 financial year that Reading School Top-Up Rates including Resource Units, will receive a **5% uplift** effective from **1 April 2023**. The new rates are shown in **Appendix 1**.

5. Centrally Retained Costs

- 5.1. **Inclusion support posts (£250,300)** – this budget includes the cost of three posts retained by the Local Authority. They carry out a range of statutory functions relating to monitoring exclusions, part time timetables and other issues relating to vulnerable pupils, and ASC advisory support/outreach.
- 5.2. **Inclusion support (£484,000)** – This is funding to support schools with a higher percentage of pupils with EHCPs than the statistical neighbour average to support inclusion in mainstream schools. The method for its allocation was agreed at the July 2018 meeting of the Schools' Forum following the recommendation of a SEND working group and was reviewed (via a consultation with all schools) during Autumn 2022. Following a further consultation with all schools on the funding of this support, Schools' Forum agreed to transfer £484,000 from the schools' block to the high needs block to pay for this support, and this funding is ringfenced specifically for this purpose.
- 5.3. **School Inclusion Panel (Therapeutic Thinking Approach) (£50,000)**
- 5.4. **ASD Outreach (£41,000)** is provided by Christ the King School.

- 5.5. **Early Years Inclusion Fund (£250,000)** - this is a contribution to a larger budget funded from the Early Years DSG Block (£300k in total). It supports inclusion of children in early years' settings. Work has been undertaken to move away from 1:1 funding to identify and support inclusive practices and resources that enable young children with SEND to have their needs met in these settings.
- 5.6. **Dingley's Promise SEND Provision (£25,000)** - The total cost of the provision is £41.5k, with £16.5k contributed from the Early Years DSG block.
- 5.7. **Sensory Consortium (£378,000)** – This is a joint arrangement with Windsor and Maidenhead and other Berkshire Local Authorities. Inflated for 2022/23 with an increase in support sessions.
- 5.8. **Speech and Language (SALT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) Contract (£520,000)** - The contract value has now been adjusted to include all academies, as some were originally excluded. Inflated for 2022/23 with an additional contract created for the early years resource units.
- 5.9. **Virtual School Children Looked After (£214,500)** - This contribution towards the Virtual school for Children Looked After. This has increased from 2021-2022 due to the funding reduction within the central block and following a benchmarking exercise this service is funded from the High Needs Block in the majority (if not all) LAs.
- 5.10. **SEND transport contribution (£100,000)** - This contributes to the total SEND Transport spend of £3m.
- 5.11. **Central overheads (£79,000)** - This contributes towards the cost of council overheads. The amount has not increased for several years and has seen a slight reduction from 2022/23
- 5.12. **Teachers Pay & Pension Grants (£296,000)** – This amount has been added to the HNB DSG for the local authority to pay over to special schools and alternative provision these grants based on the actual number of pupils recorded in the October 2021 census.
- 5.13. **Commissioning (£134,000)** – SEN Placement costs are the main driver of spend within the High Needs Block and BfFC are focusing on the procurement of high cost placements to see better arrangements, contracts and partnership working can bring down the average costs of placements. This will focus on independent settings for 22-23 that includes colleges.
- 5.14. **Medical Tutoring (Children Missing Education) (£50,000)** – To ensure the local authority are able to discharge their statutory duty in providing appropriate tuition to pupils who are medically unfit for school.
- 5.15. **Hard to Place Funding (£50,000)** – To create a fund to support children going through the fair access protocol or requiring intervention to prevent permanent exclusions.
- 5.16. **Children Missing Education (CME) (£146,000)** – To maintain the offer of service in regards to Children Missing Education and Elective Home Education where numbers have increased

considerably since the pandemic. E.g. The CME The levels since 2019 have increased from 51 to 240. In conjunction with the growing statutory duties with the attendance support team, the CME will adopt service roles from them to ensure continued service delivery. In previous academic years the model was 1.7 FTE which is now being increased to 2.7 FTE to enable delivery and increased offer of support to schools.


- 5.17. **SEND Resources for Schools – (£0)** – As part of the Delivering Better Value (DVB) project, we are looking into creating an SEND Advisory Service for all Reading Schools to access in supporting SEND children within mainstream settings. No monetary value has yet been assigned to this workstream.

6. Place Funding

- 6.1. This funds the agreed number of places in special schools, resource provision/units in mainstream schools, and alternative provision (pupil referral units). The funding is fixed for the year regardless of how many pupils are on roll. Resource provisions receive £6k per place plus the school formula funding for the actual number of pupils in the unit on the previous October census day (or post 16 formula funding); Pre 16 vacant places as on October census day are funded at £10k per place. The mix between filled/vacant places changes annually and has an impact on the budget (if there are more vacant places, it costs the HNB more). Special schools and pupil referral units receive £10k per place.
- 6.2. **Maintained school place funding (£1,245,667)** – This budget also allows for increases in resource places which could potentially open in September 2023.
- 6.3. **Academies place funding (£4,973,834)** – This is top sliced by the ESFA from the Local Authority HNB allocation to fund places in Academies based on the LA HNB place return which is submitted in November of the previous year. The 2023/24 budget includes 8 additional places at The Avenue which are being considered as satellite classes from September 2023. The funding for this is being held centrally and is not included in the recouplement.

7. EHCP Top Ups

- 7.1. **Mainstream schools Top Up (£3,220,105)** – this is based on the actual number of top ups as at February 2023, increased by an additional 13. This supports the inclusion strategy and reflects the current trend of increase.
- 7.2. **Special School Top Up (£10,142,426)** – this is based on the actual number of top ups as at February 2023, increased by 26 places. The budget has assumed an overall average increase in rates of 5%, though we have no control on increases in other local authorities.
- 7.3. **Nursery Top Up (£66,476)** – This includes additional resource places as part of the Early Intervention strategy.
- 7.4. **Resource Unit Top Ups (£880,730)** - this is based on the actual number of top ups as at February 2023, increased by an additional 22 places as we are opening a number of additional new places. The budget has assumed an overall average increase in rates of 5%, though we have no control on increases in other local authorities.

- 
- 7.5. **Out of Authority (OOA) Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools (NMSS) (£5,167,199)** – this is based on the actual number of top ups as at February 2023, increased by a total of 31 placements. The budget assumes inflation at 5%.
- 7.6. **Further Education Colleges (£1,801,473)** – this is based on the actual number of top ups as at February 2023, with an increase of 25 pupils as the demand for college placements appears to have grown. The budget assumes inflation at 5%.
- 7.7. **Pupil Referral Units top up funding (£1,203,859)** – Cranbury College receive a sum of £710k for PRU placements. The additional amount is for EHCP placements at Cranbury and top up fees in other PRUs. No increase in numbers has been assumed for 2023/24 and assumed 5% inflation. Funding removed from schools for permanent exclusions are credited against this budget if the pupil is subsequently placed in a PRU. This service forms part of an SLA which will be reviewed.
- 7.8. **Other independent alternative placements (AP) (£801,296)** – there has been an increase in the number of pupils attracting additional support for AP on short term alternative packages either through their school or through the Council. Where schools place pupils who are already receiving top up, they are now responsible for this payment to avoid double funding. This budget is based on the actual number of top ups as at February 2023 with an increase of 20 pupils and assumes an increase for inflation of 5%.
- 7.9. **Personal Budgets (£134,289)** - There has been an increase in the number of pupils attracting personal budgets, funding of which is transferred and managed by the parents / carers of pupils. This budget allows for an increase of 10 on top of the actual as at February 2023
- 7.10. **Hospital Education (£166,000)** - This budget funds a teaching team at the Royal Berkshire Hospital and is hosted by Cranbury College. It is required to support pupils from any Local Authority area who are in hospital in Reading. The budget has been increased by 5% for inflation.
- 7.11. **Other hospital funding (£30,000)** - This budget funds the cost of pupils' education while they attend tier 4 specialist independent mental health hospital provision which is commissioned by NHS England. This is demand led and cannot be predicted. Annual costs in recent years have averaged £30,000.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Top-up Rates for Reading Schools from 1 April 2023.

TOP UP FEES FOR READING SCHOOLS - FROM 1 APRIL 2023				
	CURRENT TOP UP FEE £	New Rate	Increase £	Increase %
SPECIAL SCHOOLS				
THE AVENUE - 210 PLACES:				
ASD1	8,010	8,410	400	5%
ASD2	15,980	16,780	800	5%
ASD3	19,970	20,970	1,000	5%
ASD4	25,860	27,150	1,290	5%
ASD5	31,190	32,750	1,560	5%
ASD6	41,060	43,110	2,050	5%
ASD7	51,320	53,890	2,570	5%
MLD1	3,490	3,660	170	5%
MLD2	7,100	7,460	360	5%
MLD3	10,700	11,240	540	5%
MLD4	14,300	15,020	720	5%
MLD5	19,440	20,410	970	5%
MLD6	21,340	22,410	1,070	5%
PMLD1	17,400	18,270	870	5%
PMLD2	24,540	25,770	1,230	5%
PMLD3	26,210	27,520	1,310	5%
SLD1	6,390	6,710	320	5%
SLD2	10,000	10,500	500	5%
SLD3	13,600	14,280	680	5%
SLD4	17,200	18,060	860	5%
SLD5	22,340	23,460	1,120	5%
SLD6	24,240	25,450	1,210	5%
HOLY BROOK - 32 PLACES				
	18,560	19,490	930	5%
HAMILTON (SEMH) - 64 PLACES				
	14,200	14,910	710	5%
RESOURCE UNITS				
BLESSED HUGH ASD (THE BASE) - 25 PLACES				
	8,250	8,660	410	5%
EP COLLIER S&L - 12 PLACES				
	2,530	2,660	130	5%
CHRIST THE KING ASD (THE ARK) - 21 PLACES				
	8,250	8,660	410	5%
HIGHDOWN VI - 5 PLACES				
	12,600	13,230	630	5%
PROSPECT MLD (THE BRIDGE) - 30 PLACES				
	2,970	3,120	150	5%
SOUTHCOTE SCD - 8 PLACES (from 1/9/21)				
	8,250	8,660	410	5%
MAINSTREAM				
Band A				
	2,850	2,990	140	5%
Band B				
	5,120	5,380	260	5%
Band C				
	7,390	7,760	370	5%
Band D				
	9,170	9,630	460	5%
Band E				
	17,200	18,060	860	5%
PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT				
CRANBURY COLLEGE - 132 PLACES (including exclusions)				
GENERAL TOP UP - Annual Fixed Sum	711,360	746,930	35,570	5%



Reading Schools' Forum

March 9, 2023

Agenda Item 6

Early Years Budget 2023/24

For decision

For discussion

For information

SUMMARY

This report sets out the early years DSG block funding and budget proposed for 2023/24.

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None

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Company number 11293709

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 NOTE: The basis used to determine the funding allocation for 2023/24 (paragraphs 3.4 & 3.7).
- 1.2 NOTE: The early years funding rates to be paid to providers in 2023/24 (paragraphs 6.2).
- 1.3 NOTE: The centrally retained early year's budget for 2023/24 (as set out in section 5).

2. Background

- 2.1 The Early Years Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) provides funding to support delivery of the early years entitlements in all early year's settings, including private, voluntary & independent settings (PVI's), maintained nursery schools, and nursery classes in infant and primary schools. The early years entitlements are:
 - 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged two year olds
 - Universal 15 hours entitlements for all three and four year olds
 - Additional 15 hours entitlements for eligible working parents of three and four year olds.
 - Early Years Pupil Premium for eligible three and four year olds
 - Disability Access Fund – for children in receipt of the Disability Living Allowance - to support disabled children's access to the entitlements for three- and four year olds, e.g. to support providers making adjustments to their settings.
 - Maintained nursery school supplementary funding
- 2.2 A new formula for distributing the funding to local authorities was introduced in 2017/18 which established new funding rates, alongside new regulations for allocating this funding to providers. This single early year's national funding formula (EYNFF) requires all settings, irrelevant of type, to be funded on the same basis i.e. same hourly rate. The first two years were transitional, but since 2019/20 all providers are paid on the same rate.
- 2.3 The Early Years arrangements for 2023/24 were published by the ESFA in December 2022 and can be found on the webpage [Early years funding: 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/early-years-funding-2023-to-2024)
- 2.4 This report sets out the funding assumptions for 2023/24 and the overall Early Year's budget based on the funding likely to be available. Schools' Forum agreement was obtained in January 2023 for the centrally retained budget.

3. Early Year's Block Funding 2023/24

- 3.1. Early year's funding is mainly based on the numbers of two-, three-, and four-year olds recorded in the January census – 5/12 from the January falling in the previous financial year (January 2023), and 7/12 in the January falling in the current financial year (January 2024). The overall assumption is therefore that January numbers reflect the average position for the year, with lower numbers in the autumn, building up to the highest numbers in the summer term; this is because the free entitlement commences the term following the child's birthday. Providers receive funding based on their actual take up each term, so it is unlikely that the DSG funding received will ever match the actual spend, and this needs to be carefully managed. Pressure on this block will occur if the January census data is lower than the actual take up for the whole year. The same method applies to early years pupil premium grant (EYPPG) funding and the disability access fund (DAF).

- 3.2. In line with the protections policy set out in the Government response document, all local authorities will benefit from at least a 1% increase in their funding rates in 2023-24, with increases for some up to 4.9% for 3- and 4-year-olds, and up to 10% for 2-year-olds. Reading are set to receive the maximum funding rates for all entitlements.
- 3.3. Following the outcome of the consultation the 2023 to 2024 calculations for supplementary funding for maintained nursery schools have also been changed:
- all local authorities' hourly supplementary funding rates have been increased in line with funding secured in the Spending Review and additional funding to reflect the recently announced National Living Wage increases
 - teachers' pay grant and teachers' pension employer contribution (TPPG) funding has been rolled in
 - a minimum funding floor and cap have been applied to create a fairer distribution of this funding
- 3.4. The technical note 2023-2024 published 16 December 2022 shows that the current indicative DSG Early Years Block Allocation is based on the number of part-time equivalents (PTEs) taking up the entitlements as recorded on the January **2022** schools, early years and AP censuses multiplied by 15 hours × 38 weeks × local authority's hourly funding rate.
- 3.5. ESFA will update these initial allocations in:
- July 2023 based on January 2023 PTE census numbers
 - July 2024, based on five-twelfths of the January 2023 PTE census numbers (to cover the April 2023 to August 2023 period), and seven-twelfths of the January 2024 PTE census numbers (to cover the September 2023 to March 2024 period)
- 3.6. The breakdown of the 2023/24 allocation is shown in Table 1, with the first two columns replicating the notification received from the ESFA in December 2022 which is based on January 2022 census data, and the second two columns based on the January 2023 draft census data – For the purpose of setting the budget, the draft 2023 January census is used at 100%, with the assumption that any significant decrease or increase in take up between now and next January will be replicated by an adjustment to the grant.
- 3.7. The funding rates for 2023/24 have increased by £0.61 for two-year olds and £0.27 for three- and four-year olds compared to 2022/23. The minimum rate allocated to a local authority is £4.87 per hour for three- and four-year olds and £5.36 per hour for two-year olds. Each local authority has an area cost adjustment added if relevant, and for three- and four-year olds an additional needs allowance, both of which Reading benefits from. For Reading, the rates for 2023/24 have increased from £5.53 (including the TPPG) to £5.80 for three- and four-year olds and from £6.11 to £6.72 for two-year olds. To arrive at the funding allocation these rates are multiplied by the number of part time equivalent (PTE) children (1 PTE = 15 hours attendance) in the relevant census multiplied by 15 hours for each week and multiplied by 38 for the number of funded weeks in the year.

Table 1: Early Year's Block Funding 2023/24

	2023/24 – December '22 Notification		2023/24 – LA Estimate to base budget on	
	PTE NUMBER (Jan 22 Census)	FUNDING £	PTE NUMBER (Draft Jan 23 Census)	FUNDING £
3 & 4 year olds - universal @ £5.80 x 15 hours x 38 weeks	2,560.55	8,465,179	2,481.61	8,204,210
3 & 4 year olds – extended entitlement @ £5.80 x 15 hours x 38 weeks	840.71	2,779,388	843.64	2,789,083
2 year olds @ £6.72 x 15 hours x 38 weeks	368.97	1,413,303	311.57	1,193,429
PPG @ £0.62 x 15 hours x 38 weeks	438.13	154,83	380.15	134,344
DAF @ £828	68	56,304	68	56,304
Maintained nursery grant @ £3.80 ph	346.60	750,736	335	725,610
Total Allocation		13,619,746		13,102,981

- 3.8. We have seen a reduction in the total number of children receiving Early Years entitlements between the actual January 2022 and draft January 2023 census data. There is a 3.1% (-79) drop across three and four-year olds accessing the free universal entitlement (we also saw a 3% reduction in 2022), whereas Three and four-year olds accessing extended entitlement have stabilised with a slight 0.3% increase (+3). In 2022 we saw a 16% increase in 2 year old funding however there is a 15.6% (-57) decline the current year in those receiving the two year old funding. This is partly due to the change in eligibility criteria for families.
- 3.9. In addition, there are allocations for pupil premium (EYPPG) and the Disability Access Fund (DAF) for the number of eligible pupils. There has been an increase to the EYPPG (£0.62 (+£0.02) per hour) and DAF rate (£828 (+£28) per eligible child per year).
- 3.10. The Maintained nursery schools supplementary grant will continue in 2023/24. In response to the consultation and the continuing concerns from local authorities, the DfE are also progressing with changes to ensure fairer distribution of the supplementary funding. The minimum rate for 2023/24 will be set at £3.80 and this is the allocation Reading will receive.
- 3.11. Overall, the initial Early Years block grant is set to increase by £1.101m from £12.002m (expected in 2022/23) to £13.103m based on January 2023 census, this is due to the increases in funding rates as opposed to the number of children.
- 3.12. Current forecasts show a surplus balance in the Early Years Blocks for 2022/23 of £0.294m. This will be carried forward to 2023/24 and used as contingency.

4. Early Year's National Funding Formula (EYNFF) for 2023/24

- 4.1. New regulations came into force from 1st April 2017 for distributing funding to providers for three and four year olds. There was a two year transitional period, and from April 2019 all types of providers including maintained nursery schools have received a single funding rate

(including the same base rate and supplements) for both the universal and additional 15 hours.

4.2. Other regulations include:

- LAs must pass on at least 95% of their three and four year old funding directly to providers.
- May continue to use lump sums to distribute the additional supplementary funding to maintained nursery schools.
- Must use a deprivation supplement in the three and four year old formula, and any other supplements must fall within one of the allowable categories (i.e. sparsity, flexibility, quality, English as an additional language).
- Must not channel more than 10% of funding for three and four year olds through supplements.
- Must provide a Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund for three and four year olds.
- Must pass on Early Years Pupil Premium in full to providers of eligible three and four year olds at the national rate of £0.62 per hour up to a maximum of 570 hours per year (paid on universal hours only).
- Must fund all settings providing a place for Disability Access Fund eligible three and four year olds at the annual rate of at least £828. It is payable as a lump sum and must not be pro-rated according to hours taken up.

4.3. In 2022/23 all Reading providers received a single base formula rate of £5.06 per hour for three and four year olds, and £5.90 per hour for two year olds. When setting the provider funding rates any deficit or surplus from the previous year must be considered (i.e. this could arise if the January census on which the funding is based does not reflect the actual census counts and thus payments during the year). It is assumed there will be a surplus from 2022/23 and this has been considered when setting the 2023/24 budget.

4.4. In order to set the budget, a decision needs to be made on how many hours are to be paid to providers during the year ahead. It is usual to base it on the actual take up during the previous financial year, if the current January census data is not significantly different (as this is what the funding is based on).

4.5. We now have January 2023 draft census data and have decided to calculate the budget for 23/24 based on these figures, with the aim to update this as and when we receive updated census data. Funding received by the Local Authority will continue on the calculation of; 5/12 January 2023 census and 7/12 January 24 census.

4.6. Using these hours of provision multiplied by the current funding rates plus a proposed additional £0.61 for 2 year olds (£6.51) and £0.27 for 3 & 4 year olds (£5.33) gives an annual budget as shown in Table 2. Appendix 1 gives this breakdown by type of provider.

4.7. The only supplement used by Reading is for deprivation, and in 2022/23 this was paid on the same eligibility criteria as the PPG at £0.97 per hour. With the increase in PPG the total funding through this factor will be set at £1.59 for 2023/24. This is an increase of £0.02 from 2022/23.

Table 2: Early Years Entitlement Budget Calculation for 2023/24

	TOTAL HOURS* Draft Jan23 Census	PAYOUT RATE £	23-24 BUDGET £
3 & 4 year old - universal	1,414,519	£5.33 per hour	7,539,386
3 & 4 year olds – extended	480,876	£5.33 per hour	2,563,072
2 year olds	177,594	£6.51 per hour	1,156,134
Pupil Premium Grant/Deprivation	216,684	£1.59 per hour	344,528
Disabled Access Fund	68 children	£828 per child	56,304
Maintained Nursery Supplementary Grant	190,950	£3.80 per hour	725,610
			12,385,034

*Total hours for 23/24 budget based on Jan 2023 draft census

- 4.8. Providers will be paid based on their actual hours of take up each term and at the increased hourly rates.

5. Centrally Retained Early Year's Budget

- 5.1. The local authority can retain up to 5% of their three and four year old allocation for central expenditure; this is calculated on the planned (budgeted) spend i.e. the overall average hourly rate to be paid to providers must be at least 95% (the pass through rate) of the funding rate received.
- 5.2. Schools' Forum agreed the proposed amount of £788,600 to be centrally retained in 2023/24. This is an increase of £69,600 in relation to inflationary pay increases and on costs we have increased the Early Years portage staffing by 0.8 FTE to handle the continuing increasing demand of Early Years and SEND. It is proposed pay increases will be automatically added to the budget in future years. This budget pays for the following services:
- **Early Years Team £290,900** – this is the management and administrative costs involved in delivering the free entitlement. It includes the following posts and activities:
 - Early Years Team manager 1 FTE
 - Childcare Compliance Manager 1.0 FTE
 - Early years data, sufficiency, and performance officer 0.68 FTE
 - Early Years Development Officer 1.0 FTE
 - Extended Childcare Project Officer 1.0 FTE
 - Early Years Operations and Support Officer 1.0 FTE
 - **Early Years Portage Team £420,900** – Early intervention home visits. It includes the following posts and activities:
 - Early Years SEND Team manager - 0.8 FTE
 - Senior Portage Worker - 1.0 FTE

- Portage Workers – 4.6 FTE
 - Early Years SEND Support Advisor - 1.0 FTE
 - SEND Support worker – 0.86 FTE
- **Dingley Contract £16,800** (plus £25,000 from high needs block) will provide Family Support Programme, Providers Advisory Support Service (PASS). Dingley’s Promise provide a suitable environment for further assessment and therapy from Social Care, Education and Health professionals to advance the children’s prospects.
 - **Central Establishment Charges £10,000** – contribution to central costs such as finance, office accommodation, ICT.
 - **Early Years Inclusion fund £50,000** – this is a contribution to a larger inclusion fund for Early Years settings which is also partially funded by the High Needs Block.

6. Overall Budget for 2023/24

6.1. Table 3 sets out the overall budget for 2023/24, compared to 2022/23 budget and forecast.

Table 3: Early Years Block Budget 2022/23 and Proposed Budget for 2023/24

	2022/23 REVISED BUDGET £	2022/23 FORECAST £	2023/24 PROPOSED £
Three & Four Year old funding - universal	7,386,436	7,013,011	7,539,386
Three & four Year old funding – extended entitlement	2,425,612	2,471,218	2,563,072
Two Year old funding	1,240,947	1,103,410	1,156,134
Maintained nursery grant	221,270	213,931	725,610
Pupil Premium & Deprivation	391,966	351,203	344,528
Disabled Access Fund	50,400	23,200	56,304
Inclusion Fund	50,000	50,000	50,000
Centrally Retained	669,000	669,000	738,600
Total Expenditure	12,435,632	11,984,974	13,173,634
DSG Funding	12,272,537	12,002,302	13,102,981
B/F Balance from previous year	171,997	186,793	294,121
Funding Remaining	8,902	294,121	223,468

6.2. The payable rates to providers in 2023/24 will therefore be set as follows:

Three- and four-year-olds - £5.33

Two-year-olds - £6.51

Deprivation - £0.97 (added to £0.62 for pupil premium)

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Breakdown of Early Years Entitlement Budget 2023/24

Entitlement By Type of Provider	Hours based on January 2023 Draft Census			
	TOTAL	2023/24 Payout Rate	Budget £	Equivalent No. of Children PTE
3 & 4 year old UNIVERSAL - maintained nursery schools	190,950	£5.33	£1,017,764	335
3 & 4 year old UNIVERSAL- primary schools Maintained	330,030	£5.33	£1,759,060	579
3 & 4 year old UNIVERSAL- primary schools Academy	147,630	£5.33	£786,868	259
3 & 4 year old UNIVERSAL - PVI	745,909	£5.33	£3,975,695	1,309
TOTAL	1,414,519		£7,539,386	2,482
3 & 4 year old EXTENDED - maintained nursery schools	75,240	£5.33	£401,029	132
3 & 4 year old EXTENDED - primary schools	81,510	£5.33	£434,448	143
3 & 4 year old EXTENDED - PVI	324,126	£5.33	£1,727,594	569
TOTAL	480,876		£2,563,072	844
2 year old - maintained nursery schools	39,330	£6.51	£256,038	69
2 year old - primary schools	2,280	£6.51	£14,843	4
2 Year Old Funding - PVI	135,984	£6.51	£885,253	239
TOTAL	177,594		£1,156,134	312
Disability Access Fund - maintained nursery (No. of children)	22	£828.00	£18,216	22
Disability Access Fund - primary schools (No. of children)	23	£828.00	£19,044	23
Disability Access Fund - PVI (No. of children)	23	£828.00	£19,044	23
TOTAL	68		£56,304	68
Early Years Pupil Premium - maintained nursery	45,030	£0.62	£27,919	79
Early Years Deprivation - maintained nursery	45,030	£0.97	£43,679	79
Early Years Pupil Premium - primary schools	62,700	£0.62	£38,874	110
Early Years Deprivation - primary schools	62,700	£0.97	£60,819	110
Early Years Pupil Premium - PVI	108,954	£0.62	£67,552	191
Early Years Deprivation - PVI	108,954	£0.97	£105,686	191
TOTAL	216,684		£344,528	380
Maintained Nursert Grant	190,950	£3.80	£725,610	335
			£12,385,034	



Reading Schools' Forum

March 9, 2023

Agenda Item 7

Falling Rolls

For decision

For discussion

For information

SUMMARY

Falling Rolls Policy.

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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 AGREE: To consult Schools' Forum on an amendment to the Falling Rolls criteria for 2023-24 and to approve the proposal from Brighter Futures for Children.

2. Falling Rolls Fund Operation Guidance

- 2.1 Local authorities may set aside schools block funding to create a small fund to support good schools with falling rolls, where local planning data shows that the surplus places will be needed within the next three financial years.
- 2.2 The Schools' Forum should agree both the value of the fund and the criteria for allocation, and the local authority should regularly update the Schools' Forum on the use of the funding. As with the growth fund, the Falling Rolls Fund is also within the NFF schools block. Any in-year reduction to the Falling Rolls Fund needs to be agreed with the Schools' Forum or Secretary of State if appropriate.
- 2.3 Criteria for allocating the Falling Rolls Fund should contain clear objective trigger points for qualification, and a clear formula for calculating allocations. Differences in allocation methodology are permitted between phases
- 2.4 Compliant criteria would generally contain some of the features set out below:
 - a. support is available only for schools judged good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection (**this is a mandatory requirement**)
 - b. surplus capacity exceeds a minimum number of pupils, or a percentage of the published admission number
 - c. local planning data shows a requirement for a minimum percentage of the surplus places within the next three years
 - d. formula funding available to the school will not support provision of an appropriate curriculum for the existing cohort
 - e. the school will need to make redundancies to contain spending within its formula budget
- 2.5 Methodologies for distributing funding could include:
 - a. a rate per vacant place, up to a specified maximum number of places (place value likely to be based on basic per pupil funding)
 - b. a lump sum payment with clear parameters for calculation (for example, the estimated cost of providing an appropriate curriculum, or estimated salary costs equivalent to the number of staff who would otherwise be made redundant)
- 2.6 Where Falling Rolls funding is payable to academies, the local authority should fund the increase for the period from the additional September intake through until the following August
- 2.7 Local authorities should report any Falling Rolls Fund remaining at the end of the financial year to the Schools' Forum.
- 2.8 Funding may be carried forward to the following funding period, as with any other centrally retained budget, and local authorities can choose to use it specifically for falling rolls.

3. Reading's Falling Rolls Policy 2022-2023 as agreed in June 2022


- 3.1 To replicate the ESFA guidance to include all mandatory criteria as set out in section 2.4. With the added additional criteria of falling rolls reducing by more than 5% for the past 2 years.
- 3.2 Schools who meet the above criteria in 2022/23 (Caversham Park) submitted a business case for Director of Education approval.
- 3.3 Any agreed funding will be for a specified number of surplus places (within the planned admissions number) at 75% of the relevant basic entitlement rate.
- 3.4 Schools' Form approved an amendment to also give the Director of Education discretion to approve any other requests relating to pupil numbers.

4. Review of 2022-2023

- 4.1 Caversham Park were the only school to meet the criteria for this fund. E P Collier also had a request for increased rolls that was approved by the Executive Director of Children Services/Director of Education. No other requests or payments were made in 2022-2023.
- 4.2 The policy was introduced due to the number of primary schools with falling numbers of reception class children. This could leave the school in financial difficulty whilst trying to maintain education standards for all year groups. Particularly after seeing a bulge of pupils come through Primary education and have now reached Secondary education. Many reasons can be attributed to this and are not always within a school's director control, but is critical as funding is connected to pupil numbers.
- 4.5 There is particular concern over the Caversham Park area (boarding Oxfordshire County Council) where the numbers of children/young families have dropped and there is limited space for new homes which has caused a low growth area for children and young families. This is not uncommon as other LAs have also experienced similar patterns in communities and it can take up to a generation or growth in the economies to change the need. LAs have to plan for the long term future in school places.
- 4.7 Due to these factors and the uncertain situation Reading is finding itself, we are proposing new criteria for the Falling Rolls Fund for 2023-2024. This will hopefully provide stability to schools whilst the LA assesses and puts into place plans for future school place needs.

5. Proposed 2023-2024 Criteria for Falling Rolls Fund.

- 5.1 We are proposing eight criteria (as seen below) to help assist schools with falling pupil numbers.
 - a. **Judged Good or Outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection.**
This is a mandatory requirement by the DfE.
 - b. **Falling roll greater than 5% in latest year, and below 80% of overall school PAN**



Removing the review of reception only and treating the falling rolls over the entire school year groups. Including that the school has to be under 80% of Total planned school roll number. (1 form entry primary totalling 210 places)

c. Schools must not have more than 8% of reserves as at 31 March of previous financial year

It is within the best interest for Reading for schools to use their surplus reserves prior to requesting any share of the Falling Rolls Fund, to which there is a limited amount of agreed funding to which the Council and Schools' Forum have at their disposal. 8% has come from the previous removed mechanism of Primary school's surplus balances review.

d. Formula funding available to the school will not support provision of an appropriate curriculum for the existing cohort without making teacher redundancies

Additional funding is awarded to schools where without funding they would have to consider closing a classroom and as a result impact the education of the pupils within the school. The fund is not to pay for teacher redundancies.

e. Business Case required for funding request prior to coming academic year

No school is automatically entitled to this funding. The Director of Education and School Effectiveness team along with School Finance will assess a business case on how the school plan to use the funding before any agreement has been put in place. This will involve conversations between the school and the School Finance and School Effectiveness teams . In some cases, this may also be accompanied by a Licensed Deficit application if the school is budgeting a deficit balance.

f. Minimum Per Pupil funding (2023/24 Rate £4,405 primary) fund up to 80% of PAN with a maximum pay-out of £100k

We acknowledge that every school is unique and needs and circumstances can vary. Schools Funding guidance from the ESFA suggests that 80% of total PAN is on average the level that schools should be able to have the minimum required resources to educate the national curriculum. We do accept that the need can be very different in each school, but as a general limit we have proposed this rate. We have also limited the total pay-out for one school in one year to £100k due to the affordability. Schools' Forum and BFFC reserve the right to change levels due to business case discussions and the overall level of funding.

g. Funding awarded for maximum of 2 consecutive years

This funding cannot be maintained for more than 2 years due to the funding coming out of uncommitted growth funding reserves. We believe this funding will support and provide time for the school and local authority to manage the situation.

h. Schools' Forum and Director of Education reserve the right to change levels of funding or supply discretionary funding based on in year applications (business cases) and regarding the overall level of funding.

The funding is based on the £250k approved from January 2023 Schools' Forum and the £100k c/fwd. from 2022-2023. Any expenditure over this allocation will be reported to Schools' Forum before any approval is supplied for the deficit.

6. Impact

6.1 The table 1 below shows which schools would be eligible to submit a business case to access funding based on the criteria above. This only shows the maximum funding that can be supplied, and the actual funding agreed would be based on the business case and approval of the Director of Education.

Table 1: School	Latest OFFSTED	Total School Capacity	Current NOR	Surplus Capacity	Spaces occupied	Eligible for funding	Maximum Pay-out
Caversham Park	Good	210	131	79	62%	Yes	£100,000
Moorlands	Good	420	315	105	75%	Yes	£92,505
St Martin's RC (VA)	Good	210	131	79	62%	Yes	£100,000
Total cost							£292,505

Only 3 schools have reduced pupil numbers of more than 5% and have overall school roll of less than 80%. The funding is based on building the school back up to being funded to 80% but at a limit of £100k.

6.2 Table 2 shows which schools would be eligible to submit a business case to access funding based on **2022-2023** criteria. The amount of funding is non-negotiable and only reflects the pressures in the reception year, and not the entire school

Table 2: School	Latest OFFSTED	PAN @ Reception	Current NOR Reception	Surplus Capacity	Surplus %	Eligible for funding	75% of MPPF Reception PAN - £4,405 x 75%
Caversham Park	Good	30	12	18	60%	Yes	£59,468
Moorlands	Good	60	34	26	43%	Yes	£85,898
Total cost							£145,365

Only 2 schools reduced pupil numbers of more than 5% within each of the last 2 years and have low reception figures. This funding is based on increasing the reception class to full numbers but at 75% of the current minimum per pupil unit rate.

Appendix 1 – Analysis of Reading Schools

School	Total School Capacity	Current NOR (Oct-22)	Surplus Capacity	Spaces occupied	Movement 20 to 21	Movement 21 to 22
Alfred Sutton Primary School	630	624	6	99.0%	1.9%	-1.1%
All Saints CE Aided Infant School	60	60	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
All Saints Junior School	100	100	0	100.0%	4.3%	3.1%
Battle Primary Academy	420	409	11	97.4%	-0.5%	1.7%
Caversham Park Primary School	210	131	79	62.4%	-18.9%	-12.7%
Caversham Primary School	420	414	6	98.6%	0.2%	-0.2%
Christ the King RC (VA) Primary School	315	294	21	93.3%	-3.2%	-1.3%
Churchend Primary Academy	420	426	-6	101.4%	2.4%	0.0%
Civitas Academy	420	404	16	96.2%	4.3%	18.1%
Coley Primary School	210	202	8	96.2%	-11.3%	2.5%
Emmer Green Primary	420	413	7	98.3%	1.5%	0.2%
English Martyrs RC (VA) Primary School	420	396	24	94.3%	-0.2%	-1.7%
E P Collier Primary School	420	365	55	86.9%	2.3%	19.7%
Geoffrey Field Infant School	270	264	6	97.8%	1.5%	-1.9%
Geoffrey Field Junior School	360	357	3	99.2%	3.2%	-0.6%
Katesgrove Primary School	630	617	13	97.9%	3.2%	1.6%
Manor Primary School	315	256	59	81.3%	-5.2%	1.2%
Meadow Park Academy	420	367	53	87.4%	2.1%	9.2%
Micklands Primary School	420	350	70	83.3%	1.6%	-7.4%
Moorlands Primary School	420	315	105	75.0%	-6.9%	-6.8%
New Christ Church CE Primary School	210	196	14	93.3%	4.0%	7.1%
New Town Primary School	420	366	54	87.1%	24.3%	8.3%
Oxford Road Community School	210	210	0	100.0%	1.9%	-0.9%
Park Lane Primary School	420	410	10	97.6%	0.5%	0.5%
Ranikhet Academy	210	196	14	93.3%	-2.3%	13.3%
Redlands Primary School	210	206	4	98.1%	0.5%	-0.5%
Southcote Primary School	630	597	33	94.8%	0.8%	-0.8%
St Anne's RC (VA) Primary School	210	180	30	85.7%	0.6%	-1.1%
St John's CE Primary School	420	402	18	95.7%	-2.3%	6.3%
St Martin's RC (VA) Primary School	210	131	79	62.4%	-1.3%	-14.9%
St Mary and All Saints CE (VA) Primary	420	272	148	64.8%	0.4%	-2.9%
St Michaels Primary School	420	403	17	96.0%	-3.6%	1.5%
Thameside Primary School	420	380	40	90.5%	-0.5%	-2.8%
The Heights Primary School	350	352	-2	100.6%	0.0%	-0.3%
The Hill Primary School	420	387	33	92.1%	-1.7%	-3.0%
The Palmer Primary Academy	420	390	30	92.9%	4.0%	0.5%
The Ridgeway Primary School	420	398	22	94.8%	0.0%	-5.5%
Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School	630	516	114	81.9%	2.9%	-3.4%
Wilson Primary School	420	415	5	98.8%	2.2%	-0.5%



Reading Schools' Forum

March 09, 2023

Agenda Item 8

Schools' Forum Meeting Dates
2023/24

For decision

For discussion

For information

SUMMARY

This report proposes the dates and agenda items for the 2023/24 financial year.

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VERSION

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DATE

9 March 2023

REVIEW DATE

None

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1. Recommendations

1.1 AGREE: The Schools' Forum dates and agenda items for the 2023/24 financial year

2. Proposed Dates

- 2.1 The Schools' Forum is a statutory and public meeting, which is required to meet as a minimum four times a year. In Reading, the Forum met five times in the last financial year. This worked well, and it is proposed that the same number of meetings are held in the coming year. We are not aware of any additional items of business that may need to be reviewed/discussed in the Summer term to warrant two meetings.
- 2.2 The meetings need to be scheduled at appropriate points in the year to tie in with decision making deadlines in relation to the setting of the School budget, and release of key data and information from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The frequency and timing of meetings need to be agreed in advance of each financial or academic year.
- 2.3 In 2022/23 the dates worked with the ESFA deadlines and It is proposed to keep to similar dates in 2023/24. The meetings will continue to be held on Thursdays at 5pm with location to be confirmed (either virtually or in the Civic Centre) and scheduled for two hours.
- 2.4 The dates proposed are set out in Table 1. The agenda and papers need to be dispatched one week in advance and published on the website so that all interested parties can access the papers and can make representations to Schools' Forum Members.


Table 1: Proposed Schools' Forum Dates 2023/24 Financial Year

MEETING DATE	DISPATCH OF AGENDA
June 22, 2023	June 15, 2023
October 19, 2023	October 12, 2022
December 07, 2023	November 30, 2023
January 18, 2024*	January 11, 2024*
March 7, 2024	February 29, 2024

**depending on APT submission date*

3. Agenda Items

- 3.1. The key agenda items for each meeting are set out below. Other ad hoc reports will be added as and when, for example to discuss school funding based national announcements or consultations launched by the ESFA.
- 3.2. June meeting agenda items:
- DSG outturn 2022/23
 - Maintained school balances 2022/23 and budgets 2023/43
 - Review of the Schools' Forum constitution
 - DSG Budget 2023/24 and update on deficit recovery plan

- 
- Scheme for Financing for Schools update
 - SEND update

3.3. October meeting agenda items:

- DSG budget setting strategy for 2024/25
- Initial proposals for school funding formula for 2024/25
- Budget monitoring 2023/24 month 6
- SEND update

3.4. December meeting agenda items:

- DSG budget overview for 2024/25
- Final proposals for school funding formula for 2024/25
- Budget monitoring 2023/24 month 8
- Agree de-delegations for 2024/25
- Agree central school services budget for 2024/25

3.5. January meeting agenda items:

- DSG actual funding settlement for 2023/24
- Final school funding formula for 2024/25
- Budget monitoring 2023/24 month 9
- Agree Falling Rolls & Growth fund for 2024/25
- Agree Early Years centrally retained budget for 2024/25

3.6. March meeting agenda items:

- High needs budget (Including SEND Top-Ups) for 2024/25
 - Early Years budget (Provider funding Rates) for 2024/25
 - Budget monitoring 2023/24 month 11
 - Agree Schools' Forum meeting dates for 2024/25
 - SEND update
- 