

**REPORT TO:** School Forum

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Operational Director – Children’s Organisation and Provision

**SUBJECT:** High Needs Students Assessment Framework 2014/15

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report provides an update on the implementation of the High Needs Students Assessment Framework for 2013/14 and revisions proposed for 2014/15.

2.0 **RECOMMENDED**

2.1 **School forum approves the High Needs Students Assessment Framework for 2014/15.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 In April 2013 Halton Local Authority introduced the High Needs Students Assessment Framework in response to each local authority becoming responsible for managing the funding for education support for high needs students aged 0-25.

3.2 Through the post 16 element of the Assessment Framework a total of 91 applications were received for high needs funding for Post 16 students from colleges and Independent Specialist Providers. These were processed through an assessment panel in summer 2013 and; a total of 74 applications were approved.

3.3 Contracts are in place for each of the 74 placements and the success of placements is being reviewed through monitoring arrangements.

3.4 In reviewing the High Needs Students Assessment Framework for 2013/14 feedback was sought from the applicants i.e. Future Education Colleges and Independent Specialist Providers, and from Panel Members. Based on this feedback changes have been made to reduce and focus the evidence requirements for new applications and for continuing learners to documentation most beneficial in assessing the suitability of the placement and costs associated.

3.5 Changes have also been made to the finance documentation, which

asks applicants to breakdown the cost of the placement further. This will allow us to make future comparisons between costs in institutions e.g. cost of in class support staff. It also allows us to identify costs that relate to social care and/or health elements of the placement, for which we can then discuss a contribution from our colleagues in Health and Social Care. This is a preparatory step towards future Joint Commissioning, which will develop from the introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans as part of the implementation of the SEN reforms.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.0 The High Needs Assessment Framework sets out the process by which applications from Further Education Colleges and
- 4.1 Independent Specialist Providers will be assessed and funding agreed. Managing applications is essential to ensure a robust and auditable process is followed.

- 5.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

- 5.1 NONE