

**REPORT TO:** Schools Forum

**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Divisional Manager 0-25 Inclusion

**SUBJECT:** Notional SEN Budgets

**WARDS:** Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform schools forum about the variance in the ability of notional SEN budget to meet SEN needs across schools and make recommendations to review.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

2.1 Schools forum approve the establishment of a task a finish group of school heads and/or business managers to review to how the notional SEN budget is allocated.

## **3.0 SUMMARY**

3.1 Increasingly over the last year concerns have been raised by schools in relation to their ability to meet the needs of pupils due the lack of available funding for SEND.

3.2 Mainstream schools are notified each year about a clearly identifiable but notional SEN budget. The requirement to identify this budget for their schools is set out in regulation 11(3) of the [School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2022](#) That regulation says that “the local authority must identify within each budget share an amount calculated by reference to the requirements, factors and criteria specified in Part 3 [that is, the various elements of the local schools funding formula] which are relevant to pupils with special educational needs; such amount must be calculated using a threshold sum of £6,000 per pupil below which the school will be expected to meet the additional costs of pupils with special educational needs from its [annual] budget share”.

3.3 The notional SEN budget is not a budget that is separate from a school’s overall budget. It is an identified amount within a maintained school’s delegated budget share or an academy’s general annual grant. It is intended as a guide for a school’s spending decisions, and is neither a target nor a constraint on a school’s duty to use its ‘best endeavours’ to secure special provision for its pupils with SEN.

- 3.4 It is important to note that the notional SEN budget is not intended to provide £6,000 for every pupil with SEN, as most such pupils' support will cost less than that. Nor is the notional SEN budget intended to provide a specific amount per pupil for those with lower additional support costs, even though the local authority may make reasonable assumptions about what those costs might be for the purpose of ensuring that their schools' notional SEN budget calculation is realistic.
- 3.5 The factors for establishing the notional SEN budget and its purpose are set out in the DfE's *Notional SEN budget for mainstream schools operational guidance August 2022*. These include basic entitlement, deprivation and low prior attainment factors.
- 3.6 Paragraph 132 of the DfE's *High Needs Funding Operational Guidance for 2022/23* sets out the expectations on schools that the first £6,000 of funding for pupils with high levels of need is expected to be met not from the High Needs Block, but from within funding already available to the school
- Top-up funding rates for individual placements should take into account both the costs to the school or college of offering overall provision for the pupils and students with high needs and the contribution made from other elements of funding. These include mainstream schools' notional SEN budget (for the costs of additional support up to £6,000 per annum)*
- 3.7 Over the summer of 2022 Halton Council has revised and relaunched the Terms of Reference for its EHCP Partnership Panel. The EHCP Partnership panel is the advisory body that supports decision making around whether to undertake an EHC needs assessment and whether to issue an EHCP. The panel is a multiagency panel with representation from across the system.
- 3.8 The decision thresholds of the panel are clearly set out in the *SEND Code of Practice 2015* and include the ability to set local criteria about how effectively schools have implemented the graduated approach and whether there is evidence to suggest that "support in addition to that which is normally available" is required. A key part of this determination is in effective use of the notional budget and whether additional funding (top up funding) may be required as set out in 3.6 above.
- 3.9 A key element in the Partnership Panel's relaunch is to provide a more transparent and consistent approach to decision making. This will inevitably have an impact on some schools budgeting approach.
- 3.10 The table in Annex 1 shows the impact of individual schools notional SEN budgets. As can be seen there are a number of schools who are required to spend over 65% of their notional SEN budget on pupils with EHCPs leaving little per pupil funding for other pupils SEND needs at lower levels. Pupils in resource base provision within mainstream schools are not included in the figures below as these are funded through the place funding for the resource base.

- 3.11 Due to the increasing expectation of the use of the first £6,000 of support for a pupil coming from the schools mainstream allocation as per the guidance set out above it is recommended the schools forum undertake a review of the notional SEN budgets to ensure that it is providing an appropriate level of support for schools with higher levels of SEN. There are a number of possible options to explore, including:
- a. Revisions to the factors used to establish the notional SEN budgets
  - b. A reserve budget held in the high needs block to ensure that no school is expected to use an unreasonable amount of its notional SEN budget to support pupils with EHCPs
  - c. Confirmation that the current formula and support is appropriate to best meet the needs of Halton children and young people.

#### **4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### **4.1 Children & Young People in Halton**

It is essential that mainstream schools receive appropriate funding to allow them to support all children and young people including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

##### **4.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None

##### **4.3 A Healthy Halton**

None

##### **4.4 A Safer Halton**

None

##### **4.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None.

## Appendix 1 – Notional SEN budgets and SEN pupils by school

LAESTAB	School Name	Notional SEN Budget	Pupils with an EHCP	EHCP Expectation	Balance to support LCHI @ SEN Support	% of Notional SEN expected to be spent on EHCP pupils	Possible expectation ceiling	Variance over expectation level	Notional SEN shortfall	Number of pupils on SEN Support	Notional SEN funding per LCHI pupil
8763179	All Saints Upton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	£ 52,563.84	2	£ 12,000.00	£ 40,563.84	23%	65%	42%	£ -	25	£ 1,622.55
8762700	Astmoor Primary School	£ 37,283.21	4	£ 24,000.00	£ 13,283.21	64%	65%	1%	£ -	32	£ 415.10
8762382	Beechwood Primary School	£ 37,630.94	7	£ 42,000.00	-£ 4,369.06	112%	65%	-47%	£ 26,984.45	23	-£ 189.96
8762000	Bridgewater Park Primary School	£ 30,960.59	3	£ 18,000.00	£ 12,960.59	58%	65%	7%	£ -	46	£ 281.75
8762725	Brookvale Primary School	£ 63,473.48	7	£ 42,000.00	£ 21,473.48	66%	65%	-1%	£ 1,141.90	23	£ 933.63
8762283	Castle View Primary School	£ 40,917.46	2	£ 12,000.00	£ 28,917.46	29%	65%	36%	£ -	23	£ 1,257.28
8762109	Daresbury Primary School	£ 38,798.41	2	£ 12,000.00	£ 26,798.41	31%	65%	34%	£ -	19	£ 1,410.44
8762004	Ditton Primary School	£ 93,320.45	6	£ 36,000.00	£ 57,320.45	39%	65%	26%	£ -	54	£ 1,061.49
8762425	Fairfield Primary School	£ 137,122.36	6	£ 36,000.00	£ 101,122.36	26%	65%	39%	£ -	112	£ 902.88
8763177	Farnworth Church of England Controlled Primary School	£ 79,155.61	8	£ 48,000.00	£ 31,155.61	61%	65%	4%	£ -	20	£ 1,557.78
8762383	Gorsewood Primary School	£ 48,216.20	6	£ 36,000.00	£ 12,216.20	75%	65%	-10%	£ 7,168.41	47	£ 259.92
8763176	Hale Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	£ 43,831.54	3	£ 18,000.00	£ 25,831.54	41%	65%	24%	£ -	30	£ 861.05
8763050	Halebank CofE Primary School	£ 28,078.83	0	£ -	£ 28,078.83	0%	65%	65%	£ -	7	£ 4,011.26
8762689	Hallwood Park Primary School and Nursery	£ 30,731.00	2	£ 12,000.00	£ 18,731.00	39%	65%	26%	£ -	26	£ 720.42
8762712	Halton Lodge Primary School	£ 55,785.55	4	£ 24,000.00	£ 31,785.55	43%	65%	22%	£ -	37	£ 859.07
8762376	Hillview Primary School	£ 44,595.67	1	£ 6,000.00	£ 38,595.67	13%	65%	52%	£ -	24	£ 1,608.15
8762428	Lunts Heath Primary School	£ 81,317.76	3	£ 18,000.00	£ 63,317.76	22%	65%	43%	£ -	21	£ 3,015.13
8762104	Moore Primary School	£ 43,390.51	5	£ 30,000.00	£ 13,390.51	69%	65%	-4%	£ 2,763.33	28	£ 478.23
8762415	Moorfield Primary School	£ 59,426.67	3	£ 18,000.00	£ 41,426.67	30%	65%	35%	£ -	42	£ 986.35
8762381	Murdishaw West Community Primary School	£ 43,548.73	3	£ 18,000.00	£ 25,548.73	41%	65%	24%	£ -	43	£ 594.16
8762727	Oakfield Community Primary School	£ 69,280.03	0	£ -	£ 69,280.03	0%	65%	65%	£ -	50	£ 1,385.60
8763632	Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary School	£ 47,958.14	4	£ 24,000.00	£ 23,958.14	50%	65%	15%	£ -	43	£ 557.17
8762726	Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary School	£ 49,225.96	7	£ 42,000.00	£ 7,225.96	85%	65%	-20%	£ 15,389.42	14	£ 516.14
8762003	Palace Fields Primary Academy	£ 42,624.11	1	£ 6,000.00	£ 36,624.11	14%	65%	51%	£ -	24	£ 1,526.00
8762325	Pewithall School	£ 48,028.18	6	£ 36,000.00	£ 12,028.18	75%	65%	-10%	£ 7,356.44	23	£ 522.96
8763502	Runcorn All Saints CofE Primary School	£ 32,398.30	5	£ 30,000.00	£ 2,398.30	93%	65%	-28%	£ 13,755.55	28	£ 85.65
8762005	Simms Cross Primary School	£ 61,937.88	4	£ 24,000.00	£ 37,937.88	39%	65%	26%	£ -	33	£ 1,149.63
8762002	St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy	£ 33,079.08	5	£ 30,000.00	£ 3,079.08	91%	65%	-26%	£ 13,074.76	23	£ 133.87

8763648	St Basil's Catholic Primary School	£	70,810.36	1	£	6,000.00	£	64,810.36	8%	65%	57%	£	-	56	£	1,157.33
8763615	St Bede's Catholic Infant School	£	53,122.86	1	£	6,000.00	£	47,122.86	11%	65%	54%	£	-	26	£	1,812.42
8763614	St Bede's Catholic Junior School	£	68,302.39	6	£	36,000.00	£	32,302.39	53%	65%	12%	£	-	63	£	512.74
8763640	St Berteline's CofE Primary School	£	62,070.90	5	£	30,000.00	£	32,070.90	48%	65%	17%	£	-	41	£	782.22
8763510	St Clement's Catholic Primary School	£	45,794.01	5	£	30,000.00	£	15,794.01	66%	65%	-1%	£	359.84	16	£	987.13
8763509	St Edward's Catholic Primary School	£	32,246.26	4	£	24,000.00	£	8,246.26	74%	65%	-9%	£	4,676.82	19	£	434.01
8763649	St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School	£	54,896.68	3	£	18,000.00	£	36,896.68	33%	65%	32%	£	-	41	£	899.92
8763650	St John Fisher Catholic Primary School	£	49,565.04	6	£	36,000.00	£	13,565.04	73%	65%	-8%	£	5,819.57	21	£	645.95
8763637	St Martin's Catholic Primary School	£	48,185.56	2	£	12,000.00	£	36,185.56	25%	65%	40%	£	-	34	£	1,064.28
8763506	St Mary's Church of England Primary School	£	47,425.96	3	£	18,000.00	£	29,425.96	38%	65%	27%	£	-	42	£	700.62
8763175	St Michael with St Thomas CE Primary School	£	45,814.60	1	£	6,000.00	£	39,814.60	13%	65%	52%	£	-	43	£	925.92
8763651	St Michaels Catholic Primary School	£	59,937.72	6	£	36,000.00	£	23,937.72	60%	65%	5%	£	-	48	£	498.70
8762295	The Brow Community Primary School	£	40,187.04	1	£	6,000.00	£	34,187.04	15%	65%	50%	£	-	45	£	759.71
8763511	The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School	£	32,673.43	2	£	12,000.00	£	20,673.43	37%	65%	28%	£	-	27	£	765.68
8762107	Victoria Road Primary School	£	53,309.95	1	£	6,000.00	£	47,309.95	11%	65%	54%	£	-	30	£	1,577.00
8762723	Westfield Primary School	£	32,426.77	2	£	12,000.00	£	20,426.77	37%	65%	28%	£	-	24	£	851.12
8762118	Weston Point Community Primary School	£	43,248.80	6	£	36,000.00	£	7,248.80	83%	65%	-18%	£	12,135.82	16	£	453.05
8762281	Weston Primary School	£	47,360.14	7	£	42,000.00	£	5,360.14	89%	65%	-24%	£	17,255.24	25	£	214.41
8762001	Widnes Academy	£	36,655.55	4	£	24,000.00	£	12,655.55	65%	65%	0%	£	267.53	17	£	744.44
8762387	Windmill Hill Primary School	£	47,415.31	6	£	36,000.00	£	11,415.31	76%	65%	-11%	£	7,969.31	72	£	158.55
8762297	Woodside Primary School	£	37,623.41	6	£	36,000.00	£	1,623.41	96%	65%	-31%	£	17,761.21	24	£	67.64
8766905	Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy	£	314,465.23	17	£	102,000.00	£	212,465.23	32%	65%	33%	£	-	101	£	2,103.62
8764001	Ormiston Chadwick Academy	£	309,047.74	21	£	126,000.00	£	183,047.74	41%	65%	24%	£	-	190	£	963.41
8764625	Saints Peter and Paul Catholic High School	£	397,947.19	10	£	60,000.00	£	337,947.19	15%	65%	50%	£	-	133	£	2,540.96
8764005	Sandymoor Ormiston Academy	£	166,354.66	20	£	120,000.00	£	46,354.66	72%	65%	-7%	£	18,260.72	53	£	874.62
8764721	St Chads Catholic and Church of England High School	£	172,275.15	10	£	60,000.00	£	112,275.15	35%	65%	30%	£	-	99	£	1,134.09
8764003	The Grange School	£	330,282.95	14	£	84,000.00	£	246,282.95	25%	65%	40%	£	-	211	£	1,167.22
8764103	The Heath School	£	359,505.81	22	£	132,000.00	£	227,505.81	37%	65%	28%	£	-	193	£	1,178.79
8764207	Wade Deacon High School	£	465,867.17	30	£	180,000.00	£	285,867.17	39%	65%	26%	£	-	107	£	2,671.66
	<b>TOTALS</b>	£	<b>4,999,499.13</b>	<b>331</b>	£	<b>1,986,000.00</b>	£	<b>3,013,499.13</b>	<b>40%</b>			£	<b>172,140.32</b>			