

REPORT TO: School's Forum

DATE: 21st May 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Lorraine Butcher, Operational Director

SUBJECT: SEN Funding

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the School's Forum of progress in reducing the number of pupils with SEN being educated in special schools outside of Halton, resulting in significant savings being made in the deployment of SEN resources, and to seek agreement to the re-distribution of resources saved to mainstream and special schools within the Borough.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 The School's Forum approve in principle that SEN resources saved as a result of a reduction in placements of pupils with SEN Out of Borough are redistributed to maintained schools within Halton.
- 2.2 It is therefore proposed that redistribution is based upon the following:
- pro-rata to maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools according to percentage distribution of the Individual School Budget (ISB).
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- 2.3 For mainstream primary and secondary schools the resource is distributed via the SEN element of the formula.
- 2.4 For nursery schools the resource is distributed on the number of FTE pupil
- 2.5 For special schools the funding is pro-rated to the SNWPU

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 In 2003 the Local Authority launched a "Strategy for the Inclusion of Pupils with SEN" which had as an objective maximising delegation of resources to schools and to ensure that SEN resources are targeted fairly, consistently and efficiently to need. Additionally the OFSTED inspection of the Local Authority undertaken in January 2004 determined that "best value was not secured".

3.2 Since that time significant structural reform has been undertaken to secure improved learning outcomes for children with SEN achieved through the more effective targeting of resources. This has included:

- The re-designation of the special schools;
- The review of the Learning Support Service and formation of SEN Team;
- The reduction in the number of statutory assessments undertaken and resulting in fewer statements being issued; and
- The releasing of resources earlier without the need for a statement to be issued

Outstanding at this stage is the completion of the review of SEN Units.

3.3 As a result of the above, it is pleasing to report the reduction in the number of children with SEN being educated within neighbouring Local Authority special schools or within the independent and non-maintained sector.

3.4 As a consequence, significant resources have been accrued within the DSG, which now should rightly be distributed. Details of the allocation between each school is included in Appendix A.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 There have been savings on both the independent out borough placement budgets and the out borough placement expenditure budget. The savings total £427,645 in 2006/2007.