

REPORT TO: Schools Forum
DATE: 24th February 2021
REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director - Finance
SUBJECT: High Needs Block funding for 2021-22
WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To report to the Schools Forum the High Needs Block funding for 2021-22.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 The report is noted.
- 2.2 The centrally retained budgets are agreed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Grant settlement

The High Needs grant allocation for 2021-22 is £18,554,788 after recoupment for per place funding in academies and independent special schools.

3.2 Transfer from Schools Block

For 2021-22, as previously reported we have not requested a transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. It is however necessary to state that if we are unable to clear the deficit balance from 2020-21 within 2021-22 we will have no choice but to request a transfer from schools and Schools Forum for 2022-23.

However, in line with the Inclusion Charter developed with schools in 2019 and school's responsibility as part of the Local Offer, it is essential that schools ensure they use this year's funding to improve their provision for children and young people with SEND, thereby reducing the need for specialist placements.

3.3 Current position

Details of the allocation of the High Needs Block are attached at Appendix A.

3.4 Special Schools and PRU top-up funding levels

All top-up funding levels are being kept at the same level as currently in place.

School	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
Ashley	£7,003.30	£9,579.29	£14,755.12
Chesnut Lodge	£9,516.89	£11,562.51	£14,771.26
Brookfields	£5,572.47	£8,792.60	£15,304.42
The Cavendish	£7,171.19	£9,629.17	£14,698.76
PRU	£15,000	N/A	N/A

3.5 Resource Bases top-up funding levels

Details of the resource base top-up funding levels are attached at Appendix B, but similar to the special schools and PRU, levels have been kept at the same level as currently in place.

3.6 Centrally retained budgets

The top-up funding budget has been increased from £1.3M to £1,972,084 to include the top-up funding allocated to schools at the start of the financial year.

Specialist provision budgets have in total increased by £82,958, relating to a new Educational Psychologist post and all incremental increases. Due to the increased demands for EHCPs and support for pupils and students with special educational needs.

The budget for Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools has been increased from £3,172,450 to £4,452,830. This is the expected cost for current placements for the coming financial year. We have not been able to build in any additional funding for extra placements that may commence in the coming year.

Similarly, the budget for Inter Authority Recoument has been increased from £375,000 to £382,670, being the expected cost of current placements for the coming year. Again no additional funding has been added for extra placements that may commence in the coming year.

The High Needs Contingency budget has been removed as we have insufficient funding to allow for this.

The Inclusion Division staffing costs have increased by £60,488 from the current year, to reflect incremental increases and changes in staff within the current staffing structure. The supplies and services budget has been separated out from the staffing budget and has been kept at the same level as the current year.

4.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Although we have seen a significant increase in the High Needs Block grant allocation, costs are still increasing especially against the Out of Borough placement budgets. Detailed in-year monitoring is required to enable close management of High Needs budgets.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children & Young People in Halton

It is essential that schools and education support services receive sufficient funding to allow them to support all children and young people.

5.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 It is evident that the major pressure on the High Needs Block are the costs of Out of Borough provision. It is unfortunately very likely we will come in over budget in these areas in 2021-22. With no contingency budget the Top-up funding budget is also likely to come in over budget. Therefore, with an expected deficit from 2020-21 we are starting 2021-22 with a probable overspend on the High Needs Block.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 The Local Authority must discharge its statutory responsibilities in relation to all schools and settings.

High Needs Block Budgets			Appendix A
	2021-22	2020-21	
Special Schools & Academies	£ 5,934,886	£ 5,109,893	
Resource Bases	£ 1,193,732	£ 1,186,633	
PRU	£ 1,500,000	£ 1,500,000	
Top-up funding	£ 1,972,084	£ 1,300,000	
Special Schools Equipment	£ 20,000	£ 20,000	
Specialist Provision:			
Visually Impaired	£ 118,417	£ 122,970	
Cognition & Learning	£ 125,235	£ 126,540	
Communication, Language & ASD	£ 106,843	£ 107,840	
Hearing Impaired	£ 227,611	£ 210,020	
Home Tuition	£ 300,667	£ 295,260	
Education Psychology Service	£ 288,245	£ 230,470	
SEMH Team	£ 343,700	£ 334,660	
Independent Special Schools	£ 4,452,830	£ 3,172,450	
Inter-Authority Recoupment	£ 382,670	£ 375,000	
Post 16 Provision	£ 969,000	£ 969,000	
HN Contingency	£ -	£ 536,466	
Inclusion Division staffing	£ 554,128	£ 493,640	
Inclusion Division Supplies & Servi	£ 64,740	£ 64,740	
Total High Needs Block	£ 18,554,788	£ 16,155,582	

Resource Base Top-up Rates 2021-22		Appendix B	
	Unit	Top-up Rate	
<u>Primary</u>			
Weston Point	EBD	£ 4,990.67	
Halton Lodge	SEMH	£ 5,639.50	
The Brow	Assessment	£ 2,957.71	
The Brow	SPL	£ -	
Woodside	EBD	£ 4,036.45	
Palacefields	SPL	£ -	
Beechwood	SEMH	£ 5,675.00	
Simms Cross	ASD KS1/2	£ 4,466.68	
Oakfield	Assessment	£ 4,047.45	
Oakfield	SPL	£ -	
The Grange	ASD KS1/2	£ 5,745.20	
<u>Secondary</u>			
The Grange	ASD KS3/4	£ 6,564.79	
The Grange	SLCN	£ 1,387.47	
Sts Peter & Paul	ASD KS3/4	£ 5,356.25	