

## Schools Forum

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Central Spend</b>
<b>Date:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> December
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<b>Local members affected:</b>	All maintained schools and academies

### Summary

This paper recommends the proposed Dedicated Schools Grant central budgets for 2016-17

### Recommendation

**Schools Forum is asked to agree the central budgets as follows:-**

**Central Schools – Schools Forum decides**

**De-delegation – Primary and Secondary Maintained Schools decide for their phase**

**Early Years Central – Schools Forum decides**

**High Needs – Consultation only**

### Background

Items that are deducted from the Schools Budget to determine the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) are known as Central Budgets. These comprise of the several elements and different elements are subject to different treatments by Schools Forum according to Schools forums powers and responsibilities:-

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417333/Schools\\_forums\\_powers\\_and\\_responsibilities\\_2015\\_to\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417333/Schools_forums_powers_and_responsibilities_2015_to_2016.pdf)

Table 1 shows the proposals for changes to 2016-17 budgets in each area. The areas highlighted require Schools Forum approval and the areas not highlighted are for Local Authority decision and therefore for Schools Forum to note. A summary of the reasons for the changes for each element is given below:-

### DSG Grant Income

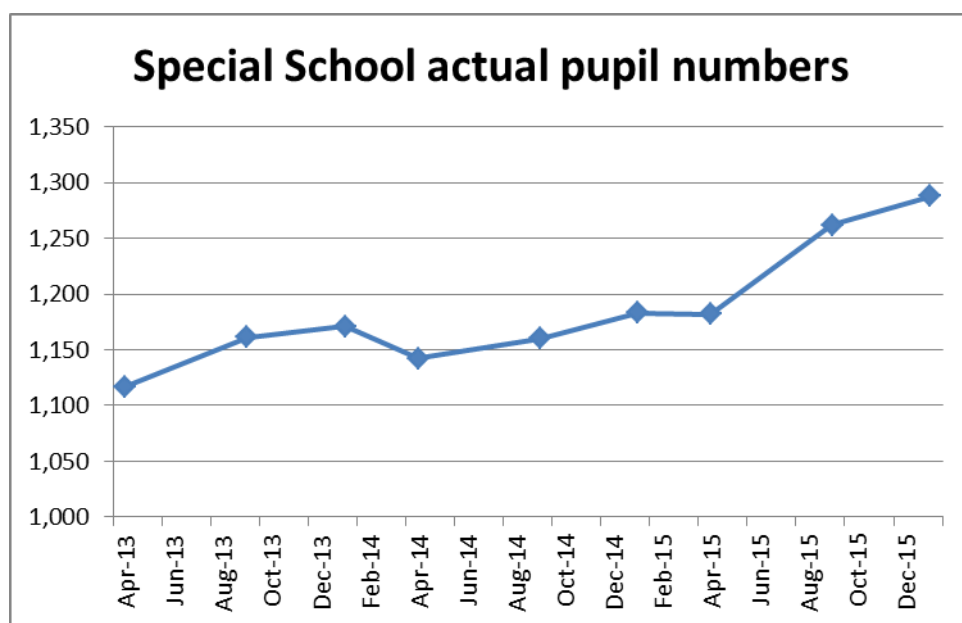
The total amount of DSG to be received in 2016-17 is just under £6m more than in 2015-16. Of this £5.5m relates to an increase of 1,285 pupils and £0.5m relates to changes in High Needs

## **Individual Schools Budgets (ISB)**

A paper was taken to Schools Forum in November explaining that clarification of the regulations meant that £618k needed to be delegated to all schools and £360k de-delegated for closing schools deficit write offs. Schools Forum agreed this should be allocated 50% through AWPU and 50% through lump sum.

Rates relief when academies convert has resulted in £200k saving.

Place funding for Special Schools is part of ISB.



The graph shows the increase in pupil numbers in Special Schools. This has led to an increase in place funding required of £1.1m. Places for September have been agreed with Special Schools therefore any payments for overnumber (i.e. when a special schools goes over their agreed place number) will be on an exception basis.

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) place funding has increased due to the amount per place increasing from £8k to £10k. There has been a subsequent reduction in top-up funding (see High Needs)

## **Central Schools**

As explained above £618k is being delegated to schools then partially de-delegated for closing schools deficit write offs.

Schools Forum Funding Group requested that Central Schools budgets be reduced by 5% where possible, and if not a business case was presented as to why a 5% reduction was not possible. The areas that agreed to make the savings were:

Admissions

Independent Schools – non-SEN

Legal

Practical Learning Opportunities

Raising Participation Age

Safeguarding in Education

Schools central overheads

The areas where savings could not be made were:

Bucks Learning Trust – this is a contractual agreement where savings cannot be made at this time

Schools PRC – This budget is for historically agreed teacher's early retirement costs. The budget cannot be reduced as the current costs are already above the current budget and increase with inflation. Please note that new early retirement costs are the responsibility of the school involved.

Management of Schools Forum – This very small budget is just to pay for the room hire and membership of F40. It is already fully committed so there is no scope for savings.

Capital contribution – It was agreed at Schools Forum in November that this should be reduced to £3.3m and 2016-17 is the last year that this can be taken. However, due to the pressures on budgets, it is now being suggested that the £3.3m be spread over two years (2016-17 and 2017-18). Therefore only £1.65m will be taken in 2016-17 and a further £1.65m in 2017-18.

Growth fund is used to fund pupils from September to March in schools where we have asked them to take additional pupils. An additional 665 places are predicted for 2016-17 costing an additional £711k

Licences: A paper was presented to Schools Forum in November about the increased licence cost of £140k.

**Action: Schools Forum to agree the proposed budget for Central Schools in Table 1**

### **De-delegation**

De-delegation is where maintained schools give back some of their funding to be held centrally. At present there are 3 areas of de-delegated funding:-

- A. Contingency – current rate £10.61 per pupil
- B. Union facilities – current rate £1.21 per pupil
- C. Jury service cover and cover for small schools – current rate £0.28 per pupil

**Option 1: Keep the rates of de-delegation the same as current rates.**

**For:** This will mean schools will see no changes and only slightly less will be collected than the current budgets (due to 2 academy conversions in year)

**Against:** Schools will not see the benefit of a slight reduction in rates (5% equates to 61p per pupil)

**Option 2: Reduce de-delegation by 5% in line with other central budgets**

- A. Contingency – **For:** Schools will save 53p per pupil  
**Against:** There are more schools applying to contingency than in previous years, and that demand is only expected to increase
- B. Union facilities - **For:** Schools will save 6p per pupil.  
**Against:** The unions have already seen a £10k cut 2 years ago and much work has already been done to significantly reduce the number of meetings. The authority has a statutory duty to ensure meaningful working relationships with unions. If a cut is made without agreement from the TU's they face potential industrial dispute which may take

different forms and could have quite an impact re dealing with conduct cases/consultations on changes/re-organisations in schools etc

- C. Jury service cover and cover for small schools – **For:** Schools will save 2p per pupil  
**Against:** The amount of meetings that small schools can claim for has increased (as agreed by Schools Forum in September following clarification from the June meeting) therefore it would be difficult to reduce this budget

### **Option 3: Stop small schools cover funding altogether**

**For:** It was suggested at Schools Forum Funding Group that the lump sum was set high at £125k in order to protect small schools. There is an argument therefore that small schools already have the funding to cover things like attending meetings. This would save a maximum of 29p per pupil.

**Against:** Small schools have not been consulted on the impact this would have on them.

**Action: Primary maintained reps and secondary maintained reps need to vote for their sector.**

### **Early Years Central**

Schools Forum Funding group requested that there was a 5% cut in central Early Years budgets. This has been agreed to be taken from qualification grants.

**Action: Schools Forum to agree the proposed budget for Central Early Years in Table 1**

### **High Needs**

Changes to the High Needs block are for consultation only. The decision making around High Needs remains with the Local Authority.

Additional Resource Units (ARPs) there has been a reduction in the number of places required over the last two years resulting in a reduction in the funding required.

Bucks Learning Trust (BLT) SEN – The specialist teaching service was moved to BLT in August 2013. The demand for this service has increased such that BLT require an additional £162k funding per year.

The contribution to Early Help is no longer needed so this is a saving of £157k.

Independent Schools SEN – The proposal is to keep the budget at the same level even though the indications show we should make savings. However, because of the volatility of this budget and the high costs involved an element of contingency is required (in the absence of any DSG reserve)

High Needs Block Funding (HNBF) Schools and Early years providers may request HNBF for specific **short term targeted interventions** to support an individual's SEN where support is required above the notional £6,000 delegated funding. The demand for this in school provision is rising with 153 claims in 2014-15 rising to a forecast 225 claims in 2015-16 and represents a 24% increase over this time. Within Early years, the demand for this is rising with 1184 claims in 2014-15 rising to a forecast 1386 claims in 2015-16 and represents a 17% increase over this time. A tab in the Table 1 spreadsheet further explains the budgets.

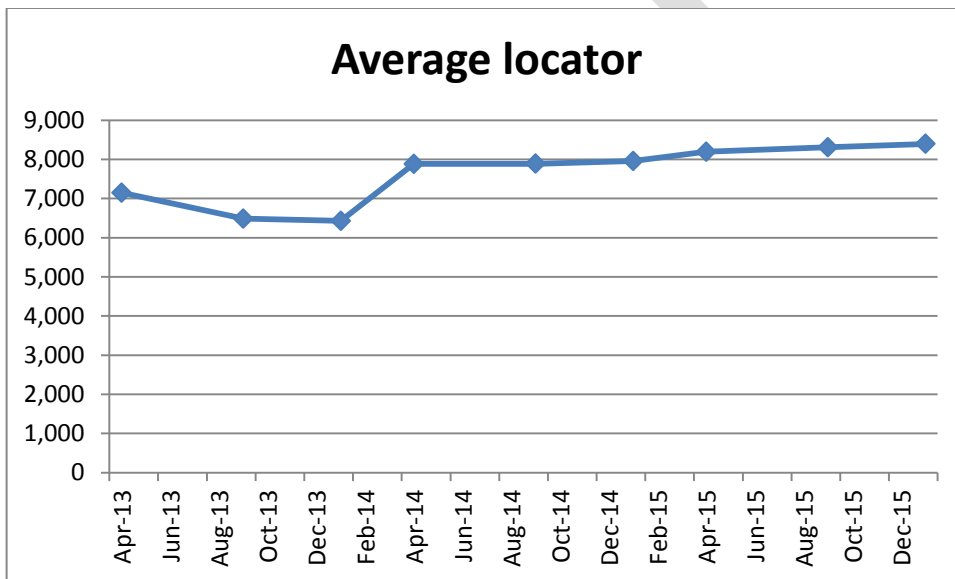
Post-16 The demand for post-16 provision is rising. Nearly all of this provision is met locally as specialist provision was created in our two further education colleges. However, the change in government policy with the introduction of the SEND Reforms means that the entitlement to education now continues post 19 until the age of 25. The current estimate is that this will result in a 10% increase in demand.

PRUs Top up, Hospital and Home Tuition has seen a reduction, however this is partly due to the increase in place funding (see Individual Schools Budget ISB). There has also been a withdrawal of the subsidy of places that has resulted in savings.

Recoupment is the budget for Buckinghamshire pupils that attend schools in other Local Authorities and pupils from other Local Authorities attending Bucks schools. As Special Schools have been reaching capacity, and as the result of parental preference, demand for this provision has also increased.

SEN advice and challenge – the contribution towards this service is no longer required, saving £150k

Special Schools Top-up – The large increase in places in Special Schools has resulted in a large increase in top-up funding required.



Graph 2 shows that the average locator (locators relate to the amount of money a pupil qualifies for based on their need). This has increased over time. This has also contributed to the additional requirement for top-up. One explanation for the increase may be the drive to reduce independent specialist placements has resulted in pupils with higher needs being placed in our Special Schools.

SSA / SEN Funding /Top up to schools (including academies) is the funding for pupils with statements or EHC Plans. The total number of supported hours reduced from 13,291 in 2014-15 to 12,974 in 2015-16. This has resulted in a slight underspend of £100k.

Vulnerable children attainment intervention mainly contributes to the Family Resilience Service. The reduction of £70k, however, relates to contributions toward participation workers and Schools Meals activities that are no longer happening.

**Action: Schools Forum to note the proposed High Needs budget in Table 1**