

Buckinghamshire County Council

High Needs Spend and SEND Strategy

Schools Forum

18th June 2019




High Needs Block – Guidance on Spend

High Needs Operational Guidance....

- The high needs funding system supports provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from their early years to age 25, enabling both local authorities and institutions to meet their statutory duties under the [Children and Families Act 2014](#).
- High needs funding is also intended to support good quality AP for pre-16 pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, cannot receive their education in mainstream or special schools. The high needs funding block provides local authorities with resources for place funding and top-up funding for institutions, and funding for high needs services delivered directly by the authority or under a separate funding agreement with institutions (including funding devolved to institutions), as permitted by regulations.

Section 251 Return Guidance...

- Administrative costs and overheads attributable to a particular category of expenditure that regulations allow to be charged to the schools budget should in general be included under the appropriate item heading
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High Needs Block Expenditure

- Total expenditure in 2018-19 (before Academy recoupment) was £85.215m against a High Needs Block Allocation of £81.096m
- Assumed continued use of reserves to balance high needs block 2019-20
- Currently an overspend variance is projected against the budget for additional places and exceptional support

| Expenditure Type | 18-19 Outturn £ | 19-20 Budget £ | Actuals to date (Period 2) £ | Forecast 2019- 20 £ | Forecast Variance £ |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Placements and top-ups for pupils in schools (aged 5-16) | 63,370,123 | 63,662,844 | 19,908,257 | 64,262,844 | 600,000 |
| Placements and top-ups for pupils in schools Post 16 | 7,315,847 | 7,318,000 | 385,642 | 7,318,000 | 0 |
| Placements and top-ups Early Years | 596,457 | 470,809 | 71,986 | 470,809 | 0 |
| Alternative Provision | 5,133,838 | 5,195,600 | 237,398 | 5,115,600 | (80,000) |
| Commissioned Contracts | 1,814,562 | 1,857,000 | 32,966 | 1,864,806 | 7,806 |
| Contribution to Staffing and Service Costs | 5,016,488 | 4,976,320 | 345,359 | 4,980,003 | 3,683 |
| Council Corporate Overhead costs | 1,968,000 | 1,968,000 | 0 | 1,968,000 | 0 |
| | 85,215,316 | 85,448,573 | 20,981,608 | 85,980,062 | 531,489 |
| Funding | | | | | |
| Funding Allocation | (81,096,276) | (82,692,220) | | (82,692,220) | 0 |
| Transfer from Historic Commitment DSG | (1,708,000) | (1,708,000) | | (1,708,000) | 0 |
| Support from Schools Forum | (650,000) | 0 | | 0 | 0 |
| Support from Reserves | (1,761,039) | (1,048,353) | | (1,048,353) | 0 |
| | (85,215,315) | (85,448,573) | 0 | (85,448,573) | 0 |

Spend analysed in more detail in Appendix 1



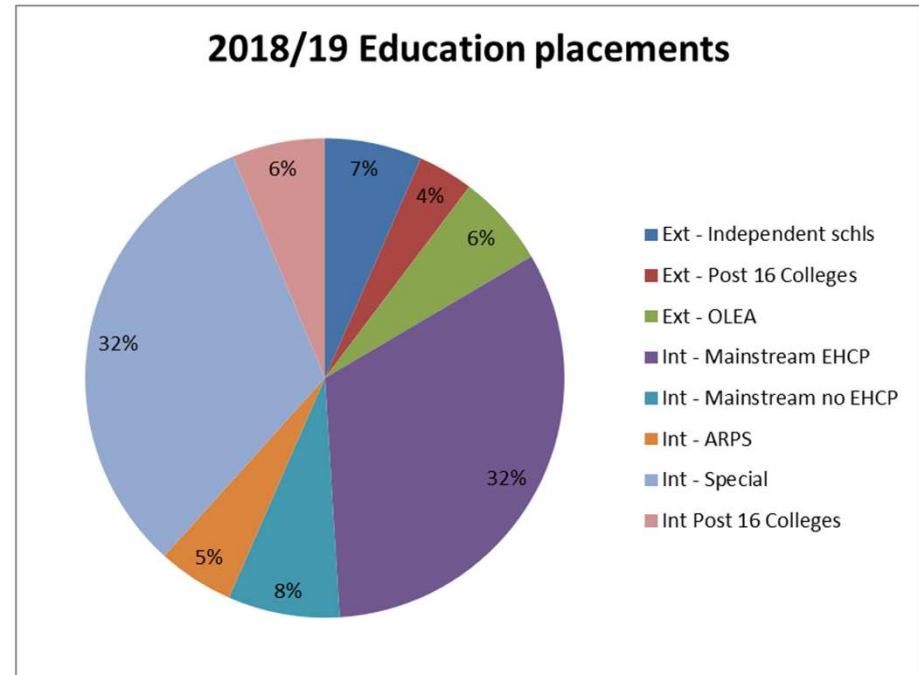
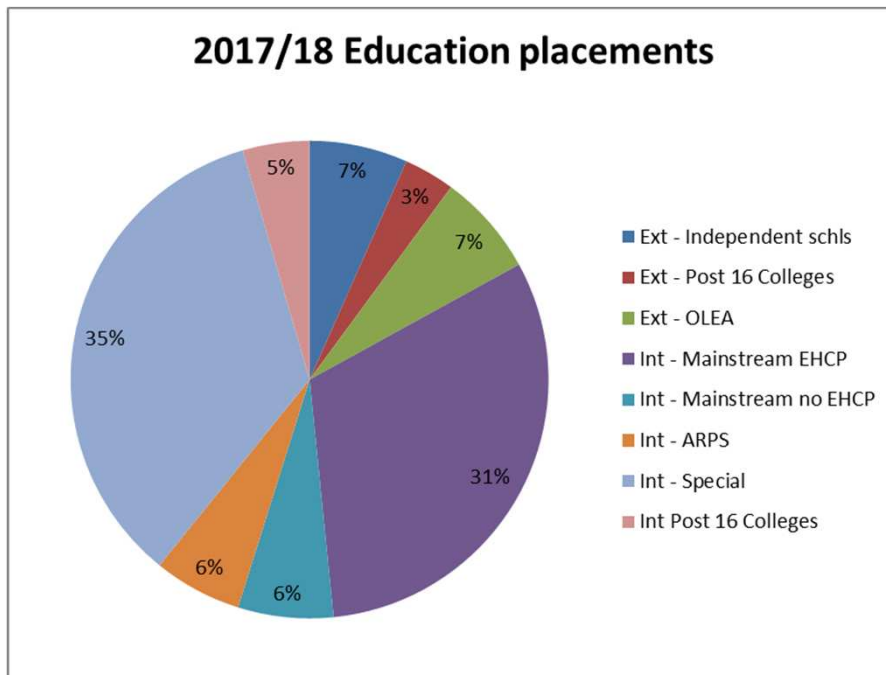
High Needs Block Expenditure 2018-19

- 90% of the total high needs block spend is direct support for pupils
- Within that total, placements and top-up costs for pupils in all types of provision from mainstream to specialist account for 84% of the total high needs spend ie, £71.3 million
- In 2018-19 this included supporting 4,403 pupils aged 5-16 and a further 489 post-16 students in schools and colleges.
- The numbers of pupils (primary, secondary and post-16) supported with high needs block funding increased by 9% in 2018-19
- 6% of spend supports Alternative Provision (£5.2 million)



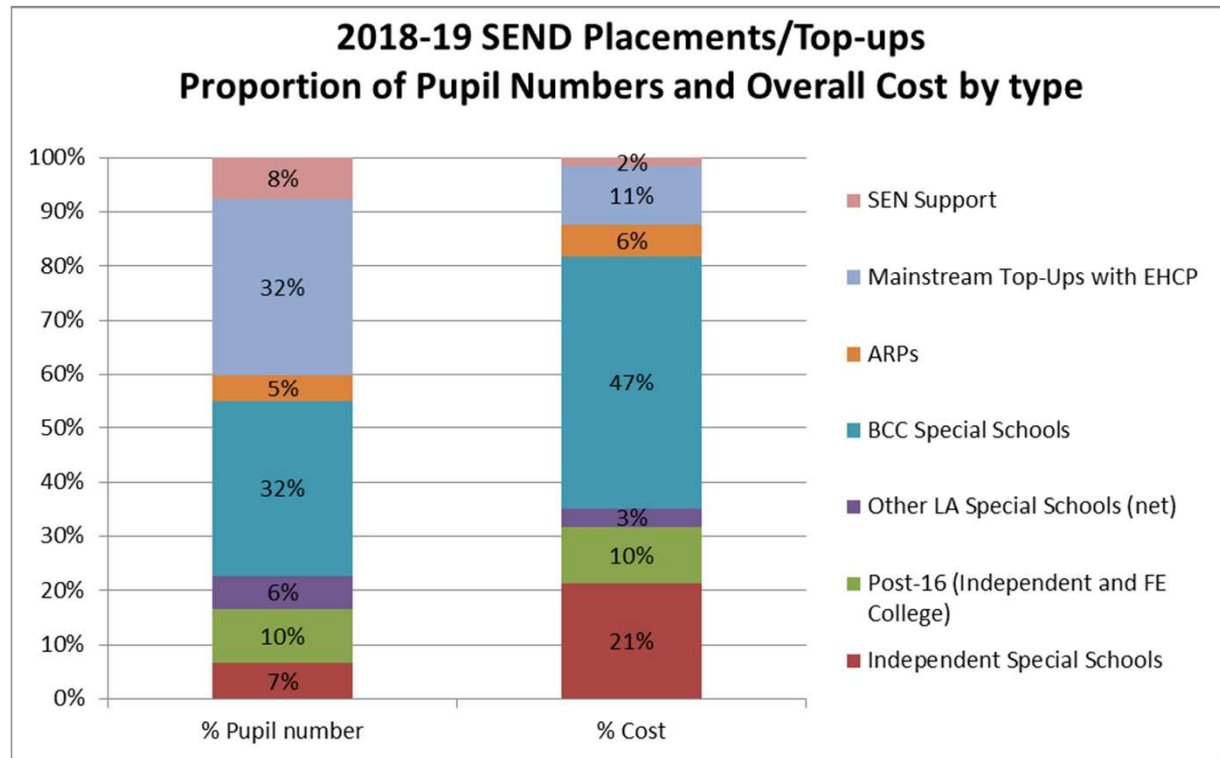
High Needs Block Expenditure 2018-19 – Mix of Placements

- The mix of placements impacts significantly on costs
- Proportion of external placements has remained at 17% despite a 9% increase in demand for support (excludes Early Years)

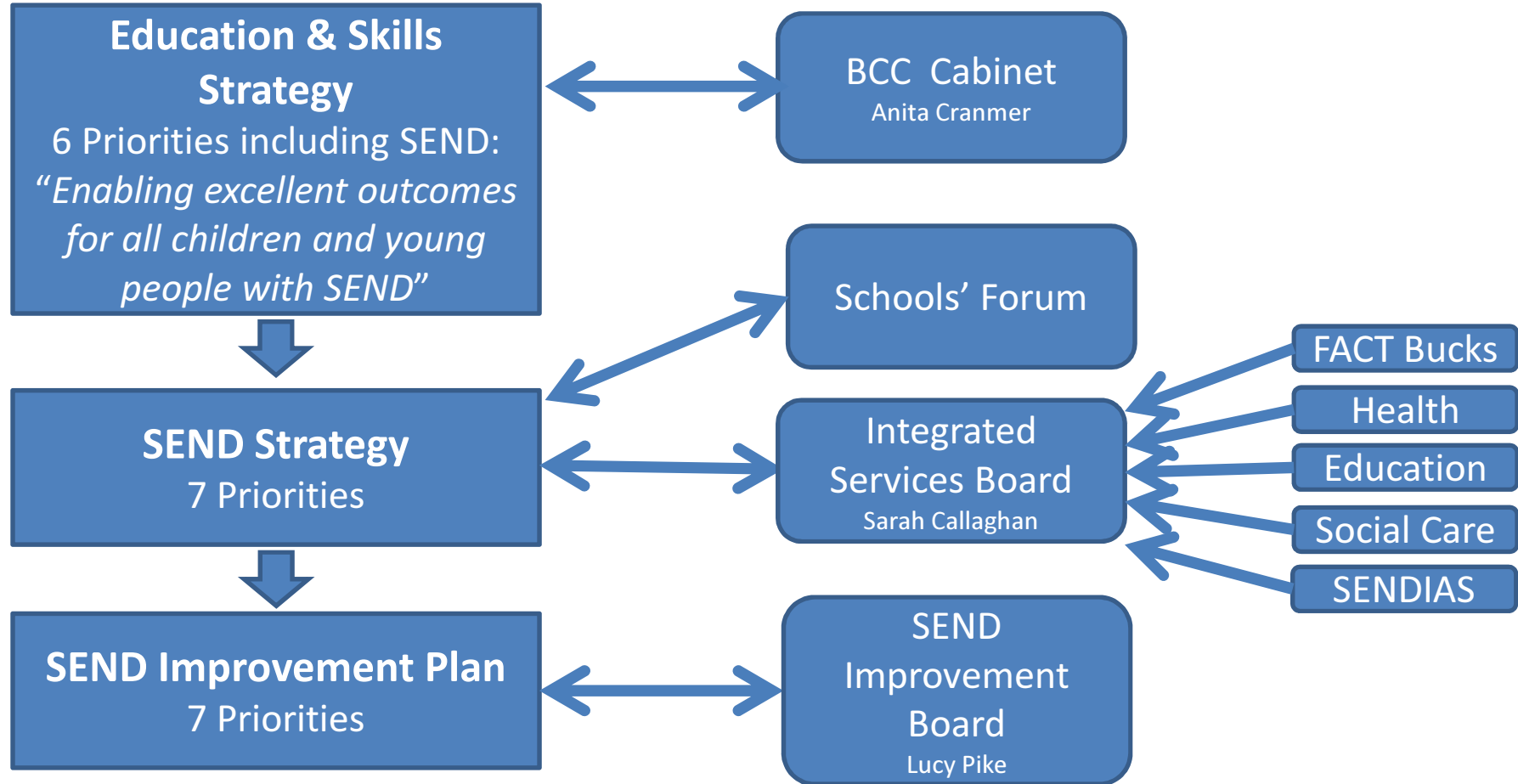


High Needs Block Expenditure 2018-19 – Mix of Placements/costs

- The graph shows external independent special school placements account for 7% of the number of pupils but 21% of costs
- Similarly top ups for pupils with EHCPs in mainstream account for 32% of pupils but 11% of costs



SEND Governance



Buckinghamshire County Council

SEND Improvement Plan



High Needs Block – Links to SEND Strategy

- Workstreams within the SEND Improvement Plan impacting on high needs spend:
 - Sufficiency strategy (priorities 2,3,4,5)
 - SEN restructure (priorities 4,6)
 - Funding review (priorities 2,3,7)
- Key features are to understand demand, ensure quicker decision making, improved approaches to planning and securing specialist placements, reducing reliance on high cost external provision



Current Demand for Education Health and Care Plans

| Primary Need | Dec 2013 | Dec 2014 | Dec 2015 | Dec 2016 | Dec 2017 | Dec 2018 | % change from 2013 |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Moderate Learning Difficulties | 627 | 657 | 637 | 643 | 635 | 722 | ↑ 15% |
| Speech, Language and Communication Needs | 832 | 884 | 830 | 851 | 816 | 857 | ↑ 3% |
| Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development Needs / Social, Emotional & Mental Health | 407 | 453 | 451 | 491 | 482 | 570 | ↑ 40% |
| Specific Learning Difficulties | 173 | 180 | 147 | 126 | 121 | 136 | ↓ 21% |
| Severe Learning Difficulties | 118 | 117 | 120 | 127 | 144 | 151 | ↑ 28% |
| Autistic Spectrum Disorder | 583 | 635 | 675 | 809 | 946 | 1128 | ↑ 93% |
| Physical Difficulties | 264 | 268 | 258 | 274 | 265 | 277 | ↑ 5% |
| Hearing Impairment | 78 | 77 | 84 | 83 | 84 | 93 | ↑ 19% |
| Visual Impairment | 55 | 56 | 57 | 57 | 59 | 65 | ↑ 18% |
| Multi-Sensory Impairment | 7 | 9 | 9 | 12 | 14 | 20 | ↑ 186% |
| Profound and Multiple | 30 | 32 | 41 | 46 | 45 | 51 | ↑ 70% |
| Not Recorded / Other | 5 | 9 | 80 | 61 | 54 | 4 | ↓ 20% |
| Total | 3179 | 3377 | 3389 | 3580 | 3665 | 4074 | ↑ 28% |



Current Demand for High Cost Placements – May 2019

| For Info Pupil Number 31/3/17 | Main SEN need | Pupil Number | Average Cost Per Pupil | Current Full Year Cost |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | | £ | £ |
| 67 | ASD | 73 | £56,932 | £4,156,044 |
| 5 | HI | 7 | £59,472 | £416,304 |
| 19 | MLD | 24 | £42,554 | £1,021,286 |
| 2 | MSI | 2 | £49,634 | £99,268 |
| 0 | OTH | 1 | £28,950 | £28,950 |
| 36 | PD | 35 | £64,970 | £2,273,941 |
| 7 | PMLD | 7 | £74,438 | £521,063 |
| 38 | SEMH (& BESD) | 33 | £72,446 | £2,390,704 |
| 49 | SLCN | 48 | £36,540 | £1,753,903 |
| 8 | SLD | 8 | £59,609 | £476,875 |
| 8 | SPLD | 11 | £44,355 | £487,900 |
| 8 | VI | 9 | £26,425 | £237,826 |
| 247 | Grand Total | 258 | £53,737 | £13,864,063 |



Current Demand for High Cost Placements

- The table below shows the numbers of full time equivalent placements solely funded by Education budgets and those jointly funded with other agencies
- The costs shown in the table are the costs to the High Needs Block
- Unit costs vary significantly according to complexity

| Education Placements May 2019 | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| | FTE | Education cost | Avg Education unit cost |
| Education | 211.4 | £10,861,609 | £51,379 |
| Education and Social Care | 26.2 | £2,534,512 | £96,737 |
| Education and Social Care and Health | 6.9 | £497,533 | £72,106 |
| Education and Adults | 0.8 | £58,707 | £73,384 |
| Education and Health | 2.0 | £243,594 | £121,797 |
| Total Education | 247.3 | £14,195,955 | £57,404 |



Average Unit Costs of Specialist Provision 2018-19

| Unit Costs - Specialist Provision | | |
|---|--|--------|
| | | £ |
| Independent Special Schools | | 52,884 |
| BCC Special Schools | | 21,104 |
| Additional resourced Provision | | 15,967 |
| Top Ups for Children with EHCPs in Mainstream | | 4,844 |
| SEN Support (pupils without EHCPs) | | 2,973 |

Note that the unit costs are averages – costs will vary according to complexity of need (see slide 11)



Scrutiny of High Needs Expenditure

- Within the local authority expenditure against the high needs block is reported to and scrutinised by:
 - Children’s Budget Board (chaired by Section 151 Officer)
 - Children’s Services SLT
 - Monthly meetings with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council
- High Needs spend is reported to each meeting of Schools Forum



Actions in 2019-20 to reduce reliance on high cost external placements

- Net increase of 43 funded places in BCC special schools 2019-20:
 - Creation of additional SEMH places for primary aged pupils at Chiltern Way Academy (Bierton Hill)
 - Increase in nursery age places at Booker Park
 - Increase in planned places at Chilternwood for more complex needs
- Target to reduce external placements by full time equivalent of 10 places per year to fund the increased in house capacity. Based on current unit costs this results in an ongoing saving of £1m per year by 2022-23
- Numbers and unit costs of external placements to be tracked
- Review designations of specialist provision to ensure meets current and future demand through development of Sufficiency Strategy
- Development of banded funded model so funding reflects need across mainstream and specialist provision

