



# Report to Schools Forum

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Title:** Dedicated Schools Budget – Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022-23

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**Recommendations:**

**Schools Forum is asked to note the revenue budget monitoring forecast at the end of October (Period 7)**

**Reason for decision:** For Information

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1. This report updates Schools Forum on the current forecast for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget for the 2022-23 financial year, based on the spend to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 (period 7).

## 2. Forecast 2022-23

2.1. The overall Dedicated Schools Budget is currently projected to underspend by £0.25m as at the end of October.

	Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000	%
Central Block	5,054	5,168	114	2%
Early Years Block	34,579	33,513	-1,066	-3%
High Needs Block	104,004	104,706	702	1%
Schools Block	175,419	175,419	-0	0%
	<b>319,056</b>	<b>318,806</b>	<b>-250</b>	

2.2. The main reason for the projected underspend is a forecast underspend of £1.066m for the early years block. This reflects lower take up of places for vulnerable 2 year olds. It is likely that the DSG settlement for 2022-23 will be adjusted downwards to reflect this lower take up if numbers in the January 2023 early years census remain low and therefore a proportion of this underspend will be clawed back in 2023-24.

- 2.3. A summary of the current forecast against the high needs block is attached as an appendix to this report. High needs budgets are projected to overspend by £0.7m this year. The forecast takes into account the unallocated contingency of £1.7m and includes pressures against the budgets for independent special schools, personal budgets and mainstream top ups, alternative provision and integrated therapies.
- 2.4. It is likely that the forecast in future months will also include pressures against the budget for BC special schools and academies. From September a number of additional places have been funded across special schools in order to meet demand. By supporting additional places in Buckinghamshire provision the need for placements in the independent sector can be reduced
- 2.5. Schools block is currently projected to break even.
- 2.6. Central schools services block is projected to overspend by £0.114m due to pressures against the budget for Premature Retirement Costs as costs continue to exceed the available budget.

### 3. DSG Reserve

- 3.1. Any variance against the DSG is to be managed through the DSG reserve which is ringfenced. At the start of the 2022-23 financial year the council had a deficit of £3.6m against its DSG reserve.
- 3.2. The current projected overspend will reduce the deficit at the end of the year however as noted earlier in this report there is the potential for a clawback of the underspend against the early years block.

