

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

19 September 2024 at 10:00 – 12:00

Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

Multi Academy Trusts

Catalyst Academies Trust
Harris Federation
Ormiston Park
ORTU Federation
Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust
REAch2 Academy Trust
South West Essex Community Education Trust
The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)
Vine Schools Trust
Christus Catholic Trust

Name

Mr T Parfett (Vice Chair)
Mrs N Graham
To be advised
To be advised
Mr Griffiths
Mr E Samuel
Mr S Munday
Mrs V Reid (Chair)
Mrs E Wigmore
Mrs J Seymour

Secondary Voluntary Aided School

Grays Convent

Name

Mrs P Johnson

Standalone Academy Trusts

Woodside Academy
Giffards Primary

Name

Mr S Proctor
Mrs N Haslam-Davis

Infrastructure Groups

TASS
TPHA

Name

Mr S Bell
Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes

Alternative Provision

Olive AP

Name

Mr M Vickers

Special Schools

Treetops Academy
Beacon Hill Academy

Name

Mr J Brewer
Mrs Sue Hewitt

Non-school members

Diocese of Chelmsford
Diocese of Brentwood
0-5 EYFS Representative
0-11 Representative
11-19 Representative

Name

Miss S Jones
Mrs M Shepherd
Mr A Melbourne
Ms A Jones
Mr S Bowak

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM
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Introductory Items		
Item	Item	Time Guide
1.	Welcome from Chair	10:00
2.	Apologies for Absence	10:02
3.	<i>For decision</i> School Forum Membership Review and Election of Chair and Vice Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sarah Williams presenting	10:05
4.	<i>For decision</i> Dedicated Schools Grant 2024-25 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• David May presenting	10:35
5.	<i>For information</i> Review of Forward Plan 2024/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sarah Williams presenting	11:15
6.	<i>For discussion</i> Equipment Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Andrea Winstone presenting	11.20
Closing Items		
7.	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 June 2024	11.30

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

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8.	Action Log	11:45
9.	Any Other Business	11:50
	Date of next meeting Thursday 28 th November 2025	

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE:	19 th September 2024
SUBJECT:	Election of Chair and Vice Chair and Membership Update
REPORT OF:	Sarah Williams
THE REPORT IS:	For Decision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks for the Schools Forum to agree the election of the Chair and Vice Chair for the academic year. There are no changes to the membership structure.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Forum members to agree that the current Chair, Mrs V Reid to continue as the chair of the forum.
- 2.2 Schools Forum members vote and agree a new vice chair for the academic year 2024/25.

3.0 MAIN BODY OF REPORT

- 3.1 Each year the Schools Forum membership is reviewed and updated. There have been no changes to membership.

3.2 *School forum membership structure*

Name of Multi Academy Trust - 10 members	Name	Role
CEO – Catalyst Academies Trust	Mr T Parfett	CEO
Harris Federation	Mrs N Graham	Assistant Director
CEO Ormiston Park	To be advised	
CEO ORTU Federation Ltd (Stanford & Corringham Trust)	To be advised	
CEO Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust	Mr P Griffiths	CEO
CEO REAch2 Academy Trust	Mr E Samuel	Headteacher Purfleet Primary
CEO South West Essex Community Education Trust (SWECET)	Mr S Munday	CEO
CEO The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)	Mrs V Reid	CEO

CEO Vine Schools Trust	Miss E Wigmore	CEO
CEO Christus Catholic Trust	Ms N Cashell	CEO
<i>Secondary Voluntary Aided School</i>	Name	Role
Grays Convent	Mrs P Johnson	Headteacher
<i>Standalone Academy Trusts</i>	Name	Role
West Thurrock Academy	Mr S Proctor	Headteacher
Giffards Primary	Mrs N Haslam	Headteacher
<i>Infrastructure Groups</i>	Name	Role
TASS	Mr S Bell	Chair of TASS
TPHA	Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes	Chair of TPHA
<i>Alternative Provision</i>	Name	Role
Olive AP	Mr Mark Vickers	CEO
<i>Special Schools</i>	Name	Role
Treetops Academy	Mr J Brewer	Headteacher
Beacon Hill Academy	Ms Sue Hewitt	Headteacher
<i>Non-school members</i>	Name	Role
Diocese of Chelmsford	To be advised	
Diocese of Brentwood	Mrs M Shepherd	
0-5 EYFS Representative	Mr A Melborne	
0-11 Representative	Ms Alison Jones	
11-19 Representative	Mr S Bowak	

4.0 CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

NAME: Sarah Williams
ROLE: Education Support Services
E-MAIL: sjwilliams@thurrock.gov.uk
PHONE: 01375 652971

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE: 19 September 2024

SUBJECT: Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25

REPORT OF: David May

THE REPORT IS: For Decision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The projected outturn for 2024/25 is a forecasted deficit of £1.517m, with additional risks of £0.227m identified.
- 1.2 The movement to reserves of £1.517m will change the surplus position of £0.630m to a deficit of £0.887m. This was planned to support identified funding pressures in the High Needs Block in 2024/25, whilst benefits from the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme are realised.
- 1.3 There continues to be significant risk within the High Needs Block:
 - Continued increase in demand for EHCP's; and
 - Sufficiency of local offer to prevent high-cost external placements.
- 1.4 Information has been released on a Core Schools Budget Grant (CSBG) 2024/25 for the period September 2024 to March 2025. The CSBG will provide almost £1.1 billion to support schools with their overall costs in the 2024/25 financial year, in particular following confirmation of the 2024 teacher pay award. This matches what ESFA have calculated is needed to fully fund, at a national level, the teacher pay award and the support staff pay offer in financial year 2024/25, over and above the available headroom in schools' existing budgets.
- 1.5 Payment to Early Year Providers is dependent upon accuracy of census data that maximises the funding received by the Local Authority from the ESFA. The timeframe for data collection has been streamlined to ensure the census data equals the payments to be made to Providers. In this way the number of hours paid by Thurrock to Providers will equal the funded hours received from the ESFA. This ensures that the hourly rate paid to providers is the highest it can be.
- 1.6 An update is included on the DSG Management Plan to reflect the increase in numbers and costs.
- 1.7 In previous years information would have been received from the ESFA on proposed NFF factor values and indicative funding allocations for 2025/26. The timing of the general election and the budget day, planned for 30 October, has delayed the release of information.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Schools Forum is invited to:

- a) Note and seek clarity on the contents of the report.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

2.1 To inform members of the Schools Forum of the projected outturn position in relation to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2024/25, in accordance with the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.

3. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2024/25

3.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant is forecasting an outturn position of £1.517m (2%) overspend, against a revised budget of £62.121m, as shown below: Appendix A provides further detail on the key areas of expenditure.

Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25	School Block £m	Central Services Block £m	High Needs Block £m	Early Years Block £m	Total £m
Funding Settlement	167.156	1.610	38.912	22.718	230.396
Academy Recoupment	(161.025)		(7.250)		(168.275)
Funding Block Transfer	(0.400)		0.400		0.000
Final DSG	5.731	1.610	32.062	22.718	62.121
Forecasted Outturn	5.731	1.610	33.682	22.615	63.638
Variance to Budget	0.000	0.000	1.620	(0.103)	1.517
Previously reported variance (13-06-24)	0.000	0.000	0.952	0.000	0.952
Movement from previously reported	0.000	0.000	0.668	(0.103)	0.565
Risk	0.000	0.000	0.227	0.000	0.227

3.2 The net overspend is driven by:

- Expansion of places within Special Schools from Sept-24 at a cost of £0.345m.
- Out of Borough Placements Pre 16. Overspent by £0.442m. Includes three joint funded placements agreed in the spring term with a full year cost implication to the DSG of £0.528m. Includes £510k contingency.
- Medical Tuition, £0.223m, continued demand for tuition services.
- Top Up Funding Academies, £0.596m - Review of EHCP Plan, resulting in additional support to maintain places in mainstream schools and academies and an increase in interim funding to provide support whilst EHCP assessment is completed.
- Post 16 £0.344m, Placements to be confirmed, start of the new academic year.

Offset by:

- Delay in the opening of Primary Autism base to Oct-24, a saving of £0.102m.
- Delay in the opening of the new SEMH base (AP), a saving of £0.212m.

3.3 The movement between reporting periods is a net increase of £0.565m. This is due to:

- Top Funding Academies, Increase of £0.538m, Increase in EHCP's. Review of EHCP Plan, resulting in additional support to maintain places in mainstream schools and academies.
- Top Up Funding - Other Local Authorities, Increase of £0.330m, Export/Import adjustment.
- Movement to reflect start of new academic year and change of LAC policy, reduction of £0.200m.

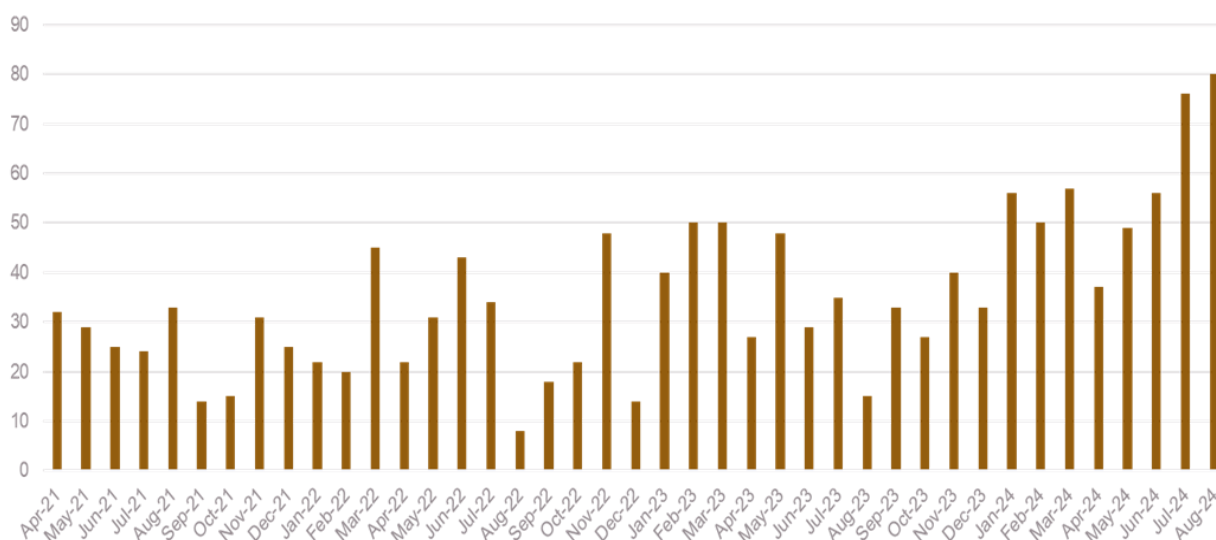
- Early Years central team, saving £0.103m reflects current payroll structure and includes grants to offset salaries.

3.4 The risks identified in the table above to the value of £0.227m are not included in the forecast outturn position but are noted that they may materialise as the year progresses.

- If EHCP's continue at a rate of 30 per month, cost implication of £0.227m. The current forecast assumes an increase of 10 per month.

3.5 The table below shows the significant increase in the number of requests for assessment of EHCP experienced in July and August. Thurrock currently maintains 2,378 which is 6% of the school age population. This is higher than the national of average of 4% and statistical neighbours of 4%. We are commissioning a review of EHCPs in Thurrock to gain a better understanding as to why Thurrock is higher.

The number of initial requests for assessment for an EHC plan (In Month).



4. DSG RESERVE

4.1 The movement to reserves of £1.517m will change the surplus position of £0.630m to a deficit of £0.887m. This was planned to support identified funding pressures in the High Needs Block in 2024/25, whilst benefits from the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme are realised.

DSG Reserve - Summary	£m
DSG Unusable Reserve at the end of 2021/22	1.883
DSG Usable Reserve	(2.513)
DSG Balance 31/03/2024	(0.630)
DSG Outturn 2024/25	1.517
DSG Projected Balance @ 31/03/2025	0.887

- 4.2 The Government extended the DSG statutory override in December 2022 for a one-off period of three years up to 31 March 2026. When the statutory override falls away, the accumulated DSG deficit will be the responsibility of each Local Authority.
- 4.3 The engagement in the SEND Delivering Better Value programme is designed to support Local Authorities in the management of the Dedicated Schools Grants. The DSG Management Plan 2024/25 to 2028/29 submitted, validated and approved through the DBV programme shows an accumulated deficit of £17m in March 2029.
- 4.4 This position reflects the national position of the High Needs Block and the challenges faced in meeting increased demand, complexity of need and price increases.
- 4.5 A long-term solution is required to funding available to support the Schools and the High Needs Block.

5. School Operational Guide on the in-year use of DSG surplus

- 5.1 An action from the meeting held on the 13-06-2024 to be reported back to today's meeting, for discussion was detail from the School Operational Guide on the in-year use of DSG surplus.
- 5.2 The Schools operational guide can be found at:
[Schools operational guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-operational-guide-2024-to-2025)
- 5.3 Section 21 - Redetermination of budget shares, states:
It is not permissible to make an in-year redetermination of schools budget shares other than in the explicit circumstances allowed for within the school finance regulations which relate to:
- sixth form funding
 - early years funding
 - reallocation of funding for excluded pupils
 - rates
 - risk protection arrangements.

Therefore, any in-year underspends that are not covered by the above should be carried forward to the next funding year.

For local authorities that have an overall DSG surplus, any DSG underspend brought forward from the previous year can be used to support the growth or falling rolls fund in the schools block, or to support the central school services block, the high needs block, or the early years block.

For local authorities with an overall DSG deficit, further information is provided in the section on [DSG deficits and high needs exceptional funding](#).

- 5.4 Alternatively, local authorities can carry forward an underspend to the next funding period and allocate it to schools via the funding formula. In this situation, the local authority will again need to consult with its schools forum. In-year reallocations to schools cannot be made as these do not comply with the annually made school finance regulations.

- 5.5 In summary the regulations do not permit the redetermination of school budget share in year. The 2023/24 DSG surplus carried forward into 2024/25 of £0.630m to be used to support the DSG projected deficit in 2024/25 of £1.517m.

6. Core Schools Budget Grant 2024/25

6.1 The core school budget grant (CSBG) will provide almost £1.1 billion to support schools with their overall costs in the 2024/25 financial year, in particular following confirmation of the 2024 teacher pay award. This matches what ESFA have calculated is needed to fully fund, at a national level, the teacher pay award and the support staff pay offer in financial year 2024/25, over and above the available headroom in schools' existing budgets.

6.2 Budgets for 2025/26 are still to be agreed; this includes the 2025/26 core schools' budget which, as usual, the department will need to agree across government. ESFA know how important these decisions are to schools and are working across government to take them as soon as practicable.

6.3 ESFA have published the funding rates for mainstream schools, special schools, alternative provision (AP) schools, and hospital schools and CETs in the methodology document.

- [Core schools budget grant \(CSBG\) methodology: September 2024 to March 2025](#)

6.4 The base funding rates for 2024/25 financial year are:

Mainstream

- a basic per-pupil rate of £76 for primary pupils, including pupils in reception
- a basic per-pupil rate of £108 for key stage 3 pupils
- a basic per-pupil rate of £122 for key stage 4 pupils
- a lump sum of £2,900
- a FSM6 per-pupil rate of £70 per eligible primary pupil
- a FSM6 per-pupil rate of £100 per eligible secondary pupil

Special and AP Schools

- £610 per place using published place numbers.

Centrally employed teachers.

- A per-teacher funding rate of £2,428.

6.5 ESFA expect to publish information on allocations, alongside the conditions of grant, in September.

6.6 ESFA are also providing £97 million in respect of schools delivering post-16 and early years provision. Additional funding for early years settings will be distributed through the early years budget grant (EYBG), reflecting the methodology used in the early years teachers' pay grant (EY TPAG) in 2023/24. Funding for post-16 schools will be allocated separately, and further information will be published in due course.

6.7 ESFA have published a calculator for mainstream schools and academies to estimate their CSBG allocation for September 2024 to March 2025.

- [CSBG Mainstream School Calculator: September 2024 to March 2025](#)

6.8 If a school includes an early years or post-16 facility (for example a sixth form) then these pupils should not be included when using the calculator provided, as this tool only

estimates the allocation for your 5 to 16 mainstream population. Early years and 16 to 19 allocations will be additional to these.

7. Early Education and Childcare Providers Academic Year 2024/25

7.1 Payment to Providers is dependent upon accuracy of census data that maximises the funding received by the Local Authority from the ESFA. The timeframe has been streamlined to ensure the census data equals the payments to be made to Providers. In this way the number of hours paid by Thurrock to Providers will equal the funded hours received from the ESFA.

7.2 This ensures that the hourly rate paid to providers is the highest it can be.

7.3 The table below shows the streamlined timetable effective from September 2024.

Early Education and Childcare Providers Academic Year 2024/25		
PORTAL KEY DATES	ESTIMATES	HEADCOUNT
Autumn 2024 – 13 funded weeks (17 Stretched)		
Provider Portal Open	01-Jul-24	02-Sep-24
Provider Portal Deadline	19-Jul-24	03-Oct-24 (3, 4yr & disadvantage 2yr) 08-Nov-24 (working parents 9months-2yr)
Payment Due	06-Sep-24	06-Dec-24
Spring 2024/2025 – 12 funded weeks (15 Stretched)		
Provider Portal Open	04-Nov-24	23-Dec-24
Provider Portal Deadline	22-Nov-24	17-Jan-25
Payment Due	10-Jan-25	03-Mar-25
Summer 2025 – 13 funded weeks (20 Stretched)		
Provider Portal Open	17-Feb-25	14-Apr-25
Provider Portal Deadline	07-Mar-25	TBC
Payment Due	25-Apr-25	27-Jun-25
Please note the following:		
- Dates for Summer Headcount deadline and Autumn 2025 will be confirmed at a later date. - Providers will not be able to make any adjustment after the portal deadline		

8. Delivering Better Value in SEND programme

- 8.1 The Delivering Better Value in SEND programme aims to support LA's to improve delivery of SEND services for children and young people while ensuring services are sustainable.
- 8.2 Thurrock grant application was approved by DfE DBV Programme Board on 29 February. The outline plan is shown below, with expenditure to be incurred during 2024/25:

Thurrock DBV: Use of Grant

Workstream & Area	Impact	Total Cost	Spend 2024/25
Workstream 1- Improving mainstream capacity and ability to meet needs of children and young people at SEND Support and with EHCPs.	Schools - Release to attend training	£450,000	£550,000
	Cost of training and venue hire	£100,000	
Workstream 2a - Improving mainstream capacity and ability to meet needs of children and young people at SEND Support and with EHCPs.	Primary Outreach	£180,000	£300,000
	Secondary Outreach	£120,000	
Workstream 2b - Review of Outreach services to prioritise and mainstream year 1 investment	SEND specialist engaged to review and prioritise outreach offer.	£75,000	£75,000
Workstream 3 Reducing the high INMSS placement costs	Increase to commissioning capacity to ensure VFM being secured.	£75,000	£75,000
		£1,000,000	£1,000,000

- 8.3 Workstream 1 – Following discussions, schools have been requested to submit individual or trust combined training plans to allow phased release of grant. Updates will be required throughout the year to meet agreed outcomes and DfE reporting requirements.

Training - Funding Allocations		Budget	Schools	Total
Payment to Schools	Primary	£8,000	39	£312,000
Payment to Schools	Secondary	£12,000	13	£156,000
Schools Training Budget			52	£468,000
To support AP and training to be provided by Thurrock				£82,000
Total				£550,000

It is planned that payments to schools will be made as shown in the table below:

Payments to Schools				
Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Apr-25	Total
£1,333	£2,667	£2,667	£1,333	£8,000
£2,000	£4,000	£4,000	£2,000	£12,000

- 8.4 Workstream 2a – Olive AP and The Osborne Academy Trust have developed a new outreach offer to reduce the number of fixed term exclusions and suspensions. This has been presented to schools and further feedback has been sought to ensure we are meeting the identified needs for outreach across our school community.
- 8.5 Workstream 2b - A review of outreach provision was commissioned in Spring term. This has identified strengths and ways to strengthen the outreach offer. All outreach providers engaged well with the commissioned review. Recommendations will be discussed with outreach providers during the autumn term. A report will be presented to Schools Forum meeting in November.
- 8.6 Workstream 3 – A review of INMSS placement costs is underway to consider current cost implications and if value of money is being secured. Recruitment of new Commissioner to support with this workstream has concluded and Officer is now in post they will begin reviewing the 10 highest cost placements and look to benchmark this across other similar sized authorities to ensure best value. Our aim is also to develop a strong partnership relationship with the IMMS providers with the aim of driving down costs and identifying other placements as and when they are required.

9. DSG Management Plan 2024/25

- 9.1 The DSG Management plan had been updated to reflect the latest projected outturn position and the ongoing financial implications into future years. This is shown in the table below:

LA + DBV MITIGATED Projection	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Mainstream schools or academies	1,171	1,088	1,309	1,322	1,335	1,349
Resourced Provision or SEN Units	141	138	232	252	262	272
Maintained special schools or special academies	496	521	569	577	585	593
NMSS or independent schools	63	46	63	59	59	55
Medical/Home Tuition	45	182	46	48	49	51
Post 16	167	318	172	177	182	188
AP (EHCP)	7	9	115	115	115	115
Total EHCP / Places funded by HNB	2,090	2,302	2,506	2,550	2,588	2,622
Table 3c Mitigated and DBV	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Total Expenditure	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Mainstream	7.621	9.238	9.484	9.765	10.052	10.349
Resources	5.043	5.566	6.216	7.059	7.622	8.110
Special Schools	12.580	13.617	13.942	14.583	15.230	15.904
NMSS or Independent	3.960	4.161	5.416	5.221	5.380	5.162
Medical or Home Tuition	1.078	0.984	0.809	0.857	0.908	0.962
Post-16 or FE	2.563	2.859	2.642	2.776	2.918	3.067
AP	2.721	2.908	3.525	3.687	3.763	3.841
	35.565	39.332	42.034	43.947	45.873	47.395
Other H2S Transport	1.600	1.600	1.600	1.600	1.600	1.600
Total	37.165	40.932	43.634	45.547	47.473	48.995
DSG Assumed	38.111	39.312	40.079	41.282	42.520	43.796
In Year Position HNB	(0.946)	1.620	3.555	4.266	4.953	5.200
In Year Position Other Funding Blocks	(0.219)	(0.103)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
DSG Deficit/(Surplus)	0.534	(0.631)	0.886	4.441	8.707	13.660
Accumulated Deficit/(Surplus)	(0.631)	0.886	4.441	8.707	13.660	18.860

- 9.2 The impact on the updated plan to that which was submitted as part of the DBV programme are reflected in the table below:

Impact of Changes	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Latest Accumulated Deficit/(Surplus)	(0.631)	0.886	4.441	8.707	13.660	18.860
SEND DBV Programme Accumulated Deficit	0.080	2.364	5.830	9.511	13.385	16.879
Change in Accumulated Deficit / (Surplus)	(0.711)	(1.478)	(1.389)	(0.804)	0.275	1.981

- 9.3 A detail review of the assumptions embedded within the plan will be undertaken prior to the next meeting of the schools forum to consider long term mitigations and funding implications for 2025/26 budgets.

10. Dedicated Schools Grant 2025/26

- 10.1 In previous years information would have been received from the ESFA on proposed NFF factor values and indicative funding allocations for 2025/26. The timing of the general election and the new government's Budget Day, planned for 30 October, has delayed the release of information.
- 10.2 The next schools forum meeting is scheduled for 28 November where traditionally we focus on:
- the principles, to be recommended to Cabinet, to be applied to the local funding formula, influenced by guidance and national funding formula values published by ESFA.
 - Key risks and decisions on the High Needs Block 2025/26
- 10.3 At this stage it is unclear what information will be released and when.

11. Questionnaire: School Funding and Budgets

- 11.1 Following discussions at the School Forum, Schools and Academy representative have requested that a follow up survey to that requested In March. This is to allow a more up to date understanding of the challenges and the financial position of schools and academies in Thurrock.
- 11.2 Each Academy should complete an individual return by Friday 8 November. It would be helpful if you could take the time to complete. The outcome will be discussed at the Schools Forum on Thursday 28 November and will help inform 2025/26 budget decisions and future discussions with the Education Skills Funding Agency.

Name of School / Academy			
		Yes	No
1.	Were you able to set a balanced budget in 2024/25?		
2.	Were Reserves used to set a balanced budget?		
3.	Are Reserves available to support future year budgets?		
4.	What percentage increase for support services pay has been included when considering 2024/25 budget?		
5.	What is your expected level of reserves at the end of 2024/25.	£	
5.	What is your expected level of reserves at the end of 2024/25 as a percentage of your 2024/25 budget.		
	Negative (deficit) forecasted		
	Less than 5%		
	Between 5% and 9.99%		
	Greater than 10%		
7	What are the 3 key financial challenges in 2024/25?		
8.	Are you expecting any additional challenges in setting 2025/26 budget?		
Thank You. Please return to			

12. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

- School Forum meeting 13-06-24 - Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24 & 2024/25
- School Forum meeting 14-03-24 - Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24 & 2024/25
- School Forum Meeting 16-01-24 - Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24 & 2024/25

13. CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact.

Name: David May
Role: Head of Financial Management, Corporate Finance
E-Mail: dmay@thurrock.gov.uk

Appendix A

Dedicated Schools Grant		2023/24 Outturn	2024/25 Budget	2024/25 Projected Outturn	2024/25 Variance
		£m	£m	£m	£m
SB	Schools Block	155.651	166.756	166.756	0.000
CSSB	Central Services Block	1.608	1.610	1.610	(0.000)
HNB	High Needs Block	37.165	39.312	40.932	1.620
EYB	Early Years Block	13.987	22.718	22.615	(0.103)
Dedicated Schools Grant Funding Settlement		208.411	230.397	231.913	1.516
Less Academy Recoupment		(157.667)	(168.275)	(168.275)	0.000
Dedicated Schools Grant Received		(51.908)	(62.121)	(62.121)	0.000
(Under) / Overspend		(1.163)	0.000	1.517	1.517
SB	Maintained Schools Budgets	4.018	4.454	4.454	0.000
SB	Growth Fund	0.993	1.277	1.277	0.000
CSSB	Statutory and Regulatory duties - Education	0.544	0.511	0.511	(0.000)
CSSB	Statutory and Regulatory duties - Finance	0.159	0.174	0.174	0.000
CSSB	School Place planning	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.000
CSSB	Admissions	0.301	0.301	0.301	0.000
CSSB	Schools Forum	0.006	0.009	0.009	0.000
CSSB	SACRE	0.010	0.015	0.015	0.000
CSSB	School Licences	0.154	0.173	0.173	0.000
CSSB	Contribution to Combined budgets	0.406	0.400	0.400	0.000
HNB	Place Funding	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Academies	3.771	4.535	5.132	0.596
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Resource Provisions	4.077	4.672	4.570	(0.102)
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Special Schools	7.375	7.871	8.217	0.346
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Alternative Provision	1.865	2.265	2.053	(0.211)
HNB	Top Up Funding - Other Local Authorities (4-16)	1.549	1.385	1.675	0.290
HNB	Top Up Funding - Post 16	2.563	2.515	2.859	0.344
HNB	Pupils not in School	0.617	0.540	0.538	(0.002)
HNB	Medical Tuition	0.419	0.193	0.416	0.223
HNB	Residential - Non Maintained and Independent	1.841	1.854	1.939	0.085
HNB	Non Residential - Non Maintained and Independent	2.118	2.155	2.222	0.067
HNB	Commissioned Services	1.185	1.245	1.245	0.000
HNB	Additional High Needs Targeted	0.550	0.600	0.600	0.000
HNB	Home Hospital Education Services	0.042	0.030	0.030	0.000
HNB	Travellers Team	0.050	0.052	0.054	0.001
HNB	Home to School Transport	1.600	1.600	1.600	0.000
HNB	High Needs Central Team	0.515	0.500	0.500	0.000
HNB	SEND DBV	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
HNB	Year 11s	0.000	0.050	0.033	(0.017)
EYB	3&4 Year old	11.732	13.700	13.700	0.000
EYB	2 year olds Disadvantaged	1.923	2.117	2.117	0.000
EYB	2 year olds Working parents	0.000	3.445	3.445	(0.000)
EYB	Under 2 Year olds	0.000	2.821	2.821	(0.000)
EYB	Expansion of the EY offer	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
EYB	Early Years Central Team	0.332	0.635	0.532	(0.103)
Dedicated Schools Grant		50.744	62.122	63.638	1.517

Thurrock School Forum Forward Plan for 2024 – 2025

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item / Focus
Thursday 28th November 2024	Dedicated Schools Grant – Finance Report - Decision
	Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan - Decision
	High Needs Block 2024/25 - Decision
	ESFA Consultations - Standing
	Review of Forward Plan 2024/25 - Standing
	Childcare Sufficiency - Standing
Thursday 16th January 2025	Dedicated Schools Grant – Finance Report & Presentation
	Growth Fund 2024/25
	ESFA Consultations - Standing
	Thurrock Code of Practice for delivery of early education for 2, 3&4 year olds - Standing
	Childcare Sufficiency
	Review of Forward Plan 2024/25 - Standing
Thursday 13th March 2025	Thurrock Budget – Children’s Services
	Dedicated Schools Grant – Finance Report - Decision
	High Needs Block and Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan – Decision
	ESFA Consultations - Standing
	Pupil Place Planning Review - Standing
	Review of Forward Plan 2024/25 - Standing
Thursday 12th June 2025	Dedicated Schools Grant – Finance Report - Decision
	Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan - Decision
	Meeting dates for the academic year 2025/26
	ESFA Consultations - Standing
	Union Facility Time Annual Review
	Review of Forward Plan 2024/25 - Standing

SEND Equipment Policy

APPENDIX A

Thurrock Council Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Equipment Policy for Educational Establishments

April 2024

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1.0 Introduction

All children and young people are entitled to an education, which enables them to:

- Reach their full potential and achieve the best possible education and outcomes
- Become confident children, young people, leading fulfilling lives with the ability to express their own views, and make a successful transition into adult life

The Children and Families Act (2014), SEN Code of Practice (2014) and Equality Act (2010) is clear that children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) are included in this entitlement, however they often need additional and different support and provision in place to achieve these outcomes. Early years settings and schools should use their best endeavours to ensure that effective provision is in place to support this. This means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's SEN.

The Equality Act 2010 provides people with legal protection from discrimination in a variety of circumstances. Part 6, Chapter 1 of the Act [addresses education specifically and talks about the protections offered to children in schools](#)

The Special Educational Needs – Code of practice 0 to 25 years 2015

States: "Some children and young people (CYP) require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many CYP with Vision Impairment (VI), hearing loss or deafness or a Multi-Sensory Impairment will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation" (section 6.34). "Some CYP with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers" (section 6.35).

This policy is designed to:

- Ensure children and young people (CYP) 0 to 25 years have the necessary equipment provided to enable them to access all aspects school life to access education; achieving their potential and to maintain their health and independence.
- Clarify the responsibilities for the provision of equipment between Thurrock Council, Integrated Care Board and NELFT, Thurrock Children's Social Care and Educational establishments including early years settings, school or college (further education)
- Provide guidance on when/which equipment may, or may not be provided to CYP in early years settings, school or college (further education)
- Promote understanding between managers of Thurrock Council SEND, ICB and NELFT, Thurrock Children's Social Care and Educational establishments and other parties involved in the provision of equipment to children. Thereby promoting a collaborative multi agency approach to ensure the CYP receive the right support at the right time.

2.0 Eligibility

To be eligible for the provision of specialised equipment for educational purposes, the following requirements need to be met:

1) There is an assessed need for specialist equipment to enable a CYP (0 to 25 years) to access the environment, for educational purposes including; curriculum and life of the early years setting/school and/or health and safety.

And

2) The CYP (0 to 25 years) must attending one of the following eligibility setting/s:

- Pupils/residents attending early years settings, educational setting, school or college (further education) in Thurrock for whom Thurrock Maintains their EHCP or is financially responsible for their EHCP.
- Pupils/ residents attending early years setting, educational setting, school or college (further education) with a Thurrock address

- For pupils with a Thurrock address who attend early years settings, educational setting, school or college (further education) in another LA – the setting would apply to Thurrock for funding for equipment

Pupils with an out of borough address who attend an early years setting, educational setting, school or college (further education) in Thurrock - the setting should apply to their LA for funding for equipment.

Students attending university (Higher Education) equipment needs will be assessed and provided for by the University via the Disabled Students Allowance and not by Thurrock Local Authority.

3.0 Standard equipment and reasonable adjustments

Schools, colleges and Universities are responsible for undertaking day to day maintenance checks, safety and repair of all equipment (Standard or Specialised) within their education setting.

3.1 Standard equipment

It is expected that the educational settings will provide a range of standard equipment for CYP to enable them to access education long and short term, for example:

- Disabled toilets
- Over the toilet wheeled commode chair

3.2 Reasonable adjustments

Schools will also be required to provide the following as stated in the Reasonable Adjustment for Disabled Children 2015:

- Assistance from a sign language interpreter, lip-speaker or deaf-blind communicator
- Extra staff assistance including support for personal care
- An electronic or manual note taking service
- Induction loop or infrared broadcast system
- Videophones
- Personal care items, including slings for hoists
- Audio-visual fire alarms
- Readers for people with vision impairments
- Assistance with guiding
- An adapted keyboard
- Specialised computer software
- Items which could be used for several CYP eg hoist

4.0 Specialist Equipment

4.1 Specialist equipment

Specialist equipment is defined as needed by a pupil with special educational needs within a private, voluntary or independent early years settings, maintained early years settings and schools, and post 16 settings in order to facilitate better access to the provision/curriculum provided in the setting/school. It is defined as the type of equipment which would not ordinarily be available in the school or setting. This will typically include items such as:

- Specialist seating and standing equipment
- Specialist communication aids
- Specialist positioning equipment
- Toilet aids specific to that particular CYP needs, hoists, slings, freestanding height adjustable changing tables
- Sensory equipment such as radio aids or portable sound field systems and Perkins or electronic Braille or Braille notes

A laptop / notebook, iPad or equivalent computers are common-place, standard equipment in all schools and is **not** considered to be "specialist equipment" under the above definition.

4.2 Sensory – FM systems

The National Deaf Children's Society Quality Standards states: "Every Child with a Hearing Loss should be considered as a potential candidate for a Radio Aid". In line with this recommendation, all CYP in Thurrock with a hearing loss will be considered for a FM System.

The teacher of the deaf (TOD) will make recommendations for schools to purchase the equipment and where it can be purchased from.

The TOD, working with audiology, will identify suitable candidates for provision with a personal FM system as part of their amplification package and taking into account the child's and parent/carers' views, The ToD may recommend FM system use using audiology records and professional judgement to identify that the following criteria have been met:

The CYP:

- Has a permanent bilateral, mild, moderate, severe or profound hearing loss
- Is a reliable hearing aid/cochlear implant user
- Has a record of good attendance at Audiology appointments (this is required because the hearing aids must be in good working order and matched to an up-to-date audiogram before a radio aid can be effective).

The setting:

- Agrees to use the equipment as advised by the teacher of the deaf
- Allows the child to use the equipment at home as long as the parent/s have signed an home usage agreement, agrees to take responsibility for the care of the equipment and the equipment is covered by the home contents insurance policy

4.3 Sensory – Low vision aids

Some CYP with a visual impairment require access to low vision aids and/or modified work. The Qualified Teacher of the Visually Impaired (QTVI) will assess a CYP's need and advise on the appropriate font size for the CYP. When appropriate a Low Vision Aid will be suggested and where possible a demonstration of the equipment will be organised. The decision to consider a Low Vision Aid is dependent on font size, the reading ability of the CYP – if a CYP needs to access large amounts of text and enlarged books are not manageable. Following this a decision will be made as to whether the equipment is appropriate for the CYP.

The equipment belongs to the CYP whilst they are in education and should follow the child through their education, as long as it continues to be fit for purpose. Young people may take the equipment into post 16 provision.

As the CYP may need the equipment for homework and access to everyday life they may take the equipment home as long as parents agree and sign to say that they will take responsible care of the equipment. This will include an assurance from the parents that it will be covered on their household insurance.

Please Note: It is likely to be unlawful for a school to charge a pupil (or his parents) for making a reasonable adjustment in any circumstances, whatever the financial cost to the school and however the school is funded. The Equality Act duty applies to all schools in England and Wales irrespective of how they are funded. This includes Independent Schools and academies.

5.0 Funding thresholds

Mainstream schools

Thurrock Council expects mainstream schools to provide equipment and software to CYP with SEND up to the threshold which will be reviewed each year and published for schools to view.

The contribution to costs of new equipment for children with EHC plans equipment will need to be listed as provision in the child's EHC plan and the setting is required to contribute towards the cost of such equipment. The contribution is per child per year and may include the total contribution for multiple pieces of equipment.

For items of equipment over the agreed threshold mainstream schools will fund the first part and the LA will fund the remaining costs from the high needs budget.

The funding thresholds are reviewed annually.

The following thresholds apply from 1 April 2024:

- The SEND equipment threshold is set at £2,000 per child per academic year
- Equipment under £2,000 per child per academic year will be sourced and funded by schools with assistance from the appropriate service provider.
- Where equipment costs per child, per academic year exceeds £2,000, the Council will source the equipment and recharge the first £2,000 to the school.

Where the child attends an education setting and does not have an EHC plan the setting is required under the Equality Act to provide the equipment the child needs, the above thresholds will also apply.

For mainstream schools, with a child or young person with complex needs, who requires a large amount of specialist equipment, the panel will expect that equipment

to be included in the child's EHC plan and where the cost is significant the LA will work with the school to agree a contribution towards that equipment.

Early years (EY)

For pupils in EY settings there will be no expectation of financial support from the setting. The equipment costs will be covered by the Inclusion Fund for Early Years by the council in which the child resides.

Special schools

For schools, with CYP with complex needs, who require a large amount of specialist equipment, the panel will expect that equipment to be included in the child's EHC plan and where the cost is significant the LA will work with the school to agree a contribution towards that equipment.

Therapist equipment requests

All Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy (NELFT) equipment requests are sent to SEN and SEN Finance (SEN@thurrock.gov.uk SENFinance@thurrock.gov.uk) from the secure NHS e-mail account (NHS.net) with name of school in title and child's initials.

Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities are responsible for undertaking day to day safety and maintenance checks of all equipment (standard or specialised) within their education setting. Therefore, schools/other settings may find it helpful to maintain a log of equipment ordered/delivered so they can include this in their equipment maintenance schedule.

OT/PT Equipment is ordered by therapists via TCES Community and remains the property of TCES Community

6.0 Repairs, transfers and returns

6.1 Repairs

If any equipment develops a fault or is identified as needing a repair, it should be immediately taken out of use and clearly labelled, cleaned down. The school/setting should immediately inform TCES Community of any concerns about damaged or broken equipment and arrange repairs. Email to: purchasing@medequip-uk.com

6.2 Transfers of equipment

Important - All planned transfers of equipment to other schools/settings (inside or outside) of Thurrock **must** be promptly notified prior to a transfer taking place. N.B. The School/setting is responsible for informing TCES Community by email to: purchasing@medequip-uk.com as early as possible. This is so that:

- Equipment asset registers and essential servicing and maintenance schedules can be updated to reflect the new location of the equipment
- Equipment may be collected, cleansed, decontaminated and checked/serviced prior to delivery to the new school
- Contracted suppliers of hired equipment can be contacted to arrange the return or relocation under a new hire agreement for the equipment.

6.3 Transfer to schools/Settings in Thurrock

When a child moves to a school/setting within Thurrock, then the equipment prescribed for that child will normally move to the new school/setting with them.

6.4 Transfer to schools/Settings outside of Thurrock

When a child moves to a school/setting outside of Thurrock, then the equipment prescribed for that child will normally move to the new school/setting with them with the exception of hired equipment, which **must** be returned to the supplier unless a new hire agreement for the equipment has been agreed.

6.5 Return of equipment

Equipment should be returned to the recycle store when the individual child it was prescribed for no longer needs it. When a piece of equipment is no longer in use, the setting/school must promptly contact TCES Community to arrange for the equipment to be removed from the setting/school. Email to: purchasing@medequip-uk.com

7.0 Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The setting/school

The setting/school/college/home will:

- Ensure equipment is kept clean and is stored in a safe place
- Carry out daily safety checks and liaise with TCES Community to arrange regular servicing (as required) in line with manufacturers recommendations
- Promptly report any damaged or lost equipment to the Equipment Service. Email: purchasing@medequip-uk.com removing damaged equipment from use until fully repaired
- Arrange for return of equipment to the recycling store when no longer in use by the child
- Track servicing and maintenance checks for all equipment within the setting/school/home
- Track any loan applications and agreements, including insurance evidence from academy settings
- Approve and pay the invoice for the proportion of equipment cost in line with the LAs agreed charging policy. The LAs SEND Team will administer the charging policy and liaise with the school/setting about invoicing arrangements and financial contributions where appropriate.

7.2 Local authority

The LA will:

- The LAs SEND team will administer the charging policy and liaise with the school/setting about invoicing arrangements and financial contributions where appropriate.

7.3 Local authority, health providers and commissioners

Partner organisations will work together to:

- Monitor and review this policy and guidance on an annual basis

- Audit the process and service at least annually, provide feedback to inform continuous improvements

8.0 Policy review

The policy and associated procedures will be reviewed annually and shared with Schools' Forum.

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE: 19 September 2024
SUBJECT: SEND Equipment Policy
REPORT OF: Liz Morrison
THE REPORT IS: For Discussion

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This policy is designed to:
- 1.2 Ensure children and young people (CYP) 0 to 25 years have the necessary equipment provided to enable them to access all aspects school life to access education; achieving their potential and to maintain their health and independence.
- 1.3 Clarify the responsibilities for the provision of equipment between Thurrock Council, Integrated Care Board and NELFT, Thurrock Children's Social Care and Educational establishments including early years settings, school or college (further education)
- 1.4 Provide guidance on when/which equipment may, or may not be provided to CYP in early years settings, school or college (further education)
- 1.5 Promote understanding between managers of Thurrock Council SEND, ICB and NELFT, Thurrock Children's Social Care and Educational establishments and other parties involved in the provision of equipment to children. Thereby promoting a collaborative multi agency approach to ensure the CYP receive the right support at the right time.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Schools Forum is asked to agree to the policy.**

3. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 To inform members of the Schools Forum of the Council's Equipment updated Policy
- 3.2 For items of equipment over the agreed threshold mainstream schools will fund the first part and the LA will fund the remaining costs from the high needs budget.
- 3.3 The funding thresholds are reviewed annually and have not changed in the last 4 years.

- 3.4 The following thresholds continued to apply from 1 April 2024 and will be the same in 2025.
- 3.5 The SEND equipment threshold is set at £2,000 per child per academic year.
- 3.6 Equipment under £2,000 per child per academic year will be sourced and funded by schools with assistance from the appropriate service provider.
- 3.7 Where equipment costs per child, per academic year exceeds £2,000, the Council will source the equipment and recharge the first £2,000 to the school.

4. TITLE: SEND EQUIPMENT POLICY SEE APENDIX A

5. CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact.

Name: Liz Morrison
Role: SEND IMPROVEMENT OFFICER
E-Mail: emorriosn@thurrock.gov.uk

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

Draft Minutes
13 June 2024 at 10:00 - 12:00
Virtual Meeting - Microsoft Teams

In attendance

Multi Academy Trusts Name

The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)
The Osborne Trust
South West Essex Community Education Trust
Catalyst Academies Trust

Mrs V Reid (Vice-chair)
Mr P Griffiths
Mr S Munday
Mr R Latham

Secondary Voluntary Aided School Name
Grays Convent

Mrs P Johnson

Standalone Academy Trusts Name

Woodside Academy
Giffards Primary

Mr S Proctor
Mrs N Haslam-Davis

Infrastructure Groups Name

TASS
TPHA

Mr S Bell
Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes

Alternative Provision Name

Olive AP

Ms Jo Gillman

Special Schools Name

Beacon Hill Academy
Treetops School

Mrs Sue Hewitt
Mr J Brewer

Non-school members Name

0-5 EYFS Representative
0-11 Representative
11-19 Representative
Diocese of Brentwood

Mr A Melbourne
Ms A Jones
Mr S Bowak
Mrs M Shepherd

Also in Attendance:

Assistant Director, Education & Commissioning
Head of Financial Management, Children Services
and Dedicated Schools Grant
Head of Service - Education Support Service
Head of Service – School Effectiveness and SEND
Head of Service - Specialist Provision &
Principal Educational Psychologist

Mrs M Lucas
Mr D May

Miss S Williams
Mrs A Winstone
Mr M W Taylor

School Effectiveness and Early Years Manager
Clerk

Mrs A Picknell
Mrs K Swan

1. **Welcome from Chair**
The Vice Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies received from Mrs M Shepard and Mr M Vickers.
3. **Agreement of agenda, time-guide, and notification of 'Any Other Business'**
The Forum agreed the agenda and time guide. No additional items received.
4. **For Decision: Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24 and 2024/25**

Mr D May shared the report and noted a slight amendment to the Teachers Pay and Pensions Grant, the figures in the report show there is a pension grant and have now been informed there is a separate pay and pension grants. The DSG out turn position was at a surplus of £1.164 million, this is consistent with the previous report. 4.2 outlined the key drivers that led to the underspend.

Schools Block was predominantly growth fund, Mr D May informed that in future he will be creating a link between any savings that have been made on the growth fund and any increase in tuition that have occurred.

The High Needs Block predominantly, one off funding and savings as a result of delays caused by RAAC. There are still pressures in the system, moving on to 2024/25 the pressures have materialised, the surplus that is now in the DSG will support the deficit that is forecasted in 2024/25.

The DSG Reserve for the first time in approximately 5 years moves from a deficit position to a surplus of £630,000.

Mr P Griffiths added that The Regional Schools Commissioner has become adamant that public consultation needs to take place prior to the opening of the base. One of the advantages is if the base becomes a DfE approved base before it opens, any new build at the school in question would incorporate this as part of the new build and will not be an addition.

Mr D May continued that the 2024/25 position is currently forecasted to be £952,000 overspent. The figures have been updated to reflect the latest opening dates, expansion of places special schools from September but there is still pressure, and this is consistent with information submitted as part of the DBV grant. There are still risks that are recognised but are not reflected in the figures, that being any changes to Post 16 and any further increase to the EHCPs. A more accurate position will be presented in September/November once there is the new pupil movement for the new academic year.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes asked, if there is a surplus, is there a rule about why that could not be distributed back to the Schools Block which is where the money came from because of the contribution that was made?

Mr D May advised that the regulations state that it would need to go back into the DSG reserve and be considered in future years.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes added that her understanding was that the money should be spent in that same year for pupils within that year?

Mr D May responded that the Schools Operational Guide state that it would need to go back into the DSG reserve and be considered in future years.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes requested to see the regulation for clarity so that she can share with colleagues at TPHA.

Action D May to share Schools operational guide: 2024/25 [Schools operational guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) at September meeting

Mr M Taylor added that the additional pressures facing us is the large number of pupils with particular high needs, largely on the autistic spectrum in mainstream schools, primary schools in particular. Consequently, a large number of adjustments have been made where the number of hours have had to be increased in order to provide the support those pupils need. It is a high financial pressure because of the high cost for the pupils requirements. Those are children who are predominantly preverbal with very complex needs being supported in mainstream primary who otherwise, if there were specialist-based placements available, would be moved across. This has not been reflected in the budget but is part of the pressure which makes the budget tighter than it appears and that is why adjustments are made on individual school basis.

Ms N Haslam-Davis added a certain percentage had to transfer over but there seems to be an 8% surplus, which seems to be an increase on the amount that was taken over in to the High Needs Block. A lot of money was contributed and there is still a surplus. Whilst there is understanding that there is a regulation and it is important that is seen, but in essence a lot of money was contributed and will continue to do so.

Mr P Griffiths added that the reason this is controversial is because not all LEA's have made the same decision because forums in other places have held money in the Schools Block and not transferred in to the High Needs Block because they voted not to do so. The pressures in schools are very high and it was a surprise that there was a surplus. Within the best value review there needs to be assurance the amount of money in the Schools Block is retained as far as possible. Traditionally there has always been support for the High Needs Block whenever possible.

Mr A Melbourne asked if there is a way to avoid this in the future, rather than transferring amounts across in one lump can it be done in a phased fashion, so keep money back rather than transferring and then it not being able to be pulled back if a surplus transpires?

Mr D May responded that any transfer between funding blocks needs to be agreed annually because it has to be implemented as part of the budget setting process and the distributing of funds. That is in an annual discussion which is entered in to in November and is only for that coming years' consideration, there is no further commitment beyond that.

Ms S Hewitt asked if there is additional money going in to the High Needs Block and the pressure in mainstream schools is supporting the children who have the high complex needs, does the money from the High Needs Block go back to those schools to help to support the children or is there a mechanism for that to happen?

Mr D May responded that the funding that is in the High Needs Block reflects all the pressures for children with EHCP plans and that could be in a mainstream setting or a high needs provision and the High Needs Block goes back in to schools with the EHCP's. Mr M Taylor added that there has been meetings with special schools, Treetops in particular who are also experiencing significant pressure because of the complexity of needs and the numbers of pupil profile that is putting additional pressure on Treetops budget as they are supporting pupils where the original organisational structure was not set up to reflect the complexity of need. So, it is looking at how to best to hold as many of those children in the Local Authority rather than having to place them outside.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes said that whilst she recognises that money in the High Needs Block can be distributed in to schools through EHCPs; believed that the agenda was stopping children moving to an ECHP, so when the budgets are so tight in mainstream, the only option is to push for the EHCP whereas if the children could be better supported better at SEN. By always shifting the money in to the High Needs Block and taking it from the Schools Block it is almost preventing that. Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes added that it is almost encourages children to be pushed forwards for an EHCP when they could be supported better at SEN support if there was the money to do that.

Mr M Taylor added that by adjusting the funding for the high needs pupils it enables the schools to use the funding which otherwise is going towards those disproportionately to do some of the SEN support.

Mr D May acknowledged that, moving forward, there needs to be a different approach.

Mr D May continued, for 2024/25 the majority is caused by pressures in the high needs block. A good example is the out of borough placements where three placements were made in the spring that cost a minimal amount in 2023/24 but the full implication for the DSG on those three placements alone is £528,000. This is for only DSG contributions, health and social care pay their own. Mr D May explained that there are some savings that have been factored in, that is including the £952,000, at this stage we do not know the pupil movement and the cost from September and so therefore the position that was presented in the autumn will be more accurate and more up to date.

Ms S Hewitt asked if the EHCPs continue at a rate of 24 a month there is a cost implication of that, has an amount been factored in that is expected? How many EHCPs are expected to be issued a month? Is there a figure that it is based on?

Mr D May said that we used the DBV programme where the target is set for the year end and that is reflected in the DSG management plan. That is what is based on but if the numbers continue to 24 month it will be a lot more. The number predicted is around 15 per month across the year, but that is a net increase/decrease.

Mr S Proctor suggested that one of the issues around reduction or trying to look at reducing the number of EHCP's is not possible during the current climate. If the focus, the training, and the support discussed through the other projects was also not only around reducing the number of EHCP's but also the hours that are required within the EHCP's is a more appropriate course of action moving forward. To say that reducing the number of EHCP's is not an appropriate or sensible approach.

Mr D May said that it was something that had to be used as part of the DBV programme where the average number of plans with an hourly rate attached to the plan was looked at to come up with a figure to go into the projection. It is the total spend on EHCP's that is the key consideration and impact. If more can be kept at the EHCP level it is more cost effective than out of borough placements and specialist provisions

Mr S Proctor asked who is going to be held accountable if the plan does not work, what is the accountability measure?

Mr D May said he believes it will be the partnership, on the DSG management plan presentation there is the quarterly return that has to be submitted. As part of the DSG management, the DBV grant, certain outcomes were committed to which in the first year is a lot about training but then after that there are expectations in reduction of costs to try to bring it more in line with the budget allocation. If that is not achieved we will be accountable through discussions held annually with ESFA looking at how that balance would be rectified. The DSG deficit will move things to Local Authorities responsibility by 2026/27 which will cause significant problems throughout the country as most will have a deficit, some will be significant which would lead to a Section 114 notice. After the election, with the accountability, the level of funding that is going in and it is part of the annual discussion that used to be held with the ESFA on the DSG management plan on what options are available. Those discussions become more important to escalate the problem through the system.

Mr S Proctor asked Mr M Taylor: Considering the idea and the suggestion is to reduce the amount of EHCP given out, can we have a commitment from Thurrock Council that those who actually require an EHCP are still going to be receiving them and not having a cap, and once the allocation is hit then we are held accountable and that children will not be given any EHCPs. Mr M Taylor said that we do not have a target for a number of plans as that blanket policy which would go against the SEN regulations. What there is, is an estimate that if the preventative work is done and other support is provided it is anticipated that the numbers will be reduced in the context? of a large increase. It was nationally discussed about a 2% having a targeted need but we know locally we have significantly greater than that so would never reduce it down to that level because of the complexity of need in the individuals. It would definitely not be a cap, it would be working out with each request to ensure that everything has been done with early intervention to ensure that there is a full process of "plan, do review". It is part of the national

increase, any changes will come down to DFE but there has been a change in the whole structure of the SEN process. The longer-term move is to question the possibility of targeting the money at a smaller group of individuals but ensuring the appropriate support is in place.

Ms V Reid asked if there can be any more information around the three out of borough placements, so there is more understanding on their profile in terms of the age or the needs and how long the pressure is likely to last?

Mrs A Winstone said that all three children are LAC and have been to either Treetops or Glenwood. Neither child managed at the placements, their needs were so high that they are now in residential or going to residential either 38 or 52 weeks. One of the pupils is in year 11, one in year 8 and one in year 9. The cost will continue but for the year 8 and year 9 pupil there has been over 40 consultations. One pupil has higher needs that can be met within Local Authority or specialist schools within any travelling distance.

Mr M Taylor added that normally with children with high complex needs and challenging behaviour have always been placed outside the system. Treetops as a specialist school will be able to provide support up to a particular level but over the last 20-25 years have always been placed outside because there has always been a very small number. When looking at comparative data Thurrock is a low user of independent special schools but the places that are used tend to be high cost because they are only used when the child cannot be supported outside, that skews the data position it looks like more money is spent than there is. Occasionally there is another group of pupils in addition to those with autism that are placed outside, such as those with high complex social and emotional needs where it is necessary, and a 52-week special school is a good answer to allow those children's needs to be met appropriately. The placements are monitored carefully and the majority of pupils that have gone through the placements have done very well.

Mr D May gave an update on the Teachers Pay and Pension. Within the report there was a teacher's pay grant, the value of the teachers' pay grant was £170,166 in 2023/24 purely for specialist and AP providers and was the agreed method that was used to distribute funding in 2023/24. In 2024/25 the same methodology was applied and there is an updated sum for the full 12 months because the previous one was for a 7-month allocation. The sum is consistent with 2023/24 however there is no confirmation as to when the funding will be received. Previously this has been July and March, if it is received July and March, it will be distributed that way, if it is received in one lump sum then it will be distributed in that way. Mr D May said that it would be for him to communicate that with Thurrock Special and AP providers.

Mr D May said that an allocation for the Teachers' Pension Grant has been given and is included within the report. The same distribution method has been used as the Pay Grant that was applied in 2023/24 and has been updated. This is money that has already been received and will be distributed to Special and AP Academies as part of the July payment for the financial year 2024/25.

Action: Mr D May to send updated values to Special and AP providers once final confirmation is received from ESFA.

Decision required: To decide to continue with distribution in the same way next year

Agreement - 16
Abstain - 0
Against - 0

AGREED.

5. For Decision: Union Facility Time Annual Review

Ms A Winstone said that there has been no change and no claims on the facility time this year. The balance at the end of the financial year is £12,666 and an administration fee had been claimed. There were no claims made last year but to consider whether any contributions are made this year.

Mr P Griffiths said that he would support the suggestion that no amounts are claimed from schools and it is important that this is done each year because it was hard job to get everyone to pay the Union facility amounts initially so, by keeping it on the agenda and maintaining an amount of money that could be used by those wishing to claim union facility time from any of the schools, therefore no schools would be adversely affected. Mr P Griffiths proposed that there are no further claims for money from schools and the money is held in reserve to be looked at year on year.

Decision required: A decision for the money to be held in reserve.

Agreement - 16
Abstain - 0
Against - 0

AGREED

6. For Decision: Meeting dates and the academic year 2024-2025

Ms S Williams clarified that the meeting set for 16th January suggested it was a Tuesday, but it is a Thursday and said the report would be amended.

Ms S Williams shared the dates for the proposed meetings:

1. Thursday 19th September 2024
2. Thursday 28th November 2024
3. Tuesday 16th January 2025
4. Thursday 13th March 2025
5. Thursday 12th June 2025

Decision required: Dates agreed as above

Agreement - 16
Abstain - 0
Against - 0

AGREED

7. For Discussion: DSG Management Plan and SEND DBV Programme

Dedicated Schools Grant:

Mr D May shared the Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan for 2023/24. Mr D May said that the report showed the historic deficit position moving from £4 million to a £0.630m surplus, a lot has been supported by the one-off savings that were received and benefited from as previously discussed in 2023/24

DSG Deficit 2017 to 2024:

Mr D May shared the DSG Deficit 2017 to 2024 slide which showed the ongoing position within the funding blocks and where the deficit arose from. The report also showed where the deficit arose from and over that period the high needs block had a deficit of £6.8 million.

Dedicated Schools Grant:

Mr D May said that for 2024/25 the current position has reverted back to a deficit position with the reserve. Mr D May said there is a better understanding, moving into the new academic year but there are significant pressures in every one of the funding blocks because of lack of funding.

Thurrock SEND Strategy:

Mr D May said that the aim in Thurrock is to increase the local offer so that more children can be supported and educated within Thurrock which gives better outcomes and better value for money for DSG.

SEND Strategy:

Mr D May shared a breakdown of the EHCP's showing that there are still 63 out of borough in specialists' provisions, this is continuously reviewed. If a local offer is developed more than more children could be prevented from leaving the borough for specialists' provisions.

Thurrock Commissioned Places:

Mr D May shared the Thurrock Commissioned Places showing the expansion of the offer that will be kept up to date.

Outreach Service:

Mr D May shared what the current offer is for the Outreach Services, two of the items are supported through the DBV grant. Schools need to be made aware of the offers that are available and how to access.

High Needs Budget 2024/25:

Mr D May said that when the High Needs Budget was set the risks were acknowledged but the slide shows what the output is projected to be out of the 952 but also within the Revenue Report there were two identified risk areas. Mr D May said that there is a 1.5 million potential risk if the two are added together and that is consistent with the information that was presented in November and January when budgets were set, and the risks were identified in the system.

Emerging Insight from the DBV Programme:

Mr D May said that the Emerging Insights that came from the DBV Programme is about increasing parent confidence by increasing access to mainstream schools.

Grant Application:

Mr D May shared the Grant Application of the £1 million and showed how it was proposed to be spent. Mr D May shared that there will be a special Head Teachers meeting to discuss in further detail.

DSG Mitigated Projection with Grant Investment:

Mr D May shared that the DSG Mitigated Projection with Grant Investment represents the table that was in the report. The top table is the number of EHCPs, which are the number of EHCP's forecasted that determines the financial position, that is not saying that they will be capped but the projection and will be held to account as to why it is different to the projection. Each of the EHCP-s have a value and that is reflected in the table and the cost is shown. The accumulated deficit surplus goes from £0.631m surplus at year end, the projection by 2028/29 is a £16.1 m deficit. Mr D May said that this is an improvement from the position that was presented to the DBV programme, it was forecast at £16.9m as opposed to £16.2m so there is a 700,000 improved position which is the improved out turn position for 2023/24 and also means that 2024/25 have been updated to reflect the current position when new provisions will come online.

DVB Progress Reporting:

Mr D May said that within the DBV programme quarterly returns have to be submitted to the DFE and RAG rate them. Mr D May said that if there are any that are red or amber rating then that may influence the grant funding that is received. Mr D May advised that this should not happen because all the outcomes are about increasing the provision, delivering training, the impact on EHCP's is not forecasted for 3-4 years.

In summary:

Mr D May said that a large number of Local Authorities have significant DSG deficits, Thurrock is working through and there is a plan in place. Increasing the local offer has supported the system up to now and need to ensure that it is appropriate moving forward. There are long term problems within the whole of school funding and the SEND AP Green Paper is one way to address the funding issues. This could change with the change in Government, but the

update is needed as to what announcements are made in the autumn to inform future years decisions.

Mr S Proctor asked when considering delivering better value, how was the funding for resource bases currently worked when looking at what is done internally already? Mr D May said that when the resource spaces were originally set up there was a full costing of what that would cover and what funding a base would require to deliver for the number of children that have an agreed need. It is agreed at the outset of the base being established and following is added to with the increase that the High needs Block is received. Where this year a 3% increase was received in the High Needs Block, that was passported over to those provisions, 3% increase of the band value.

Mr S Proctor asked how is the value of the provision monitored, is there a return link to income received compared to expenditure spend and impact that has had, how is value measured? Mr D May advised as part of the DBV programme Newtons who were working and challenging the figures that were presented did a bench marking exercise where they tried to identify like to like and nothing on the cost side materialised that was evident that value for money wasn't demonstrated. The ones that were challenged were around the independent costs that were provided. Mr D May said that he and Ms M Lucas were happy that their explanation was ok because there were very few out and they are going to be high cost as opposed to if there were another 100 out being submitted there might be a provision that should have had internally. The commissioning Team are involved to review and make sure that value for money is demonstrated. From a cost basis, there has been assurance provided through the DBV Programme. Mr Proctor asked if, for example a base was provided with £100,000, what safeguards are there from the authority to make sure that £100,000 is spent for that purpose only. Mr M Taylor said that it is an ongoing challenge for all Local Authorities to ensure they are getting the best value from any of the resources but largely because the bases are built in partnership with Multi Academy Trust there is an open conversation and transparency around budgets. Mr Taylor said that he and Mr D May meet with all the resource spaces at the beginning of the year to organise both the numbers of commission places and also the cost. The cost discussion is held with them and there is push back on where there are questions to be asked in terms of the different proportions of cost. When the bases are originally set up there is a building cost and a set up cost which is identified by individual spend areas. Mr M Taylor adds that in term of the outcomes, through the SLA there are detailed KPI's from those bases around the attendance of pupils, the parental and pupil satisfaction of progress, any exclusions, any pupils having to move on to any more costly higher needs provisions. There is individual level data and very detailed accounts of the individuals progress and any other circumstances which is discussed at the Accountability Meetings which are held three times a year. Mr M Taylor said that he is confident that the evidence is there but there could be further improvements. There is a varied amount of information that has come from different types of bases. Mr Proctor adds that from the position of looking at overspending and the difficulties with the High Needs Block, there should be a more robust system around the accountability of costs for those resource spaces and the work that Osbourne are doing could be rolled out across all the bases to ensure that is being appropriately financed. Mr S Proctor added that open and honest conversations are good but there needs to be hard accounting evidence to ensure that best value is delivered for things that are already being spent not only looking at training and other things. Mr M Taylor adds that where it is most robust is the financial side. The part that there is some greater variability is probably the pupils' outcomes data which is continuously being worked on.

Mr R Latham adds that Catalyst Trust have three bases, two PLC's and ARC in Aveley. The funding taken in is for the adults that are needed, when looking at quantifying outputs it is about getting the children back in to mainstream and so need to delve in to looking at the number of children that then turn around so when they go to secondary school they go in to a mainstream secondary school. Initially there is a cost upfront but then there are savings within the secondary aspect. Mr R Latham gave an example of a couple of children that have recently been taken on, they are being taught in what could be described as a cupboards in mainstream primary schools in Thurrock, they are then turned around, accessing mainstream classrooms, and then leaving primary schools with greater opportunity. The data is there but it is the long-term impact of the resource spaces are having which is then having a significant saving stopping them going to secondary basis.

Mr P Griffiths added that the Osbourne Trust run several bases, sensory service, and all of the alternative provisions primary and scrutiny is welcomed. They are Thurrock children, and it is public money and so should be called to account. Mr P Griffiths said that his biggest concern is to what extent the mainstream schools are now beginning to subsidise the resource bases in terms of funding because it is getting tight to run the funding due to the costs being higher than 3%. A lot of the colleagues are highly trained and expensive to train and keep because of the incremental drift, which is not taken into account, it is a flat 3%. Mr P Griffiths added that when the Best Value Report was provided through Local Authorities work, there was complete cooperation in a transparent manner as would be expected from an organisation that is trying to work on behalf of Thurrock and not as a separate Multi Academy Trust. Mrs V Reid added that in terms of the bases they do all have a different complexion and being able to evidence outcomes will look different dependant on what the bases aims and KPI's are but it is recognised that the bases do a fantastic job so the out of borough placements, although costly at times are as low as they can possibly be.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes asked Mr M Taylor of any of the information can be shared with schools in some appropriate way so there is an understanding from all in terms of what it looks like. Mr M Taylor responds that the rates and costs are presented at Schools Forum, but the budget decisions discussions are not presented but there could be a discussion with Mr D May about what details could be provided. Mr M Taylor added that summaries of the progress and outcomes of the data from those bases have been presented to the SEND board on a number of occasions. Mrs M Lucas added that resource basis is very keen for Headteachers to have a look, they are open about what is happening and what is going on for the children. Mrs S Haynes added that it is good to visit bases and see what people are doing, it would also be good to have the same amount of money in her school to do similar things with those children. Mrs S Sawtell-Haynes said that sometimes it is just about money, not just strategies because money brings staffing, training, resources etc which is often difficult to see because knowing you cannot replicate in your school is quite frustrating.

Mr S Proctor said that if looking at a range of different things then the current spends also need to be looked at and making sure that the accountability is there. Mr S Proctor confirmed that he is not trying to undermine the work that the resource bases do or the independent schools and mainstream schools with the very small budgets they have, to try and make that impact as well. The realism is that the number of EHCPs going up, currently 24 a month is impacting all of the schools and so it is ensuring that there is best value for money and every school has the appropriate financial support to best meet the children's needs, if not the £1 million of any of the other work that is done will be undermined.

8. For information: Pupil Mobility

Mr D May shared the Pupil Mobility presentation and said that Pupil Mobility had been discussed at a number of meetings around what funding is available. There has been some research into what funding is available. Within the Schools Block and the National Funding Formula that is used there are 14 factors, one of which is pupil mobility. Mr D May said that when the data is received, only the data that is provided by the ESFA can be used which is driven from their analysis or usage of the census data that is returned. In the main, school funding is driven by the October census data however the pupil mobility factor looks at those pupils that have entered the school in January or May, either Spring or Summer Term census. This is looked at over the last three years to come up with units that is attached to each school that drives or delivers additional funding to schools. The number of pupils moving into Thurrock has increased significantly, in particular over the last three years, the table shows how the funding that is being distributed through Local Authority has also increased to reflect the increased need. They are assumed to be eligible for mobility if proportion of pupils are above the threshold of 6%, which is why some schools will have funding and some schools that think they should have had funding, have not. Mr D May explained that data sets are used which are presented by the ESFA that must be used, the national funding formula value is applied, which is the funding being distributed to schools.

Mr D May said that the High Needs Block was then looked at, if there are a number of pupils moving in what is the potential that the High Needs Block could receive additional funding, the

only factor that relates to population is the population factor, which would be slightly increased but is not going to reflect or be proportionate to the increase in costs. Therefore, it is simply that the High Needs Block does not receive any funding, not retrospectively for pupils that have moved into the area, but the Schools Block does. In summary the National Funding Formula that is distributing limited funding to schools relating to School Block Funding and for Pupil Mobility, the High Needs Block is not there but if one child moved into the area to try and get a specialist place in Thurrock that was not there, it is then Thurrock's responsibility. One child could easily cost £100,000 if transport and school costs need to be paid for out of borough. The key is the amount of year 11 pupils that have entered the system in 2023/24 and trying to find a solution to those.

9. For information: Schools' Forum Forward Plan

Miss S Williams shared the forward plan and asked members if there was anything else they would like to see on the Forward Plan.

Action: Miss S Williams shared that she will be adding the Equipment Policy to September forward plan.

10. Budgeting Questionnaire

Mr D May said that he had presented the information to Head Teachers Meeting in April, 20 responses were received from schools. Mr D May shared the results of the survey, the report showed there is a split between balanced budget and reserves being used.

The report also showed the challenges that the 20 responders identified are: Pay increases and the staffing implication, cost of living and energy costs, level of funding for SEN or unknown additional income and the risk relating to the early years funding.

Mrs V Reid added that the results become out of date quickly, since the report was produced in April there have been a number of changes, things have become more challenging since April.

Mr P Griffiths added that it is a very difficult moment in the history of education on a funding basis particularly with an election as well. Mr P Griffiths said that he was worried about the reality hitting after the election. It may be that we are looking forward with hope for additional funding but being able to run education and maintain standards on the current funding is becoming incredibly difficult. Mr P Griffiths said that the biggest challenge in Osbourne Trust is going to be what happens with the Support Staff Pay Award and how great that could be, if that goes in at 10% then it is likely we cannot fund that in the future because there is simply not the cash or reserves to do it. Mrs V Reid echo is that point from the GLC.

Mr S Proctor said that it feels month on month there are changes, looking at the Forward Plan. Mr S Proctor suggested that when the DSG and High Needs Block decisions are to be made in November, there could be a survey that is put out around the schools current positions on October which could then be brought to the meeting to help try and have some informed conversation around some of the decisions moving forward. Mrs V Reid added that she is in agreement. Ms S Hewitt echoed what Mr S Proctor had said about the pressures on school staff because most of the staff at her school are support staff and not teaching staff, and there is no recognition of that nationally in terms of putting more money into the pot when there is a pay rise. If there is a pay rise the chances are the Government will put something in to help but that does not happen with support staff. Ms S Hewitt adds that Beacon Hill Academy have moved on to their own pay scales and are not tied in to NJC and the pay awards are given from September to September so at least when the budget is set every year there is not the shock of coming to the middle of the year when Local Authority Pay Award is changed and then have to find money that we didn't have and have to adjust the pay rates. Ms S Hewitt adds that currently they have not lost any staff by doing that, but it is a gamble that had had to be taken because there is not another way to keep the numbers of staff needed to keep the children safe.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes asked if there was a way to look at the reserves that are held within each of the blocks as well as within schools and specialist schools so there is a clear picture of what that looks like. Mrs Sawtell-Haynes said that she understands all schools have their reserves policy, she is unable to stick to her reserve policy at the moment because there is not enough money to keep running if the reserves are kept to. Mr D May responded that it would depend on the individual schools but agreed that it is possible to go through the accounts. Mr P Griffiths added that they are public accounts and they are available for scrutiny so they should be shared. It would be a challenge however when an individual academy has concerns about the money that they need and there will be another place that has some reserves that may or may not be in line with what they feel is acceptable. Mr Griffiths added that the difficulty is with the notion that everybody knows that the money should be spent on the children that are in education now, but if that is done then you cannot keep a cash flow. The difficulty in Osbourne is that some of the schools run have a level of autonomy and they all have their own bank accounts, which is quite expensive to run.

Mrs V Reid agreed with the points raised and asked if it was an appropriate agenda item for Schools Forum. Mrs M Lucas agreed that it was an appropriate item for Schools Forum.

Mrs M Lucas asked although the information is public and could be put together, what would it achieve? Because it is about the purpose. Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes responded if we are looking at transferring money again from Schools Block to the High Needs Block and within institutions in the High Needs Block they have large reserves, it does not feel appropriate. If there are mainstream schools that are setting a deficit budget and money is being moved across to schools that have a surplus, it does not feel appropriate. It could be asked how those schools have accrued such money, and they may have a plan for the money, but we are in tight times saving money for the future is not the place we are in.

Mrs V Reid said that she would welcome some discussion and challenge to understand more about the purposes for the funds and why they have accumulated. Mr D May added that it is not something he believes that the Local Authority can do, he does not have capacity to go through 52 separate accounts, even if that were possible, he would come up with the level of reserve that was stated within the account. It would have to be a survey for all schools to complete with value and context. Mr D May agreed with Mrs M Lucas in what would be the purpose of that. Mr P Griffiths added that it would need a context for some of the funding because it may not be straight forward in every case, but it would be a useful debate if schools and trusts were willing to fill in the survey.

Action: Mr D May to circulate the Presentation made at the Headteachers Briefing with members following the meeting. Finance was circulated after re SF meeting.

Action: Mr D May to bring back an updated questionnaire that can be discussed at Schools Forum that is appropriate for the current circumstances that can be sent out to schools after the meeting with a date to come back to the November meeting if they wish to. This will be under Schools Funding Survey 2024-2025

11. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th March 2024

Re page 8:

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes said that there was supposed to be an agenda item for the meeting about a questionnaire for budgets.

This has been added as agenda item number 10.

12. Action Log Review

Covered under previous minutes.

13. Matters Arising

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes said that it was previously discussed about children coming into Thurrock from abroad so therefore there is not any money in the system at all for those children. Mr D May confirmed that this come under Pupil Mobility, it is not just abroad it is moving from any borough the Pupil Mobility factor picks up the children that are not traditional in the September and on the census in October

14. Any Other Business

None.

Date of next meeting

- Thursday 19 September 2024

DRAFT

AGENDA ITEM 8 - Thurrock Borough Council
Schools Forum Action Log

Thurrock Council	Agenda Item	Action details	Action Owner	Action or Decision	Relevant Timescales	Action Status	Additional information
13th June 2024	Agenda Item 4	DSG Regualtion information to be confirmed by DM	D May	Action	19.09.24	Open	
13th June 2024	Agenda Item 4	Mr D May to send updated values to Special and AP providers once final confirmation is received from ESFA.	D May	Action		Open	
13th June 2024	Agenda Item 4	D May to share Schools operational guide: 2024/25 Schools operational guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Redetermination of budget shares at September me	D May	Action	19.09.24	Open	
13th June 2024	Agenda Item 9	S Williams to share the Equipment Policy at the next meeting	S Williams	Action	19.09.24	Open	
13th June 2024	Agenda Item 10	D May to circulate the Presentation made at the Headteachers Briefing with members following the meeting. Finance was circulated after re SF meeting.	D May	Action		Open	
13th June 2024	Agenda Item 10	Mr D May to bring back an updated questionnaire that can be discussed at Schools Forum that is appropriate for the current circumstances ^[WS1] ^[MD2] ^[MD3] that can be sent out to schools after the meeting with a date to come back to the November meeting if they wish to. This will be under Schools Funding Survey 2024-2025	D May	Action	19.09.24	Open	