

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

18th March 2021 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
Mrs N Graham
To be advised
Dr Sophina Asong
Mr Griffiths
Mr E Samuel
Mr S Munday
Mr K Sadler
Mrs E Wigmore
Mrs N Cashell

Secondary Voluntary Aided School

Grays Convent

Name

Mrs M Miller

Standalone Academy Trusts

Woodside Academy
Giffards Primary

Name

Mr E Caines
Mrs N Haslam-Davis

Infrastructure Groups

TASS
TPHA

Name

Mrs P Johnson
Mrs J Sawtell-Haines

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 Alison Jones
Dr J Revell

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Introductory Items		
Item	Item	Time Guide
1.	Welcome from Chair	2 mins
2.	Apologies for Absence	2 mins
3.	Agreement of agenda, time-guide and notification of 'Any Other Business'	2 mins
Items for Decision		
4.	Dedicated Schools Grant 2020/21 and 2021/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by David May 	20 mins
5.	High Needs Block 2022/23 Consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by David May 	20 mins
6.	Permanent Exclusions 2021/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by Michele Lucas 	15 mins
7.	Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan 2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal presentation by David May 	20 mins
Items for Information		
8.	Pupil Place Planning Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by Sarah Williams 	15 mins

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9.	<p>Outcomes for disadvantaged and unrepresented student and young people in Thurrock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal update by Michele Lucas/Dr Asong 	10 mins
9.	<p>Schools' Forum Forward Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider and agree any urgent additions to the forward plan, presented by Sarah Williams 	2 mins
Closing Items		
10.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th January 2021 and Action Log</p>	5 mins
11.	Matters Arising	2 mins
12.	Any Other Business	5 mins
	Date of next meeting 17th June 2021	

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE: 18 March 2021
SUBJECT: Dedicated Schools Grant 2020/21 and 2021/22
REPORT OF: David May
THE REPORT IS: For Decision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The DSG 2020/21 projected outturn position is a deficit of £1.074m, as a result of continued demand within the High Needs Block that exceeds the budget available. This is an improved position of £0.543m from that previously report of £1.617m.

2020/21	<u>Funding Settlement</u>	<u>Academy Recoupment</u>	<u>Final DSG</u>	<u>Outturn</u>	<u>Variance</u>
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Schools	126.839	(119.841)	6.998	6.099	(0.899)
Central Services	1.850	0.000	1.850	1.792	(0.058)
High Needs	26.045	(5.376)	20.669	22.715	2.046
Early Years	12.699	0.000	12.699	12.683	(0.015)
Total	167.433	(125.217)	42.216	43.290	1.074

- 1.2 The DSG has a carried forward deficit of £1.978m into 2020/21. The 2020/21 projected in year position will increase the deficit to £3.052m.
- 1.3 The ESFA have confirmed that Thurrock's local funding formula and submitted APT for 2021/22 met all of the compliance checks and no further action is required.
- 1.4 Treetops Free School is scheduled to open in September 2021. To finalise agreement with the ESFA Band values have had to be agreed. Paragraph 6.8 outlines the Band values and funding to be received.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Schools Forum is recommended to:
- Agree the financial position for 2020/21 and offer comments on action taken or that could be considered.
 - Agree to receive a final report on the 2020/21 projected outturn position at the next meeting.
 - Agree the Band Values for Treetops Free School as shown in 6.8 below from September 2021

- d) Agree to the increase in thresholds for specialist equipment to £2,000 as shown in 6.10 below from April 2021.

3. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 To inform members of the Schools Forum of the projected outturn position in relation to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2020/21, in accordance with the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.
- 3.2 To provide an update on the formation of the 2021/22 budget.

4. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2020/21

- 4.1 Appendix A shows the projected outturn position for 2020/21. The key area remains the High Needs Block.
- 4.2 The current projected outturn for 2020/21 is an overspend of £1.074m. This is an improved position of £0.543m from that previously reported of £1.617m.

2020/21	<u>Funding Settlement</u>	<u>Academy Recoupment</u>	<u>Final DSG</u>	<u>Outturn</u>	<u>Variance</u>
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Early Years	12.699	0.000	12.699	12.683	(0.015)
Total	167.433	(125.217)	42.216	43.290	1.074

- 4.3 **Schools Block**
The growth fund allows officers to ensure sufficiency of places within Thurrock schools for all children of school age. Based on current commitments and historic level of spend it is currently forecasted an underspend of £0.899m. No change from that previously reported.
- 4.4 **Central Services Block**
A projected underspend of £0.058m through a combination of a delays in recruitment within School Admissions to December 2020 and savings in venue hire, as Schools Forum meetings are to be held through Microsoft Teams in 2020/21. An improvement of £0.012m.
- 4.5 **High Needs Block**
This is the significant area of financial risk and can be broken down into four areas:
- The continued increase in the number of EHCP. Additional costs of £0.519m are forecasted in maintaining pupils within Thurrock schools or other Local Authority mainstream schools and academies. This is a decrease of £0.215m. The impact of schools re-opening on the 8th March will need to be closely monitored and considered in finalising the outturn position.
 - Post 16 – Increased pupil numbers are forecasted with additional cost of £0.400m.

- Residential and Non-Residential Non-Maintained and Independent placements forecast an overspend of £0.838m, a decrease of £0.290m. At the time of writing the last report a number of joint funding packages were not agreed and therefore at that stage full cost was assumed to the DSG. All packages and funding arrangements have now been reviewed and agreed for 2020/21.
- Increase in supplying tuition packages for pupils not in School, costing additional £0.290m.

A review of the local offer and commissioned places available in Thurrock continues. The need to challenge schools on the use of the Notional SEN budget and the requirement to progress to an EHCP remains.

4.6 Early Years Block

A small underspend of £0.015m is shown which is attributed to the centrally retained expenditure. The January 2021 census final submission date is Friday 16th April 2021. Officers continue to validate the data prior to submission. The table below shows the information currently available.

	3&4 YO	2YO	Total
Guaranteed April to December = 26 weeks	7,482,407	1,206,136	8,688,543
Spring Term - Calculated by Thurrock	3,313,488	549,387	3,862,875
DSG Early Years Funding Allocation	10,795,895	1,755,523	12,551,418
Total Payments April to December	7,338,961	995,526	8,334,487
Payments - Spring 2020	3,342,520	440,369	3,782,889
Retained EY Central Team	217,450	0	217,450
Total Payments	10,898,931	1,435,895	12,334,826
Unallocated at 31st March 2021	(103,036)	319,628	216,592

The funding allocation for 2020/21 has been revised to reflect the initial census data. The expected funding to be received of £12.551m, is less than the initial allocation provided by the ESFA of £12.699m, a reduction of £0.148m.

At this stage due to the uncertainty the 2 and 3 & 4 year old offer continues to be shown as breakeven.

The Jan-21 census will also impact on 2021/22 funding allocation. The initial census data has been used to project the implication for the summer term:

	3&4 YO	2YO	Total
Unallocated at 31st March 2021	216,592	0	216,592
Summer Term - ESFA	3,357,278	557,044	3,914,322
Potential Payments - Summer 2021	3,515,127	416,402	3,931,528
Retained EY Central Team	173,053		173,053
Net Impact on Spring 21 Census	(330,901)	140,642	(190,259)
Net Impact after funds c/fwd.	(114,309)	140,642	26,333

This is subject to change, following the finalisation of the Jan-21 census. Final funding allocations for 2020/21 will be confirmed by the ESFA in July 2021.

4.7 DSG Reserve

The DSG has a carried forward deficit of £1.978m into 2020/21. The 2020/21 projected in year position will increase the deficit to £3.595m.

DSG Deficit - Summary	£m	Deficit % of DSG
Historic Deficit 2018/19	(2.656)	
DSG 2019/20	0.678	
Historic Deficit 2019/20	(1.978)	1.26%
DSG 2020/21	(1.074)	
Projected Deficit @ 31/03/21	(3.052)	1.82%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Requirement to complete DSG Management Plan > Need to deliver a balance budget position > Continued annual increase in EHCP's > Ongoing discussions with the ESFA 		

5. DSG Management Plan 2020/21

- 5.1 The DSG conditions of grant 2020/21 requires that any LA with an overall deficit on its DSG account at the end of the 2019/20 financial year, or whose DSG surplus has substantially reduced during the year, must be able to present a plan to the Department for Education (DfE) for managing their future DSG spend.
- 5.2 Management plans should reflect the most current forecast DSG position and be published on the LA local offer website as set out in the Special educational needs and disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. Relevant leads in the finance and special educational needs (SEN) areas should sign off each version of the management plan (with sign off to be at least at assistant director level).
- 5.3 A presentation on the DSG Management Plan is an agenda item.

6. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2021/22

- 6.1 This section of the report provides an update on developments since the January meeting.
- 6.2 In December, the Secretary of State for Education announced details of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for 2021/22. The table below shows the funding to be received in Thurrock:

Table 1: Dedicated Schools Grant Funding Allocation

Dedicated Schools Grant	2020/21	2021/22	Increase
	£m	£m	£m
Schools	127.474	140.936	13.462
Central Services	1.850	1.783	(0.067)
High Needs	25.410	28.266	2.856
Early Years	12.699	12.877	0.179
Total	167.433	183.862	16.430

Schools Block

- 6.3 In 2021/22 local authorities continue to have discretion over their local schools funding formulae. Thurrock Cabinet agreed on 9th December 2020 that Thurrock's funding formula in 2021/22 would implement the following principles:
- National Funding Formula values to be applied;
 - Any unallocated funding will be applied to the Basic Entitlement values;
 - Growth fund of £1.758m, to be retained to support sufficiency of places.
 - Schools Forum have agreed to transfer up to 0.5% (£0.673m) from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support increase demand for Specialist placements and Education, Health and Care Plans.
- 6.4 The ESFA confirmed on the 10th February that Thurrock's local funding formula and submitted APT met all of the compliance checks and no further action is required.

High Needs Block

- 6.5 The Schools Forum approved the High Needs budget at its meeting on the 19th January. In approving the budget the Schools Forum acknowledged risks of £1.9m, recognising that current demand for services exceeds the resources available.

Band Values

- 6.6 Thurrock Band values to be applied for the Academic Year 2021/22 were approved on the 19th January.
- 6.7 Band Values are determined to ensure that the assessed need of the child can be met and that all providers are fully funded based on agreed staffing ratios and support. It is not expected that within the resource provisions that the mainstream School would subsidise the cost of the base.

- 6.8 As part of the establishment of Treetops Free School a review of the initial funding agreement has been undertaken to inform a meeting to be held with the DfE on 9th March. The table below shows the Band Values to be applied for the academic year 2021/22.

Treetops Special Free Academy - Funding Allocation 2021/22						
Place Type	Places	Place Funding	TPG & TPECG	Top Up	Band Value	Total
MLD	32	£10,000	£660	£4,340	£15,000	£480,000
ASD	28	£10,000	£660	£24,340	£35,000	£980,000
	60				Total	£1,460,000
					DFE - High Needs	£600,000
					Thurrock DSG - High Needs Block	£860,000
					Total	£1,460,000

Specialist Equipment

- 6.9 Include as part of the January report was proposed changes to Specialist Equipment. Unfortunately as part of the presentation this was not discussed.
- 6.10 The proposal is to increase the equipment threshold for schools to purchase equipment to £2,000 from the current value of £500. This change would reflect the increase in funding being received by schools, reflected in increased Notional SEN budgets and the time lapse since the last review.
- 6.11 In 2019/20, 97 requests for specialist equipment were received at a cost of £117,895. The values paid ranged from £40 to £4,620.
- 6.12 This increase in threshold would support the reduction in Additional High Needs Targeted funding in 2021/22. It is expected that an annual saving of £52,000 would be realised.

7. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

- School Forum Report 19th January 2021 – Dedicated Schools Grant 2020/21
- School Forum Report 19th January 2021 – Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22

8. 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

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Role: Strategic Lead, Corporate Finance
E-Mail: dmay@thurrock.gov.uk
Phone: 01375 652092

Appendix A

Dedicated Schools Grant 2019/20 and 2020/21		2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21
		Outturn	Budget	Outturn	Variance
		£m	£m	£m	£m
	Schools Block	8.470	6.998	6.099	(0.899)
	Central Services Block	1.890	1.850	1.792	(0.058)
	High Needs Block	20.183	20.669	22.715	2.046
	Early Years Block	12.179	12.699	12.683	(0.015)
Dedicated Schools Grant		42.722	42.216	43.290	1.074
SB	Maintained Schools Budgets	7.278	5.392	5.392	0.000
SB	Business Rates	(0.034)	0.000	0.000	0.000
SB	School Licences	0.122	0.126	0.126	0.000
SB	Growth Fund	0.917	1.480	0.582	(0.899)
SB	Deficit Recovery	0.188	0.000	0.000	0.000
CSSB	Statutory and Regulatory duties - Education	0.336	0.379	0.379	0.000
CSSB	Statutory and Regulatory duties - Finance	0.082	0.140	0.140	0.000
CSSB	School Place planning	0.053	0.029	0.029	0.000
CSSB	Admissions	0.188	0.260	0.206	(0.054)
CSSB	Schools Forum	0.008	0.010	0.006	(0.004)
CSSB	SACRE	0.008	0.010	0.010	0.000
CSSB	Contribution to Combined budgets	1.215	1.022	1.022	0.000
HNB	Place Funding	0.139	0.343	0.343	0.000
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Academies	2.684	2.803	2.995	0.192
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Resource Provisions	2.195	2.593	2.643	0.050
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Special Schools	3.654	4.156	4.194	0.038
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Alternative Provision	1.268	1.445	1.535	0.090
HNB	Top Up Funding - Other Local Authorities (4-16)	0.968	1.043	1.192	0.149
HNB	Top Up Funding - Post 16	1.780	1.787	2.175	0.388
HNB	Pupils not in School	0.362	0.161	0.432	0.271
HNB	Residential - Non Maintained and Independent	1.270	1.100	1.596	0.496
HNB	Non Residential - Non Maintained and Independent	1.585	1.100	1.443	0.343
HNB	Commissioned Services	1.230	1.149	1.149	(0.000)
HNB	Additional High Needs Targeted	0.369	0.200	0.236	0.036
HNB	Home Hospital Education Services	0.017	0.000	0.000	0.000
HNB	Travellers Team	0.043	0.052	0.042	(0.010)
HNB	Home to School Transport	1.787	1.787	1.787	0.000
HNB	High Needs Central Team	0.832	0.950	0.954	0.004
EYB	3&4 Year old	10.020	10.345	10.345	(0.000)
EYB	2 year olds	1.690	1.836	1.836	0.000
EYB	Early Years Central Team	0.469	0.517	0.502	(0.015)
Dedicated Schools Grant		42.722	42.216	43.290	1.074

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE: 18 March 2021
SUBJECT: HNB Consultation – Changes for 2022/23
REPORT OF: David May
THE REPORT IS: For Decision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The DfE have published a consultation on proposed changes to the High Needs National Funding Formula in 2022/23. The consultation runs until 24 March 2021.
- 1.2 The DfE will implement decisions from this consultation in 2022/23. It is not a full-blown review, but rather a consultation on the historic spend and attainment factors in the High Needs National Funding Formula (NFF). At this stage it is about changing the distribution with no mention of additional funds being allocated to High Needs.
- 1.3 The full formula is still due for review, but the DfE have delayed this until after the main SEND review report has been published (due in 'Spring 2021'), even though further changes won't be implemented until 2023/24.
- 1.4 Section 6 of the report shows the consultation questions and proposed combined response from Thurrock Council and Thurrock Schools Forum.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Schools Forum is recommended to:
 - a) Discuss and offer comment on the report and the consultation
 - b) Agree the responses to the consultation outlined in Section 6 of this report.

3. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 To inform members of the consultation on review of national funding formula for allocations of high needs funding to local authorities: changes for 2022/23.

4. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK FORMULA 2021/22

- 4.1 High needs funding is provided to local authorities through the high needs block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG). Local authorities must spend that funding in line with the associated conditions of grant 2021/22 and the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations.
- 4.2 The high needs funding system supports provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from their early years to age 25, to enable both local authorities and institutions to meet their statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014. High needs funding is also intended to support good quality alternative provision (AP) for pupils of compulsory school age who, because they have been excluded or suspended, or because of illness or other reasons, cannot receive their education in mainstream or special schools.
- 4.3 The high needs funding block provides local authorities with resources for place funding and top-up funding for institutions, and funding for high needs services delivered directly by the authority or under a separate funding agreement with the service provider (including funding devolved to schools and colleges for that purpose), as permitted by regulations.
- 4.4 The high needs funding block of the DSG has, since 2018/19, been distributed by means of a national funding formula applied consistently across all local authorities that calculates each authority's allocation.
- 4.5 The formula attempts to balance the two fundamental drivers determining local authorities' relative need to spend on high needs:
- the nature of the local SEND system. Within the current formula the basic entitlement, historic spend and hospital education factors are elements of the formula that reflect local issues, for example the number of pupils in special schools; and
 - the underlying needs of the population being served. The population and other proxy factors in the formula, which relate to the characteristics of the children and young people living in the local authority area, combine together to reflect the level of underlying needs.

Figure 1 below illustrates how the 2021-22 formula calculation works.

Figure 1: Basic building blocks of the formula

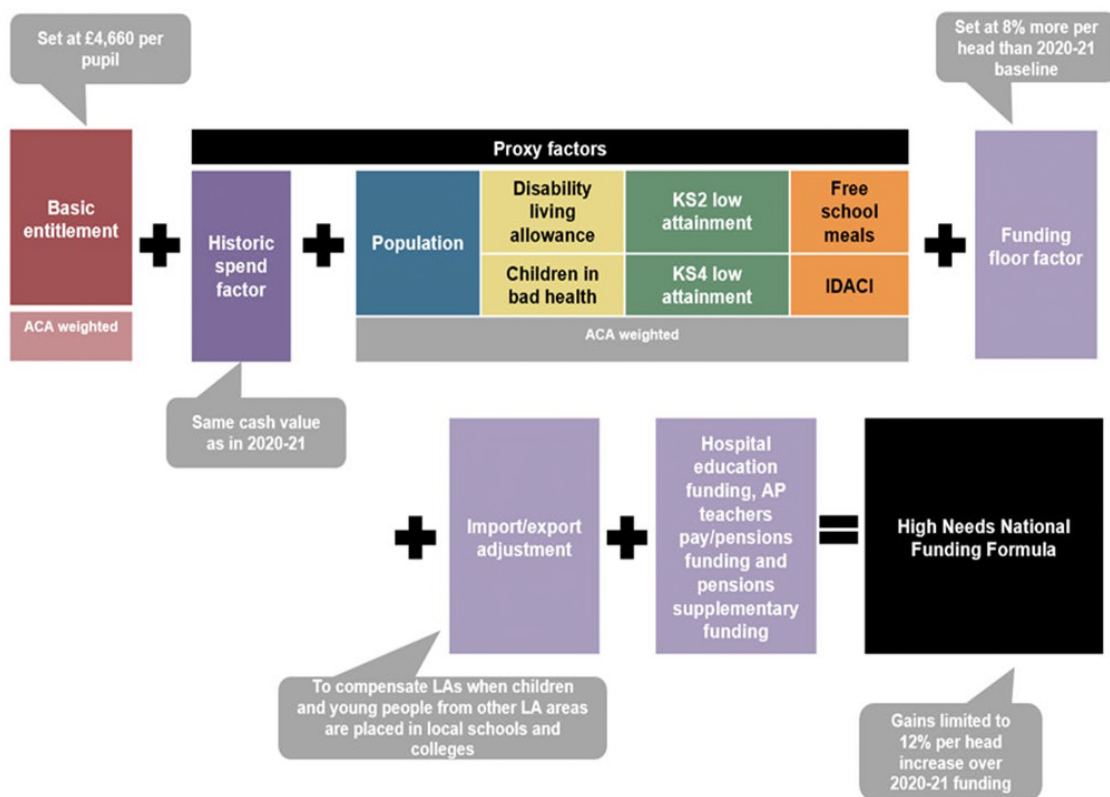


Figure 1: This diagram shows that the factors will be added together to give the formula allocation, with an area cost adjustment applied to the proxy factors and basic entitlement.

4.6 Basic Entitlement

The calculation for each local authority is as follows:

- Total the number of pupils on roll at maintained special schools and special academies from the October 2019 school census.
- Add the number of pupils with SEN in independent schools, as recorded on the January 2019 alternative provision census.
- Multiply the basic entitlement base rate of £4,660 by the local authority's ACA to give an ACA-weighted basic entitlement rate for each local authority.
- Multiply the number of eligible pupils by the local authority's ACA-weighted basic entitlement unit rate to get the published basic entitlement factor funding $((a + b) \times c)$.
- The published basic entitlement factor funding is not final and will be updated with October 2020 school census data and January 2020 AP census data.
- The ESFA's basic entitlement factor amount is calculated as the number of pupils and students in NMSSs and SPIs, multiplied by £4,660.

For all of these places the place led factor is £10,000 per place and therefore a key question for the formula is why only £4,660 is paid. Unfortunately this is not a question to be considered as part of this consultation.

4.7 Historic Spend factor

The historic spend factor value is based on the baselines for each local authority that were published in August 2017 and adjusted as described below. A weighting of 50% was applied to this adjusted figure to give the final figure for the formula. This amount is maintained at a cash-flat level.

With the significant increases in high needs funding through the formula since 2018/19, the overall proportion of funding allocated through this factor has reduced considerably, down by 10 % from 44% of funding in 2018/19 to 34% in the 2021/22 formula.

Although some local authorities will have been able to make changes that have helped them spend within their high needs funding allocations, for others speed at which this funding has reduced, as a proportion of total high needs funding, will have been greater than the speed at which they have been able to make changes to local patterns of provision, so we are considering whether it would be appropriate to increase the proportion of funding through this factor.

The proposal is to increase the percentage of the 2017/18 actual expenditure amounts, from 50% to, say, 60%. This would increase the significance of this factor in the 2022/23 formula, reflecting a more gradual pace of change in the pattern of spending that it would be reasonable to expect from local authorities.

ESFA would welcome views on the option of increasing the percentage of actual expenditure in 2017/18 included in the funding formula calculation.

In Thurrock the following information has been provided to show how this change would impact on funding:

LA Name	Thurrock
Current 2017-18 baseline used for historic spend factor	£22,444,000
2017-18 actual expenditure amount we propose to use in future	£24,655,929
Original funding through the historic spend factor	£10,295,138
Proposed level of funding through the historic spend factor	£11,488,693
Actual % increase in high needs allocations between 20-21 and 21-22	8.00%
Theoretical % increase in high needs funding allocations between 20-21 and 21-22	11.20%

The table below shows in this isolated factor that we potentially could have received £1.194m more funding.

4.8 Proxy factors

The remaining high needs funding, after deductions for the basic entitlement, hospital education and historic spend factors, is then available for the proxy factors listed below:

- a. population factor
- b. free school meals (FSM) factor
- c. income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI 2019 data) factor
- d. bad health factor
- e. disability factor
- f. key stage 2 low attainment factor
- g. key stage 4 low attainment factor

Weightings are assigned to determine the amount allocated through each of the proxy factors. The weightings are applied separately for SEND (90% of

5. SEND ACTIVITY AND FUNDING

5.1 The table below provides a summary of the national position for EHCP's and funding for the period 2016/17 to 2020/21.

Financial Year	January Census	Total Statements / EHCP's	Annual % Change	Cumulative Change since 2016/17	Total HNB £m	Annual % change	Cumulative change since 2016/17
2016/17	2016	256,315			5,696		
2017/18	2017	287,290	12%	12%	5,827	2%	2%
2018/19	2018	312,626	9%	21%	6,115	5%	7%
2019/20	2019	353,995	13%	34%	6,279	3%	10%
2020/21	2020	390,109	10%	44%	7,063	12%	22%

5.2 The table is consistent with the position previously discussed within Thurrock with funding not keeping up with the year on year increase in demand.

Financial Year	SEN2	Total Statements / EHCP's	Annual % Change	Cumulative Change since 2016/17	Total HNB £m	Annual % change	Cumulative change since 2016/17
2016/17	31/03/17	1,251			20.680		
2017/18	31/03/18	1,341	7%	7%	21.753	5%	5%
2018/19	31/03/19	1,538	15%	22%	22.593	4%	9%
2019/20	31/03/20	1,677	9%	31%	23.696	5%	14%
2020/21	28/02/21	1,791	7%	38%	25.908	9%	23%

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Historic spend factor - question 1

The historic spend factor in the high needs national funding formula is the main proxy we currently use for local circumstances that can significantly affect local authorities' levels of spending on high needs, and that take time to change. This formula lump sum is calculated using 50% of each local authority's planned expenditure on high needs in 2017-18, reported by local authorities.

We now have access to actual spending data from 2017-18. We therefore propose replacing the current lump sum included in the formula calculation with an amount calculated on the basis of actual expenditure in 2017-18, as reported by each local authority.

Do you agree that we should replace the current lump sum included in the formula calculation with an amount calculated on the basis of actual local authority expenditure, as reported by each local authority?

Agree; Disagree; Unsure

Please provide any additional comments:

Agree to the change and use of 2017/18 actual expenditure, if this is the only way to reflect local circumstances. However we have concerns that 2017/18 data is being used which is 3 years out of date.

In the consultation it is unclear how this will be funded and if this is simple redistributing the same level of funds. It also does not explain the impact on any additional funding on the gains and caps in operation.

The fundamental problem with High Needs is insufficient funds to meet demand. If the proposal is not linked to any additional funding, then this is simply shuffling the same funds around and creating winners and losers.

6.2 Historic spend factor - question 2

The historic spend element of the high needs national funding formula has remained at a cash-flat level since the introduction of the national formula in 2018-19, moving from 44% of the overall formula funding in 2018-19 to 34% in the 2021-22 formula as that total funding has increased. Some local authorities may not have been able to change their spending patterns to keep pace with the percentage reduction in this factor, despite the protection afforded by the funding floor minimum increase of 8% this and next year. We are therefore considering whether to increase the proportion of funding allocated through this factor, alongside using actual expenditure amounts.

Using actual expenditure from a more recent year, and leaving the percentage at 50%, would increase the amount of the lump sum, but we are not proposing to do this as we are clear that local authorities' actual spending now or in future should not determine how much funding they receive. We could, however, increase the significance of this factor in the 2022-23 formula, by increasing the percentage of 2017-18 spending that is applied, allowing for a more gradual rate of change in the local pattern of spending.

Do you think that we should increase the percentage of actual expenditure in 2017-18 included in the funding formula calculation, or leave it at 50%?

Use the comments box to propose a particular increase or reduction in the percentage.

Increase the percentage; Keep the percentage at 50 % Decrease the percentage; Unsure or other

The use of the 2017/18 actual expenditure is 3 years out of date but we acknowledge from the information presented that this allows some local factor to be recognised within the formula.

50% seems appropriate as this is historic and fixed and we need to continue to allow other more up to date factors to influence the formula.

6.3 **Historic spend factor - question 3**

We are aware that the continued use of historic spend is not the perfect long term solution for reflecting the patterns of local demand and supply that affect spending on high needs, as those patterns will naturally change over time. As part of the funding formula review that we are carrying out, and for consideration as we develop that formula in the years after 2022-23, we are therefore seeking views on potential alternatives to the historic spend factor.

Any new factors would need to be appropriate for a funding formula (e.g. the data used should be collected on a consistent basis) and would also need to avoid creating a perverse incentive (e.g. to spend more on a certain type of provision so as to gain more funding, rather than to improve the quality or appropriateness of provision).

To what extent do you agree that the funding formula should include factors that reflect historical local demand for and supply of SEND and AP provision?

If you have any suggestions for such factors that could eventually replace the historic spend factor, please provide these in the comments box.

Strongly Agree; Agree; neither Agree nor Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

DfE believes that updating this factor with more recent data would provide an incentive to spend more. However, the system is about meeting children's needs. Inherited provision forms part of the current need to spend, so the formula has to recognise this and minimise the time lag. There will always be an issue over the point at which you set a historic factor. An increase in the funding available to support HNB would go some way to remove this problem.

An instant change should be that the basic entitlement factor should provide £10,660 per pupil for special schools, to match the place-led funding LAs have to pay. In 2021/22 it is only £4,660 (uplifted from £4k for pay/pensions grants) and LAs have to rely on the rest of the NFF factors, which are inadequate, to cover the rest of the £10k plus top-up costs.

Equally with AP provisions a place costs £27,000, however the recoupment values from schools and academies is no more than £7,000. This creates an instant £20,000 pressure on the High Needs Block. A more responsive system is required to match funding received to costs incurred.

6.4 **Low attainment factor - question 4**

The high needs national funding formula uses low attainment at both key stage 2 and key stage 4 as a proxy indicator for SEND. This figure is calculated using an average of results over the most recent 5 years of tests and exams, which for the 2022-23 formula would have meant using test and exam results from 2016 to 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 key stage 2 tests and GCSE exams were cancelled. This has resulted in no key stage 2 data, and GCSE data that would be inappropriate to use because of the inconsistencies with the results from previous years.

We have considered using the same data as used to calculate last year's attainment formula factors, but this would mean data from more than 5 years ago. Instead, we propose to calculate low attainment by using data from 2016 to 2019, but then to double the weighting of the most recent exam data from 2019. This method could be used for a further year, assuming the 2021 test and exam results are also not able to be used for this purpose.

Do you agree with our proposal to update the low attainment factors using data from 2016, and to substitute the most recent 2019 data in place of the missing 2020 attainment data?

Agree; Disagree-calculate in the same way as last year; Disagree-Other;

For the 2022/23 the High Needs National funding formula, the DfE proposes to update the attainment data series for KS2 and KS4 by rolling it forward a year. This would use five years' data from 2016, but given the situation with SATs and GCSEs, they would have to substitute the most recent 2019 data in place of the missing 2020 attainment data. This sounds reasonable in the circumstances; the document explains it may have to be extended again for 2023/24.

6.5 SEND and AP proxies - question 5

The high needs national funding formula uses six indicators which together act as a proxy for the level of more complex SEND, and need for alternative provision (AP) in an area. These indicators include: a measure of the local population of children and young people, the two low attainment measures (key stage 2 and key stage 4) referred to in question 4, two health and disability measures (the number of children in bad health and the number of families in receipt of disability living allowance), and two deprivation indicators (the number of children eligible for free school meals and a local area deprivation measure).

Numbers of EHC plans are not be used as a robust indicator of underlying need because the way they are used varies considerably across local areas, and the number of plans is therefore not necessarily directly associated with the local authority's need to spend. The ongoing SEND review is considering whether system changes are needed, to provide more consistency in EHC needs assessment and planning process, and to improve other aspects of the SEND arrangements.

Following the SEND review, we will consider whether consequent changes to these proxies that we use in the funding formula, as well as other funding changes, would be appropriate, as it is important that the proxies used support local authorities to deliver the outcomes of the review. At this stage we are keen to understand whether there are new factors either that could replace existing factors that have become out of date or otherwise unreliable, or that could be added to the formula to address types or prevalence of identified need, and we would welcome views.

If you wish to offer ideas on factors that could be added to the current formula, or that could replace the current proxies, please provide further details in the comments box below.

Proxy factors should carry much more weight for a more responsive National Funding Formula, but they should have more relevance to SEND. It would be worth exploring indicators such as low birth weight and pre-term births. Has data from Health been fully explored, for example where there is a medical diagnosis? Even a time lag would be better than no specific recognition of some conditions.

In relation to existing indicators, Ever6 should be used for FSM instead of the single census FSM indicator, and there should be a post-16 element to Disability Living Allowance.

7. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

- School Forum Report 17th September 2020 – High Needs Block 2020/21

8. 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

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THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE: 18th March 2021

SUBJECT: Proposed funding arrangements for permanent exclusions

REPORT OF: Michele Lucas

THE REPORT IS: For Decision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update relating to the contribution to the education of permanently excluded children which was agreed by Schools Forum in March 2019.
- 1.2 To provide details of the financial contribution we will seek from schools to support children and young people who have been permanently excluded.
- 1.3 To continue on the principal of funding following the child or young person.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Schools' Forum members are asked to consider changes to the mechanism to calculate exclusion charges/allocations for all mainstream schools and use this mechanism to form an agreement with all academies.
- 2.2 That Schools Forum accepts the following changes to be applied from September 2021 for the changing/allocation mechanism for permanent school exclusions:

3. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 To seek agreement from Schools Forum to alter the charges/allocations for pupils permanently excluded from mainstream schools and academies.

4. BACKGROUND –RISING LEVELS OF PERMANENT EXCLUSION

- 4.1 This year has seen a reduction in the number of permanent exclusions this can be directly attributed to the global pandemic. Table 1 details the number of permanent exclusions by academic year since 2013/2014.

Table 1 Number of Permanent Exclusions by Academic Year

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 to date
Primary	1	6	7	4	16	9	2	0
Secondary	18	19	27	19	27	35	29	9
Total	19	25	34	23	43	44	31	9

5. MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS EXCLUSION CHARGES

- 5.1 The methodology for the calculation of exclusion charges for mainstream pupils is set out within the School Finance Regulations.
- 5.2 The purpose of the charge is to provide a contribution to the cost of alternative school provision as part of the arrangements for pupils educated out of school and if the pupil is admitted to another mainstream school within the funding period, the admitting school's will receive the budget share in accordance with the complete weeks remaining in the funding period during which the pupil is a pupil at the admitting school
- 5.3 The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations states that, where a child is permanently excluded, the Local Authority must re-determine an excluding school's budget share. All references within the Regulations regarding the amount to reduce by, refer to the 'funding period' and not the financial year. The regulations do not provide specific dates for the funding period and schools and the local Authority need to agree this period.
- 5.4 Schools will be aware that the funding formula is calculated according to lagged pupil numbers and data (from the preceding October school census). Therefore, if a pupil is excluded before the October census date, a maintained school will receive no further formula funding for the pupil beyond the end of the current financial year and in the case of an academy they will receive no funding beyond the end of the current academic year. However, for a pupil excluded after the census date the school will receive funding for the whole of the following financial year. The exclusion

charges, therefore, include funding for the relevant period of both years (the funding period).

6. CURRENT METHOD USED IN THURROCK

6.1 Thurrock introduced a charge from September 2019 of £3,500 for Primary and £4,800 for secondary as well as the pupil base funding and pupil premium on a pro-rated basis depending on the term in which the child was permanently excluded this was agreed by the schools forum in March 2019. We recognise that a small number of our schools were not represented at the schools forum when this decision was made. To address this we have reviewed the membership of schools forum and the new membership includes representation from all early year, schools and colleges across Thurrock.

7. PROPOSED METHOD TO BE USED IN THURROCK FROM SEPTEMBER 2021

7.1 For excluded pupils, the charges will be as per the Schools and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. This means that when a pupil is permanently excluded, the authority will re-determine the excluding school's budget share. The excluding school's budget share will be reduced by the minimum per pupil rate at individual school level calculated using the post MFG budget, as shown in appendix 2, and any pupil premium attributable to the child. This will be pro-rated based on the weeks remaining in the funding period.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED CHANGE

8.1 The lower level of permanent exclusions has offered some support to the High Needs Block, however the continued pressure on the high needs expenditure remains unsustainable.

8.2 The change in the charging policy is recommended as we have recognised that including an additional contribution from schools has had an adverse impact on a small number of schools budgets.

8.3 Funding Pressure

The LA buys places for excluded pupils upfront from Alternative Providers or Specialist Resource bases to ensure that permanently excluded pupils have access to education (6 day provision). There is a finite amount of DSG budget that the LA can use to do this with and if the number of places is exceeded then additional budget will need to be found to spot purchase places. The contributions received from schools has supported with some of the DSG overspend in high needs funding.

9. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 9.1 From implementation in September 2021, the funding period will be the same for Maintained schools and Academies for the period September 2021 to March 2022.
- 9.2 For the financial year 2022/23 updated rates will be available in March 2021, at that stage, an updated report covering the two funding periods will be provided to the March 2022 meeting of the Schools Forum. This will reflect the different funding periods for Maintained schools (April to March) and Academies (September to August).
- 9.3 At the date of the permanent exclusion the financial information available will be used to determine the funding to be withdrawn or provided. No retrospective adjustment will be made.
- 9.4 The charge to be calculated will be the full funding period. i.e. for the remainder of the current financial year and the whole of the next financial year if the exclusion is after the October census and the pupil is not in year 11.
- 9.5 In a small number of cases, a school will agree to admit a pupil outside of the October census date, in these cases an individual discussion will be held on the funding to be withdrawn unique to the individual circumstances surrounding the child.

10. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

11. CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

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Appendix 1

Charges to schools – excluded pupils

For excluded pupils, the charges will be as per The Schools and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations.

This means that when a pupil is permanently excluded, the authority will re-determine the excluding school's budget share.

The excluding school's budget share will be reduced by

$$A \times (C/52)$$

A is the amount determined by the authority as attributable to a pupil with the same characteristics.

This has been determined as the minimum per pupil rate at individual school level calculated using the post MFG budget plus any pupil premium attributable to the pupil.

The individual school level values for 2021/22 are shown at Appendix 2. These will be updated annually following approval of the Thurrock Schools Funding Formula.

C is either

- (i) the number of complete weeks remaining in the funding period calculated from the relevant date; or
- (ii) where the permanent exclusion takes effect on or after 1st April in a school year at the end of which pupils of the same age, or age group, as the pupil in question normally leave that school before being admitted to another school with a different pupil age range, the number of complete weeks remaining in that school year calculated from the relevant date;

When a pupil who has been permanently excluded from the excluding school and is admitted to another school, the authority will re-determine the admitting school's budget share. This will be increased by:

$$D \times (E/F)$$

D is the amount by which the authority reduced the budget share of the excluding school, except that any reduction following a financial adjustment order is not taken into account.

E is the number of complete weeks remaining in the funding period during which the pupil is a pupil at the admitting school.

F is the number of complete weeks remaining in the funding period calculated from the relevant date.

Where a permanently excluded pupil is subsequently reinstated by the governing body of the school, the school's budget share will be increased by an amount which is no less than

$G \times (H / I)$

G is the amount by which the authority reduced the school's budget share

H is the number of complete weeks remaining in the funding period during which the pupil is reinstated; and

I is the number of complete weeks remaining in the funding period calculated from the relevant date.

For the purposes of this document, the relevant date is the sixth school day following the start date of the permanent exclusion. If required and the exclusion is subsequently withdrawn or overturned the necessary adjustments will be made.

Process

On a monthly basis the Inclusion and Access Officer will extract from the Capita One system details of any permanent exclusions.

The minimum per pupil rate at individual school level, shown at Appendix B plus any pupil premium attributable to the pupil will be used to calculate the budget adjustment applicable.

The Inclusion and Access Officer will also produce a statement per school that will be provided when the budget adjustments/invoices are processed.

Funding Formula 2021/22 - Individual School Level Values

Appendix 2

LAESTAB	Phase	School Name	Per Pupil Value 2021/22
8833822	Primary	Abbots Hall Primary School	£4,261.44
8832439	Primary	Arthur Bugler Primary School	£4,191.77
8832014	Primary	Aveley Primary School	£4,406.51
8832542	Primary	Belmont Castle Academy	£4,200.26
8832003	Primary	Benyon Primary School	£4,626.48
8832722	Primary	Bonnygate Primary School	£4,404.27
8832013	Primary	Bulphan Church of England Academy	£5,446.51
8832011	Primary	Chadwell St Mary Primary School	£5,024.90
8832462	Primary	Deneholm Primary School	£4,194.15
8832622	Primary	Dilkes Academy	£4,336.74
8832824	Primary	East Tilbury Primary School	£4,217.04
8832942	Primary	Giffards Primary School	£4,200.19
8832137	Primary	Graham James Primary Academy	£4,196.74
8832987	Primary	Harris Primary Academy Chafford Hundred	£4,224.52
8832008	Primary	Harris Primary Academy Mayflower	£4,197.41
8832644	Primary	Herringham Primary Academy	£4,552.49
8833605	Primary	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	£4,580.23
8835281	Primary	Horndon-On-the-Hill CofE Primary School	£4,277.45
8835266	Primary	Kenningtons Primary Academy	£4,311.44
8832000	Primary	Lansdowne Primary Academy	£4,772.92
8832015	Primary	Little Thurrock Primary School	£4,199.85
8833502	Primary	Orsett Church of England Primary School	£4,257.68
8832006	Primary	Ortu Corringham Primary School	£4,199.33
8832002	Primary	Purfleet Primary Academy	£4,406.95
8832005	Primary	Quarry Hill Academy	£4,423.97
8832985	Primary	Shaw Primary Academy	£4,415.18
8832429	Primary	Somers Heath Primary School	£4,465.26
8833512	Primary	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	£4,423.79
8833522	Primary	St Mary's Catholic Primary School	£4,880.22
8833603	Primary	St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School	£4,199.09
8832004	Primary	Stanford-Le-Hope Primary School	£4,257.06
8832009	Primary	Stifford Clays Primary School	£4,196.90
8832001	Primary	Thameside Primary School	£4,540.84
8832024	Primary	The Gateway Primary Free School	£4,821.24
8832007	Primary	Tilbury Pioneer Academy	£4,708.96
8832984	Primary	Tudor Court Primary School	£4,205.30
8832078	Primary	Warren Primary School	£4,206.84
8832592	Primary	West Thurrock Academy	£4,340.57
8832472	Primary	Woodside Academy	£4,195.77

Funding Formula 2021/22 - Individual School Level Values

Appendix 2

LAESTAB	Phase	School Name	Per Pupil Value 2021/22
8834733	Secondary	Grays Convent High School	£5,739.13
8834394	Secondary	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	£5,464.55
8834003	Secondary	Harris Academy Ockendon	£5,939.48
8834002	Secondary	Harris Academy Riverside	£5,779.60
8836906	Secondary	Ormiston Park Academy	£6,316.35
8834004	Secondary	Orsett Heath Academy	£6,178.79
8835439	Secondary	Ortu Gable Hall School	£5,716.50
8834001	Secondary	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	£6,187.94
8835440	Secondary	St Clere's School	£5,744.64
8834005	Secondary	Thames Park Secondary School	£6,212.87
8836905	Secondary	The Gateway Academy	£6,479.85
8834000	Secondary	The Hathaway Academy	£6,108.07
8835438	Secondary	William Edwards School	£5,525.27

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE:	18 March 2021
SUBJECT:	Pupil Place Planning Update 2021
REPORT OF:	Sarah Williams
THE REPORT IS:	For Information

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council's Pupil Place Planning document is reviewed and updated annually. The 2021 to 2025 version is currently being reviewed and updated. The revised version will be sent to all schools and other stakeholders for comment. The final version will be published once all comments received have been considered and any amendments made.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Schools Forum is asked to note the process for the Pupil Place Plan (PPP) and the impending publication of the 2021-2025 Pupil Place Plan.

3. 2021 – 2025 Pupil Place Plan

The Council has a statutory obligation to ensure there is a sufficient supply of school places for all residents who request a place for their child. As population demographics are dynamic, it is necessary to continually review and update pupil place forecasts. Pupil place requirements are reviewed as part of our PPP team meetings that take place every 4 weeks. The group is made up of officers from the PPP team, Finance, Admissions, Awards & Benefits, Transport, Early Years and School Improvement. This group reviews current positions, issues and forecasts. This allows Thurrock to take the necessary action at the earliest opportunity to increase school places when demand is required. Pupil Growth and School Capital Programme updates are provided to Schools' Forum members and at Headteacher briefings.

The PPP gives information about the supply of school places in Thurrock and forecasts pupil numbers for the next five years, with information on the changing context within which planning takes place.

The Pupil Place data highlights a number of issues; one of these is the impact of the decline from 2016/17 in the birth rate in Thurrock. 2015/2016 has been the highest number of live births to date and this was reflected in the number of primary applications received for Reception 2020. We are currently processing applications for Reception 2021 of which we received a total of 2330 on time applications, however we do know we will receive late applications.

The primary phase forecasts in the 5 year plan are calculated on the basis of known data regarding live births in Thurrock, the number of children already on roll in schools and the anticipated child yield from proposed housing developments in the planning system.

The heat map provided within the presentation clearly identifies the hot spot areas for births is Grays, Tilbury and Aveley, Ockendon and Purfleet planning areas.

From 2015 to 2020 there has been a 12% (1835 pupils) rise in Primary pupils. . From September 2019 to September 2020 there is a 1% increase in Primary numbers on roll based on the autumn census. In Secondary From 2015 to 2020 there has been a rise of 24% (2076 pupils), From September 2019 to September 2020 there is an increase of 3.7%.

With regard to secondary schools, we can still see the increase in demand for school places as the primary cohort move into the secondary phase. Orsett Heath Academy and Thames Park Academy opened in their temporary accommodation in September 2020, initially with a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 120 spaces each starting in Year 7 Sept 2020. It is planned in Sept 23 both schools will take to their full PAN. We will continue to monitor capacity across the borough.

In relation to geographical and statistical neighbours, Thurrock has seen a pupil increase of 19% between 2013-2020.

On National Offer Day, 1st March a total of 2368 applications were considered for a place from Thurrock applicants. There are currently 230 vacancies across the borough, which will support late applications received throughout the academic year. The local authority have not supported any secondary schools increasing their PAN for year 7.

Pupil yield from developments awaiting planning decision or those that have not yet started equate to approximately 1170 primary pupils and 627 secondary pupils forecasted to require a school place.

FINANCIAL / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

School places are funded through allocations of the Dedicated Schools Grant, which is linked to the number of pupils within school, although it is lagged by one year.

The Capital costs of providing the infrastructure to provide more School places is funded through Basic Need Capital Grants. These costs would be identified as part of the Schools Capital Programme.

4. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

2020 – 2024 Pupil Place Plan.

Pupil Place Planning Presentation – March 2020

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

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Thurrock School Forum Forward Plan for 2020 - 2021

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item / Focus
<p>17th June 2021</p> <p>9:00 – 11:00</p> <p>Virtual Meeting /</p> <p>Venue to be confirmed</p>	Dedicated Schools Grant 2020/21 - Outturn
	Thurrock Budget 2021/22 to 2023/24 – Key Issues and Implications for Children’s Services
	Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22
	Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan 2021/22
	Local Safeguarding Partnership
	Union Facility Time Annual Review - Standing
	Thurrock Code of Practice for delivery of early education for 2, 3&4 year olds - Standing
	Schools Forum Membership Review 2021/22
	Review of Forward Plan 2021/22
	Academies and Free Schools Update - Standing
<p>September 2021 Meeting</p>	Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22
	Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23
	High Needs Block 2021/22 & 2022/23
	Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan 2021/22
	School Effectiveness Strategy
	Academies and Free Schools Update
	Membership update
<p>November 2021 Meeting</p>	Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22
	Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23
	High Needs Block 2022/23 – Commissioned Places
	Childcare Sufficiency - Standing
	Academies and Free Schools Update - Standing
	Tuition Support Services
<p>January 2022 Meeting</p>	Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22 – Projected Outturn
	Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23
	Growth Fund and Falling Rolls 2022/23

Schools Forum

Minutes of Meeting held 19th January 2020 at 10.00a.m
Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams

In Attendance:

Multi Academy Trusts

Catalyst Academies Trust
ORTU Federation
Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust
South West Essex Community Education Trust
The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)
Reach2 Academy Trust
South West Essex Community Education Trust
Vine Schools Trust
Christus Catholic Trust

Name

Mr T Parfett (Vice Chair)
Dr Sophina Asong
Mr P Griffiths (The Chair)
Mr S Munday
Mr K Sadler
Mr E Samuel
Mr S Munday
Mrs D McManus
Mrs N Cashall

Secondary Voluntary Aided School

Grays Convent

Name

Mrs M Miller

Standalone Academy Trusts

Woodside Academy

Name

Mr E Caines

Infrastructure Groups

TASS
TPHA

Name

Mrs P Johnson
Mrs J Sawtell-Haines

Special Schools

Treetops Academy
Beacon Hill Academy

Name

Mr J Brewer
Mrs Sue Hewitt

Non-school members

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

Name

Mrs M Shepherd
Mr A Melbourne
Ms Alison Jones

Also in Attendance

Mr Malcolm Taylor
Ms Michelle Lucas
Mr David May
Ms Sarah Williams

Ms Teresa Lydon

Strategic Lead – Specialist Provision/PEP
Assistant Director, Education Skills
Strategic Lead – DSG and Schools
Service Manager, Education Support
Service
Clerk

1. Welcome from the Chair

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. The Chair asked all members to click the mute button until they wanted to speak this was to address the feedback that can take place on Microsoft Teams. He also advised that this meeting was not being recorded.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Mr M Vickers sent their apologies for the meeting. Mrs M Lucas advised that Councillor A Jefferies had sent his apologies.

3. Agreement of Agenda, Time-Guide and Notification of Any Other Business

- i) The Forum agreed the agenda and time guide.
- ii) Any Other Business – no items were put forward before the meeting

4. Dedicated School Grant (DSG) 2020-21

Mr D May summarised the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2020-21 report which was sent out to all forum members prior to the meeting.

Mr D May advised that the DSG 2020/21 projected outturn is a deficit of £1.617m, as a result of continued demand within the High Needs Block that exceeds the budget available. The DSG has a carried forward deficit of £1.978m into 2020/21. The 2020/21 projected in year position will increase the deficit to £3.595m.

The High Needs Block is a significant area of financial risk and is broken down into four areas:

- The continued increase in the number of EHCP. Additional costs of £0.734m are forecasted in maintaining pupils within Thurrock schools or other Local Authority mainstream schools and academies.
- Post 16 – Increased pupil numbers are forecasted with additional cost of £0.400m.
- Residential and Non-Residential Non-Maintained and Independent placements forecast an overspend of £1.128m.
- Increase in supplying tuition packages for pupils not in School, costing additional £0.300m.

Early Years Block has a breakeven forecast based on the following information. Thurrock has agreed the following approach for the spring term:

- Where a child registers to take up a place and does not attend any other setting, payment will be made to the setting holding the place.
- Minimum funding guarantee, for each setting, equal to the value paid in spring 2020.
- If a setting chooses not to open, no payment will be made.
- The Local Authority will continue to fund providers which have been advised to close, or left with no option to close, due to public health reasons.

This remains consistent with what has been guaranteed for each term in 2020/21.

Mr E Caines asked how they would get funding if the settings were not open. Mr D May advised that guidance for the spring census is that all early year's provision should remain open and continue to allow all children to attend full time or their usual timetable hours. The setting can then include all children registered to take a place on census whether in attendance or not. If closed due to COVID then the census is still completed as if open. The Chair also commented that if the schools settings have chosen not to open then they would not get the funding. Mr E Caines commented that during the original lockdown they were told that the nursery would close if the school was closed except for key workers. The wording of this was then changed. He feels that parents do not want their children in these settings. Mr D May advised that EFSA guidance advises if the nursery setting is not open to all children then they would not get the funding. The Chair advised that all nursery settings should be fully open. Not all schools have done this and may not get the funding. Mr D May commented that as they are using the spring 2021 census this will have a significant impact on budgets.

Action: M Lucas to contact all schools to re-iterate to them that their nurseries need to be fully open and advise all parents

Mrs J Sawtell-Haines asked if she could furlough her staff in the nursery if all of their children choose not to attend the setting.

Mr E Caines asked about furlough of nursery staff to cover the money which will be lost in the future. Mr D May advised that if the school has chosen not to open he was unsure if furlough would apply. Mr E Caines commented that they were originally told that it was up to the nurseries to decide whether they join the school or close. All decided to close. The guidance was then changed but there was no alert to this change. Also told that this would not be based on census. He feels that this is an appalling situation. The Chair advised they faced significant challenge at one of their schools which they closed due to a high number of staff being extremely ill. He also commented that the DfE have advised that they must open.

The government has updated the rules on how providers who receive early entitlement income can access the Job Retention Scheme.

When working out how much wage support can be claimed via the furlough scheme, providers should now:

- establish how much early entitlement funding you are currently receiving
- calculate what this equates to as a percentage of your usual income

This is the proportion of your wage bill which cannot receive any furlough support, meaning that the rest of your wage bill is eligible for furlough support.

The DfE has also confirmed that providers can now take the decision as to what would reasonably represent a usual monthly income, rather than using February 2020.

AGREED

- a) All Forum members agreed the financial position for 2020-21 and offered comments on action taken or that could be considered.
- b) All Forum members agreed to receive regular updates on 2021-22 projected outturn position.

5. Dedicated School Grant 2021-22

Mr D May went through a presentation and summarised the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2021-22 report which was sent out to all forum members prior to the meeting.

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for 2021/22, was updated to reflect the October 2020 census data received has increased from £11.371m to £16.430m. The primary reason for the change, is the increase in pupil numbers of 469 from October 2019 to October 2020.

Thurrock Cabinet approved that the National Funding Formula would be implemented in full in 2021/22. The report provides an update to the formula to be submitted to the ESFA by 21st January. The final formula 2021/22 is also included in the attached report.

The High Needs Block continues to experience significant increase in demand and costs. It is proposed to transfer funding from the Schools Block £0.673m and the Central Services School Block £0.200m, subject to Schools Forum approval, to support the HNB budget.

The report informs of the challenges faced in Early Years as a result of the impact of Covid and the return to the use of the January 2021 census data. Officers are awaiting updated guidance and further information will be presented at the next meeting.

Mr D May advised that at the Headteachers meeting on the 3 February an update would be provided to all Headteachers to inform them of their provisional funding allocation.

Schools Block

Mr D May advised of the increase in funding of £13.462m is as a result of grants transferring into the Dedicated Schools Grant of £6.269m; increase to funding rates of £4.192m; increase of 468 pupils, realising additional funding of £2.629m and an increase in the growth fund by £0.372m.

In 2021/22 the funding will continue to be distributed using the Schools National Funding Formula (NFF). Key aspects of the formula are:

- The incorporation of the 2019 update to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), ensuring that the deprivation funding through the NFF continues to target schools most likely to need additional funding;
- Funding previously received through the Teachers' Pay Grant (TPG) and Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grants (TPECG), has been added to schools' baselines; by increasing the basic per pupil funding;
- The minimum per pupil funding levels will be set at £4,180 for primary schools and £5,415 for secondary schools.

Mr D May advised that it still remains the government's intention to move to a 'hard' NFF, where budgets will be set on the basis of a single, national formula.

Mr D May discussed the Formula Factors Values.

Mr D May advised that Cabinet agreed that the Thurrock's funding formula in 2021/22 would implement the following principles:

- National Funding Formula values to be applied
- Unallocated funding has allowed an inflationary increase of 1.03257 to be applied to Basic Entitlement values
- Confirmed growth included in formula
- Retained growth £1.213m
- High Needs Block contribution of £0.673m (0.5%)
- Notional SEN %ages consistent with 2020/21

Mr D May circulated the Provisional 2021-22 funding allocations. He advised that Pupil Premium values have not changed. Eligible pupils are now to be determined by October 20 Census.

The Chair thanked Mr D May for the information received.

Mr C Caines commented that normally they would have other meetings to make decisions. Mrs J Sawtell-Haines commented that they did not have the schools forum paperwork before for the Thurrock Primary Heads Association (TPHA) meeting therefore it could not be discussed with the wider primary Headteachers.

Central School Services Block

Historical commitment funding in 2021/22 has been reduced by 20%. Mr D May advised that in Thurrock this is a £0.256m reduction and will be incurred over the next 5 years. The Chair asked how the Locality Authority (LA) were expected to function given this 20% reduction. Mr D May commented that this has been discussed for a number of years by the ESFA and this has been incorporated within the LA medium term financial plan.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haines asked about the savings in venue costs for the School forum. How much has been saved by switching to Virtual Meetings. Mr D May advised at least half around £5,000 and this is ringfenced to the DSG and used to support the HNB. He also advised that virtual meetings will continue for now but DfE permission is needed to continue from April 2021.

High Needs Block

Mr D May advised that the High Needs NFF for 2021/22 remains unchanged. However, with over £730 million of additional funding, the formula will ensure that every local authority will receive an increase of at least 8%. Thurrock has received an increase of £2.856m or 11%.

Key areas:

- Projected Outturn 2019/20 is a deficit of £2.562m.
- Continued Year on Year Increase in EHCP's +12% against a population growth of +2%
- Commissioned Numbers 2021/22 + 63 places with Treetops Free School Opens Sept-21
- New Secondary SEMH Provision Sept-21

Mr D May advised we need to set a balanced budget.

High Needs Block 2021-22 Key risks £1.9m are outlined as follows:

- Top Up Funding -Thurrock Schools -Budget less than the 2020/21 forecasted outturn. Potential financial Risk £0.650m;
- Top Up Funding -Other Local Authorities (4-16) -Budget less than the 2020/21 forecasted outturn. Potential financial Risk £0.150m;
- Top Up Funding -Post 16 -Budget to equal the 2020/21 forecasted outturn. Potential financial Risk £0.125m;
- Pupils not in School -Budget less than the 2020/21 forecasted outturn. Potential financial Risk £0.150m;
- Residential -Non Maintained and Independent –Budget to equal 2020/21 forecasted outturn. Potential financial Risk £0.500m;
- Non Residential -Non Maintained and Independent –Budget to equal 2020/21 forecasted outturn. Potential financial Risk £0.200m;

- Additional High Needs Targeted –Budget less than the 2020/21 forecasted outturn. Potential financial Risk £0.125m;

Mr D May advised these will be discussed in more detail at the March forum Meeting. He also commented that The High Needs Block funding issues are a national problem that require a long term solution.

Band Values

New Band values and rates were introduced in September 2020 following a full review of the costs of running resource bases, special and AP academies, within Thurrock.

The key principle is that all providers will be fully funded based on agreed staffing ratios and support. It is not expected that within the resource provisions that the mainstream School would subsidise the cost of the base.

A review meeting is held annually with each provision to discuss both finance, performance and outcomes. The financial aspect involves:

- reviewing the staffing structure in place, in line with national guidelines as appropriate
- discussion on all other expenditure items for appropriateness; changes from the previous year's expenditure
- transparency on all income and expenditure is made available by all settings.

In 2021/22 it is proposed the following changes will be implemented to maintain parity with the increase to school funding and maintaining the principle of full cost recovery:

- the minimum per pupil funding levels will increase to £4,180 for primary schools and to £5,415 for secondary schools. This increase reflects the transfer of grant into the DSG and increase to funding rates;
- Special and AP academies - A new payment will be included to replace the specific grants for Teachers Pay and Teacher Pension Employee Contribution. The ESFA have calculated this at £660pp.
- A 3% inflationary uplift has been applied to the Top up Value

Mrs Jo Sawtell commented that it was pleasing to see that the transport costs have come down. Mr D May advised the cost of transport had not come down but the charge to the DSG of transport costs has reduced.

Dr Asong asked what were the latest census figures for travellers and if that amount shown was being spent on staff. Mr D May advised that this is mainly spend on staff. Dr Asong would like a breakdown on how many young people they are supporting. This could also be included as part of the over-arching work being done by the sub-committee for Outcomes for disadvantaged and unrepresented student and young people in Thurrock.

Action: ML to get a breakdown on figures within the traveller community and discuss this further as part of the sub-committee for Outcomes for disadvantaged and unrepresented student and young people in Thurrock.

Early Years

Mr D May advised that the ESFA have confirmed the use of the Spring Census on funding in both 2020/21 and 2021/22.

He also advised that Thurrock had agreed the following approach for the spring term:

- Provisional lists, census information and payment profile to follow the guidelines issued

- Where a child registers to take up a place and does not attend any other setting, payment will be made to the setting holding the place.
- If a setting chooses not to open, no payment will be made.
- The Local Authority will continue to fund providers which have been advised to close, or left with no option to close, due to public health reasons.
- Minimum funding guarantee, for each setting, equal to the value paid in spring 2020.

This is consistent with arrangements implemented for Summer and Autumn Terms.

Mr D May outlined the Early Years Funding Formula (EYFF) for 2021/22 as follows:

- The funding announcement included investment of £44m in early years. This will be realised through an increase in the hourly rate to be paid of 8p for 2YO and 6p for 3&4YO.
- EYFF for 2021/22 is based on Jan21 census for 5/12 of the funding and the Jan22 census for 7/12 of the funding.
- Current funding allocation, reflects updated hourly rates and is based on the Jan20 census only.
- In Jul21, the ESFA will confirm the final 2020/21 funding allocation.
- In Jul22, the ESFA will confirm the final 2021/22 funding allocation.

Covid support

The LA has approved the following request to support settings:

A one-off payment as a contribution for COVID related costs to be paid in the spring term. This will be based on the autumn numbers with each provider to receive a fixed amount of £500, with a variable rate of £50 per child. This has a cost implication of £235,250.

AGREED

- a) All Forum members noted the contents of the report.
- b) Forum members agreed to the transfer of 0.5% £0.673m from the Schools Block to High Need Block to support increase demand for Specialist placements and EHCP's in 2021/22. Two abstained from voting.
- c) Forum members agreed to the retention of £1.213m to fund in year growth in 2021/22. One abstained from voting
- d) All Forum members agreed the use of the Central School Services Block budget of £1.783m in 2021/22.
- e) All Forum members agreed the High Needs Block Budget of £29.139m in 2021/22 with the associated risks identified.
- f) All Forum members agreed the Early Years Budget for 2021/22

6. Growth Fund 2021/22

Miss S Williams commented that this report seeks for the Schools Forum to agree to the process for the allocation of growth funding for schools who take bulge classes or expanding schools whereby schools increase their published admission number at the request of the Council.

She advised that following the publication of the Pupil Place Plan last July Miss S Williams and Mr D May have worked together to present the forecasted growth budget for 2021/22.

She commented that the local authority continues to work with schools to ensure that there is a

sufficiency of school places to meet local demand across the borough. This may involve increasing the published admission number (PANS) in those schools where existing places are deemed insufficient to meet projected local demand. Currently the local authority, through basic need funding, supports the capital cost of any required expansion and bulge classes, if that expansion or bulge class has been agreed as part of the pupil place planning process.

The growth fund cannot be used to support schools in financial difficulty. Growth funding in Thurrock will be applied in the following circumstances:

- where a school or academy has agreed with the authority to provide additional places (30 places) to meet basic need in the area (either as a bulge class or on-going commitment).
- To support where a school has increased its PAN in agreement with the local authority to meet basic need in the area.

Funding will be for a full class of 30 children, funded for one year only. For example from September to the following August. There will then be an annual review of the numbers in the bulge class using the summer census. Funding in the second year will be based on the difference in actual numbers of children on roll between the summer and October census.

Growth funding will not apply in the following circumstances:

- For any PAN increases which are not agreed with the local authority as part of the place planning process to meet basic need in the area.
- Where pupils are admitted above a schools PAN as a consequence of appeal, infant class size regulation exceptions or error in the school admissions process.
- The fund will not be applied retrospectively and will only apply to increases in class size agreed with the council.
- Funding will not be provided following the October census whereby the class is not full to capacity.

She advised that the LA is required to publish the methodology used to provide additional growth fund to schools and academies and it must be applied in the same ways regardless of the type of school.

Mr D May advised that the minimum per pupil value which are applied in 2021-22 will be applied to this growth fund.

Falling Rolls Fund

Miss S Williams advised that the guidance issued allows local authorities to top-slice from the schools block to create a small fund to support good or outstanding schools with falling rolls where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years. The only mandatory requirement is that financial support provided via the falling rolls fund is available only to schools and academies judged good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection. The key principles that drive the need to maintain a falling rolls fund are to ensure that places are secured that will be required in the following two to three years (based on the latest demographic information available) and that neither the local authority, or schools/academies incur unnecessary costs in relation to short-term temporary losses in pupil numbers.

She commented that in consideration of the data available it is not considered that this would be appropriate as the conditions outlined above would not be met within Thurrock in 2021/22. Officers will annually consider if circumstances require the development of a policy.

The Chair would like the LA to discuss with their DFE/ESFA link officer, whether the good and outstanding criteria can be dis-applied in certain circumstances. Can a strong case be provided where the school has an Ofsted rating that requires improvement but clear improvements in school performance can be proved.

Action: The LA to discuss with DFE/EFSA Link officer dis-application for the falling rolls fund in certain circumstances for good and outstanding schools and if a strong case can be provided where the school has an Ofsted rating that requires improvement but clear improvements in school performance can be proved.

AGREED

- a) All forum members agreed the proposed criteria for schools and academies accessing funding allocated for growth for the academic year 2021/22
- b) All forum members agreed a Growth Fund budget for 2021/22 of £1,2132,337
- c) The majority of Forum members agreed the need to keep under review the possible need to establish a Falling Rolls Policy. Three members abstained from voting.

7. Thurrock School Forum Forward Plan for 2020-2021

The forward plan was agreed for 2020-21.

Dr Asong commented on the sub group that was setup to examine outcomes for disadvantages and unrepresented students and young people in Thurrock. She would like this to be part of the agenda going forward.

Action: SW to add outcomes for disadvantages and unrepresented students and young people in Thurrock to the forward Plan

AGREED

- a) All forum members noted the contents of the report.

8. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 19th November 2020

All governors were happy with the content.

9. Matters Arising

Previous actions

Mr D May to include numbers at each resource base to the January meeting. This has been included in the attached reports.

Ms S Williams to update date of next meeting. This action is complete.

MT to discuss with resources regarding sharing the framework that was used to choose the bandings for each resource base and the costs. MT commented that within Table 8 of the DSG 2021/22 report, information on the funding to be paid to providers is equal to the costs incurred at each base.

MT to put together costs for out of borough placements for next meeting. MT agreed that this form part of the detail discussion around the DSG Management Plan at the March meeting.

September meeting actions outstanding

A Winstone will send around the figures for the number of EHCPs at each schools.

10. Any Other Business

Miss S Williams has asked if all forum members could upload a picture to their Microsoft Teams profile.

She also advised that as result of these meetings an action log with be produced which will be sent to all members before the minutes are issued.

Mr E Caines asked if any item for decision were included in the next agenda as opposed to information and sent out on time for them to consult with their schools.

11. Date of next meeting

Date of next meeting is 18th March 2021