

Schools Forum 3 October 2006

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Funding for Special Educational Needs (SEN) without statements

Purpose of Report

1. To advise Schools Forum of the outcomes from the meeting of HTCF – Budget Working (BWG) group on 13 September 2006, in respect of proposed changes to funding Special Educational Needs (SEN) without statements in primary schools.

Budget Working Group Discussed

2. Yes – 13 September 2006

Actions for Schools Forum

3. The report presents two options proposing a change to the funding for Special Educational Needs (SEN) without statements; Schools Forum are asked to recommend to the Director of Children's Services their preferred option.

Attachments to Report

4. Appendix 1 & 2

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Background

2. In 2006/07, £2.737m was distributed to schools via the Fair Funding formula to address Special Educational Needs (SEN) for pupils for whom there is no statement of SEN. Of the £2.737m, £0.867m is driven by free school meal eligibility, and £1.870m is driven by under attainment.
3. Schools in the secondary sector attracted £0.748m for under-attainment based on KS2 and KS3 results for pupils currently in KS3 and KS4. Schools in the primary sector attracted £1.122m based on KS1 results only (previously this was the only data available to reflect under-attainment).
4. For a number of years additional assessment data for pupils in Foundation Stage has been captured and reported to the authority in the form of Foundation Stage Profiles. As this data is now readily available it may be combined with KS1 SATs results to produce a more equitable method for distribution of funding for SEN without statements within the primary sector.

Proposals

5. Foundation Stage Profile data has been collated for each school based on the following areas of learning:
 - Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) – three assessment scales,
 - Combined Maths – three assessment scales,
 - Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL) – four assessment scales.
6. Attached at Appendix 1 is a Summary of the financial effect of proposed options (Models A and B) compared to funding actually received in 2006/07. Appendix 2 shows detail of the the proposed assessment scales and weightings which were amended as a result of recommendations made by BWG on 13 September 2006.
7. Both models combine KS1 SATs results for pupils in KS2 Jan 2006 and Foundation Stage Profiles as detailed below for pupils in KS1 Jan 2006.
8. **Model A** combines FSP and KS1 scores and allocates funding equally to SATs weighted and FSP weighted total. The outcome for individual schools is a maximum increase in funding of £13,303 and a maximum reduction of £5,608.
9. **Model B** splits the total funding for primary sector (£1.122m) into two parts and uses FSP to drive £0.481m (3/7ths for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) and £0.641m (4/7ths for Years 3-6 inclusive). The outcome for individual schools is a maximum increase in funding of £28,241 and a maximum reduction of £11,906, therefore the immediate effect on schools is more significant than that demonstrated in model A.
10. Eight schools received additional funding under the operation of the Minimum Funding Guarantee in 2006/07. These schools would effectively be protected against incurring any further reduction in funding due to the implementation of changes to the funding of SEN without statements.
11. The operation of the MFG would ensure that all other schools would be protected against a reduction in funding if the reduction in columns (c) or (e) exceeds the value in column (g).
12. BWG on 13 September 2006 considered both options in some detail, and subject to increasing the weightings used in CLL assessment scales, recommend to Schools forum that Model B be adopted.

Finance

13. The funding of schools is prescribed by the DfES through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2006.
14. The Dudley Scheme of Fair Funding requires all formula changes to be consulted upon. Any changes could be operational by April 2007 subject to a shortened consultation period. Alternatively the recommended proposal would be to offer a full term consultation period and implement agreed changes in April 2008. This would coincide with the start of the new DSG multi year funding period, and would give

schools affected by the turbulence in funding, sufficient planning time to make necessary adjustments to spending plans.

15. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget is funded by a direct DfES grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

Law

16. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

Equality Impact

17. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

Recommendation

18. Schools Forum consider the report in respect of funding for SEN without statements in the primary sector and advise the Director of Children's Services regarding a potential variation to the Dudley Fair Funding formula in line with model A or B or alternatively retaining the status quo.



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