

## DRAFT MINUTES- MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS' FUNDING FORUM (SFF)

8:00 – 12:00, 10 October

**Mercure Maidstone, Great Danes Hotel, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne, Maidstone, Kent ME17 1RE**

**Present:** John Dennis (Chairperson), Phil Sayer (Vice Chairperson), Janice Brooke, David Stanley, David Whitehead, Alison Coppitters, Lynda Downes, Mark Tomkins, Annabel Lilley, Michael Blanning, Richard Powell, Neil Willis, Anne Davis (Observer), Carl Roberts (Observer), Tracey McCartney, Ben Cooper, Alison Hook (Substituting for Rosemary Joyce), Louise Burgess, Ceranne Litton, Michael Powis, Roger Gough (Member), Patrick Leeson, Simon Pleace, Ian Hamilton (Clerk), Julie Ely (LA Officer), Louise Langley (LA Officer),

**Apologies:** Mike Smith

1.	<p><b>High Needs Budget Forecast for 2017-18</b></p> <p>To access a copy of the presentation click on this link <a href="#">Item 1 High Needs Funding Forecast for 2017-18</a></p> <p>Simon Pleace presented this item to SFF members. The growth in both High Need (HN) pupil/student numbers and overall cost has been a significant concern of SFF in recent years and therefore a regular update has been provided to members of the SFF.</p> <p>The latest HNs position shows an overall forecast spend for 2017-18 of £161.1 m. In 2016-17 the high needs outturn was £150.8m, and this represents an increase of £10.3m. Since the last time of reporting to the SFF (meeting 30 June) the forecast overspend has increased from £6.7m to £10.3m an increase of £3.6m.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Analysis of High Needs Funding – re-applications August 2016 to August 2017</b></p> <p>To access a copy of the paper click on this link <a href="#">Item 2 Analysis of High Needs funding – re-applications August 2016 to August 2017.</a></p> <p>Ian Hamilton presented this paper to the members of the SFF following a specific request from an earlier Forum meeting. The information presented in the report was based on 2,038 HNPs and is for the first time a robust representative block of data where we could test the perceived trends in the original cost, compared to the re-application cost for HNs mainstream pupils.</p>	



	<p>recommended that there should be specialist provision for the 2% and ensure that they received appropriate provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the main, the majority of the 20% of children with SEN should have their needs met by mainstream teaching, and that should include differentiation and Quality First Teaching. Our recent review highlighted that in some schools this practice is not embedded.</li> <li>- The number of children with EHCPs has nationally remained at around 2.8% of the school population for the last 5 years. In Kent 3% of our school population has EHCPs.</li> <li>- This prevalence rate suggests there might be some over-identification of SEN in Kent schools.</li> <li>- The significant increase in SEN demand includes, increased population, better identification of Speech and Language and ASD. It is therefore important that SEN becomes the core business of the school.</li> <li>- The high needs top up budget needs to be more predictable and more closely linked to patterns of need</li> <li>- The budget must continue to fund the top up required by schools to support the pupils with the most complex needs who may otherwise warrant statutory assessment</li> <li>- The budget must also be used well in tandem with other resources such as LIFT to get the best outcomes for pupils</li> <li>- As the increase in HNF is not sustainable we need to explore new models of funding</li> <li>- Proposals for more effective targeting of HNF would address eligibility, affordability and make process improvements; clearer criteria so all schools better understand which pupils are eligible; make more explicit the expectation that normally available resource have been targeted; greater emphasis on assess, plan, do and review cycle; funding the delivery of the best practice</li> <li>- Top up by primary need type e.g. ASD or HI would be graduated to reflect severity; personalised for 5% most severe (profound). Notional top up for smaller schools to continue.</li> </ul> <p>The content of the paper and the presentation was discussed by the members of the SFF. Members of the SFF approved the following specific changes to the process:</p> <p>1) An additional £250k from the Local Authority will be allocated to</p>	
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employ additional staff to strengthen the gate keeping for Mainstream High Needs funding applications and monitoring of provision.

2) To change the current process to a Need Specific Top up Funding Arrangement from 1 April 2018.

SFF members broadly supported the contents and findings from the report which are going to be communicated to Seniors Leaders, SENCOs and School Governors at a series of meetings hosted by PL over the period October to late November. A final version of the changes to HN's Mainstream SEN process will be presented to the SFF at its meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> December.

The following are the key points raised during the meeting and these along with other points taken from the meetings hosted by PL in October will inform the final process for the funding of High Needs in Mainstream Schools from 1 April 2018:

- A suggestion was put forward that instead of a single claim for each individual pupil, a submission could be made where multiple pupils are included on one application. The application could be by an individual school or group of schools in a Federation or Trust.
- The HN funding submission made by the school listed interventions for the HN pupil but did not include the cost. The rationale for this is that it removes the incentive to include interventions that tipped the application over the £6,000 threshold.
- To work with Special Schools to determine the appropriate level of top-up for a HN mainstream pupil.
- To introduce incentivisation into the High Needs funding system that will encourage/reward schools that adopt a whole school approach to SEN, rather than an individual pupil approach.
- Provide guidance that will help School Governors to identify best use of notional SEN funding in their school.
- As part of the application process schools are required to have attended whole school awareness ASD training provided by LIFTS.
- To publish data that provides a school by school comparison of the number of HN pupils as a % of a school's population. The comparison will take into consideration schools with similar characteristics based on school population and notional SEN funding.
- The number of HN pupils as a percentage of school population (threshold to be determined) will trigger a visit from the SEN monitoring team.
- We need to give due consideration to the best way of providing funding

	for certain pupils when they change schools. This is about providing some continuity in funding whilst also recognising that individual schools may have different approaches to interventions.													
	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>It was agreed that we should extend SFF meeting into the afternoon on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, as we are expecting a long agenda. An email will be sent to all members of SFF at the beginning of November to remind them.</p>	Ian Hamilton												
	<p><b>Future SFF meetings for the remainder of the 2017-18 Academic Year</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th><th>Timings</th><th>Venue</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 December 2017</td><td>8:00 to 12:00</td><td>Mercure, Maidstone Great Danes Hotel</td></tr> <tr> <td>27 April 2018</td><td>8:00 to 12:00</td><td>Oakwood House, Maidstone</td></tr> <tr> <td>29 June 2018</td><td>8:00 to 12:00</td><td>Oakwood House, Maidstone</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Timings	Venue	1 December 2017	8:00 to 12:00	Mercure, Maidstone Great Danes Hotel	27 April 2018	8:00 to 12:00	Oakwood House, Maidstone	29 June 2018	8:00 to 12:00	Oakwood House, Maidstone	
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