



West Northamptonshire Schools Forum

A meeting of the West Northamptonshire Schools Forum will be held at the Council Chamber, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Wednesday 13 December 2023 at 2.00 pm

Agenda

1.	Apologies for absence and Forum Membership Changes
2.	Declarations of Interest Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
3.	Minutes (Pages 5 - 14) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2023.
4.	Election of Vice-Chair for 2023-24
5.	DSG Monitoring 2023-24 (Pages 15 - 20) Emily Cooledge
6.	Schools Funding 2024-25 - outcome of consultation and final proposals (Pages 21 - 44) Emily Cooledge / Beth Baines
a)	Schools Funding Formula
b)	Notional SEND element of funding formula
c)	Split Site Funding Policy
d)	Growth Fund and weighted numbers for new schools / year groups
e)	Central Schools Services budgets 2024-25

f)	Maintained Schools De-delegations (School Improvement Grant, Trade Union Facility Time, Redundancy Support)
7.	<p>Early Years 2024-25</p> <p>Verbal update: for Schools Forum to consider and comment on proposals for consultation.</p> <p>Katie Morlidge</p>
8.	<p>High Needs Budget 2024-25 (Pages 45 - 54)</p> <p>For Schools Forum to be advised of consultation proposals.</p> <p>Beth Baines / Ben Pearson</p>
9.	<p>High Needs Project Update (Pages 55 - 76)</p> <p>Andy Pymm</p>
10.	<p>Forward Plan</p> <p>Standing items (if required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSG Monitoring • DfE / ESFA Funding announcements • School Budgets • High Needs • Early Years • National Funding Formula <p>14 February 2024</p> <p>Early Years Budget 2024-25 – outcome of consultation and consideration of final proposals, including vote on central expenditure.</p> <p>WNC Budget Proposals 2024-25</p> <p>Schools Forum meeting dates 2024-25</p>
11.	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>The Chair to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.</p>

Catherine Whitehead
Proper Officer
6 December 2023

West Northamptonshire Schools Forum Members:

Beccy Merritt	Paul Wheeler
Peter French	Dan York
James Shryane	Lee Hughes
Vanessa Bradley	Jon Lake
Rachel Martin	Iain Massey
Karen Lewis	Hayley Walker
Jenny Thorpe	Eliza Hollis
Rod Warsap	

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

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NN1 1DE

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West Northamptonshire Schools Forum

Minutes of a meeting of the West Northamptonshire Schools Forum held at Council Chamber, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Wednesday 18 October 2023 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Paul Wheeler, Chair (PW)
 Beccy Merritt (BM)
 Dan York (DY)
 Rachel Martin (RM)
 Thomas Goodridge (substituting for Jenny Thorpe) (TG)
 Lee Hughes – online (LH)
 Hayley Walker – online (HW)
 Eliza Hollis – online (EH)
 Tracey Carter (substituting for Karen Lewis) – online (TC)

Also Present:

Councillor Fiona Baker, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education (FB)
 Richard Poole, UNISON (RP)

Officers:

Ben Pearson, Assistant Director Education (BP)
 Andy Pymm, Project Manager SEND Funding (AP)
 Emily Cooledge, Strategic Finance Business Partner (EC)
 Beth Baines, Senior Finance Business Partner (BB)
 Shazia Umer, Head of Place Planning and Pupil Admissions (SU)
 Rosemary Kavanagh, HR Specialist Strategy and Projects (RK)
 Simon Bowers, Assistant Director Assets and Environment (SB)
 James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager (JE)
 Kathryn Holton, Committee Officer (KH)

1. **Apologies for absence and Forum Membership Changes**

Apologies were received from Peter French, Jon Lake, Karen Lewis (Tracey Carter substituting), Iain Massey, James Shryane and Jenny Thorpe (Thomas Goodridge substituting).

Louise Samways resigned as an academy mainstream representative in July 2023.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

3. **Election of Chair for 2023-24**

JE asked Schools Forum for any nominations for Chair. BM proposed PW and this was seconded by LH with all members in agreement.

RESOLVED: That Paul Wheeler be elected as Chair of West Northamptonshire Schools Forum for 2023-24.

4. **Election of Vice-Chair for 2023-24**

There were no nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED: that the election of Vice-Chair would be held over until the next meeting.

5. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.
- That the notes of the inquorate meeting on 4 July 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

6. **DSG Monitoring 2023-24**

EC advised that the report outlined the position at period 4 which had been reported to Cabinet in September 2023. The DSG forecast outturn and variance estimated an overspend of £1.9m. This was mostly related to the High Needs Block (HNB) due to an increase in numbers and in independent school placements. Work was ongoing within the WNC capital programme to increase capacity which would reduce costs in the medium term. The in-year position was expected to worsen. The CSSB overspend was due to historical pension costs. The Early Years underspend was due to staffing vacancies; active recruitment was underway. Costs were currently 9% lower than WNC's nearest neighbours with the national position being 81/125 authorities.

The following comments were made:

- The commissioning of Educational Psychologists to reduce the backlog would lead to an increase in EHCPs. How would this be addressed?
- Were WNC at the bottom of the funding band because needs had not been identified historically?

EC/BP responded as follows:

- Capital investment would assist in creating additional capacity for places after dealing with the increased EHCPs and additional modelling would take place over the medium term.
- Under-identification of needs had been an issue. WNC were 1.5% below the national average for the primary phase.
- The impact of lockdown on children was still ongoing. There were more requests for additional support and the severity of need was increasing. There were a

number of programmes being implemented to address this but they would take some time.

- SB advised that outdoor learning centres had been approached to see if increased provision could be made available for schools.

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum noted the forecast outturn position for 2023-24.

7. **DfE / ESFA Funding Announcements**

EC presented the paper outlining the Schools and High Needs National Funding Formula provisional settlement version 2. Additional work had been required following publication of updated provisional settlement. Table 1 showed the current year against the revised provisional settlement. Unfortunately the revised settlement had resulted in a decrease of £3m across the Schools Block since the July announcement and the resultant increase from the current year was 2% (£6.9m).

BB made the following comments:

- There had been no major new formula components this year. The regular uplift of the rates had happened which took the additional grant and rolled it into the base.
- There had been a 1.4% increase on the AWPU and High Needs factors.
- The FSM factor would increase by 1.6%.
- There were two per pupil funding units - AWPU and an overarching minimum per pupil funding level (MppFL). The MppFL had increased; details were set out in the table on page 29 of the report.
- The minimum funding guarantee (MFG) for schools had been set at 0.5%, although in practice some schools would receive less than this. BB was happy to discuss in more detail with those affected.
- Split site funding was now calculated using a national formula which had resulted in more schools being included which pulled funding away from other schools.
- There had also been changes to the growth fund and to notional SEND.
- The HNB was proposed to increase by 3.2% (£2.1m). The forecast overspend on the DSG at period 4 for the current financial year was £1.9m and the proposed funding increase would not be enough to cover the structural deficit, growth and inflationary costs.
- The CSSB had two parts – ongoing responsibilities and historical funding. It was reducing by 20% each year and 2024/25 was expected to be the first year when it would fall below the unavoidable costs. An application would be made to ask for that to be held to cover pension costs.
- The figures included the rolling-in of the mainstream additional grant. Each year there had been an additional grant in December, but this could not be guaranteed.

The Chair noted that the figures showed a depressing picture. The additional money for high needs might not even cover the deficit, let alone inflationary pressures.

Thanks were expressed to BB for her work on the revised settlement.

BP suggested that the Schools Forum could write to the DfE expressing concern at the financial position. This was agreed.

The Chair thanked officers for their work in responding to the revised provisional settlement.

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum noted the update on funding announcements and agreed to write to the Department for Education expressing concern about the financial pressures facing schools in 2024-25.

8. **Schools Funding 2024-25 - consultation proposals**

BB outlined the draft consultation as follows:

- Some items were now set nationally but there were still some requiring consultation.
- The split site funding policy was now set nationally.
- A Schools Forum vote was still required for the Growth Fund and some changes were proposed to align with guidance and to consider increasing rates with salary inflation.
- There were a list of Weighted Numbers which Schools Forum would need to agree in December.
- The falling rolls fund had been voted out in the past. It was not proposed to implement this because no school would benefit from it.
- The proposed de-delegation rates were not changing for SIG and redundancy funding. The TU funding would either continue at the current rate or increase by 10%. The rate had been reduced last year due to a surplus and the 10% increase would put this back, not cover inflation. Work was being carried out with unions for better buy-back particularly for academy schools.
- The Government had asked LAs to consult on the notional SEND budget which had not been done since 2013. There had been discussion on how this budget could be used to help the HNB and enable schools to be more inclusive. There were differences of opinion between authorities. The formula had not quite been resolved but would be in the consultation.

RP pointed out that school support staff were facing an increase in injuries and work-related stress due to dealing with behaviour of EHCP pupils. Union input could support heads and prevent staff leaving. RP asked for an impact assessment to be distributed to schools so that an informed decision on cost per pupil could be made. It was agreed that the impact assessment would be added to the consultation as an appendix.

Members made the following comments:

- What was SCAP population data? Small rural schools had a lot of variation in numbers.
- Had capacity/sufficiency data been published?
- The notional SEND section was unclear.
- Were the factors for notional SEND funding changing?

- Was notional SEND likely to be baked into a national formula? If so, this would have an impact on schools.

BB/BP/SU responded as follows:

- SU advised that falling rolls required forecasts to be submitted for the next 7 years
- BP advised that a temporary dip in population was difficult to evidence, although it could be reviewed in the future.
- The notional SEND funding was the part of the budget which the government expected to spend on SEND. Clarity was needed because it was complex and open to different interpretations. The relevant section would be revised to improve understanding.
- The overall total SEND funding was not set to change but the percentages applied to different characteristics such as AWPU, FSM and IDACI would change.
- There was currently no national formula for notional SEND but this seemed to be the direction of travel.

BP advised that suggestions for improving the consultation response rate would be welcomed. A table would be included in Head West to show how each school would be affected. When engaging with Multi-Academy Trusts (MAT) there could be one response from the MAT plus one from each school.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum noted the proposed process and timeline for the 2024-25 school funding consultation and agreed to the addition of the Trade Union impact assessment and reworded SEND section.

9. **Northampton Schools Group PFI Update**

SB presented the report updating members on the PFI contract. SB highlighted that the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) was due to produce a new inflation forecast in November 2023, although RPIx had been close to the actual position in any case. Work by WNC to examine PFI costs was close to an end and should enable a case for additional funding to be put to the ESFA. The results of the last PFI customer satisfaction survey in October 2022 were consistent with a pattern of a minority of schools experiencing poor performance. However, the contractor was putting real effort into improving, which would hopefully become apparent.

Members made the following comments:

- If there was a difference in April 2024 from the OBR forecasts would the assumption be held and adjustments made later?
- Would any recoupment for non-service be used to offset any potential increases across PFI?
- The contractual period of 2 years between satisfaction surveys was a long time. Could it be beneficial to conduct an additional survey to understand current performance?
- Schools PFI Forum was intended to meet once per term. Would a meeting take place before the end of 2023?

SB responded as follows:

- It was likely that the forecast figures would be used, whether this benefited schools or not, although this was open to discussion.
- The Council were entitled to keep any recoupment for non-service so this would not be returned.
- Conducting an additional survey could be suggested to the contractor, although any issues should be reported as soon as possible.
- Issues with RAAC had consumed the team's time, but it was still hoped to schedule a meeting of the Schools PFI Forum before the end of the autumn term 2023.

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum noted the update.

10. **High Needs Project Update**

BP thanked everyone involved in the launch of the SEND and AP strategy. More than 500 people had attended. There had been 206 pieces of feedback, 98% of which were positive. However, there was still more work to be done. The report showed the additional SEND places already being delivered. Further expansion via a needs-led approach was being discussed and all teachers needed to be engaged with SEND.

AP advised that the additional SEND capacity table had been included in the update as previously requested.

AP went on to highlight progress being made in key areas of activity.

SEND Ranges: work was being carried out to develop the workstream within the strategy, although the dates had slipped into the next half term. Value was being added by implementing training.

The funding consultation had been completed. This had taken place on multiple platforms and reached over 35k people, although some would have been duplicated, for example as both a citizen and a parent. The objective had been to drive awareness and enable participants to share their views.

257 responses in total were received. Not all of those who responded had actually submitted their response, and those who did submit tended to have responded differently. A summary was outlined in the report. The results would be clustered and a summary paper produced. Responses to the survey supported the proposed direction on SEND funding.

The following comments were made:

- The questions appeared to be loaded, particularly the question on whether children and young people with SEND, that do not have an EHC Plan, should receive funding via their education setting.
- Significant work had gone into increasing SEND capacity but numbers would continue to increase.
- Concerns had previously been raised about pinch points from KS2-3.

- Was any time and investment being put into early years? The sector had capacity but would need funding.

AP/BP responded as follows:

- There had been increased requests for support and assessment of children in year 6. Improvements needed to be made to identify and address needs earlier.
- The team was engaging with secondary schools about provision focussed on maintaining continuity of support from KS2-3.
- The current focus on primary ages reflected that this was where the biggest gap in provision had been identified.
- Early years challenges needed to be addressed and the team were keen to have discussions and improve efficiency.

FB advised that the SEND launch event had been organised by Creating Tomorrow College. The young people came to the building, took part in the meeting and ran the event. They rose to the occasion and she was very proud of them. Employers needed to be accepting of those who were different. BP advised that 3 interns with SEND had recently been employed by the Council. They had ideas and passion and were willing to challenge what was being done and why.

Financial modelling and funding recommendations: AP outlined the slide showing the differences between EHCP and non-EHCP funding. Discussions were being held with sub-groups which would then come back to Schools Forum. It was important to get rates as accurate as possible to avoid problems faced by other councils such as clawbacks or a large number of appeals.

The following comments were made:

- Historically there had been a poor response from the early years sector to the consultation. How could this be improved?
- Pre-warning people of the consultation could be helpful in improving responses.
- WNC needed to improve the way it was seen in the early years sector and also change the perception that giving feedback on the funding model would have no effect.
- RM was happy to read through the consultation beforehand and advise on accessibility.
- Were processes being considered within the consultation as well as finance and funding and would these be communicated to all?
- Was 1 April 2024 realistic for implementation of payment changes?

BB/BP/AP responded as follows:

- A web-based platform would be used for the consultation, together with direct emails, Head West and Early Years Connections.
- An Early Years team was being created, but it would be helpful for WNC to engage with Early Years events that were already taking place such as the Early Years Provider Network meetings.

- WNC was open to all ideas about how to maximise engagement, including incentivising responses to consultation and engaging through existing events and networks.
- Work was being done with sectors to look at processes and this would be shared via the local offer. Resources and expertise were being used to help visualise the process and process mapping as part of the SEND improvement scheme.
- It was anticipated that the earliest payments would be made from 1 April 2024, although this would be phased with Further Education following a later timetable.
- Testing was taking place with volunteer providers to accelerate an easier to complete form.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum noted the update.

11. **West Northamptonshire Council scrutiny review of child and adolescent mental health and the risk of self-harm [verbal item]**

BP reported that as part of a scrutiny review, health colleagues had requested the Council to ask members of Schools Forum if additional funding could be considered to support mental health in schools. Whilst recognising the need, members considered that the pressures on school budgets were already acute and that this request could not therefore be accommodated.

RESOLVED: That due to budget constraints Schools Forum were unable to consider the provision of additional funding for mental health support in schools.

12. **Schools Forum meeting arrangements - responses to survey**

JE summarised the results from the recent survey of members regarding future meeting arrangements.

The following points were made:

- The responses from the survey were mixed with no strong preferences.
- Decision making was easier in person, but it was possible to manage voting at hybrid meetings.
- Face to face meetings were good, but online participation as a backup was necessary.
- The July meeting had not been quorate; this might be better held online because of the difficulties of attending in person due to end of term pressures.

RESOLVED: That future Schools Forum meetings be held on Tuesdays at 2.00pm where possible. In-person meetings were preferred (with remote access as required) to be held at The Forum in Towcester except for the July meeting which would be held as an online only meeting.

13. **Forward Plan**

JE outlined the forward plan and asked members to agree the change of meeting date from 6 February 2024 to 14 February 2024.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum noted the Forward Plan and agreed the change of date of the 6 February 2024 meeting to 14 February 2024.

The meeting closed at 4.15 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____

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West Northants Schools Forum: 13 December 2023
Agenda Item 5
2023-24 Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring as at Period 7

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report provides an assessment of West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) financial performance against its approved 2023-24 DSG budget, incorporating key financial risks, issues and opportunities identified since 1 April 2023, for schools forum to note.
- 1.2 Table 1 shows the relevant responsibilities in relation to in year monitoring which is taken from the Education and Skills Funding Agency's Schools Forum Powers and Responsibilities, published in March 2021.

Table 1

Local Authority	Schools forum	ESFA
De-delegation – proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where Forum disagrees with the Authority's proposals
General Duties for maintained schools – proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where Forum disagrees with the Authority's proposals
Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund – proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where Forum disagrees with the Authority's proposals
Central Spend on Early Years and Central School Services – proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where Forum disagrees with the Authority's proposals
Central Spend on High Needs – Decides	None, but good practice to Consult	None

2 2023-24 Forecast Outturn

- 2.1 Table 1 summarises the DSG forecast outturn and variance currently being estimated for this financial year at the end of Period 7. It highlights some increased identified service pressures against the high needs block which will be sought to be managed within year and across the medium term.

Table 1 – Forecast Outturn 2023-24 by DSG Block £k

DSG Block	Gross Expenditure Budget	Recoupment	Net Expenditure Budget	Period 7 Forecast Expenditure	Period 7 Forecast Variance	Movement from Period 4
Schools	342,175	(273,243)	68,932	68,958	26	26
Early Years Provision	27,845	0	27,845	27,589	(256)	(118)
High Needs	71,475	(16,851)	54,624	59,016	4,392	2,780
Central Schools Services Block	3,791	0	3,791	3,781	(10)	(447)
TOTAL	445,286	(290,094)	155,192	159,344	4,152	2,241

2.2 The DSG is currently forecasting an overspend of £4.15m – an adverse movement of £2.24m from the position reported at P4 mainly due to additional demand pressures in the high needs block.

High Needs Block

2.3 The forecast pressure in the high needs block totalling £4.39m overspend is due to increased demand for out of county placements and provision for pupils with SEND.

2.4 This is especially for young people with social, emotional and mental health needs alongside other needs such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and learning difficulties.

2.5 Independent special school placements are forecast to overspend by £2.8m and have increased by 34 pupils by the end of July whereas the increase for the whole of 2022-23 was 52. The cost of placements has also increased from an annual average of £50k to £55k which is a combination of increased need but also inflation on the costs being charged.

2.6 Pressures in provision for pupils with SEN (units, resourced provision and mainstream top ups) also exceed budgeted levels due to increased demand by £2.0m.

2.7 These pressures are mitigated in part by forecast underspends across post 16 provision.

2.8 Additional capacity in the Educational Psychology team is being commissioned on a fixed term basis, funded by one off resources from the Council's general fund, to provide the statutory assessments needed to significantly improve the current performance, while enabling the substantive service to continue to recruit permanent staff and complete new assessments. This work is expected to commence in quarter 4 and continue into the new academic year.

2.9 As a direct result of assessments working through the system, there is a significant likelihood that the forecast overspend on the high needs block will increase in the short term.

Early Years Block

2.10 The early years block is forecast to underspend by £0.26m on central expenditure due to staffing vacancies. The service continues to recruit to centrally funded posts to offer the sector advice, support and guidance around quality first teaching,

safeguarding, SEND specialist support, transitions, funding and any other areas of need.

DSG Balances

2.11 The table below shows the forecast DSG balances as at 31 March 2024 based on the current estimate of commitments, and in year forecast at period 7.

Table 2 – Forecast Balances 2023-24 by DSG Block £k

DSG Block	Balance as at 31 March 2023	Movements in Year 2023-24	2023-24 P7 Forecast Outturn Variance	Forecast Balance as at 31 March 2024	Movement from Period 4
Schools	(441)	441	26	26	26
Early Years	(2,065)	1,000	(256)	(1,321)	(118)
High Needs	1,967	(1,703)	4,392	4,656	2,780
Central Schools Services Block	(1,610)	0	(10)	(1,620)	(447)
TOTAL	(2,149)	(262)	4,152	1,741	2,241

2.12 Any local authority that has an overall deficit on its DSG account at the end of the financial year, or whose DSG surplus has substantially reduced during the year, must co-operate with the Department for Education in handling that situation. In particular, the authority must:

- provide information as and when requested by the department about its plans for managing its DSG account in the current financial year and subsequent years
- provide information as and when requested by the department about pressures and potential savings on its high needs budget
- meet with officials of the department as and when they request to discuss the authority's plans and financial situation
- keep the schools forum regularly updated about the authority's DSG account and plans for handling it, including high needs pressures and potential savings.

2.13 The Secretary of State reserves the right to impose more specific conditions of grant on individual local authorities that have an overall deficit on their DSG account, where they believe that the LA are not taking sufficient action to address the situation.

2.14 The challenges WNC face around increasing demand, rising costs due to inflation, and current lack of placement supply in county to meet demand leading to requirement for out of county placements at a greater cost than in county are replicated nationally.

2.16 WNC costs have previously been comparatively low compared to regional and national benchmark.

- 2.17 WNC faces additional challenges in that the funding it receives from central government is amongst the lowest compared to regional and national benchmark, with the increase in funding in recent years being at the bottom end of the annual % uplift through the High Needs National Funding Formula, and at just 3% for 2024-25. Even if the Council were to get the maximum uplift in funding at 5%, this would not even be sufficient to meet the structural deficit.
- 2.18 The most recent estimate of the national High Needs block deficit is £2.3bn at the end of March (rising to £3.6bn by 2025 with no intervention), with some London authorities with deficits in excess of £100m, and some regional neighbours with deficits up to £30m.
- 2.19 WNC is actively undertaking significant work to put in place actions to mitigate and manage demand pressures in year, and across the medium term.
- 2.20 For example, the 2023-24 capital programme includes a total of circa £34m investment in a new special school with a target completion date of September 2025, and continuation of works to increase resourced places in mainstream schools and special school expansions over the next academic year to support better outcomes for children, create in excess of an additional 600 places and reduce financial pressures over the medium term. This will be funded through central government grants and Council borrowing.
- 2.21 The Council have also consulted on the transfer of funding from the schools block to the high needs block in 2024-25 which if agreed will provide c£1.75m additional funding for the high needs block in meeting demand pressures going forwards.
- 2.22 The Council is committed to working with the sector, from early years through to post 16, and using expertise across all partners to develop best practice in ensuring a system wide approach to ensure that there are enough high-quality services and provisions, which are jointly planned and delivered, so children and young people can stay within their local communities wherever possible.

3 Financial implications

- 3.1 The resource and financial implications of the WNC DSG budget are set out in the body of, and appendices to, this report.

4 Legal implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

5 Risks

- 5.1 This report sets out the financial forecast and risks identified following the period 7 review of the Council's DSG budgets.

6 Recommendations for Schools forum

- 6.1 That Schools forum notes the forecast outturn position for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Report Author:

Officer name: Emily Cooleage

Officer title: Strategic Finance Business Partner

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West Northants Schools Forum: 13 December 2023
Agenda Item 6
Mainstream School Budgets 2024-25

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Schools Forum Consultation Written Responses

Appendix B – estimated cost of de-delegations per school

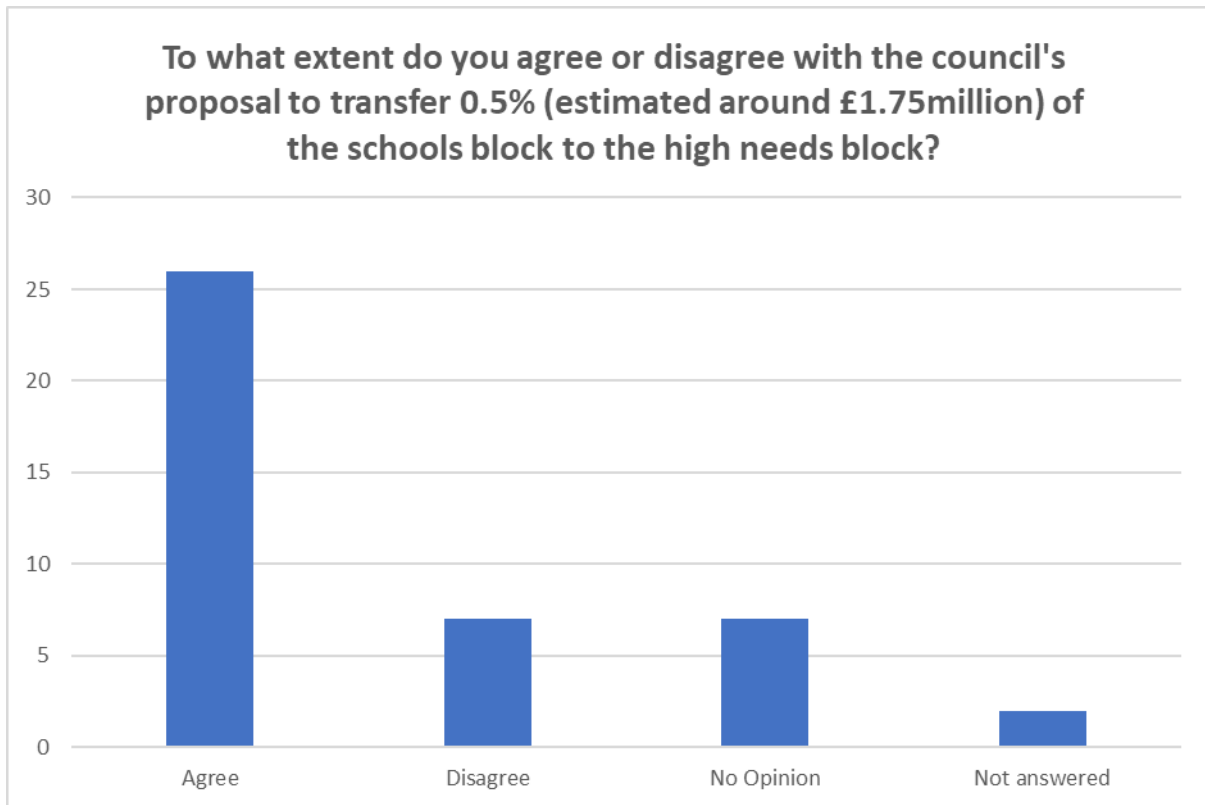
1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is to inform West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Schools Forum of the responses to the schools forum budget consultation for 2024-25. This will support their decisions for setting block moves and centrally managed budgets. The consultation ran from the 1st of November to the 30th November and WNC received 42 responses from 186 schools (prior year was 57).
- 1.2 This consultation was first taken in draft to the Schools Forum in October 2023 prior to going live.
- 1.3 Reviews of the consultation feedback have led to changes in some of the options being presented to schools forum members. For example an increased rate is suggested for the size of the School Improvements Grant de-delegation for maintained schools due to the request for bursar support and training.
- 1.4 There is also a change in the growth fund budget for 2024-25 to support schools taking pupils from the closure of another school. These are highlighted and explained in the relevant sections.

2 Responses to the consultation

3 Schools Block transfer of 0.5% to the High Needs Block

- 3.1 WNC propose to transfer 0.5% of the schools block to the high needs block (0.5% was also in transferred to the 2023-24 high needs block). If this 0.5% transfer weren't made, then it would add an estimated pressure of £1.75m to an already stretched budget. The response to the question was supportive of the move with 26 of the 42 respondents agreeing with the transfer.

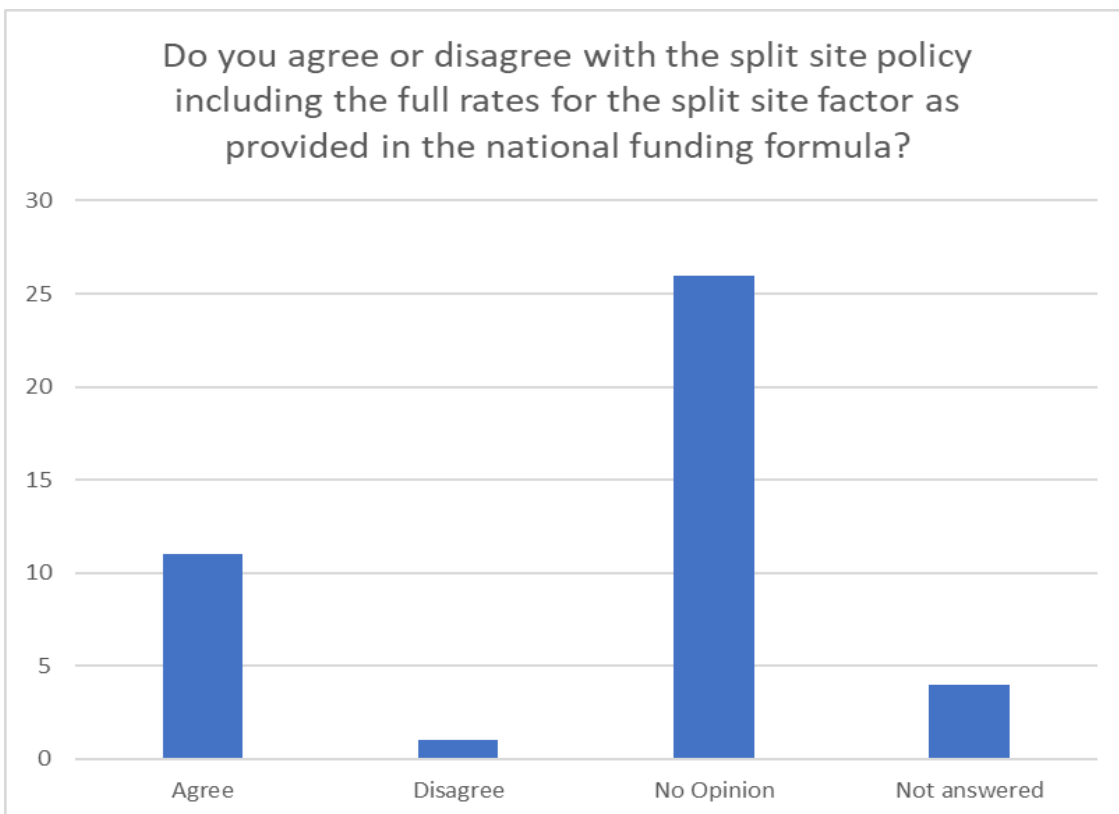
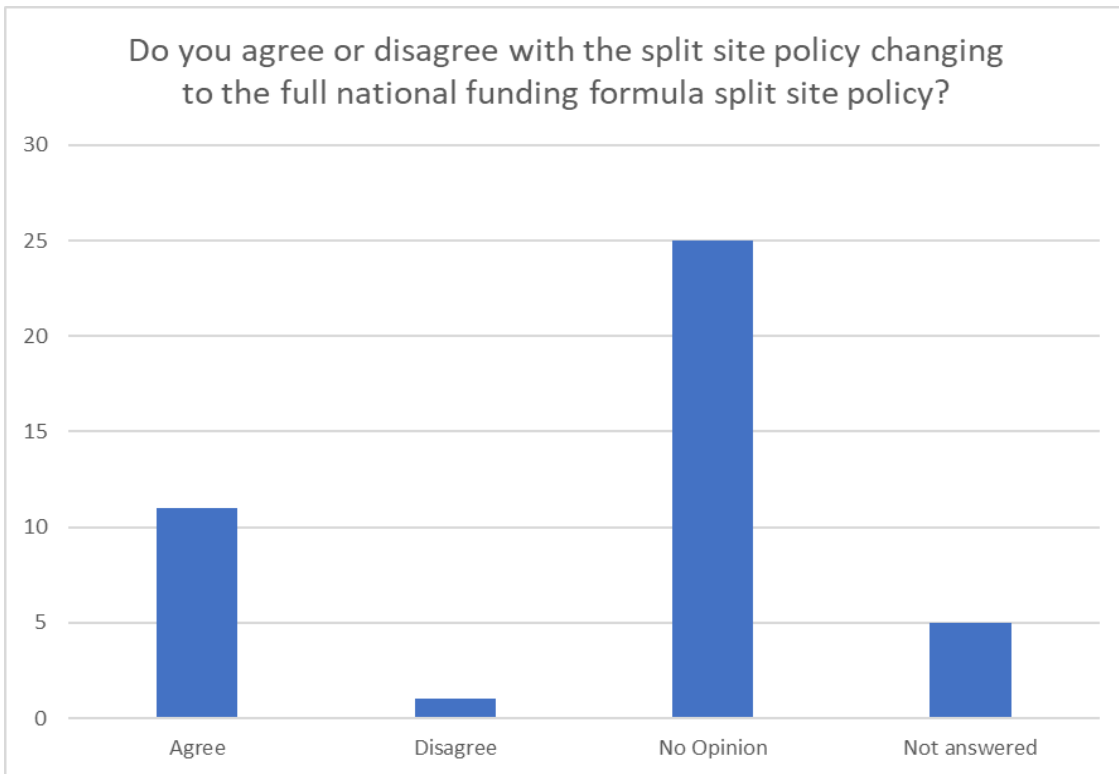


3.2 We asked our school leaders if they had other comments they would like to make on the national funding formula and the transfer of 0.5% to the high needs block. These responses are shown in full in appendix A. There was widespread support and understanding regards the increase in funding for the high needs block and acknowledgement of the financial pressure on, and increased demand for, SEND education. However, many commented that this should not be done to the detriment of mainstream school pupils education funding, that mainstream schools need the funding as do the SEND schools. One comment was that there simply is not enough funding within the education system.

3.3 There were also a number of comments relating to the distribution of high needs funding and it being difficult to access. WNC is committed to ensuring that all children, pupils and young people have access to the education that they need and we want to assure all our education providers, parents, pupils and students that we are working to address the back log of assessments due to the national shortage of educational psychologists. There is a £450k investment in reducing this backlog across 2023-24 and 2024-25 with significant service improvements and investment underway. In addition, the current SEND project is working to ensure that decisions around funding for education are open, transparent and fair.

4 Split site funding policy change

4.1 The national funding formula prescribes a standard split site funding policy and rates for the first time in 2024-25. We recommended moving to the new policy and rates in full to mirror the national funding formula. The responses to the split site policy were largely in favour of adopting the change as were the responses to adopting the rates in full for 2024-25, with 11 in agreement with both, one disagreeing and 30 either with no opinion or not responding to that question.



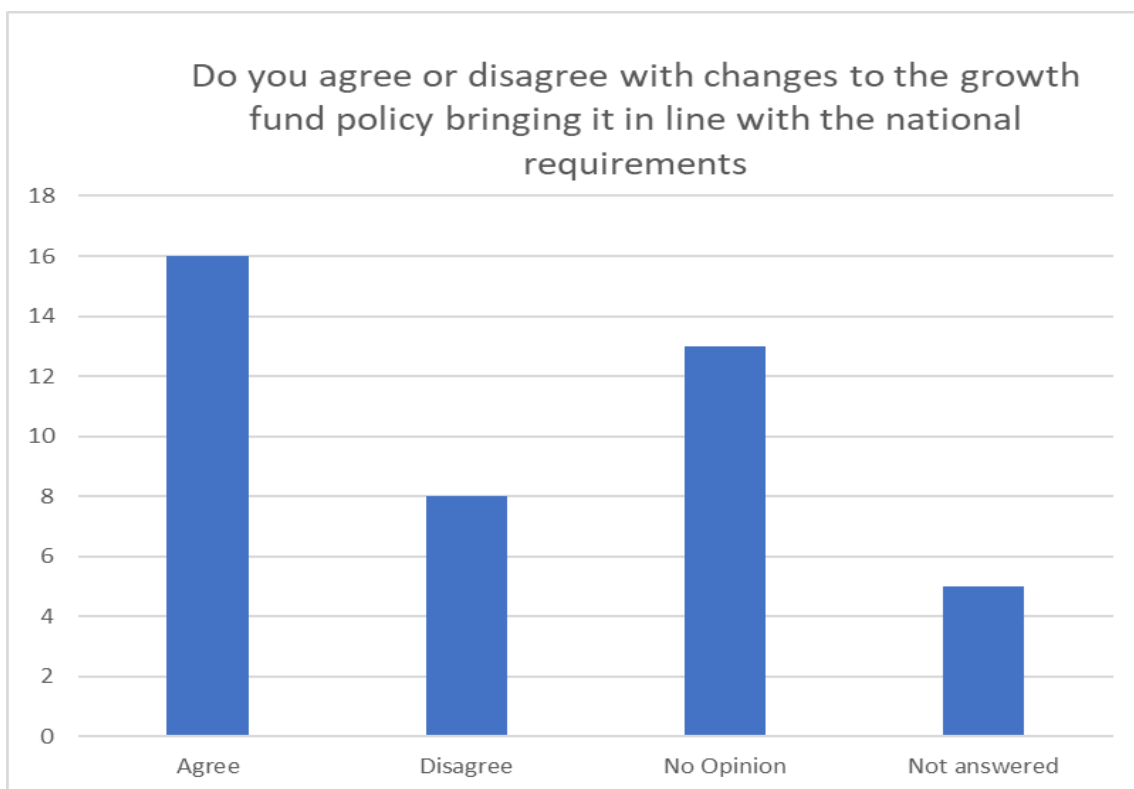
4.2 There were 8 comments provided by schools for the split site section which noted that as the split site is now part of the national funding formula it should be applied at WNC but that where capping and size of school mean that they are adversely affected, adjustments should be made to the formula to prevent them having significant financial difficulty as a result of formula changes. We will analyse the impact on small schools when the final DSG settlement

is released and liaise with the ESFA, Cllr Baker and Schools Forum members if we see any unintended consequences as a result of the formula changes.

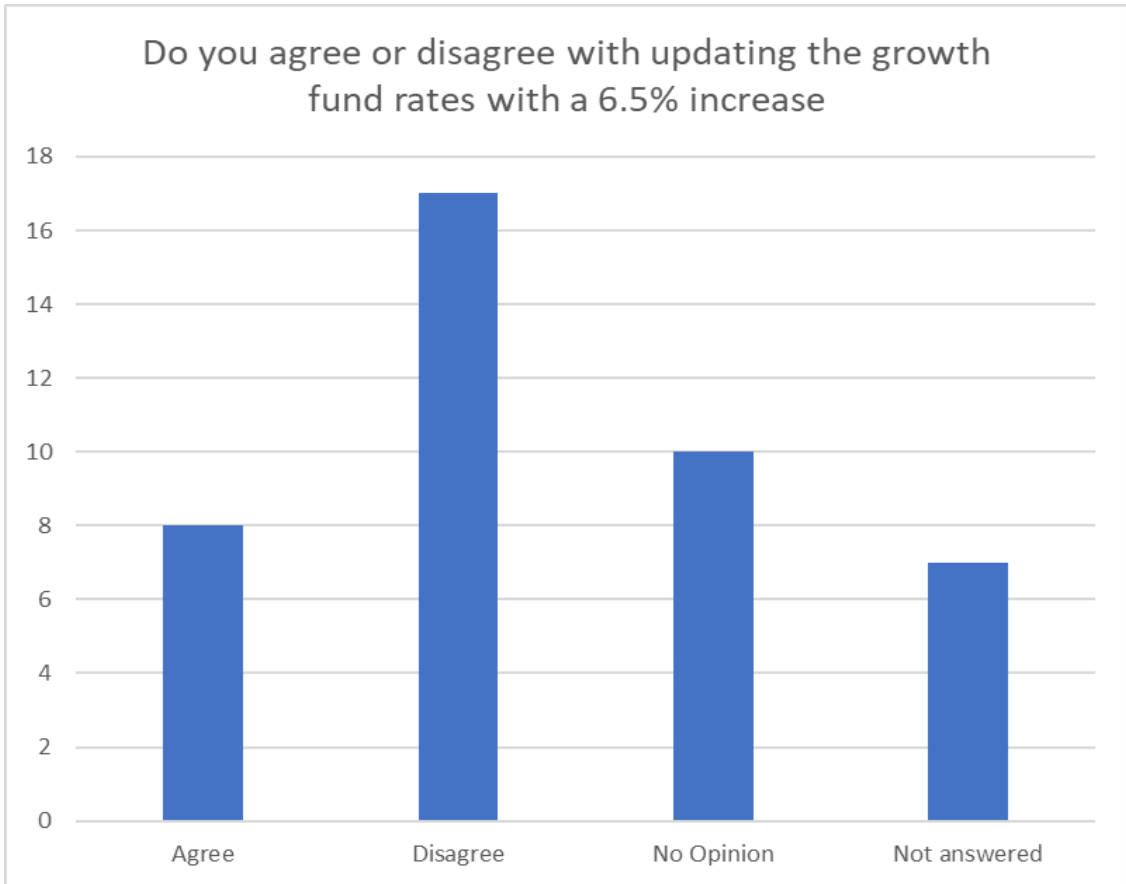
- 4.3 Other commentators said that split site funding did not apply to them, but it will affect all schools as it reduces the overall funding available to other schools by implementing the new rates in full.
- 4.4 Another comment was that having split sites with the additional costs of other buildings is difficult to manage on the schools budget without split site funding.

5 Growth fund policy, rates, weighted numbers and the growth fund budget

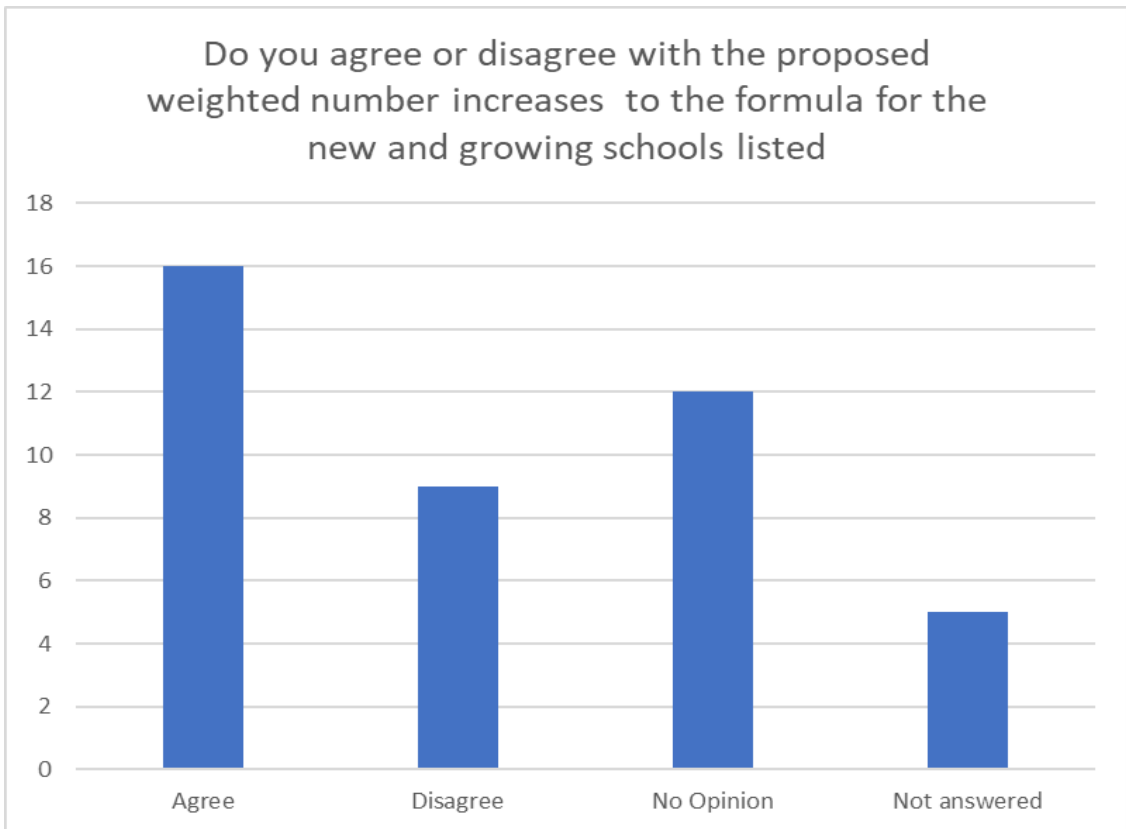
- 5.1 It is Schools Forum’s responsibility for setting the Growth Fund policy, budget, rates and the weighted numbers to be added to schools budgets for new and growing schools. For the first time in 2024-25 there are requirements to fund the in year growth regardless of pupil admission number but on the basis of whether a school will have to add an additional class (when at the request of the LA).
- 5.2 We asked if schools were in agreement with the changes proposed to WNC’s growth fund policy and the response was largely in favour of this with 16 being in agreement. There were 8 who disagreed and 18 with either no opinion or no response.



- 5.3 We also consulted on updating the growth fund rates in line with the teachers salary increase in 2023-24, and 17 disagreed with this increase. There were 8 in agreement and 17 with either no opinion or no response.

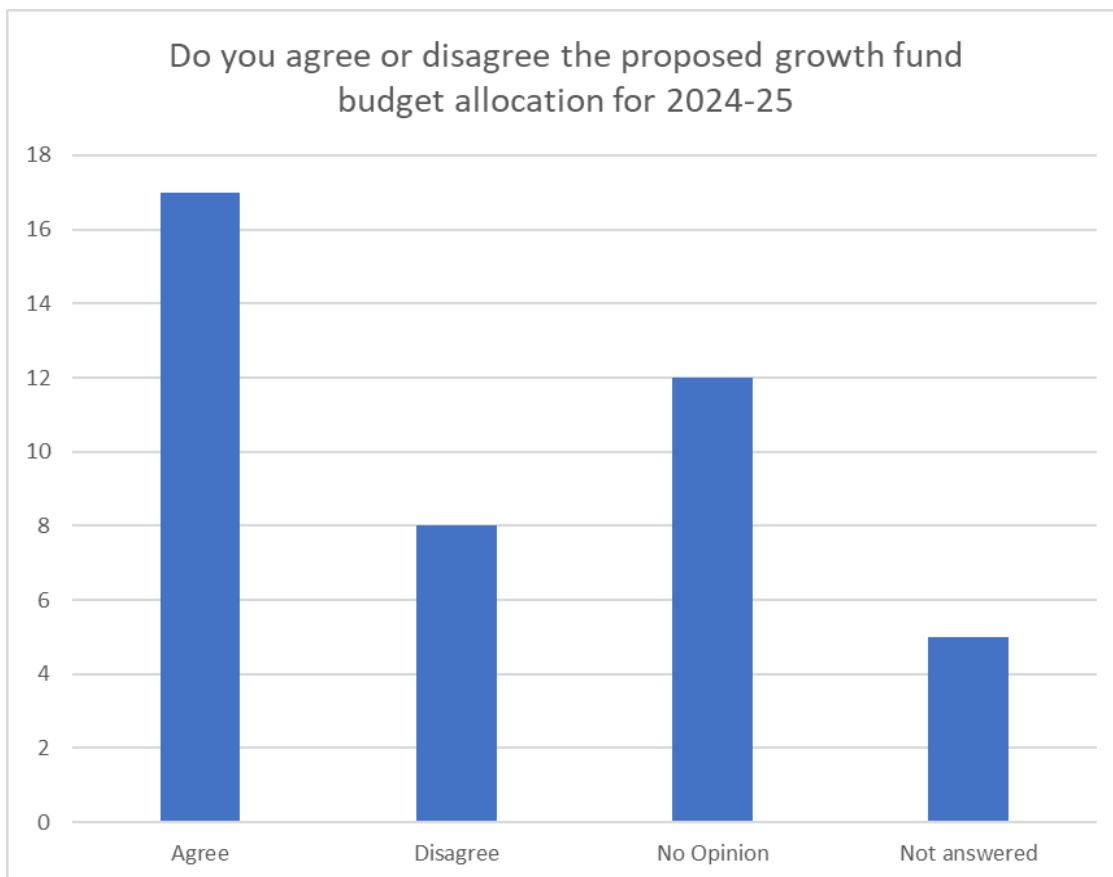


5.4 The response to the inclusion of the weighted numbers in the schools formula showed that the majority, 16, were in agreement and 9 were in disagreement with this. 17 either had no opinion or did not respond.



5.4 We also provided the forecast budget requirement for funding growth in classes in 2024-25 and listed schools and academies where that growth was planned. 17 of the response were in

agreement with the budget and 8 were against with 19 either of no opinion or did not leave a response.



5.5 We received one comment on the growth fund which was a request for assurance that there is strategic overview around places to ensure that they are located and allocated properly, with a specific example being given by the responder relating to a school with an intake of 9 pupils in reception year (please see appendix A for full response).

5.6 WNC can provide assurance that place planning is at the forefront of the Children’s Directorate services. WNC never create places where there is existing spare capacity amongst local schools (i.e. schools within a reasonable travelling distance which is generally schools within a 3-mile radius). We realise that more and more primary schools have gaps in their numbers which can be attributed to an ongoing drop in birth rates and a slight drop in inward migration following on from Brexit, but there are still some areas that are more densely populated where we have run out of places in the area, in certain year groups. In terms of allocating pupils elsewhere when numbers are low, the admissions code wouldn’t allow us to do this as parental preference is a legal requirement where there are available places.

5.7 Our biggest area of growth continues to be at secondary level and we are working on longer term plans to address this

6 Impact on pupil growth funding budget due to Southfield Primary closure

6.1 Southfield Primary school is set to close from July 2024, following on from a decision taken by the Warriner Trust and the DfE. The school had become financially unviable due to low pupil numbers and a deficit budget position.

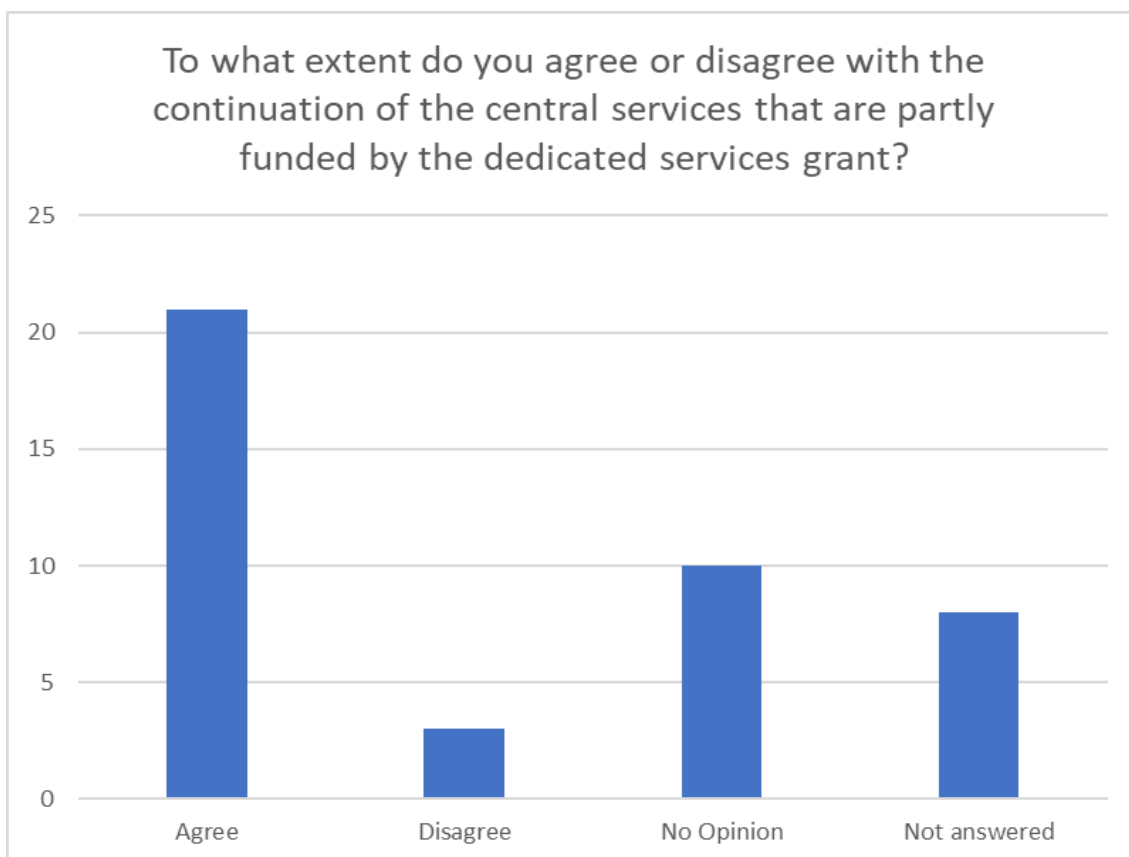
6.2 This has resulted in 78 pupils facing displacement from July 2024, across years reception to 5. There is limited capacity across Brackley schools and this will be further impacted upon as a result of the Southfields closure

6.3 Waynflete Infants and Brackley Junior have been allocated 69 of the 78 'to-be-displaced' Southfields pupils and as a result some year groups will be over PAN and one year group will need a bulge class of 30.

6.4 The impact of this is an additional requirement in the growth fund to try to fund the additional classes. This will add a £201.4k pressure into the budget requirement for 2024-25. As a result we are increasing the budget proposed for Growth Fund from £0.97m to £1.17m.

7 Central Schools Services Budgets

7.1 Within the budget consultation we provided the list of centrally funded services which are largely to fulfil statutory services, for example the admissions service and the copyright licenses. We asked whether School Leaders agreed with the continuation of these services and 21 agreed. There were 3 responses against the central services and 18 with no opinion or who did not respond.

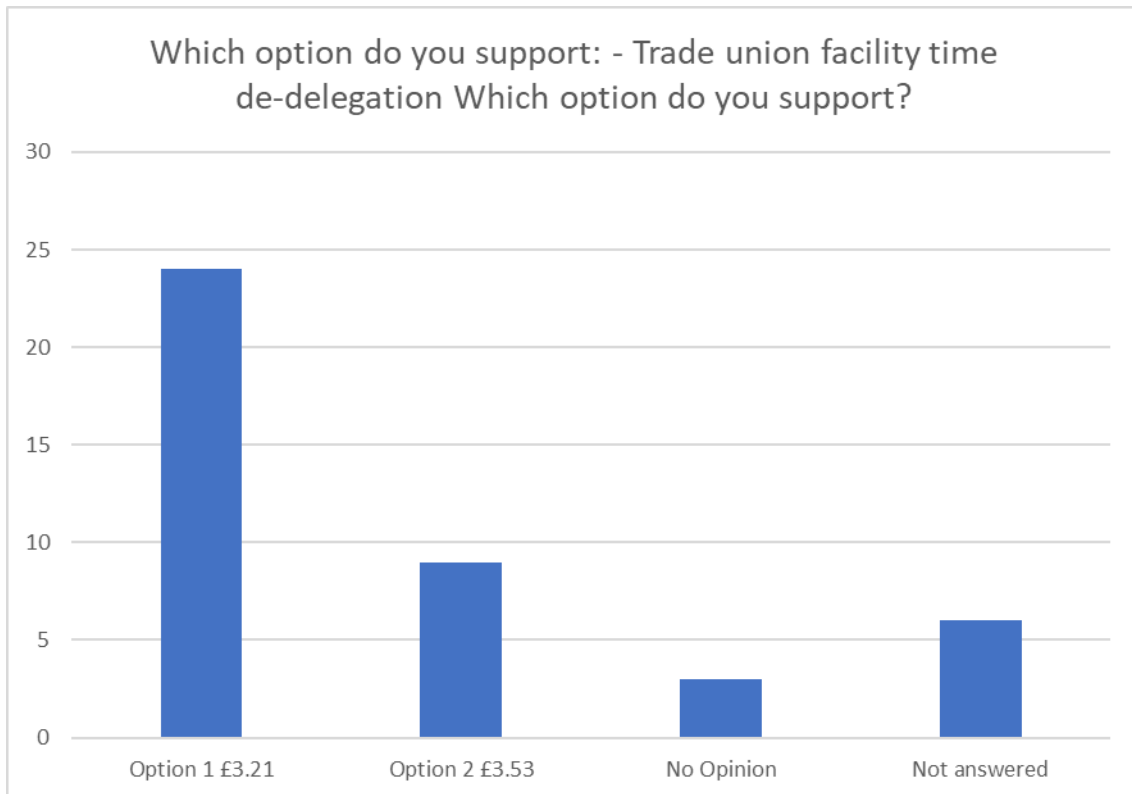


7.2 Within the comments section there were 8 responses which generally supported the proposal to continue central services as set out in the consultation but made comments on the quality and need for improvement in WNC services. These related to education services for; Finance support, legal, SEN, premises and general contact details.

- 7.3 Another comment focussed on the PFI scheme at their school and a lack of value for money, especially given the increase in costs over the last two years (see full response in appendix A).
- 7.4 The PFI contract is a long term arrangement which was used to support the restructure of Northampton schools from three to two tiers and add school places. The facilities management part of the PFI costs, which is the one which changes, is tied to the RPIx inflation index. As inflation has been very high recently, this has unavoidably caused large increases in these costs. The facilities management services are contractually subject to benchmarking every five years, so when the next benchmarking exercise is due that will provide an opportunity to check these costs against the market.
- 7.5 Specific concerns about the performance of your local team should be raised with the PFI contract management function at the Council, who will be pleased to see if there are failing which should be addressed.
- 7.6 One comment was a request for information on the teachers pay and pension grant element of the central schools services block. This is to cover the inflationary salary increases for centrally employed teachers.
- 7.7 Further information and breakdown of each of the service areas was also requested which will be brought to a schools forum for review next year.

8 De-delegation: Trade Union Facility Time

- 8.1 For the continuation of the trade union facility time de-delegation from maintained schools (and academies who choose to buy in) we provided two options.
- 8.2 Option 1: the same rate as for 2023-24 £3.21 – which would reduce the budget available due to the reducing number of maintained schools and lower buy in by academies. Or
- 8.3 Option 2: to increase the rate to maintain the budget, with a rate of £3.53 per pupil per Anum.
- 8.4 The majority have responded to keep the 2023-24 rate of £3.21 per pupil. 24 schools agreed with maintained the rate of £3.21 per pupil, 9 voted to increase the rate to £3.53 while 9 either had no opinion or did not respond.



8.2 A number of comments were provided for the trade union section. 9 comments asked us what the long term strategy is with more maintained schools academising and more academies not opting into this de-delegation. They said;

“it is going to be financially challenging for those LA schools and Trusts that continue to represent the diminishing group and costs rise.”

8.3 Another commented that as there was no additional funding to cover support staff salaries despite the salary increase, that therefore no increase should be applied to the trade union de-delegation funding. And one commented that as the unions are paid for by their customers they were unsure as to why schools needed to contribute.

8.4 Clearly there is a lot of support within the schools responses for the trade union de-delegation but there was one negative comment received stating:

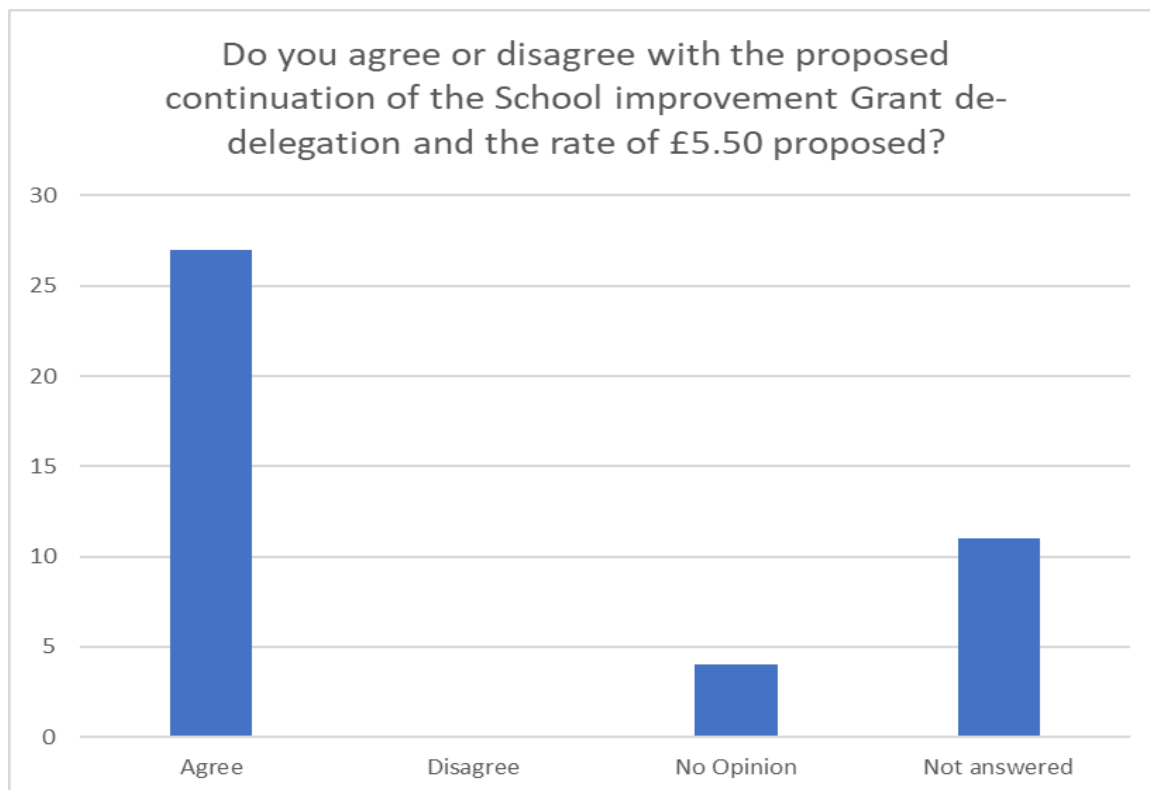
“There should be no payment for union activities; put the money into pupil books and other resources”.

8.5 This de-delegation results from a statutory requirement to union representatives allow reasonable time off their employment and the de-delegated monies are used to re-imburse schools who employ the TU rep for their contracted time and would have to fund additional staff to cover that time.

8.6 Trade union representatives will attend the schools forum meeting and will be given the opportunity to respond to each of the points raised.

9 De-delegation: School Improvement Grant

9.1 For the school improvement grant, no change in the rate was proposed and all those who responded agreed with the proposal. 27 agreed and 15 either had no opinion or did not respond.



9.2 We received 5 comments in this section, and 2 in another section of the consultation asking us to consider funding, for example by using this de-delegation, to provide support to schools with financial advice, support and training. Especially in situations of emergency where a bursar may have left of be off sick. We have also received this request outside of the consultation with direct requests from school leaders and their bursars. We are therefore providing a new proposal in addition to the current SIG, in response to these requests.

9.3 WNC would not want to replace the current bursar support that schools are purchasing from external suppliers but we recognise and want to support schools with this request. The role that we believe would be most useful to our maintained schools would be to provide additional capacity within the School Effectiveness team to provide financial support to schools through:

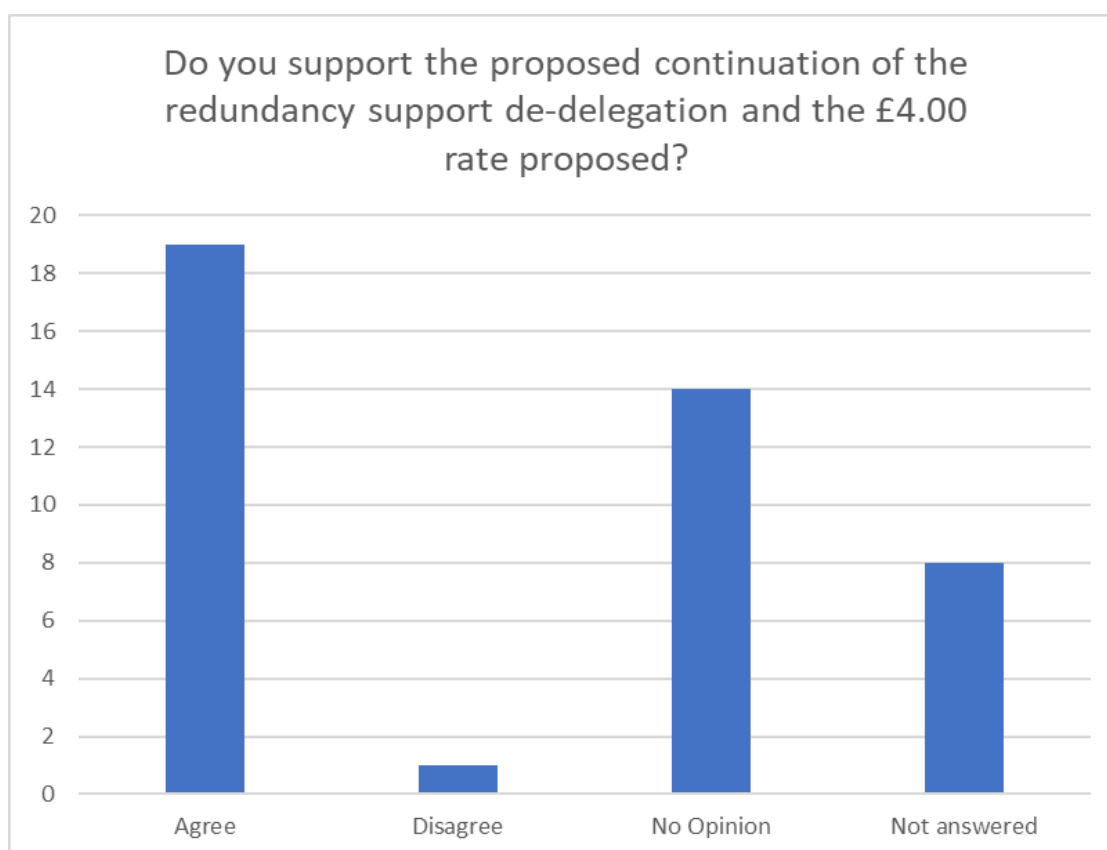
- short term additional financial support, as a service to all maintained schools, when facing an unpredictable difficulty,
- tailored support to go between employed external bursar support and WNC specific forms, returns and processes,
- training for new bursars and in-school financial teams and bursar support suppliers, with regards to WNC specific requirements,
- short term cover for emergency situations where a bursar becomes unavailable,

- challenging and supporting restructures as and where required.

9.4 The additional budget requirement is estimated to be £60k which would be a cost of £5 per primary pupil. The cost of the 3 regular de-delegations including this new proposal are shown in appendix B (Oct 2022 census basis).

10 De-delegation: Redundancy support

10.1 For the redundancy support de-delegation from maintained schools, no change in the rate was proposed and 19 of those who responded agreed with the proposal. 1 disagreed and 22 either had no opinion or did not respond.



10.2 We received just two comments on this de-delegation section one of which was against the use of a redundancy de-delegation because they believe that if a school are having to restructure or make redundancy's then:

“the county council as main employers should fully fund this not (as main employers) not schools that are already in debt”.

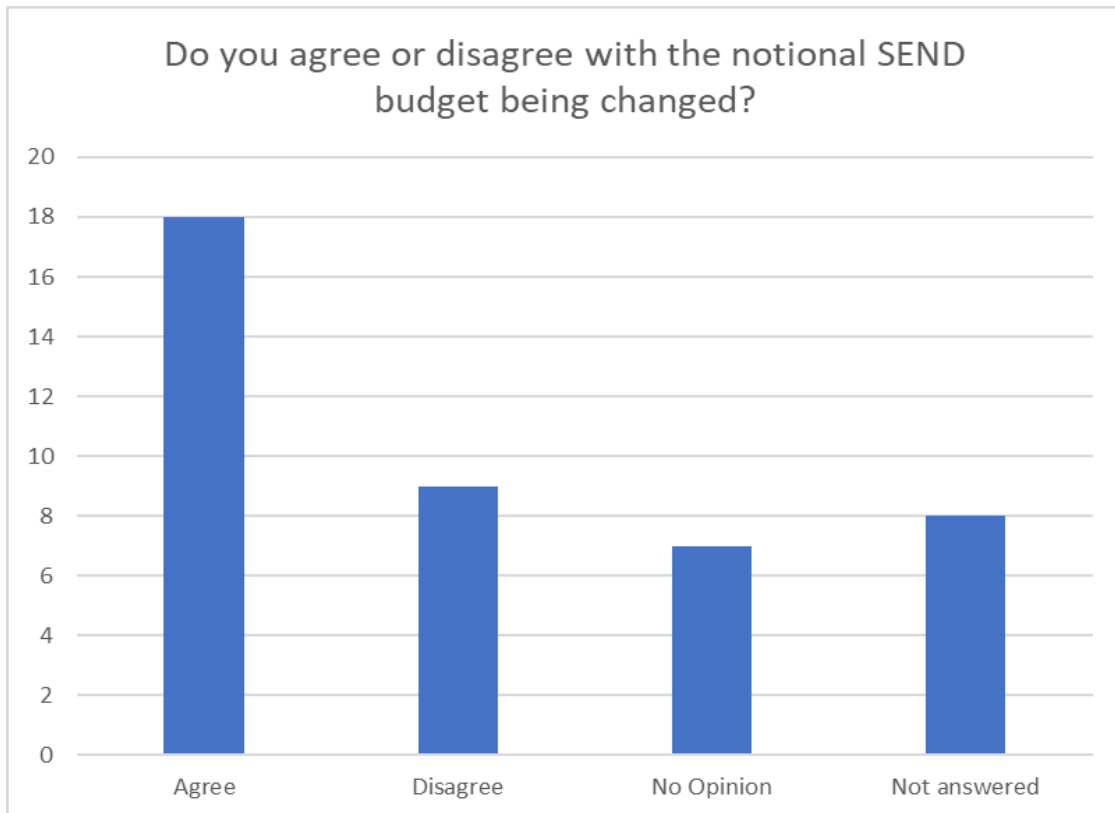
10.3 This is the opposite view of the Council as this would create inequality with regards to those schools who are reacting to changes in their budgets and restructuring through good financial practices and forecasting. It would reward those who do not act and respond to changing pupil numbers and funding.

10.4 The second comment was that they expected more schools to need to use this if costs continue to rise.

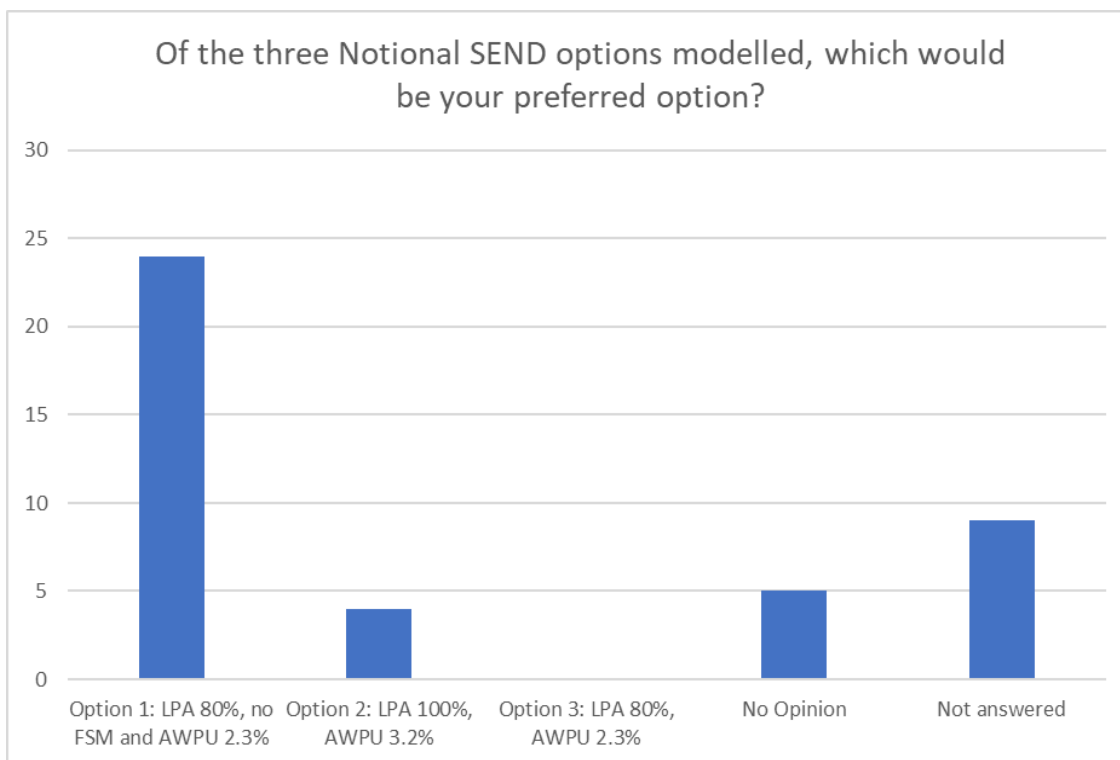
11 Notional SEND Options

11.1 The final theme of the schools consultation was a requirement for all LAs to consult on the notional SEND budget set within the national schools funding formula. There was no prescriptive national formula to be followed but a couple of recommendations and also a couple of examples were provided.

11.2 We asked whether the change in notional SEND budget in response to the ESFA's recommendations and there was a majority of responses in agreement with this. 18 would prefer to move to a new calculation, 9 did not want to change and 15 either had no opinion or did not respond.



11.3 We put forward three options, one reflecting an update to the current WNC policy but incorporating two recommendations, to increase include the majority of the low prior attainment factor and not to include the FSM (but include only the FSM ever 6). The other two options varied the percentage of AWPU and low prior attainment. The responses were showing a strong preference for the amended version of the current notional SEND budget calculation. Of the three options proposed 24 chose option 1, 4 chose option 2 and none chose option 3.



11.4 we received a number of responses to the notional send section of the consultation. Some noted and understood that increasing the notional SEND budget reduces the ability to apply for additional element 2 funding while the responses from others suggested they hadn't fully grasped the concept.

11.5 An important point that was made in the comments is that schools need to know how the assessment of 'what is eligible element 2 expenditure' is to be decided by WNC officers. This is being reviewed by the SEND project team as this needs to be clear and practical and consideration given to the limited resources of school and council staff time.

11.6 many comments highlighted the increasing volume and level of SEND that schools are experiencing.

11.7 Another point made by a responder was that;

"With the increase in Support Staff costs over the past two years, rising costs of energy and general cost of other resources the school needs to use part of the notional SEN budget to resource the school. We cannot afford to put the notional SEN allowance to one side for those children that require SEN..."

11.8 We would challenge this view as the notional SEND budget is a specific part of the formula budget that is to be used for the children with SEND. We expect schools to be looking at budget efficiencies and possible restructures if they are unable to use their notional SEND budget on their children with SEND.

11.9 Please see the appendix A for all responses.

12 Financial implications

12.1 The resource and financial implications of the WNC DSG budget are set out in the body of, and appendices to, this report.

13 Legal implications

13.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

14 Risks

14.1 Although the vast majority of funding passes through to schools under a national funding formula, there are risks to schools and therefore the LA, around the decisions taken on setting the schools block and local version of the national funding formula. All decisions that effectively top slice the schools budgets increase the of going into a deficit, especially for those with falling rolls.

14.2 WNC work with schools to ensure that forecasts of budgetary difficulties are picked up and acted upon quickly. WNC maintained schools provide the LA with information on their end of year, quarterly spend and income information and annually submit 3 year plans. For some of the "top slices" proposed, if accepted will help to mitigate the risks.

15 Recommendations for Schools Forum

15.1 That schools forum votes on each consultation proposal:

15.2 Do you agree with the proposal to move 0.5% from the Schools Block to the high needs block in 2024-25

15.3 15Split Site Policy: Do you agree with implementing the split site policy and rates in full to follow the national funding formula (NFF).

15.4 Growth Fund, do you agree with:

- the updated growth fund policy
- increasing the growth fund rates
- including the weighted numbers included in the consultation document.
- do you agree to set the NET growth fund budget at £1.17m

15.5 Central Budgets from the Central Schools Services Block of the DSG: do you agree the budgets as shown in the schools consultation document, to continue to be funded for another year.

15.6 De-delegation for Trade Union Facility Time: Which option do you support:

- Option 1: Continuation of the de-delegation as in previous years at a rate of £3.21 per pupil
- Option 2: Continuation of the de-delegation but with 10% increase £3.53 per pupil

15.7 De-delegation for School Improvement Grant:

15.8 Do you support the proposed continuation of this de-delegation and the rate of £5.50 proposed?

15.9 Do you support the proposed extension of this de-delegation to include finance support at a rate of £5.00 per pupil?

15.10 De-delegation for redundancy support: Do you support the proposed continuation of this de-delegation and the rate of £4 proposed?

15.11 Notional SEND Budget – do you support:

- The notional SEND budget changing for 2024-25 based on the ESFA recommendations.
- The notional SEND budget option 1, 2 or 3.

Report Author:

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Maintained Schools Budgets 2024-25 - Consultation Responses

Comments on the national funding formula and transfer of 0.5% to the high needs block
In principle we agree with this request but feel there should be protections in place to ensure better access to HNF and it not feel like a competitive grant. [x8 responses with this message]
In principle we agree with this request but feel there should be protections in place to ensure better access (and sometimes quicker access) to HNF and it not feel like a competitive grant.
Accessing the high needs block is problematic and never enough to fund effective support
We feel that the percentage should be higher into high needs block as needs are increasingly high nationally. If this were to happen schools could continue to apply for funding where needs arise and the pot would be large enough. If the money is all shared equally then it is not necessarily where the greatest need is.
While I feel this supports the high needs block, particularly as more schools are having to accommodate more children with complex SEND need due to lack of places in specialist provision, my concern is how this will impact the education of the children in the mainstream sector as their funding will be reduced. If the high needs block is already in a deficit, how will this added income be used to support children with SEND. I'm concerned that this money may be used to balance that budget rather than increasing funding for those children with additional needs.
Schools cannot afford to take a reduction to support the high needs block. I agree the high needs block needs additional funding but not at school's expense.
While this is not the ideal scenario, the number of children with significant needs has increased, our school has children with special arrangement funding in place in addition to their EHCP funding due to the lack of Special School places within the LA. Despite this funding, the challenge of meeting the growing needs of pupils impacts significantly on staffing and, therefore, if place funding is not forthcoming from the DfE to support pupils remain within the maintained sector, it needs to come from somewhere.
Whilst i do think it's important that high needs funding is increased, i do not think it should come from school's budget. Schools need every penny they can get.
I agree that it's necessary but at a time when school budgets are being stretched more that ever and funding moved from the schools block to ease a problem elsewhere just exacerbates the problem within schools.
Simply isn't enough funding within education, all needs need to be covered

Split site funding comments
It's part of the NFF so it should be included in calculations. Where any capping has been applied - it should be proportionate and if individual schools are materially affected by capping, adjustments must be made to ensure the funding passes through fairly and as intended. Small schools are more adversely affected by capping rules. [reponses x6]
Using the full rates for the split site factor as provided in the national funding formula It's part of the NFF so it should be included in calculations. Where any capping has been applied - it should be proportionate and if individual schools are materially affected by capping, adjustments must be made to ensure the funding passes through fairly and as intended. Small schools are more adversely affected by capping rules[responses x2]

<p>I have to walk my children to St David's Sports Hall on the Harborough Road, which is maintained by my school, and the main site of the school is on Kingsthorpe Grove Road. I feel that my school should be able to access the split site funding.</p>
<p>We have a split site due to a small school hall and limited outside space on the main school site. We have struggled to support the running of the building with our main school budget and capital allocation. It is a large site and the grounds are now in a state of disrepair. Updates to this cannot and should not be funded from our existing budget.</p>
<p>We have tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain funding to replace the astroturf which is becoming almost unusable in wet weather. This additional funding will enable the school to fully replace with a new all weather pitch.</p>
<p>Not applicable to our school</p>
<p>Doesn't affect our school so have no opinion</p>

Growth Funding Comments
<p>While I agree that due to the need for more school places this needs to be in place, but there should be assurances that there is a strategic overview in place to ensure school places are located and allocated appropriately. Locally we have, in recent years, seen a local 1 form entry primary being allocated 9 reception children, with other local schools also having gaps. The pressure this creates on school budgets is unnecessary and, had there been a strategic overview, the 9 children could have been placed locally, therefore reducing the burden on the school with the low intake and supporting other schools in reaching their PAN.</p>

Central Schools Services Budget Comments
<p>Need better services in West Northants for Education eg Finance support , legal, SEN</p>
<p>Need better services for this money in WNC for education e.g. finance support, legal, SEND</p>
<p>We need better, more responsive services in West Northamptonshire.</p>
<p>SEN, :Legal, Finance</p>
<p>Agree but we need better services in West Northants for education e.g. finance, legal, SEN</p>
<p>We need better services in West Northants to be consistent in education e.g. finance support, legal, SEN etc</p>
<p>Need better services in west northants for education - finance support, premises</p>
<p>The Services in West Northants need to improve and be more responsive.</p>
<p>SIP, Caroline Barton, is very good.</p>
<p>I didn't spot the information regarding as to why there is a proposed value relating to the Teachers' Pay and Pension Grant within the CSSB.</p>
<p>Happy to continue with central services expenditure contribution.</p>
<p>I would like to point out that maintained schools struggle with contacting some of this support. Contact emails and telephone numbers are not readily available. We have to use allbursar email to obtain information. Ideally this should be placed on some sort of central portal (Teams etc) that we could all have access to. This is not finance related but should form part of the services provided.</p>

While I agree that these services are important for schools there seems to be a disparity between support for WNC maintained schools and NNC schools, particular in relation to schools finance. While, to my knowledge, the service for NNC schools has continued, the WNC finance team has seen a significant reduction in staffing and more importantly the level of support on day to day issues ensuring school budgets are managed correctly. While I have been in post for several years and am experienced in my role, this lack of support and expertise at WNC in dealing with operational finance queries is concerning. I know locally of new bursars, and experienced finance staff who are leaving, and are concerned at the lack of support available. The disconnect between the use of finance packages in school, and how the finance team need actions to be made should be addressed, certainly if de-delegated funds are being used to support the North, but not schools in the west

With the cost of PFI increasing dramatically over the last 2 years and this impacting our budget massively, i would question if we are actually receiving the best value for money. With regards to the site staff provided at our school, their abilities are very limited resulting in school staff taking on tasks which should be completed within our PFI contract.

It would be useful to have a full breakdown / analysis of the services provided with the associated costs so that appropriate comments could be made.

Trade Union Facility Time Comments

As more academies / Trusts opt-out of TU Facility Time what is the long term strategy? It is going to financially challenging for those LA schools and Trusts that continue to represent the diminishing group and costs rise. [x9]

Less risks involved.

As an academy we do not currently buy into the facilities time payment.

As schools have seen a minimal increase to support staffing costs, I feel this approach should be mirrored with the trade union fund.

As the unions are paid for by their customers I am unsure as to why schools need to contribute.

There should be no payment for union activities; put the money into pupil books and other resources.

School Improvement Comments

happy to use the De delegation to support schools with financial advice

It would be useful to have a provision for finance support for Bursars/Business Managers/Heads available, as the service previously offered by WNC was withdrawn, whether this be for schools needing some additional support in the short-term, or as a service available to all schools if/when required. Without tailored support being available to schools, and changes to processes at WNC's end, it has been challenging to manage and understand school financial systems, reports, and budget management.

It is difficult to seek external training and support when it isn't always clear what WNC expects to see when requiring schools to match back to their reports. Changes to budget management on our finance systems requested by WNC mean that the monitoring reports that we have used in the past don't give us the same or a clear picture of the financial position.

I have been in schools for many years and have found these changes frustrating and difficult, so I really feel for those people who are just starting their journey in schools' finance or leadership. I understand that schools are using a number of different finance systems which means that those supporting would need sufficient knowledge to support this, or specialists for each system, but with many schools facing significant financial pressures, it is imperative that finance staff and leaders can have a clear picture of their budgetary provisions to enable them to use their delegated funds and income in the most valuable ways, and to have accurate information for monitoring and longer term planning.

[submitted x2]

It would be nice to see a Schools Finance function returned to offer assistance when needed to schools that do not have the expertise, knowledge or understanding of the functions they are required to perform with regard to finance.

We do have an external company that assists with finance, however, they cannot respond quickly and sometimes can't even solve issues which leaves the school in a difficult situation with solving the issues. I had to employee Charlotte Dennison to come and solve the issue for me which she did within an hour of being here.

It would be especially useful to be able to call upon a knowledgeable person that understands FMS and Schools Finance when annual tasks are required. I can populate my three year plan easily as I am quite efficient using Excel, however, when it comes to calculating carry forward and completing the budget proposal I find this task difficult and am always uncertain that I have completed it correctly.

Providing a service that we could call upon would be a valuable use of de-delegation funding.

A service which is widely used in maintained schools and is definitely beneficial to ours. Due to the finance support being withdrawn from WNC, would it be possible to add a team or member of staff to support business managers? Maybe a 'super bursar' type role.

Redundancy Funding Comments

If school are having to restructure or make redundancy's then the county council as main employers should fully fund this not (as main employers) not schools that are already in debt

With costs continuing to increase, more schools will unfortunately need the support.

Notional SEND Budgets comments

The notional SEND, MUST relate to the number of SEN children on role. It is unfair and in our case, wholly insufficient otherwise. Currently there is no equality, the funding must be relative to the school and not just a larger proportion of the AWPUP percentage. We are failing both the children who are and are not on our SEN register if we continue to take this approach.

Notional send is not clear to identify within the schools budget. It is difficult to track. In terms of the amount received set at £6K for SEND this has been in place for years and never increased and even with the notional send is never enough to meet the needs of the children. In primary school we are getting more SEND needs and with specialist provisions bursting at the seams this has a huge effect on school budgets

This is difficult to decide because if schools have high SEND, high deprivation and low prior attainment then there is not an option that fits perfectly and these schools do need financial support to be successful.

With the increase in Support Staff costs over the past two years, rising costs of energy and general cost of other resources the school needs to use part of the notional SEN budget to resource the school. We cannot afford to put the notional SEN allowance to one side for those children that require SEN, therefore, we have to look at these on a case by case basis.

We have a high proportion of SEN children with significant needs that do not have an EHCP and the process is a lengthy one to apply for them, meaning we are incurring costs to support these children whilst waiting for a decision (not to mention failing these children as they are in the wrong setting).

If our notional SEN is increased this will limit us being able to apply for additional funding for those children that need it.

I would like clarity on how decisions on the review of element 2 spend will be made by officers, to ensure consistency, openness, transparency and fairness across WNC.

Increase in pupils requiring support.

Funding based on prior attainment could be more appropriate when determining future notional SEND funding. We believe this option would require the academy to fund a lower amount internally before being able to apply for additional HNF. This is the determination of our CFO As well as the accounting officer. If this is not the case, greater clarity in the explanation would be useful.

As a school with a significant number of pupils with EHCP's in place plus special arrangement funding due to a lack of WNC provision for SEND pupils, increasing the notional funding, which does physically exist, only puts us in a significantly worse situation in the ability to request sorely needed additional funding for children who have not be provided with a special school place.

Any other Comments

As a school in West Northants the financial support and checking was removed. As a school we have no one who comes to support heads, bursars or SBM in the management of school finance - and when asking questions quite frankly no one really knows. Eg. how much will the PFI charges be next year? School finance (which lets face it is a complete minefield and over complicated in my opinion) has been left floundering. Bring back the county advisers to the West - the North are still supported why not us?

Please let me know how I can further progress my request for split site funding.

Will there be any changes to De-delegation funding to reinstate Bursar support from LA Schools finance. The private Financial Support available to schools is not proving to be beneficial or value for money.

Sadly the impact of these consultation changes do little more that move money from one target area to another, some will win and some will lose. The impact of the unfunded support staff pay rises has been significant, and could potentially result in redundancy in our school in the next financial year. The result of this is less support for the pupils in our school and a reduced capacity for the SLT to deliver the intended outcomes for the children and families within our school.

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Indicative cost of de-delegations proposed in the 2024-25 budget consultation

Ref	School	October 2022 Census - pupils on roll	One or the other (not both)		Both could be applied		Redundancy Support £4
			Trade Union Facility Time at £3.21	Trade Union Facility Time at £3.53	School Improvement Grant £5.50	School Improvement Extension £5	
	Total	12,458	39,990	43,977	68,519	62,290	49,832
9412001	All Saints CofE VA Primary School	386	1,239	1,363	2,123	1,930	1,544
9413002	Ashton CofE Primary School	27	87	95	149	135	108
9412197	Barry Primary School	408	1,310	1,440	2,244	2,040	1,632
9412002	Blisworth Community Primary School	169	542	597	930	845	676
9412188	Boothville Primary School	612	1,965	2,160	3,366	3,060	2,448
9413008	Brackley Church of England Junior School	198	636	699	1,089	990	792
9412010	Bridgewater Primary School	621	1,993	2,192	3,416	3,105	2,484
9412006	Brington Primary School	46	148	162	253	230	184
9413012	Brixworth CofE VC Primary School	483	1,550	1,705	2,657	2,415	1,932
9412008	Bugbrooke Community Primary School	252	809	890	1,386	1,260	1,008
9412181	Chiltern Primary School	228	732	805	1,254	1,140	912
9413202	Clipston Endowed Voluntary Controlled Primary School	102	327	360	561	510	408
9412023	Cosgrove Village Primary School	49	157	173	270	245	196
9412024	Crick Primary School	191	613	674	1,051	955	764
9413019	Croughton All Saints CofE Primary School	108	347	381	594	540	432
9412014	Delapre Primary School	609	1,955	2,150	3,350	3,045	2,436
9412026	Denton Primary School	101	324	357	556	505	404
9412210	Duston Eldean Primary School	416	1,335	1,468	2,288	2,080	1,664
9412160	Earl Spencer Primary School	396	1,271	1,398	2,178	1,980	1,584
9413026	East Haddon Church of England Primary School	81	260	286	446	405	324
9413028	Flore Church of England Primary School	81	260	286	446	405	324
9413029	Gayton Church of England Primary School	63	202	222	347	315	252
9412042	Greatworth Primary School	58	186	205	319	290	232
9413511	Hackleton CofE Primary School	198	636	699	1,089	990	792
9412046	Harlestone Primary School	52	167	184	286	260	208
9413034	Harpole Primary School	188	603	664	1,034	940	752
9412047	Helmdon Primary School	110	353	388	605	550	440
9412184	Hopping Hill Primary School	399	1,281	1,408	2,195	1,995	1,596
9412218	Hunsbury Park Primary School	290	931	1,024	1,595	1,450	1,160
9412076	John Hellins Primary School	207	664	731	1,139	1,035	828
9412208	Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School	434	1,393	1,532	2,387	2,170	1,736
9413205	Kingsthorpe Village Primary School	204	655	720	1,122	1,020	816
9413326	Little Houghton Church of England Primary	89	286	314	490	445	356
9412068	Long Buckby Infant School	130	417	459	715	650	520
9412067	Long Buckby Junior School	197	632	695	1,084	985	788
9412176	Lyncrest Primary School	201	645	710	1,106	1,005	804
9412069	Maidwell Primary School	67	215	237	369	335	268
9412016	Millway Primary School	391	1,255	1,380	2,151	1,955	1,564
9415200	Moulton Primary School	609	1,955	2,150	3,350	3,045	2,436
9413331	Newbottle and Charlton Church of England Primary	111	356	392	611	555	444
9412074	Overstone Primary School	175	562	618	963	875	700
9413049	Pattishall Church of England Primary School	140	449	494	770	700	560
9412075	Pitsford Primary School	61	196	215	336	305	244
9412079	Road Primary School	321	1,030	1,133	1,766	1,605	1,284
9413304	St Andrew's Ceva Primary School	334	1,072	1,179	1,837	1,670	1,336
9413400	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Aston-le-Walls	72	231	254	396	360	288
9413060	Stoke Bruerne Church of England Primary School	65	209	229	358	325	260
9413062	Syresham St James CofE Primary School and Nursery	79	254	279	435	395	316
9413500	The Bliss Charity School	183	587	646	1,007	915	732
9412012	The Bramptons Primary School	96	308	339	528	480	384
9413340	Tiffield Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary	44	141	155	242	220	176
9412174	Vernon Terrace Primary School	207	664	731	1,139	1,035	828
9412090	Walgrave Primary School	142	456	501	781	710	568
9413077	West Haddon Endowed Church of England Primary	211	677	745	1,161	1,055	844
9412183	Whitehills Primary School	417	1,339	1,472	2,294	2,085	1,668
9413080	Whittlebury Church of England Primary School	68	218	240	374	340	272
9413088	Yardley Gobion Church of England Primary School	84	270	297	462	420	336
9412107	Yardley Hastings Primary School	103	331	364	567	515	412
9412108	Yelvertoft Primary School	94	302	332	517	470	376

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West Northants Schools Forum: 13 December 2023
Agenda Item 8
High Needs Budgets 2024-25

List of Appendices

- Appendix A – Allocated Places for 2024-25
- Appendix B - Special School RAS rates 2024-25
- Appendix C – Special School Indicative budgets 2024-25

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is to inform West Northamptonshire Council’s (WNC) Schools Forum of the high needs places set for 2024-25, the special school indicative budgets and the RAS rates for 2024-25 and to update on the overall high needs budget setting progress for 2024-25.
- 1.2 Table 1 shows the relevant responsibilities in relation to in year high needs funding arrangements which is taken from the Education and Skills Funding Agency’s Schools Forum Powers and Responsibilities, published in March 2021.

Table 1

Local Authority	Schools forum	ESFA
Financial issues relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding • arrangements for use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding 	Consults Annually	Gives a view and informs the governing bodies of all consultations

2 Specialist Places set for 2024-25

- 2.1 Place funding (elements 1 and 2) is allocated to:
 - all types of special schools, apart from independent special schools

- all types of mainstream school with an SEN unit or RP and/or a sixth form that has pupils with high needs
- all types of college that educate students who have high needs

2.2 The regulations for place numbers and therefore place funding, are that they are allocated annually and provide a set amount of core high needs funding. Once place funding is allocated, it is not associated with or reserved for a specific local authority or individual pupil or student.

2.3 Place funding is not withdrawn if an individual does not occupy a funded place and this system provides all eligible schools and colleges with a guaranteed budget for the year and gives them a degree of financial stability.

2.4 Place number and funding changes for academies are submitted to the ESFA by LAs in early November each year ahead of the following academic year. This then determines the "recoupment" funding that is distributed directly to academies by the ESFA (rather than paying to LAs to devolve to schools).

2.5 WNC allocate places for maintained providers at the same time as completing the academy exercise and the places that have been set for 2024-25 and the financial implications for the WNC financial year (April 2024 to March 2025 are shown in Appendix A.

3 Indicative Special School budgets and the RAS rates for 2024-25

3.1 With the place funding set for the academic year 2024-25 (and 2023-24 previously having been set) approximately half of the special schools budgets are fixed for the 2024-25 financial year.

3.2 The top up funding (element 3) is received by special schools based on a detailed assessment of each pupil's needs, which results in a score from 1 to 10. This is termed locally as the "RAS" score or Resource Allocation Score. We receive detailed listings of each pupil in each of our special schools through a 'RAS Autumn Update' process where special schools submit their workbooks to us. From this return an indicative total top up adjustment for 2023-24, an indicative top up for 2024-25 and an indicative overall budget for 2024-25 has been provided to each special school (see appendix B)

3.3 Special schools are subject to a minimum funding guarantee in the same way that mainstream primary and secondary schools are. For 2024-25 the minimum funding guarantee is 0%. However, the RAS rates are being increased to reflect the required uplift that was in 2023-24 (and given as protection funding) and also a 3% increase to reflect that the MFG given in 2023-24 was based (by Government) on a 2021/22 baseline. Overall therefore the RAS rates for special schools are increasing by 8.15% between 2023-24 and 2024-25. These rates are published in appendix B.

3.4 Unlike place funding the top up (element 3) follows the pupil and is updated to reflect the number of days a pupil was registered in a school. This part of the budget remains indicative as it is subject to pupil changes.

3.5 The forecast indicative increase in budget required for special schools in 2024-25 is £27.77m and increase of £2.3m from the 2023-24 budget of 25.5m. The provisional high needs budget increase is £2.1m.

4 High Needs Budget Setting 2024-25

3.1 For the first time at WNC we are forecasting that the high needs overspend will push the overall dedicated schools grant into a deficit at the end of 2023-24. This will require WNC to complete a DSG deficit recovery plan to the ESFA and work on this has started as soon as this position was realised. We understand that the majority of Council's nationally are facing similar pressures on the High Needs Block funding, and are working with colleagues across the East Midlands, and nationally to research best practice of managing increasing demand without the increase in funding that we require.

3.2 The routine annual work to set the high needs budget for the following year has been carried, out as in other years, but this has identified such an extremely large overspend that instead of publishing our high needs budget in December, we will instead enter a second phase of detailed budget challenge and review work with our high needs budget holders to look at ways to mitigate the budget overspend for 2024-25.

3.3 We will bring the final high needs budget to schools forum on February 14th and it is worth noting that we do still expect this will be a deficit budget for 2024-25 but we will be looking at ways to bring that deficit in to a balanced position over the medium term plan.

5 Financial implications

3.1 The resource and financial implications of the WNC DSG budget are set out in the body of, and appendices to, this report.

4 Legal implications

4.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

5 Risks

5.1 The main risks in relate to the increasing pressure on the high needs budget with demand outstripping the grant. Work is underway to mitigate this risk from increased demand and increased cost of placements through a programme of work with budget holders. This will include a refreshed medium-term financial plan using the Government DSG recovery plan template.

6 Recommendations for Schools Forum

6.1 That schools forum note the contents of this report

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PLACE FUNDING ANALYSIS - DOES NOT INCLUDE TOP UP FUNDING

2024-25 SEND PLACES PROVISION NAME	Category	Academy or Maintained	Total Place Numbers 2023-24	ACTUAL NOS SEPTEMBER 2023 (WNC only)	Pre-16 Place Numbers 2024-25 Funded Locally	Pre-16 Place Numbers 2024-25 Funded Directly by ESFA	Post-16 Numbers 2024-25	Other LA places	"Empty" Places at Oct23 census in Mainstream	Total Place Numbers 2024-25 (academic year)	Places Change Δ	2023-24 £ (financial year)	2024-25 £ (financial year)	£ Change Δ (financial year)	Change % (financial year)	
HOSPITAL AND OUTREACH	AP	Academy	87	n/a	0	87	n/a	n/a	n/a	87	0	1,785,071	1,785,071	0	0.0%	
COMPLIMENTARY EDUCATION	AP	Academy	200	28	0	200	0	120	n/a	200	0	2,000,000	2,000,000	0	0.0%	
THE SPIRES	AP	Academy	36	45	0	45	0	0	n/a	45	9	132,501	450,000	317,499	239.6%	
CAROLINE CHISHOLM SCHOOL ALLTHROUGH	SEN Unit	Academy	10	11	0	10	0	n/a	0	10	0	70,000	60,000	-10,000	-14.3%	
HEADLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL	SEN Unit	Academy	50	50	0	50	n/a	n/a	0	50	0	275,000	300,000	25,000	9.1%	
EAST HUNSBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL	SEN Unit	Academy	47	50	0	50	n/a	n/a	0	50	3	282,000	292,500	10,500	3.7%	
MALCOLM ARNOLD ACADEMY	SEN Unit	Academy	11	5	0	11	n/a	n/a	6	11	0	90,000	90,000	0	0.0%	
SIMON DE SENLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL	SEN Unit	Academy	20	24	0	24	n/a	n/a	0	24	4	122,500	134,000	11,500	9.4%	
BLACKTHORN PRIMARY SCHOOL	SEN Unit	Academy	16	16	0	16	n/a	n/a	0	16	0	122,667	96,000	-26,667	-21.7%	
THE PARKER E-ACT ACADEMY SECONDARY	SEN Unit	Academy	20	21	0	20	n/a	n/a	0	20	0	136,667	120,000	-16,667	-12.2%	
HARDINGSTONE PRIMARY ACADEMY	SEN Unit	Academy	10	9	0	10	n/a	n/a	1	10	0	35,000	62,333	27,333	78.1%	
CASTLE PRIMARY ACADEMY	SEN Unit	Academy	10	10	0	10	n/a	n/a	0	10	0	35,000	60,000	25,000	71.4%	
MOULTON SCI COLLEGE	SEN Unit		0	0	0	30	n/a	n/a	30	30	30	0	175,000	175,000	175,000	100.0%
NEW UNIT 1	SEN Unit		0	0	30	0	n/a	n/a	30	30	30	0	175,000	175,000	175,000	100.0%
HUNSBURY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL (ASD)	SEN Unit	Maintained	31	46	75	n/a	n/a	n/a	29	75	44	182,667	441,000	258,333	141.4%	
HUNSBURY PARK PRIMARY ORIGINAL (SEMH)	SEN Unit		11	11	11	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	11	0	38,500	66,000	27,500	71.4%	
KINGSTHORPE GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL	SEN Unit	Maintained	28	30	28	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	28	0	168,000	168,000	0	0.0%	
VERNON TERRACE PRIMARY SCHOOL	SEN Unit	Maintained	5	3	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	5	0	30,000	37,000	7,000	23.3%	
NORTHAMPTON COLLEGE	POST-16	Further Education	230	n/a	n/a	270	0	65	n/a	270	40	1,360,000	1,540,000	180,000	13.2%	
WIEDUCATE	POST-16		0	n/a	n/a	10	10	0	n/a	10	10	0	40,000	40,000	40,000	100.0%
CANTO LEARNING LTD	POST-16	Further Education	50	n/a	n/a	50	50	0	n/a	50	0	300,000	300,000	0	0.0%	
MOULTON COLLEGE	POST-16	Further Education	115	n/a	n/a	125	125	75	n/a	125	10	680,000	730,000	50,000	7.4%	
BILLINGBROOK	SPECIAL	Academy	258	259	0	215	44	15	n/a	274	16	2,563,333	2,673,333	110,000	4.3%	
DAVENTRY HILL	SPECIAL	Academy	200	193	0	168	25	18	n/a	211	11	1,958,333	2,064,167	105,833	5.4%	
FAIRFIELDS	SPECIAL	Maintained	126	0	126	0	0	0	n/a	126	0	735,000	1,260,000	525,000	71.4%	
GATEWAY	SPECIAL	Academy	74	64	54	64	0	10	n/a	128	54	431,667	1,055,000	623,333	144.4%	
GREENFIELDS	SPECIAL	Academy	106	90	0	71	19	16	n/a	106	0	1,047,500	1,060,000	12,500	1.2%	
KINGS MEADOW	SPECIAL	Academy	40	30	16	30	0	10	n/a	56	16	233,333	493,333	260,000	111.4%	
NORTHGATE	SPECIAL	Academy	262	252	35	191	61	10	n/a	297	35	2,620,000	2,824,167	204,167	7.8%	
PURPLE OAKS	SPECIAL	Academy	118	111	0	123	8	9	n/a	140	22	1,130,000	1,308,333	178,333	15.8%	
TOTAL			2,171	1,358	380	1,880	342	348	99	2,505	334	18,564,739	21,860,238	3,295,499	17.8%	

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Resource Allocation Band (RAS) Funding Rates

RAS Band	Rates 2021/22	2022/23 and 2023/24	2024/25	Increase £	Increase %
Primary					
Primary - RAS 1	47.00	49.35	53.37	4.02	8.15%
Primary - RAS 2	327.00	343.35	371.33	27.98	8.15%
Primary - RAS 3	795.00	834.75	902.78	68.03	8.15%
Primary - RAS 4	1,216.00	1,276.80	1,380.86	104.06	8.15%
Primary - RAS 5	2,431.00	2,552.55	2,760.58	208.03	8.15%
Primary - RAS 6	4,769.00	5,007.45	5,415.56	408.11	8.15%
Primary - RAS 7	7,480.00	7,854.00	8,494.10	640.10	8.15%
Primary - RAS 8	10,659.00	11,191.95	12,104.09	912.14	8.15%
Primary - RAS 9	14,212.00	14,922.60	16,138.79	1,216.19	8.15%
Primary - RAS 10	17,485.00	18,359.25	19,855.53	1,496.28	8.15%
Secondary					
Secondary - RAS 1	2,291.00	2,405.55	2,601.60	196.05	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 2	2,571.00	2,699.55	2,919.56	220.01	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 3	3,039.00	3,190.95	3,451.01	260.06	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 4	3,460.00	3,633.00	3,929.09	296.09	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 5	4,675.00	4,908.75	5,308.81	400.06	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 6	7,013.00	7,363.65	7,963.79	600.14	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 7	9,724.00	10,210.20	11,042.33	832.13	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 8	12,903.00	13,548.15	14,652.32	1,104.17	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 9	16,363.00	17,181.15	18,581.41	1,400.26	8.15%
Secondary - RAS 10	19,729.00	20,715.45	22,403.76	1,688.31	8.15%
Sixth Form					
Post-16 - RAS 1	3,249.00	3,411.45	3,689.48	278.03	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 2	3,529.00	3,705.45	4,007.44	301.99	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 3	3,997.00	4,196.85	4,538.89	342.04	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 4	4,418.00	4,638.90	5,016.97	378.07	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 5	5,633.00	5,914.65	6,396.69	482.04	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 6	7,971.00	8,369.55	9,051.67	682.12	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 7	10,682.00	11,216.10	12,130.21	914.11	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 8	13,861.00	14,554.05	15,740.21	1,186.16	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 9	17,321.00	18,187.05	19,669.29	1,482.24	8.15%
Post-16 - RAS 10	20,687.00	21,721.35	23,491.64	1,770.29	8.15%

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Special Schools indicative Budgets 2024-25

School	Total funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant 2023-24	2024-25 Place Funding	2024-25 Indicative Top up	2024-25 Average after 8.15% uplift and before protection	Protection Per Pupil 2024-25 (indicative) MFG 0%	Indicative Formula Budget 2024-25	ADDITIONAL GRANT FUNDING (outside of average per pupil formula funding)	Total funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant	Increase in Special Schools Funding £	Increase in Special Schools Funding %
Billingbrook	5,909,026	2,673,333	3,039,771	21,880	41,977	5,755,081	200,113	5,955,194	46,168	0.8%
Daventry Hill School	4,025,418	2,087,500	1,990,998	20,308	0	4,078,498	138,911	4,217,409	191,990	4.8%
Fairfields	2,904,411	1,260,000	1,619,029	23,668	0	2,879,029	97,753	2,976,782	72,371	2.5%
Gateway	1,734,794	1,055,000	1,423,902	32,834	21,757	2,500,660	90,440	2,591,100	856,306	49.4%
Greenfield	2,430,602	1,060,000	1,406,328	27,080	0	2,466,328	91,277	2,557,605	127,003	5.2%
Kingsmeadow	841,552	493,333	416,178	25,449	173,254	1,082,766	41,273	1,124,039	282,486	33.6%
Northgate	5,039,939	2,824,167	2,393,555	19,749	0	5,217,721	180,744	5,398,465	358,527	7.1%
Purple Oaks	2,576,759	1,308,333	1,546,192	24,074	0	2,854,525	97,814	2,952,339	375,580	14.6%
TOTAL	25,462,502	12,761,667	13,835,954	195,042	236,988	26,834,609	938,324	27,772,933	2,310,431	9.1%

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**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Schools Forum High Needs Funding / SEND Update

13 December 2023 V2



1. Joint SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy
2. SEND Ranges
3. SEND Demand Increase : EHC Plan & Non-EHC Plan (Targeted SEND Funding)
4. SEND Additional Capacity
5. SEND Funding Project

Joint SEND & Alternative Provision Strategy



- Workstream meeting program in place supported by the colleagues across the partnership plus representatives for Education Settings
- Over 130 colleagues across the 7 workstreams
- Workstream schedule live for remainder of academic year > Strategy year 1
- Delivery Plan reviewed & refined by workstreams > actions, owners and deadlines identified
- Self Evaluation Framework assessment underway for each workstream
- Project Governance > progress review at monthly SEND Improvement Board
- Early successes > engagement and commitment from the partnership & settings

SEND Ranges

- Multi-disciplinary training for settings 0-25 including Early Years , Schools & FE settings plus WNC
 - See schedule
- Moderation sessions with 0-25 example reviews proposed for March 2024
 - See schedule
- Panel application administration being amended to align with the SEND Ranges
 - EHC : Request For Statutory Assessment Application Form & Annual Review Form > on test
 - Non-EHC / Targeted SEND Funding : Application Forms > on test
- Implement – Learn – Refine

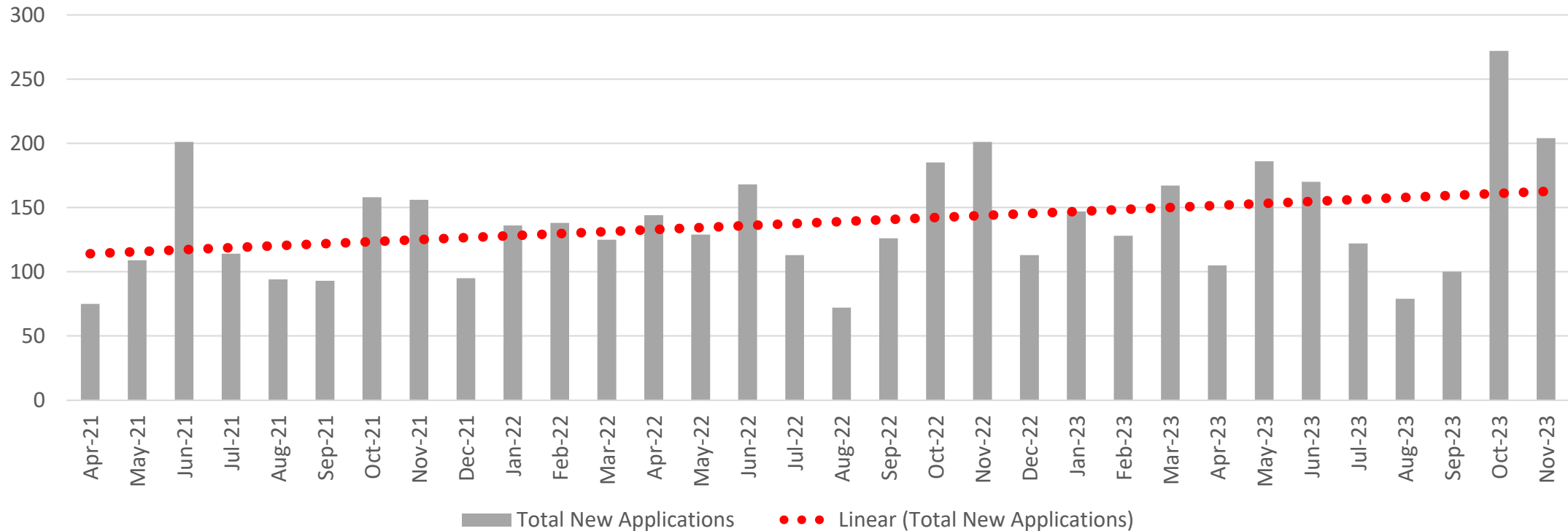
SEND Ranges Training Schedule

1	08 December 2023	TBC	All	Meeting to further discuss training as part of the workstream
2	11 January 2024	10.00 to 12.00	All	HI/VI and The SEND Ranges, by Jacqui Joseph and her team linked into the graduated approach
3	18 January 2024	10.00 to 12.00	Primary	Understanding The Ranges
4	18 January 2024	10.00 to 12.00	Early Years	Understanding The Ranges
5	19 January 2024	10.00 to 12.00	Heads, CEOs and Senior Leaders	SEND - For Heads, CEOs and Senior Leaders - Understanding of the systems and processes and the role of the SENDCO
6	25 January 2024	10.00 to 12.00	Secondary	Understanding The Ranges
7	01 February 2024	10.00 to 12.00	Primary	Understanding The Ranges
8	01 February 2024	13.00 to 15.00	Early Years	Understanding The Ranges
9	08 February 2024	10.00 to 12.00	Primary	ASD, Inclusive teaching strategies and The Ranges - PROPOSED
10	08 February 2024	13.00 to 15.00	Early Years	ASD, Inclusion and The Ranges - PROPOSED
11	29 February 2024	10.00 to 12.00	Primary	Adaptive Teaching and The Ranges
12	29 February 2024	13.00 to 15.00	Early Years	Adaptive Teaching and The Ranges
13	07 March 2024	10.00 to 12.00	Early Years	Adaptive Teaching and The Ranges
14	07 March 2024	13.00 to 15.00	Primary	Adaptive Teaching and The Ranges
15	21 March 2024	10.00 to 12.00	All	Moderation Event - Education - ALL settings including Special Schools, Healthcare, NC Trust, parents and carers, Local Authority SEND support services, EHCP Managers and Officers. PROPOSED

Note more dates still to be added for Early Years & Further Education

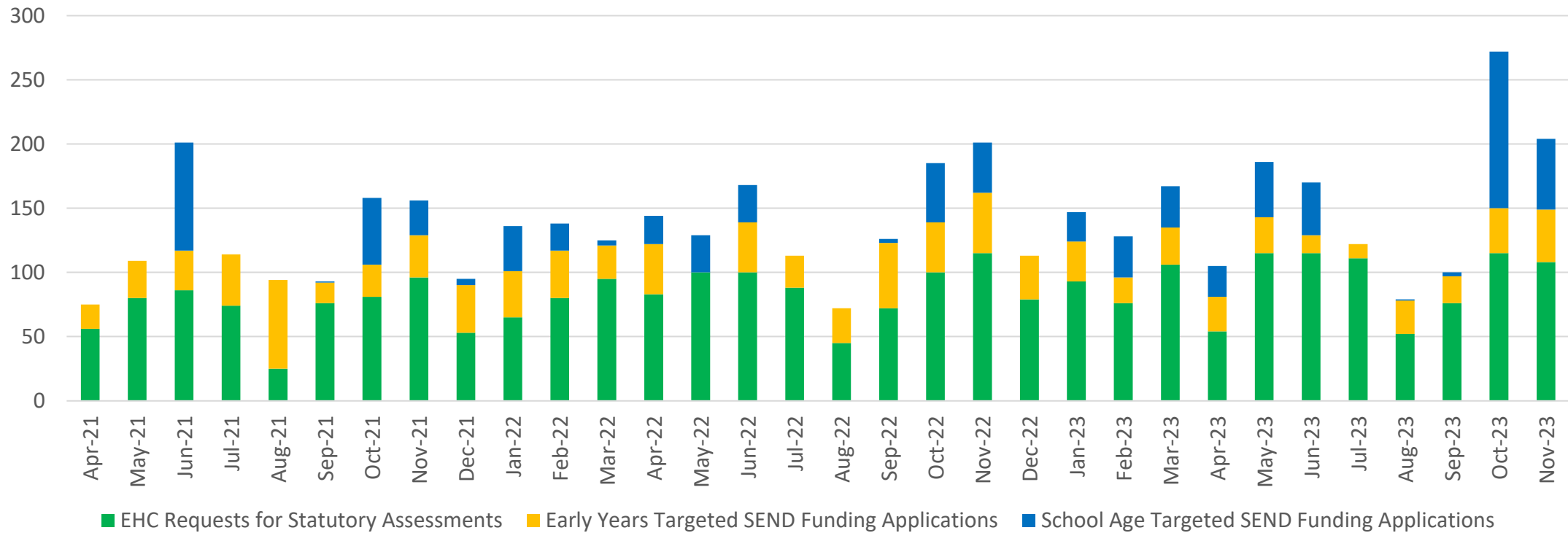
EHC & Non-EHC Plan : New Applications since April 2021

EHC & Non-EHC Plan New Applications Only
April 2021 (end of National Lockdown #3) to November 2023



EHC & Non-EHC Plan : New Applications since April 2021

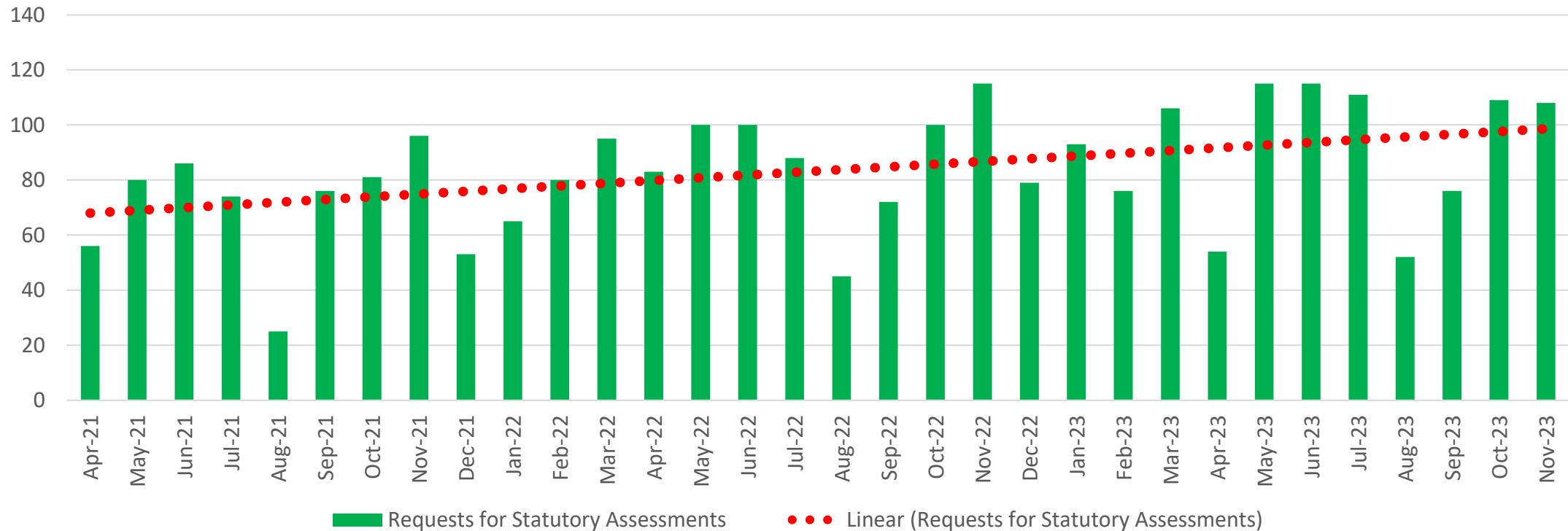
New Applications Only
April 2021 (end of National Lockdown #3) to November 2023



EHC Plan Panel Monthly Applications since April 2021

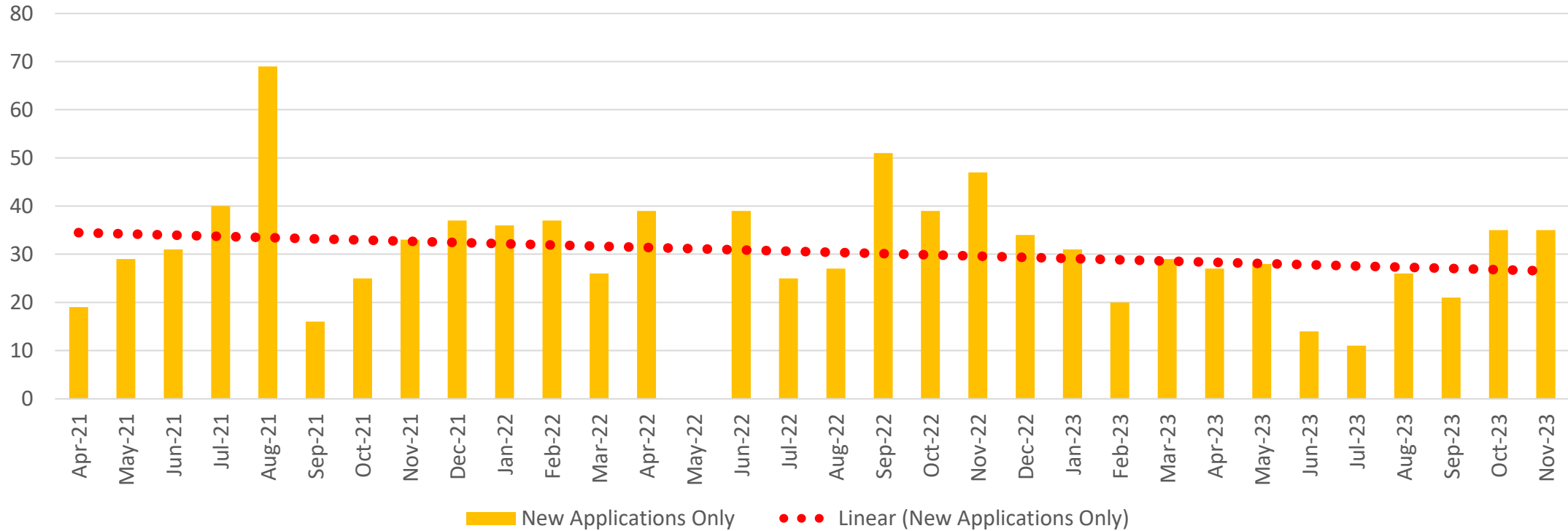
> Requests for Statutory Assessment

Requests for Statutory Assessments
April 2021 (end of National Lockdown #3) to November 2023



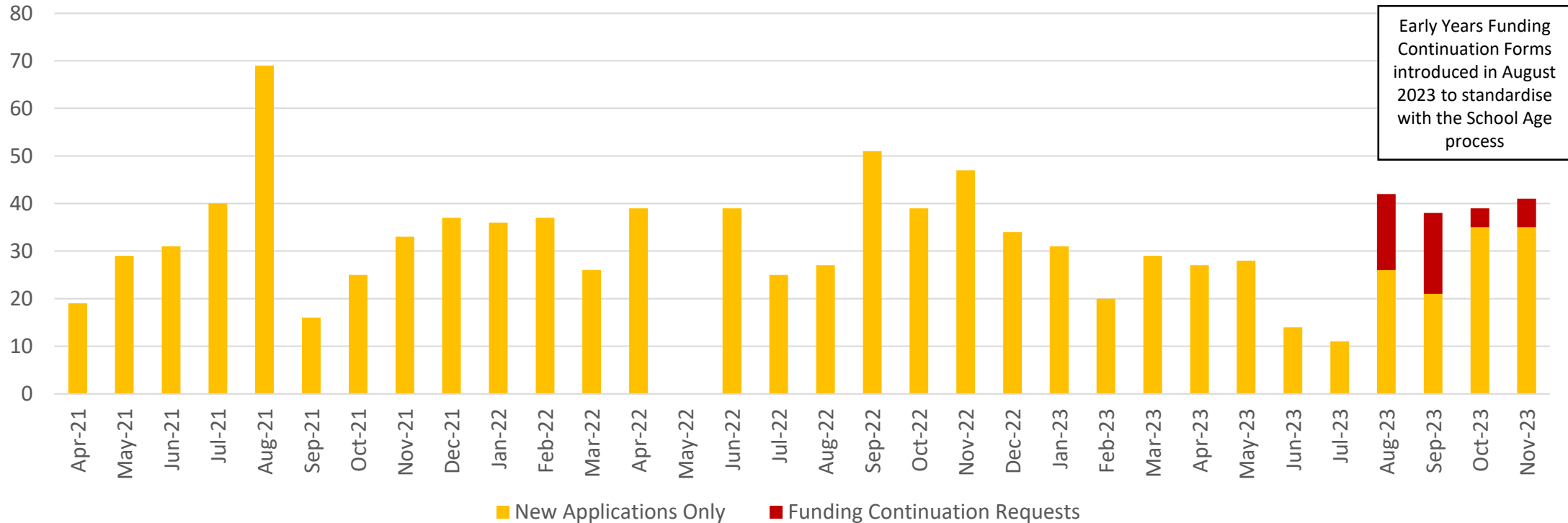
Non-EHC Plan : Targeted SEND Funding : Early Years New Applications since April 2021

New Applications Only
April 2021 (end of National Lockdown #3) to November 2023



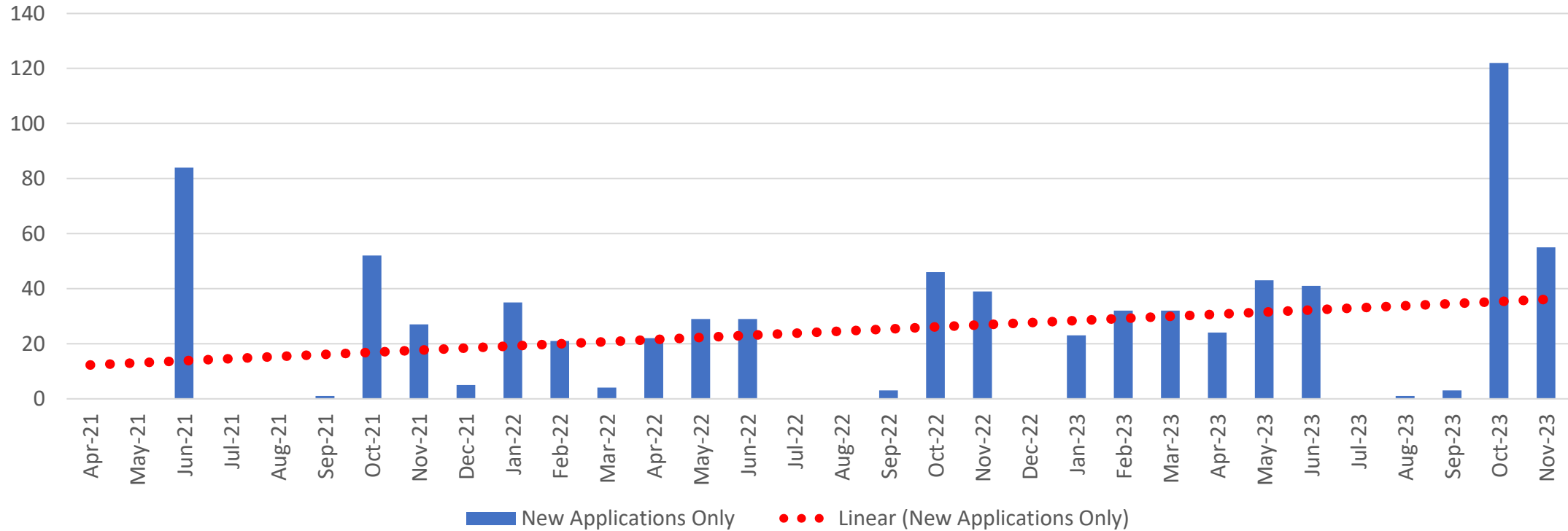
Non-EHC Plan : Targeted SEND Funding : Early Years New Applications & Continuation Requests since April 2021

New Applications & Funding Continuation Requests
April 2021 (end of National Lockdown #3) to November 2023



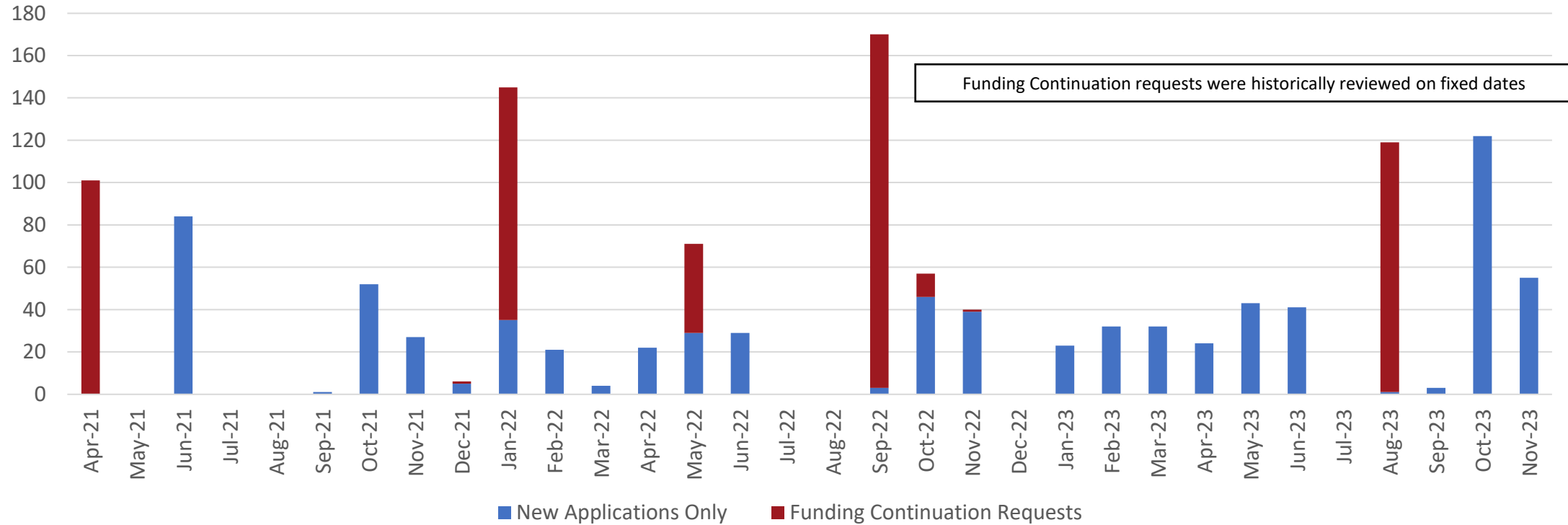
Non-EHC Plan : Targeted SEND Funding : School Age New Applications since April 2021

New Applications Only
April 2021 (end of National Lockdown #3) to November 2023



Non-EHC Plan : Targeted SEND Funding : School Age New Applications & Funding Continuation Requests since April 2021

New Applications Only
April 2021 (end of National Lockdown #3) to November 2023



SEND Additional Capacity

Type	#	Provider	Age group	Improvement	Places #	Timing	Comment
Mainstream Schools	1	Hunsbury Park	Primary	New	20	October / November 2022	Open Phase #1
	2	Headlands	Primary	New	10	November 2022	Open
	3	Castle	Primary	New	10	January 2023	Open
	4	Hardingstone	Primary	New	10	January 2023	Open
	5	Moulton School	Secondary	New	30	January 2024	
	6	Hunsbury Park unit expansion	Primary	New	10	February 2024	Phase #2
	7	Hunsbury unit on Chiltern site (satellite unit)	Primary	New	30	October 2023	Open Phase #1
	8	Hunsbury unit on Chiltern site (satellite unit)	Primary	New	15	September 2024	Phase #2
Special Schools	1	Kings Meadow	Primary	Expansion	16	January 2024	Phase #1
	2	Purple Oaks	All Through	Expansion for P-16	20	By June 2024	
	3	Northgate	Secondary	Expansion	36	September 2024	
	4	Fairfields	Primary	New	24	TBC	
	5	Kings Meadow	Primary	Expansion	16	December 2024	Phase #2
	6	Gateway	Secondary	Expansion	54	December 2024	
	7	Billing Brook	All Through	Expansion	16	TBC	
	8	New School @ Tiffield	All Through	New	250	September 2025	
Further Education	1	CTC Daventry	Post 16	New	8	September 2023	Open
	2	Wieducate	Post 18	New	10	October 2023	Open
					Total	585	

Note : there are on-going discussions with additional Education Providers for more places

SEND Additional Capacity : Mainstream Schools

2022			2023												2024														
Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep						
<div data-bbox="117 505 287 751" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #90EE90; padding: 5px;"> Hunsbury Park Primary Reception KS1 & KS2 Oct & Nov #20 </div>		<div data-bbox="366 505 537 725" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #90EE90; padding: 5px;"> Castle Primary Reception & KS1 Jan #10 </div>														<div data-bbox="1230 494 1401 836" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #FFFF00; padding: 5px;"> Hunsbury Park Unit On Chiltern Site (Satellite Unit) Primary Feb #30 </div>		<div data-bbox="1615 505 1786 725" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #FFFF00; padding: 5px;"> Hunsbury Park Unit Expansion Primary Feb #10 </div>			<div data-bbox="1531 819 1702 1039" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #FFFF00; padding: 5px;"> Moulton School Secondary KS3 & KS4 Jan #30 </div>						<div data-bbox="2288 494 2458 836" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #FFFF00; padding: 5px;"> Hunsbury Park Unit On Chiltern Site (Satellite Unit) Primary Sep #15 </div>		
<div data-bbox="145 776 315 996" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #90EE90; padding: 5px;"> Headlands Primary Reception KS1 & KS2 Nov #10 </div>		<div data-bbox="349 788 545 973" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #90EE90; padding: 5px;"> Hardingstone Primary KS2 Jan #10 </div>																											

SEND Additional Capacity : Special Schools

2024												2025																
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep								
Kings Meadow Primary KS1 & KS2 Jan #16						Purple Oaks Post 16 KS5 Jun #20					Northgate Secondary KS3 & KS4 Sep #36						Kings Meadow Primary KS1 & KS2 Dec #16					Gateway Secondary KS3 & KS4 Dec #54					New Tiffield All through Reception to KS5 Sep #250	

Billingbrook (All Through) expansion of 16 Places : timing TBC

Fairfields (Primary) New Unit of 24 places : timing TBC

SEND Additional Capacity : Further Education

2023				2024								
<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>
CTC Daventry Post 18 September #8	Wieducate Post 16 KS5 October #10											

Panel Terms of Reference & Application Forms

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Targeted SEND Funding</u>	<u>Education Banding Tool (RAS)</u>
Early Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel Terms Of Reference need to be finalised after application form is approved and shared with Sub-group Application Form : revised draft on test Funding Continuation Form now implemented Guidance notes / FAQs being developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Requested For Statutory Assessment Form is being amended to align with the SEND Ranges > on test Annual Review Form also being reviewed > on test
Mainstream Schools > primary, secondary & 16+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel Terms Of Reference need to be finalised after application form is approved and shared with Sub-group Application Form : revised draft on test Guidance notes / FAQs being developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Early Years
Units at Mainstream Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Early Years
Further Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Needs Cost Form feedback received from the sector Timing for next steps need to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Early Years
Special Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Early Years

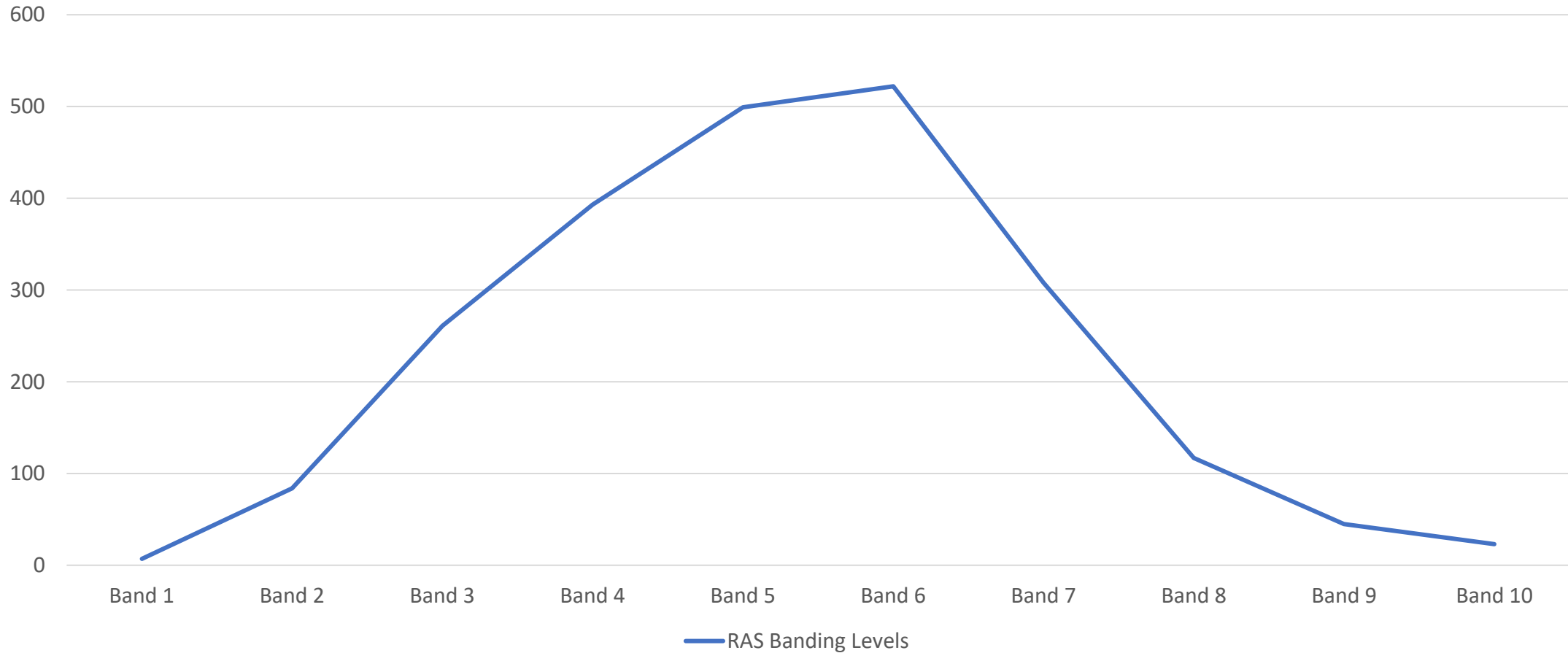
<u>Sector</u>	<u>Targeted SEND Funding</u>	<u>Education Banding Tool (RAS)</u>
Early Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024/2025 Early Years budget review / reconciliation delayed due to late confirmation of 2024/2025 budget • Communication of new rate to Sub-group delayed • Schools Forum consultation needed • Communication of new rate to EY Sector needed • Implementation from 1 April 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banding values still being evaluated by WNC • Ben Pearson / Councillor Baker / CDMT review needed • Consultation & feedback with Sub-group needed • Schools Forum consultation needed • Communication to needed Sector needed • Training for parents / carers and all education sectors needed • Phased implementation from 1 April 2024
Mainstream Schools* > primary, secondary & 16+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Pearson / Councillor Baker / CDMT approval • Sub-group agreement of rates aligned with SEND Ranges • Schools Forum consultation @ 13 December • Communication of new rate to Schools Sector needed • Implementation from 1 April 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Early Years
Units at Mainstream Schools*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Early Years
Further Education**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement with FE Sector representatives to continue the current allocation system for an additional year • WNC to run new banding system alongside for this additional year • Implementation is now scheduled for 1 August 2025 • Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To make informed decisions on Targeted SEND Funding and EHC Banding Values based on accurate data ○ To design and embed process changes and improvements ○ To calculate payment change impact and ensure smoother transition to new system ○ To understand lessons learned from Early Years & Schools launch and identify improvements for the Further Education launch 	
Special Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 4 : Implementation Plan to be reviewed in early 2024

Education Banding Tool (RAS) Implementation

<u>Sector</u>	<u>V4 Needs Profile Forms Status</u>	<u>New Payment Implementation</u>
Early Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All V4 forms completed by Caseworkers Early February moderation completion date estimate Data audits to be implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding review on a setting by setting basis New payment calculation (including payment protection) Communication of new payment to setting New payments from 1 April 2024 > phased
Mainstream Schools* > primary, secondary & 16+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All V4 forms completed by Caseworkers Early February moderation completion date estimate Data audits to be implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Early Years
Units at Mainstream Schools*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New category set up specifically for WNC with vendor Pupil numbers are currently included within the Mainstream Schools total Unit data will be confirmed when moderation is complete Data audits to be implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Early Years
Independent Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 3 Balance to be completed & moderated after Mainstream Schools and Units are completed & moderated Estimated completion by early May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of Scope
Further Education**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 3 Balance to be completed & moderated after Mainstream Schools and Units are completed & moderated Estimated completion by early May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding review on a setting by setting basis New payment calculation (including payment protection) Communication of new payment to providers New payments on 1 August 2025 > not phased
Special Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 4 Balance to be completed & moderated after FE is completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed timing plan to be developed in Q1 2024

EHC Plan Education Banding Tool : Total RAS Banding Levels @ 23 November

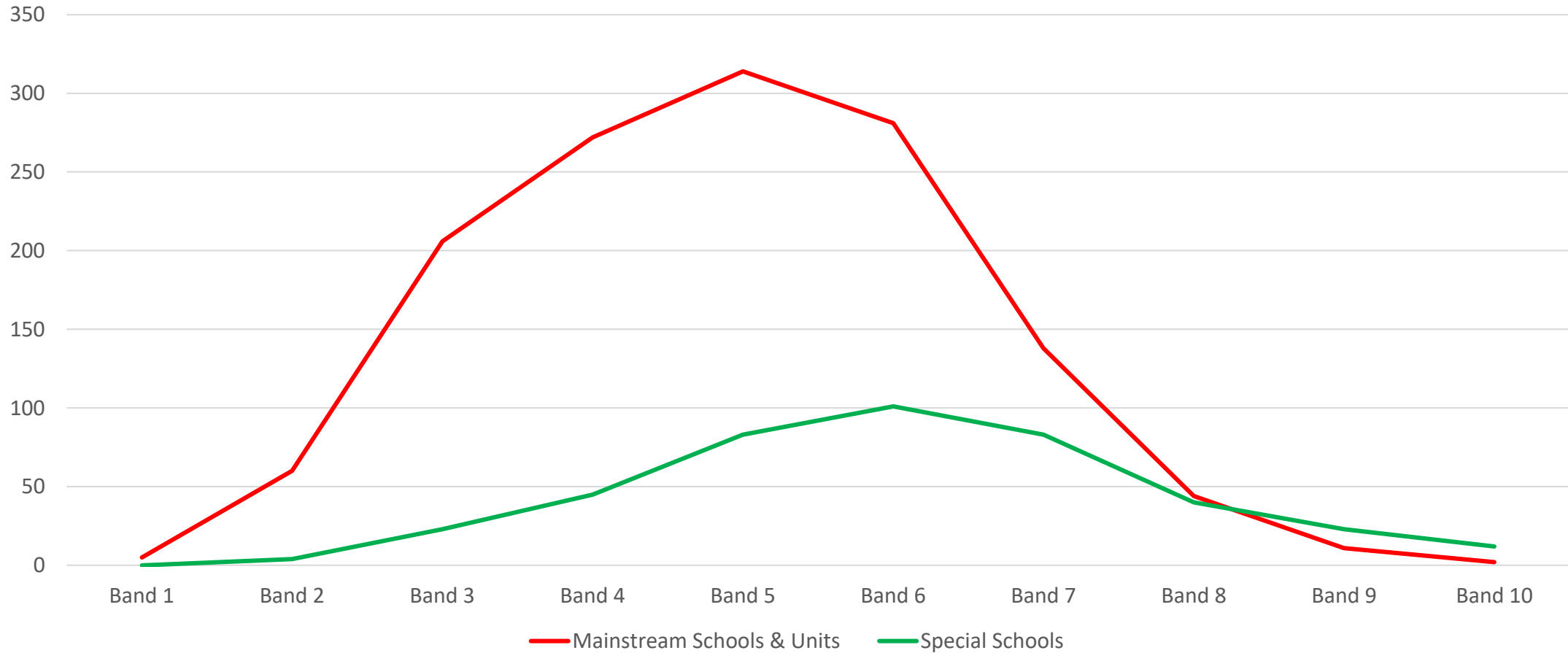
Total RAS Banding Levels @ 23 November



Source : Imosphere Formulate For SEND Reporting Tool
Includes 2,259 EHC Plans completed so far using Needs Profile Form V4 (65% of the current total of 3,482)

EHC Plan Education Banding Tool : Mainstream & Units plus Special Schools RAS Banding Levels @ 23 Nov

RAS Banding Levels @ 23 November



Source : Imosphere Formulate For SEND Reporting Tool

Data for Mainstream Schools & Units at Mainstream Schools will be split in early 2024. 1,333/ 1,532 (87%) completed
 Special Schools 414 / 1,401 (30%) completed to date

SEND Funding Project Summary

- Funding panel documents & improvements, application documentation improvements, process improvements, to be launched after consultation / co-production with education sector sub-groups
 - Launch dates are flexible
 - Comprehensive guidance notes / FAQs are being developed
 - WNC website content (including Local Offer content) needs to be updated
- Payment changes
 - Early Years from 1 April 2024 > phased implementation
 - Mainstream Schools & Units from 1 April 2024 > phased implementation
 - Further Education from 1 August 2025 > additional year for the current allocation system
 - Special Schools > detailed timeline to be agreed in Q1 2024
- Targeted SEND Funding Outcome Tracking review
 - Phase 2 > start when payment changes are confirmed
- Communication campaign / Communication Plan update > on-going
- Training topics being identified / Training Plan update > on-going