



# 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 Tuesday 7 February 2023 at 2.00 pm

## Agenda

1.	<b>Apologies for absence and Forum Membership Changes</b>
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> 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.	<b>Minutes</b> (Pages 5 - 16) To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2022.
4.	<b>Early Years Budgets 2023-24</b> (Pages 17 - 24) Outcome of consultation and consideration of proposals.
5.	<b>2022-23 DSG Monitoring</b> (Pages 25 - 30) Emily Cooledge
6.	<b>DSG Funding Update 2023-24</b> (Pages 31 - 42) Beth Baines
7.	<b>WNC Final Budget Proposals 2023-24</b> a) General overview - Emily Cooledge (verbal update) b) Schools PFI update – Simon Bowers (verbal update)

8.	<p><b>SEND Improvement Update</b> (Pages 43 - 52) Andy Pymm</p>
9.	<p><b>Forward Plan</b></p> <p>Standing items (if required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DSG Monitoring</li> <li>• DfE / ESFA Funding announcements</li> <li>• School Budgets</li> <li>• High Needs</li> <li>• Early Years</li> <li>• National Funding Formula</li> </ul> <p><b>May 2023</b> Election of Chair Election of Vice Chair SEND Green Paper implications Schools Apprentice Levy Update Administrative arrangements for allocation of central government grants</p> <p><b>July 2023</b> Provisional DSG and Schools 2022-23 outturn Schools Funding consultation 2024-25 – process and timelines Early Years funding consultation 2024-25 – process and timelines</p> <p><b>October 2023</b> Schools Funding 2024-25 – consultation proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools funding formula and Specialist Services</li> <li>• Split Site Funding Policy</li> <li>• Growth Fund and weighted numbers for new schools / year groups</li> <li>• Central Schools Services budgets 2024-25</li> <li>• Maintained schools de-delegations (School Improvement Grant, Trade Union Facility Time, Redundancy Support)</li> </ul> <p><b>December 2023</b> Schools Funding 2024-25 - outcome of consultation and final proposals – votes required on individual items. Early Years Central Expenditure 2024-25 – consultation proposals</p> <p><b>February 2024</b> Early Years Budget 2024-25 –outcome of consultation and consideration of final proposals, including vote on central expenditure. WNC Budget Proposals 2024-25</p>

	<p><b>Proposed Schools Forum Dates 2023/24</b></p> <p>Tuesday 23 May 2023</p> <p>Tuesday 4 July 2023</p> <p>Wednesday 18 October 2023</p> <p>Wednesday 13 December 2023</p> <p>Tuesday 6 February 2024</p> <p>Wednesday 15 May 2024</p>
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Urgent Business</b></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  
31 January 2023

**West Northamptonshire Schools Forum Members:**

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

## **Information about this Agenda**

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### **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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Email: [democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk)

Or by writing to:

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### West Northamptonshire Schools Forum

Minutes of a meeting of the West Northamptonshire Schools Forum held at the Council Chamber, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Tuesday 13 December 2022 at 2.00 pm.

Present: Paul Wheeler – Vice Chair (PW)  
 Beccy Merritt (BM)  
 Dan York (DY)  
 Lee Hughes (LH) – online  
 Iain Massey (IM)  
 Vanessa Bradley (VB) – online

Substitute Members: Kathryn White (KW) – online

Also Present: Councillor Fiona Baker (FB)  
 Richard Poole, Unison (RP)  
 Andy Langford, Unison (AL)  
 Rachelle Wilkins, GMB (RW)  
 Robert Johnston, NASUWT (RJ)

Apologies for Absence: Louise Samways  
 Peter French  
 James Shryane  
 Rachel Martin  
 Jon Lake  
 Karen Lewis  
 Jenny Thorpe  
 Hayley Walker  
 Eliza Hollis

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

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

Apologies for received from Peter French, Karen Lewis, Jon Lake, Hayley Walker (substituted by Kathryn White), Rachel Martin, Eliza Hollis, Louise Samways, James Shryane and Jenny Thorpe.

Schools Forum was advised that Lyndsey Barnett had stepped down as the Maintained Nursery representative. The sector had nominated Beccy Merritt, the Headteacher of Wallace Road Nursery School in Northampton, to take the place.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

PW declared in relation to agenda item 9 (Schools PFI Update) that he was the Chief Operating Officer of the East Midlands Academy Trust, which included a school in the Northampton Schools PFI Scheme.

LH declared in relation to agenda item 9 (Schools PFI Update) that he was the Chief Operating Officer of the Peterborough Diocesan Education Trust, which included a school in the Northampton Schools PFI Scheme.

3. **Minutes**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. **2022-23 DSG Monitoring**

EC presented the report and highlighted that the DSG forecast outturn position for Quarter 2 was an overspend of £2m, which represented a deterioration of £1.6m from the previous quarter. The key factor in the forecast pressure was increased demand for educational placements and the need to use out of county placements to meet this. Mitigating actions were being taken.

Schools Forum considered the report. PW requested clarification of whether there had been a carry-forward into the current DSG budget and of the latest position regarding the High Needs block recovery plan. BP advised that more information on the recovery plan would be provided by the later item on the agenda for the current meeting. However, it would be helpful to bring the detailed recovery plan to Schools Forum.

RESOLVED:

- That Schools Forum noted the forecast outturn position for 2022-23.
- That Schools Forum requested confirmation of whether there had been a carry-forward into the 2022-23 DSG budget.
- That Schools Forum agreed to have a standing agenda item at future meetings updating on action to address pressures on the High Needs block.

## 5. **DfE/ESFA Funding Announcements**

EC introduced the item, which was intended to advise of the latest funding announcements and lead into a wider discussion about the funding environment for schools, as requested by Schools Forum.

EC advised that the final funding settlement was now expected around the end of the current week. The Autumn Statement had included an additional £2.3bn funding for core school budgets in each of the next two years, which would restore per-pupil funding to the 2010 level. It had not yet been confirmed how this additional funding would be provided. There remained uncertainty about pressures on schools resulting from factors including pay awards, inflation and energy costs. The details of government capital funding support for schools' energy costs were also still to be confirmed.

PW noted that extra funding for the sector was welcome but current and future demands would still leave a strain on school budgets. Schools Forum was invited to consider whether it should seek to make further representations on this matter alongside West Northamptonshire Council (WNC).

In response to questions EC and BB advised that additional funding was likely to be distributed on a formula basis. In the previous year additional schools block funding had been provided on a per-pupil basis, together with some additional High Needs block funding that the local area could decide how to distribute.

IM referred to the example of a large secondary school going into deficit due to the impact of pay awards and energy costs. There would be a gap left to fill if additional funding was not received in 2022-23. PW considered that this was likely to reflect a typical experience for a well-managed school.

BP encouraged that Schools Forum should keep in touch with the pressures affecting the sector and discuss how these might be mitigated. The Local Government Association had identified that there was approximately £2bn pressure on Higher Needs at the current level of demand, which needed to be set against the additional funding in the Autumn Statement. Small early years providers could also be put at risk by small increases in pressures in the current climate. The new Ofsted local inspection framework had been published in the previous week; significantly, before the outcomes of the national review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision and the national SEND delivery plan. It was hoped that additional funding might be associated with their publication.

FB advised that the f40 Group of local authorities had recently sent a detailed report on pressures associated with SEND provision to the Department for Education (DfE) and was awaiting a response. Collective action on this kind of issue was more productive.

**RESOLVED:** that Schools Forum noted the update.

## 6. High Needs Budgets

EC introduced the report and outlined current financial assumptions relating to the High Needs Block budget. WNC was waiting for confirmation of its share of additional funding announced in the Autumn Statement. Work to quantify and manage pressures was continuing but the situation remained volatile with the risk of additional demands.

BB set out the special schools indicative budget for 2023-34, which WNC was required to provide to schools before the end of February. Special schools were largely full so a significant increase was not expected. The overall budget for 2023-24 was £23.9m. The report also presented the High Needs places in West Northamptonshire as at the end of 2022.

BP introduced AP who had joined WNC recently as a project manager for improvement work on SEND and had given this significant extra momentum. Improvement work included co-production of a needs analysis, building on the Mastodon survey of young people's needs. The annual school capacity (SCAP) survey for 2023 was due to include a specific return on SEND for the first time, which would enable a better dialogue with the DfE about demand and provision. WNC would also carry out a sufficiency analysis of provision in schools and other settings to inform a more pro-active future approach.

AP gave an overview of the current SEND funding project, which was designed to provide consistency and clarity of SEND funding across West Northamptonshire, highlighting the following points:

- The project covered funding both for children and young people with Education, Health & Care (EHC) plans and for those without an EHC Plan but who received additional funding.
- The project working included providers and parents from the Northamptonshire Parent Forum Group.
- It was aimed to launch the new funding framework resulting from the project in schools, units and early years settings on 1 September 2023 and on a later date in further education settings.
- WNC currently used a Resource Allocation System (RAS) to allocate funding to special schools. It was planned to extend the use RAS software into other settings. Information events would be held to present this to settings.
- Financial modelling was currently being done for both elements of the project. An update could be provided to the next Schools Forum meeting.

DY sought reassurance about the quality assurance process that would apply to data informing the future approach; how early years would be involved in the new approach given that early identification of needs helped to address them; the basis for introducing SEND Ranges ahead of the current work; and how the current work would help to address pressures on the High Needs block. DY also emphasised the importance of transparency in the approach being taken and the outcomes sought from it.



BP made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- Quality assurance of data would be supported by the collaborative approach to the project, which would produce a collective view of current provision and future needs.
- He agreed that early identification of needs should be taken into account in future planning. The SCAP would use school census information, birth data and information on housing growth to produce a projection of future demand.
- SEND Ranges was the local version of the graduated approach. It should be a tool that can be used to identify funding for the next academic year. There would be support for providers in the transitional phase and WNC would also need to ensure that its SEND panel process was effective.
- Streamlining processes, improving consistency and enhancing transparency were key principles behind the approach being taken.
- A more consistent and rigorous approach to allocating funding would put WNC in a better position to benchmark costs and identify any providers charging at an outlying rate. This would assist in managing pressures on the High Needs block.

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum noted the update and welcomed further updates to future meetings.

## 7. **2023-24 WNC Schools Funding - outcome of consultation and final proposals**

BB introduced the report and set out the results of consultation on 2023-24 WNC Schools Funding.

For Specialist Services the consultation presented two specific options: a top slice of £2.2m from mainstream school budgets to fund both specialist services centrally; or a 0.5% schools block top slice with SEN service funded centrally but sensory impairment service charged at the point of delivery. There had been 19 consultation responses in favour of option 1 and 38 in favour of option 2.

For Split Site Policy the consultation proposal was to roll forward the existing local policy from 2022-23 and to use the same rates. There had been 43 responses in favour and none against on both elements.

For Growth Fund Policy the consultation proposal was to roll forward the existing policy from 2022-23 with updated rates and the addition of a clause to allow funding of extraordinary growth events, such as children arriving in-year as refugees. There had been 46 responses in favour of the proposal relating to the Policy and 2 against. There had been 45 responses in favour of updating the rates and 3 against.

Central expenditure from the central schools services block consisted of some historical commitments and ongoing responsibilities. The consultation proposal concerning the continuation of the central services that are partly funded by DSG received 48 responses in favour and none against.

For the maintained schools de-delegation for Trade Union (TU) Facilities Time the consultation presented three options: continuation of the de-delegation as in previous years; continuation of the de-delegation but with 10% less Facility Time, as previously suggested by Schools Forum; and operate an arrangement for facility time

within individual schools. Option 1 was supported by 11 responses, option 2 by 22, and option 3 by 2.

For the maintained schools de-delegation for School Improvement Grant the consultation proposal was to continue the de-delegation. There had been 24 responses in favour and 3 against.

For the maintained schools de-delegation for redundancy support the consultation proposal was to continue the de-delegation at a rate of £4.00. There had been 26 responses in favour and 1 against.

TU representatives present were then invited to address Schools Forum on the maintained schools de-delegation for TU Facilities Time.

RP supported the continuation of the previous de-delegation for TU Facility Time, as set out in option 1 in the consultation. The per pupil rate had remained at £2.10 for some years and had not been increased last year to the difficult economic climate. Schools were now outsourcing their HR functions, which was increasing demand on TU representatives at the same time as their capacity was under pressure. A 10% reduction in Facility Time as proposed in option 2 would cause issues to escalate more quickly and delay resolutions.

RW supported the continuation of the previous de-delegation, commenting that TU Facility Time contributed both to reducing the risk of cases going to a tribunal and also to managing TU members' expectations.

RJ supported the continuation of the previous de-delegation, commenting that it was short-sighted to reduce Facilities Time in the context of increasing demand from factors such as the need to review new policies.

BP advised that he could include an item in HeadWest encouraging early consultation by schools on employment changes.

DY commented that TU representatives played a crucial role in school life. The case for continuing the previous de-delegation and increasing the per pupil rate from £2.10 to £3.57 had been made and was understandable. However, it came at a time when schools were dealing with increased overall costs. The consultation responses were likely to reflect this.

RP noted that £3.56 per pupil had been the average rate in the East Midlands for the past three years and Northamptonshire had been paying less. Changing now would involve a big jump from £2.10, which was why it had not been done in the previous year.

PW commented that carry forwards from previous years had enabled the per pupil rate to be kept low previously whilst the pool of maintained schools contributing was also reducing. This created the need for a greater increase to match the regional average but this was not supported at this time by the consultation responses.

BB noted that WNC had to work within set parameters concerning spending within different budget blocks and the central schools services block was reducing by 20% each year. This raised the question of how additional funding could be found as well as future approaches to de-delegation to take into account changes in the number of maintained schools. BP noted that the Schools Forum was responsible for deciding the de-delegation relating to maintained schools. There were other means of engaging with academies concerning buying in to TU Facility Time.

PW invited Schools Forum members to raise any questions or comments on other elements of the 2023-24 WNC Schools Funding proposals. In response to a question BB clarified that there was an error in the report concerning the de-delegation for School Improvement Grant and that the proposed rate for 2023-24 was £5.50.

Schools Forum then considered and reached a decision on each element of the 2023-24 WNC Schools Funding proposals set out in the report in turn.

#### Specialist Services

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum agreed the approach to funding specialist services in 2023-24 set out in option 2 in the report: 0.5% schools block top slice, SEN service funded centrally but sensory impairment service charged at the point of delivery.

#### Split Site Policy

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum agreed to roll forward the Split Site Policy from 2022-23 and to use the same rates as the 2022-23 split site rates.

#### Growth Fund Policy

RESOLVED:

- That Schools Forum agreed to roll forward the Growth Fund Policy from 2022-23, increasing the rates and adding a clause to allow extraordinary growth events to be funded.
- That Schools Forum agreed the Growth Fund weighted numbers as set out in the West Northamptonshire Schools Budget Consultation 2023-24 consultation document.
- That Schools Forum agreed to set the Growth Fund budget at £1.6m for 2023-24.

#### Central budgets from the Central Schools Services Block of the DSG

PW requested Schools Forum members to confirm if they had any comments or concerns about any of the proposed central budgets from the Central Schools Services Block of the DSG or were content to reach a decision on them as a group. No issues were raised.

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum agreed the central budgets from the Central Schools Services Block of the DSG for 2023-24 as set out in the report.

#### Maintained schools de-delegation for TU Facilities Time

PW noted that two of the three maintained schools representatives had been unable to attend the current meeting but he was aware that DY had sought views from the sector ahead of the decision. DY emphasised that his role on the Schools Forum was to represent all maintained primary schools.

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum agreed the approach to the de-delegation for Trade Union Facility Time in 2023-24 set out in option 2 in the report: Continuation of the de-delegation but with 10% less facility time.

PW emphasised to the TU representatives that their work was appreciated. The fact that Schools Forum had concluded that option 1 was not the right approach at this time should not be seen as a negative view of the contribution made by TU representatives.

#### Maintained schools de-delegation for School Improvement Grant

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum agreed the proposed continuation of the de-delegation for School Improvement Grant and the rate of £5.50.

#### Maintained schools de-delegation for Redundancy Support

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum agreed the proposed continuation of the de-delegation for Redundancy Support and the rate of £4.00.

### 8. **Early Years Funding Formula for 2023-24**

BB presented the draft consultation proposals for the Early Years Funding Formula for 2023-24. It was highlighted that the consultation document currently included two versions of the proposals pending confirmation of funding rates in the December settlement. The final version of the consultation document would feature a single set of proposals. BB went on to summarise key factors taken into account in the 2023-24 proposals.

BM and KW sought further information about how the 5% of 3 and 4 year old funding retained by WNC was used. BP advised that the consultation document did include some information on this but further information could be provided to Schools Forum if necessary. PW subsequently suggested that it could also be helpful to expand the information in the consultation document.

BP highlighted the reference in the consultation document to WNC's intention to distribute £500K to providers in 2023-24 from a £1m reserve within its DSG balances resulting from reduced uptake of nursery places during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was not part of the consultation but an in-year measure intended to recognise pressures affecting providers.

RESOLVED:

- That Schools Forum requested to receive further information on how the central 5% retained budget is used.

- That Schools Forum endorsed the draft consultation proposals subject to the following additions:
  - Inclusion in the consultation document of more information on how the central 5% retained budget is used.
  - Inclusion in the consultation document of a single version of the proposals to reflect the Early Years National Funding Formula rates that are confirmed in the DSG settlement for 2023-24.

## 9. Schools PFI Update

PW noted that this item had arisen from concerns about issues connected with the Schools PFI contract, particularly the impact on schools of significant increases in facilities management (FM) costs made after 2022-23 budgets had been set. Schools Forum had sought an update on the situation at its meeting on 18 October 2022 to assist in identifying and managing future demands. A report had not been provided for that meeting or for the current one. This was a very disappointing situation for Schools Forum. PW welcomed that SB was now present to give an overview of the current direction.

SB highlighted that WNC was an evolving authority and he was best-placed to deal with this item at the current meeting. The position relating to FM costs and charges was continually changing. This was why a report had not been brought to the last Schools Forum meeting, although he apologised if this had not been communicated clearly. The position remained fluid and he was only able to set out the best projection at this point, which was a challenging one.

SB gave an overview of the background to the Schools PFI, FM costs and funding, and the likely position for 2023-24, highlighting the following points:

- In 2005 the value of school FM charges was calculated as a percentage of the overall charge. Charges had subsequently been varied to reflect changes in facilities at individual schools.
- It was difficult to compare FM charges for PFI schools to those for other schools due to limited data on other schools available to WNC; differences between schools' facilities; different approaches to FM; and the fact that PFI contracts involved an element of financial risk that the contractor included in its price.
- The current economic climate made it very difficult to predict the inflation rate in April 2023 when FM charges would actually be applied. DSG funding had been inflated by 11.2% in accordance with the DfE. The WNC draft budget for 2023-24 needed to meet an overall budget gap of £35.6m and there was no allowance for meeting Schools PFI inflationary costs.
- RPIX inflation was currently projected at approximately 13%, although there had recently been some signs of easing. Inflation at this level would result in an estimated FM base unitary charge of £34.249m for 2023-24. This would produce an FM charge of £19.855m, representing an increase of £2.284m.
- The estimated position for 2023-24 involved an increase in FM charges to individual schools of £916K over the DSG increase, equivalent to £43 per student enrolled.
- Views from a schools' perspective about how to address this challenging situation were welcome. SB was ready to work through the implications with

individual schools. Schools were also encouraged to contribute to consultation on the WNC draft budget.

Schools Forum considered the update and members raised the following points during the course of discussion:

- PW noted that there was limited scope to seek to renegotiate the PFI contract. Better relations between schools and the FM contractor would make a practical difference. There seemed to have been a significant degradation in the services delivered.
- DY emphasised that some communication with schools about potential changes to FM charges was better than none. This would help schools to deal with pressures. This had not occurred in the previous year.
- DY advised that FM costs for his school had increased by £20K in 2022-23. This would be easier to accept if the standard of service provided was better. Instead, the contractor was deciding whether to clean classrooms or toilets. This situation needed to be addressed.

SB made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- Issues with the performance of the facilities management contractor were acknowledged. WNC was doing all that it could to address these, including taking legal advice.
- A figure in the low £100Ks was a sensible estimate of the amount that may be clawed back from the FM contractor for under-performance. A more specific estimate would need to be given following the meeting if requested. Money clawed back would go to WNC and to schools according to a set mechanism.
- The Schools PFI Forum was due to meet on 14 December 2022 and he would make the FM contractor aware of the frustrations expressed regarding performance.
- It was not possible to give a guarantee about future FM charges, which could be affected by a range of variables such as potential changes in the inflation rate.
- WNC wanted to work with schools on future FM charges. Intelligence from schools' perspectives helped to inform the approach taken.
- The FM charges set for 2022-23 had followed a five-yearly benchmarking process. WNC had secured a favourable outcome but had not been able to give schools advance notice of this. The process for setting charges this year was more straightforward.

PW emphasised that the key message from Schools Forum on this matter was about the importance of communication. Future estimates included cost increases that would be significant, particularly for smaller schools. Decisions taken on this matter had a real-world impact that affected children.

FB urged SB to take the lead on communications relating to the Schools PFI contract to reflect this importance.

**RESOLVED:** that Schools Forum requested to receive regular updates in future on the situation concerning charges under the Schools PFI contract.

10. **Schools Forum Forward Plan**

JE presented the Forward Plan, highlighting that the Schools Forum meeting on 7 February 2023 would consider the outcomes of consultation on the Early Years Funding Formula 2023-24 as well as proposed dates for Forum meetings in 2023-24.

PW invited members to raise any points on the Forward Plan that they wished Schools Forum to consider.

RESOLVED: that Schools Forum noted the Forward Plan.

11. **Urgent Business**

There was none.

PW thanked those present for their attendance and wished everyone a good Christmas.

The meeting closed at 4.20 pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**West Northants Schools Forum: 7 February 2023**  
**Agenda Item 4**  
**Early Years Budgets 2023-24**

**Early Years Funding 2023-2024 Proposal Report**

**1. Introduction**

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is required to consult with Schools Forum on the proposed arrangements for the Early Years Funding Formula. It is also best practice to consult with the sector before implementing any changes to base rates and supplements with PVI, Childminders and Maintained Nursery Sector funded providers.

WNC is committed to supporting and enabling the funded and non-funded Early Years sector to deliver sustainable and high quality provision within West Northamptonshire. The proposal available within this report has been based on a safe and sound balance of our commitment to passport as much DSG funding to providers, as well as being able to meet our statutory duties as a council in delivering a high quality service to the Early Years Sector.

**2. Background**

The Schools and Early Years Regulations 2018, (Regulation 22) requires local Authorities to ensure that from April 2018 at least 95% of the hourly funding rate for 3 and 4 year olds allocated by the Department for Education is passed on to providers through the formula, or other funding paid directly to providers. The DfE monitor this requirement through the WNC annual s251 budget returns.

Early Years Block DSG is calculated based on the number of hours children are taking up during census week, January 2022 (first 5 months of 2021-22) and January 2023 (for last 7 months of 2022-23). If a provider does not compete the census, the service does not receive funding for those children from 1st April 2022.

**3. Consultation with the sector**

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is required to consult on the proposed arrangements for the Early Years Funding Formula for participating Early Years funded providers.

As part of this consultation process, the survey at the end of this document was provided to all Early Years Providers in West Northamptonshire to capture views regarding the Early Years Funding for PVI and Childminders and the Maintained Nursery Sector for 2023-20234.

West Northamptonshire Council's core principles for early years education are

- 100% of 2 year-old funding will be paid to providers
- 95% of 3 and 4 year-old funding will be paid to providers

- Providing excellent support, advice and guidance using the 5% centrally retained funding
- Providing a safety-valve to protect providers who offer more hours than they are funded for

This consultation describes West Northamptonshire Council's planned early years funding arrangements for 2023-24 and invited early years education providers to feedback on the proposals. Local authorities are required to consult providers on annual changes to their local formula and schools' forums must also be consulted on changes to local early years funding formulas, including agreeing central spend by 28 February 2023.

A draft of this document was taken to WNC Schools Forum on the 13th of December. Schools' forum members requested more detail on the plans for the 5% central expenditure which has been provided in this final version.

The consultation ran between 3rd January and 27th January 2023 to ensure views can be taken into account in setting the 2023-24 early years funding formula for West Northamptonshire Council at the 7th February 2023 Schools Forum meeting.

Questions as follows:

1. Do you agree with the proposal to remove the notional SEND budget?
2. Do you agree with moving £220k from the notional SEND budget into the SENIF budget (equivalent to 4p on the base rate).
3. Do you agree with passing all of the increase on 3&4 year old funding through the base rate for universal and additional hours.
4. Do you understand that the "contingency budget" for 3&4 year olds is the expected funding WNC will need to pay as base rate for 3&4 year olds above the number of hours that WNC is funded for by the DfE.
5. Do you agree with passing all of the increase on two year old funding through the 2 year old provider rate.
6. Do you agree with the proposal to set the central budget at the maximum 5% of the 3&4 year old funding?
7. Do you agree with the proposal that any unspent central budget be used to offset any overspends in other areas of the early years budget?
8. Do you agree with the MNS proposal to fund 5% on IDACI 30% and the remainder on January census hours?
9. Do you agree with the proposed distribution of early years reserve funding as a one-off distribution to support providers with the increased cost of living?

## 4. Consultation Outcomes

### Questions relating to SEND and SENIF budgets

3. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the notional SEND budget?

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● Agree	14
● Disagree	7
● Neither agree or disagree	3



4. Do you agree or disagree with moving £220k from the notional SEND budget into the SENIF budget to enable WNC to adequately fund high needs pressures in the early years sector (equivalent to 4p from the base rate)?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Agree	14
● Disagree	4
● Neither agree or disagree	6



### Questions relating to 3 and 4 year old funding

5. Do you understand that the "contingency budget" for three and four year olds is the expected funding WNC will need to pay as a base rate for three and four year olds above the number of hours that WNC is funded for by the DfE?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Yes, I understand	20
● No, I do not understand	4



6. Do you agree or disagree with passing 95% of the increase in funding for 2023-24 for three and four year old funding through the base rate for universal and additional hours.

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Agree	14
● Disagree	3
● Neither agree or disagree	7



## Questions relating to % of funding provided to the sector

7. Do you agree or disagree with passing all of the increase for 2023-24 for two year old funding through the two year old provider rate?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Agree	21
● Disagree	2
● Neither agree or disagree	1



8. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to set the central budget at the maximum 5% of the three and four year old funding?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Agree	11
● Disagree	4
● Neither agree or disagree	9



## Questions relating to unspent funding

9. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal that any unspent central budget be used to offset any overspends in other areas of the early years budget?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Agree	13
● Disagree	7
● Neither agree or disagree	4



10. Do you agree or disagree with the MNS supplement proposal to fund 5% on IDACI 30% and the remainder on January census hours?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Agree	12
● Disagree	2
● Neither agree or disagree	10



## 5. Summary of Consultation

The response rate for the survey was poor with only 24 settings responding. This is despite regular reminders being sent to providers.

The survey reveals that the sector are supportive of the key areas set out below;

- The removal of the 'notional' SEND funding and support for SENIF
- The % of centrally retained funding for 3-4 year olds
- The use of unspent funding

## 6. Update following the December DSG Settlement

The final DSG settlement was announced on the 16<sup>th</sup> December and updated the rates that WNC will receive for 3 and 4 year old and 2 year old funding.

The final increase in rates that WNC will receive for 2023-24 are 2p and 4p higher than the provisional rates. The proposals are to add these to the base rate and contingency and are included in the final proposed local early years funding formula in table 1 and the overall budgets for 2023-24 are shown in table 2.

**Table 1: WNC proposed early years local funding formula for 2023-24**

Factor	Basis	2023-24 £
3 and 4 year old base rate for universal and extended entitlement	Per hour	4.29
Deprivation	Per hour eligible children	0.32
EYPP (early years pupil premium)	Per hour eligible children	0.62
DAF (Disabled access fund)	Annual amount	828.00
SENIF (Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund)	Per hour for eligible children, variable hours	8.00
2 year old base rate	Per hour	5.63

**Table 2: The budget breakdown for early years is as follows:**

Factor	Budget £m
Central Services	1.24
3 and 4 year old base rate for universal and extended	21.6
Deprivation	0.39
3&4 year old Contingency	0.57
EYPP (early years pupil premium)	0.245
DAF (Disabled access fund)	0.14
SENIF (Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund)	1.03
2 year old base rate	1.98
2 year old Contingency	0.08
Maintained nursery school supplement	0.87
Total*	28.15

*\*The total grant for early years is updated through the year, this is the December 2022 indicative figure provided by the Government. The final early years block funding for 2023-24 will be known in July 2024.*

## 7. Schools' Forum decisions and recommendations

The recommendation to Schools' Forum is to agree with the majority decisions outlined in the Table below for each of the decisions needed.

	Questions	Majority consultation response	Schools' Forum decision
1	Do you agree with the proposal to remove the notional SEND budget?	Yes	
2	Do you agree with moving £220k from the notional SEND budget into the SENIF budget (equivalent to 4p on the base rate).	Yes	
3	Do you agree with passing all of the increase on 3&4 year old funding through the base rate for universal and additional hours.	Yes	
4	Do you understand that the "contingency budget" for 3&4 year olds is the expected funding WNC will need to pay as base rate for 3&4 year olds above the number of hours that WNC is funded for by the DfE.	Yes	
5	Do you agree with passing all of the increase on two year old funding through the 2 year old provider rate.	Yes	
6	Do you agree with the proposal to set the central budget at the maximum 5% of the 3&4 year old funding?	Yes	
7	Do you agree with the proposal that any unspent central budget be used to offset any overspends in other areas of the early years budget?	Yes	
8	Do you agree with the MNS proposal to fund 5% on IDACI 30% and the remainder on January census hours?	Yes	
9	Do you agree with the proposed distribution of early years reserve funding as a one-off distribution to support providers with the increased cost of living?	Yes	

## 8. Next Steps

Schools' Forum are required to vote on the questions set out in the Table above

Once decisions are made, allocations to schools will be made. All decisions will be communicated to the sector as soon as possible.

If schools' forum agree to 5% of the 3-4 year old funding being centrally retained, the Council will use this funding to recruit a dedicated Early Years team within West Northants. This team will be responsible for offering advice, support and guidance to everyone in the sector around quality first teaching, safeguarding, SEND specialist support, transitions, funding and any other areas of need from the sector.

The recruitment to this team is proposed to happen immediately to support all providers from Easter 2023 onwards.

Further updates about the impact of this work will be presented to future schools' forum meetings.

**Report Author:**

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**West Northants Schools Forum: 7 February 2023**  
**Agenda Item 5**  
**2022-23 DSG Monitoring as at Quarter 3**

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix A – Q3 2022-23 DSG Monitoring

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report provides an assessment of West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) financial performance against its approved 2022-23 DSG budget, incorporating key financial risks, issues and opportunities identified since 1 April 2022.
- 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.
- 1.3 There are no votes required in relation to this agenda item.

Table 1

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Schools forum</b>	<b>ESFA</b>
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 2022-23 Forecast Outturn**

- 2.1 Table 2 summarises the DSG forecast outturn and variance currently being estimated for this financial year. It highlights some increased service pressures against the high needs block and identified pressures relating to SEND against the early years block

which are demand led, mitigated in part by underspends on early years central expenditure. The Council will seek to manage the pressures within year and across the medium term.

Table 2 – Forecast Outturn 2022-23 by DSG Block £m

<b>DSG Block</b>	<b>Gross Exp Budget *</b>	<b>Recoup -ment</b>	<b>Net Exp Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Net Spend</b>	<b>Q3 Var</b>	<b>Q2 Var</b>	<b>Movement</b>
Schools*	318.8	(253.2)	65.6	65.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Early Years Provision	26.6	0	26.6	26.1	(0.5)	0.2	(0.7)
High Needs	63.5	(16.0)	47.5	49.1	1.6	1.8	(0.2)
Central Schools Services Block*	4.2	0	4.2	4.3	0.1	0.0	0.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>413.1</b>	<b>(269.2)</b>	<b>143.9</b>	<b>145.1</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>(0.8)</b>

\*Includes carry forwards totalling £0.7m

2.2 The DSG is currently forecasting an overspend of £1.17m, which includes a £1.55m forecast high needs block overspend and a £0.07m forecast central schools services block overspend. These are offset in part by a forecast underspend of £0.46m in the early years block – a favourable movement of £0.7m from the prior reported position largely due to delayed recruitment to central posts and project work in the early years team.

2.3 The pressure in the high needs block in the main relates to increased demand for educational placements, and out of county placements provision for pupils with SEND due to a growth in education, health and care plans, and a shortage of placements in county. The 2022-23 capital programme includes investment to increase resourced places in mainstream schools and special school expansions.

2.4 The early years block variance is made up of a pressure of £0.4m on early education funding, largely relating to demand above budgeted levels, which is more than offset by staffing expenditure vacancies of £0.9m.

2.5 There is a small forecast overspend in the central school's services block which relates to rebasing the contribution to central overheads in line with inflation, which has increased since the setting of the budget.

2.6 Variances are detailed in Appendix A to this report.

2.7 Table 3 below summaries DSG balances by block as at 31 March 2022.

Table 3 – DSG Balances 2021-22 £m

DSG Block	Closing balance 2021-22
DSG general carry forwards (prior years)	(0.6)
High Needs Block	1.2
Central Schools Services Block	(1.7)
Early Years Block	(1.3)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(2.4)</b>

### **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 Quarter 2 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 2023.

#### **Report Author:**

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Appendix A - Q3 2022-23 DSG Monitoring

Summary	Budget after Block Moves	Carry Forward	Recoupment updated Jul 2022	Net Exp Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q3 Variance	Q2 Variance	Movement
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools	318,405	443	-253,204	65,644	65,644	0	0	0
Early Years Provision	26,572	0	0	26,572	26,115	-458	218	-676
High Needs	63,557	0	-16,028	47,529	49,084	1,554	1,806	-251
Central Schools Services Block	3,939	214	0	4,153	4,225	72	0	72
<b>DSG TOTAL</b>	<b>412,475</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>-269,232</b>	<b>143,899</b>	<b>145,068</b>	<b>1,169</b>	<b>2,024</b>	<b>-855</b>
<b>Check to ESFA 2022-23 statement July 2022</b>	<b>412,475</b>		<b>-267,383</b>					
Difference (September convertors)	0		1,849					
<b>Schools Block</b>	<b>Budget after Block Moves</b>	<b>Carry Forward</b>	<b>Recoupment updated Jul 2022</b>	<b>Net Exp Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Net Spend</b>	<b>Q3 Variance</b>	<b>Q2 Variance</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Individual Schools Budgets (DSG)	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
Schools Budgets (DSG)	306,129		-244,449	61,680	61,680	0	0	0
Academies	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
Redundancy/PRC - Schools de-delegated	69	104	-3	170	170	0	0	0
Union Facilities (DSG) Schools de-delegated	29	85	-1	113	113	0	0	0
School Improvement Group (DSG) de-delegated	103	187	-2	288	288	0	0	0
Pupil Growth Fund	990	67	591	1,648	1,648	0	0	0
School Rates	2,321		-2,321	0	0	0	0	0
Supplementary Grant	8,766		-7,019	1,747	1,747	0	0	0
<b>Total Schools</b>	<b>318,405</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>-253,204</b>	<b>65,644</b>	<b>65,644</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Central Schools Services Block</b>	<b>Budget after Block Moves</b>	<b>Carry Forward</b>	<b>Recoupment updated Jul 2022</b>	<b>Net Exp Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Net Spend</b>	<b>Q3 Variance</b>	<b>Q2 Variance</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools Forum (DSG)	11		0	11	11	0	0	0
School Admissions	485		0	485	462	-23	0	-23
Copyright	356		0	356	356	0	0	0
DSG grant and other costs (ESG services)	875		0	875	875	0	0	0
Teacher's Pay and Pension Grant	126		0	126	160	34	0	34
Redundancy/PRC	1,261		0	1,261	1,371	110	0	110
Northampton Schools PFI (Greenfields)	279		0	279	279	0	0	0
School Standards & Effectiveness (Combined DSG LA Services)	427	148	0	575	546	-29	0	-29
SACRE School Standards & Effectiveness (Combined DSG LA Services)	6		0	6	6	0	0	0
Transport	59		0	59	59	0	0	0
Moderation (Combined DSG LA Services)	15	66	0	81	61	-20	0	-20
Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board (Combined DSG LA Services)	39		0	39	39	0	0	0
<b>Total Central Schools Services Block</b>	<b>3,939</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,153</b>	<b>4,225</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Early Years Provision</b>	<b>Budget after Block Moves</b>	<b>Carry Forward</b>	<b>Recoupment updated Jul 2022</b>	<b>Net Exp Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Net Spend</b>	<b>Q3 Variance</b>	<b>Q2 Variance</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
LSE - Early Years	461		0	461	108	-353	0	-353
Early Years Provision Admin Staff	408		0	408	152	-256	0	-256
Early Education & Childcare establishment central	262		0	262	0	-262	0	-262
3 & 4 Free Entitlement EYSFF	21,519		0	21,519	21,616	97	0	97
Universal Supplement MNS	751		0	751	751	0	0	0
DSG - 2yr old Place Funding	1,981		0	1,981	2,154	173	0	173
Early Years - Inclusion Fund	827		0	827	1,045	218	218	0
Early Years - DAF	126		0	126	65	-61	0	-61
Early Years - EYPP	238		0	238	223	-14	0	-14
<b>Total Early Years Provision</b>	<b>26,572</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26,572</b>	<b>26,115</b>	<b>-458</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>-676</b>
<b>High Needs</b>	<b>Budget after Block Moves</b>	<b>Carry Forward</b>	<b>Recoupment updated Jul 2022</b>	<b>Net Exp Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Net Spend</b>	<b>Q3 Variance</b>	<b>Q2 Variance</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
SEN Units and Res Prov Top Ups	3,220		-997	2,223	2,841	618	277	341
Special School	23,918		-8,748	15,170	14,900	-270	130	-400
Post 16 Top Ups	4,140		-2,270	1,870	2,200	330	430	-100
High Needs Out County	14,316		0	14,316	15,153	837	978	-141
<i>Out County Ind Mainstream</i>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Out County Ind Special</i>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Out County Other Authorities</i>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>SEN Alt Provisions</i>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Out County Ind Non Maint Spec</i>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
Provision For Pupils With SEN	6,693		0	6,693	7,567	874	607	267
<i>Special Schools Outreach</i>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Primary &amp; Secondary Panel</i>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Mainstream E &amp; F</i>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
Hospital & Outreach	1,700		-1,700	0	0	0	0	0
Alternative Provision	4,466		-2,313	2,153	1,417	-736	-553	-183
MASH - Staffing	57		0	57	57	0	0	0
School attendance support service	404		0	404	404	0	0	0
Virtual School including Kick into Study	243		0	243	243	0	0	0
Specialist Support Service	1,026		0	1,026	927	-99	-63	-36
Sensory Impairment Provision	1,074		0	1,074	1,074	0	0	0
Education Health Care team	679		0	679	679	0	0	0
NPPS (Northamptonshire Parent Partnership Service)	11		0	11	11	0	0	0
prior year deficit repayment	1,611		0	1,611	1,611	0	0	0
<b>Total High Needs</b>	<b>63,557</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-16,028</b>	<b>47,529</b>	<b>49,084</b>	<b>1,554</b>	<b>1,806</b>	<b>-251</b>

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## West Northants Schools forum: 7 February 2023

### Agenda Item 6

#### West Northamptonshire Council DSG Funding Update 2023-24

#### Related agenda items

#### Agenda item 4 – Early Years Budgets 2023-24

#### Appendices – Appendix A Maintained Schools Balances Form

#### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report is to update West Northamptonshire Schools forum of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding settlement for 2023-24.
- 1.2 There are no votes required in relation to this agenda item. Decisions relating to the schools, high needs and central schools services blocks were completed in December 2022 Schools Forum and the early years budget setting votes were in agenda item 4.

#### 2 Background

- 2.1 2023-24 is the second year of a three-year increase to the national core school budget of £7 billion. This was initially announced as increasing the national core schools budget to £56.8 billion by 2024-25 from £49.8 billion in 2021-22. The increase for 2022-23 was £4b, 2023-24 will be £1.5b and 2024-25 another £1.5b.
- 2.2 As part of the 2023-24 Spending Round, the Secretary of State for Education announced increased funding above the £3.8bn increase for the core school budget.

Table 1: National Increases in the core schools budget between 2022-23 and 2023-24

	Base DSG	Schools Block Additional	High Needs Additional	Total
<b>2022-23</b>	53.65	1.19	0.33	55.17
<b>2023-24</b>	57.16	1.45	0.40	59.01
<b>Increase £bn</b>	3.51	0.26	0.07	3.84
<b>Increase %</b>	6.50%	21.85%	21.21%	7.00%

- 2.3 West Northamptonshire’s 2023-24 allocation of the increased funds was allocated in December 2022 is £31.9m, a 7.7% increase.
- 2.4 In 2022-23 additional funding referred to then as “supplementary” funding was provided alongside the base DSG settlement. This has been rolled into the base funding for 2023-24 and another additional funding amount has been awarded. These are compared in the additional column of Table 1.
- 2.5 The overall base increase (including 2022-23 “supplementary”) is £18.0m (4.5%) made up of; £12.3m increase in the Schools Block, £0.4m decrease in central block, £1.6m increase in the early years block and £4.5m increase in the High Needs Block. The additional funding allocations for 2023-24 provide £13.2m additional funding, £10.7m schools block and £2.5m high needs which take the overall increase between 2022-23 and 2023-24 to 7.7%.
- 2.6 Although the increased funding for West Northamptonshire is clearly welcome, a balanced budget will still be a challenge for 2023-24 with inflation currently at 13% and demand for High Needs places continues to rise.
- 2.7 Within overall increases discussed above, the amount that individual schools will receive will vary depending on the impact of the changes in the formula and pupil numbers to their allocations. Schools with a greater proportion of pupils on census in the deprivation factors will see larger increases. Table 2 shows the final published allocations for the WNC.

Table 2 – WNC Final DSG Funding Allocations

	<b>Schools block (£s)</b>	<b>Central SSB (£s)</b>	<b>High needs block (£s)</b>	<b>Early years block (£s)</b>	<b>Total DSG allocation (£s)</b>
Base DSG 2022-23	311.7	4.3	58.9	26.6	401.5
Supplementary Funding 2022-23	8.8	0	2	0	10.8
Base and supplementary DSG 2022-23	320.5	4.3	61.1	26.6	412.5
Provisional 2023-24	327.8	3.9	64.3	26.6	422.6
<b>Final Base 2023-24</b>	<b>332.8</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>65.6</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>430.5</b>
Increase /(decrease) from prior year	12.3	-0.4	4.5	1.6	18.0
% Increase/(decrease) from prior year	3.8%	-9.3%	7.4%	6.0%	4.5%
Additional Funding 2023-24	10.7	0	2.5	0	13.2
<b>Final Base + Additional 2023-24</b>	<b>343.5</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>68.1</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>443.7</b>
Increase/(decrease) from prior year	23.0	-0.4	7.0	1.6	31.2
Increase / (decrease) from prior year	7.2%	-9.3%	11.5%	6.0%	7.7%



*\* Early Years Block section of the final settlement is indicative; the final grant figure is expected to be provided by the ESFA in July 2023.*

2.8 Finalised allocations of the mainstream schools 'additional' grant will be published by the ESFA in spring 2023. For special schools, alternative providers and hospital and outreach the allocations will be calculated based on the methodology provided by the ESFA and communicated directly with providers.

### **3 Financial Overview by DSG Block**

3.1 This section of the report provides the key headlines on the 2023-24 DSG funding announcements on the funding received by the LA by funding block.

#### **Schools Block Funding**

3.2 Schools block funding is increasing by 7.2% overall in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23. The main features in 2023-24 are:

3.3 The core factors such as basic per-pupil funding, and funding for additional needs such as deprivation will increase by 2.4%.

3.4 The funding floor (i.e. MFG - minimum funding guarantee) will ensure that every school is allocated at least 0.5% more pupil-led funding per pupil compared to 2022-23. MFG is a per pupil protection does not include lump sum funding and premises factors.

3.5 The minimum per pupil funding levels (includes lump sum and premises) will increase by between 3.28% and 3.46% as compared to 2022-23. Schools will receive at least:

- £4,405 for primary (£4,265 in 2022-23) a 3.28% increase,
- £5,503 for KS3 (£5,321 in 2022-23) a 3.42% increase and
- £6,033 for KS4 pupils (£5,831 in 2022-23) a 3.46% increase.

3.6 The funding received by WNC to distribute to schools through the funding formula is increasing by 8.0% and 7.6% for primary and secondary pupils respectively. The primary unit of funding (PUF) increases from £4,400.43 in 2022-23 to £4,753.96 in 2023-24. The secondary unit of funding (SUF) increases from £5,626.35 in 2022-23 to £6,056.19 in 2023-24.

3.7 Table 3 shows the increase in the value of the primary unit of funding and the secondary unit funding for 2023-24.

Table 3: Unit funding rates in 2022-23 and 2023-24

	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Uplift £</b>	<b>Uplift %</b>
<b>Primary Unit Funding (PUF)</b>	4,400.43	4753.96	353.53	8.03%
<b>Secondary Unit Funding (SUF)</b>	5,626.35	6056.19	429.84	7.64%

- 3.8 In addition to the PUF and SUF funding approximately 3.7% of the schools block funding provided is for premises factors (PFI, rates, split sites) and approximately 0.7% is growth.
- 3.9 Schools rates bills are now paid to WNC directly by the ESFA and top sliced off the WNC DSG allocation, so do not impact the individual schools budgets but reduce the overall WNC DSG for distribution. The NFF uses the 2022-23 figures for the 2023-24 school rates (National Non-Domestic Rates) for its calculations and for 2023-24 the school rates have been held at the same level as the NFF published allocations. WNC has provided the ESFA with information on rates values for the 2024-25 NFF calculation to account for inflation and VOA revaluations, with an approximate 14% increase.
- 3.10 Within the modelling of 2023-24 using the provisional settlement we assumed a growth figure of £1.36m (using the Government tool and latest population data). The growth figure confirmed in the final December 2022 DSG announcement was £2.36m.
- 3.11 The growth increase alongside the PUF and SUF increases above the expected provisional values is largely why we have been able to increase the cap on per pupil increases, which was 2.74% in the indicative budgets, to 3.61% in the submitted budgets.
- 3.12 The mainstream schools budgets were submitted to the ESFA on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2023. These are indicative until the ESFA reviews and approves the budgets, which will then be published in February 2023.
- 3.13 As part of the budget setting process for 2023-24 the **maintained** schools carried forward balances are reported back to Schools Forum. The Schools Balances form has been updated and is attached in appendix A to this report.

### **High Needs Block**

- 3.14 WNC's High Needs Block increase of £7.0m (11.2%) represents the authority's share of the £965m (10.7%) national increase for 2023-24.
- 3.15 The £2.5m 'additional' funding for high needs given within the DSG for 2023-24 must be partly given to providers directly, outside of the place and top up system. For special schools, AP and Hospital providers, we estimate this will be £1.5m leaving £1.0m to support the general high needs budget pressures for 2023-24.
- 3.16 As discussed and agreed in the December 2022 Schools Forum, WNC will transfer 0.5% (£1.66m) from the schools block to high needs block to cover the SEND support service and general pressures. This is a £0.4m decrease in funding, as compared to 2022-23 £2.1m (0.68%) transfer. The change from a 0.68% to 0.5% transfer was in response to the schools consultation.
- 3.17 With the increase in funding from the December DSG settlement, the high needs budget position is balanced as shown in table 4 and 5. We will closely monitor the budget in 2023-24 with regular reports to Schools Forum. Any underspend or

overspend on the high needs block funding at the end of 2023-24 will move into the high needs DSG reserve.

Table 4 – High Needs Budget 2023-24

	<b>2022-23 Gross Budget £000</b>	<b>2023-24 Gross Budget £000</b>	<b>Movement £000</b>
SEN Units and Resource Provision Top Ups	3,220	3,995	775
Special Schools	23,918	24,272	354
Post 16 Top Ups	4,140	5,260	1,120
High Needs Out County	14,316	16,028	1,712
Provision For Pupils With SEN	6,693	8,395	1,702
Hospital & Outreach	1,700	1,785	85
Alternative Provision	4,466	3,518	-948
Educational Entitlement Team	179	188	9
Transport contribution (shown in Schools block in monitoring)	59	59	0
Virtual School	243	255	12
Specialist Support Service (schools block funding)	1,026	969	-57
Sensory Impairment Provision (schools block funding)	1,074	1,128	54
Education Health Care team	679	713	34
IASS - NPPS (Northamptonshire Parent Partnership Service)	11	11	0
Prior year deficit repayment	1,500	1,550	50
High Needs Projects		120	120
<b>Total High Needs Expenditure Budgets</b>	<b>63,224</b>	<b>68,246</b>	<b>5,022</b>
Schools Block transfer Funding 0.5%	-1,559	-1,664	-105
Schools block additional transfer above 0.5% (Ministerial disapplication)	-541	0	541
High Needs Block Funding	-61,124	-65,582	-4,458
Additional high needs funding (not to be distributed directly to providers)	0	-1,000	-1,000
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>-63,224</b>	<b>-68,246</b>	<b>-5,022</b>

Table 5 – High Needs Growth Forecast 2023-24

	<b>High Needs Growth 2023-24 £000</b>
<b>Reason for growth</b>	
Full year effect of current year demand pressures	1,994
Estimated demographic growth based on prior year trends	2,697
Inflation	161
Creation of High Needs project fund	120
Reversal of prior year growth for budgeted deficit repayment	50
<b>Total growth</b>	<b>5,022</b>
<b>Total increased funding</b>	<b>-5,022</b>

### **Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)**

- 3.18 Central school services block funds local authorities for the ongoing responsibilities they continue to have for all schools. The national funding for ongoing responsibilities is £293m in 2023-24 (£284m in 2022-23). The Central School Services Block (CSSB) comprises two elements, ongoing responsibilities and historic commitments. Ongoing responsibilities include the former retained duties element of the Education Services Grant and is funded on a per pupil allocation and deprivation factor.
- 3.19 The ongoing responsibilities element for WNC is provisionally increasing by £0.10m to £2.2m which reflects an increase in the unit of funding from £35.2 to £36.4 (3.4% increase) and an increase in pupil count from 59.4k to 60.2k (1.4%).
- 3.20 The historical responsibilities element for WNC is provisionally decreasing by £0.4m to £1.7m in 2023-24. Government started to reduce this funding in 2020-21 to withdraw historical pre-2013 central schools funding with 20% reduction per year.
- 3.21 This reduction leaves a funding gap of £0.44m against the expenditure requirement even after a review of service efficiencies and disinvestments in 2022-23 which will be met through the WNC general fund £0.4m (proposal in budget).
- 3.22 The expected ongoing reductions currently total £0.3m in 24-25 which are also currently forecast in the WNC general fund medium term financial plan.

### **Early Years Block**

- 3.23 2023-24 is the second year of a three year settlement for early years funding announced at the Spending Review in 2021. The increases announced were £160m in 2022-23, £180m in 2023-24 and £170m in 2024-25, compared to the 2021-22 financial year. In response to the recently announced National Living Wage increase next year, the Government have also announced that they are investing a further £20m in 2023-24 to help meet this cost to providers at a national level.
- 3.24 Over summer 2022 the Government consulted on proposals to update data sets underpinning the formulae for 2023-24. The main proposals affecting WNC were:

- To update the underlying data within both the EYNFF and the separate 2-year-old formula to ensure we are using the latest available data where possible.
- To mainstream the currently separate teachers' pay and pensions grants into the EYNFF and into maintained nursery school supplementary funding.
- To reform the distribution of maintained nursery school supplementary funding, alongside an additional £10 million investment, to ensure that it is being shared more evenly across all LAs with MNSs

3.25 The results of these changes are that WNC are due to receive an increase of 23p in 3&4 year old rate, an increase of 2p on the provisionally announced rate in July 2022

2022-23 EYNFF rate (£ / hr)	2022-23 TPPG rate (£ / hr)	2022-23 EYNFF rate + TPPG rate (£ / hr)	2023-24 EYNFF rate (£ / hr)	Change (£) from 2022-23 rate + TPPG rate	Change (%) from 2022-23 rate + TPPG rate
4.66	0.04	4.70	4.93	0.23	5%

3.26 The two year old rate is also higher than the provisionally announced rate of £5.81, and increase of £0.19. The final rate is a rate of £5.85 and a 23p increase.

2022-23 2YO funding rate (£ / hr)	2023-24 2YO funding rate (£ / hr)	Change (£) from 2022-23 rate	Change (%) from 2022-23 rate
£5.62	£5.85	£0.23	4.1%

3.27 Agenda item 4 has provided the detail on the local formula for 2023-24 and is therefore not repeated in this agenda item.

3.28 The December settlement was also accompanied by updated guidance with a stronger request from the Government around the use of a "quality" supplement. This is to ensure that nursery units receive this separately to ensure they can cover the unavoidable contractual salary costs.

3.29 WNC do not intend to include a quality supplement in the local early years funding formula for 2023-24 but will be working on this with providers and schools forum over the coming months.

3.30 The maintained nursery school (MNS) supplement in the provisional announcement was £776k and the final announcement it is £867k as this now includes the TPPG funding for the MNS setting.

2022-23 MNS indicative supplement (£)	2023-24 MNS pre-reforms funding (£)	MNS' share of TPPG (£)	Indicative MNS supplementary funding for 2023-24 (£)
£751,053	£776,459	£90,508	£866,966

## Key Changes 2023-24

Key change to the schools National Funding Formula in 2023 to 2024 are

- The 2022-23 supplementary grant for schools and high needs has been rolled into the base DSG for 2023-24
- There is a similar separate funding stream like the supplementary funding, called the "additional" funding for schools and high needs in 2023-24.
- The minimum funding guarantee is 0.5%,
- The minimum per pupil levels are £4,405 for primary 3.28% increase, £5,503 for KS3 a 3.42% increase and £6,033 for KS4 pupils 3.46% increase.
- There is an MFG cap on per pupil increases is 3.61%
- There are increases to the early years funding to be received by WNC of 23p per 3&4 year old part time equivalents (PTEs) and TPPG of 4p has been rolled into the 3&4 year old funding and MNS supplement and a 21p increase on 2 year old PTEs.
- The local early years funding formula table for 2023-24 has been published within Agenda item 4.

### 4 Financial implications

4.1 Financial implications are set out in the paper above.

### 5 Legal implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the information in this paper.

### 6 Recommendations for schools forum

6.1 That schools forum note the final funding settlement and schools budgets for 2023-24.

### 7 Next Steps

7.1 Following the approval of the school individual formula budgets and the finalisation of the WNC early years formula, the individual school and provider budgets will be calculated and published.

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**MAINTAINED SCHOOLS BALANCES LOOK UP TOOL AND CARRY FORWARD REQUEST SB1 FORM**

School Ref:  enter 941 and four digits please, i.e. 941\*\*\*\*

A.	Surplus Deficit 21-22 Carried-Forward	<input type="text"/>	£
B.	22-23 Budget Issued (Cash Limit - Includes A. above)	<input type="text"/>	
C.	Expenditure in 22-23	<input type="text"/>	
D.	Balance	<input type="text"/>	(B. Less C.)
E.	22-23 Allocation (Cash Limit less 21-22 cfwd)	<input type="text"/>	(B. Less A.)
F.	Allowed Uncommitted Balance of 10% prior to potential clawback	<input type="text"/>	

**WEB FORM**

Please enter your values and text in the yellow cells below, print a copy for your records and then email to [info.schools@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:info.schools@wiltshire.gov.uk)

CFR Ref	Intended Use of Carry Forward	Planned			Total	Notes or Details Required	Budget Proposal Checks	CHECKS Maximum Value
		2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025				
<b>803</b>	<b>Devolved Formula Capital Balance</b>							
803a	Where the balance relates to formula capital where a school is allowed to retain the balance for a 3 year period to enable the affordability of a capital project to be achieved (note includes capital expenditure on IT).	0			0		0	This figure should match cell K133 on your Budget Proposal Form
<b>805</b>	<b>Other Capital Balances</b>							
805a	e.g. Private Capital Income, Healthy child capital fund				0		0	This figure should match cell L133 on your Budget Proposal Form
	<b>TOTAL CAPITAL - SUB TOTAL</b>				0			
<b>801</b>	<b>Committed Revenue Balance</b>							
801a	Where a revenue balance relates to earmarked external funding which has been received but not yet spent.				0			
801b	For Nursery Schools, 25% (subject to a maximum of £50,000) of their Early Years Single Funding Formula (allocation for 2021-22).				0			
801c	Where a revenue balance relates to High Needs funding which applies to (or will be utilised in) the next financial year (subject to a maximum of 20% of the school 2021-22 Notional SEN budget).				0			20% Notional SEN
801d	<b>PUPIL PREMIUM</b>							
801d(i)	Pupil Premium Deprivation (FSMeve6)				0			
801d(ii)	Pupil Premium Service Child (SC)				0			
801d(iii)	Pupil Premium post-LAC (for children adopted from care or under a special guardianship order)				0			
801d(iv)	Pupil Premium Looked After Children (LAC)				0			
801d(v)	PE Sports Grant				0			
801d(vi)	COVID Help with technology grant				0			
801d(vii)	COVID Workforce grant				0			
801d(viii)	COVID Mass testing				0			
801d(ix)	12 to 15 vaccination programme funding				0			
801d(x)	COVID Free School Meals				0			
801d(xi)	COVID National Testing Programme				0			
801d(xii)	COVID Catch up Grant - Enter a positive figure if you have not yet spent all of your grant.				0			
801d(xiii)	COVID Recovery Premium grant				0			
801d(xiv)	COVID School led Tutoring grant				0			
801d(xv)	Afghan Resettlement grant				0			
801d(xvi)	Homes for Ukraine fundino				0			
801d(xvii)	NOT backlog grant				0			
801d(xviii)	NOT Education Recovery 5% Time off Timetable grant				0			
801d(xix)	Senior Mental Health Leads Training grant				0			
801d(xx)	Schools Supplementary grant				0			
801e	Where a primary school of 100 or less pupils due to changing circumstances and greater uncertainty needs to set aside an additional amount (maximum £20k and reasons to be specified)				0			
801f	Where a school has an arrangement under an area partnership to hold funds relating to that partnership for a number of schools.				0			
801g	Where revenue expenditure has been set aside for capital (including VA Governors 10% capital contributions).				0			
801h	Where revenue funding for repairs and maintenance (R&M) have been set aside for specific items or projects. We have not set a maximum - any balances here will need to be supported with detailed explanation and evidence. Large balances and a sample of small items will be sampled for audit.				0			
801i	UFSM revenue funding - balance owed to the ESFA as the school have received UFSM funding based on previous uptake and actual uptake is BELOW this - enter PLUS FIGURE ONLY				0			
801j	UFSM revenue funding - balance owed by the ESFA as the school have received UFSM funding based on previous uptake and actual uptake is ABOVE this - enter MINUS FIGURE ONLY				0		0	
801k	support staff back pay in March				0			
801k	Rates - if you were over funded for Rates and owe money back to us please enter as a positive figure. If you were underfunded for rates and owe you funding enter as a minus figure				0			
	Sub Total Committed				0			This figure should match cell J133 on your Budget Proposal Form
<b>802</b>	<b>Uncommitted Revenue Balance</b>				0			This figure should match cell I133 on your Budget Proposal Form
<b>806</b>	<b>Extended School Balances</b>							
806a	Where the balance relates to a surplus or deficit arising from Community Focused School activities				0			
806b	Where the balance relates to a surplus or deficit arising from Community Focused School activities - Other than Childrens Centres.				0		0	This figure should match cell M146 on your Budget Proposal Form
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	0	0	0	0			
	<b>VARIANCE (MUST BE NIL TO SUBMIT)</b>							

\*AMP/SOP: for example Asset Management Plan, Staff Development Plan or School Development Plan.

\*\*Not including exceptional cost covid grant or other grants covering expenditure in year

Allowed Uncommitted Balance remaining

Must be positive or nil:

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**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

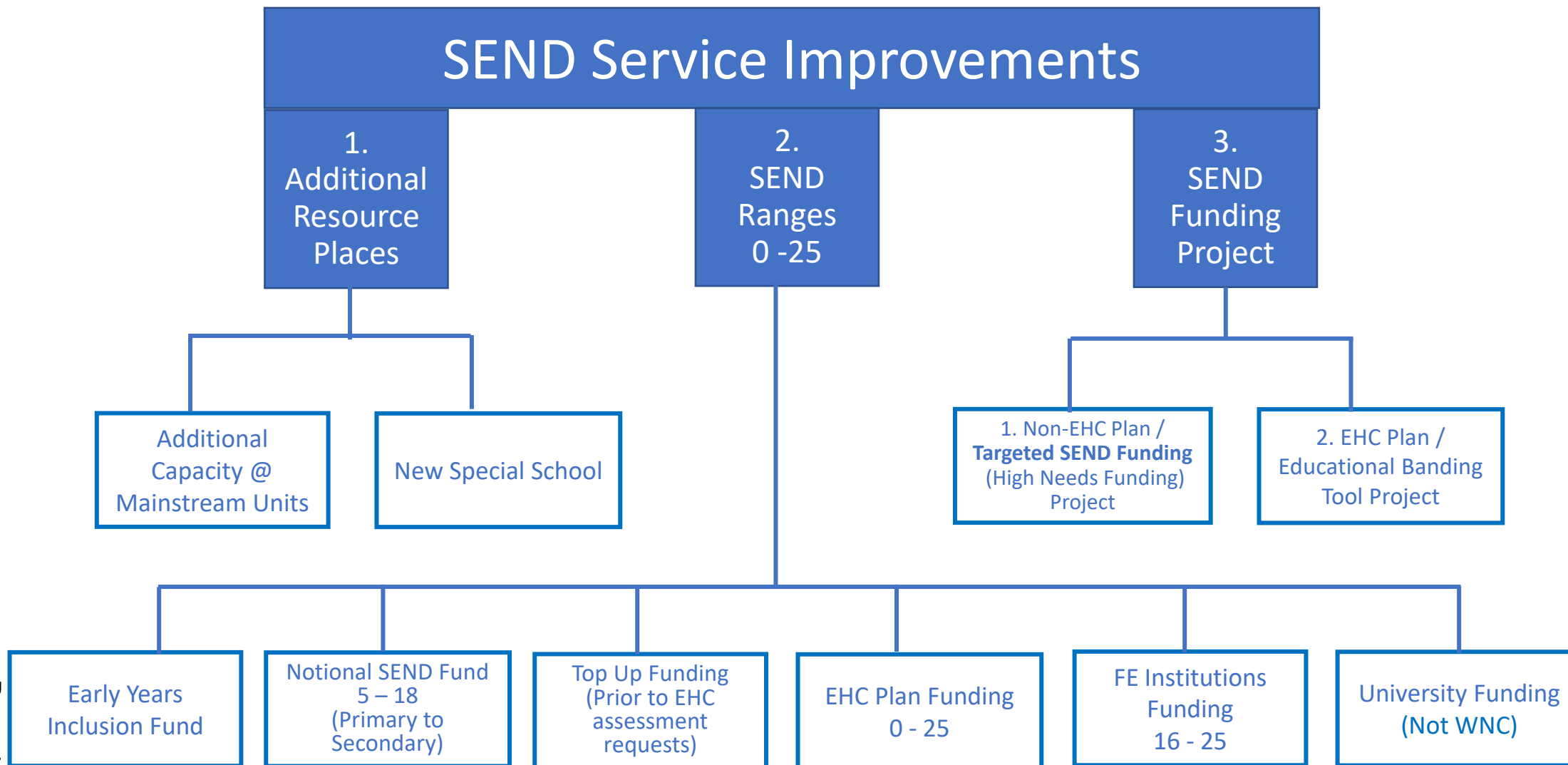
# **SCHOOLS FORUM SEND Presentation**

7 February 2023

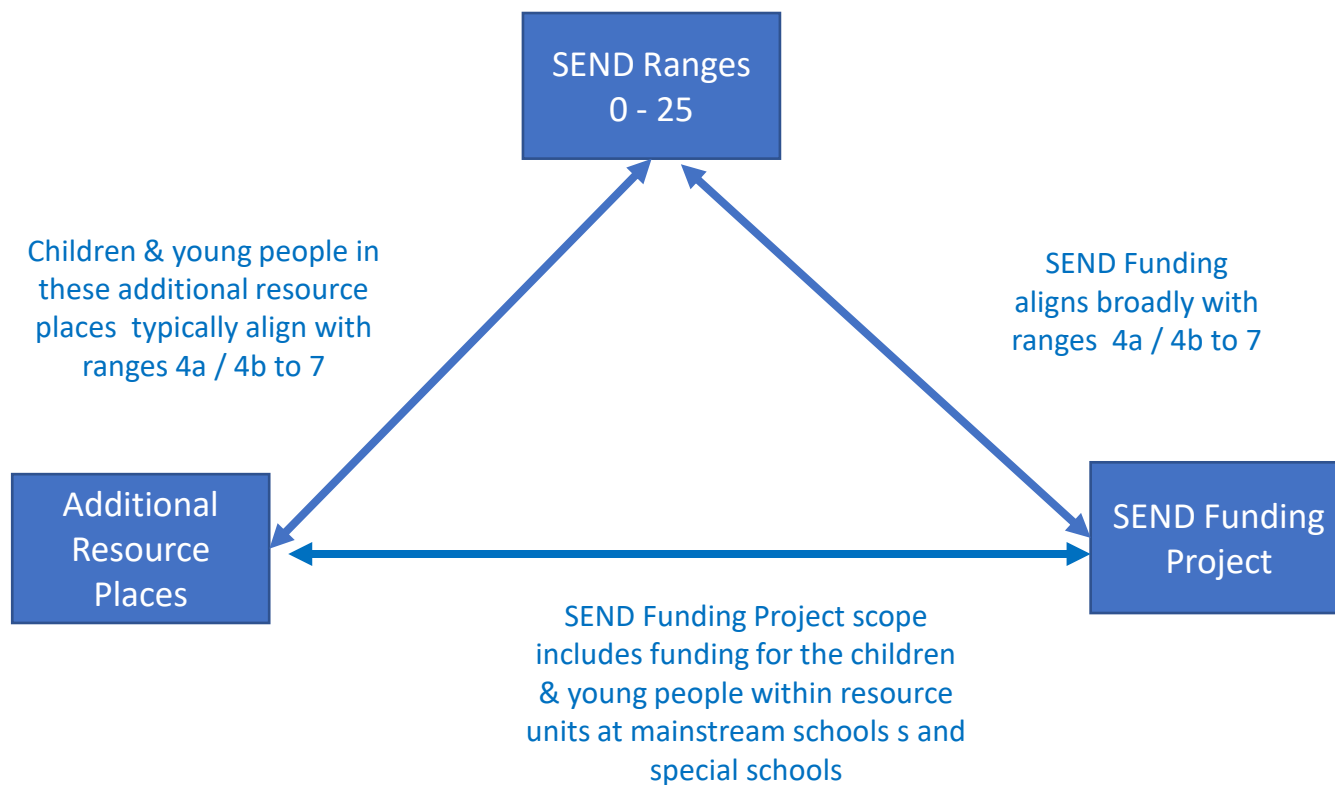


1. SEND Improvement Initiatives : updates and alignment
2. Schools Forum Future Consultations
3. Next Steps

# Key SEND Improvements : Summary



# SEND Improvements : Alignment



# SEND Improvements : Key Dates

SEND Improvement	2022 (Calendar Year)	2023	2024	2025
<b>Mainstream Units</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early engagement with providers</li> <li>• 20 additional places commissioned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 places confirmed</li> <li>• More additional places TBC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional places TBC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional places TBC</li> </ul>
<b>Special School</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional places TBC</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Special School opening &gt; target date TBC</li> </ul>
<b>SEND Ranges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot in Early Years, Primary, Secondary &amp; Sixth Form</li> <li>• Launch Events (500 apx attendees)</li> <li>• Printed booklets available</li> <li>• Published online @ WNC Local Offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-disciplinary training for settings 0-25 including Early Years , Schools &amp; FE settings plus WNC</li> <li>• Panel application administration amended to align with Ranges</li> <li>• Implement – Learn – Refine</li> <li>• Moderation sessions with 0-25 example reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedding</li> <li>• Implement – Learn – Refine</li> <li>• Further Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed continuous learning</li> </ul>
<b>Non-EHC Plan / Targeted SEND Funding (High Needs Funding) project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working Group set up - education settings &amp; NPFG</li> <li>• Evaluation of current panel processes Early Years &amp; Schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education settings sub-groups – engagement in project details</li> <li>• Testing of potential improvements</li> <li>• Early Years &amp; Schools - launch of early improvements</li> <li>• Implement – Learn – Refine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Years &amp; Schools - launch of additional improvements</li> <li>• Implement – Learn – Refine</li> <li>• Further Education Sector improvements launch – date TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed continuous learning</li> </ul>
<b>EHC Plan / Education Banding Tool project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working Group set up - education settings &amp; NPFG</li> <li>• Early Years, Mainstream Schools &amp; Units data collection</li> <li>• Special Schools – already live</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education settings sub-groups- engagement in project details</li> <li>• Needs Profile Form agreed &amp; launched - target 1 September</li> <li>• Banding ranges &amp; values agreement</li> <li>• Early Years &amp; Mainstream Schools &amp; Units payments changes identified &amp; implementation planned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Years Settings &amp; Mainstream Schools &amp; Units payments &gt; new payments implemented</li> <li>• Further Education Sector Launch – date TBC</li> <li>• Implement – Learn – Refine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed continuous learning</li> </ul>

1. EHC Plan / Education Banding Tool Project
  - Funding values associated with the EBT banding ranges for settings, plus WNC budget impact
2. Non EHC Plan / Targeted SEND Funding (High Needs Funding) Project
  - Funding values associated with the revised criteria for settings, plus WNC budget impact
3. Payment protection for settings to support the funding value changes
  - % Level of payment protection
  - Duration of payment protection
  - Notice period for payment changes
4. Education Banding Tool Implementation Phasing
  - Liaison with Staffordshire Council > Best Practice implementation
  - Multiple options to be considered to minimise the impact on settings and maximise the benefits from the implementation of the Education Banding Tool



# Next Steps

1. Additional Resource Places
  - Recent capacity additions : embedding
  - Future capacity additions : planning
  
2. SEND Ranges
  - Multi disciplinary training programme roll out
  - Moderation session planning
  
3. SEND Funding Project
  - Financial Modelling for both projects
  - EHC Plan Project > draft configuration evaluation : Needs Profile Form revisions, banding ranges & banding values
  - Non-EHC Plan Project > panels review : governance & organisation plus systems & processes

# Appendix

## Early Years Inclusion Funding

- Linked into the SEND Ranges
- Key part of the Early Years teams work
- Evidence for the Early Years Inclusion Fund requests have to be in line with the Ranges and the documentation linked into an evidence base, provision map and impact of the existing provision and what is required for any additional funds.
- The allocation of the Early Years Fund should be focused on individual children and their needs.

## Notional SEND Funding

- Is part of the schools budget and amount to £ 6,000 per child. This can also be supplemented by PPG and catch up funding if appropriate.
- In any application evidence needs to be shown on how this money has been spent using a costed provision map with outcomes and impact.
- Any additional funding requests must have this evidence and then how the additional monies are going to be used with a clear timeline and outcomes.

## Top Up funding

- This is additional monies that are time limited and quality assured to meet the needs of those child or young person who are at SEND Support but whom the school and LA feel would benefit from some short term additional funding rather than going straight for an EHCP assessment.
- The SEND Ranges will be the framework for this process and evidence based work through costed provision maps, interventions and impact need to be shown. This money to be reviewed and updated on either a termly, 6 monthly or annual basis.
- The documentation to be submitted should be in line with the Early Years funding application and the evidence around the impact of interventions through a costed provision map showing spend and outcomes/impact.
- This information to be used, after the funding has been used/reviewed/QA as part of the submission of evidence to any future submission for an EHCP assessment process.

## Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) 0-25 funding

- Any funding allocated through the banding system for an EHCP will need to be linked to the EHCP outcomes and provision with again evidence of a costed provision map and the impact of interventions on the EHCP outcomes with any adjustments as a result of the Annual Review process.
- This funding will be directed towards the individual children and young people with SEND. This should be reviewed through the AR process and transition.
- In terms of building independence it may be considered that the funding and support needs to be altered to increase independence , this can be done without any change in funding or adjustments but part of a transition plan.

## 16-25 Placements in Colleges/ Further Education

- When the LA commissions places in Further Education, this triggers the ESFA to take the notional fund from the LA budget for these places. Currently, the LA then supplements this notional fund with additional monies for each young person without any prior assessment and the provider then states how they are going to spend this money. This should be the other way round
- Firstly, the notional fund should be broken down for the LA to ascertain how this money is being spent and then through a rigorous assessment process then this should determine what the additional monies should be allocated and timelines for review
- Communication between the LA and the college/move to work based training provider need to be really secure as young person move frequently between providers, so a memorandum of understanding needs to be in place for this process across all providers.

## University Funding

- The funding for the young person with additional needs will need to be highlighted here as well as the personal budgets for support.

## Training

- The SEND Ranges Training programme will commence during the Spring term and it envisaged that the Spring term will be sorting out the systems, moderation, paperwork and then with a clear launch in Summer term 2023.