

West Northamptonshire council: SEN financial recovery plan – implementation / action plan September 2021 to August 2022

Task 1: to define and apply the graduated approach with 'needs' vs HN funding

General deliverable	Specific actions	Success criteria	deadline	Lead
Ordinarily available document co-produced by schools, health, LA and parents and adopted by all partners in the WN Local Area	Creation of a working group to include SENDCOs from all phases and NCFT to draft ordinarily available document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All EHCP assessment requests are appropriate and in line with the SEND code of practice criteria 	MAR 2022	AG
Ordinarily available document is used when EHCP decisions are being made by LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case officers and SEND panel members are aware of and understand ordinarily available document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of inappropriate assessment requests drop 	APRIL 2022	AG
Consistent use of ordinarily available document in EHCP decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 working group meetings (4 x 2 hours) to discuss and agree criteria; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refusals to assess lead to few formal challenges (no significant rise in SENDIST appeals) 	JULY 2022	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SENDCO conference to publicise. Should be jointly led by leading SENDCOs, NHCP, school effectiveness team and SEND teams; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of EHCPs in WN begin to reflect those of statistical neighbours 	SEPT 2022	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 training events (by phase) for settings in use of criteria; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of DSG (inc HNB) spend in line with budgets; 	MAR 2023	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree date for implementation (Ideally September 2022 Phased intro or pilot phase in the current school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria implemented 	SEPT 2022	AG

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Task 2: decommissioning and commissioning of resourced provision in mainstream schools

General deliverable	Specific actions	Success criteria	deadline	Lead officer
All SEND local area partners have clear, reliable information on the level and range of SEND need in WN and the consequent number and type of places required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all relevant officers are clear on WN's demand and ensure complete consistency of messaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key partner managers are clear, when asked, about the type and level of place demands 	JAN 2022	CW
All current specialist education providers in WN offer what WN CYP require in line with identified demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create appropriate working groups or focus groups (depending on model of co-production/consultation is agreed on) to model/road test proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA can evidence appropriate levels of engagement of relevant parties 	MAR 2022	AG
Number of unfilled specialist places provides a degree of flexibility for in year admission but no 'waste'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and follow agreed project timeline for each provision to change or develop their offer as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of CYP requiring independent placement and spend reduces 	SEPT 2022	AG
Set realistic time line for delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure SEND test for change of provision is met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND test met in all instances 	SEPT 2022	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure communication plan supports local area partners, who are fully informed of changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey shows that partners are appropriately aware of changes 	JULY 2022	AG

Task 3: implement the planned capital programme to increase special school places

General deliverable	Specific actions	Success criteria	deadline	Lead officer
Increase special school places for SEMH, ASD, SLD and PMLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CW / AG to complete with CK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of new buildings 	SEPT 2022	CW
Increase resourced provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop programme to create up to xxx additional resourced provision places within mainstream schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence delivery of new resourced provision 	SEPT 2022	AG
Use the government's capital programme efficiently and effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee delivery of the £x m programme already approved to ensure funding utilised for 164 places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of programme 	DEC 2022	CW

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Task 4: consult on a banding system for implementation in the 2022/23 fy

General deliverable	Specific actions	Success criteria	deadline	Lead officer
To produce a draft EHCP banding system that can be applied across mainstream, resourced provisions and special schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete a sampling exercise of EHCPs in each special school, resource provision and mainstream school to establish the funding required in each band. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft banding system is available for consultation 	APR 2022	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete an exercise to ensure that, when the proposed banding system is introduced, no mainstream school, resource provision or special school is adversely affected; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to consultation, all schools are aware what effect the Banding System will have on their budgets now and in the future; 	OCT 2020	BB
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If any school is found to be adversely affected, to introduce an minimum income guarantee for 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any school adversely affected has time to adjust their budgets 	APRIL 2023	BB
To consult with schools, parents and health partners on banding system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> benchmark proposed banding system against neighbouring local authorities: finalise a consultation document undertake a consultation exercise to include parent coffee mornings, SENCO workshops and engagement events with schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The banding system in WN is in line with neighbouring LA's levels approved by schools forum A full consultation exercise is completed and consultation responses have been used to adapt and improve the banding system 	APRIL 2023 DEC 2022 JUL 2022	BB
	Banding system is fully implemented across all schools in WN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding Band is agreed by SEN Panel for all new EHCP's issued and schools informed; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banding system fully implemented across all schools; there is an established way to appeal and review funding decisions. 	APR 2023 MAR 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded band is agreed at all annual reviews of EHCPs; 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each newly completed EHCP has an agreed funding band; 	SEPT 2022	AG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An appeal process is established via SEN Panel to look at cases where the school does not agree with the Funding Band approved by SEN Panel 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appeal panel in place 	APR 2023	AG
Annual review of banded funding levels is completed and agreed by schools forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place an annual review process for banding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate funding for all EHCPs; appropriate cost inflation built in. 	EVERY JANUARY	AG

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Task 5: propose the funding of both outreach services through a top-slice to mainstream schools' budgets

General deliverable	Specific actions	Success criteria	deadline	Lead officer
Consult service managers and staff to explain the reasons for the proposal and gauge the responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief managers and then staff of the specialist and impairment services; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefings completed 	SEPT 2021	CK
Ensure all voting members of schools forum are aware of the proposal and the reasons for it in advance of the October schools forum meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief all voting members of schools forum ensure all voting members are aware of the cost of the top slice, in financial and school budget percentage terms, and the cost of the proposed top-slice to pay for specialist and impairment services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefings completed 	SEPT 2021	CK
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement in principle in place 	OCT 2021	CK
Lobby voting members of schools forum again in advance of the December meeting (where the formal vote takes place)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the responses to the consultation on the proposal; Share the outcome with voting members to gauge their level of support – especially if the overall responses are negative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses (to date) assessed 	NOV 2021	CK
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome shared with most voting members and the likely outcome assessed 	NOV 2021	CK
SF report drafted and finalised on time for the December meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> draft the report, get agreement of the DCS to the report and its recommendations; finalise the report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> report drafted, DCS sign-off obtained 	NOV 2021	CK
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> report finalised 	NOV 2021	CK
Consultation on the operation of the support services on an insurance or traded basis in place (if schools forum support for the proposed top-slice looks unlikely)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare the consultation; Distribute the consultation document if schools forum members' view of the top-slice is negative; Assess consultation responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation documentation finalised; 	DEC 2021	CK
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation distributed: 	DEC 2021	CK
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses considered and traded services planned 	DEC 2021	CK
Fund both outreach services through a top-slice (if agreed by schools forum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement top-slice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureaucratic process for putting in place the top-slice completed 	JAN 2022	BB

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Reduce places commissioned in alternative provision

General deliverable	Specific actions	Success criteria	deadline	Lead officer
Determine place requirements for primary and secondary places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .model commissioned requirements based on the profile of exclusions over the 2016/19 school years, using the year with the highest exclusions; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise completed 	29 Oct 21	CK
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimate reintegration patterns, year 11 leavers and project increased numbers through the 2022/23 school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimates completed 	29 Oct 21	CK
Conclude the consultation on on commissioning intentions in terms of place numbers with providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the head teacher of CE with regard to commissioning intentions; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head contacted 	5 Nov 21	CK
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the head about the deadline date for submission to the ESFA and the time by which we want to receive them in order to inform the ESFA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information given 	5 Nov 21	
Submit commissioning intentions for CE to the ESFA and agree place numbers with Spire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the head teacher of Spire to discuss our needs and agree final numbers with the ESFA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commissioned numbers agreed 	18 NOV 21	CK
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake all necessary work to submit the return to the ESFA by the deadline; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • . 	MAR 2022	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve places to be commissioned at Spire 		MAR 2022	AG

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Task 7: cease non-ENCP top-up aside from exceptional cases (eg trauma)

General deliverable	Specific actions	Success criteria	deadline	Lead officer
To produce proposed criteria for the use of high needs funding when a child without an EHCP requires additional support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group with membership from SEN, school effectiveness, inclusion primary and secondary school SENCOs is established to produce proposed criteria for non-EHCP high need funding 	Proposed criteria are produced and ready for consultation.	MAR 2022	AG
Proposed criteria for non-EHCP high needs funding is agreed by schools and schools forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present a report to schools forum detailing the proposed criteria for non-EHCP high needs funding and obtain their agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools forum agreement is given to proposed criteria 	MAY 2022	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attend head teacher meetings to present the proposed criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary and secondary heads are aware of proposed criteria an consultation exercise. 	SEPT 2022	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a consultation exercise with schools and parents on the proposed criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation responses are reviewed and used to inform criteria for non-EHCP high needs funding, 	NOV2022	AG
implement new criteria for non-EHCP high-need funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of all applications for non-EHCP high needs funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High needs funding is only provided to schools to support children and young people who do not have an EHCP where there is an exceptional need 	APRIL 2023	AG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure heads and SENDCOs understand what should be ordinally available through the school's budget through a clear, agreed OA document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools make more timely EHCP requests for children who need additional support Schools have clear guidance about the criteria for a pupil who does not have an EHCP and how to apply for this High needs budget spend on support for children and young people who do not have an ECP is reduced 	APRIL 2023	AG

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Task 8: visit all independent providers with a view to improving VFM

General deliverable	Specific actions	Success criteria	deadline	Lead officer
WN LA able to evidence that CYP are appropriately placed (SEND needs met, and appropriately safeguarded)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk top analysis of current QA and inspection data as first line of assurance - any anomalies or concerns followed up as urgent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYP are appropriately placed – demonstrated by external audit; • unsatisfactory placements are remedied either by relevant action by provider or by change of placement. 	MAR 2022	AG
			MAR 2022	AG
All WN CYP in NMIs are placed only as a result of low need/high complexity needs; adequate progress is evident; learning from external providers is shared with local schools to develop local provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desktop review of current costs of placement by SEND need (eg: ASD placements, SEMH placements). Those with cost anomalies (atypically high or low) are checked for potential cost saving negotiations; • NMIs with significant numbers of WN pupils are identified for VFM visits/re-procurement of places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containment or reduction in costs for current placements; <p>Containment or reduction in costs for current placements</p>	SEPT 2022	AG
			SEPT 2022	AG
WN LA is able to evidence that CYP are appropriately placed (SEND needs met, and appropriately safeguarded)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk top analysis of current QA and inspection data as first line of assurance. Any anomalies or concerns followed up as urgent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WN LA able to evidence that CYP are appropriately placed (SEND needs met, and appropriately safeguarded) • Any unsatisfactory placements are remedied either by relevant action by provider or by change of placement. 	MAR 2022	AG
			MAR 2022	AG

Key to abbreviations

abbreviations	name	title
CK	Chris Kiernan	Interim assistant director,
AG	Anthony Giles	Head of SEN assessment
CW	Chris Wickens	Head of school organisation and capital services
BB	Beth Bains	Finance business partner, business support department