

Notice of Meeting

Schools Forum

Liz Cole, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)
Jane Coley, Academy School Representative (Headteacher)
Karen Davis, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)
Neil Davies, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)
Peter Floyd, Special School Representative (Governor)
Martin Gocke, Pupil Referral Unit Representative (Governor)
Keith Grainger, Secondary School Representative (Headteacher)
Stuart Matthews, Academy School Representative (Headteacher)
Brian Poxon, Secondary School Representative (Governor)
Roger Prew, Primary School Representative (Governor)
Leslie Semper, Academy School Representative (Headteacher)
Phil Sherwood, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)
Debbie Smith, Secondary School Representative (Headteacher)
One Vacancy, Academy Representative
Richard Stok, Primary School Representative (Governor)



Also Invited:

Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard, Executive Member for Children,
Young People & Learning

Thursday 19 September 2019, 4.30 - 6.30 pm
Council Chamber - Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12
1JD

Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1.	Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members	
	To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute members. Reporting: ALL	
2.	Election of Chairman	
3.	Appointment of Vice-Chairman	
4.	Declarations of Interest	
	Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or affected interests in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting. Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days. Any Member with an affected Interest in a matter must disclose the interest to the meeting. There is no requirement to withdraw from the meeting when the interest is only an affected interest, but the Monitoring Officer should be	

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you hear the alarm, leave the building immediately. Follow the green signs. Use the stairs not the lifts. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

	notified of the interest, if not previously notified of it, within 28 days of the meeting.	
5.	Minutes and Matters Arising	5 - 12
	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of 20 June 2019. Reporting: Paul Clark	
6.	Outcome from July 2019 Financial Consultation with Schools	13 - 24
	To provide an update on the responses from the recent financial consultation on how funds should be allocated to schools and also whether maintained schools supported on-going de-delegation of budgets and making a financial contribution to statutory education related duties for which the council is responsible for meeting but receives no funding. Reporting: Paul Clark	
7.	Financial Consultation with Schools and Early Years Providers	25 - 44
	To seek the Forum's guidance on the proposed consultation document with schools to gather views on transferring around £0.338m of funds from schools to part finance the forecast 2020-21 overspend on supporting pupils with high needs. The report also outlines the content for a limited consultation on the funding framework for the free entitlement for Early Years childcare. Reporting: Paul Clark	
8.	SEND Needs and Sufficiency Strategy	45 - 90
	To inform the Forum of the current needs and provisions for children and young people living in Bracknell Forest with special education needs and disability (SEND). It also includes a financial analysis and future estimates of growth for SEND. Reporting: Paul Clark	
9.	Arrangements for Additional Financial Support to Schools	91 - 108
	To seek agreement from the Forum in respect of proposals for additional financial support to schools, in particular, approval of new applications for licensed deficit arrangements. Reporting: Paul Clark	
10.	The Schools Budget - 2019-20 Budget Monitoring	109 - 118
	To provide the Forum with an update on the 2019-20 forecast budget monitoring position for the Schools Budget. Reporting: Paul Clark	
11.	Dates of Future Meetings	
	The next meetings of the Forum are scheduled to take place at 4.30pm on:	

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you hear the alarm, leave the building immediately. Follow the green signs. Use the stairs not the lifts. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

	<p>21 November 2019 12 December 2019 16 January 2020 19 March 2020</p> <p>A briefing for members of the Forum will take place at 3.30pm before each of the meetings.</p>	
--	--	--

Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media is permitted. Please contact Derek Morgan, 01344 352044, derek.morgan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk, so that any special arrangements can be made.

Published: 10 September 2019

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you hear the alarm, leave the building immediately. Follow the green signs. Use the stairs not the lifts. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

This page is intentionally left blank



SCHOOLS FORUM
20 JUNE 2019
4.35 - 6.00 PM

Present:

Martin Gocke, Pupil Referral Unit Representative (Governor) (Chairman)

Schools' Members

Jane Coley, Academy School Representative (Headteacher)
Karen Davis, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)
Neil Davies, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)
Stuart Matthews, Academy School Representative (Headteacher)
Yellie Powley-Williams, Primary Representative (Governors)
Brian Poxon, Secondary School Representative (Governor)
Roger Prew, Primary School Representative (Governor)
Phil Sherwood, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)

Non-Schools' Members:

Michelle Tuddenham, PVI Provider Representative (Co-Optee)

Observer:

Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning (Observer)

Apologies for absence were received from:

Liz Cole, Primary School Representative (Headteacher)
Peter Floyd, Special School Representative (Governor)
Debbie Smith, Secondary School Representative (Headteacher)
Richard Stok, Primary School Representative (Governor)

92. Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members

The Forum noted the attendance of the following Substitute Member:
Yellie Powley-Williams for Richard Stok

93. Declarations of Interest

Jane Coley, Neil Davies and Brian Poxon declared an affected interest in respect of Item 5 (Improving Leadership and Governance over Special Educational Needs Support and the High Needs Funding Block).

Martin Gocke declared an affected interest in respect of Item 6 (Review of Alternative Provision Across Bracknell Forest).

Martin Gocke declared an affected interest in respect of Item 8 (2018/19 Provisional Outturn on the Schools Budget).

Martin Gocke, Karen Davis, Neil Davies, Yellie Powley-Williams, Brian Poxon and Phil Sherwood declared an affected interest in respect of Item 9 (2018/19 Balances Held by Maintained Schools).

94. **Minutes and Matters Arising**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 14 March 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Arising from minute 88 the Chairman questioned when the strategy relating to the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment would be submitted to the Forum. The Forum was advised that an update would be reported at the next meeting.

Arising from minute 90 the Forum queried whether the Sub-Group had been set up. It was explained that the first meeting had taken place, during which the members of the Sub-Group agreed to proceed with the draft terms of reference and the work plan. The Sub-Group also discussed whether a smaller group should be identified but the consensus was all members of the Forum should be invited to attend.

Arising also from minute 90 the Forum inquired whether amendments had been made to the draft terms of reference. Jackie Ross advised that the first meeting of the Sub-Group had taken place after the papers for this Forum had been submitted. The terms of reference of the Sub-Group would be presented to the Forum at the next meeting.

Action: Kashif Nawaz

95. **Update to the Local Funding Agreement for Early Years Providers Delivering Free Places for 2, 3 and 4 Year-Olds**

The Forum considered a report which sought approval for the proposed changes to the local funding agreement.

The Forum was advised that substantial rewriting and reformatting of the Provider Agreement was required to ensure compliance with the DfE's model agreement. An overview of the proposed changes was given.

In addition to this, the Forum was advised of the proposed changes and additions to the terms and conditions in the 2019/20 Provider Agreement; namely that:

- Information about the Local Authority Designated Officer and their role has been added to Section 5: Safeguarding;
- The Statutory guidance for local authorities, published in June 2018, set out the eligibility criteria for foster carers to claim 30 hours funding. This guidance was not published in time for inclusion in the 2018/19 provider agreement. This guidance has now been added as Section 9: Foster Carers; and
- Guidance on what to do when a child's attendance is poor or erratic, or when families take extended holidays has been added in Section 17: Funding.

In relation to paragraphs 17.26 and 17.27 of the report, the Forum expressed concern that funding could be cut for children not attending regularly even though providers had a duty to hold spaces for children who were on-roll. The Forum requested clarity regarding the process for reporting concerns about a child's attendance. Further BFC guidance from the Early Years team would remedy this.

Action: Cherry Hall

RESOLVED that the revised Provider Agreement for Funding Free Places for 2, 3 and 4 Year Olds as attached at Annex A be approved for implementation from September 2019.

96. **Improving Leadership and Governance Over Special Educational Needs Support and the High Needs Funding Block**

The Forum considered a report which provided an update on the proposal to pilot a mechanism for children and young people to have prompt access to short-term additional specialist support from the High Needs Block (HNB) without having to wait to go through an Education Health Care (EHC) Plan statutory needs assessment to access Element 3 'top up funding'.

Jackie Ross thanked members of the Forum and school staff who had been involved in the Hub. The Forum was advised that there have been three Hubs so far which have looked at different ways of working with children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The work was ongoing so outcomes had not yet been analysed but it was clear that the Hubs had explored different ways of working and had looked at how to reshape the work with outreach teachers. Furthermore, positive feedback had been received from one of the children who had received support from the Hub. The Forum expressed that the Hub has clearly been transformational for the children involved. The Chairman added that this demonstrated the influence of the Forum in terms of being able to support creative and innovative ideas.

Jackie Ross explained that her recommendation going forward would be for a central Hub which could be held at Time Square or in a cluster of schools. Jackie Ross also recommended a review of support at classroom level including more targeted and specialist SEN support. The Forum noted that these two points were operational issues and did not form part of the recommendations for the Forum to consider.

The Forum questioned how it could be assured of the sustainability of the Hubs in the context of tightening budgets and capacity. The Forum was assured that the provision could be built into the budget for the next financial year if it could be evidenced that the provision was beneficial. Councillor Barnard expressed that he was very supportive of this provision.

The Forum requested an update in November when more data would be available.

Action: Kashif Nawaz

RESOLVED, to AGREE

1. that the pilot mechanism for children and young people to have prompt access to short-term additional specialist support from the HNB without having to go through an EHC Plan statutory needs assessment to access Element 3 'top up funding' as summarised above would continue until the end of the financial year; and
2. that the project would be reviewed before the end of the financial year and also be reported on in November to determine on-going sustainability and scalability as well as recommendations for going forward.

97. **Review of Alternative Provision Across Bracknell Forest**

The Forum considered a report which outlined the outcome of the initial review of the overall approach, structures and systems to deliver Alternative Provision at all key stages and to map need against this.

Kashif Nawaz informed the Forum that he had met with Head teachers to review the current landscape. The key lines of enquiry were outlined as follows:

- Mainstream Provision: What support was needed for pupils with high incidence, high/low need that schools could commission through their notional SEN funding budget?
- Alternative Provision: What opportunities were available for mainstream schools when they were not able to engage a pupil with the core curriculum offer? What could the commissioning model look like for schools?
- What would central training for school leaders around Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) look like going forward?

The report detailed an ambitious plan of action and the Forum was advised that the next step was to develop a centralised commissioning model for Alternative Provision which would combine provision with financial arrangements; schools had indicated that this was the preferred option.

The Forum was pleased that the strategy was moving in the right direction. However, it was felt that the report needed more contextual information such as what types of pupils were accessing alternative provision and whether it was just a reactive provision for pupils whose needs weren't being met elsewhere or whether the resource was being used to support inclusion (which was felt to be a much more productive use of money). The Forum also requested data regarding cost of provisions and pressures. The Forum was mindful that, for two years running, the Forum had not been able to agree that there were appropriate arrangements in place for the education of pupils with SEN and the use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school. Therefore there was a moral imperative to evidence progress this year in a timely manner.

The report would be added to and brought back to the Forum in September.

Action: Kashif Nawaz

RESOLVED, to NOTE the report and the next steps as set out in 5.8 of the report.

98. **2020/21 Initial Budget Planning**

The Forum considered a report presenting information relating to the initial works expected to be undertaken in constructing the 2020-21 Schools Budget. It presented an early opportunity to gather views from the Forum on current plans as previously identified by the Forum.

Table 1 on the report outlined a summary of the three key 2020-21 budget planning activities; namely to:

- Review the arrangements for funding schools;
- Examine the case for a funding transfer up to 0.5% of funding for schools to budgets supporting pupils with high needs; and
- Review the factors in the BF Early Years Funding Formula and their relative weightings

Four different options for change had been developed with the intention of seeking views from schools through consultation. The options were as follows:

- Option 1: Match the School National Funding Formula (SNFF)
- Option 2: Prioritise funding allocations through additional needs factors and the fixed lump sum
- Option 3: Prioritise core per pupil funding allocations

- Option 4: Prioritise funding allocations through additional needs factors with the highest prioritisation given to the fixed lump sum

Paul Clark expressed that, on reflection, Option 4 would be discounted when presenting the options to schools as it produced considerably different underlying school budget allocations compared to Options 1-3 and the current position.

The Forum felt it would be worth considering whether individual schools have received more money based on deprivation factor or historic factors. There seemed to be a risk that taking money back from those schools may in fact take away appropriate provision. However, the new national formula targets money towards high needs pupils.

Councillor Barnard left the meeting at 17:25.

RESOLVED

1. to NOTE the key developmental activities planned for the 2020-21 budget setting exercise, as set out in Table 1, including the expected consultation timelines; and
2. to AGREE the release of the consultation with schools that seeks views on changes to the BF Funding Formula for Schools and other related matters.

It was also noted that the Forum had already made comments on whether any other areas of work should be considered.

The Forum expressed gratitude to Paul Clark for all his hard work in preparing the budgets.

99. 2018/19 Provisional Outturn on the Schools Budget

The Forum considered a report which informed of the provisional outturn on the 2018-19 Schools Budget, including the allocation of balances and use of Earmarked Reserves. Earmarked reserves were sums of money which had been set aside for specific purposes such as increases in rates.

The Chairman expressed dissatisfaction that lots of students were waiting for spaces in special schools so were in the meantime having home-tuition which was more costly and less able to meet their needs. The Chairman felt that adding five spaces to College Hall would have saved money on this budget.

RESOLVED, to NOTE

1. that the outturn expenditure for 2018-19, subject to audit, showed net income of £0.437m which represented an under spending of £0.797m before allocation of reserves and balances (paragraph 6.7 of the report);
2. that after transfers to and from earmarked reserves, the Schools Budget underspent by £0.177m (paragraph 6.8 of the report);
3. the main reasons for budget variances (paragraph 6.9 of the report);
4. as at 31 March 2019, the aggregate surplus on balances and Earmarked Reserves within the Schools Budget amounted to £6.220m which reduced to £4.610m when school balances are excluded (paragraph 6.10 of the report);
5. transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves (paragraphs 6.12 and 6.13 of the report); and
6. the £1.577m surplus balance held in the Schools Budget General Reserve (paragraph 6.14 of the report).

100. **2018/19 Balances Held by Maintained Schools**

Michelle Tuddenham left the meeting at 17:35.

The Forum considered a report which updated on the level of balances held by maintained schools as at 31 March 2019, how they compared to the previous financial year and considered whether any significant surplus balances should be subject to claw-back and re-invested within the overall Schools Budget.

The report evidenced a good position in terms of an increase in aggregate surplus balances held by schools. However, there were still significant financial challenges facing schools.

The report outlined which schools were in deficit at the end of the 2018-19 financial year and detailed the plans for recovery of that money.

For schools with a surplus, in particular, Sandy Lane Primary and Meadow Vale Primary which had significant surpluses exceeding the maximum cap and their governors had submitted requests to retain the surplus; these were outlined in Annex E and F of the report.

The Forum questioned how Bracknell Forest compares to the national picture in terms of the primary and secondary split. Paul Clark explained that generally Bracknell Forest's balances were slightly below the national average but there was no data specifically relating to the primary and secondary split.

The Forum questioned how it would be monitored that schools adhered to the plans put in place. The Forum was assured that work would be undertaken at officer level within Bracknell Forest Council and school deficits are closely monitored as part of that. It was agreed that it would be useful to re-establish within the report information relating to how many years individual schools have had surplus balances.

Action: Paul Clark

It was clarified that unlike academy schools, Local Authorities are not entitled to apply to the Education and Skills Funding Agency for actual number funding for maintained schools experiencing significant in-year increases in pupil numbers and that the most appropriate method to provide support is through the Growth Fund.

RESOLVED

to NOTE

1. the key performance information on all school balances, as set out in paragraph 6.3 of the report, and in particular:
 - i. aggregate surplus balances have increased by £0.187m to £1.728m;
 - ii. this was the first increase in balances for 7 years;
 - iii. the value of deficit balances has increased by £0.380m to £1.150m and needs to be carefully monitored;
 - iv. significant surplus school balances have increased by £0.214m (44.1%); and
 - v. at 3.1%, average balances are considered to be at the minimum level required for working balances to safely cover unforeseen circumstances; and

to AGREE that:

2. the entire significant surplus balances held by schools has been assigned for relevant purposes as set out in the approved scheme and should not be subject to claw back (paragraph 6.12 of the report); and

3. the surplus balance currently held above the 16% limit should be retained by relevant schools or returned for re-distribution within the overall Schools Budget in respect of:
 - i. Sandy Lane Primary School, at £0.046m; and
 - ii. Meadowvale Primary, at £0.009m.

101. **2018/19 Funding Allocations to Mainstream Schools from Budgets Centrally Managed by the Local Authority And Other Matters**

The Forum considered a report which presented information on the in-year allocation of funds to mainstream schools through School Specific Contingencies and other budgets that were funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and in the first instance centrally managed by the council. It also presented the opportunity to amend existing funding policies. The report also updated the Forum on some mandatory changes of a mainly technical nature required to the Scheme for Financing Schools by the Department for Education (DfE) which governs the financial framework that all maintained schools need to work within, including special schools and Pupil Referral Units.

Paragraphs 6.11-6.17 of the report detailed an issue for consideration regarding the Growth Fund. In brief, a change for 2019-20 required consideration to ensure compliance with the DfE operational guidance which set out that the Growth Fund could only be used to “support growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need” and may not be used to support “general growth due to popularity; which is managed through lagged funding”. The policy as previously agreed by the Forum applied equally to all pupils and did not separate out basic need pupils. Further advice from the DfE was required before specific amendments could be proposed; therefore, a report would be presented to the Forum in September.

Action: Paul Clark

During the year an issue emerged relating to 1 FE primary schools with a relatively high proportion of empty spaces as detailed in paragraphs 6.32-6.35 of the report. The smallest schools which were relying on a fixed lump sum found it difficult to make savings when pupil numbers changed. These schools were the most difficult to allocate targeted resources to and they generally had static staffing so it was difficult to change the cost base when pupil numbers fell. The Forum was asked to agree amending the policy as it was not felt to be possible to balance the budget without additional support.

The Forum had no comments or questions.

RESOLVED

1. to NOTE the following funding allocations to schools, made in accordance with approved policies:
 - i. £0.243m for significant in-year increases in pupils (paragraph 6.9 of the report);
 - ii. £0.048m for schools required to meet the Key Stage 1 Class Size regulations (paragraph 6.20 of the report);
 - iii. £0.103m for new and expanding schools (paragraph 6.22 of the report);
 - iv. £0.036m for schools with a disproportionate number of SEN pupils (paragraph 6.26 of the report);
 - v. £0.196m for schools in financial difficulty (paragraph 6.36 of the report); and
 - vi. £0.005m from the general schools contingency (paragraph 6.39 of the report);
2. to AGREE:
 - i. that in respect of the policy supporting schools experiencing significant in-year increases in pupil numbers:

- a. the deletion of text relating to Infant and Junior Schools (paragraph 6.10 of the report); and
 - b. work should be undertaken to draft new policy text relating to allocations to schools in relation to meeting the DfE basic needs pupil criteria (paragraph 6.17 of the report);
 - ii. the expanded policy text relating to allocations to schools in financial difficulty to include one form of entry primary schools with more than 5% empty places (paragraph 6.35 of the report); and
 - iii. the existing policy text on funds used to distribute centrally managed funds to schools should continue unchanged on all other funds (Annexes 3, 9 and paragraph 6.25 of the report); and
3. to NOTE the changes to be made to the Scheme for Financing Schools reflecting a directed revision from the DfE and other minor revisions from the council to text to reflect current terminologies (paragraph 6.45 of the report).

102. **Dates of Future Meetings**

The next meeting of the Forum was due to be held on 19 September 2019 commencing at 4.30pm (preceded by a briefing for members at 3.30pm). Apologies for that meeting were received from Jane Coley.

It was noted that two future dates had been amended: 21 November and 12 December 2019.

CHAIRMAN

TO: SCHOOLS FORUM
DATE: 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

**OUTCOMES FROM THE JULY 2019
FINANCIAL CONSULTATION WITH SCHOOLS
Executive Director: People**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Schools Forum on the responses from the recent financial consultation from schools which sought views on how funds should be allocated to schools and also whether maintained schools supported on-going de-delegation of budgets and making a financial contribution to statutory education related duties for which the council is responsible for meeting but receives no funding.
- 1.2 There is also an update on the outcomes from the spending review for schools, reflecting the limited amount of information available at the publication of this report.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Responses from the financial consultation showed clear support from maintained schools for continuing to maximise the strategic and cost-effective benefits that can arise from central management through the de-delegation route on permitted services. Furthermore, there is strong support from maintained schools to continue to contribute £20 per pupil towards the cost to the council of meeting education statutory and regulatory duties that the DfE no longer provides LAs with grant funding to meet their responsibilities.
- 2.2 In terms of allocating funds to schools, there is strong support for each factor value to be set to the relevant amount of the School National Funding Formula (SNFF), or scaled by the same proportional value to the amount of available funds.
- 2.3 There was no significant majority view on whether all schools, or only those funded above the minimum per pupil funding level (MPPFL) used by the Department for Education (DfE) – currently £3,500 for primary schools and £4,800 for secondary – should make a financial contribution to the extra costs of new schools. 55% of respondents prefer all schools to make a contribution, with 45% supporting the current position where the lowest funded schools do not make a contribution.
- 2.4 Provisional information has now been released by the government in respect of the outline financial settlement for schools for the next 3 financial years, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23. Whilst this shows significant increases in funding, including support to high needs pupil, there are insufficient details available at the publication of this report to calculate the likely financial impact in BF.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Items for all School and Early Years Members (maintained and academy)

- 3.1 To NOTE the outcomes from the financial consultation with schools as summarised in the supporting information and Annex 1.
- 3.2 That the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning (CYPL) is asked to AGREE that:
1. the allocation of funds to mainstream schools from 2020-21 should be through Option 1 of the consultation, with each factor value set to the relevant amount of the SNFF, scaled by the same proportional amount to available funds.
 2. the extra cost of funding new schools should be deducted at the same proportionate amount from all schools, including those on the Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level.

Item for Maintained Primary School representatives only:

- 3.3 To AGREE:
1. the continued de-delegation of budgets for the services requested by the council
 2. that the per pupil contribution for the scheme to centrally finance classroom staff on maternity leave be increased by 35%.

Item for Maintained Secondary School representatives only:

- 3.4 To AGREE
1. the continued de-delegation of budgets for the services requested by the council.
 2. that the per pupil contribution for the scheme to centrally finance classroom staff on maternity leave be increased by 35%

Item for all Maintained School representatives (includes Special and PRU) only

- 3.5 To AGREE that a £20 per pupil contribution continues to be made by maintained schools towards the cost of delivering 'general' education related statutory and regulatory duties.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure the majority view expressed by schools are taken into account when relevant discretionary parts of the funding framework are set locally.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 These were set out in the consultation document.

6 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 6.1 At its last meeting on 20 June, as part of early budget preparations for 2020-21, the Forum agreed the financial consultation document presented by the council should be circulated to schools in advance of the publication of the financial settlement for schools which was expected towards the end of the year. This sought views on how funds should be allocated to schools and also whether maintained schools supported on-going de-delegation of budgets and making a financial contribution to statutory education related duties should be circulated to schools. This report sets out the responses received and now seeks subsequent recommendations on relevant aspects of the 2020-21 funding framework.
- 6.2 Subsequent to this, on 4 September the government announced headline details of a 3-year financial settlement for schools educating 5-16-year olds. This includes an extra £2.6 billion for 2020-21, £4.8 billion for 2021-22, and £7.1 billion for 2022-23 compared to 2019-20. In addition to these increases, there will be a further near £1.5 billion each year to continue to fund additional pension costs for teachers which become due this month for the first time.
- 6.3 Within these totals, the SNFF will include £5,000 for each secondary school next year and £4,000 for each primary school from 2021-22. There is also £700m extra for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- 6.4 Until more detailed information is made available, which is expected in October, it is not possible to accurately calculate the financial impact on BF schools. However, the size of increase, which the government indicate is £4.6 billion above inflation should result in a significant boost in funding.

Outcomes from the financial consultation with schools

- 6.5 By the 19 July response deadline, replies had been received from 23 out of 40 schools (59% response rate). A reply was received from 16 primary schools (53%), 6 secondary schools and Kennel Lane Special School. A response was not received from the all through school. This represents a good response rate, with 63% of maintained schools and 44% of academy schools responding which gives confidence that decisions on these matters can be taken with the knowledge of the majority view of schools and their categories.
- 6.6 The questions are set out below and responses summarised. Recommendations for change, where relevant, have also been added in boxes. A numerical summary of replies to each question can be found at Annex 1.
- 6.7 In terms of agreeing decisions from this consultation, the Executive Member for CYPL has the statutory duty in respect of agreeing changes to the local Funding Formula (questions 1 and 2). For de-delegation, the maintained school members of the Forum decide for their phase (questions 3 and 4) with any contribution to education related statutory duties being decided by the relevant maintained school members, including special school and pupil referral unit members (question 5).
- 6.8 Six specific comments were also received; 4 from primary schools and 2 from secondaries. These related to the de-delegated services, the burden of new schools, that funding priority should be given to high needs pupils, that schools on the Minimum Per Pupil Funding Levels should be protected at that level, and that schools in BF were not being fully funded at SNFF rates which was impacting on standards. None of these

individual comments are considered significant and relevant in the overall context of the responses received to this consultation.

Confidential Annex 2 sets out the detailed responses received.

6.9 **Question 1: allocating funds to schools**

In respect of allocating funds to schools, and maintaining the key objective of achieving a close match to the SNFF, which Option do you prefer to use next year?

3 alternative options were identified for schools to consider which were intended to deliver a more consistent, predictable and transparent approach to the allocation of funds, and which would also speed up the budget setting process in what was expected to be a challenging timeline. The financial impact on each school arising from the options was also included. As the illustrative was calculated on the October 2018 school census data which will be subject to change once the DfE makes available the validated October 2019 school census data, and in advance of any new budget decisions, it was made clear on the consultation document that all figures were estimates and subject to change.

Responses from the 23 schools replying to this question indicated that Option 1, setting all factor values at the same, affordable proportionate amount to the SNFF factor values was the most popular choice (15 schools, 68%). The next most popular response was from 4 schools (18%) which supported Option 2 which prioritises funding for pupils with additional needs and the lump sum factor, with all other factors scaled down in the same affordable proportionate amount. 3 schools (14%) preferred Option 3, which prioritises core per pupil funding rates, with all other factors scaled down in the same affordable proportionate amount.

The Forum is recommended to agree that Option 1 should be used, setting all factor values at the same, affordable proportionate amount to the SNFF factor values.

6.10 **Question 2: allocating funds to schools**

Should the extra funding required to support new schools continue to be taken at an equal proportionate rate from all schools, other than those receiving the lowest per pupil funding rates or should all schools make the same proportionate contribution?

There are currently 9 schools being funded at the discretionary Minimum Per Pupil Funding Levels (MPPFL) – £3,500 for primary schools and £4,800 for secondary - used by the DfE when calculation the SNFF budget for each school. Whilst these are the schools receiving the lowest per pupil amounts, they have generally received the highest increases in per pupil funding through the SNFF, with an average increase in 2019-20 of 2.6% compared to 2.1% for all other schools. The DfE recognises that where LAs receive funding below the SNFF rates or local pressures exist, not all LAs will be able to afford to implement the full SNFF rates and the MPPFL are therefore discretionary.

Excluding the lowest funded schools from the financial contribution to new schools results in a higher deduction from all other schools than would otherwise be the case.

Responses from the 22 schools replying to this question indicated that 12 schools (55%) preferred all schools to contribute to the cost of new schools, with 10 schools (45%) preferring the lowest funded schools to be excluded.

A further consideration for this question has arisen from the information contained in the recent government announcement on future school funding which was made after the publication of the consultation document. If the expected MPPFLs of £5,000 for

secondary schools and £4,000 for primary schools were in place in the current financial year, then only 5 schools would be above these levels and needing to make the full contribution to the additional costs which were £0.338m. The current approach is therefore not possible from 2020-21.

The Forum is recommended to agree that all schools make the same proportionate contribution to the cost of new schools, including those receiving the lowest per pupil funding rates.

6.11 **Question 3: de-delegated services**

To continue the strategic and cost effective approach in the use of the funds for contingencies (including schools in financial difficulties), support to underperforming ethnic groups, CLEAPSS licences / subscriptions, staff supply cover costs, premature retirement / dismissal cost, free school meal eligibility checking and Behaviour Support Services, do you agree that the Schools Forum should again agree to de-delegate all relevant funding for continued central management by the LA?

Note this question only impacts on maintained, mainstream schools.

All 18 responses from schools directly impacted by the question agreed that de-delegation of services should continue.

A joint response supporting on-going de-delegation for supply cover costs, which includes trade union facilities time, was also received from the National Association of Head Teachers, the Association of Schools and College Leaders and the National Education Union.

The Forum is therefore recommended to agree to continue to de-delegate funding of services requested by the council for central management by the LA.

6.12 **Question 4: de-delegated services**

With an over spending forecast on the de-delegated budget that funds the cost of classroom staff on maternity leave, which of the identified options do you support to move the service to a viable position?

Note this question only impacts on maintained, mainstream schools.

Responses from the 18 schools directly impacted by the question indicated that Option A, increasing the rate of per pupil deduction from £23 to £31 was the most popular choice (15 schools, 83%). The next most popular response was from 3 schools (17%) supported Option B which would reduce the percentage of costs covered by the scheme from 100% to 75%. No schools preferred Option C, to close the scheme and schools manage these costs on an individual basis and no longer make a per pupil deduction through the de-delegation route.

The maintained primary and secondary school representatives on the Forum are therefore recommended to agree that Option A increasing the per pupil contribution to the scheme to centrally finance classroom staff on maternity leave by 35%.

6.13 **Question 5: statutory education related duties**

In respect of making a financial contribution to the statutory and regulatory education related duties required of the council that will no longer be financed through DfE grant, do you agree that maintained schools should continue to make a £20 per pupil contribution?

Note this question only impacts on maintained schools, including mainstream special schools and Pupil Referral Units.

From April 2017, the DfE implemented a saving of £600m through the complete withdrawal of the Education Services Grant (ESG) which was the mechanism used to fund LAs for their statutory and regulatory education related duties as prescribed in various Education Acts and other relevant statutes. This resulted in the council losing £1.2m of grant but continuing to have to meet the same requirements. The DfE “recognise that local authorities will need to use other sources of funding to pay for education services once the general funding rate has been removed” and will “allow local authorities to retain some of their schools block funding to cover the statutory duties that they carry out for maintained schools which were previously funded through the ESG.” Schools have always previously agreed to a £20 per pupil deduction which would contribute around £0.23m to the £1.2m loss in grant. The deduction, if agreed, is taken after the calculation of final school budgets.

17 of the 19 respondents that this question impacted on (89%) agreed that a £20 per pupil contribution should continue.

The maintained school representatives on the Forum are therefore recommended to agree that the £20 per pupil contribution to education related statutory and regulatory duties continues.

Next steps

- 6.14 The decisions taken on these items will assist with the early preparation of 2020-21 budgets which can now commence.
- 6.15 As some of the questions only impact on maintained schools, DfE permit only Forum members representing these groups to make relevant decisions. The report recommendations are therefore presented to reflect this.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The relevant legal implications are addressed within the main body of the report.

Director of Finance

- 7.2 The Director of Finance is satisfied that there are no significant financial implications arising from this budget policy setting report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 The need for an EIA will be taken when the final budget proposals are confirmed.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

7.4 None identified:

8 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

8.1 People Directorate Management Team, school governors, head teachers, Schools Forum and schools.

Method of Consultation

8.2 Written reports and formal consultation with schools.

Representations Received

8.3 Included in body of this report.

Background Papers

Financial Consultation with schools document:

<https://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/consultation-with-schools-june-2019.pdf>

Contact for further information

Paul Clark, Finance Business Partner

(01344 354054)

paul.clark@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Doc. Ref

K:\Pine\Executive\Schools Forum\94) 190919\Outcomes from July 2019 consultation with schools.doc

Summary responses to the July 2019 financial consultation with schools

QUESTION	TOTALS				TOTAL	%
	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	ALL THROUGH	SPECIAL		
<p>1 In order to use a more consistent, predictable and transparent approach, which also speeds up the 2020-21 budget setting process in what will be a challenging timeline, the council is seeking views from schools on different approaches that can be taken in allocating funds to individual schools, whilst ensuring a close match to what the School National Funding Formula (SNFF) would deliver. All Options deliver similar budget allocations to the current approach and will be subject to regular review and change if required.</p> <p>Option 1 - All factor values set at the same proportional amount to SNFF factor values, to balance to available funding</p> <p>Option 2 - Funding allocations through additional needs factors and the fixed lump sum paid at the values in the SNFF, uniform reduction to all other factors, to balance to available funding.</p> <p>Option 3 - Core per pupil funding rates would be fully funded at SNFF values, all other factors set at the same proportional amount of the SNFF, to balance to available funds</p>						
	13	2	0	0	15	68%
	3	1	0	0	4	18%
	0	3	0	0	3	14%

QUESTION	TOTALS				TOTAL	%
	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	ALL THROUGH	SPECIAL		
<p>2 In respect of how the funding required to support new schools is calculated, for 2019-20, the approach taken was to deduct 0.5% from the total budget available for existing schools, other than those being funded at the lowest per pupil amounts at the SNFF Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level of £3,500 for primary and £4,800 for secondary. An alternative approach that could be considered would be for all schools to be funded with the same proportionate reduction to their funding.</p> <p>Do you agree that all schools should be funded with the same proportionate reduction to their funding?</p> <p>Yes No</p>	<p>9 7</p>	<p>3 3</p>	<p>0 0</p>	<p>0 0</p>	<p>12 10</p>	<p>55% 45%</p>
<p>3 To continue the strategic and cost effective approach in the use of the funds for contingencies (including schools in financial difficulties including those in or in danger of entering an Ofsted category), support to underperforming ethnic groups, CLEAPSS licence fees, staff supply cover costs, premature retirement / dismissal cost, free school meal eligibility checking and Behaviour Support Services, do you agree that the Schools Forum should again agree to de-delegate all relevant funding for continued central management by the LA?</p> <p>Yes No</p>	<p>15 0</p>	<p>3 0</p>	<p>0 0</p>	<p>0 0</p>	<p>18 0</p>	<p>100% 0%</p>

QUESTION	TOTALS				TOTAL	%
	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	ALL THROUGH	SPECIAL		
<p>4 There is an over spending on the de-delegated budget that funds the cost of classroom staff on maternity leave. This fund ensures maintained mainstream schools do not have to meet both the cost of staff on maternity leave and the cost of any required cover arrangements. With costs expected to increase in September by around 10% from rising pay and pensions for Teachers, a review has been undertaken on how the service can move to a viable position. This has identified the following Options</p> <p>Option A - increase the rate of per pupil deduction from £23 to £31 per pupil (+35%).</p> <p>Option B - reduce the percentage of costs covered by the scheme from the current 100% rate to around 75%.</p> <p>Option C - close the scheme and schools manage these costs on an individual basis and no longer make a per pupil deduction through the de-delegation route.</p>	12	3	0	0	15	83%
<p>Option B - reduce the percentage of costs covered by the scheme from the current 100% rate to around 75%.</p>	3	0	0	0	3	17%
<p>Option C - close the scheme and schools manage these costs on an individual basis and no longer make a per pupil deduction through the de-delegation route.</p>	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<p>5 In respect of making a financial contribution to the education related statutory and regulatory duties required of the council that will no longer be financed through DfE grant, do you agree that maintained schools should continue to make a £20 per pupil / place contribution?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>	13	3	0	1	17	89%
<p>No</p>	2	0	0	0	2	11%
Total responses	16 53%	6 100%	0 0%	1 50%	23 59%	
Maximum responses	30	6	1	2	39	

By virtue of
Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive
Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England)
Regulations 2012.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

TO: SCHOOLS FORUM
DATE: 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

FINANCIAL CONSULTATIONS WITH SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS PROVIDERS Executive Director - People

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Schools Forum to comment on the proposed consultation document with schools to gather views on transferring around £0.338m of funds from schools to part finance the forecast 2020-21 over spend on supporting pupils with high needs. The report also outlines the content for a limited consultation on the funding framework for the free entitlement for Early Years childcare.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **To AGREE any changes to the attached consultation document, which is intended to gather views on transferring funds from schools to part finance the forecast over spend on pupils with high needs.**
- 2.2 **To NOTE the areas where views will be sought from Early Years providers on potential refinements to the free entitlement funding framework.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To gather views from the Schools Forum on the content of the consultation document.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The proposed funding transfer is considered a key element of financing the forecast costs of pupils with high needs.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Managing the increasing cost of supporting high needs pupils

- 5.1 Members of the Forum are aware that many LAs face significant challenges in managing their High Need Block (HNB) Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) income across the needs of pupils and that many are over spending. Latest estimates indicate the cumulative deficit held by LAs on high needs budgets amounts to around £200m. The government recognise the financial difficulty as a national issue and responded with a funding increase for all LAs for 2018-19 and 2019-20 for which BFC received £0.301m in both years.
- 5.2 Whilst to date spend in the BF HNB has been managed within budget, the emerging significant increase in costs and the difficulty in presenting balanced budget proposals for 2019-20, despite the increase in funding illustrates the changing financial situation. Work is underway through the Schools Forum HNB Sub Group to review the overall budget for impact and efficient use of resources, but if the current trend continues unchecked, a £2.8m over spend is forecast for 2020-21. This is in addition to the £1.9m over spend forecast for the HNB in 2019-20 which is presented in more detail on another agenda item for today's meeting.

- 5.3 The statutory School Funding Framework acknowledges these difficulties and where agreed with the local Schools Forum, permits up to 0.5% of an LAs Schools Block budget to be transferred into HNB budgets which equates to around £0.338m in BF.
- 5.4 Whilst the recent spending review announced an extra £700m for 2020-21 to support pupils with high needs, until there is clarity on the likely financial impact in BF, the council has to keep all funding options open and that includes the need to make a request to transfer funds from schools. Despite the lack of information from the DfE on the potential funding allocations for each LA from the additional £700m, a provisional estimate modelled on the distribution used in the funding increase provided for 2018-19 and 2019-20 would suggest up to £1.7m for BF. Clearly this is an indicative figure and should be viewed with caution.
- 5.5 A consultation document has now been developed which is proposed to be distributed to schools to gather views. The Schools Forum is asked to comment on any areas of the document where changes would be beneficial.
- 5.6 The outcomes from this consultation, which has a response deadline of 18 October will be reported to the Forum on 21 November. This will include an update of the likely budget position for 2020-21 and an assessment of whether a funding transfer is required.
- 5.7 Where a Schools Forum does not agree a funding transfer request from an LA, an appeal can be made to the Secretary of State. If required, this will need to be submitted no later than 30 November 2019.

Managing the free entitlement funding framework

- 5.8 In respect of the free entitlement to early years childcare, the original intention, as reported to the last Forum meeting was to review the Early Years Funding Formula (EYFF). However, this would follow on from a detailed consultation in each of the last 3 years, and on reflection, a more targeted approach is now proposed. The areas where views on potential changes will be sought are:
1. whether the 60% advance payment rate paid to providers, based on each term's forecast participation rate, should be changed
 2. a simplification of the calculation of deprivation funding payments, which mainly impacts on child minders
- 5.9 The recent spending review also announced an extra £66m to "increase the hourly rate that's being paid at maintained nursery schools and other childcare providers that deliver on the Government's free childcare offer ". Again, until more information is provided, it is unclear of the financial impact in BF, but if all LA hourly funding rates are increased by the same amount, this would equate to around an extra £0.05 per hour of provision. The consultation will also seek views from providers on how any extra funding should be allocated through the EYFF.
- 5.10 The EYFF consultation will run concurrently with the HNB consultation.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal issues are addressed within the report.

Director of Finance

- 6.2 The Director of Finance is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from undertaking these consultations. The option for the Schools Block to transfer funds to the Needs Block presents an additional funding stream to a budget area experiencing significant financial pressure.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The need for an EIA will be taken when the final budget proposals are confirmed.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None identified at this stage. It will be considered again when there is greater clarity on the development of the 2020-21 Schools Budget.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Will follow from this report.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

Paul Clark, Finance Business Partner – People Directorate
paul.clark@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

01344 354054

Doc. Ref

K:\Pine\Executive\Schools Forum\94) 190919\Consultation on HNB funding.doc



RESPONDING TO THE INCREASED COST OF SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH HIGH NEEDS

A CONSULTATION WITH SCHOOLS

Issued on 23 September 2019

For reply by 18 October 2019

List of Contents

Item	Page
Why are we undertaking this consultation?	
Who should respond to this consultation?	
Further information	
Queries	
Responses	
What do high needs budgets fund?	
Why is there a budget difficulty and how much is it	
Developing a Strategy to Reduce High Needs Costs	
Request for a financial contribution from schools	
Next steps	
Glossary of special needs categories	

List of Annexes

Annex	Item	Page
1	Summary data of BF pupils with an EHCP receiving high needs funding	
2	Actual and forecast number of high needs pupil placements	
3	Illustrative impact of a 0.5% deduction to school budgets using 2019-20 funding data	

Why are we undertaking this consultation?

1. Like many local authorities (LAs) across the country, the council is facing significant challenges in managing costs forecast for supporting pupils with high needs to the amount of funding allocated for this purpose from the government.
2. The government acknowledges these difficulties and where agreed with the local Schools Forum¹, permits up to 0.5% of funding allocated for mainstream schools to be transferred to high needs budgets.
3. The council is currently undertaking initial budget preparations for next year and this indicates a significant funding shortfall which it is likely to need to be partially funded from a funding transfer from schools.
4. Whilst the recently announced spending review indicated an extra £700m for 2020-21 to support pupils with high needs, until there is clarity on the likely financial impact in BF, the council has to keep all funding options open and that includes the possibility of needing to make a request to transfer funds from schools.
5. Views are now being gathered from schools and other stakeholders on how the cost of supporting high needs pupils should be financed so they can be taken into account when funding decisions are considered by the Schools Forum at the end of 2019.

Who should respond to this consultation?

6. The Chair of governors of mainstream schools, in consultation with the head teacher and other governors, academy school representatives and other relevant organisations, including special schools and Pupil Referral Units.

Queries

7. If you have any queries on this consultation, please contact:

Paul Clark, Finance Business Partner – People Directorate

Telephone 01344 354054

Email: paul.clark@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Responses

8. Responses are requested **by Friday 18th October 2019** through the separate response form, to:

education.finance@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

¹ Each LA is required to establish and maintain a Schools Forum to represent Education providers and partners on key financial matters. The membership of the BF Forum has been drawn from head teachers, including academies, governors and representatives of the teacher associations, diocesan boards, Early Years providers and Bracknell and Wokingham College.

What do High Needs budgets fund?

9. The Department for Education (DfE) defines high needs as the support required to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and covers the continuum of provision for relevant pupils and students from 0-24.
10. Furthermore, the DfE has placed a financial threshold so that where the cost of provision is above £10,000 it will be classified as high needs. In such circumstances, a “place-plus” approach to funding will generally be used which can be applied consistently across all providers that support high needs pupils and students as follows:
 - a. **Element 1 or “core education funding”**: equivalent to the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) in mainstream schools, which the DfE has stated the national average is around £4,000.
 - b. **Element 2 or “additional support funding”**: a budget for providers to deliver additional support for high needs pupils or students with additional needs of up to £6,000.

Specialist and Alternative Providers (AP), such as special schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) only cater for high needs pupils and therefore receive a minimum £10,000 (Element 1 funding plus Element 2) per agreed **place**.
 - c. **Element 3, or “top-up funding”**: funding above elements 1 and 2 to meet the total cost of the education provision required by an individual high needs pupil or student, as based on the pupil’s or student’s assessed needs, typically through an Education Health Care Plan² (EHC). This element is paid to all provider types, for pupils with assessed needs above the £10,000 threshold.
11. Around 90% of funding for pupils with high needs is allocated directly to schools for providing support for children and young people with SEND. This is mainly **place** and **top up** funding for individual children with high needs in mainstream schools, resource provision units, special schools, and AP (including pupil referral units). It covers the cost of educating BF pupils both within BF and in other local authority schools and placements in private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector schools. Since 2014, LAs also have responsibility for funding support to young people with SEND in further education colleges up to the age of 25 years, an increase from the previous 19 years limit.
12. Additionally, high needs funding is also intended to be used where high needs provisions are not arranged in the form of places with the following services currently being funded: home and hospital tuition, travellers’ support, Autistic Support Service, the Child Development Centre and other support to under 5 year olds, Support for Learning plus contracts with health (for therapies) and the sensory consortium. These budgets amount to around 10% of planned spend.
13. LAs receive specific grant funding from the DfE for pupils with high needs which for BF amounted to £16.814m in 2019-20.

² An EHC plan is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person.

Why is there a budget difficulty and how much is it?

14. The budget difficulty has mainly arisen due to significant increases in the numbers of pupils requiring support, increases in complexity of need which costs more, and annual increases in the cost of this provision above the level of inflation, mainly in relation to pupils placed in private, voluntary and independent sector (PVI) provision.
15. This is a national issue, and not limited to just BF, with the latest statistical release from the DfE recording that the number of pupils in England with a statement or EHC having increased in the last 2 years to January 2019 by 11.9%.
16. The grant received to fund these increases has in no way been sufficient to cover the actual cost of the increasing demand. For many LAs, there have been financial difficulties for a number of years with data from freedom of information requests – there are no official statistics available – indicating that the combined overspend on high needs education budgets among councils in England increased from £61m in 2015-16 to £195m in 2017-18. The figures cover 117 of England’s 152 councils, meaning the true overspend will most likely be higher.
17. The £195m over spend on high needs budgets highlighted above is after around £315m of mainstream school and early years schools’ being re-assigned since 2015 to special needs funding which confirms the existence of a more significant budget difficulty.
18. Changes in the number of children receiving additional support through high needs budgets in BF shows a similar increase to the national figures, with the number expected to increase by 17.7% from April 2018 to March 2020. Taking account of the increasing complexity of need which often requires a more expensive placement, typically with a PVI provider, costs are expected to increase by 27.3% over the same 2 year period during which grant from the DfE has increased by 4.8%.
19. Summary information on the BF data relating to the cost of placements – excluding Alternative Provision - can be viewed at Annex 1³. This also shows how the proportion of high needs pupils placed in BF schools is falling, the primary special need of affected pupils, and the total number by primary school age, secondary and post-16. A glossary of terms of special needs is included at the end of this consultation.
20. In terms of the overall budgetary impact in BF, in recent years the high needs budget has been showing increasing financial pressure. This has resulted in a dramatic change from a £1.1m under spending in 2017-18 to a forecast £2.0m over spending for 2019-20.

³ The EHCP numbers used in this consultation relate to the number of pupils expected to need additional support across the whole financial year and therefore equates to bills that will need to be paid. It does not represent headcount on a specific date. The numbers therefore differ from those in the SEN Sufficiency strategy, most notably as a result of the exclusion here of pupils educated outside of schools or in receipt of an EHCPs but waiting for a placement.

21. Table 1 below summarises the year-end financial position for high needs budgets together with the unallocated balance in the Schools Budget Reserve which for the first time is forecast to have a deficit balance at the end of the year.

Table 1	Over (+)/ Under (-) spend £000	Unallocated balance in Reserves* £000	Surplus / Deficit
2016-17	-1,077	-1,778	Surplus
2017-18	-1,171	-1,994	Surplus
2018-19	-88	-1,577	Surplus
2019-20 (forecast)	+1,996	+419	Deficit

* The Schools Budget Unallocated Reserve operates in a similar way to individual school balances. There is an automatic carry forward and the cumulative balance can only be spent on education related services.

22. Projecting the current trend forward into 2020-21, assuming no intervention and on-going growth in demand for places with an increase in funding from the DfE consistent with that experienced in the last 2 years indicates the potential for a further 54 placements and a year-end over spending of around £2.8m. Annex 2 illustrates the trend data and assumptions.
23. The recently announced spending review indicated an extra £700m for 2020-21 to support pupils with high needs however there is no clarity on the likely financial impact in BF. Should all of this £700m be made available to LAs through the current national funding formula, based on the most recent distribution to LAs, then BF would receive around £1.7m additional income. This is considered the best-case scenario on the limited information available and would result in a £1.1m forecast over spending.

Strategy to Reduce High Needs Costs

24. Whilst to date spend in BF on high needs has been managed within budget, the emerging significant increase in costs and the difficulty in balancing the budget illustrates the changing financial situation with an in-year over spend and cumulative deficit balance in the Schools Budget Reserve now being forecast.
25. The council is working with the Schools Forum to develop a strategy to reduce high needs costs whilst ensuring appropriate support is in place where it's needed. This will need to be a medium plan as whilst some changes are expected to result in an early impact, others will require a period of time to take effect.
26. The Schools Forum has established a High Needs Sub Group to provide direction and feedback to options for the use of the high needs budget and the development of a plan is underway.
27. Whilst this work is on-going, and detailed proposals have yet to emerge, with such a significant budgetary pressure emerging, financial planning does need to be considered now for the 2020-21 budget, which at this stage suggests that the most

likely strategies to be adopted for reducing the forecast over spend and underlying deficit are:

- Increasing placements within BF schools
- Reducing reliance on Specialist Independent settings and placements in other LA schools
- Reducing the demand of Education, Health and Care Plans

28. We are currently completing a review of local arrangements for Alternative Provision as a detailed analysis of the direction of High Needs funding. Some of the key recommendations from these developments are expected to include:

- Develop a consistent and informed approach of identifying needs at the SEN Support stage.
- Reviewing the Published Admissions Number for relevant local provision (i.e. College Hall).
- Developing an outcomes focused commissioning model.
- Extend the range of resource provision available locally, specifically for ASD and SEMH.

29. In addition to the four key strands identified above, the council also believes that a re-assignment of funding from schools to the pressures being experienced on high needs budgets should be considered. This is set out further in the following section.

Request for a financial contribution from schools

30. Funding for schools and associated budgets is met from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which is allocated to LAs by the DfE. This grant is received in four notional “Blocks” – Schools, School Central School Services, High Needs and Early Years – each of which is allocated through a separate national funding formula. Although the DfE does not attach a ring fence to the Blocks requiring the funding to be spent only on the areas it has been allocated for, there are conditions attached with transferring funds between Blocks.

31. Taking account of the current and forecast budget position, the Council is proposing to transfer 0.5% of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2020-21, and this is subject to the following DfE conditions:

- LAs may transfer up to 0.5% of their schools block funding into another block, with the approval of Schools Forum.
- LAs wishing to transfer should consult with all maintained schools and academies, and the Schools Forum should take into account the views of schools before giving their approval.
- If the LA wishes to move more than 0.5%, or if the Schools Forum has turned down a proposal to transfer but the LA still wishes to proceed, they must submit a request to the Secretary of State.

32. The transfer of 0.5% would equate to approximately £0.338m. The actual amount will not be known until mid-December when the DfE notifies the LA of the final Schools Block allocation for 2020-21. Annex 3 shows the potential impact on each school’s

budget from this proposal, and assumes all schools make a similar percentage contribution to the budget pressure, including those currently funded at the discretionary Minimum Per Pupil Funding Levels (MPPFL)⁴ of £3,500 for primary schools and £4,800 for secondary schools. The illustration is based on the 2019-20 budget position so will be subject to change if implemented.

33. This proposed funding transfer is for one year only. The need for any future requests for funding transfers will be considered each year and if considered necessary, be subject to further consultation with schools in 2020.

Next Steps

34. The results of this consultation, including all comments made by schools, will be considered by the Schools Forum on 21st November. Subject to sufficient information on the spending review being released by the DfE, this will also include an updated forecast of likely grant income and anticipated costs. Should the council consider a funding transfer request is necessary, this will be considered by the Schools Forum will need to take a strategic approach in making its decision.
35. Should the Schools Forum not agree the funding transfer request from the council, an appeal can be made to the Secretary of State. If required, this will need to be submitted no later than 30th November 2019.

⁴ The MPPFL represents the lowest per pupil funding rate that the DfE allocates to a school in the calculation of the School National Funding Formula. Each LA has to set their own MPPFL at the affordable amount.

Glossary of special educational needs categories

Autistic Spectrum Disorder

a developmental disorder of variable severity that is characterised by difficulties in social interaction and communication and by restricted or repetitive patterns of thought and behaviour.

Hearing Impairment

An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance

Medical

Individual healthcare plans will normally specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such pupils. Where children and young people also have SEN, their provision should be planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way with the healthcare plan.

Moderate Learning Difficulty

Attainments well below expected levels in all or most areas of the curriculum, despite appropriate interventions

Physical Disability

A limitation on a child's **physical** functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina

Profound Multiple Learning Difficulty

Severe learning difficulties, they may have other significant difficulties, such as physical disabilities, sensory impairment or a severe medical condition

Speech Language Communication Need

Encompasses a wide range of difficulties related to all aspects of communication in children and young people. These can include difficulties with fluency, forming sounds and words, formulating sentences, understanding what others say, and using language socially.

Severe Learning Difficulty

Learners with severe learning difficulties have very significant intellectual or cognitive impairments. Their cognitive and/or attainment levels are normally at or below the 0.01 percentile.

Social Emotional Mental Health

Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs are a type of special educational needs in which children/young people have severe difficulties in managing their emotions and behaviour. They often show inappropriate responses and feelings to situations.

SPLC

Speech Language and Communication (although not a term that is commonly used).

Specific Learning Difficulty

Is a term that refers to a difference or difficulty with particular aspects of learning. The most common diagnosis are dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia and dysgraphia.

Visual Impairment

Visual impairment is the consequence of a functional loss of vision, rather than the eye disorder itself. It can include retinal degeneration, albinism, cataracts, glaucoma, muscular problems that result in visual disturbances, corneal disorders, diabetic retinopathy, congenital disorders, and infection.

K:\Pine\PERFORMANCE & RESOURCES\Finance\Fair funding\Consultation 2019\2. HNB Funding Transfer etc\Consultation with schools - HNB funding 2019 v1.docx

Summary data of BF pupils with an EHCP receiving high needs funding

	2017-18			
	Grand total			Average cost
	Amount	FTE	%	
BF schools and academies	£6,107,367	372.61	60.98%	£16,391
OLA schools and academies	£1,592,963	75.34	12.33%	£21,145
PVI/College/other post 16	£5,389,375	163.10	26.69%	£33,043
Totals	£13,089,705	611.05	100.00%	£21,422

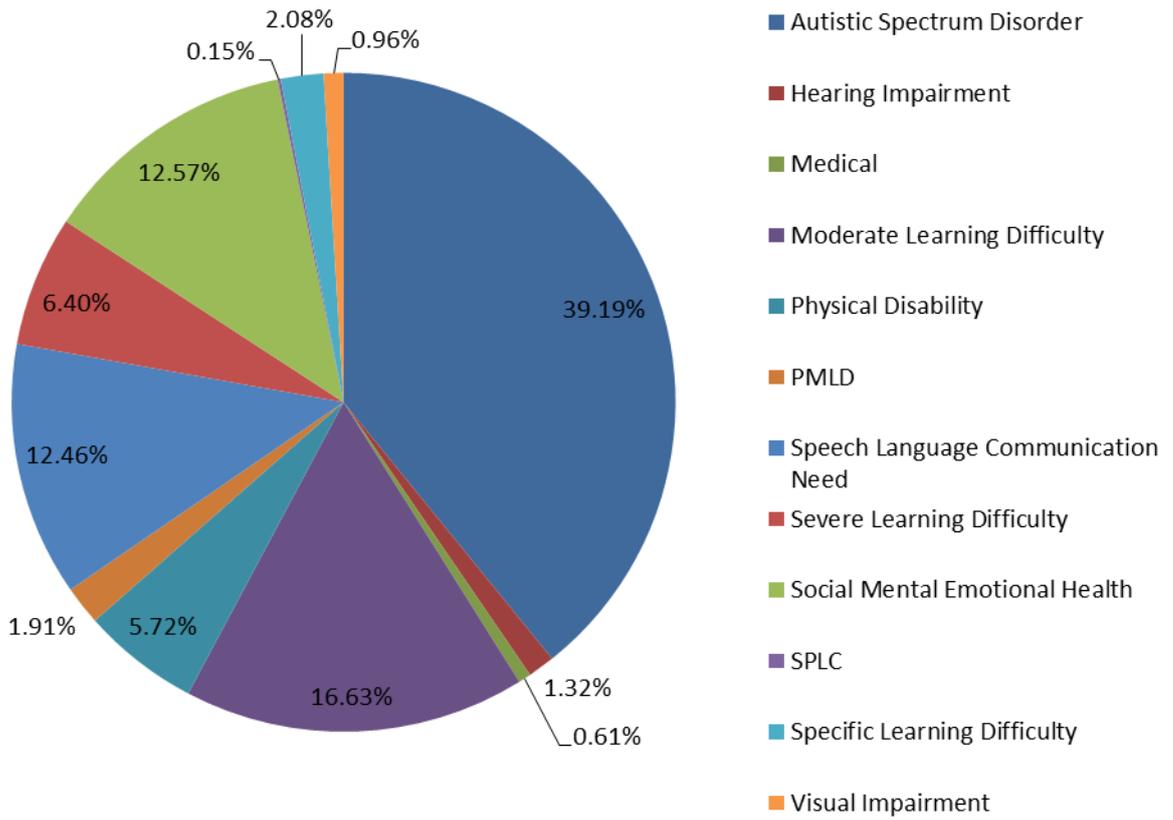
	2018-19			
	Grand total			Average cost
	Amount	FTE	%	
BF schools and academies	£6,954,202	391.96	57.98%	£17,742
OLA schools and academies	£2,198,456	99.70	14.75%	£22,051
PVI/College/other post 16	£5,831,415	184.36	27.27%	£31,631
Totals	£14,984,073	676.01	100.00%	£22,165
Year on year change	14.47%	10.63%		

	2019-20			
	Grand total			Average cost
	Amount	FTE	%	
BFC pupils in BFC mainstream/academy	£2,274,934	201.51	28.02%	£11,289
BFC pupils in BFC special school	£3,774,689	154.48	21.48%	£24,436
BFC pupils in BFC resource provision	£971,929	43.75	6.08%	£22,216
BFC pupils in OLA mainstream/academy	£308,246	28.59	3.97%	£10,782
BFC pupils in OLA special school	£2,399,398	80.25	11.16%	£29,899
BFC pupils in OLA resource provision	£73,804	4.76	0.66%	£15,521
PVI/College/other post 16	£6,865,255	205.91	28.63%	£33,341
Totals	£16,668,255	719.24	100.00%	£23,175
Year on year change	11.24%	6.39%		
Cumulative 2 year change	27.34%	17.71%		

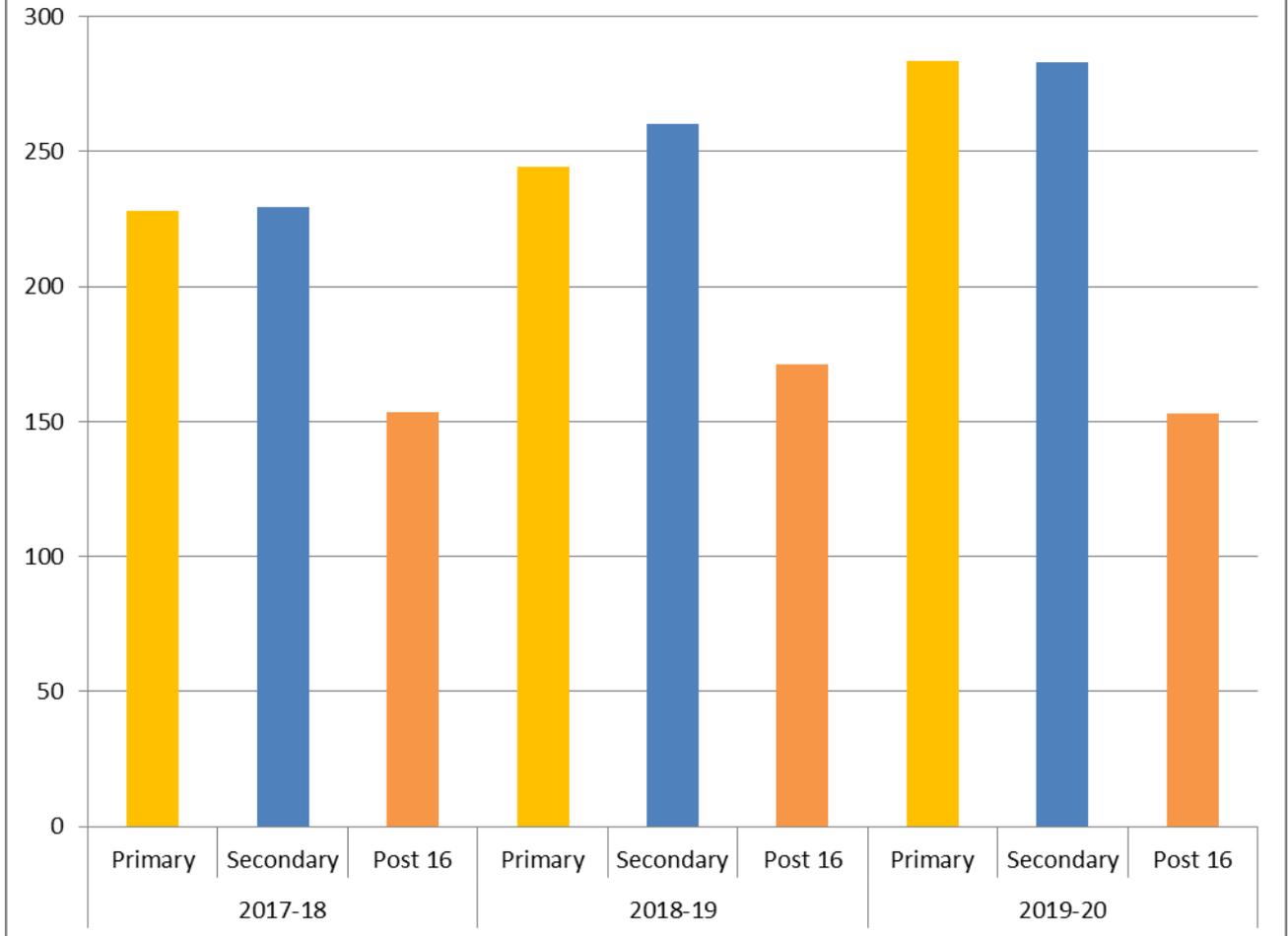
	3 year average 2017-18 to 2019-20	
	FTE	%
BF schools and academies	388.10	58.03%
OLA schools and academies	96.21	14.39%
PVI/College/other post 16	184.46	27.58%
Totals	668.77	100.00%

	2019-20			
	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE
BF schools and academies	£7,021,553	42.13%	399.74	55.58%
Non BF placements	£9,646,702	57.87%	319.50	44.42%
Totals	£16,668,255	100.00%	719.24	100.00%

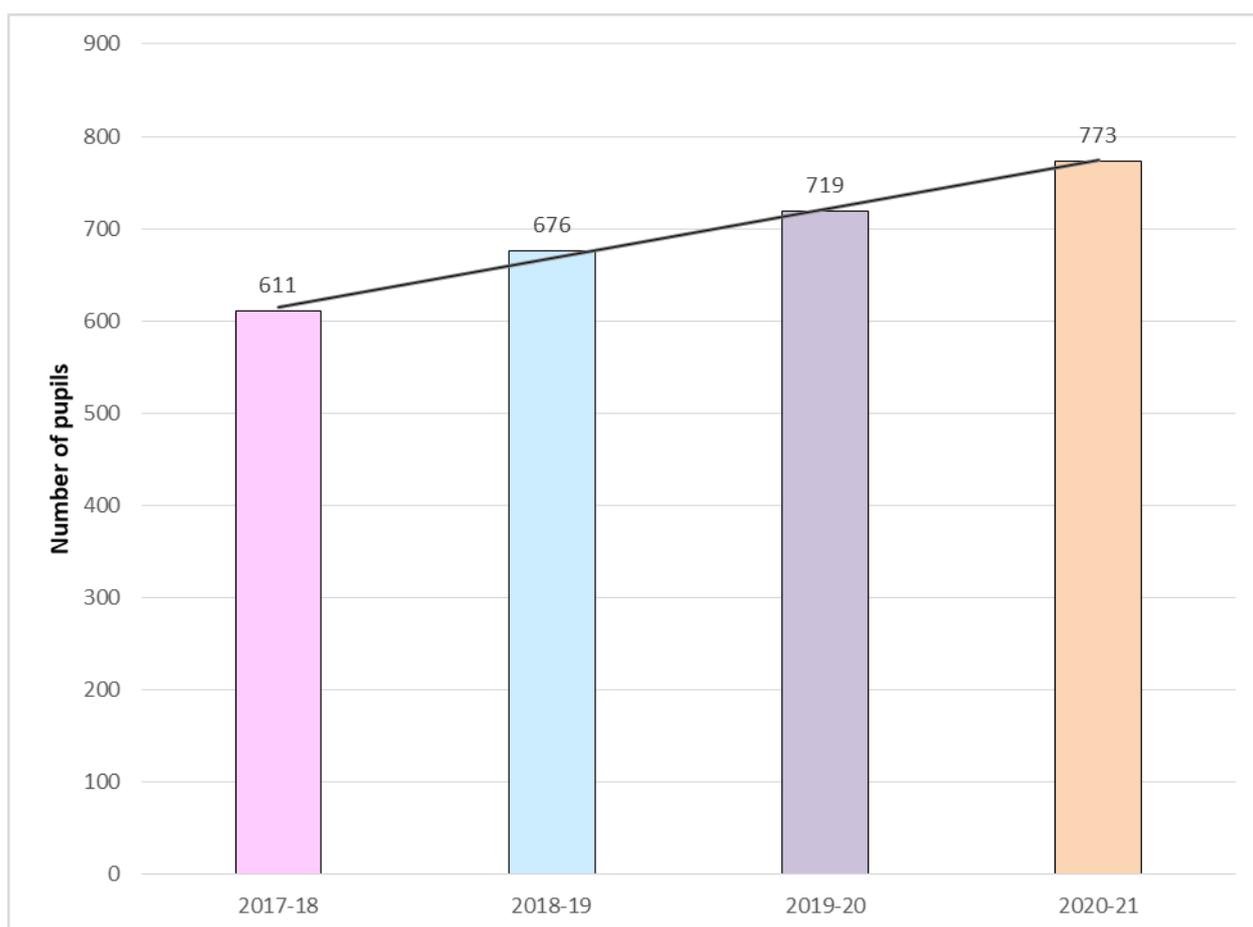
Pupils by SEN Need



Pupils by school phase by year



Actual and forecast number of high needs pupil placements



Steady state assumptions (June 2019 data):

	2019-20 Estimated Actual	2020-21 Initial Estimate
Number of high cost placements	719	773
Forecast increase in placements		54
Average cost of placement		£23,175
Increase in funding from DfE (2 year average)	2.37%	£400,000
Forecast cost increase		£851,000
Forecast overspend in 2019-20		£1,996,000
Forecast overspend for 2020-21		£2,847,000

Illustrative impact of a 0.5% deduction to school budgets using 2019-20 funding data

SCHOOL	October 2018 actual NOR	Funding For Statutory Aged Pupils (5-16 year olds)				Funding For Statutory Aged Pupils (5-16 year olds)					
		As per 2019-20 Actual budget				Illustrative 2019-20 Budgets with transfer of 0.5% to HN Block.					
		Gross mainstream funding	Maintained school only items:		Net funding retained by maintained schools	Gross mainstream funding	Maintained school only items:		Net funding retained by maintained schools	Change from 2019-20 Actual	
Less de-delegation funding to be managed by BFC	Less contribution to LA Education related statutory duties at £20 per pupil		Less de-delegation funding to be managed by BFC	Less contribution to LA Education related statutory duties at £20 per pupil							
Primary maintained											
Ascot Heath Infant School	162	£656,237	£11,937	£3,240	£641,060	£653,908	£11,937	£3,240	£638,731	£2,329	-0.35%
Ascot Heath Church of England Junior School	225	£844,929	£14,738	£4,500	£825,691	£841,629	£14,738	£4,500	£822,391	£3,300	-0.39%
Binfield Church of England Primary School	413	£1,451,560	£29,031	£8,260	£1,414,269	£1,444,539	£29,031	£8,260	£1,407,248	£7,021	-0.48%
Birch Hill Primary School	397	£1,441,936	£32,118	£7,940	£1,401,878	£1,436,133	£32,118	£7,940	£1,396,075	£5,803	-0.40%
College Town Primary School	496	£1,827,269	£37,151	£9,920	£1,780,198	£1,819,427	£37,151	£9,920	£1,772,356	£7,842	-0.43%
Cranbourne Primary School	211	£804,464	£14,576	£4,220	£785,668	£801,567	£14,576	£4,220	£782,771	£2,897	-0.36%
Crowthorne Church of England Primary School	208	£802,464	£14,391	£4,160	£783,913	£799,520	£14,391	£4,160	£780,969	£2,944	-0.37%
Fox Hill Primary School	209	£881,451	£18,043	£4,180	£859,228	£878,164	£18,043	£4,180	£855,941	£3,288	-0.37%
Harmans Water Primary School	561	£2,022,372	£45,471	£11,220	£1,965,682	£2,012,835	£45,471	£11,220	£1,956,145	£9,537	-0.47%
Holly Spring Infant and Nursery School	251	£974,374	£25,166	£5,020	£944,188	£970,067	£25,166	£5,020	£939,881	£4,307	-0.44%
Holly Spring Junior School	318	£1,225,196	£25,518	£6,360	£1,193,319	£1,214,819	£25,518	£6,360	£1,182,941	£10,378	-0.85%
Meadow Vale Primary School	606	£2,178,010	£48,764	£12,120	£2,117,126	£2,167,708	£48,764	£12,120	£2,106,824	£10,302	-0.47%
New Scotland Hill Primary	194	£768,245	£13,519	£3,880	£750,847	£763,946	£13,519	£3,880	£746,548	£4,299	-0.56%
Owlsmoor Primary School	548	£1,978,920	£40,483	£10,960	£1,927,477	£1,969,604	£40,483	£10,960	£1,918,161	£9,316	-0.47%
The Pines School	326	£1,240,723	£28,172	£6,520	£1,206,032	£1,234,776	£28,172	£6,520	£1,200,085	£5,947	-0.48%
Sandy Lane Primary School	488	£1,771,175	£44,571	£9,760	£1,716,844	£1,760,141	£44,571	£9,760	£1,705,811	£11,033	-0.62%
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bracknell	210	£810,860	£17,498	£4,200	£789,163	£807,824	£17,498	£4,200	£786,126	£3,037	-0.37%
St Michael's Easthampstead Church of England	241	£921,278	£18,220	£4,820	£898,239	£917,732	£18,220	£4,820	£894,693	£3,546	-0.38%
St Michael's Church of England Primary School	189	£717,440	£12,128	£3,780	£701,532	£714,139	£12,128	£3,780	£698,230	£3,302	-0.46%
Uplands Primary School and Nursery	210	£790,960	£13,547	£4,200	£773,213	£788,077	£13,547	£4,200	£770,330	£2,884	-0.36%
Warfield Church of England Primary School	408	£1,574,042	£30,840	£8,151	£1,535,051	£1,567,718	£30,840	£8,151	£1,528,728	£6,324	-0.40%
Whitegrove Primary School	414	£1,487,890	£28,313	£8,280	£1,451,297	£1,480,852	£28,313	£8,280	£1,444,259	£7,038	-0.47%
Wildridings Primary School	395	£1,503,470	£36,928	£7,900	£1,458,642	£1,496,258	£36,928	£7,900	£1,451,430	£7,212	-0.48%
Winkfield St Mary's CofE Primary School	199	£774,584	£13,526	£3,980	£757,078	£771,775	£13,526	£3,980	£754,269	£2,808	-0.36%
Wooden Hill Primary and Nursery School	342	£1,286,139	£28,071	£6,840	£1,251,228	£1,279,001	£28,071	£6,840	£1,244,089	£7,139	-0.56%
Primary maintained total	8,221	£30,735,989	£642,718	£164,411	£29,928,861	£30,592,158	£642,718	£164,411	£29,785,029	£143,831	-0.47%
Secondary maintained											
Easthampstead Park Community School	762	£4,304,678	£54,776	£15,240	£4,234,662	£4,283,220	£54,776	£15,240	£4,213,204	£21,458	-0.50%
Garth Hill College	1,402	£7,129,689	£98,345	£28,040	£7,003,304	£7,087,260	£98,345	£28,040	£6,960,875	£42,428	-0.60%
Sandhurst School	1,017	£5,069,340	£67,425	£20,340	£4,981,575	£5,044,932	£67,425	£20,340	£4,957,167	£24,408	-0.48%
Secondary maintained total	3,181	£16,503,707	£220,546	£63,620	£16,219,541	£16,415,412	£220,546	£63,620	£16,131,246	£88,295	-0.53%

SCHOOL	October 2018 actual NOR	Funding For Statutory Aged Pupils (5-16 year olds)				Funding For Statutory Aged Pupils (5-16 year olds)					
		As per 2019-20 Actual budget				Illustrative 2019-20 Budgets with transfer of 0.5% to HN Block.					
		Gross mainstream funding	Maintained school only items:		Net funding retained by maintained schools	Gross mainstream funding	Maintained school only items:		Net funding retained by maintained schools	Change from 2019-20 Actual	
Less de-delegation funding to be managed by BFC	Less contribution to LA Education related statutory duties at £20 per pupil		Less de-delegation funding to be managed by BFC	Less contribution to LA Education related statutory duties at £20 per pupil							
Primary Academy											
Crown Wood Primary School	557	£1,954,280	£0	£0	£1,954,280	£1,944,811	£0	£0	£1,944,811	£-9,469	-0.48%
Great Hollands Primary School	380	£1,483,675	£0	£0	£1,483,675	£1,477,162	£0	£0	£1,477,162	£-6,513	-0.44%
Jennett's Park CofE Primary School	403	£1,478,277	£0	£0	£1,478,277	£1,472,196	£0	£0	£1,472,196	£-6,081	-0.41%
King's Academy Oakwood	0	£203,108	£0	£0	£203,108	£202,092	£0	£0	£202,092	£-1,016	-0.50%
St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School,	208	£823,271	£0	£0	£823,271	£820,191	£0	£0	£820,191	£-3,080	-0.37%
Wildmoor Heath School	195	£761,171	£0	£0	£761,171	£758,350	£0	£0	£758,350	£-2,821	-0.37%
Primary Academy total	1,743	£6,703,782	£0	£0	£6,703,782	£6,674,802	£0	£0	£6,674,802	£-28,980	-0.43%
Secondary Academy											
The Brakenhale School	976	£5,082,790	£0	£0	£5,082,790	£5,059,888	£0	£0	£5,059,888	£-22,902	-0.45%
Edgbarrow School	1,082	£5,227,390	£0	£0	£5,227,390	£5,201,422	£0	£0	£5,201,422	£-25,968	-0.50%
Ranelagh School	831	£4,009,710	£0	£0	£4,009,710	£3,989,766	£0	£0	£3,989,766	£-19,944	-0.50%
Secondary Academy total	2,889	£14,319,890	£0	£0	£14,319,890	£14,251,076	£0	£0	£14,251,076	£-68,814	-0.48%
King's Academy Binfield	120	£1,631,926	£0	£0	£1,631,926	£1,623,766	£0	£0	£1,623,766	£-8,160	-0.50%
All through total	120	£1,631,926	£0	£0	£1,631,926	£1,623,766	£0	£0	£1,623,766	£-8,160	-0.50%
Total all	16,154	£69,895,294	£-863,264	£-228,031	£68,804,000	£69,557,215	£-863,264	£-228,031	£68,465,920	£-338,079	-0.48%

Note: not all changes in the final right hand column are at 0.5% due to the impact of the Minimum Funding Guarantee.

This page is intentionally left blank

To: **SCHOOLS FORUM**
DATE: **19 September 2019**

SEND NEEDS AND SUFFICIENCY ANALYSIS (Assistant Director Education & Learning)

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Schools Forum of the current needs and provisions for children and young people living in Bracknell Forest with special education needs and disability (SEND). It also includes a financial analysis and future estimates of growth for SEND.
- 1.2 The SEND Code of Practice (2014) states that local authorities must review the sufficiency of educational, training and social care provisions.¹ The council has a duty to ensure that CYP have a choice of high-quality provisions that meet their SEND. Therefore, this report evaluates the current provisions and needs of the borough and is intended to be used by the strategic commissioning team, the children's services teams and the Schools Forum to guide decision making.
- 1.3 This analysis will summarise information relevant to CYP with SEND through evaluating the following areas:
 - a) Current policy, strategy and plans that relate to SEND provisions;
 - b) Current needs within the borough including demographics, complexity of need and out of borough pressures;
 - c) Current provisions and placement options available, differentiating mainstream, special schools, resource units, alternative provision and post-16 education;
 - d) The cost of placements and primary needs; and,
 - e) The anticipated future growth of SEND and the CYP in the borough.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **That Schools Forum note the finding of the report.**

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 To provide a greater understanding of SEND needs and provisions for children and young people in Bracknell Forest.
- 3.2 To provide evidence to support future SEND decision making and the development of a SEND commissioning strategy.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 No alternative options to be considered.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The full SEND needs and sufficiency analysis is provided in appendix A.
- 5.2 The key findings based on the evidence in this report are as follows:

¹ Department for Education. SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years. (4.19)

- At January 2019 775 CYP living in Bracknell Forest had an EHCP and there were 2,050 CYP in Bracknell Forest schools with SEN support.
- Bracknell Forest has a similar proportion of CYP with an EHCP and SEN support as the national average, with ASD the most common reason for an EHCP.
- ASD, MLD and SEMH are more prevalent SEND in Bracknell Forest than nationally.
- Most CYP with SEND who were excluded had a primary need of SEMH. There is a particularly high proportion of CYP with SEN support who receive fixed term exclusions, higher than the national average.
- Two thirds of CYP with an EHCP were placed at schools within Bracknell Forest and approximately half of these were at mainstream schools.
- Within the borough there were specialist provisions with a total capacity of 344 CYP.
- The most common primary need for CYP placed outside the borough in special schools was for ASD and SEMH.
- There was not an overspend of the 2018-19 budget for SEND provisions.
- The primary need requiring the greatest total funding was ASD, which was double the cost of the next highest need (SEMH). The spend on ASD and SEMH had also increased most quickly of all the SEND over the last three years.
- The spend on out of borough special schools increased by 71% over the last three years.
- The number of CYP with EHCPs is likely to continue to increase and at a faster rate than CYP with SEN support needs. Over the next five years there could be up to 200 net increase in CYP with an EHCP.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 Relevant legal issues are addressed within the report.

Director of Finance

- 6.2 The Director of Finance is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from the publication of this plan which provides a clear analysis of needs and provisions. Any proposed changes to service delivery that arise will need to be considered as part of the annual budget setting process.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 This development will support the local authority and schools to commission SEND provisions more strategically for all children and young people as appropriate.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 The main risks are:
- Not providing a suitable range of high quality SEND provisions appropriate to the needs of children and young people within borough.
 - Continued increase in cost of commissioning SEND provisions.

These risks will be mitigated by the development of a commissioning strategy and linked to the broader developments on the direction of the High Needs Block.

Consultation

- 6.5 The data gathered has been in collaboration with the children's services teams, the SEN data officer and the finance team.

Background Papers

None

Contacts for further information

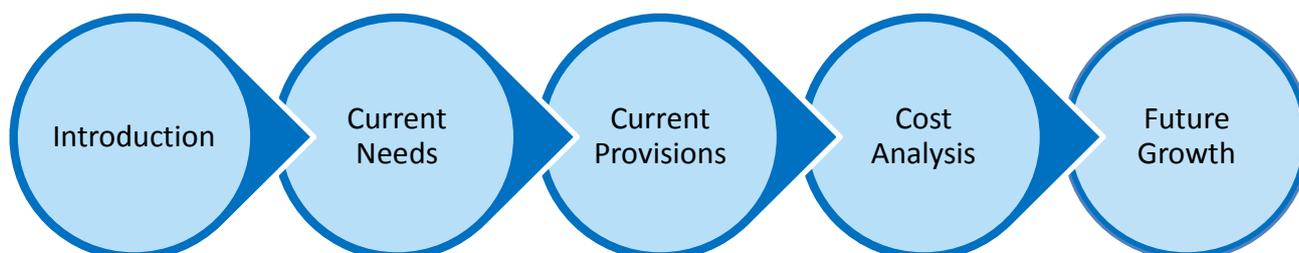
Katie Flint 01344 352217	National Management Trainee (Strategic Commissioning) katie.flint@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Kashif Nawaz 01344 353318	Head of Children's Support Services kashif.nawaz@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Rachel Morgan 01344 354037	Assistant Director: Education and Learning rachel.morgan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

SEND Sufficiency Analysis

September 2019

Contents

This analysis has been divided into five sections starting with an introduction to outline the purpose of the report. The data has then been grouped into specific sections related to the support provided for children and young people with special educational needs and disability. A brief summary for each section has been included with a breakdown of the topics covered.



Introduction

This provides an overview of the purpose of the analysis and details for how the evidence was sourced.

Current Needs

The data in this section provides a profile for the needs of CYP in the borough with EHCPs and SEN support. It aims to provide a comprehensive profile for the SEND that provisions should support.

It includes a breakdown of the primary needs for CYP with SEND and compares the prevalence with national figures and statistical neighbours. Additional information is provided for more complex groups of CYP including those who are looked after and have been excluded. Details are also provided for the needs of CYP who are placed in Bracknell Forest schools but live elsewhere.

Current Provisions

The current provisions are reviewed for the range of needs of CYP with SEND. This will enable comparisons to be drawn from the previously identified needs and the available provisions.

The provisions within the borough are identified for the range of mainstream and specialist provisions. Out of borough placements are also considered along with post 16 pathways.

Cost Analysis

The spend from the high needs block is reported with the needs and provisions that require the highest proportion of spend. Changes to spend over the previous three years are included. Additional costs associated with SEND are included such as transport costs. This will support the prioritisation of future commissioning and guide funding decision making.

Future Growth

The pattern of growth in SEND is considered with estimates provided for the future level of need within the borough. Although growth can be difficult to estimate, it provides a direction to consider for future decision making.

Introduction

Why has this report been written?	8
What is the evidence?	9
National Context	9
Local Context	9

Current Needs

Bracknell Forest Population	11
Primary Needs	13
SEN Support	15
Complex Needs	16
Out of Borough Pressure	17
Exclusions	18
Summary	22

Current Provisions

Mainstream schools	24
Special School, Resource Provision, Pupil Referral Unit and Alternative Provision	24
Post 16 Pathways	29
Summary	30

Cost Analysis

High Needs Block	31
Joint Funding Arrangements	33
Trends in Spend	34
Primary Needs	34
Provision Type and Location	35
Transport Costs	37
Summary	38

Future Growth

SEND Historic Growth	39
Estimating Growth	42
Summary	44

Appendix

APPENDIX A – EXCLUSION REASON CODES	45
APPENDIX B – METHODOLOGY FOR GROWTH PROJECTIONS	46

Glossary of Terms

Throughout this analysis commonly used terminology has been shortened for simplicity. The definitions are included here for reference during the analysis.

Term	Definition
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
BFC	Bracknell Forest Council
CIN	Child in Need
CLA	Child Looked After
CYP	Children and Young People
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
EOOS	Education out of School
HI	Hearing Impairment
MEDICAL	Medical Needs (i.e. diabetes)
MLD	Moderate Learning Disability
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment
NCY	National Curriculum Year
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
OLA	Other Local Authority
PD	Physical Disability
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty
PVI	Private, Voluntary and Independent [schools]
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Need
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty
SPLD	Specific learning Difficulty
VI	Visual Impairment



Why has this report been written?

We are committed to improving the outcomes for children and young people (CYP) with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and their families, therefore it is our vision that people have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive.

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) states that local authorities must review the sufficiency of educational, training and social care provisions.² The council has a duty to ensure that CYP have a choice of high-quality provisions that meet their SEND. Therefore, this report evaluates the current provisions and needs of the borough and is intended to be used by the strategic commissioning team, the Children's Services team and the Schools Forum to guide decision making.

This analysis also has the purpose of drawing together a range of information into a single comprehensive picture of the borough. It improves understanding across the council's services to allow decisions to be more informed and relevant to the community. It is an evidence-based foundation that, for CYP and their families, will lead to provisions tailored to local needs.

The data reported was gathered collaboratively from national sources (school census) and between the Children's services team, the SEN data officer and the finance team. It aims to provide clear evidence for the needs of the borough, to better inform budget allocations and future commissioning priorities.

This analysis will summarise information relevant to CYP with SEND through evaluating the following areas:

- f) Current policy, strategy and plans that relate to SEND provisions;
- g) Current needs within the borough including demographics, complexity of need and out of borough pressures;
- h) Current provisions and placement options available, differentiating mainstream, special schools, resource units, alternative provision and post-16 education;
- i) The cost of placements and primary needs; and,
- j) The anticipated future growth of SEND and the CYP in the borough.

² Department for Education. SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years. (4.19)



What is the evidence?

National Context

In order to provide a comprehensive picture of SEND provisions in the borough, several different data sources have been drawn upon. The SEN2 return data has been used at the January time point. This includes data on all CYP living in the borough with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP; previously named a statement of special educational need). For children with SEN support but not with a designated EHCP, the school census data has been used. The school census records all children placed in a Bracknell Forest school, irrespective of where they live. The school census has been used by the Department for Education for several pupil population reports that have been used and referenced during this report. Additional data collected by the finance team and SEN team has provided further detail and insights into the local provisions for SEND.

For the purposes of this report, EHCP refers to both EHCPs and Statements.

Local Context



There are several key strategies and plans in Bracknell Forest which relate to SEND and impact the provisions described in this report. These strategies include:

- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- The Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2016-2020)
- The Children and Young People Service Plan (2016-2019)
- Children and Young People's Partnership plan (2018-2021)
- The SEND Improvement Strategy (2017-2020; to be replaced by new SEND Strategy, Autumn 2020)
- The SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy (due later this year)
- School Places Plan (2018-2023)

The relevant headlines from each of these strategies are summarised to represent the position of SEND provisions at this time.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment explores a range of areas and recommendations for the health and wellbeing of Bracknell Forest's Population. The education of children is reviewed as part of CYP wellbeing and the developing well overview. Relevant themes explored include:

- The new Kings Academy (learning village) to support additional demand for school places.
- More CYP placed in good or outstanding schools.
- School absence figures are reducing and are at a lower rate than England and the South East.
- The increased number of fixed term exclusions.
- Higher than average class sizes.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Health and Wellbeing strategy outlines four priorities based on information about the health of the local population and what residents indicated was important to them. Most

relevant to this strategy is the priority for improving mental health support and services to CYP. Locally, challenges have been identified which may impact SEND support including long waiting lists for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), a lack of coordinated working between services and a lack of adult transition pathways.

Children and Young People Service Plan

A new CYP service plan is due to be written outlining the services that are provided, the budget and the actions required to meet the strategic priorities. The current service plan outlines actions to ensure suitable school provisions are provided that are high quality and accessible to everyone. These are further explored in the Partnership Plan to describe how these outcomes will be measured and achieved.

SEND Strategy

The SEND Improvement Strategy outlines the plan for Bracknell Forest Council and the East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group to improve performance, services and expectations for CYP with SEND. The following priorities were identified:

- Further establish effective leadership, governance and accountability of SEND (including the allocation and use of High Needs Funding).
- Continue to develop a Local Area outcomes-based culture, underpinning the approach to commissioning and shaping service delivery.
- Ensure SEND and other vulnerable CYP access a flexible range of 'fit for purpose' outcomes-focused provision and support.
- CYP to have successful transitions, and access robust Preparation for Adulthood pathways, independent living and employment.
- Further develop the offer for CYP to receive appropriate and timely support for social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Build upon existing engagement to further strengthen and improve co-production with CYP, parents and carers.
- Continue to develop and build upon joint commissioning

The new SEND strategy is due to be published later in the year, superseding the SEND Improvement Strategy. It will include targets for provisions. It will be informed by local parents and teacher to reflect their priorities.

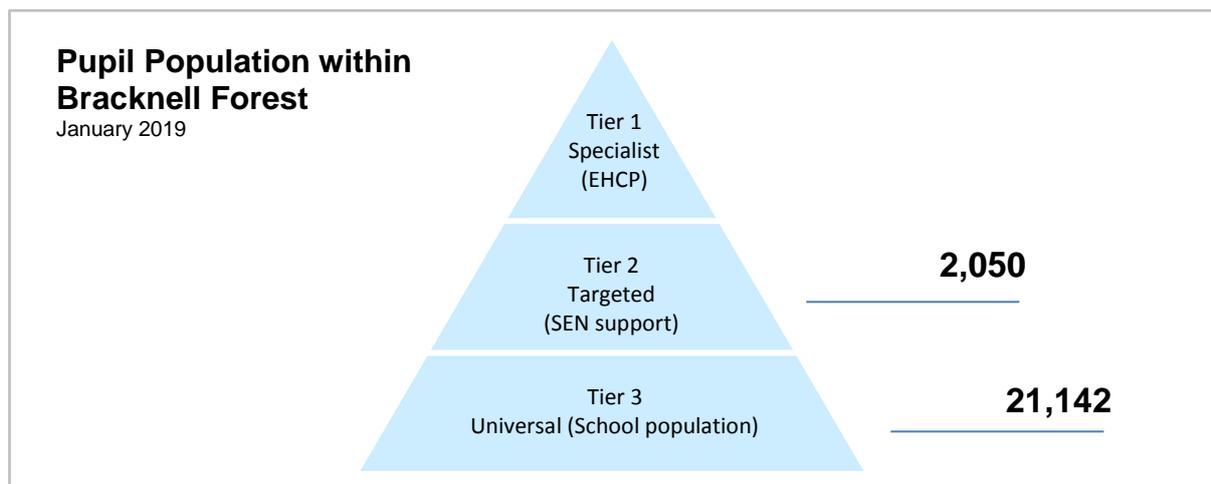


Current Needs

[Skip to Section Summary](#)

Bracknell Forest Population

Every CYP within Bracknell Forest will require different levels of support during their education. These stages within the education system can be divided into three tiers as illustrated in figure 1. Although the majority of SEND support from local authorities is at tier one, including funding from the high needs block, the demographics of all tiers will be considered in this report to provide a comprehensive picture of SEND sufficiency.



775

Figure 1. The school population of children and young people in Bracknell Forest.

The number of children within each tier is shown in figure 1. Tier one describes the CYP who have a statutory EHCP, their support requires additional funding from the high needs block³. Tier two describes children who have been recognised by their school as requiring additional SEN support and this can often be provided within a mainstream setting and the budget of the school⁴. Tier three describes all CYP in an education setting⁵.

EHCP Population

At tier one, 775 CYP make up 3.67% of the total school population, this is a lower proportion than the average for England (4%). As a proportion of the school population, Bracknell Forest has less EHCPs than six of its statistical neighbours and sits around the median of these authorities (figure 2). Trends over time are discussed later in this report as part of the future growth analysis.

³ The number of CYP with an EHCP, reported in the SEN2 return, reflects those with residence in Bracknell Forest, they may be placed outside the borough. Equally, children with an EHCP from other boroughs may be placed in Bracknell Forest schools but this would not be recorded in the SEN2.

⁴ Reported from Department for Education SEN in England (January) 2019 information based on school census data and includes 46 CYP with SEN support placed at the PRU with SEN support needs.

⁵ As reported in the School Pupils and Characteristics report, including pupils in independent schools and alternative provisions.

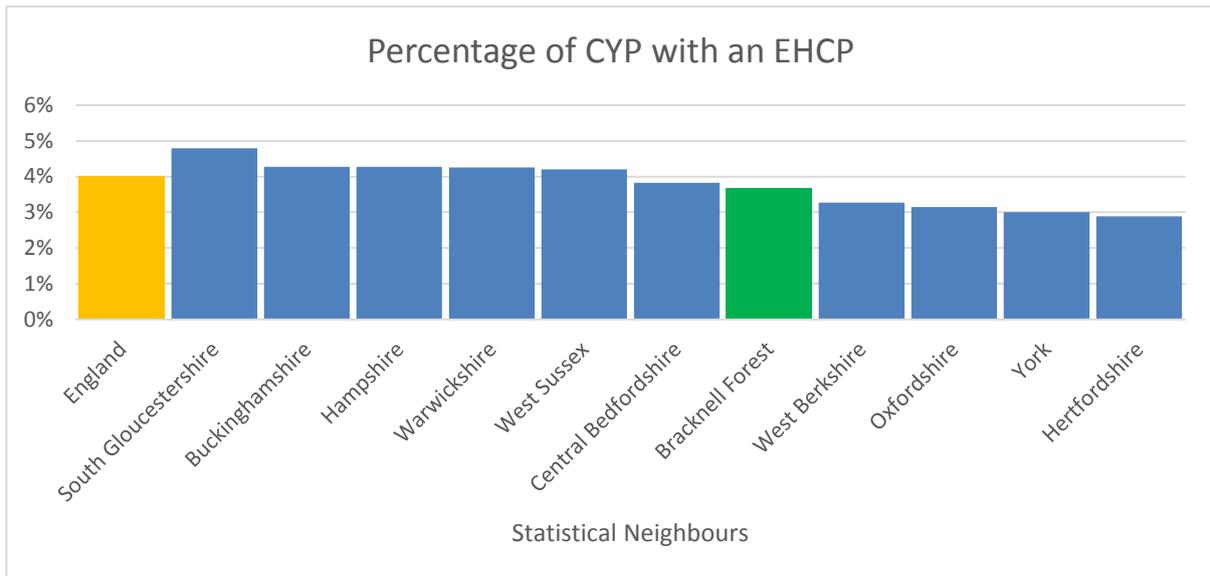


Figure 2. Percentage of all school children and young people with an EHCP as recorded in the SEN2 return.

SEN Support Population

In January 2019, 2,050 CYP at Bracknell Forest schools were recorded as needing SEN support but without having an EHCP. This is 11.6% of the Bracknell Forest pupil population⁶ and is very similar to the average percentage of CYP in England with SEN support (Figure 3). Like the proportion of CYP with an EHCP, Bracknell Forest is around the median for statistical neighbours.

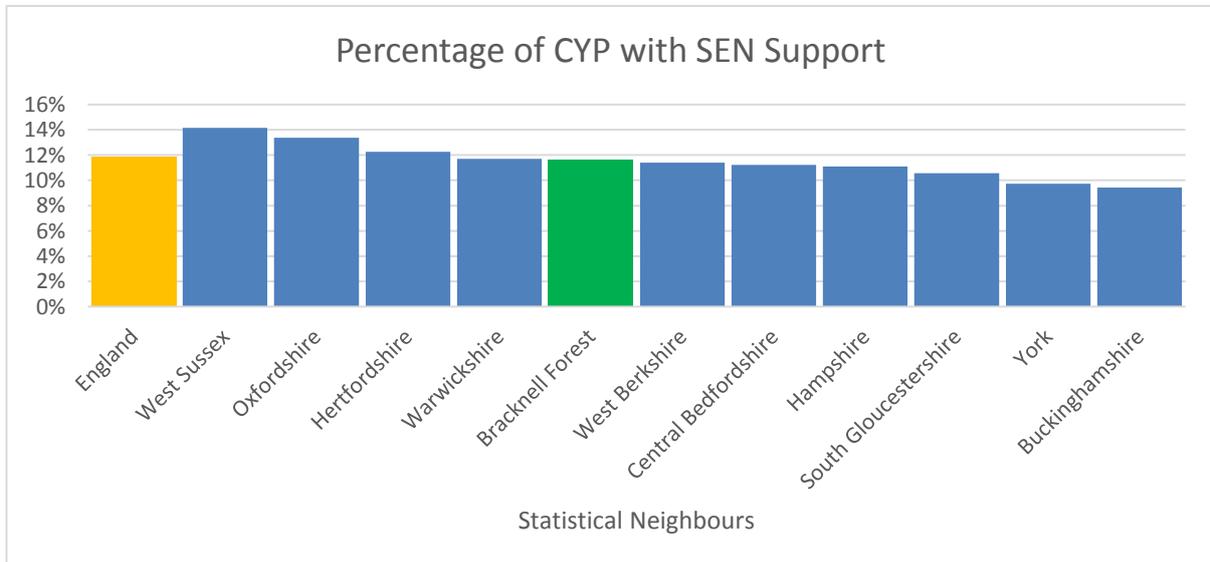


Figure 3. Percentage of all school children and young people with SEN support (without an EHCP) as recorded in the school census data. This excludes CYP in PRUs

⁶ This data reflects mainstream schools and excludes special schools.



Primary Needs

There are a wide range of needs of CYP living in Bracknell Forest, a glossary of terms can be found in appendix A. The most common SEND in the borough is ASD, with 36.9% of CYP with an EHCP needing support for this. There are also a high number of children requiring support for MLD (17.2%) and SEMH (16.4%). The full range of needs and the proportion of CYP identified with that primary need are illustrated in figure 4.

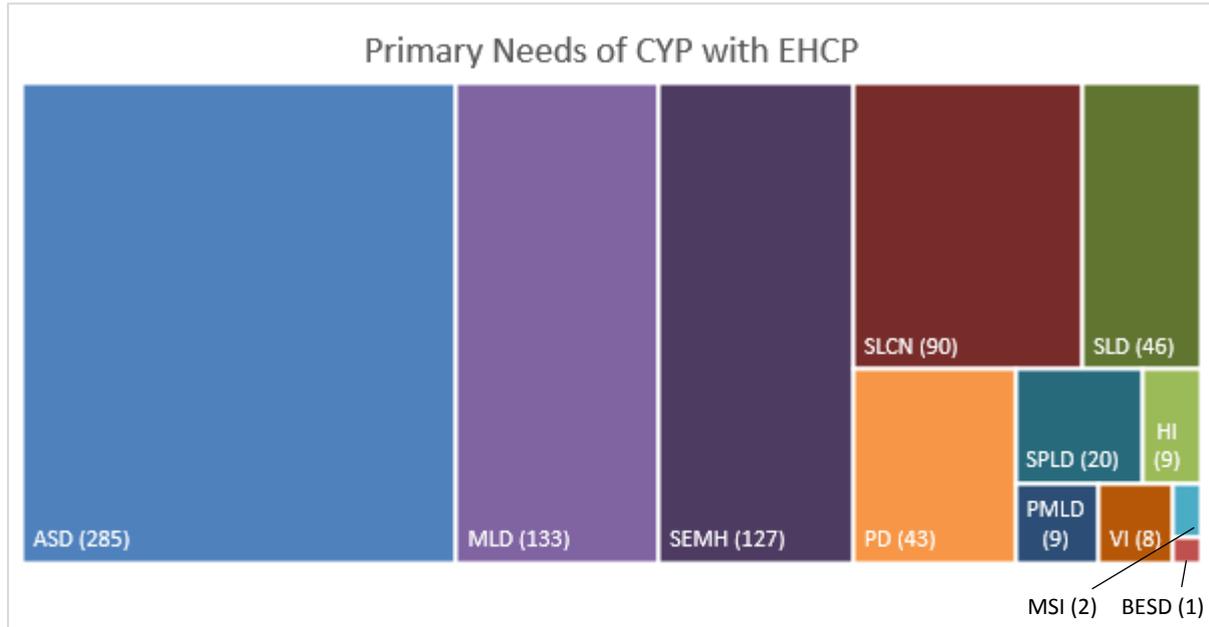


Figure 4. The primary need of children and young people with an EHCP and the number with that need as recorded on the SEN2 return.

Nationally there are some differences in the profile of CYP with an EHCP. Although ASD is the most common primary need of CYP with an EHCP, it is not as prevalent across England as it is in Bracknell Forest (Figure 5). Proportionally, more CYP in Bracknell Forest also have MLD than the national average. The picture is also different for SLCN where there are less CYP than the average with this need. Complex learning needs such as SLD and PMLD are also lower in Bracknell Forest. This highlights the need for Bracknell Forest to develop its own specific strategies that are relevant to local CYP.

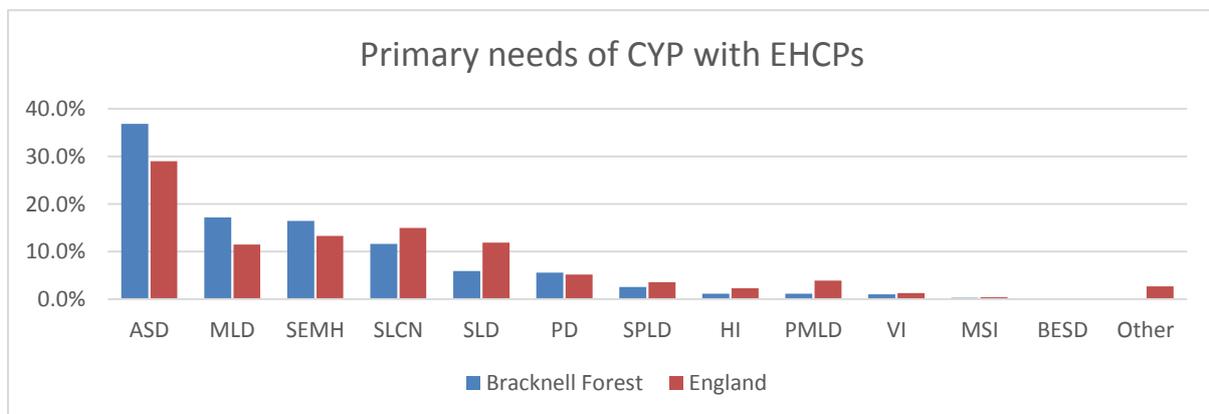


Figure 5. The primary need of a child or young person as a percentage of all EHCPs, comparing the Bracknell Forest profile to the England average. School census data.

Age Groups with EHCPs

CYP in Bracknell Forest with the three most prevalent areas of need (ASD, MLD & SEMH) are present across the full spectrum of school years as illustrated in figure 6. Both MLD and SEMH follow the expected trend curve with most CYP needing support in secondary school between NCY 7-10. ASD is more common than MLD and SEMH amongst younger children however it peaks in cohorts throughout the year groups.

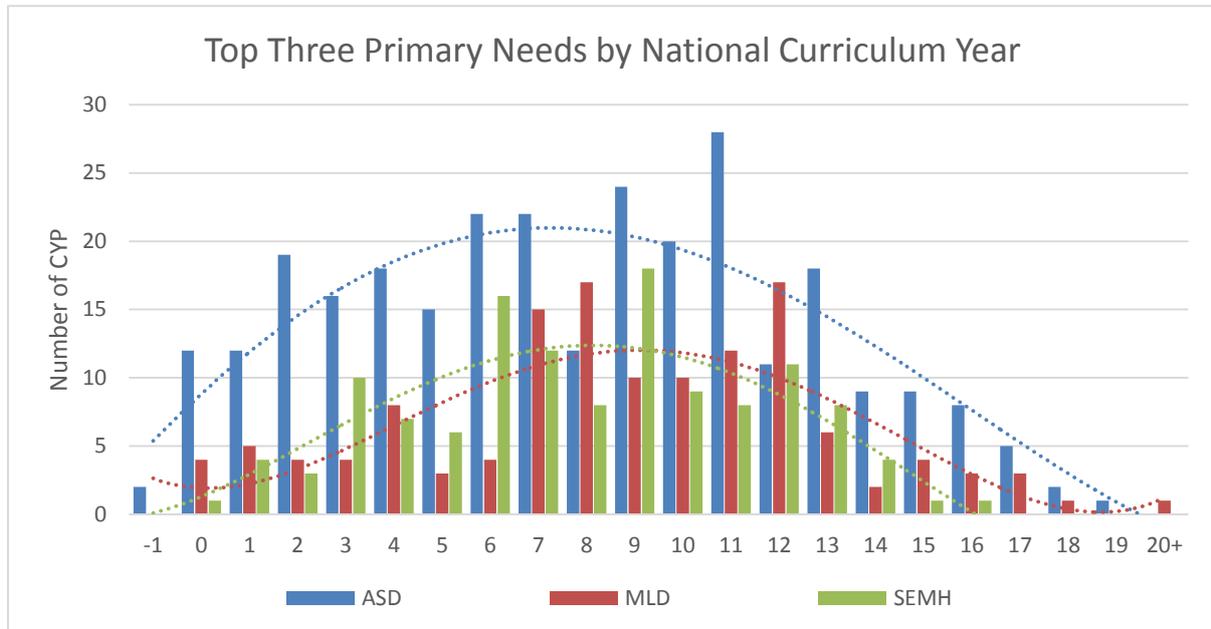


Figure 6. The distribution of the most common SEND across the curriculum years. The trend for each primary need is described by the correspond coloured dotted line.

The distribution of all CYP with an EHCP is illustrated in figure 7, with a similar pattern to figure 6. It shows that secondary school aged children are the most likely to have an EHCP which also reflects the national trend.

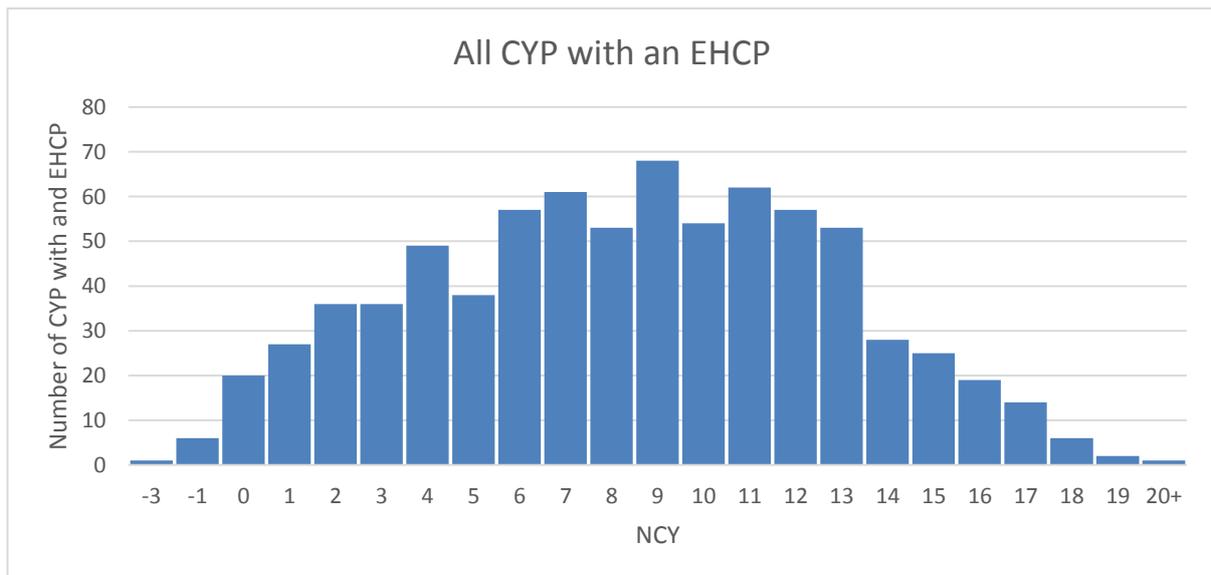


Figure 7. The distribution of the number of children and young people with an EHCP based on the National Curriculum Year.

SEN Support

There is information available through the school census for the primary needs of CYP with SEN support as well as internal records. For consistency, the school census data will be used, this proportionally matches the trends of the internal data.

The majority of CYP at a Bracknell Forest state funded primary or secondary school and with SEN support have a primary need of SPLD, SEMH or MLD (figure 8).

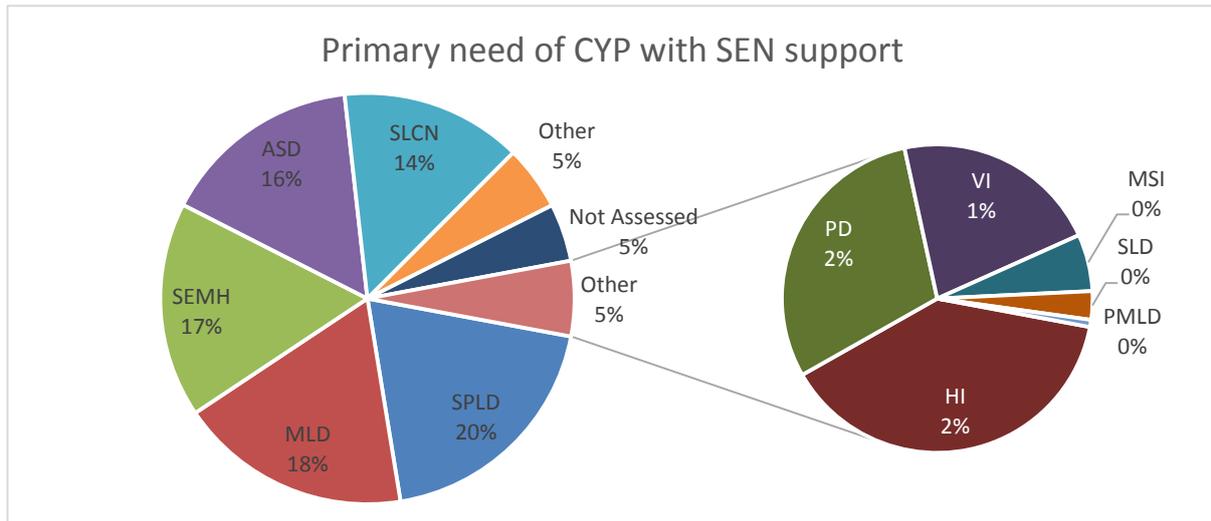


Figure 8. The primary needs of children and young people in Bracknell Forest schools who have been identified as needing SEN support, but without an EHCP. As reported in the school census.

There were differences in the SEN support needs of CYP at primary school and secondary school as shown in figure 9. One in five CYP at primary school with SEN support had needs relating to SLCN, this was significantly lower by secondary school. SPLD was the most common need amongst CYP with SEN support at secondary school.

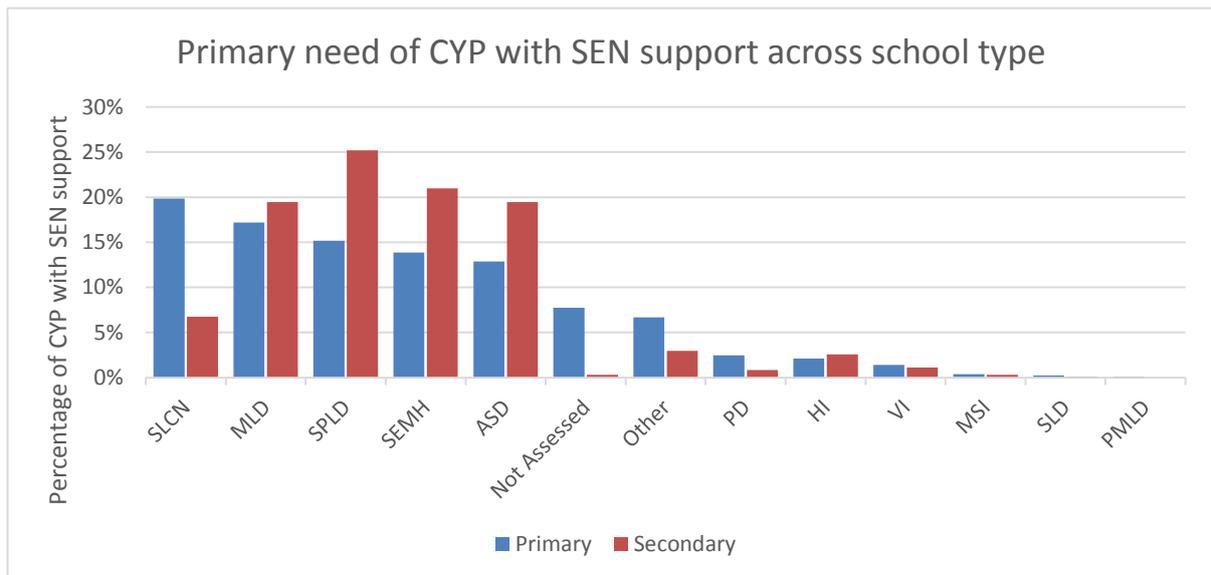


Figure 9. The primary need of children and young people in Bracknell Forest with SEN support depending on their school.



Complex Needs

There are a number of CYP within the borough who receive support from multiple teams as a child looked after (CLA), a child under child protection (CP) or as a child in need (CIN). These CYP are some of the most vulnerable in the borough because of the complexity of their homelife, health and education needs. In January 2019, there were 8 CYP with an EHCP on a child protection plan and 28 CYP classified as a Child Looked After (CLA). Figure 10 illustrates that half of these CYP need support due to SEMH, with ASD and MLD also being a common need.

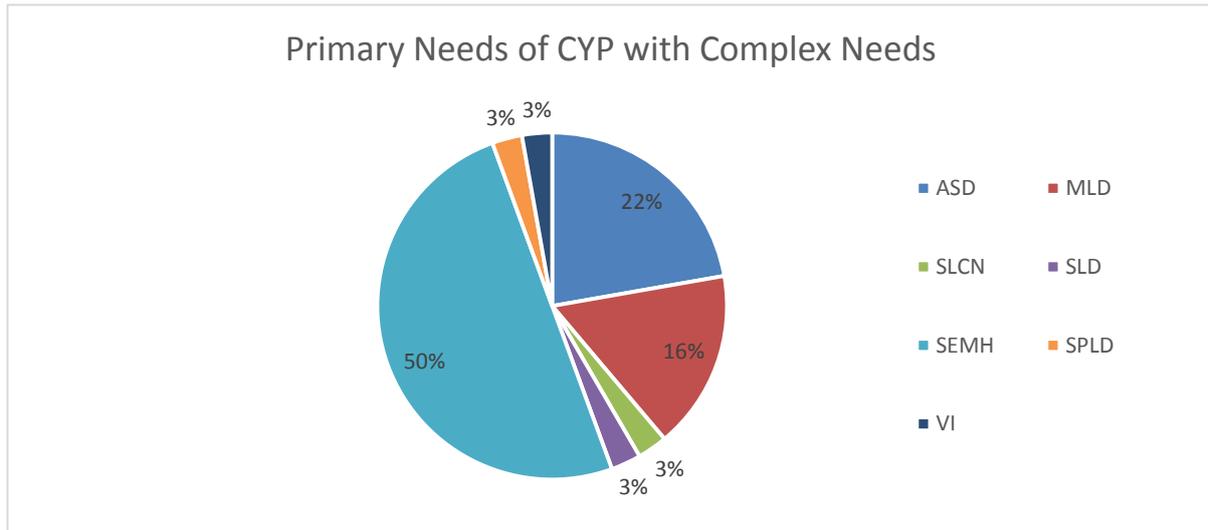


Figure 10. The primary need of the children and young people with an EHCP and also a CP order or CLA.

The minority of CYP with SEMH or ASD and complex needs are placed within Bracknell Forest, 44% and 12% respectively (Figure 11). Almost all the children with ASD are placed with providers outside the borough. There are similar numbers of CYP who are placed in independent schools and maintained schools or academies (Figure 12).

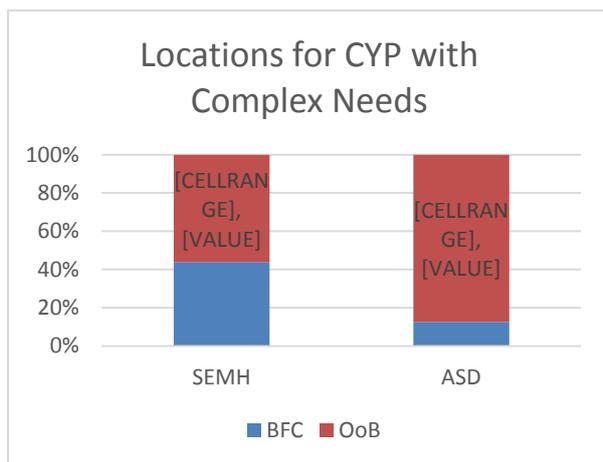


Figure 11. Placement location of children and young people with an EHCP and CP order or CLA.

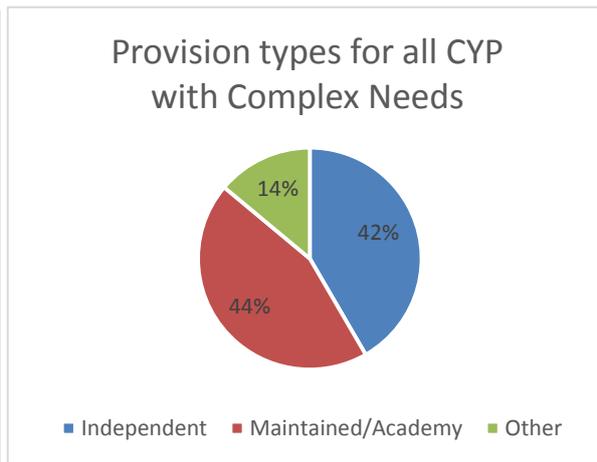
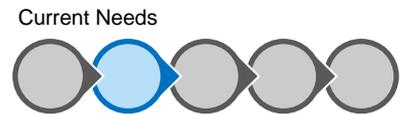


Figure 12. Provision type for children and young people with an EHCP and CP order or CLA.



At January 2019, there were 14 CYP placed in education based residential placements. 10 placements were for CLA and jointly funded. All 14 placements were in special schools, of which 10 were independent. Half the CYP had a primary need of ASD.

Out of Borough Pressure

There are currently 42 CYP with an EHCP known to be placed in Bracknell Forest schools who do not live in the borough. These placements are reported in table 1. Wokingham place the highest number of CYP with EHCPs in Bracknell Forest schools.

School	School Type	Number of Out of Borough Students (Maximum school capacity)	Home Authority (Number of CYP)
Kennel Lane	Special School	31 (188)	Hampshire (9) Surrey (7) Wokingham (6) RBWM (4) Slough (2) Reading (2) Buckinghamshire (1)
The Rise	Resource	9 (56)	Wokingham (6) West Berkshire (3)
Meadow Vale Primary School	Resource	2 (26)	RBWM (2)
Total out of borough CYP at BFC schools		42	

Table 1. The placements of children and young people with an EHCP in Bracknell Forest schools funded by a different local authority.

Most CYP from other boroughs who are placed at Bracknell Forest schools have a primary need of ASD, this adds additional pressure to the number of local CYP with the same need. The primary needs of CYP from outside the borough are illustrated in figure 13.

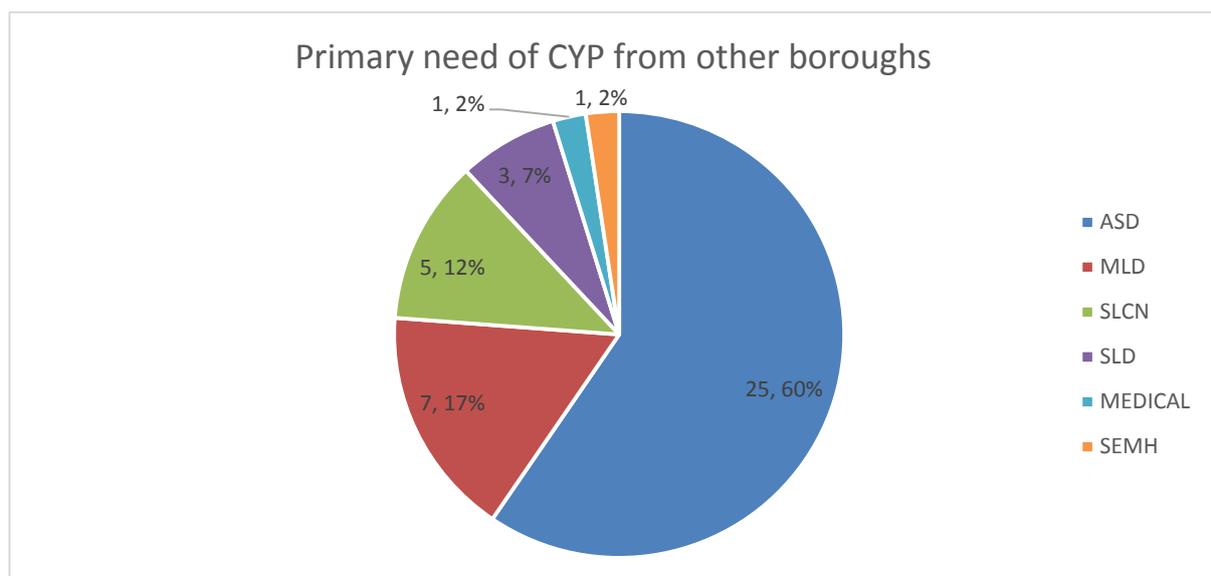


Figure 13. The primary need of children and young people with an EHCP who are funded by other local authorities.

Exclusions

Internal information for exclusions, sourced from the SEN team was used for this analysis as this provides the most up to date information and allows the more detailed breakdown of SEND, it describes the academic year 2018-19.

Over the year there were 389 CYP in the borough who received an exclusion, six were permanent. This is lower than the previous academic year as illustrated in figure 14.

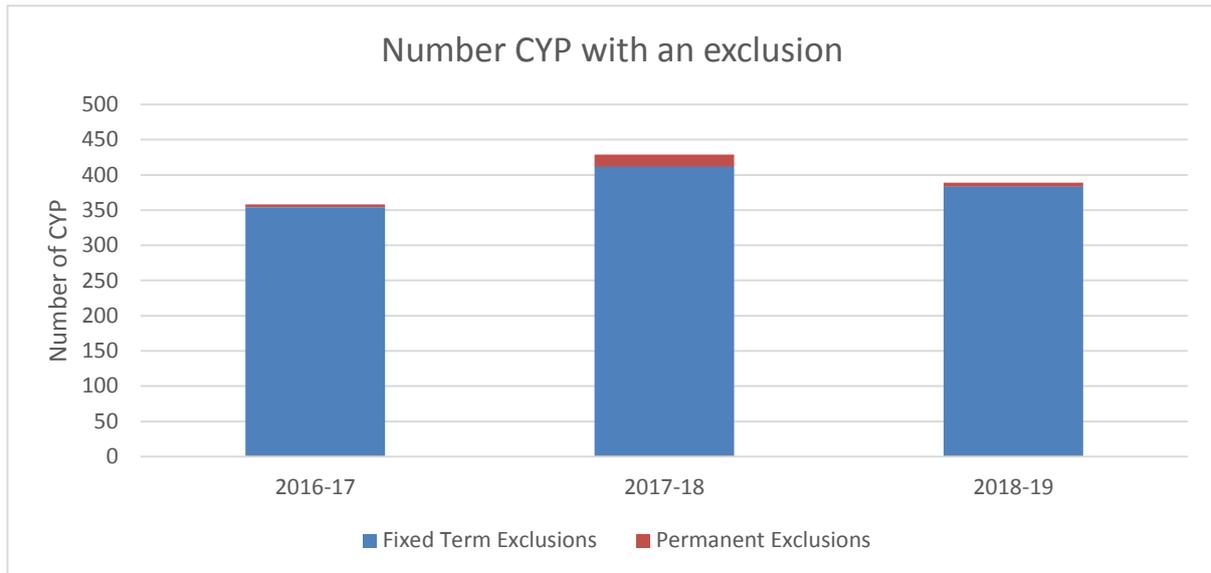


Figure 14. The number of children and young people with a fixed term of permanent exclusion over the academic years.

The majority of exclusions were not related to CYP with recognised SEND, 58% of the CYP with an exclusion did not have an EHCP or SEN support (figure 15).

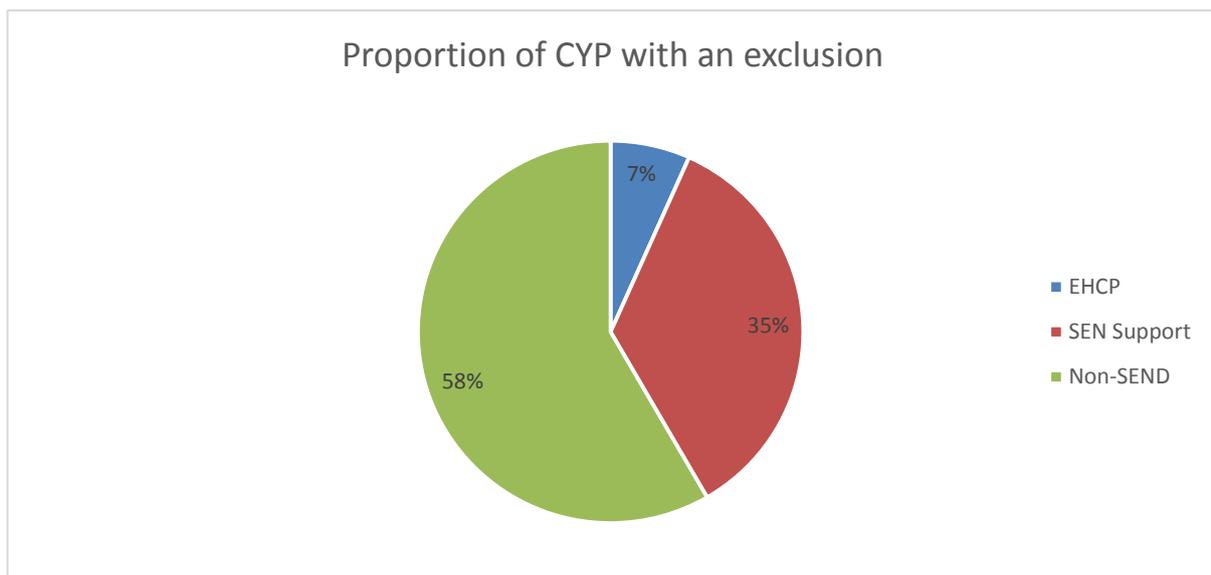


Figure 15. The proportion of children and young people with an exclusion based on any reported SEND.

EHCP Children and Young People with Exclusions

There were 26 CYP with an EHCP who received a fixed term exclusion, this is 3.4% of the EHCP population and 0.1% of the universal school population. There were no CYP with an EHCP who had a permanent exclusion. A total of 136.5 academic days were lost due to exclusions of CYP with an EHCP. Three CYP were excluded for a total of more than 10 days as illustrated in figure 16.

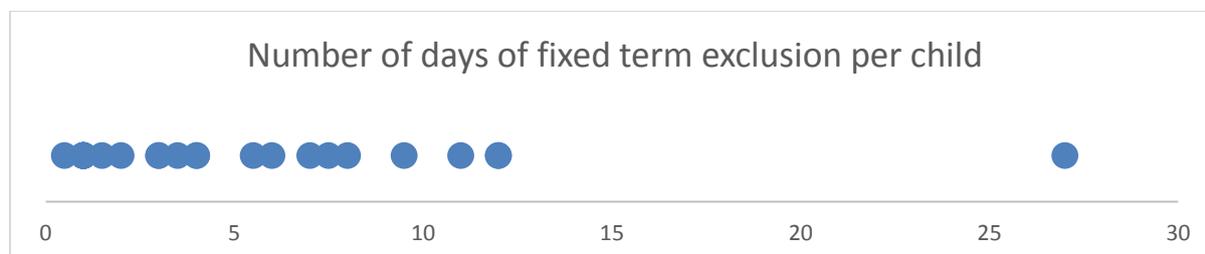


Figure 16. The distribution of the total number of days each child or young person with a fixed term exclusion was excluded for. This may be made up of several instances of fixed term exclusions.

The majority of excluded CYP with an EHCP are recorded with SEMH as their primary need (figure 17). Of the 136.5 days lost to exclusions, 85 days were from CYP with SEMH. Over 75% of the CYP with SEMH that had fixed term exclusions were placed at maintained Bracknell Forest schools or academies.

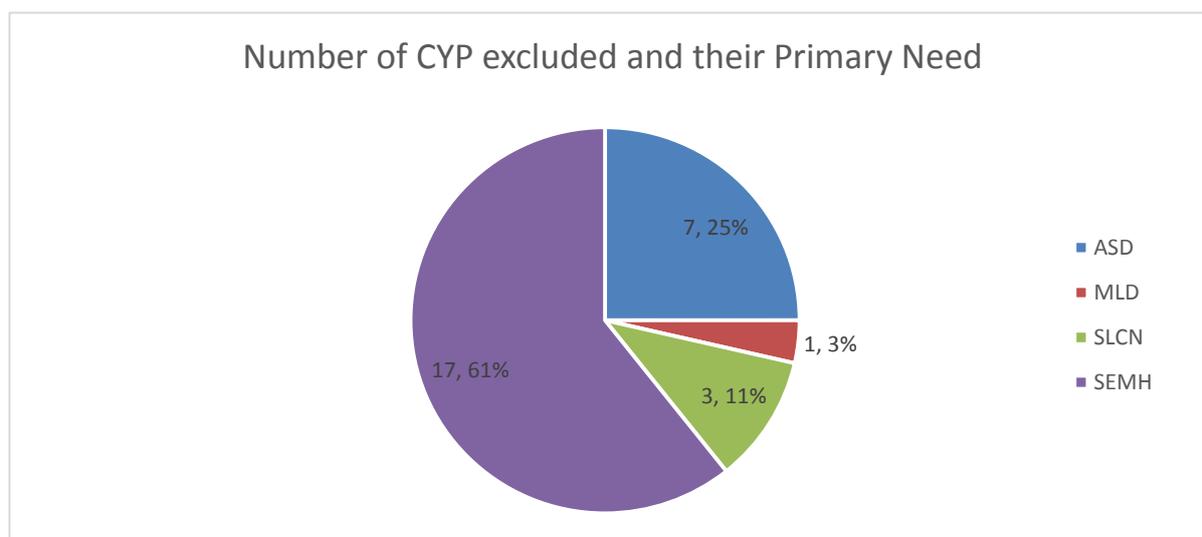


Figure 17. The primary need and number of children and young people with an EHCP who received a fixed term exclusion during the academic year.

CYP were excluded for the most amount of days from mainstream schools and the maintained special school (Kennel Lane) as shown in figure 18. This could be expected as there are a high number of CYP at these types of schools. Therefore, the proportion of excluded CYP from the school type population has been calculated showing that CYP at local authority maintained AP or PRUs and CYP in non-maintained special schools are most likely to be excluded.

It should be noted that due to the small number of CYP with EHCPs and exclusions, the patterns inferred should be taken with caution.

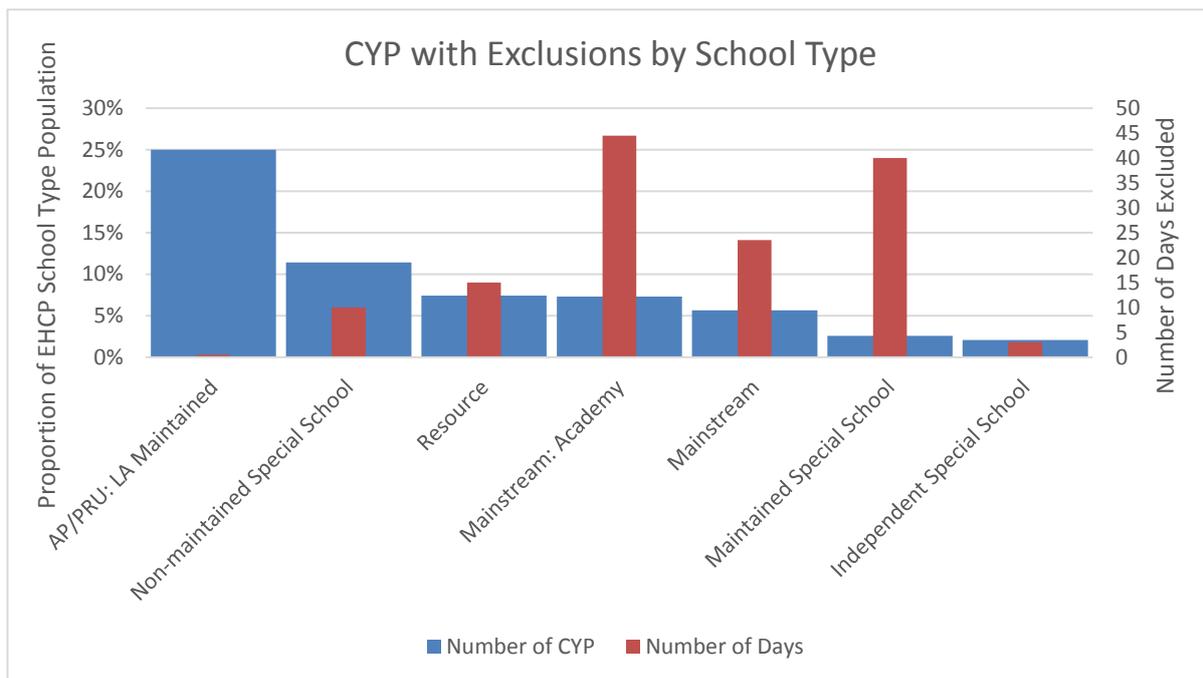


Figure 18. The children and young people excluded from their school type as a proportion of the schools EHCP population. And the total number of days of exclusion based on school type.

SEN Support Children and Young People with Exclusions

There were a further 136 CYP with SEN support needs and without an EHCP who were excluded during the academic year, two of these were permanent exclusions. This is 6.6% of the SEN population and 0.6% of the whole school population. A total of 749.5 school days were lost due to SEN support exclusions.

Similar to CYP with EHCPs, most of the exclusions were for CYP with a primary need of SEMH as illustrated in figure 19. Of the 749.5 days of exclusions, 403 were for CYP with SEMH.

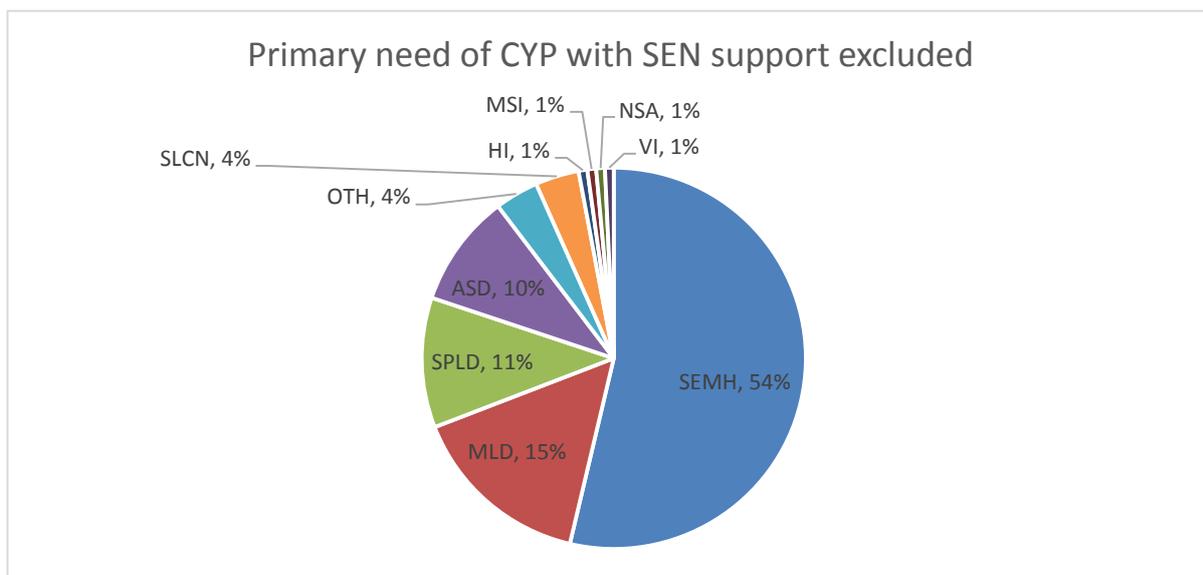


Figure 19. The primary need of children and young people with SEN support who had a permanent or fixed term exclusion during the academic year of 2018-19.

The number of incidences of fixed term exclusions for CYP with SEN support has increased over the 4 years from 2014-2017⁷. Where exclusion rates for CYP with an EHCP are significantly lower than the national average, for CYP with SEN support the rates are higher than the national average. Bracknell Forest is also in the bottom third of authorities for the rate of SEN support fixed term exclusions. The rate of fixed term exclusions for SEN support CYP is particularly higher than the national average for CYP at primary school.

Reasons for Exclusions

A variety of reasons were recorded for why CYP were excluded. These have been detailed in figure 20 for CYP with EHCPs, SEN support and across the whole school population. The most likely cause for all exclusions, regardless of SEND, was persistent disruptive behaviour. The profile of exclusions for SEN support CYP and the wider population is very similar. There are greater differences for CYP with EHCP, particularly around the increased proportion of exclusions for physical assault against an adult and a lower rate of physical assault against another pupil.

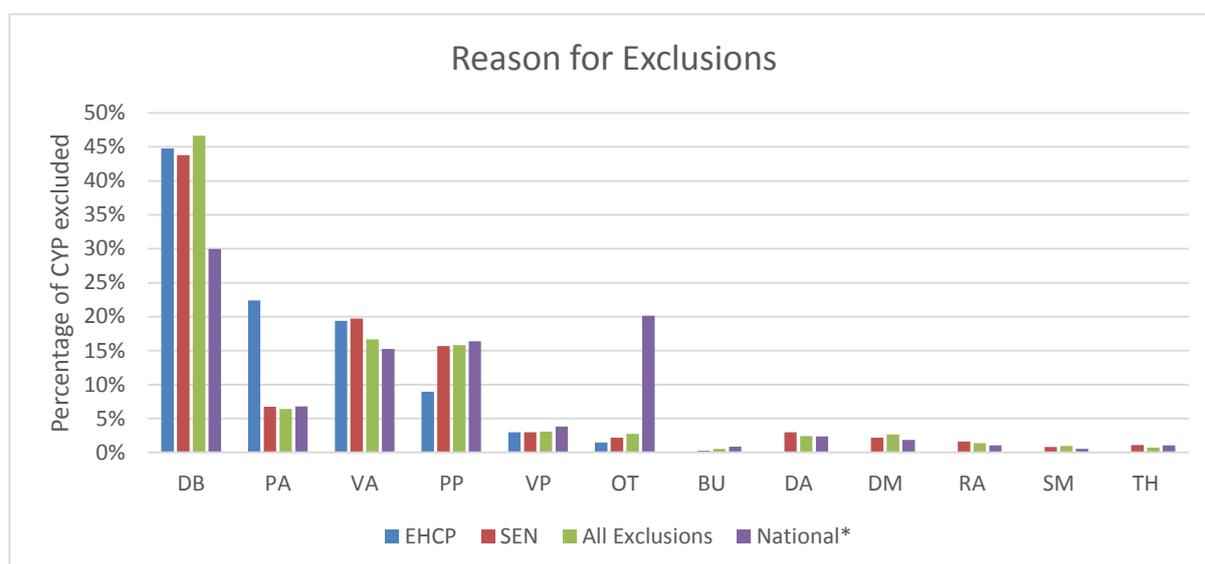


Figure 20. The reasons for exclusions as a proportion of children and young people excluded. Reason codes can be found in appendix B.

*National reasons for all exclusions, regardless of SEND.

There is further commentary on exclusions for the whole school population reported in the recent alternative provision report.

⁷ Mime 2019 SEND Dashboard



Summary

Headlines from the data:

- Bracknell Forest has relatively similar proportions of CYP with EHCPs and SEN support to the national average and amongst statistical neighbours.
- EHCPs are most prevalent in secondary school CYP.
- The most common reason for an EHCP is ASD, there is a higher proportion of CYP with ASD in Bracknell Forest than nationally.
- MLD and SEMH are also highly prevalent in the area and are more common than the national average.
- SLD and PMLD rates are most significantly below the national average.
- SCLN is the most common primary school reason for SEN support and SPLD is the most common secondary school reason for SEN support.
- SEMH is the most common primary need amongst CYP who are also a CLA or CIN. Most of these CYP are placed outside the borough.
- 26 CYP with an EHCP had fixed term exclusions within the last academic year. The majority of these CYP had SEMH needs.
- CYP with EHCPs are disproportionately likely to receive a fixed term exclusion for physical assault against an adult.
- The rate of fixed term exclusions for SEN support CYP is higher than the national average.



Current provisions

[Skip to Section Summary](#)

There are 30 mainstream primary schools, six mainstream secondary schools and one “all-through” school in Bracknell Forest⁸. A post 16 education facility also serves the borough and there are an additional seven independent schools. Specialised support is provided through a special school (Kennel Lane), three resource units, a pupil referral unit (College Hall) and an independent special school.

Of the 775 CYP with an EHCP, the needs of 489 of these are met in placements within the borough (figure 21). For CYP not placed in Bracknell Forest, the majority are placed in the nearby boroughs of Windsor & Maidenhead, Wokingham, and Reading.

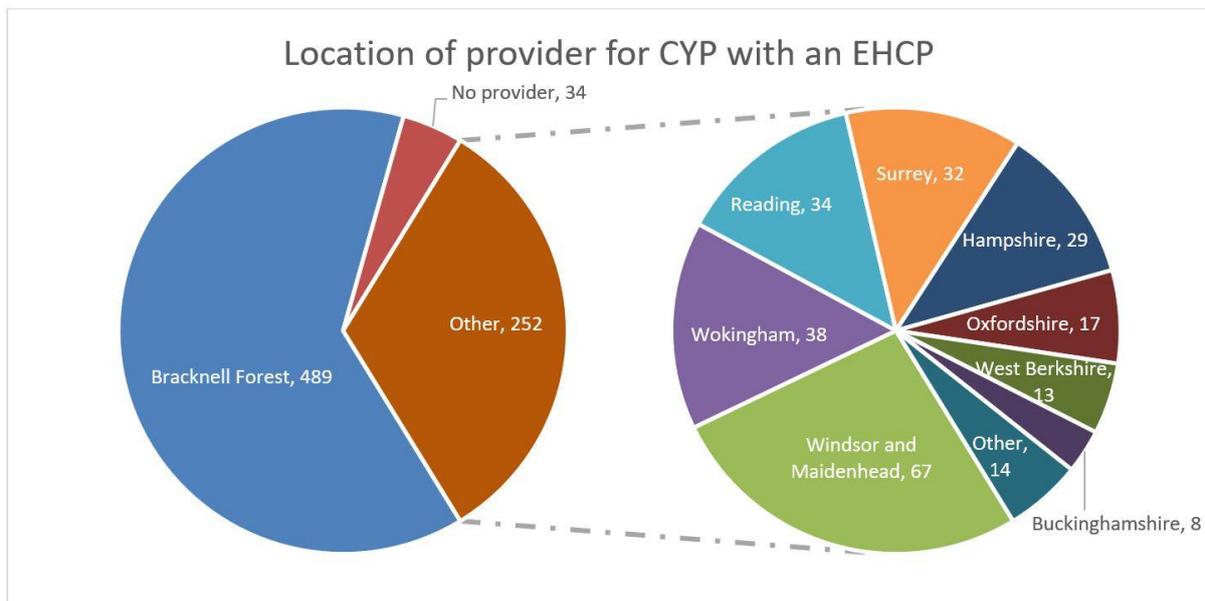


Figure 21. The placement location of children and young people with an EHCP as reported in the SEN2 return.

⁸ As reported in the School Census data. The “all-through” school (King’s Academy) opened in 2018 with a year 7 intake. Additional cohorts of primary and secondary school children will be taken in the following years.



Mainstream schools

244 local CYP with an EHCP are placed in a mainstream school within Bracknell Forest a further child is placed in a mainstream school outside the borough⁹, and 10 children are placed at independent mainstream schools. The needs of children in these placements are outlined in figure 22.

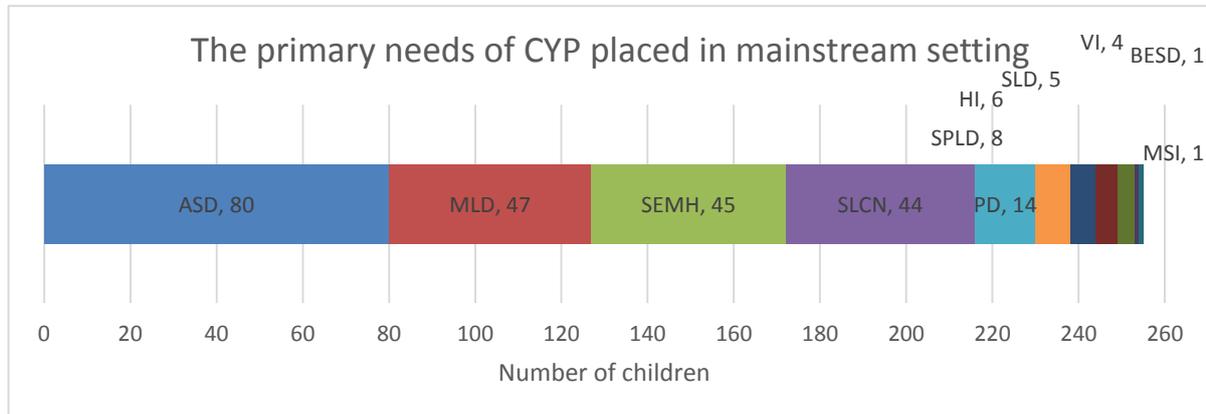


Figure 22. The primary needs of children and young people with an EHCP in a mainstream setting.

Mainstream schools currently support one third of CYP with an EHCP and for every 82 children in a Bracknell Forest mainstream school, one will have an EHCP.

Special School, Resource Provision, Pupil Referral Unit and Alternative Provision

Specialised SEND support within the borough is currently provided at the state funded Kennel Lane special school. Cressex Lodge (SWAAY) is an independent special school in Bracknell Forest supporting CYP specifically with SEMH.

There are three additional resource units: The Rise, based at Garth Hill College; Rainbow at Meadow Vale Primary School; and, the Speech and Language Resource at Meadow Vale Primary School. The Rise specialises in supporting children with ASD aged 11-19, Rainbow supports children aged 3-5 with social and communication difficulties and the Speech and Language resource is for primary school aged children.

College Hall pupil referral unit (PRU) provides secondary school aged CYP with support to return to mainstream education. It has specialised provision for children with complex needs such as anxiety and mental health in the satellite building, The Cottage. A further service is commissioned to provide outreach and home tuition. The capacity at each of these schools is outlined in table 2.

⁹ This child is placed outside the borough but in their home authority as a Child Looked After.

School	Provision Type	Ages	Capacity (FTE)
Kennel Lane	Special School	2-19	188
Cressex Lodge (SWAAY)	Independent Special School (SEMH)	11-17 (boys)	18
The Rise (Garth Hill College)	Resource Unit (ASD)	11-19	56 ¹⁰
Rainbow (Meadow Vale Primary School)	Resource Unit (ASD & SLCN)	3-5	6
Speech and Language Resource (Meadow Vale Primary School)	Resource Unit (SLCN)	5-11	20
College Hall	PRU	11-17	46
Total special school, resource and PRU places within Bracknell Forest			334

Table 2. Specialised provisions for children and young people with SEND in Bracknell Forest.

At the January 2019 SEN2 return, 341 CYP from Bracknell Forest were placed in specialised provisions, as illustrated in figure 23.

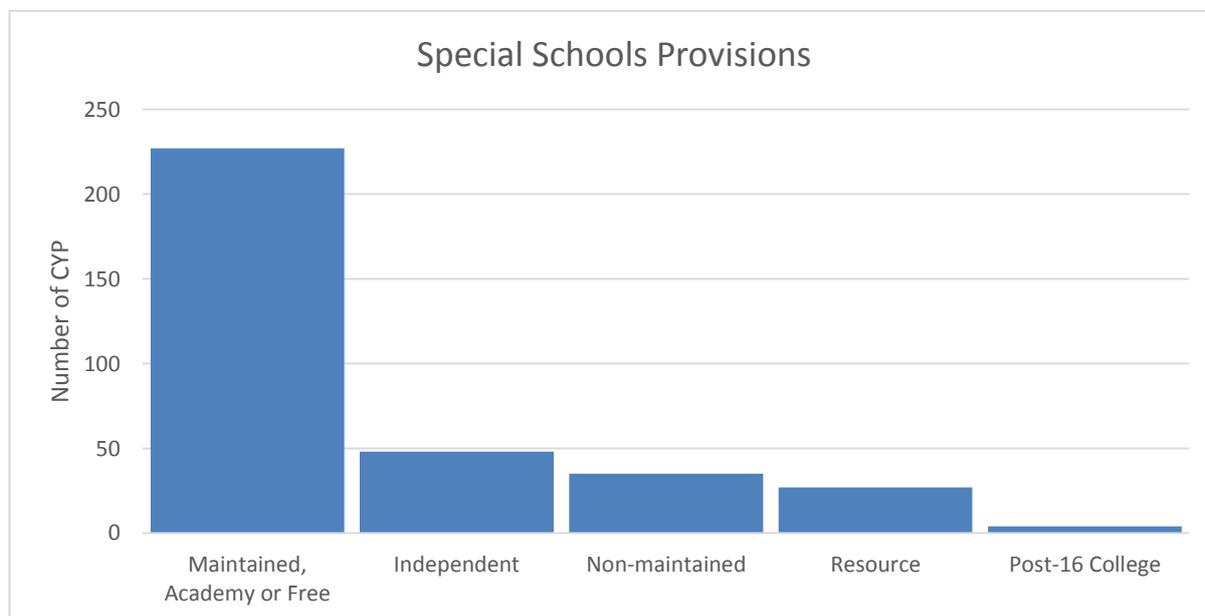


Figure 23. The provision type for children and young people placed in specialised provisions. Note that many pupils with AP/PRU placements will continue registered at their previous placements and so are not included in this graph.

¹⁰ Opened in 2015 with an eight-student intake each year until it reaches capacity.

Kennel Lane Special School

Kennel Lane, as the maintained special school located within the borough, has a capacity of 188 places¹¹. At January 2019, 154 CYP from Bracknell Forest were reported as part of the SEN2 as placed at the school. A further 31 CYP attended the school from other boroughs. A range of needs were being supported with ASD and MLD the most salient (figure 24).

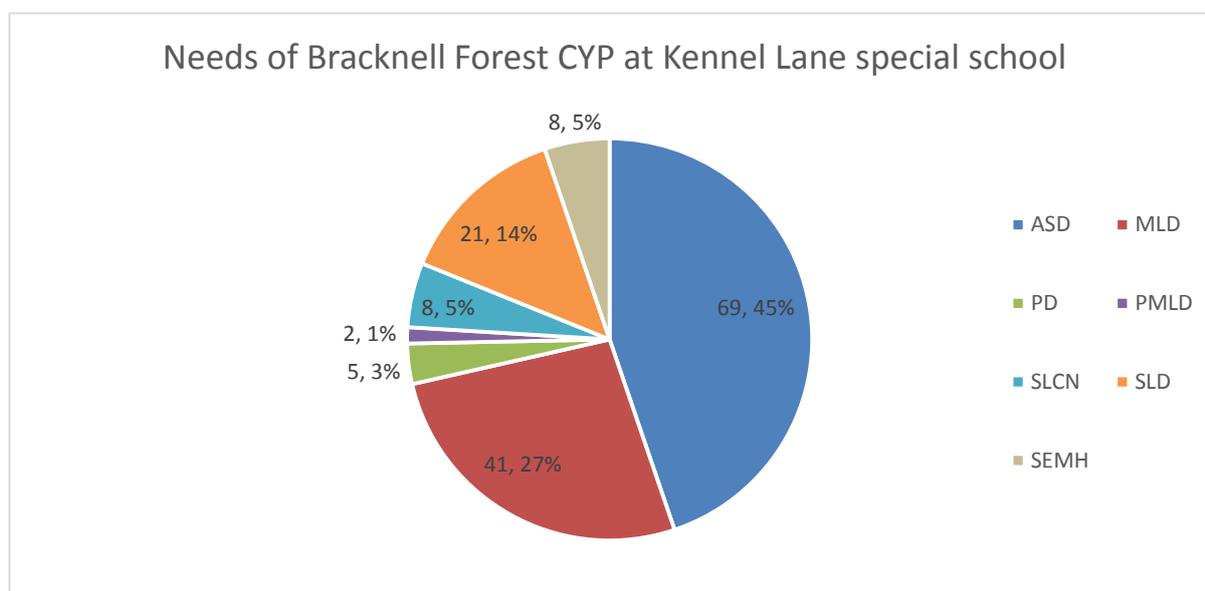


Figure 24. The breakdown of primary needs for children and young people placed at Kennel Lane school as reported in the SEN2.

Out of Borough Special School Placements

Of the 346 CYP in specialist provisions, 154 (45%) are placed outside the borough and in independent schools, across 45 different schools. The 10 special schools outside of Bracknell Forest where the most local CYP are placed is detailed in table 3.

School	Number of Bracknell Forest CYP	School Type	Area	Ofsted
Manor Green School	19	Maintained Special School	Windsor and Maidenhead	Good
High Close School	17	Non-Maintained Special School	Wokingham	Outstanding
Carwarden House School	9	Academy/Free Special School	Surrey	* ¹²
Chilworth House School	9	Independent Special School	Oxford	n/a
Addington School	8	Maintained Special School	Wokingham	Outstanding
Thames Valley	7	Academy/ Free	Reading	Good

¹¹ School Places Plan, 2018-2023.

¹² A full Ofsted inspection has not yet been conducted since undergoing academy conversion in 2014

School		Special School		
Chilworth House Upper School	6	Independent Special School	Oxford	n/a
Forest Bridge School	6	Academy/ Free Special School	Windsor and Maidenhead	Good
Heathermount School	5	Non-Maintained Special School	Windsor and Maidenhead	Good
Knowl Hill School	5	Independent Special School	Surrey	n/a
Total	91			

Table 3. The most popular school placements for special schools outside the borough.

The needs of the CYP that have been placed at these out of borough special schools are illustrated in figure 25.

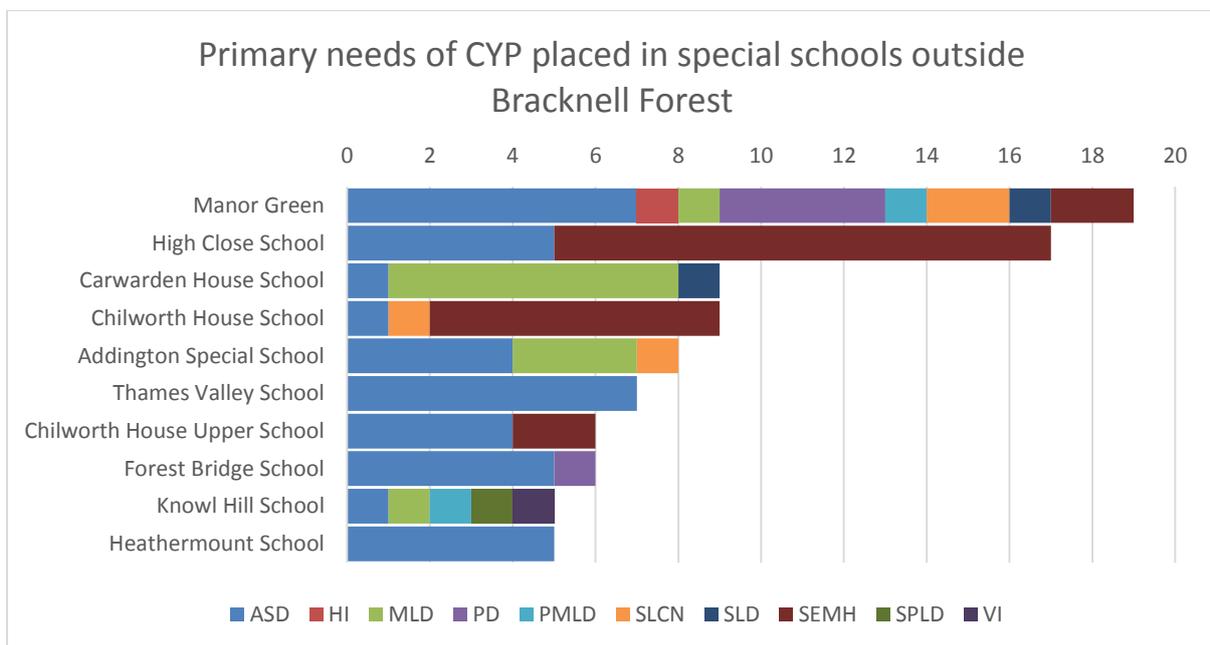


Figure 25. The primary needs of children and young people placed the most used in specialist provisions outside the borough.

Where CYP have been placed in special schools outside the borough specifically in independent and non-maintained special schools, the most common primary needs are for ASD and SEMH (Figure 26). There are 95 CYP with these two primary needs who are placed outside the borough.

Primary needs of CYP with an EHCP placed outside the borough or in independent Special or PRU Resources

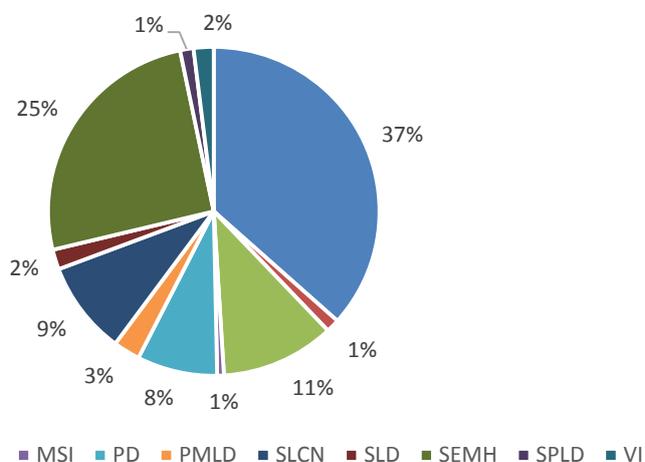


Figure 26. The primary needs of children and young people who are placed outside the borough in independent or independent PRU provisions.

Alternative Provision

A recent review of alternative provision has taken place to evaluate the needs and practice taking place, it concludes with an action plan to develop the range of alternative provisions. College Hall is the only PRU within Bracknell Forest and pupils were most likely to be referred for support in a managed move to prevent permanent exclusion. Mental health was also a likely reason for referral. 70% of placements at College Hall lasted between one term and three terms, with 30% of placements lasting more than four terms.

The challenges identified for alternative provisions are:

- The rising demand for College Hall places;
- The lack of timely access to mental health support;
- The limited support for pupil reintegration;
- The lack of specialist provision for CYP with SEMH; and,
- The current offer for support services from the council.



Post 16 Pathways

There are currently 267 CYP with an EHCP that are 16 years or older (NCY 11 or above), they are in a variety of schools across the borough and further afield (figure 27). There are 13 CYP recorded as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), this is 5% of the post-16 population with an EHCP. The UK percentage of young people (aged 16-24) reported as NEET is 11%¹³.

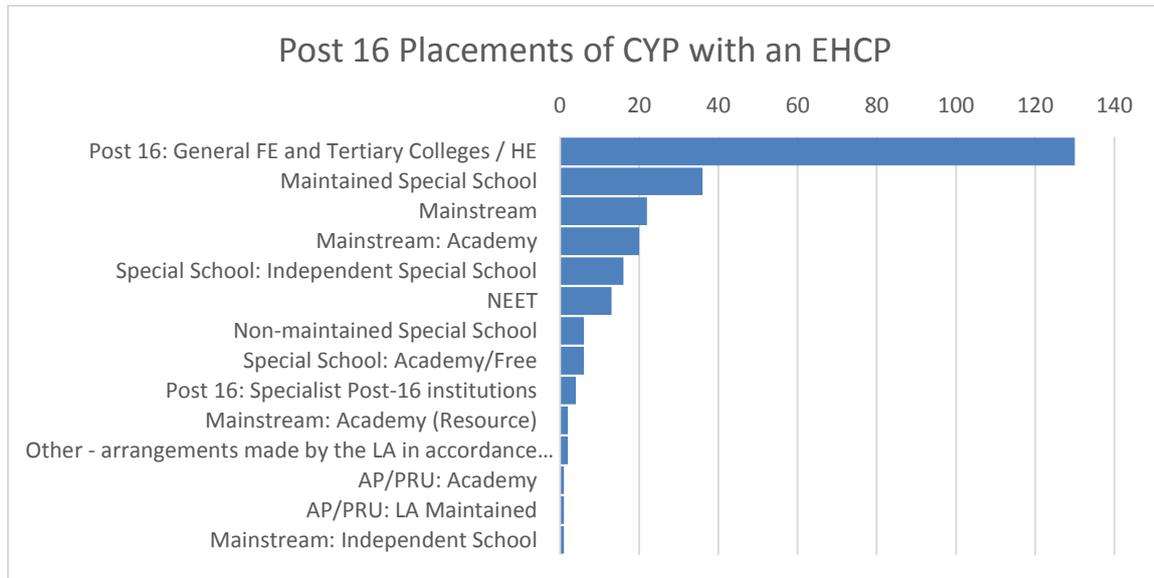


Figure 27. Number of young people aged 16-25 with an EHCP in each provision type as reported in the SEN2 return.

A range of needs are supported for the 130 CYP placed at Higher Education colleges (figure 28). Bracknell and Wokingham College currently support 66 Bracknell Forest young people with a range of needs to continue accessing education until they reach 25. There are specialised courses available through the Activate Learning group (Bracknell & Wokingham college and Reading college) such as “Our House” for 16-25 year olds with PMLD.

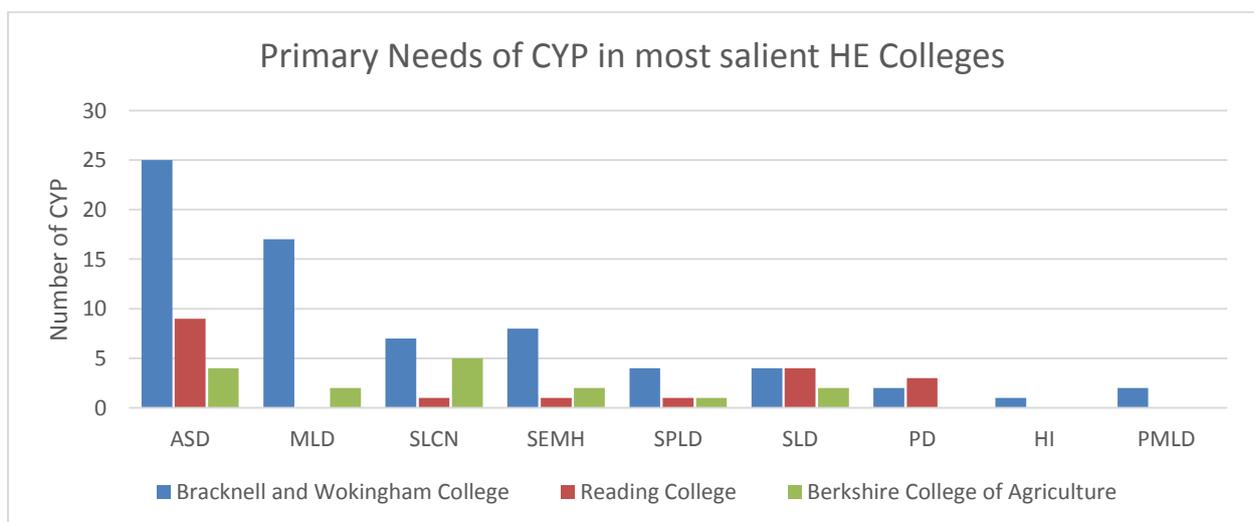


Figure 28. The number of young people with an EHCP in higher education colleges and their primary needs as reported in the SEN2 return.

¹³ Recorded January - March 2019, sourced from ONS.



Summary

Headlines from the data:

- 63% of CYP with an EHCP are placed within Bracknell Forest schools.
- Mainstream schools support one third of CYP with an EHCP.
- Across all Bracknell Forest specialist provisions, including Resource units and the PRU, there is the capacity for 344 CYP.
- Kennel Lane school is predominately supporting CYP with ASD and MLD.
- 154 of the CYP needing specialist provisions are placed outside the borough, most commonly these were CYP with ASD and SEMH needs.
- 267 CYP with an EHCP are at least 16 years old, 13 of which are NEET.
- Bracknell and Wokingham College are supporting 66 local CYP with an EHCP.



Cost Analysis

[Skip to Section Summary](#)

High Needs Block

The high needs block (HNB) is allocated as part of the Dedicated Schools Grant with the purpose of funding education, support and services for CYP with SEND. It covers a range of costs beyond CYP with an EHCP including those who have been excluded, alternative provisions, home tuition and hospital education. It can also be used as “top-up” funding for CYP with SEND as requested by mainstream schools.

The allocation of the HNB to Bracknell Forest Council for 2018-19 was £16,622,000. The DfE make direct payments to other LAs taking Bracknell Forest resident pupils and also for academies and non-maintained schools, this reduced the amount actually received to £15,162,000. The actual spend for the year was £15,074,000.

For 2019-20 the HNB allocation is due to be £16,813,000. The anticipated deductions and funding changes for this financial result in the estimated allocation of £15,537,000.

The largest area of spend from the HNB was for non-maintained special schools at 35% of the annual spend. Figure 29 provides a summary of the spend with further detail provided in figure 30. There is a similar level of spend on mainstream provisions and resource provisions within the borough.

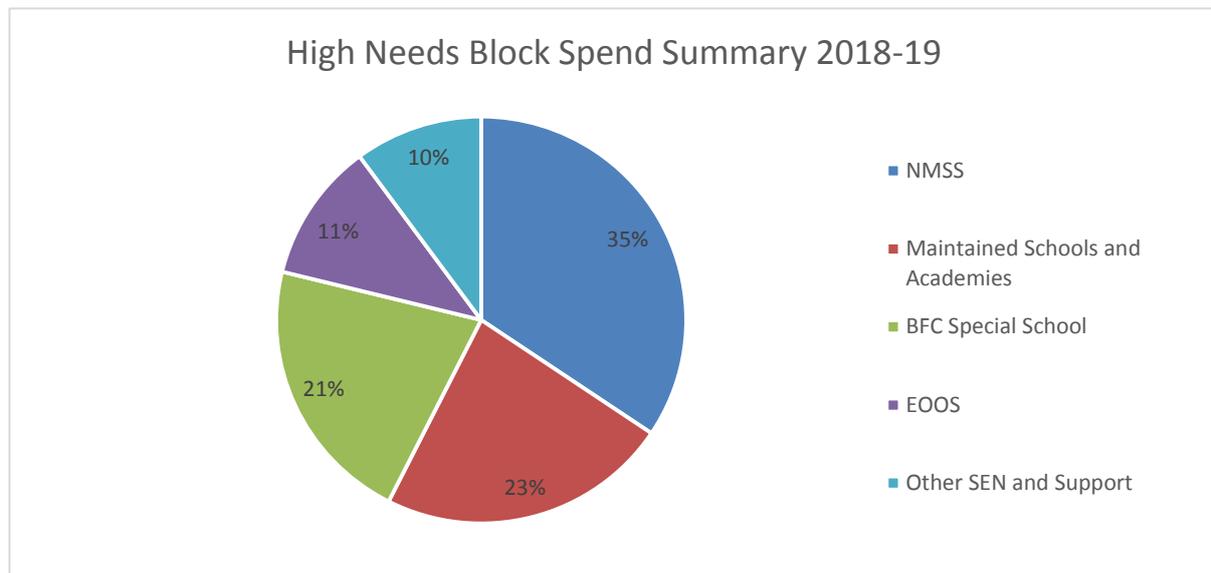


Figure 29. The summary of the spend from the high needs block for the 2018-19 financial year.

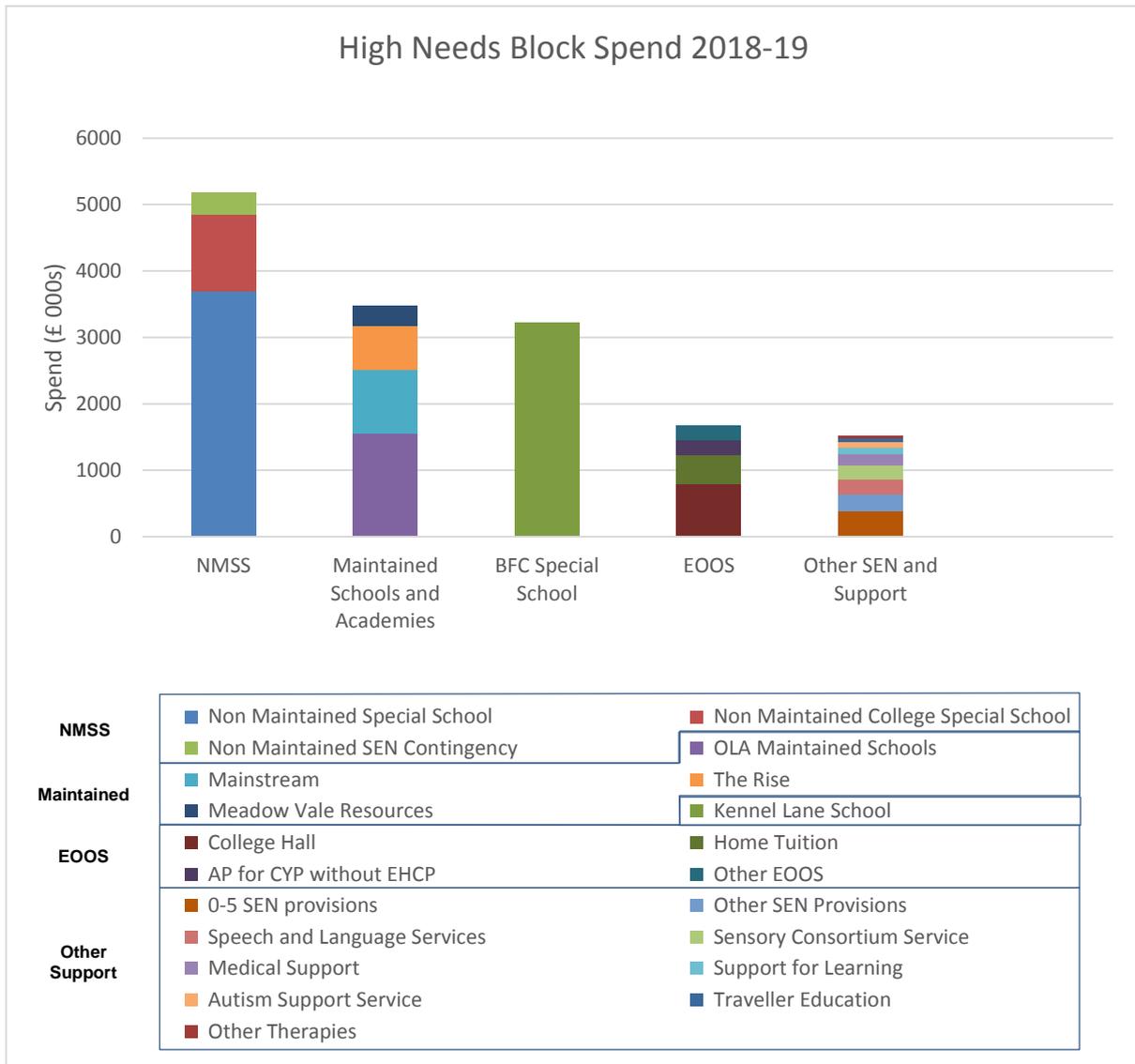


Figure 30. The breakdown of the spend from the high needs block for the 2018-19 financial year.



Joint Funding Arrangements

At August 2019, there were 10 placements for CYP with an EHCP that had joint funding arrangements between social care and education. Four of these were also funded partly by health. No CYP were funding between education and health only. The funding divide for each placement is illustrated in figure 31. These placements support CYP who have a combination of complex needs and SEND, all of these jointly funded placements are residential or respite.

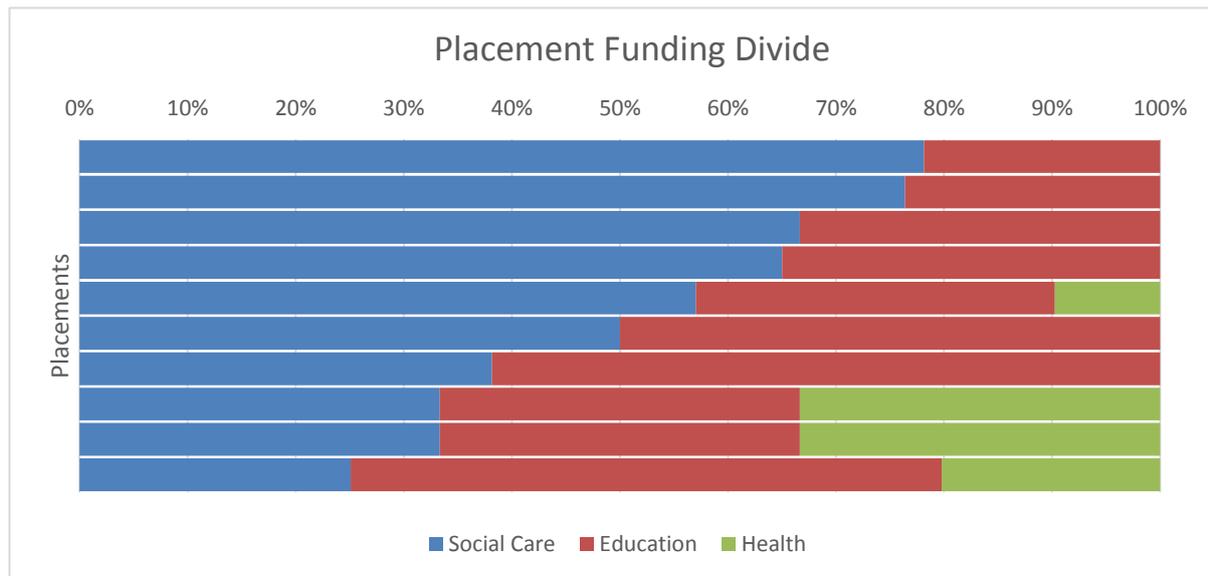


Figure 31. The division of funding arrangements between social care, education and health for each jointly funded placement of a child or young person with an EHCP.

Across these 10 placements the cost expected for the academic year of 2019-20 for each team is:

- Children’s Social Care: £1,062,000
- Education: £738,000
- Health: £212,000

There are a further 18 CLA who are not covered by joint funding arrangements. Many of these CYP are in residential placements however their residential and education placements are arranged separately.

Joint funding is agreed as required for each individual placement. The funding decision will be made by representatives from the SEN team, the Children’s Specialist Support team and the CCG (through the continuing healthcare panel).



Trends in Spend

Primary Needs

The primary need associated with the greatest cost is ASD with a total anticipated spend in 2019-20 of around £7,350,000 to support 290 FTE pupils (figure 32). The cost for SEMH is also anticipated to be high, at £3,380,000 for 110 FTE pupils.

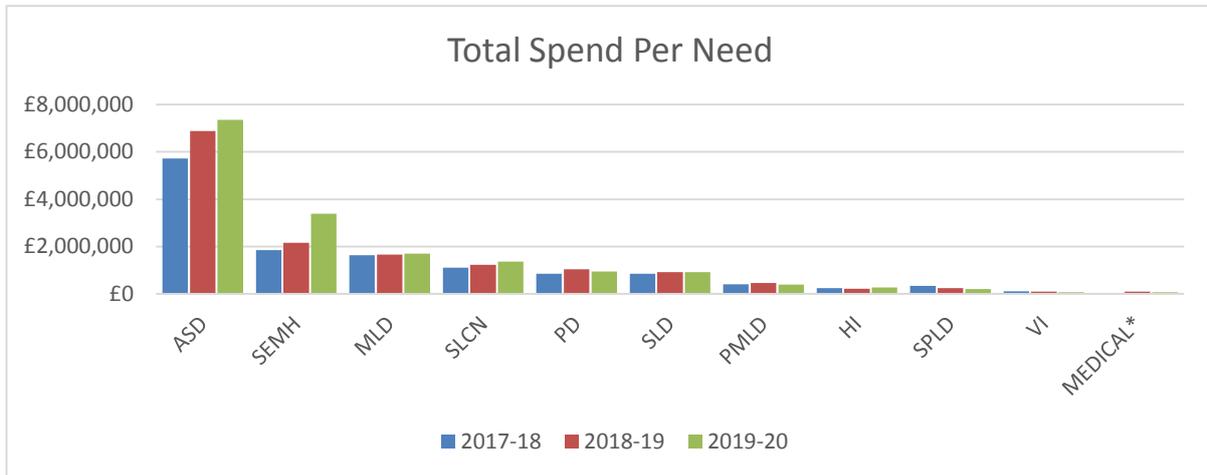


Figure 32. Total spend from the High Needs Block divided by primary need.

Over the three year period, the average cost of placements for most needs has remained relatively stable. The needs with the highest average placement cost are PMLD and SEMH where over half these CYP are placed outside the borough or in independent and non-maintained schools.

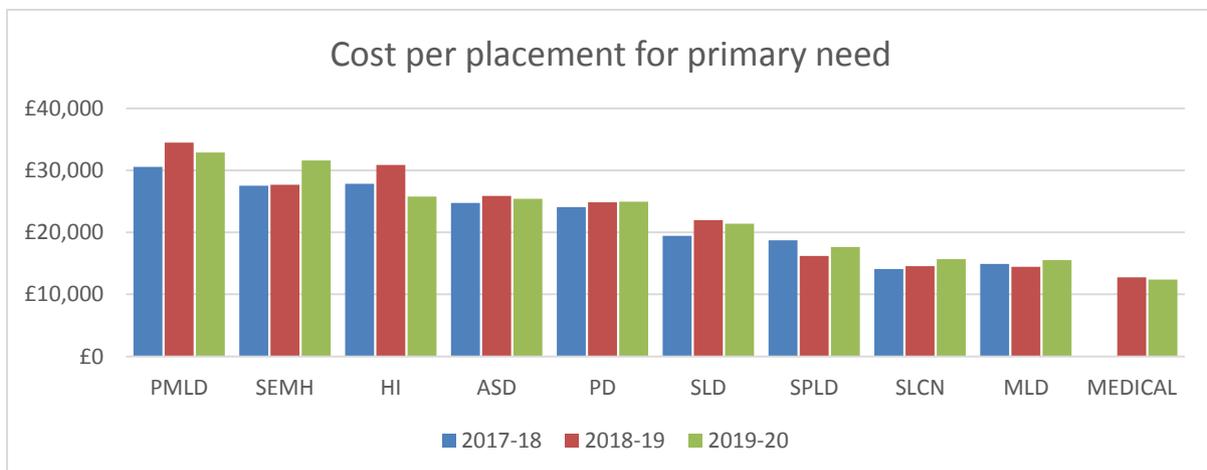


Figure 33. Average cost per placement of children and young people with an EHCP based on primary need.

As well as being the highest total spend areas, ASD and SEMH have seen the highest growth in total cost over the three-year period from 2017. The cost of SEMH placements has increased by 83% since 2017 and the average cost for each placement has grown by 15% as illustrated in figure 34. After SEMH, the highest growth in average placement cost is for SLCN, SLD and PMLD

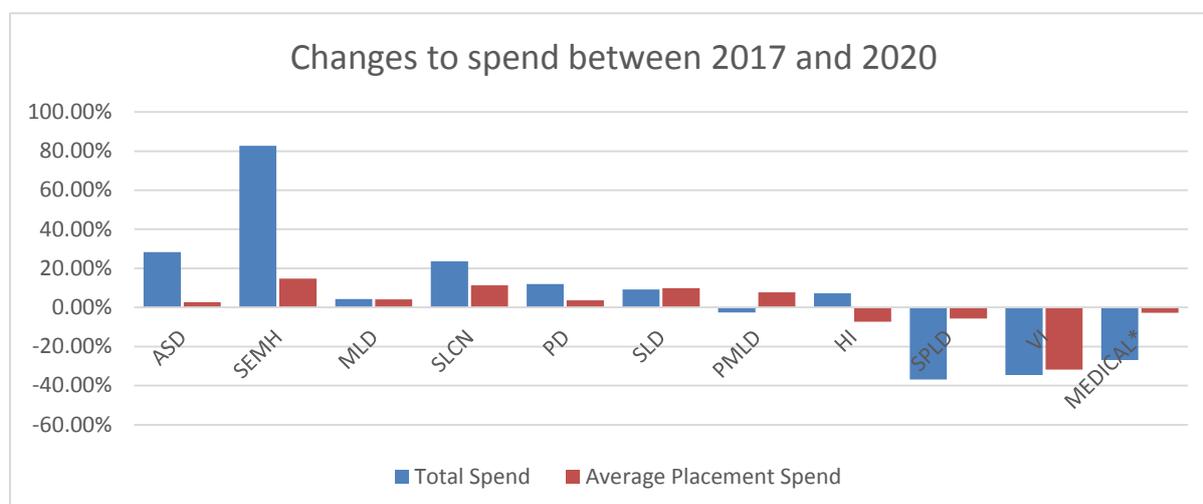


Figure 34. The change in total spend and average placement spend between 2017 and 2020 based on each primary need. Ordered based on total spend per need (Figure 32).

*Medical placements only have 2 years of data.

Provision Type and Location

The cost of each placement is highly dependent on where the provision is located and the type of support provided. An overview of the average cost for different types of placements are reported in table 3.

Bracknell Forest	Average cost per placement
Mainstream	£11,300
Resource	£22,200
Special School	£24,400
Other Local Authority	
Mainstream	£10,900
Resource	£15,500
Special School	£29,900
Other providers	
Private, Voluntary and Independent	£53,200
Higher Education College	£13,300

Table 3. Average expected placement cost based on provision type for EHCP children and young people in 2019-20

There is significant variation in the cost of placements, this is partly due to the different needs of each CYP but also in part due to the purchasing method of placements. Currently all provisions outside of Bracknell Forest, including independent school placements, are spot purchased. There are no block contracts or frameworks currently in place to support the placement of SEND CYP.

The total spend on provisions for special school placements in other local authorities and in independent schools has most markedly increased as shown in figure 35. Over the three-

year period the total spend on out of borough special schools grew by 71% with the cost of each placement at those schools having increased by an average of 22%. The total spend on independent schools increased by a third over three years but the cost of each placement only increased by 2%.

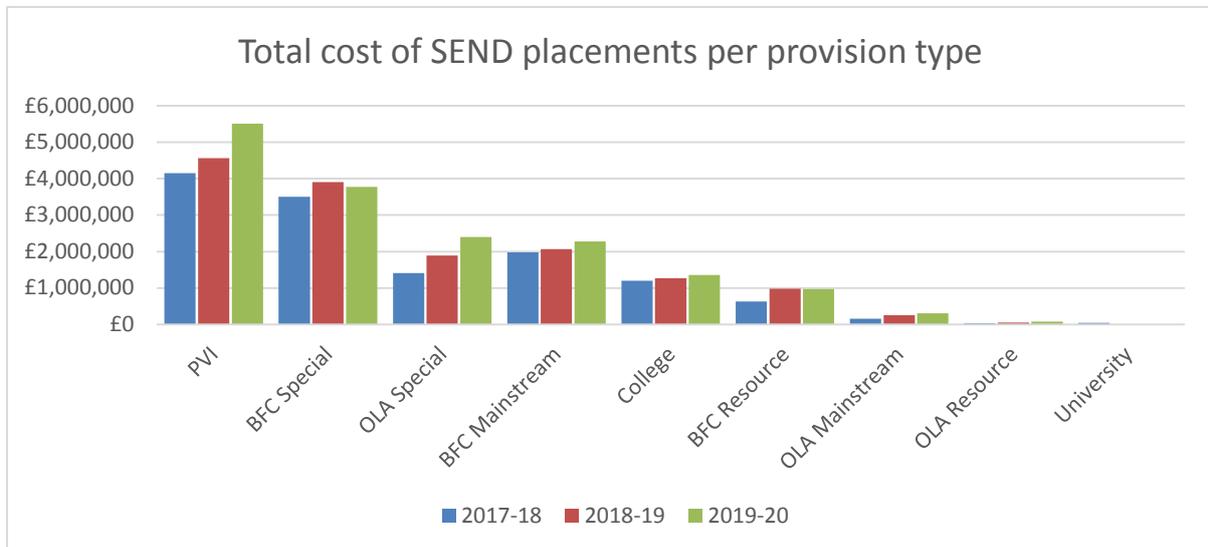


Figure 35. The total spend on placements divided into provision type and location.

The spend on other local authority resource and mainstream placements more than doubled during the three-year period, however the proportion of spend for both of these remains low.

The spend over the different cohorts follows the pattern that EHCPs are most common during secondary school. The peaks in spend can be tracked over the last three years spend reflecting the needs of specific cohorts. The cohorts with the highest spend are those starting in year 7 and 10 in September 2019. There is also an emerging heightened spend for CYP starting year 4.

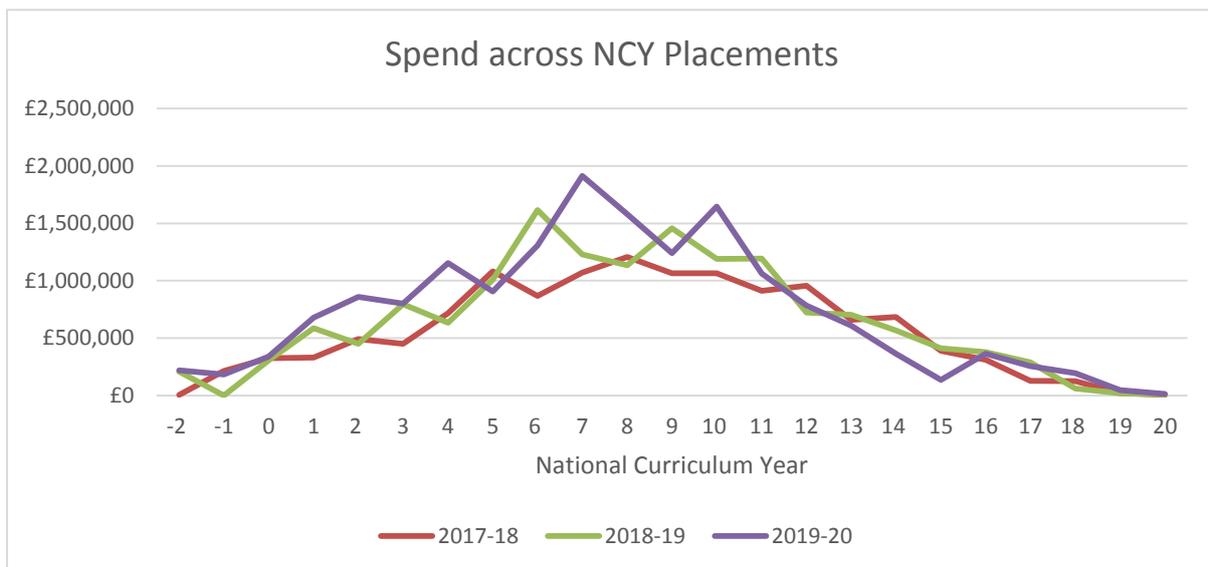


Figure 36. The total spend on placements divided into national curriculum year.



Transport Costs

There are additional costs associated with the placement of CYP with SEND that are not covered by the HNB or joint funding arrangements. Transport to and from educational placements is funded from the education transport budget.

There are 307 BFC CYP aged 5-18 with SEND who will be transported to school from September 2019, this is a 6% increase on the 289 CP from the previous year. The total cost of school transport for CYP placed at special schools, PRUs, alternative provision and 16-18 SEN provisions was £1,412,000 for the last financial year. This was 72% of the education transport budget.

The majority of these CYP (178) were located outside the borough at a cost of £1,132,000. The most common placements requiring home to school transport were Chilworth House, High Close School and Manor Green.

Within the borough there has been a large spend for transport to College Hall. The spend during the financial year 2018-19 was £97,000. As there is no footpath to access College Hall, all CYP placed there, regardless of needs, are entitled to home to school transport.



Summary

Headlines from the data:

- The 2018-19 budget for SEND provisions was £15,162,000 with an actual spend of £15,074,000.
- 10 placements have joint funding arrangements between social care, education and (in some cases) health.
- The largest area of spend from the high needs block is for non-maintained special schools.
- The highest spend on a SEND need was for ASD, which was more than double the amount of the next highest cost (SEMH).
- The average cost for each placement has remained relatively stable with PMLD and SEMH placements the most expensive per CYP.
- The total spend has increased most significantly for SEMH (83%), followed by ASD over a three-year period.
- The average cost per placement for VI, HI and SPLD have all decreased over the last three years. These are also amongst the lower areas of spend.
- Mainstream placements for CYP with an EHCP are the most cost effective.
- Placements at independent schools are the most expensive per placements.
- Spend on out of borough special schools has increased by 71% over the last three years.
- The spend on placements is highest amongst secondary school aged pupils.
- A future high cost cohort is likely to be the CYP who started NCY 4 in September 2019.
- The majority of the home to school transport budget, in the last financial year (72%), funded transport of CYP with SEND. £1,132,000 was spent on transport to other local authority placements.



Future growth

[Skip to Section Summary](#)

SEND Historic Growth

EHCP Growth

Bracknell Forest has seen a growth in the number and proportion of CYP with an EHCP over the last five years, in line with the pattern of statistical neighbours and across England (figure 37). This pattern has been widely reported across national publications. The increase has several contributing factors such as rising population growth, advances in medicine allowing children with needs to live longer and increased diagnosis rates of conditions such as ASD. Since 2014 and the introduction of the SEND Code of Practice, services for CYP has extended from up to 19 years old to 25. Therefore, there has been an additional cohort of children each year continuing their SEND support.¹⁴

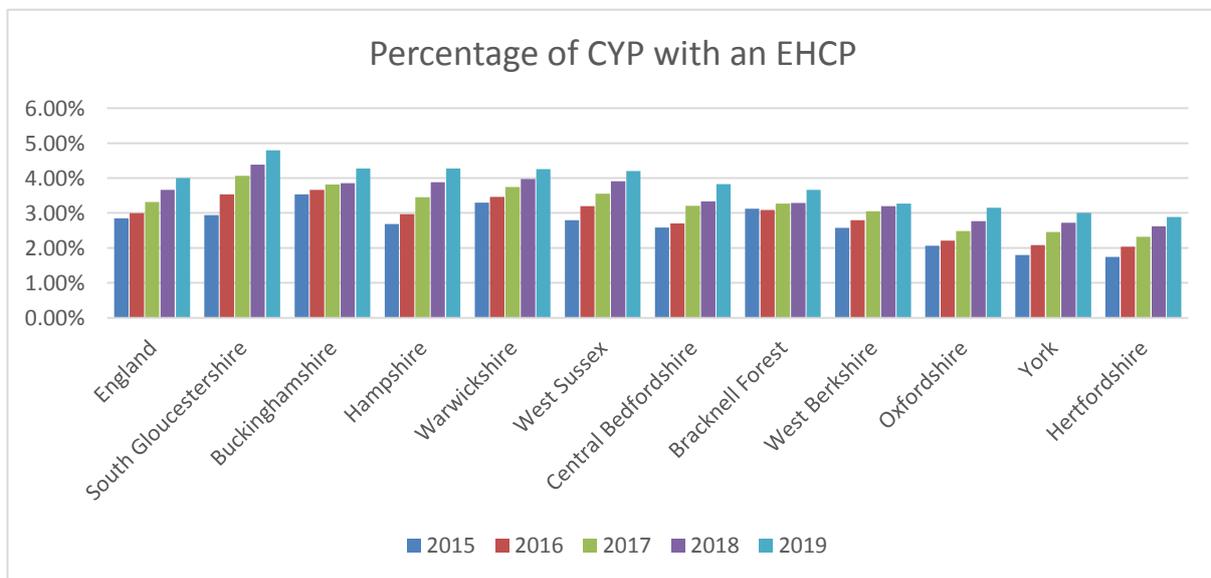


Figure 37. The proportion of the whole school population with an EHCP compared with England and statistical neighbours.

There has also been a significant increase in the number of new EHCPs issued, with Bracknell Forest reporting the steepest increase of its statistical neighbours for new EHCPs per child in the borough. This increase is illustrated in figure 38.

¹⁴ ISOS Partnership, “Have we reached a ‘tipping point’? Trends in spending for children and young people with SEND in England”, December 2018

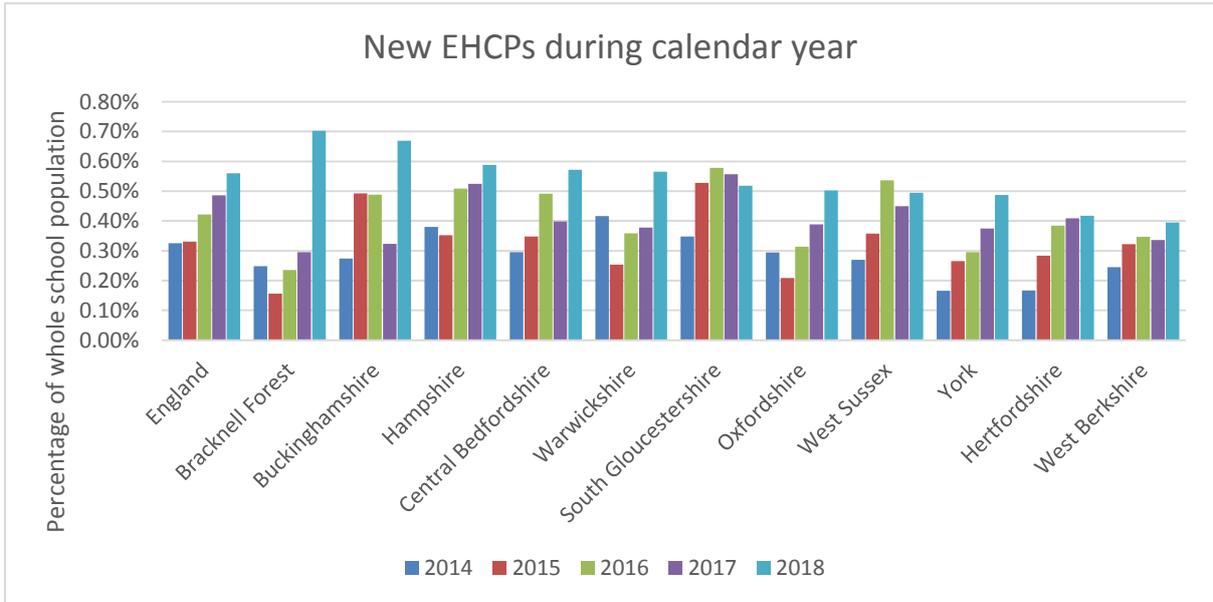


Figure 38. The proportion of the whole school population issued a new EHCP within the designated calendar year.

This pattern of increasing EHCPs will result in growth of the SEND population and therefore estimates of this growth should shape planning for further local provisions. The previous trend for CYP with an EHCP show that there have been a fluctuation in the total number for Bracknell Forest. Over the six year period reported, there was an average increase in the number of EHCPs of 3.0% per year (figure 39).

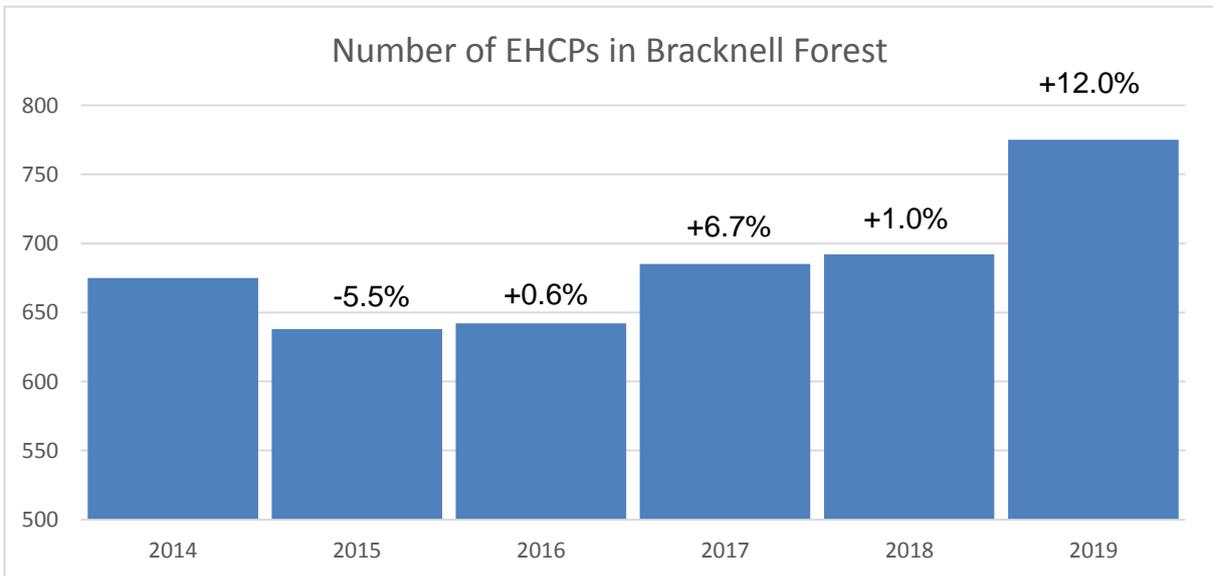


Figure 39. The change of the total number of EHCPs for children and young people in Bracknell Forest, recorded on the SEN2 return between 2014 and 2019.

SEN Support Growth

Although the proportion of CYP with an EHCP is increasing, the percentage requiring SEN Support and without an EHCP has remained relatively stable (figure 40). This has also been the case amongst the statistical neighbours. The total number of CYP needing SEN Support has been recorded to have increased by 116 CYP between 2014 and 2019.

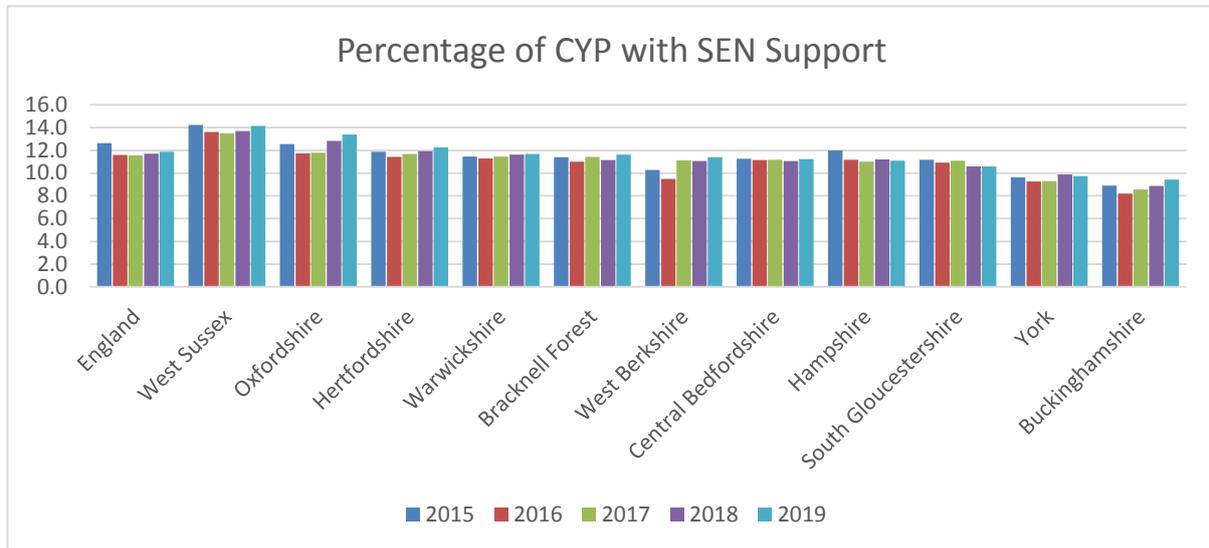


Figure 40. The percentage of the whole school population requiring SEN Support as recorded on the School Census between 2015 and 2019.



Estimating Growth

The projections for the future growth in SEND population have been calculated from two variables, estimates for the increase of the school population and estimates for the increase in the proportion of the school population with EHCPs or SEN support.

Estimates for the growth of the school population can be calculated based on the Office for National Statistics. Projections are reported for each of the age categories, this is not specific to school populations however it describes the growth in the age groups who may be eligible for an EHCP or SEN support.

The overall population is anticipated to increase in Bracknell Forest to 126,000 by 2024, this is an increase of 4.1% over the five years. The age groups of 0-24 and 5-19 have significantly different anticipated growth rates, however the mid point of these rates is 4.8% growth over the designated time period. This is also the projection from the national pupil projections over the next five years.

High and low estimates for the increase in EHCPs have been calculated based on the methodology in appendix B. The calculations for the percentage increase in the proportion of the school population with an EHCP or SEN support is also included in the appendix. Estimates for the future number of CYP with EHCPs and SEN Support needs is outlined in table 4.

	2019	2024	Growth Over Full Time Period
Whole population¹⁵			
Overall population of Bracknell Forest	121,600	126,600	5,000 (4.1%)
Population aged 0-24	37,300 ¹⁶	38,400	1,100 (2.9%)
Total school aged pupils (5-19)	23,800 ¹⁷	25,400	1,600 (6.7%)
SEND Population			
Total school aged pupils with EHCPs	775	957	Low – 182 (23.5%) High – 194 (25.0%)
% of pupils with EHCP	3.7%	4.4%	0.7%
Total school aged pupils with SEN Support	2,446 ¹⁸	2598	Low – 152 (6.2%) High – 184 (7.5%)
% of pupils with SEN Support	11.6%	11.9%	0.3%

Table 4. Estimates for the future EHCP and SEN Support population in Bracknell Forest until 2024.

¹⁵ Based on ONS population projections for local authorities.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2>

¹⁶ Projections are higher than recorded in the School Census because the population projections include all individuals aged 0-24 regardless of the education, employment or training that are part of.

¹⁷ Projections are higher than recorded in the School Census because the population projections include all individuals aged 5-19 regardless of the education, employment or training that are part of.

¹⁸ As reported in school census Table 13. This is higher than previous figures as it takes into account all schools and provisions. This is higher than internal figures suggest, however it provides a trend over the years and allows a projection to be made.

The estimated growth is illustrated in figures 41 and 42.

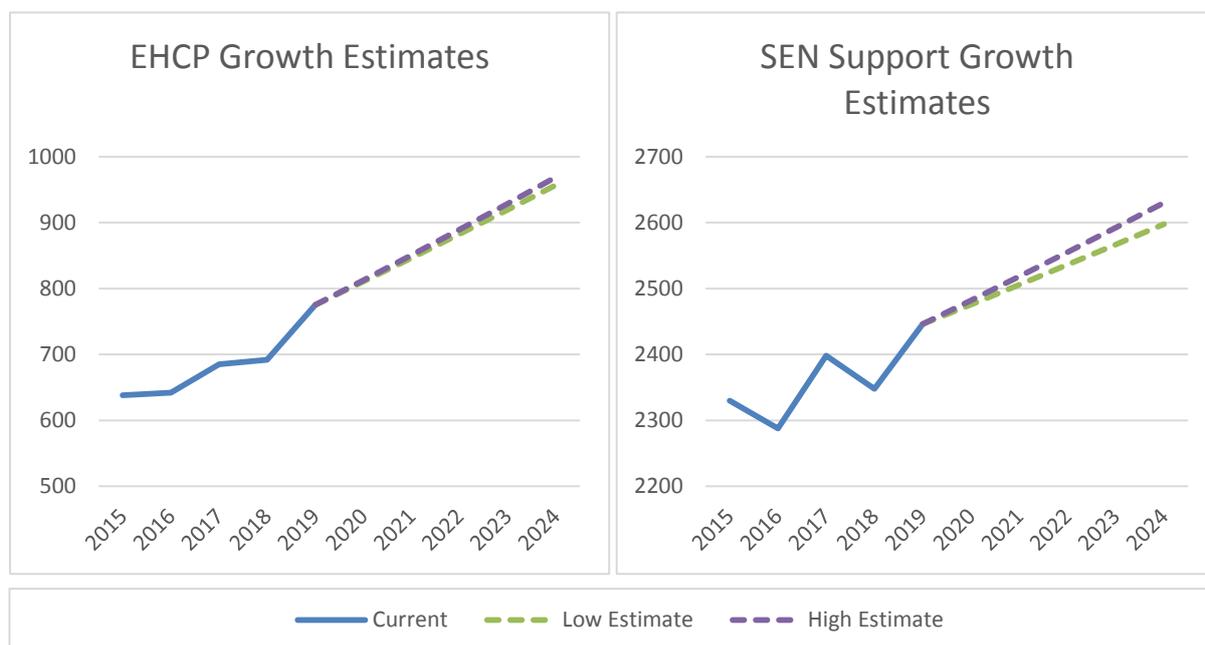


Figure 41 and 42. The estimates for growth in number of children and young people in Bracknell Forest with an EHCP and SEN Support.

The estimates outlined in this report should be considered carefully as the rates of change could vary greatly. The faster population growth anticipated for the south east region¹⁹ could increase the number of CYP on the school roll, increasing those potentially eligible for SEN support or EHCPs. There could however be lower than predicted growth rates if the previous pattern of growth does not continue.

¹⁹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/subnationalpopulationprojectionsforengland/2016based>



Summary

Headlines from the data:

- The proportion of CYP with an EHCP has increased over the last five years in line with the trend of England and of statistical neighbours.
- There has been a steep increase in the number of new EHCPs issued in the last year (12%), the greatest growth of all statistical neighbours and above the average for England.
- The proportion of CYP requiring SEN support and without and EHCP has remained similar over the last five years in line with the average percentages across England and statistical neighbours.
- Over the next five years the number of CYP with an EHCP is anticipated to rise by between approximately 182 to 194 CYP. This will increase the proportion of CYP with an EHCP to 4.4% of the school population.
- Over the next five years the number of CYP with SEN support is anticipated to rise by between approximately 152 to 184 CYP. This will increase the proportion of CYP with SEN support to 11.9% of the school population.

APPENDIX A – EXCLUSION REASON CODES

Reason Code	Detail
BU	Bullying
DA	Drug and alcohol related
DB	Persistent disruptive behaviour
DM	Damage
OT	Other
PA	Physical assault against an adult
PP	Physical assault against a pupil
RA	Racist abuse
SM	Sexual misconduct
TH	Theft
VA	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a child
VP	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil

APPENDIX B – METHODOLOGY FOR GROWTH PROJECTIONS

The number of CYP on the school roll and number of CYP with SEN Support was based on the school census. The number of EHCPs was informed by the SEN2 return data. Information from the last 5 years informed the projections to calculate the average increase in the proportion of the school population with an EHCP or SEN support. This average was then used to predict the equivalent increase over the projection period.

EHCP Growth

The proportion of CYP with and EHCP in the whole school population had an average increase per year of 0.14% over the last 5 years, this was projected forwarded for all calculations.

SEN Support Growth

The proportion of SEN support CYP in the whole school population had an average increase per year of 0.06% over the last 5 years, this was projected forwarded for all calculations.

Level	School population growth per year	Methodology
Low	0.71%	The roll increased by 0.71% on average per year, over the previous 5 years.
High	0.96%	National Pupil Projection until 2024 ²⁰ predicts growth of 4.8%, this equates to 0.96% per year.

20

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/815634/National_pupil_projections_future_trends_in_pupil_numbers_July_2019_update.pdf

TO: SCHOOLS FORUM
DATE: 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS **Executive Director of People**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement from the Forum in respect of proposals for additional financial support to schools, in particular, approval of new or amended applications for licensed deficit arrangements.
- 1.2 Updates are also provided on the current position in respect of previously agreed financial support arrangements as well as the funding allocations made to date to schools in financial difficulties under the powers delegated by the Forum to the Executive Director of People.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Schools can experience short term financial difficulties for a number of reasons and these can normally be readily resolved over the medium term. To help manage change through a planned rather than reactive process, the Schools Forum can agree support measures to maintained schools.
- 2.2 The on-going challenging financial environment has resulted in 4 schools not being able to set balanced budgets for 2019-20. Despite significant assistance from the council, it has not been possible to date to develop medium term recovery plans with aggregate deficit balances forecast at £0.983m. All of these schools also face challenges around standards and effectiveness, and more time is required to reach a solution that meets both of these needs, with one possible outcome being the need to agree repayments plans of up to 5 years rather than the normal maximum of 3 years.
- 2.3 Information is also presented in respect of one-off funding support provided so far this financial year to schools in, or in danger of entering an Ofsted category, as agreed by the Executive Director of People.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Schools Forum NOTES:

- 3.1 **The previously agreed financial support arrangements for the following schools are on target to be repaid in accordance with the agreed conditions:**
 - i. **Birch Hill Primary School;**
 - ii. **Ascot Heath Infant School;**
 - iii. **Sandhurst Secondary;**
 - iv. **Winkfield St Marys Primary School.**

That the Schools Forum AGREES:

- 3.2 That subject to the school governors confirming the financing schedule and compliance with the associated terms and conditions of the deficit scheme, that Sandhurst Secondary School's licensed deficit agreement be amended to a maximum deficit of £0.440m, for full repayment by 31 March 2023 (paragraph 6.23).**
- 3.3 That the council continues to work on repayment schedules with the following schools, and that subject to the school governors confirming the financing schedule and compliance with the associated terms and conditions of the deficit scheme, that maximum deficits are as follows:**
- i. Ascot Heath Primary School receives a licensed deficit of up to £0.220m.**
 - ii. Harmans Water Primary Schools receives a licensed deficit of up to £0.190m.**
 - iii. The Pines Primary School receives a licensed deficit of up to £0.213m.**
 - iv. Easthampstead Park Community School outstanding loan of £0.360m is converted to a licensed deficit in the same value.**

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is appropriate for the Schools Forum to be aware of, and where relevant, comment on these financial matters that are intended to provide short term assistance to schools in financial difficulties.**

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 A range of options are set out in the supporting information.**

6 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 6.1 The LA has two main options to support maintained schools requesting additional financial support. Where significant budget difficulties exist, and it is unreasonable to expect a school to be able to solve these through the management of their normal budget allocations, or where a school is in, or at risk of falling into one of the Ofsted categories of causing concern, additional funding can be provided that does not need to be repaid.**
- 6.2 Alternatively, licensed deficit and loans can be agreed. In accordance with DfE requirements, licensed deficits can be used to assist a school that is experiencing medium term financial difficulties that over time can be readily managed and the school return to a surplus, or a loan can be used where a capital investment is proposed but the school does not yet have the full resources to afford the purchase. Governing bodies are required to agree to fully repay any amounts, including where relevant, any associated interest, before such arrangements are agreed. More information on terms and conditions of financial support are set out below.**

6.3 Neither of these options are available to academy schools.

6.4 Additional funding that is not required to be repaid

Background and summary

6.5 School Funding Regulations allow for additional funds outside the normal operation of the Funding Formula to be provided to schools considered to be in financial difficulty. In agreement with the Schools Forum, this de-delegated budget has been returned to the Council for central management. The agreed criteria to be used to allocate this funding is if, in the opinion of the Director responsible for schools and the Director responsible for Finance, a school:

1. was unable to set a balanced budget and were in need of a licensed deficit arrangement at the start of the relevant financial year, and/or
2. was in or likely to fall into one of the Ofsted categories of causing concern, including serious weaknesses or special measures.
3. was a 1 form of entry school judged good or better that have more than 5% empty places

6.6 Where schools enter an Ofsted category of concern, this includes those schools judged to be inadequate or requiring improvement, the LA holds a declaration of concern meeting and establishes a Standards Monitoring Board (SMB). The Board has an independent chair and senior officers of the LA as members. The headteacher and Chair of Governors of the school are invited to attend the SMB to report on progress. A support plan outlines the actions to be taken by the school and the LA in order to effect rapid improvement. Where the school is unable to fund these actions from its own delegated budget, the SMB can request that additional resources be sought.

6.7 For schools identified by the LA as causing concern despite having a good judgement by Ofsted a declaration of concern meeting takes place and an SMB can be established of which the head teacher and Chair of Governors are invited to attend. The boards meet regularly to discuss progress and determine with the school where additional resources might be required.

6.8 In order to allow funds to be allocated within an appropriate time scale, the Forum has agreed to delegate a set of powers to the Executive Director of People to allocate funds of up to, but not exceeding £0.15m in any financial year, dependent on the Ofsted category of the school, or where there is considered a risk of being placed in a category.

6.9 The level of allocation of funds would be:

1. schools judged to have serious weaknesses (up to £20k per year)
2. schools deemed to be in need of special measures (up to £50k per year)
3. schools at risk of receiving a judgement of serious weaknesses or entering special measures (up to £30k per year)
4. 1 form of entry schools judged good or better that have more than 5% empty places (up to £20k per year per school and £40k in total in any one year for all qualifying schools)

- 6.10 To date, additional financial support has been approved for 2019-20 by the Director under the delegated powers in the value of £54,385 to 4 schools. Annex A sets out the full policy for agreeing additional financial support that was reviewed and agreed at the last meeting of the Forum. Annex B presents more information on the allocations to schools and other commitments. A report will be presented to the Forum at the end of the financial year confirming any allocations made subsequent to this report.

Licensed Deficit and Loan Arrangements

Background and summary

- 6.11 There are circumstances where schools may experience budget difficulties and in order for the school to continue to function effectively, a temporary overspend of budget allocation may be desirable. The Scheme for Financing Schools has provisions to allow for this through licensed deficit and loan arrangements which provide for additional short term funding so that schools have sufficient time to manage expenditure reductions or receive additional income that demonstrates the ability to fully repay any over spending within an agreed period. Both the Schools Forum and Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning need to agree requests.
- 6.12 Forum Members will recall that in response to changes in government requirements, the loan scheme is now available only to support schools in the purchase of a capital asset, with a new licensed deficit arrangement option introduced to support schools with a shortfall in general income compared to required spend. This change did not affect the terms and conditions of any existing loans.
- 6.13 The main impact of the change in DfE criteria for the award of loan is that schools converting to an academy as a result of intervention and underperforming schools which the Secretary of State judges are not strong enough to become an academy without a strong sponsor will no longer need to repay loans unless they are for the purchase of significant one-off capital assets. Any accumulated deficit at the point of transfer will fall onto the general contingency and financed from within the overall Schools Budget.
- 6.14 A summary of the circumstances in which a licensed deficit may be agreed is as follows:
1. Where a school would not otherwise achieve its improvement targets;
 2. It would not be reasonable to effect immediately the savings required as a result of a significant reduction in pupil numbers;
 3. A major building project is proposed;
 4. To finance an invest to save scheme.

Annex C sets out the full details of the licensed deficit scheme.

- 6.15 As a preliminary to presenting a deficit or loan for comment and agreement, officers of the LA undertake detailed reviews of school requests. This usually involves discussions with the Headteacher, Chairman of Governors and Bursar.

- 6.16 The governing body of a school receiving agreement to financial support has to agree a medium term budget plan which has been formulated from known facts, with a realistic provision for future events, and that it is kept under review with the LA on at least an annual basis. If it becomes apparent that any significant differences occur in the underlying budget and expenditure assumptions, then this may require subsequent changes, which will need to be agreed with the Executive Director of People and the Director of Finance and endorsed by the Executive Member. Should any changes be proposed to these arrangements during the year, they will be presented to the Schools Forum and Executive Member for a decision.

Update on existing loans and licensed deficits

- 6.17 The Schools Forum has previously agreed licensed deficit or loan arrangements to manage a shortfall in general income compared to required spend. The current status of each agreement, together with any recommended changes, are set out below.

Current arrangements where no changes are proposed

Birch Hill Primary School

- 6.18 A loan of £0.030m was agreed in 2016, to be fully repaid by 31 March 2019 through 2 equal payments of £0.015m in both 2017-18 and 2018-19. In reviewing the medium term budget plan, despite further savings being made and changes to practice implemented, additional cost pressures meant it was no longer considered possible to make repayments in accordance with the original schedule and therefore the Forum agreed that the repayment period was extended by 1 year to 31 March 2020, with 3 equal annual repayments of £0.010m from 2017-18 through to 2019-20. No change is proposed to the existing loan agreement which will be fully repaid this year.

Ascot Heath Infant School

- 6.19 Ascot Heath Infant School was granted a loan of £0.020m to be fully repaid by 31 March 2019 with a £0.020m repayment in 2018-19. This would allow the school to put in place a cost reduction plan in a measured way to allow transition to a Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 60 from the current number of 70. As well as better facilitating classroom teaching organisation, a reduced PAN would then be in alignment with the PAN at Junior School, thereby aiding pupil transition between the two schools. No change is proposed to the existing loan agreement which will be fully repaid this year.

Sandhurst Secondary School

- 6.20 Sandhurst Secondary School was granted a loan of £0.240m to be fully repaid by 31 March 2020. This would cover a short term over spending that would be repaid through future budget increases anticipated from a rise in pupil numbers. No change is proposed to the existing loan agreement which will be fully repaid this year.

Winkfield St Marys Primary School

- 6.21 Winkfield St Mary's Primary School was granted a licensed deficit of £0.030m to be fully repaid by 31 March 2021, with a maximum over spending of £0.020m at 31 March 2019, reducing to £0.010m at 31 March 2020 and moving to a surplus by March 2021. This allows the school to put in place a cost reduction plan in a measured way to recover the £0.025m over spending recorded at the end of 2017-

18. The repayment schedule is on target and no changes are proposed to the existing deficit agreement which will be fully repaid next year.

Current arrangements where a change is now proposed

Sandhurst Secondary School

- 6.22 The 2017-18 financial year resulted in an unexpected over spending of £0.246m. Taking account of the size of the deficit, the council again reviewed the school's financial position with senior school staff and governors which identified that a repayment plan could be produced, but now needed to reflect the increase in underlying cost base which resulted in the Forum agreeing a new licensed deficit agreement with a maximum over spending of £0.510m in 2018-19, reducing to £0.385 in 2019-20, £0.175m in 2020-21, before generating a surplus in 2021-22.
- 6.23 The council has maintained monthly budget monitoring review meetings with the Head Teacher, Business Manager and senior governors. During these meetings, whilst good progress has been made on managing and planning the budget, including fully repaying the previous loan, a further revision to the deficit agreement is now considered appropriate to allow the school to be able to meet school performance targets with a maximum over spending of £0.440m in 2019-20 (was previously £0.385m), reducing to £0.220m in 2020-21, then £0.060m in 2021-22 before generating a surplus in 2022-23. The Forum is requested to agree this revision.

Schools in financial difficulty where a repayment plan has yet to be developed

- 6.24 For the first time, in assisting schools with difficulties in balancing their budgets, 3 primary schools have presented significant deficit projections that despite substantial work, including making staffing and other reductions, remain in deficit with no immediate plan to demonstrate a return to a surplus.
- 6.25 A high level summary of the current position is as follows:
1. Ascot Heath Primary school: where pupil numbers have reduced over the last year by 51 which translates to £0.175m loss in funding, with further reductions of up to 15 expected at the start of the new academic year which indicates a £0.220m year-end deficit. The school amalgamation has also impacted on budget planning.
 2. Harmans Water Primary school: where pupil numbers have reduced over the past year by 22 which translates to £0.090m loss in funding. The school has been protected for a number of years by a significant surplus balance which was accumulated when the school was experiencing full 3 Forum of Entry (FE) admissions but is now adapting to being much closer to a 2 FE admission. £0.200m of balances were utilised in the 2018-19 budget with a modest £0.050m brought forward balance all that now remains. With relatively large 3 FE group sizes now starting to leave the school and being replaced with closer to 2 FE numbers, the deficit at year end is forecast at £0.110m, rising to £0.190m by the end on 2021-22. In the next 3 years, pupil numbers are forecast to reduce by around 60 to fall below 500 which compares to the capacity of 630.
 3. The Pines Primary school: has been experiencing financial difficulty and currently has a £0.075m licensed deficit. The school has recently been expanded back to a 2 FE, and whilst numbers are increasing, it is at a slow

rate and during the transition results in complicated and costly classroom organisation. The current forecast is for a year end deficit of £0.213m which is not expected to change significantly over the next 3 years.

- 6.26 A key factor that has contributed to the financial position of these schools is their standards and effectiveness which is impacting on the preferences that parents make in selecting a school. All 3 schools are receiving support from the council to make improvements in their education.
- 6.27 Harmans Water and Ascot Heath C of E Junior (closed Aug 2019) schools are both judged by Ofsted to “require improvement” and have had significant changes to leadership. Both schools are now on track to be good but the new leaders have to manage issues which arose under previous regimes within the school. Staffing in both schools has not been stable and recruitment has proved difficult in both schools in the past with agency staff being used. The Pines was a school which was judged as an LA category 2 in July 2018. Since this period the school has experienced significant changes in leadership. Only one governor of the previous board remains and a National Leader of School Governance is now the chair and tackling the issues around the deficit. The school was judged by Ofsted in June to “require improvement”.
- 6.28 Supporting schools to higher standards has been the priority in the People Directorate, to ensure they are turned around and do not fall into the inadequate Ofsted category where costs of support would considerably increase, or the schools could be forced to convert to an academy. This approach can be to the detriment of balancing budgets over the short term.
- 6.29 For all of these schools, the ability to repay deficits is generally dependent of increases in pupil numbers raising future income at a faster rate than associated cost increases, by reducing costs, or a combination of both. For example, being able to open a new class with 25 pupils would generate around £0.095m of income with a teacher costing around £0.045m. A full class of 30 would generate around £0.130m. When pupil numbers are in decline, schools face the opposite situation, with income reducing at a far faster rate than the directly associated costs that can be removed.
- 6.30 However, current forecasts for the primary schools in financial difficulty do not indicate increases, other than a modest one for the Pines. This means 2 of the schools are experiencing far greater reductions in funding from falling pupil numbers than can reasonably be expected to follow through into reduced costs with the Pines facing challenges in achieving efficient and effective classroom staffing structures.
- 6.31 In addition to the 3 primary schools set out above, a recovery plan has previously been agreed with Easthampstead Park Secondary School where a £0.450m loan was approved in 2016, with repayments of £0.040m due in 2018-19 and £0.410m in 2019-20. The loan would be repaid by an increase in pupil numbers which has occurred at a lower rate than originally expected and has yet to reach the forecast level. Therefore, the £0.040m repayment due in 2018-19 has been made, but with a lower £0.050m repayment affordable in 2019-20, meaning £0.360m remains outstanding at the point the loan was expected to be fully repaid. Whilst the financial position at the school has significantly stabilised, with repayments of the loan being made each year, albeit at a lower amount than agreed, a fully balance recovery plan has yet to be developed.

Proposed approach to schools that are unable to develop a medium term financial recovery plan

- 6.32 At this moment in time, 4 schools are reporting significant year end deficits with no recovery plan in place which equates to an aggregate deficit balance of £0.983m.
- 6.33 The council wants to work closely with schools to develop recovery plans but accepts that achieving high standards is the key priority in the short term and is therefore directing considerable resources towards school improvement. It is therefore proposed that the council continues to work with the schools to balance budgets over a longer 3-5 year period and as standards improve, agree where further cost reductions can be made whilst at the same time instigate initiatives to increase pupil numbers. The licensed deficit scheme will need to be reviewed and possibly updated to reflect the current approach to supporting schools in financial difficulty, and proposals for this will be presented to the next meeting.
- 6.34 In order for the schools concerned to be in a position to work towards the initial budget plans that have been produced, the Forum is recommended to agree maximum amounts of deficit only at this stage, with an update on likely repayment schedules to be provided by the end of the financial year.
- 6.35 Successfully managing school budgets is recognised by the DfE as a national issue which is facilitating improvement through the commissioning of School Resource Management Advisers (SRMAs). SRMAs will work with LAs and the schools in need of the greatest help to make best use of schools' revenue and capital resources to deliver educational outcomes. The council has received agreement from the DfE that SMRAs will be made available and these are intended to be focused on the 3 primary schools without deficit recovery plans, supported by the council, with the council continuing to be the lead support to secondary schools.

Summary loan / deficit position

- 6.36 Table 1 below provides a summary of aggregate outstanding deficit arrangements for each school, assuming the proposals in this paper are agreed. Annex D provides a more detailed breakdown of the current and proposed arrangements.

Table 1: Summary Schedule of School Loan and Licensed Deficit Requests

Item	Previously agreed £	2019-20 new requests £	2020-21 impact £	2021-22 impact £	2022-23 impact £	Total 2022-23 £	Repayment date to be determined £
Total advances	1,770,000	518,000	30,000	0	0	2,318,000	0
Total repayments	-885,000	0	-230,000	-160,000	-60,000	-1,335,000	0
Total outstanding	885,000	518,000	-200,000	-160,000	-60,000	983,000	-983,000
Total 2019-20	1,403,000						
% of maximum borrowing	33.2%						

Academy schools

- 6.37 Whilst new loan / licensed deficit arrangements are not available to academy schools, 2 schools that have converted to an academy did so with an outstanding balance on a previously agreed loan. In each instance, repayment of the original loan amount was incorporated as a legally binding condition to the academy transfer.

Wildmoor Heath Primary School

- 6.38 Wildmoor Heath Primary School has received a number of relatively small loans as the financial situation of the school changed. The school converted to an academy on 1 January 2018 with an outstanding balance of £0.048m with the legal agreement confirming on-going liability of the school to make the agreed repayments. £0.033m has subsequently been repaid as required, with the remaining £0.015m due for repayment this financial year.

Brakenhale

- 6.39 In 2015 a loan of £0.190m was agreed for Brakenhale. The school converted to an academy on 1 April 2016 with an outstanding loan balance of £0.130m. As part of the transfer arrangements, it was agreed that the school needed more time to repay the loan as it recovered from a Requires Improvement Ofsted inspection judgement and built up pupil numbers. A revised repayment schedule was agreed that would result in 36 monthly repayments of £3,611 from September 2018 to 31 August 2021 and a direct debit has been put in place to enable efficient repayment.

Summary

- 6.40 Table 1 above confirms the significant value of outstanding deficits and loan advances. At £1.403m, this represents 33% of the forecast £4.220m aggregate of surplus balances held in the Schools Budget which are the funds used to finance advances. The scheme limits the amount of financial support to no more than 40% of the aggregate of surplus balances held in the Schools Budget, which currently amounts to no more than £1.688m aggregate deficits.
- 6.41 The current position of £0.983m of likely deficits being unmatched by a medium term recovery plan presents a risk to financial stability at relevant schools.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The relevant legal provisions are addressed within the main body of the report.

Director of Finance

- 7.2 The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information. The increased request for financial support shows that the current challenging financial environment is having an effect on schools and will need to be monitored carefully to ensure schools can meet their financial obligations arising from the loans.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 There are no specific impact assessments arising from this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.4 There are strategic risks around ensuring all schools remain financially viable whilst delivering appropriate standards and effectiveness without putting excessive pressure on the Schools Budget to provide additional funds.

8 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 8.1 Assistant Director: Education and Learning, People Directorate Management Team and the Corporate Management Team.

Method of Consultation

- 8.2 Meetings.

Representations Received

- 8.3 Incorporated into the report.

Background Papers

None.

Contact for further information

Paul Clark, Business Partner - CYPL
<mailto:paul.clark@bracknell-forest.gov.uk>

(01344 354054)

Doc. Ref

Doc. Ref K:\Pine\Executive\Schools Forum\94) 190919\2019-20 Support to schools in financial difficulties etc.docx

Criteria for the allocation of additional funds to support schools facing financial difficulties

Outline of the scheme

School Funding Regulations allow for additional funds outside the normal operation of the Funding Formula to be provided to schools considered to be in financial difficulty. In agreement with the Schools Forum, de-delegated funding has been set aside in the School's Budget for this purpose. The criteria to be used to allocate this funding has also previously been agreed, and a school would qualify for additional financial support if, in the opinion of the Council's Director responsible for schools and the Council's Director responsible for finance, they:

1. were unable to set a balanced budget and were in need of a licensed deficit arrangement at the start of the relevant financial year, and/or
2. were in or likely to fall into one of the Ofsted categories of causing concern, including serious weaknesses or special measures.
3. Were a 1 form of entry school judged good or better that have more than 5% empty places

Where additional funding is agreed, it is on condition that the senior managers and relevant governors of each school attend regular monitoring meetings with officers of the Council, provide such financial and other information that is requested, and do not make any significant deviations in spending, either in magnitude or by type without the approval of the Director of Children, Young People and Learning.

Before any proposed allocation of such funds is passed on to relevant schools, they are reported to and agreed by the Schools Forum. However, this can cause uncertainty and result in a delay in releasing resources to meet an immediate need.

Powers delegated to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning

In order to allow funds to be allocated within an appropriate time scale it is recommended that a set of principles be agreed by the School Forum which allows the Council's Director responsible for schools discretion to allocate funds up to but not exceeding a set level dependent on the Ofsted category of the school. Any such allocations would subsequently be reported to the Schools Forum.

The level of allocation of funds would be:

1. schools judged to have serious weaknesses (up to £20k per year)
2. schools deemed to be in need of special measures (up to £50k per year)
3. schools at risk of either judged to have serious weaknesses or entering special measures (up to £30k per year)
4. 1 form of entry schools judged good or better that have more than 5% empty places (up to £20k per year per school and £40k in total)

With a maximum value of aggregate allocations of £150k in any one financial year without the express approval of the Schools Forum.

Allocations will only be agreed where the relevant school has demonstrated insufficient funds exist within the budget to fund the required actions or activities.

Where schools enter an Ofsted category of concern (judged to have serious weaknesses or placed into Special Measures) the LA establishes a Standards Monitoring Board (SMB). The Board has an independent chair and senior officers of the LA as members. The headteacher and Chair of Governors of the school are invited to attend the SMB to report on progress. A support plan outlines the actions to be taken by the school and the LA in order to effect rapid improvement. Where the school is unable to fund these actions from its own delegated budget the SMB can request that additional resources be sought. Any such requests are approved by the Director of Children, Young People and Learning. Funds would be allocated to the school from those held for schools in financial difficulty.

Approved by the Schools Forum on 20 June 2019.

2019-20 initial funding allocations to schools in financial difficulties

Allocations agreed under the Director's delegated powers

Taking account of proposals from the MIB and Standards Board meetings at relevant schools, and applying the formula to determine financial support to 1 FE primary schools with more than 5% empty places, the following allocations have been agreed:

1. £15,000 to Harmanswater Primary School. The school has had to restructure staffing due to a decrease in pupil numbers which has impacted negatively on the overall budget. The two Deputy Headteachers have been made redundant. The school Requires Improvement by Ofsted and the school would like to increase the capacity of senior leaders whilst the leaders work towards gaining a good judgement by Ofsted. This is a temporary measure but required at this point in time.
2. St Michael's Sandhurst is a 1 FE primary school, rated good by Ofsted with a number on roll of 189, and therefore has 10% of the 210 available places empty. This equates to additional financial support of £30,463 which the policy caps to no more than £20,000 in any one year.
3. New Scotland Hill Primary is a 1 FE primary school, rated good by Ofsted with a number on roll of 194, and therefore has 8% of the 210 available places empty. This equates to additional financial support of £16,616.
4. Winkfield St Marys. is a 1 FE primary school, rated good by Ofsted with a number on roll of 199, and therefore has 5% of the 210 available places empty. This equates to additional financial support of £2,769.

LA expenditure

In addition to these school allocations, the Forum has also agreed that up to £60,000 of School Adviser and other professional staff support time, such as HR and Finance can be funded from this budget

Extract from the BFC Scheme for Financing Schools: Licensed deficit arrangements

In exceptional circumstances, in agreement with the Schools Forum and Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning, the authority will permit schools to over spend their budget allocation through a licensed deficit arrangement. The funding of such agreements would be through the collective surplus of school balances held by the authority on behalf of schools and any unspent funding in the Schools Budget Unallocated Reserve, and will be considered on an individual basis. General features of the scheme are detailed below:

Circumstances in which licensed deficit arrangements may be agreed:

1. if in the opinion of the responsible Director a school could not otherwise achieve its improvement targets (there will still be a requirement of the governing body to demonstrate repayment).
2. if in the opinion of the responsible Director for schools and the responsible Director for finance a school could not reasonably be expected to effect immediately the savings required as a result of a significant reduction in pupil numbers (there will still be a requirement of the governing body to demonstrate repayment).

Outline features of the scheme.

- the maximum length over which schools may repay the licensed deficit is 3 years (i.e. reach at least a zero balance).
- arrangement for a licensed deficit will only be agreed where the governing body produces a plan which demonstrates to the satisfaction of the responsible Director for schools and the responsible Director for finance the savings or additional income required to repay the deficit within an agreed timescale.

In general the minimum size of loans which may be agreed will be the lesser of the following:

Primary schools	£10,000
Special schools	£20,000
Secondary schools	£30,000

OR

For all types of school, 5% of the size of the budget share as determined by the authority.

In general the maximum size of loans which may be agreed will be the greater of the following:

Primary schools	£50,000
Special schools	£150,000
Secondary schools	£250,000

OR

For all types of school, 15% of the size of the budget share as determined by the authority.

- interest will be charged at 1% above the Council's cost of borrowing on the date on which the licensed deficit is agreed unless the authority agrees for it to be waived. The requirement to pay interest will be assessed on the merits of each individual application, and in general, will not attract interest.

Outline controls on licensed deficits

- the maximum proportion of the collective balances held by the authority including any unspent funding in the Schools Budget Unallocated Reserve which will be used to support the arrangement shall not exceed 40%
- the responsible Director for schools and the responsible Director for finance of the authority will make recommendations to the Schools Forum and Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning to agree any licensed deficits and the terms on which they are offered.

The authority may request those schools operating external bank accounts to allow some or all of those balances to support the above arrangements.

Detailed school loan and deficit agreements for maintained schools – by year

School	Loan Ref.	Deficit Ref.	Previously agreed £	Changes now proposed £	2019-20 new requests £	2020-21 impact £	2021-22 impact £	2022-23 impact £	Total £	Repayment date to be determined £	Control total	Check
Advances in year												
Ascot Heath Primary		1	0	0	190,000	30,000	0	0	220,000	0		
Harmanswater Primary		1	0	0	190,000	0	0	0	190,000	0		
Birch Hill	1		30,000	0	0	0	0	0	30,000	0	30,000	0
The Pines		1 & 2	75,000	0	138,000	0	0	0	213,000	0	213,000	0
Winkfield St Mary's		1	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	30,000	0	30,000	0
Easthampstead Park	2		450,000	0	0	0	0	0	450,000	0	450,000	0
Easthampstead Park		1	0	360,000	0	0	0	0	360,000	0		
Sandhurst	2		240,000	0	0	0	0	0	240,000	0	240,000	0
Sandhurst		1 & 2	510,000	55,000	0	0	0	0	565,000	0	510,000	55,000
Total			1,355,000	415,000	518,000	30,000	0	0	2,318,000	0	1,493,000	825,000
Repayments in year												
Ascot Heath Primary		1	0	0		0	0	0	0	0		
Harmanswater Primary		1	0	0		0	0	0	0	0		
Birch Hill	1		-30,000	0	0	0	0	0	-30,000	0	-30,000	0
The Pines		1 & 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-213,000	213,000
Winkfield St Mary's		1	-20,000	0	0	-10,000	0	0	-30,000	0	-30,000	0
Easthampstead Park	2		-450,000	0	0	0	0	0	-450,000	0	-450,000	0
Easthampstead Park		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Sandhurst	2		-240,000	0	0	0	0	0	-240,000	0	-240,000	0
Sandhurst		1 & 2	-125,000	0	0	-220,000	-160,000	-60,000	-565,000	0	-510,000	-55,000
Total			-885,000	0	0	-230,000	-160,000	-60,000	-1,335,000	0	-1,493,000	158,000
Closing balance outstanding												
Ascot Heath Primary		1	0	0	190,000	30,000	0	0	220,000	-220,000		
Harmanswater Primary		1	0	0	190,000	0	0	0	190,000	-190,000		
Birch Hill	1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Pines		1 & 2	75,000	0	138,000	0	0	0	213,000	-213,000	0	213,000
Winkfield St Mary's		1	10,000	0	0	-10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Easthampstead Park	2		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Easthampstead Park		1	0	360,000	0	0	0	0	360,000	-360,000		
Sandhurst	2		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandhurst		1 & 2	385,000	55,000	0	-220,000	-160,000	-60,000	0	0	0	0
Total			470,000	415,000	518,000	-200,000	-160,000	-60,000	983,000	-983,000	0	983,000
Cumulative deficit balance at 31 March 2020				1,403,000								
Schools Budget Reserves at 1 April 2019				6,220,000								
Anticipated draw down in 2019-20				-2,000,000								
Schools Budget Reserves at 31 March 2020				4,220,000								
Advances as % of available finance					33.2%							

Summary school loan and deficit agreements for maintained schools – by school by year

School	Balance due at 2019-20 year end £	2020-21 £	2021-22 £	2022-23 £	Comment
Ascot Heath Primary	190,000	220,000	220,000	220,000	Repayment date to be determined
Harmanswater Primary	190,000	190,000	190,000	190,000	Repayment date to be determined
Birch Hill	0	0	0	0	£10,000 final repayment 2019-20
The Pines	213,000	213,000	213,000	213,000	Repayment date to be determined
Winkfield St Mary's	10,000	0	0	0	£10,000 final repayment 2020-21
Easthampstead Park	360,000	360,000	360,000	360,000	Repayment date to be determined
Sandhurst	440,000	220,000	60,000	0	£60,000 final repayment 2022-23
Total	1,403,000	1,203,000	1,043,000	983,000	

BFC Academy School Summary

The Brakenhale	61,391	18,059	0	0	£43,332 repayment due 2019-20
Wildmoor Heath	0	0	0	0	£15,000 repayment due 2019-20
Total	61,391	18,059	0	0	
Grand total all schools	1,464,391	1,221,059	1,043,000	983,000	

This page is intentionally left blank

(ITEM)

TO: SCHOOLS FORUM
DATE: 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

THE SCHOOLS BUDGET – 2019-20 BUDGET MONITORING **Executive Director of People**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this annual report is for the Schools Forum to receive an update on the 2019-20 forecast budget monitoring position for the Schools Budget, to be aware of key issues and management actions being taken and progress to date on the Education Capital Programme.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 At this early stage of the financial year, initial monitoring of the revenue budget forecasts a significant year end over spending of £1.996m which mainly arises from the previously highlighted increase in the number of children and young people needing support through the High Needs Block (HNB) budget. There are insufficient balances held in the Schools Budget Unallocated Reserve to fully fund the forecast over spending which means a year end deficit of £0.419m is currently being forecast with no remaining balances to support future pressures.
- 2.2 Whilst to date spend in the BF HNB has been managed within budget, the emerging significant increase in costs and the difficulty in presenting balanced budget proposals for 2019-20, despite the increase in funding illustrates the changing financial situation. Work is underway through the Schools Forum HNB Sub Group to review the overall budget for impact and efficient use of resources, but if the current trend continues unchecked, a £2.8m over spend is forecast for 2020-21.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Schools Forum NOTES:

- 3.1 **the budget variances being forecast on the Schools Budget that total to an aggregate net forecast over spending of £1.996m (paragraph 6.10);**
- 3.2 **that the unallocated balance on the Schools Budget Reserve is forecast at a £0.439m deficit (paragraph 6.12);**
- 3.3 **progress to date on the Education Capital Programme, as summarised at Annex 2.**

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is appropriate for the Schools Forum to be aware of, and where relevant, comment on these financial matters.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Where relevant, these are set out in the supporting information.

6 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2019-20 Monitoring of the Schools Budget (Revenue)

Approved budget

- 6.1 Budget proposals for the 2019-20 Schools Budget were approved by the Schools Forum at its meetings in January and March, and these were subsequently agreed by the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning as the initial budget. Members of the Forum will be aware that the Schools Budget is a ring-fenced account, generally funded by external income that can only be spent on defined education related duties.
- 6.2 The most significant income source to the Schools Budget is the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), which is paid by the Department for Education (DfE). The initial approved budget included £93.804m as the estimated amount of DSG. Other grant income of £6.278m was also expected from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for sixth forms, the Pupil Premium, Primary PE and Sports activities and the Universal Infant Free School Meals initiative. With £0.131m of general income also anticipated, there was originally expected to be £100.213m of income available to fund expenditure within the Schools Budget.
- 6.3 The Council's Budget setting process agreed that the allocation of budgets to individual lines of the Schools Budget could be agreed by the Executive Member, up to the level of anticipated grant income. The original budget approved by the Council was on a provisional basis and adjustments are now reported to reflect the changes agreed by the Executive Member as part of the budget setting process, all of which were supported by the Schools Forum.
- 6.4 Furthermore, to recognise the financial pressure arising from new schools, the council has agreed a 4 year medium term funding plan with schools which for 2019-20 results in the Council contributing £0.338m from its General Reserves. Adding the previously agreed £0.254m draw down from the New School Diseconomy Reserve therefore results in a net budget for the year of £0.592m.
- 6.5 As usual, subsequent to setting the original budget, the ESFA has recalculated the adjustment made to LA HNB funding allocations to ensure the resident LA funds the cost of places taken up by their pupils in other LA specialist providers. The deduction for BFC has reduced by £0.134m, which has been balanced off by an equivalent increase in budget for non-maintained special schools.
- 6.6 Overall, these changes result in an anticipated level of DSG of £93.838m with total funding of £100.943m. To ensure budgets correctly reflect anticipated spending requirements, relevant adjustments have been made to the areas of the accounts that the changes relate to. Annex 1 sets out a summary budget statement.
- 6.7 Other budget changes will be processed later in the year once further information and full reconciliations have been completed in respect of the academy school funding deduction from the DSG made by the EFSA to pay funding direct to relevant schools

and also a revised Early Years DSG allocation that will take account of actual participation rates on the free entitlement to early years education and childcare.

Forecast budget variances

- 6.8 As part of the Council's Financial Regulations, the Schools Budget is subject to monthly budget monitoring. This involves forecasting likely expenditure and income through to the end of the year, identification of reasons for variations against original budgets, and where relevant, setting out options for management action. This process allows for a forecast year end level of balances to be calculated.
- 6.9 It is appropriate for the Forum to be aware of the current forecast year end balance as this will need to be taken into account when the 2020-21 budget is agreed. It is also likely that a number of variances identified this year will be on-going and will therefore need to be considered in next year's budget.
- 6.10 Provisional budget monitoring information available at the end of July indicates that the Schools Budget will over spend by £1.996m this year. Clearly this is very early on in the financial year, with numerous spending decisions yet to be taken or trends established, so there is the potential for significant change over the coming months, but a significant year end over spending is anticipated. Explanations of the significant changes anticipated from the current budget plan (+/- £0.020m) are set out below, with Annex 1 showing the overall Schools Budget at a summary level.

Schools Block - £0.124m over spend:

De-delegated budgets - £0.052m over spend:

- 1) There is one significant budget variance to report which relates to the classroom staff maternity leave absence scheme where average costs and incidence of cases are expected to result in a second consecutive year of significant over spend. With increases in the contribution to Teachers' Pension becoming effective from September, the over spend is forecast at £0.050m.

Any aggregate year end underspending on de-delegated budgets will be returned to maintained schools, provided the overall Schools Budget under spends by at least the same amount.

Other Schools Block provisions and support services - £0.072m over spend:

- 2) The recent school expansion and building programme creates a pressure from increased rates liabilities for which there is no budget provision as the likely cost and timing is not known. One significant revaluation has been notified this year, together with further adjustments which indicates a likely over spend of £0.072m.

High Needs Block - £1.887m over spend:

Members of the Forum will be aware that budget items 3) to 7) below represent the most unpredictable and volatile education budgets that the council is responsible for. Therefore, a considerable amount of time is taken in their management. However, they remain subject to significant change at short notice which can result in large movements in cost forecasts. To help manage this volatility, a contingency for future cost increases of £0.200m is included in the forecasts until such time as greater certainty is available relating to placement details and their costs. The contingency amount is reviewed each month and adjusted accordingly. Forecasts reported at this

time for external pupil placements and top up funding for mainstream schools include confirmed costs for the summer term, with provisional amounts included for autumn and spring which are subject to change until all required placements and their costs are known. The forecasts will continue to change through to the end of the financial year.

- 3) **Delegated Special Schools – £0.034m over spend.** Top up payments to Kennel Lane Special Schools have been recalculated to reflect in-year starters and leavers. The current forecast indicates a net increase in funding allocations of £0.034m.
- 4) **Maintained schools and academies – £0.818m over spend.** Top up payments to BF maintained schools and academies are forecast to over spend by £0.239m. In respect of BF pupil placements in other LA schools and academies, a £0.504m over spend is forecast. Placements have increased by 10% with average costs of support remaining stable.

Note: this budget line includes a contingency for future cost increases of £0.075m for which at this time no spend has been incurred.

- 5) **Non-maintained special schools and colleges – £0.712m over spend.** The latest schedule of actual top up payments agreed by the SEN Team, together with a forecast for future payments based on expected changes and previous trends indicates a £0.605m over spend. Whilst the overall number of places has increased by 4 (2%) from the number assumed in the budget, the average cost of support shows an increase of £2,008 (7.4%) per place.

Note: this budget line includes a contingency for future cost increases of £0.125m for which at this time no spend has been incurred.

- 6) **Education out of school - £0.278m over spend.** The main variances relate to a £0.130m forecast over spending on the cost of home tuition services and £0.060m on externally commissioned alternative provisions as more students are receiving support than allowed for in the budget. There are a number of other relatively small variances across a wide number of budgets.
- 7) **Other SEN provisions and support services - £0.054m over spend.** The main variances relate to a £0.101m forecast over spending on medical support needs for pupils where need exceeds budget provision and a £0.020m under spending on the Autism Support Service as a result of staff vacancies. There are a number of other relatively small variances across a wide number of budgets.

Early Years Block - £0.009m under spend

There are no significant variances to report at this stage.

Dedicated Schools Grant - £0.006m under spend:

- 8) **Dedicated Schools Grant - £0.006m under spend.** The ESFA recalculates Early Years DSG funding for delivering the free entitlement to childcare and early education following receipt of the January 2019 census data. The validation process takes until June and final adjustments are therefore confirmed after the relevant accounts are closed. The 2018-19 adjustment will be a £0.043m increase compared to an estimate of £0.037m.

Managing the forecast overspend

- 6.11 It is clear that the council is facing significant challenges in managing spend to the level of HNB income. As set out above and on other agenda items, this largely arises from increases in numbers of pupils requiring additional support and the emergence of more complex needs and is part of a national issue.
- 6.12 For the current forecast over spend, there is the potential to fund up to £1.577m from unallocated balances in the Schools Block which would result in a year end deficit of £0.419m. However, this is one-off money and is not expected to be available to support expenditure after this financial year. Furthermore, no funds would remain to safeguard against future over spendings, which without any actions are currently forecast at £2.8m for 2020-21.
- 6.13 Therefore, the work currently being undertaken through Schools Forum HNB Sub Group to review the overall budget for impact and efficient use of resources is fundamental to moving towards a sustainable financial position over the medium to long term.

2019-20 Education Capital Programme

Approved budget

- 6.14 The current Education Capital budget approved by the council amounts to £13.133m, and comprises £3.061m of council funding, £0.553m from housing developers and £9.519m from various grants and other income. Of this total, £4,523m is new funding for 2019-20 with £8.610m brought forward from previous years to finance the completion of approved projects.
- 6.15 The major scheme in the programme are:
- School related projects, including schools' Devolved Formula Capital £9.854m
 - School Planned Maintenance £1.590m
 - Other projects £1.689m

Annex 2 provides a summary of the approved schemes, including current progress and key targets.

Forecast budget variances

- 6.16 At this stage, spend of £8.542m is anticipated this financial year, with £4.591m slipping into 2020-21 to reflect the phasing of works. No variances are being reported as in general, these are recycled within the school related projects.
- 6.17 However, with the market continuing to tighten significantly and prices increasing, there is an on-going need for reviews of scope to remain within individual project budgets. At this stage, there is expected to be sufficient DfE grant funding and developer contributions plus the investment from the Council to fully finance the schemes required in the short term, with funding pressure expected to arise over the medium term.
- 6.18 Due to a substantial number of high cost roof repairs, the planned maintenance programme is also facing pressure in delivering all the works required within available

funds. However, a small amount of funds is being held in reserve for emergency works. This pressure is expected to continue into the medium term.

Next steps

- 6.19 Budget monitoring will continue and any emerging issues will be incorporated into budget proposals and presented to the Forum at the appropriate time.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The relevant legal provisions have been considered within the main body of the report.

Director of Finance

- 7.2 The financial implications arising from this report are set out in the supporting information.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 There are no specific impacts arising from this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.4 There are a number of risks associated with managing these revenue and capital budgets:
- financial and economic factors, in particular the need to maintain services whilst achieving significant savings;
 - the impact of demand led services and the need to forecast changes and reshape service delivery to meet changing needs;
 - staffing and the need to recruit, train and retain staff with the relevant skills and expertise;
 - IT infrastructure availability and information accuracy;
 - failure to design, monitor and control the implementation of major programmes and projects;
 - effective safeguarding of children;
 - effective maintenance of assets;
 - working effectively with partners, residents, service users, the voluntary sector and local businesses;
 - impact of litigation and legislation;

The budget includes resources sufficient to enable the Council to monitor these key risks and where possible to minimise their effects on services. Specific risk reduction measures included as part of budget monitoring are:

- A robust system of budgetary control with regular reporting to CYPL Departmental Management Team and the Corporate Management Team
- Quarterly Service Reports (QSR's) to Members
- Exception reports to the Executive

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Not applicable.

Background Papers

None.

Contact for further information

Paul Clark, Finance Business Partner – People Directorate

(01344 354054)

<mailto:paul.clark@bracknell-forest.gov.uk>

Doc. Ref

K:\Pine\Executive\Schools Forum\94) 190919\2019-20 Schools Budget Monitoring etc.doc

**2019-20 PROVISIONAL BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT FOR THE
SCHOOLS BUDGET AS AT THE END OF JULY 2019**

Service Area	Approved Budget			Estimated Variance			Note
	Spend	Income	Net	Under spending	Over spending	Net variance	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Schools Block							
<u>Delegated and devolved funding:</u>							
Delegated Mainstream School Budgets	73,733	0	73,733	0	0	0	
School Grant income	0	-6,109	-6,109	0	0	0	
Schools Block	73,733	-6,109	67,624	0	0	0	
<u>LA managed items:</u>							
Retained de-delegated Budgets:							
<i>Behaviour</i>	253	-7	246	0	0	0	
<i>Schools in Financial Difficulty</i>	198	0	198	0	0	0	
<i>Official Staff Absences</i>	261	0	261	0	50	50	1
<i>English as an Additional Language</i>	99	0	99	-17	17	0	
<i>PRC / Licence Fees / FSM checking</i>	428	0	428	0	2	2	
Combined Service Budgets:							
<i>Education Attainment and School Transport for LAC</i>	176	0	176	0	0	0	
<i>Family Intervention Project / Domestic Abuse</i>	106	0	106	0	0	0	
<i>CAF Co-ordinator</i>	42	0	42	-3	3	0	
<i>SEN Contract Management</i>	33	0	33	0	0	0	
<i>Education Health / Sport</i>	48	0	48	0	0	0	
Statutory and Regulatory Duties	496	0	496	0	0	0	
Other Schools Block provisions and support services	1,331	0	1,331	-26	98	72	2
LA managed items:	3,471	-7	3,464	-46	170	124	
Sub total Schools Block	77,204	-6,116	71,088	-46	170	124	
High Needs Block							
Delegated Special Schools Budgets	4,074	0	4,074	0	34	34	3
Post 16 SEN and other grants	0	-172	-172	0	0	0	
Maintained schools and academies	3,220	-31	3,189	-9	818	809	4
Non Maintained Special Schools and Colleges	5,529	0	5,529	-18	730	712	5
Education out of school	1,320	-3	1,317	0	278	278	6
Other SEN provisions and support services	1,668	-68	1,600	-61	115	54	7
Sub total High Needs Block	15,811	-274	15,537	-88	1,975	1,887	
Early Years Block							
Free entitlement to early years education	7,344	-3	7,341	0	0	0	
Other Early Years provisions and support services	245	-19	226	-16	7	-9	8
Sub total Early Years Block	7,589	-22	7,567	-16	7	-9	
Dedicated Schools Grant	0	-93,938	-93,938	-6	0	-6	9
Contribution from BFC	338	0	338	0	0	0	
TOTAL - Schools Budget	100,942	-100,350	592	-156	2,152	1,996	
Note on Unallocated Schools Budget balance:							
Opening unringfenced balance on Schools Budget						-1,577	
2019-20 forecast in-year net variance						1,996	
Net forecast deficit at 31 March 2020						419	

See paragraph 6.10 for an explanation to the notes

CAPITAL MONITORING 2019/20

Dept: People

Children, Young People and Learning

As at 31 July 2019

Cost Centre Description	Approved Budget 2019/20 £000's	Cash Budget 2019/20 £000's	Expenditure to Date £000's	Estimated Outturn 2019/20 £000's	Carry Forward 2019/20 £000's	(Under) / Over Spend £000's	Next Target / Explanatory Note	Current status of the project / notes
SCHOOL PROJECTS								
Amen Corner Primary (South)	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	Requirement to be kept under review	S106 contributions available for up to 10 years from start of housing development
Ascot Heath Schools Amalgamation	685.9	565.9	88.4	565.9	120.0	0.0	Amalgamated school go live from Sep-19	Works deferred from summer 2019, programme to be agreed
College Town n Amalgamation	135.2	135.2	19.2	135.2	0.0	0.0	Completed	Completed
Crown Wood Primary	89.4	89.4	0.0	89.4	0.0	0.0	Completed	Completed.
Great Hollands Primary	181.5	181.5	17.5	181.5	0.0	0.0	Completed	Completed
Holly Spring Infant & Junior Amalgamation	362.9	362.9	50.5	362.9	0.0	0.0	Amalgamated school go live from Sep-19	On site
Jennett's Park CE Primary	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	Completed	Completed
King's Academy Oakwood	388.5	238.5	0.1	238.5	150.0	0.0	New school to go live from Sep-19	New school goes live from Sep-19
Meadow Vale Primary	115.2	115.2	0.0	115.2	0.0	0.0	Completed	Completed.
Owlsmoor Primary	10.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.7	0.0	Completed	Completed
Pines (The) Primary	183.5	125.0	2.4	125.0	58.5	0.0	Complete	Project completion due September 19
TRL Primary	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	Timescale under review	Pupil numbers arising from TRL are low, suggesting slipping programme with developer
Warfield East Primary	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	Requirement to be kept under review	S106 contributions available for up to 10 years from start of housing development
Warfield West Primary	120.0	60.0	0.5	60.0	60.0	0.0	Completed	Completed, ICT, furniture & equipment only in future years
Wooden Hill Primary	470.3	320.3	0.0	320.3	150.0	0.0	In design	Briefing stage - Concept layout in design for stakeholder approval in September 19
Primary	2,769.9	2,193.9	178.6	2,193.9	576.0	0.0		
Easthampstead Park	108.6	108.6	4.8	108.6	0.0	0.0	Complete refurbishment	Completed
Garth Hill College	61.6	61.6	0.0	61.6	0.0	0.0	Completed	Completed
Sandhurst Redevelopment	95.6	95.6	21.1	95.6	0.0	0.0	Masterplan completed	Completed
Secondary	265.8	265.8	25.9	265.8	0.0	0.0		
Binfield Learning Village	1,380.0	960.0	431.8	960.0	420.0	0.0	Secondary opened Sep-18. Primary opening Sep-19.	Secondary opened Sep-18, primary opening from Sep-19
All through	1,380.0	960.0	431.8	960.0	420.0	0.0		
Basic Need Grant for Allocation	3,298.8	298.8	83.1	298.8	3,000.0	0.0	C/f relevant funding	Unallocated grant to be c/f to fund future years' projects
Special Provision Capital Fund	430.9	380.9	0.0	380.9	50.0	0.0	Works in progress	Allocated to schools for facilities provision for special needs pupils
Healthy Pupils Capital Fund	137.2	62.2	0.0	62.2	75.0	0.0	Works in progress	Allocated to schools for facilities provision for healthy schools initiatives
S106 The Pines Security	49.0	49.0	7.4	49.0	0.0	0.0	Complete	Complete
Section 106 Developer Contributions	250.0	250.0	0.0	250.0	0.0	0.0	Completed	Allocated to projects
Capital Related Spend in Schools Revenue (RCCO)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Financial year end review .	Gathering information from schools
Devolved Capital and other funds held by schools	1,272.7	972.7	179.0	972.7	300.0	0.0	Managed by schools	Managed by schools
Other Schools Related Capital	5,438.6	2,013.6	269.5	2,013.6	3,425.0	0.0		
SCHOOL PROJECTS	9,854.3	5,433.3	905.8	5,433.3	4,421.0	0.0		

Percentages

16.7%

100.0%

0.0%

CAPITAL MONITORING 2019/20

Dept: People

Children, Young People and Learning

As at 31 July 2019

Cost Centre Description	Approved Budget 2019/20 £000's	Cash Budget 2019/20 £000's	Expenditure to Date £000's	Estimated Outturn 2019/20 £000's	Carry Forward 2019/20 £000's	(Under) / Over Spend £000's	Next Target / Explanatory Note	Current status of the project / notes
CAPITAL MAINTENANCE / CONDITION								
Planned works	1,589.9	1,514.9	87.3	1,514.9	75.0	0.0	Complete	All projects designed, majority on site for October completion
ROLLING PROGRAMME	1,589.9	1,514.9	87.3	1,514.9	75.0	0.0		

Percentages 5.8% 100.0% 0.0%

OTHER PROJECTS								
CP-IS Project	58.0	58.0	0.0	58.0	0.0	0.0	Complete	Under review
ICT projects	58.0	58.0	0.0	58.0	0.0	0.0		
South Bracknell Youth Centre / 1 Great Hollands Square	76.5	76.5	0.0	76.5	0.0	0.0	Planning for modernisation	Planning for modernisation
S106 North Ascot/TRAX	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	Planning for modernisation	Planning for modernisation
S106 Coopers Hill/NRG	20.4	20.4	0.0	20.4	0.0	0.0	Planning for modernisation	Planning for modernisation
Braccan Walk Youth Centre	765.4	765.4	5.0	765.4	0.0	0.0	Planning for modernisation	Planning for modernisation
Youth Facilities	862.8	862.8	5.0	862.8	0.0	0.0		
Retentions - Non Schools	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
Sandhurst Nursery Relocation	295.1	220.1	0.0	220.1	75.0	0.0	In design	Briefing stage
Education Centre Relocation	258.3	258.3	99.0	258.3	0.0	0.0	Complete	Phase 3 & 4 (Kitchen & Car Park) on site for October completion
Rowans (Fox Hill) Childrens Centre security	110.0	110.0	0.0	110.0	0.0	0.0	Complete	On site for September completion
S106 School Health Worker Accom The Willows	50.0	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	Completed by Christmas	In design
S106 Fox Hill & The Rowans Pre-Schl Additional Accom	31.4	11.4	0.0	11.4	20.0	0.0	In design	Briefing stage
Places for 2 year olds	16.2	16.2	0.0	16.2	0.0	0.0	Complete	Portal delivered. Project for remainder of works in planning stage.
Priestwood Guide Centre	7.1	7.1	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	Complete	Works in train.
Other	768.1	673.1	99.0	673.1	95.0	0.0		
OTHER PROJECTS	1,688.9	1,593.9	104.0	1,593.9	95.0	0.0		

Percentages 6.5% 100.0% 0.0%

TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	13,133.1	8,542.1	1,097.1	8,542.1	4,591.0	0.0		
--------------------------------	----------	---------	---------	---------	---------	-----	--	--

Percentages 12.8% 100.0% 0.0%