Special Educational Needs

Headline High Needs Block Plan

May 2017 – August 2018

Background information

The DfE, with the Education Funding Agency (EFA), allocates the high needs funding block (HNFB): an element of the Direct Schools Grant (DSG) transferred to local authorities (LAs). The purpose of the HNFB is to fund the system to meet the educational needs of all children and young people resident in the LA with SEND high needs. The HNFB allocation for Bracknell Forest is the central focus of this headline plan.

Local authorities should use their high needs budget to provide the most appropriate support package for an individual with SEND in a range of settings, taking account of parental and student choice, whilst avoiding perverse incentives to over-identify high needs pupils and students. High needs funding is also intended to support good quality alternative provision for pupils who cannot receive their education in schools.

Local authorities and institutions should collaborate on all aspects of high needs funding to develop more efficient ways of working and provide better outcomes for children and young people.

Pupils and students who receive support from local authorities' high needs budgets include:

- children aged 0 to 5 with SEND whom the local authority decides to support from its high needs budget; some of these children may have EHC plans, but this is not a requirement
- pupils aged 5 to 18 (inclusive of students who turn 19 on or after 31 August in the academic year in which they study) with high levels of SEND in maintained schools, academies, FE institutions, SPIs or other settings which receive top-up funding from the high needs budget; most, but not all, of these pupils will have either statements of SEN or EHC plans
- those aged 19 to 25 in FE institutions and SPIs who have an EHC plan and require additional support costing over £6,000; if aged 19 to 25 without an EHC assessment or plan, local authorities must not use their high needs budgets to fund these students;
- compulsory school-age pupils placed in AP by local authorities or schools

Bracknell Forest Council's Children's Services, in consultation with the local Schools Forum, commissioned a review to assess the current use of the High Needs Funding Block (HNFB) across their local special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system and to make recommendations for the future. This is in response to projected financial pressures it is anticipated the HNFB budget faces in the future, as well as reviewing the financial robustness of the local system as it adapts to the new statutory arrangements under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the statutory SEND Code of Practice (DfE 2015).

The HNFB Review was carried out between April and November 2016, timed to inform strategic decision-making for 2017-18 onwards. Specifically, the scope for the Review was to report on:

- the effectiveness of the current school SEND system, and externally commissioned provision and how the HNFB is deployed in Targeted Services;
- emerging and future pupil and student demand;
- · existing SEND provision funded from the HNFB and analyse against current and projected levels of need;

- options for better alignment of service provision to demand & potential for savings
- · options for reinvestment of savings in an improved SEND system.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is defined as a child or young person who has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her .

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age,

or

• has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Consideration must be given that this review and subsequent plan focussed on current provision and processes. This is an ideal starting point however, as different strategies are developed for example, the SEN strategy and Learning Improvement Strategy, needs are explored and Government policy evolves together with the views of school staff, Parents/ Carers, children and young people the plan may need to change.

Individual plans for specific activities are maintained within their service area.

Co-production with colleagues, parent/ carers and Children & Young People is a theme throughout all activities.

Specific contextual factors impacting on SEN and HNB this year

There has been an upturn in the volume of requests for EHCP assessments received from schools and parents. This is not out of line with the trends being seen in other authorities, some of which are reporting a significant rise in the amount of statutory assessment requests received.

The delay in announcement following the DfE consultation on school and High Needs Block funding. This has potential implications for the negotiation of contracts with providers and allocation of resources. Whilst announcement has now been made there is insufficient detail to fully check local calculation of allocations

SEND area inspection – can take place at any time with one weeks' notice to the Local Authority. RBWM has recently been inspected and their report published.

Council transformation and the reshaping of CYPL. This will have a significant bearing on structure, systems and processes.

The development of Kings Academy Binfield – there is an SEN resource base identified within the construction however its designation has not been determined. This identification has potential implications on resource allocation until full commitments are known.

Status reporting

RED - There are significant issues with this action. The action requires corrective action and cannot be addressed by activity lead or through the transformation programme .

Amber – An issue is having a negative effect on the action but can be dealt with by the action lead.

Green – The activity is performing to plan

Not started – activity not due to start

Recommendation 1:

Increase the strategic leadership by the school sector across the SEND system

- The views of headteachers are clear: they wish to see changes to the SEND system across the area and are willing to contribute to the strategic leadership of these developments.
- Many Local authorities (LAs) that have successfully adapted SEND provision to better meet need have achieved this through a strong partnership with local schools.
- Joint working with the schools' sector will help ensure there is more consistent provision of support to meet locally identified need.

Focus	Lead(s)	Activity	Status	Success criteria/ by when?
1.1 Establish a Bracknell Forest SEN Strategic Group that is a partnership between nominated head teachers and the council's Department of Children, Young People and Learning (CYPL). The Group should act as champions for a renewed vision for SEN.	SEN/ head teachers	 Invitations to participate sent Date set Initial meeting held ToR agreed including purpose, 	Green	 Group with appropriate representation established by June 17. SEN strategic group can evidence their influence on SEN strategy and policy By Oct 17 and ongoing
1.2 The SEN Strategic Group to have oversight of developing the local vision and a renewed SEND strategy and ensuring its implementation	SEN strategic group	 Engage consultant Develop strategy Consultation on strategy content Business plan created Key elements of strategy identified and reviewed at SEND strategy meetings 	Green	 Group shapes the new strategy. Strategy is agreed and implemented. New strategy in place Oct 17
1.3 Consideration of the appointment of an independent chair person, who has a strategic SEND track record, for the group's first year to ensure the work of the group is driven forward and the vision becomes established locally.	SEN strategic group	 Is an independent chair required? Identify budget Develop terms of engagement including role and remuneration Identify Chair Approach and appoint 	Amber	 Decision taken June 17 Chair appointed Sep 17

Evidence/Achievements/ Next Steps

- o Group now meeting regularly with active participation in shaping the SEND strategy and action plan. This plan will incorporate the actions from the High Needs Block review into the overarching SEN plan.
- o A third of the secondary schools/ academies are now represented on the strategy group

1.2

- o Consultant has been engaged and strategy co-produced with partners. Consultation is due to complete on 29th Sep 17
- This has been discussed with the group and discussion with primary heads association has taken place to 'determine how would you like to be able to answer the following question? How does the LA help identify and monitor children with SEND?' Feedback has been used to shape the strategy and plan.
- o Work continues with the Parent/ Carer forum with regular meetings and polling views.
- Meetings established with youth council to co-produce the SEN strategy.

- o Strategic group agreed that recommendation of an independent chair was appropriate and would enhance the authority and outputs of the group.
- o Potential independent Chair has been identified and showed interest in taking on this role
- o Terms of engagement currently being developed.

Recommendation 2:

Strong, coordinated local authority leadership for the planning of SEND provision, including place numbers, funding and commissioning

- Bracknell Forest Council and specialist providers to work together to adapt current send provision to more closely match demand
- The Review has identified a mis-match between some commissioned specialist places and likely demand, whilst, at the moment, there is no clear mechanism to formally amend specialist place numbers.
- The current scale, resource level and premises for College Hall undermines its viability as a standalone alternative provision that offers sufficient quality of education and learning for its vulnerable students, both those in the PRU and accessing home tuition.
- Bracknell Forest places a significant number of children in out of area placements: 103 pre-16 pupils in 2015/16. Pre-16 placements are considered carefully via the SEND Panel and efforts have resulted in there being a downward trend in numbers placed over the past three years.
- High-cost, out-of-area SEND placements are a major financial commitment: £3,314,895 from the HNFB in 2015-16 and it is not unusual for the 'school career' costs for a student to be in excess of £500,000

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Focus	Lead(s)	Activity	Status	Success Criteria/ By when?
2.1 Kennel Lane School:	Head of SEN	 Kennel Lane School to work with BFC officers to remodel its provision, informed by more detailed modelling of future, medium term SEND demand, in terms of numbers and primary needs. Establish an early assessment resource for reception and year 1 children that offers dual placement for up to two terms, with the pupil's mainstream primary within existing resources. A clear assessment protocol to be developed to ensure that parents understand that the places are not permanent. Kennel Lane School work with BFC officers to review the current, limited, bands for top-up funding for higher need pupils. Conduct an appraisal, involving the Head of SEN and the school's leaders, of the potential to establish a partnership for the school to apply to the EFA to become a special post-16 institution (SPI). 	Amber	 Early opportunities classes, incorporating a specialist nursery in place by Sep 17. A multidisciplinary panel oversees decisions in the development of this and thereafter decisions around entry/exit criteria and specific child placements. Sep 17 KLS/LA agree a broadening of Bands 4&5 to create a more streamlined top-up funding model. February 2018. SPI appraisal complete. Mar 18
2.2. Resource centres:	Head of SEN	 All resource centres should have an outcome- based service level agreement (SLA). Financial models for each resource centre 	Amber	Outcome based contracts in place with each resource centre. Sep 17

		 should developed and available for scrutiny by the SEN strategic group 3. Each resource centre should produce an annual report that demonstrates improving pupil outcomes as a result of placement in the provision. 4. Agreement should be reached with Ranelagh School to close its resource centre that has operated well below capacity for some time. 5. The resource centre at Meadow Vale Primary School should have its designation extended to provide specialist support for primary age children with ASD as well as some of the more complex children with SLCN it currently supports. 6. The RISE@GHC should be closely monitored to ensure that it is providing a service for the nature of pupils anticipated and that projected HNB savings are on track. 7. Rainbow resource will be reviewed with potential relocation following the inadequate judgement at GHPS and subsequent academy order 		 Regular monitoring meetings established for each provision Sep 17 Annual reports completed by each resource detailing finances, pupil profiles/ outcomes, staffing July 18 Agree and implement internal audit recommendations with each resource provision by December 2017. Agreement reached with Ranelagh June 17 Agreement reached with Meadow Vale. Apr 18 RISE@GHC has regular attendance at management group by head of SEN. May 17 RISE@GHC. Review of nature of provision, pupil profiles and finances completed Mar 18 Rainbow resource reviewed and process completed by October 2017.
2.3 College Hall:	Head of Targeted Services	Consider the following options for future PRU and home tuition provision, in consultation with the SEND Strategic Group, either: a. Reach agreement with one local secondary to take over College Hall and its services and remodel and update the alternative provision, in agreement with the LA and in consultation with other local secondary schools	Green	 PRU/ AP offer meets the needs of our schools and CYP. Aug 18 Secondary head teachers briefed on the recommendations made and views sought. May 2017 Secondary head teachers collectively consider recommendations June 17

 b. Reach agreement with all the local secondary schools for the responsibility for alternative provision to be shared between them and to reach a decision about the best arrangements for home tuition; or c. Reach agreement with another provider, such as an outstanding PRU in a neighbouring local authority or with a multi-academy trust, to agree to be commissioned to deliver College Hall's alternative provision. 	 Agreement reached on the principles upon which alternative provision will be delivered Dec 17 Provision needs and potential volumes identified Oct 17 Contracts/ SLA's in place to meet need Apr 18 Explicit pathway with agreed criteria in place in line with agreed principles. Dec 17
 Consult with secondary schools in Bracknell Forest about their responsibilities and role in providing alternative provision. Conduct needs analysis for AP place requirement. Review service functions and if required, incorporate home tuition and outreach SLAs into the over-arching SLA Contract agreed with the identified provider, containing effective monitoring arrangements and an outcome-focused performance management framework. Review the need, capacity and referral pathway for home tuition. The LA, with the support of the SEND Strategic Group, should ensure all mainstream schools are fully meeting their statutory responsibilities 	
for excluded pupils.8. Establish a clearly defined referral process for the PRU, with a pupil having been subject to two permanent exclusions being a pre- requisite.	

2.4 Partnership with the main NMSS providers:	Head of SEN	 Establish a partnership arrangement with each of the two main NMSS providers, High Close School and Chilworth House School, to: a. develop closer management of support for pupils who show the potential to move back to local provision and innovative arrangements piloted, such as what transitionary support could be funded from the NMSS to facilitate this; b. ensure forward planning of future demand for places from Bracknell Forest with these schools; c. agree a framework for payments and service contracts for places taken by pupils from Bracknell Forest. Ensure there are adequate contracts in place for all out-of-area placements and move away from the current "spot purchase" commissioning arrangement. 	Green	 Partnership agreements in place Apr 18 Clear review processes identified for reviewing potential to move back to local provision. Apr 18 Payment framework agreed. Apr 18 Outcome focused contracts in place for all out of area placements. Apr 18
2.5 Approval processes and placement reviews	SEN	 Develop, agree and publish a new approval process for high cost placements with defined threshold and nominated approving officer. Assess all current out-of-area placements in independent and NMSS schools to identify those pupils with the greatest potential for future move back into Bracknell Forest provision. For those with the most potential, there should be early consultation and discussion with parents / carers as part of assessing the time-frame for their child's return to local provision. Social care colleagues should assess all key transition annual reviews (years 9, 11 and 13) to prepare for adulthood and for services to be provided through community social care rather than educational organisations. 	Not Started	 Approval process agreed. Apr 18 Interim approval process agreed with DMT. Aug 17 Officers attend annual reviews and make recommendations to SEN Panel about suitable candidates for reintegration to LA provision. January 2017. Agreement in place with Social Care regarding preparing for adulthood services. Mar 18

2.6 Robust joint commissioning arrangements for SEND should be developed; these should start with joint planning for 14 – 25 year olds	The Head of SEN and the CCG	 Bracknell Forest Council and partners update the existing joint approach to commissioning (BFC 2013). Establish strategic arrangements for joint commissioning initially focussing on joint planning for all young people with an ECHP or statement from age 14, as learners move towards adulthood. Progress towards an EHCP should be monitored and quality assured by a strategic joint commissioning body with representation from health, education and social care. Involvement of the young person and their parents or carers throughout the process 	 Updated framework developed/ updated by approaching adulthood panel and agreed by December 2017. Strategic group provides governance to EHCP process by Jan 18
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Achievements/ Next Steps

2.1

- A successful pilot involving 5 Reception pupils who availed of 'Early opportunities' places in KLS' Foundation Stage department took place in 2016-17 academic year. 4 pupils remaining at KLS and will have an EHCP; one is able to return to his designated primary school for year 1.
- o There remains a strong commitment from the LA and KLS to the principle of the Early Opportunities places.
- A group consisting of professionals from the LA (e.g. SEN, Early Help, EPS), the CDC, health (e.g. SALT) and KLS will be set up to drive forward the EO classes and the concept of a specialist nursery at KLS.
- Key issue to be addressed is the funding of places and developing a robust SLA between the LA and the school. KLS currently do not agree that £5000 additional top up per place is sufficient funding despite local and national indicators to the contrary.
- Mazars audit highlighted that KLS funding was agreed by schools forum in Mar 13 but without a firm basis for the resource allocation and needs to be reviewed. This will be incorporated into a funding agreement.

- o Mazars have completed a full audit of all BFC SEN Resource provisions. A limited assurance opinion was expressed and a full action plan is now being developed
- This plan will be considered by the SEN strategic group.
- o Ranelagh resource unit has now been closed
- There have been initial discussions with the Head of Meadowvale to discuss broadening the criteria for the SALT resource. Outcome of the location of Rainbow resource may influence this.
- o The Head of SEN attends The Rise management Board. Challenges the resource faces have been brought to the attention of senior leaders/management board at Garth Hill College this year. There will be a sub-group of the management board established to deal with issues around staffing, integration of pupils into the main site and how the criteria for the resource can be adapted. July 17
- Rainbow resource has been relocated to Meadowvale Primary School from Great Hollands following a competitive procurement process. The resource has started the term well and is located in a separate designated area within the school.

2.3

- o Secondary head teachers briefed on the outcome of the review and the recommendations made.
- o Initial needs analysis based on current trend of PRU admissions completed. Needs analysis from schools to be undertaken
- o Positive dialogue with management and management committee at the PRU regarding potential reshaping of provision
- Referral pathway to the PRU agreed as part of Fair Access Protocol. Clear statement within the protocol that Permanent Exclusion does not necessitate a place at the PRU

- o In November 2016 the LA negotiated per pupil discounts with Chilworth House
- o Attendance at Annual Reviews prioritised by the SEN team with a view to ensuring that they are correctly placed and with a view to possible return to BFC
- 2.5 to be addressed
- 2.6 to be addressed
 - o CCG are recruiting to a new post of Childrens commissioning lead following the SEND inspection of RBWM

Recommendation 3:

Greater coherence to the SEND system, designed with the child's need at the centre

- mapping to identify support that schools might ask BFC to commission on their behalf and support they might commission, or provide, themselves.
- The view of the Review team is that the HNFB element for the ASSC service should remain the same and that traded provision facilitates an extension of the service, whilst the HNFB funding for Support for Learning should gradually be phased out
- As a result of this recommendation and focus areas, mainstream schools will need to increasingly meet the costs of low to medium level support for pupils on SEN support, from their SEND delegated funding.

Focus	Lead(s)	Activity	Status	Milestones/ Success Criteria
3.1 Update the Local Offer. This should form part of establishing a strong continuum of support for children and young people and their families.	SEN	Map the support pathways for each major SEND category.	Green	 FIS to work with SEN to complete mapping exercise. Sep 17. Information to be consulted on with parent/carer forum by Oct 17 Place on LO website by November 2017.
3.2 Review longstanding SEND support contracts	Head of Targeted Services	 The contracts for SALT, OT and sensory support be revised to be worded on a performance basis and more closely monitored, with a clear recharge facility at the end of the year if the level of service varies from what was originally commissioned. The funded provision for SALT and sensory impairment should be reduced and be primarily 	Green Not Started	 SALT, OT and Sensory contract contain outcome related measures with termly reporting. Mar 18 Impact analysis undertaken to ascertain potential perverse incentives of reducing funded provision
		for pupils with moderate to severe needs. 3. Establish a purchasing framework for schools to commission and fund additional SALT and sensory impairment support on an annual basis.	Not started	for SALT Mar 18
3.3 Establish Trading arrangements for ASSC and Support for Learning, aligned with others being developed by BFC.	Head of Targeted Services	 Clearly define the traded service including core services for high needs children attending mainstream schools or resource centres. Each traded service should set out costed support package options that schools can 	Amber	SLA's in place. Sep 17

	choose to sign up to annually.	

Achievements/ Next Steps

3.1

- Mapping exercise completed
- o Initial views of Parent/ carers sought. This is being further developed
- Partners and suppliers have updated their offer

3.2

- o Recharge in place with refund of £14k from the Sensory consortium for 16 17
- o Regular monitoring meetings for early years SALT provision in place
- o Regular monitoring meetings for school and resource provision now established.
- o There is an emerging training need being identified in meeting the low level SALT needs of our young people
- SEND area inspections have praised the model of provision that we currently have in numerous reports. This presents a risk if we change this and is currently being explored.

- ASSC and SfL SLA's have been redrafted to include core element and costed support package element. This will form a suite of SLA's as part of CYPL transformation
- Schools entered into three year SLA's April 2016. No significant changes to the costs or provision are being made to these services until April 19 following consultation with schools
- The redrafted SLA's will be issued to schools before Christmas as that is their opportunity to terminate an agreement.
- o The redrafted SLA's identify some additional services that will be offered to further meet the needs of young people and raise revenue

Recommendation 4:

A data-rich SEND system that understands the difference it is making

- Good quality, reliable data is necessary to underpin developments across the renewed SEND system. This should underpin the Council's understanding of the performance of the system and processes.
- Achieve greater transparency and connectivity between data held by teams in the Department and with other partner organisations.

Focus	Lead(s)	Activity	Status	Success criteria/ By when?
4.1 Establish a core SEND dataset	SEN	 Identify key aspects for the dataset Identify reliable recurring sources for the data collection Populate the dataset Promote the dataset Incorporate into DMT/ SEN strategy group monitoring 	Amber	Core data set established. Aug 17
4.2 Ensure that data about pupils assessed at SEN support, received from schools as part of their school census reporting, is routinely collated alongside data gathered about children and young people with statements and EHCPs for inclusion in the core dataset.	SEN/ Performance Team	Ensure core dataset is applied to SEN support pupils	Amber	 SEN and performance team establish a process for amalgamating the data. Aug 17. Dataset in place. Dec 17
4.3 Ensure financial reports about pupil top-ups and out of area funding are compiled by academic year, calendar year (linked to school census), as well as financial year and by place numbers and full costs, as well as FTE and pro-rata costs.	SEN/ Finance	 Analyse current spreadsheet Develop spreadsheet Identify key aspects for reporting Produce reports for the governance group 	Green	Financial reports routinely available. Jun17
4.4 Develop forecasting and cost projections to inform future send decision-making	Pupil Place planning/ SEN	 The existing BFC platform for modelling future demand for school places be extended to include modelling scenarios for the potential future demand for SEND places for up to ten years in the future. The assumptions for future modelling are reassessed annually against the improved SEND data. In particular, more granular, high 	Amber	SEN/ AP place planning is incorporated into pupil forecasting. Oct 17

needs cost projections should be developed	
and projections improved for post-19	

Achievements/ Next Steps

4.1

- Dataset identified
- o Business Intelligence review underway and CYPL is integral to the proposed changes
- o Regular collation, analysis and reporting remains an issue until the BI review is complete and a performance team established
- We currently commission MIME to provide a data set which gives regular data information against the SEND dataset

4.2

- The dataset is identified
- Regular collation, analysis and reporting remains an issue until the BI review is complete and a performance team established

4.3

- Spreadsheet adjusted by education finance can now produce reports of this specificity in respect of EHCP data.
- A reporting schedule needs to be developed for DMT and SEN governance arrangements

4.4

o Initial discussions undertaken with school sufficiency team. It is felt that with current data in the four areas of SEN together with population trend data SEN forecasting can be incorporated into place planning. A modelling exercise is taking place this term to test the forecasting projections