



Schools Forum

Thursday 14 March 2024

Via MS Teams

Schools Forum online meeting

- In order to facilitate the smooth operation of the meeting:
- Please mute your microphones when not speaking
- Officers will briefly present their reports, using a PowerPoint presentation to get across the key aspects
- Use the 'Raise your hand' facility if you would like to raise a question or comment 
- Alternatively use 'Chat' to advise the Chair that you would like to speak 
- Turn off your video if bandwidth becomes an issue
- Please note that this meeting is being recorded and will be posted on YouTube

Paper A
Minutes and Matters Arising
11 January 2024
(Bill Dowell)

Paper B

New Childcare offers – Revenue and Capital funding (Neville Ward)

New Childcare Offers

A summary of:

- Wraparound childcare grant funding
- New entitlement and wraparound capital grant funding
- Increases to free EY entitlement funding
- Delivery Support Grant



Paper C
Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring
(Stephen Waters)

Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2023-24

- The 2023-24 forecast outturn position for the DSG is a £3.929m in-year deficit.
- This deficit needs to be added to the £2.181m DSG surplus carried forward from 2022-23 resulting in a forecast cumulative DSG deficit of £1.748m

	£ m'
DSG Surplus carried forward from 2022-23	(2.181)
Forecast Outturn 2023-24	3.929
DSG deficit to be carried forward into 2024-25	1.748

- 2023-24 forecast outturn by block:

	2023-24 DSG Allocation £ m'	2023-24 Forecast Expenditure £ m'	2023-24 Forecast Variance £ m'
Early Years Block	17.868	18.137	0.270
Centrally controlled or retained High Needs Block	29.100	32.333	3.232
Additional High Needs Funding	1.644	1.644	-
Central Schools Services Block	2.378	2.426	0.048
De-Delegated Items from Schools Block	0.451	0.480	0.029
School Growth Fund from Schools Block	0.303	0.654	0.351
Total	51.745	55.674	3.929

Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2023-24

Early Years Block

- The forecast outturn position for the Early Years Block is showing a £0.270m overspend against a provisional budget of £17.868m.
- Forecast pressure of £0.332m on the SEND Support against a budget set of £0.600m. The demand experienced on this budget has grown in recent years with Shropshire seeing a growing number of children presenting with a range of development and emotional difficulties which require support.
- This position on the Early Years budget is provisional and could change once the final 2023-24 Early Years DSG allocation is published in July 2024.

High Needs Block

- The forecast outturn position for the High Needs Block is an in-year deficit of £3.232m against a centrally controlled High Needs Budget of £29.100m. This budget excludes the place funding element of the High Needs Block totalling £9.412m.

Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2023-24

High Needs Block

High Needs Budget Area	2021-22 Outturn £ m'	2022-23 Outturn £ m'	2023-24 Forecast £ m'	2023-24 Variance £ m'	Reason for Variance
Post 16 FE College Placements	1.844	1.662	1.606	- 0.554	Decrease in expenditure of £0.056m compared to 2022-23 outturn position. The number of EHC Plans in the 16-25 age range, indicates that the % increase in EHC plans is increasing significantly so you would expect large expenditure growth in this budget area. Instead, there is a higher proportion of post 16 pupils attending Independent Special Schools or independent alternative providers
Independent Providers	6.666	8.466	13.083	3.095	Expenditure for 2023-24 is forecasting a 55% increase which was higher than anticipated. The overspend relates to the Independent Special Schools budget where we have seen a large increase in numbers since September. The average termly cost of a placement has also increased in 2023-24 reflecting price inflationary pressures, plus demand for additional staffing support (LSA's). More frequent use of independent alternative providers, particularly in relation to post 16 as well as an increase in numbers attending out of county, independent special schools
% Increase in Independent Providers Expenditure		27.0%	54.5%		Higher % increase than anticipated due to increased demand for this type of placement

Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2023-24

High Needs Block

- **Independent Special Schools**
- Increase in demand shown by increase in numbers
- Increase in average termly cost per placement (both due to price inflation pressures and additional staffing support – increasing complexity). Typical placement cost at our most frequently used provider is £60,000 to £72,000 per annum which is over double the cost of a Shropshire Special School.
- Increase in value of, and number of contributions to complex, joint funded placements with social care and the Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- **Top Up Funding to Special Schools**
- A Forecast overspend £0.199m relates to top-up funding paid to Shropshire's special schools. 3 Special Schools have received significantly more top-up funding since the start of the academic year
- The forecast expenditure of £5.037m on top-up funding to Shropshire special schools is higher than previously forecast

Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2023-24

High Needs Block

- **Top Up Funding to Mainstream Schools**
- A Forecast overspend of £0.226m relates to top-up funding paid to mainstream schools where forecast expenditure totals £5.926m in 2023-24. An increase in demand for top-up funding in mainstream settings mirrors the national picture. This could be attributed to a growth in new EHC plans and Annual Reviews completed through the recovery plan work. This figures include the Graduation Support Pathway payments as well as top-up funding.
- **SEN Support Services**
- There is a forecast overspend of £0.665m against this budget totalling £1.898m in 2023-24. The majority of the overspend relates to one-off staffing overspends where additional staff have been employed, sometimes as agency workers to support the wider increase in demand.
- There is also a pressure identified of £0.067m on the Speech & Language Therapy team in relation to use of external therapists reflecting increase in demand.

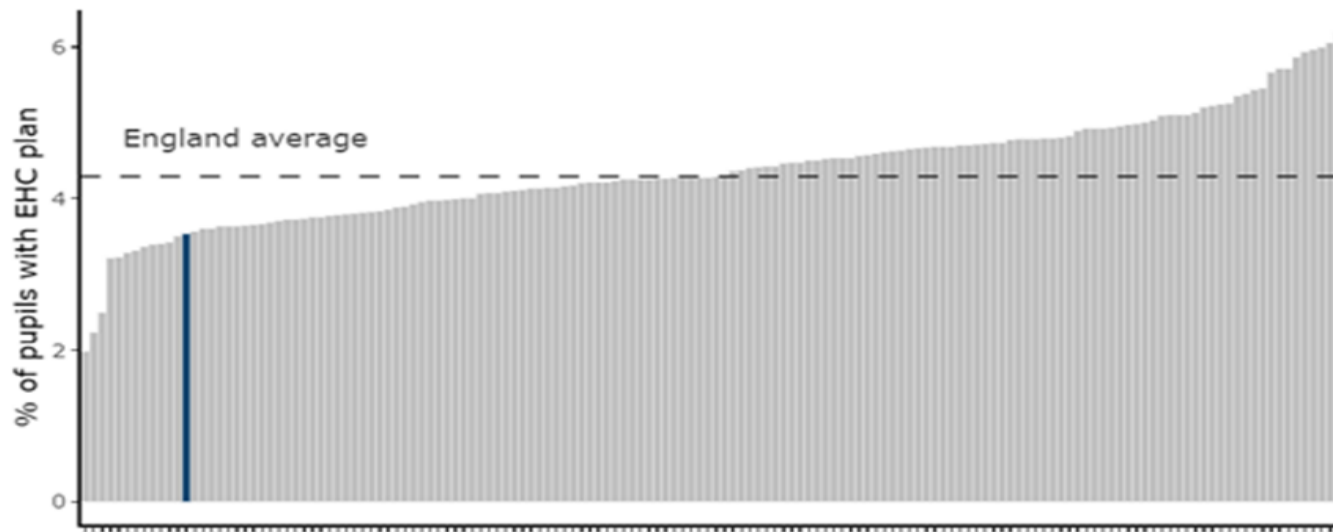
Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2023-24

Summary

- The Council's DSG financial position is forecast to go from a cumulative surplus carried forward figure of £2.181m at the start of this financial year to a cumulative deficit of £1.748m at the end of this financial year
- The 2024-25 provisional High Needs Block DSG allocation (before deductions) has been published. Shropshire's allocation is £42.188m representing a 5% increase compared to the 2023-24 allocation of £40.156m. Given that expenditure in 2023-24 on the High Needs Block is forecast to increase by 24% or £8.534m compared to the 2022-23 figure of £34.854m, it can be seen that future expenditure growth is likely to outstrip future growth in High Needs Block DSG allocations.
- The High Needs Block DSG 3 year forecasting exercise undertaken in early 2023 forecasted that the Council would move to a DSG deficit position due to this shortfall in funding relative to increase in expenditure. The latest 3 year forecast is currently being worked up with a view to sharing detailed assumptions around each expenditure line at the next Schools Forum meeting.

Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2023-24

The chart below identifies the percentage of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools using national information shared via the SEND and AP Change Programme. This illustrates the opportunity to support mainstream schools to successfully meet a greater proportion of SEND in mainstream provision. (% of pupils in mainstream educational settings who have SEN, by SEN provision type) within Shropshire (source: local inclusion dashboard; SEN provision type for comparison: EHCP)



Shropshire is ranked 138th, out of 150 LAs in 2022/23

Local Authority ■ Other LA ■ Shropshire

[DBV in SEND | Insights by Charles Sladdin - Issue
Insights - DBV in SEND](#)

What the diagnostics to date are telling us about how outcomes for children and young people with SEND can be improved.



Through the diagnostics carried out so far, the evidence gathered suggests that there are three most common and impactful thematic ways in which outcomes for children and young people with SEND can be improved by local areas whilst working towards financial sustainability (reducing unmitigated growth of spend). The themes are easy to summarise but delivering these improvements will require complex, system wide transformation with support from all local partners.

The thematic opportunities for improvement include:

1. Ensuring that a greater proportion of children with SEND receive appropriate special educational support for their needs in their mainstream schools through ordinarily available provision.
2. Ensuring that children are placed appropriately in local special schools and receive high quality, effective provision.
3. Ensuring that EHC plans deliver effective outcomes, and that an increasing number of post-16 young people with SEND are able to continue into further education, employment or training through ordinarily available provision.

These may not be the three priority opportunities for improvement in every single local area, but the evidence suggests that these three opportunities are the common, high magnitude opportunities to improve services for children with SEND.



SEND Sufficiency update (Karen Levell & Andy Nicholls)

SEND and AP

the Vision:

“Shropshire children and young people with SEND to be healthy, happy and safe, and able to achieve their potential to lead a fulfilling life.

***We want them to have, and to expect, the same opportunities in life as other children and young people.
We want them to thrive and live their best life.”***



***To develop sufficient local, high
quality and inclusive provision
across the system***

Actions taken so far:

- Mapping
- Met with DFE
- Visited existing hubs
- Expressions of interests
- Shared with SEND Sufficiency Group

Next Steps:

- Identify new need (type and location)
- Create scoring system for hub Expression of Interests
- Visit hubs / arrange presentations
- Map hubs to location / need
- Meet with DFE
- Commission works as necessary

SEND Sufficiency and Funding Reference Group (SSFRG)

- Executive leaders across maintained schools/Federations, MATs and SATs, including specialist providers
- Existing links - members of SEND and AP Partnership Board, SEND Hub providers, special school providers, etc...
- Expertise and knowledge – evidence-based approach combined with local knowledge across multiple systems (*health and social care will also be involved*)
- Shown interest and commitment in promoting inclusive practice

SSFRG intended outcomes:

- Identify the opportunities to build capacity and confidence of the mainstream workforce, along with parents and CYP, to enable a greater proportion of CYP's needs to be successfully met in mainstream schools through ordinarily available provision (SOAP).
- To develop a continuum of SEND (and AP) provision from mainstream to the most complex special.
- To develop a sufficiency plan to enable CYP to access the right provision, at the right time, and as local to them as possible so that CYP can be appropriately placed in local, high quality and effective state funded provision.
- To develop a sustainable funding model (mainstream to special) that successfully enables the continuum of provision to operate across Shropshire and removes the need for almost all INMSS provision.



Paper D
Schools Forum Work Programme &
Membership
(Jo Jones)

Meeting	Report
13 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Year High Needs Forecast and Draft DSG Recovery Plan • Updated Dedicated Schools Grant 2024-25 • Growth Fund Allocations 2023-24 and 2024-25 • Early Years Block Allocations 2023-24 and 2024-25 • Final Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2023-34
12 September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Dedicated Schools Grant update 2023-24 • Updated Dedicated Schools Grant 2024-25 • Schools Revenue Funding Update 2025-26 • Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2024-25
7 November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Retention of Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2025 • Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2024-25
5 December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Funding Arrangements 2025-26 • Consultation on the Central retention of Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2025 • Central Schools Services Block 2024-25
9 January 2025 (provisional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extraordinary meeting if needed to make decisions on APT submission
23 January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Revenue Funding Settlement 2025-26 • Shropshire Schools Forum Constitution
20 March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2024-25 • High Needs Block 3 Year forecasting

Schools Forum future dates

Thursday 13 June 2024	8.30 – 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 12 September 2024	8.30 – 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 7 November 2024	8.30 – 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 5 December 2024	8.30 – 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 9 January 2025 (Provisional)	8.30 – 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 23 January 2025	8.30 – 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 20 March 2025	8.30 – 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams
Thursday 19 June 2025	8.30 – 10.30	Microsoft (MS) Teams



Shropshire
Council

Communications (Bill Dowell)