

SEND Funding Task & Finish Group

Notes of key points raised at the meeting held on 19 November 2014 at Severdale Specialist Academy.

In attendance

Chris Davies, Gwyneth Evans, Tim Baker, Julia Dean, Robin Wilson, Phil Wilson, Rob Carlyle, Janice Stackhouse, Kay Redknap, Yvette McDaniel, Jo Humphreys (attended part way though meeting)

1. Apologies were received from Ruth Thomas and Paul Nicholson.
2. Introductions and welcomes were provided.
3. Phil was unanimously voted as chair.
4. The Terms of Reference were distributed for comment:
 - It was noted that there was no secondary headteacher representative nominated from Schools Forum
 - A secondary governor should also be a group member
 - A SEN hub leader should also be on the group
 - The group membership omitted the TMBSS headteacher

Action: Phil to secure representation from secondary headteacher and governor groups.

Action: Janice to contact the SEN hub leader about joining the group.

The Terms of Reference for the Task & Finish Group were agreed.

5. Papers were handed out showing the current high needs block budgets as per the Section 251 reporting layout.
Gwyneth took the group through the detailed breakdown of the funding in the high needs block.
It was noted that commissioned places, though funded from the high needs block, is shown on the Section 251 statement under individual Schools Block funding (£5.396m).
The cost of home to school transport for pupils attending specialist and AP is an additional cost that is not funded through the high needs block.
6. There was a group discussion of the increased complexity of need/behaviour issues/violent behaviour and drug and alcohol issues among the pupils now attending special schools, AP and maintained schools.

The group felt that the following should be included with the consultation response:

- Sparsity
- Transport costs
- Demography reducing but specialist provision increasing
- Increased complexity of need and behaviour issues
- Reduction in funding from external organisations.

The West Midlands SEN Officer Group will be submitting a response to the call for evidence on SEND funding from the Department for Education (DfE).

Action: Group members to gather intelligence, information and data from the regional and national representative groups they are part of or attend to help inform the future work of the Task & Finish Group.

7. The group noted the Schools Forum report that Chris Davies had presented to Schools Forum on 18 September 2014. There would be no increase to banding provision funding for 2015-16 but increased pupil numbers would be fully funded.
8. The group considered the DfE call for evidence paper *SEND funding: longer-term changes* which has a response date of 27 February 2015. The group agreed that it was important that Shropshire made a comprehensive response to inform the national thinking and to set out the Shropshire context.
Action: All group members to consider the 18 questions in the DfE paper and to feed any responses through to Phil who will collate the collective responses for consideration by the group at their meeting in January 2015.
9. The group would like a Shropshire representative to attend the data and analyses seminars in January 2015.
Action: Phil to contact ISOS Partnership research to register our interest.
10. Next meeting will be held on the 14 January 2015 at Severndale Specialist Academy 2.00pm to 4.00pm.
Action: Group members to diary the meeting.
Action: Phil to report to Schools Forum on 27 November 2014 on the group's first meeting.