

7. HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

Schools Forum – November 2019



SEND UPDATE

HIGH NEEDS BLOCK REPORT:

BUDGET SETTING 2020/21

Per the Schools Funding update; the High Needs Block is due to increase by £3.881m in 2020/21 from £30.166m to £34.048m. This is a 13% increase, gains were capped at 17%.

Whilst this funding is very welcome we need to consider:

- The High Needs Block overspend is currently forecast at £1.149m; this is an increase of £0.561m (48%) on the outturn variance from the previous year. If we apply a similar uplift next year we could need £1.700m just to meet our needs for one year. This will include continuing demand from both higher banding levels and the increase in Post 16 uptake.
- This funding hasn't been guaranteed beyond a year, so consideration would be needed about the sustainability of any decisions to utilise the funding.
- We know we will have increasing pressures beyond 2020/21, especially in Post 16 (expected additional pressure of approximately £300k each year) and we expect the number of EHCP pupils and their level of need to continue to increase. We also will have the new free school coming in to effect, possibly from 2021/22, with initial estimates that this will have an impact of £200k a year on the High Needs Block when fully operational.

Below is a breakdown of the High Needs Block allocation formula for 2020/21. There has been no change on the basic entitlement factor, or historic spend factor. All other factors have been increased including an extra £2m through the population factor.

Select LA name
Region
LA code

Plymouth
SOUTH WEST
879

<u>(A) Basic entitlement factor (8%)</u>
<u>(B) Historic spend factor (38%)</u>
<u>(C) Population factor (23%)</u>
<u>(D) FSM factor (6%)</u>
<u>(E) IDACI factor (6%)</u>
<u>(F) Bad health factor (4%)</u>
<u>(G) Disability factor (5%)</u>
<u>(H) KS2 low attainment factor (4%)</u>
<u>(I) KS4 low attainment factor (4%)</u>
<u>(J) Funding floor factor (0%)</u>
<u>(K) Hospital education funding (2%)</u>
<u>NFF allocation before provisional import/export adjustment (100%)</u>
<u>(L) Import/export adjustment (provisional) (1.4%)</u>
<u>2020-21 high needs NFF provisional allocation before limit on gains</u>

£2,612,000
£12,706,156
£7,852,262
£1,932,078
£1,963,371
£1,401,043
£1,781,129
£1,326,197
£1,334,940
£0
£682,841
£33,592,015
£456,000
£34,048,015

2020-21 high needs NFF provisional allocation after calculation of gain on 2019-20 baseline up to 17% per head

£34,048,015

2019/20 BUDGET MONITORING

The current forecast for the High Needs Block overspend in 2019/20 is £1.149m, the previous forecast at the beginning of the financial year was £0.850m.

The following are the main areas where we are experiencing overspends (more detail in appendix 7.1).

Special School – Top Up Funding – adverse variances £0.567m and £0.173m

(expected overspend at budget setting £0.352m)

- The increase due to additional places purchased in year and the associated top-up funding is approximately. £0.266m. Some of this increase is offset by additional top-up funding recovered from other Local Authorities.
- The profile of banding continues to move quickly towards higher bands; the table below has been updated with the current profile. This reflects the increased complexity and need of special school pupils.

	Band 6	%	Band 7	%	Band 8	%	Band 8+	%
Apr-16	234	36%	226	35%	163	25%	22	3%
Apr-17	224	34%	235	36%	170	26%	26	3%
Budget Setting 18/19	202	31%	249	38%	180	28%	22	4%
Apr-18	199	31%	254	39%	176	27%	21	3%
Jul-18	188	29%	256	39%	189	29%	26	3%
Sep-18	164	25%	264	41%	199	31%	24	4%
Budget Setting 19/20	170	25%	273	41%	200	30%	26	4%
Apr-19	161	24%	273	41%	207	31%	26	4%
Oct-19	139	21%	271	41%	233	35%	26	4%

- The net impact of a drop of 31 Band 6's and an increase of 33 Band 8's is £0.480m. Again, some of this increase is offset by additional income from other Local Authorities. A banding moderation exercise has been planned to provide assurance over banding levels.

Alternative Provision – adverse variance £0.377m

- In the first 5 months of the 2018/19 FY ACE had an average of 6 primary pupils, the comparative number this year is 19 primary pupils. These pupils are sole registered with ACE. Impact approx. £0.286m full year. The tables below shows the current outcomes for the 19 primary pupils who were at ACE in April, and the length of time the current cohort have been at ACE.

- There has been a 6% increase in the average cost of a bespoke package, but no significant increase in the number of bespoke packages for secondary pupils, compared to same period in the previous year. This suggests that the introduction of single banded funding has not resulted on an increase in Bespoke requests. Impact approx: £0.030m
- In the first 5 months of the 2018/19 FY ACE had an average of 142 standard banded pupils, the comparative number this year is 150 primary pupils. Impact approx: £0.050m

Post 16 – total adverse variance £0.344m

(expected overspend at budget setting £0.175m)

- **FE Colleges:** City College current cohort forecast is £0.177m higher than forecast at budget setting. Commissioning work is underway to reduce this figure. Additional costs incurred relating to an FE pupil from prior year, not previously expected £0.020m.
- **Post 16 Providers:** in line with expected overspend at budget setting: £0.150m

There are some favourable variances that offset these large variations, mainly,

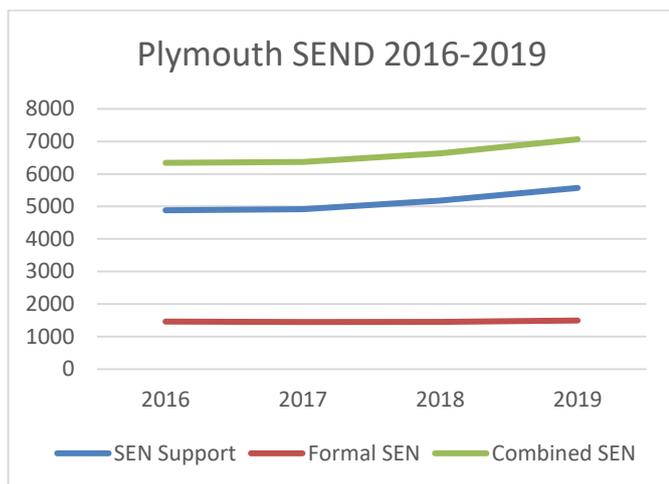
- Additional top-up recovery from other Local Authorities (£0.106m)
- Additional income through import/export adjustment (£0.177m)
- One-off in year savings in SEND services (£0.188m)

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING: REVIEW OF THE CURRENT POSITION

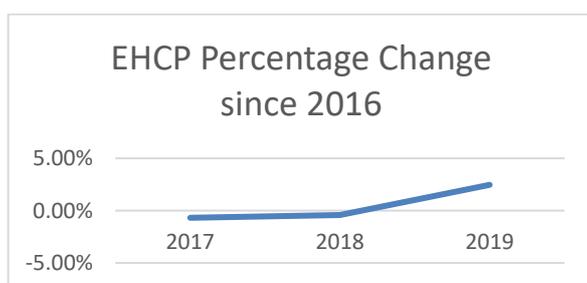
During the summer months, we have undertaken a review of the current position regarding capacity to deliver and maintain Education, Health and Care Plans in the City. This report brings some key findings for consideration by Schools Forum and a recommendation around further work.

Overall data:

When considering the School Census data, we are seeing an overall increase in the number of **school age (5-16 years)** children being identified as SEN Support. We note that the school-age cohort of children is has been remaining fairly static. However, it is anticipated that we are going to see an increase in the number of requests for Education, Health and Care assessments commensurate with the increase in the SEN support population.



In September 2019 we reached a position of approximately 2100 students with EHC Plans. When considering the position for **Education, Health and Care Plans for children and young people from 0-25 years old**, the data shows a more than 2.5% increase in the number of plans over the past year. This is predominantly due to the fact that Education, Health and Care Plans are remaining in place beyond 16 years old and therefore there is a cumulative growth in the number.



Plymouth's data is reflective of the national picture. Plymouth commenced the SEND Reform Programme in 2014 with a practice of using statutory plans at a higher rate for pupils with SEND. As a result we initially did not see a significant rise in the rate of new requests. We see other local areas now more aligned to Plymouth's position in the percentage of children and young people who have a statutory plan. However, we now anticipate that the rate of the rise in EHCP numbers will be at the same pace as other local areas, now that the gap has closed. While we need to plan for the increase in the number of children with EHCP's, the effectiveness of planning for children identified as SEN Support is a linked priority for the City regarding early identification and response to children with SEND.

Consideration has been given to the likely 3 year trajectory regarding the number of children and young people with EHCPs on the basis of current activity. This estimation is shown in the chart below.

Year	Number of EHCPs	Increase %
Dec 2017	1903	
Dec 2018	2024	6.35%
Oct 30 th 2019	2170	7.2%
December 2020	2278	Presumed 5%

December 2021	2392	Presumed 5%
December 2022	2511	Presumed 5%

Data for young people aged 16-25:

The largest increase in numbers of students with EHCPs that the LA maintain are in the 16–25 age range. As of September 2019, this will be approximately 850 out of 2050 EHCPs. This reflects the national picture in terms of proportion.

The number of requests for year 11 and Post 16 students have steadily increased and the number of Post 16 students in independent service providers, rather than ‘mainstream’ post 16 education has risen from 14 in 2014/2015 to nearly 100 last academic year.

The post 16 workload has increased each year as prior to the SEND Reforms, the majority of children with a Statement of SEN would have had the statements ceased at 16 years old. A limited number would have continued into post 16.

Although EHC Plans are not expected to continue until a student’s 26th birthday, they cannot be ceased until a student is no longer in education or has met their outcomes, and this is with their agreement.

0-25 SEND Team:

In June 2018 Schools Forums agreed the business case for the current 0-25 SEND Team establishment. It maintained a permanent enhanced level of staffing when the SEND Implementation Grant came to an end in March 2019. With agreement of Schools Forum, the team established:

I Team manager	4 x EHCP Officers (currently 3.6, 0.4 due to start Oct 2019) I Reviewing Officer
I Caseworker Supervisor	4.5 Caseworkers (I full time post currently vacant) I Apprentice

The roles profiles were updated at this point and are appropriate for the tasks required to fulfil the functions set out in the Code of Practice.

With the recent review of the current position, there is now a concern that there has not been an increase in the establishment commensurate with the increase in the number of EHC assessments being undertaken and EHC Plans being maintained.

Current pressures:

a. Timeliness of assessments

In 2018 53 out of 131 EHC assessments were completed within the 20 week timescale, equating to 47.5%. This was a significant drop in timeliness from previous years since the new code, which has been around 60 - 65%. An analysis of the reasons for this drop has been undertaken and of particular note, we were concerned about the number of requests for assessment where the summer holiday break has impacted timeliness being achieved due to school staff, and other professionals not being available to submit the required information in a timely way. This was raised in the SENCO briefing in order to raise awareness of the risk and the action requested.

Unfortunately, this summer we have seen an increase in the number of requests for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment being made in the late summer term. There is concern regarding how this may impact on the City’s position regarding timeliness in the 2019 SEND data set.

b. Annual reviews

As a City, there is a growing need to improve the quality the cycle of annual reviews for children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans. The SEND Steering Group has a multi-agency working group reviewing the tools and practice guidance and this is being implemented throughout this year. This work will include consideration of how the EHAT can align to EHCP review processes (as requested at Schools Forum in June 2019).

Recommendation:

In view of the increasing numbers of children and young people with EHCPs, and the data regarding the overall growth in the overall SEND population, there is a need to review the capacity within the 0-25 SEND Team to support and process the system of annual reviews, as well as undertake the amendments now being required to plans in a timely way.

A business case will be prepared to consider the current staffing requirement to be able to meet the increasing demands associated with Education, Health and Care assessment and planning in order that Schools Forum can consider the High Needs Block allocation.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROVISION UPDATE:

Over the summer term and this term the Local Authority have been working with all the schools to review existing provision and consider a way forward and new models of delivery for alternative education provision in the city.

A working group was established to produce a report to agree the following three areas of work moving forward :-

Primary Phase provision – the group agreed that to reduce the number of children being excluded from school the model of support needed to be based on an early intervention nurturing model. A working group has been established to move forward with the plan to be ready to come back to Schools forum for agreement early 2020

Secondary Phase provision- the group agreed that a similar process was required for the secondary age group and the proposal will also come to Schools Forum for agreement early in 2020.

Quality Assurance Framework – to support schools who use independent providers to deliver alternative education provision the local Authority will, working with schools, develop a framework where all due diligence checks will have been carried out and the school will issue SLAs for individual pupils

Medical Needs S 19 – a small working group has been established to consider a new model of delivery for the community based offer for pupils who are not able to attend school due to their medical needs. A paper will come to Schools forum early in 2020 for agreement.

Next steps:

Proposals regarding Alternative Education Provision, and the potential implications for the High Needs Block will be presented to Schools Forum at the February meeting.

BUDGET MODELLING GROUP 2019/20

The proposed work schedule for Budget Modelling Group is below. The work programme takes account of the High Needs Block funding announcements and the need for Plymouth to consider the potential impact of this.

Proposed Meeting Date	Task
Schools Forum - 6 November 2019	Proposed BMG work plan to be discussed at Schools Forum and representation agreed.
BMG 1 – 25 November – 10:30am	<p>Review High Needs Block position</p> <p>Consideration of previous HNB themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banding specifications • Continuum of top up banding • AEP demand • Support for transitions <p>Task and Finish work will be agreed following discussion</p>
Schools Forum - 11 December 2019	
Schools forum - 15 January 2020	Progress report only if required as the purpose of this schools forum in budget setting
BMG 2 – 27 January 2019 – 10:30am	<p>Review of AEP proposals and HNB implications</p> <p>Band 8+ audits – review and recommendations</p> <p>Agree workplan for review of support centre funding</p>
Schools Forum – 26 February	<p>Report back on</p> <p>Band 8+ audit</p> <p>AEP</p>
BMG 3 – 23 March 2019 – 10:30am	<p>T&F feedback HNB review (TBC)</p> <p>Support centre funding review and recommendations</p>
BMG 4 – 7 May 2019	<p>T&F feedback HNB review (TBC)</p> <p>Post 16 progress review</p> <p>Prepare summative report of BMG activity</p>
Schools Forum- 10 June	Report back on proposals following HNB review

