

9.1 HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

Schools Forum – June 2019



HIGH NEEDS BLOCK REPORT:

2018/19 OUTTURN

The final High Needs block outturn in 2018/19 was an overspend of £0.588m, which includes additional funding announced in year of £0.550m.

The main areas of overspend are:

Special School Top Up Funding (Maintained and Academy) – pressures here arise from the costs associated with purchasing new places and the escalating need of pupils attending. At the end of the year there were 233 Band 8 and 8+ pupils, this figure was 195 at the end 2017/18.

Alternative Provision – the main pressure that has emerged during 2018/19 is at ACE Primary. The provision has been full or over full for the majority of the year, which was not the case in the previous year. The costs of packages for these pupils have risen, with many receive especially high funding due to the complexity of their needs.

Post 16 Provision (Independent Sector and FE Colleges) – the pressure at Post 16 has continued to grow as anticipated due to the increasing uptake for funding up to 25. In 2018/19 we have identified that both the number of placements and the increasing cost of those placements is contributing to the pressure in this area.

All the actions above have been picked up as part of the ongoing BMG workplan.

It is anticipated Plymouth will continue to see pressures in these areas going forward.

2019/20 BUDGET MONITORING

At budget setting it was acknowledged that Plymouth would not receive enough funding through the High Needs Block, to meet the anticipated need of pupils in 2019/20. At budget setting the amount of 'underfunding' was estimated to be £0.670m.

The 2019/20 forecast has been uplifted for the above amount with additional increases added in for the current forecasts for independent sector placements (pre-16) and alternative provision.

The independent sector placements forecast is higher than anticipated at budget setting due to 3 additional pupils being funded through joint funding with Children's Social Care.

The current forecast for alternative provision is higher than the budget, due to high cost Primary pupils staying longer than previously expected.

The forecast for the High Needs Block is an overspend of £0.850m.

BMG UPDATE – JUNE 2019

The Budget Modelling Group are reporting back on the progress of Post 16 Funding Model discussions and recommendations of future work to be carried out.

The Post 16 BMG Funding report has been submitted to Forum alongside this paper.

Also submitted to Forum is a summative report on the work carried out in 2018/19, including mapping of recommendations and reporting lines.

A workplan for BMG activities in 2019/20, taking 2018/19 recommendations into account, will be reported to a future Forum.