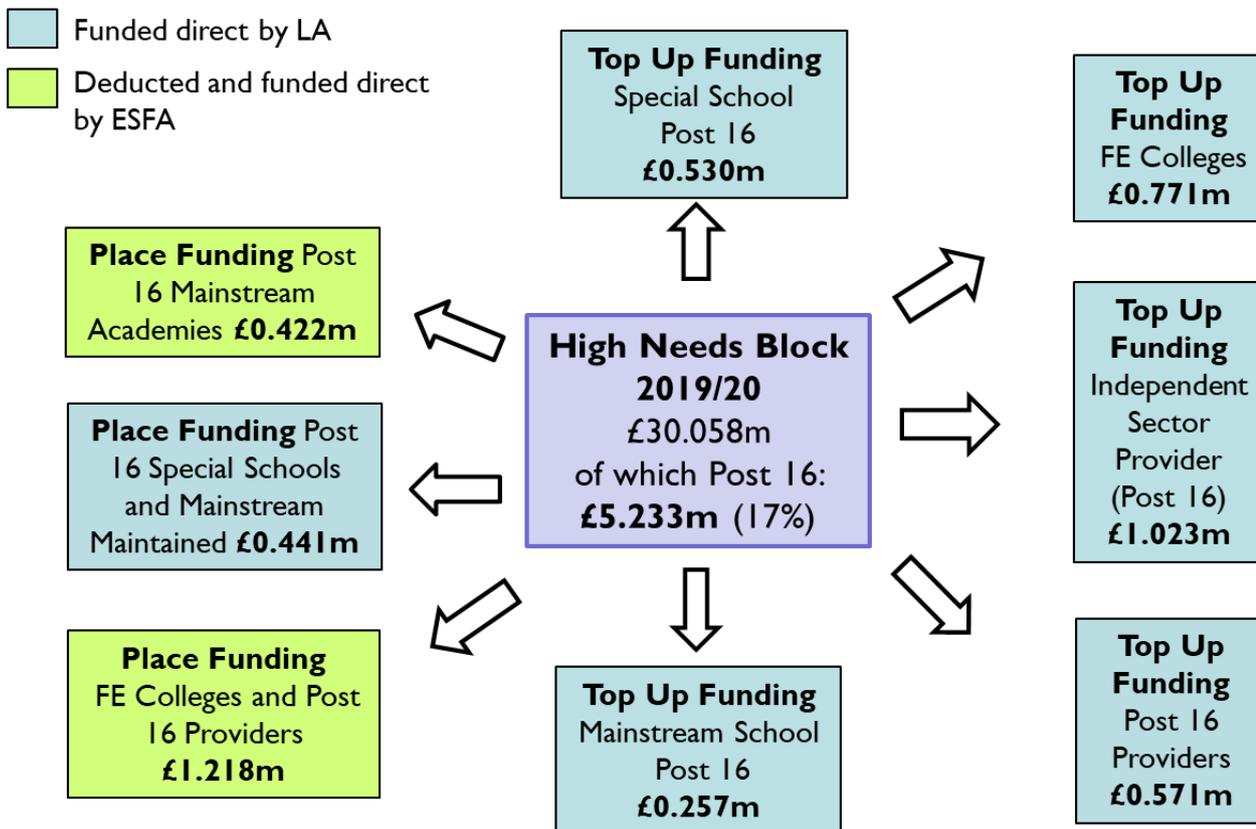


## 9.2 POST 16 FUNDING MODELS

Schools Forum BMG - April 2019



### OVERVIEW OF HIGH NEEDS POST 16 FUNDING



The Post 16 Task and Finish Group met on the 18<sup>th</sup> March and discussed the current arrangements around High Needs top up and place funding. The main issues highlighted were:

#### I. NEW FLEXIBILITY TO RETAIN ELEMENT 2 (£6,000) PLACE FUNDING

*“From 2019/20 Element 2 funding for mainstream schools and FE institutions, is allowed to be kept by LA and funded differently if institution is in agreement. No deduction will be made by the ESFA under these arrangements.*

*Funding still needs to be sufficient to fund the first £6,000 of SEN support”*

Plymouth did not change the funding arrangements for 2019/20 as there was no benefit apparent in the short timescale for consideration.

#### Action - Finance officer to continue to look into potential benefits.

Update – Finance sent a query to the ESFA for examples of benefits of retaining Element 2 and ESFA response below:

*We are pleased to hear that you are interested in taking advantage of this new flexibility in the academic year 2020 to 2021. With regards to examples of how other local authorities plan to benefit from this new flexibility, we are not in a position to provide examples at this time.*

*You may wish to contact colleagues at Kent County Council who may be able to offer examples of what they are doing as an authority to take advantage of the new flexibilities.*

Finance spoke to Simon Pleace at Kent, who worked on innovating the funding arrangements for FE colleges.

*In Kent the previous system was based on assessing and costing individual pupil needs, which was incentivising putting as many pupils through for funding as possible. This led to a hostile arrangement with FE providers, disagreements and a judicial review. Also there was no certainty over funding before the Dec/Jan after the academic year had started, so colleges could take on pupils without certainty of funding.*

*The complication for Kent is that they didn't insist on EHCPs as plans weren't necessarily a good indicator of need.*

*They started a conversation with providers and explained the pressures on the High Needs block and how funding to post 16 providers had increased significantly over recent years. Kent had used schools block to fund High Needs.*

*All parties agreed to a block funding arrangement, based on 2017/18 funding for both 2018/19 and 2019/20. This was a combination of top-up and place funding and providers had to decide what to provide within this funding. Providers agreed to meet inflationary pressures and growth within this cash envelope. This provides certainty to the provider and will be reviewed in the future to establish under/over funding. It has enhanced the way the LA talks to the colleges and appears to be the right direction of travel.*

*Interestingly alternative provision in Kent is also funded on via block funding, with a certain amount of funding delegated to schools to make their own arrangements.*

*Despite this Kent say everything is 'far from rosy' with their high needs block, as their special schools are all full which has increased their reliance on independent sector placements.*

## **2. POTENTIAL FOR USING A DIFFERENT FUNDING MODEL**

The initial focus of conversations has been on City College as the largest provider. Points raised:

- Modelling viewed - establishing examples of potential banded values (grouping current values). 1, 2, 4 banded system modelled.
- Modelling viewed – tracking pupils' original banded funding to current CCP funding
- Fluctuations in predictions and actuals – uncertainty for both LA and CCP
- Sufficient places commissioned? Are places commissioned appropriately?
- Beneficial to narrow down packages and narrow choices

**Action – CCP to provide a 3 year view on predictions vs. outcomes and the reasons and impact of this.**

See Appendix I

**Action – Finance officer to review reasons for inconsistencies in tracker modelling (ie. where there has been a big swing in funding):**

### **2 x Band 5 pupils costing significantly less**

Reason 1 – Work Start course, minimal time at College

Reason 2 - Assumption that there has been a reduction in the level of need

### **1 x Band 3 pupil costing significantly more**

Reason – had actually been attending ACE at a higher cost since last banded package at mainstream school.

### 3. OTHER ISSUES RAISED

#### ▪ Is place funding directed correctly in mainstream secondary schools?

Place funding (Element 2) for secondary post 16 High Needs pupils has to be notified in the November prior to the start of the academic year. The current arrangements are to use the numbers of EHCP pupils in place at the point in time of the November return, so funding is technically lagged by almost a year, and also can over/under fund easily.

Action – Finance to show historic trend of places funded per place occupied.

	Places - Funded			Places - Actual		
	Apr to Aug	Sept to Mar	Cost	Apr to Aug	Sept to Mar	Cost
2017/18	101	131	£726,000	136	90	£632,000
2018/19	130	99	£656,000	89	59	£414,000
2019/20	99	56	£422,000			

#### ▪ Is there a better way of funding CCP costs for transition (EHCP pupils in special schools)?

Update: Finance waiting on info from CCP on costs, recent example seen charge is £50 per day for 15 days.

#### • ‘Learning Walk’ – LA to focus on CCP pupils going to CCP in 2019/20 academic year, to better understand their journey and the role and responsibilities of those involved.

Update: Work in progress – issues arising (from Janet Greaves-Stocker):

1. Too many requests for places at Montery. Although as the detail has emerged some of the requests were not appropriate and we needed to ensure that the places went to the right students to gain the maximum benefit
2. Some students are applying for places on courses that they cannot manage so we have looked at working with the college to move them across to a course they can manage
3. Open day for year 9 families to take place 14<sup>th</sup> May which will help to clarify the myths around the college at an early stage so that the students and parents feel confident planning for the Post 16 course