

High Needs Working Group Development

Schools Forum is receiving a revised terms of reference relating to the establishment and working of High Needs subgroup.

As laid out in the appendix 1 of the Terms of Reference the Forum, through officers is establishing a task and finish group to operate in the first two terms of this academic year.

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This slide deck outlines;

- key tasks of the sub-group
- the baseline HNB funding and reserve position, with relevant recent trend analysis
- the process for appointment and membership of the group and organisation of initial meetings

Focus of the Subgroup

Whilst Schools Forum will retain its over-arching function in relation to oversight of the relevant funding blocks and receive all necessary and statutory reporting the subgroup will report back to forum with

- In response to the recent growth of the HNB reserve the sub-group is focused on the efficient use and distribution of all funding related to education of pupils with additional need.
- In the context of review of their current working to look at how the existing cluster and ENG arrangements can be optimised.
- In the context of a deeper exploration of the need profile of Camden including use of the JSNA, to explore sufficiency of places across Camden schools, including considering the need for new provision and use of vacant space. This would consider the role of specialist provision (special schools and resourced provision) reflecting the legal assumption of mainstream, Camden's commitment to inclusion.
- To consider these alongside the recommendations in the report by Peter Gray when he reviewed current provision in Camden for children and young people with special educational needs.

Existing baseline

As indicated later in the Agenda the Forum will be in receipt of full financial paper relating to HNB at its December meeting, these slides provide an update position for Q2. Forum will be provided with quarterly updates on the HNB going forward.

Narrative

Q2 shows an increase in spend for 2023/24 up from £48.9m (prediction June 23) to £49.9m and a consequent reduction in in-year underspend from £3.6m to £2.4m. Together figures represent a 14% increase on that spent in 2022/23. HNB spend is extremely fluid and can change significantly in relation to changes in a small proportion of cases

The increased spend reflects both inflationary pressure and decisions to spend more, specifically;

- Investing further into therapy support so that it is available for ENG pupils;
- Investment and additional funding to the Primary Learning Support Service
- The rollout of funding for clusters to allocate to training/CPD and development projects.
- The maintenance and development of a central provision for training
- Additional HNB contribution to AP Placement costs.

The inflationary pressure is reflected in the large increase in top-up rates across Camden schools from April 2023 but also similar inflationary pressure from non-Camden schools, colleges and other providers. A supplementary HNB was allocated to Camden in December 2022 for this purpose.

HNB funding 2021/22

- Overall HNB funding received by the Council increased from £35m 2020-21 to £52m – 2023-24 (Spend increased from £35m to £50m)
- Increase in spending in Camden Mainstream provision from HNB £7.6m 2020-21 to £11.7m 2023-24
- Increase in spending on NMI provision 2021 £2.8m (8%) to £4.2m est (8%) in 2023-24
- Increase in reserve £2m 2021-22 to £11m est 2023-24 (36% relevant to 2022/23)
- Doubling of spend on Therapy/Individual Tuition and Equipment support
- Outreach support increased by 45%

Sub-Group Formation

Timeline

- First and Second meeting November 2023
- Forum Appoint Chair of Sub-Group 1/11/23
- Communication to schools 3/11
- Direct approach to individual schools 6/11

First Meeting

- A data position paper will be provided for that meeting with the context of SEND in Camden. This will include; the number of EHCPs and ENG within schools and; the proportion of children and young people accessing mainstream, ARP, special and independent non maintained provision
- Public Health colleagues will attend to discuss the work that's taking place regarding the development of a SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

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