

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE Schools Forum High Needs Block Sub-group: Recommended Terms of Reference	
REPORT OF Vikram Hansrani, Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Schools Forum	DATE 13 September 2023
SUMMARY OF REPORT Following discussion at July Schools Forum, this report sets out proposals for the development of a High Needs Block sub-group of the Schools Forum. The purpose would be to allow more in-depth consideration of the use of the HNB in partnership with the local authority, bringing high level recommendations back to the Schools Forum. Contact Officer: Sharon Scott Interim Head of Special Education and Inclusive Intervention Service. 020 7974 6836 / sharon.scott@camden.gov.uk Paul Tanton Special Educational Needs Finance and Commissioning Manager. 020 7974 8007 / paul.tanton@camden.gov.uk	
RECOMMENDATIONS The Schools' Forum is asked to consider and agree the terms of reference put forward in this report.	



Signed:

Vikram Hansrani, Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion

Date: 5 September 2023

1. Purpose

- 1.1. Following discussion at July Schools Forum, this report sets out proposals for the development of a High Needs Block (HNB) sub-group of the Schools' Forum. The purpose would be to allow more in-depth consideration of the use of the HNB in partnership with the local authority, bringing high level recommendations back to the Schools' Forum. Camden is currently in the fortunate position of being one of a small number of Local Authorities that are no longer in deficit position and can therefore allocate extra funding to improve outcomes of children/young people with SEND.
- 1.2. Our vision is that every Camden mainstream school can meet the needs of any children in their area, to ensure quality first teaching for all children including those with SEND through continuous improvement, development and curious pursuance of best practice pedagogy.
- 1.3. The sub-group would be a time limited "task and finish" group looking at how the HNB is spent. This could be for 2 terms across the 2023/24 academic year.
- 1.4. It would reflect the fact that the HNB is to meet special educational needs of Camden residents 0-25: not just Camden schools but also children in schools in other boroughs/independent and private schools and young people in colleges/other post-16 provision. Camden has a good baseline on which to build however we know that not all children are included socially in our schools and prepared for adulthood adequately. The link with local colleges is essential. Schools and colleges must have high aspirations around employment leading to the opportunities that exist for supported internships and other employment pathways. Whilst these need to be developed, we know the current opportunities are not fully utilised.
- 1.5. Specific tasks for the sub-group would be:
 - To look at how Camden schools can optimise ENG & cluster working (this would build on existing ENG steering group).
 - To consider the recommendations in the report by Peter Gray when he looked at the current provision in Camden for children and young people with special educational needs.
 - 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.
 - How a learning support service can support Camden mainstream schools to include children, enabling all schools to be confident in meeting needs, and spreading good practice across all schools. This should be not only in terms of teaching and learning but in the context of inclusion, welcoming and the intentional building of relationships with a focus on meeting the requirements of the Children & Families Act 2014 and associated code of practice to prepare children for adulthood.

2. Terms of Reference

2.1 Responsibilities

The High Needs Block Sub-group will:

- a) Review and monitor the use of the HNB to ensure that funding is allocated appropriately to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- b) Provide regular updates to Schools Forum, offering advice and recommendations to the Schools Forum regarding the use of High Needs Funding. Through clear reporting this would ensure:
 - ongoing cognisance of issues related to the High Needs Block, and;
 - Schools' Forum members have a proactive role in HNB decision-making.
- c) Review and make recommendations to Schools Forum on directing the allocation of High Needs Funding in relation to:
 - Top-up rates, number of places and support services
 - The wider strategic agenda which underpins Camden's approach to meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND set out within the Camden Local Area SEND Strategy 2022 to 2027.

2.2 Membership

- a) Schools Forum representative members including headteachers and governors (mainstream, special and PRU)
- b) SEND service management representatives including Director of Education Commissioning & Inclusion, Head of Special Education and Inclusive Intervention Service, SEN Finance & Commissioning Manager and other officers as necessary to advise the group.

2.3 Chair

High Needs Block sub-group member voted by head teachers and school governors on the Schools Forum.

2.4 Frequency

The Sub-Group will meet on a half-termly basis as a minimum and with extra-ordinary meetings as required

3. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services

3.1 At this stage the report just sets out proposals for the development of a High Needs Block sub-group of the Schools Forum.

3.2 As the process develops into significant work streams and proposals there will be further finance comments- However, at this planning and proposal stage there are no significant finance comments.

4. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no comments to add to this report.

5. Environmental Implications

There are none.

REPORT ENDS