

16 February 2023

TITLE OF REPORT: Special Schools Funding 2022/23

Purpose of the Report

1. To bring to Schools Forum the proposal to increase special school top up unit of funding by 3%, and the allocation of funding to special schools and the pupil referral unit (PRU) for the from April 2023 from the additional high needs block funding as per the updated conditions of grant.

Background

2. The outcome of the special schools top up review was implemented for 2019/20, and the review of the fixed cost element was implemented for 2020/21. There have been no changes to the main formula for 23/24.
3. For the special schools formula, the unit of funding drives the banded top ups, and by increasing or decreasing the unit of funding rather than the top up value themselves maintains the ratios between the bandings.
4. There are allocations within the high needs block (HNB) of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) for the former teachers pay and pension grant and for the increase in NI contributions. For the teachers pay and pension funding there is an amount of £660 for each special school child on roll at the October census, but there is no allocation for children in alternative provision. The allocation basis will remain the same as for 2022/23.
5. There is additional funding for increased costs as announced in the Autumn Statement.
6. The DfE have stipulated that -

“In the financial year 2023 to 2024, maintained special schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) special and alternative provision (AP) academies (including free schools), and maintained and academy hospital schools, will receive a separate allocation amounting to 3.4% of their total place and top-up funding income, similar to the mainstream schools additional grant. This will be paid directly by the local authority which maintains the school or (in the case of academies) previously maintained the school, or (in the case of special and AP free schools) in whose area the school is located. Local authorities are required, by a condition of grant attached to their additional high needs funding, to pass on to these schools a proportion of their additional high needs funding allocation.”

7. The DfE produced information to assist local authorities in making the 3.4% additional allocation to maintained AP schools (normally referred to as pupil referral units or PRUs), and AP academies (including AP free schools).

Proposal

8. It is proposed to increase the funding for special schools by uplifting the unit of funding by 3%. This will equate to an increase of between 1.6% and 2.3% in main funding via the formula excluding the additional elements for the former teachers pay and pension grants and the increase in NI contributions and the new additional grant for 2023/24. The on average 2% increase is above the mainstream minimum funding guarantee (MFG) of 0.5%
9. The additional funding allocation for Gateshead's AP academy has been provided by the DfE.
10. It is proposed that Gateshead special schools allocation is based on the Spring term payment calculation will be 3.4% of:-
 - Top ups paid for the financial year
 - Commissioned and additional places
 - Fixed cost funding

Recommendations

11. That Schools Forum approves:-

- The 3% increase in the special school unit of funding for special school top ups.
- The methodology for allocating the additional grant payment to special schools

That Schools Forum notes that the DfE have already provided the additional grant funding allocation for Gateshead's AP Academy.

For the following reasons: -

- To enable Special School and PRU budgets to be calculated and disseminated by the statutory deadline

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Appendix 1

Primary Social Emotional Mental Health		
	2022/23	2023/24
Band 1	£12,378.15	£12,978.11
Band 2	£7,544.96	£7,999.92
Band 3	£934.58	£1,191.23
Band 4	-£2,371.04	£-2,213.56
Secondary Social Emotional Mental Health		
Band 1	£12,378.15	£12,978.11
Band 2	£5,989.94	£6,398.25
Band 3	£934.58	£1,191.23
Band 4	-£2,371.04	£-2,213.56
Autistic Spectrum Disorder		
Band 1	£12,378.15	£12,978.11
Band 2	£8,193.69	£8,668.11
Band 3	£4,240.20	£4,596.02
Band 4	-£15.95	£212.18
Cognition and Learning		
Band 1	£10,767.25	£11,318.88
Band 2	£8,193.69	£8,668.11
Band 3	£934.58	£1,191.23
Band 4	-£2,176.08	£-2012.75