

## *GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA*

**Thursday, 14 March 2024 at 2.00 pm via Teams**

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From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

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Item	Business
1	<b>Apologies</b>
2	<b>Minutes</b> (Pages 3 - 6)  The Forum is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2024.
3	<b>Early Years Funding - Under 2's Consultation Response</b> (Pages 7 - 10)  Carole Smith, Resources and Digital
4	<b>Special Schools Funding</b> (Pages 11 - 14)  Carole Smith, Resources and Digital
5	<b>Quarter 3 DSG Monitoring</b> (Pages 15 - 16)  Terence Appleby, Resources and Digital
6	<b>Mainstream Top Ups 2024/25</b> (Pages 17 - 20)  Carole Smith, Resources and Digital
7	<b>High Needs Commissioned Places 2024/25</b> (Pages 21 - 24)  Carole Smith, Resources and Digital
8	<b>Mainstream Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty</b> (Pages 25 - 26)  Carole Smith, Resources and Digital
9	<b>2024 - 25 Committee Dates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thursday 19<sup>TH</sup> September at 2pm via Teams</li><li>• Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm via Teams</li><li>• Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm via Teams</li><li>• Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January at 2pm via Teams</li><li>• Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm via Teams</li><li>• Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm via Teams</li></ul>

- Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm via Teams
- Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July at 2pm via Teams

**10 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 2pm via Teams.

## GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

### GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 15 February 2024

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Peter Largue (Chair)	Trade Union Representative
	Sarah Diggle (Vice Chair)	Secondary Maintained Governors
	Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteacher
	Steven Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteacher
	Alison Hall	Primary Maintained Schools
	Denise Kilner	Nurse Sector Representative
	Mustafa Malik	Primary Headteachers
	Ethel Mills	PVI Sector Representative
	Michelle Richards	Special Schools Rep
	Dominic Volpe	Maintained Secondary Headteachers
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Terence Appleby	Gateshead Council
	Barry Grenfell	Gateshead Council
	Kate Lowes	Gateshead Council
	Melanie Maitland	Gateshead Council
	Carole Smith	Gateshead Council

#### 42 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence received from Jacqui Ridley and Brendan Robson and Councillor Sheila Gallagher

#### 43 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11th January 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

#### 44 EARLY YEARS FUNDING - 2-YEAR-OLD FUNDING

The Forum received a report to outline the results of the Early Years 2-Year-Old funding consultation.

After the approval of the 2-year-old funding formulae proposals at the January 2024 Forum the consultation documents were sent to all early year settings on the 16th January 2024, a total of 26 responses were received, but not all respondents answered all questions.

The results showed overall positive response to the proposals in the consultation from 88.46% to 50%.

There had been a significant number of don't know responses and disagreement responses ranged from 3.85% to 30.77%.

The funding formulae will be reviewed during 2024/25 financial year.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) The School Forum approved a single funding formula for both disadvantaged and 2-year-olds of working parents.
  - (ii) The School Forum approved 5% top-slice to contribute to the early years funding team and the remainder to be added to the inclusion fund.
  - (iii) The School Forum approved a base rate of £6.5664 per hour
  - (iv) The School Forum approved disadvantaged supplement rate £0.86, with £0.05 to be held in contingency for fluctuations in pupil mix between disadvantaged and 2-year-olds of working parents.
  - (v) The Schools Forum approved the universal supplement rate using 5% of funding based on IDACI ACORN data.

#### **45 EARLY YEARS FUNDING - 3- & 4-YEAR-OLD FUNDING**

The Forum received a report for the proposals for 3- & 4-year-old early years funding formulae for 2024/25.

The Local Authority have received an increase in funding of £0.47 per hour for the 3- & 4-year-olds, however, £0.04 of the increase relates to the mainstreaming of the Teachers Pay and Pension Grant (TPPG) for 2023/24.

The total estimated funding for 3- & 4-year-old early years funding is £12,537,638 both universal and extended hours, the allocation will be amended with January 2024 census information.

There will be an increase in the inclusion fund for 2024/25, the funds will be allocated on a different basis to better meet the needs of low levels and emerging SEND.

Approval was requested from Schools Forum to allocate the small amount of unspent inclusion funding for 2023/24 on inclusion training for all early year's settings.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) The School Forum approved the updated 3- & 4- year old EYSFF factor values, approved the proposed use of unspent centrally held inclusion funding
  - (ii) The School Forum notes further work will be undertaken on the allocation of inclusion funding allocation proposals for 2024/24.

#### **46 EARLY YEARS FUNDING - UNDER 2'S**

The Forum received a report on the proposals made by the Early Years subgroup of

Schools Forum on the allocation of the under 2-year-olds DSG funding from September 2024 for consultation with all early year's settings.

The third meeting of the group on the 15th January 2024 discussed funding proposals for children under 2 of working parents and agreed proposals to be taken to Schools Forum for approval to enable the consultation with all early years settings to take place.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) The Schools Forum approved the proposed consultation document in appendix 1, together with the planned consultation period of 16 February 2024 to 1 March 2024.

**47 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**Chair.....**

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## REPORT TO SCHOOLS FORUM

14 March 2024

Item 3

### TITLE OF REPORT: Proposed Under 2-Year-Old Formula and Consultation Results

#### Purpose of the Report

1. To bring to Schools Forum the results of the Early Years Under 2-Year-Old funding consultation and proposals for the funding of under 2-year-olds from September 2024.

#### Background

2. This report builds on a report brought to Schools Forum in February 2024. Following the approval of the Under 2-year-old funding proposals and consultation documents at February's 2024 Schools Forum, the Under 2-year-old consultation document was sent to all early years settings on 16 February 2024, with a closing date for the consultation of 1 March 2024.

A total of 18 responses have been received.

There was a mixture of respondents as per the below table.

Setting Type	Number
Childminder	6
Day Nursery	6
Maintained School	4
Pre School	1
Primary Academy	0
Nursery School	1

3. There was an overall positive response to the proposals in the consultation, with 77.78% agreeing with proposal 1 and 94.44% agreeing with proposal 2. 22.22% disagreed with proposal 1 and 5.56% (one respondent) did not know about proposal 2.

The results to the individual questions are in appendix 1 and comments made by respondents in appendix 2.

## **Proposal**

4. Following the consultation results it is proposed that:-
  - The under 2-year-old funding will be top-sliced at 5%, with a proportion of this funding being allocated to the funding of the early years funding team, and the remainder to be held in the Inclusion Fund for allocation to settings (together with proposed allocations from 3- & 4-year-old funding and 2 year old early years funding).
  - There will be one single funding rate to all settings for all children of £9.937 per hour.

It is recognised that as this is a new formula, with limited actual data on children that will attend the individual settings and therefore it is also proposed that this formula will be reviewed during 2024/25 financial year.

## **Recommendations**

5. It is recommended that Schools Forum notes the consultation responses and comments, and approves:-
  - 5% top-slice to contribute to the early years funding team and the remainder to be added to the inclusion fund.
  - A single funding rate for all settings of £9.937 per hour

## **For the following reasons:**

6. To enable early years settings to receive funding under 2-year-olds of working parents from September 2024.

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CONTACT: Carole Smith    Ext.274



## Appendix 1

	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>No</b>
Q1	Do you accept the proposal to top-slice funding by 5% to fund the early years funding team and the special educational needs and disabilities inclusion fund?	77.78%	0%	22.22%
Q2	Do you accept the proposal of a single funding/base rate for all children with no supplements?	94.44%	5.56%	0%

## Appendix 2

Setting	Question	
3	1	Early years team and inclusion fund already get 5% from 3 & 4 year old funding and will soon be getting an extra 5% from new 2 year old funding. I think the entire £10.46 should be passed through to providers especially as the Under 2's are very costly for providers to care for eg. Higher ratio's of staff needed. Also it is very unlikely that any under 2's will benefit from anything in inclusion fund.
5	1	Early years team and inclusion fund already get 5% from 3 & 4 year old funding. They will also be getting an extra 5% from new 2 year old funding. I think the entire £10.46 should be passed through to providers especially as the Under 2's are very costly for providers to care for. For example we have higher ratio's of staff needed to care for under 2's and it is very unlikely that any under 2's will benefit from anything in the inclusion fund.
8	2	I appreciate that pupils with additional needs will need extra support, but imagine that this could be provided by inclusion fund.
9	Other	Propaganda to parents should NOT claim they get FREE childcare, as they don't understand it as "free no-frills childcare" and wonder why they cannot get the times and terms they choose from my general offering. It is undermining to the council and government for me to have to explain it out. I'm not sure what terminology would work better, perhaps "get 15 funded hours" and write on any handouts that terms and conditions apply!
10	1	The EY funding team and inclusion fund already receive 5% from existing 3&4yr old funding and will also be receiving an additional 5% from 2yo funding from April. The Inclusion fund will not be allocated to children of this age group and with higher staff:child ratios settings should receive the maximum rate possible to cover these higher costs
17	1	I disagree with the 5% being taken for under 2-s due to having qualified and experienced Senco-s on site who are able to support staff with identifying and responding to development concerns/delays. They are able to put in the required early years intervention needed before the child has statutory assessment at 2 years of age and work closely with the health visiting team. As our younger children are on a lower ratio, we are able to meet the required developmental stages with next steps confidently. Experiences taught us in the past that involvement from Sen inclusion team is higher once the child is over 2.
18	1	I feel that there should be some monies put towards children being able to access some 1;1 funding prior to an EHC being finalised
	2	Unsure as to how the supplements would then affect the rate. Don't know enough information about what having supplements would add

**REPORT TO SCHOOLS FORUM**

14 March 2024

**Item 4****TITLE OF REPORT: Special Schools Funding 2024/25**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To bring to Schools Forum the proposal to increase special school top up unit of funding by 0.5%, and the allocation of funding to special schools and the pupil referral unit (PRU) from April 2024 for the financial year 2024/25.

**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.
3. The special schools pupil top up formula is driven by the unit of funding to calculate the banded top ups. By increasing or decreasing the unit of funding rather than the top up values themselves, maintains the ratios between the bandings, and therefore the proportion of funding allocated to each funding band.
4. For 2024/25 it is proposed that the unit of funding be increased by 0.5% in line with the mainstream schools minimum funding guarantee (MFG) percentage. There are no proposed changes to the main top up or fixed cost formulas for 2024/25.

**Residential Funding**

5. There are currently no residential units operating in special schools in Gateshead, as such it is proposed that this funding is removed from 2024/25. As the current funding (2023/24) for the residential unit is significant, to remove this amount of funding without any protection would have a significant detrimental effect on a school, it is therefore proposed that the funding for the unit is phased out over 2 years. For 2024/25 it is proposed that funding is reduced by 1/3, for 2025/26 funding to be reduced by 2/3 and there will be no residential funding for 2026/27.
6. The residential funding is not protected by MFG as the service is no longer commissioned as per the below extract of the High Needs Funding Operational Guidance 2024/25.
7. "When calculating the protection, local authorities should make sure that they are comparing like for like. Adjustments should be made for changes in the nature of the provision. For example, if previous top-up funding rates included an element for a commissioned service which is no longer provided by the school, the value of that element can be discounted when calculating the MFG protected level."

Work is currently underway between the Local Authority and schools with a view to enhancing provision and utilising both physical and financial resources released by no longer commissioning residential services.

### **Mainstreamed Grants**

8. There are allocations within the high needs block (HNB) of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) for the former teachers pay and pension grant (TPPG) and for the increase in NI contributions (additional costs), and the additional grant from 2023/24. For the TPPG 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 for these mainstreamed grants will remain the same as for 2024/25.

### **Additional Funding 2023/24**

9. The additional funding announced Autumn 2022 prescribed additional funding of 3.4% for special schools and PRU's. 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). The allocation basis for this additional funding will remain the same as for 2024/25.

### **Proposal**

10. It is proposed to increase the funding for special schools top up funding by uplifting the unit of funding by 0.5%. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the current and proposed top up rates.
11. This is estimated to equate to an increase of between 0.26% and 0.4% (calculated on a like for like basis) in main funding via the formula excluding the additional elements for the former TPPG, the increase in NI contributions and the additional grant for 2023/24.
12. It is also proposed that the funding for the residential unit be phased out by the reducing the funding by 1/3 for 2024/25 and 2/3 for 2025/26 and no funding will be provided for 2026/27.

### **Recommendations**

That Schools Forum approves:-

- The 0.5% increase in the special school unit of funding for special school top up funding.
- The phased removal of residential funding

And Schools Forum notes that there will be no changes to the allocation of the additional funding elements for TPPG, NI Grant and the additional grant (3.4%).

For the following reasons: -

- To enable Special School and PRU budgets to be calculated and disseminated.

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**Carole Smith Ext. 2747**

## Appendix 1

<b>Primary Social Emotional Mental Health</b>		
	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
<b>Band 1</b>	<b>£12,978.11</b>	<b>£13,081.10</b>
<b>Band 2</b>	<b>£7,999.92</b>	<b>£8,078.02</b>
<b>Band 3</b>	<b>£1,191.23</b>	<b>£1,235.28</b>
<b>Band 4</b>	<b>-£2,213.56</b>	<b>£-2,186.53</b>
<b>Secondary Social Emotional Mental Health</b>		
<b>Band 1</b>	<b>£12,978.11</b>	<b>£13,081.10</b>
<b>Band 2</b>	<b>£6,389.25</b>	<b>£6,468.34</b>
<b>Band 3</b>	<b>£1,191.23</b>	<b>£1,235.29</b>
<b>Band 4</b>	<b>-£2,213.56</b>	<b>£-2,186.53</b>
<b>Autistic Spectrum Disorder</b>		
<b>Band 1</b>	<b>£12,978.11</b>	<b>£13,081.10</b>
<b>Band 2</b>	<b>£8,668.11</b>	<b>£8,749.55</b>
<b>Band 3</b>	<b>£4,596.02</b>	<b>£4,657.10</b>
<b>Band 4</b>	<b>£212.18</b>	<b>£251.34</b>
<b>Cognition and Learning</b>		
<b>Band 1</b>	<b>£11,318.22</b>	<b>£11,413.57</b>
<b>Band 2</b>	<b>£8,668.11</b>	<b>£8,749.55</b>
<b>Band 3</b>	<b>£1,191.23</b>	<b>£1,235.29</b>
<b>Band 4</b>	<b>-£2,012.75</b>	<b>£-1,984.72</b>

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Item 5

**TITLE OF REPORT: Quarter 3 DSG Monitoring**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform Schools Forum of the projected outturn position, as at the end of quarter 3, of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2023/24.

**Background**

2. The DSG is made up of four funding blocks:
  - The **Early Years (EY) block** for 2 and 3 & 4-year-old funding;
  - **Mainstream Schools block** which includes some centrally held and de-delegated funding;
  - **High Needs block (HNB)** which includes special schools, alternative provision and top-ups to maintained schools and academies; and
  - **Central Services Schools block** which includes central functions carried out on behalf of schools, for example, licences, schools' admissions, pension costs.
3. Schools Forum receives details of DSG revenue monitoring throughout the financial year, with the format presented based on the expenditure headings of the Section 251 statement. Details are provided in Appendix 1.
4. The Council-lead DSG budget for 2023/24 is £110.550m.
5. The projected outturn for the year is £111.103m, an overspend of £0.553m, an increase in overspend of £0.136m since the last report. The projections are based on expected activity at the time of preparing the report. The High Needs Block is projecting a £1.075m overspend with the Early Years Block offsetting this by £0.579m. The main areas of variance are:
  - +222k school in financial difficulty approved by Schools Forum
  - +£526k top-ups
  - +£409k SEN Support Services
  - -£81k Support for Inclusion
  - -£579k Early Years Block as actual places are less than estimated
6. The balance of the DSG reserve at 31 March 2023 was £3.965m. Factoring in the in year overspend of £0.553m and the Early Years clawback for 2022/23 of £0.182m would decrease the balance to £3.230m at 31 March 2024.

**Proposal**

7. That Schools Forum notes the content of the report.

**Recommendations**

8. That Schools Forum notes the content of the report.

## 2023/24 DSG Revenue Outturn as at quarter 3

DSG Area	Budget after Recoupment £'000	Outturn £'000	Variance £'000	Comments/Notes
Maintained Schools Budget Share	68,077	68,025	(52)	Variance relates to Early Years
High needs place funding within Individual Schools Budget	4,600	4,600	0	
<b>DEDELEGATION</b>				
Contingencies	0	2	2	
Behaviour support services	266	285	19	
Support to UPEG and bilingual learners	205	147	(58)	Change in staffing structure
Staff costs Maternity cover	104	143	39	
Staff costs Trade Union Facility Time	52	38	(14)	
<b>HIGH NEEDS BUDGET</b>				
High Needs Budget (including Special Schools, PRU and Additional Support Top-ups)	26,676	27,751	1,075	£222k School in financial difficulty £162k maintained topups £209k academy topups £156k Independent topups £409k SEN Support -£81k Support for Inclusion"
<b>EARLY YEARS BUDGET</b>				
2,3 and 4 year-olds funding to PVI's	9,167	8,639	(528)	Subject to clawback in following year
<b>CENTRAL PROVISION WITHIN SCHOOLS BUDGET</b>				
Contribution to combined budgets	77	78	0	
School admissions	234	240	6	
Servicing of schools forums	47	47	0	
Termination of employment costs	313	343	30	Premature Retirement costs
Pupil growth/ Infant class sizes	24	40	16	
Other Items	148	166	18	CLA/ MPA Licences top sliced from DSG for all school licences
Education Welfare service	143	143	0	
Statutory/ Regulatory duties	417	417	0	Includes ESG topslice agreed by Schools Forum
<b>TOTAL DSG</b>	<b>110,550</b>	<b>111,103</b>	<b>553</b>	

	£'000	Comments/Notes
Reserves balance at 31 March 2023	(3,965)	
Appropriation from reserve: in year adjustments	182	EY 22/23 clawback
Appropriation (to)/from reserve: in-year (surplus)/deficit	553	
<b>Projected reserve balance at 31 March 2024 (surplus) / deficit</b>	<b>(3,230)</b>	



**Item 6****TITLE OF REPORT: Mainstream High Needs Top Ups 2024/25**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To bring to Schools Forums attention the proposed Mainstream schools top up rates from April 2024.

**Background**

2. Under the funding arrangements for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), the government intends for all children and young people to be supported regardless of where they are educated. This intention is inclusive for all types of SEND pupils up to the age of 25.

**Mainstream School Top Up Rates**

3. A banded top up structure for mainstream schools was introduced in 2013/14 in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance and was last updated for 2024/25.
4. The mainstream top up rates were substantially uplifted for 2023/24 due to additional funding allocated to the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
5. The increase in funding for 2024/25 HNB is less than half than for 2023/24, with the backdrop of the DSG HNB overspending in 2023/24.
6. The current top ups are based on term time only (TTO) teaching assistant level 2 (TA2) from a special school and therefore include salary enhancements.
7. It is therefore proposed inline with mainstream schools minimum funding guarantee (MFG) that mainstream school top ups are increased by 0.5% for the financial year 2024/25, this will still be above the estimated hourly rate for 2024/25 for a TTO TA2 at scale point 7 without enhancements.

## **Proposal**

8. It is proposed that that hourly rate be increased from £17.55 to £ 17.64 an increase of £0.09 and 0.5%.

## **Recommendations**

9. That school forum approves the mainstream top up increases for 2024/25.

## **For the following reason(s):**

10. To enable Mainstream School top up budgets to be set and mainstream schools to estimate their high needs income for financial year 2024/25.

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CONTACT: Carole Smith Ext. 2747

## Appendix 1

### Mainstream Schools top ups 2023/24 & Proposed 2024/25 rates

<b>Mainstream (Reception to Year 11)</b>				
	<b>No of hours support per FTE</b>	<b>Current Top Up Funding per FTE</b>	<b>Proposed Top Up Funding per FTE</b>	<b>Requirements</b>
<b>From School Resource</b>	<b>1 to 10</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Access to high quality universal services supported by curriculum differentiation or environmental access/adaptation as appropriate.</li> <li>-Some targeted or integrated support.</li> <li>-Group strategies used flexibly to promote independent or child-initiated learning.</li> <li>-Some specific reinforcement or skill-development activities may be required.</li> <li>-Access to regular and additional targeted teaching in small groups and/or individually to address the pupil's individual needs, including social (skills), physical, medical and self-help skills.</li> <li>-Some intensive individualised programmes may be required with long term adaptation of the curriculum to address the attainment levels which will be significantly below age related expectations in National Curriculum subjects.</li> <li>-Input from specialist outside agencies.</li> </ul>
<b>Band 5</b>	<b>11 to 15</b>	<b>£3,423</b>	<b>£3,434</b>	<p><b>As from schools' resources plus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Individualised programmes/adaptations will be required with adaptations for specific skills development to ensure access to the curriculum and/or significant physical/medical needs are met.</li> <li>-Additional and different activities may be required with regular opportunities for over learning (repetition).</li> <li>-Additional access to specialist equipment may be required.</li> <li>-Ongoing advice and support from specialist outside agencies.</li> </ul>
<b>Band 4</b>	<b>16 to 20</b>	<b>£6,846</b>	<b>£6,880</b>	<b>As per Band 5 but with higher levels of support required.</b>
<b>Band 3</b>	<b>21-25</b>	<b>£10,268</b>	<b>£10,320</b>	<p><b>As Band 4 and 5 plus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Extensive individualised programmes and some one-to-one support to enable the pupil to concentrate and access the curriculum or to meet complex physical and/or medical needs more severe than at Band 4.</li> <li>-Regular supervision throughout the day, including the use of time out and other such approaches.</li> <li>-Some support may be required during unstructured times.</li> <li>-There may be multi-agency direct involvement.</li> </ul>
<b>Band 2</b>	<b>26 to 30</b>	<b>£13,691</b>	<b>£13,760</b>	<b>As Band 3 plus:</b>

				<p>-access through the usual mainstream groupings may not be appropriate for some areas of the curriculum due to significant or complex learning/physical/medical needs so extensive individualised programmes will be required which may involve the use of specialist teaching techniques, alternative communication methods, appropriate equipment and materials.</p> <p>-On-going direct support and advice from external agencies.</p> <p>-Support during un-structured times for health and safety reasons.</p>
<b>Band 1</b>	<b>31 to 35</b>	<b>£17,114</b>	<b>£17,200</b>	<p><b>Pupils in this band would be those who require full time support in mainstream school because they:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-are very disabled</li> <li>-present with exceptionally challenging behaviour,</li> <li>-are severely autistic</li> <li>-present serious Health and Safety considerations.</li> </ul>

**REPORT TO SCHOOLS FORUM**

14 March 2024

Item 7

**TITLE OF REPORT: Commissioning Arrangements for High Needs Places  
2024/25**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To bring to Schools Forum the proposed commissioning arrangements for High Needs Places for 2024/25.

**Background**

2. The Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations (England) require Schools Forum to be consulted on the commissioning arrangements for high needs places. This includes all places for special education needs (SEN) and alternative provision places commissioned by the local authority (LA), and the arrangements for paying top-up funding.
3. Not all places are currently agreed and therefore these numbers could be subject to change.

**Commissioning Process for 2024/25**

4. As in 2023/24, all special schools and the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) will receive funding of £10,000 per commissioned place. Additionally Resourced Mainstream Schools (ARMS) will receive £6,000 per place for a pupil that is main or current registered at the school and £10,000 for a vacant place or a pupil subsidiary registered at the school.
5. In addition to this and according to national funding policy, the LA will pay a locally agreed top-up to settings if and where they are necessary. The top-ups may vary between settings depending on the complexity of pupils' needs in the particular establishment. This top-up will only be paid for pupils on roll and will move in real time with the pupils.
6. The LA gathers data and intelligence to support the annual commissioning process by:
  - Looking at retrospective data and trends
  - Reviewing special schools' current pupils and pupils that will leave at the end of the academic year

- Discussion with school headteachers
- Estimating needs for new special placements by analysing information from:
  - the early years' service
  - annual moderation process
  - other intelligence from the casework officer team and other services

## Commissioned Places

7. The below table shows the proposed commissioned places for 2024/25 within the LA.

<b>Commissioned Places 2024/25</b>				
<b>Additionally Resources Mainstream Support Bases</b>				
	KS1	KS2	KS3 & 4	Notes
Bede	8 + 8	8		
Swalwell	10			
Swalwell ASD	8			
Brandling	4	4		
Lobley Hill	8			
Rowlands Gill	10			
Whickham School			18	+3 Post 16
Thorpe Academy			13	+ 2 Post 16
<b>Special Schools</b>	Pre 16	Post 16		
Dryden	35	11		
Eslington	68			
Furrowfield	71			
Gibside	170			
Hill Top	88	17		
The Cedars	170	20		
<b>Alternative Provision</b>	Pre 16	Post 16		
River Tyne Academy	103			
<b>Post 16</b>				
Gateshead College		59		
Learning Skills		10		

## Proposal

That Schools Forum notes the contents of the report and proposed commissioning of the above places.

## **Recommendations**

8. Schools Forum notes the report.

### **For the following reasons:-**

9. To adhere to the requirements of the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations (England)

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**REPORT TO SCHOOLS FORUM**

14 March 2024

Item 8

**TITLE OF REPORT: Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To bring to Schools Forum proposals on the distribution of the Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty funding that has been allocated to Gateshead by the Department for Education (DfE).

**Background**

2. In July 2023 the Department for Education (DfE) announced that it was providing £40m of additional funding for 2023/24 to support individual schools in that find themselves in particular financial difficulties. £20m of this funding was provided to 35 local authorities for maintained schools, and Gateshead's allocation of this funding is £179,028.20. Below is a link to the information provided by the DfE.
3. It is anticipated that this is one off funding and it is not anticipated that there will be any further funding in future years.

[Additional support for schools in financial difficulty in 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/additional-support-for-schools-in-financial-difficulty-in-2023-to-2024)

4. For Gateshead it is proposed that this process will exclude special schools and nursery schools as they have access to financial difficulty funding via other procedures.
5. In consultation with EducationGateshead it is proposed that funding is allocated to schools in financial difficulty on the following basis:-
  - Schools that had an opening and closing deficit for 2022/23.
  - Schools that had a closing deficit of over £20k at the end of 2022/23.
  - Schools that have a projected deficit balance at the end of 2023/24.
6. Funding will then be allocated on a proportional basis as per the year end deficit of 2022/23.

**Proposal**

7. It is proposed that Schools Forum approves the following allocation conditions:-

- The funding is for maintained mainstream schools only as special and nursery schools as they have access to financial difficulty funding via other procedures.
- Only schools that had an opening and closing deficit revenue budget for 2022/23, and a projected deficit budget at the end of 2023/24 be allocated funding.
- Schools will be allocated a proportion of the £179,028.20 funding on a proportional basis based on their closing revenue balance for 2022/23.

Schools Forum is requested to approve the allocations.

### **Recommendations**

8. It is recommended that Schools Forum

### **For the following reasons:-**

9. To provide Gateshead maintained mainstream schools in financial difficulty with an allocation of funding from the grant provided by the DfE.

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