

Swindon Borough Council

Schools Forum

Tuesday, 6 October 2015

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices at 4.00 p.m.

School Members:

Steve Colledge, Chair - Academy Headteacher
Janet Urban, Vice-Chair - Primary Headteacher
Rhian Cockwell, Primary Headteacher
Andrew Henstridge, Primary Headteacher
Ray Williams, Primary Governor
David Bell, Secondary Governor
Charles Law, Special Governor
Jackie Smith, Special Headteacher
Lauren Connor, Academy Headteacher
Wendy Conaghan, Academy Headteacher
Ben Slater, EOTAS
Alison Lowe, Primary Headteacher
Sharon Kirwan, Swindon Association of Secondary Heads
Sue Banks, Secondary Headteacher
Jane Wheatley, Primary Headteacher

Non-School Members:

Andrew Wild, Diocese - Bristol
Ruth Lee, Diocese of Clifton
Peter Smith, Trade Unions
Kate Adams, Early Years Representative
Andrew Miller, 16-19 Partnership
Graham Taylor, 16-19 Partnership
Ram Thiagarajah, BME

Observer Status

Beverley Pennekett, Education Funding Agency

Committee Officer: Rita Glen-Gallo

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Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 3 - 8)
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2015.
3. **2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Position** (Pages 9 - 20)
4. **Monitoring of School Balances** (Pages 21 - 32)
5. **Schools Financial Value Standard Returns** (Pages 33 - 42)
6. **2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget and Forward Look to 2016-17**
(Pages 43 - 108)
7. **Post 16 High Needs Funding Update** (Pages 109 - 116)

Date of Despatch: 28 September 2015

Public Question Time - - Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). We will give priority to those who submit questions in writing at least two days before the meeting. Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements.

Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Director of Law and Democratic Services, we will publish it, along with the answer, alongside the Minutes. The process associated with asking a public question is set out in the "Public Question Time at Council Meetings Protocol and Guidance" available on the Council's Website (<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

SCHOOLS FORUM

TUESDAY, 7 JULY 2015

PRESENT: -

School Members: Steve Colledge, Chair - Academy Headteacher
Janet Urban, Vice-Chair - Primary Headteacher
Ray Williams, Primary Governor
David Bell, Secondary Governor
Jackie Smith, Special Headteacher
Lauren Costello, Academy Headteacher
Wendy Conaghan, Academy Headteacher
Kate Adams, Early Years
Nick Letchet, Swindon College
Ben Slater, EOTAS

Non-School Members: Peter Smith, Trade Unions
Ram Thiagarajah, BME

Officers: Ian Burbidge (Head of Finance, Schools)
Anne Mackay (Finance Manager, Education)
Peter Nathan (Head of Education)

Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, was also in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Sharon Kirwan (Swindon Association of Secondary Headteachers), Charles Law (Special Governor), Rhian Cockwell (Primary Headteacher) and Andrew Miller (16-19 Partnership).

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2. Public Question Time

The following question was asked in accordance with standing Order 28 –

Questioner

Alastair Dixon-Patterson, Lydiard Park Academy.

Question

Mr Dixon-Patterson asked a series of questions relating to the (a) reflection of responses to public questions in the minutes, (b) reference to recording of Special Educational Needs top up funding in the minutes, (c) work undertaken to ensure variances in funding and expenditure were reflected in budgets, (d) contingencies in place and effect on budgets due to Specialist Resource Provision units being opened by the Borough in the future.

Response

The Chair thanked Mr Dixon-Patterson for his questions and advised that a written response had been provided and circulated at the meeting. The Chair, Mr Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools, and Mr Peter Nathan, Head of Education responded at the meeting to the questions and comments.

3. Final Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2014-15

Mr Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools, presented a report regarding the final position of the 2014/15 retained Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget following closure of the Local Authorities 2014/15 final accounts. The report provided information on the final spend against the 2014/15 centrally retained budget including commentaries on those areas of the budget where forecast figures proved to be inaccurate.

Mr Burbidge referred to the Direct Funding of High Needs Places recouped by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the funding retained of the equal pay liability that had been added to the DSG.

Resolved: That the School Forum notes:

(1) The reduction of the DSG by the EFA for Direct Funding of High Need Places for Post 16 Pupils.

(2) The final outturn on the 2014/15 centrally retained DSG budget was an in year overspend of £0.109m.

(3) The £0.500m equal pay liability was still outstanding

(4) That after taking account of the brought forward balance, in-year underspend and allocations of funding previously agreed by the Schools Forum, the total DSG balance available for redistribution as at 31st March 2015 was £1.098m.

4. Actual 2014-15 Year End School Balances

The Forum considered a report by Mr Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools, regarding the final position on 31st March 2015 school revenue balances compared with the estimated position as forecast by schools in December 2014.

Mr Burbidge talked members through the report, commenting on the various items and highlighting the decisions required by the Forum. He referred to the Schools Forum meeting in January 2012 where members agreed the criteria for a revised scheme to monitor and manage school balances. Mr Burbidge explained the reasons why four schools were forecasting a "Red" rating and referred to the reasons submitted by the schools for variances in their budgets. In response to a question relating to actions to be undertaken due to positive revenue budget positions held by schools, Mr Burbidge explained that this would be included in a report to be submitted at the next Forum's meeting in October 2015.

Resolved: That the Schools Forum notes that:

(1) Just over half, 23 of 42 (55%) of schools final year end reported balances were close to the estimates provided in December as measured by the thresholds agreed by Schools Forum.

(2) 15 of 42 (36%) of schools were reasonably accurate in forecasting their year end balances

(3) Only 4 of 42 (10%) schools have reported significant variances between their final and December estimates of their projected year end balances – commentaries on these schools are provided.

(4) Final school balances (adjusted to exclude in-year Academy conversions) are forecast to be £4.6m which is 30% higher, than the December estimates of £3.6million.

(5) The Special Resource Provision (SRP) Unit for one maintained school started the year in a deficit position and one maintained school and two SRP units were in deficit at the 31st March 2015.

(6) That further to (5) above, the maintained school was being supported by the Local Authority as it worked to balance its budget over the next three years.

(7) The Local Authority would present further information on the planned use of school balances to the October 2015 Schools Forum meeting.

5. 2015-16 Dedicated School Grant Retained Budget Position

Mr Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools, submitted a report regarding the latest projected 2015/16 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) retained budget position. He advised that as at the end of May 2015, there was a projected overspend of £0.201m against the retained DSG budget and explained that Appendix A of the report indicate reasons for the projected variances and commentaries on all high risk areas. In response to a query regarding the allocation of DSG money, Mr Burbidge advised that it would be prudent to retain funding at present.

Resolved: That the Schools Forum notes that the latest projection on the 2015-16 retained budget was an overspend of £0.201m.

6. 2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget

The Forum considered a report by Mr Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools, updating members on various unresolved budget issues that arose at the Schools Forum meeting on 17th March 2015. Mr Burbidge advised that the report addressed (a) changes to the Dedicated Schools Grant Allocation, (b) reference to Mainstream School Budgets, (c) a change to the overall budget requirement relating to Pupil Growth Funding and (d) changes to various High Need commissioned provisions. He further advised that the report then highlighted items to be considered by members as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process.

Mr Burbidge, Head of Finance, Schools and Mr Peter Nathan, Head of Education, responded to questions and comments regarding the following issues:

- The recruitment of an Early Years Engagement Officer to promote Early Years take-up.
- Effects on PDI outreach provision due to differences in funding between maintained schools and academies,
- Confirmation that moderation on banding systems within specialists' settings would be undertaken and how the system would benefit from a review of current timescales of reviews by the Special Education Needs team.

Resolved: (1) That the Schools Forum:

(1) Notes that due to the changes in the EFA funding, £0.500m equal pay liability remains outstanding and this will result in an increase in central costs of £0.031m.

(2) That further to (1) above, the Head of Finance be requested to circulate information relating to interest to be paid before the next meeting of the Forum.

(3) Notes the current position regarding Early Year's income and expenditure based on the current projection of take up.

(4) Agrees to the proposal to recruit an engagement officer and to purchase an application portal to link with the Council's existing IT systems.

(5) Notes the current position with regard to former non-recoupment academies.

(6) Notes the proposals to review the trigger funding policy to accommodate situations outside the current policy.

(7) Notes the proposal to start a consultation on a 6th form provision at Crowdy's Special School.

(8) Notes that £0.018m will be paid to Uplands Special School to maintain the current 138 places.

(9) Notes the changes to the Ridgeway HI Unit coming into effect on 1st September 2015.

(10) Notes the changes to the Ruskin ASC Unit.

(11) Notes the issues regarding the Nyland Campus Outreach Team (NCOT) service being caused by 6 academies choosing not to buy back the service.

(12) Notes the changes to the funding applications made to the Special Educational Needs Resource and Assessment Panel (SENRAP).

(13) That the Head of Education be requested to liaise with the Special Education Needs team regarding a review of timescales in moderating banding systems within special education needs settings.

(14) Agrees the proposals to use £0.030m of the exclusions income to support reintegration.

(15) Notes that there will be a further adjustment to Secondary School Basic Per Pupil Entitlement (BPPE) rates in 2016/17 to reflect the increase in place funding at the Education Other Than at School Service (EOTAS).

(16) Agrees to the creation of a Student Resource Package (SRP) Funding Review Task Group to review SRP funding and provide funding recommendations for the 2016/17 financial year.

(17) Further to (16) above, notes the suggested task group membership as referred to Appendix 1 of the report and would include Jackie Smith, Special Headteacher, Wendy Conaghan, Academy Headteacher, Steve Colledge, Chair and Academy Headteacher and Kate Adams, Early Years representative.

(18) That further to (16) above, agree the terms of reference as referred to in Appendix 1 of the report.

(19) That further to (16) above, an additional meeting of the Forum be set up in December 2015 to review a report by the Task Group.

7. Post 16 High Needs Funding Update Report

The Head of Finance, Education, presented a report updating the Forum on the level of funding available and proposes indicative funding allocations to providers for the 2015/16 financial year. Mr Ian Burbidge, Head of Finance, Education referred to the number of pupils accessing this provision, how the number of placements taken up at Further Education Colleges would be higher than previous years and why the Local Authority's request to increase the place numbers for exceptional circumstances was rejected by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). Members noted that the EFA had agreed to provide element 3 funding for 252 pupils. Mr Burbidge made reference to Table 1 in the report, reflecting planned placements for 2015/16.

Resolved: That this Forum notes that:

(1) The latest projected 2015/16 financial year costs arising from the LA new funding responsibilities for Post 16 High Needs Students is estimated at £2.019m for an estimated 386 FTE post 16 (excluding school sixth form) high needs students. This includes costs of 48 FTE placements at ISPs of £0.579m and

indicative allocations to FE colleges and training providers of £1.439m for 338 students.

(2) That indicative banding values for the academic year 2015 have reduced since 2014/15 academic year to fit within the available funding envelope as a result of a significant projected increase in student numbers.

8. Any Other Business

To enable out-turn figures to be determined, members agreed that discussions relating to pay liability be deferred to another meeting of the Forum.

9. Dates of Future Meetings

The Schools Forum is scheduled to meet on the following dates:

- 6th October 2015, 4 p.m. in Committee Room 6.
- 12th January 2016, 4 p.m. in Committee Room 6.
- 15th March 2016, 4 p.m. in Committee Room 6.

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2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Position

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

Author:	Finance Manager - Education
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To advise Schools Forum members of the latest projected 2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant (“DSG”) retained budget position.
- 1.2 The Local Authority (“LA”) is required to report the position on the DSG budget to the Schools Forum throughout the year and at the financial year end. This report provides Forum Members with the projected year end position against the 2015-16 retained budgets based upon available information at the end of August 2015.
- 1.3 The retained DSG budget is monitored in accordance with standard Swindon Borough Council (SBC) budgetary control procedures and a report is submitted to the Education Leadership Team each month. Updates are also periodically provided to Corporate Board, Cabinet and the Children and Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendations

The Schools Forum is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note that the latest projection on the 2015-16 retained budget is an **overspend of £0.738m**
- 2.2 Note that the unallocated DSG balance will reduce to **£0.360m**.

3. Detail

Latest 2015-16 Retained Budget Position

- 3.1 As reported to Schools Forum on 7th July 2015 the overall value of the 2015/16 centrally retained DSG budget is £29.6m.
- 3.2 Attached at **Appendix A** is the report that was issued to the Education Leadership Team on 16th September 2015 based on information at the end of August. This shows that an overspend of £0.738m is projected across the overall budget. The main reasons for the projected variances and commentaries on all high risk areas are provided in **Appendix A**.
- 3.3 The LA Finance team has continued to work with Budget Managers to review the financial position to ensure robust forecasts are projected. In setting the retained budget officers included an element of contingency funding across some of the

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Position

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

high risk budget areas to meet for any unexpected placements commissioned before 31st March 2016.

- 3.4 At this stage the LA is expecting that, although there continues to be a risk associated with the projection, an overspend of £0.738m (0.45%) will occur, which will need to be funded from existing unallocated DSG balances. Following the projected overspend of £0.738m the value of the unallocated DSG balances will be £0.360m. The financial position will continue to be monitored and the final 2015-16 outturn position (subject to external audit) will be represented to the July 2016 Schools Forum after closure of the LA's accounts.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note that the latest projection on the 2015-16 retained budget is an overspend of £0.738m**
- **Note that the unallocated DSG balance will reduce to £0.360m**

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no proposals included within this report.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 Various financial implications are included in this report relating to management of the retained DSG budget

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no legal or human rights implications arising from this report.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 This report does not make any recommendations that affect these areas.

Links to One Swindon, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 Utilisation of the DSG has a direct link to two of the Council's five priorities – "Right skills, right jobs in the right place" and "Make the best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council".

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 As there are no proposals in this report, a DIA has not been completed.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Position

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no specific risk management implications not highlighted in the body of the report.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A - Education Leadership Team budget monitoring report
- 8.2 Appendix B – DSG Budget analysis by expenditure type
- 8.3 Appendix C – DSG Profiled budget to date compared with actual spend to date

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Comparison of Notional SEN using the new funding model for 2014/15

APPENDIX A

School Name	Old Funding Model				New Funding Model					Net Gain / (Loss) Compared to New Funding Model											
	Total Low Prior Attainment Pupils Oct 2013	Statemente d Pupil Numbers as at Oct 13 (excluding SRP)	Notional SEN Funding 2014-15	Notional SEN Spend Oct 14 Census Data (Adj for Statemanted Pupils Only)	Total Top Up Received 2014-15	Total Low Prior Attainment Pupils Change From Oct 2013	Statemente d Pupil Numbers Change From Oct 13 (excluding SRP)	Top Up Received April 14	Additional Top Up Received Jan 15		Total Notional SEN due	Total Top Up Received 2014-15									
A												I			L		M		N = I + L		O = F - M
F = C + E																					
Abbey Meads Community Primary School	76.61	7	£103,115	£83,836	£0	-0.20	-2.00	£0	£0	£84,573	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Beechcroft Infant School	40.46	0	£74,229	£38,889	£0	32.40	3.00	£0	£0	£50,919	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Bishopstone School	6.40	1	£5,651	£6,292	£4,141	1.50	-1.00	£1,725	-£63	£7,313	£1,662	-£2,479	£1,510	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Bridlewood Primary School	38.38	1	£35,636	£35,725	£89	4.69	1.00	£0	£1,599	£37,235	£1,599	£1,510	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Brook Field County Primary	77.78	9	£72,788	£98,753	£29,465	-0.54	-1.00	£12,277	£13,877	£98,942	£26,154	-£3,311	£2,256	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Catherine Wayte Primary School	59.12	5	£54,708	£67,967	£13,259	5.51	0.00	£5,525	£9,991	£70,223	£15,515	£2,957	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Carseldon Primary Scholl	19.98	0	£23,171	£14,014	£0	4.42	0.00	£0	£0	£15,825	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Clebrook Infant Academy	19.21	4	£21,541	£31,173	£13,133	14.78	-1.00	£5,472	£10,617	£37,630	£16,089	£2,957	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Colebrook Junior School	44.54	2	£45,141	£41,848	£0	-11.15	0.00	£0	£0	£37,283	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Covingham Park Primary School	58.43	3	£69,998	£63,891	£0	8.03	2.00	£0	£0	£66,357	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Drove Primary School.	165.52	5	£187,344	£149,615	£0	0.43	2.00	£0	£0	£148,973	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
East Wichel Community Primary School	40.84	2	£57,933	£39,248	£0	5.59	0.00	£0	£0	£41,536	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Eastrop Infants	28.44	2	£24,768	£30,548	£5,780	2.96	0.00	£2,409	£4,584	£31,760	£6,993	£1,212	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Eldene Primary School	118.96	2	£173,949	£101,056	£0	-2.54	2.00	£0	£0	£99,198	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Even Swindon Primary School	183.88	10	£219,637	£181,989	£0	-10.75	0.00	£0	£0	£177,590	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Ferndale Community Primary	82.74	5	£128,076	£95,043	£0	1.94	3.00	£0	£0	£94,607	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Goddard Park Primary School	63.29	9	£238,203	£85,087	£0	7.19	-2.00	£0	£0	£88,849	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Gorse Hill Primary	95.61	12	£137,101	£125,409	£0	7.41	-1.50	£0	£0	£129,055	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Grange Infant School	49.69	3	£41,800	£47,253	£8,953	5.51	-1.00	£3,731	£4,389	£49,919	£8,119	-£834	£421	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Grange Junior School	30.55	2	£38,442	£42,530	£4,088	4.03	3.00	£0	£4,509	£42,952	£4,509	£421	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Greenmeadow School	25.40	0	£42,644	£21,320	£0	4.80	1.00	£0	£0	£22,875	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Haydon Wick Primary School	25.87	4	£49,632	£39,347	£0	2.42	0.00	£0	£0	£40,335	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Haydonleigh Primary School	42.09	1	£51,639	£41,825	£0	14.60	2.00	£0	£0	£46,983	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Hazelwood Academy	33.58	1	£63,040	£39,354	£0	9.00	3.00	£0	£0	£41,811	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	38.42	4	£51,565	£58,647	£7,082	-2.59	3.00	£0	£4,795	£56,360	£4,795	-£2,287	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Holy Family Catholic Primary	63.07	5	£125,376	£81,243	£0	-3.90	3.00	£0	£0	£78,418	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	

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DSG Budget Analysis by Expenditure Type

2015-16 Budgets by Expenditure Type									
Service Area	Employees £'000	Premises £'000	Transport £'000	Supplies & Services £'000	3rd Party Payments £'000	Internal Recharges £'000	Capital Financing £'000	Income £'000	Total £'000
Free nursery education (3&4 year olds)	36.9	-	-	0.3	8,161.4	-	-	-	8,198.6
Disadvantaged two year olds	-	-	-	8.0	2,724.0	55.0	-	-	2,787.0
LAC Pupil Premium	-	-	-	385.7	-	-	-	(385.7)	-
DSG NNDR	-	925.4	-	-	-	-	-	(925.4)	-
Nnyland Primary Behaviour Support	-	-	-	232.7	-	-	-	(232.7)	-
Trade Union Facilities	28.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	(28.4)	-
Admissions	156.4	-	0.3	12.9	-	55.2	-	(29.5)	195.3
Tuition Services	584.2	53.3	7.0	37.2	160.3	57.2	-	(9.4)	889.8
The Oakfield project	270.2	45.2	2.0	13.0	-	(18.5)	-	(311.9)	-
Portage	151.5	11.7	2.7	7.3	-	-	-	(21.5)	151.7
School subscriptions	-	-	-	186.8	-	-	-	(51.7)	135.1
Trigger funding	-	-	-	-	390.6	-	-	-	390.6
Pupil Growth set up costs	-	-	-	-	46.0	-	-	-	46.0
High Needs top ups	-	-	-	-	10,885.6	-	-	-	10,885.6
Statemanted Pupils Equipment	-	-	-	130.0	-	-	-	-	130.0
Out of Borough fees	-	-	-	-	2,803.5	-	-	(221.9)	2,581.6
Post 16 new responsibilities	-	-	-	-	2,333.2	-	-	(311.2)	2,022.0
New school start up costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Therapy	-	-	-	-	105.0	-	-	-	105.0
Notional SEN	-	-	-	-	350.0	-	-	-	350.0
High Needs Contingency	-	-	-	315.0	-	-	-	-	315.0
Equal Pay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Central Charges	-	-	-	-	-	615.5	-	-	615.5
Broadband Connectivity	-	-	-	383.8	-	-	-	(383.8)	-
School Exclusions	-	-	-	30.0	-	-	-	(380.0)	(350.0)
Forums & FSM Administration	-	-	-	4.1	-	19.5	-	(21.6)	2.0
Education Support Services Monitoring	-	-	-	10.0	-	-	-	-	10.0
Travellers children	-	-	-	-	2.0	-	-	-	2.0
Expense Category Totals	1,227.6	1,035.6	12.0	1,756.8	27,961.6	783.9	0.0	(3,314.7)	29,462.8

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End of August 2015 Budget Monitoring

Schools Forum 06 10 2015 DSG Retained Budget Monitoring Report - Appendix C

Service	Cost Centre	Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance to date	Full Year budget	Full year forecast	Full Year Variance
Free Nursery Education Commissioning - three & four year olds	2000	£2,055,845	£3,283,807	£1,227,962	£8,198,600	£8,560,342	£361,742
DSG Premature Retirement & Redundancy Costs	2002	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
School subscriptions	2004	£135,100	£160,409	£25,309	£135,100	£133,600	(£1,500)
Free Nursery Education Commissioning - two year olds	2005	£727,835	£573,896	(£153,939)	£2,787,000	£2,033,168	(£753,832)
DSG Retained Equal Pay	2009	£0	£0	£0	£0	£31,000	£31,000
DSG Retained Contingency	2011	£615,500	£642,787	£27,287	£615,500	£634,500	£19,000
LAC pupil premium	2012	£96,425	(£8,525)	(£104,950)	£0	£0	£0
6th form SEN	2014	(£212,500)	(£216,147)	(£3,647)	(£510,000)	(£510,000)	£0
DSG NNDR	2015	£0	£15,582	£15,582	£0	£15,600	£15,600
Universal Infant Free School Meals	2016	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Nyland Primary Behaviour Support	2019	(£66,249)	(£66,309)	(£60)	£0	£0	£0
Trade Union Facilities	2020	(£16,570)	(£9,053)	£7,517	£0	£0	£0
Schools' Forum	2021	£500	£1,562	£1,062	£2,000	£2,000	£0
Pupil Growth Trigger Funding	2023	£0	£33,058	£33,058	£390,600	£390,600	£0
Pupil Growth Set Up Costs	2024	£46,000	£72,669	£26,669	£46,000	£72,000	£26,000
Admissions	2025	£111,100	£106,226	(£4,874)	£195,300	£195,300	£0
Free School Meals administration	2026	£4,125	£3,074	(£1,051)	£0	£0	£0
Therapy	2027	£26,250	£26,250	£0	£105,000	£105,000	£0
SEN Resourcing Assessment Panel	2028	£4,545,313	£4,599,316	£54,003	£10,885,600	£11,005,571	£119,971
Statemanted Pupils Equipment	2029	£116,000	£126,235	£10,235	£130,000	£130,000	£0
Schools in Challenging Circumstances	2032	£2,500	£6,187	£3,687	£10,000	£10,000	£0
Out of Borough School Fees	2033	£1,112,635	£901,111	(£211,524)	£2,581,600	£2,153,434	(£428,166)
Travellers Children	2034	£830	£0	(£830)	£2,000	£2,000	£0
Tuition Service	2035	£358,720	£369,175	£10,455	£889,800	£901,400	£11,600
Post 16 - New Responsibilities	2036	£842,500	£731,731	(£110,769)	£2,022,000	£2,018,583	(£3,417)
Broadband Connectivity	2039	£159,915	£208,555	£48,640	£0	£0	£0
The Oakfield Project	2040	£56,990	£104,748	£47,758	£0	£0	£0
Year 11 Protocol	2041	£0	£164	£164	£0	£0	£0
Portage	2042	£67,740	£51,480	(£16,260)	£151,700	£151,700	£0
Notional SEN	2048	£144,387	£144,387	£0	£350,000	£350,000	£0
School Exclusions and short term placements	2049	(£145,830)	(£159,410)	(£13,580)	(£350,000)	(£284,000)	£66,000
High Needs Contingency	2055	£131,245	£0	(£131,245)	£315,000	£0	(£315,000)
New School start-up costs	2056	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
OVERALL TOTAL		£11,128,806	£11,918,951	£790,145	£29,462,800	£28,611,799	(£851,001)

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Monitoring of School Balances

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

Author:	Finance Manager – Education
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To advise Schools Forum members of the planned use of 2014-15 surplus balances during 2015-16 and the use of 2015-16 surplus balances in 2016-17 and beyond.
- 1.2 To advise Schools Forum members of the estimated school revenue balances expected to be held on 31st March 2016 as forecast by schools in June 2015.
- 1.3 The LA is required to monitor the level of school balances held by schools to provide assurance to the LA's Chief Financial Officer, Director of Children Services and Cabinet Member for Children Services regarding the financial sustainability of individual schools. The LA must work with individual schools where balances are low or where there are strong indications that they will be low in the immediate future
- 1.4 The LA is also required to monitor the level of school balances held by schools as there is a national and local expectation that annual revenue funding allocated each year is used to support the education and well-being of pupils in the school at that time. Unless there are clear and valid reasons why it is appropriate to do so, schools should not accumulate funds which could/should have been used to raise standards further.
- 1.5 The LA fully supports the principle that schools should hold a reasonable level of balances, which may be built up over a number of years for strategic purposes as well as providing a degree of contingency funding for unexpected costs or funding reductions. At the same time the Forum has agreed that Schools should be challenged and held accountable for the level of balances they hold.
- 1.6 Schools are encouraged to embed effective financial management procedures so that their forecasting of year-end balances is accurate and they have a clear understanding of the resources available to them. Schools are measured on how effective they are and this report provides a summary of the schools' estimated 2015/16 year-end balances.
- 1.7 The main focus of the LA's control of balances scheme is to improve forecasting and encourage schools with surplus balances to utilise them effectively for the benefit of pupils already in school as is expected by Department for Education (DfE). It is also very important for schools with relatively low balances to undertake accurate forecasting to avoid them encountering a deficit position.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Monitoring of School Balances

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Schools Forum is recommended to:

- Note the planned use of schools' surplus balances brought forward at 1st April 2015 and the schools' committed use of these balances in 2015/16.
- Note the surplus balances estimated to be carried forward by schools at 31st March 2016 and the value to be committed for use in 2016/17.
- Note that based on the survey forms received twenty two schools plan to hold uncommitted balances on 31st March 2016 which exceed the target per pupil values agreed by the Schools Forum.
- Note the analysis of schools' planned use of March 2015 surplus balances in 2015/16.
- Note the indicative future balances to be held by schools at 31st March 2017 and 31st March 2018, taken from the three year budget plans submitted by schools in June 2015.
- Note the school balances claw back mechanism remains in place and the circumstances that need to apply for it to be implemented by the LA available.

3. Analysis of 2015/16 Estimated Year End Balances Surveys

3.1 The LA is pleased to report that survey forms have been received from all schools. A summary of the planned usage of surplus balances from 2014/15 and the projected year end position and planned usage of surplus balances for 2015/16 is provided in table 1 below

Table 1 – Summary of balances and value of usage					
Total opening balances brought forward 1 st April 2015	Value committed for use in 2015/16	Sector	Total estimated 31 st March 2016 balances	Value committed for use in 2016/17	Value uncommitted school balances expected at 31 st March
£3,521,928	£1,605,908	Primary	£2,633,885	£947,678	£1,681,284
£480,324	£122,191	Secondary	£387,701	£193,944	£193,757
£480,118	£172,233	Special	£421,942	£201,397	£220,545
£147,018	£40,000	EOTAS	£147,018	£40,000	£107,018
£4,629,388	£1,940,332	Totals	£3,590,546	£1,383,019	£2,202,604
100%	41.90%	%	100%	38.52%	61.34%

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Monitoring of School Balances

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

- 3.2 The above table is based entirely on submissions from schools that have been reviewed by the LA as part of its statutory role. A summary of the schools' survey forms is attached at **Annex A**. There is a strong indication that overall balances are expected to fall from the value carried forward at the end of 2014/15.
- 3.3 It is relevant to note that the school balances information refer only to maintained schools and exclude Academies.
- 3.4 Based on the survey forms received 22 schools plan to hold uncommitted balances on 31st March 2016 which exceed the target per pupil values agreed by the Forum of:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| • Primary settings | £120 per pupil | (minimum of £20,000) |
| • Secondary settings | £100 per pupil | (minimum of £60,000) |
| • Special settings | £800 per pupil | (minimum of £40,000) |

The majority of these schools (15/22) provided a narrative explanation on their balances return regarding the exceptional circumstances for holding higher levels of uncommitted balances per pupil.

- 3.5 Other general observations from the survey forms received are:
- Six primary schools anticipate carrying forward uncommitted balances of less than £20,000 by year end which, if realistic, would imply that the LA will need to work very closely with these schools to reduce their spending.
 - Two schools plan to use brought forward balances to support their 2015/16 budget and the LA finance team will contact these schools during the autumn term.
 - The majority of schools sent in balance surveys showing the same income, expenditure and estimated balance to carry forward as shown on their three year plans but a number of schools needed to resubmit their balance returns as they did not align with their budget templates.
 - Fifteen schools provided a narrative to explain the variance between the school's estimated balance in December and the actual balance to carry forward in March.

Schools' planned use of surplus balances during 2015/16 is shown in the table 2 below:

Monitoring of School Balances

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

Table 2 – Planned use of March 2015 surplus balances during 2015/16

Reason	Number of incidences	Total planned expenditure
Specific Premises Improvement	21	£69,904
Provision for unplanned responsive premises maintenance works	12	£130,209
ICT Investment	15	£231,995
Workforce restructuring one off costs	4	£58,850
Commercial / Traded Activities	2	£21,156
Funds on behalf of other clusters	2	£34,068
Other specific projects	18	£396,725
Staff Absence Reserve	7	£115,646
Purchase orders for goods ordered but not received by year end	14	£207,446
Setting the new year budget	2	£94,233
Total	38 schools	£1,940,332

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the planned use of schools' surplus balances brought forward at 1st April 2015 and the schools' committed use of these balances in 2015/16**
- **Note the surplus balances estimated to be carried forward by schools at 31st March 2016 and the value to be committed for use in 2016/17.**
- **Note that based on the survey forms received twenty two schools plan to hold uncommitted balances on 31st March 2016 which exceed the target per pupil values agreed by the Schools Forum.**
- **Note the analysis of schools' planned use of March 2015 surplus balances in 2015/16.**

4. Estimated school balances at 31st March 2017 and 31st March 2018

- 4.1 Appendix A also shows the estimated balances to be held by schools at 31st March 2017 and 31st March 2018, taken from the three year budget plans submitted by schools in June 2015.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Monitoring of School Balances

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

4.2 General observations on the budget plans submitted by schools are:

- One school expects to carry forward a deficit at the end of financial year 2015/16 the school is being supported by the LA finance team.
- Two schools submitted plans showing a deficit balance at the end of financial year 2016/17 and six by the end of 2017/18. If the plans are realistic then the LA may need to work closely with a number of schools over the next two years to help them to reduce their expenditure. Where schools operate an SRP or run a commissioned service, the combined balance is taken into account in determining whether a deficit balance is predicted.
- A large proportion of School's have submitted budget templates showing in year structural deficits (in year expenditure is exceeding in year income, excluding brought forward balances) that are unsustainable as they lead to low or very low balances at the end of 2017/18.

5. Indicative future balances

5.1 The table below shows the actual revenue balances brought forward from 2014/15 and the indicative revenue balances for 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Table 3 – Indicative school revenue balances				
Sector	31/03/15 Actual	31/03/16 Indicative	31/03/17 Indicative	31/03/18 Indicative
Primary	£3,521,928	£2,633,885	£1,788,606	£694,310
Secondary	£480,324	£387,701	£193,758	£9,431
Special	£480,118	£421,942	£163,062	(£103,283)
EOTAS	£147,018	£147,018	£129,658	£36,183
Total	£4,629,388	£3,590,546	£2,275,084	£636,641
Change £	-	(£1,038,842)	(£1,315,462)	(£1,638,443)
Change %	-	(22.44%)	(36.64%)	(72.02%)
Deficit balances	-	1	2	6

5.2 The table shows that the revenue balances held by schools are expected to fall significantly over the next three years.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the indicative future balances to be held by schools at 31st March 2017 and 31st March 2018, taken from the three year budget plans submitted by schools in June 2015**

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Monitoring of School Balances

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

6. School balances claw back mechanism

- 6.1 The LA therefore retains the right to implement claw backs but only in circumstances where a school
- Is consistently inaccurate (Red rated) in forecasting their year end balances for 2 consecutive years and does not provide adequate explanations and
 - Holds relatively high balances .i.e. above 8%, 5% or 2% of ISB depending on the size of the school budget.
- 6.2 Where the LA believes that clawbacks may be applicable schools will be given an opportunity to defend their positions prior to any claw backs being proposed to the Schools Forum. No school has been inaccurate over each of the last two years. Forum Members are advised that proposing claw backs is not the LAs preferred course of action but it would be inappropriate and unfair if any school had high balances which were not being adequately managed when funds could be used to raise standards in that school or re-distributed to other schools where they could be spent on current pupils.
- 6.3 It is important to acknowledge that forecasting is only one indication of how well schools are managing their balances and further information on school balances will be provided throughout the year to the Schools Forum.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the school balances claw back mechanism remains in place and the circumstances that need to apply for it to be implemented by the LA**

7. Alternative Options

- 7.1 There are no alternative options presented in this report.

8. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 8.1 LA's and their Schools Forums are required to monitor the level of balances held by schools and to ensure local arrangements are in place which ensure excessive balances are not held

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 8.2 There are no legal or human rights implications arising from this report.
-

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Monitoring of School Balances

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 8.3 This report does not make any recommendations that affect these areas.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 8.4 Utilisation of the DSG has a direct link to two of the Council's five priorities – "Right skills, right jobs in the right place" and "Make the best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council".

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 8.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has not been done as this report does not make any recommendations that affect services.

Risk Management

- 8.6 The key risks arising from this report are that ineffective monitoring by schools could lead to them encountering financial difficulties. Conversely the LA would not wish to see any individual school accruing excessive surplus balances which could have been used to improve standards and attainment for pupils currently in school.

9. Consultees

- 9.1 The Board Director Resources (Section 151 Officer), Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) and Board Director Commissioning (Director of Children Services) are consulted in respect of all reports.

10. Background Papers

- 10.1 Appendix A - Monitoring of School Balances.

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Planned Use of 2014-15 Surplus Balances during 2015-16

Name of School	Specific Premises Works	Provision for unplanned responsive premises works	ICT Investm't	Workforce restruct'g one off costs	Comm'cial Traded Activities	Funds held on behalf of clusters	Other specific projects	Staff Absence Reserve
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbey Meads Community Primary School	£7,000	£10,000	£60,000	£0	£0	£0	£22,000	£0
Abbey Meads Childrens Centre	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Abbey Meads Sunshine Club	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Abbey Meads Community Focused	£0	£4,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Beechcroft Infant School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£10,000
Bishopstone Church of England Prim	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Bridlewood Primary School	£5,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,000	£15,000
Brook Field Primary School	£3,501	£10,000	£40,000	£0	£0	£0	£13,554	£0
Catherine Wayte Primary School	£56,370	£10,000	£3,245	£6,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Chiseldon Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£9,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Colebrook Junior School	£0	£0	£5,000	£0	£0	£0	£19,295	£10,000
Covingham Park Primary School	£55,354	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
East Wichel Primary School	£0	£0	£30,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Eldene Primary School	£40,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Eldene Primary School SRP (CLD)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Even Swindon Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Even Swindon Primary School Outreach	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Even Swindon Primary School SRP (SSL)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Ferndale Community Primary School	£65,553	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Grange Infant School	£74,312	£0	£3,000	£0	£0	£0	£5,135	£0
Grange Junior School	£50,000	£5,000	£13,000	£0	£0	£0	£16,000	£0
Greenmeadow Primary School	£13,000	£0	£0	£0	£2,386	£0	£28,000	£20,000
Haydonleigh Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Lainesmead Primary School	£30,670	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,108	£0
Lawn Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Liden Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Nythe Primary School	£8,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Oakhurst Community Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£25,000	£0	£0	£86,200	£0
Oaktree Nursery and Primary School	£47,400	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Oliver Tomkins Church of England Infant	£18,000	£7,000	£9,000	£0	£0	£4,500	£0	£0
Oliver Tomkins Church of England Junior	£10,000	£8,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£5,000	£0
Orchid Vale Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£21,107	£0
Red Oak Primary School	£0	£0	£3,750	£0	£18,770	£0	£0	£0
Red Oaks Primary School - Hearing	£0	£0	£1,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Red Oak Primary School - SRP (HI SL &	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Robert le Kyng Primary School	£35,000	£3,000	£8,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Robert le Kyng Primary School SRP (PD)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Ruskin Junior School	£16,580	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Ruskin Junior School - SRP (ASD)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Ruskin Junior School - ASD Advisory &	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
South Marston Church of England Primary	£0	£0	£0	£18,850	£0	£0	£19,254	£0
St Francis Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£12,000
Wanborough Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Westrop Primary School	£11,384	£6,531	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£32,000	£0
Westrop Community Focused	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£15,764	£0
Wroughton Infant School	£17,635	£6,678	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Wroughton Junior School	£55,145	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,710	£0
Isambard Community School	£0	£0	£20,000	£0	£0	£29,568	£0	£0
EOTAS	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£10,000	£0
Brimble Hill School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£26,598	£33,646
Crowdys Hill School	£0	£50,000	£15,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£15,000
St Lukes School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
The Chalet School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,000	£0
Uplands School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Uplands School - VI service	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total Maintained Schools	£649,904	£130,209	£231,995	£58,850	£21,156	£34,068	£396,725	£115,646

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Name of School	Planned Use of 2014-15 Surplus			Estimated 2015-16 revenue balance to be carried forward to 2016-17				
	Purchase orders raised before year end but goods not delivered	Setting the new year budget	Total Committed Balances to be spent on specific items in 2015/16	Total Revenue Balances b fwd from 2014-15	Expected Total Revenue Income 2015-16	Total	Expected Revenue Expenditure 2015-16	Estimated School Revenue Balance to be carried forward to 2016-17
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
School	£0	£0	£99,000	£116,404	£1,674,543	£1,790,947	£1,704,797	£86,151
Abbey Meads Childrens Centre	£0	£0	£0	£9,748	£234,333	£244,081	£235,678	£8,403
Abbey Meads Sunshine Club	£0	£0	£0	£43,669	£60,000	£103,669	£55,124	£48,545
Abbey Meads Community Focused	£0	£0	£4,000	£127,412	£75,450	£202,862	£62,604	£140,258
Beechcroft Infant School	£48,409	£0	£58,409	£81,467	£1,205,218	£1,286,685	£1,238,559	£48,126
Bishopstone Church of England Primary	£0	£0	£0	£34,231	£334,928	£369,159	£346,090	£23,069
Bridlewood Primary School	£8,827	£0	£63,827	£101,456	£1,106,607	£1,208,063	£1,118,206	£89,857
Brook Field Primary School	£14,371	£0	£81,426	£162,300	£1,578,781	£1,741,081	£1,612,537	£128,544
Catherine Wayte Primary School	£10,630	£0	£86,245	£208,357	£1,603,116	£1,811,473	£1,693,665	£117,808
Chiseldon Primary School	£0	£0	£9,000	£19,077	£664,681	£683,758	£673,131	£10,627
Colebrook Junior School	£7,095	£21,710	£63,100	£89,220	£704,407	£793,627	£710,762	£82,865
Covingham Park Primary School	£0	£0	£55,354	£71,236	£1,411,480	£1,482,716	£1,468,478	£14,238
East Wichel Primary School	£0	£0	£30,500	£71,454	£1,494,416	£1,565,870	£1,545,291	£20,579
Eldene Primary School	£0	£0	£40,000	£48,269	£1,834,747	£1,883,016	£1,828,404	£54,612
Eldene Primary School SRP (CLD)	£0	£0	£0	£33,137		£33,137		£33,137
Even Swindon Primary School	£83,055	£0	£83,055	£170,309	£2,576,871	£2,747,180	£2,683,006	£64,174
Even Swindon Primary School Outreach	£0	£0	£0	£0	£22,000	£22,000	£20,892	£1,108
Even Swindon Primary School SRP (SSL)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£342,295	£342,295	£331,428	£10,867
Ferndale Community Primary School	£0	£0	£65,553	£65,553	£1,982,752	£2,048,305	£1,969,904	£78,401
Grange Infant School	£4,087	£0	£86,534	£171,146	£1,048,638	£1,219,784	£1,149,796	£69,988
Grange Junior School	£0	£0	£84,000	£147,094	£1,328,893	£1,475,987	£1,314,663	£161,324
Greenmeadow Primary School	£11,135	£0	£74,521	£114,865	£1,052,019	£1,166,884	£1,100,706	£66,178
Haydonleigh Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£67,864	£1,926,631	£1,994,495	£1,955,688	£38,807
Lainesmead Primary School	£3,241	£0	£35,019	£55,981	£1,817,250	£1,873,231	£1,839,935	£33,296
Lawn Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£53,016	£1,734,303	£1,787,319	£1,759,920	£27,399
Liden Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£31,287	£1,427,282	£1,458,569	£1,435,887	£22,682
Nythe Primary School	£0	£0	£8,000	£53,112	£826,437	£879,549	£841,347	£38,202
Oakhurst Community Primary School	£7,351	£0	£118,551	£146,806	£1,886,422	£2,033,228	£1,892,030	£141,198
Oaktree Nursery and Primary School	£0	£0	£47,400	£114,509	£2,041,975	£2,156,484	£2,072,358	£84,126
Oliver Tomkins Church of England	£1,816	£0	£40,316	£46,867	£917,151	£964,018	£952,567	£11,451
Oliver Tomkins Church of England	£0	£0	£33,000	£78,907	£980,194	£1,059,101	£1,022,368	£36,733
Orchid Vale Primary School	£0	£0	£21,107	£65,813	£1,586,454	£1,652,267	£1,600,491	£51,776
Red Oak Primary School	£0	£0	£22,520	£90,841	£2,766,069	£2,856,910	£2,650,423	£206,487
Red Oaks Primary School - Hearing	£0	£0	£1,500	£0	£239,700	£239,700	£240,179	(£479)
Red Oak Primary School - SRP (HI SL &	£0	£0	£0	£1,500	£208,922	£210,422	£217,712	(£7,290)
Robert le Kyng Primary School	£0	£0	£46,000	£158,721	£1,945,749	£2,104,470	£1,963,557	£140,913
Robert le Kyng Primary School SRP	£0	£0	£0	(£41,172)	£252,256	£211,084	£290,603	(£79,519)
Ruskin Junior School	£0	£0	£16,580	£117,197	£1,659,866	£1,777,063	£1,679,486	£97,577
Ruskin Junior School - SRP (ASD)	£0	£0	£0	(£196)	£243,299	£243,103	£226,142	£16,961
Ruskin Junior School - ASD Advisory &	£0	£0	£0	£86,370	£355,521	£441,891	£378,916	£62,975
South Marston Church of England	£440	£0	£38,544	£95,713	£541,598	£637,311	£591,401	£45,910
St Francis Primary School	£0	£0	£12,000	£110,398	£1,741,569	£1,851,967	£1,735,029	£116,938
Wanborough Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£43,284	£824,675	£867,959	£833,509	£34,450
Westrop Primary School	£0	£0	£59,915	£59,915	£995,726	£1,055,641	£1,009,912	£45,729
Westrop Community Focused	£0	£0	£15,764	£15,764	£25,500	£41,264	£41,264	£0
Wroughton Infant School	£0	£0	£24,313	£92,995	£1,039,813	£1,132,808	£1,068,056	£64,752
Wroughton Junior School	£0	£0	£80,855	£90,033	£1,475,007	£1,565,040	£1,521,086	£43,954
Isambard Community School	£0	£72,623	£122,191	£480,324	£5,792,453	£6,272,777	£5,885,076	£387,701
EOTAS	£0	£0	£40,000	£147,018	£2,070,700	£2,217,718	£2,070,700	£147,018
Brimble Hill School	£3,125	£0	£63,369	£199,588	£1,676,720	£1,876,308	£1,770,290	£106,018
Crowdys Hill School	£0	£0	£80,000	£258,161	£2,588,345	£2,846,506	£2,579,446	£267,060
St Lukes School	£0	£0	£0	(£149,899)	£1,754,764	£1,604,865	£1,720,961	(£116,096)
The Chalet School	£3,864	£0	£28,864	£70,904	£1,223,058	£1,293,962	£1,242,182	£51,780
Uplands School	£0	£0	£0	£100,112	£4,117,710	£4,217,822	£4,107,147	£110,675
Uplands School - VI service	£0	£0	£0	£1,253	£240,650	£241,903	£239,397	£2,506
Total Maintained Schools	£207,446	£94,333	£1,940,332	£4,629,387	£71,259,944	£75,889,331	£72,298,786	£3,590,546

SF 06 10 2015 Monitoring of School Balances - Annex A

Name of School	Planned Use of School Surplus 2015-16 Balances in (i) 2016-17 and (ii) beyond							
	Specific Premises Improvements	ICT Investm't	Workforce restruct'g one off costs	Other specific projects	Setting the new year budget	i Total Committed Balances to be spent on specific items in 2016-17	ii Planned use of March 2016 balances beyond 2016-17	ii Total Committed Balances to be spent on specific items in beyond 2016-17
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbey Meads Community Primary School	£0	£6,000	£23,800	£3,000	£0	£32,800	£21,310	£21,310
Abbey Meads Childrens Centre	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Abbey Meads Sunshine Club	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Abbey Meads Community Focused	£4,040	£0	£0	£0	£0	£4,040	£136,218	£136,218
Beechcroft Infant School	£0	£0	£0	£11,700	£0	£11,700	£0	£0
Bishopstone Church of England Prim	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Bridlewood Primary School	£18,000	£15,585	£25,218	£0	£0	£58,803	£15,000	£15,000
Brook Field Primary School	£15,300	£24,000	£0	£26,000	£0	£65,300	£0	£0
Catherine Wayte Primary School	£2,000	£11,500	£0	£0	£0	£13,500	£0	£0
Chiseldon Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Colebrook Junior School	£0	£5,000	£0	£6,000	£40,718	£51,718	£52,906	£52,906
Covingham Park Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
East Wichel Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Eldene Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£22,000	£0	£22,000	£0	£0
Eldene Primary School SRP (CLD)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Even Swindon Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Even Swindon Primary School Outreach	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Even Swindon Primary School SRP (SSL)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Ferndale Community Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£0	£0
Grange Infant School	£25,000	£0	£10,800	£0	£0	£35,800	£0	£0
Grange Junior School	£70,000	£13,000	£30,000	£0	£0	£113,000	£13,351	£13,351
Greenmeadow Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£0	£0
Haydonleigh Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Lainesmead Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Lawn Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Liden Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Nythe Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£32,673	£32,673	£0	£0
Oakhurst Community Primary School	£0	£0	£40,000	£42,600	£0	£82,600	£0	£0
Oaktree Nursery and Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£44,000	£44,000	£0	£0
Oliver Tomkins Church of England Infant	£0	£8,000	£0	£0	£0	£8,000	£0	£0
Oliver Tomkins Church of England Junior	£20,000	£14,000	£0	£0	£0	£34,000	£15,000	£15,000
Orchid Vale Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£6,960	£0	£6,960	£6,960	£6,960
Red Oak Primary School	£0	£45,000	£70,000	£0	£0	£115,000	£0	£0
Red Oaks Primary School - Hearing	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Red Oak Primary School - SRP (HI SL &	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Robert le Kyng Primary School	£35,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£45,000	£20,000	£20,000
Robert le Kyng Primary School SRP (PD)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Ruskin Junior School	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£10,000	£0	£0
Ruskin Junior School - SRP (ASD)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Ruskin Junior School - ASD Advisory &	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
South Marston Church of England Primary	£0	£0	£13,500	£0	£0	£13,500	£0	£0
St Francis Primary School	£0	£0	£32,934	£0	£0	£32,934	£0	£0
Wanborough Primary School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£17,284	£17,284	£0	£0
Westrop Primary School	£0	£10,480	£0	£0	£0	£10,480	£0	£0
Westrop Community Focused	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Wroughton Infant School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£36,586	£36,586	£0	£0
Wroughton Junior School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Isambard Community School	£0	£20,000	£0	£0	£173,944	£193,944	£184,239	£184,239
EOTAS	£40,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£40,000	£85,000	£85,000
Brimble Hill School	£0	£0	£32,679	£3,718	£0	£36,397	£30,876	£30,876
Crowdys Hill School	£50,000	£35,000	£0	£80,000	£0	£165,000	£0	£0
St Lukes School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
The Chalet School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Uplands School	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Uplands School - VI service	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total Maintained Schools	£289,340	£217,565	£278,931	£251,978	£345,205	£1,383,019	£580,860	£580,860

SF 06 10 2015 Monitoring of School Balances - Annex A

Name of School	Summary of Total Balances and calculation of General Uncommitted					Estimated School Balances	
	Estimated 2015-16 school revenue balance to be carried forward to 2016-17	Planned use of school 2015-16 surplus balances in 2016-17	Value of uncommitted school balances expected to be held 31st March 2016	October 2014 school census pupil numbers	Total uncommitt'd school balances held per pupil	Value of school balances expected to be held 31st March 2017	Value of school balances expected to be held 31st March 2018
	£	£	£	NOR	£	£	£
Abbey Meads Community Primary School	£86,151	£32,800	£53,351	387.00	£138	£60,327	£9,926
Abbey Meads Childrens Centre	£8,403	£0	£8,403	-	n/a	£0	£0
Abbey Meads Sunshine Club	£48,545	£0	£48,545	-	n/a	£47,951	£47,616
Abbey Meads Community Focused	£140,258	£4,040	£136,218	-	n/a	£147,399	£154,589
Beechcroft Infant School	£48,126	£11,700	£36,426	262.00	£139	£22,855	£975
Bishopstone Church of England Prim	£23,069	£0	£23,069	43.00	£536	£23,189	£12,601
Bridlewood Primary School	£89,857	£58,803	£31,054	263.00	£118	£53,569	£6,456
Brook Field Primary School	£128,544	£65,300	£63,244	409.00	£155	£53,324	£5,519
Catherine Wayte Primary School	£117,808	£13,500	£104,308	410.00	£254	£35,220	(£65,446)
Chiseldon Primary School	£10,627	£0	£10,627	148.00	£72	£16,937	£6,098
Colebrook Junior School	£82,865	£51,718	£31,147	168.00	£185	£61,662	£21,799
Covingham Park Primary School	£14,238	£0	£14,238	364.00	£39	(£5,864)	(£15,745)
East Wichel Primary School	£20,579	£0	£20,579	283.00	£73	£45,818	£47,647
Eldene Primary School	£54,612	£22,000	£32,612	332.50	£98	£40,779	£19,104
Eldene Primary School SRP (CLD)	£33,137	£0	£33,137	-	n/a	£26,589	£19,516
Even Swindon Primary School	£64,174	£0	£64,174	520.00	£123	£28,950	(£15,880)
Even Swindon Primary School Outreach	£1,108	£0	£1,108	-	n/a	£1,268	£795
Even Swindon Primary School SRP (SSL)	£10,867	£0	£10,867	-	n/a	£27,089	£39,995
Ferndale Community Primary School	£78,401	£30,000	£48,401	408.00	£119	£77,044	£1,755
Grange Infant School	£69,988	£35,800	£34,188	262.00	£130	£30,468	£15,872
Grange Junior School	£161,324	£113,000	£48,324	358.00	£135	£100,351	£69,487
Greenmeadow Primary School	£66,178	£20,000	£46,178	267.00	£173	£64,689	£34,594
Haydonleigh Primary School	£38,807	£0	£38,807	492.00	£79	£19,483	£3,639
Lainesmead Primary School	£33,296	£0	£33,296	371.00	£90	£48,868	£5,909
Lawn Primary School	£27,399	£0	£27,399	415.00	£66	£47,184	£44,878
Liden Primary School	£22,682	£0	£22,682	297.00	£76	£5,276	£3,862
Nythe Primary School	£38,202	£32,673	£5,529	165.00	£34	£25,697	£5,532
Oakhurst Community Primary School	£141,198	£82,600	£58,598	434.50	£135	£111,264	£24,012
Oaktree Nursery and Primary School	£84,126	£44,000	£40,126	345.00	£116	£26,966	£22,478
Oliver Tomkins Church of England Infant	£11,451	£8,000	£3,451	177.50	£19	£20,222	£35,211
Oliver Tomkins Church of England Junior	£36,733	£34,000	£2,733	186.00	£15	£3,467	£1,941
Orchid Vale Primary School	£51,776	£6,960	£44,816	349.50	£128	£26,861	£8,697
Red Oak Primary School	£206,487	£115,000	£91,487	524.50	£174	£83,506	(£65,951)
Red Oaks Primary School - Hearing	(£479)	£0	(£479)	-	n/a	£34,911	(£46,483)
Red Oak Primary School - SRP (HI SL &	(£7,290)	£0	(£7,290)	-	n/a	(£25,968)	£46,906
Robert le Kyng Primary School	£140,913	£45,000	£95,913	413.00	£232	£171,861	£130,359
Robert le Kyng Primary School SRP (PD)	(£79,519)	£0	(£79,519)		n/a	(£126,329)	(£177,390)
Ruskin Junior School	£97,577	£10,000	£87,577	377.00	£232	£42,722	£9,785
Ruskin Junior School - SRP (ASD)	£16,961	£0	£16,961	-	n/a	£28,235	£35,932
Ruskin Junior School - ASD Advisory &	£62,975	£0	£62,975	-	n/a	£25,853	(£12,891)
South Marston Church of England Primary	£45,910	£13,500	£32,410	102.00	£318	£19,819	£2,162
St Francis Primary School	£116,938	£32,934	£84,004	437.50	£192	£107,746	£41,452
Wanborough Primary School	£34,450	£17,284	£17,166	205.00	£84	£27,426	£20,292
Westrop Primary School	£45,729	£10,480	£35,249	227.00	£155	£12,272	£61,127
Westrop Community Focused	£0	£0	£0	-	n/a	£15,764	£15,764
Wroughton Infant School	£64,752	£36,586	£28,166	234.00	£120	£28,165	£51,265
Wroughton Junior School	£43,954	£0	£43,954	355.00	£124	£47,721	£8,549
Isambard Community School	£387,701	£193,944	£193,757	1,117.00	£173	£193,758	£9,431
EOTAS	£147,018	£40,000	£107,018	96.00	£1,115	£129,658	£36,183
Brimble Hill School	£106,018	£36,397	£69,621	67.00	£1,039	£62,717	£7,714
Crowdys Hill School	£267,060	£165,000	£102,060	128.00	£797	£102,126	(£128,408)
St Lukes School	(£116,096)	£0	(£116,096)	60.00	(£1,935)	(£33,749)	(£4,139)
The Chalet School	£51,780	£0	£51,780	58.00	£893	£31,968	£21,550
Uplands School	£110,675	£0	£110,675	139.00	£796	£0	£0
Uplands School - VI service	£2,506	£0	£2,506	-	n/a	£0	£0
Total Maintained Schools	£3,590,546	£1,383,019	£2,207,527	12,657.00		£2,275,084	£636,641

Schools Financial Value Standard returns

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

Author:	Finance Manager – Education
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All
Settings Affected:	All LA maintained schools and Pupil Referral Units

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To update Schools Forum members on the findings from the review of the 2014/15 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) self-assessments and suggest a consistent procedure for future returns.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Schools Forum is asked to note that:
- The LA is issuing guidance on how best to complete the SFVS return and future submissions should follow this guidance.
 - SFVS forms part of the LA's financial health check of schools and schools may be contacted to verify evidence in support their assessments.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is in its third year of operation (having superseded the former Financial Management Standard in Schools assessment which was subject to external verification and withdrawn by DfE in November 2010). Local authority maintained schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) are required to complete the SFVS once a year. All Swindon maintained schools and PRU completed and submitted their 2014/15 SFVS assessment to the local authority by 31st March 2015.
- 3.2 The SFVS has been designed by the DfE with schools to help them in managing their finances and to give assurance to the Local Authority that they have secure financial management in place.
- 3.3 Governing bodies of maintained schools or management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs) have a formal responsibility for the financial management of their schools, and so the standard is primarily aimed at governors and management committees.
- 3.4 The standard focuses on five main areas:
- A - The Governing Body and School Staff
 - B - Setting the budget

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, Finance Manager Education, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Schools Financial Value Standard returns

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

C - Value for money

D - Protecting public money

E - Summary of agreed remedial action and timetable for reporting back

- 3.5 The requirements and expectations of governing bodies and management committees relating to the SFVS are now a part of the Financial Training for Governors programme which is provided by the LA finance and Internal Audit teams as part of the Governor Support Traded Service.
- 3.6 The evidence provided in the self-assessments is incorporated into the LA's financial health monitoring procedures which are used to identify schools that may require further LA challenge or support from the school improvement, finance and / or Internal Audit teams. Although the assessment is not subject to external assessment, the LA Internal Audit Team will review returns and any supporting evidence as part of its annual internal audit programme and will look to verify evidence during school visits.
- 3.7 Local authorities are required to fill out the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Chief Financial Officer (CFO) assurance statement every year to cover all the maintained schools in their area.

4. 2014/15 Review, actions and proposals for future returns

- 4.1 All the SFVS submissions were returned to the LA by the 31st March 2015 deadline and have subsequently been subject to an initial review. The standard had 23 questions to be completed with a yes/no/in-part answer and a column to include comments, evidence and proposed actions. It also has an area for remedial actions where the school believes areas could be strengthened.
- 4.2 The 23 questions cover a wide range of governance and internal control issues and the LA would not expect schools to include categorical 'Yes' scores against all areas. Table 1 below shows the numbers of schools that submitted self-assessments with only 'Yes' answers and those that included a number of 'No'/'In Part' answers submitted.

Table 1 - SFVS 2014/15	Number of schools
'Yes' to all questions	27
'No' to some questions	3
'In Part' to some questions	10
Total number of schools	40

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, Finance Manager Education, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Schools Financial Value Standard returns

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

- 4.3 Reviews have been undertaken on all returns and the findings will be used to inform the annual Internal Audit plan and the health-check process used within Finance. The reviews identified that schools have varying approaches to the completion of these returns and the quality and level of detail varied considerably.
- 4.4 The LA would refer governors and management committees to the DfE website where guidance is available on the evidence that should be considered when completing the form, good practice and further support available to assist schools in addressing specific issues. There is no prescription of the level of evidence that the governing body and management committee should require but the governors and management committees need to be confident about their responses and to be assured that their mandatory obligations have been fulfilled. It will enable governors and management committees to more easily identify weaknesses or areas for challenge.
- 4.5 The following points will form the main part of LA guidance:
- There are two new questions in Section A of the 2015/16 standard; schools should ensure they access the latest version from the DfE website.
 - The governing body or management committee may delegate the consideration of the questions to finance or any other relevant committee but a detailed report should be provided to the full governing body or the management committee and the chair of governors or chair of the management committee must sign the completed form.
 - Answers to all 25 questions should be given. In the area where “comments, evidence and proposed actions” are entered, comprehensive answers should be given and supporting evidence should be listed in the document, along with relevant timescales. It is not advised to embed the evidence documents into the file prior to sending the return to the LA as the file will be too large. All evidence should be detailed and made available if requested by the LA.
 - Examples where answers are “Yes” with very brief responses do not provide the necessary assurance for the governing body or the LA. It is important governors and the management committee are confident about all the responses.
 - Where a question is answered “No” or “In Part” the school should provide a brief summary of the position and proposed remedial action with an expected delivery date.
 - In Section E (Summary of agreed remedial action and timetable for reporting back), governors and management committees should
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, Finance Manager Education, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Schools Financial Value Standard returns

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

summarise remedial actions and the timetable for reporting back. Governors and managing committees should ensure that each action has a specified deadline and an agreed owner. Governors and management committees must monitor the progress of these actions to ensure that all actions are cleared within specified deadlines.

- The completed and signed return should be submitted to the LA's Schools Finance Team by 31st March 2016. Schools should submit both the completed Word document to enable the schools' responses to be collated and a PDF copy of the signed return.
- The basis for best practice follows the LA assessment of all completed answers from submitted returns. A number of questions contained weak answers or lacked detailed evidence, Appendix A gives some best practice and examples of some of the more comprehensive answers from schools.

4.6 The next SFVS returns will be reviewed with regard to the considerations above and in **Appendix A**.

5. Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options presented in this report.

6. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 The LA's Chief Finance and Section 151 Officer (The Board Director – Resources) is responsible for monitoring the financial health of LA maintained schools and is required to report compliance of the standard to the DfE. Full compliance with the SFVS requirements provide a high level of assurance that all financial and procurement arrangements in schools are of a high standard.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

6.2 There are no legal or human rights implications arising from this report.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

6.3 This report does not make any recommendations that affect these areas.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

6.4 Utilisation of the DSG has a direct link to two of the Council's five priorities – "Right skills, right jobs in the right place" and "Make the best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council".

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Anne Mackay, Finance Manager Education, 01793 465742, amackay@swindon.gov.uk.

Schools Financial Value Standard returns

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 6.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has not been done as this report does not make any recommendations that affect services.

Risk Management

- 6.6 Governing bodies must be able to demonstrate that they have robust financial management processes in place. Completion of the SFVS provides assurance to Governing bodies and the LA's S151 officer that adequate processes are in place or highlights areas for improvement.

7. Consultees

- 7.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer), Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) and Board Director – Commissioning (Director of Children Services) are consulted in respect of all reports.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Previous SFVS reports to the Schools Forum

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Schools Financial Value Standard – Best practice, advice and example.

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	LA best practice advice	Example answer
<p>Question 4 - Does the governing body receive clear and concise monitoring reports of the school's budget position at least three times a year?</p>	<p>Answers that provide at a minimum, dates of such meeting and also evidence of challenge by governor's, by way of minuted records.</p>	<p>Finance committee receive cost centre reports at 5 meetings per year. Notification of balances form reported to governors at the following meetings: July Form; 1st December 2014. December Form: 23rd March 2015 Finance committee reports to full governing body at full meetings. Finance committee interrogates any overspend/underspend/unusual activity. Governing body consulted regarding any additional requests for spending during the financial year e.g. additional laptops (meeting minutes 26/01/15)</p>
<p>Question 7 - Does the school review its staffing structure regularly?</p>	<p>Answers should be expanded to state when reviews took place, with reference to staffing structures and Governor minutes relating to this area.</p>	<p>The staffing structure has been reviewed regularly. In 2014 the structure of the Senior Leadership Team was reviewed. Evidence: * Governors minutes * Staffing structure plan Confidential Minutes from 29 April Governors Meeting</p>
<p>Questions 8 – 11 –category “Setting the budget”.</p>	<p>These questions require more evidence within each answer, specifically assumptions applied to the three year budget, e.g. pupil growth assumptions, school staffing structures, records of challenge by governors and action plans made for perceived shortfalls in revenue.</p>	<p>Question 10 Evidence of budget discussion is available in the F&P minutes held by the clerk to Governors. Alternative costed options are routinely identified and debated to provide stand-by solutions to identified contingencies. The budget is approved by Governors each year within the agreed timescale and no deficit budget is set. The local authority finance department monitors that this is so. The signed budget and working papers are available from the Business Manager in the school office. School continues to try to include more staff in the budget setting process for an improved and even more accurate budget. The Business Manager has a budget setting file for each year which is kept in the office.</p>

	LA best practice advice	Example answer
<p>Question 12 - Does the school benchmark its income and expenditure annually against that of similar schools and investigate further where any category appears to be out of line?</p>	<p>Evidence of benchmarking should be detailed in the document and dates and minutes of reports presented to governing bodies should also be included.</p>	<p>Following introduction of a new benchmarking report last financial year, governors found this report accessible and preferred to use this. Jan 2014. Headteacher & chair of governors have noted any variance – to be discussed further at future finance meeting. Minutes of extraordinary finance committee meeting dated 30th March 2015 show discussion on the new benchmarking report.</p>
<p>Question 13 - Does the school have procedures for purchasing goods and services that both meet legal requirements and secure value for money?</p>	<p>The financial management policy and purchasing procedures to be evidenced, detail of procedures and procurement examples to be listed.</p>	<p>The school seeks quotations for goods prior to order placement and negotiates with suppliers on a regular basis. Evidence: Purchasing procedures Financial Procedures document. Scheme of Delegation VFM statement When purchasing more specialist items such as IT equipment, companies are invited to give advice/demo. Opinion of other users/schools sought, 5 companies asked to quote and company chosen due to a combination of knowledge of product, after care, staff training and cost.</p>
<p>Question 17 - Can the school give examples of where it has improved the use of resources during the past year?</p>	<p>Details of examples of improvements should be listed.</p>	<p>Effective and creative use of pupil premium funding with process in place to measure impact. Switching suppliers and service providers where better pricing is available without loss of quality of product/service. This includes waste disposal, telecoms and energy providers during 2014/15. Innovative use of staff resources – ensuring skills are fully utilised (TA skills audit carried out and training tailored to their needs and current skills), covering teacher absence through directly employed teachers rather than use of supply agencies), ensuring that CPD/training is linked to SDP and switching resources as required to achieve school priorities (changing teacher and TA intervention groups to support academic shortfalls). Increase in lettings by refurbishing a school hall. Working towards being a cashless school saving admin time which can be used more effectively on other projects. School funding deposited in higher interest bank accounts.</p>

	LA best practice advice	Example answer
<p>Question 23 - Does the school have an appropriate business continuity or disaster recovery plan, including an up-to-date asset register and adequate insurance?</p>	<p>Business Continuity Plans and asset registers and should be detailed in the document.</p>	<p>The school has a web-based asset register which can be accessed externally. An audit of assets takes place annually.</p> <p>Insurance for the school buildings, contents and minibuses is purchased annually through SBC.</p> <p>The server is backed-up daily and remotely by Capita.</p> <p>School has adequate supply insurance from Capita Best which includes maternity cover.</p> <p>The Business Manager has drawn up a detailed Business Continuity Plan.</p> <p>A 5 year SWOT analysis has been completed and reviewed by Governors</p>
<p>Summary of remedial action and timetable</p>	<p>Outcomes from last year should be presented as complete and individuals/committees should be assigned to future requirements/actions and timelines stated.</p>	<p>PREVIOUS ACTIONS and Date Completed</p> <p>To undertake a declaration of interests of all senior staff January 2015 Yes</p> <p>To extend benchmarking against local schools May 14 No</p> <p>To meet new guidelines for nutritional values of school meals including allergens February 2015 Yes – on going</p> <p>To adopt the school's Whistle Blowing Policy June 2014 Yes</p> <p>To adopt the Business Continuity Plan June 2014 Yes</p> <p>Action and Date</p> <p>To plan the budget for 2015/16 and onwards with the view that income from a long-term letting may be terminated with just 6 months' notice March 2015</p> <p>To extend benchmarking against local schools February 2015</p> <p>To invest surplus balances in high interest accounts April 2015</p> <p>To ensure that the schools secures value for money across the school through the implementation of new procedures which will be followed by everyone June 15</p>

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2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget and Forward Look to 2016-17

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

Author:	Head of Finance – Education
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Settings Affected:	The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is ring fenced funding provided by the DfE to meet the educational needs of early years, school age and all 0 to 25 year old high need pupils; any decisions on how the grant is utilised indirectly affects all settings.

1. Purpose and Reasons

1.1. The Schools Forum meeting on 7th July 2015 received an update on the 2015/16 Dedicated Schools Grant Settlement and Budget. This report provides members with an update on various issues. This report addresses:

- An update on the central equal pay liability
- An update on the Notional SEN changes that were introduced in April
- Early Years update
- Pupil Growth Policy
- Feedback from the SENRAP modelling pilot
- An update on the SRP review
- An update on the general SEN strategy
- An update on the SEN forecasting model
- Trade Union Release Time
- F40 funding group update

1.2. The report then looks forward to the items that will need to be considered as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process.

2. Recommendations

2.1. Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- Note that £0.031m of central funding is being retained to meet central equal pay liabilities and that repayment proposals will be brought to a future Schools Forum for discussion. (Para. 3)

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget and Forward Look to 2016-17

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

- Note the impact that the funding changes would have had on the 2014/15 notional SEN funding. (Para. 4)
- Note that where a claw-back of funding is required schools will be contacted by the Local Authority ("LA"). (Para. 4)
- Note the current position regarding the take up of early years' places. (Para. 5.1)
- Note that the budget for 2016/17 will need to be reviewed in light of the increasing numbers of students taking up early years' provision. (Para. 5.4)
- Note the potential impact on the number of early years places required following the Governments' announcement increasing early years' entitlement from 15 to 30 hours. (Para. 5.5)
- Note the contents of the letter received from the Early Years Representative (Para. 5.6)
- Note the proposed time table to review the trigger funding policy to accommodate situations outside the current policy. (Para 6)
- Note the changes to the funding applications made to the Special Educational Needs Resource and Assessment Panel (SENRAP). (Para. 7)
- Agree to the principles of universal banding model (Para. 7)
- Note the date of the extra schools forum on the 1st December. (Para. 8)
- Note the contents of the Specialist Provision for Special Educational Needs in Swindon report. (Para. 9)
- Note the work being undertaken to model SEN secondary school requirements. (Para. 10)
- Discuss the union letter with their head teacher associations so that forum can vote on this issue in January (Para. 11)
- Note the minutes of the F40 meeting with the DfE. (Para. 12)

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget and Forward Look to 2016-17

Schools Forum

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- Note that there is a need to increase the value of the DSG reserves as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process. (Para. 13)
- Note that as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process the £500k reduction in DSG funding for 6th forms will need to be addressed. (Para. 13)

Update on 2015/16 budget position

3. Update on central equal pay liability

- 3.1. At the July meeting of the forum the LA was requested to clarify the position surrounding the remaining equal pay liability of £0.5m. The current situation is that this is being repaid at the rate of £31k per annum; this loan does not incur any interest charges. However once this amount is repaid the £31k of funding can be included within the amount available for distribution within the wider DSG. When the final outturn figures are known at the end of 2015-16 a proposal will be brought to schools forum to agree the repayment arrangements for this sum.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note that £31k of central funding is being retained to meet central equal pay liabilities and that repayment proposals will be brought to a future Schools Forum for discussion.**

4. Update on Notional SEN changes

- 4.1. Forum requested an update on the impact that the Notional SEN changes may have on mainstream schools. In order to illustrate how the changes may affect each setting the funding for 2014-15 has been recalculated using the October 2013 and 2014 data for low prior attainment and statemented pupils. In overall terms this would have resulted in a reduction in spend of £27.6k, thus bringing the total payments to £337k instead of the actual payment of £365k.
- 4.2. Inevitably with the change in payment mechanism there will be an impact on the funding being received by each setting. The largest gain would have been £8k, where the number of Low Prior Attainments (LPA) students increased by 20.07. The biggest reduction was where the number of statemented students fell by 4 combined with a reduction of 3.42 LPA students. **Appendix A** contains a summary of the impact by school.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget and Forward Look to 2016-17

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

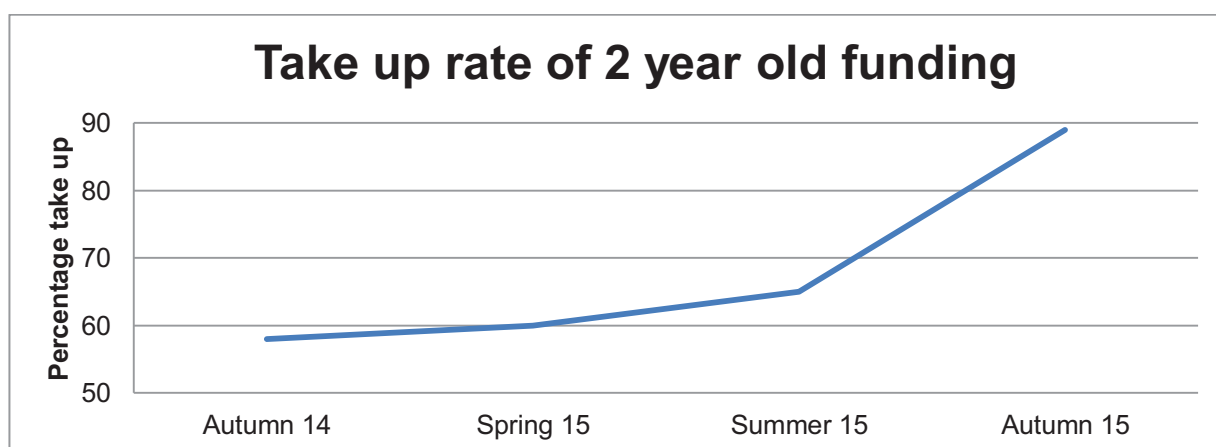
- 4.3. The forum are asked to note that the modelling exercise shows that there would have been a claw-back of funding from some settings where the initial top up was greater than would have been required for the full year.
- 4.4. Forum is asked to note that when the census figures are available later this year the notional SEN will be recalculated and schools will be contacted where a claw-back of funding is required. Any additional SEN funding required will be paid in January.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the impact that the funding changes would have had on the 2014/15 notional SEN funding.**
- **Note that where a claw-back of funding is required, schools will be contacted by the LA.**

5. Early Years Update

- 5.1. Forum will recall that there was a request to use some of the 2 year old funding to recruit an Early Years Engagement officer, and this post has now been filled. During the autumn term the number of 2 year old places has increased significantly to a total of 972 with a further 120 spaces to be created in Autumn 2015 in Abbey Meads Village Centre. Alongside the opening of additional places, the initial work carried out by the Early Years Engagement officer has seen a rise in take up of funding (shown below) through engagement events, social media and encouraging families to take up their entitlement through home visits.



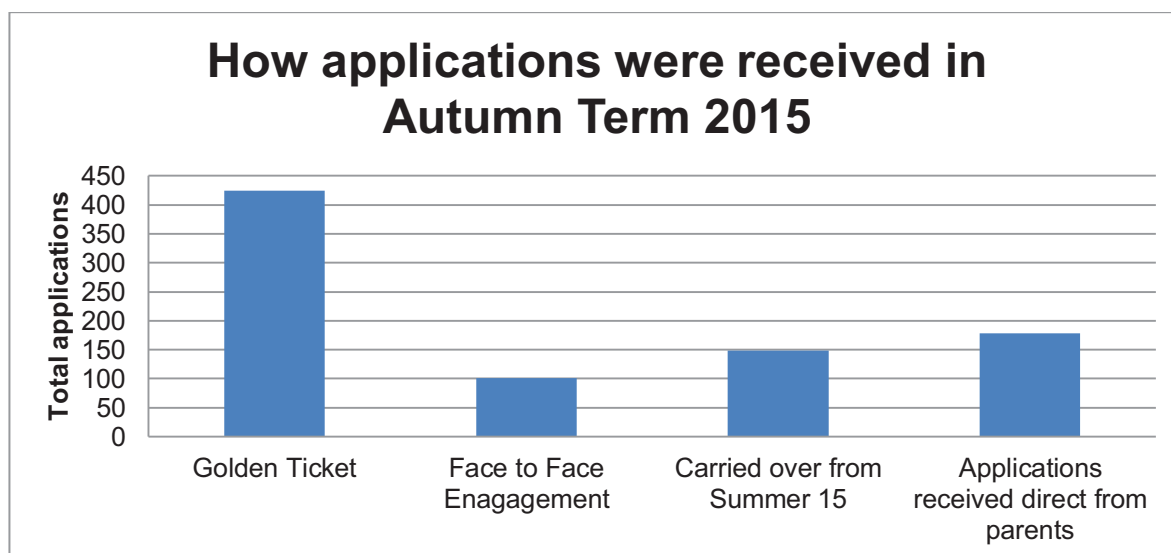
Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

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- 5.2. The following graph shows how the applications have been received specifically through the improvements made to the way hard to reach families are being engaged with directly.



- 5.3. The post approved by schools forum was a 1 year contract, but with the amount of work already undertaken to engage the economically disadvantaged families to access the funding, and the future increase in 3 & 4 year old funding, there could be a case for this role continuing beyond July 2016.
- 5.4. Forum will be aware from previous reports on this agenda that there has been an issue with setting the budget and estimating the income for the early years DSG funding, this will need to be addressed as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process.
- 5.5. Forum may be aware that the Government has announced the introduction of an increase in the early year's entitlement from 15 hours to 30 hours from September 2017. The DfE has asked for expressions of interest to be submitted for pilots running from September 2016. At present there has been no announcement on the availability of capital or revenue funding to deliver the new entitlement. The LA has conducted some early estimates and expects the new entitlement to require an additional 72 new nursery / pre-schools (each providing places for 26 students i.e. another 1,872 30 hour places) to meet the increase based on the current population of Swindon.
- 5.6. Attached at **Appendix B** is a letter received from Early Years Representative outlining their concerns about the issues that child-minders are currently facing.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

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The letter also reflects on the wider concerns of ensuring that funding for staff wages etc. is paid at a rate that allows the national minimum wage to be paid, and allows for the employment of suitably trained managers to ensure that the best outcomes for the children are attained.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the current position regarding the take up of early years' places.**
- **Note that the budget for 2016/17 will need to be reviewed in light of the increasing numbers of students taking up early years' provision.**
- **Note the potential impact on the number of early years' places required following the Governments' announcement increasing early years' entitlement from 15 to 30 hours.**
- **Note the contents of the letter received from the Early Years Representative.**

6. Pupil Growth Policy

- 6.1. At the July 2015 Schools Forum a recommendation was approved to request the School Admissions Forum to establish a task group to review the existing pupil growth policy, which is predominately set up for primary schools to expand on a phased basis. The task group will review alternative options for school expansion and how the policy should be adapted to manage pupil growth at special and secondary schools. The task group is likely to initially meet in November and submit recommendations for the policy to March 2016 forum.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the proposed time table to review the trigger funding policy to accommodate situations outside the current policy.**

7. Feedback from the SENRAP modelling pilot

- 7.1. In April 2015 the LA implemented a pilot scheme to test the universal banding model to allocate top up funds to mainstream schools and academies. The pilot model accepted that all new applications for funding would apply the new mechanism and that this would be subject to a moderation process. As part of the

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pilot modelling the affordability for the SENRAP budget and the work load impact on schools completing applications and the SENRAP panel was assessed.

7.2. The LA remains committed to simplifying the funding application and allocation process, by moving towards a universal banding arrangement for mainstream pupils in receipt of SENRAP funding.

7.3. The principles of the universal banding model are:

- In order to introduce greater consistency and equity between mainstream settings a band based approach is introduced for all mainstream pupils who have a statement of SEN or an EHC Plan.
- The model in mainstream settings will follow the model established for specialist settings.
- The “banding” level will be assessed by the school setting and moderated on at least a bi-annual basis.
- All requests for increases in banding will be moderated.
- All new applications will be moderated.
- Once a banding has been agreed it is anticipated that this will follow the pupil from reception year through to year 11, and if appropriate in to post 16 education.
- The value of each band will be based on the funding available within the SENRAP budget and fixed on an annual basis.

Review of the pilot model

7.4. Schools have been able to request additional funding through an application to SENRAP based on the assessment of the pupil using the existing banding descriptors. As with special schools and SRPs there is scope for mainstream settings to submit a business case for bespoke levels of funding but this would only be for those pupils which have extremely complex or multiple needs which are not adequately reflected in the band descriptors.

7.5. Feedback from schools is that they find the new processes more helpful to quickly access additional resource for each pupil. The SENRAP panel have also found the model to be far less bureaucratic but they are finding inconsistencies in the

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way the banding descriptors are used which will need to be addressed through continued moderation.

- 7.6. There have been a much larger number of applications for additional resource than during the same period last year. This may be due partly to the implementation of the SEND reforms but is also likely to be as a result of making the process less cumbersome.
- 7.7. During the pilot, pupils already in receipt of SENRAP top up funding remained unchanged. As part of the planning for the roll out of the new model from April 2016, schools have been asked to complete a self-assessment using the new banding descriptors.

Moderation

- 7.8. In September 2015 mainstream schools were included in the moderation process alongside specialist provision. Samples from 10 mainstream schools were selected for moderation. Of the sample 66.7% were upheld, 21% increased and 12.5% decreased following moderation. The LA is recommending that on this basis the banding values submitted through the self-audit will be accepted and implemented from April 2016.
- 7.9. Guidance given to schools noted that, generally speaking, pupils attending mainstream schools will usually be banded at levels 5 and 6, whilst bands 1-2 are more likely to be in our specialist settings. The pilot and self-assessment has demonstrated that the highest proportion of pupils have a banding of 3, 4 or 5. The professionals involved in the moderation discussed the difficulties with comparing need across different types of provision, e.g. between mainstream and specialist settings. There was general acknowledgement that the banding was consistent between mainstream settings and the LA is satisfied with this in terms of equity.
- 7.10. The mechanism for moderation in mainstream schools going forward may need to be reviewed.

Affordability

- 7.11. Interim financial values for each "band" were agreed in line with the funding available from the existing SENRAP budget. For the purpose of the pilot, if a school "bands" a pupil at a particular level then the amount of resource they will receive will be based on the published banding funding level. On the basis of the

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self-assessment and pilot data, the current banding values are likely to be reduced from the current level to ensure that they remain within the budget available.

- 7.12. Officers are currently working to model the budget requirements for April 2016, whilst remaining within the budget available. The budget will need to include an element of contingency to meet funding requirements for new pupils entering the system and also to accommodate in year changes to banding levels. Once an appropriate contingency has been established the remaining balance will be allocated to the 6 bands based on the profile of existing students. The results of this exercise will be reported to January Schools Forum.
- 7.13. Full details of the new arrangements will be consulted on with the various head-teacher associations before the January Schools Forum.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the changes to the funding applications made to the Special Educational Needs Resource and Assessment Panel (SENRAP).**
- **Agree to the principles of universal banding model**

8. SRP Funding Review Task Group update

- 8.1. All SRP settings have been sent a budget template to be completed to enable a standardised approach to be used to review the current SRP funding arrangements. The first meeting of this group will be on the 9th October. There is a further meeting planned for the 6th November with an extra Schools Forum meeting on the 1st December. A verbal update of the discussions at the September meeting will be provided to the forum.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the date of the extra schools forum on the 1st December.**

9. SEN strategy update

- 9.1. The SEND reforms provide an opportunity to review and refresh our approach to SEN support in Swindon. Our priority will be to work with key stakeholders to develop a system-wide approach focused on reducing demand for specialist provision and on meeting that demand in the most cost-effective way possible.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

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This will require significant culture change alongside changes to policy and practice. We aim to develop a culture and working practices that are inclusive by nature and have at their heart a focus on improving outcomes, person-centred practices and co-production.

9.2. Central to the approach will be:

- Strengthening the strategic overview and commissioning for SEND – based upon a rigorous analysis and monitoring of outcomes.
- Building capacity across the system, particularly in mainstream schools.
- Developing the workforce so that being outcomes focused and person-centred is at the heart of their practice.
- Refreshing SEND/EHCP processes, focusing particularly on the SEND Banding descriptors and the role of the SEN Panel.
- Promoting innovative responses to the SEND of children and young people, by working together with families to design the kind of help and support they need to exercise greater control over their lives, including the use of personal budgets.

9.3. Full details of the Specialist Provision for Special Educational Needs in Swindon report can be found at **Appendix C**.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the contents of the Specialist Provision for Special Educational Needs in Swindon report.**

10. An update on the SEN forecasting model

10.1. The LA has been working on new methodology to estimate future SEN pupils in secondary special schools in Swindon. The purpose is to enable strategic and financial planning of provision and allow schools to make long term management decisions. The methodology used is known as the cohort survival method. To predict the number of special school places that will be needed the cohort survival method incorporates and assesses the following information for each primary school based area:

- The proportion expected to enter school based on past experience;

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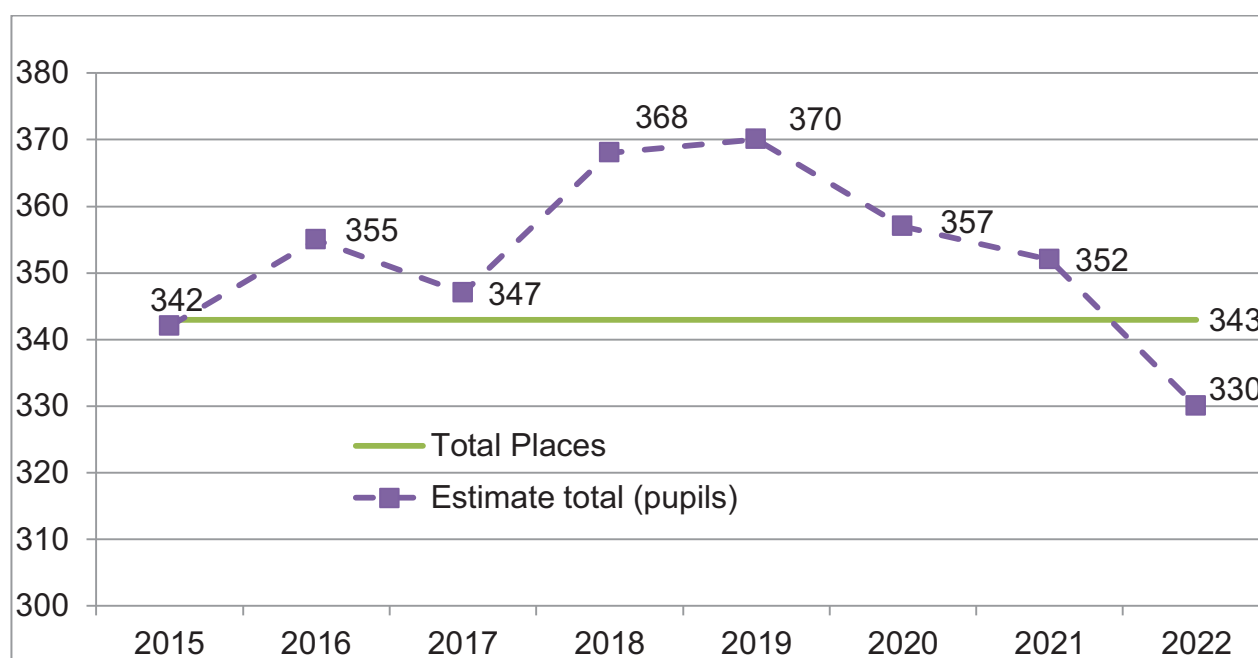
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- The “survival” of that cohort as it moves through school taking account of net migration which occurs in relation to schools’ popularity and the effects of development in their area
- The likely transfer to each secondary school;
- And, for each secondary school, a similar “survival” method, particularly taking account of transfer rates to the sixth form if there is one

10.2. At present the model is being tested with secondary special school head teachers during the autumn and if successful the model will be developed further to forecast special primary schools and special resource provision populations.

10.3. The chart below shows the estimate overall NOR at the secondary special schools up to September 2022 against the current level of capacity.



Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the work being undertaken to model SEN secondary school requirements.**

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

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11. Trade Union Release Time

- 11.1. The LA has received a letter from four teaching unions regarding trade union release time of which a copy is attached at **Appendix D**. The unions have requested that the forum consider using de-delegation to enable the continuation of this service. A vote will be taken on this issue at the January Schools forum. This service is also provided as part of the traded services arrangements to enable all academies to access this service. Forum members are requested to review this letter with their various head teacher associations to enable this to be voted on at the January 2016 forum.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Discuss the union letter with their head teacher associations so that forum can vote on this issue in January.**

12. F40 funding group update

- 12.1. Forum Members will be aware of the on-going F40 fairer funding campaign that has been in existence for a number of years. Members will also be aware that in 2014/15 an additional £350m was introduced into the national funding mechanism to address some of the inequalities nationwide. F40 representatives met with DfE colleagues on the 9th September to discuss the groups' proposed changes to the national funding formula. Copies of the minutes are attached at **Appendix E**.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note the minutes of the F40 meeting with the DfE.**

13. Look ahead to 2016/17 budget

- 13.1. As reported within the **2015/16 DSG Retained Budget Monitoring Report** on the agenda, there is a concern that the projected DSG reserves will have fallen to £360k by the end of the year. This would not be considered to be a prudent level of reserves given the on-going demand for high needs placements and the increases predicted in early years' place requirements. It is therefore proposed that as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process there will need to be a sum set aside to increase the reserves to a prudent level. The January 2015 Schools Forum report indicated that it was prudent to maintain reserves at £1.154m and

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therefore options will be explored to identify a strategy to restore reserves to a prudent level.

- 13.2. Forum are reminded that the DSG funding receivable was reduced by £486k to reflect the fact that 6th form students were now being funded by the EFA and not from the DSG. This reduction in funding has been funded from reserves brought forward in to 2015/16. It is not possible to repeat this in 2016/17, and therefore the 2016/17 budget will need to accommodate this funding reduction.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note that there is a need to increase the value of the DSG reserves as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process.**
- **Note that as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process the £486k reduction in DSG funding for 6th forms will need to be addressed.**

14. Alternative Options

- 14.1. Alternative options are described throughout this report where applicable.

15. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 15.1. Various financial implications are included in this report relating to management of the retained DSG budget.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 15.2. There are no legal or human rights implications arising from this report.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 15.3. This report does not make any recommendations that affect these areas.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant Budget and Forward Look to 2016-17

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Links to One Swindon, Plans and Policies

15.4. Utilisation of the DSG has a direct link to two of the Council's five priorities – "Right skills, right jobs in the right place" and "Make the best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council".

Diversity Impact Assessment

15.5. The proposals within this report are designed to allocate funding targeted at disadvantaged pupils and at pupils with low prior attainment and / or special education needs in order to narrow the attainment gap between these and other pupils.

Risk Management

15.6. There are no specific risk management implications not highlighted in the body of the report.

16. **Consultees**

16.1. The Board Director Resources (Section 151 Officer), Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) and Board Director Commissioning (Director of Children Services) are consulted in respect of all reports.

17. **Background Papers**

17.1. Previous reports to the Schools Forum and documents posted on the DfE web site.

18. **List of Appendices**

- **Appendix A** - Comparison of Notional SEN using the new funding model for 2014/15
- **Appendix B** - Reflection of the pressures within the Early Years Sector
- **Appendix C** - Specialist Provision for Special Educational Needs in Swindon
- **Appendix D** - Letter from trade unions regarding trade union release time.
- **Appendix E** - Minutes of F40 meeting of 9th September.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 or iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk

Comparison of Notional SEN using the new funding model for 2014/15

School Name	Total Low Prior Attainment Pupils Oct 2013	Statemnted Pupil Numbers as at Oct 13 (excluding SRP)	Old Funding Model				Total Top Up Received 2014-15	
			Notional SEN Funding 2014-15	Notional SEN Spend Oct 14 Census Data (Adj for Statemnted Kids Only)	A	D		F = C + E
Abbey Meads Community Primary School	76.61	7	£103,115	£83,836	£0		£0	
Beechcroft Infant School	40.46	0	£74,229	£38,889	£0		£0	
Bishopstone School	6.40	1	£5,651	£6,292	£4,141		£4,141	
Bridlewood Primary School	38.38	1	£35,636	£35,725	£89		£89	
Brook Field County Primary	77.78	9	£72,788	£98,753	£29,465		£29,465	
Catherine Wayte Primary School	59.12	5	£54,708	£67,967	£13,259		£13,259	
Chiseldon Primary Scholl	19.98	0	£23,171	£14,014	£0		£0	
Colebrook Infant Academy	19.21	4	£21,541	£31,173	£13,133		£13,133	
Colebrook Junior School	44.54	2	£45,141	£41,848	£0		£0	
Covingham Park Primary School	58.43	3	£69,998	£63,891	£0		£0	
Drove Primary School.	165.52	5	£187,344	£149,615	£0		£0	
East Wichel Community Primary School	40.84	2	£57,933	£39,248	£0		£0	
Eastrop Infants	28.44	2	£24,768	£30,548	£5,780		£5,780	
Eldene Primary School	118.96	2	£173,949	£101,056	£0		£0	
Even Swindon Primary School	183.88	10	£219,637	£181,989	£0		£0	
Ferndale Community Primary	82.74	5	£128,076	£95,043	£0		£0	
Goddard Park Primary School	63.29	9	£238,203	£85,087	£0		£0	
Gorse Hill Primary	95.61	12	£137,101	£125,409	£0		£0	
Grange Infant School	49.69	3	£41,800	£47,253	£8,953		£8,953	
Grange Junior School	30.55	2	£38,442	£42,530	£4,088		£4,088	
Greenmeadow School	25.40	0	£42,644	£21,320	£0		£0	
Haydon Wick Primary School	25.87	4	£49,632	£39,347	£0		£0	
Haydonleigh Primary School	42.09	1	£51,639	£41,825	£0		£0	
Hazelwood Academy	33.58	1	£63,040	£39,354	£0		£0	
Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	38.42	4	£51,565	£58,647	£7,082		£7,082	
Holy Family Catholic Primary	63.07	5	£125,376	£81,243	£0		£0	
Holy Rood Infant School	35.90	4	£35,132	£46,381	£11,249		£11,249	
King William Street CE School	39.12	7	£46,993	£50,532	£17,540		£17,540	
Lainesmead Primary School	136.10	8	£186,195	£134,374	£0		£0	
Lawn Primary School	66.00	8	£109,737	£92,193	£0		£0	

APPENDIX A

New Funding Model											
Total Low Prior Attainment Pupils Change From Oct 2013	Statemnted Pupil Numbers Change From Oct 13 (excluding SRP)	Top Up Received April 14	Additional Top Up Received Jan 15	Total Notional SEN due	Total Top Up Received 2014-15						

School Name	Total Low Prior Attainment Pupils Oct 2013	Statemnted Pupil Numbers as at Oct 13 (excluding SRP)	Notional SEN Funding 2014-15	Notional SEN Spend Oct 14 Census Data (Adj for Statemnted Kids Only)	Total Top Up Received 2014-15	Total Low Prior Attainment Pupils Change From Oct 2013	Statemnted Pupil Numbers Change From Oct 13 (excluding SRP)	Top Up Received April 14	Additional Top Up Received Jan 15	Total Notional SEN due	Total Top Up Received 2014-15	Net Gain / (Loss) Compared to New Funding Model
Lethbridge Primary School	24.18	6	£33,609	£66,251	£32,642	10.62	5.00	£6,309	£28,635	£68,553	£34,944	£2,302
Liden Primary School	76.77	5	£90,489	£83,854	£0	2.24	1.00	£0	£0	£84,360	£0	£0
Millbrook Primary	115.70	5	£148,157	£118,165	£0	-7.43	3.00	£0	£0	£113,896	£0	£0
Moredon Primary & Nursery School	65.02	9	£144,089	£93,302	£0	5.67	0.00	£0	£0	£95,622	£0	£0
Mountford Manor Nursery & Primary School	65.31	2	£138,053	£56,414	£0	-13.10	0.00	£0	£0	£51,054	£0	£0
Nythe Primary School	47.94	5	£60,658	£56,623	£0	-2.83	-1.00	£0	£0	£55,875	£0	£0
Oakhurst Community Primary School	71.20	5	£78,534	£83,445	£4,911	6.60	2.00	£0	£6,793	£85,327	£6,793	£1,882
Oaktree Primary School	101.27	11	£211,088	£118,831	£0	5.20	-3.00	£0	£0	£122,187	£0	£0
Oliver Tomkins Infant School	54.03	2	£78,118	£48,503	£0	-27.49	0.00	£0	£0	£37,252	£0	£0
Oliver Tomkins Junior School	37.35	0	£84,677	£33,203	£0	15.03	2.00	£0	£0	£38,536	£0	£0
Orchid Vale Primary School	30.74	1	£36,434	£33,862	£0	5.37	2.00	£0	£0	£35,243	£0	£0
Peatmoor Community Primary	20.02	1	£25,502	£22,846	£0	-3.22	1.00	£0	£0	£21,118	£0	£0
Red Oaks Primary School	62.15	2	£66,286	£75,197	£8,911	9.34	6.00	£0	£10,280	£76,565	£10,280	£1,368
Robert Le Kyng Primary School	153.30	6	£153,195	£135,841	£0	-14.90	-1.00	£0	£0	£130,153	£0	£0
Rodbourne Cheney Primary School	41.45	2	£90,152	£39,679	£0	-0.65	0.00	£0	£0	£39,412	£0	£0
Ruskin Junior School	72.68	5	£131,386	£84,482	£0	-4.76	2.00	£0	£0	£81,716	£0	£0
Seven Fields Primary School	85.26	3	£205,697	£75,708	£0	8.84	0.00	£0	£0	£79,328	£0	£0
Shaw Ridge Primary School	81.85	5	£95,854	£104,912	£9,058	-2.93	6.00	£0	£5,405	£101,260	£5,405	-£3,653
South Marston CE Primary School	6.69	1	£9,579	£9,990	£411	2.81	0.00	£171	£1,391	£11,141	£1,562	£1,151
Southfield Junior School	39.62	4	£41,121	£41,992	£7,871	-1.95	-2.00	£3,280	-£2,389	£42,011	£890	-£6,981
St Catherine's Primary School	47.01	4	£56,342	£50,673	£0	1.35	-1.00	£0	£0	£51,636	£0	£0
St Francis C of E Primary School	73.14	13	£67,487	£123,690	£56,203	6.10	1.00	£21,960	£36,332	£125,779	£58,292	£2,089
St Leonards CE Primary School	40.56	2	£32,356	£32,054	£6,698	-6.36	-2.00	£2,791	-£2,791	£30,269	£0	-£6,698
St Marys RC Primary School	40.88	3	£62,748	£51,579	£0	4.35	2.00	£0	£0	£52,539	£0	£0
Swindon Academy	197.72	7	£445,208	£200,306	£0	2.65	7.00	£0	£0	£198,524	£0	£0
Tadpole Lane	0.00	0	£2,444	£0	£0	0.00	0.00	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Tregoeze Primary School	22.27	5	£42,203	£38,614	£0	5.99	-1.00	£0	£0	£41,476	£0	£0
Wanborough Primary School	12.10	2	£13,828	£12,085	£5,257	1.42	-2.00	£2,190	-£2,190	£13,485	£0	-£5,257
Westlea School	93.37	5	£100,422	£98,996	£0	-5.64	2.00	£0	£0	£95,870	£0	£0
Westrop Primary School	48.33	5	£44,060	£63,902	£19,842	-5.23	1.00	£6,809	£10,482	£61,351	£17,291	-£2,551
Wroughton Infants School	36.82	1	£39,700	£41,630	£1,930	7.75	3.00	£0	£3,874	£43,574	£3,874	£1,944
Wroughton Junior School	40.92	6	£57,665	£56,999	£2,834	0.72	-1.00	£1,181	-£1,143	£57,703	£38	-£2,796
PRIMARY SUBTOTAL	3,711.63	259.00	£5,402,320	£4,139,010	£271,349	121.72	46.50	£87,824	£160,221	£4,169,795	£248,045	-£23,303
	0.00	0										

School Name	Total Low Prior Attainment Pupils Oct 2013	Statemnted Pupil Numbers as at Oct 13 (excluding SRP)	Notional SEN Funding 2014-15	Notional SEN Spend Oct 14 Census Data (Adj for Statemnted Kids Only)	Total Top Up Received 2014-15	Total Low Prior Attainment Pupils Change From Oct 2013	Statemnted Pupil Numbers Change From Oct 13 (excluding SRP)	Top Up Received April 14	Additional Top Up Received Jan 15	Total Notional SEN due	Total Top Up Received 2014-15	Net Gain / (Loss) Compared to New Funding Model
Churchfields Academy	249.60	15	£529,546	£335,100	£0	-12.62	3.00	£0	£0	£325,988	£0	£0
Highworth Wameford School	190.36	18	£239,828	£273,358	£40,530	5.69	-2.00	£16,888	£21,130	£277,845	£38,017	-£2,513
Isambard Community School	224.93	19	£293,951	£316,433	£25,982	7.13	-1.00	£10,826	£16,397	£321,174	£27,223	£1,241
Kingsdown School	329.26	21	£475,050	£441,258	£0	10.34	2.00	£0	£0	£446,124	£0	£0
Nova Hreod	176.87	13	£382,084	£238,371	£0	-34.19	-1.00	£0	£0	£219,010	£0	£0
St Joseph's Catholic College	240.97	22	£383,870	£340,472	£0	13.09	-3.00	£0	£0	£349,857	£0	£0
Swindon Academy	227.29	24	£462,511	£333,294	£0	-16.91	-4.00	£0	£0	£325,761	£0	£0
The Commonweal School	249.98	17	£370,890	£341,980	£0	0.85	2.00	£0	£0	£341,309	£0	£0
The Dorcan Academy	264.60	13	£482,416	£340,103	£0	-27.67	3.00	£0	£0	£322,210	£0	£0
The Lydiard Park Academy	247.25	15	£412,901	£322,251	£0	-16.81	0.00	£0	£0	£312,444	£0	£0
The Ridgeway School	169.28	15	£241,526	£268,785	£27,258	1.82	7.00	£1,149	£23,085	£265,760	£24,234	-£3,024
SECONDARY SUBTOTAL	2,570.40	192.00	£4,274,573	£3,551,405	£93,770	-69.29	6.00	£28,863	£60,611	£3,507,483	£89,474	-£4,296
MAINSTREAM TOTAL	6,282.03	451.00	£9,676,893	£7,690,415	£365,119	52.43	52.50	£116,687	£220,832	£7,677,278	£337,519	-£27,600

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Reflection of the pressures within the Early Years Sector

Background

We should be concerned that the Early Years sector is reaching financial breaking point and there is a genuine possibility that settings may close or restrict care and education solely to 3-4 year provision, where staff to child ratios are more generous, resulting in reduced staffing costs. If so, the very children we are trying to reach, particularly our most vulnerable families who often need additional support and help with early intervention programmes will be unable to access Early Education provisions, resulting in failures to bridge the learning and development gaps many of these children typically have.

Finance

A recent 'Call for the True Cost of Childcare' has been completed and we wait the report and recommendations for enhanced payments. Settings reported consideration to (and not exclusively) rising costs in the following:

- Staff hourly wages
- Implementation of pension scheme
- HR and H&S costs
- Accountancy fees
- Waste disposal
- Staff training
- Rent
- Business rates
- DVD licence (MPLC) – Schools have this paid for directly from the DSG fund

Whilst cost have been and are expected to rise further, the Early Years sector is funded significantly below the levels of income each FTE brings into the DSG and significantly below other education providers (especially when the additional enhancements are factored in).

The table below is a comparison of education funding using information from the Schools Forum in January 2015.

Cohort	FTE (income to DSG)	Actual BPPE	Early Years funding compared to FTE	Early Years funding BPPE:£4 hourly rate
3 & 4 year olds	£3,888.06	@ £3.85 = £2,194.50 @ £4.00 = £2,280.00	- £1,693.56 - £1608.06	
KS 1 & 2		£2,754.40 (plus lump sum of £106,700)		- £474.40
KS3		£3,607.24 (plus lump sum of £175,000)		- £1,327.24

It is appreciated that all education sectors are facing huge pressures, however Child-minders, setting leaders and managers are often required to be 'in ratio' meaning they are expected to complete management task whilst working full time with children.

However, whilst it is acknowledged that many who work in education give up *some* of their own time, it is worth noting that Early Years leaders do not have the privilege of delegating these duties to specialist members of staff – such tasks are completed by setting managers and child-minders in *much* of their own time.

Time, Staff and Resources

The current situation within the EY sector is there is a desire to raise the quality of the EY workforce through access to enhanced training to degree level in order to improve outcomes for children and raise standards. However, due to the current level of funding providers are in a catch 22 situation where the funding does not enable them to pay the appropriate hourly rate for higher qualified staff making staff retention difficult and often leave them to go to other settings.

However, the introduction of new Living Wage, in a sector that traditionally is one of the lowest paid, has already added to financial pressures. Furthermore, this must be 'up scaled' to more senior or higher qualified staff members, resulting in massive wage rises, with reports of £18,800 and £36,000 per annum increases in wage bills (approximately an additional 17 FTE to plug the gap).

Both local evidence and international evidence (in the form of reviews and reports) highlights the benefits of money placed in Early Years Education Settings where we can support, educate and intervene with services before children start school and work on a '*preventative*' approach rather than the '*reactive*' approach to assist the Borough and schools to reduce the burden of high needs placements.

SEND statement/EHCP levels in Swindon are 3.8% against a national average of 2.6%, placing significant pressures on budgets as we support the growing numbers of children requiring additional support in schools. Whilst it is appreciated that all members should unite to contribute to the provisions for SEND, it is suggested that this contribution should be distributed in a fairer, relative manner than previous approaches.

Significant changes in recent years have also added to workloads such as:

- responsibility to complete and review Early Help Records
- work closely with the Health Visiting Team when conducting 2 year reviews
- increases in safeguarding issues and attendance to (and writing reports for) TAC meetings and CP conferences
- a greater number of children starting at settings with development delay/SEN
- greater attendance to network meetings
- making referrals to children's centres along with informing parents 'What's on?' at their local Children's Centre
- and more recently the SEND reforms and Education and Health Care Plans.

Additionally, Ofsted requirements necessitate greater parent partnerships including open days and parent evenings, working closely with other professionals, tracking children's progress and keeping a record of how Early Years Pupil Premium is spent. The new inspection framework also places greater emphasis on tracking children's progress and educating parents and carers on healthy eating and oral hygiene, as the country tackles childhood obesity and a nation of children with rotten teeth. Furthermore, settings are also subject to other legal requirements such as updating allergens lists (including non-food items such as play-doh for example) and Public Health inspections. All of the above is in

addition to the actual running of a business – payroll, invoices, attendance, staff reviews, updating websites, show around's etc.

This report is not suggesting that settings should not conduct the above as fulfilling these duties is what makes settings' good' or 'outstanding'.

Wider Pressures

A further concern of the sector is the implementation of 30 hours of childcare. Research conducted by SBC have suggested the Borough needs to source the equivalent of 72 Reception Class places by September 2017 with an expansion expected of 21,000 new homes in the borough requiring an additional 33 classes.

A recent survey indicated that 46% of settings are interested in expansion of businesses, but this cannot happen without financial support to do so. Furthermore, there is anxiety that they may have to turn away *existing* families as they may simply not have enough childcare hours to accommodate the increase.

Settings and child-minders have also expressed concern that they already operate the 15 hours Early Education programme at a loss and the additional 15 hours will effectively mean a further 'pay cut' as the £3.85 (£4.00 for setting operating flexible funding over 52 weeks) does not cover the cost of providing the sessions, never mind their own hourly rates.

Additionally, it has been highlighted that provision for SENRAP funding will need to be enhanced, which also needs to be recognised.

A further unease with the implementation of 30 hours is the tightly governed restrictions on staff to child ratios. Faced with such rising costs, business decisions need to be made and there is a genuine fear that settings will reduce the number of childcare places for children under 3 years to enable the 30 hours to be accommodated. In doing so, managers can reduce staff numbers and related costs such as pensions.

Summary

The Early Years Sector is asking for more money – although the request is made in the context that it is merely asking that the money provided by central Government should be passed directly and fairly on to settings to enable leaders to do the job effectively.

Kate Adams
Early Years Representative

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Specialist Provision for Special Educational Needs in Swindon

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Specialist Provision for Special Educational Needs

Executive Summary

The research is designed to:

1. Strengthen understanding of the demand for specialist provision for children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), the potential future trajectory and associated cost implications for both children's and adult services.
2. To identify the key drivers behind:
 - The comparatively high proportion of children and young people in Swindon subject to a statement of SEN (EHC);
 - The consistently high demand for special school and SRP placement.
3. To align:
 - Families' perspectives;
 - Insight from schools and practitioners;
 - Strategic awareness of commissioners;
 - Opportunities within the SEND Reforms;
 - Learning from other local areas.
4. To propose supply and demand-side solutions to secure a sustainable level of high quality specialist provision for children and young people with SEND in Swindon.

There are 4 main phases to the research:

- i) **Data analysis** - A detailed analysis of key data to strengthen understanding of the trends, potential future trajectory and cost implications.
- ii) **Stakeholder workshop** - A workshop with a range of key stakeholders, based upon Outcomes Based Accountability, designed to:
 - Share the findings from the data analysis;
 - Develop a range of plausible hypotheses re the key drivers behind the data trends.
- iii) **Fieldwork** - To test and strengthen the hypotheses generated at the stakeholder workshop:
 - In depth interviews with a small sample of families of children and young people with SEND to explore their aspirations and the support they rely upon to achieve them, including networks and community links;
 - Desk top and other research to collate learning and interesting practice from other local areas, including SEND pathfinders that have succeeded in reducing reliance on specialist provision;
 - Discussion with service teams and specialist providers to understand the challenges and opportunities within existing systems, processes, professional practice and working culture(s);

- iv) **Analysis and reporting** - To analyse evidence and data collected during the research and report on findings and high level options to secure a sustainable level of high quality specialist provision for children and young people with SEND in Swindon

The data analysis suggests that Swindon identifies and statements relatively high numbers of children and young people with SEND at a cost that is consistently higher than many other LAs. In addition, a higher proportion of children in Swindon attend a specialist resourced provision or special school than in most other similar local authorities.

Within this context, outcomes overall are no better and sometimes less positive than those achieved by children and young people with SEND in other LAs. *(It is important to note however that 4 special schools are judged “good” by OfSTED and 1 “outstanding”. This will reflect OfSTED’s view that progress is also good or outstanding in these schools.)*

These trends suggest that either:

- A higher proportion of children and young people in Swindon present with complex SEND than in many other local areas – perhaps inflated by families moving into the area, attracted by the level and quality of its specialist provision, or
- Policy and practice in Swindon, however, unintentionally, channels a higher proportion of children and young people with SEND towards statemented and/or specialist provision.

The research did not identify specific demographic factors that might lead inevitably to higher rates of statementing or the need for more specialist provision.

Anecdotal evidence is reported that families may be encouraged to move to Swindon by its relatively high number of good and outstanding special schools. However, while this may hold true in a small number of instances, the research found nothing to suggest that this occurs at a scale that could have more than a marginal impact on overall trends.

The hypotheses tested during the field work suggested a number of ways in which existing policy and practice contribute to a culture of dependency that, in turn, results in a relatively heavy reliance on specialist provision.

Current trends suggest that, unless something changes, the reliance on statutory provision is likely to remain high and that the LA will have to invest further in specialist provision. There is no evidence to suggest that this is due to a particular set of demographic challenges. Rather, the research has highlighted the extent to which current policy and practice however, unintentionally, channels at least a proportion of children and young people with SEND towards statemented and/or specialist provision. This has important capital and revenue implications that are likely to be exacerbated over the next few years when a greater proportion of the pupil population will be of secondary school age – limiting the extent to which the funding within the Early Years and Schools Blocks will be available to subsidise higher spending within the High Needs Block.

High levels of demand for specialist services and provision for SEND in children’s services risks being translated into similarly high demand for adult services at a time when the focus increasingly is on promoting independence and resilience in individuals, families and communities.

The SEND reforms provide an ideal context within which to deliver the kind of change needed to build a sustainable model that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND by supporting at all points the independence and resilience of individuals and families. To do so requires:

System change, at the heart of which is integrated, collaborative commissioning, supported where appropriate by pooled and/or aligned funding.

Cultural change, characterised by:

- Empowering and involving families and young people as co-producers;
- Person-centred and outcomes focused working;
- Prevention and early identification and intervention;
- Sustained, long-term, joined-up working from 0-25.

Functional change, including

- Single point of contact for families;
- Integrated, outcomes-focused, support planning, 0-25;
- Peer support and family leadership;
- Integrated personal budgets.

Recommendations

The priority should be to work with key stakeholders to develop a system-wide approach focused as much on reducing demand for specialist provision as on meeting that demand in the most cost-effective way possible. This requires significant and concerted action over time to change culture as much as policy and practice. Within this context the SEND reforms are an important opportunity to review and refresh the approach to SEN support in Swindon, providing the context within which to develop a culture and working practices that are inclusive by nature and have at their heart:

- A relentless focus on improving outcomes;
- Person-centred practices;
- Co-production

Central to the approach should be:

1. Strengthening further the strategic overview and commissioning for SEND – based upon a rigorous analysis and monitoring of outcomes.
2. Building capacity across the system, particularly in mainstream schools.
3. Developing the workforce so that being outcomes focused and person-centred is at the heart of their practice.
4. Refreshing SEND/EHCP processes, focusing particularly on the SEND Banding descriptors and the role of the SEN Panel.
5. Promoting innovative responses to the SEND of children and young people, by working together with families to design the kind of help and support they need to exercise greater control over their lives.

1. Introduction

Background to the research

- 1.1 A report to Cabinet in September 2014, highlighted the relatively high proportion - compared to national, regional and statistical benchmarks - of children and young people in Swindon:
 - Subject to a statement of SEN;
 - Placed in specialist provision - special school or specialist resourced mainstream provision (SRP).
- 1.2 The report also reported an increasing demand for places in some provision and associated cost pressures.
- 1.3 The report proposed to commission research to strengthen the LA's understanding of the drivers behind these trends as the basis for the development of options to reduce the trends and/or manage the cost implications.

Managing Adult Demand

- 1.4 The Managing Adult Demand programme identifies 3 priorities in response to the potentially unsustainable social and financial costs associated with high levels of life-long dependency on service provision:
 - i) To enable people to lead more fulfilling lives through enhanced choice and independence – taking personal responsibility for using their own resources where possible.
 - ii) To build the capabilities and skills of communities (service users), carers and the workforce to facilitate greater independence.
 - iii) To continue to protect the most vulnerable people in Swindon

SEND Reforms

- 1.5 The SEND Reforms set out in the Children and Families Act (2014) emphasise the importance of giving families more choice and control over the support upon which they rely through, e.g. person centred approaches and co-production. However, there is also a potential risk that the reforms could simply raise expectations of a more extensive and potentially more expensive pattern of specialist provision.
- 1.6 The reforms introduce a number of important technical changes that require the local authority and its partners to:
 - Commission more services jointly so that they meet the holistic needs of children and young people (0-25) with SEND;
 - Publish a clear and transparent 'Local Offer', that tells parents and young people what support is available and what they can expect;
 - Introduce a more streamlined assessment process, integrating education, health and care services;
 - Replace statements of SEN and Learning Difficulty Assessments with a single Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan for all children and young people with SEND between the ages of 0-25;

- Provide the option of a personal budget for families and young people with an EHC Plan;
 - Do more to help young people with SEND to prepare for adulthood.
- 1.7 The new Code of Practice integrates guidance on the pre-16 SEN system and post-16 learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities. For the first time the Further Education sector will be included in the list of organisations that must have regard to the Code.
- 1.8 Education, health and social care services need to work more closely together so that children and young people with SEND are identified early and receive the support they need as soon as possible. They need to focus relentlessly on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND and earn the trust and confidence of their families.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

- 1.9 A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for children with a disability or complex need in Swindon is planned to:
- Understand current provision and where there are gaps
 - Understand the needs of disabled children and those with complex needs now and in the future
 - Forecast future demand for services and identify trends in need
 - Provide insight into what works well, what could be improved, and suggestions for innovative practice from both service users and people delivering the services.
 - Map requirements to the existing service specification and develop a new Service specification for community health services to meet the needs of these children and young people.

2. Purpose of the research

- 2.1 To strengthen understanding of the trends in demand for specialist provision for children with SEND, the potential future trajectory and associated cost implications for both children's and adults services.
- 2.2 To identify the key drivers behind:
- The comparatively high proportion of children and young people in Swindon subject to a statement of SEN (EHCP);
 - The consistently high demand for special school and SRP placement.
- 2.3 To align:
- Families' perspectives;
 - Insight from schools and practitioners;
 - Strategic awareness of commissioners;
 - Opportunities within the SEND Reforms;
 - Learning from other local areas.
- 2.4 To propose supply and demand-side solutions to secure a sustainable level of high quality specialist provision for children and young people with SEND in Swindon.

3. Approach

3.1 There are 4 main phases to the research:

- i) **Data analysis** - A detailed analysis of key data to strengthen understanding of the trends, potential future trajectory and cost implications.
- ii) **Stakeholder workshop** - A workshop with a range of key stakeholders, based upon Outcomes Based Accountability, designed to:
 - Share the findings from the data analysis;
 - Develop a range of plausible hypotheses re the key drivers behind the data trends.
- iii) **Fieldwork** - To test and strengthen the hypotheses generated at the stakeholder workshop:
 - In depth interviews with a small sample of families of children and young people to explore their aspirations and the support they rely upon to achieve them, including networks and community links;
 - Desk top and other research to collate learning and interesting practice from other local areas, including SEND pathfinders that have succeeded in reducing reliance on specialist provision;
 - Discussion with service teams and specialist providers to understand the challenges and opportunities within existing systems, processes, professional practice and working culture(s);
- iv) **Analysis and reporting** - To analyse evidence and data collected during the research and report on findings and high level options to secure a sustainable level of high quality specialist provision for children and young people with SEND in Swindon

4. Data analysis

Identification of SEND in Swindon.

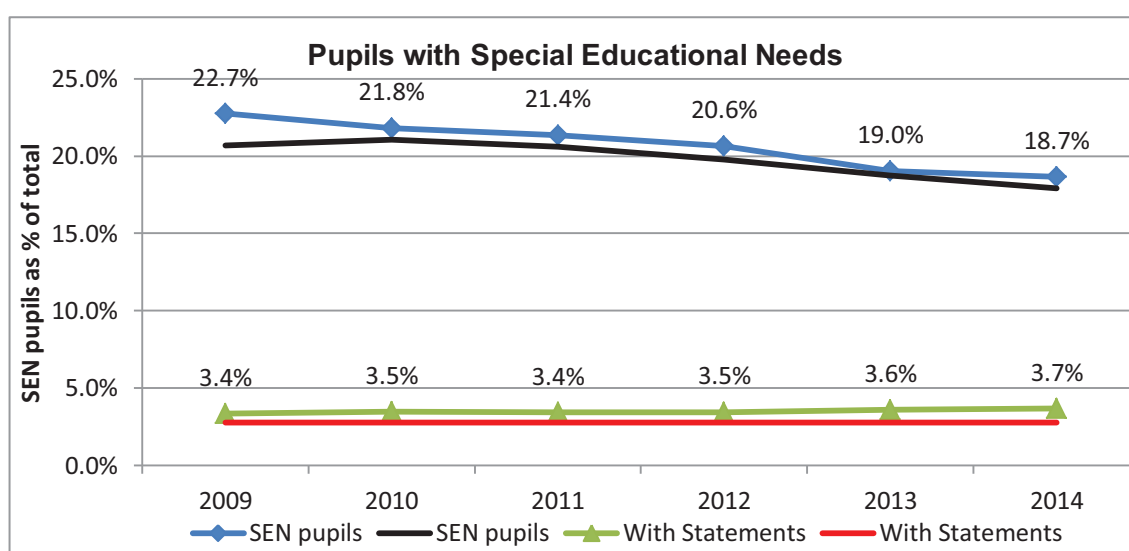
- 4.1 Although it has fallen gradually, the proportion of children and young people in Swindon identified as having SEND remains consistently above national benchmarks: Specifically, the proportion of children and young people identified as having SEND is:
- Below national and regional benchmarks at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2;
 - Broadly in line with national and regional benchmarks at the end of Key Stage 1;
 - Significantly above national and regional benchmarks at the end of Key Stage 4.

Figure 1

Proportion of SEN Pupils out of all pupils at the end of each Key Stage (2012/13)	Swindon	England	South West
Early years/Foundation	9%	12%	11%
Key Stage 1	19%	20%	20%
Key Stage 2	20%	23%	23%
Key Stage 4	28%	21%	20%

- 4.2 The proportion of children and young people in Swindon with a statement of SEND continues to rise slightly. This compares to a national trend that has remained steady and is above national benchmarks.

Figure 2

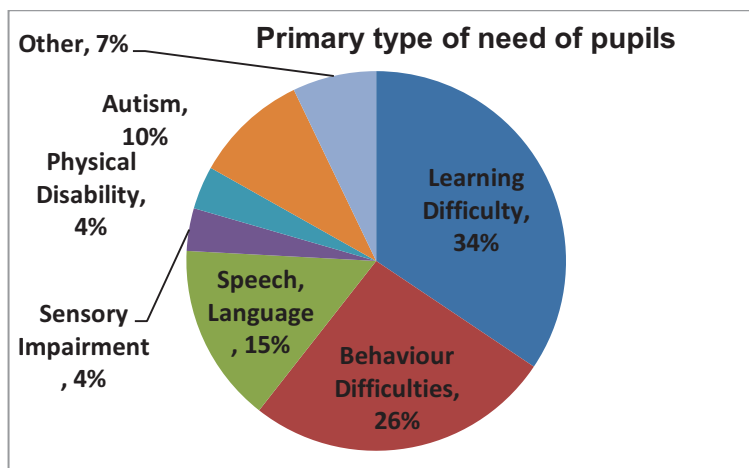


- 4.3 The number of requests for statutory assessment has increased consistently each year from 180 in 2008 to 239 in 2012-13. Similarly, the number of new statements issued rose each year from 2010 to 2013.
- 4.4 Compared to national benchmarks:
- Identification of children and young people with behaviour, emotional or social difficulties (BESD)¹ is relatively high;
 - Identification of children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and specific learning difficulties (SPLD) is relatively low.

¹ This is superseded in the new SEND Code of Practices by the new category of social, emotional and/or mental health needs (SEMH)

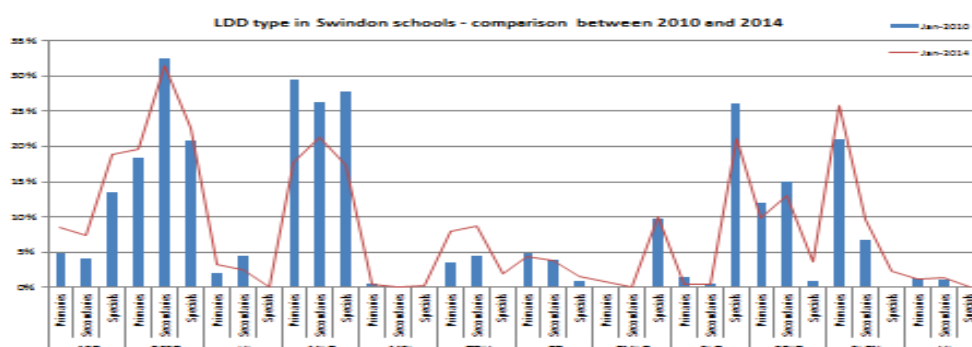
- 4.5 A higher proportion of children and young people have their SEND categorised as “other” than is the case nationally.

Figure 3



- 4.6 Since 2010 growth in identified SEND is evident in:
- Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) – although this remains in line with or slightly below national benchmarks;
 - BESD – particularly in the primary sector;
 - SpLD – in special schools;
 - SLCN - in primary and special schools.
- 4.7 Since 2010 fewer children and young people have been identified as having:
- Moderate learning difficulties (MLD);
 - Severe learning difficulties (SLD) – in special schools;
 - SpLD – in secondary schools.

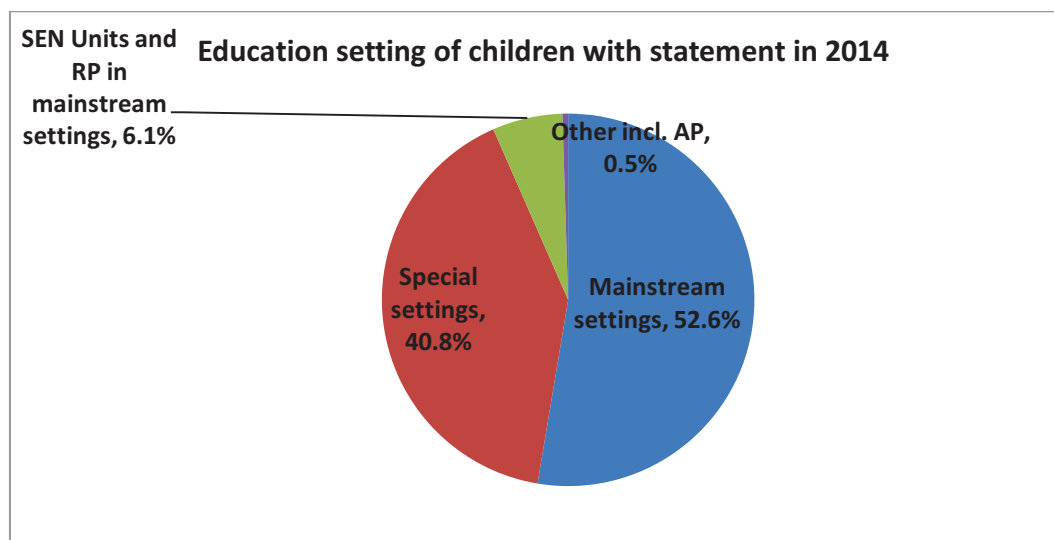
Figure 4



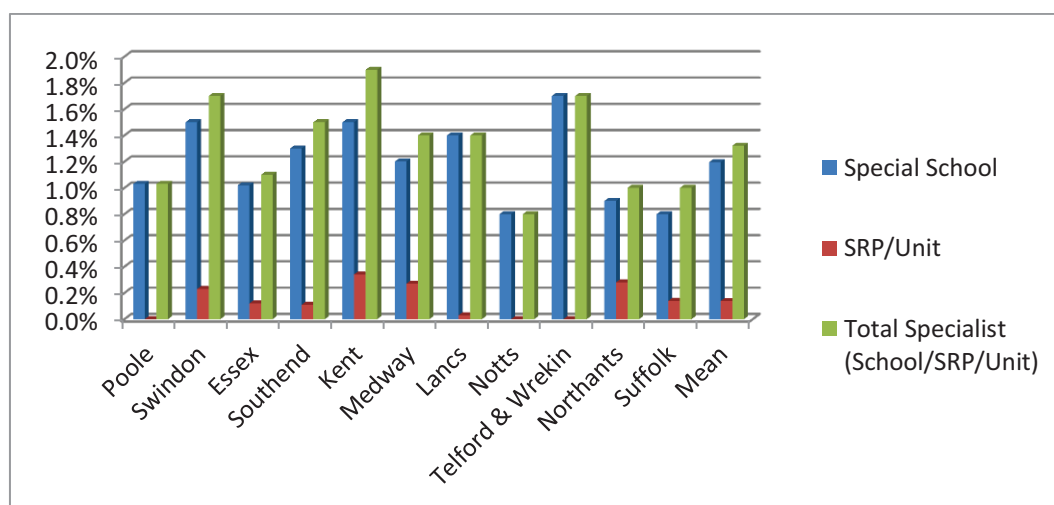
- 4.8 Compared to national benchmarks:
- A relatively high proportion of statemented pupils attend a mainstream school or, to a lesser extent, a specialist resourced provision (SRP);
 - A relatively low proportion of statemented pupils attend a special school.

Despite this, a high proportion of children in Swindon attend a specialist resourced provision or special school compared to national and statistical neighbour benchmarks.

Figure 5



Children in Swindon attending specialist provision



4.9 There are significant pressures for secondary special school places with the shortfall in places expected to peak in 2016. Pressures are particularly significant for:

- Uplands – with significant challenges projected at post-16;
- St Luke's – with significant challenges projected at Y7 in 2015.

Costs of specialist provision

4.10 Swindon consistently budgets for and spends² more per pupil and as a proportion of its overall DSG on SEND/High Needs than national and regional benchmarks, e.g.:

² Although S251 SEN spend in 2012-13 did fall below the national benchmark

Figure 6

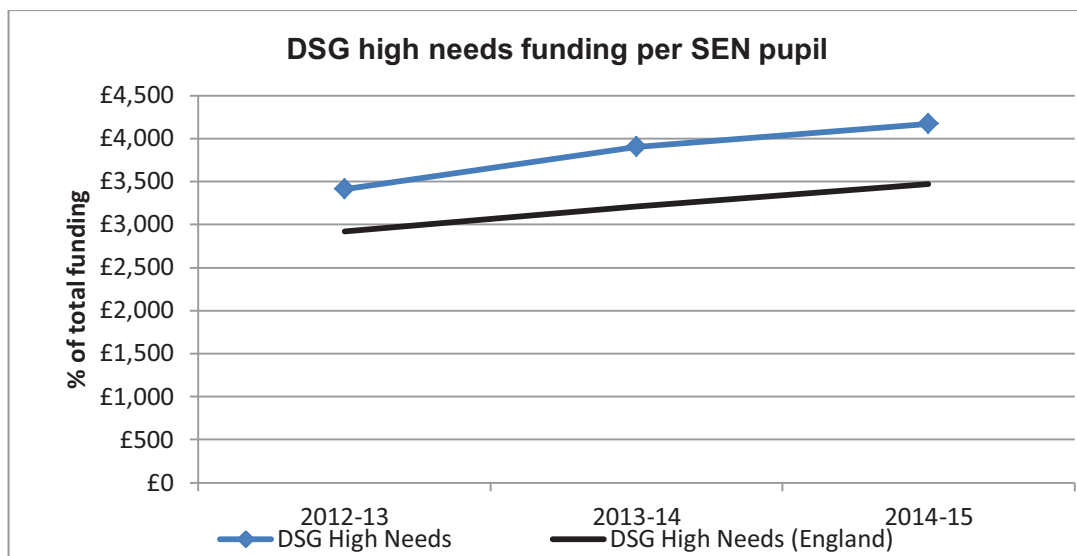


Figure 7

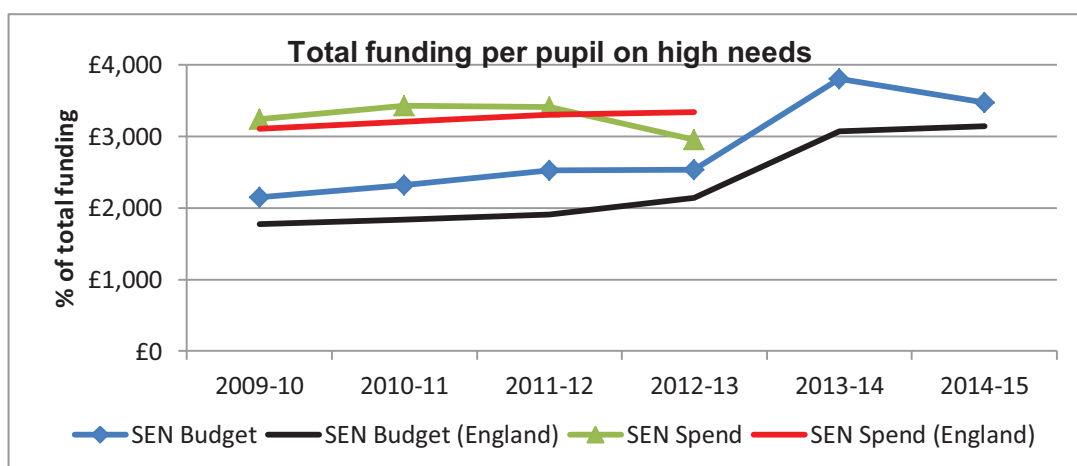
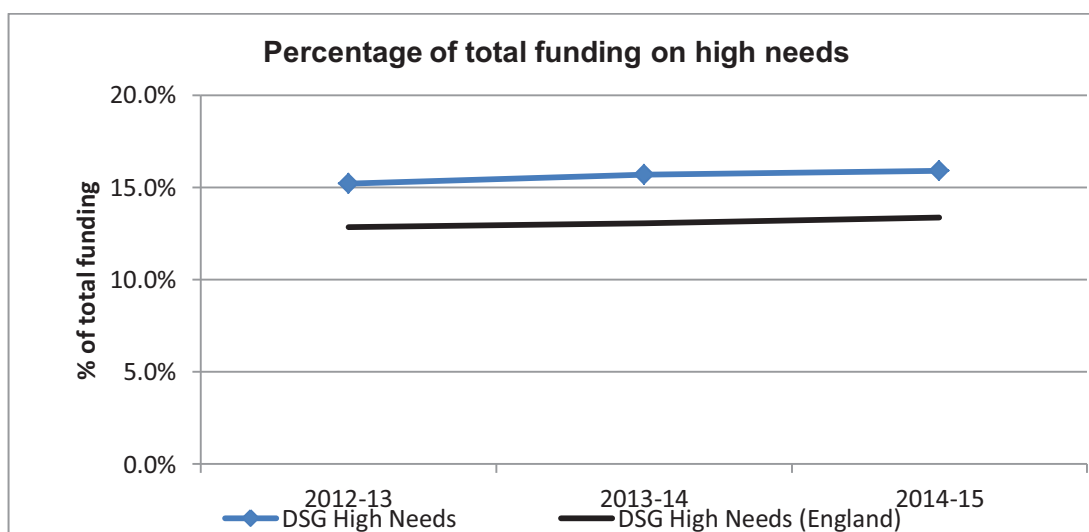


Figure 8



4.11 The High Needs Budget continues to spend more than the local formula and national allocation and continues to rise, e.g.:

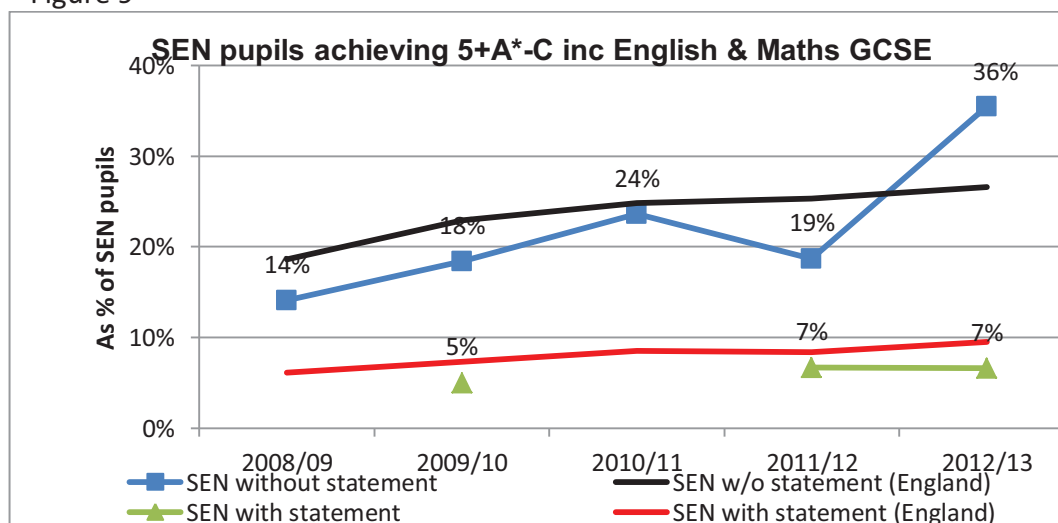
- The High Needs settlement for 2015-16 is expected to be £24.403m. Current projections are for expenditure of £26,420,509 an increase of £676,509 on 2014-15;
- The S251 SEN budget overall budget rose from £15.8m in 2012-13 to £20.2m in 2014-5³
- The High Needs budget per pupil rose from £3,413 in 2012-13 to £4,173 in 2014-15.

Outcomes for children and young people with SEND⁴

4.12 Achievement and progress at the end of KS4 for pupils with SEND is generally below national benchmarks, particularly for those with a statement of SEND, e.g.:

- The proportion of pupils with SEND that achieved at 5 A*-C GCSE, including English and maths fell below national benchmarks in 4 of the 5 years between 2008-09 and 2012-13⁵;
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of SEND that achieved at 5 A*-C GCSE, including English and maths remains consistently below national benchmarks;
- The proportion of pupils with SEND making expected progress in English has remained relatively stable and is slightly below national benchmarks;
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of SEND making expected progress in maths has remained stable and falls below national benchmarks.

Figure 9



³ However, the 2014-15 figure is actually just over £1m less than the previous year

⁴ Caution is required in interpreting outcome data as national benchmarks exist only for SEN children as a whole and do not relate to different kinds of specialist provision. This is because low numbers and the diverse needs of pupils in specialist provision make like for like comparison very difficult. It is important that 4 special schools are judged "good" by OfSTED and 1 "outstanding". This will reflect OfSTED's view that progress is also good or outstanding in these schools.

⁵ N.B. There was a significant increase in performance in 2012-13 in which 36% of children and young people with SEND achieved the benchmark standard compared to 27% nationally.

Figure 10

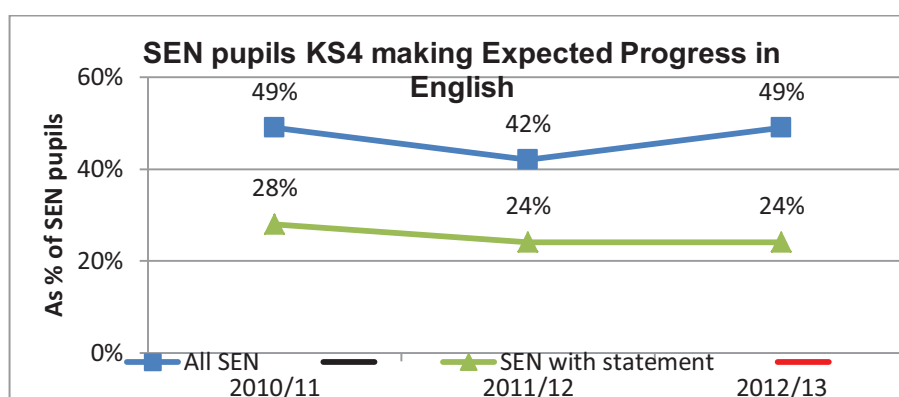
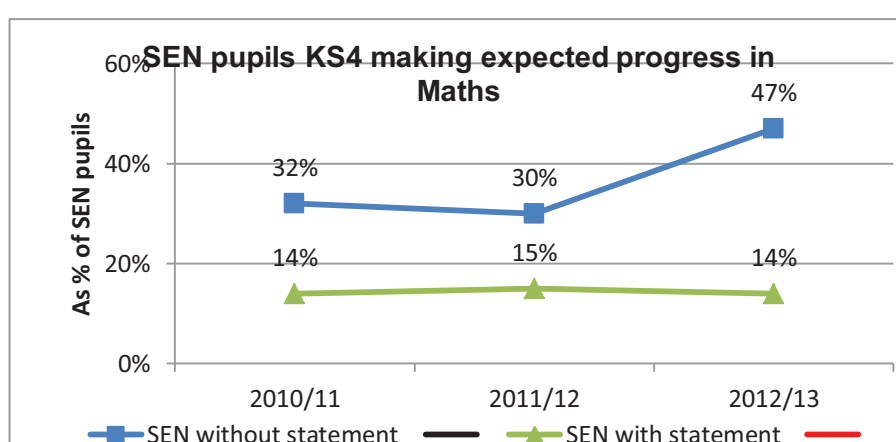


Figure 11



4.13 Achievement and progress at the end of KS2 for pupils with SEND is improving in reading and mathematics:

- The proportion of pupils with SEND achieving Level 4 in reading increased between 2011-12 and 2013-14. Over the same period the proportion of pupils with a statement of SEN achieving Level 4 in reading also increased;
- The proportion of pupils with SEND making expected progress in reading in 2013-14 increased by 3% from 2012-13 (when it was broadly in line with national benchmarks). Similarly the proportion of pupils with a statement of SEN making expected progress in reading also rose by in 2013-14 by 3% from 2012-13 (when it was broadly in line with national benchmarks);
- The proportion of pupils with SEND achieving Level 4 in maths increased between 2011-12 and 2013-14, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of SEN achieving Level 4 in maths fell over the same period;
- The proportion of pupils with SEND making expected progress in maths 2013-14 increased by 5% from 2012-13 (when it was broadly in line with national benchmarks). Similarly the proportion of pupils with a statement of SEN making expected progress in maths rose by in 2013-14 by 11% from 2012-13 (when it was broadly in line with national benchmarks);

Figure 12

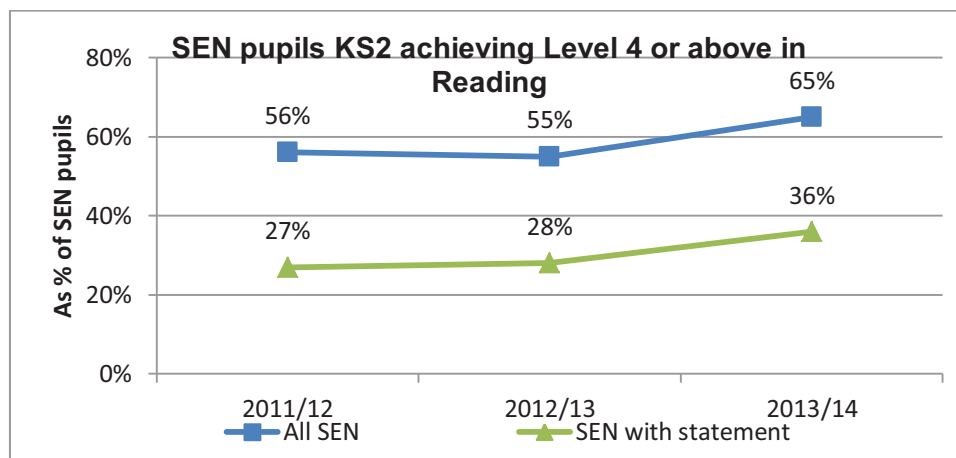


Figure 13

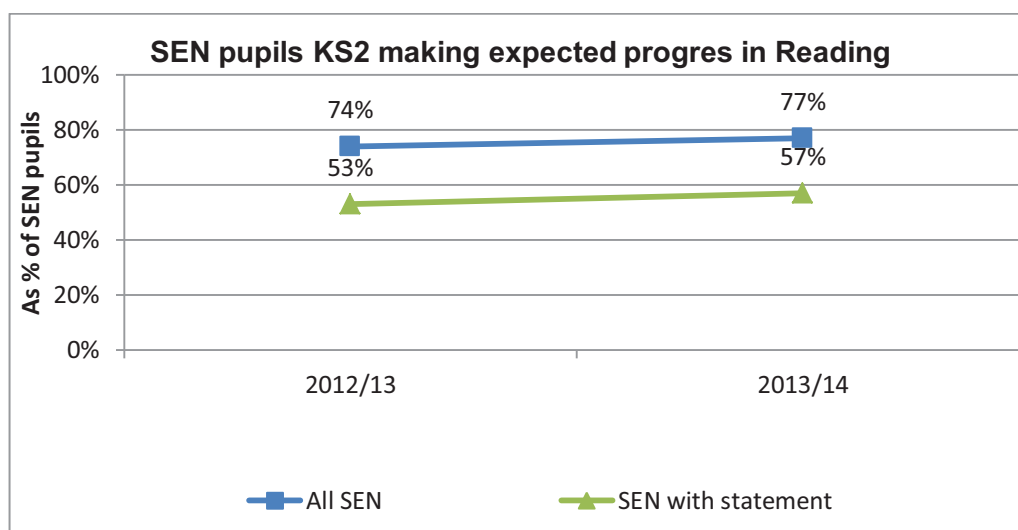


Figure 14

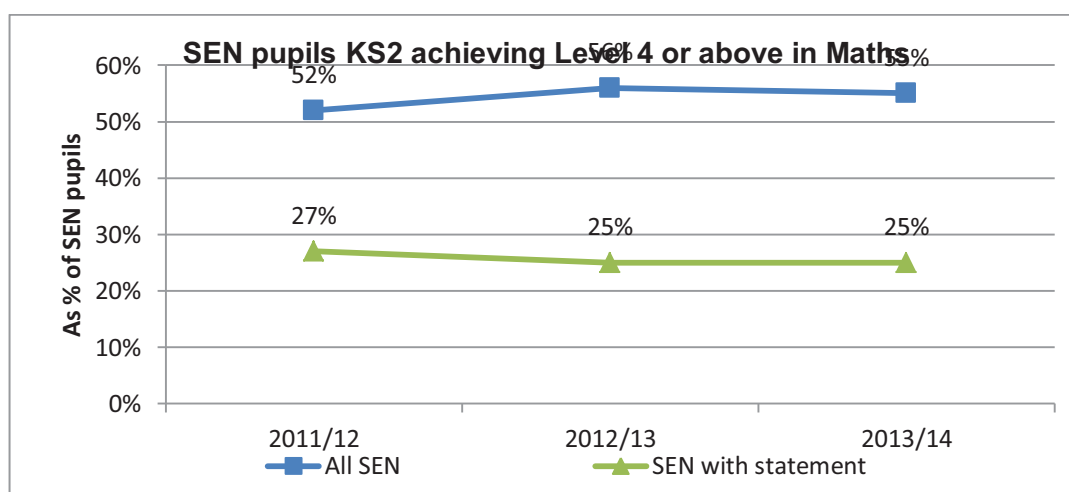
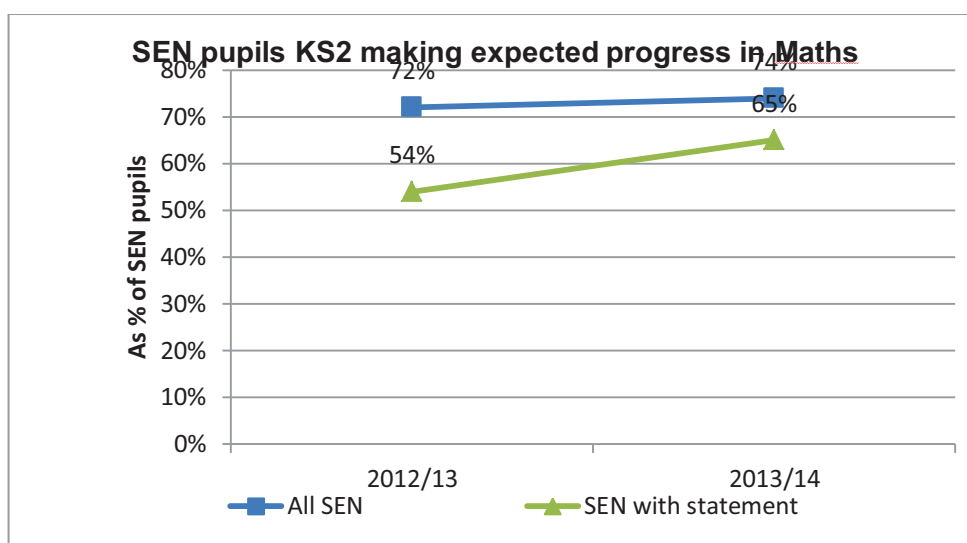


Figure 15



- 4.14 School attendance has not improved significantly for pupils with SEND in Swindon since January 2010. Pupils with SEND, particularly those with a statement of SEN, have higher levels of overall (OA) and persistent absence (PA) than national and regional benchmarks, e.g.:

Figure 16

Attendance – over 5 years	January 2010				January 2014			
	Not SEN	Act.	Act. +	State.	Not SEN	Act.	Act. +	State.
Overall Absence	4.9%	6.8%	8.5%	8.9%	4.7%	6.4%	7.4%	8.9%
Persistent Absence					3.3%	7.1%	10.4%	14.4%

Attendance – Jan 14	Swindon		England		South West	
	All SEN	Statement	All SEN	Statement	All SEN	Statement
Overall Absence	7.6%	8.9%	7.4%	8.2%	7.5%	8.2%
Persistent Absence	10.6	14.4%	10.2%	12.4%	9.9%	12.1%

- 4.15 Pupils with SEND, particularly those with a statement, are disproportionately more likely to be excluded from school:

Figure 17

Pupils receiving F/T Excl.	January 2010				January 2014			
	Not SEN	SEN Act.	SEN Act. +	State.	Not SEN	SEN Act.	SEN Act. +	State.
	1.6%	3.4%	10.0%	9.9%	1.2%	4.5%	10.5%	10.8%

F/T Exclusions Jan 14	Swindon		England		South West	
	All SEN	Statement	All SEN	Statement	All SEN	Statement
	8.6%	10.8%	6.1%	6.6%	6.4%	7.8%

- 4.16 The proportion of children and young people in Swindon who are “in need” (CIN) or looked after (LAC) that have SEND is well above national, regional and statistical neighbour benchmarks. This is particularly the case for children and young people with a statement of SEN.

Figure 18

Children in Need with SEN		Swindon	England	S West	S. Neigh.
School-aged CIN as at 31/03/13	SEN	60%	58%	59%	59%
	S. Action	13%	16%	16%	15%
	S. A. Plus	19%	18%	17%	19%
	Statement	28%	24%	26%	25%

Looked After Children with SEN		Swindon	England	S West	S. Neigh.
School-aged LAC as at 31/03/13	SEN	75%	68%	74%	68%
	S Action/S A Plus	33%	39%	40%	39%
	Statement	42%	29%	34%	29%

However, the proportion of children and young people with SEND that are LAC, at 1.4%, is broadly in line with national, regional and statistical benchmarks⁶.

- 4.17 Young people with Learning Difficulties (16-18) are less likely to be engaged in positive learning activities or education, employment or training than their peers. The difference is broadly in line with national, regional and statistical neighbour benchmarks.

Figure 19

Post-16 activities (16-18) June 2014		Swindon	England	South West	Stat Neigh
% In Learning activities	LDD	78%	77%	77%	78%
	All young people	82%	81%	82%	81%
	Diff	4%	4%	5%	3%
% NEET	LDD	12%	11%	11%	11%
	All young people	6%	6%	5%	6%
	Diff	6%	6%	6%	5%

5. Fieldwork

- 5.1 The data analysis suggests that Swindon identifies and statements relatively high numbers of children and young people with SEND at a cost that is consistently higher than many other LAs nationally and within the South West. Within this context, outcomes overall are no better and sometimes less positive than those achieved by children and young people with SEND in other LAs. These trends suggest that either:

- A higher proportion of children and young people in Swindon present with complex SEND than in many other local areas – perhaps inflated by families moving into the area, attracted by the level and quality of its specialist provision, or

⁶ This may reflect that there is a relatively high proportion of children and young people in Swindon with a statement of SEN and a relatively low proportion that are LAC.

- Policy and practice in Swindon, however, unintentionally, channels a higher proportion of children and young people with SEND towards statemented and/or specialist provision.

Feedback from parents and carers

5.2 Interviews with parents and carers were designed to learn from their experience of having a child with SEND in Swindon. Swindon Parent and Carers agreed to extend the invitation to their members to be involved in the research. In the event 5 sets of parent/carers agreed to be interviewed:

- The parent of a Y10 student with Down's syndrome who had attended mainstream school throughout his educational career;
- The parent of a Y4 pupil who is currently not attending school and recently commenced a bespoke package of part-time individual tuition;
- The legal guardians of 3 grandchildren under the age of 8. Their Y2 granddaughter has a statement of SEN and attends her local junior school. She is due to attend a specialist resourced provision when she transfers to junior school;
- The parent of 3 boys between the ages of 6 and 10. Her eldest child was diagnosed with ASC and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) eighteen months ago and her youngest is currently on the ASC diagnostic pathway. Both boys attend their local mainstream school;
- The parent of 2 children with an ASC diagnosis. Her son, aged 10, attends the Chalet special school while her 7 year old daughter, who was recently diagnosed with Aspergers syndrome, attends her local primary school.

In addition, 2 focus group discussions were conducted with the parents of pre-school children with SEND who attend the Special Tots and Koalas groups at the Saltway Centre.

5.3 Parents and carers were invited to share their experiences of the SEN system with a particular focus on:

- What had worked well for them so far and anything that worked less well;
- Their thoughts and feelings about the future;
- The support that parents, carers and their children receive;
- Any other support that they think their son or daughter needs;
- The choice they had in deciding what support their son or daughter and the rest of the family should get;
- Any other information that they wanted to share.

Connor

Connor (not his real name) is a 15 year old boy with Down's syndrome. He attends a mainstream secondary school and is hoping to take some GCSEs next year. Connor's dream is to be a Butlin's Redcoat. He plans to go to Swindon College when he leaves school.

Connor's mum, Jane (not her real name) gave birth at home. She did not know that anything was wrong until her health visitor came to visit and arranged for an emergency hospital admission. Jane did not know what to expect when she was told that Connor had Down's syndrome and received very little information or support at the time. Now as member of the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group, Jane has helped to create hospital resources for parents of a newly born baby with Down's – *it begins by saying "congratulations" because we believe that we should value the birth of a Down's Syndrome baby in just the same way as any other birth.*

Jane felt that professionals discouraged her from having high aspirations for Connor. She was advised that he would need to attend special school throughout his education career. However, Jane was determined that Connor should have the chance to succeed in mainstream school, although she was always willing to consider special schooling if things didn't work out for Connor.

Jane found out all that she could about Down's Syndrome, including the best ways to help Connor to learn. She managed to get a grant from Barclays Bank to pay for his mainstream nursery school until he was 3.

Jane was delighted with Connor's primary school. They were very welcoming, made adjustments to meet his needs and came along to training days offered by the Down's Syndrome Group. Things were more difficult after Connor's school merged with another school. Jane felt that the Headteacher and SENCO of the new school were less willing to accommodate Connor's needs and did not welcome her suggestions about how best to help him learn. She felt that the school did not meet the terms of Connor's statement in full and says that communication became less frequent.

Transitions have always been difficult. Jane feels that she has had to develop the knowledge and confidence to challenge professionals some of whom she feels have a narrow perception of the pathways available to young people like Connor. However, she is optimistic about the future and advises parents in a similar position to herself to *believe in your dreams*

Claire (not her real name) is 6. She has a twin sister and an 8 year brother. They live with their grandparents who are also Claire and her sister's legal guardians. Claire's brother is a looked after child.

Claire has had a statement since she was in pre-school and receives 25 hours of support from a teaching assistant. She is on the Autistic diagnostic pathway and also shows signs of attachment disorder. She requires a lot of support and attention. She has attended her local infant school but is due to transfer to a specialist resourced provision (SRP) when she transfers to junior school.

Claire's grandparents find looking after Claire and her brother and sister a full-time job. Her grandfather works shifts and is on call at short notice. They describe their journey so far as like "banging their heads against a brick wall", although they found support from staff from Saltway, where Claire attended pre-school very helpful. They appreciated the advice they were given about their various entitlements and the fact that they were able to take Claire's sister and brother with them sometimes.

When Claire started school, her grandparents felt like their support "dropped off a cliff" and they also lost many of the informal networks they had established with other families. They find it difficult working with so many different professionals and wish that support for the family as a whole was more joined up. They are particularly concerned at the moment because their social worker from the disability team left recently and has not yet been replaced.

They have recently received an amended statement that they think confirms that Claire will attend a SRP in September, although the wording leaves them a little unsure. They had to work hard to get this agreed as the educational psychologist initially thought that Claire would be able to succeed in a mainstream junior school.

They hope that eventually Claire will make enough progress to be able to attend her local mainstream school again.

Lorraine (not her real name) has two children with additional needs. Her son Jack is 10 and was diagnosed as autistic when he was 3½. Jack attends the Chalet special school. His sister Mary is 7. She was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome 2 years ago and attends her local mainstream school.

Lorraine says that Jack's needs became clear when he was young and that his assessment and decisions about his future education were relatively straight forward. He attended Special Tots and Koalas, which he and Lorraine found very useful. Jack is making good progress at the Chalet and is now much more communicative and sociable. Lorraine is very pleased with Jack's education so far and expects him to transfer to Uplands when he enters secondary education. She is reassured by developments at Uplands that promise to offer Jack a clear pathway up to the age of 25 that combines education and life skills.

Marie found mainstream pre-school very difficult and screamed every day for 2 hours. Marie's transition to mainstream school was planned very carefully – there were lots of meetings with her reception teacher and the school was prepared to be very flexible. At the time professionals were uncertain whether Marie had needs on the autistic spectrum and the decision was made to see how she coped as she moved from reception into Year 1. Unfortunately, Marie coped very poorly and she was eventually diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome.

Marie does not have a statement/EHCP. However, the school recognise her needs and make a lot of adjustments to meet them from within their own resources. Lorraine appreciates the very strong partnership that she feels she has with Marie's teachers, but is quite anxious about her secondary education.

- 5.4 Parents and carers interviewed as part of the research expressed a range of views about the kind of provision they wanted for their child. This included a parent of a boy with Down's syndrome who was determined that he should attend mainstream provision throughout his educational career, the legal guardians of a girl on the autistic spectrum who wanted their granddaughter to attend a SRP in the expectation that she will eventually be able to succeed in mainstream school, and the mother of a boy who has recently been diagnosed with ASD who is pursuing specialist provision.
- 5.5 Most of the parents that attended the focus group discussions were actively considering the most appropriate school placement as their child approached statutory school age. For some, this was clearly an immensely challenging and often stressful time for them.
- It's all I think about – it keeps me awake at night*
Gruelling
Heart wrenching
- 5.6 A major challenge for parents of pre-school children was deciding on whether they wanted their child to attend mainstream or specialist provision. They leaned heavily on advice from the professional who they knew and trusted best. Some parents who expected their child to need special school provision were particularly concerned as they had heard that the number of children requiring placement exceeded the number of places available.
- 5.7 Stories shared by parents and carers all included examples of where they had felt supported and things had gone well. Conversely, there were also times when they had found the process confusing and professionals less helpful making them feel that they had to battle to get the support that their child needed.
- What worked well for parents and carers?*
- 5.7.1 Parents and carers reported that the process worked best for them when:
- They felt treated as equal partners by professionals*** – as experts in their own child's development.
- Parents and carers valued the opportunity to work in partnership with professionals. Some had undertaken their own research which, together with experience gained over the years, gave them real knowledge and understanding to contribute
- Our son was struggling with his reading and his teachers had tried a number of different approaches to help him. I advised them that the best way was to stick to a one approach and give him the chance to learn through frequent repetition. This made a real difference.*
- We agreed about my daughter's issues and challenges and worked together in partnership.*

- ii. ***They felt that their child was welcome at school and that staff were prepared to go the extra mile to help them succeed.***

Parents and carers said that their child made the most progress when they were happy at school, felt welcome and were a valued member of the school community. The attitude of the headteacher and SENCO was critical, demonstrated in a readiness to make reasonable adjustments in response to the child's needs, provide additional support from within the school's own resources and, where necessary, seek additional information or training.

My son's primary school was very welcoming. His teachers put visual signs around the school to help him understand where everything was and supplemented the TA support in his statement from within their own resources. They also attended training sessions put on by the Down's syndrome group.

The teachers asked staff from Koalas to come into school to explain how they had worked with our granddaughter.

The reception teacher was also the SENCO. We had lots of meetings at the beginning to make sure that the early days went well and the school were really flexible.

- iii. ***They had ready access to information, advice and support from someone that they trusted.***

Each parent or carer identified someone who they had found particularly helpful and supportive. Sometimes this was a professional or group of professionals.

Staff from Koalas and Special Tots at the Saltway Centre were really helpful. They advised us of what support we were entitled to and allowed us to bring the other children when we attended the group with our granddaughter.

Parents of pre-school children at Special Tots and Koalas were unanimous in stating that "here" was where they got the information, advice and support they relied upon.

Parents and carers also valued support from other parents of children with SEN, including social media, and friends and neighbours. Parents and carers said that among their greatest difficulties was feeling isolated and alone and that simply talking to other parents who had similar experiences could be of great help. Support from the Swindon Parent and Carer group was seen as particularly beneficial, e.g. in signposting other sources of support or chasing up with professional on families' behalf.

Other parents understand and can point you in the right direction....however, I do find it dispiriting when I see other families fighting the same battle.

Pre-school was the first time when there was someone who really understood and made me feel at ease. They helped me to understand what my son needs – they helped us learn, understand and cope as a family.

iv. Professionals considered the family as a whole

Reliable access to respite or short breaks was a key priority for parents and carers. Being able to share the responsibility allowed parents and carers time and space to spend with other members of the family – including each other.

We were able to take all the family on a trip to Weston Super Mare organised by social services for a group of looked after children. Just having other people around who to help with our granddaughter allowed us to have a great day with her brother and sister – sometimes small things make a big difference.

What worked less well for parents and carers?

- 5.7.2 Parents and carers described a range of issues and challenges that they had faced in securing their child the help and support that they felt they needed. From these discussions a number of common themes emerged:

i. Transitions can be very difficult times for parents and carers

In every case, transition between different phases of education proved challenging and at times stressful for parents and carers. This appeared to be regardless of whether the transition was, e.g. from early years into full-time education or preparing for post-16 education. The challenges most commonly cited by parents and carers included:

- Having to build relationships with a new set of professionals who did not know their child and who may bring a different understanding of their needs.

The educational psychologist saw my son in school without me having time to prepare him in advance. She did not see him at his best in the 2 hours she was with him and gained a very limited view of his capabilities. As a result she had decided that he needed to go to a special school for the next stage in his education.

I did not agree with the educational psychologist that our granddaughter could succeed in a mainstream junior class. They could not offer the same level of small group and individual support as she had received in the infant school.

- Losing the formal and informal support on which they had previously relied.

Suddenly all the support we had disappeared. We didn't know any of the other parents and had no one to talk to about what was happening

ii. The statutory process can be very confusing

Parents and carers often found the statutory processes confusing and off-putting. Some parents and carers also found some of the language used in important documents difficult to understand and were sometimes unsure what was actually being said.

Some parents and carers also found some of the language used in important documents difficult to understand and were sometimes unsure what was actually being said.

We needed a simple explanation of the process that we could understand.

We needed someone who we could trust to explain the process to us and to tell us what was happening

The amended statement says that our granddaughter should attend the SRP – does that mean that she will attend the SRP or that she can if everything works out and they have a place?

iii. It can be difficult to work with a range of different services and systems.

A common theme was the extent to which parents and carer would welcome support from a single person who they trusted to help them navigate their way through a complex system.

Parents and carers cited as particularly challenging:

- Services having different processes and thresholds;
- Meetings where key agencies do not attend;
- The inability to have a single conversation about the needs of the family as a whole.

I became my own key worker and took responsibility for organising CHIN meetings myself. This was after a number of meetings when attendance was poor because professionals had not been informed of the next meeting.

We couldn't discuss the family in meetings as a whole as our grandson is Looked-After and we are legal guardians for our granddaughters

Our granddaughter can't have a short break under Aiming High because we have respite care for her.

iv. Frequent staff changes make it difficult to build trusting relationships

It is of critical importance for parents and carers that they are able to build stable and trusting relationships with the professionals who work with their child. Parents and carers find frequent changes in personnel particularly difficult and resent the need to constantly retell their story to professionals who they are not confident will be there for the long haul. While this was particularly the case for social workers, parents and carers also saw their relationship with the school's SENCO as critical. Although less common, the impact of any change in SENCO was often seen by parents and carers as significant.

Our granddaughter's social worker recently left and we have had no replacement. There have been frequent changes in social worker and we have had to retell our story constantly

The SENCO went on maternity leave almost as soon as my son started at his new school. Her cover was not trained and appeared unwilling or unable to adapt to his recently diagnosed disability.

v. Parents and carers find it difficult to get the support they need when they need it

Parents and carers reported that it was difficult to obtain support for their child early in their journey. In their experience, while securing a diagnosis appeared to

be a necessary pre-requisite to securing the support that they needed, this was not always accepted by educational professionals.

My son's school questioned his diagnosis. He received no support, no strategies. He was punished for being naughty and developed stress incontinence. In the end, I withdrew him from school on the advice of my GP and the ASC team. The CAMHS team are now involved.

It took a long time – too long - to get recognition that our granddaughter would not be able to manage in a mainstream junior school.

vi. Schools don't always appear able or willing to make the necessary adjustments to meet the needs of children with SEND

Parents and carers reported a wide range of experiences with their child's school. Where things worked well, they felt that their child was welcomed as a valued member of the school community, that their views as parents were listened to, and that the school went a long way to make the necessary adjustments to include their child. In other cases, they felt that the school was unable or unable to make the necessary adjustments to accommodate their child's needs and their views were not seen as important. On occasion, a change in school leadership or SENCO had a significant impact on their experience.

Everything changed after the schools merged.... I was not confident that my son received all the support that was set out in his statement.

I was told that no school could meet my son's needs.

The school was unwilling to pay for the (traded) services that my son needed. He couldn't see an educational psychologist because the school had already used up its time allocation.

The junior school said that they didn't have the space to offer our granddaughter small group work.

The school simply expected my son to conform. They did not take any account of his difficulties.

vii. Parents and carers find that some professionals appear to focus more on their difficulties or impairments than their strengths and talents

Some parents and carers felt that the assessment of their child and subsequent statement concentrated a great deal on their SEN - what he or she found difficult or could not do - and less on their skills and attributes.

viii. Not all professionals treat parents and carers as equal partners

Parents and carers reported that their relationships with professionals varied greatly – from those where they felt that they truly were treated as equal partners, experts in their own child's needs, to others who appeared to consider them more part of the problem than the solution.

I felt that the new SENCO did not want to listen to me and often told me how many years experience she had to draw upon.

I find that professionals become defensive when something isn't working.

I've never had a conversation about the outcomes I want for my son with professionals

ix. *Some professionals appear over-stretched and do not respond quickly to queries*

Parents and carers recognise that professionals invariably have heavy caseloads and can appear to be overstretched. For them, the concern is that statutory processes can a long time to complete and that some professional can be slow in responding to queries. This can leave them feeling uncertain about what is going to happen next.

We are finally moving towards getting an EHCP, although it has already taken longer than it is supposed to

Sometimes it can take 3 or 4 weeks to get a return call

The team feels over-stretched

What would make the biggest difference?

- 5.7.3 Parents and carers were invited to suggest changes that they felt would make the greatest difference to their experience of the SEN system and the support that their child needs. Common themes were:
- i. Someone to help parents and carers navigate the system
 - ii. Simple, clearly written information
 - iii. Many and flexible pathways for children and young people with SEND
 - iv. Stable and trusting relationships with key professionals
 - v. A more joined up system that treats the family as a whole
 - vi. Professional that are willing to listen to parents and carers and treat them as equal partners
 - vii. Access a wider range of support

Feedback from commissioners

Pupil place planning

The current pupil forecasting method used by Children's Services at Swindon Borough Council is the cohort survival method. To predict the number of school places that will be needed the cohort survival method incorporates and assesses the following information for each primary school based area:

- The proportion expected to enter school based on past experience;
- The "survival" of that cohort as it moves through school taking account of net migration which occurs in relation to schools' popularity and the effects of development in their area
- For each secondary school, a similar "survival" method, particularly taking account of transfer rates to the sixth form if there is one.

- 5.8 Current projections, presented in Appendix A, suggest that, despite investing in a relatively high level of specialist provision in the past, the LA faces significant pressures for special school places over the next few years. This pressure will peak in 2016 and then reduce gradually. The best case scenario is that supply will meet demand by 2021, although other projections suggest that this may not be until 2025.
- 5.9 Swindon takes a sophisticated approach to pupil place planning for specialist SEND provision. Nevertheless, the relatively small population of pupils with complex SEND means that projections can vary quite significantly in response to, e.g. a Y6 bulge in one special school. It is unlikely, therefore, that pupil place planning for special schools can ever reach the level of precision as for mainstream schools, based upon predictable demographic factors, and that the various projections for secondary special school places, presented as Appendix X, should be seen as a best estimate of from a range of potential scenarios.
- 5.10 The research did not identify specific demographic factors that might lead inevitably to higher rates of statementing or the need for more in specialist provision. Demand for specialist provision tends to increase at key transition points – Years 5/6 and Year 12 – suggesting in some instances a lack of confidence that the next education phase will be able to meet a child or young person's needs as well as the current one. Otherwise, bulges can occur in different year groups at different times, making pressure for places hard to predict and to plan for.
- 5.11 The research has not been able to validate anecdotal evidence that suggests that families with children with SEND move to Swindon because it offers, for its size, a relatively high number of good and outstanding special schools. While this may be true in a small number of individual cases, the research found nothing to suggest that this inflow of families occurs at a scale that could have more than a marginal impact on overall trends.
- 5.12 Figure 20 shows the proportion of pupils attending mainstream schools and SRP and special school provision who live outside of Swindon. Figure 21 compares the proportion of pupils in special or SRP provision that moved to Swindon after 5 with

pupils in mainstream schools. Any difference noted between the 2 groups is not statistically significant

Figure 20

Pupils with Out of Borough Codes	%
Mainstream pupils	0.8
Special and SRP pupils	3.9

Figure 21

High Needs Pupils (Swindon residents only)	Domiciled in Swindon before age of 5		Moved to Swindon at 5 or above *	
Special schools	374	90.6%	39	9.4%
SRPs	144	93.5%	10	6.5%
Total	518	91.4%	49	8.6%
Pupils moving to Swindon at 5 or above *	%			
Mainstream pupils	6.6%			
Special + SRP pupils	8.6%			

- 5.13 The fieldwork was designed to explore and test a range of hypotheses that were generated following the data analysis and workshop with key stakeholders. The hypotheses were informed by discussion at the workshop and crafted as potentially plausible explanations for identified trends within the data that focused largely on the extent to which the current trends are driven by policy and practice. They also provided a useful stimulus for wider discussion, particularly with commissioners and practitioners.
- 5.14 The insight of commissioners was explored in a number of individual and small group discussions and also at a special meeting of the SEND Strategic Board.

Hypotheses

- 5.14.1 Swindon identifies and statements a relatively high proportion of children and young people because:
- The long-standing consensus that significant investment in specialist provision is the best way to meet the needs of the most vulnerable learners has not been subject to rigorous scrutiny based upon a robust analysis of outcomes;
 - The response to a child's SEND is driven by a deficit model and does not focus sufficiently on the assets – strengths and talents - that the child, family, school and community can contribute to a more innovative and effective support package;
 - There is a lack of confidence across the system that mainstream schools, particularly secondary schools, have the resources, expertise and confidence to meet a wider and more complex range of SEND without recourse to a statement (EHCP);
 - Use of the Early Help Record identifies some needs that are more “social” than educational;
 - Too few children have their needs identified and addressed early;

- Too few children with SEND make sufficient progress in response to the graduated response at School Action and School Action plus (now SEN Support);
- Too few children make sufficient progress in response to specialist intervention so that their needs can be met within “normal mainstream resources”.

5.14.2 More pupils are identified as having BESD/are excluded from school in Swindon than in many other LAs because:

- Too many pupils fail to have their SEND identified and addressed appropriately;
- The reliance of specialist provision has limited the extent to which the wider system has assumed responsibility for more vulnerable learners.

5.14.3 Swindon spends more on high needs pupils than many other LAs because:

- The long-standing consensus that significant investment in specialist provision is the best way to meet the needs of the most vulnerable learners has not been subject to rigorous scrutiny based upon a robust analysis of outcomes;
- Too many children and young people attend out of Borough specialist provision;
- There is too often a single agency – educational – response to needs that have a significant social and/or health element.

5.14.4 Outcomes for children and young people with SEND are no better and often less positive than those achieved by children and young people with SEND in other LAs because:

- The long-standing consensus that significant investment in specialist provision is the best way to meet the needs of the most vulnerable learners has not been subject to rigorous scrutiny based upon a robust analysis of outcomes;
- The reliance of specialist provision has limited the extent to which the wider system has assumed responsibility for more vulnerable learners;
- Educational outcomes for pupils with SEND are consistent with generally poor performance at the end of Key Stage 4;
- The response to a child’s SEND is driven by a deficit model and does not focus sufficiently on the assets – strengths and talents - that the child, family, school and community can contribute to a more innovative and effective support package.

Key messages

5.15 Feedback from commissioners demonstrated some support for each of the main hypotheses and suggested a number of ways in which existing policy and practice at least contribute to a relatively heavy reliance on statementing and specialist provision in Swindon. In particular, commissioners highlighted as priorities:

5.15.1 *Strengthening further the strategic oversight and commissioning of specialist SEND provision, based upon a rigorous monitoring of outcomes.*

Commissioners suggested that while operational management of specialist provision was relatively strong, more formal strategic oversight and commissioning could be strengthened further. They highlighted, in particular, a need to monitor more closely the impact of provision on outcomes and to use the intelligence gleaned to inform commissioning decisions at individual pupil and provision level.

We are not measuring the impact of any provisions we are not able to demonstrate where pupils get good outcomes, or where they are better than any other provision.

Specialist provision may get good outcomes, but may not be the only provision that could get good outcomes

5.15.2 Capitalising on the new Education, Health and Care planning process (EHCP) processes, to focus on outcomes and person-centred planning and encourage more innovative solutions to meeting pupil need

Commissioners recognise that current processes often focus more on the child or young person's learning difficulties or impairments than their strengths and talents or the support on which they rely within the family and wider community. This is also evident in the banding descriptors that the SEN Resource Allocation Panel (SENRAP) uses to decide the level of funding required to meet a child's SEN in an objective and consistent manner. Commissioners, and members of the SENRAP, recognise the risk that this approach could channel decision-making towards specialist provision at the expense of more innovative support arrangements.

New EHCP processes introduced under the SEND reforms are recognised as an opportunity to change the way in which the needs of children with SEND are assessed and decisions made about the type of support and provision best suited to help them succeed. Focusing on the outcomes that the child or young person should achieve, along with their goals, aspirations, strengths, talents and support within the family and wider community should help commissioners and practitioners to work together with families to co-design more innovative ways of providing support. However, this is a significant change in practice and may take time to embed.

We are beginning to work with families differently, but still recommending the same provision

5.15.3 Building capacity and confidence in mainstream schools to meet a wider range of SEND

Commissioners recognise that mainstream schools vary quite significantly in their confidence and capacity to meet SEND and that, while there is much excellent practice upon which to build, this is not consistently the case across all schools. They are concerned that relying too heavily on specialist provision could inhibit the development and dissemination of good, inclusive practice more widely.

A particular concern was the extent to which some schools rely on teaching assistants to provide much of the support children with SEND and that this may inhibit the development of more innovative, evidence-based practice⁷.

Although there are pockets of very good inclusive practice across primary and secondary mainstream schools, this is the exception rather than the rule

Specialist provision is always suggested as the solution when mainstream cannot meet need, or in a crisis however there is little innovation around mainstream schools meeting needs.

5.15.4 Strengthening opportunities for wrap around, multi-agency support and for longer in the child's educational journey.

⁷ It is also the case that many statements of SEN also specify provision in the form of TA hours.

Commissioners questioned the extent to which the level of multi-agency support and expertise that is available during the early years is sustained once the child enters full-time education. Ensuring that the EHCP process is genuinely multi-professional, resulting in a holistic pattern of support for the child's education, health and social care needs is a key priority within the SEND Reforms.

Feedback from practitioners

5.16 The views of practitioners were canvassed primarily through:

- Discussion with the High Needs Task and Finish Group - which includes representation from all Specialist Resourced Provisions and special schools. Attendance is also open to heads of a range of specialist services. A number of group members are also SENCOs;
- Feedback invited from members of a range of specialist support services, including members from the integrated services for disabled children.

5.17 Overall, practitioners were more challenging of the hypotheses, highlighting the quality of the work and impact of their special school, specialist resourced provision or service, often supported by examples of good practice. Where there was common ground between commissioners and practitioners it was largely around the need to:

- Use the opportunity of the EHCP process to focus more sharply on outcomes, person-centred approaches and innovative ways to meet a child's SEND;
- Build confidence and capacity in meeting SEND within mainstream schools.

When families are engaged AND involved in a child's support plan, outcomes are better for all concerned (Parents carry over strategies from school to home, they provide info to school that helps school engage the child, they practice therapy activities at home and in school)

Within the SALT department we are developing our skills with person-centred, solution focussed work. Close work with the parent support advisor also occurs. Clearer pathways in terms of what parental support can be offered within SBC would help with guidance.

It needs a WHOLE school approach at secondary to SEN in general....Some children with SEN (e.g. MLD) cope well at secondary as when children are put in ability groups, they are with a whole class of children at their level and not just one out of 30 as they were at primary school. Others with specific needs who are well supported at primary but without a SEN struggle at secondary as the support completely drops off.

All of the children at the SRP could not have their needs met within a mainstream school. This is regularly reviewed as the aim is to transfer them out whenever it may be possible. With children transferring in to the SRP then a lot of input and advice

5.18 Practitioners highlighted the real and potential benefits of specialist provision for children with more severe and complex needs, in particular:

- i. The importance of specialist provision as a tiered pattern of support for children with SEND.**

Practitioners emphasised the fact that some children with particularly severe and complex needs are unlikely to succeed without high levels of specialist intervention that are more easily delivered in specialist provision where there is also the advantage of economies of scale;

Advantages of specialist provision are often smaller class sizes and a higher adult-child ratio. If mainstream settings were supported to reduce class sizes and put a higher adult-ratio support in earlier, would this help some children to access mainstream

The Better Communication Research Project highlighted the necessity of a tiered approach to supporting children with Speech & Language difficulties....The percentage of children with severe speech and language difficulties in Swindon (without global learning difficulties) who require the specialist provision of an SRP is very small when compared to the overall number of children with speech and language difficulties.

ii. Examples for effective outreach work designed to build confidence and capacity in mainstream schools.

Several Specialist Resourced Provisions also provide an outreach services to mainstream schools.

We provide an outreach service from Even Swindon which helps the sharing of expertise. Courses are run at the SRP and additionally teaching staff and children are invited in to the SRP to experience the resources and methods of teaching used there.

- 5.19 Some practitioners highlighted the difficulties in judging the outcomes achieved by children in specialist provision in the absence of robust national benchmarks. This is exacerbated by the relatively small numbers and diverse needs of pupils, making like for like comparisons particularly challenging. Heads cite the fact that 4 of the special schools in Swindon are judged “good” by OfSTED and 1, Uplands, “outstanding” as confirmation of the positive outcomes achieved by their pupils. In addition, the Head of Uplands monitors progress against exacting benchmarks that reference the National Progression Guidance developed by the National Strategies⁸.

6. A case for change

- 6.1 Current trends suggest that, unless something changes, the reliance on statutory provision is likely to remain high and that the LA will have to invest further in specialist provision. There is no evidence to suggest that this is due to a particular set of demographic challenges. Rather, the research has highlighted the extent to which current policy and practice however, unintentionally, channels at least a proportion of children and young people with SEND, who might otherwise have their needs met within the “graduated response”, towards statemented and/or specialist provision. This has important capital and revenue implications that are likely to be exacerbated over the next few years when a greater proportion of the pupil population will be of

⁸ Although the Progression Materials provide a useful benchmark against which to measure the progress of pupils working well below age expectations, the national data base upon which they are founded has not been updated since 2010

secondary school age – limiting the extent to which the funding within the Early Years and Schools Blocks will be available to subsidise higher spending within the High Needs Block.

- 6.2 High levels of demand for specialist services and provision for SEND in children's services risks being translated into similarly high demand for adult services at a time when the focus increasingly is on promoting independence and resilience in individuals, families and communities.

Policy drivers - SEND reforms and The Children and Families Act:

- 6.3 Reforms set out in the Children and Families Act (2014) challenge professionals to change the way in which they work with each other and families, to focus relentlessly on improving outcomes for children and young adults with SEND, give children and families more control and choice and, critically, to earn their trust and confidence. Extending the system up to 25 years is an opportunity to achieve a holistic vision of development from birth right through to transition into adulthood.
- 6.5 Since September 2014, several core processes support this vision:
- Replacing Statements of Special Educational Need and Learning Difficulty Assessments with a single coordinated assessment process and EHCP, with a focus on planning for whole-life outcomes;
 - The potential for a personal budget for some young people whose needs cannot be met by universal or targeted services;
 - Greater coordination between all the services that support children and their families, particularly requiring local authorities and health authorities to work together and encouraging joint commissioning.
- 6.6 The challenges are complex, deep-seated and involve many stakeholders - each with their own perspectives and priorities. Technical changes alone cannot and will not make the difference. Rather, the reforms demand fundamental, system-wide organisation and cultural change:
- *Asset-based*: focusing as much upon the strengths and resources within the family itself as providing targeted or specialist support;
 - *Proactive and preventative*: needs are picked up early and support is offered quickly;
 - *Empowering*: families know what they can expect and have more control over the decisions that affect them;
 - *Enabling*: staff work closely to share skills and knowledge and work seamlessly from assessment through to delivery

Dissatisfaction with the current system

- 6.7 The Reforms have been introduced because current arrangements do not work well enough for too many children, young adults and families. Children and young adults with SEND still achieve much poorer outcomes than their peers and many families believe that they have to battle to get the support they need. There is too little trust and confidence across the system. The roots of dissatisfaction can be summed up in the following themes that, while in no way unique to Swindon, emerged during the fieldwork phase of the research:

Adversarial relationships between families and statutory services:

- 6.8 Discussion with parents and carers illustrated that in Swindon, as is the case nationally, the relationship between families and public services is at times adversarial. While each of the parents and carers interviewed could identify positive experiences and professionals who they had learned to trust, for many the sense was of a battle - whether to get the diagnosis they believed would unlock the support they needed or to secure a place in the school of their choice.
- 6.9 Although each of the parents and carers had, to varying degree, taken steps to grow their understanding and knowledge of their child's needs and the SEN system as a whole, there was little evidence of statutory services consistently working alongside families to co-produce support. However, where this had happened, parents and carers felt valued and supported. An approach that is centred exclusively on the child's difficulties or impairment can miss opportunities to harness and build upon the circles of support within the family and wider community.

The 'cliff face' at key transition points:

- 6.10 Parents and carers find all transitions difficult, whether from early years to primary school, primary school to secondary school or, most significantly, from children's to adults' services. Sometimes it is simply fear of the unknown, having to build new relationships with new professionals. Transition can also involve a change in culture, in which previous expectations and established patterns of communication and support no longer exist.
- 6.11 Where young people transition to services funded by adult social care they are likely to experience a sharp drop in the value of their care and support. The system needs to focus on building the capacity and resilience of young people and their families to be able to thrive in context where support is less service or provision-led.

A complex array of services and systems

- 6.12 Even well-informed and relatively "savvy" parents and carers can find the complex array of services, systems and processes baffling. The plea from parents and carers was for clearer and more readily available advice and guidance but also, more powerfully, for a single point of contact and someone to help them navigate their way through the complexity.

7. Learning from other local authorities

- 7.1 Local authorities vary quite significantly in the proportion of their school population subject to a statement of SEN. Some, e.g. Newham, Nottinghamshire, Nottingham City, have consistently maintained statements for less than 1% of their pupils over several years. Conversely, others, like Swindon, have maintained statements for approaching 4% of pupils over a similar period. Few, if any showed trends that had changed significantly in either direction.
- 7.2 Local authorities that maintained a particularly low rate of statemented provision, tended to focus the statutory process on children and young people with the most complex SEND, with the largest proportion placed in special schools. These LAs have invested in building capacity and expertise in mainstream settings and secured the confidence of families that their child would receive the support they needed without the protection of a statement.

8. Opportunities for change

- 8.1 The SEND reforms are a once in a generation opportunity to change the way in which we work with children and young adults with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families so that they can shape the support that they need and achieve the best possible outcomes.
- 8.2 Learning from SEN Pathfinders and other third sector organisations offer examples of interesting and innovative practice that help to demonstrate how this ambition can be achieved.

An asset-based approach

- 8.3 Assessments all too often focus more on a child or young person's difficulties or impairment than their strengths and talents. Providing support for young people to do something they enjoy and make it accessible for other young people with disabilities to benefit from too fosters their confidence and builds the skills to participate in their wider community.

My Life is a member organisation in Wigan designed to understand people's aspirations and find ways for them to become involved in things that will make them happy and raise their ambition. It aims to challenge the perception that disabled people require charity and support and that they cannot contribute to society. Becoming a member of My Life requires committing to offer skills and to grow your capabilities. It directly challenges the notion that support needs are static.

Technology

- 8.4 Technology offers new ways for families and service providers to collaborate. Apps and websites enable young people and families to construct plans and share information in a way that suits them. The content can be updated regularly and can help celebrate successes and new achievements that can be shared across different settings. It also provides ways to receive real time feedback from families and increase the contribution of parent and pupil voice.

Greenwich have developed wiki websites that young people can use to host their "One Plan" – a concise plan that focuses on the positives in the young person's life and highlights tips to enable development. The wiki pages are owned by the family and young person, but practitioners and support workers can also feed in information and create a holistic record.

Peer support

- 8.5 Partnering young people with learning disabilities with non-disabled peers to provide support and companionship in normal service settings helps to foster confidence and inclusion into wider friendship circles and promote confidence to lead a more independent life in the future.

Best Buddies' vision is to create a society where people with learning disabilities are fully integrated into schools, communities and workplaces. A network of students, with and without learning disabilities, offer their time to a young person to provide peer support to establish a plan to raise their profile in the school, or colleague or wider community, and to build their confidence. Because their buddy attends the same school or college, the young person can integrate and make stronger connections than if an outside support worker fulfilled the role.

Of Course We Can developed by Active Impact in Gloucestershire organises "fun things to do" for small groups of disabled and non-disabled groups together. Their aim is to transform the notion of short breaks for disabled children and young people by providing adventurous or relaxing activities that can be enjoyed by all young people whether disabled or non-disabled

Empowering families and building their understanding

- 8.6 Helping families understand their role in the planning process and the support they can expect from statutory services can give them the confidence and belief to collaborate with professionals in designing and securing the support that their child needs to achieve their goals.

In Control's "Partners in Policymaking" programme aims to equip disabled adults and parents and carers of children with a disability to get to grips with the social care system so that they can feed into the planning process. A "Sharing the Challenge" workshop provides a space where families and practitioners can build new understandings and relationships.

New models of support

- 8.7 Creating a space for statutory and non-statutory services to come together to provide a holistic range of support for young people and their family. The team is held to account by a key worker that is selected by the young person and their family to best support them achieve their outcomes.

My Way in Derbyshire brings together the work of the children and young adult's, adults and Connexions services in an holistic, person-centred and outcomes focused approach to support planning. My Way facilitators enable young people and their families to develop their vision of how they want life to be and help them solve problems and overcome obstacles along the way. Before set up costs of approximately £180,000 are taken into consideration savings over the first year are estimated as approximately £200,000.

9. The way forward

- 9.1 The research identified a number of examples where commissioners and practitioners are already finding new and different ways to respond to the challenge, e.g.:
- The Early Bird programme aims to empower parents of young children with ASC to act as experts on behalf of their child and to work with schools to help them understand and meet their child's needs.

- Working closely with a group of Y11 students at Crowdies Hill, their families and providers, including Swindon College, to design bespoke packages of support that should enable them to make a successful transition to the College in Y12.

9.2 The SEND reforms provide an ideal context within which to deliver the kind of change needed to build a sustainable model that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND by supporting at all points the independence and resilience of individuals and families. To do so requires:

System change, at the heart of which is integrated, collaborative commissioning, supported where appropriate by pooled and/or aligned funding

Cultural change, characterised by:

- Empowering and involving families and young people as co-producers;
- Person-centred and outcomes focused working;
- Prevention and early identification and intervention;
- Sustained, long-term, joined-up working from 0-25.

Functional change, including

- Single point of contact for families;
- Integrated, outcomes-focused, support planning, 0-25;
- Peer support and family leadership;
- Integrated personal budgets.

9.3 Central to the approach should be:

- Strengthening further the strategic overview and commissioning for SEND – based upon a rigorous analysis and monitoring of outcomes.
- Building capacity across the system, particularly in mainstream schools.
- Developing the workforce so that being outcomes focused and person-centred is at the heart of their practice.
- Refreshing SEND/EHCP processes, focusing particularly on the SEND Banding descriptors and the role of the SEN Panel.
- Promoting innovative responses to the SEND of children and young people, by working together with families to design the kind of help and support they need to exercise greater control over their lives.

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Peter / Ian
for info / action

RECEIVED
16 SEP 2015

14 September 2015

Dear Director

We are writing on behalf of all employees working within the boundaries of your local authority who are members of ATL, NAHT, NASUWT and NUT.

You will recall that, from last April, local schools agreed through your Schools Forum to partially 'de-delegate' funding for supply cover costs, including for trade union facilities time. Where de-delegation took place, we believe this was the right decision and would like to see this replicated across both primary and secondary phases.

We believe that the central retention and distribution of the fund is the most effective and efficient arrangement and we would like to work with you to ensure that this arrangement applies to all schools. This accords with advice issued by the Local Government Association and the National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers in October 2014.

Discussions are now taking place in your authority on funding arrangements for supply cover costs from April next year and we are asking you to pass the information in this letter to members in your Schools Forum and to encourage them to vote for de-delegation of funding arrangements for supply cover costs.

Successive governments have recognised the importance of good industrial relations and have legislated to provide a statutory basis for facilities time as follows.

- Paid time off for union representatives to accompany a worker to a disciplinary or grievance hearing.
- Paid time off for union representatives to carry out trade union duties.
- Paid time off for union representatives to attend union training.
- Paid time off for union 'learning representatives' to carry out relevant learning activities.
- Paid time for union health and safety representatives during working hours to carry out health and safety functions.

These provisions are contained within the *Employment Relations Act 1999*, the *Trade Union Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992* and the *Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1997*.

\Cont'd ...

ATL, NAHT, NASUWT and NUT have members and union representatives in academies as well as maintained schools within your authority and, in addition to seeking your support for de-delegation, we are seeking your agreement for the local trade union funding arrangement to be formally extended to academies within your local authority boundaries.

As the DfE *Advice on Trade Union Facility Time* acknowledges, the trade union recognition agreement between the authority and the recognised unions will have transferred to the academy school as the new employer of the transferred staff as part of the conversion process to academy status under TUPE. We believe that, following conversion, academies should also become parties to local authority trade union facilities arrangements.

The academies within your boundaries will have received funding for trade union facilities time in their budgets and they are entitled to use that funding to buy-back into local authority arrangements. Indeed, many academies across England have already agreed to buy in to local authority trade union facilities arrangements.

Pooled funding will help the local authority and all schools to meet their statutory obligations on trade union facilities time. Setting up a central funding arrangement will allow academies to pay into a central pool if they wish to. But most importantly it will help maintain a coherent industrial relations environment where issues and concerns, whether individual or collective, can be dealt with more effectively. All these points are echoed in the advice issued by the LGA and NEOST.

We urge you, therefore, to support the de-delegation funding for supply cover costs, extending it, where necessary, across all schools and to continue or establish (if you did not do so previously) a mechanism whereby academies within your boundaries are able to buy into a central fund for trade union facilities time. If you agree to do so, we will write to academy principals to encourage them to buy in to your arrangement.

Yours sincerely

Mary Bousted

Russell Hobby

Chris Keates

Christine Blower



F40 meeting with Department for Education, 9 September 2015. Held at Sanctuary Buildings, Westminster

DfE: Tony Foot, Tom Goldman, Angela Fairchild, Chris Jones, Susan Fielden, Dan Evans, Russell Ewens and Clare Furze

F40: Martin Wade (Cambs); Simon Pleace (Kent), Margaret Judd (Dorset), Caroline Brand (Worcs) and Doug Allan (Secretary to f40)

1. Introductions

Both DfE and f40 representatives introduced themselves. F40's team was made up of members of the LA finance managers research team (FMRT) that had worked on the funding formula proposals.

TF thanked the f40 team for their further development work on proposals for a new funding formula. His team at the DfE had found the general approach and detailed modelling very interesting. He indicated that there are a few questions that he and his team wish to ask to get a better understanding of the approach.

This meeting is the third this year at which f40 has presented its ideas; the previous meetings being held in February and June 2015.

2. Discussion of f40's updated proposals

MW pointed out that the development work was the outcome of a team effort by financial representatives of a range of f40 member authorities, fully supported by f40's Executive Committee and membership. He gave a general introduction to the latest tranche of work undertaken. He explained that the spreadsheet had been updated to include 2015-16 data. The main thrust is on Schools Block: High Needs and Early Years details await the outcome of consultations and will be updated when figures are available from the DfE.

In producing the current proposal the team had had a wide-ranging discussion about factors and their application and an interesting debate about values. Pupil Premium had been "parked" when discussing deprivation. Sparsity and Lump Sum are probably the most important factors, and it was acknowledged that there might not be full consensus among f40 members, requiring further refinement in due course. Some LAs see sparsity as an absolute necessity, whilst others take a different approach. There is ongoing debate about what constitutes a small school and what is a necessary school, and how do you protect and make them sustainable when there is no reasonable alternative but to keep them?

MW emphasised that the f40 approach is based on retaining the role of LAs in the allocation of funds to individual schools.

AF asked why there was a wide variation in the application of sparsity by LAs and SP explained why some supported the principle and others didn't. Some LAs, back in 2013, opted to increase their primary lump sum instead of introducing the sparsity factor to offer appropriate protection.

MW continued his introduction by referring to fact that f40's proposal continues to use the three Blocks but that the revised spreadsheet only included Schools Block figures as the detail of High Needs and early Years are still to be determined by the DfE. He pointed out that f40 had added extra funds to the Schools Block to reflect increasing needs (at the expense of the High Needs block).

In response to a question from CJ about the extra funding f40's formula appeared to require, MW said that initially the formula required an extra £93m but after an adjustment needed because it was found that some data on Prior Attainment was missing from the data initially supplied by DfE, that figure increased to £167m. TF pointed out that in the current economic climate it would be more difficult than ever to achieve additional funding. The next Spending Review is expected to conclude in late November and it is likely to be a tough period. TG wondered if f40 had considered scaling back its factor values to avoid any requirement for additional funding. MW said f40 had not so far done that work but would include it in a future work programme.

RE asked about High Needs and for initial reactions from the f40 team to the ISOS research. SP indicated that f40 has not yet taken a view (the Executive meets on 19 September) but individual members consider that the principles appear sound and fair, but it is difficult to make a detailed assessment about its application without the underlying data. He added that LAs want to see less bureaucracy associated with High Needs.

TF asked the f40 team to flag up where flexibility by LAs will be important and team members suggested the following areas – Growth, to be able to react to local need at all levels; Sparsity, because there are so many differences and variations in local areas; and generally just to be able to make adjustments to deal with local pressures.

TG wanted to tease out the issues re Blocks. He suggested that the three blocks had been created based on now historic information and that maybe a different approach was needed. Should the idea of three blocks be reconsidered? If they stay should there be significant flexibility to transfer between them, particularly to cope with growth? MJ said that whilst growth is important there are many other considerations that also need flexibility. MW hoped that historical decisions made by individual LAs would not be retained in a new formula.

AF asked about Lump Sum and how f40 had built up its figures in the formula and what is behind the assumptions. MJ went through the spreadsheet to explain the various data, explaining that the calculations were based on reasonable levels of provision and reasonable costs of delivery of those levels of service.

CJ asked why f40 had used the figure of 60 pupils for primary and 600 pupils for secondary. MW explained the rationale was based on the smallest size schools that the f40 team deemed to be reasonable. It was noted that some LAs did operate schools smaller than this, but these were exceptions rather than the norm and that these should be managed via the sparsity allocation.

SF wondered about AWPU assumptions and the differences in class sizes. MJ said that all LAs have their own figures but for the benefit of the formula the team had to agree a reasonable approach. We had based the AWPU on building up costs and the relative values were what they were based on the bottom up calculation. We had no preconceived ideas about what the relative values should be between the key stages. These would also be different from the total primary to secondary ratio because of the other factors in the formula.

SF then asked about Examination Fees and whether the figures used were benchmark figures. It was confirmed that they are. They are Key Stage 4 spread across two years. SF then asked whether the

new government policies regarding examinations and repeat entries would change this figure and MJ responded that it could, assuming that the examination boards don't put prices up to compensate.

CF asked about the proposal for using three years' data to determine certain factors and the value this adds to the formulae, particularly with regard to deprivation where the Ever6 FSM measure already captures multiple years. MW suggested that single year data can throw up anomalies whereas a three year approach would definitely assist and smooth out irregularities.

TG wondered if the problem is more to do with intake changes and growth, rather than basic budget planning. F40 representatives felt that moving to a three year average would smooth out changes in funding and allow schools to predict with greater certainty their future funding levels.

CJ raised the matter of MFG and protection proposals put forward by f40. He suggested the f40 proposal appeared to be ambivalent about MFG, leaving individual LAs to decide on their approach. MW emphasised that f40 is not ambivalent and that there were good reasons for the approach adopted. There needs to be a maximum that individual LAs and schools can lose in an agreed timeframe. F40 envisages that an additional arrangement offering a reducing protection may be required for a few LAs that stand to lose the most and that funding for additional protection ought to be found from outside the DSG.

CJ asked if f40's proposals envisage maintaining MFG and if so, is it just for schools or also for LAs? He also linked this issue to that of LA flexibility. MW said that it is mainly to do with issues around growth and increasing population and recognition of need-led pressures. MJ added that different LAs would have different pressures on MFG at school level as the redistribution of funds between LAs took effect, meaning that some LAs may not be able to work within tightly bound MFG values. We were just conscious that they may need to be more flexible. It is also about putting decision-making responsibility back in the hands of Schools Forums.

MJ asked if the DfE could supply High Needs data that would allow f40 to undertake further work on its formula proposals. RE explained that the data used by Isos is publicly available and committed to send attendees links to published data. TF asked the f40 to confirm further data sources that they require (e.g. prior attainment as discussed earlier) and said appropriate information would be supplied wherever possible.

MW acknowledged that it is not possible to undertake any further work on Early Years at this point but hoped that appropriate data would also be forthcoming in due course. In the meantime he suggested that the DfE needs to be aware of growing concerns among members of f40 and in local government in general.

DE asked whether f40 would include any Lump Sums or Sparsity in Early Years calculations and MW indicated that the f40 team did not believe this was necessary due to the nature and range of providers of Early Years provision. Applying a lump sum would not be viable due to the small size of many providers (i.e. childminders) and likewise due to the targeted local provision it is unlikely sparsity would be a material factor.

MJ reminded the DfE team that f40 is interested in a few additional issues around school funding, including allowing greater central flexibility for managing rates to remove bureaucracy from the system; how PFI calculations are handled to ensure that the uneven distribution of PFI arrangements (both the number of schools per LA with PFI and the values of the affordability gap) do not make a national funding formula seem unfair at the outset because LAs will have to top-slice for PFI

arrangements unevenly. CB asked the DfE to consider the recommendation that the funding be administered by LAs to both maintained schools and academies. This would remove the need for recoupment and formula replication undertaken by the EFA making the process more efficient and less costly. With this the formula should apply to all for the same funding year.

TF rounded off the discussion by indicating that the DfE was not yet in a position to spell out all of the options it is considering. He envisages that in late October the department should be in a position to engage further with the f40 in confidence on its emerging proposals. At this stage the DfE was in discussions with Ministers and the Treasury about possible ways forward.

MW said that the meeting had been very informative and constructive and that f40 looked forward to working closely with the DfE team to achieve a successful conclusion to the fair funding issue.

F40/DA/9 September 2015

Post 16 High Needs Funding Update

Schools Forum

Date: 6th October 2015

Authors:	Head of Finance (Education and Innovation) SEND Strategic Commissioner
Wards Affected:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Settings Affected:	As the Dedicated Schools Grant is ring-fenced funding provided by the Department for Education to meet the educational needs of early years; school age and all 0 to 25 year old high needs pupils any decisions on how the grant is utilised indirectly affects all settings. This report specifically affects funding for High Needs post 16 students attending Further Education Colleges, Independent Specialist College Providers and other training providers.

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Schools Forum on the level of funding available and proposes indicative funding allocations to providers for the 2015/16 financial year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- Note that the latest projected 2015/16 financial year costs arising from the LA new funding responsibilities for Post 16 High Needs Students is estimated at £2.022m for 387 post 16 (excluding school sixth form) high needs students. This includes costs of 55 placements at ISPs of £0.531m and indicative allocations to FE colleges and training providers of £1.491m for 332 students. (Para. 8.1).
- Note indicative banding values for the academic year 2015/16 have reduced since 2014/15 academic year to fit within the available funding envelope as a result of a significant projected increase in student numbers.

3. Current Forecast for Post 16 placements

Funding Available 2015/16

- 3.1 Although the Post 16 financial year runs from August – July, the DSG is allocated and reported on a financial year basis. Therefore this report is aligned to the financial year.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Burbidge on 01793 464384 (iburbidge@swindon.gov.uk) or Lyn Frith on 01793 463217 (LFrith@swindon.gov.uk)

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- 3.2 As reported to Schools Forum in July 2015 the total funding available for 2015/16 financial year for post 16 providers (excluding school sixth forms) is **£2.022m**.

Proposed 2015/16 ISP costs

- 3.3 For placements at Independent Specialist Provider Colleges (ISPs) including the UET, annual costs are at individually negotiated rates. Pupils attend ISPs when their needs cannot be met within the mainstream or special school 6th form, or mainstream FE College provision with additional support or a bespoke package. Where appropriate placements are jointly commissioned with social care and health agreeing contributions. ISP placements from September 2015 are estimated at 55 places with 2015/16 financial year costs of **£0.531m**.

Proposed 2015/16 FE College and Training Provider costs

- 3.4 In September 2014 the Universal Banding approach was implemented in all FE Colleges and Training Providers for High Needs students. The banding scheme was based on the model already used in special schools and SRPs. All students are funded at the same level and a range of supplements were agreed. Students have been allocated against the same 6 prime need bandings used for special school and SRPs and indicative post 16 banding values were calculated based on the funding envelope provided by the EFA for the new responsibilities as calculated below:

- Total funding envelope financial year **£2.022m**
- Less term 5 and 6 costs from the 14/15 academic year **£0.718m**
- Balance available for terms 1- 4 of the 15/16 academic year **£1.304m** (September-March)
- Less ISP costs September – March (see table 1 below) **£0.306m**
- Balance available for FE Colleges and Training Providers September – March **£0.998m**

4. Indicative Funding Allocations 2015/16

- 4.1 At this stage in the year the LA is unable to confirm precise funding allocations for individual providers because some students have not confirmed their placements for the 2015/16 academic year yet. The table below provides the LA's best estimates which are as follows;

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Table 1 – Indicative 2015/16 Academic Year Allocations

	Estimated places September 15	Actual Placements September 15	2015/16 Financial Year payment April – August	2015/16 Financial Year payment Sept - March	Financial Year Total	Note
Cirencester College	12	7	£11,736	£12,240	£23,976	
New College	55	66	£109,131	£173,036	£282,167	
Swindon College	174	141	£235,470	£400,879	£636,349	
Wiltshire College	20	14	£31,813	£45,818	£77,631	
Bespoke Packages		8		£89,966	£89,966	
FE College Total	276	236	£388,150	£721,939	£1,110,089	1
Training Providers Total	36	27	£105,354	£80,794	£186,148	
ISPs	15	14	£198,236	£152,109	£350,345	
UET	37	41	£26,183	£154,347	£180,530	2
ISP Total	52	55	£224,419	£306,456	£530,875	
Contingency	26	69	0	£194,611	£194,611	3
Post 16 Total	390	387	£717,922	£1,303,800	£2,021,723	

4.2 The LA expects to fund element 3 top ups for a total of 387 students during the 2015/16 academic year which is an increase of 135 over the EFA approved placements collated through the High Needs Return in October 2013. The LA had the opportunity in October 2014 to make a request to the EFA for exceptional circumstances to increase the place numbers. However the increase per provider did not meet the exceptional circumstances criteria and therefore requests made by the LA were not successful. The EFA have agreed to recognise and provide element 3 funding for 252 places.

Note 1 – The number of placements realised at FE Colleges have reduced compared to the number estimated in July 2015. Some of these pupils have subsequently been

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confirmed as no longer requiring high needs support and some have decided not to continue their education.

Note 2 – In July the number projected to Schools Forum was the full time equivalent. We have subsequently amended this figure in line with other providers. Therefore this impacts on the total overall number of pupils.

Note 3 – There are currently 69 pupils who have been identified as being high needs, but their post 16 destination is currently unknown. Schools Forum should note that it is still early in the term and students are still enrolling with post 16 provisions.

- 4.3 The projection based on the current known student numbers and the bandings allocated through the moderation process will mean a total financial year spend of £2.022m and will be on budget.
- 4.4 A contingency budget of £0.195m has been developed for the period September-March for the identified pupils who are high needs where a destination has yet to be confirmed as it is still early in the term.
- 4.5 A new local funding formula was devised and implemented in September 2014 to distribute the available funding to FE Colleges and Training Providers. Based on current projections of student numbers it is not possible to maintain the 14/15 banding values within the financial envelope. As agreed at the July Schools Forum, the indicative values have been aligned with the available budget now the number of pupils projected has reduced. This means that the difference in value from 2014/15 rates has reduced from that anticipated at the July School Forum. The resulting funding values for September 2015 are proposed as follows;

Table 2 – Proposed 2015/16 post 16 post school High Need Band Values & Supplements

	<u>AYR Values</u> <u>2014/15</u>	<u>AYR Values</u> <u>2015/16</u>	<u>Difference</u> <u>in Value</u>
Band 1 – 100%	£8,975	£8,155	-£820
Band 2 – 90%	£8,078	£7,340	-£738
Band 3 – 60%	£4,488	£4,893	+£405
Band 4 – 37.5%	£3,366	£3,058	-£308
Band 5 – 30%	£2,693	£2,447	-£246
Band 6 – 15%	£1,346	£1,223	-£123
<u>Supplements</u>			
Medical Needs	£750	£750	£0
Manual Handling	£500	£500	£0
Transition	£250	£250	£0
Workshop / High Risk Environment	£400	£400	£0
Open campus	£250	£250	£0

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- 4.6 The self-audit and moderation of bandings and supplements process has developed to include all providers to ensure resources are allocated as equitably as possible. Moderation is an annual activity to consider changes to current banding allocation for pupils for whom the college is requesting a change of band. New pupils joining in September 2015 will have been banded by their previous provision. Colleges will have the opportunity to request a change of banding level for these pupils at a further moderation event schedule to take place at the beginning of term 2.
- 4.7 During Term 5 and 6 LA Commissioners completed a monitoring and review of high needs students in a range of settings. The outcome of the exercise with recommendations for 16/17 will be presented to the January Schools Forum for consideration.
- 4.8 The providers have all engaged and participated in the self-assessment and moderation process of High Needs Students managed by the LA and will continue to be included within moderation in Term 2.

Members of the Schools Forum are now asked to:

- **Note that the latest projected 2015/16 financial year costs arising from the LA new funding responsibilities for Post 16 High Needs Students is estimated at £2.022m for an estimated 387 post 16 (excluding school sixth form) high needs students. This includes costs of 55 placements at ISPs of £0.531m and indicative allocations to FE colleges and training providers of £1.491m for 332 students.**
- **Note indicative banding values for the academic year 2015/16 have reduced since 2014/15 academic year to fit within the available funding envelope as a result of a significant projected increase in student numbers.**

5. Alternative Options

The LA has a statutory duty to manage and distribute the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in accordance with prevailing grant conditions and School Finance Regulations. DfE have prescribed the options available to Local Authorities, some of which are mandatory whilst some are discretionary, but in most cases funding values are to be locally determined. The proposals in this report are aimed at containing costs within the level of funding provided by EFA to meet the LAs new responsibilities. As no elements of the DSG are ring fenced it is for individual LAs to decide how best to manage this funding via consultation with Schools Forum's. Higher or lower levels of post 16 high need funding could therefore be subject to the whole DSG budget being balanced, thus an increase

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in funding for Post 16 would require a compensatory saving elsewhere in the budget.

6. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 As this is essentially a financial report the implications are explained throughout the document. At this stage the impact of any funding changes on individual colleges and other providers cannot be precisely determined although the establishment of banding and supplement values should reduce financial uncertainty.

6.2 It is important to recognise that under the school finance regulations no setting is financially protected against reduced pupils or students although from 2014/15 the LA had an option to protect good and outstanding mainstream schools and academies from temporary falling rolls.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

6.3 There are no legal and human rights implications arising from this report.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

6.4 Although the impact on individual settings cannot be determined at this stage the school funding reform programme is causing a degree of volatility which may have implications for schools and other providers which are detrimentally affected by the redistribution of funding. In determining funding levels the LA is required to comply with the school finance regulations and providers are expected to manage their operations and spending within their available funding including brought forward balances.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

6.5 Utilisation of the DSG has a direct link to two of the Council's five priorities – "Right skills, right jobs in the right place" and "Make the best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council".

Diversity Impact Assessment

6.6 The DfE's funding reform programme is aimed at simplifying fair funding although funding changes at individual settings is inevitable. The reform programme is clearly aimed at ensuring funding is targeted at disadvantaged pupils and at pupils with low prior attainment and/or special education needs in order to narrow the attainment gap between these and other pupils.

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Risk Management

- 6.7 The key risks arising from this report are that local decisions relating to Post 16 funding could lead to an overspend on the 2014/15 DSG and/or that the EFA could deem that our funding arrangements do not comply with the school finance regulations requiring budgets to be recalculated.

7. Consultees

- 7.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer), Board Director, Commissioning (Director of Children Services) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

8. **Background Papers**

- 8.1 Various documents issued by the Department for Education which were summarised in previous reports to the Schools Forum

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