

**Schools Forum 7 October 2008**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Schools Resource Pack**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Schools Forum of the Audit Commission interactive website which is available to assist schools to target spending on pupils with special and additional educational needs (SEN and AEN).

**Budget Working Group Discussed**

2. Yes – 19 September 2008.

**Action for Schools Forum**

3. To note the contents of the report.

**Attachments to Report**

4. None.

Sue Coates  
Senior Principal Accountant  
Children's Services Accountancy  
22 September 2008

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#### **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Schools Forum of the Audit Commission interactive website which is available to assist schools to target spending on pupils with Special and Additional Educational Needs (SEN and AEN).

#### **Background**

2. The online package has been developed by the Audit Commission, in collaboration with The National Strategies and the Department for Children, Schools and Families, in consultation with local government, schools and parents.
3. This electronic resource is available to all schools across England, and will improve transparency in the way that schools spend their SEN/AEN funding (a key recommendation of the recent Education and Skills Select Committee report on Special Educational Needs).
4. This self-evaluation tool sets out principles of good practice in the strategic management of resources, against which schools can:
  - review the ways in which they make decisions about the use of resources;
  - improve the way in which spending is targeted at agreed educational objectives and
  - identify the extent to which they apply the principles of best value.
5. The website will enable head teachers and their management teams to :
  - Identify sources of funding within the school for SEN and AEN.
  - Identify pupils for whom this funding is to be used.
  - Identify what services /facilities are being provided for these pupils.
  - Identify outcomes with need and expectations for these pupils.
  - Evaluate the impact of services and facilities on outcomes.
  - Identify annual expenditure on SEN and AEN.
  - Compare total SEN/AEN budget with actual expenditure.
  - Determine whether the school achieves good value for money in its SEN/AEN provision.
6. Access to the schools resource pack is available at the following website:  
[www.sen-aen.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.sen-aen.audit-commission.gov.uk)

7. The Director of Children's Services is seeking nomination of one primary school and one secondary school to pilot the use of the resource pack and feed back to Schools Forum with regard to the effectiveness of the resource, and value of recommending use by all schools.
8. At the meeting of HTCF-BWG (Head Teachers Consultative Forum- Budget Working Group) on 19 September the group supported the proposal to pilot the tool kit in a small number of schools.

### **Finance**

9. The funding of schools is prescribed by the DCSF through the School Finance (England) Regulations 2008.
10. Schools Forums are regulated by the School Forums Regulations 2002 as already amended by the Schools Forums (Amendment) Regulations 2004 the Schools Forums (Amendment) 2005 Regulations and the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.
11. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct DCSF grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

### **Law**

12. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

### **Equality Impact**

13. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

### **Recommendation**

14. Schools Forum to:
  - Note the report regarding the availability of the Schools Resource Pack.
  - Nominate one secondary and one primary school to pilot the use of the resource pack and feedback to Schools Forum.



**John Freeman**

**Director of Children's Services**

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