
Dudley Schools Forum – 21st June 2022

Report of the Director of Children’s Services

Update on the use of the School Specific Contingency Reserve

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Schools Forum with the latest financial forecast in respect of plans to spend the School Specific Reserves Expenditure (£511K) for 2022/23 and beyond.

Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities

2. Schools Forum is the ‘guardian’ of the local Schools Budget, and its distribution among schools and other bodies, and therefore must be closely involved throughout the development process.

Recommendation

3. To receive this report and seek views of Schools Forum on the outlined expenditure for the Schools Specific Contingency Reserve of £511k

Background

4. A report on the Schools Specific Contingency Reserve was presented at the meeting of Schools Forum on 22 June 2021. It was agreed that a detailed report be presented to a future Schools Forum meeting regarding the plans to spend the reserve of £511k for providing support to schools for the implementation of the SEND Strategy. This was presented in November 2021 with the proviso of a further working group with LA Officers and Headteachers to develop plans and proposals.
5. Dudley is a diverse Local Authority that needs a range of provision, intervention and resource allocation based on the needs of differing localities to provide effective education to its school population. To meet the needs of the individuals and to ensure equality of opportunity, Dudley values SEND as an intrinsic part of its school improvement partnership.
6. We are creating a School Specific Workforce Development Model based on the SEND Green Paper, recognising that schools are stronger together when they can better understand their context and therefore their priorities. It also places resource



and need at grassroots level which will have maximum impact on the lives of our young people and their families.

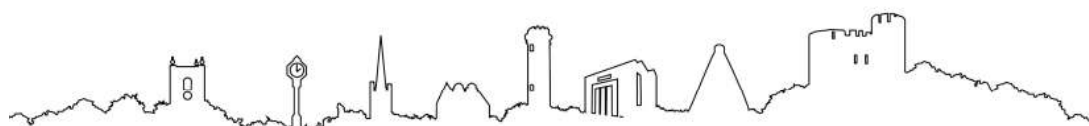
7. The model is focused on improving outcomes for all our children but particularly those who have SEND within our mainstream schools. It recognises work is needed to ensure that systems and processes are in place to improve meeting needs for our SEND children within all our mainstream schools. This model will also provide strategies to prevent exclusions in particular our SEND children.
8. Dudley (Education Outcomes) is currently reorganising its School Improvement Team to include new provision for SEND at both a strategic and local level. This is to promote more integrated working between all services and schools/ educational settings. It is also seeking to support school locality working by building on the existing 'township' model and the corresponding primary and secondary networks.

9. **DUDLEY SEND LEAD PRACTITIONER SPECIFIC PRIORITIES:**

- I. Providing a strategic link between the Core SEND team and our schools, which impacts practice on the ground at a local level.
- II. Facilitating and empowering schools to work together collaboratively and in partnership in localities, to better meet the needs of children and young people at the universal and targeted levels of need.
- III. Recognising and valuing the participation of all schools regardless of context.
- IV. Solution building, barrier breaking, developing and improving current provision and outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families in the locality within which they live
- V. Strengthening the system of school understanding and practice to reduce variability and to promote and ensure inclusion and equity of provision for all
- VI. Development of clear transparency, openness, trust, and empowerment
- VII. Promoting and valuing creativity, innovation and evidence based, and research led approaches relevant to the needs of schools in a given locality
- VIII. Working towards long term sustainable improvement and clear working practices alongside short-term solutions
- IX. Maximising efficient and effective use of resources with accountability for impact on the outcomes for children and young people

10. **SEND SCHOOL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**

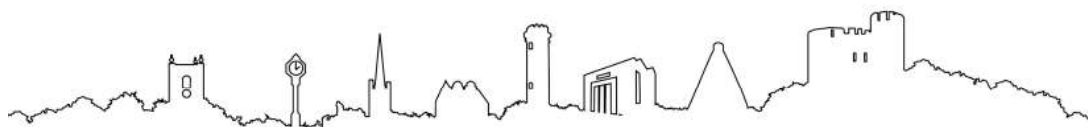
- I. Objective 1: The needs of more children and young people with SEND and their families at the universal and targeted levels of need are met locally through increased resources, targeted provision and a more highly skilled workforce



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- II. Objective 2: There is greater inclusion of children educated in their local community school and higher achievement among children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities , through more efficient and effective use of resources and as a result of effective and innovative school partnerships using evidence-based and research led approaches and strategies
 - III. Objective 3: Outcomes and engagement, including progress and attendance for vulnerable children and young people in primary and secondary schools in localities are improved and exclusions, children out of school, children and young people in segregated provision including children on home tuition and children and young people who elect to home educate are reduced
 - IV. Objective 4: Improved and innovative provision for our children and young people from vulnerable groups in the locality results in improved performance, engagement, attendance and progress and reductions in exclusions, children out of school and NEET population
 - V. Objective 5: Improved communication and interaction between the Core SEND team, the School Improvement Team and all internal and external Educational Outcomes teams to ensure that every child's needs are met in a non-judgemental and inclusive way
 - VI. Objective 6: A clear strategy which improves the understanding, practice and execution of SEND provision at a locality level, empowering schools to take a comprehensive lead in developing inclusive practices for all students
11. The project is designed to be school led, to facilitate and empower schools to work together collaboratively and in partnership, in localities. Collaborations will work to reduce variability and promote inclusion and equity of provision for children and young people at the universal and targeted levels of need in mainstream school and reduce the number of students attending Resource Bases and Special Schools whose needs could be met in mainstream with appropriate and more cost-effective support.
 12. This money for the SEND Specific Workforce Development Model is intended to support a process of change in the whole SEND system across Dudley. It is therefore not simply targeting one specific SEND population; instead, it has been apportioned considering every mainstream state school and academy across the borough.
 13. The SEND Specific Workforce Development Model is driven by a **SEND Lead Practitioner** who understands and co-ordinates a response between the Core SEND team and School Improvement. The post becomes the bridge between the code of practice and the day to day implementation in schools.



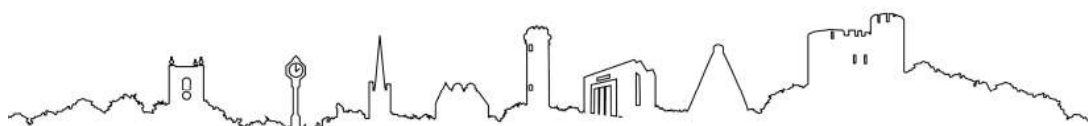
14. In supporting this role, there will be **two designated SEND Development Officers**, working with the Lead Practitioner to oversee the link between the Core SEND team and our schools.
15. This is a date stamped project, with the posts created initially for two years. During this time, it is envisaged that the work of the team will ensure long term viability and longevity.
16. The principles of the project very much support and promote the participation of all schools regardless of context and are designed to strengthen and develop effective partnership working across all types and phases of school in a school led approach. In addition, a significant resource will be expended on CPD and Workforce Development to ensure inclusive practice is developed across all schools.

17. **The role of the SEND Lead Practitioner involves:**

- Being the strategic lead between the Core SEND team and school improvement
- To share the project with all schools and be a point of contact for SEND development
- To set up Network / Learning communities Area Teams and coordinate across the area
- To support Learning communities and Networks in development of project proposals
- To review and agree ways of working and good practice
- To report on progress and escalate barriers half-termly
- To work in partnership with the Inclusion Team to identify those children at risk

18. **The Role of the SEND Improvement Officers involves:**

- Working with SEND Lead Practitioner
- Working across all schools and their SLT and SENDCos
- Co-ordinate a response to SEND issues
- Oversee specific SEND assessments as required
- Provide agreed training and support to colleagues at a local level
- Review SEND practice
- Ensure an inclusive approach for all young people
- Lead staff CPD and training to ensure workforce development



19. The project will be funded through the £511k SEND budget as follows:

Costs and Funding Plan		
Lead Practitioner (Secondment)	Equivalent to AHT/AP Post	SLT £55,000 plus on costs = £73,000 Total Cost £146,000 Two year fixed term
SEND Improvement Officer	Equivalent to current Inclusion Officer or teacher post (UPS) £42,000 plus on costs £55,000	£42,000 plus on costs = £55,000 x two posts £110,000 per year Total Cost £220,000 Two year fixed term
CPD Network Development SEMH, Restorative Practice, Resilience, Trauma, Restorative Practice, Code of Practice Understanding, SEND Reviews – First Allocation		Total Cost £80,000 (Over two year period)
Total Cost		Total Cost £466,000
Funds still be allocated		£65,000

Budget Working Group Discussed

20. Yes – 14 June 2022

Finance

21. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct grant; Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

Law

22. The Schools Forum is a statutory decision making and consultative body constituted in line with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and its associated regulations, including the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012, to enable members of the local school community to work in partnership with Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council when making decisions about school funding and finances.

23. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2021.



Risk Management

24. There are no material risks to the Council's Risk Management Framework resulting from the contents of this report.

Equality Impact

25. This report has no direct implications for the Council's commitment to equality and diversity.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

26. This report has no direct implications for human resources, organisational development or service transformation.

Commercial/Procurement

27. There is no impact on the potential to commercially trade and no impact on our customer base.

Council Priorities and Projects

28. The 2019/2022 Council Plan is clear in its ambitions for educational outcomes including raising skills, educational and work potential, increasing good or better schools and closing the gap for disadvantaged pupils. This report relates to the use of the Dedicated Schools Grant funding to support the educational outcomes of children and young people in the borough.



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