

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 26th February 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer

SUBJECT: High Needs Block funding for 2020-21

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report to the Schools Forum the High Needs Block funding for 2020-21.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

2.1 The report is noted.

2.2 The centrally retained budgets are agreed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Grant settlement

The Dedicated Schools Grant settlement was announced on 19th December giving a total of £19,063,244 for the High Needs Block for 2020-21 which is an increase of £2,292,555 from 2019-20.

From this figure, £2,906,662 is being recouped by the ESFA for commissioned places in special academies and some independent special schools. This leaves £16,156,582 High Needs Block that will be paid to Halton Borough Council.

3.2 Current position

Due to the earlier date of the Schools Forum, at the time of writing the High Needs budgets have not been finalised. Therefore the budgets for Resource Bases, Special Schools, PRU, Top-up funding and Centrally Retained provisions will be tabled at the meeting.

3.3 Resource Base Funding

As in previous years, per place funding is set at £6,000 per filled place where the pupil is on roll at the school offering the Resource Base place and £10,000 per place for vacant places and places filled by pupils on roll at another school.

3.4 Special Schools and PRU

The per place funding continues at £10,000 for each commissioned place, irrespective of whether that place is filled or not. Top-up funding is paid for each learner for the days on roll.

3.5 Top-up funding
Top-up funding is continuing and budgets will be tabled at the meeting.

3.6 Centrally retained budgets
As in previous years, we wish to retain the some funding to provide support to schools. The centrally retained budget for 2019-20 is shown below. The budgets for 2020-21 are still to be finalised and will be tabled at the meeting.

	2019-20
Staffing	£1,313,800
Supplies & Services	£102,820
Independent Special Schools	£2,412,450
Inter Authority Recoupment	£175,000
Post 16 Provision	£969,000
Specialist Equipment	£20,000
Top-up funding contingency	£1,000,000
SEND Commissioner	£50,770
SEMH Team	£255,870
Total	£6,362,580

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Whilst we have received a significant increase in our High Needs Block allocation for 2020-21, there are still budgetary pressures in this area. As well as on-going pressures on the Independent Special Schools, Inter Authority Recoupment and Top-up funding budgets, as we start new initiatives aiming to reduce expenditure in the longer-term, in the short-term these will add to the pressure on this block.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children & Young People in Halton

It is essential that schools and education support services receive sufficient funding to allow them to support all children and young people.

5.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**
None.

5.3 **A Healthy Halton**
None.

5.4 **A Safer Halton**
None.

5.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**
None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 These budgets need to continue to be closely monitored to avoid going over budget.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 The Local Authority must discharge its statutory responsibilities in relation to all schools and settings.