

AGENDA



SCHOOLS FORUM

Date: Thursday 19 January 2023
Time: 4.30pm
Place: Microsoft Teams

Distribution

Members of the Committee

Pippa Osborne (Chair)	Dave Baker (Vice Chair)
Julia Anwar	Ross Newman
Jo Dent	Diane Owen
Stuart Evans	Lisa Parker
Kim Garland	Will Roberts
Clare Haughton	Fr. Malcolm Strange
Aaron Jefferies	Andy Watson
David Jenkins	Susie Weaver
Nicola Jones	Bernice Webber
Louise Leader	David Williams
Kirby Littlewood	Louisa Wilson
Steve Moir	

Appropriate Officers attending:

Mustafa Salih
Hilary Smith
Caroline Warren

Councillors attending:

Erica Williams
Trevor Jones

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AGENDA

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Schools Forum Membership – September 2022

Type & number of Members	No	Sub-Group Represented	Forum Representative	Establishment	Term of Office/Position
Maintained school members (5 Primary Headteachers/4 Primary Governors/1 Secondary/1 Special/1 PRU representative) = 12					
Primary	1 of 5	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative	Bernice Webber	Headteacher, Old Sodbury CE Primary	23/01/2020
Primary	2 of 5	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative	Kathryn Absalom	Executive Headteacher, Park and Parkwall Primary Federation	19/01/2023
Primary	3 of 5	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative	Kirby Littlewood	Stanbridge Primary School	21/01/2021
Primary	4 of 5	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative	Pippa Osbourne (Chair)	Christ Church CofE School	01/01/2019
Primary	5 of 5	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative	Louisa Wilson	St. Stephens C of E Junior School	21/01/2021
Primary	1 of 4	Governor	Andy Watson	Governor-Hanham Primary Federation	07/07/2022
Primary	2 of 4	Governor	David Jenkins	Governor – Crossways Schools	18/07/2019
Primary	3 of 4	Governor	Jo Dent	Governor – Alexander Hosea Primary	02/12/2021

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Primary	4 of 4	Governor	Aaron Jeffries	Governor – Coniston Primary School	07/07/2022
Secondary	1 of 1	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Kim Garland	Headteacher-Brimsham Green	18/07/2019 (2 nd term)
Special Schools	1 of 1	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Lisa Parker	Headteacher Warmley Park	21/01/21 (2 nd term)
PRU (only has to be 1)	1 of 1	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Louise Leader	Headteacher Pathways Learning Centre	18/07/2019 (2 nd term)

Type & number of Members	No	Sub-Group Represented	Forum Representative	Establishment	Term of Office/Position
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Academies members (1 Primary/1 Special/6 Secondary member representatives) = 8

Primary Academy	1 of 1	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Susie Weaver	Executive Principal CLF	19/09/2019 (2 nd term)
Special Academy	1 of 1	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Nicki Jones	Trustee for Enable Trust	21/01/2021
Secondary Academy	1 of 6	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Julia Anwar	Olympus Academy Trust	23/09/2021
Secondary Academy	2 of 6	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Dave Baker (Vice Chair)	CEO OAT	19/09/2019 (2 nd term)
Secondary Academy	3 of 6	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Diane Owen	Chair to Academy Council at King's Oak Academy	23/09/21 (2 nd term)

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Secondary Academy	4 of 6	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	VACANT		
Secondary Academy	5 of 6	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Will Roberts	CEO CSET	01/03/2019
Secondary Academy	6 of 6	Headteacher/Headteacher Representative or Governor	Steve Moir	Headteacher – Bradley Stoke	18/07/2019
Non-school members = 5					
16-19	1 of 1	Representative	Stuart Evans	SGS Filton	21/11//2019
Early Years	1 of 2	Representative	Ross Newman	Early Years SF Rep	14/06/2021
Early Years	2 of 2	Representative	Clare Haughton	Page Park Pre-school	23/09/2021 (2nd term)
Diocese	1 of 2	Representative	Malcolm Strange	Diocese of Bristol	18/10/2019
Diocese	2 of 2	Representative	David Williams	Diocese of Gloucester	21/01/21

Type & number of Members	No	Sub-Group Represented	Forum Representative	Establishment
Substitutions				
Maintained Primary	1of1	Headteacher	Katherine Marks	Headteacher, Frenchay Primary
Maintained Primary	1 of 1	Governor	VACANT	

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Maintained Secondary	1 of 1	Member Representative	Terry Redfern/Stuart Thomas	Business Manager/AHT Brimsham Green
Maintained Special School	1 of 1	Member Representative	Tania Craig	Head teacher New Horizons
Pupil Referral Unit	1 of 1	Member Representative	Dan Walton	Deputy Head PLC
Primary Academy	1 of 1	Member Representative	Sue Kelham	Principal Wallscourt Farm
Special Academy	1 of 1	Member Representative	VACANT	
Secondary Academy	1 of 1	Member Representative	VACANT	

**South Gloucestershire Schools Forum
Minutes of Meeting held on
Thursday 1 December 2022
Microsoft Teams**

PRESENT:

Pippa Osborne (Chair)	Headteacher Christ Church Junior School
Dave Baker (Vice Chair)	CEO, Olympus Academy Trust
Julia Anwar	Head of Business Operations, Olympus Academy Trust
Kim Garland	Headteacher, Brimsham Green School
Aaron Jefferies	Primary Governor, Coniston Primary School
David Jenkins	Governor, Crossways Schools
Nicola Jones	Representative Special Academies
Louise Leader	Headteacher, Pathways Learning Centre
Ross Newman	Early Years Schools Forum Representative
Lisa Parker	Headteacher, Warmley Park School
Will Roberts	CEO, Castle School Education Trust (CSET)
Andrew Watson	Governor, Hanham Primary Federation
Bernice Webber	Headteacher, Old Sodbury CE Primary School
David Williams	Diocese of Gloucester
Louisa Wilson	Headteacher, St. Stephens C of E Junior School

Executive Members:

Erica Williams, Cabinet Member - Schools, Skills & Employment

Officers:

Mustafa Salih, Head of Financial Management and Business Support
Hilary Smith, Head of Education, Learning and Skills
Deb Luter, Schools Finance Team Leader
Caroline Warren, Finance Business Partner
Kevin Ford, Operations Director, Integra

Others:

Tamsin Moreton, Director of Finance & Operations, Enable Trust (Observer)

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees were welcomed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Trevor Jones, Chris Sivers, Jo Dent, Stuart Evans, Claire Hill, Susie Weaver, Kirby Littlewood, Fr Malcolm Strange, Diane Owen, Steve Moir, Clare Haughton

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None**4. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP – Mustafa Salih**

One application received for the Primary Headteacher vacancy. Paperwork to be processed.

Dave Baker has emailed out re the Academy vacancy but so far no positive response.

5. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT (Pippa Osborne)

None

6. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING – 3RD November 2022

Andrew Watson attended although it was recorded he had sent apologies.

Remainder of the Minutes recorded as accurate.

7. Integra Update (Kevin Ford)

Integra will look to cease to provide schools with catering and cleaning services effective from September 2023. This has been driven by a number of factors including issues around staff recruitment and to fulfil the requirement of the service efficiently.

The consultation will run until the February 2023 budget when a final decision will be made. All schools and staff will be made aware that this is going into the public consultation document.

We are pulling together a document to provide some signposting to schools with regards to procurement, not as an LA to support but signpost.

As an LA we are extremely challenged in terms of government pension and commercial providers can be more flexible.

The first consultation is February 2023 with a decision by April and would need to start from September 2023.

Our contractual arrangements are with schools and we have no direct contact with parents.

DB – We would be happy to support those who have been through it before.

Action: Pippa to take to Headteachers Executive for Primary to look at when we can create an event to share that expertise.

8. School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant (Hilary Smith)

This is for information sharing only and not a need to make any decisions.

This follows on from last year by the DfE decision to withdraw the land grant to cover its role and responsibility in relation to brokering to deliver school functions. There was a short consultation by the Department and the Schools Forum where 50% of locally maintained schools agreed to de-delegation.

We are proposing to have an online session on Wednesday 7th December for Headteachers and then a consultation document will be sent the same day for LA maintained schools and schools will have until Thursday 22nd December to respond. We will analyse the results, formulate the proposal and then the intention is to circulate to all maintained schools the week before it is released to Schools Forum so everyone has had chance to see it and make their views known to Schools Forum at the meeting in January about whether to de-delegate.

Timetable:

7 December	Engagement session with school leaders
7 December	Consultation and survey schools to seek views
22 December	Consultation ends/deadline to respond to survey
11 January	Complete analysis of responses and formulate proposal
12 January	Provide details of proposal to all schools. Report available for Schools Forum.
19 January	Schools Forum meet to consider report and make decision on way forward

9. Q1 DSG Report (Caroline Warren)

To update Schools Forum on the Dedicated Schools Grant and Safety Valve position as at Quarter 1 2022/23.

The current cumulative overspend is £25,907k with an in-year overspend of £8.1m and that is before the safety valve payments of the £3m and Council contribution of £334,00k and brought forward £21m and comes to £25,907k.

There continues to be pressure of demand and price and it has been noted as a risk of meeting our safety valve targets.

The main pressure areas that were reported against our original safety valve was linked to special school places and places at Pathways Learning Centre (PLC) and the additional pressure of £1.3m delay in implementing the banding.

Budget statement in November for extra funding for schools next year but no detailed figures yet. Nationally extra £2bn for schools and additional £2bn the following year of new funding with £9m coming to South Gloucestershire and which means about £500 per pupil. It will help to support schools who have had the most challenges and we are doing an exercise with Integra on schools budgets that was showing there were more schools heading towards deficit budgets that should be mitigated.

The actual detailed settlement will be known middle to end of December and when we come back to the Forum in January we will know what that means for per pupil funding.

There is no information on energy costs and no announcements of support for energy costs beyond March.

10. SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN

Jan 2023	19th			
			Business Case for £2.2m Transfer	
		7	Setting the Schools Budget 2023/24	Mustafa Salih
		8	Growth funding policy and update on the DSG based on the quarterly monitor	Caroline Warren
	Additional Item	9	<i>Q2 update and Early Years Funding Rates</i>	<i>Caroline Warren</i>

11. Any Other Business

CW – Q2 update and Early Years Funding Rates to be added to the January Forward Plan.

Meeting closed

South Gloucestershire Council

SCHOOLS FORUM

19 January 2023

Setting the Schools Budget 2023-24

Purpose of Report

1. To formally consult with the Schools Forum on options for setting the Schools Budget 2023-24. The Forum is being asked to give a formal view on a block transfer of £2.2m, which will be presented to Cabinet and Full Council for their consideration in setting the final Schools Budget for 2023-24.

Policy

2. The Financing of Maintained Schools Regulations 2022 requires local authorities (LAs) to set the Schools Budget each year. The Schools Budget is defined in regulations and broadly represents all the expenditure incurred by local authorities that relate to schools. The source of funding to support the Schools Budget is a ring-fenced grant received by local authorities known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Local Authorities must distribute an element of the Schools Budget to their maintained schools using a formula which accords with the regulations made by the Secretary of State for Education and enables the calculation of a budget share for each maintained school. The financial controls within which delegation works are set out in the Scheme for the Financing of Schools.
3. The DSG is allocated to local authorities in 4 blocks as follows:
 - Schools Block: relates mainly to funding for mainstream school budget shares
 - High Needs Block: relates to funding to support children and young people with SEND
 - Early Years Block: relates to funding for supporting nursery education providers and other general early years education responsibilities
 - Central Services Block: relates to funding to support LA statutory responsibilities relating to schools
4. Requirements relating to each of the blocks and the DSG in totality are covered in the regulations previously mentioned.
5. The Schools Forum has a key responsibility to act as a consultative body with the local authority on the strategic financial management of the Schools Budget and the DSG. A key

priority in this area is to take decisions that ensure sound financial management of the Schools Budget.

Background

6. This report sets out the latest information available and proposed options to consider in setting the 2023-24 Schools Budget including setting the formula for calculating school budget shares.
7. The DfE has announced funding arrangements for 2023-24.

The National Funding Formula (NFF) for Schools 2023-24

8. In November 2022 the Government announced additional funding for schools amounting to an extra £2bn nationally. With this additional funding in South Gloucestershire the funding for direct school budget shares is set to increase in total by £15.2m (8.1%) and the High Needs Block will increase by £5.2m (11.5%).
9. The DfE in announcing the extra £2bn had calculated that on an overall basis that level of extra funding should allow schools to meet the impact of pay awards and general inflationary pressures that had been concerning most schools.
10. In addition, a number of technical adjustments and requirements for the National Funding Formula (NFF) have been set by the DfE which are as follows:
 - Minimum per-pupil funding of at least £4,405 for each primary school, and £5,715 for Secondary,
 - the 2022 to 2023 schools supplementary grant has been rolled into the NFF by adding an amount representing what schools receive through the grant into their baselines, adding the value of the lump sum, basic per pupil rates and free school meals Ever 6 (FSM6) parts of the grant onto the respective factors in the NFF and uplifting the minimum per pupil values by the supplementary grant's basic per-pupil values, and an additional amount which represents the average amount of funding schools receive from the FSM6 and lump sum parts of the grants
 - increasing NFF factor values by:
 - 4.3% to free school meals at any time in the last 6 years (FSM6) and income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI)
 - 2.4% to the basic entitlement, low prior attainment (LPA), FSM, English as an additional language (EAL), mobility, and sparsity factors, and the lump sum.
 - 0.5% to the floor and the minimum per pupil levels (MPPL)

- 0% on the premises factors, except for Private Finance Initiative (PFI) which has increased by Retail Prices Index excluding mortgage interest payments (RPIX) which is 11.2% for the year to April 2022

SEND Pressures and the DSG Recovery Plan

- The Council's successful engagement with the DfE's Safety Valve process has resulted in significant funding to offset a large part of the historic DSG deficit that has built up over several years due to our expenditure exceeding our annual funding allocation.
- The DfE's national benchmarking tables have consistently shown that we pass on significantly more funding to schools through EHCP top-up levels than all our comparators as well as having a higher proportion of EHCPs than our comparators.
- Since entering the Safety Valve Programme, the Council has received £12m which has directly reduced the cumulative DSG deficit. As long as our recovery plan is adhered to the Council is due to receive a further £13.5m.
- The Safety Valve Recovery Plan is shown in the following table which includes an assumed £2.2m transfer from the Schools Block each year up until 2026/27 and a £1m contribution from the Council's own reserves.

DSG Sustainability Plan	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'001
High Needs Block Funding	27,225	27,711	30,134	33,548	38,036	39,937	41,135	42,369	43,641	44,950	46,298
<i>Annual Increase in Funding</i>		486	2,423	3,414	4,488	1,902	1,198	1,234	1,271	1,309	1,348
		1.80%	8.70%	11.30%	13.40%	5.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Transfer from Schools Block	2,900	2,200	2,200	2,200							0
Total Funding	30,125	29,911	32,334	35,748	38,036	39,937	41,135	42,369	43,641	44,950	46,298
DfE Ask Proposal											
Transfer from Schools Block					2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200		
Safety Valve Ask					17,000	4,000	4,000				
Council contribution					334	333	333				
Total Proposed Funding	30,125	29,911	32,334	35,748	57,570	46,470	47,668	44,569	45,841	44,950	46,298
<i>Annual % Increase</i>		-0.70%	8.10%	10.60%	79.70%	-34.40%	2.80%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%
Total Spend (analysed below)	32,602	34,958	39,978	44,986	44,156	42,537	40,995	41,180	42,004	42,844	43,701
<i>Annual % Increase</i>		7.20%	14.40%	12.50%	-1.80%	-3.70%	-3.60%	0.50%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
In Year Over(+)/Under(-) spend High Needs Block	2,477	5,047	7,644	9,238	-13,414	-3,933	-6,673	-3,389	-3,837	-2,106	-2,597
In Year Over(+)/Under(-) spend (Other Blocks)		-347	-89								
Cumulative deficit	11,646	16,346	23,901	33,139	19,725	15,792	9,119	5,730	1,893	-213	-2,810

15. Receipt of the further £13.5m is contingent on the above plan being adhered to. Without access to the Safety Valve funding then up to £25.5m of the cumulative deficit could need to be covered by further savings on SEND expenditure.

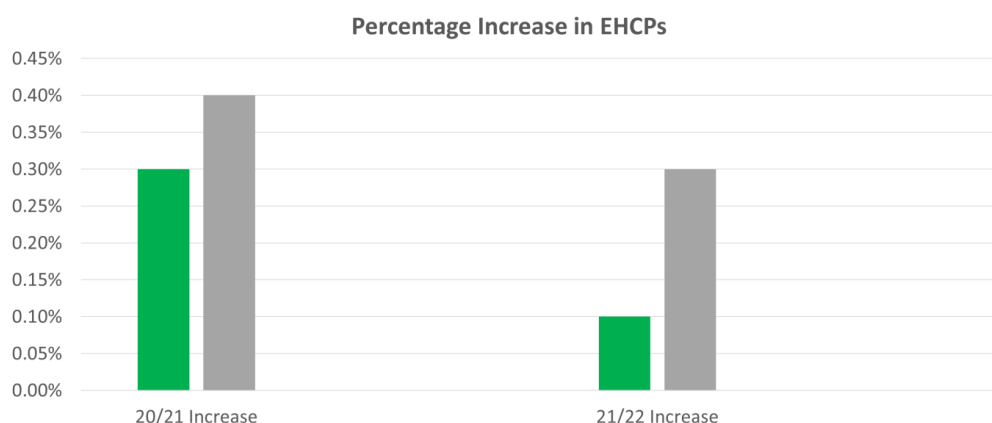
The Case for the £2.2m Transfer

16. As explained above direct school budget shares funding will increase by £15.2m in 2023/24 and so a transfer of £2.2m to invest in SEND would leave £13m (6.9%) extra funding to boost school budget shares.

17. Over recent years the Schools Forum has approved a transfer of £2.2m from each years Schools Block increase to invest in improvements to the local SEND system, improving support for schools and helping to reduce escalating costs in future years. The majority of the £2.2m flows back to schools but importantly to specifically support SEND pupils.

18. The planned use of the £2.2m in 2023/24 is as follows:

- **£1m for Cluster Boards** to invest in SEND support in their schools. Appendix A sets out the detail on the positive impact the Cluster Boards have achieved so far including supporting improved outcomes for SEND pupils, new services for pupils at SEND support and improved identification of pupils at SEND support. Importantly it has also supported progress on one the Safety Valve agreement's critical KPIs by helping to close the gap with our benchmarking comparators on the proportion of EHCPs, as shown in the following table:



Cluster Key Performance Indicator	19/20	Y1 (20/21)		Y2 (21/22)		Y3 (22/23)	Y4 (23/24)	Y5 (24/25)
	Baseline	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Reduction in percentage of children with an EHCP	3.80%	3.80%	4.10%	3.70%	4.20%	3.60%	3.50%	3.30%
National Benchmark (Actual)	3.30%		3.70%		4.00%			

The impact of the Cluster funding and boards have now passed a threshold and are seen as a key feature of our local SEND system. Interestingly the DfE have now started promoting similar schemes for all local authorities to help them meet their challenges on reducing SEND expenditure. Moving this initiative from a pilot stage to a permanent stage is now important to ensure the Cluster Bords can start investing over a longer

term horizon and therefore through this report the Forum is being asked to approve their establishment on a permanent basis with an agreement to commit to a transfer of at least £1m on an ongoing basis for the next few years. Appendix A also sets out greater detail on the planned use of the £1m in future years.

- **£200k for investment in Early Years.** Appendix B sets out in detail the positive improvements that this investment in Early Years has achieved and the following table summarises the planned use of the £200k in 2023/24:

Work Stream	Cost
SALT Secondment to EY team (0.6 FTE TTO)	£42,000
SALT training for EY practitioners	£12,500
Ongoing License for AET training	£3,500
Additional Portage Practitioners	£60,000*
Additional EIO (0.5 FTE)	£21,000
Little Treasures Offer (PCF)	£49,000
TOTAL	£188,000

- **£300k to invest in early help in our schools.** In gaining entry to the Safety Valve Programme, the DfE queried whether the plans proposed had sufficient focus on early help. It is the case that the risk of escalating need is high and we need to do more to support early intervention, for example many pupils and young people being referred to the High Risk Group may not have reached that stage had there been sufficient focus on early intervention. However, we recognise that this is a challenge for schools. Therefore, working with the clusters to identify and develop an effective centrally coordinated early help offer, we proposed to use an element of the transfer to develop that offer. This will supplement the commissioning of experts to provide an early help offer in the classroom for SEMH. This will also complement the new family link worker early help offer being developed through the use of council and health funding.
- **£700k investment in central capacity** to ensure schools, parents and pupils receive improved support and guidance on a timely basis as they navigate through the EHCP and new banding process. Increased demand for services has resulted in the need to boost capacity of the central teams, therefore this short term investment has been necessary in EHC coordination, EP services and the associated support. This will be needed until we start to see a plateauing of demand for EHCPs.

19. All of the above investment initiatives are critical to our continued progress on moving to a position where, as a system we can live within our means as well as improving our offer of support for SEND pupils. The Council has rightly developed these investment initiatives collaboratively with the High Needs Working Group which is a sub-group of the Schools forum and has representatives from all sectors of schools. The intention is to continue managing the use of the funding and tracking its impact jointly with the HNWG and continue our process of providing regular updates to the Forum and thereby all schools as well.

School by School Modelling

20. Appendix C shows school by school modelling of school budget shares for 2023/24 utilising all funding available including South Gloucestershire's share of the November announced extra £2bn. Two options are shown: option 1 with the £2.2m transfer and option 2 without the £2.2m transfer. As with all modelling figures the Council presents to schools, they are shown to give an indication of impact between different options and should not be taken as representing final budget share figures schools will receive for 2023/24. Final budget share figures will be shared with schools by the 28th February, which is the statutory deadline.

Recommendations

21. The Schools Forum is requested to approve:

1. **Option 1: a £2.2m transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, which continues the same level of transfer that had been secured for 2022/23 and allows the investments in Cluster Funding Early Help, Early Years, and EHCP processes to support the DSG Recovery Plan to continue.**
2. **Moving Cluster Fund and Boards from pilot status to permanent status with an approval to commit to a £1m transfer on an ongoing basis until the Safety Valve Programme allows for this investment to be funded from the High Needs Block (currently planned for 2026/27), with ongoing governance in partnership with the High Needs Working Group.**

22. This consultation with the Schools Forum is of the highest importance and the Council is very mindful of continuing our progress on the Safety Valve Programme in full partnership with the Forum. The regulatory framework around the Schools Forum does mean that the Council will need to consider the views expressed by the Forum, with the decision on setting the Schools Budget including the option of seeking the Secretary of States approval for a block transfer resting with the Cabinet of the Council.

Financial Implications

23. The School Finance Regulations set out the arrangements which Local Authorities must follow when allocating the DSG funding to schools.

24. As the support for schools and other pupil related services expenditure is funded by the DSG there is no charge to the Council Budget. Hence there is no charge to the Council Tax payer.

25. The DSG is forecast to overspend in 2022/23. Any overspend will need to be recovered from future year's DSG funding. The Council has successfully entered into the DfE's Safety Valve Programme which includes adhering to a challenging plan of reaching an in-year balance by 2027/28. The recommendations in this report form an important element of staying on track with the Safety Valve agreement and failure to maintain that progress could put at risk the £25.5m secured through the Safety Valve Programme. The historic nature of the deficit will

mean that without this additional funding from the DfE greater savings from the local SEND system would be needed to achieve that statutorily required in-year balance.

Legal Implications

26. There is a legal requirement for the local authority to:
- submit the final school pro-formas and underlying data to the Education & Skills Funding Agency by the 21 January 2023.
 - confirm with schools their budget allocations for 2022/23 by 28 February 2023.
27. The Chief Financial Officer, after the end of the financial year, must confirm to the DfE that the grant conditions have been met.

Author

Mustafa Salih, Head of Financial Management and Business Support
Tel: 01454 863197

South Gloucestershire Council

SCHOOLS FORUM

19 January 2022

SEND Clusters: Cluster Permanence Recommendation

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to:

- a. update Schools Forum on the impact of SEND Clusters during 2021/2022
- b. recommend that Schools Forum approves the establishment of SEND Clusters as a permanently funded element of the South Gloucestershire SEND system from the financial year 2023/24 onwards
- c. recommend that Schools Forum approves the following additional business support, funded from the existing cluster budget, to facilitate sustainability of the permanent model:
 - i. local authority officer capacity to provide financial support
 - ii. local authority officer capacity to provide commissioning support
- d. recommend to the SEND Partnership that reducing exclusions and suspensions becomes the responsibility a multi-agency strategic and operational partnership group, of which the SEND Clusters would be members

Background

South Gloucestershire's SEND Clusters continue to work to support the delivery of three key outcomes:

- a reduction in Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)
- a reduction in permanent exclusions
- improved outcomes for children and young people at SEND Support

The planned impact of the clusters upon the quality improvement aims of the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) and the financial aims of the Safety Valve are demonstrated in Annex A.

As previously reported to School Forum, all five clusters are now well established, with data-informed commissioning arrangements that reflect their SEND priorities. Their impact within school communities, and on the inclusion and learning of children at SEND Support, continues to evolve and is evaluated through a range of formal and informal processes.

In reviewing the impact of the cluster model to inform future decision-making it is important to note that:

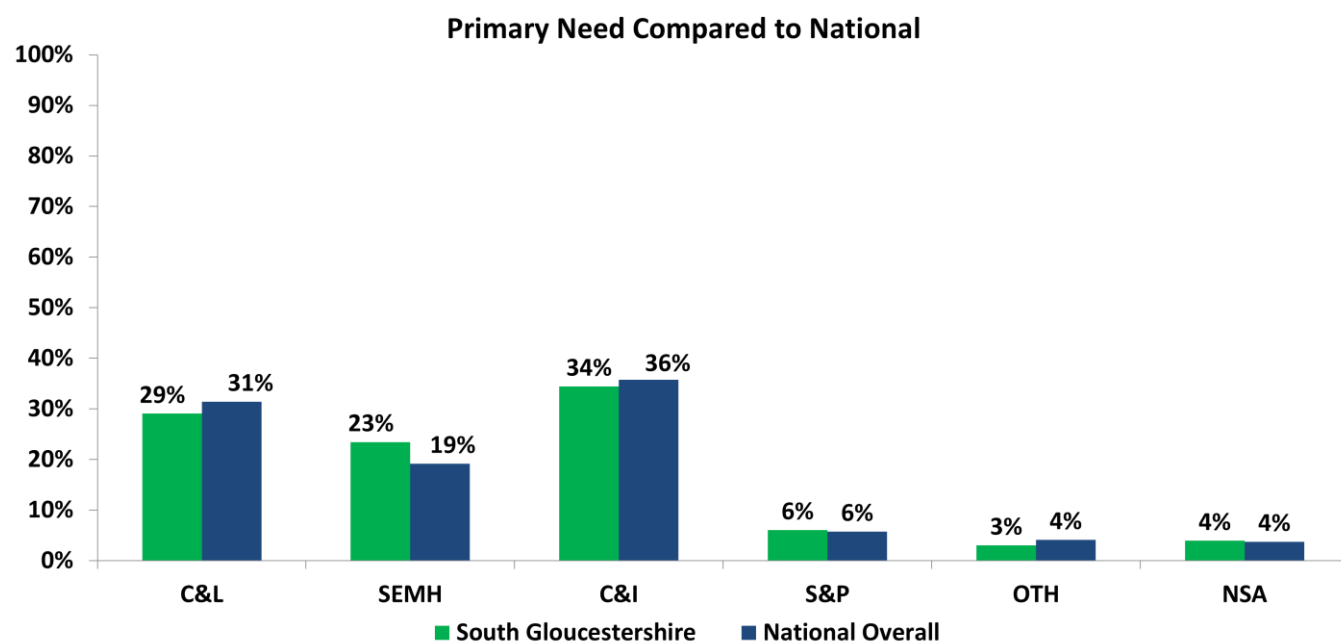
- SEND Clusters became fully functional immediately preceding, and during, the Covid-19 pandemic. Our evaluation cannot disaggregate the impact of this context upon children, families and schools from the impact of the cluster model

- SEND Clusters are a feature of our joint-commissioning infrastructure. Isolating their contribution to complex pathways is challenging due to the wide range of variables
- the evaluation does not aim to measure the impact of the extensive range of evidence-based training and interventions commissioned by clusters for individual children at SEND Support

Despite these limitations in evaluation methodology, SEND Clusters have been a consistent feature of South Gloucestershire’s SEND system since 2019, which allows for comparison of key outcomes data over the last three years.

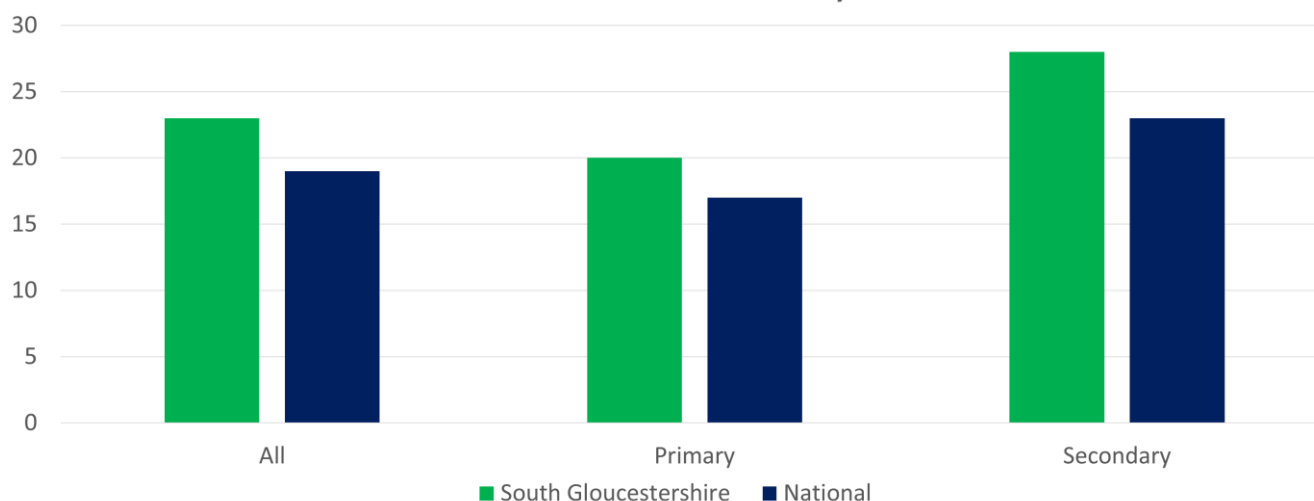
Early and Accurate Identification of Need

Early and accurate identification of need underpins all three of the SEND Cluster outcomes, and is therefore critical to both APP and Safety Valve achievement. Our Spring 2022 School Census data shows that, at SEND Support, our identification of primary need has improved and is now broadly aligned with national benchmarks:



Our main outlier is categorisation of SEMH as primary SEND need, which is currently 4% above the national average. Triangulation of wider local information suggests that this is most likely the result of over-identification rather than higher-than-national prevalence, with continued practice in some schools responding to the presenting behaviour of children and young people, without full assessment and support of their underlying speech and language, communication and interaction, and cognition and learning needs (categorisation of primary need in these areas is 2% under the national average). One example of this is referral data from High Risk Group which shows that, over the last two academic years, 96% of children and young people had SEMH identified at their primary need but only 25% of had been seen by a speech and language therapist. It is also noteworthy that, when broken down by phase, the difference between the local and national positions reduces to 3% for primary schools and increases to 5% for secondary schools:

Identification of SEMH as Primary Need



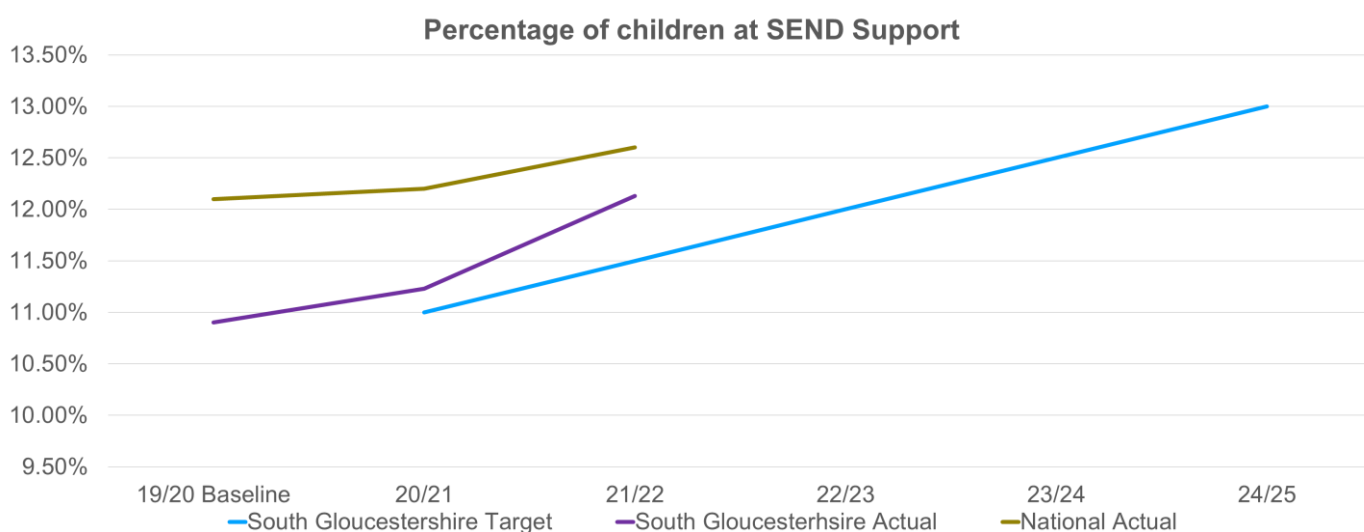
To address this outlier in accurate identification of SEMH need a range of actions are underway, including:

- an education-wide SEMH Action Plan, which is an integral part of the South Gloucestershire Children and Young People's Mental Health Strategy, and includes work to support schools in developing their whole school SEMH and SEND policy and practice
- SEND Clusters continuing to commission enhanced offers to reflect the bespoke needs of their communities and support their schools with SEMH and SEND practice
- an extension to the NHS core offer for speech and language therapy to include assessment and therapy for children in secondary schools

Percentage of Children and Young People at SEND Support

With SEND Clusters improving early and accurate identification of need, our Safety Valve programme aimed to **increase** the percentage of children at SEND Support in South Gloucestershire. School Census data shows that this was achieved in both 20/21 and 21/22; our third-year target was exceeded by the second year of the programme and the gap with national benchmarks has reduced from 1.2% to 0.47%:

Cluster Key Performance Indicator	19/20 Baseline	Y1 (20/21)		Y2 (21/22)		Y3 (22/23)	Y4 (23/24)	Y5 (24/25)
		Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Increase in percentage of children at SEND Support	10.90%	11%	11.23%	11.50%	12.13%	12%	12.50%	13%
National Benchmark (Actual)	12.10%		12.20%		12.60%			

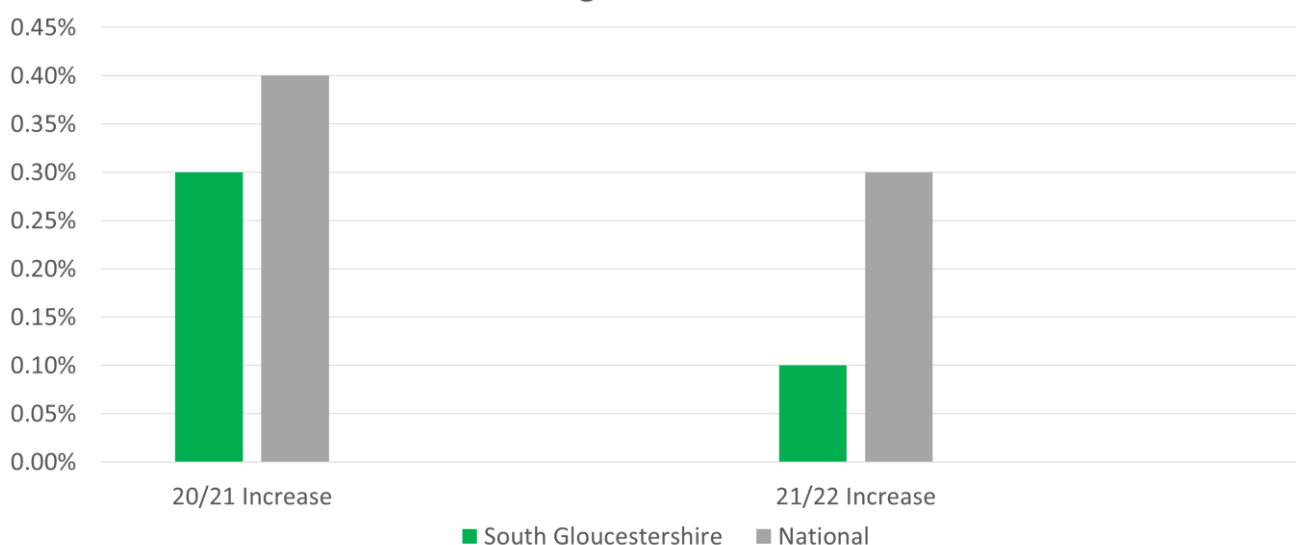


Percentage of Children and Young People with Education, Health and Care Plans

With SEND Clusters increasing the support available to meet children’s needs at SEND Support, our Safety Valve programme aimed to **reduce** the percentage of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan and match national benchmarks by the academic year 24/25. School Census data shows that our percentage of children with an EHCP increased in the academic years 20/21 and 21/22. However, the rate of this increase was less than national, resulting in the gap with national benchmarks reducing from 0.5% to 0.2%.

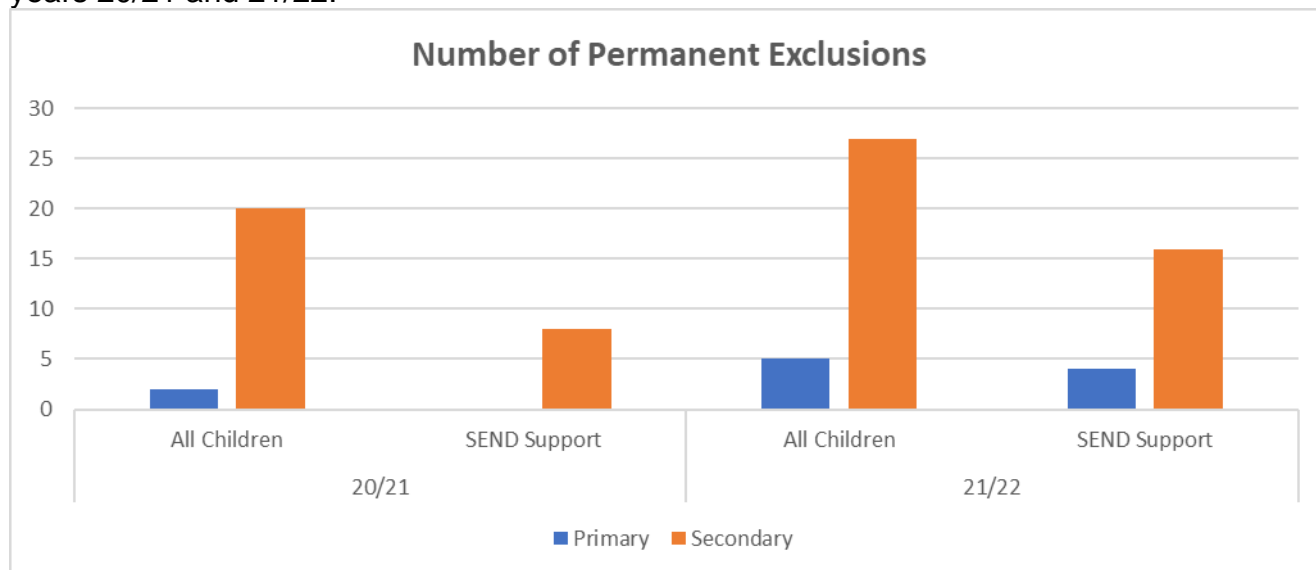
Cluster Key Performance Indicator	19/20	Y1 (20/21)		Y2 (21/22)		Y3 (22/23)	Y4 (23/24)	Y5 (24/25)
	Baseline	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Reduction in percentage of children with an EHCP	3.80%	3.80%	4.10%	3.70%	4.20%	3.60%	3.50%	3.30%
National Benchmark (Actual)	3.30%		3.70%		4.00%			

Percentage Increase in EHCPs

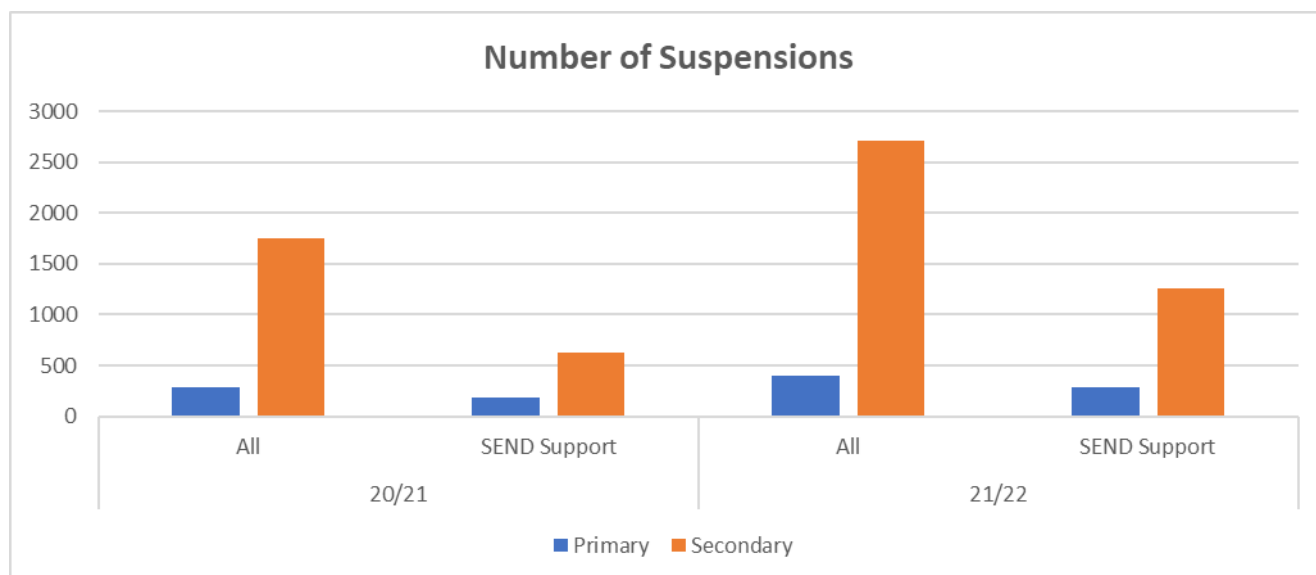


Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions

The number of permanent exclusions in South Gloucestershire increased for all children and those at SEND Support, in both primary and secondary phases, between the academic years 20/21 and 21/22:



Furthermore, while reduction in suspensions is not a key outcome of the SEND Clusters, the number of suspensions is an important indicator of the health of our SEND system and the inclusivity of educational practice, and therefore forms part of our cluster evaluation. The number of suspensions also increased for all children and those at SEND Support, in both primary and secondary phases, between the academic years 20/21 and 21/22:



While an increase in the overall number of exclusions and suspensions raises potential concerns about frequency and severity of children and young people's dysregulation and risk, education staff wellbeing and variation in the inclusivity of schools' practice, it is also noteworthy that the proportional increase of exclusions and suspensions for children at SEND Support occurs within the context of our planned percentage increase in children at

SEND Support. As such, this may represent growing recognition of the underlying SEND needs of children experiencing episodes of dysregulation.

Data from the referrals of children and young people presented to High Risk Group during the academic years 20/21 and 21/22 highlights the multi-factorial and complex layering of SEND, social care and mental health needs associated with distress, dysregulation, risk and placement breakdown. Of particular note, 62% of children had either received a diagnosis of ADHD or were undergoing assessment, and a further 20% had either received a diagnosis of autism or were undergoing assessment. 78% of all children referred had known Adverse Childhood Experiences and 71% had received support from social care. 96% were identified as having social, emotional and mental health needs. As such, it is recommended that the outcome of reducing exclusions and suspensions becomes the responsibility of a co-ordinated, timely, multi-agency partnership at strategic and operational levels, of which the SEND Clusters would be members with contributory leadership and commissioning functions on behalf of schools.

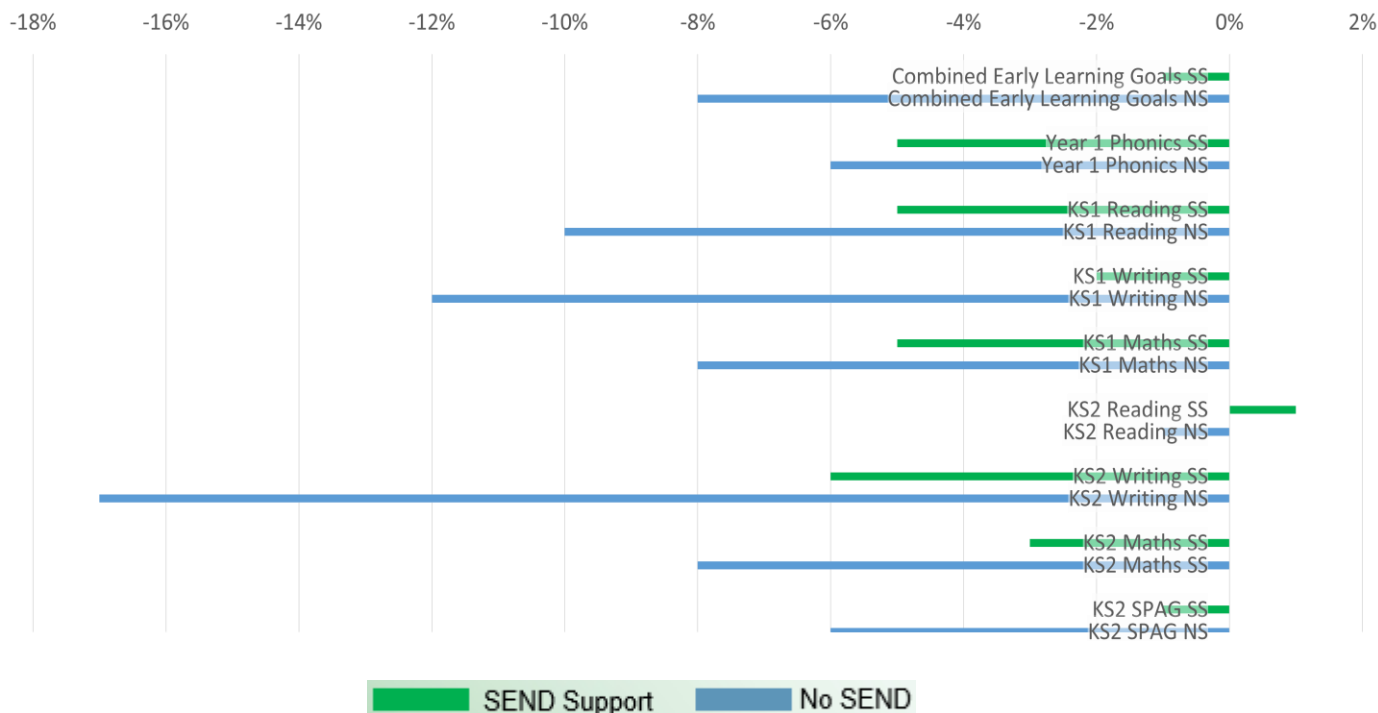
An example of how our existing range of diverse provision, commissioned by SEND partners including Clusters, comes together into an integrated pathway of assessment and support is included in Annex B. This was co-produced by SEND Cluster leaders, Pathways Learning Centre, and local authority teams in October 2022 to show schools the opportunities for identification of SEND needs across the graduated response and how, when matched with access to support at an appropriate level, the risk of school placement breakdown for children with SEMH needs can be minimised.

Educational Outcomes

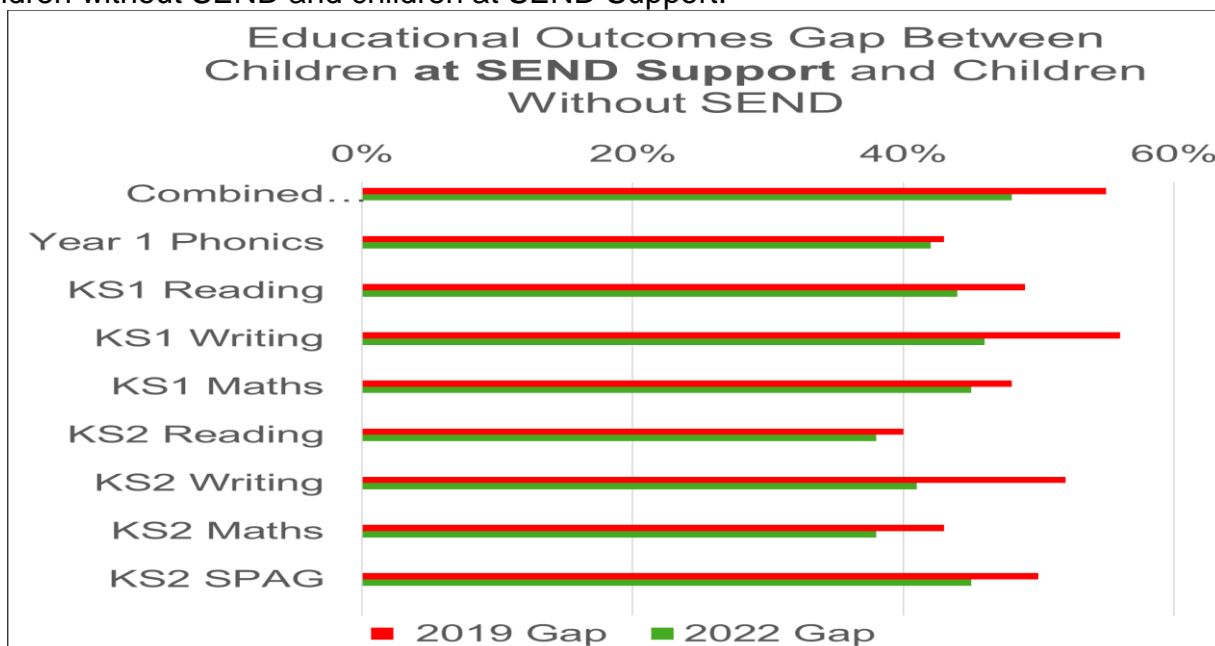
Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, no educational outcomes data has previously been available to inform cluster evaluation.

For the academic year 21/22, provisional educational outcomes data of children and young people without SEND and at SEND Support were compared with the same cohorts of children in 18/19. **Please note that the raw data and local analysis of educational outcomes is awaiting validation by the education performance team.**

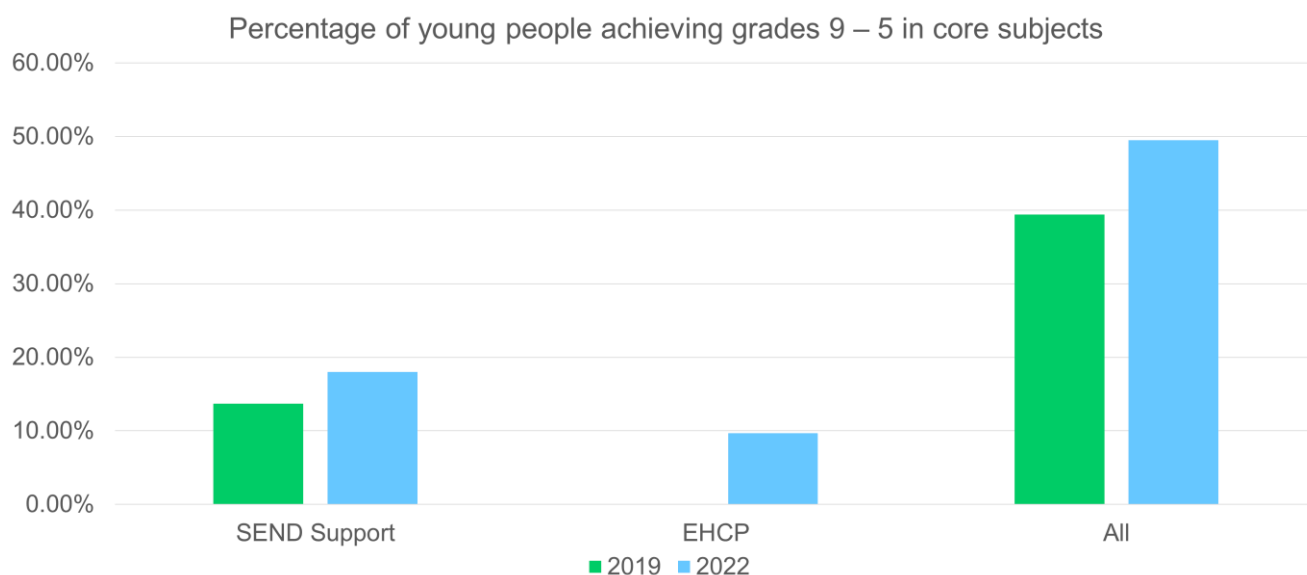
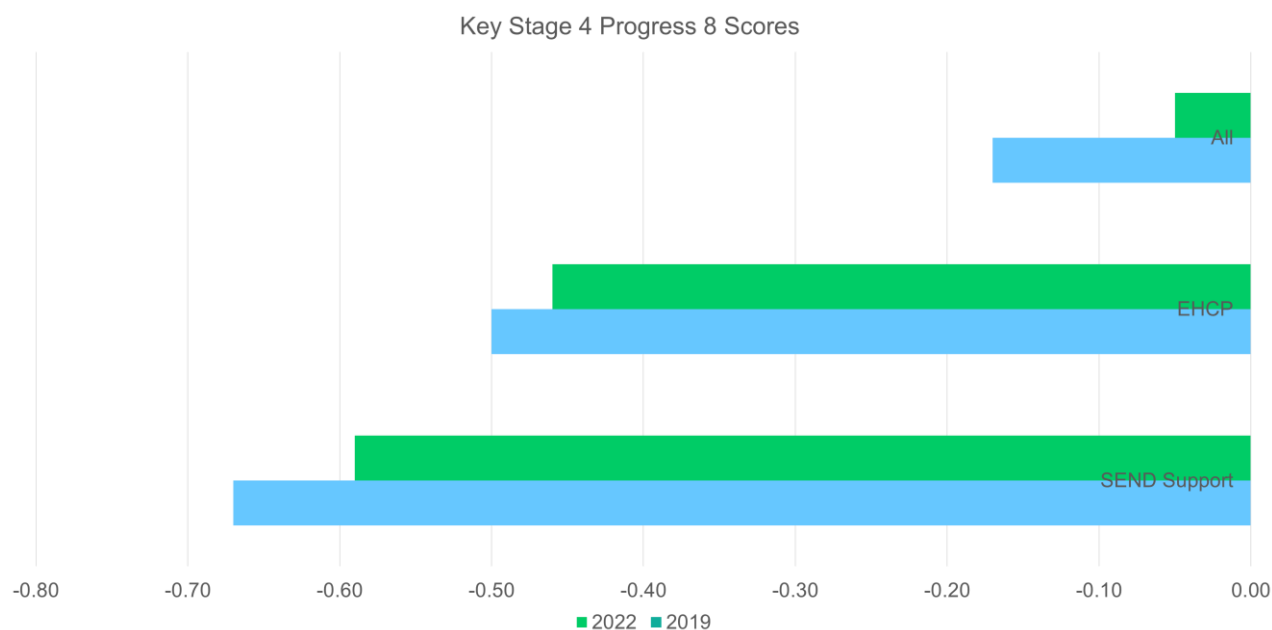
Results for children at primary phase indicate an overall reduction in educational outcomes between 18/19 and 21/22 for children without SEND and those at SEND Support (except for KS2 Reading where outcomes for children at SEND Support increased by 1%). However, the percentage reduction was **less** for children at SEND Support than for children without SEND in every assessment area:



This has resulted in a reduction in the primary phase gap in educational outcomes between children without SEND and children at SEND Support:



Results at secondary phase indicate an increase in Progress 8 scores and an increase in the percentage achieving grades 9-5 for all young people, including those at SEND Support:



Leadership of the SEND System

The need for increased and improved leadership of SEND in South Gloucestershire was identified in the 2017 Ofsted/Care Quality Commission Local Area Inspection and was included within the 2018 Written Statement of Action (the predecessor of the current APP). SEND Cluster teams have played a crucial role in providing this peer-to-peer leadership for schools, which is evidenced through the overwhelmingly positive feedback provided by headteachers and SENCOs annually. Annex C includes a selection of their comments.

Cluster Model Risks

SEND Cluster risks are managed through both the APP and Safety Valve risk registers and reported periodically to High Needs Working Group. The most significant of these are:

- Leadership Capacity: While capacity for the SEND Cluster leadership of headteachers and SENCOs is remunerated through the cluster budget, take-up of

posts is voluntary and represents significantly increased responsibility and workload for busy school leaders. Some leaders have left cluster roles when demands within their schools have increased. Without willing and supported experienced school leaders, the SEND Cluster model cannot function.

- **Financial Processes:** Cluster budgets reside with the cluster lead headteacher's school. Despite efforts to streamline invoicing and payment arrangements between schools, some immovable features of local financial infrastructure have resulted in processes remaining time consuming for cluster leaders and their school business managers. This further increases the risk of school leaders not wanting to become cluster leaders, and school decision-makers not wanting to expose their schools to unnecessary financial risk.
- **Commissioning:**
 - Cluster contracts and, in some cases, direct recruitment of cluster staff members are the responsibility of the cluster headteacher's schools. Like cluster financial processes, securing contractual and human resource arrangements is time consuming for cluster leaders and represent higher-risk activity for schools' governing bodies. This further increases the risk of schools and their leaders not wanting to lead SEND Clusters
 - Currently, cluster continuation and financing is delegated by Schools Forum on an annual basis. This restricts the commissioning of services and recruitment of staff to a twelve-month contract. As clusters embed and expand their longer-term aims, examples have emerged of this short-term finance cycle limiting providers' willingness to accept commissions. Of particular note, in 2022 clusters agreed to pool a percentage of their budgets to jointly commission a Primary Mental Health Specialist (PMHS) service from CAMHS. At the same time, South Gloucestershire's children's social care team also made the decision to commission additional PMHS capacity for their locality teams. Social care's investment was recurring revenue and the commission was approved by our local CAMHS provider. However, the cluster commission did not progress because recruitment of staff for our short-term commission represented a higher level of business risk.

Cluster Permanence

Evaluation has demonstrated the following improvements in South Gloucestershire's SEND system, which are associated with the activity of our SEND Clusters:

- Improved early and accurate identification of need, more closely aligned with national benchmarks
- Exceeded planned increase in the percentage of children and young people at SEND Support
- Reduced gap between local and national percentage of children and young people with an EHCP

- Reduced educational outcomes gap between children without SEND and children at SEND Support in the primary phase
- Improved Progress 8 scores and increased percentage achieving grades 9 to 5 in core subjects for all young people, including those at SEND Support
- Improved leadership of the SEND system through peer-to-peer school cluster model

Our SEND Cluster leaders are committed to continuing this work, building on the progress made so far to develop longer-term commissioning intentions and further influence all school's practice at SEND Support. This has the potential to continue to maintain children and young people at SEND Support and manage the expected local increase in requests for EHCPs predicted by Mastodon C.

Review of the cluster model's key risks has identified an association with the current annual cycle of financial delegation, which the transition to a permanently funded model of recurring revenue could mitigate through:

- enabling the SEND and Inclusion Planning and Partnerships Officer to create a SEND leadership career progression plan for headteachers and SENCOs, with training and development opportunities for emerging leaders. This would secure a long-term pipeline supply of cluster leaders
- funding an all-cluster finance officer, hosted within the local authority's education finance team, to manage all financial transaction on behalf of cluster leads (further scoping is required on the capacity needed for this post, with funding diverted from the current cluster remuneration of school business managers to cluster financial activity)
- funding an all-cluster commissioning officer, hosted by the local authority's children's commissioning team, to manage all cluster contracts on behalf of cluster leads (further scoping is required on the capacity needed for this post)
- enabling clusters to commission services and recruit staff to permanent contracts

Recommendations

It is recommended that Schools Forum:

- a. notes the impact of SEND Clusters during 2021/2022
- b. approves the establishment of SEND Clusters as a permanently funded element of the South Gloucestershire SEND system from the financial year 2023/24 onward
- c. approves the following additional business support, funded from the existing cluster budget, to facilitate sustainability of the permanent model:
 - i. local authority officer capacity to provide financial support
 - ii. local authority officer capacity to provide commissioning support
- d. notes the recommendation to the SEND Partnership that reducing exclusions and suspensions becomes the responsibility a multi-agency strategic and operational partnership group, of which the SEND Clusters would be members

(Annexes A, B and C attached as separate PowerPoint presentations)

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DSG Recovery Theme 3

Improved Identification of need and access to support in Early Years

To reduce the reliance on EHCPs by early identification of need and provision of the required support.

The purpose of this report is to monitor progress towards achieving the aims of theme 3 of the DSG recovery plan.

Context

Theme 3 has three distinct aims

- To improve the identification of needs within the early years
- To improve practitioner confidence and skills to intervene early to support children
- To reduce the number of EHCPs in early years

Schools Forum have allocated £200,000 during 2021-22 to support the development of initiatives within this theme. Research into the issues being faced by settings and families in the early years indicates that for many children, they can only access support once they have a diagnosis or an EHCP. This theme aims to provide sources of support and early identification of need without an EHCP in place and involves several workstreams, many of which have ran as one year pilots:

Theme 3: Early Years Workstreams	
Funding for Settings (to support children) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years Inclusion Support Fund (EYISF) • Transition Support Fund (TSF) 	Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Education Trust (AET) • SEND training for Childminders • Education Psychologist (EP) consultations for EY settings
Speech & Language Inclusion Hubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SALT support for Childminders • SALT support for parents • SALT consultations for EY settings • Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) training for practitioners 	Early Years Parental Support & Guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Treasures Stay and Play sessions • Virtual parent / care support sessions • Holiday activities and support

Some of the workstreams are complete, but other pilots continue to operate. Some of the one-year pilots will not be complete until December 2022 and one runs into 2023. A full analysis of the data will take place in early 2023, but the purpose of this report is to summarise impact at this point to secure services continue that are having positive impact and no break in support and provision occurs. This report therefore makes recommendations for 2023 as well as reporting on progress.

Progress of Workstreams:

Funding For Early Years Settings to Support Children: **Ongoing**

This funding provides financial support for children with additional needs, without an EHCP. This enables practitioners to provide support and strategies for children and families to determine if they

have long term needs, or if with the appropriate intervention, their needs can be met without the need for an EHCP.

This funding is available for children from age 2 until the end of Reception year in school.

The panel considers applications twice a month and has been in place from 12th April 2022. This is ongoing and not a pilot and outcomes of the panel are detailed below.

	May 2022		June 2022		July 2022	
	No of Children	Funding awarded	No of Children	Funding awarded	No of Children	Funding awarded
TSF	6	£34,800	16	75,400	20	85,800
EYISF	6	£23,147	13	53,175	13	57774
declined	4	-	11		27	
TOTAL	16	57,947	40	128,575	60	143,574

It is too early to report if this funding has had impact on EHCP numbers, but this data will be recorded and reported on from April 2023.

Training

Autism Education Trust (AET): Ongoing

Actual Spend: £7000 Ongoing Cost: £3500 per year *(EIO additional time required to run this pilot)*

This is a two-year pilot, 5 LA officers within EY team are trained to deliver this program, alongside integra which will continue to be available to all practitioners working in Early Years settings, childminders and Reception classes in schools. The Early Years team are targeting settings that have not yet engaged with the training and larger chain nurseries are having bespoke AET delivered to their whole staff teams. Full data will be available at the end of December to report on total number of settings with trained practitioners.

SEND training for childminders: Complete

Actual Spend: £8300 *(EIO additional time required to run this pilot)*

Impact had been previously reported on, 58 Childminders have completed this training package. It could be delivered again, but not in the immediate future, due to insufficient childminder numbers. The Early Years team is working to recruit more childminders as a priority throughout 2022 – 2023.

Education Psychologist (EP) Support to EY Settings: 1 year pilot starting Sep 2022

Actual Spend: £9000 for EP *(EIO additional time required to run this pilot)*

1 year pilot has started in September 2022 (delayed due to EP capacity and absence due to illness in EY team). EPs are working alongside EIOs to deliver outreach consultation meetings to 12 EY settings during this pilot year. These settings will benefit from EP and EIO observing practice within the setting together and providing strategies and suggestions to support practitioners to meet the needs of all children with SEND within the cohort. Support will be bespoke to the setting, considering the environment, resources and practitioner's skills and knowledge.

The settings for the pilot have been selected using the following criteria:

- 6 settings where there are typically lots of children with needs and frequent applications for inclusion funding
- 6 settings where staff are less confident to access support and are reluctant to take children with SEND.

The EPs are working in the settings, alongside staff in this pilot which should reduce the barriers as practitioners will not need to be released from the setting in order to access support. The success of this project will be reported on in July 2023.

Inclusion Hubs (all hubs commenced November 2022 for one year): Ongoing

SALT Contract Allocated Spend: £55000 Actual Spend: £52000

Inclusion Hub Allocated Spend: £10000 Actual Spend: £506 (to date - further ongoing costs)

Childminder Hubs (SALT support) are running monthly in three localities (Yate, Cadbury Heath and Filton) with varied attendance between 25% and 90% capacity

100% childminders attending report that their practice has developed because of attending a hub. Childminders reported progress in speech and language development of children 3 months after attending hub.

Parent Hubs (SALT support) for parents are running monthly in three localities (Yate, Cadbury Heath and Filton) often at full capacity.

SALT consultations for EY settings : practitioners book a consultation with a therapist to discuss concerns and strategies for a child in their setting, uptake was initially high, but is now variable.

SALT training for EY practitioners: Ongoing

After a delayed start (due to shortage of Speech and Language therapists), training commenced January 2022. A package of training is being delivered throughout each term and has been planned to meet the needs of the practitioners attending. Training is being delivered virtually each month and is recorded so all practitioners in South Glos can access at a convenient time.

Early Years Parental Support (commenced January 2022): Ongoing

Allocated Spend: £70,000 Actual Spend: £70,000

South Glos Parents and Carers (SGPC) have operated Little Treasures (term time stay-and-play support sessions open to families with a child under 5, with additional needs or a disability) in Warmley for some time. This one-year pilot was to fund an extension of Little Treasures into another locality (Yate), alongside additional workstreams of parent / carer support, holiday activities and support to practitioners to support children with additional needs transition into an EY setting.

Progress report at midpoint of this pilot:

Little Treasures Stay and Play Sessions: are running weekly in Warmley and Yate for families with a child under 5, with additional needs or a disability. The Warmley group supports 15 families,

and the Yate supports 10 families, there are 2 children on the waiting list for Warmley but there is some capacity to increase the number of families supported in Yate.

As part of the pilot a plan for practitioners (from EY settings) to attend some of the sessions to talk to parents and staff was made to establish links between settings and the ‘Stay and Play’ groups to support the transition of children into a preschool or nursery where appropriate. This element of the pilot will not be achieved as EY practitioners are not able to be released from the setting due to staff shortages and a national recruitment crisis.

Virtual parent / carer support sessions: these operate monthly, 7 families have attended during the first 6 months of the project.

41 families have received one-to-one support from SGPC, following a request and 6 professionals have contacted them and received support.

SGPC have partnered with Childrens Centres, the Families plus 0-5 support workers, Warmley Park school and SEND cluster 4.5 during this pilot.

Training for parents / carers

Workshops (with very positive feedback) have been provided for parents on

- Understanding and Supporting Sensory differences (0-5 years)
- Sleep

Further workshops are planned for the second half of the pilot.

Holiday activities and support for families of children under 5 with SEND:

Family Woodland Sessions enabled 12 early years children and their families to engage in sessions at Easter, half-term and during the summer holidays delivered by qualified forest school practitioners.

Woodland Play Scheme enabled 13 early years children to attend four 2-hour sessions during the summer holidays, parents were not required to stay with the children.

Additional sessions of Dancing tots, Gympanzees and Little Hatters were provided during the summer for up to 34 children per session.

Additional Early Intervention Officer (EIO): Ongoing

Actual Spend: £20,675

Many of these projects needed *additional EIO time* that the EY team had capacity to deliver, an additional full time EIO has been employed for two years to support the increasing SEND support required by the EY sector, 0.5 FTE of this EIO post has been funded from theme 3.

Risks to success of ongoing workstreams:

- The recruitment crisis in EY sector means settings are not able to release staff to attend training or consultations, as they are operating at full capacity with open vacancies. There is also high turnover of practitioners within settings so staff who access training may not remain in post long enough to demonstrate impact.
- Declining numbers of childminders in South Glos, a strategy to address this is being developed but the time taken for training and registration processes means numbers will not increase quickly.
- Increasing number of EY settings are closing, due to sustainability (low funding) and recruitment challenges. EY team need to prioritise increasing place capacity to ensure all children can access early education and childcare places.

Plan for Theme 3 (from January 2023):

The £200K has been allocated for an additional year, so a further set of pilots are proposed, alongside continued development of the successful pilots in year 1.

SALT Secondment to EY team

Cost = £42,000

This would be a consistent person who is part of the EY team for three days each week (term time only), gaining line management, clinical supervision, CPD, IT and corporate support from Sirona but working under the direction of the Early Years Advisers. This model gives greater flexibility to respond to the needs of the EY sector throughout the year.

Workstreams for SALT:

- **Childminder hub:** One each month (rotate localities, so occurs every three months in each children centre), delivering with an SSO
- **Parent hubs:** Three each month (one in each locality), delivering with an SSO
- **Insetting Support:** One year pilot for 15 settings (criteria to be determined), SALT would work alongside practitioners within each setting with a LA officer each term. **These settings will benefit from SALT and EIO/SSO observing practice within the setting together and providing strategies and suggestions to support practitioners to meet the speech and language needs of all children, including those with SEND within the cohort. Support will be bespoke to the setting, considering the environment, resources and practitioner's skills and knowledge.**
- SALT consultations: **Settings can book these as required to discuss appropriate strategies for children with speech and language concerns.**
- Training: **EY team and language champions within EY settings**

Extension of SALT commissioned services

Cost; £12,500

This provides a SALT one day per week to offer SALT training to EY practitioners working within South Glos. This would extend the same training offer to all South Glos practitioners that is available throughout BNNSG to those in other LAs.

Ongoing AET training

Cost: £3,500

This continues the successful pilot to offer funded training to all practitioners working in Early Years settings and Reception Classes in School. The EY team aim to engage all settings in this training, to upskill all practitioners to meet the needs of children with social and communication differences.

Portage Offer to Settings

Cost: £40,000 (1.0FTE £36,560 - £38,860 & £1000 for trainer costs)

Cost £60,000 (1.5 FTE & £1000 for trainer costs)

Background: Portage is a recognised programme for supporting parents to engage and work with their children who have complex special educational needs. These children are often identified prior to being in an early year's settings by health professionals who refer the family to the Portage team. Portage is overseen by the National Portage Association (NPA) who register Portage Home Visitors and provide professional development for the Portage community. Each year, Portage teams are assessed by the NPA and given a star rating for their work. South Gloucestershire have achieved a 5 Star rating for the last 3 years.

In South Gloucestershire, there is a very small but very dedicated Portage Team of 2.3 FTE comprising of 3 people. Portage is a gentle process which celebrates and builds on the very small steps made by children over time, it is not intended to be a quick intervention. Annually they will work with approximately 30 – 40 families, however, there continues to be a waiting list of 18 months for families to gain home visit support, prior to their children starting school.

The NPA Stamp of Approval Scheme is an award given to early year's settings who have demonstrated they deliver inclusive early years education based upon Portage Principles. This is awarded, following coaching and mentoring support (and assessment) from a qualified Portage practitioner. This is not currently offered to South Glos Early Years Settings due to the capacity of the Portage team.

Increasing the number of Portage Practitioners within the EY team would enable support to be given to settings to upskill practitioners in early identification of SEND and achieve the inclusive practices needed to achieve the NPA Stamp of Approval.

Settings are awarded the stamp of approval for a period of one year, upon demonstrating that they:

- a) meet all of the essential NPA criteria
- b) are supported by a Portage representative who is familiar with the setting and the work that they do with children with additional needs and their families.

This pilot aims to increase the Portage capacity, to enable the Portage Home visitors to support settings to gain the Portage Stamp of approval, as well as reducing the Portage waiting list. The EIOs within the EY team would also complete the Portage training to then share this in upskilling the EY workforce.

Additional Early Intervention Officer (EIO): Ongoing

Spend: £21,000

Many of these projects needed *additional EIO time* that the EY team had capacity to deliver, an additional full time EIO has been employed for two years to support the increasing SEND support required by the EY sector, 0.5 FTE of this EIO post has been funded from theme 3.

Total Spend = £139,000

Other funding opportunities to explore:

SGPCF / Little Treasures

Extension of EP offer

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APPENDIX C ATTACHED AS A SEPARATE DOCUMENT

South Gloucestershire Council

SCHOOLS FORUM

19th January 2023

Growth Funding Policy Criteria 2023-24

Purpose of Report

1. To agree with the Forum the criteria on which growth funding is allocated to maintained and academy schools and the provisional list of schools identified to receive growth funding in 2023-24.

Policy

2. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is an Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) grant which is used in its entirety to fund the Schools Budget which in turn supports school and pupil related expenditure. The grant is ring-fenced and must be used in accordance with criteria set by the ESFA.
3. Growth Funding is included within the Schools Block allocations of the DSG.
4. Criteria for allocating growth funding must be approved by Schools Forum.

Background

5. Primary and Secondary Maintained Schools and academies are eligible for Growth funding based on a policy agreed by Schools Forum.

Growth Funding Policy

6. The proposed criteria for agreeing and allocating growth funding in 2023-24 is:

(i) Permanent and Temporary Increases

7. Where schools increase their Published Admission Number (PAN) in agreement with the Local Authority (LA) and these are not captured in the October census until the following year or included in the estimated pupil numbers in the Authority Proforma Tool (AP Tool), funding will be allocated from the central growth fund.
8. PAN increases can be based on either one form of entry, or a part-time form of entry where there is a longer-term plan to increase the schools PAN up to one form of entry.

9. Increases can be based on a temporary or permanent change in the pupil admission numbers agreed with the LA.
10. Where a temporary change is agreed (i.e. a temporary bulge class is required for one year) growth funding will be calculated for the academic year. The school will receive 7/12^{ths} in September and 5/12^{ths} in April.
11. Where a permanent change is agreed (i.e. the schools PAN is increasing permanently, on a roll through basis) and this is not captured in the October census until the following year or included in the estimated pupil numbers in the AP Tool funding, schools will receive growth funding for the agreed roll through period (usually 7 years for Primary and 5 years for Secondary)
12. The growth funding allocation will be based on the Basic Entitlement rates for 2022-23 multiplied by the agreed pupil number increase and pro-rata based on the agreed date of change.
13. For example, where a school has agreed with the LA to increase by 30 pupils (a one form of entry) in September the growth funding calculation would be based on 30 pupils multiplied by the Basic Entitlement for the proportion of the financial year the class runs September to March.
14. However, if a school has a PAN of 20 and agrees an increase to 30 to create one form of entry in September, the allocation of growth funding will be based on 10 pupils multiplied by the Basic Entitlement for the portion of the financial year the class runs 7/12^{ths} September to March.

(ii) Exceptional Circumstances

15. Exceptional circumstances can arise where the LA may request /agree an increase above a school's current PAN number by any increment and mid-year, for example an unplanned closure of a local independent school as was the case in south Glos. recently. In these circumstances growth funding will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for the portion of the financial year the class runs.
16. On occasions (depending on the exceptional circumstance) the LA might agree to fund a guaranteed minimum number of pupils in a specific year group, in future years. Where this type of agreement is made the LA will calculate the difference between the October census numbers and the guaranteed minimum pupil numbers for the specific year group. The Basic Entitlement rate will be applied to the pupil number differential for the agreed number of years.

(iii) New Schools

17. New primary schools receive £42,000 for pre-opening setting up costs. They will also attract £50,000 for each of the first four academic years due to diseconomies of scale and setting structures while building up numbers.

18. New secondary schools receive £63,000 for pre-opening setting up costs. They will also attract £75,000 for each of the first four academic years due to diseconomies of scale and setting structures while building up numbers

19. New All Through Schools - New primary schools attached to an existing Secondary school to become an all through school receives £42,000 for pre-opening setting up costs plus the Primary school will attract £50,000 for each of the first four academic years due to diseconomies of scale and setting structures while building up numbers. In addition, the new all through school will receive an allocation of £50,000 per form of entry for the first academic year for the New Primary phase and £25,000 for the next three academic years (in line with previous Schools Forum agreement Sept 2015).

(iv) Growth Funding Settlement

20. The growth funding allocation for 2023-24 is £1,596,622 and included within the Schools Block Funding allocation. This is an increase of £486,539 from the 2022-23 allocation.

21. The Growth Funding allocation is based on the following factors

- £1,520 for each primary 'growth' pupil,
- £2,275 for each secondary 'growth' pupil, and
- £74,700 for each new school that opened in the previous year (that is, any school not appearing on the October 2021 census but appearing on the October 2022 census).
- An Area Cost Adjustment of 1.015% is applied to the above rates

The table below shows the data used to calculate the growth funding allocation for South Gloucestershire Schools.

LA Name [A]	LA Code [B]	Eligible primary growth [C]	Eligible secondary growth [D]	ACA (pupil weighted for fringe LAs) [E]	Allocation for primary growth [F] = [C] * £1,520 * [E]	Allocation for secondary growth [G] = [D] * £2,275	Number of new schools [H]	ACA weighted number of new schools [I] = [E] x [H]	Allocation for new schools [J] = [I] * £74,700	Total growth allocation [K] = [F] + [G] + [J]
South Gloucestershire	803	353.5	455.5	1.015	£545,186.90	£1,051,434.42	0	0.000	£0.00	£1,596,621.32

22. It should be noted that the Department for Education do not expect local authorities to use these rates in their local arrangements for funding growth.

23. Below is a provisional list of schools identified as likely to be eligible for growth funding in 2023-24 financial year.

School/Academy	Change / Reason for Growth	New School Opening Date / Date of PAN increase	No. of places April 23 to August 23	No of places Sept 23 to March 24
Abbeywood	Previous temporary Increase in PAN 180 to 210 made permanent in Sept 2023	01-Sep-21	30	30
Abbeywood	Permanent increase in PAN from 210 to 240	01-Sep-23	0	30
Charlton Wood	Final 5/12 payment for post opening and breach reception class roll through	01-Sep-19	30 places - added into APT (Authority Proforma Tool)	30 places - added into APT (Authority Proforma Tool)
Frenchay	Temporary Increase to 1FE throughout all year groups (1 year only)	01-Sep-22	70 (Max)	0
John Cabot	Temp Increase from 160 to 175 roll through year groups (1 behind due to break in Sept 18)	01-Sep-17	15	15
Lyde Green Primary	Increase reception from 60 to 90 roll through bulge	01-Sep-20	30	30
Manorbrook	Potential increase breach	01-Sep-23	0	30
Patchway	Exceptional Circumstance - Hong Kong increase - Yr9 breakeven 24 pupils for 3 years (roll through) and Yr 10 30 Pupils for 2 years (roll through) - Final Year Sept 23	01-Sep-21	54 (max)	24 (max)
Stoke Lodge Area	Potential temporary bulge class of 30	01-Sep-23	0	30
Yate Schools Area	Potential temporary bulge class of 30	01-Sep-22	0	30

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) The Schools Forum is asked to approve the criteria used for the Policy and the allocation of growth funding in 2023-24.

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South Gloucestershire Council

SCHOOLS FORUM

19th January 2023

Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23 Quarter 2

Purpose of Report

1. To update Schools Forum on the Dedicated Schools Grant and Safety Valve position as at Quarter 2 2022/23.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funded budgets

2. The net DSG budget excluding academies and High Needs recoupment, is £152,086k. The DSG is forecasting an outturn overspend position of £25,907k, no change since Quarter 1. This arises from a forecast in-year overspend of £8,109k, a forecast Safety Valve payment relating to the DSG recovery plan (£3,000k), a council contribution from the Financial Risks reserve relating the Safety Valve agreement (£334k) and a brought forward deficit balance of £21,132k.

3. Details of the latest DSG funding announcement including changes since Quarter 1 report is provided in the table 1 below.

Table 1 – DSG Funding Announcement

DSG Budget	Net £'000
Revised DSG March 2022 (as at Quarter 1)	150,462
Adjustments and Recoupment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Needs Block Import/Export / Free Schools / Recoupment (High Needs Place Return) / Supplementary adjustments 	1,176
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Years Block – January 2022 Census 	448
Total Revised DSG (July 2022) as at Quarter 2	152,086

4. The DSG funding comes from four funding block, the Schools Block, the Central Schools Services Block, the High Needs Block and the Early Years Block.

5. The overspend position by each funding block is provided in table 2 below and the key changes and risks in the subsequent paragraphs.

Table 2 – Funding position by Blocks

Funding by Blocks	Gross Budget	EFA / Other Income Budget	Budget Reserve (Approved Q1)	Net Budget (DSG)	Gross Exp	EFA / Other Income	Q2 Reserve	Net Exp	Over / (Under)
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Schools Block:									
Total Schools Block - Primary & Secondary Schools (excluding Academies)	105,800	-15,852	0	89,948	103,541	-13,603	10	89,948	0
Central Schools Services Block:									
Total Central Schools Services Block	3,343	-121	0	3,222	3,194	-132	160	3,222	0
High Needs Block:									
Schools & Independent Providers (including Academies)	46,307	-195	-8,013	38,099	51,868	-5,582	-8,187	38,099	0
Central Items	2,565	-361	-96	2,108	2,850	-592	-150	2,108	0
Total High Needs Block	48,872	-556	-8,109	40,207	54,718	-6,174	-8,337	40,207	0
Early Years Block:									
Private, Voluntary & Independent Providers	17,842	0	0	17,842	17,715	0	127	17,842	0
Central Items	935	-68	0	867	984	-48	-69	867	0
Total Early Years Block	18,777	-68	0	18,709	18,699	-48	58	18,709	0
Total In-Year DSG & EFA Funding	176,792	-16,597	-8,109	152,086	180,152	-19,957	-8,109	152,086	0
Total DSG In Year Overspend									-8,109
DSG Deficit Reserve B/F									-21,132
DSG Safety Valve Agreement 2022-2023									3,000
DSG Safety Valve Council Contribution from Financial Risks Reserve									334
Total DSG Deficit Reserve									-25,907

Schools Block

6. The Schools Block is forecasting an underspend of £10k, an improvement of £10k since Quarter 1.

Central Schools Services Block

7. The Central Schools Services Block is forecasting an underspend of £160k, an improvement of £160k since Quarter 1. This is mostly due to a provision made at year end for school admission and appeals charges no longer being required.

High Needs Block

8. High Needs Block is forecasting a £8,337k overspend at Quarter 2, an increase of £228k since Quarter 1. The overspend position is before applying the £3,000k forecast DSG safety valve payment and £334k council contribution.

9. The main areas where the forecasts have increased or decreased by £100k or more compared to Quarter 1 relate to the latest funding announcement as well as demand and/or price increases within the areas summarised below and supported by the changes in demand and price illustrated in Table 3.

10. South Gloucestershire Special Schools and Placements made to Pathways Learning Centre (PLC) are showing a reduced pressure of £225k since Quarter 1. This is due to a combination of additional income due to the funding announcement in July 2022, partly offset against an increase in the average cost of placements made at PLC.

11. Post 16 (Further Education College, Independent and Alternative Provision) is showing an additional pressure of £132k. This is due to a combination of the implementation of the new banding system linked to the safety valve work delivering savings of £157k compared to the target of £261k and price increases compared to Quarter 1.

12. Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools is showing an additional pressure of £164k due to a forecast increase in demand of 4 placements compared to Quarter 1 and a slight reduction in price. The forecast outturn assumes that the savings target of £414k will be achieved in this area.

13. Other Alternative Provision is forecasting an additional pressure of £108k since Quarter 1. This is due to an increase in demand (3 new alternative packages) and the average price has increased due to changes for some existing support packages.

14. The Quarter 2 figures include a contingency provision for new placements based on named placements and unknown placements as well as a provision for possible leavers. During Quarter 2 there can be a time delay on the data confirmations with educational settings and other alternative provisions regarding transfers and leavers. The forecast includes provision for these young people until the placement has been confirmed and a contract signed. Once all leavers and transfers have been confirmed, the financial position will be updated with the impact of the changes and reported to Schools Forum.

Table 3 – High Needs Demand and Price

High Needs Pressure areas	Outturn 2020/21	Outturn 2021/22	Quarter 1 2022/23	Quarter 2 2022/23
Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools - Placements No.s	111	107	129	134
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£1,647	£1,710	£1,670	£1,640
Statemented Support Provision including SG Pupils in OLA Schools No.	840	888	970	1,049
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£257	£273	£266	£247
Post 16 - FE Independent Specialist Placements	33	27	41	43
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£1,007	£1,184	£966	£1,001
Post 16 - FE Colleges	257	360	356	356
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£184	£167	£179	£182
Post 16 Alternative Provision	48	53	75	65
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£315	£378	£410	£414
Post 16 - Total Placements	338	440	472	464
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£282	£255	£284	£290
Education other than at School SENHN No.s	20	7	12	11
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£382	£681	£585	£602
Other Alternative Provision SENAP No.s *		35	38	46
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)		£247	£379	£375
OLA Special Schools No.s	79	88	104	109
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£476	£563	£571	£527
Early Years High Needs Support No.s (EHCPs only)	36	35	27	22
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£133	£175	£168	£216
Special Schools No.s	483	492	520	520
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£521	£561	£578	£577
Resource Bases No.s	142	139	149	152
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£520	£570	£515	£508
PLC No.s	150	169	170	170
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£646	£600	£542	£561

* during 2021/22 Alternative provision costs for Children in School monitored separately.

Early Years Block

15. The Early Years Block is forecasting an overspend of £58k, an increase of £58k since Quarter 1.

DSG Recovery Performance

16. As previously reported South Gloucestershire Council entered into a Safety Valve Agreement with the Department for Education. The agreement was based on the updated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) recovery plan using the Department for Education's (DFE's) Management Tool Template. The recovery plan has been based on the budget pressures identified as part of the budget build for 2021/22 to 2025/26 and the revised savings targets based on the High Needs Working Groups latest DSG recovery programme.

17. As part of the agreement, the Department for Education will support the council over the next 6 years to help clear the historical deficit. The first payment of £10,500k was received on 31st March 2022 and future instalments will be received following the submission of quarterly progress reports.

18. The second quarter progress report for 2022/23 was submitted to the Department for Education during September 2022, and confirmation of approval was received from the Department for Education, with the release of a 2nd payment of £750k in 2022/23. Further progress reports will be submitted in the next two quarters and the balance (£1,500) of the 2022/23 support will be provided on approval of progress.

19. Although the People's Department has been making good progress on implementing changes in line with the Safety Valve agreement, there is a continuing pressure around the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being requested, an increase in the cost of supporting young people with an EHCP as well as increased pressures from schools regarding funding and cost of living price increase. This continued pressure is a potential risk, which will make the task of continuing to meet the Safety Valve targets extremely challenging.

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EARLY YEARS FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS 2023/24

REPORT ATTACHED AS A SEPARATE DOCUMENT (PDF VERSION)

SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN

Mar 2023	2nd			

ANY OTHER BUSINESS