

Meeting title	SCHOOLS FORUM
Date	Tuesday 1st February 2022 – via Teams
Forum Members Present	Jo Stooling (Vice Chair), Chris Hobbs, Claire Crowther, Cllr Dine Romero, Kevin Burnett, Louise Malik, Roz Lambert, Steven Mackay,
Forum Members Not Present	Jo Marsh, Zoe Davy, Neil Everett, Gary Lewis
Observers	
Officers Present	Christopher Wilford, Mandy Bishop, Olwyn Donnelly, Philip Frankland, Richard Morgan, Rosemary Collard, Justine Kill (notes)
Officers Not Present	Mary Kearney-Knowles
Distribution	As above
Next meeting	29 th March 2022

1.	Apologies Received	ACTION
	JS welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	No declarations were made.	
3.	Minutes of the last meeting 7 th December 2021	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting were agreed as accurate, with the correction of items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Family Support and Play Service</u> • Page 2, paragraph 4 • Page 2, paragraph 5 • <u>HERS</u> • Page 4, paragraph 3 • <u>Early Years Funding</u> • Page 5, paragraph 2 <p>JK amended and circulated updated notes.</p> <p><u>Comments</u></p> <p>KB - At the last meeting, KB asked whether there was a 'schema' available to show how all the SEND 'jigsaw pieces of support' fit together and RC said that it is something RC and OD could map out.</p> <p>KB - was wondering whether RC had had an opportunity of doing this?</p>	

RC – RC and OD hope to produce a diagrammatic schema to show how SEND services support children at different levels of need but currently there isn't time to do so.

JS mentioned that JM had produced a schema showing school provision for SEND in P.A.T. and she might be able to help with the overall LA schema or know someone who can?

KB - mentioned at the last meeting that it would be good to know how many MAT SEND provisions supported what the LA was doing (and visa versa). OD advised that she was having a meeting with the MATs around this point. Is there any update?

OD - I am currently still looking at SEND services and how to avoid duplication with any MAT services. There is good buy in from MAT CEOs and there's another meeting coming up on 2nd March 2022.

4. Budget Update 2022-23

RM presented paper 4

Overall funding increases

At the last meeting we talked about the methodology of NFF for schools. This has now been provisionally allocated by DfE and will be finalised in the next few months.

The DFE have provided the DSG allocation by block for the 22-23 financial year. Allocations below:

	Schools block (£s)	Central school services block (£s)	High needs block (£s)	Early years block (£s)	Total DSG allocation (£s)
DSG 2021-22	120,962,812	1,065,296	28,798,240	10,545,328	161,371,676
DSG 2022-23	123,782,344	1,055,258	31,298,139	9,792,853	165,928,594
Increase	2,819,532	-10,038	2,499,899	-752,475	4,556,918
% increase	2.33%	-0.94%	8.68%	-7.14%	2.82%
Supplementary grant allocations	3,642,691	-	1,155,373	0	4,798,064
% addition	3.01%	0	4.01%	0	2.97%
Overall increase	6,462,223	- 10,038	3,655,272	- 752,475	9,354,982
	5.34%	-0.94%	12.69%	-7.14%	5.80%

Good increase, as this means it will generate additional resources for schools of approx. 1.4% over the coming years.

The DFE have indicated that they intend to use the ACA values in the hard formula when they introduce it, and in a recent consultation they indicated that they will expect Local Authorities to move towards the ACA levels in the future.

Schools Supplementary Grant

For 2022-23 the DfE have announced a new grant allocation for mainstream schools. The grant allocation methodology (appendix 3) sets out the allocation methodology by DfE.

The total allocated to schools in England equates to £1.2billion and it is estimated that B&NES share of the grant equates to £3.643m

Special schools are not covered by this grant and therefore a separate mechanism will be required to provide them with equivalent funding.

Pupil Premium Grant

Pupil Premium grant funding allocations have an increase in funding, set out in the table below.

Grant	2021-22	22-23	Increase %
Primary FSM6 pupils:	£1,345	£1,385	2.97%
Secondary FSM6 pupils:	£955	£985	3.14%
Looked-after children:	£2345	£2,410	2.77%
Children who have ceased to be looked-after:	£2345	£2,410	2.77%
Service children:	£310	£320	3.23%

Early Years Funding

The early years funding allocation is still provisional. The final allocation is based on the January pupil count rather than the October census.

The 1.4% increase has been allocated to the rates of allocation to the LA.

A 1.4% increase is disappointing as early years settings will be affected by minimum wage increases for many of their staff. Early years settings do not attract teacher's pay and pension grants for any staff that hold teaching qualifications.

Early years settings also do not attract the supplementary grant.

High Needs Funding

The High Needs Block has attracted a reasonable increase for 2022-23.

Overall, a £3.655m increase in allocations has been received which equates to a 12.69% increase on the 2021-22 allocation.

The High Needs Block increase includes an element supplementary grant (payable to special schools). This is different to mainstream schools where the supplementary grant has been specified for mainstream schools with rates prescribed by the DfE.

For special schools the DfE stated that LA's should look to allocate the funding through increased top ups.

In 2020-21 the DSG year end accounts showed a DSG deficit of £5.424m due to

high needs pressures.

During 2021-22 we are observing significant pressures in the High Needs Budgets and are forecasting that an increased deficit of approx. £12.6m is being projected.

Significant increases are being observed in our most complex cases with the Joint Agency Pooled Budget showing a £1.8m increase in costs whilst the number of pupils being supported has remained stable.

Similar pressures are being observed in EHCPs in special school top up (bandings) that have shown a 13% increase this financial year. The numbers of pupils in independent special schools has risen by 20% from March 2020.

These increased pressures show that even a 8% increase in funding last year has not kept pace with the pressures being observed. The 12.69% increase in 2022-23 will help towards the pressures but it is not anticipated that it will eradicate the ongoing increase in the deficit.

The extent of these pressure will see the DfE formally requiring us to enter into the deficit management planning process during 2022-23. This will require regular returns to the DfE on what we plan to do to recover the situation.

Our Strategic SEN plan involves enhancing our local provision with increased provision on special schools, colleges and special units in mainstream schools. During 2021-22 several of these increased provisions have come on track and more will be operational during 2022-23. It is hoped that this will limit the need to place pupils in expensive independent provision often at a considerable distance from the family home, also incurring transport costs for the LA.

The situation would be worse had the LA not supported the DSG in 2018-19 with a contribution of £2.3m towards the pressures that exist in the High Needs budget. Many LA's are reporting pressures on high needs and further discussions with the DfE are occurring on a national level to support LA's in deficit.

School Improvement and Monitoring Grant – Maintained Schools Only

The DfE consulted on the removal of the grant that supports local authorities in its school improvement of maintained schools. Until now maintained schools have received school improvement support and advice from the Local Authority (or its commissioned service) free of charge.

In support of this process the DfE have provided a grant based on maintained school pupil numbers to the local authority. From 2022-23 the grant will be reduced by 50% and for 2023 -24 the grant will be removed.

In 2021-22 B&NES received the minimum allocation allowed under the conditions of the grant being £50k. So for 2022-23 we will receive £25k.

As we have very few maintained schools (6 primary and 1 secondary) we feel we can manage the reduction for 2022-23. However moving forward to 2023-24 we will have to consider the options available.

The DfE intend to amend the school funding regulations to allow Local Authorities to de-delegate from maintained schools a sum suitable to deliver the school improvement function. During 2022 we will consult with the maintained schools to plan our approach for the removal of the grant.

Questions and Comments

LM – would you be able to share changes of sparsity for each school as there's a significant change. Government funding in 2020, small schools did worse than bigger schools. It would be good to see what sparsity was then, and what it is now.

RM – could be a bit technical. In the past, DfE have looked at individual schools and the distance children need to travel, or if that school didn't exist, the distance it would take to travel to another school. They then put a threshold on distances to what is, and what isn't allowable.

KB – re the DSG and different blocks. Inflation pressures aren't shown. Is there any predicted hole or increase in demand?

RM – will come back re this question.

KB – the schools block got 5.34% overall increase, supplementary grant of 3.01%, does this cover the National Insurance hike in April? If so, how much better off will the school block be after inflationary pressures?

RM – inflation pressures are difficult to quantify.

RM doesn't know about the teachers pay award and if they move to the £30k, the LA pay award for April 2021 is yet to be finalised. We don't know what the impact of rising electricity and gas charges and the National Insurance levy increase will have on the overall school budget.

DfE 3.01% will cover new inflationary pressures schools will face. If this is the case, 2.3% in NFF could be covering 2% increase for schools generally.

As we move through academisation the LA is losing knowledge and data on pressures on individual schools; we don't see their accounts like we do with maintained schools.

SM – the supplementary grant will go into DSG from the year after.

Pay, have you heard if the supplementary grant will be needed for the pay increase for teaching and support staff for next year, or National Insurance? If pay rises by 1% it will cause pressure. NFF increase and supplementary grant cover all increases and pay rise, there will be a funding cut in effect.

RM – overall 5.34% in school budgets, National Insurance and energy would get close to eating up the fund.

CH – Jeff Tatum advised to put in for 100% funding for energy. Is there any news on procurement?

RM – LA hasn't yet decided on procurement on gas and electricity, still waiting for a decision. It will depend on the circumstances of the school and how efficient they are.

KB – has RM heard if there is anything in particular on energy contracts for schools and LAs?

RM – there is a training programme from ESFA about procuring energy, best

value on the market, etc.

DR – is it possible to know how many schools are producing their own energy and what we can do to promote schools to be more self-sufficient; solar, wind, ground source pumps?

RM – Chew Valley have a wind turbine, not sure if it does anything specific.

No full list of schools self-generating energy.

RM will check with Jeff Tatum if there's any benefit.

DR – this would also be a good way of us jointly achieving the climate challenge, significant contributor.

LM – there is a public sector decarbonisation scheme, public bodies can apply for it. MATs can apply to get funding for renewable heating resources.

CH – done work on Bath and West Community Energy, charity for solar panels with Writhlington School. Looking to do with other schools too.

KB – one thing on Early Years, there was a mention in the letter to DR about some form of additional funding; that the LA are receiving a grant to support business. Could any of this be used for support for the Early Years sector?

RM – the Covid grant is available to the LA to support businesses within the area due to Covid pressures. This can be applied for by Early Years, but not in the same league as grants allocated to schools.

KB – is the LA supporting Early Years through this?

RM – yes, supporting businesses and Early Years settings.

PF – has been speaking to colleagues, Invest in Bath, and they have just gone live with another funding round, £500 - £1500, amounts don't align with DfE.

This will be open for the whole of February, grants will be decided on following February. If it's divided up further, there will be a lot less funding. We did get additional funding for the sector to support settings to stay open all year round, especially for key workers. Limited funding to apply for and reallocate if successful.

RL – we're right to identify the real issue in lack of funding and increase in salaries in Early Years settings and small businesses.

KB – is there any possibility for a stream of income for Early Years that hasn't been looked at?

DR – similar point, do we know if nurseries and Early Years private providers know they can apply for grants? Once they've applied, they'd be in the running for further grants. This would be good for all nurseries and Early Years providers to know.

PF – can inform and encourage, but can't get everyone to apply.

PF – highlighted funding is going down for Early Years. DfE have upped census monitoring in Early Years in the last year using methodology to claw back funding. Additional census in spring and summer last year. Anticipated funding this year will be set on an annual basis, on assumption the DfE is back to normal.

RL – support was available during Covid, but now things are biting; back on own two feet with less resources.

High Needs – DfE don't have a mechanism for special schools so this is left to the LA. The deficit will grow.
 In the next financial year, the DfE will have a conversation with the LA on the deficit recovery plan / strategic SEN plan on how we manage the deficit over the coming years.

KB – Supplementary grant, only affects maintained schools at the moment. What is currently on offer for the maintained schools? What is given to them that they will lose, or the LAS will lose as supporting other services in the LA?
 CW – LA services won't be affected, will be used to buy in school improvement services and commission a challenging support partner to buy in a number of days each. This is part of the S.Glos alliance; 70 primary schools Heads in B&NES. We will discuss in the next academic year how services will be paid for in the future.

KB – is there a central fund for MATs? DfE identified a historical grant paid by the LA. DfE decided to remove anomaly and save the resource to use somewhere else.

RL – is there any contributions to the Early years team?
 CW – yes, academies have top budget to pay for services.

KB – another back door way for academisation.
 Need clarification on page 11 of the appendix, grant not counted as part of individual budget.
 RM – Pupil Premium and Supplementary grant are not classes at NFF allocations. Those two grants are on top of minimum funding guarantee.

5. Early Years Funding

PF presented paper 5

Letter went to DfE, their job was to reply and send back up the chain, sign off and pass back to us.

Further to the paper in December 2021, this paper would then be our intention on how to allocate the funding we have been given.

Announcement on funding allocations 2022/23 financial year On 26th November 2021 the DfE provided details as to how the £160 million is to be broken down for most Councils. In Bath and North East Somerset, the following apply:

An increase of 21p an hour in the 2-year-old entitlement rate, raising it to £5.80 received by Bath and North East Somerset Council.

An increase of 17p an hour in the 3- and 4-year-old entitlement rate raising it to £4.61 based on the Council receiving a protected uplift to the minimum funding

rate.

An increase in the Early Year's Pupil Premium (EYPP) by 7p to 60p per hour, equivalent to up to £342 per eligible child per year for a child accessing the full universal offer of 570 hours. This is only paid for the 3+ offer and is the first increase since 2015 when the premium was introduced.

The Disability Access Fund, an additional payment made to providers to help to make reasonable adjustments within their provision to support eligible 3 and 4 year old children with a disability, will also increase by £185 to £800 per eligible child per year.

At this stage Bath and North East Somerset has only been notified of these changes but not the overall budgets as these are still to be assessed by the DfE in line with the 3, rather than usual 1, censuses we have had to undertake this year.

Proposed funding rates and formula allocation for 2022/23 financial year

To maintain the current funding formula but apply the DfE increases as appropriate under the guidance. This would result in the following changes to the formula from April 2022:

2-year-old rate

Currently £5.59 an hour, increasing to £5.80, a full pass through, £3,306 for the full 570 hours.

3- and 4-year-old rate

During the last two increases Bath and North East Somerset has passed through in full the 8p increase in 2019/20 and 6p in 2020/21, 14p in total making the current rate £4.14 an hour.

For 2022/23 to increase the rate to £4.30 passing through 16p out of the total increase of 17p. The remaining penny to be used to support the Council costs which have had no increase in the amount charged to the DSG budget for the last 2 financial years.

This means from the additional 31p made available to the Council over a 3 year financial period, 30p has been passed through, a 3% draw down (97% pass through) which is less than the 5% (95% pass through) permitted by the DfE's DSG regulations.

This funding increase would mean an EYE place full time would be worth £2,451 for the universal offer of 570 hours, £4,902 for the full extended hours offer of 1140 in a year.

In addition, all children would continue to receive the universal deprivation supplement of 2p an hour to create a fund at each setting (subject to a £10 minimum per funding period) to provide support to children who the setting identify as needing additional support but do not, or do not yet, qualify for support through other routes.

The deprivation supplement for children who qualify for the Early Years Pupil

Premium (EYPP) remains at 65p. The EYPP rises by 7p an hour from 53p to 60p in line with the new funding allocated to Councils. This means in total an EYPP child will now receive an extra £1.25 an hour on top of their basic funding or £712.50 a year if they attend the full 570 hours.

The Disability Access Fund increase will continue to be administered by the SEND team.

Consultation with the Early Years Reference Group

The above proposal has been shared with the Reference Group. As part of that paper, it was noted that given the lateness of the DfE announcements there was no room to undertake a full scale review of the funding formula ahead of the 2022/23 financial year and meet the funding approval deadlines. Given that the DfE already know the further allocations for the subsequent two financial years it is hoped that they will make an earlier announcement in 2022/23.

Questions and Comments

KB – is the letter re funding, and children amount of children per member of staff missing the plot? What is the sector still short on, and what would they ideally need?

PF – there are statistical ratios on staff to children, but by the time you add children and increases, this offsets salary costs and inflation.

RL – is unhappy with the letter, the Government seem to be saying ‘we’re giving you money, so why are you moaning?’

The idea of 13 children to one member of staff is a concern.

The whole idea of having to vote, the LA have their hands tied.

We are having a real recruitment crisis, we’re not being able to offer good salaries at the moment. Staff don’t want to go for a badly paid job when they can get an easier life elsewhere.

CC – we’re stuck between a rock and a hard place. £20k Early Years funding isn’t enough.

Providers are at breaking point. 84% of providers are having difficulty recruiting, 52% say pay is a barrier.

Staff won’t want to look after children on a 1:13 basis.

One setting had to close and go to reduced occupancy as they did not have enough staff to run it.

Can we ask for a recruitment retention policy and work with colleagues and show how Early Years is a pathway.

1:13 ratio will mean the quality of provision will be reduced.

Are we forcing settings to go back to a school approach? We need to start fighting a bit harder, collectively, collaboratively.

JS – not being able to recruit due to salaries is putting additional pressure on staff, in nursery, Early Years and schools settings.

DR – it is clear the response is required back to the person PF has been

DR

	<p>speaking to. DR is happy to make a response, ballsy with facts and figures highlighting that it is not good enough and doesn't address need, or the need to do better. DR is happy to pursue the idea of a recruitment fair.</p> <p>KB – two elements of childcare and early education. Anything that can be presented as evidence, parental choice, early education and impact on schools is being shown in impact and cuts. Early Years settings probably would do anything they could before letting anything happen to standards. Anything around those two strands might help with the letter.</p> <p>MB – there are issues with recruitment and retention across a range of factors. We are looking at pay scale. The adult social care fair didn't generate a huge amount of follow-ups. We're now looking at employing through the NHS. Our link with Bath College is important. JS – there are opportunities looking at digital strategies for recruitment. MB – we need social media presence. CC – we need a recruitment and retention policy; more than just a recruitment fair. We need to take responsibility for the Early Years sector and support to overcome challenges. PF – there are a few strands to cover. PF met with the team responsible for looking at recruitment and retention. PF spoke with RC to ascertain they have spoke with the sector. PJ and JE will be meeting with the Employment Engagement team. New colleagues want to help and support with the issues CC mentioned about training grants, bursaries, etc. There is a debate between early education and childcare on who benefits from what; families to work, education? When it comes to evidence, there is decades of longitude studies explaining benefits of early education for children with disadvantaged backgrounds. The National Childcare strategy was all about that. It is up to people to do something about it, not ignore it and treat it as an add on extra.</p> <p>SM – Pupil Premium funding for schools should be spent on Early Years. If it is spent on Early Years, it will be improving Early Years education. KB – there are lots of studies, young children finding their feet and discovering themselves. Very frustrating.</p> <p>VOTE - Does the Forum approve the 2022/23 Early Years Entitlement Funding Formula as outlined in this paper?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forum were all in agreement with the proposal <p>JS said this is a really positive step forward in support of the Early Years sector.</p>	
6.	Special School Supplementary Grant	

RM presented paper 6

For 2022-23 Mainstream schools have been allocated a new supplementary grant to cover the cost of the social care levy on national insurance and other inflationary pressures.

Special Schools have been excluded from the methodology and additional resources have been allocated to the local Authority with a view that we increase the top-up values of the special schools to support them through the inflationary pressures.

Mainstream schools have been allocated additional resources to cover inflationary pressures.

The grant does not cover special schools but the DFE have provided an additional allocation of resources to the high need block and suggest that Local Authorities negotiate increases in top-up values for these schools.

The Mainstream grant equates to an uplift of the Schools Block DSG of 2021-22 of 3.01%

Special schools are funded on an amount per place (£10,000) and a top-up related to the EHC Plan. We use bandings to group pupils with similar needs.

The overall Special school budget is estimated to amount to £11.386m This includes both the place funding and the top-up funding.

If we then take the same percentage increase as allocated to mainstream schools (3.01%) this would mean that special schools should receive £342k additional resources.

The DFE have stated that they expect the additional funding to be added to top-up values so by adding the £342k to the top up funding on a simple per pupil basis adds £654 to each top up value.

B&NES will notify Other Local Authorities of the increase in banding values for B&NES special schools so that they can pay the same increase in top up from April 2022.

South West Finance officers have discussed the principles of this approach and have agreed to support the payments in this way.

Alternative approaches to developing the methodology have been considered with percentage increases to the various top up banding and whilst this may be more equitable it would be cumbersome to administer in comparison to the preferred approach.

The grant itself is time limited as it is expected like the supplementary grant for mainstream schools to be incorporated into the ongoing funding following the SEN review publication.

*(**Please see paper 5 of the agenda pack for full breakdown and details)*

Questions and Comments

LM – understands the simplistic calculation, but is worried about staffing in special schools will be reflective of need, higher levels means more staffing.
RM – said it is slightly more complex. There are 6 band levels. Band 7 is the exception to the band mechanism.

Looked at the split in pupils in bands, they are relatively stable across schools; level of need is comparable therefore, will look to use simplistic methodology because we don't know what will happen in the next financial year.

LM – independent schools, with the National Insurance going up and pressure on budgets, we wouldn't want to see an automatic amount going to independent schools; they could be paid at a higher rate than our schools.

RM – we do get individual independent schools asking for more on a regular basis.

RC's team has fended these off in the past. We won't give a blanket increase across the sector. We will look at requests coming in. It's clear the supplementary grant is not for independent schools.

RL – out of county children are funded by the LA, there are lots of questions which could go on forever.

KB – the level of need is comparable amongst bands. Do you mean in terms of costs around each child?

RM – the number of pupils are relatively comparable across special schools. Band 4 and band 5 are relatively similar. Won't be doing anyone down by putting an ex amount of pound on band 5, if significant enough to have a complicated approach.

RC – LM's point re independent schools, they come to us and ask for increases, we only agree a certain percentage which is reasonable. We only agree for specific reasons, this is well monitored and looked at.

OD – we're using NAS contract guidelines looking at requests to keep a lid on pricing increases.

RM asked if JS has any comments from a special school perspective?

JS – Amelia the Business Manager is in conversation with Fosseyway, looking at impact on changes. There's a big disparity in banding, unstable medical needs means huge staff requirements in different levels of medical and education support.

Putting in intricate system before the SEND review and teachers pay awards.

It's not worth investing time in a complex system as we'll just go round and round in circles. Without salary information, we can't budget

Keep campaigning that we need something in place for special schools.

Happy with how it is at the moment. Good to know timescales on supplementary grant for one year and what it's spent on. We need clarity on this.

RM – the one year issue depends on SEND review proposals and highlights for longer term. There could be a whole change in mechanism, and we should start to clarify directions on what the DfE plan to do.

JS – EHCP and funding review is generic. Health and funding is getting smaller. The balance needs to be addressed on the funding allocation. We need to look at and see the impact on B&NES schools.

	<p>The Forum was asked to comment on the planned approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone confirmed they are happy to support this 	
7.	<p>SEND Update</p>	
	<p>PowerPoint presentation was circulated. Any questions, please contact Rosemary Collard or Olwyn Donnelly.</p>	
8.	<p>A Pilot Early Help Package for Pupils at risk of Referral to HERS due to suspected Mental Health / Emotional Needs</p>	
	<p><u>OD presented paper 8</u></p> <p>The government guidance, ‘Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions’ (2014) outlines the responsibilities of schools/academies to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported, so that they are able to access education and remain in their home school whenever possible.</p> <p>When schools are unable to support pupils to access mainstream or special school due to their health needs, the Local Authority has a statutory duty to arrange suitable education. The pupils are then referred to the Hospital Education Reintegration Service (HERS). Over recent years there has been a significant change in the profile of pupils’ medical needs, with the majority now referred to HERS due to a primary mental health need.</p> <p>The service was commissioned in 2018 to meet the needs of 33 learners, it currently has 80 pupils on roll with a current referral rate of 11 per week.</p> <p>The impact of mental health issues on attendance is a national issue.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>It is proposed that we pilot an early help offer for pupils where attendance is becoming a concern due to anxiety, and they are at risk of being referred to HERS. Schools would have the option to buy a preventative package for a fixed fee and time period. The schools would contribute a proportion of their AWPU, the weekly rate for the duration of the package, up to a maximum of 8-10 weeks.</p> <p>This proportion of the AWPU would meet just under 50% of the cost of supporting these students and so we are proposing that the LA match fund this for a year as a pilot project to allow us to evaluate the impact of an early help offer here in B&NES.</p> <p>Should the early help package be successful, it would keep child in education in their home school community where their outcomes, both academic and social would be significantly improved. It would also prevent further loss of the AWPU should they move into HERS and save the additional cost per pupil to the LA.</p> <p>Forum is asked to approve the proposed pilot to run for a year, after which a report will be brought back to allow evaluation of its impact and a decision made</p>	

if the programme should be continued and/or extended.

Report

The HERS is currently going through a recommissioning process which has included consultation with key stakeholders such as schools, families, students in HERS and health professionals. A number of key themes emerged which informed the new service specification but there was also a clear message from all parties that some sort of 'pre-HERS support' was needed.

There has also been contact with other Hospital Education Services across the region and nationally and with the National Association for Hospital Education. This has allowed us to take the learning from innovations such as the 'Medical Needs in Schools Project' in Oxford and the importance of supporting the home schools around their statutory responsibilities and best practice when supporting pupils with medical needs in schools.

Alongside a clear training offer for schools, the Hospital Education Services in Dudley and Northamptonshire have successfully implemented an 'early help' approach, with support from their Schools Forum.

Colleagues in Dudley have shared some of their learning for a successful service. Apart from the time frame of 8 – 10 weeks, they found that a service that was associated with, but separate from, the Hospital Service worked best. It allowed the emphasis to be on mentoring the student and supporting the wider family system as well as the home school. On occasions where the early help did not prevent the pupil moving on to HERS, it allowed them to have a fresh start

For this pilot, it is proposed that a provider would be commissioned to deliver the pilot, either as a direct award or a contract variation. It would require 2 full time practitioners at a cost of £50K each and holding a caseload of up to 10 students at a time, with the expectation that each practitioner would work with at least 30 students over the course of the academic year.

The chosen provider would need to demonstrate:

- An understanding of schools, wider family systems and other early help systems across the LA
- An understanding of SEMH and evidence of experience and further training in mental health
- An ability to make working connections with community health and social care services
- Access to support to evaluate the impact of the project
- An understanding of the remit of the pilot and ability to meet key KPIs around increased attendance and engagement with learning, identification of possible SEND and reduction in onward referrals to the HERS.

Questions and Comments

LM – is the contribution from the LA or DSG?

LM – how are you going to inform and advertise that this service is available?

OD – we are looking at the whole system and running conferences to promote the work.

KB – money from DSG will be well spent as schools will save money. Is the LA putting in from another budget on top of this, or all top sliced from the DSG?

RM – element of DSG is a one off budget, coming from practical activity it

	<p>utilises a one year project. Will reduce deficit on DSG. OD – if 10 children were prevent to HERS, the service would pay for itself. RM – part of one allocation from the High Needs block is to pay for two practitioners.</p> <p>We need to support and look for schools to take an active part in allocating children towards this project.</p> <p>KB – is this going to the Schools Standards Board for CEO's to buy into? CW – B&NES attendance panels are a key area for this.</p> <p>Does the Schools Forum feel able to support this proposal?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forum are in agreement 	
9.	AOB	
	<p>RM mentioned that the NFF Factor value had been amended on Appendix 1 of the 4th paper on budget. RM will circulate the amended version.</p>	RM
9.	Date of next meeting	
	29 th March 2022	