

Divisions Affected - ALL

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 July 2021

SEND High Needs Funding for Academic Year 2021-22

Report by Corporate Director of Children's Services/Education

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider the Cabinet report attached as Appendix 1 and present their findings to the Cabinet meeting on 20 July 2021.

Executive Summary

1. For mainstream schools, the national expectation is that there is use funding already in their budget to provide services for children with SEND. Top-Up funding is additional funding allocated to a setting or school to enable a pupil with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan to participate in education and learning. Mainstream schools require adequate and proportionate funding to be able to meaningfully include children with special educational needs. Top-Up funding is from the High Needs Block, part of the Dedicated Schools Grant.
2. For the academic year commencing September 2020, Cabinet agreed increases in Top-Up funding to Early Years, Primary and Secondary schools in September 2020 and to Special Schools in January 2021.
3. The Cabinet report recommends that the increase in Top-Up funding for 2020-21 is maintained for the academic year 2021-22. This an interim arrangement pending consultation on whole system reform (including a full funding formula review for implementation in September 2022).
4. If the increase were not agreed for the new academic year, then the High Needs deficit would initially reduce. However, a key strand of the SEND Strategy is to support children to remain in mainstream schools. By not continuing the current level of Top-Up funding, it is likely that some children will not remain in mainstream education, moving to more expensive provision and possibly long-term higher costs would be incurred by this budget.

Appendix: Cabinet Report

NAME
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Director for Children's Services

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12th July 2021