

REPORT FOR SCHOOLS FORUM

1.	Date of meeting:	13 th January 2023
2.	Title:	Rotherham's Notional SEN Additional Funding Eligibility Criteria - Mainstream Schools and Academies
3.	Directorate:	Finance and Customer Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report builds upon a previous report to Schools Forum regarding the notional SEN budget within a mainstream school's budget share and highlights the process schools should follow when requesting additional funding.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That Schools Forum note how Notional SEN budgets are calculated, when it might be appropriate to seek additional resources and how.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION & CONTEXT

- 3.1 Local authorities identify for each mainstream school a notional amount to guide schools in their spending to meet the costs of additional support for the school's pupils with special educational needs. Although this is an indicative amount, it is important that it is sufficient for the reasonable additional costs that may be incurred by schools.

4 Notional SEN Budget

- 4.2 Mainstream maintained schools and academies ("schools") are notified each year of a clearly identified but notional budget, within their overall budget allocation, towards the costs of fulfilling their duty to use their 'best endeavours' to secure that special educational provision for their pupils with SEN.

Calculating the notional SEN budget

- 4.3 Rotherham's schools' notional SEN budget is calculated as follows (% as indicated):

- a small part of the basic entitlement funding; **5%**
- a larger part of deprivation funding, reflecting the higher prevalence of lower-level SEN amongst disadvantaged pupils **50%**, and

- the majority or whole of the low prior attainment factor funding, as this is the best proxy we currently have for pupils with low-cost, high-incidence SEN **100%**

It is shown as a single figure and denotes the element of a school budget share which is notionally intended to support both existing SEN pupils with Low Cost / High Incidence SEN, and the first £6,000 of support for high-cost pupils.

It is important to note that the notional SEN budget is not intended to provide £6,000 for every pupil with SEN, as most such pupils' support will cost less than that. Nor is the notional SEN budget intended to provide a specific amount per pupil for those with lower additional support costs, even though the local authority may make reasonable assumptions about what those costs might be for the purpose of ensuring that their schools' notional SEN budget calculation is realistic.

4.4 **Notional SEN assumptions**

To assist Schools with the calculation, we have notionally assumed that approximately:

- 25% of the notional SEN will be used to support low cost / high incidence SEN
- 75% of the notional SEN budget will be used to support the first £6,000 of high cost pupils.

It is then estimated that 75% of the notional figure should meet the 'high cost' pupil numbers, at a rate of £6,000 per pupil.

Targeted funding to supplement the notional SEN budget

4.5 In some cases, however, a mismatch between the notional SEN budget and actual costs of SEN support may be because the school has a disproportionate number of 'high cost' pupils with SEN in relation to its size.

4.6 In this instance the local authority can provide targeted funding from its high needs budget to schools in such exceptional circumstances. This would be where the 'high cost' pupils are higher than the number outlined in the notional assumptions set out in para 4.4.

5. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 That Schools Forum support Rotherham's Notional SEN additional funding eligibility criteria.

6. NAMES & CONTACT DETAILS

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