

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**SCHOOLS FORUM**

**SEND BANDING REVIEW FOR EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLANS**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides Schools Forum with the current position in respect of the proposed Banding Review for Schools.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**2.1 Introduction and Context**

Funding for North Lincolnshire education providers comes in four parts;

- The Early Years Block which funds the free entitlement to nursery education for 3 and 4 year olds and some 2 year olds.
- The Schools Block which funds mainstream schools (and indirectly academies)
- The Central Schools Service Block which provides funding for the local authority to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies
- The High Needs Block which supports all pupils with needs that cost in excess of £10,000. This is all pupils in special schools, alternative provision and the top ups for some pupils in mainstream schools.

**BANDING SYSTEM:**

**What is it?**

- A way of specifying financial support to pupils with Special Educational needs
- Provides a mechanism for allocating additional resources to support the child in school to meet the outcomes stated in an EHCP

- Allows flexibility for the school to meet the outcomes on an EHCP

The funding may enable a range of interventions, training, specialist support, group activities and/or some 1-1 support which may be from a teacher or support staff. The effectiveness of the EHCP would therefore be judged by the achievement of outcomes.

In recent years there has been no review of bandings and funding has not increased for schools to support additional and special educational needs for children in receipt of an EHCP. Independent providers request uplifts year on year for children accessing their provisions, however there is no system in place for schools to receive an annual uplift for EHCPs which may help to support children remaining in mainstream education with a resultant saving on external provisions.

Following Covid, the needs for many of our children have significantly increased with far more children needing additional support than ever before.

Requests for support through EHCPs has also increased. In January 2020 there were 974. Currently North Lincolnshire holds 1,460 EHCPs.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 In recognition of the increase in staffing and other costs, as well as the increase in numbers of children who are being assessed for an EHCP and the types of needs indicated, the local authority has identified the need to review SEND funding bands for mainstream schools. Consideration of possible percentage uplift to schools from September 2024 for all children with an EHCP.

The SEND bandings were last changed through an uplift on 01 April 2022 by 3%. The current proposal is to utilise modelling and consultation to consider the use of a potential band for SEND Support, and a one-off uplift of between 3% and 5%. A paper will be provided to Schools Forum with more detailed modelling at the next meeting.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 To support the local authority process of evaluating, including through modelling costs and headteacher and SENDCo stakeholder engagement, the impact of a one off uplift of between 3 and 5% from September 2024 and a subsequent annual uplift of 3% for children with an EHCP dependent on financial implications for the High Needs budget.

**5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

- 5.1 An increase in banding for children with an EHCP may have significant implications for the High Needs budget. However, there is a potential for longer term savings with children remaining in mainstream education should an agreed formula for uplift to EHCPs be agreed.

There is also potential for significant savings within High Needs SEND with the implementation of Specialist Resource Hubs in mainstream schools which will prevent the need for many children to move to costly independent schools.

**6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

- 6.1 N/A

**7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

- 7.1 N/A

**8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

- 8.1 Following analysis of potential costings/uplifts and agreement from the Strategic Lead - Finance, it is proposed to meet with headteachers through a consultative approach to gain their views and considerations for the potential bandings prior to final decisions being agreed.

Further feedback and discussion opportunities will be provided through the summer term leadership briefings, Secondary Matters and Primary Consortium meetings.

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 For Schools Forum to acknowledge and support the ongoing work for potential banding increases for children with an EHCP, with an anticipated launch date for September 2024.

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