

Agenda Item 6

Report to: Schools Forum

Date: 14 July 2017

Title of Report: Funding for Admissions and Transport team

By: Jo Miles, Admissions and Transport Manager

Purpose of Report: To provide information on the expenditure on School Admissions and Transport

1. Background

1.1 This report provides information on the £486,500 DSG that relates to 'School Admissions' (£476,200) and 'Admissions Appeals' (£10,300). Please note that the Home to School Transport costs are not included as they are not funded from DSG.

2. Summary of Information

2.1 The below table provides a summary of the expenditure relating to Admissions and Transport.

Overview of expenditure	
Staffing	435,917
Transport	1,989
Supplies & Services	23,374
Internal Printing	14,920
Total	£476,200

2.2 The funding for **Staffing** relates to 10.8 FTE staff working across Admissions, Transport and Free School Meals.

2.3 **Transport** relates to staff travel (largely by public transport) to appeal hearings and meetings such as BAP and FAP panels, and such other school visits as may be required.

2.4 **Supplies and services** relates to a number of significant costs, including the following:

- **The composite prospectus** which the LA is legally required to provide in order to explain the Admissions process to parents. Although most parents now access this online, there is still a proportion of families who do not have internet access, or whose broadband connection is unreliable, and who need hard copies. Each family with a child due to start reception, junior school or

secondary school (and now also year 10) in the following September is also sent a leaflet drawing their attention to the need to apply for a school place.

- IT infrastructure costs such as **Tribal server licence**, which relates to the cost of licensing the pupil database (including the School Access Module and the parent portal) used to administer the admissions process.

2.5 **Internal printing** includes all documents printed in the Admissions & Transport team, chiefly, decision letters, free school meal review letters, and forms for parents to apply for school places, waiting lists and free school meals. The team communicate digitally wherever possible.

2.6 The table below provides a summary of the expenditure relating to Admissions Appeals:

Overview of expenditure	
Panel members expenses & travel	6,000
Other spend (venue, interpreter and panel member training costs)	4,300
TOTAL	10,300

2.7 The key activities of the Admissions & Transport team are described in **Appendix 1**.

3.0 Benchmarking information

3.1 Benchmarking information is attached in **Appendix 2**. However, it is not possible to extract comparative data from published returns as in many authorities admissions, transport and FSM are administered by different teams, and in some urban authorities there is very little requirement for mainstream home to school transport, as distances and public transport links are such that very few children qualify. Some admission teams are also responsible for assisting with the administration of selection at 11+.

Key Activities of the Admissions & Transport team

<p>Phased Transfer Admissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-ordinating the annual admissions exercises for reception, year 3 (of junior schools) and year 7 entry for all maintained schools and academies in East Sussex. These relate to approximately 6000, 750, and 5,500 applicants respectively. • Administering approximately 5,000 in year admissions every year. • notifying parents of schools with atypical age range admissions, and co-ordinating admissions for these. • uploads admissions information to SAM so that schools are able to access it, and provides support and advice for schools in so doing.
<p>Free school meals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsibility for assessing eligibility for free school meals and home to school transport (in respect of mainstream schools) entitlement. There are approximately 7,500 applications for FSM and 11,000+ decisions are made in respect of home to school transport eligibility per annum
<p>Appeals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepares and presents approximately 300 admission appeals every year as well as 50-100 transport panel cases • responsibility for SEND transport panel cases (pre- and post-16) and is represented on the Discretionary Home to school transport panel.
<p>Strategy/policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for formulating the County Council's proposed admission arrangements for consultation with the public and decision by elected members. • contributes to school places planning for East Sussex, providing management information in respect of oversubscription levels and demand for places, as well as the legal requirements in respect of admission numbers, and negotiating the provision of additional places where needed, or the dispersal of displaced children in the event of school closures. • statutory responsibility for monitoring the arrangements of schools and academies which are their own admission authority and ensuring that all establishments comply with the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code. A report is submitted each June to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator in respect of this. • responsible for consulting on any proposed changes to home to school transport policy and/or home to school transport arrangements. • statutory duty to publish a 'composite prospectus' by 12 September each year detailing the admission arrangements of all the state-funded schools in the local authority area to which parents can apply. • updating the County Council's website to ensure that the relevant Admissions and Transport information is kept up to date
<p>Fair Access Protocol (FAP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory responsibility for administering the FAP process fairly and liaising with schools and ESBAS to ensure that suitable placements are found for the most vulnerable children.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Admissions & Transport team is also responsible for reviewing and updating the protocol and consulting with schools and colleagues about proposed changes.
Deferred Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for managing the process for deferred admission for summer born children for around 30-40 parents per year group. Seeking advice from relevant professionals in order to make decisions in the best interests of the individual child.
Contact Volumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team also deals with approximately 30,000 telephone calls from parents each year as well as 70 complaints and 2-10 Local Government Ombudsman cases. There are also in the region of 20 Freedom of Information requests as well as 5-10 press enquiries around each national offer day.

Benchmarking information

Appendix 2

	Pupil numbers: Total State Funded Schools	Number of Total State Funded Schools	Staff Total	Pupils/ FTE	Schools/ FTE	FSM	Transport
Southampton	29,895	66	4.6	6,499	14	No	No
West Sussex	107,918	269	13.0	8,301	21	No	No
Buckinghamshire	81,208	219	21.6	3,760	10	No	Yes
Wokingham	25,000	61	5.8	4,310	11	No	No
East Sussex	64,558	181	10.8	5,978	17	Yes	Yes
<i>East Sussex (excl. FSM and Transport)</i>	<i>64,558</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>6.5</i>	<i>9,932</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>

As can be seen from the table, two authorities have a higher pupils/ FTE ratio than East Sussex, but only one has more schools per FTE members of staff. However, neither of these teams deal with Free School Meals or Home to School Transport, and West Sussex have a separate team dealing with the Fair Access Protocol as well. If you exclude these activities, East Sussex would have approximately 6.5 FTE staff members dealing with admissions, rather than 10.8 – as shown in the bottom row.