

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Schools Forum</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>9 July 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Director of Children's Services</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Proposed increase to mainstream school top-ups for 2021/22 academic year</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To give an overview of proposals to increase the value of top-ups to mainstream schools for children with EHCPs</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1) Schools' Forum note the proposed new top-up values for mainstream schools for academic year 2021/22**

**2) Schools' Forum notes that the increases are conditional on sufficiency within the High Needs Block and may need to be reviewed if overall demands on resources are not sustainable.**

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## **1 Background**

1.1 All mainstream schools have a notional SEN budget which is to support the additional needs (up to the cost of £6k above the usual place-funding) for all children with SEND. For those children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), mainstream schools receive additional funding which is determined by the level of the needs of the child, and the associated costs of making specialist provision that would be in excess of the £6k that is already in school budgets. This 'top-up' funding is provided to schools on a monthly basis from the High Needs Block.

1.2 In 2016, following a review of the funding arrangements, the Local Authority rationalised the value of the top-ups into four bands. These values have not changed since that date and, therefore, a review is timely.

1.3 Schools have reported to us that the current top-ups do not consistently meet the additional costs of supporting children with EHCPs, particularly for children who require additional adult support (either TA or specialist teacher input). If we are to continue to ensure that mainstream schools are able to meet the needs of all children in their local communities, it is important that they feel confident that they have the resources to do this, especially for those with the more complex needs.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 Just 25% of all EHCPs across East Sussex are in mainstream schools (a fall from 34% in 2018); this compares to 34% across England. Conversely, 40.1% of all children with an EHCP in East Sussex are in a special school (state-run and independent); this compares to 36.8% nationally. The impact of this is that the High Needs Block expenditure in East Sussex is more skewed towards non-mainstream provision than is the case elsewhere.

2.2 There is no reason why children in East Sussex should require more specialist provision than mainstream and, therefore, it is important that local mainstream schools are able to offer provision for a greater proportion of children than is currently the case. So as to facilitate this, the proposals are to increase the top-up to mainstream schools across all funding bands.

2.3 Following a review of the type of provision required at different bands, and the associated costs of this provision, it is clear that there is a greater pressure of funding for children with higher levels of need (i.e. at the 'enhanced support' bands) as these are those who require input from adults, which carry a salary cost to the school. Children supported at the 'targeted support' bands predominantly require resources which are not linked to salaries and, therefore, there is less of a demand on costs. For this reason, the following enhancements are proposed:

- Targeted Support A and B – increase by 10%
- Enhanced Support A and B – increase by 37%

2.4 The tables below show the implications of the changes, including the monthly figures payable to schools. The proposals equate to an annual increase of £156 per pupil at the lower end to £1,909 at the upper end of need. These figures are based on the current numbers of children in receipt of top-up funding and, assuming there are no increases in the numbers, this would represent an additional cost to the High Needs Block of £585k per year (total costs increasing from £2.2m to £2.76m p.a.):

Funding Band	Monthly Top Up Value	No.of pupils	Actual Monthly Top Up
(TS A) Targeted Support (A)	£130.35	102	£13,295.70
(TS B) Targeted Support (B)	£169.46	321	£54,396.66
(ES A) Enhanced Support (A)	£273.74	174	£47,630.76
(ES B) Enhanced Support (B)	£430.16	153	£65,814.48
Grand Total		750	£181,137.60

Funding Band	Monthly Top Up Value	No.of pupils	Actual Monthly Top Up
(TS A) Targeted Support (A)	£143.39	102	£14,625.27
(TS B) Targeted Support (B)	£186.41	321	£59,836.33
(ES A) Enhanced Support (A)	£375.02	174	£65,254.14
(ES B) Enhanced Support (B)	£589.32	153	£90,165.84
Grand Total		750	£229,881.57

2.5 As stated above, the ability to continue to fund a higher rate for top-ups is dependent upon overall costs within the High Needs Block being met within the overall envelope of funding allocated from the DfE.

### 3. Conclusion

3.1 As an outcome of a review of costs, and to reinvest in SEND provision in mainstream schools, it is appropriate to uplift the mainstream top-ups for mainstream EHCPs for the 2021/22 academic year. This will allow schools to have greater confidence in meeting provision outlined in EHCPs (especially those at 'enhanced support') and offer support to a broader range of children and young people in their local communities.

3.2 Schools' Forum is recommended to:

- 1) Note the proposed uplift in mainstream school top-up funding for the 2021/22 academic year.
- 2) Note the caveat on funding beyond academic year 2021/22 is dependent upon sufficiency of funding within the High Needs Block.

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