



## Sheffield Education Funding Forum 24 September 2024 Executive Summary

### Update from Strategic Director of Children's Services

Meredith Dixon-Teasdale gave a verbal update on priorities:

- In the national context, the focus has not recently been on young people and we are now seeing the impact of this, for example on children and young people with special educational needs (SEND).
- The [Sheffield City Goals](#) set the direction of travel.
- The [Sheffield City Council Plan](#) has three themes – People, Prosperity and Planet and five outcomes, the first of which being that Sheffield will be 'A place where all children belong and all young people can build a successful future'.
- On 1 October, Family Hubs and Youth Services will be moving into our service area.
- Sheffield was rated Good/Outstanding in the September 2023 social care inspection.
- We need our own children's homes to ensure our children are getting the best outcomes that are also cost-effective - we currently have expensive placements and our overspend in that area is £5m.
- Our relationship with Learn Sheffield has flourished and we have a good partnership approach which is helping to solve issues in the SEND system for example.
- Work around alternative provision needs a clear strategy and a range of providers.
- SEND:
  - Funding is not consistent in how we meet needs, and how we ensure the money is following the child (initially to review via the mainstream lens).
  - We need to tackle the cost of the system whilst ensuring good/improved outcomes for all children.
  - We need to ensure good decision-making and reduce tribunals.
  - Our Home to School transport is over-reliant on taxis with a £6.5m overspend.
  - There needs to be challenge within the system.

### SEND Top-up and Locality Funding Update

The Forum noted the update provided for information only – key points as highlighted below:

- Last year the locality funding for this work was £6m and it has now been increased to £7m.
- There has been inconsistency across localities and the resource allocation system (RAS) was commissioned to create a needs-based profile banding system which in turn will establish the funding required - we may require several million pounds more funding.
- The initial modelling of funding values has been completed.
- Approximately 700 pupil needs profiles have been completed for mainstream and it is expected that all mainstream profiles will be complete by Easter.
- New Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans are being input using the RAS.

## **Exclusion Prevention**

Forum members were asked to note the challenging situation faced by the city and the sector with regard to rising numbers of permanent exclusions; and the update on the prevention-led response to this:

- Paper 4 provides a high-level update and there is a lot of work being undertaken in this area, some of which is developmental.
- We do not yet have the full set of monitoring data, and we will revisit this throughout the year and provide further updates.
- So far, the work has been positive and we are working to improve and diversify the offer.
- There have been 195 permanent exclusions in the last year.
- 94% of those children and young people accessing the exclusion service have SEND needs.
- There is a 79% attendance rate.
- A key response is to work with the sector to prevent exclusions from school where possible, including through the commissioning of a diverse range of alternative provision.
- The PRU is rated Good, but we need more than one centre and we therefore decided to diversify and expand the framework by commissioning Brigantia Learning Trust to provide provision from summer 2024.

## **Sufficiency Planning Update**

- There continues to be a citywide position of excess/surplus primary school places in Sheffield, as a result of lower birth rates, and this is forecast to remain for the next five to seven years. To consider how we exploit the surplus space.
- For secondary, there is a deficit of 15 forms of entry in Y7 places citywide which equates to 450 places, and we are considering options as to how we manage this.
- Post-16 numbers are forecast to increase each year, reaching a peak in 2028/29. There is concern around those young people not in education, employment or training and we are liaising with the sector to better understand the sufficiency position.
- There is continued growing demand for SEND places. The opening of the two new schools to create an additional 180 places will not meet demand alone.
- We have commissioned 1<sup>st</sup> Planner to undertake a review of the mainstream secondary and special school estates to look for opportunities to create more sufficiency.

The Forum noted the update and supported continued engagement and involvement in addressing sufficiency issues; including helping identify opportunities to increase sufficiency in secondary and to work collaboratively with the post-16 sector.

## **Early Years Extended Entitlements – response to supply re. capital funding**

The Forum noted the update, allocation of funding and next steps:

- A Wraparound Delivery Plan was submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) in June.

- The new Government has not committed to the 2025/26 provisional funding element.
- 27 providers have been approved.
- A total of £767k of capital grants has been allocated to 17 projects across the city to date, leaving £82k available.
- Next steps include:
  - Development of plans for more provisions/expansions to open in January or April 2025, targeting areas without wraparound care.
  - Family Hub Coordinators will work with schools and other childcare providers to understand local demand and develop plans.
  - Funding providers will be supported by the Sheffield Wraparound Support Hub and they will develop a Quality and Inclusion Charter.

## **Additional Updates**

The Forum was also provided with other papers for information only – all of which are available to download on the Forum website and include updates on the following:

- School Food Vouchers
- Teachers' Pension Grant
- Core School Budget Grant
- Early Years Rate and Payment Frequency

*Forum papers are available to download via the [Sheffield Education Funding Forum](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/schools-childcare/sheffield-education-funding-forum) webpage.*

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*You can also download a list of Forum members on this page should you wish to raise an issue/ask a question.*

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