

## **SEND Funding Update December 2024**

### **Key Messages**

Forum members are asked to:

- Note the background information below.
- Note that the outcome of the consultation will be tabled at the Forum meeting.
- Approve the recommendation funding allocation for 2025/26

### **1. Introduction/background**

- 1.1. A review of SEND high-needs funding was instigated in 2021.
- 1.2. In 2022, following extensive cross-sector activity we procured a resource allocation system called 'Formulate for SEND' from Imosphere. This is a banded funding system.
- 1.3. Local Authority practitioners complete a needs profile within the system for each young person with an EHC Plan, this generates an annual funding band between 1 and 10.
- 1.4. Following work completed over the last year, we have now progressed to developing proposed funding bands and projected overall spend.

### **2. Recent activity to support the implementation of Formulate for SEND**

- 2.1. We have held or arranged initial meetings to discuss the funding model and the implications for schools with over 70 schools so far and will continue to liaise with all mainstream schools throughout the year.
- 2.2. The LA team have completed needs profile forms for over half of pupils with EHC plans who attend mainstream provision within mainstream schools.
- 2.3. Using the information from this cohort, we have modelled different funding values and have developed a proposed funding model.
- 2.4. An advisory group continues to hold constructive discussions across the full range of areas involved in the funding review and has shaped the work for 2024/25. These meetings will continue throughout the year.

### 3. Proposed EHC Plan Band Values

- 3.1. The proposed band values shared for consultation are listed in the table below. In addition, there are circumstances where a bespoke funding values will be allocated for a small number of pupils with exceptional needs.
- 3.2. The consultation closes on Friday 13 December and the outcome will be shared as a verbal update at the Forum meeting on 18 December 2024.
- 3.3. The funding tool is slightly sensitive at the lower end of the banding values. There has been scrutiny of the plans allocated to band 1 and the provision contained in these EHC plans does not require the school to put in place support beyond what would be ordinarily available within mainstream schools.

<b>Band</b>	<b>Funding value</b>
1	0
2	£750
3	£2000
4	£4000
5	£4000
6	£6000
7	£6000
8	£8000
9	£8000
10	£10000
Bespoke	Agreed at funding panel

### 4. Projections for EHC Plans and Top-up Funding

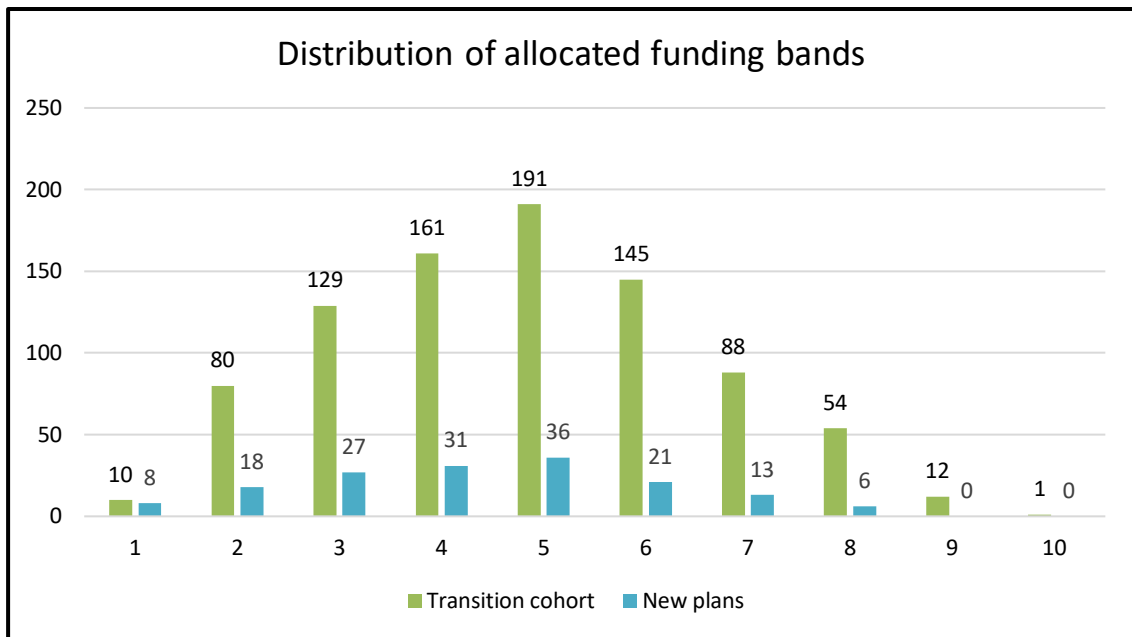
- 4.1. As at the end of November 2024 there are 1983 pupils with EHC Plans placed in mainstream schools in and out of Sheffield.
- 4.2. At the start of the 2025/26 school year our projections suggest that we will have between 2250 and 2500 pupils with EHC plans placed in mainstream provision.
- 4.3. If the proposed funding values are agreed, the projected overall cost for pupils with EHC Plans in mainstream schools are shown below

Number of pupils in mainstream settings	<b>2250 pupils</b>	<b>2500 pupils</b>	<b>2750 pupils</b>
Projected costs	£9,947,109	£11,039,010	£12,130,911

4.1. The current investment into the Locality model for the 2024/25 school year is £7.2m

## 5. Funding band allocation so far

5.1. As at the end of November there is an initial funding band allocation for 1027 pupils. The distribution of these bands is demonstrated in the chart below, split between those pupils whose EHC plan has been issued in the 2024/25 academic year and those that were issued in previous years, referred to as the 'Transition cohort'.



## 6. Support for pupils in mainstream schools with high needs SEND who do not have EHC Plans

6.1. Mainstream schools are meeting the needs of an increasingly complex cohort of pupils within their communities. It is not necessary for all of these pupils to be supported via the EHC Plan process, but the cost of their support needs is beyond the funding provided to mainstream schools via the notional SEND funding allocation.

- 6.2. Additional investment will be required to support the provision for this cohort and prevent escalation to statutory SEND processes where needs can be met without this.
- 6.3. Now that the extent and cost implications of the funding model for pupils with EHC plans is clear, LA Officers are working on the requirements for a funding process for pupils with higher needs who do not have EHC plans and the additional investment that will be required to support this.
- 6.4. Additional information on the proposals for this model will be shared later at a future meeting following engagement with the funding advisory group and sector consultation.

## **7. Cost implication to the High Needs Block**

- 7.1. The Local Authority is currently in an overspend position with regard to the High Needs Block.
- 7.2. A new funding model for pupils with and without EHC plans will require increased investment in mainstream provision in excess of the funding already allocated and will increase this overspend.
- 7.3. Investment in mainstream provision is essential in order to strengthen mainstream provision, support inclusion, educate children within their communities with their peer group wherever possible, and improve their outcomes.
- 7.4. The more children who can be educated locally will prevent additional expenditure on transport.
- 7.5. Investment in non-statutory SEND will provide support for those children for whom EHC plans are not appropriate, but require support beyond the funding already allocated to schools via notional SEND funding.
- 7.6. All newly issued EHC Plans for pupils in mainstream provision in mainstream schools will be funded from September 2024, then all EHC plans for pupils in mainstream provision in mainstream schools will be funded from September 2025.

## **8. Consultation outcome**

- 8.1. The sector consultation closes on 13 December 2024, the consultation outcome will be shared as a verbal update in the meeting on 18 December 2024.

## **9. Recommendations**

Forum members are asked to:

- **Note** the proposed funding bands and consultation outcome (as shared at the meeting) and **approve** the recommended funding allocation for 2025/26.