

Funding for Children on roll at Sheffield Inclusion Centre

Key Messages

Forum members are asked to:

- Note the strategic intentions for inclusion
- Note the content of this paper as a follow up to the presentation received in February 2020
- Approve the Inclusion Gateway process of funding allocation
- Agree to the funding proposal for children entering roll at Sheffield Inclusion Centre
- Approve the funding of children with EHCP who are added to roll at Sheffield Inclusion Centre

1. Background

One of our key policy focuses remains to support inclusion and increase access to local mainstream schools by reducing both the number of permanent exclusions and escalations to special schools. In line with this our strategic intention is therefore to reduce the number of exclusions and therefore the number of pupils at Sheffield Inclusion Centre.

Whilst this is a focus of our work, it recognised that there are circumstances where schools feel permanent exclusion of a child is necessary.

The Sheffield Inclusion Centre is a pupil referral unit which meets the needs of pupils from the age of 5 to 16 from the Sheffield area who have been permanently excluded from school or are in danger of permanent exclusion.

2. Provision for Excluded Pupils

A presentation was provided to School Forum in February 2020 outlining the financial provision for excluded pupils or those at risk of exclusion – Inclusion Gateway Funding. The total allocation agreed for this fund is £500k allocated as follows:

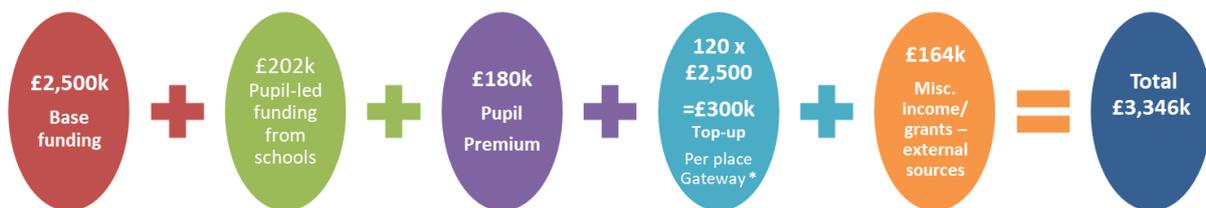
- £175k for allocation by the Inclusion Gateway process where providing additional support to mainstream schools is identified as providing the potential to avoid exclusion of a pupil

- £325k total to be allocated to the Sheffield Inclusion Centre, at the point of exclusion to support reintegration of pupils

2.1. Sheffield Inclusion Centre funding

Based on a Sheffield Inclusion Centre model of an average of 250 pupils for 2020/21 the total cost for the Centre is expected to be £3,671k. This model was shared and agreed by the Schools Forum at its meeting in February 2020.

The main funding allocation will be as follows:



This accounts for pupils who begin the academic year at Sheffield Inclusion Centre – approximately 120 pupils and require support for reintegration.

An additional £325k is then available to the Sheffield Inclusion Centre, via the Inclusion gateway process to support reintegration. This is £2,500 per excluded pupil. If the anticipated in-year exclusions total 130, this would be a total additional funding to the Sheffield Inclusion Centre of £325k and provide an overall funding to the centre of £3,671k.

2.2. Children with EHC Plan excluded from mainstream school

Wherever possible children with EHC Plan should not be excluded from school. However, where a child with an EHC Plan is permanently excluded from mainstream school they would be allocated a place at Sheffield Inclusion Centre.

It is proposed that any top-up funding that the mainstream school receives in relation to the child's EHC Plan should be transferred to the Sheffield Inclusion Centre in these instances. This would be pro-rata for the amount of time from the academic year (over 39 weeks) that the child is on roll at the Sheffield Inclusion Centre.

This would be in relation to the additional funding rather than the school notional SEN funding.

In addition, it is proposed that if a child with an EHCP begins the academic year at Sheffield Inclusion Centre, the centre should make application to the locality that the child lives for funding to support the EHC Plan.

The Sheffield Inclusion Centre should also access locality funding from the locality in which the child lives to support any EHC Plans which are provided whilst at the Centre.

When a pupil receiving funding from a locality leaves the Sheffield Inclusion Centre, the funding returns to the locality.

Where a specialist provision is agreed for a child with an EHC Plan at the Sheffield Inclusion Centre but no suitable place is yet available, the centre would request funding from the locality in the first instance and then would need to provide a provision map detailing the specific required provision to the local authority EHC Panel for consideration of any additional resource whilst placement is being secured.

3. Allocation of gateway funding to Sheffield Inclusion Centre

Due to the COVID pandemic, the Inclusion Gateway process and protocols have been delayed in their development. The funding protocol is now in place to allocate funding to support children who are at risk of exclusion and schools are now starting to receive this allocation to support prevention of exclusions.

Due to the delays, Sheffield Inclusion Centre will receive the full inclusion gateway funding of £325k for this academic year as a block payment. This will support the operating costs of the Sheffield Inclusion Centre and enable the system to be developed and embedded to its fullest.

For future academic years, the £325k will be allocated to Sheffield Inclusion Centre on a per pupil basis, enabling the Inclusion Gateway process to use this funding if required to provide additional support to mainstream schools to prevent exclusions. This is in line with our key policy focus on inclusion and increasing access to mainstream provision.

4. Transfer to High Needs Block

To support inclusion and increase innovative and preventative work to reduce exclusions, the Sheffield Schools Forum approved a transfer of 0.5% (£1.5m) from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2018/19, 2019/20, and 2020/21.

We are again proposing to redirect £1.5m of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2021/22 to continue to support this piece of work.

This investment forms an important part of the city's inclusion model. For the last two financial years it has provided an opportunity to invest in interventions to boost the overall inclusion model with projects and services that aim to prevent school exclusions and support reintegration. These include:

- The Inclusion Gateway funding for individual children and Think for the Future provision.
- Nurture Provision.
- Prevention interventions to support children within mainstream school.
- Parenting Support.
- Primary Inclusion Panel (PIP) and Secondary Inclusion Panel (SIP) support.

During the Pandemic all funded services have continued with adaptation and some restrictions. As the impacts of COVID continue to increase vulnerabilities and impact on children's engagement in school, we are requesting a continuation of this funding to ensure this provision is not lost, and provide opportunity for a full review of each area of work and its impact on the core aims of the programme.

Further information and an update on interventions can be found in appendices 1 and 2.

5. Recommendations

Forum members are asked to:

- a) Agree to the funding proposals outlined in this paper.
- b) Agree that any locality funding allocated to a young person with a EHCP follows the pupil to the Sheffield Inclusion Centre, for the period that they are on roll there. If the pupil moves to go to specialist provision, or at the end of year 11 the funding will return to the locality.
- c) Approve the proposed £1.5m transfer to the High Needs Block (also as per the recommendation in Paper 6 – National Funding Formula and Indicative School Budgets).