

# **High needs funding formula and other reforms**

## **Government consultation – stage one**

### **Response from North East Lincolnshire Schools' Forum**

#### **Question 1**

**Do you agree with our proposed principles for the funding system?**

Fundamentally yes these seem reasonable and follow the principles adopted under fairer funding however the answer provided cannot be fully confirmed until the potential financial impact of their implementation is seen, presumably at Stage 2.

#### **Question 2**

**Do you agree that the majority of high needs funding should be distributed to local authorities rather than directly to schools and other institutions?**

Yes

#### **Question 3**

**Do you agree that the high needs formula should be based on proxy measures of need, not the assessed needs of children and young people?**

Not sure. The need to avoid perverse incentives is clear but any proxy measure needs to reflect the current situation, be clear and understood by all interested parties and be updated on a regular, ie, annual basis. The recent example of the IDACI data being updated after 5 years would not be acceptable.

#### **Question 4**

**Do you agree with the basic factors proposed for a new high needs formula to distribute funding to local authorities?**

Yes

### Question 5

**We are not proposing to make any changes to the distribution of funding for hospital education, but welcome views as we continue working with representatives of this sector on the way forward.**

This matter has not been materially significant to NELC.

### Question 6

**Which methodology for the area cost adjustment do you support?**

Hybrid, however this should work at both ends of the spectrum, low cost areas may suffer from recruitment / retention issues which could suggest higher incentives have to be paid

### Question 7

**Do you agree that we should include a proportion of 2016-17 spending in the formula allocations of funding for high needs?**

Yes, there will need to be some transition period given the long term nature of this spend.

### Question 8

**Do you agree with our proposal to protect local authorities' high needs funding through an overall minimum funding guarantee?**

Yes

### Question 9

**Given the importance of schools' decisions about what kind of support is most appropriate for their pupils with SEN, working in partnership with parents, we welcome views on what should be covered in any national guidelines on what schools offer for their pupils with SEN and disabilities.**

Any guidelines should be aligned with the SEND Code of Practice. Chapter 6 Schools outlines how schools should be meeting the needs of their pupils with SEND either with or without an EHCP. All schools should also be publishing their 'local offer' in respect of their SEND pupils.

### Question 10

**We are proposing that mainstream schools with special units receive per pupil amounts based on a pupil count that includes pupils in the units, plus funding of £6,000 for each of the places in the unit; rather than £10,000 per place. Do you agree with the proposed change to the funding of special units in mainstream schools?**

Yes, this should not cause any issues.

### Question 11

**We therefore welcome, in response to this consultation, examples of local authorities that are using centrally retained funding in a strategic way to overcome barriers to integration and inclusion. We would be particularly interested in examples of where this funding has been allocated on an “invest-to-save” basis, achieving reductions in high needs spending over the longer term. We would like to publish any good examples received.**

Through Schools Forum a pot of money has been identified to support children in early years settings with emerging SEN. The outcomes sought include more children being ‘school ready’ and/or progressed to EHCP before school entry.

### Question 12

**We welcome examples of where centrally retained funding is used to support schools that are particularly inclusive and have a high proportion of pupils with particular types of SEN, or a disproportionate number of pupils with high needs.**

No applicable

### Question 13

**Do you agree that independent special schools should be given the opportunity to receive place funding directly from the EFA with the balance in the form of top-up funding from local authorities?**

Yes, with provisos that the commissioned place negotiation process or something similar in place for special academies is used for independent schools.

**Question 14**

**We welcome views on the outline and principles of the proposed changes to post-16 place funding (noting that the intended approach for post-16 mainstream institutions which have smaller proportions or numbers of students with high needs, differs from the approach for those with larger proportions or numbers), and on how specialist provision in FE colleges might be identified and designated.**

The proposals in part seem very similar to those currently operating. The document makes reference to the fact more information is required into how the proposals would work in practice which we would agree with. Any proposals implemented need to reflect and be able to meet increasing demand and be supported by additional funding to meet this.