SCHOOLS’ FORUM

**4.0**

Date: 16th January 2018

Heading: SEND Updates

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| **Lead Officer/s** | Christopher Wilford |
| **Contact details** | [**Christopher\_wilford@bathnes.gov.uk**](mailto:Christopher_wilford@bathnes.gov.uk) **;** |
| **Forum asked to be informed/decision** | SEND Updates, New Banding Model & Next Steps |
| **Time Needed** | **15 minutes** |

**1. Background**

1.1 In July 2017 Forum was advised that the Local Authority was currently reviewing the way that the high need allocations of finances are made for Education Health Care Plans and that a SEND Banding Group made up of Head teachers and education representatives were reviewing and drawing up new banding arrangements. This paper acts as an update on the progress of this work.

**2. Forum is advised that**

2.1 That a regular group of Head teachers and SENCO’s have been involved in the creation of the new banding model and that work has begun to transfer all existing Statements and EHCP’s to the new banding model. This first part of this work is complete.

2.2 The next steps for the proposed banding changes and implementation were discussed with school representatives and Local Authority Officers at a meeting on Thursday 30th of November 2017. This report therefore lays out proposals for fairly implementing the next steps for transitioning to the new banding model

2.3 Forum is asked to comment on the proposal from the SEND Banding Group

**3. Report**

**Banding Allocations**

3.1 The outcomes of the initial exercise from phase 1 of the re-allocation of bandings are highlighted in the table below. The group did not see any unexpected results in the spread of bandings across schools and colleges.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Band** | **Mainstream**  **schools and FE college** | **Units** | **Special schools** | **Total** |
| **1** | 43 | 0 | 8 | 51 |
| **2** | 178 | 8 | 66 | 252 |
| **3** | 156 | 9 | 111 | 276 |
| **4** | 86 | 12 | 120 | 218 |
| **5** | 28 | 4 | 37 | 69 |
| **6** | 12 | 0 | 21 | 33 |
| **Total** | 503 | 33 | 363 | 899 |

**A call for additional evidence**

3.2 The Banding group recognised that the exercise to accurately place EHCPs into new banding group will require an opportunity for all settings, schools and colleges to see the outcome of the first banding exercise and for them to comment and where appropriate, provide any additional evidence if the placement of that pupil into that proposed banding does not accurately reflect that pupils individual needs.

3.3 The group agreed therefore that we operate a period to allow for a call for additional evidence which is outlined below;

* That this period last between January and the end of March 2018. The SEND team will write all schools as soon as possible with the outcomes of the banding exercise and with information on what the process will be for submitting additional evidence and what evidence would be useful and acceptable.
* The group also agreed that between 1st of April & June 2018 that the SEND team will arrange a number of days for this new evidence to be considered in an open process with SENCO’s & Head teachers so as to be transparent around any re-banding that takes place.
* Once the above exercises have been completed and before the end of the academic year 2018, the Local Authority will apply values to these bands. The allocation of finance to the individual bands cannot happen until we have completed the call for evidence.
* We will then before September 2018 write to schools to advise of final bandings for each pupil and the value of those bands.

**Managing the transition and financial implications**

3.4 The re-banding exercise as previously advised could mean that the level of funding for each individual setting school or college could increase or reduce. The group was keen to ensure that schools were supported to manage any financial transitional arrangements so they were not adversely affected for an interim period. The group therefore proposes the following arrangements;

* The Local Authority will apply the new bandings to only new EHCPs that are issued from September 2018.
* The Local Authority will run a shadow financial year between September 2018 & September 2019 whereby the original financial values for all pupils with an EHCP issued before September 2018 will remain the same regardless of whether the banding exercise has increased or decreased the financial values of EHCP’s for each school. This allows a period of stability for schools to manage their resources and plan ahead for any changes.
* That the Local Authority will work with any schools in extreme situations where there has been a significant adverse effect during this shadow year.
* That the new banding & their financial values will be fully introduced from September 2019 for all EHCP’s issued before September 2018

3.5 A timetable for the proposed next stages of implementation is included below;

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| **Time Scale** | **Activity** |
| Jan 18- | Call for Evidence – the LA will write to all schools to advise of the draft bandings for pupils with EHCP’s & issues advice on how to submit evidence. |
| Jan 18 – March 18 | Schools have the opportunity to consider the bandings and if they accurately describe pupil needs & submit additional evidence if needed |
| April - June 18 | The LA will organise panel days & invite schools reps to consider new evidence against banding descriptors. |
| June – July 18 | The LA will advise all schools of all final allocated bands & the financial values of each band. |
| Sept 2018 | Any new EHCP issued from Sept 18 onwards will have the new financial banding arrangements applied. |
| Sept 18 – Sept 19 | Shadow Year – The LA will ensure for one full academic year that the financial values for each school regardless of any increase or decrease in financial value for EHCPs will remain the same for all EHCP’s issued before Sept 18. During this year the LA will work to support any schools significantly affected by banding changes to manage any extreme changes. |
| Sept 2019 onwards | New banding changes fully implemented for all EHCP’s |

3.9 Schools Forum is advised that the total amount funding available for EHCP’s is not changing, however the Forum should note that financial values for each individual school could go up or go down. Levels of need also fluctuate for pupils and the LA can re-consider banding arrangements for any pupils via the Annual Review process.