

Report to Haringey Schools Forum: 6th July 2023

Report Status

For information/note
For consultation & views
For decision

Report Title: Disapplication request for inflationary top ups for Special Schools.

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Purpose:

1. Request disapplication of 3.4% inflationary increase to Haringey Special Schools on top ups.

Recommendation:

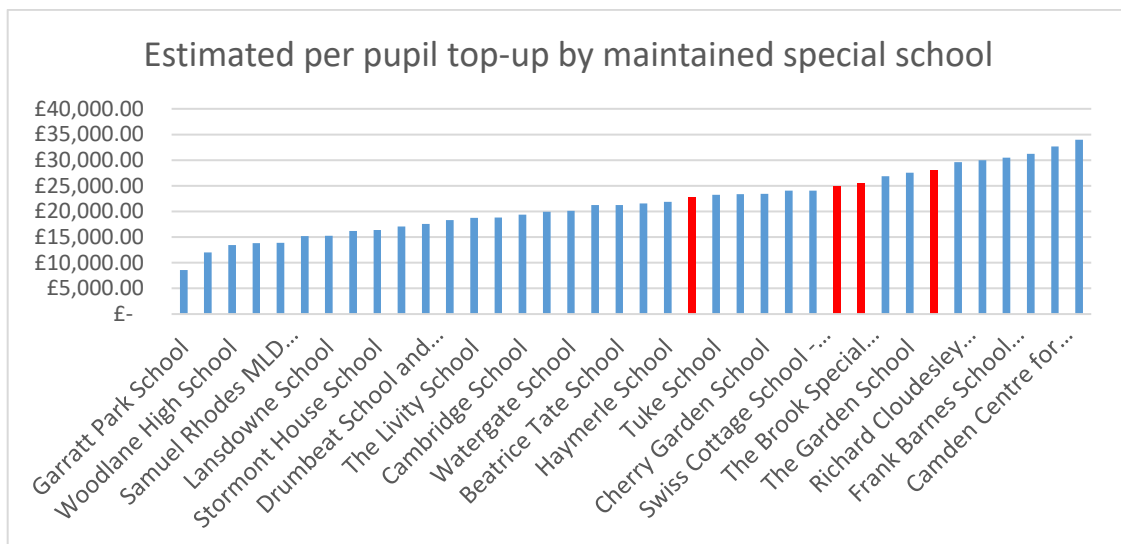
1. That Schools Forum approves the application of a disapplication request to the Department of Education to freeze Special School top-up funding to create a £420,000 saving within the High Needs Block (HNB).

1 Introduction.

- 1.1 This report provides a rationale regarding the proposal to disapply regulations within the School and Early Years (Finance) Regulations 2023 by submitting a disapplication request to the Department for Education to create a saving within the HNB by freezing Special School top-ups.

2 Analysis of Current Issues

- 2.1 In April 2023 Haringey Council began implementation of the five-year Safety Valve programme which is designed to incrementally reduce the overspend position within the HNB to create a balanced budget by April 2028.
- 2.2 Analysis of spend within the HNB indicates that Haringey Schools have relatively high top-ups compared to local benchmarking and ISOS have been working with Special Schools to undertake a finance review. This report and recommendations has been shared with Special Heads and it is recognised that budget reductions, whilst not welcomed, are understood and further that Special heads continue to work in a collegiate way to improve outcomes for children and young people in Haringey recognising the financial context in which they are operating.



- 2.3 Further due to historic agreements Haringey Special Schools receive maximum top-ups for all children in schools (with a flat rate rather than banded funding). Therefore, all children attending a Haringey Special School receive a minimum top-up of £24,000 in addition to £10,000 place funding.
- 2.4 As part of the Safety Valve agreement Haringey Council agreed with the Department for Education that they would freeze Special School top-ups for the duration of the programme and undertake a systematic review of all HNB top-up funding. This proposal has been shared in previous reports to the Schools Forum in Oct 2022 [ITEM 8.1 - Haringey Safety Valve Programme Schools.pdf](#) and discussed at the Safety Valve Steering Group, Special Heads Group, SEND Executive and High Needs sub group alongside the work commissioned by ISOS to work with our stakeholders to review our bandings and top ups.

- 2.5 In April 2023 The DfE allocated an inflationary allowance of 3.4 % to Special Schools, Alternative Provision (AP) and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in England. In Haringey this would affect five settings.
- 2.6 Haringey Council have passported the 3.4% for place funding in recognition of inflationary pressures for Special Schools. Therefore, all Special Schools will get an additional £340 per child from April 2023.
- 2.7 For 2023/24 each schools' funding allocation has been checked for a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) of 3% in accordance with High Needs block funding guidance, and only two schools received this.
- 2.8 Haringey Council intention is not to pass on the further 3.4% inflationary uplift for Special School top-ups, this will create an immediate savings of £430k in year and £2.2m (based upon 2022-23 payments) over the 5 years of the Safety Valve programme.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 3.1 That Schools Forum recognise that all HNB top-up funding is currently undergoing review as part of the Safety Valve programme to bring current spend within budget as per terms of the agreement.
- 2.2 That this disapplication process is approved by Schools Forum, on the understanding that Haringey Council will make a separate disapplication request to the secretary of state should the Forum refuse to endorse this request.