

Agenda Item



Report Status

For information/note ☒
For consultation & views ☐
For decision ☒

Report to Haringey Schools Forum – 17th October 2024

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

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Purpose:

1. Request disapplication from Department for Education for the following items
 - 0.5% of DSG from Schools Block to the High Needs Block to continue to meet terms and conditions of Haringey's Safety Valve Agreement.
 - To freeze top-up funding to Special Schools by retaining the inflationary uplift of 3.4% to contribute towards the savings to be delivered from the Remodel of Financial Support / Top ups workstream within the Safety Valve Agreement

Recommendations:

- 1) That Schools Forum approves the application of a disapplication requests to the Department of Education to:
 - a) Transfer 0.5% of Schools Block into the High Needs Block to ensure that Haringey continues to meet the requirements of the Safety Valve Programme.
 - b) Freeze the Special School top-up funding by retaining the inflationary uplift of 3.4% to meet the requirements of the Safety Valve Programme

1 Introduction.

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 and agree a transfer from the Schools Block.

2 Analysis of Current Issues

- 2.1 In March 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 March 2028.
- 2.2 In order to achieve the Safety Valve Savings, Haringey has projected that for the duration of the programme the achievement of a balanced budget will be achieved by transferring 0.5% of the DSG or £1.129m into the High Needs Block to meet the increasing demands for SEND services in Schools.
- 2.3 As part of the Safety Valve Programme a key project is the remodelling of Financial Support / Top ups, expected to deliver £709k annually, retention of the 3.4% uplift applied to Special Schools will contribute £420k towards that target.
- 2.4 This disapplication request supports the delivery of the SEN Support programmes in schools, including the additional outreach resources in the Language and Autism Support Team; The Language Support Assistants and the funding for Early Intervention and Support via Band C of the new Haringey Support Bandings. This money is additional to the existing SEN support services which include support for children with visual or hearing support needs, autism and speech, language and communication needs.

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.
- 3.2 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.