

Agenda Item



Report Status

For information/note ☒
For consultation & views
For decision

Report to Haringey Schools' Forum – 4 December 2025

Report Title: High Needs Block (HNB) Section 251 and Commissioned Special Places 2025-26.

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Purpose:

1. To note Section 251 (S251) **commissioned specialist places** at Haringey Special schools and Special Free School, Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs), Alternative Provision delivered through HLP, South Grove, The Finch (Fortismere), Haringey 6th form and the Harrington scheme for 2025-26 as part of reporting to the Department for Education (DfE).
2. To note the recoupment deductions made by DFE.
Recoupment is deducted from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), High Needs block and paid to academies and free schools directly for commissioned places and administered by the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA).
3. To note the High Needs Budget 2025/26
The High Needs Budget allocation was last reported to Schools' Forum in January 2025. The latest published allocation is **£59.896m** less recoupment of £2.366m as of 24th November 2025.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report updates Schools' Forum in accordance with the [Schools' Forum Regulations 2012](#) requiring Schools' Forum to meet regularly and the local authority to inform, report and consult with Schools' Forum concerning the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in line with the [Schools Forums Powers and Responsibilities](#).
- 1.2 The [section 251 return](#) is a statutory return that local authorities (LA's) are required to complete under section [251 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009](#). A requirement is for LAs to prepare and submit to the Secretary of State for Education an education and children and young people's services budget statement at the end of April 2025 for the prescribed period. The prescribed period for this budget statement covers **1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**.
- 1.3 This paper relates to the commissioned specialist places only of the S251 return funded from the High Needs Block (HNB). The HNB is one of the four blocks of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2025/26.
- 1.4 This report is to update Schools' Forum in their role of having strategic oversight of High Needs budget (HNB) funding implications that directly inter-relate with the Safety Valve ongoing work for 2025/26.

2. Special School commissioned places 2025/26

- 2.1 Table 1 below details the **extract** from the Department for Education (DfE) S251 budget statement submitted May 2025.

Table 1 – S251 Budget HNB Commissioned places 2025/26

School Name	DfE Number	Type of Establishment	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Places		SEN Place Funding	Alternative Provision (AP) Places		AP Place Funding	Hospital Education Places		Hospital Education Place Funding	Total Place Funding
			April 2025 to August 2025	September 2025 to March 2026	April 2025 to March 2026 (£)	April 2025 to August 2025	September 2025 to March 2026	April 2025 to March 2026 (£)	April 2025 to Aug 2025	Sept 2025 to March 2026	April 2025 to March 2026 (£)	April 2025 to March 2026 (£)
Earlmead Primary School	2020	Mainstream	3	6	£28,500							£28,500
West Green Primary School	2051	Mainstream	8	8	£48,000							£48,000
Alexandra Primary School	2078	Mainstream	0	3	£17,500							£17,500
The Mulberry Primary School	3001	Mainstream	24	24	£144,000							£144,000
Haringey Learning Partnership	1101	PRU				£118	£118	£1,180,000	£12	£12	£120,000	£1,300,000
Blanche Neville School	7000	Special	68	68	£680,000							£680,000
Vale School	7001	Special	115	115	£1,150,000							£1,150,000
The Brook Special Primary School	7005	Special	129	129	£1,290,000		£10	£58,333				£1,348,333
Riverside	7006	Special	165	172	£1,690,833							£1,690,833
Grand Total:			512	525	£5,048,833	£118	£128	£1,238,333	£12	£12	£120,000	£6,407,167

Note: The above chart, submitted as the S251 Budget 2025/26, was created from information known at that time (May 2025) since then we have reviewed our commissioned specialist places, which identified some anomalies. These were corrected - see table 2 below.

Table 2 – Updated S251 Budget HNB Commissioned places 2025/26

School Name	DfE Number	Type of Establishment	Special Educational Needs (SEND) Places		SEN Place Funding
			April 2025 - August 2025	September 2025- March 2026	April 2025 to March 2026
West Green Primary School	2051	Mainstream	8	8	48,000
The Mulberry Primary School	3001	Mainstream	24	24	144,000
Earlsmead Primary School	2020	Mainstream	4	6	35,667
Alexandra Primary School	2078	Mainstream	0	3	17,500
Haringey Learning Partnership	1101	PRU	130	130	1,300,000
Blanche Nevile School	7000	Special	70	70	700,000
Vale School	7001	Special	119	119	1,190,000
The Brook Primary School	7005	Special	130	140	1,358,333
Riverside School	7006	Special	169	177	1,743,334
The Grove	7003	Special free school	125	125	1,250,000
		TOTAL	779	802	7,786,834

3.Special School Commissioned places 2025/26

- 3.1 The HNB supports provision for pupils and students with SEND who require additional resources to participate in education and learning, from their early years to age 25 in schools and colleges (excluding students aged 19 to 25 who do not have an EHC plan or students who are over the age of 25) and pre-16 pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) who, because of exclusion, illness, or other reasons, cannot receive their education in mainstream schools.

In support for specialist provision, the HNB supports both **place funding** and **top up funding** for specialist provision. Numbers may fluctuate during the academic year due to demand. Agreement of commissioned numbers between the local authority (commissioner) and the relevant provider for the pupils is necessary to support management of this budget.

- 3.2 Out of Borough (OOB) children may be placed within Haringey special schools. This is important to note because the place funding of £10k is paid for each commissioned place from the HNB where the special school is located, even where the child is the responsibility of another Borough.

“The import/export adjustment reflects the movement of high needs pupils and students between local authority areas, where they live in one authority area (known as the resident local authority) and attend a school or college in another (known as the provider local authority), creating an additional financial cost to the latter authority.

The import/export adjustment is calculated using school census and ILR data. It is not based on commissioned or funded high needs places. A difference between the funded high needs places and school census or ILR data may not mean there is an import/export data error.

The import/export adjustment is calculated as a net figure based on:

- *the number of high needs pupils and students educated at a school or college in the local authority area, minus*
 - *the number of high needs pupils or students living in their area*
 - *this gives the net number of pupils and students, either positive or negative, which is then multiplied by £6,000 for the import export adjustment amount”*

This is why careful monitoring of commissioned arrangements is so important; further analysis will be undertaken to clarify the impact of the import /export grant in Haringey's HNB.

- 3.3 The borough where the child resides is responsible for funding the Top up element to the school.

Special School commissioned places Minimum Funding Guarantee MFG 2025/26

Table 3 below shows the number of special school places funded under the minimum funded guarantee (MFG) budgeted for 25/26 total **place funding** costs (less recoupment).

Table 3 – S251 Special School Place Funding (MFG) Budget 2025/26

Table 3 - HNB Special School budgets 2025-26	S251 Places 2025-26	S251 Place Funding at 10k per place
	No	£
Blanche Neville	70	700,000
Riverside	162	1,620,000
The Brook	130	1,300,000
The Grove*	125	1,250,000
The Vale	119	1,190,000
Plus the following due to expansion		
Riverside (September 24)	7	70,000
The Brook (September 25) – 7/12 months	10	58,333
Riverside (September 25) – 7/12 months	8	46,667
Total before DFE Recoupment	631	6,235,000
DFE Recoupment from the High needs block (HNB) (The Grove)	125	-£1,250,000
Total 25/26		4,985,000

**The Grove place funding is top sliced from DSG and paid via the General Annual Grant (GAG)*

- 3.4 As shown in the S251 budget return to the DfE and the table above, the Local Authority commissions 631 special school places totalling **£4.985m** (less recoupment) for 25/26.
- 3.5 Table 4 below shows the number of funded **Top Ups** under the **minimum funded guarantee** (MFG) budgeted for 25/26.

Table 4 – Special School Indicative Top-up Funding (Including MFG) Budget 2025/26

HNB Special School Top up budgets 2025-26	S251 Top up 2025-26	S251 Top up Funding at per place	HNB 2025-26 Top up Budget £	HNB 2025-26 Top up Budget £	Total HNB 2025-26 Top up Budget
			Apr to Aug	Sept to Mar	TOTAL
Blanche Neville	23	24000	230,000	322,000	552,000
Riverside	147	24000	1,470,000	2,058,000	3,528,000
The Brook	117	24000	1,170,000	1,638,000	2,808,000
The Brook	10	23280		135,800	135,800
The Grove	108	27909	1,255,905	1,758,267	3,014,172
The Vale	93	24000	930,000	1,302,000	2,232,000
The Vale	3	27909	34,886	48,841	83,727
TOTAL			5,090,791	7,262,908	12,353,699

Note: The table above only includes MFG Top ups, this is the minimum amount that a schools should receive in “top up” funding, not the total number of commissioned places.

3.6 Total Special School indicative budgets for 2025/26

Table 5 – Special School Place Funding and Top-up Estimated Budget 2025/26

TOTAL SPECIAL SCHOOLS BUDGET 2025/26				
HNB Special School budgets 2025/26	S251 Places 2025/26	TOTAL PLACE FUNDING	TOTAL TOP-UP FUNDING	TOTAL BUDGET 2025/26
	No	£	£	£
Blanche Neville	70	£700,000	£552,000	£1,252,000
Riverside	162	£1,620,000	£3,528,000	£5,148,000
The Brook	130	£1,300,000	£2,808,000	£4,108,000
The Grove	125	£1,250,000	£3,014,172	£4,264,172
The Vale	119	£1,190,000	£2,315,727	£3,505,727
Expansion				
The Brook	10	£58,333	135,800	£194,133
Riverside from Sept 24	7	£70,000		£70,000
Riverside from Sept 25	8	£46,667		£46,667
Total	631	£6,235,000	£12,353,699	£18,588,699
Recoupment				
The Grove	-125	-£1,250,000		-£1,250,000
Total budget after recoupment		£4,985,000	£12,353,699	£17,338,699

- 3.7 Both place funding and top up place funding/numbers are now being reviewed termly to confirm places, OOB numbers and agreement on any variations due to the monitoring and delivery of the Safety Valve Programme.
- 3.8 A school decision to go over the number of commissioned special school places must be **agreed between the Headteacher and the local authority budget holder**. This is because the local authority does not have to allocate place funding for additional places above that of commissioned numbers as per HNB guidance unless prior agreement has been sought.
- 3.9 Place and top up indicative budget for Haringey special schools from 2025-2026 (less recoupment) is **£17,338,699**.

4. Additional Resource Provisions (ARPs) indicative budgets 2025/26

Table 6 – ARP Indicative Budget 2025/26

HNB Resource Bases budgets 2025-26	2025-26 S251 Place Funding		2025-26 Place funding School block funding (AWPU) (£4k)	2025-26 Place funding High needs block funding (£6k). £10k New	HNB 2025- 26 Top up Budget	Total HNB 2025-26 Budget
	Apr to Aug	Sept to Mar	£	£	£	£
Earlsmead Primary School	4	4	16,000	24,000	80,000	120,000
Earlsmead Primary School		2		11,667	23,333	35,000
West Green Primary School	8	8	32,000	48,000	160,000	240,000
Alexandra Primary School	0	3	0	17,500	35,000	52,500
The Mulberry Primary School	24	24	96,000	144,000	480,000	720,000
			144,000	245,167	778,333	1,167,500

- 4.1 ARPs are enhanced resource provisions within mainstream schools. Pupils attending ARPs are part funded from Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) of c£4,000, plus Element 2 funding (£6k) from the school's block in accordance with the autumn census, based on the Authority Proforma Tool (APT).
- 4.2 Top up payments are paid at Band G rates (£20k) based on actual numbers of pupils, whereas place funding is paid whether or not a pupil is attending.
- 4.3 For pupils starting in September that are not yet on the census, they are paid at £10,000 per place pro rata up to the end of the financial year.
- 4.4 The two new ARPs established during 2025/26 are:
- 15-place ASC at Earlsmead Primary school, with 6 places from September 2025.
 - 10-place SEMH at Alexandra Primary school, with 3 places from September 2025.
- 4.5 ARP Indicative funding from the DSG budget for 25/26 is **£1.167m**.

5. Post 16 Commissioned Places 2025/26

5.1 Table 7 below shows the number and total of post 16 commissioned places

Table 7 Wider Post 16 Commissioned Places 2025/26

High needs block Post 16 Commissioned Places 2025/26			
Provision	Setting	No.	(£)
Post-16 SEN places	SEN places at Haringey 6th Form College	134	£804,000
Further Education (FE) and Independent Learning Provider (ILP) Places	Digital Skills at Harrington	51	£306,000
	Total		£1,110,000

6. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK Deductions (recoupment) 2025/26

6.1 Table 8 details the deductions taken from the HNB Budget and passported directly to Academies, Free Schools and Post 16 Provisions for 2025/26.

Table 8 - High needs block 2025/26 deductions			
Provision	Setting	No.	Deduction (£)
All places	The Grove (Special free school)	125	£1,250,000
Alternative Provision academies and free schools	Pre-16 AP Places	1	£5,834
Post-16 SEN places	SEN places at Haringey 6th Form College	134	£804,000
Further Education (FE) and Independent Learning Provider (ILP) Places	Harrington	51	£306,000
High Needs Deductions July 2025 DSG.			£2,365,834

Table 7 and 9 Source: <https://skillsfunding.service.gov.uk/view-latest-funding/dedicated-schools-grant/funding-breakdown/2025-to-2026/309/24-11-2025?includeHistory=true#high-needs>

7. Legal implications

7.1 The Schools' Forums (England) regulations 2012 govern the constitution and conduct of meetings of the forum. The Schools Finance (England) Regulations 2012 determine those matters on which the local authority must or may consult the school's forum and those in respect of which the school's forum can make decisions. These regulations make provision for the financial arrangements of local authorities in relation to the funding of maintained schools and providers of prescribed Early Years provision in England.

- 7.2 Just highlighting to risk to the High needs block funding of the DFE import and export system which could adversely affect future funding, I have detailed this risk in section 2.3 of this paper.

8. Other implications

- a. Risk management – None
- b. Contractual issues – None
- c. Staffing issues – None
- d. Customer impact – None
- e. Safeguarding children – None
- f. Health issues – None
- g. Crime and Disorder - None
- h. Property/Asset Issues - None

Background papers used in the preparation of the report:

High Needs Block DSG Allocations - <https://skillsfunding.service.gov.uk/view-latest-funding/dedicated-schools-grant/funding-breakdown/2025-to-2026/309/24-11-2025?includeHistory=true#high-needs>

Dedicated schools grant (DSG): 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[National funding formula for schools and high needs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

List of appendices N/A