

**SCHOOLS FORUM**  
**31<sup>st</sup> January 2023**



**Report sponsor:** Andy Smith, Strategic Director of People Services and Alison Parkin, Director of Financial Services & Deputy Section 151 Officer  
**Report author:** Janice Hadfield, Head of Finance

**ITEM**  
**02/23**

**Proposed Schools Block Transfer 2023-24**

**SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the proposal to transfer £0.055m (0.02%) of the school's block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to the High Needs Block in 2023-24.
- 1.2 Since 2018-19 local authorities are able to transfer up to 0.5% of the gross Schools Block to High Needs following consultation with schools and the approval of the Schools Forum. Should the Schools Forum not approve a transfer approval can be sought from the Secretary of State. A transfer of greater than 0.5% of the gross Schools Block can only be made with the approval of the Secretary of State. There are no restrictions on transfers between other blocks. Approval for a transfer is only for the year it is enacted; further approvals are required annually.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To note the indicative allocations of the Dedicated Schools Grant as detailed in this report.
- 2.2 To approve a transfer of £0.055m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for Derby is split into four blocks: Schools Block, Early Years Block, High Needs Block and a Central School Services Block.

The 2023-24 allocation for the DSG is £307.857m and is made up of four blocks of funding:

- Schools Block £228.227m
- Central School Services Block £2.654m
- High Needs Block £56.628m
- Early Years Block £20.348m

- 3.2 Prior to 2018/19 local authorities had full flexibility to transfer funding between blocks, this has largely been from Schools to High Needs. Under the 2018/19 school funding reform, which saw the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF) for schools and High Needs, the Department for Education (DfE) limited the ability to transfer funding from the Schools Block to High Needs.

- 3.3 Since 2018/19 local authorities are able to transfer up to 0.5% of the gross Schools Block to High Needs following the approval of the Schools Forum. Should the Schools Forum not approve a transfer approval can be sought from the Secretary of State. A transfer of greater than 0.5% of the gross Schools Block can only be made with the approval of the Secretary of State. There are no restrictions on transfers between other blocks. Approval for a transfer is only for the year it is enacted; further approvals are required annually.

- 3.4 The requirement to transfer £0.055m, for the SENDIASS service which works closely with parents and families with pre-mediation to prevent tribunals, avoid out of authority placements and associated costs. This will retain capacity in the team for this essential work to help reduce pressures on the HNB.

- 3.5 To give context to the extent that the team support the HN budget by way of cost avoidance the following has been reported by the team:

*SENDIASS has had **69 successful pre-mediation** cases since January 2020 :*

**10 – 2020**

**45 – 2021**

**14 – 2022**

*With an average cost saving of £7,730 (£650 mediation meeting, £80 mediation certificate and £7000 tribunal) SENDIASS by doing this have made cost saving of £533,370. This doesn't include the two cases avoiding independent schools which had saved a further £172,855.50 (escalating to £864,277.50 for both placements over 5 years).*

*This brings a grand total costs avoided to **£1,397,647.50.***

*This has only been achieved and remains sustainable, whilst retaining the current 3.46 FTE (core is 2.3 FTE) with limited time to undertake preventative work supporting parental engagement of the graduated response / SEN Support process. That work would ultimately impact of the amount of EHCP assessment being submitted, which is currently averaging 63 per month. This is a direct result of the capacity of SENDIASS being involved with tribunal / appeal work reflected in the 117% increase seen by the Council in appeals.*

<b>For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:</b>	Janice Hadfield <a href="mailto:Janice.hadfield@derby.gov.uk">Janice.hadfield@derby.gov.uk</a>
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