

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

12 December 2019

DSG Expenditure – Wiltshire Virtual School

Purpose of the Report:

1. To present the forecast expenditure on looked after children in full time alternative education provision for the financial year 2019/20.

Main Considerations:

2. For the financial year 2019/20, £102,800 was allocated by the Schools' Forum to the Virtual School, from the DSG budget, to provide full-time alternative educational provision for the small number of looked after children and young people who:
 - do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
 - do not receive education as part of a social care package; **and**
 - are unable to successfully access a mainstream education setting
3. The same amount of funding (£102,800) was allocated by Schools' Forum in 2018/19, after a reduction of £100,000 in allocation for the financial year 2017/18, which reflected the timing of an increase in Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding allocated by the DfE via the Pupil Premium Grant. This additional PP+ funding continues to be allocated, via the Virtual School, to maintain and support stability of on-roll school places for pupils, on an assessed, needs-led basis.
4. This year, full-time alternative educational provision has been required for a small number of children and young people looked after by Wiltshire Council, in line with the criteria listed above.
5. The allocated DSG funding has been used to manage the costs of this provision. Costs provided below are actual and projected, to the end of the financial year 2019-20:

Year Group (AY 2019/20)	Provision	Cost at end of FY 2019/20	Provision Duration - Weeks FY 2019/20
8	Pupil Referral Unit, Reading	£8,625	17
9	Independent Alternative Provider, Kent	£21,000	26
9	Independent Alternative Provider, Essex*	£10,000*	16*
10	Independent Alternative Provider, Blackpool	£13,680	39
11	Pupil Referral Service, Bristol	£12,888	52
11	Independent Alternative Provider, Wiltshire	£15,000	23
Year Group - (AY 2018/19)			
9	Independent Alternative Provider, Kent	£6,283	29
11	Independent Alternative Provider, Bristol	£5,712	14
11	Independent Alternative Provider, Bristol	£15,400	17
Total		£108,588	
DSG		-£102,800	
Overspend (Balance from PPG)		£5,788	

**estimated cost – provision being sought for a YP who has just completed a custodial sentence*

6. There has been no increase in the amount per capita pupil premium grant funding available from the DfE for looked after children.
7. The Virtual School has received an extension to the pupil premium grant from the DfE this financial year of £60,738 to enable provision of the local authority's extended statutory duties for previously looked after children. Conditions of grant are clear that this funding cannot be used for looked after children.
8. DSG funding made available during 2019/20 has ensured access to and stability of educational provision for some of our most vulnerable looked after children and young people.
9. Costs for full-time alternative educational provision during 2019/20 are broadly similar to costs incurred during 2018/19. There is no expectation that the need for this provision will decrease during 2020/21. As such, I would like to request allocation of funding at the same level for 2020/21.

Proposals:

10. Schools' Forum is asked to note the expenditure forecast at the end of 2019/20 and to consider the request made for 2020/21.

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