

Split Site Allowance – High Needs Block

Introduction

1. Following the Schools Forum meeting on the 6th November 2014, it was agreed that a detailed schedule of 'additional' costs for schools in a High Needs setting, be presented to the next Schools Funding Working Group (SFWG). A paper was presented to Schools Forum outlining the principle of a split site allowance for High Needs education settings and it was felt that further evidence of the need for a split site allowance was required, before a decision could be made regarding funding levels.

Background

2. In a small number of schools within Wiltshire education is delivered across more than one site. Where those sites are distinct and require travel for pupils and/or separate administration it is recognised that there are additional costs to a school compared with single site provision. Funding rates are £65,000 for a Primary School and £100,000 for a Secondary School.
3. Wiltshire has traditionally supported the use of split site funding for mainstream schools within its formula, to support schools meeting a distinct criteria. As high needs provision is not funded through the main formula, any provision must be funded through the high needs, place plus mechanism.
4. Until September 2014, Wiltshire has never had high needs provision split over more than one site and therefore this is a unique position which we now find ourselves in. With one school now operating a high needs provision over two sites and another expected to do so from September 2015, the issue of funding is causing the two schools affected, some considerable concern.
5. Both schools affected have been asked to present a case which outlines their need for an allowance. St Nicholas School have provided a detailed analysis and Greentrees Primary School are currently working through their estimated costs. Both schools have seen their split site develop as part of an agreed plan between the LA and the school.

St Nicholas Special School - Chippenham

6. The expansion of the off-site facilities has enabled the school to deliver a separate provision that will better provide for the growing needs of children and young people who attend the school. The financing for these developments has been funded by the Local Authority and the Education Funding Agency.
7. Based upon the additional site provided to the school, there is now capacity for the school to expand from its current 75 places to 88 places in the future, if demand dictates the growth is required. Funding for the additional places would have to be secured from the Department for Education, who are currently not prepared to fund growth within Wiltshire's Special Schools.
8. The table below sets out the additional costs faced by the school, as prepared by the Head, Deputy-Head and Bursar at the school.

Cost Base	Amount (£)
Additional Staffing Costs	73,726
Additional Non-Staffing Costs	40,628
TOTAL	114,354

9. The school have been able to identify a range of costs which exceed the current split site allowance awarded to both a maintained primary and secondary school. Included within the Additional Staffing costs are the costs for Receptionists, TA's, Admin support and a Teacher for 1 day a week.
10. The additional costs for Non-Staffing include the utilities, cleaning, transport and other associated property costs.
11. St Nicholas School is currently funded for 75 places and then receives top-up funding for pupils, based upon the banding value associated with their particular need. The application of a split site allowance would require the establishment of a school-specific top-up rate, designed specifically to award additional funding in respect of the second site.

Proposal

12. Having previously agreed to the principle of a split site allowance, Schools Funding Working Group have given consideration to the cost bases put forward by St Nicholas School and propose the following;
 - A maximum split site allowance for special schools of £45,000
 - The amount to be in recognition of the additional costs faced by operating over a split site
 - The amount to be paid through a school-specific top-up rate from the High Needs budget which ensures compliance with the EFA guidance.
13. Consideration for a split site Resource Base allowance at Greentrees be given at a future meeting, in light of the outcomes for St Nicholas School and further clarity of the additional associated costs with their split site.

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