

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Committee
MEETING DATE: 19 November 2024
BY: Executive Director – Education and Children's Services
SUBJECT: Additional Support Needs (ASN) Funding

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek the Committee's approval for the proposed changes to the allocation of funding to support children and young people with ASN.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- i. Approve the proposed changes to the principles for the allocation of funding for children and young people with ASN.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national approach to improving outcomes for children and young people by offering the right help at the right time so that they can reach their full potential.
- 3.2 The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004) provides the legal framework for the provision of additional support for learning. The Act legislates for the responsibility of education authorities to identify, provide and review the provision for the additional support needs of children and young people.
- 3.3 The national context of children and young people with ASN is changing. Numbers of children and young people with ASN have doubled in the past decade. There are several factors contributing to this including: advances in medicine and neonatal care, rising poverty, poorer mental health and better identification of ASN.
- 3.4 This picture is mirrored in East Lothian. Between 2014 and 2023 the number of pupils with ASN has increased by 84%. 36% of children and young people in East Lothian are currently recorded as having ASN.
- 3.5 The predominant reasons for ASN in East Lothian include Social and Emotional Behavioural Need (SEBN) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

- 3.6 The current system of funding for ASN comprises of Predictable and Exceptional Needs.
- 3.7 Predictable Needs funding is determined by free school meal entitlement and school roll. It is allocated on a 70:30 basis with 70% based on free school meal entitlement and 30% based on the school roll.
- 3.8 Exceptional Needs funding applications are made by school staff for individual children and young people who are considered to have needs which are complex and enduring. This is evidenced through submission of the Child's Plan to a panel to assess and moderate against set criteria. If granted, exceptional needs are assessed as either low, medium or high and this correlates to a number of ASN Auxiliary hours of support. This varies each year depending on the overall budget and the number of children and young people with exceptional needs.
- 3.9 In line with the principles of Belonging to East Lothian and the evolving nature of the ASN landscape, it is essential that funding: aligns with a changing profile of need; is decentralised to ensure localised support with an emphasis on early intervention; and is equitable, evidencing improved outcomes for children and young people.
- 3.10 To ensure the continued efficiency and effectiveness of ASN funding allocations a working group of school leaders and central staff, led by the Quality Improvement Manager for Equity & Inclusion has been established.
- 3.11 The working group agreed unanimously that the current system needs to be reviewed and identified the following constraints with it:
- The current system is bureaucratic. It can take time to access support.
 - Schools need greater flexibility and autonomy to provide support.
 - The growing numbers of children and young people with social and emotional needs and autism are not adequately recognised in the universal support formula for predictable needs or exceptional needs.
 - Resource needs to include children and young people who struggle to attend school.
 - The current system conflates the provision of staffing hours with meeting needs. Meeting learners' needs is more nuanced than that.
 - There is an element of subjectivity with the current system of Exceptional Needs which is predicated on the content of a Child Plan.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 3.12 The working group agreed that an objective and comprehensive, data driven system is required to address constraints in 3.10 and ensuring alignment with the factors identified in 3.8.
- 3.13 Data for children and young people is collated in the education management system SEEMiS.
- 3.14 The Risk Matrix module in SEEMiS holds information for children and young people which directly correlates to factors giving rise to ASN. This is detailed in Appendix 1.

- 3.15 It is proposed that a new system of funding for ASN would:
- Amalgamate the two distinct Predictable and Exceptional Needs funding streams into one ASN funding stream.
 - Use the information in the SEEMiS Risk Matrix and apply ASN weightings factors for all individual children and young people.
 - This determines the number of children and young people in each school who have a low, medium or a high level of factors giving rise to ASN.
 - A progressive weighting for funding will be applied to a determination of low, medium, or high factors.
 - This will be compiled to provide individual schools with an allocation of funding.
 - As a result, Head Teachers and their senior leadership teams will be able to determine how best to allocate resource to meet needs across their schools. It will also allow greater flexibility to respond to changing and emerging needs throughout the course of a school year.
- 3.16 The proposed new model of funding will assume the same overall level of funding as that which is available currently. It is therefore possible that there will be increases and decreases to the funding that individual schools receive. This is true with the current system too. However, to mitigate against any significant swings, a smoothing effect will be applied for the first three years of transition to the proposed new system.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide adequate provision for children and young people with Additional Support Needs.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - none
- 6.2 Personnel - none
- 6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 SEEMiS Risk Matrix factor are contained in Appendix 1.

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SEEMiS Risk Matrix – Factors Giving Rise to Additional Support Needs

School Attendance %
85-90
70-84
50-69
Below 50
Attendance Codes
Social Anxiety
Should Not Attend – Reasonable Adjustment ASN
Sickness with Educational Provisions
Free School Meals and School Clothing Grants
Yes
No
Social Index of Multiple Deprivation
1
2
3
4
5
With Care Experienced
Looked After Away From Home
Looked After At Home
Previously Looked After
Kinship Care
English as an Additional Language
New to English
Early Acquisition
Developing competence
Competent
Fluent
ASN Planning
Individual Education Plan
Child Plan
Positive Support Plan
Inclusion and Wellbeing Risk Assessment
CSP
Assessed or Declared Disabled
Other ASN – no formal plan
Child Protection Register
Yes
Yes Previously and subsequent deregistration
Young Carer
Yes

