

WESTMORLAND & FURNESS COUNCIL SCHOOLS FORUM
Report Title: Targeted SEN Funding
Meeting date: 11 June 2025
Report of: Isobel Booter, Assistant Director Education & Inclusion

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following a number of meetings with deficit schools, the LA committed to modelling the impact of reintroducing targeted SEN funding to schools with high levels of EHCPs. Targeted SEN funding had previously been applied to schools with more than 2% of pupils on roll with EHCPs but was withdrawn in 2021/22.
- 1.2 A report was presented to the Schools Forum High Needs Working Group in April 2025 setting out the scenarios included in this paper. The High Needs Working Group recommended that the paper and modelling should be considered by the full Schools Forum.

2.0 Link to Council Plan Priorities

- 2.1 Ensuring that schools are funded appropriately is supportive of the Council Plan priorities that “People in Westmorland & Furness are healthy, happy, active and able to lead fulfilling independent lives, thriving in their communities” and the commitment to reduce inequality and “ensure that young people have enough opportunities to access the best education”.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 The Schools Forum are recommended to note the modelling in the report and to consider whether:
 - whether Targeted SEN funding should be reintroduced;
 - if targeted SEN funding is reintroduced, the threshold and funding value per pupil to be used;

- whether other ways of supporting inclusive schools could be considered.

4.0 Rationale & Evidence for the Recommendation

- 4.1 Prior to 2022/23 schools with more than 2% of pupils on roll with an EHCP received £3,000 for each pupil over the threshold. This targeted funding was removed in 2021/22 as part of measures to manage High Needs Block expenditure.
- 4.2 Since then, the numbers of pupils with EHCPs or SEN support have increased significantly as has the level and complexity of need. LA officers recently met with 21 deficit schools to discuss their deficits and to set out actions for both schools and the LA. A number of themes emerged from these meetings, one of which was the impact of increasing numbers of pupils with SEND on school finances and on staff within schools. As a result the LA undertook to review Targeted SEN funding and consider whether it should be reintroduced.
- 4.3 For the purposes of modelling the number of pupils with an EHCP as at February 2025 has been used and takes the number of pupils with an EHCP as a percentage of number on roll. Where a school has pupils in a Resource Provision unit those pupils have been excluded from EHCP numbers as the school receives additional funding for RP units.
- 4.4 Three scenarios have been modelled as shown in the table below.

Schools	Model 1 - 6% over threshold Alloc at £3,000 per pupil	Model 2 - 5% over threshold Alloc at £3,000 per pupil	Model 3 - 4% over threshold Alloc at £2,000 per pupil
No of schools receiving payment	37	52	73
Primary	31	46	66
Secondary	6	3	7
Lowest payment per school	£3,000	£3,000	£2,000
Highest payment per school	£54,000	£72,000	£72,000
Total cost	£669,000	£942,000	£888,000

- 4.5 Model 1 uses a threshold of 6% of number on roll relating to pupils with EHCPs and allocates £3,000 for each pupil with an EHCP over the threshold. In this model 37 out of 141 would receive funding and the annual cost to the High Needs block would be £669,000.
- 4.6 Model 2 uses a threshold of 5% of number on roll relating to pupils with EHCPs and allocates £3,000 for each pupil with an EHCP over the threshold. In this model 52 out of 141 would receive funding and the annual cost to the High Needs block would be £942,000.
- 4.7 Model 3 uses a threshold of 4% of number on roll relating to pupils with EHCPs and allocates £2,000 for each pupil with an EHCP over the threshold. In this

model 73 out of 141 would receive funding and the annual cost to the High Needs block would be £888,000.

- 4.8 The reintroduction of Targeted SEN funding would increase the pressure on the High Needs block but does recognise both the pressures arising as a result of SEN and that the school system in Westmorland & Furness is very inclusive. For some of our schools they are seen by many parents as the school of choice for children with SEN.

5.0 Options

- 5.1 The Schools Forum is asked to note the modelling presented and to consider:
- whether Targeted SEN funding should be reintroduced;
 - if targeted SEN funding is reintroduced the threshold and funding value per pupil to be used;
 - whether other ways of supporting inclusive schools could be considered.

6.0 Financial & Other Relevant Implications

- 6.1 Financial implications are considered throughout this report. No equality/legal/implications have been identified.

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