
York Schools Forum

4th July 2024

Report of the Assistant Director, Education and Skills

SEND Banding

Summary

- 1 This paper provides the members of Schools Forum with an update on the work taking place to review the current SEND banding structure.

Background

2. At the meeting of Schools Forum on 8th February 2023 it was agreed that the Assistant Director, Education and Skills should convene a task and finish group to focus on a review of the current use of the High Needs DSG through approach to SEND banding in York.
3. The review of SEND banding is being done in the context of the Safety Valve delivery plan and the publication of the Department for Education's SEND and AP improvement plan which was published on 2nd March 2023. A priority in the SEND and AP improvement plan is financial sustainability with an outcome that '*Local systems deploy their resources effectively such that spending shifts towards early intervention and away from costly specialist provision, where this is not required*'. In York the current system of SEND banding was developed and published in 2018.
4. All systems of banding should be kept under review and updated to reflect the latest evidence of best practice. Any review of banding should also seek to improve the clarity, transparency and consistency of the decision- making processes.

Progress on recommendations from the 2023 task and finish group

5. **Pilot the use of a costed provision map model.** There has been a testing of the use of the provision map approach, with some schools submitting provision maps to the Resource Allocation Panel. Review of these provision maps has shown that there are inconsistent approaches being used in the development of provision maps and they also lead to an inflation in the amount of additional funding being requested. If costed provision maps were used to replace banding this is more likely to create financial pressures which could not be supported by the High Needs DSG. The only secure way to move to the use of costed provision maps would be to benchmark the costs that can be funded from the DSG and also to ensure that there is a clear link between requested resource and the outcomes in education, health and care plans.
6. **The review of banding must be underpinned by an agreement of what ordinarily available provision looks like in York.** The Ordinarily Available provision guidance

to has been published and further tweaks will be made to it to ensure that there is greater consistency in application and support parents and carers understanding of what can be ordinarily provided to support children and young people identified as having special educational needs.

7. **Publish new guidance about the local authority advisory panels for statutory assessment and resource allocation to increase transparency.** Due to changes of staffing in the SEN team progress has not been made on this action. A review of the panels is taking place over June and July and new guidance will be published for the start of the new academic year in September 2024.
8. **It is recommended that the local authority works with the specialist settings to review the current special school banding framework and to establish a clear place-based framework.** This has been modelled through the work done on the enhanced resource provision and Danesgate service level agreements. Next steps are to review the special school top up banding to simplify and link more closely to ensuring that the economies of scale expected from special school provision is being evidenced.

Next Steps

9. It is clear that the current sub-division of banding creates increased complexity and results in an inconsistent application of banding decisions. It is also clear that the levels of funding attached to each band which was originally based on the notional hours of additional support from a teaching assistant, no longer equates to the wages of teaching assistants. In order to create a more meaningful system of additional support it is proposed that a review is undertaken during July and August and that proposals to introduce revised banding scales are brought to Schools Forum for consultation in autumn 2024 with a view to implementing revised banding from January 2025. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that mainstream banding incentivises inclusion in mainstream.

<p>Contact Details Authors:</p>	<p>Chief Officers Responsible for the Report:</p>		
<p>Maxine Squire Assistant Director, Education and Skills Tel: 01904 553007 email: maxine.squire@york.gov.uk</p>	<p>Martin Kelly Corporate Director, Children’s Services and Education Tel:</p>		
	<p>Report Approved</p>		<p>Date</p>
<p>For further information please contact the author of the report</p>			