

The Highland Council  
ADULT & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE  
26 September 2012

Agenda Item	
Report No	

**Additional Support Needs – Allocation Model**

**Report by Director of Education Culture and Sport**

**Summary**

This report proposes an allocation model for additional support needs funding.

This report contributes to a broad range of outcomes in Working Together for the Highlands and specifically to the following:

- The Council will enhance services for children who need extra support, including implementation of the role of 'Pupil Support Assistant', investing further in social care, and ensuring a more personalised approach.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The review of classroom support that began during session 2010-11 was led by a Cross Party Working Group of Elected Members, supported by a Task Group, consisting of a variety of people, including Senior Managers, Head Teachers, Classroom Assistants, Learning Support Auxiliaries, the Chair Persons of 3 Parent Councils and members of UNISON and GMB.
- 1.2 Much of the initial discussion was about the support required in our classrooms, taking account of the changing needs of the pupils within our schools. In a positive move forward in this respect, it was decided to create a unified post of Pupil Support Assistant, a change which is being implemented during this school term.
- 1.3 Although much of the early discussion included the possible implications of a budget reduction on posts, in February 2012 it was decided not to make these savings and to provide additional funding to the Additional Support Needs budget. As a result, all members of staff in Classroom Assistant or Learning Support Assistant posts have been offered an amendment to their contract and a transfer to the post of Pupil Support Assistant.
- 1.4 The Cross Party Working Group subsequently asked the Task Group to consider the current allocation of classroom support in relation to individual schools and associated school groups, to review the arrangements for the allocation of the Area additional support needs budgets and to make recommendations on a model for the future allocation of support.
- 1.5 The Cross Party Working Group subsequently asked the Task Group to consider

the current allocation of classroom support in relation to individual schools and associated school groups, to review the arrangements for the allocation of the Area additional support needs budgets and to make recommendations on a model for the future allocation of support.

- 1.6 Over recent months, work has been undertaken on a needs based allocation model, to allocate the ASN budgets available at Area level, to meet the need identified in individual schools.

## 2. Current Situation

- 2.1 There is a process operating currently that identifies need across all school. This annual audit of need is undertaken by school staff and provides a consistent approach to the assessment of pupil need across Highland. It engages Head Teachers and Support for Learning Teachers, in every school in Highland. This process requires support teams to consider the needs of the pupils within their school in relation to the Matrix of Need (**appendix 1**). The Matrix identifies need at 4 levels and provides a benchmark for school staff. The Matrix was the result of a detailed study undertaken some time ago by the University of Edinburgh, to consider the needs of pupils and to identify the level of significant need that would require a more targeted and individualised approach. The Edinburgh study identified need at level 3 and 4 as requiring targeted support and this has been validated in Highland, where similar findings have been achieved through regular use of this tool.

The annual audit of need is undertaken in February/March each year and provides very detailed information that supports discussion between Area ECS Managers, Area ASN Officers, Area Principal Educational Psychologists and Head Teachers. These discussions support the distribution of Pupil Support Assistants and Support for Learning Teachers across Areas, with a view to targeting the identified need for the coming academic session.

Although this process in itself is quite robust, the allocation of support has up to now drawn on the historic allocations of resourcing to Areas. These Area ASN budgets have not been reviewed in any detail in recent years. As a result, inequities in support levels across Areas have built up.

- 2.2 For some time, Head Teachers and Support for Learning Teachers have been indicating how time consuming this process is, although they clearly see the merit in identifying need on an annual basis, to ensure that account is taken of the regular changes in school populations. In addition, this annual audit is only one measure of identifying need across schools. In order to account for individual variations eg high levels of deprivation, significant increases or decreases in school rolls etc, a more sophisticated model is required. This model ideally would be able to confidently use pupil data from Phoenix e1 and be able to draw on models to predict need wherever possible, so as to reduce the time element in assessing and gathering information on pupil need.
- 2.3 In light of the changes in Area organisational structures, the ASN budget allocations to all 4 Areas are able to be considered in detail, with a view to

ensuring an equitable reallocation of the current budgets.

- 2.4 In an attempt to quantify the level of resource that may be required to meet the identified need, work has therefore been undertaken to consider what may be a reasonable level of additional support to provide to pupils with a variety of needs. This work has focused on what could be considered a minimum level of adequate support and it is recognised that there will be pupils in each of the categories identified who have much more complex needs than those described in this model and therefore higher levels of resourcing, than that identified by the model, may be required to meet these needs.
- 2.5 This model should not therefore be seen as a template for allocating individual need, but a general guide for the allocation of resource within each of the 4 Areas in Highland or within an associated school group. Decisions about individual resourcing will continue to require to be made at an Area level on the basis of the child's plan, information from the Partners to the Plan and the information held by key practitioners working in ASN, along with the Area ECS Manager.

### **3. The Proposed Budget Allocation Model**

- 3.1 The Budget Allocation Model that is proposed has several aspects to it, taking account of need at different levels, involving both generic and targeted support and also teaching and non-teaching support. The model draws on good practice in support for learning, our knowledge of additional support needs and the principles of equity and inclusion. The work on the model has been undertaken within the context of Getting it Right for Every Child and also within the legislative framework of the Additional Support for Learning Act (2004) and (as amended 2009).

The model requires school and pupil data to be updated regularly on Phoenix e1, so that this information can be used to reduce some of the time consuming elements of the current annual audit. It also requires clear processes of review and monitoring to be established at school, Area and Council-wide level, to ensure equity is maintained and consistency in practice achieved. While Head Teachers will continue to have responsibility for managing the support staff within their schools on a day to day basis, an overview of the support needs across an Area requires to be taken by Area ECS Managers, who will continue to have overall responsibility for managing the Area ASN budgets. However, this model also requires there to be Highland-wide support from specialist ASN services and a small central budget available to meet unusual or extreme need, midway through a session, that would not be able to be met easily from the Area ASN budget, once this has been allocated to schools. These Highland-wide ASN supports will continue to be managed by the Principal Officer Early Education and ASL.

## **4 Allocation of Resource for Generic Support**

### **4.1 General Classroom Support**

Previously Classroom Assistants provided generic support for primary schools.

This support was initially provided to the early stages, but over the years, has been used throughout the school. While there is a need to ensure that pupils with additional support needs are appropriately supported, schools and parents also highly value more general curriculum support, setting up activities, preparing displays of children's work, etc.

The model therefore provides an allocation of generic support equivalent to 2 hours per week for every 20 pupils, and 2 hours per week for every 10 pupils in Gaelic medium provision to reflect early stage immersion which will ensure that all primary schools have an allocation of generic support for each class, each week.

#### 4.2 **Support for Small Schools**

Small schools have particular difficulties in providing generic support as there is less flexibility in the numbers and range of staff available to provide support. It is therefore proposed to additionally provide 2 hours generic support to each small school (for this allocation model a small school is defined as a primary school of less than 70 pupils).

### 5 **Allocation of Resource for High Level Need**

5.1 In Highland, Additional Support Needs are assessed as being at one of 4 different levels. This assessment of need is undertaken by school staff and forms the basis of an annual audit of need that supports the allocation of support to schools within each Area in Highland. It is reasonable to assume that pupils with level 3 and 4 needs will require additional support for learning teaching and/or PSA support to access the curriculum and to provide personal support and/or intimate care. In addition, all pupils at these levels will have a child's plan and for many, these plans will be multi-agency and complex. This will require additional time for the Named Person and/or Lead Professional to coordinate, meet with parents and other professionals etc.

5.2 It is proposed that on average, a child with level 3 needs will benefit from 10 hours PSA support per week and that the equivalent of 1FTE teacher will be required to provide support to every 10 pupils with this level of need.

5.3 It is further proposed that on average, a child with level 4 needs will benefit from 15 hours PSA support per week and that the equivalent of 1FTE teacher will be required to provide support to every 6 pupils with this level of need.

5.4 These support ratios are broadly in line with the recommended supports for pupils in special schools, where a group of 4-6 pupils with severe communication difficulties or severe and complex learning difficulties will be supported by 1 FTE teacher, and up to 10 pupils with moderate learning difficulties will be supported by 1 FTE teacher. However, as noted above, allocations of support should be adjusted dependent on the needs of individual pupils and the teaching context.

### 6 **Allocation of Resource for Predicted Lower Level Need**

- 6.1 It can be predicted that at any point in time 20-25% of the school population will present with additional support needs, most at a much lower level (level 1 and 2) than those identified above. Many of these needs will be transient, but some will be longer term, requiring differentiation of the curriculum, curricular planning, additional support to access the curriculum eg reading materials, scribing work etc. Conditions such as Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Disorder, Dyspraxia, moderate learning difficulties etc, all occur on a proportionate basis within the general population. These needs can largely be accommodated within mainstream classes with additional support and by and large, (although not always), they can be met within a group – either a small group or class.
- 6.2 It can therefore be predicted that within each group of 20 pupils, 4 or 5 will have some level of ASN. For the purposes of allocating resource, it is therefore proposed to allocate approximately 5 hours PSA support and 5 hours SfL teaching support for each group of 20 pupils, to accommodate this level of need.

## **7 Allocation of Resource for Need Associated with Deprivation**

- 7.1 Language and learning difficulties are correlated very highly with indices of deprivation and therefore where there are higher levels of deprivation there will tend to be a significantly greater level of additional educational support need. In addition, research has shown a very clear correlation between deprivation, language difficulties and challenging behaviour, often also associated with higher levels of social need and family issues.
- 7.2 Using the Free School Meal Entitlement data as an indication of the level of deprivation is accepted practice. It is therefore reasonable to also use this as a way of predicting need in relation to challenging behaviour, social and emotional difficulties, generalised learning difficulty and language difficulties, as this relates to deprivation. Pupils with such difficulties most often require additional support to help them enhance their social skills, to moderate their behaviour, to be supported and nurtured socially and to develop more positive relationships. In addition, the level of planning and assessment required for such pupils is recognised as being higher, especially where their needs are being supported in collaboration with outside agencies and targeted services such as Social Work.
- 7.3 To meet this need it is therefore proposed to allocate an average of 5 hours PSA support and 5 hours SfL teaching support for every 20 pupils entitled to free school meals.

## **8 Support for Pupils where English is an Additional Language**

- 8.1 There is a strong argument to be made around the need for enhanced support for pupils learning in a different language. For pupils where English is an additional language, there is a specialist EAL service, staffed by teachers who work peripatetically to support schools and pupils in delivering and accessing the curriculum. This service is not part of the proposed allocation model and will continue to support the range of pupils where English is an Additional Language, where assistance is requested.

## 9 Summary

9.1 The proposed model provides a method of equitably sharing the ASN budget in a transparent way, to address the needs of pupils with predictable, lower level specific learning difficulties (predicted on the school roll); challenging behaviour and language and learning difficulties (predicted on the basis of FSME); and high level need (audited annually by each school).

9.2 This Model has Several Identified Strengths:

- It clearly identifies need and allocates support on the basis of this identified need.
- Support is linked to the needs of the pupil population and therefore can be more responsive to changing settings and changing needs.
- It links the level of support provided in mainstream environments to that provided in special school settings, thus providing more equity of provision regardless of access to special school.
- It provides a guide for ECS Managers and Head Teachers with regard to the level of support a pupil may require.
- Support within a school/ASG can be flexible to move to where the need is as the school population changes.
- The model can predict the level of need on the basis of information readily available from the pupil database and therefore provide the basis to more detailed conversations between Area Managers and Head Teachers in relation to the allocation of support.

9.3 There are of course some key requirements to ensure the model is effective in allocating support effectively:

- The model provides a guide to allocating resource and while it provides a reasonably robust means of allocating the ASN budget across the 4 Areas in Highland, it requires to be applied flexibly in relation to ASGs and individual schools.
- It requires the pupil database, Phoenix e1 to be maintained accurately throughout the year to ensure there is confidence in its accuracy at any time.
- It requires ASN specialists, at Area level and within the central ASN Team, to monitor the consistency of the use of the ASN Matrix in identifying and classifying need ie a level 3 pupil in Lochaber would be considered level 3 in Thurso etc.
- It requires an adequate level of central resource to be identified to meet the needs of pupils arriving in an Area, mid-way through a term, once the ASN budget has been allocated.
- It requires Head Teachers to be cognisant of the premise that the resource will follow the need and therefore if pupils are excluded, a level of resource may be removed from the school to continue to meet the pupil's needs elsewhere.
- It requires the budget allocation to each Area to be monitored and

reviewed to enable a reallocation on a regular basis, to take account of significant changes in need. (Consideration is being given to the frequency of reallocating budget and if changes are not significant, this may be able to be done annually, to prevent the possibility of inequity building over several years).

- 9.4 In the process of realigning budgets, there will be schools that have historically been relatively well resourced, that will find any reduction in support difficult to manage. While there is a need to reallocate the budget across ASGs to meet the identified and predicted need, it is recommended that the reallocation process is incremental in nature. Managing the implementation of this model over 2-3 academic sessions will enable schools to adjust their working practices to take account of the inevitable changes in allocations across ASGs.
- 9.5 The model, and its implementation, will require to be closely monitored over the next three years to ensure it is effective in providing equitable levels of support. After this initial implementation period, the level of need will continue to be tracked and monitored, with any changes required to the model being considered over time.
- 9.6 Area ECS Managers are able to monitor their own support needs and the quality and quantity of support provisions across ASGs in their Areas. However, there is a need to ensure consistency of approach across the Council to ensure this model is implemented effectively. The Highland Council ASN Team, led by the Principal Officer, Early Education and Additional Support for Learning, will therefore sample schools in each Area, on an annual basis, reviewing the process of identifying need (ie ensuring consistency in the way the Matrix of need is used), and also consistency in the levels of support provided and the strategies used in practice. This will provide a process of quality assurance Highland wide.

## **10 Budget Implications**

- 10.1 Although the overall resource within the Area ASN budgets currently equates well to the level of need identified through this model, the budget which is currently available is allocated unevenly across the council Areas, resulting in an inequity of resourcing to meet the identified need. The significant feature of this model is the provision of a direct link between identified need and resource which may have implications for the budget in the future, should need significantly rise. National statistics would indicate that there is a rise in those pupils with complex Additional Support Needs due to the positive effects of better medical interventions for pre-term babies, a rise in the incidence of Autism Spectrum Disorders and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome etc. If this national trend is replicated in Highland, over time this may present a budget pressure and so close monitoring of need is an essential component of this model.

## **11 Implications**

- 11.1 The resource implications are set out in the report. There are no equality, climate change or risk implications following from the report.

## 12 Recommendation

12.1 Members are asked to note the significant progress that has been undertaken thus far to modernise support within the classroom.

and

to agree the implementation of the budget allocation model as a means of providing a transparent means of equitably allocating the ASN budget across the 4 Areas and providing a guide to the level of support required to meet identified needs at varying levels across schools in Highland.

Signature: Hugh Fraser

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Date: 18 September 2012

Author: Bernadette Cairns  
Principal Officer, Additional Support for Learning & Early Years

Background Papers: Matrix of Need



HIGHLAND COUNCIL – ECS SERVICE  
LEVELS OF ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEED

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date	Review Date
Class	Class
ASN Level	ASN Level

	Level 1 – Standard Support	Level 2 – Significant Support	Level 3 – Substantial Support	Level 4 – Specialised Support
Needs relating to: The physical environment	Level 1 – Standard Support The ordinary education setting is appropriate (DDA compliant)	Level 2 – Significant Support Access to a room <i>sometimes</i> required for the delivery of structured programmes etc. which cannot be delivered within the mainstream classroom eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a deaf pupil requiring a low noise environment</li> <li>area for a pupil to engage in outside agency programme</li> </ul>	Level 3 – Substantial Support A base/dedicated area within a mainstream setting may be required for a <i>substantial part</i> of the pupil's time in school eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ASD friendly environment</li> </ul>	Level 4 – Specialised Support A highly specialised environment is required <i>all of the time</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pupil with complex needs</li> </ul>
The curriculum and how it is delivered	Mainstream curriculum with differentiation eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>alternative outcomes</li> <li>additional time</li> <li>responding to preferred learning styles</li> </ul>	<i>Significant</i> differentiation is needed in one or more areas of the curriculum, requiring a child's plan/programme with SMART targets, which are reviewed termly eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>for learning and/or behaviour</li> <li>independence/social/life skills</li> <li>physical/sensory issues</li> </ul>	<i>Very substantial</i> and individualised planning is needed in a wide area of the mainstream curriculum requiring regular review and consultation with parents, and agencies/services external to the school	The pupil follows an <i>alternative/elaborated</i> curriculum from that provided in mainstream, supported by a detailed child's plan.
The level of adult support required (refer to CSP if appropriate)	A flexible and creative use of support normally available, in order to respond to needs	Significant needs which require to be addressed through access to individual and/or small group support for <i>part of the time</i> , monitored and reviewed through the child's plan.	Access to a <i>substantial</i> level of support <i>most of the time</i> to implement agreed protocols/actions, as agreed and recorded in the child's plan.	Pupil requires access to teacher and/or assistant support <i>all of the time</i> . This support is monitored, reviewed and evaluated through the child planning process.
The level of specialised resources and technology required	Ordinarily available resources. For some pupils this will include mobility aids, wheelchairs and assistive technology support	Resources, required by the pupil individually, on a <i>time limited</i> basis eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>switches</li> <li>hearing aids for glue ear</li> </ul>	Highly specialised resources or technology not normally available and deployed/designed for the pupil's specific use <i>when required</i> eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communication aids</li> <li>radio aids</li> </ul>	Access to highly specialised resources, facilities or technology not normally available and deployed/designed for the pupil's specific use <i>all of the time</i> eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>augmentative aids</li> <li>assistive technology</li> </ul>
The level of support agencies / services involved	Needs identified and monitored by Class / Subject Teacher. For some pupils this may include support from therapists. ASN file <i>may be</i> opened at this Level	Agreed and monitored child's plan and/or programmes delivered by school staff which may be supported by outside agencies eg OT / S&LT eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consultation and resources from therapists</li> </ul> ASN file opened at this Level	Direct, planned and monitored <i>long term support</i> on a regular basis by specialist agencies/services (including social work). Child's plan used to coordinate and monitor support and outcomes for the child/young person.	Direct, planned and monitored support on an <i>intensive</i> basis, supported by a detailed child's plan.
Communication (inc EAL)	Ordinary oral/aural and written communication eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>visually supported environment</li> <li>using less complex language</li> </ul>	Communication and language needs met by specific approaches eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>symbols</li> <li>visual/verbal cues</li> </ul>	Enhanced support to aid communication and social inclusion additional communication methods eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sign/gesture, including Makaton</li> <li>PECS</li> <li>augmentative systems</li> </ul>	Highly specialised methods required <i>all of the time</i> eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sign language</li> <li>Braille</li> </ul>

