

<b>Committee:</b>	Schools Forum
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
<b>Title:</b>	Approval of De-delegated Budgets 2024-25
<b>Author:</b>	Sonya Harban, Strategic Finance Lead CYP
<b>Decision making / consultative / information:</b>	Decision Making
<b>Who can vote?</b>	De-delegated – by phase – primary and secondary maintained schools' members only

### **What is the Forum being asked to decide?**

1. Schools Forum is asked to agree the de-delegation of funding back to the Local Authority for the continuation of each of the following services detailed in Annexes A-D: Specialist Education Services (previously referred to as CISS), Support to under-performing ethnic groups including bilingual learners, Local Authority School Improvement function statutory duties (due to the withdrawal of the Local Authority Monitoring and Brokerage Grant) and Trade Unions, by phase for maintained primary and secondary schools.

### **Reason for recommendation**

2. Funding for de-delegated services is allocated through the funding formula to all schools, but can be passed back i.e., de-delegated, for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools, so that the service can be provided centrally.

### **Alternative options**

3. Schools Forum could decide not to approve the continuation of these de-delegated budgets. Schools would then have to manage these services individually.

### **Who will be affected by this decision?**

4. The decision whether a service should be de-delegated by phase will apply to all maintained mainstream schools in that phase.
5. De-delegation is not an option for academies, special schools, nurseries or PRUs as per the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) regulations. Where de-delegation has been agreed for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools, it is the Department's presumption that the LA will offer the service to those schools and academies in their area which are not

covered by the de-delegation. Academies will continue to receive a share of funding for these services in their delegated budget, and Academy Trusts will agree their own funding arrangements for similar services.

## Main body of the Report

5. De-delegated services are for maintained schools only, and is not an option for academies, special schools, nursery schools or PRUs.
6. The funding for de-delegated services is allocated through the formula to maintained schools, but the agreed funding is then passed back for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools with Schools Forum approval, so that the Local Authority can provide the service centrally.
7. Table 1 below sets out the current amount per pupil and provides an indication of the financial impact on a school for each de-delegated service.

Table 1:

De-delegation: Cost to a school	Specialist Education	Ethnic minorities &	Trade Union cover	School Improvement
Per Pupil	£12.18	£1.91	£1.50	£6.56
Lump Sum - Primary				£1,000.00
Lump Sum - Secondary				£2,000.00
Primary School - pupil numbers				
100	£1,218	£191	£150	£1,656
180	£2,192	£344	£270	£2,181
210	£2,558	£401	£315	£2,378
315	£3,837	£602	£473	£3,066
630	£7,673	£1,203	£945	£5,133
Secondary School - pupil numbers				
1200	£14,616	£2,292	£1,800	£9,872

8. Table 2 below summarises the current DSG budgets for de-delegated services against previous years. These budgets reduce year on year due to pupil numbers reducing in maintained schools through academy conversions. The figure for 2024-25 is dependent on final maintained pupil numbers which will be known in December:

Table 2:

<b>De-delegated Services Budget</b>	<b>2024-25 (Forecast)</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
Intervention	£0	£0	£258,555	£267,703	£290,779	£300,967
Specialist Education Services	£279,519	£283,063	£292,978	£303,124	£328,656	£339,862
Support to underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners	£43,833	£44,388	£45,943	£47,534	£51,538	£53,295
Trade Union	£34,424	£34,860	£36,081	£37,330	£40,475	£41,855
School Improvement Duties	£248,545	£254,454	£0	£0	£0	£0
	<b>£606,320</b>	<b>£616,766</b>	<b>£633,557</b>	<b>£655,691</b>	<b>£711,448</b>	<b>£735,979</b>

9. Schools' Forum members are required to agree the decision to de-delegate the budget on an annual basis. For 2024-25, the recommendation is to retain the same level of per pupil funding for the services.
  
10. Each respective service is described in the attached annexes and includes the cost per pupil, an explanation of the benefits of the service, the impact if Schools Forum do not agree the funding, how the expenditure will be monitored and how the impact of the proposal will be evaluated.
  
11. Schools' Forum members for primary maintained schools and secondary maintained school must decide separately for each phase whether a service should be de-delegated.

## Annex A

### DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2023 - 24

<b>Title of proposal</b>	Specialist Education Services (SES)	
<b>Contact name &amp; job title:</b>	<b>Contact tel:</b>	<b>Contact email:</b>
Izzy Connell	07540673775	<a href="mailto:Izzy.Connell@suffolk.gov.uk">Izzy.Connell@suffolk.gov.uk</a>
<b>De-delegated Annual budget £</b>	2023-24 (for information)	2024-25 (forecast)
	£283,063	£279,519
<b>Which phase does this support?</b>	Primary	Secondary
	yes	yes
<b>Amount per pupil £</b>	Primary	Secondary
	£12.18	£12.18

**What are the benefits of Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give details of the service provided).**

#### Overview

SES are aligned to the areas of need as detailed in the SEND Code of Practice. Additionally, there is a Whole School Inclusion (WSI) Service, supporting whole school approaches to SEND and Inclusion. The WSI service consists of Specialist Teachers to support SENCos and the leadership of SEND in schools, as well as Inclusion Practitioners (newly named Multi-Agency Facilitators) to provide bespoke and holistic support to the most vulnerable pupils; supporting communication with families and external partners to promote and facilitate next steps and positive outcomes for those most at risk of non-participation, non-engagement, and underachievement.

The above in mind, the proposal this time is to request resource for the following Specialist Education Services: Communication and Interaction; Speech, Language and Communication Needs); SEMH; Cognition and Learning (including Specific Learning Difficulties) and Whole School Inclusion.

The proposed allocation of funds from the DSG de-delegated fund is essential to the overall funding of the above services this year. The benefits to agreeing this proposal are:

- Schools will continue to receive support for SEND, with a focus on supporting the universal and targeted offer in mainstream schools and classrooms, as well as for individual pupils with SEND across all these areas of need, through modelling strategies and interventions, advice, guidance, and training.
- All mainstream schools will continue to be able to access free training from each of the above services, as well as lower cost options to support early intervention and to provide access to the wider staff within schools. This is in addition to the more bespoke traded offer.

- Schools will continue to have access to advice and guidance from the specialist SES teams via the universal, early intervention offer to schools, including Inclusion Support Meetings (ISMs) and SEND Support Consultations (Solution Circles).
- Schools will continue to have access to advice and guidance from a specialist SES teacher for whole school inclusion issues and inclusive practice, via the Whole School Inclusion Service. This includes packages of support for new SENCOs, support for CYP with an EHCP at key transition points and working to support the Inclusion Quality Mark in Suffolk schools.
- There will continue to be a countywide SENCO Forum to facilitate networking and to provide training and information. In addition, from November 2023, all schools will have access to a half-termly 'Community Inclusion Forum' to support networking and to provide updates and information from across the SEND system, with a focus on local issues and local challenges. The Community Inclusion Forums will include representatives from SES, Psychology and Therapeutic Services, health teams, including school nursing and mental health teams and Early Help practitioners.
- From January 2024, all mainstream schools will receive a termly support visit from SES to ensure all schools can access the information and guidance they need based on their context and their school priorities around SEND. This visit will provide access to the same teachers (and in time an Educational Psychologist) to answer questions, signpost to support and services and to ensure support is effectively targeted where it is most needed within the school.
- From January 2024 there will be a bespoke, individualised offer of support for learners with an EHCP, to support implementing the educational provision as detailed in Section F of the EHCP. These will be named 'Section F visits'. They will also support signposting to other relevant services within SCC and externally to ensure a wide understanding of the provision required to meet need.

The information below serves to report on the impact of SES over the last year and is reflective of the on-going aims of SES in supporting schools and settings:

The number of referrals received in academic year 2022/23 across each of the services was as follows:

- SEMH: 588
- Communication and Interaction: 494
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs: 156
- Cognition and Learning: 339
- Specific Learning Difficulties: 154
- Whole School Inclusion: 55 direct referrals from schools, these in addition to phase transfer support visits, packages of support and training for new SENCOs and working alongside the specialist teams to provide bespoke support in schools.

Inclusion Support Meetings (ISMs) are a part of the SES universal offer to enable access to earlier advice and guidance, without the need to refer. The ISMs have continued, now across all of the services and the broad areas of need, including the Whole School Inclusion Service and the Education Access Team for those children and young people vulnerable to permanent exclusion. During the course of 2022/23 SES undertook 1259 ISMs across 212 mainstream schools. Feedback from schools has been overwhelmingly positive, with the average score reported in service evaluations and surveys as 9 out of 10 – this relating to

the impact of the ISM in increasing confidence, skills and knowledge in meeting a learner's needs.

Some quotes from schools following survey:

- *I think they are the best thing available to SENDCos in the early stages and really help with confidence and access to a sounding board. (ISMs)*
- *Whilst at meetings we get sign posted to enable us to support our parents and gain knowledge to what is available to us. We are able to meet with others to share good practice. If I have a concern or unsure I have been able to talk to xxxxxx who will share her knowledge as well as direct to websites or other professionals or she will find out. I also receive helpful information to support children and parents through my emails which I might not have heard of. I feel these meetings are worth attending and never feel I come away empty handed. (ISMs)*
- *It is really useful to get an additional perspective on how to approach a problem. The meeting helped to clarify what our next steps should be to help support the child's emotional wellbeing and more strategies to help with self-regulation.*
- *Has given me clear direction in the next steps I need to take.*
- *Please keep running them we've always found them hugely beneficial and are very grateful for the practical and constructive advice. (ISMs)*

A survey to all mainstream schools at the end of the academic year 2023 demonstrated positive feedback about the overall scope and quality of the SES offer.

A wealth of qualitative feedback was also captured through the survey. Some comments provided are here:

- *Fresh ideas and increased teacher confidence. Also enabled teacher involved to up skill other staff members.*
- *We have been able to take knowledge in the advice that our universal SEN offer is good but as a school we need to think about our targeted support for individuals.*
- *It has helped us review our practice and ensure that we had things in place to meet the needs of that specific child. There has been a lot of support with regularly reviewing of the support in place and guidance as to courses or other schools which could support us. There has also been guidance/support for parents which has been really useful.*
- *It provided me with guidance to be able to select priorities. It supported me with how to demonstrate what we do and with setting up our own graduated approach.*
- *The knowledge and skills of staff has increased immensely, and this has been put into practical approaches to support pupils. We have systems in classes that are being used to support the pupils that were struggling to engage, whilst also supporting the rest of the pupils to develop their emotional literacy.*
- *Pupils are beginning to understand different emotions and recognise their own emotions and how they can support themselves and others.*
- *Thank you, I really feel the service has improved immensely over the past few years and all the support you provide us with is timelier and more invaluable.*

**What will be the impact if Schools Forum does not agree to this proposal? (Please explain the consequences for the funding and delivery of the service(s) provided if the request is not approved).**

If this proposal is not agreed there will be the following impact:

The offer of support to schools and their pupils will be significantly reduced and this may:

- be detrimental to outcomes for pupils with SEND across Suffolk
- be detrimental to supporting inclusive practice in schools across Suffolk
- be detrimental to the support for SENCOs, including networking opportunities and training
- increase pressure on the High Needs Block funding as more children and young people may require alternative or specialist provision. This would mean there would be a need to ask schools' forum to move more funds into high needs block as there would be more demand for specialist places.
- Suffolk County Council will be less able to fulfil its strategic commitment to establish an early intervention service to improve outcomes for SEND pupils in Suffolk.
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#### **How will the expenditure be monitored?**

All Inclusion Services budgets are scrutinised on a monthly basis and this budget is part of this process.

If required this budget will be presented to the High Needs Working Group when they meet. Monitoring will take place alongside the evaluation of the impact of the service.

#### **How will the impact of the proposal be evaluated? (Please also include an equalities impact assessment for children or other people who have one or more of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010).**

We measure impact in the following ways:

- Pupil progress is measured using a scaled approach – Core Offer Progress Statements (COPS). Whilst this is across SES, each service will analyse this data based on key indicators pertinent to the area of need. This allows us to look at the sometimes very small steps of progress made by some CYP with more complex profiles of need.
- Case studies are completed biannually describing SES involvement and impact.
- All CPD delivered to schools is evaluated.
- All schools and parents are asked to complete an evaluation post-intervention.
- Evaluations are also sent out following Inclusion Support Meetings and SEND Support Consultations (Solution Circles).
- There is an annual survey to schools asking for feedback more widely on the scope and quality of the offer and whether or not, as a result of SES input, there is more confidence in meeting the needs of CYP with SEND.

## Annex B

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2023-24		
<b>Title of proposal</b>	<b>Support to underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners</b>	
<b>Contact name &amp; job title:</b>	<b>Contact tel:</b>	<b>Contact email:</b>
<b>Adrian Orr – Assistant Director (Education &amp; Learning)</b>	01473 264709	adrian.orr@suffolk.gov.uk
<b>Annual budget £</b>	2023-24 (for information)	2024-25 (forecast)
	£44,388	£43,833
<b>Which phase does this support?</b>	Primary	Secondary
	Yes	Yes
<b>Amount per pupil £</b>	Primary	Secondary
	£1.91	£1.91
<b>What are the benefits of Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give details of the service provided).</b>		
<p>This resource is used by Suffolk County Council to provide targeted support for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils who live in the county, supporting them to overcome the barriers to accessing school through the work of a Gypsy Roma &amp; Traveller Education Liaison Officer. The complexities and interwoven factors that impact on educational engagement and achievement of this group of pupils is significant. The GRT Education Liaison Officer works with school leaders and staff and also families to promote an inclusive culture that welcomes all communities, promotes high expectations and is committed to forging strong engagement from parents and families. To facilitate this work, our GRT Education Liaison Officer carries out visits to families on sites and encampments, works with early years settings, the health care trust, family centres, as well as school leaders and staff to ensure the swift application and enrolment and ongoing attendance of GRT pupils in Suffolk schools. Nationally pupils from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds underachieve, are more likely to have SEND and have poor and interrupted educational experience. In Suffolk this year, the summer census data indicates that 21% are identified as having SEND. The latest outcomes for this group identify vast underachievement: In Suffolk, at key stage two, 9% achieved the expected standard in reading writing and maths combined this year. Although this is an improvement on last year still sits significantly below the national where 59% of pupils achieved this. In key stage four, 17.2% of pupils achieved grade 4 or above in maths and English. This drops to 3.4% for GRT pupils achieving grades 5-9. Research from the Education Policy Institute (EPI) suggests that GRT pupils are, on average, almost 3 years behind White British pupils (by 34.1 months) by the end of secondary schooling. Travellers of Irish Heritage are 28.9 months behind white British pupils. Despite this gap, in Suffolk, their performance, although is widely variable, is often higher than their peers nationally has improved in recent years.</p>		



As the rise in European Roma pupils continues, the GRT Liaison Officer is developing and strengthening her to work with these growing communities. Many of these pupils have not accessed schooling until entering the U.K. Their understanding of the culture of education in England needs addressing with families at the outset as their prior experience is vastly different to the majority of families and building confidence in our systems and with education settings is vital. Almost all have English as an additional language (EAL) and many with their first language being spoken word only, thus presenting specific challenges in relation to the teaching of literacy.

A notable success of this work continues to be the high percentage of GRT pupils attending early years settings and schools, including some continuing into secondary education. An area of focus with the GRT Education Liaison Officer continues to be maintaining a robust database of GRT pupils in Suffolk settings, working with school leaders and health and support services to ensure the LA has an accurate view of the extent of support and the level of need. Through this work, trust is built with the GRT families. They are encouraged to declare their status and enrol their children in local schools. Regular, timely and effective communication between the GRT Education Liaison Officer and the receiving school ensures better preparation to receive a child and therefore builds understanding and confidence between all stakeholders. The link between attendance and achievement for families is sensitively strengthened, with parents treated as equal partners. The risk of children missing education is therefore minimised.

GRT pupils nationally are over-represented in pupils being electively home educated (EHE) and not in school, often likely to leave formal education at the end of Key Stage 2. In Suffolk, we have records showing over 2% of EHE pupils are from the GRT community. This has dropped since last year where it was approximately 4%. However, this is due to the fact that the overall EHE cohort has grown. We do know that this figure is likely to be higher as this group are reluctant to disclose their background to the Local Authority. The work of the GRT Engagement Officer continues to support the EHE Team to increase effective engagement with GRT families and to build trusting relationships so that the group are more likely to disclose their GRT background. This joint work between officers ensures GRT families have an accurate understanding of EHE, have access to the support and resources they require to make an informed decision about educational provision, and are therefore more likely to access an appropriate education and also re-engage into mainstream education. It is of particular importance in the current climate as EHE rates have increased significantly since covid and show very little sign of reducing.

The second strand for this resource is to be used to ensure school leaders are supported in meeting the needs of the EAL pupils who attend their settings, through opportunities for joint collaborative working; sharing strategies; working together on new approaches and access to research and new initiatives. It is essential to ensure no school leader feels isolated in their drive to ensure provision meets the needs of this vulnerable group of learners. EAL pupils need to quickly develop skills which enable them to access more formal qualifications. This improves their integration into life in the UK, maximising their skills, opportunities, and prospects. This way they are likely to make a significant contribution to the workplace and to society in this country. An increasingly significant number of pupils with EAL continue to arrive in the UK, part way through their schooling. The number of Suffolk schools welcoming pupils with EAL also continues to increase. During 2019, the number of EAL pupils recorded constituted 8.7% of pupil population in Suffolk. This has risen to 9.9% during 2020. In May 2021 it was 9% and in May 2022, it was 9.6%. May 2023 it was 9.1%. This number is the tip of the iceberg as these communities are

often not forthcoming in identifying their children as EAL. The number of refugees within this figure is increasing and is predicted to continue to increase as a direct impact of the situation in Ukraine and the middle east. This is further evidence to support working with these families building professional trusting relationships as many will arrive having experienced trauma from being displaced.

This resource has ensured that schools, wherever they are on their EAL journey, can access support to further improve outcomes for pupils with EAL. This is being achieved through the facilitation of school-to-school support through provision of a network of EAL expertise, which includes: Countywide EAL Network Meetings held half termly which have proved invaluable as schools have been navigating issues such as refugee support, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children, attendance, funding; Signposting and facilitating connections to relevant services and resources such as Ipswich Opportunity Area team, Suffolk Refugee Support, ISCRE; Supporting schools to take part in projects that pilot new and innovative ways of improving outcomes for EAL pupils.

During the academic year 2020/21 the number of EAL pupils in Local Authority schools who have directly benefitted from the work supported by this resource is approximately 1044 pupils. In 2021/22 this has risen to approximately 2359. In 2022-2023 this figure was 2225. In addition, a great many more children and young people have been impacted through the sharing of effective practice; school to school support and trialling new initiatives supported through this resource.

It is proposed that this resource be allocated to enable schools to be best placed to support the needs of this growing cohort, develop and share expertise and improve practice so that all Suffolk pupils, regardless of their school setting and English language level, achieve their full potential.

The support and challenge of the Standards and Excellence team will ensure that school leaders, including governors, are evaluating the impact of actions on improving the outcomes of all vulnerable groups. Officers will work with school leaders to support/challenge them to ensure the curriculum provision in their schools is well planned and constructed to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who have EAL. They will work to ensure the curriculum is inclusive.

The work of the Standards and Excellence team will include a focus on ensuring school leaders, including governors, have access to advice and support regarding the EAL cohort, through this resource. Where the needs of specific groups of pupils are not well met, officers will challenge this with leaders to bring about improvement.

**What will be the impact if Schools Forum does not agree to this proposal? (Please explain the consequences for the funding and delivery of the service(s) provided if the request is not approved).**

- GRT children would arrive in schools and settings where support would have to be sought from other schools. More enquiries from these communities would be directed at school and settings putting extra demands on leaders and staff. Messages and support offered might lack consistency and vary in effectiveness.
- Reduced application and attendance of GRT pupils at school and nursery, leading to poorer outcomes at all key stages. Increased percentage of pupils who are electively home educated, potentially impacting on adult literacy and numeracy skills which lead to limiting adult career choices. In addition, if this cohort of pupils are not in school they do not have the protective factors of schools surrounding them leaving them more vulnerable to safeguarding concerns.

- Increased percentage of GRT pupils who leave current school to be electively home educated and potentially impacting on NEET (not in employment, education or training) figures.
- The understanding trust building and strengthening of GRT community links would diminish reducing the likelihood of positive working relationships and integration into school communities
- Outcomes and progress for pupils with EAL would be at risk of continuing to vary widely across Suffolk, with pupils from some schools significantly underachieving, potentially impacting on onward journeys, career and life opportunities; pockets of poor social mobility and inequalities would increase.
- School leaders may lack confidence and be isolated in their work to ensure provision meets the needs of EAL pupils.
- The opportunities to share what has worked and implement new initiatives would be diminished.
- The broader network of support and momentum gained in the school to school support and sharing of good practice/networking would be impacted and diminished.

#### **How will the expenditure be monitored?**

- Monthly and quarterly budget reports
- Line manager 1:1 meeting – strategic leads
- Monthly Education, Skills & Learning leadership meetings
- Priority Schools meetings
- Education Accountability and Improvement Board
- School to school support partnership

#### **How will the impact of the proposal be evaluated? (Please also include an equalities impact assessment for children or other people who have one or more of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010).**

- Achievement evidence will be analysed to evaluate the impact on reducing the attainment gap between underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners and their peers.
- Attendance evidence will be analysed to evaluate the impact on reducing absence rates, including persistent and severe absence rates.
- Officers will follow up in their conversations with school leaders to monitor the impact of school to school support on improving the quality of provision for EAL learners and to develop sharing of good practice through locality plans. This will be documented in visits from Local Authority Officers.
- Feedback from School leaders will be sought to confirm that they have access to appropriate resources to improve outcome for pupils with EAL.

## Annex C

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2022-23		
Title of proposal	Trade Unions	
<b>Contact name &amp; job title:</b>	<b>Contact tel:</b>	<b>Contact email:</b>
Adrian Orr – Assistant Director (Education , Skills & Learning)	01473 264709	adrian.orr@suffolk.gov.uk
<b>Annual budget £</b>	2023-24 (for information)	2024-25 (forecast)
	£34,860	£34,424
<b>Which phase does this support?</b>	Primary	Secondary
	√	√
<b>Amount per pupil £</b>	Primary	Secondary
	£1.50	£1.50
<b>What are the benefits of Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give details of the service provided).</b>		
<p>The council has operated a collective arrangement for trade union engagement for maintained schools. This arrangement has been in place for more than a decade. The funding provides for regular meetings between the trades unions and the council negating the need for maintained schools to all make their own separate and individual trade union arrangements. The arrangement also assists the council and unions in discussion, about policy, local issues in relation to maintained schools and through frequent informal discussion allows issues and concerns to be addressed early. Retaining this arrangement supports in managing the risk of an additional burden of activity falling upon school individual maintained school leaders and governors.</p>		
<b>What will be the impact if Schools Forum does not agree to this proposal? (Please explain the consequences for the funding and delivery of the service(s) provided if the request is not approved).</b>		
<p>Schools will need to make their own arrangements for trade union membership and negotiations. It is likely that school leaders will need to undertake additional activities such as negotiating individual school arrangements with all of the teaching and staff unions which currently is facilitated by the LA.</p>		
<b>How will the expenditure be monitored?</b>		
<p>The expenditure is monitored against the budget on a regular basis to ensure it is being used as effectively as possible</p>		
<b>How will the impact of the proposal be evaluated? (Please also include an equalities impact assessment for children or other people who have one or more of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010).</b>		
<p>Headteachers themselves will need to decide upon the effectiveness of this arrangement although there is a high probability that if such an arrangement was not in place school leaders would need to undertake potentially significant additional work against a backdrop of existing heavy workloads.</p>		

## Annex D

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2023-24		
Title of proposal	Local Authority School Improvement function statutory duties	
<b>Contact name &amp; job title:</b>	<b>Contact tel:</b>	<b>Contact email:</b>
<b>Adrian Orr – Assistant Director (Education &amp; Learning)</b>	01473 264709	adrian.orr@suffolk.gov.uk
<b>Annual budget £</b>	2023-4 (for information)	2024-5 (Forecast)
	£254,454	£248,545
<b>Which phase does this support?</b>	Primary	Secondary
	Yes	Yes
<b>Amount per pupil £</b>	Primary	Secondary
	£6.56	£6.56
<b>Lump sum £</b>	£1,000	£2,000
<b>What are the benefits of Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give details of the service provided).</b>		
<p>This paper sets out the detail of work which enables the council to fulfil its responsibilities including statutory responsibilities with respect to support for LA maintained schools.</p> <p>In October 2021, the Department for Education (DfE) launched a consultation seeking views on the removal of the</p> <p>In January 2022 the DfE published the outcome of the consultation on the removal of the School Improvement Monitoring &amp; Brokering grant, allocated to all local authorities (LA). This is the budget that has historically funded LA support and school improvement activities in maintained schools. This grant was removed in October 2022 from all LAs in England. Part of the DfE rationale for this is that this brings LA maintained school in line with academy schools who have their budgets top sliced to pay for MAT school improvement functions. The DfE deemed the LAMB grant as unfair.</p> <p>To ensure that LAs remain adequately funded to exercise their statutory functions and intervention powers, the DfE gave LAs the power in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations to fund all school improvement activities, including core school improvement activities, via de-delegation of funds from maintained schools’ budget shares, with the agreement of their local schools forum or the Secretary of State. Eligible members of Schools forum voted in 2022/3 and approved the de delegation of funding from LA maintained schools for the 2023-24 financial year. This means that we must now ask schools to fund the council’s statutory work through de delegation for 2024-5.</p> <p>The service funded by this resource enables the LA to fulfil its statutory roles and responsibilities which have not changed in spite of the removal of government funding. With respect to this service, the LA’s statutory roles and responsibilities are to ‘know’ its schools; to secure education</p>		

excellence and promote high standards. (Include reference or links to documents as in R and R of LMCS and DCS 2013; Section 13 A of the 1996 / 2006 Education Act)

The table below shows the context of schools and settings in Suffolk as at October 2023.

Phase	All Suffolk Schools	LA Maintained	Academies
Nursery	1	1	0
Infant	4	1	3
Primary	246	93	153
Junior	3	1	2
Middle	2	0	2
High	44	3	41
Special	14	1	13
PRU	10	1	9
Sixth Form Provision	2	0	2
Total	324	101	223

Close working with LA maintained Headteachers and Governors has enabled closer collaboration and coproduction of strategies and ways of working, for example the review of the High Level Action process which has led to the revised School Improvement Engagement Model to be implemented from January 2024.

All 101 LA maintained schools and settings are supported through the strands of work detailed below.

1. School Improvement continuous conversation support personalised to the needs of each school at no additional cost to the school

In addition to fulfilling the LA's statutory roles and responsibilities, the work supported by this resource is designed to support school leaders including governors in all LA maintained schools in their leadership of improvement. The work focusses on where schools are in relation to realising their school's vision; secure their school's improvement; strong leadership and management; good quality education and strong pupil outcomes. By providing this resource through de delegated funding, this support is available for all schools and not impacted by schools' individual budgets as would be the case with a 'buy back' model.

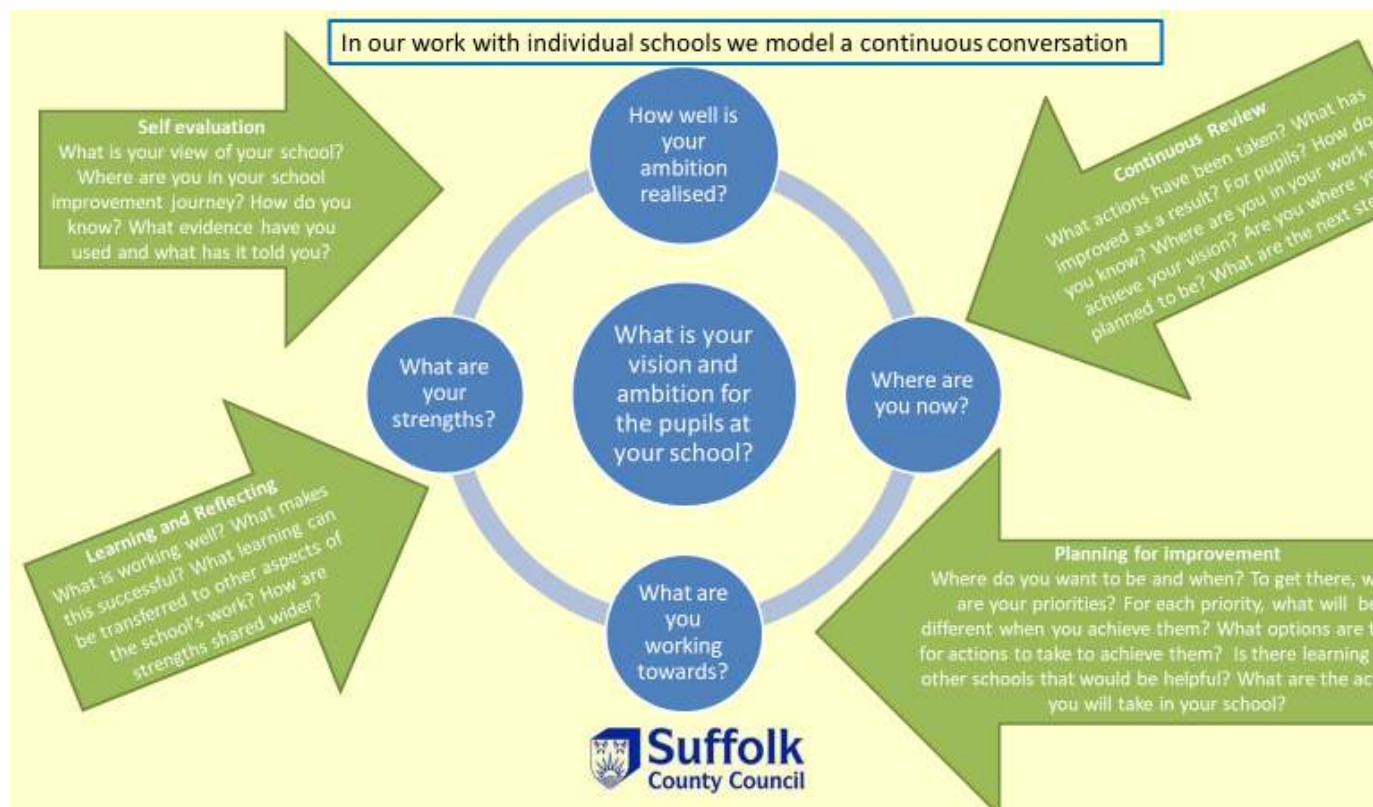
Improvement support is provided through the deployment of Standards and Excellence Partners to all LA maintained schools with personalised agendas decided by the school leaders and the LA officers, to meet the needs of each school. Visits are regular and frequent so that the work is a "continuous conversation" which flow and links between visits. There are at least two visits to every LA maintained school every term throughout the year.

The work uses a wide and comprehensive range of evidence including first hand evidence and national, published benchmarks such as the Education Inspection Framework to ensure strong impact. In addition, evidence-based practice and research such as EEF resources are used in supportive conversations around next steps and planning for improvement, identifying options and using what is seen to have worked elsewhere and sign posting to effective practice or learning from research or other schools. The visits also contribute to identifying practice or strengths to share wider that other schools may benefit from.

The benefit of this service is the support for and impact of work to ensure accurate self-evaluation; strong planning for improvement; effective monitoring processes and evaluation of the impact of

school improvement actions with a focus on the future trajectory in relation to Ofsted inspections and statutory assessments.

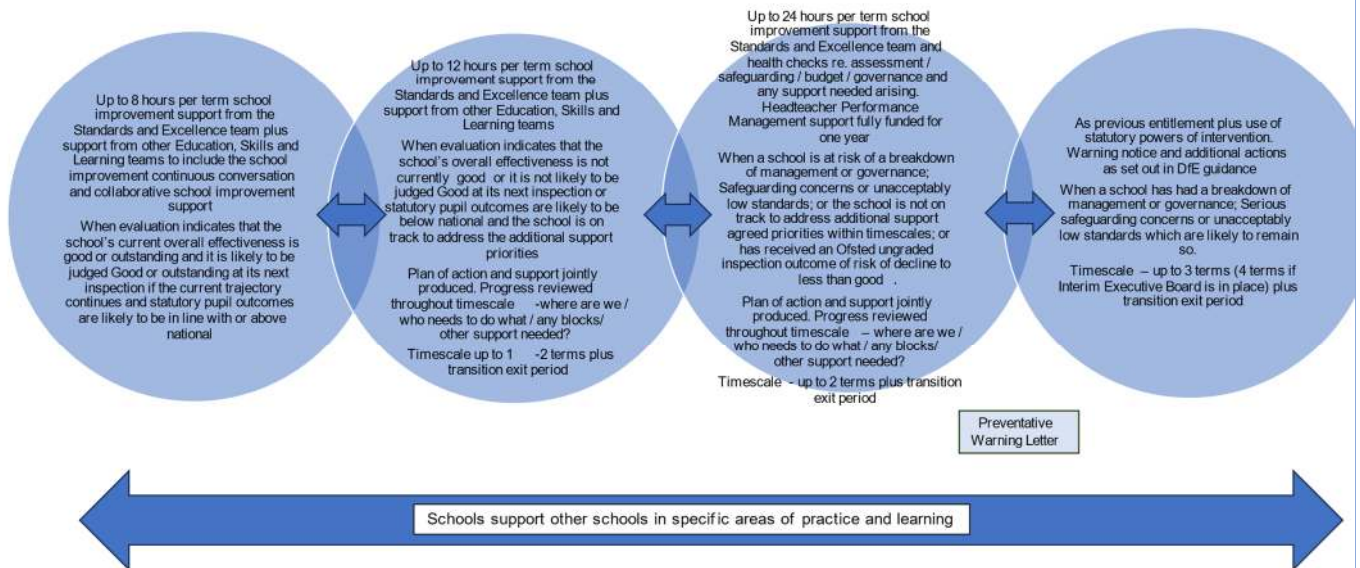
This continuous school improvement support model is illustrated in the diagram below.



This service focuses on all aspects of leadership and management and the quality of education including leadership of school improvement; safeguarding; inclusion; outcomes for all pupils and groups of pupils including those pupils with SEND.

As a result of consultation and coproduction with school leaders to review the current High Level Action process, from January 2024, the revised 'School Improvement Engagement Model' will be implemented. This is shown in the diagram below. This model makes more explicit the different entitlements of support. It will enable school leaders to plan, with LA officers, additional activity to support them in their leadership of improvement and ensure all schools experience the benefit quoted to us as part of the consultation, of an LA officer as part of the team securing their schools improvement. Additional support where schools meet the criteria will also include health checks, such as for governance and assessment, and Headteacher performance management support.

School Improvement Engagement Model - LA maintained schools and Education, skills and learning



**2. Additional support**

As set out in the DfE ‘Schools Causing Concern’ guidance LAs are expected to intervene where LA maintained schools meet the criteria for a WN. These include unacceptably low standards; breakdown of Leadership and governance; safety of pupils.

Ofsted and the DfE are notified when the LA has issued a Warning notice.

In Suffolk, our approach is to work proactively with school leaders where additional support for improvement is needed. This approach identifies risk early and responds to prevent the risk of decline and of meeting these criteria. The service provided by this resource ensures all schools who are eligible access this intensive higher level of support at no additional cost to the school beyond the delegated resource. This process has contributed to preventing LA maintained schools being judged inadequate or RI and achieving low standards. (see impact below)

As a result of the consultation and coproduction in the summer term 2023, schools will continue to be supported where there are risks of low standards; Ofsted decline or challenges in leadership and governance through additional support in the ‘School Improvement Engagement Model’ as seen in the diagram above.

This retains the impactful elements of HLA and also clarity about the support including school leaders being able to self-identify the support their school needs at any one time. The model will maintain fluidity, a proactive ‘future looking’ perspective and be evidence based.

The LA does not have powers of intervention in academies, the RSC is expected to intervene where academies meet these criteria.

Through the deployment of Standards and Excellence Partners to all individual LA maintained schools, this enables a point of contact for all LA maintained schools and teams within the LA which support joint working and the ‘team around the child or school’ working effectively together. This may include, for example, joint work and visits between the Inclusion team and Standards and Excellence Partners.

**3. Using Knowledge of effective practice across the county and Sign posting to practice**

With the wide range of strong practice and learning that is identified through visits, the ability to sign post school leaders to learn from and with other schools and to benefit from practice is able to be utilised. Officers can sign post to where leaders may make links and visits and learn from



others. This means that school leaders and school staff are able to benefit from the learning from colleagues in other schools through visits to see provision and initiatives in practice, factors that have supported improvement and also virtually through discussion. This is a feature of work which will be strengthened with the introduction of the School Improvement Engagement Model.'

4. Supporting school leaders including governors to establish, facilitate and run Networks so that leaders including governors of every LA maintained school are connected, benefit from learning, relationships and joint working with other schools and not isolated in their work.

This resource is used to facilitate groups of school leaders working together to facilitate joined up working across the county, between LA maintained schools so that school leaders including governors are connected and benefit from collaboration. This also means that school leaders with common priorities or areas of focus are able to be brought together to solve issues together. The intended impact of this is that no LA maintained school leader will be isolated in their work and all will be able to benefit from the learning, experiences and support of others. There are a range of networks that have been developed across the county including the Executive Headteacher network; Headteachers in the East / Coastal area; the IP12 group; LA maintained HTs in the West; LA maintained network in Lowestoft and the North of the county; Central steering group of Headteachers and a county wide network for leaders of 'small schools'.

Governance is also a key part of this strand with opportunities for governors to network in online sessions; links made between governing bodies; support for governors through facilitating mentors and developing smaller governor networks. This is still an important strand of work to focus on as there are some parts of the county where networks are still to be developed, or additional networks to develop with different areas of focus and also further requests for more networks.

5. This resource is also used to work with the LA maintained steering group to provide conferences, networks , CPD and events for LA maintained school leaders.

This resource continues to be used to support networking and collaboration between school leaders across the county. In response to Headteachers sharing the need for greater opportunities for networking and coming together as a group of LA maintained school leaders, this resource has supported further development of this work. LA officers have worked with the LA maintained Headteacher steering group to collaboratively arrange events including conferences and opportunities for CPD for LA maintained school Headteachers. Events have been held each term in the academic year 2022-23 and continue in 2023-4. There is much support to continue to arrange a range of opportunities.

#### 6. Leadership Opportunities

This resource is used to work with LA maintained school leaders on a collaborative model where additional leadership capacity is needed. As a result, a cohort of potential interim leaders has been established and had the opportunity to take up interim posts in other schools, also providing opportunities for leaders in their schools to take on interim roles and responsibilities. Further developments are underway to implement a 'team support' approach following successful trialling. This will also be developed to extend opportunities for wider leadership development for other roles in schools.

#### 7. Headteacher induction support

As part of the County wide induction for Headteachers in new posts in all Suffolk schools, Headteachers new to posts in LA maintained schools have the opportunity to attend professional development induction sessions provided by this resource. They are also offered mentors, pairing with experienced Suffolk LA maintained headteachers during their first year of headship in Suffolk. Many of these relationships develop into longer-term collaborations.

Impact Benefits to date

The impact of the service contribution is that children and young people in all Suffolk LA maintained schools are supported to receive a high-quality education through supporting for the school leaders of their schools and settings.

School leaders including governors are supported in their work, personalised to reflect their schools' unique characteristics.

The impact can also be seen in Inspection outcomes. The table below shows the % schools judged good or better at their most recent Ofsted inspection.

	October 2022	December 2022	February 2023	April 2023	June 2023	August 2023	October 2023
National (England)	88%	89%	88%	88%	88%	89%	89%
Suffolk-All Schools	85%	86%	86%	87%	87%	86%	85%
Suffolk- LA maintained	97%	96%	97%	98%	97%	97%	96%

The % schools judged outstanding are shown in the table below.

	October 2022	February 2023	April 2023	June 2023	August 2023
National (England)	18%	17%	16%	16%	16%
Suffolk-All Schools	12%	12%	12%	11%	11%
Suffolk- LA maintained	18%	19%	17%	17%	17%

This service has supported school leaders in leading their school's improvement as seen in the % LA maintained schools who have retained or improvement to good in recent inspections.

Suffolk LA Maintained	2022-23		2021-22		2020-21	
Improved to or remained good or better	29	88%	13	100%	4	100%
Remained or declined to RI or inadequate	4	12%	0	0	0	0

Research conducted on behalf of the Local Government Association (LGA) found that, as of January 2023, 93% of council-maintained schools were ranked "outstanding" or "good". The study also revealed that 73% of LA maintained schools improved from "inadequate" or "requires improvement" to "good" or "outstanding".

The service impact to date is also reflected in provisional KS2 outcomes with support for school leaders to ensure the quality of provision meets pupils' needs and to fulfil the aspiration that leaders hold for their pupils. The data shows there is still more work to do to ensure Suffolk children achieve as well as children nationally and to work with leaders to prevent underachievement in their schools.

Provisional 2023 Suffolk performance information (some incomplete national data sets)			
Measure	Suffolk 2023 (2019)	National 2023 (2019)	Difference 2023 (2019)
RWM EXS+	56 (61)	59 (66)	-3 (-5)
Reading EXS+	71 (73)	73 (73)	-2 (-2)
Writing EXS+	68 (76)	71 (78)	-3 (-2)
Maths EXS+	70 (76)	73 (79)	-3 (-3)

Measure	2023 LA maintained	2023 National LA maintained	Difference
RWM EXS+	60	60	=
Reading EXS+	75	74	+1
Writing EXS+	73	72	+1
Maths EXS+	73	74	-1

#### Areas for Future development

- Continue to work with the LA maintained school Headteacher steering group to ensure our work is adapted and refined continually to secure improvement and support LA school leaders with their work.
- Implement the newly refined School Improvement Engagement model to replace current HLA system.
- Extend the work on leadership opportunities to wider leadership roles and across the county.
- Work with the LA maintained school Headteacher steering group to support induction and network for deputy Headteacher and aspiring leaders
- Coaching – a number of officers have trained as coaches and completed the ILM level 5 accreditation. We will explore the opportunity to provide coaching for Headteachers and school leaders.
- Further develop networks so that leaders including governors in schools in all parts of the county, are able to link with others in a range of collaborative groups.

**What will be the impact if Schools Forum does not agree to this proposal? (Please explain the consequences for the funding and delivery of the service(s) provided if the request is not approved).**

- As set out in DfE guidance, if this is not approved LA would need to go to secretary of state to appeal this decision.
- The LA would not be able to fulfil its statutory responsibilities
- School improvement support would be impacted as schools would need to buy in their school improvement support which would be an impact on schools' budgets at a time when these are fully stretched as a result of the fuel costs and pay awards. As a result, pupils and leaders in some schools would not have access to school improvement support.
- The Risk of decline would not be mitigated as the proactive approach would not be consistent or guaranteed for all schools
- School leaders would feel isolated in their work and not benefit from networks or partnership collaborative working.
- Suffolk CYP may not receive a good or better education and move on to the next phase of their education with the skills and knowledge needed to access the next stage.
- The LA would have limited evidence to monitor and know its schools. It would be limited to 'understand the performance of LA maintained schools' DfE Schools Causing Concern, based on published performance information. This would result in decisions to intervention being reactive and not proactive. Therefore, intervention may not be a comprehensive or accurate picture of the current quality of education.

**How will the expenditure be monitored?**

- Monthly and quarterly budget reports
- Line manager 1:1 meeting
- Monthly Education Skills & Learning leadership meetings
- Education Accountability and Improvement Board bimonthly

**How will the impact of the proposal be evaluated? (Please also include an equalities impact assessment for children or other people who have one or more of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010).**

- % LA maintained schools judged good or better in Ofsted
- % schools retaining good or improving their Ofsted judgement
- Pupil outcomes at all key stages and comparison to national LA; and all Suffolk
- Rigorous QA of team's work
- Closing of gaps for schools previously underachieving and groups of pupils
- Feedback from school leaders