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**Meeting:** Schools Forum  
**Date:** 21 January 2013  
**Subject:** Use of centrally retained Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2012/2013  
**Report of:** Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services  
**Summary:** The report outlines how the centrally retained DSG has been used in 2012/13.

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**Advising Officer:** Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services  
**Contact Officer:** Helen Redding, Head of Learning and School Support  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Council

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**The Schools Forum is asked to:**

- 1. Note how the centrally retained DSG is used to support provision for vulnerable pupils and raising attainment**
- 2. Note the decision made in the November Schools Forum meeting to distribute unspent DSG**

#### **Introduction**

The Council is required by the School Forum Regulations to report on the use of Centrally retained DSG to the Schools Forum. The content of this report provides the detail of this.

#### **Services funded by DSG**

*Early Years Children With Disabilities Team (£249,450)*

1. The team consists of 2 teachers and 4 support staff (3 of whom are Nursery Nurses) and administrative support. The team are currently supporting 147 children and work as 2 teams, one based in Biggleswade and 1 in Dunstable. Numbers can change frequently as children come onto caseload or have their support increased or decreased or come off caseload. The majority of support takes place in the child's home or in their Early Years setting.

2. Of those receiving support 26 have a statement of SEN, 18 are in the process of Statutory Assessment and the majority of others are at Early Years Action+ of the SEN Code of Practice (and may go on to require statutory assessment before their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday).
3. The team work within the framework of Early Support. As such initial assessments of all new referrals are completed within 8 weeks of being allocated. This is monitored via the Early Years Allocation Meeting which meets fortnightly. In addition, the team are required to complete Educational Advice within a 6 week timeframe as part of the statutory assessment process.
4. This service will be commissioned to be run by Ivel Valley and The Chiltern Area Special Schools in 2013, at which point the DSG required to run this service will be transferred to them through a contract.

*Advisory Support Teachers retained within the Psychology and Advisory Support Team (£114,369)*

5. This supports 2 Area Special Educational Needs Coordinators who support Early Years settings in meeting the needs of children with SEN and Disabilities, and an Advisory Teacher for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) until August 2012. The ASD Advisory Teacher work is now commissioned as Outreach through Ivel Valley and The Chiltern Area Special Schools, and so £41,361 was released in year.

*Visual Impairment Team (£188,120)*

6. This budget supports the peripatetic function of the visual impairment service.
7. The visual impairment team consists of 2 teachers, 2 specialist support staff and a specialist resource Technician. They work with pre school and school age children within their local context, advising families, schools and settings, and providing direct support to blind and severely visually impaired children and young people and those with multi sensory impairments.
8. There has been an increase this year on the number of young children with severe visual impairments who will require specialist support including Braille as they move into and through the school system. Staffing levels are being reviewed to support this.
9. It is intended to commission the service for visually impaired during 2013/14, at which point the DSG that supports this service will be transferred with the successful contract.

**Other Functions supported by DSG**

10. *Support for high needs children in Early years:* £169,800 supports children in settings and nurseries with high needs who do not yet have a statement of SEN but require additional support. This was increased by £19,800 from £150,000 in year to meet demand.

11. *Therapies:* £70,270 is used to support therapies such as Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy where it has been specified as an assessed need on a Statement of SEN that therapy is required on a more regular basis than can be accessed through Health Services. This is a needs led budget. It was reduced by £35,000 in year from £105,270 due to reduced demand.
12. *Statements:* £449,900 DSG is used to fund new statements in all schools across the year. This is monitored monthly and DSG is released in year when potential costs to end of year can be estimated. An additional £121,610 is funded by the YPLA towards Post 16 learners. The process for this changes in 2012/13.
13. *High Cost pupils:* £451,330 supports the additional exceptional needs of the most complex pupils in our special schools who have evidenced assessed needs that requires additional support to maintain them in our local special school provision (for example additional TA support for our most challenging pupils). It also supports a Therapeutic Intervention project at Oak Bank School that enables staff to work with families and provide counselling and other support for the most challenging young people. This is supporting pupils to remain accessing education locally. The outcomes of this are monitored on a termly basis. This is a needs led budget. An element of this is being considered for inclusion within Oak Bank's budget share from 2013 following changes as part of the review of High Needs Funding.
14. *Recoupment:* £316,890 DSG was released in year from this cost centre as it was no longer required. This is being reviewed for 2013/2014 in the light of the changes in process of payments through the Funding Reforms.
15. *Hospital Recoupment:* £91,880 is allocated to pay invoices from other Authorities that provide education through their hospitals when Central Bedfordshire pupils are in hospital (including our Looked After Children living in other Authorities, pre school children and children in independent schools). Some of these are short stay, but some pupils are in hospitals such as Addenbrooks and Great Ormond Street for long periods.
16. This is currently invoiced retrospectively and is needs led. However, from 2013 Hospital Recoupment will cease to exist. The DSG will be top sliced from all Authorities to fund hospital education provision. Central Bedfordshire does not have a hospital and the amount of top slice is considerably more than Hospital Recoupment has cost in any year.

17. *Out of County Placements:* £1,791,830 is allocated to fund Out of Authority Specialist Placements. Some of these pupils have been placed as we have been unable to meet needs locally, and some are at the direction of the SEN and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). Health and Social Care services pay a contribution towards some placements. Currently there are 17 pupils placed out of Authority by education, 2 by Social Care and 1 by Health where DSG funds the education element. Of the education led placements, we receive a health contribution to 3 pupils, and a social care contribution to 3 pupils. An additional £198,570 is funded through the YPLA towards Post 16 learners. This does not meet the actual cost of Post 16 learners. This changes in 2013/14. Historically there has been insufficient DSG to fund all of the education element, and this has had to be supplemented by £255,720 of Council resources.
18. *Additional Pupil Support:* £219,050 is allocated to support pupils with additional needs for fixed periods of time. Many of these pupils are undergoing statutory assessment and this budget supports schools in supporting these pupils' needs until the end of this process. A significant number of pupils who require this support are at risk of permanent exclusion, and specialist agencies are always involved. This is a needs led budget.
19. *Access and Inclusion:* £75,660 supports the staffing costs of the management of advice and process for exclusions and elective home education. This was reduced by £20,000 in year from £95,669 as there was a temporary reduction in spend due to maternity cover.
20. *Virtual School management and delivery:* £198,470 supports the staffing costs and functions of the Virtual School for Looked After Children.
21. *PRU:* £1,353,556 supports the running costs of the PRU for excluded pupils and the Medical Needs Service. From April 2013 the Medical Needs Service will be transferred as a commission to HAST and the DSG element for this service will transfer to HAST to support this contract. The PRU for excluded pupils will be funded like a Special School from April 2013 as outlined in the new funding regulations. From September 2013 the Council will commission a different service for excluded pupils and those at serious risk of exclusion through the Academy of Central Bedfordshire (Alternative Provision Free School)
22. *Commissioning:* £400k supports the additional costs of commissioning services to schools and other providers. Due to the time taken to commission services £350,000 of this has been released in year.
23. *Raising Attainment at KS2:* £90k has been allocated to support maintained schools in the continuation of the project carried out in 2012/2012 as reported to Schools Forum on 26 November 2012. As agreed at this Schools Forum meeting the unallocated balance will be distributed to participating schools to support the partnership work with their feeder Lower Schools.

24. *School Admission*: £260,490 supports the School Admissions Service, which became a Central Bedfordshire Service in April 2012 with termination of the previous shared service with Bedford Borough Council. The Regulations allow for expenditure on the operation of the system of admissions of pupils to schools (including expenditure incurred in carrying out consultations under section 88C(2) of the 1998 Act) and in relation to appeals. Under buy back arrangements the Service also offers a range of services to own admission schools from funding that these schools receive directly in their own revenue budgets to support their statutory duties.
25. As part of its statutory obligations, the School Admissions Service co-ordinates the admission of pupils to schools at the normal point of entry i.e. all admissions into the reception year and transfers to middle, upper and secondary schools, as well as in-year admissions (until 31 August 2013). This involves:
- Preparing, publishing and issuing of application information to parents of children starting school or transferring between school phases
  - Receiving application forms and data entry of applications
  - Provision of information to own admission authority schools and academies to enable applications to be determined
  - Liaison with other local authorities on cross border applications
  - Determination of applications for places at community and VC schools
  - Allocation of places by the national or locally agreed deadline.
  - Advising parents of the outcome of their application
  - Maintaining waiting lists for schools
  - Ensuring that every child living in the local authority area has a school place
  - Provision of information to parents about the appeals process
  - Preparing and presenting the local authority's case at admission appeals for community and VC schools
  - Formulating policies and practices in response to legislative changes
  - Consulting on any changes to the Council's admission arrangements and determining its admission arrangements annually, by 15 April, irrespective of whether there are any changes.
  - Producing an annual report on admissions for all schools in the local authority area, which has to be published locally and sent to the Schools Adjudicator by 30 June.
- 27 *SEN Contingency*: £275,670 supports the provisions of Outreach Services from Special Schools and other identified excellent SEN practice

## **Summary**

28. All spending using DSG is carefully monitored to ensure it is spent appropriately and in line with the requirements that are set out in the School Funding Regulations. Some elements are needs led and are reviewed monthly so that unspent DSG can be released and redistributed to schools as agreed by Schools Forum at its meeting on 26 November.