

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
ON 11 JUNE 2008**

**SUBJECT: ONGOING INCREASED DEMAND ON THE EDUCATIONAL
SUPPORT SERVICES BUDGET**

BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform committee of the ongoing increased demand on the Educational Support Services budget in relation to resources required to support pupils with Level 5 Additional Support Needs for financial year 2007-2008. A report in relation to this subject was considered by Educational and Social Services Committee on 28 November 2007 (para 25 of the minute refers) and again on 19 December 2007 (para 27 of the minute refers).
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D (1) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee notes the continuing pressure on the Level 5 Additional Support Needs budget.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 It is the policy of The Moray Council that children be educated as far as possible through inclusion in their local school, in mainstream classes. In addition, appropriate specialist base provision is available in designated primary schools in each Associated School Group (ASG) and in each of Moray's secondary schools. This provides a spectrum of provision to meet the needs of almost all of Moray's pupils. The activities in relation to this policy conform to the statutory requirements contained in the following legislation:
- The Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000, which specifies that education provided by an education authority should be delivered in a mainstream school except in exceptional circumstances. This is known as the "presumption of mainstreaming".
 - The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupil's Educational Records) Act 2003, which prescribes the following specific duties for Education authorities:
"not to treat disabled pupils less favourably" and,
"to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils"
 - The Education (Additional Support for Learning) ((Scotland) Act 2004 act, which specifies how Education Authorities make effective provision for all children and young people who need additional support.

The Additional Support for Learning Framework Policy which conforms to this Legislation was approved by Committee on 14 February 2007 (para 6 of the minute refers).

- 3.2 To support the implementation of this policy and the underpinning legislation, staffing is allocated annually to schools and consists largely of two elements:
- Level 1-4 staffing which is a school based allocation and relates to the support given to pupils requiring general assistance with their learning needs.
 - Level 5 staffing which is needs led and is allocated to schools on an individual pupil basis. Level 5 pupils represent the most severely disadvantaged pupils educationally who number approximately 200.
- 3.3 A staffing exercise is undertaken on an annual basis, to identify the additional pupil support needs (ASN) across Moray and an allocation to each school is made on the basis of the information gathered as part of this process. The process begins in January, when information relating to the additional support needs of all pupils in our schools is gathered as part of an audit process. These needs are examined and validated by Education Officers in partnership with Moray schools and the Educational Psychology team. This is an in-depth and lengthy process, which culminates in the allocation of teaching and auxiliary resources for each academic year. The memo outlining this process is issued to schools in late May or early June.
- 3.4 The budget relating to level 1-4 staffing relates to a core staffing allocation based on number of pupils. This budget was reduced by £62,000 in each of 2006-07 and 2007-08 in line with falling rolls. No saving has been taken this year in recognition of the increased pressure in this area.
- 3.5 The budget relating to level 5 pupils is needs led, is volatile and the level of support required is determined by the number of and severity of the needs identified during the annual staffing audit process. In effect this means that the budget required is identified some time after the council budget setting process which is completed in February.
- 3.6 The ASN staffing exercise for 2008-2009 has progressed as in past years and the resultant staffing to schools has now been issued. At this point the allocations are at the limit of the total budget. The number of known Level 5 pupils for the new session in August 2008 will have their needs met within the resources available.
- 3.7 However, between the issuing of the staffing allocation in May/June and the end of the financial year the number of additional pupils requiring Level 5 support has, traditionally, increased. These pupils are unknown to the system and their numbers cannot be predicted at this time.

- 3.8 Committee is therefore being alerted to the current situation at the earliest opportunity, as previously agreed with the Chief Financial Officer and reported to Committee on 28 November 2008 (para 3.11 refers).

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

None.

(b) Policy and Legal

None.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

The current staffing allocation utilises the full extent of the currently allocated budget. Any further allocations of resource, in line with policy, will result in an overspend against the budget allocated to Additional Support Needs (ASN). Committee will be advised at the earliest opportunity if this situation does arise and may need to consider balancing adjustments in other areas.

(d) Consultations

The senior management team of Educational Services has been consulted and is in agreement with the content of this report.

The Chief Financial Officer has also been consulted and is in agreement with the content of this report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 That Committee notes the continuing pressure on the Additional Support Needs level 5 budget.**

Author of Report: Eric Scarborough, Head of Educational Support Services
Background Papers: DMD/JR/Reports/Policy Committee/19 December 2007/
Increased Demand on the Educational Support Services Budget
Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/Children and Young People's Services
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