

Report of the Director of Children and Families

Report to the Leeds Schools Forum

Date: 14 June 2018

Subject: SEMH provision set up funding

Report Author: Louise Hornsey

Contact telephone number: 0113 3788689

Summary of main issues

1. At the February 2018 meeting Schools Forum requested a report on the set up funding paid by the local authority to Springwell Leeds. This request was made following a report to Schools Forum on set up funding available to new mainstream schools through the Growth Fund.
2. This report sets out details of the revenue set up funding paid to Springwell Leeds by the council, the process by which this was approved, differences in funding compared to the Growth Fund and the arrangements for monitoring outcomes for pupils.

Recommendations

3. Schools Forum is asked to note the revenue set up funding paid to Springwell Leeds, the formal approval this has received and the assurances provided around ongoing collaborative working and monitoring.

1 Background information

- 1.1 Following Ofsted reports that identified Elmete BESD SILC as inadequate, Wellspring was invited by the council to take over the provision and to work in partnership with the authority to develop an SEMH plan and multi-site academy that would improve education and support for children and young people with complex SEMH needs.
- 1.2 In a report to Executive Board in November 2015 it was noted that without this new provision there would have been significant difficulties in securing alternative places for these young people, and substantial revenue pressures would be generated by placing a large number of young people out of the city. Using the quoted standard rate charges made by a private provider at the time, the cost to meet the needs of 240 learners was estimated to require a minimum revenue expenditure of £13.2m per year.
- 1.3 In order to establish this new multi-site provision, set up funding was provided from the high needs block to support some pre-opening costs, further details of which are provided below.

2 Main issues

2.1 Set up funding provided

- 2.1.1 Taking into account the nature and complexities of the project to establish a new multi-site SEMH provision (see 2.2 below for further details), pre-opening revenue funding was agreed for three temporary Springwell Leeds sites in 2016/17. This mainly provided funding for pre-opening staffing costs, as well as some funding for the Academy Trust's overheads for supporting the new arrangements and equipment and resources. Funding was also agreed for 2017/18 and 2018/19 when three new provisions opened and the significant growth in places required additional staff to be employed and trained before the places could be made available.
- 2.1.2 All decisions to provide this funding have been taken as either Key or Significant Operational Decisions through the council's formal decision making process. These decisions were published on the council's website and were approved by the Director of Children and Families. The funding arrangements have also been formally documented in a cooperation agreement between the council and Springwell Leeds.
- 2.1.3 The revenue funding provided for Springwell Leeds for set up costs is as follows:

Year	Amount	Site
2016/17	£146,250	Meanwood
	£312,500	Brudenell
	£249,000	Horsforth
	£10,550	Horsforth site rent
2017/18 - 2018/19	£275,000	East
	£260,000	South
	£395,000	North
	£14,997	Horsforth site rent

Total £1,663,377

2.2 Comparison with the Growth Fund

- 2.2.1 New mainstream schools set up by the local authority receive some set up funding through the Growth Fund, which is established each year through a top slice of the schools block following approval by Schools Forum. Up to £115k is payable to a new single site mainstream school, depending on size and phase. Additional funding is also available for rental costs due to growth, and to provide equipment for pupils.
- 2.2.2 Funding for special schools is provided through the high needs block and there is no requirement for the local authority to develop a Growth Fund for special schools. Any decisions on set up funding are instead made on a case by case basis and in line with the council's formal decision making process. The unique and complex nature of the project to develop the Springwell Leeds multi-site SEMH provision has meant that the set up costs for this have been higher than those payable to a mainstream school under the Growth fund. Details of the reasons for this are set out below.

Nature of the project

- 2.2.3 Establishing the new SEMH provision has involved a change management process on a significant scale, which included developing buildings across multiples sites and the need for significant resource and collaborative working.
- 2.2.4 The set up funding provided for mainstream schools through the Growth Fund assumes that a school would be operating from one site, whereas Springwell Leeds initially operated across several interim sites and significant work has taken place to develop permanent provision across four sites, increasing the number of SEMH places in the city from 70 to 340. The multiple sites combined with the scale and complexity of the project has resulted in greater set up costs than we would expect to see for a new mainstream school operating from a single site.

Pre-opening staffing costs

- 2.2.5 The set up funding available to a mainstream school through the Growth Fund covers a Headteacher's salary for the summer term before opening as well as other costs including some non-teaching staff needed during the summer period, recruitment costs, and a contribution towards the cost of releasing some leadership posts from their existing roles at other schools, prior to them being paid through payroll at the new school.
- 2.2.6 The Growth Fund does not provide funding for teachers and support staff before opening as there is an assumption that appropriately skilled staff can be recruited for mainstream schools. However due to the specialist nature of the SEMH provision at Springwell Leeds, there was a need to train teachers and support staff in advance of opening new sites and at key stages of growth, in order to ensure they were appropriately skilled and ready to support children and young people. This recruitment

and training has been on significant scale; Springwell Leeds has advised that 48% of staff who were inherited from the previous provisions have left and 122 new staff have been recruited.

2.3 **Monitoring arrangements**

2.3.1 Springwell Leeds has been working collaboratively with the council to deliver a quality SEMH provision. The arrangements relating to the partnership, including the monitoring of outcomes, are documented in the cooperation agreement between the council and Springwell Leeds. This details how the performance of Springwell Leeds will be measured in order to demonstrate the quality of provision and outcomes for learners. In addition to this, regular liaison meetings take place between the council and Springwell Leeds.

2.3.2 We have also agreed with Elected Members that we will provide an annual report to them on the cost impact and outcomes of this investment.

3 **Recommendations**

3.1 Schools Forum is asked to note the revenue set up funding paid to Springwell Leeds, the formal approval this has received and the assurances provided around ongoing collaborative working and monitoring.