

Local Authority Benchmarking data

1. Purpose of the Report

To update members of the latest s251 benchmarking data

2 Recommendations

i) The forum note the report

ii) Officers be asked to bring a thorough report to the next Forum on the levels of spending on Special Education Needs in other Local Authorities.

3. Comparisons

- 3.1 Appendix A shows a comparison on a per pupil basis of all the budget headings within the DSG for our statistical neighbours.
- 3.2 In all there are 11 Local Authorities in the group, the ranking compares our position in the table, the higher the ranking the higher the spend. So if the ranking is 1 it reflects the highest spending authority.
- 3.3 Such statistics are always difficult to interpret as not all Authorities categorise the expenditure in the same way, so a degree of care is needed. It is not necessarily either good or bad to be either at the lowest or highest end of the spending spectrum. It is more important that the statistics provide a challenge to the current policies being adopted. It could well be that the level of spend is appropriate.
- 3.4 Useful information can be gleaned from these statistics, if we take all the SEN headings together we can see that we are one of the highest spenders. Our non-statemented costs are particular high, this covers
- Specialist Teachers
 - ASD Outreach & SEN Training
 - Early Years Specialist Support Worker
 - Mental Health Support Services In Schools

It maybe that other authorities delegate these costs or they show them else where on the s251 statement. Only further investigation will confirm this.

- 3.5 Central administration is high. This covers School admissions, Licences/ subscriptions, servicing of schools forums, cover for maternity, suspensions, termination of employment costs and

miscellaneous. The maternity represents around 50% of our spending. This cost is dealt with differently in other authorities and the cost is met from school budgets. In Lewisham we are currently exploring with the Insurance Team how these costs could be managed within the supply cover insurance arrangements.

4 **Next Steps**

This data provides useful benchmarking data and allows us to challenge whether we are provide value for money.

5 **Conclusion**

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