**West Berkshire Council Schools**

**Criteria for Additional Resource Unit Funding in Exceptional Circumstances**

# Introduction and Background

## West Berkshire Council has resource units sited at primary and secondary schools providing specialist support for physically disabled, speech and language difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), hearing impaired, and specific literacy difficulties.

## Each unit receives funding of £10,000 for the number of places it supports. Sixth form places are funded at £6,000 in addition to the sixth form funding.

## In most units the place funding does not cover the costs, so in addition top up funding is paid for each pupil in the unit. This funding “follows the pupil” and is paid by the local authority where the pupil lives. In West Berkshire there are three or four top up funding bands specific to each unit. These were originally calculated in 2013 when the current high needs funding system was introduced. The funding rates were based on staffing ratios for the number of pupils in the unit, and at the relevant salary costs at that time, plus an allowance for non staffing costs.

## Although place funding is fixed for the year, top up funding can vary if there is movement of pupils. Generally, the number of pupils will stay much the same for the year, and as and when pupils leave, their places are refilled as soon as possible. Schools can therefore plan their unit budgets and staffing structures around the number of places and expected pupil numbers.

## An exceptional circumstance to this is where a number of pupils leave the unit at the same time (for example at the end of year 6). Due to the complexity of their needs, it may not be possible to admit more than one new pupil into the unit at a time, and each new pupil will need to be integrated at different times. Not replacing all pupils at the same time will have an impact on the unit’s funding, as current staffing levels will need to be maintained.

## At a meeting of the Schools’ Forum on 17th July 2017, funding for this exceptional circumstance was considered and agreed. The criteria and funding is set out in the paragraph below.

# Criteria to be met and Additional Funding to be paid

## Criteria to be met:

## Two or more places have become vacant at the same time (probable for year 6 and year 11 leavers).

## and

## There are pupils available to fill the places.

## and

## Due to the significant specific needs of these pupils it is not possible for them all to start at the unit at the same time.

## Additional funding will be calculated at the relevant top up rate from the date the pupil(s) would have commenced in the unit to the date they actually start.

## The Head of Education is to verify that the criteria have been met and approve the funding from the High Needs top up budget.