

# Funding and provision for children with additional needs

Public Consultation 9 September – 21 October 2024

Scrutiny Committee – Children & Families on 21  
October 2024



# Why consult?

- Children's needs are not being met as quickly as wanted
- Arrangements put in place are not having the impact they should
- Budget is under enormous pressure, proposals are designed to deliver the Deficit Management Plan (DMP)
- It is clear changes must be made

This consultation is about money, because the evidence is that part of the problem in the system may be due to how money is given out. If money can be spent in a smarter way, this may result in better outcomes.

# Process

- Informal consultation with schools and parents in Summer Term 24
- Formal consultation (9<sup>th</sup> Sept – 21<sup>st</sup> Oct)
- Face to face and online briefings with Parents/Carers, Headteachers, SENCOs and the public
- Full consultation outcome report to be produced
- Business Case to be submitted to Executive for decision on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov

# Need for change

The ability of mainstream schools to provide for children with additional needs is coming under pressure.

Consequences when mainstream schools struggle or children's needs go unmet:

- Suspension and exclusion increases
- Placement breakdowns
- High-cost placements
- Increase in pupils who are severely absent from school
- Parents have to leave employment
- Children taken into care
- Schools judged inadequate

# Proposal 1: Equivalent funding



Somerset's current Top-up system provides different funding for a child attending mainstream school compared to special school, but the typical cost of delivery is similar in both.



The proposal is that any school that is educating a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan would receive equivalent Top-up funding, regardless of the type of school.



# Sources of funding

- Element 1 £5,000
- Element 2 £6,000
- Element 3 (Top-Up)
- Element 3 (Costed Plan)

	Special Top-Up	Mainstream Top-Up	Costed Plan plus Mainstream Top-Up	Variance
Band 1	£1,935	-	-	£1,935
Band 2	£3,916	£1,325	£6,071	(£2,155)
Band 3	£7,895	£2,798	£9,081	(£1,186)
Band 4	£12,289	£4,417	£11,456	£833
Band 5	£16,284	£5,888	£13,148	£3,136
Band 6	£20,279	£7,362	£17,133	£3,146
Band 7	£26,671	£11,484	£14,409	£12,262

Average Costed Plan is similar to the funding provided to special schools.

Suggests that special school Top-Up is appropriate, but mainstream Top-Up is too low.

# Proposal 2: Phasing



To change the funding for all children immediately would cost £10.3m



Pupils moving to equivalent funding would happen in 4 groups:



# Proposal 4: Model of Provision



Lack of clear solutions when children start to struggle in mainstream schools.



A model of provision would be established that is clear about how everyone in the system can together respond to situations where a pupil is finding mainstream school difficult, based on seven principles.



**These principles do not reflect our current system and would potentially take some time to realise, if supported through this consultation and subsequently adopted.**



# Principles

**Every child has the potential to succeed in a local mainstream school**

**Every child should always be on roll at a school**

**We anticipate challenges, to reduce their impact**

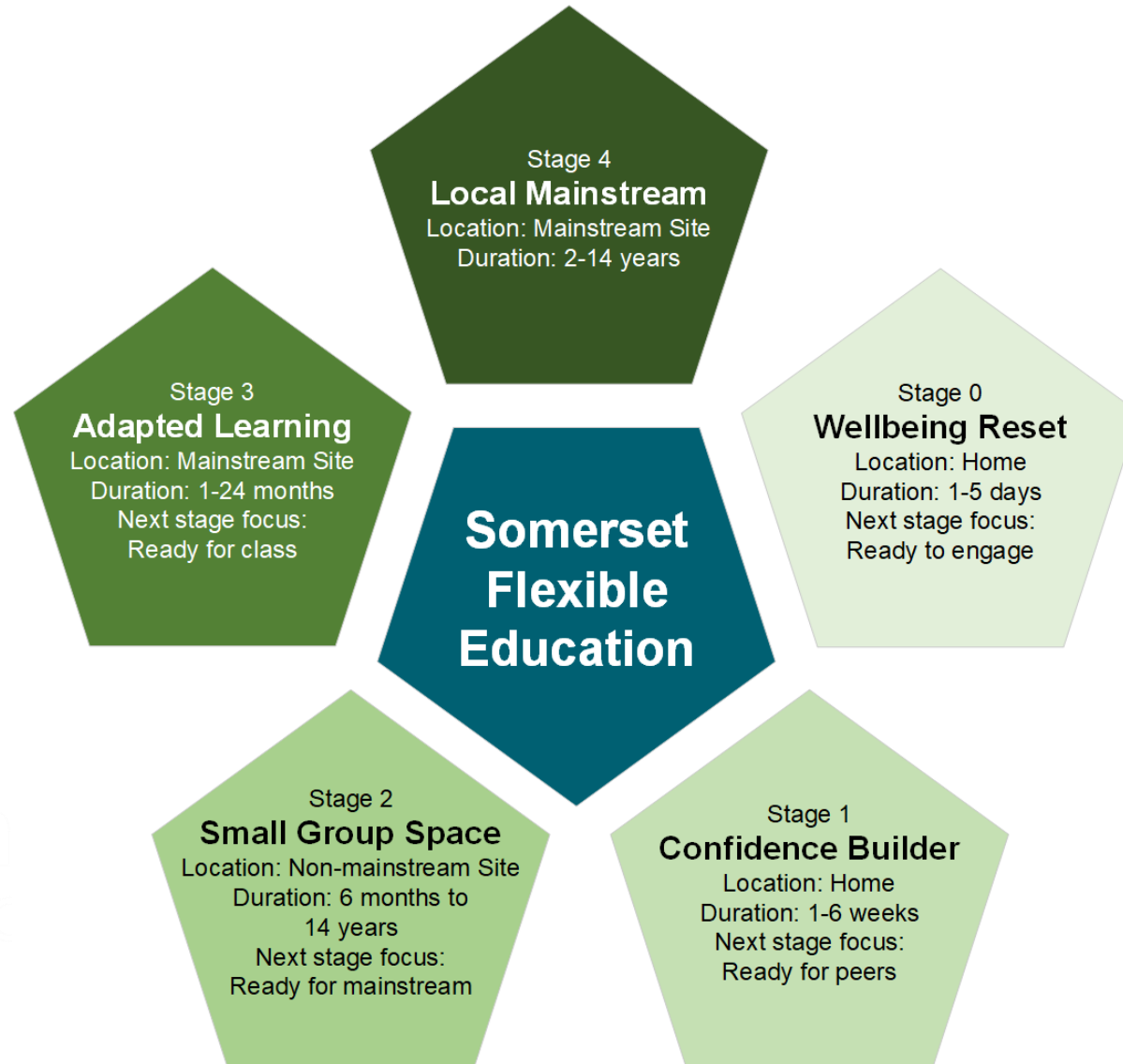
**Every school aged child needs full-time supervision**

**More flexibility in stretching curriculum provision**

**Out of school hours provision is for all children**

**Children should have access to relation-based support**

# Pathway back into mainstream education




# Pathway back into mainstream education



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# Pathway back into mainstream education



Stage 1  
**Confidence Builder**  
Location: Home  
Duration: 1-6 weeks  
Next stage focus:  
Ready for peers




# Pathway back into mainstream education

Stage 2  
**Small Group Space**  
Location: Non-mainstream Site  
Duration: 6 months to 14 years  
Next stage focus:  
Ready for mainstream



# Pathway back into mainstream education



Stage 3  
**Adapted Learning**  
Location: Mainstream  
Site  
Duration: 1 – 24  
months  
Next stage focus:  
Ready for class



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# Pathway back into mainstream education

Stage 4  
**Local  
Mainstream**

Location:  
Mainstream Site  
Duration: 2 – 14  
years

# Proposal 5: Incentives and disincentives



Incentives and disincentives in the system are not currently focussed on inclusion.



There should be more support when pupils are at risk of exclusion, and exclusion should be disincentivised, particularly in the case of exclusion for persistent disruptive behaviour.



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# Proposal 6: Short-term, Interim and Emergency Funding



Being able to access funding quickly is sometimes more important than the sums involved



Establish a fund that can be accessed rapidly by frontline local authority managers without application or lengthy sign off.



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# Consultation Feedback

To be presented at meeting on 21 October  
and verbal update given



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