

a: Revenue Budget Monitor

	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
P09	£0.0m	£8.6m Overspend	£8.6m Overspend
<i>P08</i>	<i>£0.0m</i>	<i>£8.6m overspend</i>	<i>£8.6m overspend</i>

May	June	Jul/Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
2.4	3.3	8.3	8.1	8.0	8.6	8.6		
	▼	▼	▲	▲	▼	▼		

Revenue Position

Summary DSG position 2020/21 Period 9 (all figures in £000s)

	b/f	DSG funding/budget 2020/21	Outturn Period 9 2020/21	In-year variance at P9	Cumulative c/f	In-year variance at P8	Movement P8 to P9
Schools Block	(174)	272,492	272,492	0	(174)	0	0
De-delegation	(464)	0	0	0	(464)	0	0
Schools Central Block	0	2,386	2,385	0	0	0	0
Early Years	20	37,119	37,553	434	454	360	74
High Needs Block	3,509	62,511	70,670	8,159	11,668	8,196	(37)
Funding		(374,508)	(374,508)	0	0	0	0
Total	2,892	0	8,592	8,592	11,484	8,556	37

Key Messages

The in-year forecast deficit on the DSG has increased slightly by £0.037m to £8.6m, which when added to the brought forward balance will give a total deficit to carry forward at the end of the year of £11.5m. The main area for concern continues to be the High Needs block which is forecasting an overspend in-year of £8.2m. The Early Years overspend is also primarily caused by High Needs expenditure in this area.

Within the High Needs Block, top-up funding is still experiencing the biggest pressure, with a significant increase from 2019/20, the current forecast is £7.503m over budget. There is currently another round of top-up applications in progress, analysis of the applications has indicated another increase in costs for this financial year and a £0.475m increase has been included in the forecast as an estimate of the impact of this, an additional £0.150m from last period as we obtain more detail on the applications agreed. However, the forecast cost of staffing has fallen leading to a slight reduction in the overall forecast for the block

In Early Years the increase in overspend is due to an increase in SEN top-up costs. There is an emerging issue in relation to the January 2021 census due to the guidance issued by DfE regarding the impact of Covid. This means that settings can include pupils who are being kept away from settings for Covid reasons but not counted if the setting cannot take them (either due to closure or because of reduced places to enable social distancing and maintaining places for vulnerable and children of key workers). This could reduce the numbers

counted in the census and effect both funding into the block (as the January 2021 census generates 7/12ths of the funding), as well as the amount paid to settings.

Following agreement of Schools Forum, the amount transferred from the Schools Block in 2020/21 is being used to contribute towards the Education Transformation Programme. We are currently forecasting that all this funding will be spent in 2020/21. The Education Transformation Programme commenced this year and is primarily concerned with SEN and consequently the High Needs Block, this will need to reduce future cost pressures in the block and make it more sustainable. Nationally High Needs continues to be challenging and in Bristol this has been exacerbated by work to clear the backlog of EHCP. Further detailed activity review & analysis will need to be undertaken to ensure planning is robust and sufficient resources are available to meet needs, and we will continue to lobby government for a more sustainable funding settlement.

During the pandemic, most schools remained open to provide education to children of Key Workers and vulnerable pupils. Any additional costs incurred by schools during this time were able to be reclaimed from ESFA. The funding into the DSG was unaffected by Covid, and also the amounts paid to schools continued at pre-Covid levels following DfE guidance.