

## Tackling Emerging Threats to Children Project – Funding Update

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request approval for an alternative approach to the allocation of funding to schools for the *Tackling Emerging Threats to Children* project; this is following the decision by the Secretary of State not to allow the Local Authority to centrally retain the Non ISB Schools Budget reserve allocation for this project.

### 2. Background & Context

- 2.1 In September 2015, the Schools Forum unanimously approved funding of £1.2m over three years towards the *Tackling Emerging Threats to Children* project, which aimed to support schools and parents to safeguard children against a broad range of emerging threats. These threats include the risks children face from **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**, **online grooming** and **radicalisation**, as well as associated **internet safety** concerns.
- 2.2 The project was initiated in response to the growing trend of exploitation and abuse of children and young people, particularly through the internet and social media. In order to support schools, children and their families to combat exploitative activity, it was proposed that three tiers of support would be developed; this consisted of **Universal Support**, **Targeted Support** and **Specialist Support**, to complement a **Recovery Support** offer funded by the Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).
- 2.3 In order to fund this project, it was proposed that £1.2m of the Non ISB Schools Budget reserve would be retained to fund these support offers for a period of 3 years. Use of this budget was subject to approval by both the Schools Forum and the Secretary of State, as required under *The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2015*. Approval from the Schools Forum was obtained, in principle, in June 2015 and formal approval was acquired in September 2015.
- 2.4 In February 2016, the Schools Forum were made aware that the Secretary of State had decided **not** to approve the application. The reason given for the decision was as follows:

*“This proposal is inconsistent with the policy of maximum delegation to schools as schools should be able to make their own decision on how to use the funding.*

*We would suggest the authority or the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board could offer a package of support and suggest to schools which wish to purchase this provision to group together and purchase it without committing other schools.”*

### 3 Allocation of the Non ISB Schools Budget Reserve

- 3.1 The Secretary of State suggested, as an alternative, that the funding towards the *Tackling Emerging Threats to Children* project be delegated directly to individual schools and academies, who will then be asked if they wish to opt in to the service.

- 3.2 The Local Authority wishes to adopt this approach and is proposing that a share of £0.420m from the Non ISB Schools Budget reserve is calculated for each individual school on a per pupil basis. Each school will then be written to individually and asked if they want the money to be paid to them directly, or if they would prefer to re-pool their allocation to support the funding of the project and access the support services.
- 3.3 The allocation will be approximately £4 per pupil. A sample letter to schools is attached for information at **Appendix A**.
- 3.4 If the school or academy wishes to retain its proportion of the funding allocation, they will be required to contact the Local Authority to indicate that this is their intention; payment will be made as soon as practicable. Where no response is received, it will be assumed that the school wishes to re-pool their funding and access the services offered by the project.
- 3.5 The Local Authority will still need to seek approval from the Secretary of State to delegate additional funding to schools, so the timescales for this arrangement are uncertain.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The Schools Forum approve the proportionate allocation of the Non ISB Budget Reserve to all schools and academies in Nottinghamshire, with a view to requesting that this is re-pooled to fund the *Tackling Emerging Threats to Children* project.

**Steve Edwards**  
**Service Director for Children's Social Care**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Natasha Wrzesinski  
Senior Practitioner, Quality & Improvement  
T: 0115 99 34648  
E: [natasha.wrzesinski@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:natasha.wrzesinski@nottscc.gov.uk)