

LGA research into high needs funding and best practice in SEND

Presentation to NCAS

14 November



Two concurrent research projects commissioned by the LGA and delivered by Isos

High needs expenditure

SEND good practice

1

Quantify the current gap between high needs resources and actual spend.

To draw together some of the effective approaches that local areas have developed to address challenges around SEND

2

Understand what is driving these trends and how local areas are responding.

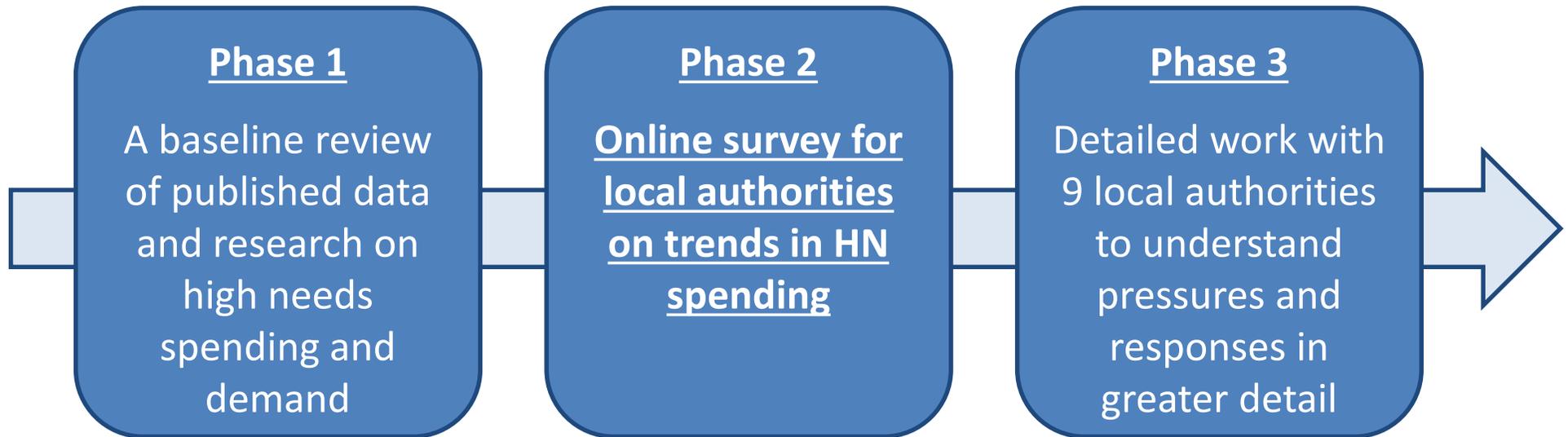
To distil these into practical, accessible messages and illustrative examples

3

Develop an evidence base to inform discussions between central and local government on meeting the needs of young people with SEND.

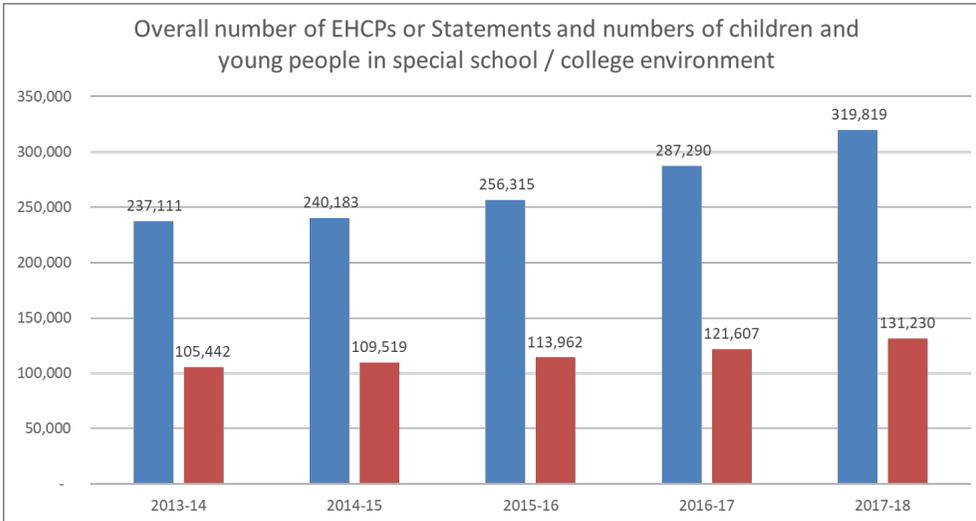
To disseminate and develop these through broad engagement – workshops and published final product

Methodology for the high needs spending research

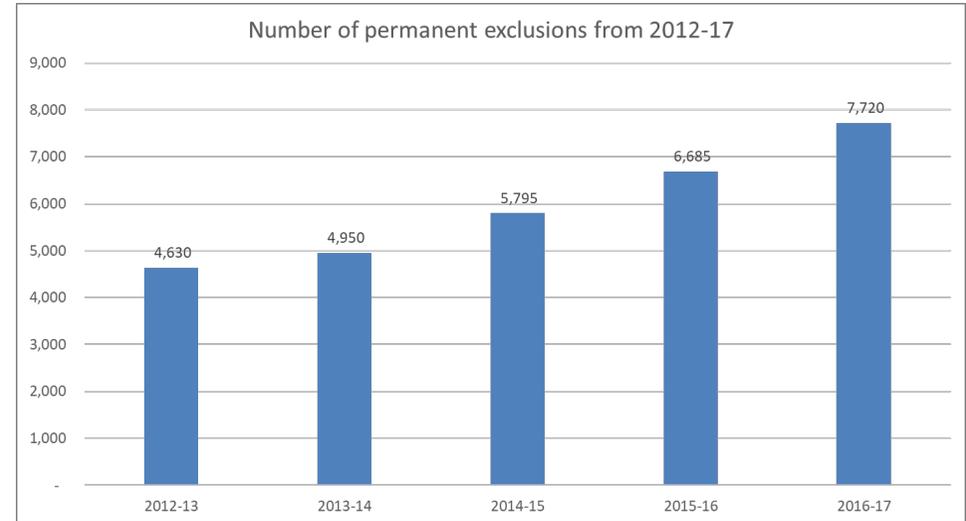


The interim findings in this presentation are based on completed fieldwork in all 9 local authorities and survey returns from 73 local authorities.

Published data shows us that demand is rising nationally



■ Number of EHCPs / statement ■ Number of children with EHCP in special school or college



- The number of children and young people with EHCPs / statements has risen by **35%** in 5 years.
- The number of children and young people educated in special schools and specialist colleges has grown, albeit more slowly, by **24%** in the same period.
- The number of permanent exclusions has increased by **two thirds** in the last 5 year period for which data is available.



Why is the demand for high needs expenditure increasing?

Population trends

- 0-25 population growth (c. 1% in 2 years); advances in life-expectancy for children with complex conditions; more awareness and better diagnoses.

Raised expectations

- Code of practice significantly and rightly raised expectations and aspirations of parents for children with SEND.

Post-16 responsibility

- Currently around 25% of EHCPs (according to our survey) are for children and young people post-16 and this number is rising.

Accountability framework

- The very sharp focus in inspection and through the broader accountability framework on progress 8 and attainment 8 does not incentivise mainstream schools to be inclusive.

Curriculum

- The shifting of the curriculum away from a vocational offer gives schools less flexibility to offer programmes of study likely to engage those less suited to traditionally academic subjects.

Core funding pressures

- Mainstream schools are having to make budget cuts which normally involve reducing TA and pastoral support, with a knock-on impact on their ability to support those with additional needs.⁵

Published financial data hints at the impact this is having on expenditure

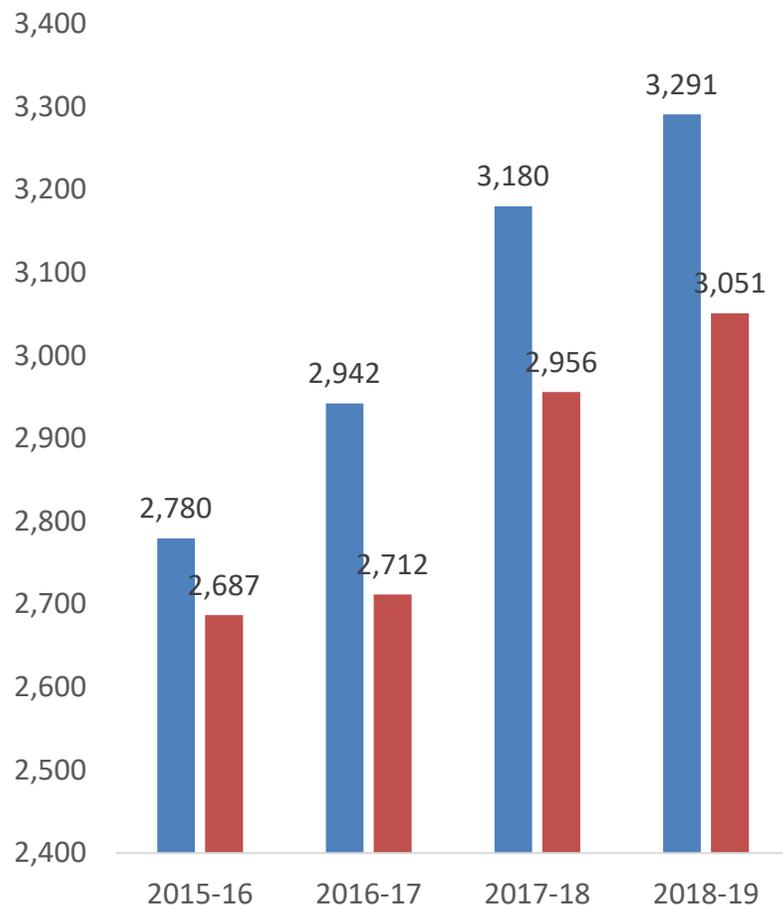
- Total published S251 high needs budgets and outturns both **exceeded** the total high needs block allocation from the DSG for at least the last 4 years
- The percentage of local authorities reporting that their S251 high needs expenditure exceeds their own budget has increased from **39%** in 2014-15 to **55%** in 2016-17.
- The DSG carry forward reported in S251 outturns has reduced by nearly **60%** between 2014-15 and 2016-17.
- The re-baselining exercise carried out on the High Needs block in 2016-17 led to around **£270 million** net transfer from the schools block to the high needs block.
- A survey carried out by ADCS in 2017 showed across 85 local authorities 68 LAs reported an overspend on the HNB which totalled **£139.5 million**



Our survey shows that total and average spend on high needs has increased and that high needs block allocations fall short of existing levels of expenditure

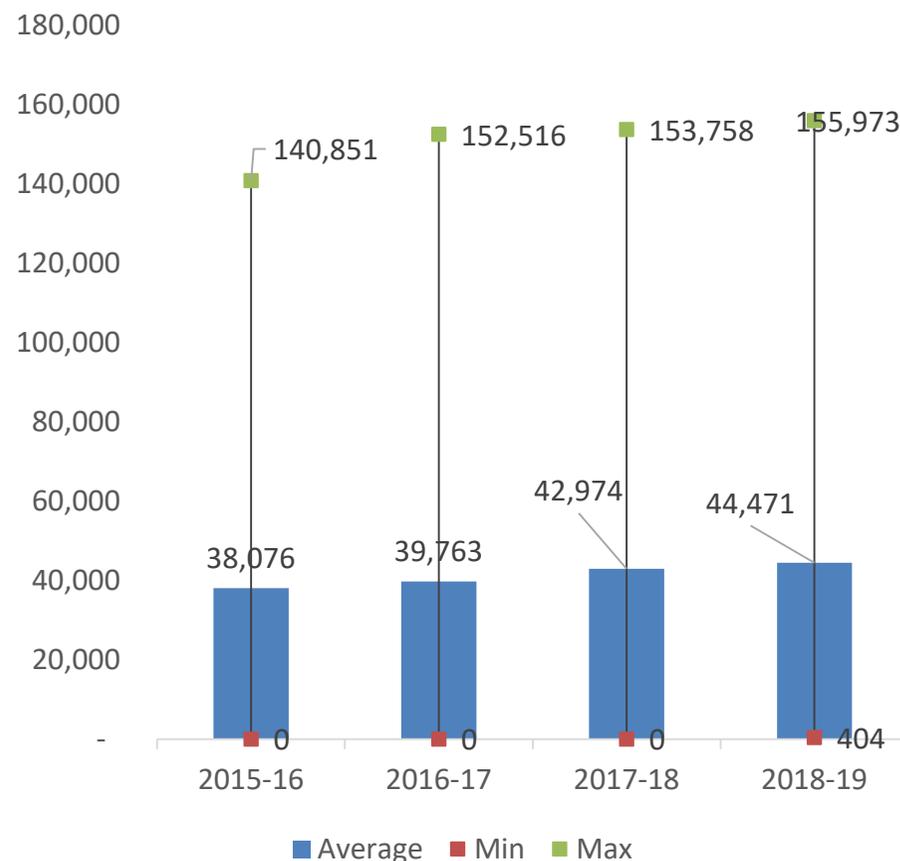
Total spend against High Needs Block budget

£MM, 2015-19



Average spend against High Needs Block budget

£000s, 2015-19



Total high needs spend

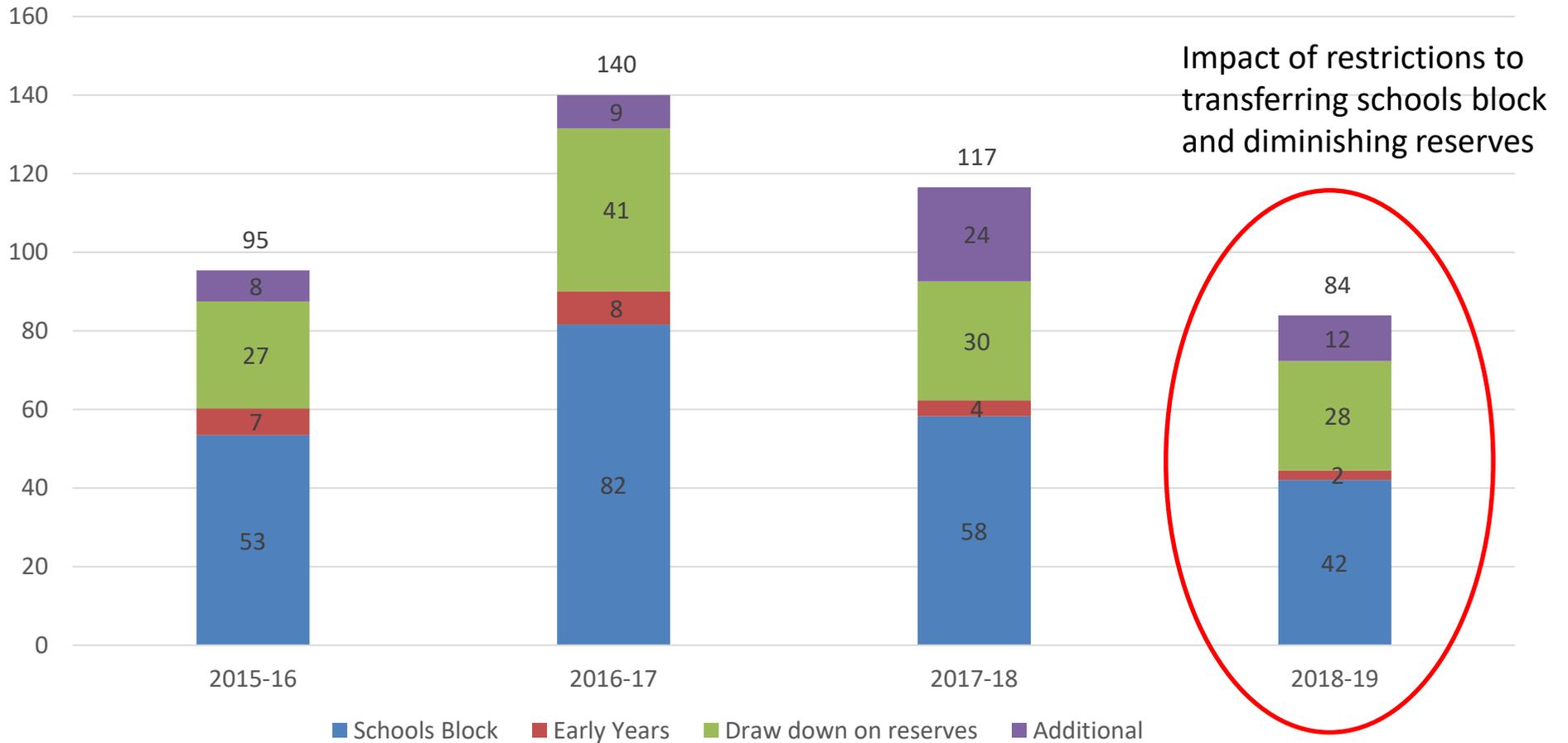


Total high needs block allocations

This has meant that local authorities have topped-up the high needs block from other sources

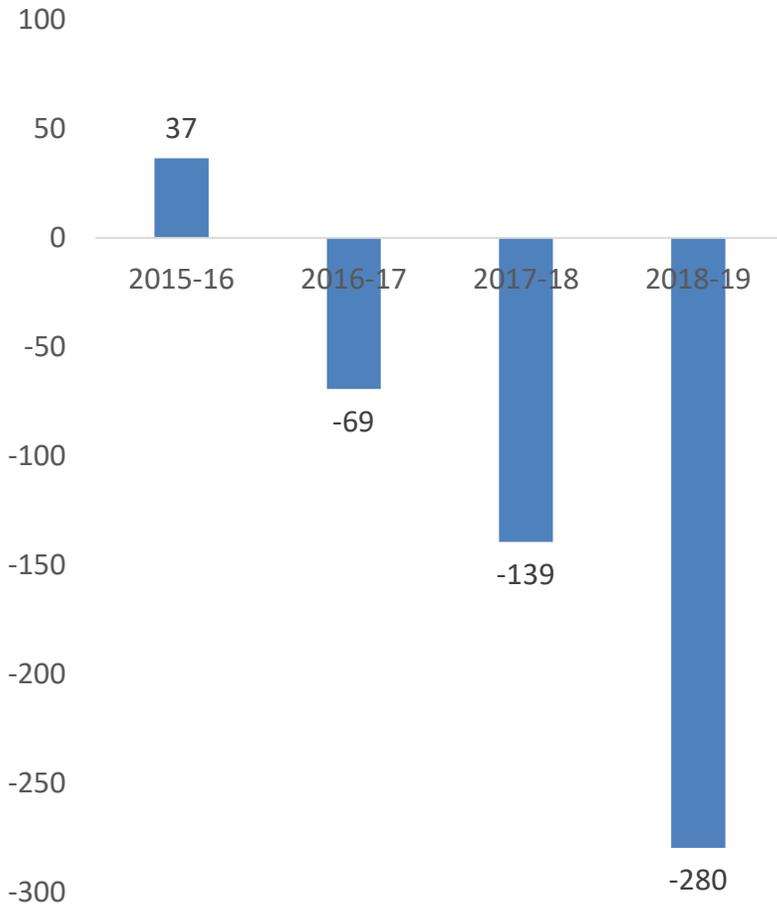
Inputs into High Needs Budget

EMM, 2015-19

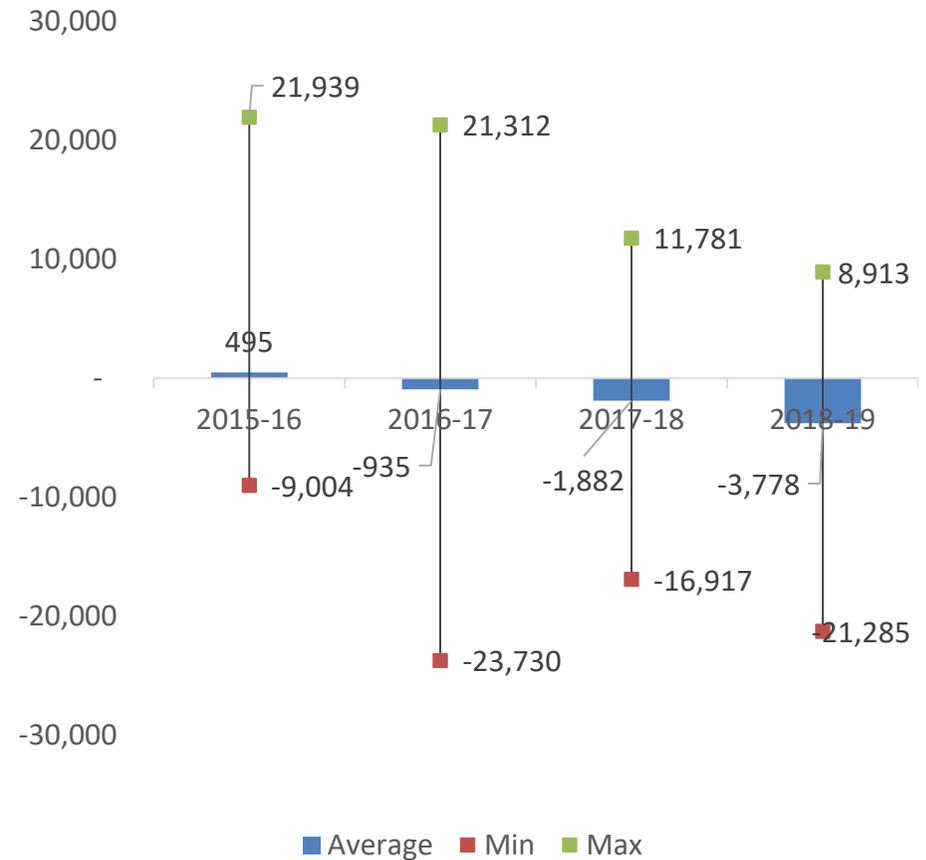


Councils increasingly describe reaching a 'tipping point' – this is backed up by the data

Net position given YoY carry forwards/deficit
£MM, 2015-19



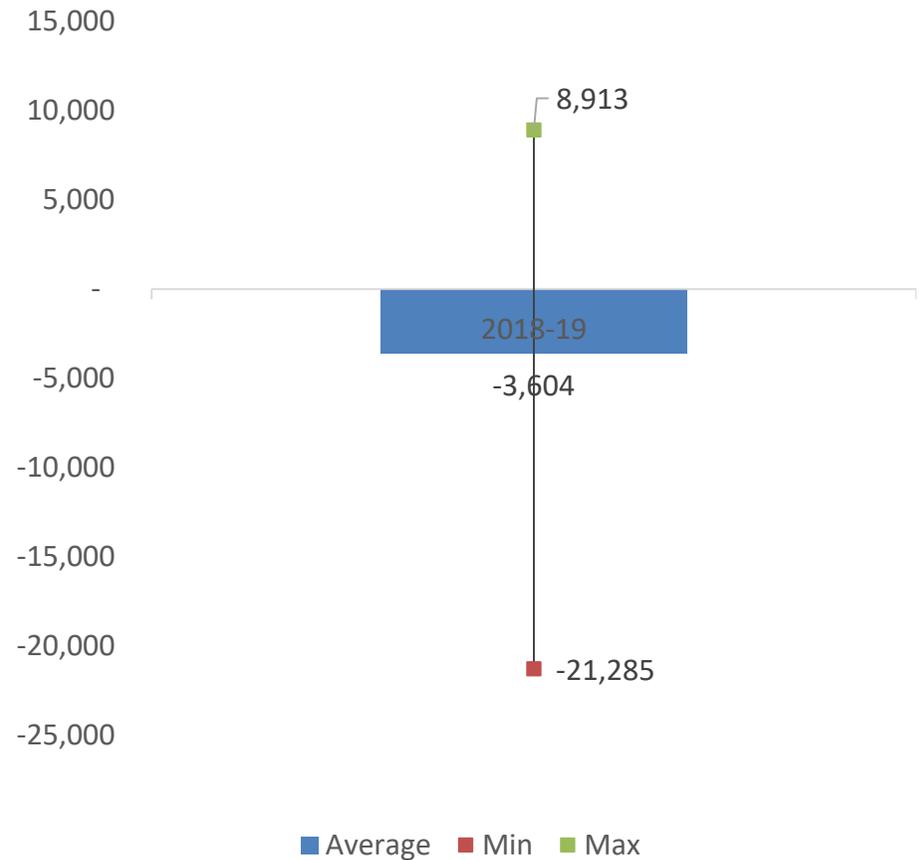
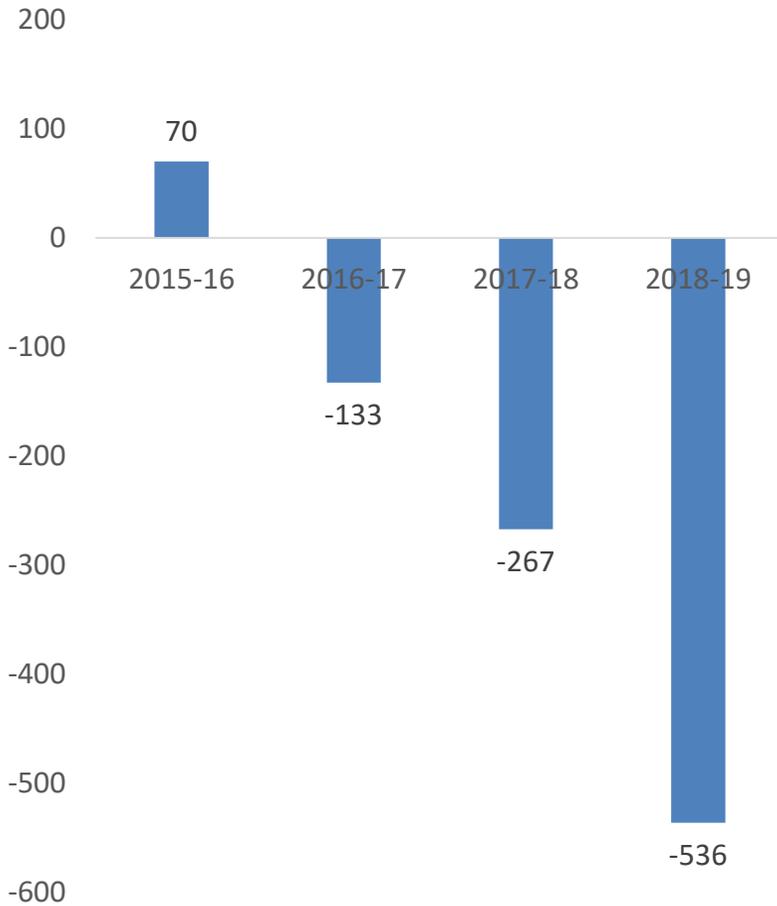
Average net position given YoY carry forwards/deficit
£000s, 2015-19



If we simply 'scale up' these survey results, the national implications are potentially significant

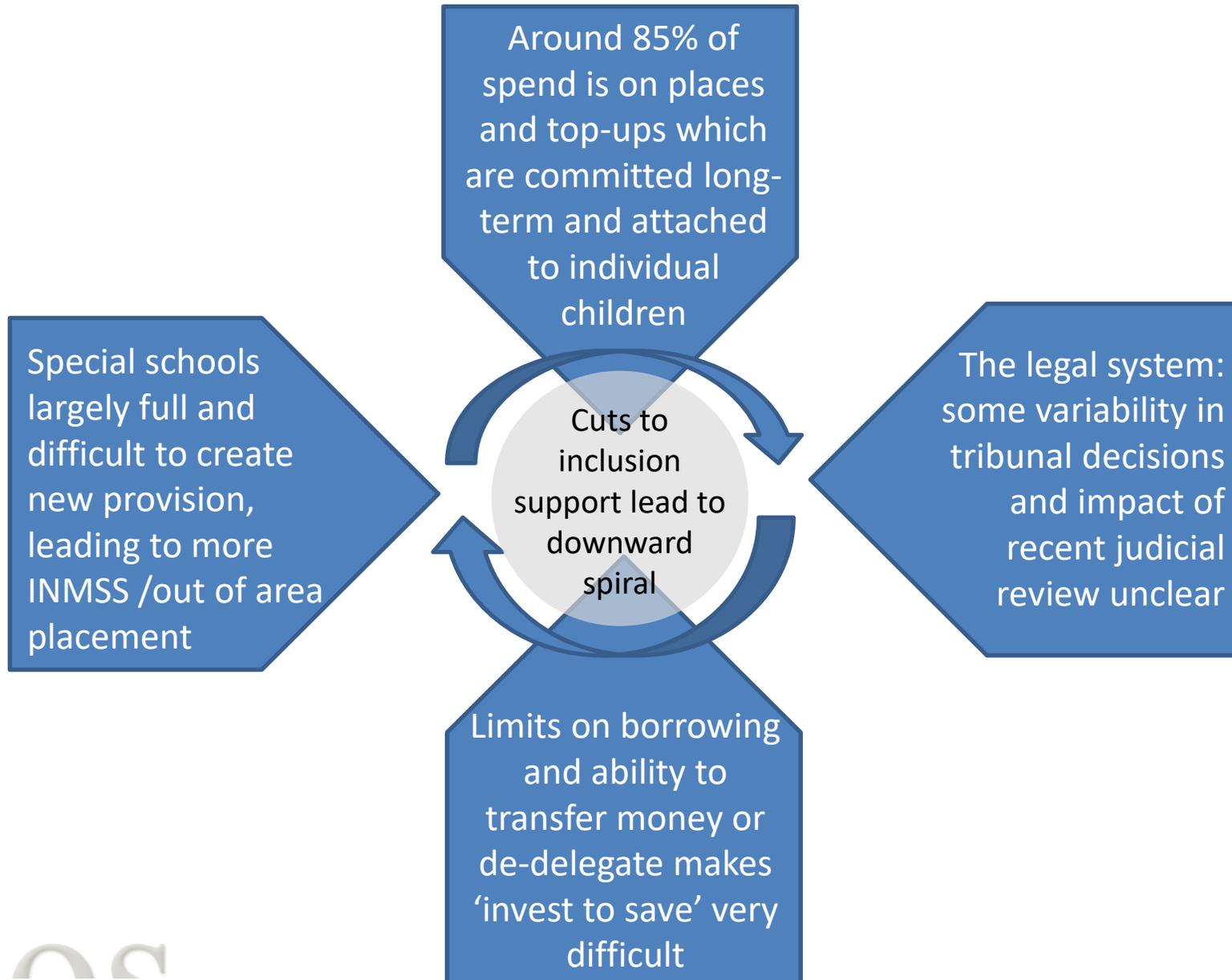
Scaled net position given YoY carry forwards/deficit
£MM, 2018-19

Average net position given YoY carry forwards/deficit
£000s, 2018-19



The scaled net position was arrived at by applying the population scalar (from population size of survey respondents to total population size) to the net position of those who responded to the survey. **CONFIDENTIAL – NOT FOR ONWARD CIRCULATION**

What prevents local authorities from being able to manage down expenditure



What can be done?

1

- The DfE has recognised issues around inclusion in the system and has pledged to take action – SoS speech to ADCS conference in July
- Changes to Ofsted framework and focus

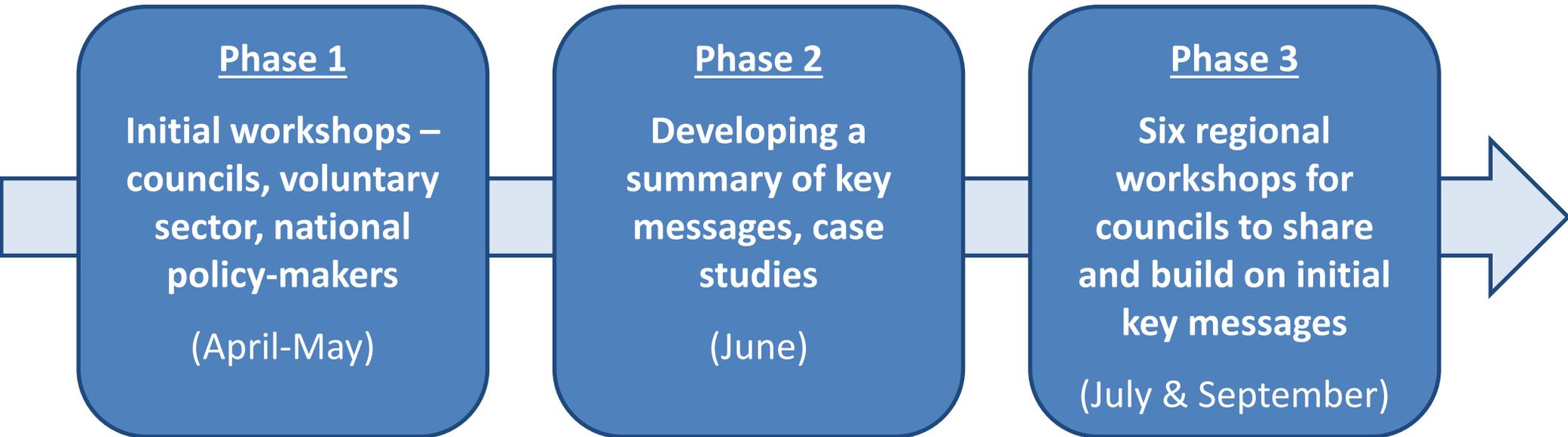
2

- LGA plans to use the outcomes of this research to lobby central government
- Complete the survey if you haven't already – the stronger the evidence base the more likely it will have an impact!

3

- There are actions that LAs can take which help mitigate some of the challenges described
- Our recent good practice research points to some of these...

SEND Good Practice research - we have approached the project in three phases.



All of the feedback that we gather will be developed into concise, accessible and practically-focused products – capturing the learning on effective practice within the SEND system and practical messages for councils.

During the project, we have focused on six broad themes.

- ① **Strategic partnership working with parents and carers, and young people**
- ② **Strategic partnership working and joint commissioning across education, health and care**
- ③ **Identifying, assessing and supporting young people's needs**
- ④ **Building inclusive capacity in mainstream schools and settings**
- ⑤ **Developing responsive, flexible and effective local specialist provision**
- ⑥ **Preparation for adulthood**

1 Strategic partnership working with parents and carers, and young people

Demonstrate commitment to sharing challenges and solving problems in a spirit of co-production. Ensure that co-production feels meaningful and not tokenistic but engaging at a formative stage, openly sharing a problem and enabling parents, carers and young people to generate ideas and shape solutions.

Empower and enable local groups of parents and carers to play a strategic role within the local SEND system. Identify specific opportunities for parents, carers and young people to influence the local SEND system at a strategic level and build the capacity of local groups and networks to play this role.

Focus on broadening participation by engaging an ever-wider range of young people and families. Make broadening participation, and hearing from as broad a range of parents, carers and young people as possible, an explicit aim of the local SEND system.



2 Strategic partnership working and joint commissioning across education, health and care

Develop and embed strong routines and processes for making decisions and commissioning provision across key agencies. Ensure that there are explicit processes and protocols – about decision-making and the use of resources – that are used to consider commissioning of individual packages of support and overall services.

Ensure joint commissioning delivers better, joined-up support by planning pathways of support for specific types of needs. Identifying key areas of need – for example autism, mental health or physical disability – and planning a coherent, seamless pathway of support for young people and their families.

Put in place effective governance structures and processes to ensure strategic decisions can be taken swiftly and effectively. Whatever the make-up of council and CCG boundaries, ensure that there is a clear partnership governance structure in place that enables partners to make joint strategic decisions swiftly and effectively.



3 Identifying, assessing and supporting young people's needs

Focus on strengthening core processes and building a consistent understanding so that needs can be identified early and accurately (and the right support put in place). Central to this is having a widely understood and consistently applied vocabulary for identifying a young person's needs (as a first step to putting in place the right support).

Ensure that information about local support is accessible and helps families and professionals to navigate the local system easily. Making sure that the local offer enables families and professionals to understand what support is available how to access it and enabling services to respond flexibly to offer a more bespoke package of support.

Put in place open, transparent and outcomes-focused processes for assessing young people's needs. Ensure that assessment processes take a holistic view of a young person's needs while also identifying the support that is needed, and that decisions are taken in an open, informed and transparent manner.



4 Building inclusive capacity in mainstream schools and settings

Ensure that there is a clear strategy for building inclusive capacity in mainstream schools and settings. This will require there being a set of consistent expectations about the support mainstream settings and schools will offer, but also a clear offer of support to build their capacity to deliver this support effectively.

Ensure that schools and settings have access to an explicit offer of targeted inclusion support. Be clear what will be part of a “core” offer open to all schools and settings (without requiring a statutory assessment and plan), and where there is an additional offer that settings and schools can tap into by using their own resources.

Ensure that education inclusion support is part of a broader, holistic and joined-up offer of support for young people’s care and health needs. Recognise the importance of supporting a child’s needs in their education setting, but also that those needs may be linked to issues related to their family, home or health that will require joined-up support.

5 Developing responsive, flexible and effective local specialist provision

Work with local specialist providers to develop robust routines for considering local needs and shaping local provision to meet them. Developing an evidence-informed and collaborative approach to planning places in specialist SEND provision – both the state-funded and INMSS– so that there is an effective plan for how provision can meet needs.

Develop a range of “mainstream plus” options. This will include working with local mainstream and specialist providers and developing models for meeting young people’s needs in learning environments that match their educational and wider developmental needs, and allow them to remain connected to their local communities.

Develop collaborative processes for considering bespoke placements for young people with the most complex needs. Bring together local specialist providers to consider how they could develop bespoke packages of support to enable young people with the most complex needs to be supported wherever possible in their local communities.

6 Preparation for adulthood

Be pro-active in gathering feedback from young people about their aspirations and use this intelligence to commission pathways that will enable young people to pursue their goals. Engage young people who are likely to require further support or bespoke pathways to pursue their aspirations, and convene partners to shape pathways.

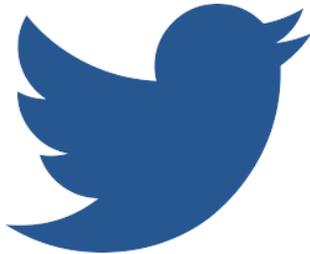
In parallel, pro-actively engage local employers to support them to develop support and opportunities for young people with SEND to make a successful transition to the world of work. Take an incremental approach to working with employers, develop employment pathways, build employers' capacity, and use this learning to engage other employers.

Ensure that there is a strong, joint local offer of education, health and care options to enable young people with the most complex needs to make a successful transition to adult life. Plan transitions early and enable agencies to work together to put in place holistic packages of support that will enable a young person to thrive in adult life.

To continue the discussion ...



www.isospartnership.com
<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IHUPE/>



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