

Schools Forum March 2019

Early Years SEND Inclusion Funding (ALFEY Funding)

Contextual Information

It is the duty of all providers delivering funded early education places to meet the needs of children with SEN and disabilities. In order to do this the Local Authority follow recommended guidelines to ensure the funding arrangements for early education reflect the need to provide suitable support for these children.

It is at the discretion of each private, voluntary and independent (PVI) provider to decide how to spend their allocation for special educational needs. Some providers choose to fund extra teaching or non-teaching staff to support pupils with special educational needs and/or use this funding to provide interventions and resources. Others may pay for additional time for the provider's special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) to work with pupils. This funding also covers the providers duties around the provision of specialist equipment and aids.

Local Practice

Settings make applications using a form which is submitted to the Alfey Funding Panel (the panel is comprised of LA Officers and PVI sector representatives). The panel assess the applications against criteria developed by the Inclusion Advisory Teacher prior to the panel meeting. During the panel meeting each application is discussed and a score is agreed and awarded to the child. Depending on the application, there may be some recommendations made in regard to the child or funding awarded. Funding is usually allocated to the child for a period of one year, unless the panel require further information and request this for the next panel meeting. The score allocated to the child dictates how much additional funding the setting will receive for the child. The scores are set out below:

ALFEY Score	% of hourly rate received	£ hourly rate received
1	20%	£1.80
2	40%	£3.60
3	60%	£5.40
4	80%	£7.20
5	100%	£9.00

In 2016 the Local Area increased the hourly rate available to be in line with minimum wage guidance.

Spend

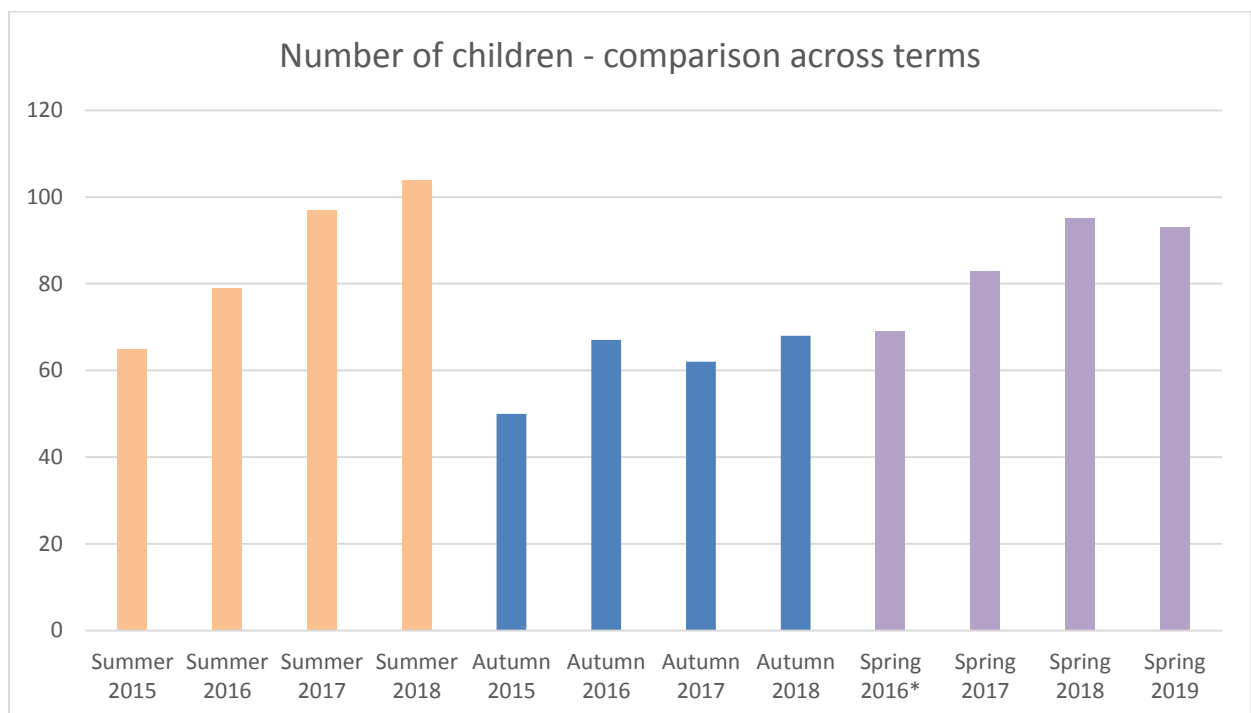
There has been an evidenced increase in level of need which is clear from the information that follows detailing the increased spend and increase in average score across the terms. In addition to this, the implementation of the 30 hours extended entitlement in Autumn 2017 required an extended budget to accommodate Alfey Funding for up to 30 hours per week for children entitled to the additional hours.

The following table provides a breakdown by term since 2015 of numbers of children, total spend, average spend per child, average score as well as the number of children accessing the extended entitlement.

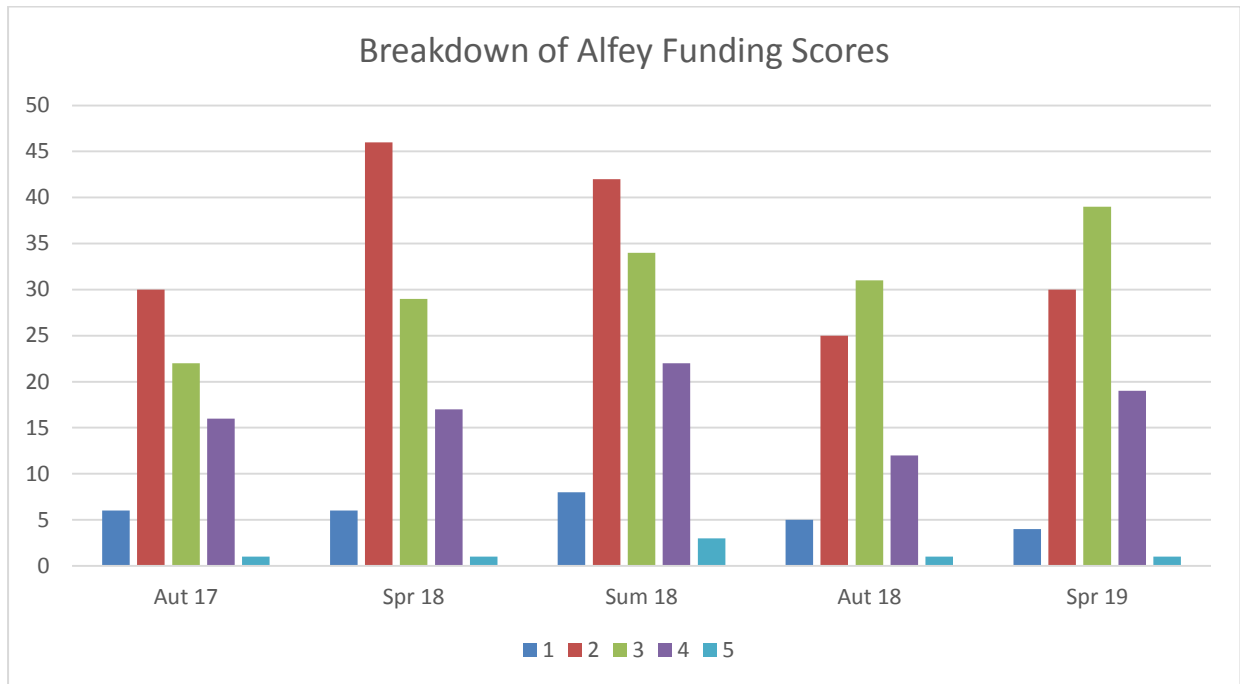
	Number of children	Spend	Average Spend per child	Average Score	Number of children receiving more than 15 hrs
Summer 2015	65	£43,960.50	£676.32	2.5	
Autumn 2015	50	£39,073.50	£781.47	2.9	
Spring 2016*	69	£50,738.22	£735.34	2.9	
Summer 2016	79	£68,493.96	£867.01	2.9	
Autumn 2016	67	£67,906.08	£1,013.52	3.1	
Spring 2017	83	£71,767.44	£864.67	2.9	
Summer 2017	97	£82,889.64	£854.53	2.9	
Autumn 2017	62	£59,232.60	£955.36	2.7	7
Spring 2018	95	£75,432.60	£794.03	2.6	14
Summer 2018	104	£98,702.10	£949.06	2.7	25
Autumn 2018	68	£75,412.35	£1109.01	2.7	16
Spring 2019	93	£89,802.00	£965.61	2.8	23

**Important note – the hourly rate increased from £7.50 ph to £9.00 ph in Spring 2016.*

The chart below compares the number of children in receipt of Alfey Funding over the three terms and clearly demonstrates an increase in need over the last 4 years:



The chart below shows a trend of increasing levels of need; with scores of 1 and 2 decreasing whilst scores of 3 and 4 have increased.



Actions, risks and considerations

1. To prevent the possibility of an overspend in the future the Alfey Funding Panel has agreed to:
 - a. Cease to allocate funding at level 1, so funding will only start at level 2 (other offers will be made to the sector to support children who may previously have been allocated level 1).
2. Maintain the current budget at £250,000 for supporting PVI's with a continued contribution from the Higher Needs Block of £100,000.