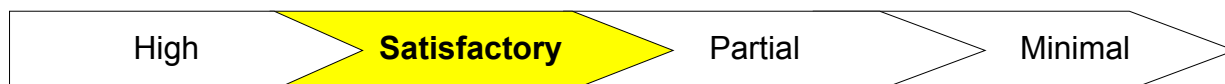


Appendix 1b: Assurance and Themes

Assurance



Special Educational Needs

Objective

To assess whether:

- “Element 1” and “Element 2” allocations of Special Educational Needs (SEN) budgets to maintained schools are calculated based on accurate assumptions that have been agreed in advance
- there is sufficient, effective allocation to and use of “Element 3” funding for pupils in Local Authority schools and special schools with SEN provision.

Themes

In general, the Special Educational Needs (SEN) team had implemented robust arrangements that ensured:

- SEN Element 1 and 2 funding was being utilised appropriately before allocating Element 3
- statutory censuses were completed on time and suitable follow-up and advice was available to schools if required.

There was a need to consolidate guidance regarding the use of Element 1 and 2 funding and confirm it remains current. Guidance on Element 3 funding needs to be produced for the team to refer to when looking to set funding levels. It should be noted that no errors were found in the sample of cases tested.

An officer needs to be made accountable for ensuring legislative and compliance requirements are fulfilled by ensuring guidance documentation and processes are updated as necessary.

Adequate processes were found to be in place regarding the management of annual reviews carried out by case workers, where decisions were made around whether to escalate any requests onto the Education, Health and Care (EHC) Panel. The EHC Panel had a significant role in ensuring decisions made regarding assessments and funding were appropriate and discharge this role effectively.

Annual reviews of SEN statements were completed by the schools. However, the Council needs to introduce a monitoring process to track which pupils had received a review. This would also support the current exercise of converting statements to EHC plans (a legal requirement whereby all SEN pupils require an EHC plan by 2018).

Number of actions agreed: 4