

# Banding tool review: Presentation to RBK Parent Carer Consortium

## How does AFC fund pupils/students with SEND Now?

### What is Banding and how does it operate locally?

- Banding is a way for Local Authorities (LA) to allocate top-up funding for securing special educational provision in children and young people's EHCPs. Each LA has its own mechanism for allocating top-up funding, but banding is the most common approach across England
- Analysis of the current mechanism in RBK has shown:

#### **Special schools**

- RBK has varying bands across each special school
- The current banding descriptors do not account for crossovers of needs, which can lead to inequitable funding or inability to effectively tailor banding
- Current Matrix rates are a fixed rate which creates inflexibility

#### **Mainstream**

- RBK's Matrix approach to banding is an historic model, creating challenges to the consistency of use

#### **Further Education Colleges**

- There is no banding model used - creating subjectivity and inequity

## Why Change?

- The current system is inequitable, lacks transparency and is inconsistent - different providers meet different children's similar needs at differing top-up funding rates, leading to overspend.
- The DfE High Needs Operational Guidance states *'Local authorities must treat those placed in maintained provision, in academies and free schools, in the further education sector, and in non-maintained and independent provision on a fair and equivalent basis when making arrangements for funding young people with high needs'*
- The recent SEND Green Paper states *'Despite unprecedented investment, the system is not delivering value for money for children, young people and families'*. It proposes reform of funding for a strong and sustainable system:
  - national framework of banding and price tariffs
  - standardisation of notional SEND budget
- **The High Needs Subgroup of the Schools Forum has approved implementing a new approach to Banding and agreed to use a universal banding tool, delivered by Imosphere's CareCalc.** A fair, consistent and needs-based tool to support the allocation of top-up funding for children and young people with EHCPs.

# What are the Benefits and Risks?

Benefits 1	Benefits 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A fair and transparent process</li> <li>● A consistent and needs-based approach to support the allocation of top-up funding for children and young people with EHCPs; enabling consistent and evidence-led decisions about resources for EHCPs</li> <li>● Generates a fair offer across provisions and settings, acknowledging the need for schools to have funding surety and ability to deploy resources to meet needs; moving away from only 1:1 models of delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give assurance to the RBK Safety Valve Agreement</li> <li>● Better value for money</li> <li>● Promotes objectivity</li> <li>● Adopts proven best-practices in place in other Local Authorities in England. They say it provides an evidence base shown to support a change in band and subsequent funding, following any changes in need captured at the Annual Review</li> <li>● Aligns RBK with the proposals in the Green Paper &amp; other LAs</li> <li>● Will provide funding consistency across Kingston and Richmond educational establishments</li> </ul>
Risks	Planned Mitigating Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There will be a transitional period when two systems will run in parallel. Some schools may make slight gains, others slight losses, but overall this more fairly distributes a finite budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Agreements will be made to support transitional arrangement. Each EHCP will continue to receive sufficient top-up funding for the provisions to be delivered</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Impact of new framework for Banding proposed in Green Paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Included in the Contract with Imosphere a requirement to take account of national initiatives</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Represents a big change for all stakeholders particularly schools and families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Co-production is a key element of the project; meaningful engagement with schools and parents/carers enabling them to influence developments as the project progresses</li> </ul>

# The Implementation Timetable

## Timetable:

- **Phase 1** - system fully available by Jan 2023, in time for the new academic year 2023/24  
Starting with Special Schools in the state-funded sector, commencing with:
  - pupils for whom new EHCPs are being drawn up,
  - those undergoing a phase transfer (moving up a school)
  - pupils in Year 9, if staffing resource allows
- **Phase 2** - for 2024/25
  - all annual reviews
  - extension to mainstream schools
- **Phase 3** - for 2025/6
  - Further Education and Alternative Provision
    - It is proposed to explore the implications of also extending the approach to SPIs.

# Understanding the Tool

## The CareCalc Tool:

- Pupils measured against a range of criteria in 15 different categories including:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Communicating well;</li><li>- Achieving potential for learning;</li><li>- Developing and enjoying recreational activities;</li><li>- Forming positive relationships;</li><li>- Being independent with self-care;</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Risk of accidental or intentional harm in an education setting;</li><li>- Preparing for FE and Adulthood</li><li>- Developing independent living skills;</li></ul>
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The SEND Service answers a series of standardised questions in the CareCalc tool, in each category for each pupil, using information from the EHCP. CareCalc then recommends a Band. A national forum of all CareCalc users makes amendments to the tool.

Utilising historical data, AFC, with stakeholders, will determine:

- the number of bands - typically between 7 and 10. The lowest band is aimed towards Moderate Learning Difficulties or Global Developmental Delay, and the highest band is aimed towards Profound and Multiple levels of Learning Difficulties and other SEN needs
- the band values, and whether it is a range or a fixed amount, is based on modelling on existing local EHCP funding levels



## Question and Answer Session