School Transport Update

July 2023

Background of Service

- Total Spend £50.2m in 2022/23 financial year, £9.4m overspend
- 30 FTE
- School Transport is provided to around 13,500 school and college students each day, broken down as follows:

Category	Number of Pupils	Spend (22/23)
Primary - Mainstream	1,600	£2.6M
Secondary - Mainstream	8,000	£9.2M
SEN	3,000	£26.9M
Post-16 SEN	750	£3.7M
Alternative Provisions - Discretionary	200	£0.9M

School Transport Entitlement Policy 2022 Changes

Changes:

1. increase the use of safe, co-ordinated pick-up and drop-off points for SEND children.

2. Arrange journeys to more commonly serve multiple schools and colleges and age groups, including journeys that serve both mainstream and special schools and colleges
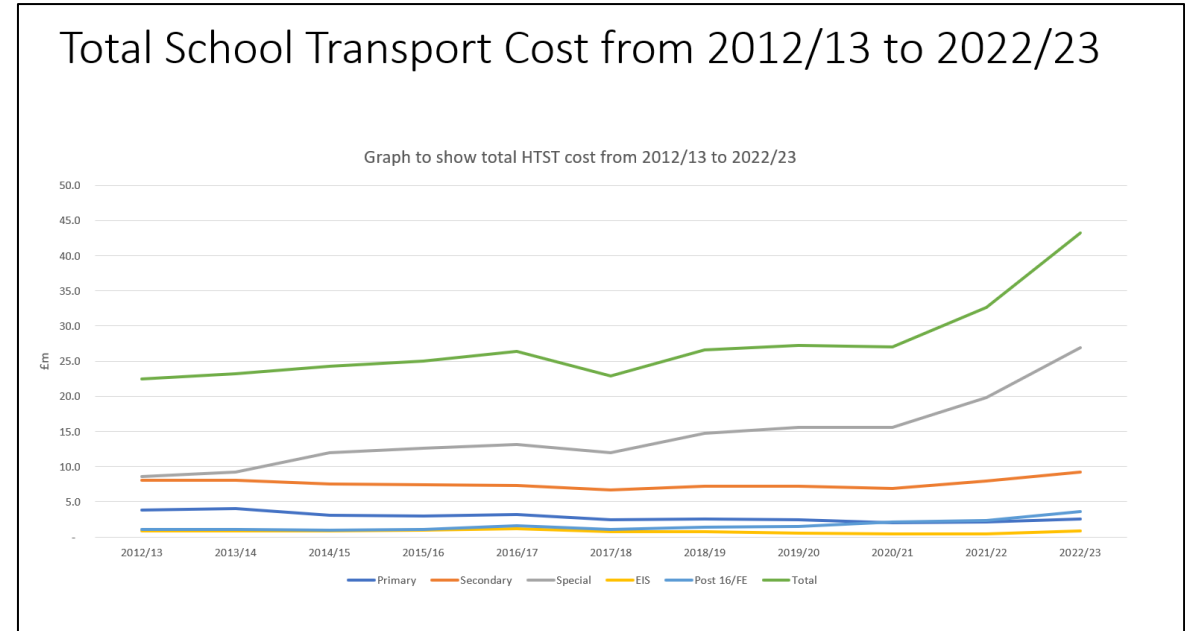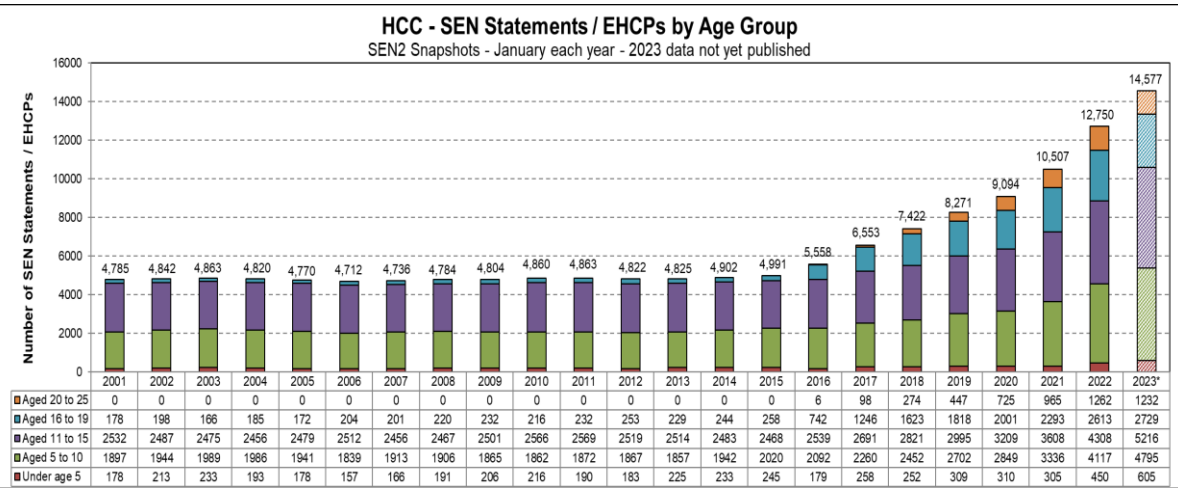
Update:

- No new transport arrangements implemented based on 2022 Policy change

- By September 2022, most transport arrangements were in place

- Service will consider these arrangements on a case by case basis when commissioning transport

Needs assessment

- The Child's wellbeing remains paramount
- Transport arrangements are assessed on the basis of individual need, with each child's needs fully considered.
  - The changes only apply to a small number of pupils where it is deemed appropriate.
  - Any child that is assessed to need door to school pick-up and drop-off will still receive that level of service.
  - Provision will be reviewed regularly, and revised where necessary, to make sure that every child's transport meets their needs effectively, whatever their individual circumstances
- National Road Safety Guidelines are used when deciding whether a route to the pick-up point is safe
- Passenger Assistants are still available on the vehicles where necessary

Current issues for the School Transport Service

HCC - SEN Statements / EHCPs by Age Group
SEN2 Snapshots - January each year - 2023 data not yet published

Total School Transport Cost from 2012/13 to 2022/23

Graph to show total HTST cost from 2012/13 to 2022/23

School Transport Average Cost per Child from 2012/13 to 2022/23

Graph to show total HTST Average Unit Cost per child from 2012/13 to 2022/23

Legend: Primary — Secondary — Special — EIS — Post 16/FE
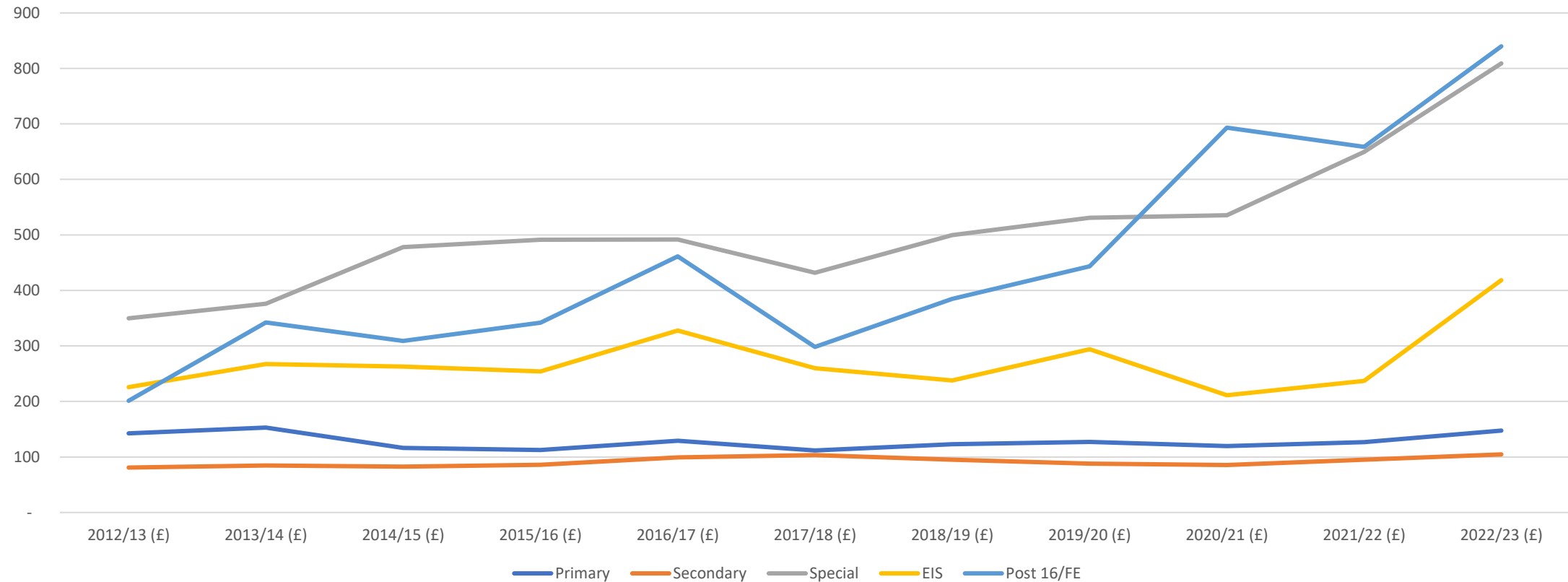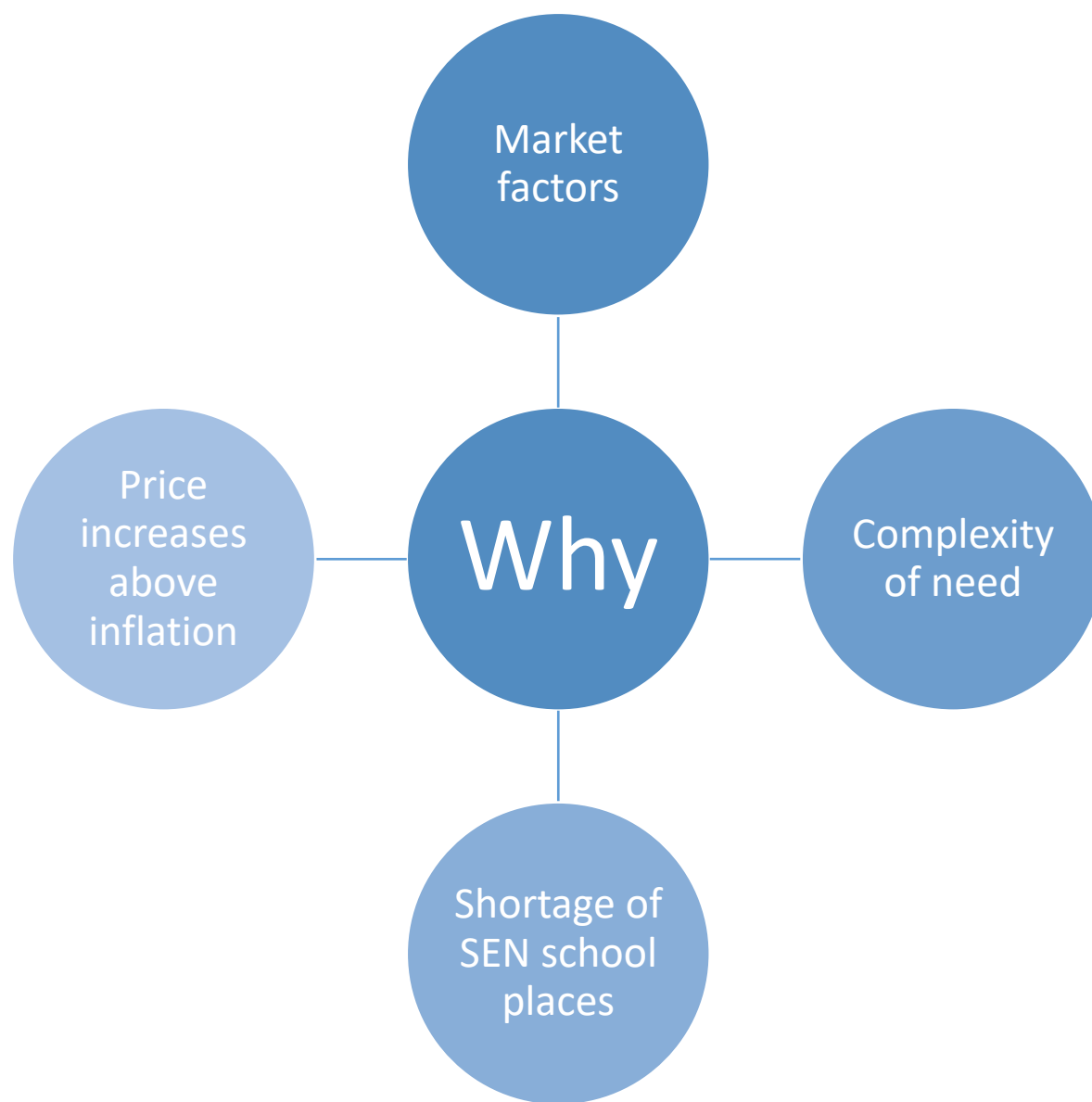
Future Forecasts

	Primary M'stream	Secondary M'stream	SEN	Post 16	Other	Total
2012/13 Student Numbers	2,459	9,114	2,220	500	331	14,624
2012/13 Unit Cost – Monthly	142	81	350	201	226	1,000
2012/13 Unit Cost - Annual	1,565	888	3,849	2,212	2,482	10,996
2012/13 Cost	**£3.8m**	**£8.1m**	**£8.5m**	**£1.1m**	**£0.8m**	**£22.3m**
2022/23 Student Numbers	1,605	8,023	3,023	390	193	13,234
2022/23 Unit Cost – Monthly	147	104	809	840	419	2,319
2022/23 Unit Cost - Annual	1,621	1,148	8,899	9,235	4,604	25,507
2022/23 Cost	**£2.6m**	**£9.2m**	**£26.9m**	**£3.6m**	**£0.9m**	**£43.2m**
2025/26 Student Numbers	1,588	7,830	3,600	535	173	13,726
2025/26 Unit Cost – Monthly	175	106	1,191	1,624	639	3,735
2025/26 Unit Cost - Annual	1,927	1,167	13,098	17,865	7,029	41,086
2025/26 Estimated Cost	**£3.1m**	**£9.1m**	**£47.1m**	**£9.6m**	**£1.2m**	**£70.1m**

Service Improvements

Three high priority improvement areas:

1. Faster Mainstream and Post 16 eligibility assessment decision making

2. Tendering and commissioning strategy

3. Passenger Assistant recruitment

Other improvements include:

- Review of frequency of communications and channels to Parents/ Carers

- Triage and call centre implementation

- Updates to School Transport website

- 'Phone First' approach

- Optimisation of internal Business Processes with families at the centre

Current issues for the School Transport Service Peak Period

- Influx of applications and required transport arrangements between June and September

Type	No. of Applications	% received during June – September from total applications (2022/23 period)
Mainstream	2193	60%
SEN	712	38%
Post 16	380	61%

- Similar number projected for same period for 2023/24 academic year

- Average 750 calls and 1500 emails per day during peak periods

- High staffing levels at peak periods to accommodate demand

Conclusions

- SEN numbers continue to increase

- Costs forecast to rise

- Need for legislative change
  - New statutory guidance
  - CCN and ADCS work

- Managing costs where we can

- Committed team, with clear service improvement plan which is progressing well

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