

## Schools Budget Setting 2024-25

To: Schools Forum

Meeting Date: 13 December 2023

From: Jonathan Lewis – Service Director: Education  
Martin Wade – Strategic Finance Manager

Recommendations: **Education Functions and De-Delegations – Maintained Primary only**

- a) Maintained Primary School representatives on Schools Forum are asked to approve:
  - i. the continued retention of £10 per pupil from maintained schools for services specifically provided to maintained schools.
  - ii. the continuation of the de-delegation in respect of Contingency.
  - iii. the continuation of the de-delegation in respect of Free School Meals Eligibility.
  - iv. the continuation of the de-delegation in respect of Maternity and Paternity Cover.
  - v. the continuation of the de-delegation in respect of Trade Union Facilities Time.

**Growth Funding and New Schools**

- b) Schools Forum are asked to comment on the proposed approach for Growth and Falling rolls funding.
- c) Schools Forum are asked to approve the proposed Growth Funding policy (Appendix 4) to apply to 2024/25 only.
- d) Schools Forum are asked to note the proposed variations to pupil numbers.

Officer contact:

Name: Martin Wade

Post: Strategic Finance Manager

Email: [martin.wade@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.wade@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Tel: 01223 699733

# 1. Background

- 1.1 The presentation (**Appendix 1**) accompanying this report provides information to support the 2024-25 Schools budget setting process and will cover the following areas:
- 2024-25 DSG Funding Arrangements
  - Retained Funding and De-Delegations (Maintained Primary only)
  - Pupil Numbers – **Appendix 2** provides a comparison of pupil numbers between the October 2022 and October 2023 census points.
  - Growth and Falling Rolls Funding - **Appendix 3** is the draft Growth Fund policy to be applied in 2024-25, and **Appendix 4** provides analysis of the proposed funding route for growth.
  - Next Steps
- 1.2 During the presentation by Officers, Members of Schools Forum will have opportunity to ask questions. Schools Forum will then be asked to comment / vote on the recommendations as required. As in previous years some items will necessitate final updates and/or decisions at the January meeting once further detail has been published.
- 1.3 The table on the following pages shows the main decision making powers and responsibilities for items relevant at this meeting (other powers such as decisions in respect of deficits, contracts and changes to the Scheme of Financial Management do not apply to the items covered above.)

## Schools Forum Roles and Responsibilities

Function	Local education authority	Schools forum	DfE role
<b>Formula change (including redistributions)</b>	Proposes and decides	<b>Must be consulted</b>	Checks for compliance with regulations
<b>Movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks</b>	Proposes	<b>Decides</b>	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
<b>Minimum funding guarantee (MFG)</b>	Proposes any exclusions from MFG for application to DfE	<b>Gives a view</b>	Approval to application for exclusions
<b>De-delegation for mainstream maintained schools</b>	Proposes	<b>Maintained primary and secondary school member representatives</b>	Will adjudicate where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
<b>General Duties for maintained schools - Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools</b>	Proposes	<b>Would be decided by the relevant maintained school members (primary, secondary, special and PRU).</b>	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
<b>Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth - pre-16 pupils, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy</li> </ul>	Proposes	<b>Decides</b>	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Falling rolls - funding for good or outstanding schools with where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years</li> </ul>			
<b>Central spend on:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>early years block provision funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement</li> <li>back-pay for equal pay claims</li> <li>remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies</li> <li>places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils</li> <li>admissions</li> <li>servicing of schools forum</li> <li>Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools</li> </ul>	Proposes	<b>Decides</b>	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
<b>Central spend on:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>capital expenditure funded from revenue – projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013 so no new projects can be charged</li> <li>contribution to combined budgets – this is where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources</li> </ul>	Proposes up to the value committed in the previous financial year and where expenditure has already been committed.	<b>Decides for each line</b>	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>existing termination of employment costs (costs for specific individuals must have been approved prior to April 2013 so no new redundancy costs can be charged)</li> <li>prudential borrowing costs – the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Central spend on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>high needs block provision</li> <li>central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State</li> </ul>	Decides	<b>None, but good practice to inform forum</b>	None