

Schools Budget Setting 2024-25

To: Schools Forum

Meeting Date: 12th January 2024

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

Recommendations: **Schools Funding Formula**

- a) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the final schools funding formula proposals following the December announcements.

High Needs Block

- b) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the high needs block following the December announcements.

Central Schools Services Block

- c) Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the final central schools services block proposals following the December announcements.

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1. Background

1.1 The presentation (**Appendix A**) accompanying this report provides information to support the 2024-25 Schools budget setting process and will cover the following areas:

- National Funding Announcements
- Final Schools Budget Proposals
- High Needs Block
- Central Schools Services Block
- Next Steps

1.2 During the presentation by officers, members of Schools Forum will have an opportunity to ask questions. Schools Forum will then be asked to comment / vote on the recommendations as required.

1.3 **Please note:**

Appendix B provides draft (illustrative for academies) school level figures based on the latest datasets provided by the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) in December, and reflects the approach agreed by Schools Forum at the November meeting.

Appendix C shows the draft funding factor values applied, compared to 2023/24 values.

Appendix D shows the distribution across all funding factors applied.

All figures remain draft until further data validation has been undertaken and the formula has been approved at Children and Young People (CYP) Committee, and subsequently by the ESFA.

1.4 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
Formula change (including redistributions)	Proposes and decides	Must be consulted	Checks for compliance with regulations
Movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Minimum funding guarantee (MFG)	Proposes any exclusions from MFG for application to DfE	Gives a view	Approval to application for exclusions
De-delegation for mainstream maintained schools	Proposes	Maintained primary and secondary school member representatives	Will adjudicate where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
General Duties for maintained schools - Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools	Proposes	Would be decided by the relevant maintained school members (primary, secondary, special and PRU).	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth - pre-16 pupils, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy • Falling rolls - funding for good or outstanding schools with where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years 	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal

Central spend on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> early years block provision funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement back-pay for equal pay claims remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils admissions servicing of schools forum Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools 	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Central spend on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> capital expenditure funded from revenue – projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013 so no new projects can be charged 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 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) prudential borrowing costs – the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013 	Proposes up to the value committed in the previous financial year and where expenditure has already been committed.	Decides for each line	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree local authority proposal
Central spend on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> high needs block provision central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State 	Decides	None, but good practice to inform forum	None

2. Source Documents

2.1 Appendices B, C and D will be circulated “to follow”.