

Schools Funding Consultation – November 2019 – Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do the budget scenario amounts for my school not change regardless of the proposed block transfer and MFG amounts?

Due to the introduction of the minimum per-pupil levels (MPPL) (£3,750 for primary and £5,000 for secondary) those schools which have previously received less than this amount are now being funded up to this level. Where this is the case the funding will not change between the different scenarios as the overall affordability will be met by capping the gains of schools already receiving more than the MPPL.

2. Why do the budget scenario amounts for my school reduce?

As above, this is due to the introduction of the minimum per-pupil levels (MPPL) (£3,750 for primary and £5,000 for secondary). Where schools already receive more than these amounts as funding is transferred to the High Needs Block the gains will be capped to ensure overall affordability.

3. How is the £ per pupil in the Minimum Per Pupil Level (MPPL) calculated?

The per pupil funding level is calculated by taking the total pupil led funding factors and school led factors, including the lump sum and dividing by the total number of pupils. The only factors which are excluded from the calculation are premises specific such as rates, PFI, split sites and any exceptional premises factors.

Total Schools ISB (including Lump sum)	£2,036,000
Less Premises Factors (Rates, PFI, Split Sites, Exceptional Premises)	-£34,000
Total	£2,002,000
Pupil Number	530
Per Pupil Funding Level	£3,777

4. Has the lump sum been removed from the funding?

No – it remains in the formula and has been increased by 4% from the 2019/20 amount. However, as noted above the lump sum is included in the minimum per pupil level calculation which may impact on small schools where the lump sum is spread across less children.

5. Why are there differences between the published National Funding Formula (NFF) amount and the Local Base Position for 2020/21?

There are a number of minor differences between the figures due to differing baselines being applied. However, in some cases there are some material variations which are due to the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) calculations. Effectively the published NFF figures have calculated levels of MFG protection we would not expect to see going forward. This is because the baseline date the DfE are comparing to is the October 2017 census, whereas the local modelling is based solely on the October 2018 census.

6. How is the new mobility factor calculated?

The mobility factor allocates funding to schools with a high proportion of pupils who join outside of a standard entry point. The new DfE methodology tracks individual pupils using their unique pupil ID through censuses from the past 3 years. If the first census when the pupil was in the school was a spring or summer census, they are a mobile pupil. This excludes reception pupils who start in January. This methodology also excludes pupils who joined in the summer term after the summer census, or pupils who joined in October before the autumn census.

To be eligible for mobility funding, the proportion of mobile pupils a school has must be above the threshold of 6%.

Based on the illustrative data published by the DfE the current profile of distribution is:

Illustrative Funding	Number of Primary Schools	Number of Secondary Schools
Above £30k	2	0
Between 20K and £29.9K	3	2
Between 10k and £19.9K	8	1
Between £1K and £9.9K	51	1
Between £33 and £999	12	1
Do not Qualify	134	29

7. Why has the High Needs budget not been recognised at a national level?

Additional funding is due to be received, based on recent announcements, although it is clear the current national formula for High Needs does not reflect the increasing need and costs within Cambridgeshire. There is a commitment to review SEND further – the scope of this can be found [here](#)

8. Was consideration given to staggering the proposed High Needs Block transfer?

Yes, but the current level of spend already exceeds the basic High Needs Block allocation for 2020/21. Without a transfer between blocks there would be a significant increase in the overall cumulative deficit which would have cash flow implications for the Local Authority.

9. Why is there such an unfairness in the current local formula?

We have to apply the funding formula as per national legislation. What makes it unfair is that there isn't sufficient funding in the system which results in varying impacts for different cohorts of schools.

10. What will happen if there is a change of government?

All the main parties' manifestos commit to high levels of funding for education. Treasury have set department budgets and therefore there is little prospect of funding change in 20/21, although this might increase in 21/22.

11. Will schools still receive a separate Teachers Pension Grant (TPEG) in addition to the illustrative ISB figures which have been published for 2020/21?

For 2020/21 we expect the grant to continue to be separately funded outside of the ISB. However, we do expect it to be baselined into the DSG at some stage in the next 3 years.

Extract from the DfE websites states the following:

"We will provide £1.5 billion per year to continue funding these additional pension costs from 2020 to 2021 through to 2022 to 2023. Schools and local authorities will be paid using the rates below for the period April to August 2020, and receive payments from the supplementary fund to cover this period. We will publish detailed allocations for April 2020 onward in due course."

The link with additional information on the grant can be found at the following:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-pension-employer-contribution-grant-tpecg/pension-grant-methodology>

12. Why do some schools hold such high balances and can these be used to support the pressures on High Needs?

Schools hold balances for a number of reasons and it is prudent to do so given financial uncertainties and increasing costs. However it is recognised that there is an inequity in the levels being held by some schools. Although the Local Authority could enforce a mechanism to clawback excessive balances from maintained schools there is no similar mechanism for academies.

School level balances can be found in the following:

- Maintained balances can be found [here](#) (as at the 31st March 2019)
- Academy balances can be found [here](#) (as at the 31st August 2018)

13. Will the Central Schools Services Block funding continue to disappear?

Yes, we expect to see a continuing reduction in the Historic Commitment element of the CSSB. This has always been the intention set out by the DfE, although the rate of reduction is not clear. This reduction will have implications for the services and functions currently funded from this area.

14. *What is the charge for broadband likely to be in future years and how much will the upgrade to 200mb for primary schools cost?*

As noted above if the Historic Commitment element of the CSSB continues to reduce the additional costs associated to the current broadband contract would need to be passed on to schools. The actual cost would be dependent on the reduction in funding. The additional cost for primary schools to upgrade to 200mb will be based on individual circumstances.

15. *How are schools experiencing growth funded?*

New schools are funded based on agreed pupil number on an annual basis whilst they fill to capacity. Where existing schools are growing to meet basic need funding is allocated from the centrally retained growth fund subject to the criteria agreed by Schools Forum. A panel of officers and headteachers will meet to approve allocations for 2020/21.