



Schools Forum

Thursday 11 January 2024

Via MS Teams

Schools Forum online meeting

- In order to facilitate the smooth operation of the meeting:
- Please mute your microphones when not speaking
- Officers will briefly present their reports, using a PowerPoint presentation to get across the key aspects
- Use the 'Raise your hand' facility if you would like to raise a question or comment 
- Alternatively use 'Chat' to advise the Chair that you would like to speak 
- Turn off your video if bandwidth becomes an issue
- Please note that this meeting is being recorded and will be posted on YouTube

Paper A
Minutes and Matters Arising
30 November 2023
(Bill Dowell)

School Funding Arrangements 2024-25

(Jo Jones)

School Funding Arrangements 2024-25

Affordability of the NFF

- DSG Schools block for 2024-25 headlines
 - Reduction of 407 Primary Pupils, Increase of 37 secondary pupils
 - Overall reduction of 370 pupils – this is the first time since NFF that we have seen a reduction in pupil numbers for Shropshire
 - 23-24 – Total pupils 36,700 (21,169 Primary, 15,531 Secondary)
 - 24-25 – Total pupils 36,330 (20,762 Primary, 15,568 Secondary)
 - Equates to a loss of funding of £1.893m (PUF/SUF)
 - Overall Shropshire schools have been funded an additional £9.3m compared to 23-24
- Growth Fund allocation of £695,575
- Commitments for growth funding for academies for Summer Term total £264k
- Bowbrook Primary funding for 9 extra places in Y1 and 30 places in Reception
- Expected growth commitments for 24-25 total £350k

School Funding Arrangements 2024-25

Affordability of the NFF

- Initial APT draft is showing that funding schools in line with the NFF is unaffordable.
- If all schools are funded in line with NFF then we only have £36k remaining for Growth funding and we have commitments of at least £350k for Growth for 24-25 (funded outside of APT).
- Growth funding for Bowbrook Primary is shown within the APT (approx £103k) so is already accounted for in the £36k balance.
- ESFA have confirmed that it is likely to be changes in pupil demography that are impacting the affordability of the NFF. The PUFs and SUFs for 2024-25 are based on the pupil demography of **October 2022** and then uplifted for October 23 pupil numbers, but funding is required to be distributed across the October 23 demographics.
- Comparing numbers from 23-24 to 24-25 we can see the following increases that are likely to have impacted funding due to the year lag:
 - 8% increase in Secondary FSM numbers (219 pupils)
 - 9% increase in EAL Primary (60 pupils) and 18% increase in EAL Secondary (29 pupils)
 - 4% increase in Primary Low Prior Attainment (222 pupils) and 1.5% increase in Secondary Low Prior attainment (53 pupils)

School Funding Arrangements 2024-25

Affordability of the NFF

- In order to balance our DSG Schools Block and submit a compliant APT we will need to adjust the schools funding. We can do this by either 'capping and scaling' or reducing factor values.
- While schools will still see increases in their budget share compared to 2023/24 (apart from falling rolls), it is not as anticipated because there will need to be slight changes to the formula.
- Where the local authority chooses to apply capping and scaling, if there is a change in per pupil funding of more than the cap they set, then gains over this cap are scaled back according to the scaling factor the LA chooses to apply.
- Where a school receives a minimum per pupil funding level (MPPFL) allocation, they will be exempt from capping and scaling in the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) calculation. Similarly, where they do not receive a minimum funding level allocation, capping and scaling will not take the budget lower than the MPPFL. New and growing schools are also exempt from capping and scaling.
- We have modelled the capping and scaling on keeping the MFG at 0.5% to ensure all schools receive this minimum increase and then increases above this have been capped at 12.5% to achieve balancing the Schools Block.
- Capping and scaling will reduce certain schools gains across all factors, for example those schools that have gains with the split site changes for 24-25 or schools that have seen increases in other factors such as FSM.
- Please refer to Appendix 1 (Capping and Scaling Modelling)

School Funding Arrangements 2024-25

Affordability of the NFF

- Reducing factor values
 - We have also modelled on reducing the Basic Entitlement factor (also known as AWPU) as this is a factor that all pupils attract in all schools. The modelling shows a reduction 0.3% to achieve to balancing the Schools Block.
 - As before all schools subject to MPPL and MFG funding will not have any reductions as these two aspects of funding will top them up to the required amount for minimum funding levels. New and growing schools are not exempt from this factor value reduction.
 - Reducing the AWPU value will affect all eligible schools equally as it is reducing the same factor for everyone.
 - Please refer to Appendix 2 (Reducing AWPU Modelling)

Recommendation – to ensure a fairer distribution of reduction the LA recommend reducing the Basic Entitlement (AWPU) factor value by 0.3%

VOTE – Maintained and Academy school representatives are asked to vote on the recommendation to ensure the growth commitments are covered and the adjusted NFF is affordable.

School Funding Arrangements 2024-25

Transfer to the High Needs Block

- In addition to reducing the NFF to afford growth funding we would also like Schools Forum to discuss and consider a potential transfer to the High Needs Block.
- As discussed in the previous Schools Forum meeting the High Needs block is expected to be in deficit at the end of 2023-24 and the deficit is increasing year on year.
- A transfer from the Schools Block into High Needs Block would go part way to alleviate these pressures. Modelling has been done on the same basis as before to achieve varying amounts of potential transfer values.
- Please refer to Appendix 3

VOTE – Maintained and Academy School representatives are asked to vote on a further reduction to the NFF to enable a transfer to the High Needs Block. If the vote is Yes, an agreement on the amount is to be made.



Paper B
Early Years Funding 24-25
(Neville Ward)

Early Years Funding 2024-25

- Confirmation of indicative budgets for 24/25
- Budgets cover the existing EY entitlements and the new entitlements which come into place this year
- Different reporting requirements for new entitlements which will impact on indicative budgets
- Need to ensure increasing central costs whilst maximising hourly rate paid to providers

Early Years Funding 2024-25

Universal 3- and 4-year-old entitlement	£11,724,988
Extended 3- and 4-year-old entitlement	£6,203,593
2-year-old entitlements	£7,810,978
Expanded 9-month-old entitlement	£3,456,511
Total	£29,196,070

Non- Formulae and Retained Funding

- EY SEND £1,100,000
- Deprivation £300,000
- Sustainability £300,000
- Central costs £700,000

Proposed Funding Rates



Entitlement	23/24 Rates	Increase	24/25 Rates
3&4 YO – both universal and extended	£4.75	+20p	£4.95
2YO – both disadvantaged and expanded	£6.90	No Change	£6.90
9 Month old from Sept 24	N/A	N/A	£9.05

Communications

(Bill Dowell)