

Schools Forum 14 March 2018

Ratification of the decision within the email to Members 17 January 2018

Dear Members,

I'm emailing to ensure you are aware of a revision to the indicative formula funding positions for primary and secondary schools and academies for 2018/19 – a revision on the modelling that was presented to the Schools Forum on 10 January - and to explain why this revision is necessary.

All local authorities received an email from the Education Skills Funding Agency on Thursday 11 January informing that, in their manipulation of the data from the October 2017 Census, an error has been made, the result of which is that FSM %s (the 'flat' FSM October 2017 position only) for many schools and academies have been overstated. The ESFA didn't go into detail about the nature of the error, but this is a error made at national level by the ESFA (not one made by Bradford LA or Bradford schools). In retrospect, the error is actually quite difficult to spot and changes to individual school %s can be (and were in our assessment of the data) plausibly explained by other factors.

The ESFA has sent a revised dataset, which we are now required to use to calculate 2018/19 formula funding allocations for schools and academies. Please see the attached, which shows the difference in FSM %, the clean cash difference that this change produces (highlighted in blue) and then what the material impact of this is on each school's & academy's total formula funding after the Minimum Funding Guarantee and ceilings are applied (highlighted in green). You will see that for many schools & academies the MFG / ceiling means that this error doesn't impact (the revised position is not different from the modelling presented to the Schools Forum on 10 January). The material impact in total is not substantial at £52k.

Having shared this analysis with the Chair and Vice Chair, we take the view that this required revision to the data doesn't materially affect the recommendations that the Schools Forum made for 2018/19 on 10 January i.e. had the FSM data been correct in the modelling presented to the 10 January meeting, the Schools Forum would have made the same recommendations. The result of the revision is that the cost of Schools Block formula arrangements is £52k lower than I set out in papers last week and this will be held within the Schools Block.

I hope this explanation is clear. If you have any queries, or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to come back to me on 01274 432678 or alternatively,

andrew.redding@bradford.gov.uk.

Regards

Andrew