

SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA ITEM

For Action



For Information

**Brief Description of Item**

Members are asked to consider and agree newly proposed allocations to primary schools and academies from the established DSG Schools Block Growth Fund in 2020/21.

Date (s) of any Previous Discussion at the Forum

The criteria for funding expanding schools and bulge classes in 2020/21 were included as part of the consultation on Primary and Secondary funding in 2020/21, and were agreed by members prior to submission of our final Schools Block pro-forma to the ESFA in January 2020.

Background / Context

The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations allow for a Growth Fund to be held and managed centrally within the Schools Block of the DSG. The Regulations require that this fund is:

- ringfenced i.e. cannot be spent on any other purpose. Any unspent growth funding remaining at the year-end should be reported to the Schools Forum. Funding may be carried forward to the following funding period, and can be used again specifically for growth if the authority wishes.
- available to be accessed by both maintained schools and academies across the District (with both maintained school and recoupment academy budgets contributing to the cost of this fund).

The Regulations also require that local authorities consult their Schools Forum before incurring any expenditure. How the Growth Fund operates is still currently for local determination but is currently under review within the National Funding Formula transition.

The criteria and mechanisms for allocating funding from the Growth Fund in Bradford were agreed by Forum members following the consultation held in October 2019, and were part of our final Schools Block APT (pro-forma) submitted to the ESFA in January 2020. Funding has already been allocated and agreed for existing primary expansions and bulge classes in 2020/21; this funding was included in 2020/21 Section 251 Budget statements for maintained schools and in Authority payments to academies.

The agreed criteria and mechanisms for allocating growth funding to primary schools / academies in 2020/21 are the same as in 2019/20 and are, in summary, as follows:

- Where a school / academy is expanding or admitting a bulge class for the first time in September 2020, the school / academy is allocated 80% of the value of the 2020/21 base amount per pupil for the additional planned intake number, for the remaining proportion of the year i.e. $80\% \times \text{£Base APP} \times \text{additional planned intake number} \times 7/12$. In the following financial year, funding is then allocated as follows:
 - A permanently expanding school / academy would receive funding calculated on the difference between the October Census pupil numbers and a calculation of the composite $5/12 + 7/12$ numbers, based on an estimate of the following year September intake. The school / academy will then be allocated 80% of the value of the additional base amount per pupil, for the additional number of calculated pupils.
 - No additional funding is necessary or allocated for a school / academy that has a bulge class of 30 pupils from the previous year; this additional class is automatically funded within the normal budget as the full class will be included in the October Census.
 - Additional funding is allocated, however, for a school / academy that has a half bulge class in each year for the lifetime that half class is at the school / academy. An additional sum is allocated based on 80% of the value of the base amount per pupil for the difference between 30 and the actual number of children in the half class. E.g. For an existing half class of 15 pupils the funding would be calculated as $(30-15) \times \text{£Base APP} \times 80\%$.

Details of the Item for Consideration

This paper asks members to consider an allocation from the Primary Growth fund to one primary school; the funding will support an increase in provision as follows:

- **Low Ash Primary School** admitted a half bulge class at September 2019. We are now confirming the continuation of funding related to this class until the class leaves year 6, resulting in an allocation of **£13,716** in 2020/21.

Please note that there are potential additional allocations to the primary phase relating to September 2020 intakes. These will be presented to the Schools Forum at the next meeting on 16 October.

Please also note that allocations for expansions in the secondary phase at September 2020 will be presented to the Schools Forum for agreement in December (following the confirmation of October Census numbers). Indicative values will be provided to schools and academies prior to this for their planning purposes.

Implications for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) (if any)

The Forum has set aside the following values of Growth Fund for new expansions during 2020/21:

- Primary £200,000
- Secondary £800,000

The remaining balance of the Primary Growth Fund in 2020/21, after the allocation set out above, will be £186,284. No allocations have yet been formally agreed by the Schools Forum from the Secondary Growth Fund (will be presented in December).

How does this item support the achievement of the District's Education Priorities

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that sufficient high-quality provision is available to meet the needs of all Bradford District children.

Allocations of funding from the Growth Fund are necessary to support schools and academies throughout their expansion in order that the District meets the demands of the local population.

Recommendations

Primary Forum members are asked to agree to allocate a total of £13,716 from the Primary Growth Fund in 2020/21.

List of Supporting Appendices / Papers

None.

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