

Primary and Secondary Schools Funding Proposed Funding Arrangements for 2019/20

Denefield School – Response to Consultation

1. Do you agree that West Berkshire should apply the national funding formula rates for every factor, applying a minimum funding guarantee of 0% and funding cap on gains of 2% (as shown in Annex C)? If not, please let us know with your reasons why.
2. Or do you agree that West Berkshire should apply the national funding formula rates for every factor, applying a minimum funding guarantee of -0.5% and funding cap on gains of 3% (as shown in Annex D)?

Option 2 – this will help ensure that gains are delivered more quickly to the most underfunded schools.

3. Do you agree that if there is additional funding available the minimum funding guarantee should be set between 0% and 0.5% with the increase in the cap on gains at 3% according to affordability. If not please let us know the reasons why?

Agreed – see above

4. Do you agree that any shortfall or surplus in funding is addressed by scaling all formula factors downwards or upwards? If not, please let us know with your reasons why.

Adjustment to the MFG within the allowable range should be the main vehicle for dealing with affordability, and only then scaling the formula factors in the way you have suggested. Formula factor rates need to be as closely aligned to the NFF rates in readiness for when the NFF becomes a hard formula.

5. Do you agree that a top slice should be applied to all schools to support the High Needs Block? If not please let us know the reasons why.

Agreed – we recognise the need to support high needs students through a SB top slice for 19/20 in favour of the HNB. We understand the need to reduce the HNB deficit and that permanent exclusions put additional pressure on the HNB.

Nevertheless, WBC should not rely solely on SB funding to address the deficit, but do everything they can to make reasonable savings themselves. WBC should look at ways of reducing iCollege costs and ensure that preventative measures are in place for our most vulnerable students. It would have been helpful to have

more detail on how the £490k top-slice will be used. You are asking schools to give up a significant amount of funding without fully explaining the rationale.

For Denefield, the top-slice would mean a reduction of between £20k and £23k. This is a significant amount, but it is also just over the cost of a full time student placed for one year at iCollege and should be seen in this context.

In agreeing to the top-slice, we would not want to see it become a permanent funding reduction in future years without further consultation.

6. If your answer to question 5 is yes – do you agree with the amount as set ie £490k, which is the maximum allowable percentage without application to the Secretary of State? Or do you think the amount should be higher or lower – please let us know your reasons why.

Every attempt should be made to minimise the cost to schools before applying the maximum top-slice allowable.

7. If your answer to question 5 is yes – do you think the funding allocated per school should be in proportion to the school's funding as a proportion to total funding or the school's pupil numbers as a proportion to total pupil numbers? Please let us know the reasons why.

Unsure without seeing final figures.