

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

Briefing & Consultation Document for Schools October 2018

RESPONSE FROM FRANCIS BAILY PRIMARY SCHOOL

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)?

FBPS: We believe the first option should be applied, namely MFG of 0% and gains capped at 2%. This provides the most “stability” for all schools overall.

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?

FBPS: Yes

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.

FBPS: Yes

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.

FBPS: No. We believe that insufficient detail is being given to schools to make an important decision about whether to deviate from the NFF. Historically substantial sums of money have transferred from Schools Block to HNB and this has failed to address its ability to live within its means. In fact, it may well

have discouraged the HNB from making the very difficult decisions that Schools Block has had to make in order to remain financially sustainable.

Whilst it is recognised that some of the fund proposed to be transferred will be spent on “invest to save” projects, no detail has been provided to the consultation on this so a decision cannot be considered in a fully informed manner.

In addition, there are concerns around the historical variation between forecasts made for the HNB and out-turns. Even mid-year forecasts have been unreliable and there does not appear to be sufficient accountability for this degree of variation.

Before further requests are made for funding from the MSB these issues need to be addressed.

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.

FBPS: N/A – we do not agree with the proposal

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.

FBPS: If it comes to pass that the funding is top-sliced we believe this should be done on a proportion of funding rather than on a per pupil basis.

8. If you have any comments/suggestions on this proposal or the criteria set to access the other additional funds please provide details.

FBPS: Nothing to add

9. If you do not agree with any of the above services being de-delegated, please let us know with your reasons why.

FBPS: Contingency for Schools in Financial Difficulty (primary schools only) should be de-delegated at ZERO this year (as agreed at Schools Forum).

NB: As part of the consultation we believe that greater clarity should have been provided to schools as to how these de-delegation figures had been arrived at. As they are mandatory, we feel that they should meet a higher threshold of transparency as to why they are set at those levels than optional buy-backs.

Feedback provided by:

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