
Schools Funding Formula 2020/21

Report being considered by: Schools Forum
On: 20th January 2020
Report Author: Melanie Ellis
Item for: Decision **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set out the results from the consultation with all schools on the proposed primary and secondary school funding formula for 2020/21 and to make a final decision.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Agree the following for setting the school funding formula for 2020/21:
- (1) To mirror the DfE's National Funding Formula to calculate the funding allocations
 - (2) To introduce the mobility factor into the local formula
 - (3) To address any surplus or shortfall in funding by a combination of reduced AWPU rates and a cap on gains
 - (4) To agree the criteria for additional funds as per the consultation
 - (5) To agree the de-delegations and to top up the Primary Schools in Financial Difficulty fund to £250k
 - (6) Apply a top slice of 0.25% to the schools' funding, in order to support High Needs.
- 2.2 The above proposals are going to Executive on 16 January 2020. The Executive decision will be presented at the Schools Forum of 21 January 2020.

Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Council or the Executive for final determination?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
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3. Introduction

- 3.1 The Government announced in August that funding for schools and high needs will rise by £2.6 billion for 2020/21. The West Berkshire schools' block allocation for 2020/21 is £104.5m excluding the growth fund, which is an increase of £5.1m from 2019/20.
- 3.2 2020/21 is the third year of the National Funding Formula (NFF). The government has confirmed its intention to move to a single 'hard' NFF to determine every school's budget, and will work closely with local authorities and other stakeholders in making this transition in the future.

- 3.3 In 2020/21, as in previous years, each LA will continue to have discretion over their schools funding formulae, in consultation with local schools. The LA is responsible for making the final decisions on the formula. Political ratification by the Council's Executive must be obtained before the 21 January 2020 deadline.
- 3.4 Provisional 2020/21 NFF allocations were published at a local authority level by the Department for Education (DfE) in October 2019, including notional school level allocations. Funding levels and allocations were announced later than in previous years, giving LA's less time for modelling and consultation.

4. Consultation responses

- 4.1 A consultation was held in December 2019, covering the six areas below. Appendix A contains the responses to the consultation. 17 responses were received.

- (1) Do you agree that, subject to final affordability, West Berkshire should mirror the DfE's 2020/21 NFF and that this formula should be used to calculate funding allocations?

17 responses, 16 agree, 1 disagree

- (2) Do you agree that West Berkshire should introduce the mobility factor into the local formula in order to mirror the NFF?

17 responses, 17 agree

- (3) Do you agree that any shortfall in funding is addressed by using Option 3, using a combination of reduced AWPU values and applying a cap on gains?

17 responses, 14 agree, 3 disagree

- (4) If you have any comments/suggestions on the additional funds proposal or the criteria set to access the other additional funds please provide details.

4 responses, 4 agree

- (5) If you do not agree with any of the proposed services being de-delegated, please let us know with your reasons why

8 responses, 7 agree

- (6) Which of the following options would you support regarding a transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2020/21?

a) 0% b) 0.125% c) 0.25% d) 0.5%

17 responses, a) 8, b) 0, c) 4, d) 3 plus 2 responders supporting a transfer but not saying which percentage.

Overall supporting a transfer 9, against a transfer 8.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Based on the consultation responses, the Authority's recommendations are set out in section 2. These proposals were supported by the Heads Funding Group at their meeting of 8 January 2020.
- 5.2 The final formula will be allocated according to the principles above and the Council's Executive will make the final decision in January 2020, with the formula to be submitted to ESFA by 21 January 2020.

6. Appendices

Appendix A): consultation responses and comments

Appendix B): illustrative funding per school based on the recommendations