
Growth Fund 2020/21 Payments

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 25th January 2021

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Item for: Decision

By: All School Members/PVI Representative

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To review the growth fund applications and decide whether to award payments to schools from the growth fund in 2020/21.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To vote on the applications made to the growth fund for 2020/21

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

- 3.1 Growth funding is based on a formula and is within the Local Authorities' Schools Block DSG allocation. As it is within the schools block, a movement of funding between the schools formula and the growth fund is not treated as a transfer between blocks. Therefore, if the funding is not required for growth, it can be added into the school formula.
- 3.2 The purpose of the growth fund is to support maintained schools and Academies which are *required* to provide extra places in order to meet basic need within the authority, and to meet the cost of new and reorganised schools including pre-opening and diseconomy costs. It can also fund schools where very limited pupil number growth requires an additional class *as set out by infant class size regulations*. It cannot be used for general growth in pupil numbers.
- 3.3 The growth fund is also to support new schools with pre-opening costs and diseconomies of scale. We have a commitment to pay for the opening of the new school Highwood Copse.
- 3.4 Following the receipt of the final October 2020 Census data, all schools were invited to make a funding request if they felt that their circumstances met the growth fund

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criteria. To support their applications, schools were asked to submit information regarding increases in class and teacher numbers between the two academic years. Only growth in relation to basic need requirements in the area (and thus increases in PAN or bulge years approved by the local authority for this purpose) qualifies for this funding.

4. Applications Made 2020/21

- 4.1 Only one school applied for growth funding: Whitelands Park Primary School, which is part of the Kennet School Academies Trust.
- 4.2 The basis of the Whitelands Park application is 'Extra class in September to meet basic need'. There is an increase of 17 pupils overall. However, the school has not agreed with the authority to provide an extra class in order to meet basic need in the area and, therefore, this criteria is not met.
- 4.3 Whitelands Park has a PAN of 60 and this has not changed. The school had been running with 2 classes per year group with the exception of one year group that was particularly small (varying as it progressed in the school from 30 to 32 for the last 3 years). This year group was managed as one class but has now moved to secondary school and therefore the total number of pupils at the school has increased.
- 4.4 The expectation is that where schools are operating below their PAN and see an increase in pupil numbers within their existing capacity, essentially growing back towards their planned admission number, that this would be managed within their lagged funding.
- 4.5 The school has employed an additional teacher from September and are running, therefore, with 2 classes per year group. Based on the pupil numbers, a decision could have been made to operate with 3 mixed year classes (in years 4 and 5) for one year until the lagged funding was in place.
- 4.6 Although the Whitelands Park application does not meet the 2020/21 growth fund criteria, the lagged funding is significant in value and as an academy will take a year to 'catch up'. Based upon the pupil-led school's funding data 2020/21 this would amount to a funding shortfall £59,630 (£3,507 x 17 pupils) for the academic year. Therefore, a decision needs to be made concerning the schools access to the growth fund.

5. Budget and Payments 2020/21

- 5.1 The growth fund awarded for 2020/21 was £756,100.
- 5.2 The criteria for growth fund 2020/21 states that 'Funding will be total Basic Needs Entitlement per additional pupil in the new class up to a maximum of £60,000 per class (approx. 20 pupils in primary, 14 pupils in secondary) pro rata for the remainder of the financial year. £60,000 will pay for a full time teacher at mid scale, a term time

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only Teaching Assistant, and approximately £9,000 for other costs. (Academies are paid a full year).’

- 5.3 If the decision was made to pay growth funding for Whitelands Park at 17 pupils, the allocation would be £50,252 (17 pupils @ £2,956).
- 5.4 We also have a commitment to pay for the start-up costs of Highwood Copse, which will be opening in September 2021. The Growth Fund criteria states that funding will be actual cost of staff appointed and in post prior to the opening of the new school up to a maximum of £75,000, plus a fixed one-off lump sum of £25,000 for all other purchases necessary before the school opens.
- 5.5 It has been agreed by Schools’ Forum that any unspent balance on the growth fund will be carried forward and added to next year’s growth fund, to ensure that there is enough funding being built up for future growth and in order to provide funding for the new primary school, Highwood Copse.

Appendix A

Growth Fund Calculation 2020/21

Whitelands Park Primary School									
Please tick the box that forms the basis of your application									
a) Extra class in September to meet basic need							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
b) Increase in Admission number in September by 5 or more to meet basic need							<input type="checkbox"/>		
c) Infant Class size - Additional class required in autumn term as total number of R, yr 1 and yr 2 pupils has now exceeded a multiple of 30							<input type="checkbox"/>		
Year Group:	Pupil Numbers			No. of Classes			No. of Teachers FTE		
	Oct-20	Oct-19	Change	Oct-20	Oct-19	Change	Oct-20	Oct-19	Change
Reception	60	48	12	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 1	45	59	-14	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 2	59	57	2	2	2	0	2	2	0
SUB TOTAL Infant Cls	164	164	0	6	6	0	6	6	0
Year 3	53	50	3	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 4	47	43	4	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 5	42	52	-10	2	2	0	2	2	0
Year 6	52	32	20	2	1	1	2	1	1
TOTAL All Classes	358	341	17	14	13	1	14	13	1