
Growth Fund 2024/25 Payments

Report being considered by: Schools' Forum on 20th January 2025

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Item for: Information **By:** All School Representatives

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform Heads Funding Group members of payments recommended to be made to schools from the Growth Fund budget in 2024/25.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To note the payment of £94k to Trinity School.

3. Introduction/Background

3.1 Growth funding is allocated by the Department for Education (DfE) by formula and forms part of the Schools Block DSG allocation. The funding can either be used to form a growth fund, or it can be added into the school formula. The Schools Forum must be consulted on the total size of the growth fund and criteria for use.

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.

3.4 Following the receipt of the final October 2024 Census data, all schools were invited to make a funding request if they felt that their circumstances met the growth fund 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 2024/25

4.1 The only school to apply for growth funding was Trinity school.

4.2 For the academic year 2024/25 Trinity have been required to accommodate a bulge year, with an increase of 41 students in year 7. This is to meet basic need in the area. The increase in pupil numbers at Trinity has impacted upon the curriculum

structure. In order to run extra core groups for this year group Trinity have employed two additional teachers, English and Maths.

5. Payments 2024/25

- 5.1 The Service Director for Education is satisfied that the relevant criteria have been met and therefore payment will be reported to the Schools Forum.
- 5.2 Trinity school advised that the required change to the curriculum structure has been costed as £93,997. Funding of up to £110,450 is available for secondary schools for each additional class. Academies' financial year runs from September to August, therefore, academies receive a full 12 months of growth funding. The payment of £94,000 will be paid to Trinity in two instalments, 7/12ths to cover the period Sept – March and the remaining 5/12ths to be paid in April. This additional 5/12ths element will be reimbursed by ESFA to the LA's Dedicated School's Grant 2026/27.
- 5.3 For 2024/25 and 2025/26 it has been agreed that the projected balance of the growth fund was sufficient and both allocations were to be added into the school formula. It has been agreed by Schools' Forum that any unspent balance on the growth fund will be carried forward.
- 5.4 The table below shows the forecast balance on the growth fund including the payment of £94k to Trinity included in the Contingency figures below.

	Growth	Balance
Balance 31.03.24		-817,216
<i>Trinity 2023/24</i>	<i>43,875</i>	<i>-773,341</i>
<i>Highwood Underwriting</i>	<i>33,345</i>	<i>-739,996</i>
<i>Trinity 2024/25</i>	<i>54,833</i>	<i>-685,166</i>
Est Balance 31.03.25		-685,166
<i>Contingency</i>	<i>147,050</i>	<i>-538,116</i>
Est Balance 31.03.26		-538,116