

Schools Forum

3rd October 2024

Election of Chair & Vice Chair

Membership - Report

Membership Review

- Review of Schools Forum membership carried out
 - Refer to report
 - Pupil numbers: May-24 census used
- A structural change is required due to schools converting to academy
 - Approximately 1,000 pupils switch from Maintained schools to Academy Schools
 - Reduction of 1 Maintained Primary Representative
 - Increase of 1 Mainstream Academy representative
- Report stated 3 vacancies
 - Mainstream Academies
 - Special Headteachers
 - PRU

Membership

Respresented sector	Current Membership	Updated Membership	Structural Changes	Vacancies at Sept-24
Primary Schools	7	6	-1	0
Secondary Schools	0	0	0	0
Mainstream Academies	11	12	1	1
Special Schools	2	2	0	1
Special Academies	1	1	0	0
Maintained Nursery School	1	1	0	0
Pupil Refferal Unit (PRU)	1	1	0	1
Non School Group	5	5	0	0
Total	28	28	0	3

Schools Forum Membership: Approval / Ratification

- **The Schools Forum should approve the updated membership split.**

Voting: All Members

National Update

National Update

- We would normally receive the National Funding Formula (NFF) announcement for 2025/26 in mid July.
 - This covers the schools block (which funds school budget shares), the high needs block and the Central Schools Services Block.
 - We do not usually receive an Early Years update until December
 - Due to the change in government, it was announced that indicative school budgets for 2025/26 would not be announced “in line with the usual timescales”.
 - Now confirmed to be soon after the national budget announcement (30th October)
- Therefore, we have no information to pass on about next year's budgets
 - As soon as we hear anything we will get information out to schools as soon as possible.

Teachers Pay Award

- It was announced on the 29th July that teachers pay award would be 5.5% from September 2024.
 - The announcement also stated that this would be fully funded at a national level
- £1.2bn of additional funding in financial year 2024/25
 - Based on what the DfE have calculated to “fully fund, at a national level, the teachers pay award and the support staff pay offer in financial year 2024-25, over and above the available headroom in existing school budgets overall”
- Budgets for 2025/26 are still to be agreed but “when considering 2025/26 budgets for schools, the DfE will be taking into account the impact of the full year’s costs of the teacher pay award”.

Core Schools Budget Grant

- This funding is to be distributed via the Core Schools Budget Grant (CSBG) which totals £1.2bn
 - £945m to mainstream schools
 - £140m for high needs
 - £97m for schools delivering post-16 education
 - £34m for schools delivering early years provision
 - £11m for centrally employed teachers
- LA maintained mainstream schools will get the grant in November 2024
- Mainstream academy schools will receive the grant in December 2024.

Core Schools Budget Grant

- Mainstream school level allocations will not be based on staffing costs but other factors are used as a proxy:
 - £76 per primary pupil (including reception)
 - £108 per KS3 pupil
 - £122 per KS4 pupil
 - £2,900 lump sum
 - £70 per primary FSM6 pupil
 - £100 per secondary FSM6 pupil
- Mainstream School allocations have been published by the DfE
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/core-schools-budget-grant-csbg-2024-to-2025#allocations>

Core Schools Budget Grant

- The Schools Finance Officers have done some analysis on a selection of LA maintained mainstream schools.
 - This analysis showed that a combination of staffing cost increases already budgeted for and the CSBG should on average cover both the teachers & provisional officers pay awards (£1,290 flat rate per FTE)
- In summary although this is welcome news and should cause schools budgetary positions to improve in 2024/25, some schools were starting from a position of planning to use reserves.

Core Schools Budget Grant

- The LA will receive 2 allocations for special schools and AP schools
 - The 1st will be received in November 2024 and is based on September 2024 place numbers published by the DfE in July 2024.
 - The 2nd will be received in March 2025 using updated place number data
- LA's have flexibility in how they pass on these allocations to settings however, we plan to distribute funding on the basis of the September 2024 commissioned places.
 - Suitable proxy for staffing costs and mirrors how we have distributed previous similar grants.
 - We will be consulting with special and AP schools on this approach, so would appreciate feedback from special & AP school reps today.

Core Schools Budget Grant

- Early years funding will be distributed via the Early Years Budget Grant (EYBG) which reflects the methodology used in the Early Years Teachers' Pay Grant (EYTPAG) in 2023/24
 - Coventry's notional EYBG allocation is £270k.
 - Coventry's MNS EYBG allocation is £16k
- LA's have flexibility to determine the most appropriate way of allocating funding. Further detail will be provided in due course.
- Funding for post-16 provision will be allocated separately
 - No further detail on this yet.

Supplementary Grants

- Recap on extra grants outside of NFF
 - September 2023 Teachers Pay Award (TPAG)
 - April 24 Employer Pension Contribution (TPECG)
 - CSBG
- Our working assumption is that the delay to the publication to the 25/26 NFF will mean these become mainstreamed.

2023/24 Early Years DSG

- In 2023/24 the Early Years DSG grant was based on 2 sets of census data.
 - 5/12ths of the allocation is based on January 2023 take up numbers
 - 7/12ths of the allocation is based on January 2024 take up numbers
- As the January 2024 census is not available until after the end of the financial year any adjustments required are not reflected in the 2023/24 DSG allocation
 - Cash adjustment to the 2024/25 DSG allocation
- Due to a reduction in take up in January 2024, the DSG allocation has been reduced by £237k

Whats next?

- Receive the NFF allocations for 2025/26
- Once received the budget setting process can be for
 - Schools Block – calculating school budgets must be done by the January SF meeting
 - High Needs – normally done by the March SF meeting
 - Early Years – normally done by the March SF meeting however, it was moved forwards to February last year
- Central expenditure to be approved at next meeting

Current central exp position

	2023/24	2024/25	Provisional 2025/26	Inc/Dec
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Centrally Retained Services				
1.4.1 Contribution to combined budgets	324	158	25	-133
1.4.2 School admissions	602	634	634	0
1.4.3 Servicing of schools forum	3	3	3	0
1.4.4 Termination of employment costs	323	323	323	0
1.4.5 Falling Rolls Fund	0	0	0	0
1.4.6 Capital expenditure from revenue (CERA)	0	0	0	0
1.4.7 Prudential borrowing costs	0	0	0	0
1.4.8 Fees to independent schools without SEN	0	0	0	0
1.4.9 Equal pay - back pay	182	182	182	0
1.4.11 SEN Transport	310	310	310	0
1.4.12 Exceptions agreed by Secretary of State	0	0	0	0
1.4.14 Other Items	531	445	445	0
1.5.1 Education Welfare Service	513	561	561	0
1.5.2 Asset management	152	155	155	0
1.5.3 Statutory / Regulatory duties	319	349	349	0
Total	3,259	3,121	2,988	- 133
Historic Commitments	1,139	973	840	-133
NFF (Central Expenditure)	2,120	2,148	2,148	0
We are still awaiting the confirmed copyright license charge for 2024/25 - when received this will result in realignment of budget across 1.4.14 and 1.5.3				
For 2025/26 we have not received the indicative NFF - therefore the above table assumes status quo apart from the 20% historic commitment reduction expected against 1.4.1				
In recent years we have been on the funding floor (a 2.5% reduction in our per pupil rate)				

Central Expenditure

- What level of review is needed?
 - Schools Forum needs to approve CSSB expenditure in December
- Undertook a significant review in November 2021
 - All centrally funded service areas completed reports detailing what the service does, how it is funded and what the future of the service looks like
 - These reports were considered by the Schools Forum sub group & service managers were on hand to answer any queries the group had
 - Very little change to services offered since that review
- Are SF happy to approve based on detailed 22/23 review with any changes presented at the next meeting?

2023/24 DSG Outturn & Reserves

Overview Outturn & Reserves

- Centrally held DSG had an underspend of £4.3m
 - Due to High Needs underspend of £3.3m, a £0.9m underspend on Early Years, a £0.2m underspend on de-delegated services offset by a £0.1m overspend on the growth fund.
- This left a £14.2M DSG reserve closing balance
 - Central - £13.8m; NNDR - £0.4m
- After 24/25 reserve contributions this leaves £14M
 - Central - £13.6m; NNDR - £0.4m
- Maintained Schools reserve - £23.5m
 - £23m in 22/23

DSG Outturn Block Analysis

Block	Central £000's	Other £000's	Comments
Schools Block	98	120	Growth Fund and NNDR implications of academisations
Early Years Block	-865		Activity levels not as high as budgeted (£0.6m), central underspend due to staffing vacancies (£0.1m) & increase in 22/23 DSG allocation (£0.1m)
De-delegated	-199		Underspend on Teacher Maternity costs and the New Arrivals Fund
High Needs	-3,363		£1m overspend on provision, £0.4m underspend on central areas due to staffing vacancies & £3.9m holding pot
Central	-2		
Total	-4,331	120	

High Needs Underspend

- Underspend on the HN block for 23/24 was £3.3m
 - overspend on provision (£1m – see below)
 - Provision budgets increased by £6.5m in 24/25
 - central underspends (£0.4m – staffing vacancies)
 - money being put aside for future use (£3.9m)

High Needs Area	22/23 Spend £000's	23/24 Budget £000's	23/24 Spend £000's	(Under)/overspend £000's
High Needs Inclusion	600	500	350	-150
Enhanced Resource Provision	250	700	450	-250
High Needs Top Up - Mainstream	4,750	6,800	7,000	200
Independent Specialist Placements	5,700	6,800	7,050	250
Other Local Authority Placements	1,500	1,550	1,750	200
High Needs Top Up - Special Schools	3,950	4,900	5,650	750
Total Provision	16,750	21,250	22,250	1,000

DSG Reserve Position

23/24

	Central £m	Other £m
Opening Balance as @ 01/04/23	-9.7	-0.5
Budget Setting 2023/24- use of reserves	0.2	
In-year under/ overspend	-4.3	0.1
Closing Balance as @ 31/3/24	-13.8	-0.4
Budget Setting 24/25	0.0	
Early Years adj - 2 year olds	0.3	
Early Years adj - 3 & 4 year olds	-0.1	
Remaining Balance	-13.6	-0.4
General	-13.4	
Earmarked: De-delegated	-0.2	
Earmarked: NNDR		-0.4

School Balances

School Balances – Summary by Phase

Total Reported Balances by Phase Including Academies

School Type	21-22	Change (£000's)	22-23	Change (£000's)	23-24	Balance % of budget
	Balance (£000's)		Balance (£000's)		Balance (£000's)	
Primary (inc Nursery)	28,877	+205	29,082	+1,659	30,741	17.8%
Secondary	17,847	+1,769	19,616	+627	20,242	13.6%
Special & PRU's	5,473	-1,273	4,199	+1,018	5,217	15.9%
Total	52,197	+700	52,897	+3,304	56,201	15.8%

Age Profile of School Balances – No. of schools & academies by Phase

Reported balances as a % of school budget shares across 3 years

School Type	<5%			5% - 10%			>10%		
	21-22	22-23	23-24	21-22	22-23	23-24	21-22	22-23	23-24
Primary	8	7	8	9	16	22	70	64	57
Secondary	4	3	3	2	2	6	15	16	12
Special & PRU	1	2	1	2	1	1	6	6	7
Total	13	12	12	13	19	29	91	86	76

Growth Fund

Growth Fund Operation

- Growth Fund consists of several strands
 - Increasing form of entry – Key stage 1
 - Infant Class Size – Key stage 1
 - In-year admissions – pre-16
 - Secondary Growth – Year 7, Year 8 & Year 9
 - Implicit Growth – pre-16
 - Bulge Classes
 - Secondary Capacity – Year 7 & Year 8
- Schools Forum needs to approve Growth Fund methodology and resource allocated to growth at the January meeting.

Growth Fund

- Significant growth in pupil numbers in recent years (driven by families arriving in the city – not an increase in birth rate) has caused 2 major issues for the growth fund:
 - An increase to the types of funding provided by the fund (bulge classes & secondary capacity)
 - The increase in funding received hasn't matched the increase caused by the new funding types above.

Growth Fund

- As a result we plan to conduct a review of the operation of the growth fund before it is approved by Schools Forum in January
 - Review will be conducted by the Schools Forum sub-group.
 - Hopefully this will happen before the November meeting
 - Will depend on the timing of the NFF announcement
- Areas for consideration:
 - Are existing funding routes still appropriate?
 - Are the unit costs being used for each funding route appropriate?
 - Are there new areas we should consider funding?
- Lucy will be in touch about the sub-group in due course

Fair Funding Consultation

Fair Funding Consultation

- We will consult on formula approach, but as in previous years our intention would be to mirror NFF as closely as possible.
 - Will also include an option should maximum MFG be unaffordable
- Consultation will also cover:
 - De-delegation options (maintained schools)
 - Fair Funding Scheme of Delegation changes
- Consultation normally closes by mid-November – will depend on when we receive the NFF notification.
- Report outcomes to Cabinet in early January – again dependant on the NFF announcement.