

Agenda Item 32

TITLE	2023/24 Proposed Schools Block Budget submission
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Schools Forum on 11 January 2023
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

This reports forms part of regular reporting to Schools Forum, informing areas of statutory decision making and improving visibility and consultation on wider Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) financial matters.

RECOMMENDATION

Schools Forum are asked to approve the Final 2023/24 Schools Block Budget prior to submission to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This is the Final 2023/24 Schools Block Budget for discussion and agreement.

We were informed by the ESFA of our final DSG allocation for 2023/24 on 16th December.

2023/24 Final School Block Budget January 2023

.01 Purpose of the Report

This report provides a final School Block Budget for 2023/24 for consideration by the Schools Forum following the announcement of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations in December 2022. Pupil data has now been updated to reflect the October 2022 census together with the updated data sets for determining additional educational needs.

.02 Recommendations

Schools Forum are asked to approve the Final 2023/24 Schools Block budget prior to submission to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on 20th January 2023.

.03 Background

Final funding allocations for the 2023/24 financial year were received from the ESFA on 16th December 2022. The final budget reflects the October 2022 pupil numbers and updated data.

.04 Changes from Estimated Budget

Table A shows that the final allocation was £138,779,889, a difference of £341,599 from the estimated budget. The difference is due to an additional 36 pupils compared to the figures received from schools in September, which shows how pupil numbers keep changing throughout the year. This also affected the growth fund income we had estimated. The impact on individual schools will vary depending on the pupil characteristics in each school, see Appendix A.

54 schools will see an increase in budget from 2022/23 with 11 seeing a reduction. All 11 of these schools have seen reduction in pupil numbers from October 2021.

As discussed at the December meeting of Schools Forum, a disapplication request has been made by the LA to the Secretary of State in respect of a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2023/24, equating to approx. £694k. While formal outcome of that process is not known at the time of writing, the LA has been advised that it is extremely unlikely that approval will be granted, given that Schools Forum did not support the block transfer. Figures provided in Appendix A therefore assume no block transfer for the 2023/24 financial year. The DSG Management Plan retains a block transfer assumption from 2024/25 onwards however, and therefore work will continue through the relevant task & finish groups

and the Borough Education Partnership to secure system wide support for the approach in future financial years.

Table A
Compares the Draft Budget for 2023/24 with the Final Budget for 2023/24

	2023/24 FINAL with no transfer	2023/24 ESTIMATED	Variance between Estimated and Final
Number on Roll	26,415	26,379	36
Primary PUF	71,983,274	71,873,369	109,905
Secondary SUF	63,495,841	63,424,604	71,237
Premises	1,634,878	1,634,877	1
Growth	1,665,896	1,505,440	160,456
	138,779,889	138,438,290	341,599
Growth Fund Estimate	1,665,896	1,700,000	- 34,104
0.5% Transfer to HNB	-	-	-
Amount to put through APT	137,113,993	136,738,290	375,703

The Model

The model takes into account the results of the consultation with schools in November.

- Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) has been set at 0.5%. Therefore, every school will see a 0.5% increase on the pupil led factors compared to 2022/23
- The minimum NFF rates have been used against each factor.
- Notional SEN has been increased in line with the national average, with total of £14.9m allocated through the model.
- More factors are used in the notional SEN calculation, which are Option 1 from the consultation, i.e.:

Factor	Option 1
AWPU	4%
Deprivation	30%
Low Prior Attainment	100%
Lump Sum	30%

- The minimum per pupil level factor (MPPL) will continued to be used as the basis for the calculations for expansion classes
- We have added an inflationary uplift for 2023/24 for the new and growing school rates that haven't changed since 2018/19. We have based the increase on the average cumulative MPPL increase since 2020-21, which is 15%.

- We haven't yet received a response with regards to our disapplication request for our all-through school, but the model has assumed that this will be approved as Schools Forum supported that approach.

Growth Fund

The DSG finance settlement confirmed Growth Funding of £1.66m for 2023/24, a slight increase on that assumed in planning figures previously discussed.

In order to meet mainstream place planning challenges, the full allocation is proposed to be retained for Growth, which taken with the anticipated £234k remaining in reserves at the end of this financial year, gives £1.894m total resources for 2023/24.

In line with the all schools consultation, pupil led funding for new classes remains based on MPPL, and an inflationary uplift has been applied to both lump sum and pupil diseconomies funding. The inflationary factor used is 15%, which equates to the average cumulative uplift in MPPL since 2020/21.

Mainstream Schools Additional Grant

In 2023/24 schools will also be receiving additional funding, called the Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG). This is in addition to the core DSG budget allocation, and schools will have the flexibility to prioritise their spending of the MSAG to best support the needs of their pupils and staff and address cost pressures.

Wokingham has been advised of a provisional amount of £4.5m for our schools. School level allocations will be published by the ESFA in Spring 2023 and paid to schools in two tranches, 5/12ths during the summer term and 7/12ths during the autumn term.

Similar to the Supplementary Grant received in 2022/23, the MSAG will be incorporated into schools core budgets in 2024/25.

The basic rates will have the Area Cost Adjustment (ACA)

Please see table C below for the rates applicable to each age range. When the school level allocations are published, the Area Cost Adjustment (ACA) will be applied to the funding rates to take into account geographical variation in labour costs. For Wokingham the ACA is 1.0348.

Table C

	Primary	KS3	KS4
Basic per pupil rate	119	168	190
Lump sum	4510		
FSM6 per pupil rate	104	152	152

.05 **Summary**

The Final Schools Block budget for 2023/24, subject to Schools Forum approval, will be submitted to the ESFA by the 20th January deadline.

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