

Funding from Growth Fund - Infant Class Size Growth - Clarification

Purpose of report

1. To seek clarification regarding the funding for Infant Class Size Growth, from the Wiltshire Growth Fund.

The Wiltshire Growth Fund

2. Wiltshire currently operates a growth fund and Schools Forum agreed to a number of criteria for the allocation of funding for pupil growth in the 2015-16 financial year. A revision to the scheme was made for 2014-15, due to the previous Wiltshire scheme becoming non-compliant. The element of the scheme that required amendment was the factor for in year pupil growth, as funding can only be provided for growth due to basic need or to meet infant class size regulations.

3. The historical position, prior to 2014-15 stated that;

“In Year pupil number increases: Funding for in year pupil growth is allocated is the in year increase in numbers would necessitate provision of an additional class. For primary schools total funded NOR is divided by 30 to arrive at a theoretical class number for the school. Total NOR from the following census is also divided by 30 to arrive at a new class number. If the total increase in NOR is greater than 13 and an extra class would be generated then additional funding is allocated per additional class.”

4. The original scheme required a two-pronged approach;
 - An increase of at least 13 pupils
 - Dividing school pupils by 30, requires an extra class

5. The wording introduced for the 2014-15 financial year was amended due to the changes in the regulations introduced by the Education Funding Agency. The new wording stated that;

“Infant Class Size Increases: This is payable to a Primary School with infant classes which is required to set up an additional class in the Autumn term as required by the infant class size regulations, and the school cannot accommodate all of its additional Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils in classes of 30 or less, i.e. the total number of pupils in the 3 year groups exceeds a multiple of 30. If the total increase in NOR necessitates that an extra class would be required, then additional funding is allocated per additional class.”

6. The revised wording has proposed a single-pronged approach;
 - Dividing school pupils by 30, requires an extra class

The Financial Impact

7. The numbers of schools in receipt of the allowance in 2013-14 and 2014-15 are as follows;

	2013-14	2014-15
Schools Entitled	12	25
Schools with 13+ growth in Infants		13
Cost (£18,210 per school)	£218,520	£455,250

8. Whilst the budget for the Growth Fund has been built based upon a higher number of schools being entitled to the funding, the number of schools entitled increased significantly over this period.
9. Of the schools in 2014-15 with growth of less than 13 pupils, the split was as follows;

Increase in Number of Pupils	Number of Schools
1	2
2	2
4	1
6	2
9	1
10	1
11	1
12	2

10. Without setting a minimum threshold, there are some schools which have seen a minimal increase in pupil number but have been entitled to the funding from the Growth Fund.

Proposals

11. Schools Forum is asked to note the content of the report.
12. Schools Forum is asked to give consideration to re-establishing a two pronged approach and setting a minimum threshold for the increase in pupil numbers.

