

Dedicated Schools Grant Consultations 2021-22

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Schools Forum with the results of the recent Autumn consultations relating to;
 - De-delegation of central services - Maintained Schools only
 - Transfer of funds from Schools Block to High Needs Block – all schools
2. The survey results will help to inform Schools Forum decisions for setting the budgets for the 2021-22 financial year.

De-Delegation of Central Services Consultation Responses

3. Under the “soft formula”, funding should be fully delegated to schools, however certain central services can be ‘de-delegated’ for maintained schools only, with approval of the respective maintained Schools Forum representatives.
4. The funding regulations require that all maintained schools are consulted and given the opportunity to express their preferences for the services which can be de-delegated. The services consulted as part of the 2021-22 consultation process were:
 - Access Budget Planning Software Licence (formerly known as HCSS)
 - Trade Union Facilities Costs
 - Maternity Costs
 - Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
 - Traveller Education Service
 - Behaviour Support Service
5. The consultation took place through Right Choice with a window of three weeks for schools to consider their responses. Schools Forum members can see the questions and results of the consultation, detailed in Appendix 1.
6. A total of 36 responses were received, 33 responses from Primary Schools and 3 from Secondary Schools. This compares favourably to the consultation for the 2020-21 year where only 20 responses were received.
7. The results received were significantly in favour of retaining the de-delegated services in both the Primary and Secondary schools which will inform eligible Schools Forum members for the maintained schools when voting on the school budgets for 2021-22.

Transfer of Schools Block to Support the High Needs Block

8. Schools have been consulted during recent years regarding a potential transfer of funds between the Schools Block and the High Needs Block of the DSG. Whilst it has been a generally unwelcome question to ask schools, members of Schools Forum have acted in the greater interests of schools and supported a transfer of funds to help with the spiralling demand and costs of SEN within the county.
9. The funding regulations do allow for a transfer of funding between the Schools Block and other blocks within the DSG. In the last two financial years, Schools Forum agreed to the following transfers;
 - 2019-20 - £2.2m which equated to 0.8% of Schools Block
 - 2020-21 - £2.065m which equated to 0.7% of Schools Block, which was subsequently reduced to 0.5% by the Secretary of State.
10. Local Authorities have the flexibility to move up to 0.5%. Anything higher would require approval from the Secretary of State through a disapplication request, which it was agreed at the last Schools Forum meeting would not be applied for.
11. In order for Schools Forum to make a decision about a potential transfer, the autumn consultation questions were agreed at the October Schools Forum meeting and was subsequently issued through the Right Choice as a survey with a window of three weeks for schools to consider their responses.
12. Schools Forum members can see the questions and results of the consultation, detailed in Appendix 2.
13. This consultation was open to all schools, both maintained and academy schools and a total of 22 responses were received, considerably higher than the 9 received last year and can be broken down as follows;
 - 3 secondary schools
 - 1 special schools
 - 18 primary schools
14. Of the schools that responded, the results can be summarised as below;
 - 15 of 22 respondents supported a transfer of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.
 - All 22 respondents did not want a reduction in Top-Up values.
 - Only 4 out of 22 respondents supported a 'Hybrid' option of a block transfer and a reduction in Top-Up values.
 - Of the 15 respondents that supported a transfer, the breakdown of transfer values has been detailed, as below;

Value	Schools	% Support
£0.5m (0.17%)	1	6.67%
£1.0m (0.34%)	4	26.67%
£1.4m (0.5%)	8	53.33%
£1.5m (0.51%)	1	6.67%
£2.0m (0.68%)	1	6.67%

15. This data will inform the decision making around the 2021-22 budget. At the October 2020 Schools Forum meeting, it was highlighted that approximately £800k of funding could be made available if;
- The Mobility factor has not been introduced as part of the Wiltshire formula and by continuing not to introduce this funding factor would release £571k of funding.
 - The maximum Sparsity allowance for Primary schools is to be increased from £26k to £45k and by not moving to this higher level would release a further £220k of funding.

Proposals

16. Schools Forum is asked to note the report local consultation responses in relation to the schools delegated budget for 2021-22 financial year.
17. Schools Forum is asked to make 'in principle' decisions in accordance with the consultation responses as below;
- **De-delegation** of central services for Maintained schools
 - FSM – primary and secondary
 - Licences – primary and secondary
 - Trade Union – primary and secondary
 - Maternity – primary and secondary
 - Ethnic Minority Support – primary only
 - Traveller Education – primary only
 - Behaviour Support – primary only
 - **Block transfer** between Schools Block and the High Needs Block, subject to affordability when school funding for 2021-22 has been confirmed.
 - Transfer of 0.5% of Schools Block to the High Needs Block, the maximum allowable without Secretary of State approval which equates to approximately £1.4m.

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Appendix 1 – Results of De-delegation consultation

Appendix 2 – Results of Block transfer consultation

Appendix 1 – De-Delegation Consultation

Questions

DfE Heading	Wiltshire Budget	Delegate?	Retain Centrally?
Free school meals eligibility	Free School Meals Eligibility Service		
Licences/subscriptions	HCSS Licence		
Staff costs – supply cover	Trade Union Duties		
	Maternity Costs		
Support for minority ethnic pupils and underachieving groups	Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) – Primary		
	Traveller Education Service – Primary		
Behaviour support services	Primary Behaviour Support Service		

Results

A summary of the results is set out below.

PRIMARY	FSM	Licences	Trade Union	Maternity	EMAS	Traveller Education	Behaviour Support
Delegate	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
De-delegate	33	33	33	33	32	31	32
Total	33	33	33	33	33	33	33

SECONDARY	FSM	Licences	Trade Union	Maternity	EMAS	Traveller Education	Behaviour Support
Delegate	0	0	0	0	N/a	N/a	N/a
De-delegate	3	3	3	3	N/a	N/a	N/a
Total	3	3	3	3	N/a	N/a	N/a

Appendix 2 – Block Transfer Consultation

Qu 1 – Please enter your DfE Number and school name here:

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Qu 2a – Taking the factors above into account, do you support a transfer of funding from the School Block to the High Needs Block?

Yes	
No	

Qu 2b – If you support a transfer, please indicate the amount of transfer:

Value to Transfer	£/Pupil	Please select
£0.0m (0.0%)	£0.00 / pupil	
£0.5m (0.17%)	£7.81 / pupil	
£1.0m (0.34%)	£15.62 / pupil	
£1.4m (0.5%)	£21.90 / pupil	
£1.5m (0.51%)	£23.44 / pupil	
£2.0m (0.68%)	£31.25 / pupil	

Qu 2c - No transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2021-22. - The impact of this would be that Top-Ups and Named Pupil Allowances (NPA) funding levels would have to be reduced to help with cost pressures in the High Needs Block. Do you support a reduction in these rates?

Yes	
No	

Qu 2d) Would you prefer to see a hybrid of the above with a transfer from Schools Block to top up the High Needs Block together with reduced values for top ups and Named Pupil Allowances?

Yes	
No	

2) If you do not agree to the transfer of funds or the reduction of top-up funding levels, how else do you suggest that we fill the funding gap that we have for High Needs?

Appendix 2 – Block Transfer Consultation

Consultation Responses

High Needs Consultation Responses 2021-22						
SCHOOL	Transfer To High Needs		Reduction In Top Ups		Hybrid Option	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	No
1		✓		✓	✓	
2		✓		✓		✓
3		✓		✓		✓
4	✓			✓		✓
5	✓			✓	✓	
6	✓			✓		✓
7	✓			✓	✓	
8	✓			✓		✓
9	✓			✓		✓
10	✓			✓		✓
11	✓			✓		✓
12	✓			✓		✓
13	✓			✓		✓
14	✓			✓		✓
15	✓			✓		✓
16	✓			✓		✓
17	✓			✓		✓
18		✓		✓		✓
19		✓		✓		✓
20	✓			✓		✓
21		✓		✓	✓	
22		✓		✓		✓
	15	7		22	4	18

Value to Transfer

YES To Transfer Schools Block To HN						
SCHOOL	Value To Transfer					
	0%	0.17%	0.34%	0.50%	0.51%	0.68%
1				✓		
2				✓		
3			✓			
4				✓		
5					✓	
6		✓				
7				✓		
8				✓		
9						✓
10				✓		
11				✓		
12			✓			
13			✓			
14			✓			
15				✓		
		1	4	8	1	1
Amount		£0.5m	£1.0m	£1.4m	£1.5m	£2.0m