

Dedicated Schools Grant Consultations 2022-23

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 2022-23 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 2022-23 consultation process were:
 - Free School Meal Eligibility Checks
 - 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 25 responses were received, 22 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 but less favourably than the consultation for the 2021-22 year where a total of 36 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 representatives when voting on the school budgets for 2022-23.

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 with integrity and in the greater interests of schools and supported a transfer of funds to help with the increasing 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 three financial years, Schools Forum agreed to the following transfers.
 - 2019-20 - £2.2m which equated to 0.8% of Schools Block funding
 - 2020-21 - £2.065m which equated to 0.7% of Schools Block, which was subsequently reduced to 0.5% by the Secretary of State.
 - 2021-22 - £1.517m which equated to 0.5% of Schools Block funding
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. It was agreed at previous Schools Forum meetings that a request to transfer greater than 0.5% would not be applied for, due to previous decisions of the Secretary of State, unless the results of the consultation supported a greater transfer.
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 19 responses were received, slightly down from the 22 responses received last year but considerably higher than the 9 received the previous year and can be broken down as follows.
 - 7 secondary schools
 - 12 primary schools
14. Of the schools that responded, the results can be summarised as below;
 - All 19 respondents supported a transfer of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.
 - Only 1 respondent supported a reduction in Top-Up values.
 - Only 3 respondents supported a 'Hybrid' option of a block transfer and a reduction in Top-Up values.
 - The breakdown of transfer values has been detailed, as below.

Value	Schools	% Support
£0.5m (0.17%)	1	5.3%
£1.0m (0.34%)	3	15.8%
£1.58m (0.5%)	15	78.9%
£2.0m (0.63%)	0	0.0%

15. This data will inform the decision making around the 2022-23 budget for both De-delegation in maintained schools and a transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

Proposals

16. Schools Forum is asked to note the local consultation responses in relation to the schools delegated budget for 2022-23 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 2022-23 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 £1.58m.

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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	1	1	0	0	3	3	3
De-delegate	21	21	22	22	19	19	19
Total	22	22	22	22	22	22	22

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 Schools 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 (0.16%)	£7.79 / pupil	
£1.0m (0.32%)	£15.58 / pupil	
£1.58m (0.5%)	£24.63 / pupil	
£2.0m (0.63%)	£31.16 / pupil	

Qu 2c - No transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2022-23. The impact of this would be that Top-Ups and Named Pupil Allowance (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	

Qu 3 - 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

<u>High Needs Consultation Responses 2022-23</u>						
SCHOOL	Transfer To High Needs		Reduction In Top Ups		Hybrid Option	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	No
P1	✓			✓		✓
P2	✓			✓		✓
P3	✓			✓		✓
P4	✓			✓		✓
P5	✓			✓		✓
P6	✓					
P7	✓			✓		✓
P8	✓			✓	✓	
P9	✓			✓		✓
P10	✓			✓	✓	
P11	✓		✓		✓	
P12	✓			✓		✓
S1	✓			✓		✓
S2	✓			✓		✓
S3	✓			✓		✓
S4	✓			✓		✓
S5	✓			✓		✓
S6	✓			✓		✓
S7	✓			✓		✓

Value to Transfer

SCHOOL	Value to Transfer				
	0%	0.17%	0.34%	0.50%	0.63%
P1				✓	
P2				✓	
P3				✓	
P4				✓	
P5				✓	
P6				✓	
P7			✓		
P8				✓	
P9				✓	
P10				✓	
P11			✓		
P12			✓		
S1				✓	
S2				✓	
S3		✓			
S4				✓	
S5				✓	
S6				✓	
S7				✓	
	£0.0M	£0.5M	£1.0M	£1.58M	£2.0M