

Wiltshire County Council

Schools Forum

1st December 2011

School Financial Regulations 2012 consultation

Purpose of the paper

1. To inform Schools Forum of proposals by the DfE to change the current School Financial Regulations 2012. The current school finance regulations cover the 2011-12 financial year and therefore expire at 31 March 2012. The consultation sets out draft regulations which will be effective for the 2012-13 financial year only. As the DfE are not making major changes to the funding system in 12-13, there are few changes proposed

Summary of the changes

2. The following summarises the changes:

2.1 MFG Disapplications – To allow LAs to agree disapplications locally, subject to School Forum approval, where the secretary of state had agreed these unconditionally in 2011-12 and where they relate to factors where disapplications were consistently approved in 2011-2. These include Advanced Skills Teachers, SEN Units and site/school specific factors where the school's circumstances had changed.

To introduce an additional safeguard so that the continuation of exemptions agreed in previous years could only happen where the method of calculating the formula factor had not changed. This would protect schools more effectively against the effect of formula changes. *Comment: These proposals are helpful and should speed up MFG calculations for 2012-13.*

2.2 Pupil Premium for excluded pupils - During the debates on the Education Bill, Ministers gave a commitment that, where an excluded pupil attracts the pupil premium, this funding should move with the pupil as well as the age-weighted funding. *Comment: It is not clear if this change applies to both the free meals and the service school elements. Clarification has been sought from the DfE.*

2.3 Remissions of boarding fees - Section 458 of the Education Act 1996 provides that, in certain circumstances e.g. financial hardship or no other appropriate provision available, registered pupils boarding at maintained schools have the right to have their boarding fees remitted by the local authority for the area in which they would ordinarily reside were they not at boarding school. The current Education Bill will replicate this right for registered pupils boarding at Academies. The DfE has never previously advised on how this should be funded but are now introducing a specific category of allowable central expenditure within the central schools budget. *Comment: This is a technical change. No issue.*

Recommendation

3. Schools Forum is asked to note the above changes.

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Director, Department for Children & Education

Unpublished documents relied upon in the production of this Report: NONE
Environmental impact of the recommendations contained in this Report: NONE
KNOWN

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