

## **Schools Forum**

**9th July 2013**

### **School Growth Fund 2013/14 Update**

#### **Introduction**

1. The purpose of this paper is to update the forum on the process followed and awards of funding made in applying the School Growth Fund criteria as discussed and agreed at 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012 meeting for implementation for 2013/14.
2. It was discussed and agreed that the Growth Fund will be ring-fenced so that it is only used for the purposes of supporting growth in pupil numbers to meet basic need for the benefit of both maintained schools and Academies. This refers to places required to meet need in terms of planned admissions arrangements as previously agreed in advance by the LA.
3. It was also agreed that any funds remaining at the end of the financial year must be added to the following year's DSG and reallocated to maintained schools and Academies through the local formula.

#### **Summary of Key Points**

4. Recommendation that Schools Forum note the process followed and the award of additional funding made to the schools against the criteria described below.
5. Recommendation that Schools Forum agree to the proposed amendments to the Criteria for Accessing Growth Funding in 2014/15.

#### **Background / Discussion**

6. Growth Funding of £150k was set aside for the primary sector covering maintained schools and academies.
7. A small panel met which included the Head of Service for Education, Early Years & Complex Needs and officers from School Admissions and Finance.
8. The process to determine which school qualified for School Growth funding involved applying the criteria against all primary schools in the

first instance to gauge which ones had satisfied the first stage – ie those where there had been planned admission increases previously agreed in advance with the LA.

9. This first stage identified that there were five primary schools where increases to their Published Admission Number (PAN) had been agreed for reception intake for September 2013.
10. The second stage involved calculating the expected number of pupils for September 2013 using predicted Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) places due in school based on the places allocated and accepted as at 7<sup>th</sup> June 2013.
11. The resultant number of predicted reception places was compared with the increase in the PAN.
12. This then reduced the five schools identified at the first stage to just two at the second stage as both demonstrated that there would be an increase of more than 15 pupils - namely Reception.
13. The third stage was to calculate the growth funding based on 7/12ths of the Basic Entitlement per Pupil to cover the period September to March. A combined total of £68,840 was determined for the two schools.
14. The schools identified were communicated via email of this award against the growth in numbers calculated as described above.
15. As this is the first year of operating this arrangement, we would wish to stress to other schools **not** successful at this stage that any **unanticipated exceptional circumstances** (eg where following the admission appeals process) that eligible increases would be considered after this round of awards has taken place.

### **Future Years**

16. All funding is only guaranteed for the financial year to which it relates. Future funding will be assessed annually during the production of the budgets.
17. It is proposed to amend the criteria provided at the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012 Schools Forum (that was also amended when discussed) from:
  - 9 *Where the predicted numbers for a Primary School (excluding nursery classes) for the following September show an increase of more than 15 pupils in a Key Stage or 10% of their total roll, they may be able to access additional funding.*

To read:

- 9 *Where the predicted numbers for a Primary School for the following September show an increase of more than 15 pupils entering reception or 10% of their total roll consistent with an increase in their PAN, they may be able to access additional funding.*

Members views are also sought on whether the criteria should be further amended to apply until the PAN has been effective across all year groups. There is an argument to suggest that schools effected should be planning for this after the first year. If this were to be funded additional growth funding would need to be top sliced from mainstream budgets to pay for this.

### **Recommendations**

18. Members of Schools Forum are asked to note and comment on the above process followed and on the amendments proposed to the criteria to the School Growth Fund for 2014/15.

Darren Coulton  
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