



Schools Forum

**Monday, 22 June 2015 4.00 p.m.
The Board Room - Municipal Building,
Widnes**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R', written over a faint rectangular stamp.

Chief Executive

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

*Please contact Ann Jones - Tel: 0151 511 8276 or email:
ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Monday, 12 October 2015*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

SCHOOLS FORUM

At a meeting of the Schools Forum on Monday, 16 March 2015 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: J. Rigby (Chairman)
 M. Constantine (Vice-Chairman)
 Councillor Philbin, Observer
 L. Fox, Secondary Academy Representative
 N. Hunt, Pupil Referral Unit Representative
 S. Broxton, Primary Governor Representative
 D. Moran, Primary Academy Representative
 A. McIntyre, Children's Organisation & Provision
 A. Jones, Democratic Services
 L. Feakes, School with Nursery Unit
 A. Jones, Financial Management
 R. Collings, Primary Representative - Infant School
 K. Landrum, Primary Representative - VA School
 A. Brown, Nursery Schools Representative
 N. Unsworth, Financial Management
 E. Hall, All Through School Representative
 A. Parkinson, HBC
 G. Taylor, EFA Observer

Action

SCF38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Debbie Burke.

Mr Gary Taylor, an EFA Observer, was introduced to the Forum.

SCF39 PREVIOUS MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 21 January 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

Further to SCF29 Academy Balances – it was noted that two schools' information was included in the agenda pack; Wade Deacon High School and Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy. Two other schools had their balances outstanding; one was listed with Companies' House but the other was not listed with them. When the information was made available this would be circulated to the Forum.

Ann Jones

SCF40 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Forum was advised that Deborah Burke, Acting Head of School of St Chads would be replacing Andrew

Keeley and Elaine Hall, Registrar at The Grange, would be replacing David Stanley who was retiring.

It was reported that the PVI Sector were currently preparing to elect two members to the Forum, who would be ready to attend the June meeting. It was noted that interest had been received regarding the Primary Governor Representative vacancy and recruitment was still needed for the Secondary Academy Representative.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

SCF41 SEN FUNDING LEVELS 2014-2015

The Forum received a report which presented an analysis of the overspend on the SEN funding levels in 2014-15.

Appendices A and B attached to the report presented information relating to the expenditure and pupil numbers in 2014-15 and 2013-14, so that comparisons could be made.

Additional information was circulated to Members which discussed:

- SEN Analysis;
- Enhanced Provision;
- Special Units;
- Special Schools;
- Service Level Agreements; and
- Other Expenditure.

In summary, Officers advised that the SEN Contingency Budget at the start of 2014-15 was £3,347,276 and the forecasted overspend now stood at £60,000. Given that £132,055 had been one-off expenditure during 2014-15 and the top-up funding levels for special schools for 2016-17 was being reviewed, officers were optimistic that with the expected carry forward from 2014-15, the Contingency would not be overspent during 2015-16.

It was noted that a detailed piece of work including the Special Schools' top up funding levels would start in June this year, in collaboration with Cheshire West and Chester Council. They would be tasked with identifying the real costs of top ups for special schools and the findings would be reported to the Forum in due course.

The Forum discussed the information presented and noted the comments made with regards to younger children

entering schools with higher needs. It was hoped that the proposed Nurture Groups (see SCF50) would go some way to pump priming services to this group of children and reducing the overall level of spend in future years.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum notes the information.

SCF42 CAPITAL REPORT

Schools Forum received a summary and progress update of the Capital Programme 2015/16 for the Children and Enterprise Directorate.

It was noted that in February 2015 the Department for Education announced the schools capital grant allocations for 2015/16. The Council's Executive Board would meet on 26 March 2015 to approve the implementation of the Capital Programme. Information on the funding received was presented in the report.

The report also provided the Forum with information on the key capital programmes and projects supported by this funding, which included a programme of planned maintenance works at community schools, as shown in appendix one. Members also noted that in addition to the capital programmes, Halebank CE VC Primary School was to be rebuilt as part of the Government's Priority School Building Programme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SCF43 UPDATE ON ACADEMY BALANCES

Information relating to Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy and Wade Deacon High School was provided to the Schools Forum for information.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

SCF44 REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Forum was advised that two requests for financial assistance had been received: one from Ditton Nursery and one from The Grange School.

Due to the timing of the Schools Forum meetings the Schools' cases and amounts requested had not been received. Officers requested therefore that a Sub Group of the Forum be formed, so that the requests could be

considered in a timely manner, rather than wait for the next meeting.

It was agreed that the most suitable date for volunteers was Wednesday 25 March at 2.30 pm, in Ann McIntyre's office. The following Members volunteered to sit on the Sub Group: Marjorie Constantine, John Rigby, Amanda Brown and Richard Collings. An email would be sent to these Members to confirm the arrangements.

RESOLVED: That a meeting of the Schools Forum Sub Group be convened to hear the requests for financial assistance from Ditton Nursery and The Grange School.

SCF45 CWAC / LOTC EVOLVE AGREEMENT 2015/16

The Forum was requested to consider the continuation of the provision from Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) and Edufocus, the provision of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC), Visits and Outdoor Education advice and guidance to Halton Schools.

Further, Schools Forum was asked to make permanent their previous decision, made in the March 2014 meeting, to fund this provision from April 2015 and subsequent years, from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

The Forum agreed with the importance of LOtC and that off-site activities provided a valuable opportunity for pupils and young people to encounter experiences that were not available to them in the classroom. They also recognised that LOtC could be a catalyst for positive engagement in education, improved personal performance, and promote a lifetime interest and in some cases lead to professional fulfilment.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

- 1) supports the continued provision of the LOtC Service provided by CWaC and associated trading subsidiaries, supported by Edufocus; and
- 2) agrees that it continues to be funded via the DSG for the 2015/16 financial year and subsequent years, until such time as the Forum requests a review of these arrangements.

SCF46 HIGH NEEDS STUDENTS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK SUPPORT

The Forum received a report which informed them of the implementation of the High Needs Students (HNS) Assessment Framework and its success in managing applications from Post 16 institutions and advised of the use of support to implement the HNS Assessment Framework.

It was reported that in April 2013 Halton Local Authority introduced the High Needs Students Assessment Framework in response to each local authority becoming responsible for managing the funding for education support for high needs students aged 0-25, as outlined in the document *School Funding Reform: Next Steps towards a fairer system*, published on 26 March 2012.

The report provided information on the management of the post 16 element of the Assessment Framework and the applications and funding received in 2013/14 and 2014/15. It also explained the current position of 2014/15 applications and the tasks that were required from January 2015 in order to implement the quality assurance process.

The Forum noted the High Needs Assessment Framework would be required for 2015/16 to process all applications for High Needs Funding for students with a Learning Difficulty Assessment who had not yet transferred to an Education Health and Care Plan. The resource required therefore was £18,000 to support the process throughout the financial year.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum agrees to fund, from the High Needs budget, additional support to implement the High Needs Assessment process up to £18,000 for the financial year 2015/16.

SCF47 TOP-UP FUNDING LEVELS FOR 2015-16

The Forum received a report which advised them of the Top-Up Funding Rates for 2015/16.

It was reported that the High Needs Block was under increasing pressure, especially the top-up funding costs. In order to bring the forecast spend into line with budget, the Council had to apply a 1.5% reduction to top-up rates for Special Schools and Resource Bases. This had produced estimated savings of just under £50,000 in total. The Forum noted that the Council had not increased the Enhanced Provision rates from their 2014/15 levels.

The report discussed top-up information for the following:

- Special Schools (Appendix A refers);
- Resource Bases (Appendix B refers);
- Resource Base Service Level Agreements;
- The Pupil Referral Unit; (noted that values were outstanding); and
- Enhanced Provision Funding.

The following comments / points were made:

- With reference to paragraph 3.5, one member wished to be notified whether the pupil details they had submitted regarding enhanced funding were correct or not, as no response was received from Finance regarding this. Officers would aim to correct this for future submissions;
- Concerns were raised that there were a number of spare places in Resource Bases whilst funding continued to be provided to children with Enhanced Provision in mainstream schools. Anita Parkinson acknowledged this concern and explained the processes/diagnoses that were required prior to a placement being made;
- If a child was being assessed for a place in a Resource Base, while the process was undertaken, the child would attract funding through Enhanced Provision to enable the school to support the child; and
- A working group (referred to earlier in minute SCF41) was being set up to review the top-up levels for Special Schools, Resource Bases and Enhanced Provision, and the Forum would be updated on progress in June.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SCF48 EARLY YEARS FUNDING FOR 2015-16

The Forum was presented with the Additional Notional SEN funding criteria and allocations for 2014-15.

It was noted that under the new School Funding Regulations the Council was required to gain agreement from Schools Forum on the funding factors used for the Early Years settings. The following was proposed:

Ann McIntyre

- Maintained Sector – not to change the funding factors used – Basic per Pupil, Deprivation (using IDACI), Lump Sum and LA Rates (for Nursery Schools only).
- Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector (PVI) – not to change the funding factors used – Basic per Pupil, Deprivation (IDACI) and LA Rates.

Officers tabled the Early Years Cash Values 2015-16 however this was incomplete and would be sent round to Schools Forum Members after the meeting.

Ann Jones

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

- 1) notes the report;
- 2) agrees the funding formula for Maintained Early Years settings; and
- 3) agrees the funding formula for PVI settings.

SCF49 SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS REVIEW

The Forum was advised on the revision of the Halton Scheme for Financing Schools (SFFS).

It was noted that the *Halton Scheme for Financing Schools* and *Financial Guidance for Schools* had not been reviewed or updated for some time. Representatives from maintained schools plus Internal Audit, Schools Support and Financial Management met during the Autumn Term and went through the document discussing changes that were needed.

The two documents had now been amalgamated to ensure that all financial guidance was easily accessible in just one document. Changes had been made in line with Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education in February 2014. The major changes were discussed in the report.

It was noted that the document would be subject to consultation with Head Teachers and Governing Bodies of all maintained schools after the Spring break. Following this it would be brought back to Schools Forum in June for approval, with the aim that it comes into effect from 1 September 2015.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

- 1) notes the report; and

- 2) the revised Scheme be put out to consultation to Head Teachers and Governing Bodies as per Section 1.4 of the report.

SCF50 NURTURE GROUP PILOT FUNDING

The Forum was presented with a summary of the proposed Nurture Group (NG) pilots and the associated delivery costs from September 2015.

Members were advised that further to the previous reports on funding for Pupil Referral Units on 19 March 2013, 21 January 2014 and 14 March 2014, a comprehensive strategic review of Alternative Provision (AP) was now complete. A commitment to develop a Borough wide strategy to support Emotional Health and Wellbeing was agreed following this review and a working party engaged with schools to identify gaps in provision.

A draft document '*Halton Emotional, Wellbeing and Health Approach*' was in place and was aligned to the Mental Health Strategy 2014-2019 Action Plan. It was noted that a key priority of this approach was to implement 'A person centred graduated response' through the development of NG practice in primary and secondary settings.

The report provided information on exclusions in Halton compared with national figures and gave details of the costs of the current out of Borough provision and details of the resources needed to run a NG. For information the NG specifications were listed in Appendix 1 of the report.

Overall the Forum supported the NG concept and agreed that there were pupils that would benefit from the service. It was noted that the pilot would run for 12 months and could be extended if it was proved successful. It was also noted that there was the opportunity for the Authority to bid for a chance for additional funding from Central Government if accepted as a pilot.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

- 1) agrees to fund £155,180 to implement a Nurture Group pilot in both KS1 and KS3 settings in Runcorn and Widnes (4 settings) from September 2015 to July 2016; and
- 2) agrees that expressions of interest could be sought from primary and secondary schools in Halton, to

provide the settings for the Nurture Groups.



Meeting ended at 5.50 p.m.

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 22 June 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Clerk to Schools Forum

SUBJECT: Nominations for Chairman and Vice Chairman Roles

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To request from Forum Members nominations for the roles of Chairman and Vice Chairman, for a two year term.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) Nominations for the role of Chairman be made; and
- (2) Nominations for the role of Vice Chairman be made.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The present Chairman and Vice Chairman, John Rigby and Marjorie Constantine respectively, have completed their two year terms in their roles at the end of June. Therefore nominations are invited from all Forum Members to take on the roles, for a period of two years.

There are no restrictions on the category of member or whether or not they have held the position before. Interested Members can contact the Clerk prior to the meeting to put themselves forward.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

In the interests of good practice and in accordance with the *EFA's Schools Forums: Operational and Good Practice Guide*, the Chairmanships are recommended to be refreshed every two years and all Members should be invited to stand for the roles.

5.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

EFA – Schools Forums: Operational and Good Practice Guide: For Local Authorities and Members of the Schools Forums.

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCHOOL FORUM

APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Establishment Name	Pewithall School	Applicant's Name	David Baugh
Please specify whether you are applying for a Licenced Deficit *or Deficit Write off and the reasons for your choice	We are not applying for a licensed deficit or a deficit write of but for "Emergencies and exceptional unforeseen costs which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet."		
Please outline the current School Budget position	Our one line budget this year is £730,000 we have had to top up our budget from saving for the past four years and this year we have had to make considerable cuts to our pupil support groups and TA support due to a decreasing fund.		
Please specify the amount requested and rationale for this sum	<p>We require £25,000 which is the cost of the shortfall in our budget. The rationale being we were given two additional pupils in reception this year making the total for that class 32. The grounds for this being an administrative error in admissions as both pupils qualified as LAC but didn't declare until they appealed. In good faith the school employed additional staff to help with the constraints on Key Stage One (92pupils to 3 teachers and 2 TAs), which has used our surplus funding. One of the LAC pupils had two old sisters who have exhausted our resources and also generated higher supply costs as our SENCO has had to attend almost double the amount of planning and progress meetings with other agencies. This has had a huge effect on the school budget.</p> <p>In addition to this, we have had four members of staff off on long term sick and the insurance</p>		

	<p>company has not covered the cost due to the nature of the surgery (elective). This in actual terms is one full time teacher for 10 weeks, our premises manager for 6 weeks, our SENCO and full time teacher for two weeks and a fulltime TA currently on the sick.</p> <p>We have had to fund both the relief member of staff and the staff on sick leave. This is a situation which could not have been avoided and has led to us having to make major cuts to our budget in order to balance our budget from 15/ 16. We still are £30,000 short of balancing with a huge reduction in services and pupil support.</p> <p>In addition to this the school has to fund major restructuring work to the kitchen due to poor air flow, two ovens being condemned and redecoration to the kitchen area. Which is going to cost somewhere in the region of £12k.</p> <p>In addition to this our fire alarm is due replacement as the system is very old. This although 90% funded will cost £20k with the school having to pay £2000.</p> <p>Also on the premises side of the budget our ICT suite requires a new air conditioning unit which will cost £2750 to replace or £750 to remove.</p> <p>We ask for the amount to fund our TA in Key Stage One as in previous years we have been able to access ghost/ growth funding which now is obsolete.</p> <p>The cuts we have made to get us closer to balancing our budget will be to the detriment of our pupils as our pupils directly benefit from support groups we have had to discontinue.</p>
<p>Please specify under which of the eligibility criteria you meet</p>	<p>Emergencies and exceptional unforeseen costs which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet.</p>

<p>Please outline the circumstances which have led to the application</p>	<p>The grounds for this being an administrative error in admissions as both pupils qualified as LAC but didn't declare until they appealed. In good faith the school employed additional staff to help with the constraints on Key Stage One (92pupils to 3 teachers and 2 TAs), which has used our surplus funding. One of the LAC pupils had two old sisters who have exhausted our resources and also generated higher supply costs as our SENCO has had to attend almost double the amount of planning and progress meetings with other agencies. This has had a huge effect on the school budget.</p> <p>One of our reception child has required a special chair, due to the fact she has an artificial leg. This cost £3000.</p> <p>In addition to this, we have had four members of staff off on long term sick and the insurance company has not covered the cost due to the nature of the surgery (elective). This in actual terms is one full time teacher for 10 weeks, our premises manager for 6 weeks, our SENCO and full time teacher for two weeks and a fulltime TA currently on the sick.</p> <p>We have had to fund both the relief member of staff and the staff on sick leave. This is a situation which could not have been avoided and has led to us having to make major cuts to our budget in order to balance our budget from 15/ 16. We still are £30,000 short of balancing with a huge reduction in services and pupil support.</p> <p>In addition to this the school has to fund major restructuring work to the kitchen due to poor air flow. We are still awaiting wo ovens have been condemned and redecoration to the kitchen area is needed. Which is going to cost somewhere in the region of £12k.</p> <p>In addition to this our fire alarm is due replacement as the system is very old. This although 90% funded will cost £20k with the school having to pay</p>

	<p>£2000.</p> <p>Also on the premises side of the budget our ICT suite requires a new air conditioning unit which will cost £2750 to replace or £750 to remove.</p> <p>We ask for the amount to fund our TA in Key Stage One as in previous years we have been able to access ghost/ growth funding which now is obsolete.</p> <p>The cuts we have made to get us closer to balancing our budget will be to the detriment of our pupils as our pupils directly benefit from support groups we have had to discontinue.</p>
<p>Please outline the action taken by the school to address the deficit</p>	<p>We have made cuts to the Schools: SLAs, staffing, supply teaching, capitation and pupil support.</p>
<p>Please provide information on the future sustainability of the school</p>	<p>Our school will have to make further cuts in 2016/ 2017 but with this financial assistance they may not be as severe as planned.</p>
<p>Please specify the date a decision is required by</p>	<p>As soon as the decision is made by school forum.</p>

Signature: *D. P. B...* Date: *15.05.15*

- Please note that a licensed deficit can only be agreed for amounts up to a maximum of 10% of the school budget share. Decisions on licensed deficits are made by the

REPORT TO: School Forum
DATE: 22nd June 2015
REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer
SUBJECT: Halton Scheme For Financing Schools
WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To share with School Forum the revised Scheme For Financing Schools that has been put to consultation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) That the maintained school representatives approve the revised Halton Scheme For Financing Schools as tabled to come into effect from 1st September 2015.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 We started reviewing and revising the Halton Scheme For Financing Schools (SFFS) in October 2014. Initially a working group was set up with representatives from maintained schools to assist us as we started this task.

We have drawn on various areas of the Council to update and advise on individual sections of the Scheme where appropriate.

- 3.2 We have combined the Halton SFFS with the Financial Guidance for Schools document which was supplementary to the SFFS. The sections listed below have seen substantial changes:
 - 1.2.1 Application of the scheme – now applies to PRU.
 - 2.1.4 Control of assets – clarification
 - 2.1.6 Writing off of debts – position regarding school meal debts clarified
 - 2.4 Efficiency and value for money – updated
 - 2.6 Audit – General – updated
 - 2.9 Register of business interests – updated (but excluding new proposals as detailed in 3.6 below)
 - 2.10 Purchasing, tendering and contracting requirements – clarification on the new HMRC requirements for labour included
 - 2.15 Notice of concern – new section added
 - 2.16 School Financial Value Standards – new section added
 - 2.17 Fraud – new section added
 - 3 Instalments of the budget share – updated (whole section)
 - 4.7 Writing off deficits – clarified

- 4.10 Loan scheme – section deleted
- 6.1 General Provision – updated
- 8.3 Service Level Agreements – updated
- 9 PFI/PPP – updated (whole section)
- 11.10 ‘Whistleblowing’ – updated
- 11.12 Redundancy/Early Retirement costs – updated

Annex A – schools to which the scheme applies – updated

Annex E – Operation of local bank accounts - updated

- 3.3 The draft SFFS will be put to maintained schools for consultation on 8th June. **The closing date for comments is Friday 19th June.** The comments received will be tabled at the meeting.
- 3.4 Subject to comments received, we are asking for implementation of the Halton SFFS on 1st September 2015. We will aim to review and revise where necessary the SFFS for consultation in the summer term each year.
- 3.5 We would like to thank members of the working group for their co-operation, time and effort in getting this work underway.
- 3.6 The Education Funding Agency announced on 28th May that it is proposing two changes to the SFFS. The consultation period for these proposals closes on 24th June 2015. Below are the details of the proposals:

The first relates to the business interests of governors of maintained schools. The EFA think there should be greater visibility around the individuals involved in maintained school governance. They propose to introduce a directed revision to the SFFS which strengthens the requirement for maintained schools to maintain a register to interests, and introduces a requirement to publish it.

Rationale for Change: Governors hold an important public office and it is important that they are known to their school and wider communities. The Governors’ Handbook currently recommends that governing bodies publish the names of their governors, their category and terms of office, and any committees they sit on and the EFA are planning to formalise this good practice through an amendment to the statutory guidance on the Constitution Regulations.

Under the Local Authority’s Scheme for Financing Schools, governing bodies should already be maintaining a register of interests. For academies, the latest edition of the Academies Financial Handbook requires them to publish the register. In the interests of transparency we think that the requirement should also apply to maintained schools.

In terms of scope, we propose that the register should set out the relevant business interests of governors and details of any other

educational establishments that they govern. The register should also set out any relationships between school staff and members of the governing body such as spouses or relatives. Guidance will be provided.

The proposed new text for section 2.9 of the model Scheme is given below, with changes highlighted.

“2.9 Register of business interests.

The scheme **must** contain a provision which requires the governing body of each maintained school to have a register which lists for each member of the governing body and the head teacher:

Any business interests that they or any member of their immediate family have;

Details of any other educational establishments that they govern;

Any relationships between school staff and members of the governing body; and

to keep the register up to date with notification of changes and through annual review of entries, to make the register available for inspection by governors, staff and parents, and the authority, **and to publish the register, for example on a publicly accessible website.**

The authority may issue more detailed guidance on the maintenance of such a register.”

2. We are also considering a directed revision to clarify borrowing powers for schools and to align our advice to schools with that already available to academies. We are proposing the following amendment to section 3.6 of the Scheme, which would then read as follows:

“3.6 Borrowing by schools

The scheme should contain a provision reminding schools that governing bodies may borrow money **(which includes the use of finance leases)** only with the written permission of the Secretary of State. **The Secretary of State’s general position is that schools will only be granted permission for borrowing in exceptional circumstances.**

From time to time, however, the Secretary of State may introduce limited schemes in order to meet broader policy objectives. The scheme must contain a provision that allows schools to use any scheme that the Secretary of State has said is available to schools without specific approval, currently including the [Salix](#) scheme, which is designed to support energy saving.

Schemes may explicitly bar schools from using credit **cards and overdrafts**, which are regarded as borrowing. However, they should encourage the use of procurement cards by schools, as these cards can be a useful means of facilitating electronic purchase.

The restrictions do not apply to Trustees and Foundations, whose borrowing, as private bodies, makes no impact on Government accounts. These debts may not be serviced directly from the delegated budget, but schools are free to agree a charge for a service which the Trustees or Foundation are able to provide as a consequence of their own borrowing. Governing bodies do not act as agents of the authority when repaying loans.

This provision does not apply to loan schemes run by the authority (see section 4.10).

- 3.7 On the issue of finance leases, we have contacted the EFA for further clarification. Halton, as in many local authorities, does not allow schools to sign for finance leases. Any school wishing to take on a finance lease must send full details of the options they have considered plus the lease agreement from the supplier to the Financial Management Division. The Financial Management Division will then assess the options and where appropriate, gain authorisation for the finance lease from the Chief Finance Officer. At the time of writing no response has been received from the EFA. Should a response be received before the meeting it will be reported.

4.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Schemes for financing schools – statutory guidance for local authorities. February 2014	Kingsway House	Anne Jones
EFA Newsletter 28 th May 2015	Kingsway House	Anne Jones



**HALTON BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

**SCHEME FOR
FINANCING
SCHOOLS**

**REVISED
April 2015**

HALTON LA SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS

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Halton Scheme For Financing Schools

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE FUNDING FRAMEWORK

The funding framework which replaces Local Management of Schools is set out in the legislative provisions in sections 45-53 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Under this legislation, local authorities determine for themselves the size of their schools budget and their non-schools education budget – although at a minimum an authority must appropriate its entire Dedicated Schools Grant to their schools budget. The categories of expenditure which fall within the two budgets are prescribed under regulations made by the Secretary of State, but included within the two, taken together, is all expenditure, direct and indirect on an authority's maintained schools except for capital and certain miscellaneous items. Authorities may deduct funds from their schools budget for purposes specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State under s.45A of the Act (the centrally retained expenditure). The amounts to be deducted for these purposes are decided by the authority concerned, subject to any limits or conditions (including gaining the approval of their Schools Forum or the Secretary of State in certain instances) as prescribed by the Secretary of State. The balance of the schools budget left after deduction of the centrally retained expenditure is termed the Individual Schools Budget (ISB). Expenditure items in the non-schools education budget must be retained centrally (although earmarked allocations may be made to schools).

Authorities must distribute the ISB amongst their maintained schools using a formula which accords with regulations made by the Secretary of State, and enables the calculation of a budget share for each maintained school. This budget share is then delegated to the governing body of the school concerned, unless the school is a new school which has not yet received a delegated budget, or the right to a delegated budget has been suspended in accordance with s.51 of the Act. The financial controls within which delegation works are set out in a scheme made by the authority in accordance with s.48 of the Act and regulations made under that section. All proposals to revise the scheme must be approved by the Schools Forum, though the authority may apply to the Secretary of State for approval in the event of the forum rejecting a proposal or approving it subject to modifications that are not acceptable to the authority.

Subject to any provision made by or under the scheme, governing bodies of schools may spend such amounts of their budget shares as they think fit for any purposes of their school* and for any additional purposes prescribed by the Secretary of State in regulations made under s.50 of the Act. (*Section 50 has been amended to provide that amounts spent by a governing body on providing community facilities or services under section 27 of the Education Act 2002 are treated as if they were amounts spent for the purposes of the school (s50(3A) of the Act.)

An authority may suspend a school's right to a delegated budget if the provisions of the authority's financial scheme (or rules applied by the scheme) have been substantially or persistently breached, or if the budget share has not been managed satisfactorily. A school's right to a delegated budget share may also be suspended for other reasons (schedule 17 to the Act).

Each authority is obliged to publish each year a statement setting out details of its planned Schools Budget and other expenditure on children's services, showing the amounts to be centrally retained and funding delegated to schools. After each financial year the authority must publish a statement showing out-turn expenditure at both central level and for each

school, and the balances held in respect of each school.

The detailed publication requirements for financial statements are set out in directions issued by the Secretary of State, but each school must receive a copy of each year's budget and out-turn statements so far as they relate to that school or central expenditure.

Regulations also require a local authority to publish their scheme and any revisions to it on a website accessible to the general public, by the date that any revisions come into force, together with a statement that the revised scheme comes into force on that date.

1.2 THE ROLE OF THE SCHEME

The Scheme For Financing Schools sets out the financial relationship between the local authority and the maintained schools which it funds. The requirements within the scheme relate to financial management and associated issues, and are binding on both the local authority and on schools.

1.2.1 APPLICATION OF THE SCHEME TO LA AND MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

This Scheme applies to all community, nursery, special, voluntary, foundation (including trust), foundation special schools and pupil referral units maintained by the authority. It does not apply to schools situated in the authority's area which are maintained by another authority. Nor does it apply to academies.

1.3 PUBLICATION OF THE SCHEME

A copy of the scheme will be supplied to the executive head teacher / head teacher and the governing body of each school covered by the scheme and listed in Annex A, and any approved revisions will be notified to each such school.

The scheme will be published on the Halton Borough Council website and any revised version will be published by the date the revisions come into force, together with a statement that the revised scheme comes into force on that date.

1.4 REVISION OF THE SCHEME

Any proposed revisions to the scheme will be the subject of consultation with the governing body and the executive head teacher / head teacher of every school maintained by the authority before they are submitted to the Schools Forum for their approval.

All proposed revisions must be submitted to the Schools Forum for approval by members of the forum representing maintained schools. Where the Schools Forum does not approve them or approves them subject to modifications which are not acceptable to the authority, the authority may apply to the Secretary of State for approval.

1.5 DELEGATION OF POWERS TO THE EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHER / HEAD TEACHER

Full or partial management of the school's budget may be delegated to the executive head teacher / head teacher and other members of the school's staff, where this is considered appropriate and enhances control over the budget. In such circumstances, references in this scheme to "governing bodies" or "governors" also apply to these staff. However, the extent of such delegation, and the limits of financial authorisation, should be documented in a formal Scheme of Delegation for the school, approved and minuted by the full governing

body. This should be reviewed on an annual basis by the governing body. Revisions to the Scheme of Delegation should be recorded in the minutes of the governing body.

The first formal budget plan of each financial year must be approved by the Governing body or by a committee of the governing body.

1.6 MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOLS

The Local Authority is responsible for maintaining the schools covered by the Scheme, and this includes the defraying all the expenses of maintaining them (except in the case of a voluntary school where some of the expenses are, by statute, payable by the governing body). Part of the way an authority maintains schools is through the funding system put in place under sections 45 to 53 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

1.7 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Strategic Director for Policy and Resources has statutory responsibility to ensure the proper administration of the LA's financial affairs, including those of schools. To fulfil this responsibility governing bodies will provide the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources with all necessary access to information, documents and records. In addition, the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources, or a representative, has the right to attend governor's meetings to give advice or information on financial matters, which may affect these statutory responsibilities.

The Strategic Director for Children and Enterprise is responsible for the management of the Halton Scheme, for monitoring the effectiveness of the Scheme and for recommending to the LA withdrawal of delegation where appropriate.

Governing bodies have a statutory responsibility to ensure the proper administration of their school's financial affairs and management of their delegated budget within the terms of the Scheme. They are responsible for ensuring that these financial regulations are observed in schools and that a system of internal controls is established, which ensures all activities under their control are conducted in a proper, efficient and well-ordered manner. These internal controls should be formalised within a Manual of Internal Procedures, detailing the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and staff involved in the finances and administration of the school. Legal costs and other costs e.g. fines, which are incurred by the LA, because the governing body did not accept the advice of the LA, may be recharged to the school's budget share. The governors of maintained schools will not incur personal liability in the exercise of their power to spend the delegated budget share providing they act in good faith, since the governing body is a corporate body and such liability is excluded under the terms of s.50(7) of the SSAF Act.

2 FINANCIAL CONTROLS

2.1 GENERAL PROCEDURES

2.1.1 APPLICATION OF FINANCIAL CONTROLS TO SCHOOLS

Governing bodies have a statutory responsibility to ensure the proper administration of their school's financial affairs within the terms of the Scheme. In the management of their delegated budgets, schools must comply with the LA's requirements on financial controls and monitoring, not only those in the scheme but those requirements contained in more detailed publications referred to in the scheme but outside and compatible with it. These include the Procurement Guidance, Standing Orders, Employers Guide for Managers and

the Employee Handbook. However, if these are inconsistent with the provisions of this scheme, then the provisions of the scheme will prevail.

Governing bodies are responsible for ensuring that the Scheme is observed in schools and that a system of internal controls is established, which ensures all activities under their control are conducted in a proper, efficient and well-ordered manner.

In the management of their delegated budgets schools must comply with Halton's requirements on financial controls and monitoring. These requirements relate not only to those in the scheme but also those requirements in more detailed publications referred to in the scheme.

2.1.2 PROVISION OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND REPORTS

Financial records and accounts kept by schools and governing bodies must be in a form compatible with those of the LA, as it is the latter which form the statutory records and accounts of each school.

The LA has a responsibility to ensure governing bodies are exercising effective financial control over the school's delegated budget, and may therefore at any time request details of actual and anticipated expenditure and income to be produced and for a full explanation of any figures therein to be given. These details may be requested in a form and at times determined by the authority. The request for submission of such details will not be made more often than every three months except those connected with tax or banking reconciliation, or unless the LA has notified the school in writing that in its view the school's financial position requires more frequent submission or the school is in its first year of operation.

All accounting codes used shall conform to the approved standard code list; copies are available from the Children and Enterprise Team, Financial Management Division. Schools are also required to abide by the general accounting principles recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). More detailed guidance on these principles will be issued by the LA as appropriate.

All financial transactions which affect the school's budget must be processed through the LA's bank account, the school's bank account or imprest bank account, as approved by the Strategic Director of Policy and Resources under an appropriate local financial processing scheme.

2.1.3 PAYMENT OF SALARIES; PAYMENT OF BILLS

Governing Bodies are required to follow the LA's financial procedures for payment of salaries, expenses and creditors. These procedures will vary according to the different buy back arrangements of each school and whether a school has opted for a local bank account.

2.1.4 CONTROL OF ASSETS

Recording assets, ensuring their safe custody and their proper management, is the responsibility of the governing body who should maintain proper security for all furniture, equipment, plant, stores and other assets. Any assets worth over £1,000 must be recorded in accordance with the LA guidance. Schools may determine the form of the asset register they maintain for assets worth less than £1,000 but a register of some form should be kept.

The governing body is also responsible for the security of the school's buildings and land, and should ensure that procedures are operated to control access to the buildings and land at all times. Keys should be held by a responsible officer who should ensure that buildings are securely locked when not in use. A list of key holders should be kept.

Governing bodies should ensure that procedures are operated within the school to check the inventory at least annually and certify it as correct. This check should be undertaken by someone independent of the person who maintains the inventory. Any major discrepancies in the inventory should be investigated and reported to the Internal Audit Team. Assets should only be disposed of in accordance with the Authority's guidance.

Items should be clearly and permanently marked as being Borough Council property and should be included in the inventory as soon as they are received. A copy of the inventory should be kept away from the school site.

Any surplus furniture, equipment, vehicles and plant, may be disposed of by the governing body in order to obtain the best return for the item. The maximum values of stock and equipment which the head teacher may write-off or dispose of without reference to the governing body must be resolved by the governing body and this should be formally recorded in the Scheme of Delegation. Such disposals should be recorded within the inventory. Above these values, governing body approval is required.

No Borough Council property should be removed from the school except in the ordinary course of school business and no items can be used for other than school business without specific written permission from the governing body, when the items' removal should be fully documented including signature of the person removing the item and full documentation of its subsequent return.

All sales to a third party and write-offs must be approved by the Governing body or a nominated sub-committee. VAT must be recovered where applicable. The Authority's write off procedures should be followed in such cases. No leased item is to be disposed of in any way without the express permission of the leasing company (via the Operational Director for Finance). This includes: sale, part exchange, scrapping, writing off, donating, re-leasing, sub-letting or any other form of "give away".

Stocks

The governing body is responsible for the control of all school stocks and for ensuring that these do not exceed reasonable requirements. Where the governing body considers the level of stocks held to be significant, they should ensure that full stock records are maintained and that an independent annual stock take is performed, with any significant discrepancies being reported to the governing body.

Cash

The amount of cash held on school premises shall be minimized by at least weekly banking, shall be held securely and shall not exceed the limits of the school's insurance cover. Any loss resulting from unauthorized entry, burglary or theft must be reported immediately to the police to comply with insurance requirements. Circumstances which suggest the possibility of financial irregularity or loss should be immediately reported to the Chief Internal Auditor. Keys for safes, alarm systems etc should be held by a responsible officer and shall never be left on the premises overnight.

2.1.5 ACCOUNTING POLICIES (including year-end procedure)

Schools are required to abide by the accounting policies and year-end procedures as issued by Halton LA.

At the year-end, governing bodies will submit any information requested as part of the process to close the LA's accounts and to comply with those requirements of the SSAF Act which relate to the publication of financial information. Information supplied at year-end should be on an accruals basis. Accounting records and associated documents must be retained in accordance with the LA Records Retention Policy which is available on Halton's Intranet.

2.1.6 WRITING OFF OF DEBTS

The governing body should establish which named members of the school's staff are authorised to cancel, replace or write-off invoices, and their respective financial limits for such action. Requests to write off invoices raised through the LA's Sundry Debtor system should be referred to the Strategic Director of Policy and Resources. The write-off of bad debts should be reported to the governing body with full explanation of the reasons for the write-off. Debts relating to school meal income cannot be written off without consultation with the School Meals Service.

2.2 BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

Reports and accounts furnished to the LA must be on an accruals basis. Separate guidance as to the level of detail and frequency of submission will be issued. Schools may operate their internal systems on either a cash or an accruals basis.

2.3 SUBMISSION OF BUDGET PLANS

Each school will receive notification of its budget for the following financial year by 31st March each year.

The full governing body must prepare and formally approve a budget plan and a detailed allocation of its budget. These should reflect all anticipated expenditure and income during the forthcoming financial year, and should facilitate the achievement of the schools' educational objectives in line with the School Development Plan. Schools are permitted to take account of estimated balances in submitting the annual budget plan. The budget allocation shall be prepared in the format specified by the Strategic Director of Policy and Resources and sent to the Children and Enterprise Team in Financial Management Division by 30th June each year following approval by the board of Governors. Schools with a local bank account facility may be required to submit a budget plan before 31st May. This budget plan will be provisional and marked accordingly.

Governing Bodies must formally consider and approve any variation from their spending plan which results from significant policy changes.

Under the SSAF Act 1988, the budget delegated to schools may only be used to meet expenditure incurred for the educational benefit of pupils.

The LA will supply schools with all income and expenditure data it holds which is necessary to efficient planning by schools.

BUDGETARY CONTROL

The governing body is responsible for the management and direction of the delegated school budget, so as to achieve their objectives for the school. This involves monitoring and control of expenditure and income and the regular review of performance. The LA will provide the school with regular reports of income and expenditure to aid this process. This responsibility may be delegated to the Executive Head Teacher / Headteacher and other members of the school's staff via a written Scheme of Delegation approved by the full governing body, which details the extent of each person's financial authorisation.

The Executive Head Teacher / Head teacher should seek approval of the governing body, before any expenditure commitment is made which is likely to have a material effect upon the school's finances in the current or future years, or which constitutes a new or significantly different policy.

The Headteacher (assisted by the Financial Management Division if purchased via an SLA) should provide the governing body with regular reports, in a suitable format, of the school's financial position. The report should present as a minimum level of detail, actual and committed expenditure, comparison with the budget and an explanation of any variances.

Governing bodies may plan to carry resources forward for projects such as the replacement of equipment.

Provided they can continue to meet future commitments, governing bodies may use their delegated budget to meet 'excepted' revenue items, when they wish to secure a service over and above that provided by the LA.

Prior to entering into a commitment which affects spending in a subsequent year the governing body must be satisfied that any such expenditure can be met from its likely budget for that year.

Where a governing body wishes to enter into an agreement to lease or hire goods or services for a period of more than 12 months, approval must be sought from the Financial Management Division before any contract is signed. Only the Chief Finance Officer of the LA or his designated deputy is allowed to sign finance leases. Staff employed by a school are not authorised to sign as a finance lease is deemed to be a form of borrowing which is expressly forbidden by schools unless with the written permission of the Secretary of State.

In coding and recording any expenditure and income schools must ensure they use the appropriate LA code for Consistent Financial Reporting returns.

SUBMISSION OF FINANCIAL FORECASTS

While it is beneficial for schools to have a three-year financial forecast in place, it is recognised that this is only possible when the LA is advised of indicative budgets for that three-year period.

2.4 EFFICIENCY AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Schools must seek to achieve efficiencies and value for money, to optimize the use of their resources and to invest in teaching and learning, taking into account the Authority's purchasing, tendering and contracting requirements.

It is for heads and governors to determine at school level how to secure better value for money.

There are significant variations in efficiency between similar schools, and so it is important for schools to review their current expenditure, compare it to other schools and think about how to make improvements.

2.5 VIREMENT

Providing overall spending is contained within the total delegated budget, the governing body may approve transfers of budget between account codes to facilitate a more effective deployment of resources and thereby aid their budget management.

Budget virements should not however be undertaken merely to match budgets to actual expenditure and income.

The governing body should establish and approve a written policy in terms of budget virements. This should state which members of the school's staff have authority to undertake virements and at what financial level, and that the governing body's approval is necessary for any virements in excess of a specified amount or which relates to a significant change of policy.

The governing body must formally consider and approve any variations from spending plans which result from significant policy changes. Where such a significant change is approved by the governing body, a virement should be requested to effect the change to the detailed allocation, along with a revised budget plan to support the change.

Schools with a local bank account choosing to change the levels of pay and non-pay budgets must do so through a virement submitted to the Children and Enterprise team in the Financial Management Division in order that a cash adjustment can be made in the next advance. No budget virements can be accepted from local bank account schools after the 15th February each financial year, as it is not possible to process the cash adjustment before the final cash advance is made to schools.

2.6 AUDIT: GENERAL

The audit regime for schools will be determined by the local authority as regards internal audit and by the Council's appointed external auditor. Schools are required to co-operate with this regime.

An independent internal audit of the school's activities will be provided by the Operational Director for Finance as part of the Section 151 Officer's statutory obligations to ensure the correct use of public funds. The main purpose of the audit is to review, assure, alert and advise the governing body on the control and systems employed by them in carrying out the schools activities, and to assist the school in achieving optimum economy, efficiency and effectiveness as well as to assist schools in managing the risks that they face.

The LA's internal auditors shall have full access to school's assets, records and transactions. They are entitled to ask for any information and explanations from any staff member to help them complete their research.

The Headteacher will be provided with a report following every internal audit review of the school's activities, which the Headteacher shall present to the next meeting of the full governing body. A copy of the final audit report will be distributed to Strategic and

Operational Directors in both the Policy & Resources and Children & Enterprise Directorates as well as being presented at the Council's Business Efficiency Board (Audit Committee).

Any matters which involve, or are thought to involve irregularities affecting cash, stores, other school property or the unofficial fund, shall be notified by the Headteacher to the Chair of Governors and to the Council's internal auditors. The latter will then advise as to the best course of action to be followed.

Written reports on the investigation of irregularities will be presented to the governing body, the Headteacher and the Strategic Director – Children & Enterprise as soon as practicable by the Divisional Manager – Audit & Operational Finance.

The governing body shall ensure that the staff of the local authority's External Auditors are also granted full access to schools' assets, records and transactions. They are entitled to ask for any information and explanations from any staff member to help them complete their research.

2.7 SEPARATE EXTERNAL AUDITS

The governing body may spend funds from its budget share to obtain independent external audit certification of its accounts for its own purposes. This certification would be separate from any Council internal or external audit process and would not in any way replace the Council's processes.

2.8 AUDIT OF VOLUNTARY AND PRIVATE FUNDS

The end of year audited accounts for voluntary and private school funds, comprising an income and expenditure account, balance sheet and audit certificate (complying with any relevant Charity Commission requirements) shall be presented annually to a meeting of the full governing body. A copy of the audit certificate must be sent to Internal Audit (internal.audit@halton.gov.uk).

A voluntary or private (unofficial) school fund is defined as any fund established to support school activities but generated by funds which are independent of school's official resources. It is controlled partly or wholly by a person appointed by the governors, and therefore parents, students and supporters of such funds are entitled to expect the fund to be well-managed and controlled with the school demonstrating prudent stewardship of the funds in the same way as public funds. The common example of such a fund is the School Fund.

The unofficial fund monies shall at all times be kept completely separate from the school's delegated budget. Payments relating to the school's delegated budget should not be made via unofficial funds and vice versa. Under no circumstances shall payments in respect of salaries, wages, travelling or other employee related expenses be made out of an unofficial fund.

2.9 REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS

It is important that governors and staff not only act impartially, but are also seen to act impartially. The governing body and school staff have a responsibility to avoid any conflict between their business and personal interests and affairs and those of the school. There is a legal duty on the Head teacher and all governors to declare an interest likely to lead to questions of bias when considering any item of business at a meeting and for the individual concerned to withdraw, if necessary, whilst the matter is considered.

To help put this duty into practice, a governing body is required to establish and maintain a register of pecuniary interests indicating, for all governors and the head teacher, any business interests. There is no comprehensive definition of what constitutes a business interest, but declarations should include any links with individuals, businesses, contractors, directorships, shareholdings or other appointments where the school may purchase goods or services from or who are directly employed by the school. It should also include interests of related persons such as parent, spouse, co-habitee, child or business partners where influence could be exerted by that person over a governor or a member of staff.

Completed individual declarations should be maintained together in a register of interests. The register will enable governors to demonstrate that in spending public money they do not benefit personally from decisions that they make.

Governing bodies should ensure the register is up to date, complete and includes the Head teacher and all governors as a minimum. Dated nil returns are, therefore, required. There should be notification of changes from governors, as appropriate, and through an annual review of entries. To ensure evidence of completeness the register should be signed off annually by the Chair of Governors.

The completed register should be retained in school and made available on request to members of the governing body, the Head teacher, staff, parents and the Director Children's Services.

It is the responsibility of each individual governor to declare their interest. The register is not a substitute for declaring an interest at meetings. Any governor, Head teacher or other member of staff who has a personal or material interest in any contract affecting the school shall declare that interest to the governing body, or its relevant committee, and not vote when a decision is being made. If there is uncertainty as to whether or not to disclose an interest, the safest course is to disclose.

2.10 PURCHASING, TENDERING AND CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

Governing bodies are required to abide by the LA's financial rules including standing orders in purchasing, tendering and contracting matters. Schools should assess in advance, where relevant, the Health and Safety competence of contractors, taking account of the authority's policies and procedures.

Any sections of the LA's financial regulations and standing orders will be disapplied which would require schools:-

- (a) to do anything incompatible with any of the provisions of the scheme, or any statutory provision, or any EU Procurement Directive;
- (b) to seek LA officer countersignature for any contracts for goods or services for a value below £60,000 in any one year;
- (c) to select suppliers only from an approved list; or
- (d) would permit schools to seek fewer than three tenders or quotations in respect of any contract with a value exceeding £10,000 in any one year.

Prior to contracting with a provider of labour, schools are required to carry due diligence checks expected by HMRC. A questionnaire (Form HMRC LP1) must be completed for each supplier of labour and returned to HMRC directly. Further information can be obtained from the Purchase to Pay Team.

The governing body is responsible for all orders raised in relation to the school budget. Authority to sign such orders up to given financial limits should be restricted to a small number of persons approved by the governing body.

In order to ensure that the school obtains value for money, except where a school opts to retain services provided by the Local Authority, the governing body must formally agree and document the value above which written quotations should be obtained. For purchases of less than the agreed amount, quotations are advisable where appropriate. These should be retained for auditing purposes.

Where the lowest quotation is not accepted the reasons should be reported to governors. Where it is impractical to obtain three written quotations (e.g. due to the specialist nature of the goods or services required) this should also be reported to governors.

The governing body shall ensure that before an order is placed sufficient budgetary provision exists to meet all the costs associated with that order.

Only official, pre-numbered LA order forms and order forms produced by Agresso or FMS shall be used to place all orders for goods and services. The main exceptions are those relating to public utilities, periodic payments, rent, rates, petty cash purchases, formal contracts and contracts made under framework agreements and exceptions approved by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources. Governing bodies are responsible for the secure storage of orders and their proper use within the school.

Each order must clearly state the nature of the goods or services, the quantity supplied, the agreed charge or estimated cost, together with the delivery address and any other relevant details. Copy orders should be securely retained in numerical order.

Official LA order forms shall not be used to obtain goods and services for individuals.

Only in cases of extreme urgency can an order be issued verbally, which shall then be confirmed with a written order as soon as possible afterwards, marked "CONFIRMATION ORDER ONLY".

It is permissible to transmit orders electronically but the reverse side of the order form should also be transmitted to ensure the supplier is in receipt of the LA's terms and conditions.

We are not able to process invoices on the Council ledger in a foreign currency, GBP only. Therefore, we would always recommend making the purchase from a foreign country by HBC credit card as this provides greater security in terms of any risk of fraud or insurance issues. The credit card method is also one of the most cost effective methods to make a purchase from abroad. If your provider is unwilling to accept payment by credit card (which is unusual in today's market) then the only other facility we can offer is to make an International Payment which we have to coordinate through Nat West.

Such transactions are not cost effective as Halton incurs a bank charge with Nat West for each international payment. In addition to this cost there is also an administrative cost of staff time in preparing, authorising and processing an International Payment on Nat West's Bankline system. To cover these costs, schools will be charged an administration fee of £50 (subject to annual review) for each International Payment that we process on the school's behalf.

Prior to making any purchases from abroad it would be prudent and good practice for the school to confirm the method of payment with the supplier in advance of making the

purchase. Depending on the type of goods being purchased, the other issue to consider is that the overall cost of the transaction from abroad could actually work out to be more expensive than making the purchase from UK.

See Annex D for details on Procurement.

2.11 APPLICATION OF CONTRACTS TO SCHOOLS

Schools may opt out of an LA arranged contract with the exception of the following circumstances. Any costs incurred by a governing body as a result of breaking the terms of a contract will be charged to the school's delegated budget.

Governing bodies are empowered under paragraph 3 of schedule 1 to the Education Act 2002 to enter into contracts, in most cases they do so on behalf of the authority as maintainer of the school and the owner of the funds in the budget share. Other contracts may be made solely on behalf of the governing body, when the governing body has clear statutory obligations – for example, contracts made by aided or foundation schools for the employment of staff.

Contracts referred to in this Section means any agreement entered into for the supply of goods or services, but does not include contracts of employment. Examples of such contracts include window cleaning, equipment purchase maintenance and support, and construction work.

Before entering into a contract for the supply of goods, materials or services, the governing body are required to consider the procurement guidance contained within the Schools Financial Regulations.

2.12 CENTRAL FUNDS AND EARMARKING

The LA will make sums available to schools from central funds, in the form of allocations which are additional to and separate from the schools' budget shares. Such allocations will be subject to conditions setting out the purpose or purposes for which the funds may be used. Any virement between these funds must not be carried out to the point of assimilating the allocations into the schools' budget share. An example of this includes funding for SEN.

Funding earmarked from centrally retained funds must be spent within the same financial year, or within the period over which schools are allowed to use the funding if different. It should be spent on the purpose for which it is given, or on other budget heads for which earmarked funding is given and not vired into the budget share. Schools should be able to demonstrate that this requirement has been complied with. Any unspent earmarked funding not spent within the designated period must be returned to the LA.

The LA will not make any deductions, in respect of interest costs to the LA, from payments to schools of devolved specific or special grant.

2.13 SPENDING FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE SCHOOL

Section 50 (3) allows governing bodies to spend budget shares for the purposes of the school, this is subject to regulations made by the Secretary of State and any provisions of the scheme. By virtue of Section 50 (3a) which came into force on the 1st April 2011, amounts spent by Governing Bodies on community facilities or services under Section 27 of the Education Act 2002 will be treated as if spent for any purposes of the school.

2.14 CAPITAL SPENDING FROM BUDGET SHARES

Capital expenditure will in the main be determined and financed by the LA and this expenditure will not form part of schools' budgets. However, a governing body considering undertaking a capital scheme can fund such a scheme from its delegated budget, taking into account any carry forward built up for this purpose or its devolved formula capital allocation on work which is their responsibility.

Any capital expenditure from a community school's budget share must be notified to the LA. Schools must take the advice of the LA on any capital spending from their school budget share. Governing bodies must notify the LA of any expected capital expenditure from the school budget share. Governors need to take into account any advice from the LA on the merits of any proposed capital expenditure if it exceeds £15,000. This includes schools seeking to bid for specialist schools status. Consent will only be withheld on health and safety grounds. The reason for these provisions is to help ensure compliance with the current Schools Premises Regulations, DFE Construction Standards, and health and safety legislation. These provisions would not affect expenditure from any capital allocation made available by the Authority outside the delegated budget share.

APPROVAL TO INCUR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The governing body shall formally approve any proposal to incur capital expenditure having first been presented with a detailed report of the proposal, which clearly states all the one off and ongoing financial implications of the proposal and the method of financing such costs. The report should also relate the proposal to the objectives and action plan contained within the school's development plan. The governing body must also have regard to the provisions of this scheme, in particular the requirements concerning tendering procedures.

Any additions to or changes from the original proposal, shall be approved by the governing body before any commitment is entered into.

Approval for all capital expenditure on LA owned premises shall be considered gross of any income, capital receipts, grant income, donations, reimbursements etc. even if the net cost is nil. A governing body of a school where the LA owns the premises may approve gross capital expenditure up to a limit of £100,000. Gross capital expenditure of greater than £100,000 requires the approval of the LA's Executive Board before any commitment is entered into.

PURCHASE OR LEASE OF LAND OR BUILDINGS

The purchase or lease for longer than three years, of land and buildings which are not included in the LA's Capital Programme, must be approved by the LA's Executive Board before any commitment may be entered into.

Where a governing body wishes to enter into an agreement to lease or hire goods or services for a period of more than 12 months, approval must be sought from the Financial Management Division before any contract is signed.

MONITORING CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

All capital expenditure must be separately coded in the school's accounts, in order that it can be clearly identified by the LA when considering the Authority's overall capital expenditure allocation (contact the Financial Management Division for advice).

Each meeting of the full governing body shall receive a report of all capital expenditure, which shall include details of actual expenditure incurred compared to that originally approved, with reasons for any variance and proposals for financing any projected overspending.

VOLUNTARY AIDED AND SPECIAL AGREEMENT SCHOOLS

The SSAF Act empowers the governors of voluntary aided schools to use their school budget share to meet their element of the trustees' expenditure on capital works, which is not reimbursed through the DFE grant aid. A school's budget may also supplement the grant funding available to Voluntary Aided Schools, to permit building projects to go ahead. Use of budget resources to fund any expenditure which is not the statutory responsibility of the LA will incur Value Added Tax at the standard rate and cannot be reclaimed. This includes all the proposals outlined here.

2.15 NOTICE OF CONCERN

The authority may issue a notice of concern to the governing body of any school it maintains where, in the opinion of the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Children's Services, the school has failed to comply with any provisions of the scheme, or where actions need to be taken to safeguard the financial position of the authority or the school.

Such a notice will set out the reasons and evidence for it being made and may place on the governing body restrictions, limitations or prohibitions in relation to the management of funds delegated to it.

These may include:

- Insisting that relevant staff undertake appropriate training to address any identified weaknesses in the financial management of the school;
 - Insisting that an appropriately trained/qualified person chairs the finance committee of the governing body;
 - Placing more stringent restrictions or conditions on the day to day financial management of a school than the scheme requires for all schools – such as the provision of monthly accounts to the authority;
 - Insisting on regular financial monitoring meetings at the school attended by authority officers;
 - Requiring a governing body to buy into an authority's financial management systems;
- and
- Imposing restrictions or limitations on the manner in which a school manages extended school activity funded from within its delegated budget share – for example by requiring a school to submit income projections and/or financial monitoring reports on such activities.

The notice will clearly state what these requirements are and the way in which and the time by which such requirements must be complied with in order for the notice to be withdrawn. It will also state the actions that the authority may take where the governing body does not comply with the notice.

The purpose of this provision is to enable a local authority to set out formally any concerns it has regarding the financial management of a school it maintains and require a governing body to comply with any requirements it deems necessary. The principal criterion for issuing a notice, and determining the requirements included within it, must be to safeguard the financial position of the authority or school.

It should not be used in place of withdrawal of financial delegation where that is the appropriate action to take; however, it may provide a way of making a governing body aware of the authority's concerns short of withdrawing delegation and identifying the actions a governing body should take in order to improve their financial management to avoid withdrawal.

2.16 SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD (SFVS)

All local authority maintained schools (including nursery schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) that have a delegated budget) must demonstrate compliance with the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) and complete the assessment form on an annual basis. It is for the school to determine at which time of the year they wish to complete the form.

Governors must demonstrate compliance through the submission of the SFVS assessment form signed by the Chair of Governors. The form must include a summary of remedial actions with a clear timetable, ensuring that each action has a specified deadline and an agreed owner. **Governors must monitor the progress of these actions to ensure that all actions are cleared within specified deadlines.**

All maintained schools with a delegated budget must submit the form to the local authority annually by 31st March.

2.17 FRAUD

All schools must have a robust system of controls to safeguard themselves against fraudulent or improper use of public money and assets.

The governing body and head teacher must inform all staff of school policies and procedures related to fraud and theft, the controls in place to prevent them and the consequences of breaching these controls. This information must also be included in the induction for new school staff and governors.

3. INSTALMENTS OF THE BUDGET SHARE; BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 FREQUENCY OF INSTALMENTS

Schools opting for a non-pay bank account may choose to have instalments paid into a bank account on a termly or monthly basis. Schools opting for their gross budget share, i.e. pay and non-pay budgets, will have instalments paid into a bank account on a monthly basis. Schools with local bank accounts for non-pay budgets who wish to alter their frequency of instalments must place this request in writing to the Children and Enterprise Team within the Financial Management Division at least two months prior to the start of the relevant financial year.

3.2 PROPORTION OF BUDGET SHARE PAYABLE AT EACH INSTALMENT

Schools choosing to take pay budgets will receive monthly cash advances of equal weightings on the first working day of each month based on their Individual School Budget allocation. Schools choosing to take non-pay budgets can opt to receive monthly cash advances of equal weighting or termly advances. Monthly advances for schools with non-pay bank accounts will be paid on the first working day of each month. Termly advances will be payable on the first working day of April, September and January. The proportion of these advances will be 40% in April, 35% in September and 25% in January. The estimated advances until completion of the school budget upload will be based on a nominal split

between pay and non-pay previous year budgets or expenditure. Subsequent advances will be based on the schools budget plan, to be agreed by Governors and submitted to the LA by 30th June.

3.3 INTEREST CLAW BACK

The LA will not deduct any claw back for schools opting to take non-pay budgets on a monthly basis payable on the first working day of each month. A deduction of 1% of the non-pay budget will be made to the instalments of schools opting to take non-pay budgets on a termly basis. For schools opting to take their total budget share on the first working day of each month claw back will be deducted on all the elements as these sums will be paid to the school in advance of the teachers and non-teaching staff pay dates and staffing on-costs. Interest will be calculated at the seven day money market rate as published in the "Local Government Chronicle" each Friday and will only be deducted for the dates affected.

3.3.1 INTEREST ON LATE BUDGET SHARE PAYMENTS

The LA will add interest to late payments of budget share instalments where such late payment is the result of LA error. The interest rate used will be the same calculation as used in the claw back calculation.

3.4 BUDGET SHARE FOR CLOSING SCHOOLS

For schools for which approval for discontinuation has been secured, budget shares may be made available until closure.

3.5 BANK AND BUILDING SOCIETY ACCOUNTS

The request for a school to operate a local bank account for the first time must be made following the agreement of the full Governing Body.

Any school funded under LMS which wishes to either opt for its own bank account for the first time or to opt to take their gross budget share may only do by seeking approval from the Operational Director for Finance at least four months prior to the start of the financial year. This request should be made in writing to the Operational Director for Finance and should be accompanied by a copy of the full Governing Body minutes from the meeting at which the decision was made.

Schools without a bank account at the start of the scheme cannot opt to hold one until any deficit balance has been cleared. Any school requesting a bank account at a later date will not be able to do so until any deficit has been cleared.

Bank accounts will only take effect from the beginning of the financial year.

Schools opening new external bank accounts, will have a transfer to the account of an amount agreed by both school and LA as the estimated surplus balance held by the LA in respect of the school's budget share in the May cash advance, if the school desires and on the basis that there is then a subsequent correction when accounts for the relevant year are closed.

Where schools have an external bank account they can retain all interest payable on the account unless they choose to have an account within the Halton LA contract which may make other provision.

See Annex E for details of the operation of a Local Bank Account.

IMPREST ACCOUNTS

Imprest accounts (in the form of a bank account or petty cash) will be provided to governing bodies as considered appropriate by the Operational Director for Finance, to meet "minor" expenses only.

The governing body should ensure that the amount of the imprest account provided is appropriate for making minor payments locally, and that where petty cash is held on the premises, the amount is such that it is acceptable with regard to the school's insurance cover, and is held securely.

Access to the imprest account should be restricted by the governing body, to one or two authorised members of staff. These shall be the only persons authorised to make purchases using the imprest account, having first ensured there are sufficient funds available in the account.

Only "minor" items should be purchased through the imprest account, therefore the governing body should determine the maximum value of any single transaction which may be purchased using a bank imprest account.

3.5.1 RESTRICTIONS ON ACCOUNTS

Maintained schools can opt to have an external bank account, from a designated list produced by the Financial Management Division of Halton LA, into which their budget share instalments are paid. Schools having bank accounts with other banks prior to 1 April 2001 will be allowed to retain those accounts. Should they choose to close this account and propose to open a new account, this must be chosen from the Halton LA designated list.

Schools may have accounts for budget share purposes, which are in the name of the school rather than the LA. If a school has such an account the mandate should provide that the LA is the owner of the funds in the account; that it is entitled to receive statements; and that it can take control of the account if the school's right to a delegated budget is suspended by the LA. Arrangements may be negotiated with certain banks whereby the accounts are in the name of the LA but specific to each school, such arrangements will be offered to schools.

Budget share funds paid by the LA and held in school accounts remains the LA property until spent.

Signatories to the external bank account may only be LA employees and school employees. Governors who are not members of staff at the school may not be signatories.

Schools are not permitted to hold a credit card unless it is a Halton BC Corporate credit card which is managed by the LA. Schools must not obtain any other credit card, as this constitutes borrowing and is not permitted.

Schools may not operate debit cards.

Schools are permitted to make payments via BACS subject to the approval of the Operational Director for Finance. In making such payments schools do so at their own risk and any loss would not be covered under the LA's insurance arrangements.

Direct Debits and Standing Orders are permissible where a school operates a local bank account.

Online banking may be used for the purpose of viewing and downloading up to date statement information.

3.6 BORROWING BY SCHOOLS

Governing bodies may borrow money only with the written permission of the Secretary of State. This provision does not apply to the Trustees and Foundations, whose borrowing, as private bodies, makes no impact on the Government accounts. These debts may not be serviced directly from the delegated budgets, but schools are free to agree a charge for a service which the Trustees or Foundation are able to provide as a consequence of their own borrowing. Governing bodies do not act as agents of the LA when repaying loans.

3.7 OTHER PROVISIONS

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that procedures are operated within the school to permit only bona fide transactions to be made via the local bank account. Any losses or costs arising in respect of a local bank account, due to error, negligence or irregularity are the responsibility of the governing body and will be charged against the school's budget.

The Governing body shall determine a true and fair assessment of the school's proposed pay and non-pay budgets for the purposes of the calculation of their local bank account advances. Where the Operational Director for Finance considers such an assessment has not been made, cash flow charges may be made against the school's budget.

4. THE TREATMENT OF SURPLUS AND DEFICIT BALANCES ARISING IN RELATION TO BUDGET SHARES

4.1 THE RIGHT TO CARRY FORWARD SURPLUS BALANCES

Schools can carry forward from one financial year to the next any shortfall in expenditure relative to the school's budget share for the year plus/minus any balance brought forward from the previous year. The balance each school will carry forward will be detailed in their Section 251 outturn statement.

The Strategic Director for Policy and Resources will provide the governing body with details of the school's accounts as soon as possible after the conclusion of each financial year, including the carry forward balance.

Section 3.5 details the arrangements for the carry forward of surplus balances to new bank account schools. The provisional balance will be calculated by taking the schools spend to date on the ledger plus current commitments from the school's revised budget. A full reconciliation of the balance will be completed at the next financial year end and an adjustment, plus or minus, will be made to the provisional balance.

4.2 CONTROLS ON SURPLUS BALANCES

The governing body, in considering its budget allocation for the new financial year, should give consideration to the level of carry-forward from the previous year. In particular, they should consider whether the amount was as expected and if not why not, whether the amount is considered reasonable in comparison to the total school budget and the level of

contingency provision thought necessary, and, by reference to the school's development plan, what proposals have been earmarked for the use of the carried forward balance.

The LA will report to Schools Forum during the summer term each year on both LMS and NON LMS balances for each school. Following a change in regulations it is now at the discretion of Schools Forum how balances are dealt with in current and future years. Schools Forum reserves the right to re-introduce an excess surplus balance limit and also to call upon any school to explain the balance they have and proposals for its use.

The level of carried forward balance should be reported by the governing body to parents in the annual governors' report, with detailed proposals for the use of the balance.

4.3 INTEREST ON SURPLUS BALANCES

Governing bodies of non-local bank account schools may request the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources (via Financial Management Division) to place monies from their delegated budget, including carried forward balances, on deposit with the LA, in order to earn interest. The Strategic Director for Policy and Resources will decide upon the appropriate interest rate in line with the seven day money market rate, as published in the "Local Government Chronicle" each Friday. Money which is surplus to immediate requirements can be placed on long-term deposit (to be spent in a subsequent financial year). Interest will also be paid on a "cash flow" basis where a schools' monthly expenditure is less than the average profile.

Alternatively, funds may be invested with the financial institutions named on the list of authorised institutions drawn up by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources, but only in accounts which provide immediate access to the whole of the sum invested.

LA monies shall not be deposited in private funds, unofficial funds, personal accounts, or any other account not approved by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources.

4.4 OBLIGATION TO CARRY FORWARD DEFICIT BALANCES

Any overspending on a schools' budget remaining at year-end, will be the first call on any monies invested in the Deposit Savings Scheme, and any overspending remaining thereafter will be deducted from the schools' budget for the following year. Such a deficit balance will be shown on the Section 251 Outturn statement.

Arrangements for the repayment of deficits over a period of more than one year should be made following special agreement with the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources. Where a school has a deficit balance at the beginning, or end, of any financial year as detailed above the LA reserve the right to charge interest (see 4.6).

4.5 PLANNING FOR DEFICIT BUDGETS

Governing bodies should not plan a deficit budget, after taking into account carried forward balances. Schools with a carry forward are expected to be able to achieve a balanced budget in the following financial year. However, exceptionally where schools can demonstrate that achieving such a balance within the next financial year will prove to be severely detrimental to the functioning of the school, the Strategic Director for Children and Enterprise may consider allowing a licensed deficit for a strictly limited number of years (see section 4.9).

4.6 CHARGING OF INTEREST ON DEFICIT BALANCES

The LA may charge interest on deficit balances. Interest will be charged by using the seven day money market rate, as published in the “Local Government Chronicle” each Friday and using the calculation below.

Where a school has a deficit balance at the beginning or end of any financial year (ie a deficit balance at 1st April equal to the deficit balance on 31st March), the LA reserves the right to charge interest on the following basis:-

If the school is in deficit at the beginning of a financial year, and ends the financial year in deficit, interest will be calculated by adding together the opening balance of the school to the closing balance at the end of the financial year, then dividing this sum by two. Interest will be charged on this average deficit using the annualised seven day money market rate, as published in the “Local Government Chronicle”.

If the schools is in deficit at the beginning of a financial year but is in surplus at the end of the financial year, or in surplus at the beginning of the financial year but in deficit at the end of the financial year, the estimated number of weeks the school has been in deficit will be calculated by profiling the movement between the opening and closing balance evenly throughout the 52 weeks of the financial year.

4.7 WRITING OFF OF DEFICITS

The LA cannot write off the deficit balance of any school. Schools in financial difficulty may wish to apply via Schools Forum for additional funding, subject to the need for such additional funding meeting the criteria set out in the funding regulations.

4.8 BALANCES OF CLOSING AND REPLACEMENT SCHOOLS

Upon the closure of a school, any balance (whether surplus or deficit) reverts to the LA and cannot be transferred as a balance to any other school, even where that school is a successor to the closing school, except that a surplus transfers to an academy where the school converts to academy status under section 4(1)(a) of the Academies Act 2010.

4.9 LICENSED DEFICITS

Under exceptional circumstances, where schools can demonstrate that achieving a balanced budget within the next financial year will prove to be severely detrimental to the functioning of the school, the Strategic Director for Children and Enterprise may consider plans for a school to have a licensed deficit, for one year initially, and exceptionally up to a maximum of three academic years. In such instance the Governing Body must provide in writing to the Strategic Director for Children and Enterprise:

- A full explanation of the situation, demonstrating that attempting to balance the budget in the next financial year would prove to be severely detrimental to the functioning of the school
- A detailed action plan with proposed timescales, designed to achieve a balanced budget within an agreed timescale

The case submitted must be approved by the Strategic Director for Children and Enterprise, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources. Termly reports to the Strategic Director for Children and Enterprise must be submitted until the approved action plan is fully implemented.

Deficits will only be agreed for amounts up to a maximum of 10% of the school budget share.

Approval of licensed deficits will be subject to the availability of sufficient resources within the LA reserves. A maximum of 25% of the collective school balances held by the Authority will be available to back such arrangements.

4.9 LOAN SCHEME

Halton Borough Council no longer operates a school loans scheme

4.10.1 CREDIT UNION APPROACH

Schools opting to adopt a credit union approach to loans are required to provide audit certification to the LA, unless the LA acts as administrator of the arrangement.

5 INCOME

5.1 INCOME FROM LETTINGS

Schools may generate and retain income from letting the school premises, unless the income is subject to alternative provisions arising from any joint-use or PFI/PPP agreements. The level of charge to be levied for each type of letting should be reviewed and approved annually by the governing body. Schools may cross-subsidise lettings for community and voluntary use with income from other lettings, provided there is no net cost to the budget share. Schools must have regard to directions issued by the LA as to the appropriate use of school premises, as permitted under the act for various categories of schools. Income from lettings of school premises should not normally be payable into voluntary or private funds held by the school.

Lettings of school premises not owned by the LA are not affected by this provision.

Governing bodies are responsible for all costs that may arise from letting school premises. If letting results in costs being incurred by the LA on repairs or the replacement of buildings, grounds or equipment, the LA reserves the right to charge the costs to the schools' delegated budget.

The governing body shall ensure that where appropriate, VAT is charged on lettings and properly accounted for in accordance with the appropriate VAT regulations. Further advice may be obtained from the Financial Management Division.

5.2 INCOME FROM FEES AND CHARGES

Schools may generate and retain income from fees and charges, except where a service is provided by the authority from centrally retained funds. The level of charge to be levied for each activity should be reviewed and approved annually by the governing body. Schools must have regard to any policy statements on charging issued by the authority.

5.3 INCOME FROM FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

Schools may retain income from fund-raising activities within the voluntary or school fund where these have been earned at no cost to the school's official budget.

5.4 INCOME FROM THE SALE OF ASSETS

Schools may retain the proceeds from the sale of assets except in cases where the asset was purchased with non-delegated funds (in which case it should be for the authority to decide whether the school should retain the proceeds) or if the asset concerned is land or buildings forming part of the school premises and is owned by the LA. The retention of proceeds of sale for premises not owned by the authority will not be a matter for the scheme.

5.5 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR THE COLLECTION OF INCOME

The governing body shall ensure procedures are operated within the school for the safe and efficient collection, receipt and accounting of all money due to the LA. Unless otherwise stated in this Scheme, all income retained must only be used for the purposes of the school.

Invoices for income due in respect of charges for work done, goods supplied or services rendered should be raised promptly using a method approved by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources. All payments in settlement of an account should be paid into the LA bank account or approved local bank account as appropriate.

All income should be promptly paid over, at least weekly, to the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources or deposited in the Council's name using banking arrangements approved by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources. No deductions will be made from the sum received.

5.6 PURPOSES FOR WHICH INCOME MAY BE USED

Income from the sale of assets purchased with delegated funds may only be spent for the purposes of the school.

6. THE CHARGING OF SCHOOL BUDGET SHARES

6.1 GENERAL PROVISION

The authority may charge the budget share of a school without the consent of the governing body only in circumstances expressly permitted by the scheme, and requires authorities to consult schools as to the intention to so charge, and notify schools when the charge has been done.

Although the right of authorities to protect their financial position from liabilities caused by the action or inaction of governing bodies by charging budget shares is well established, the government is anxious to ensure that schools are clearly aware of the circumstances in which this may happen. The main circumstances in which charging are permitted is listed in 6.2.

For each of these circumstances the authority would have to be able to demonstrate that the authority had necessarily incurred the expenditure now charged to the budget share. This means that where the authority cannot incur a liability because the statutory responsibility rests elsewhere, no charging is possible. Therefore the position on charging will vary between categories of school.

In some cases the ability to charge budget shares depends on the authority having given prior advice to the governing body. Authorities need to ensure that they have taken steps that enable them to give advice whenever possible, and will wish to remind schools of this.

For the avoidance of doubt, local authorities may de-delegate funding for permitted services without the express permission of the governing body, provided this has been approved by the appropriate phase representatives of the Schools Forum.

6.1.2 CHARGING OF SALARIES AT ACTUAL COST

Salaries of school-based staff will be charged to school budget shares at actual cost.

6.2 CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH CHARGES MAY BE MADE

Charges may be made in the following circumstances:

6.2.1 Where premature retirement costs have been incurred without the prior written agreement of the authority to bear such costs (the amount chargeable being only the excess over any amount agreed by the authority);

6.2.2 Other expenditure incurred to secure resignations where the school had not followed authority advice;

6.2.3 Awards by courts and industrial tribunals against the authority, or out of court settlements, arising from action or inaction by the governing body contrary to the authority's advice;

Awards may sometimes be against the governing body directly and would fall to be met from the budget share. Where the authority is joined with the governing body in the action and has expenditure as a result of the governing body not taking authority advice, the charging of the budget share with the authority expenditure protects the authority's position.

Authorities should ensure in framing any such advice that they have taken proper account of the role of aided school governing bodies.

6.2.4 Expenditure by the authority in carrying out health and safety work or capital expenditure for which the authority is liable where funds have been delegated to the governing body for such work, but the governing body has failed to carry out the required work;

6.2.5 Expenditure by the authority incurred in making good defects in building work funded by capital spending from budget shares, where the premises are owned by the LA or the school has voluntary controlled status;

6.2.6 Expenditure incurred by the authority in insuring its own interests in a school where funding has been delegated but the school has failed to demonstrate that it has arranged cover at least as good as that which would be arranged by the authority;

See also 10.1. The authority itself needs to consider whether it has an insurable interest in any particular case.

6.2.7 Recovery of monies due from a school for services provided to the school, where a dispute over the monies due has been referred to a disputes procedure set out in a service level agreement, and the result is that monies are owed by the school to the authority;

6.2.8 Recovery of penalties imposed on the authority by the Board of Inland Revenue, the Contributions Agency or HM Revenue and Customs, Teachers Pensions, the Environment Agency or other regulatory authorities as a result of school negligence.

6.2.9 Correction of authority errors in calculating charges to a budget share (eg pension deductions)

Before applying any such provision the authority should consider whether it is reasonable to do so. If the error dates back several years it may be questionable whether such charging is reasonable.

6.2.10 Additional transport costs incurred by the authority arising from decisions by the governing body on the length of the school day, and failure to notify the authority of non-pupil days resulting in unnecessary transport costs.

6.2.11 Legal costs which are incurred by the authority because the governing body did not accept the advice of the authority (see also section 11).

6.2.12 Costs of necessary health and safety training for staff employed by the authority, where funding for training had been delegated but the necessary training not carried out.

6.2.13 Compensation paid to a lender where a school enters into a contract for borrowing beyond its legal powers, and the contract is of no effect.

6.2.14 Cost of work done in respect of teacher pension remittance and records for schools using non-authority payroll contractors, the charge to be the minimum needed to meet the cost of the authority's compliance with its statutory obligations.

6.2.15 Costs incurred by the LA in securing provision specified in a statement of SEN where the governing body of a school fails to secure such provision despite the delegation of funds in respect of low cost high incidence SEN and / or specific funding for a pupil with High Needs

6.2.16 With the exception of any losses occasioned as a result of error, negligence or irregularity by the LA, all other losses or costs arising in respect of a local bank account, due to error, negligence or irregularity.

6.2.17 Any loss arising from the failure to notify the Strategic Director for Children and Enterprise of a statement for a child / pupil attending the school who is not resident within the Borough.

6.2.18 Any "betterment" costs incurred when for example, replacing educational equipment and materials following damage by fire, if the appropriate insurance cover has been arranged by the LA.

6.2.19 Any overspending on earmarked funding (i.e. the allocation of funds to schools from a centrally held fund for specific purposes) will be charged to the school budget.

6.2.20 Recovery of amounts spent from specific grants on ineligible purposes.

6.2.21 Costs incurred by the authority as a result of the governing body being in breach of the terms of a contract.

6.2.22 Costs incurred by the authority due to submission by the school of incorrect data.

6.2.23 Costs incurred by the authority or another school as a result of a school withdrawing from a cluster arrangement, for example where this has funded staff providing services across the cluster.

6.2.24 Amounts agreed under PFI / PPP agreements entered into by the Governing Body. This will include any funds distributed to relevant PFI schools through a specific formula factor for this purpose.

Any dispute arising from charges against a school budget by the LA will be resolved by the LA's Executive Board.

7 TAXATION

7.1 VALUE ADDED TAX

Where a payment is subject to VAT, a VAT invoice shall be obtained, and the VAT element shall be properly identified within the coding of the invoice. VAT on expenditure relating to non-business activity will be reclaimed by the LA and not met from the school budget. Failure to ensure that VAT is properly reclaimed will result in costs being met out of school budgets unnecessarily.

Certain types of income generated by schools attract VAT e.g. certain sports lettings, payphone income etc. Schools should ensure that VAT regulations regarding the treatment of income are complied with. Any penalties imposed by HMRC upon the LA as a result of a school's non-compliance may be recharged to the school.

Advice regarding VAT matters may be obtained from the Purchase to Pay Team, Financial Services Division.

7.2 CITS (CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TAXATION SCHEME)

Schools must abide by procedures issued by the Authority in connection with CITS.

There is a legal obligation placed on local authorities to make deductions of income tax from contractor's invoices which fall within the scope of the CITS scheme. This includes any payments made to contractors who carry out any type of building work for the school as they are effectively sub-contractors to Halton LA. The types of work included in the scheme are such things as painting and decorating, joinery, plumbing, etc.

In order to ensure that the information given on tax returns is accurate, no work involving CITS should be paid for from voluntary or unofficial funds or from imprest accounts or local bank accounts.

Schools must therefore send the invoice and where applicable a cheque from their local bank account made payable to Halton LA for the net amount excluding VAT. The authority will make the appropriate deductions and be responsible for the payment to the contractor together with the accounting of such transactions to the HMRC.

If a school makes a payment in full to a sub-contractor when the invoice should have been processed through the CITS mechanism above, then the school will be liable to pay any penalty deductions the HMRC may decide to impose.

8 THE PROVISION OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES BY THE AUTHORITY

8.1 PROVISION OF SERVICES FROM CENTRALLY RETAINED BUDGETS

The authority will determine on what basis services from centrally retained funds, will be provided to the schools.

The authority will not discriminate in its provision of services on the basis of categories of schools except where (a) funding has been delegated to some schools only or (b) such discrimination is justified by differences in statutory duties.

8.2 TIMESCALES FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES BOUGHT BACK FROM THE LA USING DELEGATED BUDGETS

The term of any arrangement with a school to buy services or facilities from the LA is limited to a maximum of three years from the inception of the scheme or the date of the agreement, whichever is the later. Any subsequent agreement relating to the same services will be limited to a maximum of five years. However, for contracts for supply of catering services an extension to five and seven years is allowable.

Services provided by the LA where the funding is not retained centrally under the Regulations made under section 46 of the Act, will be offered at prices which are intended to generate income which is no less than the cost of providing those services. The total cost of the service will be met by the total income, even if schools are charged differentially.

8.2.1 PACKAGING

The authority will provide any services for which funding has been delegated and the Council is offering the service on a buyback basis, in a way in which does not unreasonably restrict schools' freedom of choice among the services available. Where practicable services will be offered on a service-by-service basis as well as in packages of services.

However, the Council may consider offering packages of services which offer a discount for schools taking up a wider range of services,

8.3 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

Service Level Agreements must be in place by the last date in February each year to be effective for the following financial year. Schools will have at least one month's notice to consider the terms of the agreements.

8.3.1 If services or facilities are provided under a service level agreement – whether free or on a buyback basis – the terms of any such agreement starting on or after the inception of the scheme will be reviewed at least every three years if the agreement lasts longer than that.

8.3.2 Services, if offered by the LA, will be available on a basis which is not related to an extended agreement, as well as on the basis of such agreements. Where services are provided on an ad-hoc basis, they may be charged for at a different rate than if provided on the basis of an extended agreement.

Centrally arranged premises and liability insurance are excluded from the requirements on service supply covered under 8.2 and 8.3.

8.4 TEACHERS PENSIONS

In order to ensure that the performance of the duty on the Authority to supply Teachers Pension with the information under the Teachers' Pension Regulations 1997, the following conditions are imposed on the Authority and governing bodies of all maintained schools covered by this Scheme in relation to their budget shares.

The conditions only apply to governing bodies of maintained schools that have not entered into an arrangement with the Authority to provide payroll services.

A governing body of any maintained school, whether or not the employer of the teachers at such a school, which has entered into any arrangement or agreement with a person other than the Authority to provide payroll services, shall ensure that any such arrangement or agreement is varied to require that person to supply salary, service and pensions data to the Authority which the authority requires to submit its annual return of salary and service to Teachers' Pensions and to produce its audited contributions certificate. The authority will advise schools each year of the timing, format and specification of the information required. A governing body shall also ensure that any such arrangement or agreement is varied to require that Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) are passed to the authority within the time limit specified in the AVC scheme. The governing body shall meet any consequential costs from the school's budget share.

9 PFI / PPP

- 9.1 The authority shall have the power to issue regulations from time to time relating to PFI / PPP projects. Amongst other issues these may deal with the reaching of agreements with the governing bodies of schools as to the basis of charges relating to such schemes; and the treatment of monies withheld from contractors due to poor performance.
- 9.2 The authority is empowered to charge to the schools' budget share, amounts agreed under a PFI / PPP agreement entered into by the governing body of a school.
- 9.3 In the absence of an agreement on charging the school for PFI service provision, the authority may, at its discretion, charge the schools' delegated budget to reflect changes to service provision under a PFI agreement.

10 INSURANCE

10.1 INSURANCE COVER

Where funds for insurance are held centrally (or where cover is arranged centrally), the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources will arrange, administer and review insurance cover for any risks against which the LA considers the school and governing body should be indemnified and in which the LA has an insurable interest.

If funds for insurance are delegated to any school and the governing body of that school arranges its own insurance cover relevant to the LA's authority's insurable interests, it must demonstrate that cover is at least equivalent to that which would otherwise have been arranged by the LA authority, if the LA authority itself were to make such arrangements. If

cover is deemed to be insufficient, any expenditure incurred by the LA authority in insuring its own interests may be charged to the school budget.

The LA will insure schools against fire damage (unless the school has arranged its own insurance cover), including any consequential losses arising from making good the situation, e.g. temporary accommodation. Claims are subject to negotiation and agreement with a loss adjuster who may require savings to be taken into account in arriving at a net position. Such savings could include the running costs that would have been incurred on premises had there not been a fire.

In dealing with the consequences of a fire, each incident is considered on its merits with the LA applying the following principles:

- any consequential loss not covered by insurance will be set against the savings to the school budget from having accommodation out of use.
- such consequential costs could include meeting any extra costs incurred by another school acting as temporary host for pupils displaced by fire.
- any school providing temporary accommodation may be reimbursed with those costs arising from the provision that are not covered by insurance.
- where items such as educational equipment and materials are replaced by schools, any "betterment" will be charged against the school budget.

A record of all insurance cover taken out by the LA will be maintained by the Divisional Manager for Audit and Operational Finance. The governing body shall notify the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources of any new risks or new assets which need to be insured, or any alterations to existing insurances, and of any occurrence which may lead to a claim.

Schools should not give any indemnity to a third party without the written consent of their insurers.

No remedial work may be commissioned where a claim for damage to property is involved until approved by the insurer.

If a school's activities take it outside the areas covered by their insurance cover arranged by the LA, the governing body shall extend the insurance cover following consultation with the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources. Any resulting costs shall be paid from the school's budget.

The handling of any claims on insurance policies which have been taken out without the involvement of the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources is the responsibility of the governing body.

Appropriate insurance to cover the potential liability of the governing body towards staff or third parties for any negligence in the exercise of their responsibilities as governors will be arranged by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources under the following policies, unless schools make their own arrangements:

- Employer's Liability
- Public Liability
- Official's Indemnity
- Libel and Slander
- Money
- Fidelity Guarantee
- Personal Accident

- Motor Policy (Special Schools).

11 MISCELLANEOUS

11.1 RIGHT OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Governing bodies are required to supply all financial and other information which might reasonably be required to enable the Authority to satisfy itself as to the school's management of its delegated budget share, or the use made of any central expenditure by the Authority (eg earmarked funds) on the school.

11.2 LIABILITY OF GOVERNORS

Because the governing body is a corporate body, and because of the terms of Section 50 (7) of the SSAF Act, governors of maintained schools will not incur personal liability in the exercise of their power to spend the delegated budget share provided they act in good faith.

An example of behaviour which is not in good faith is the carrying out of fraudulent acts. Breaches of the scheme are not in themselves failures to act in good faith; neither is rejection of LA advice as to financial management.

11.3 GOVERNORS' EXPENSES

The LA will delegate to the governing body of a school yet to receive a delegated budget, funds to meet governors' expenses.

Under section 50 (5) of the Act, only allowances in respect of purposes specified in regulations may be paid to governors from a schools' delegated budget share. No other allowances may be paid. Schools may not pay expenses duplicating those paid by the Secretary of State to additional governors appointed by him/her to schools under special measures.

Governing bodies may only pay themselves travelling and subsistence allowances for the purposes of their role in respect of the school. This must be in accordance with the policy and rates previously resolved by the governing body. In addition, the total amount of travelling and subsistence allowances paid to governors must be separately reported in the financial statement of the annual report to parents.

11.4 RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEGAL COSTS

Legal costs incurred by the governing body, although the responsibility of the authority as part of the cost of maintaining the school unless they relate to the statutory responsibility of aided school governors for buildings, may be charged to the school's budget share unless the governing body acts in accordance with the advice of the Authority.

Also see section 6. The effect of this is that a school cannot expect to be reimbursed with the cost of legal action against the authority itself (although there is nothing to stop an authority making such reimbursement if it believes this to be desirable or necessary in the circumstances).

The costs referred to are those of legal actions, including costs awarded against an authority, not the cost of legal advice provided.

Governing bodies may wish to seek independent legal advice, at a cost to their school budget share, where there is a conflict of interest between the LA and the governing body.

11.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Governing bodies must have due regard to duties placed on the LA in relation to health and safety, and the Authority's policy on health and safety matters in the management of the budget share.

Under Section 39 (3) of the School Standards and Framework Act the LA may issue directions to the governing body and the Headteacher of a community, community special or voluntary controlled school on health and safety matters. These directions are enforceable, so far as governing bodies are concerned under Section 497 of the Education Act 1996 if not complied with.

11.6 RIGHT OF ATTENDANCE FOR CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

Governing bodies are required to permit the Chief Financial Officer of the authority, or any other officer of the authority nominated by the Chief Finance Officer, to attend meetings of the governing body at which any agenda items are relevant to the exercise of her or his responsibilities.

The Chief Finance Officer's attendance should normally be limited to items which relate to issues of probity or overall financial management; such attendance should not be regarded as routine. The authority should give prior notice of such attendance unless this is impracticable.

11.8 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Schools are required to use their best endeavours in spending their budget share to secure SEN.

11.9 INTEREST ON LATE PAYMENTS

Governing bodies are reminded to be mindful of the statutory requirements in relation to interest on late payments.

11.10 "WHISTLEBLOWING"

Any person working at a school or school governor who suspects, with good reason, that financial irregularity or any other wrong-doing has occurred should immediately inform the Divisional Manager – Audit & Operational Finance of his/her concerns. This course of action gives the employee/governor an early opportunity to express his/her views in full. To wait and report this matter at a committee meeting could cause delay which may be detrimental to any necessary enquiries.

11.11 CHILD PROTECTION

In cases where a child is at risk schools will be expected to release staff to attend child protection case conferences and other related events.

11.12 REDUNDANCY / EARLY RETIREMENT COSTS

The 2002 Education Act sets out how premature retirement and redundancy costs should normally be funded. The guidance note summarizes the position relating to the charging of voluntary early retirement and redundancy costs. It sets out what is specified in legislation and provides some examples of when it might be appropriate to charge an individual schools' budget, the central Schools Budget or the local authority's non-schools budget.

Section 37 of the 2002 Education Act says:

(4) costs incurred by the local education authority in respect of any premature retirement of a member of staff of a maintained school shall be met from the school's budget share for one or more financial years except in so far as the authority agree with the governing body in writing (whether before or after the retirement occurs) that they shall not so be met.

(5) costs incurred by the local education authority in respect of the dismissal, or for the purpose of securing the resignation, of any member of the staff of a maintained school shall not be met from the school's budget share for any financial year except in so far as the authority have good reason for deducting those costs, or any part of those costs, from that share.

(6) The fact that the authority have a policy precluding dismissal of their employees by reason of redundancy is not to be regarded as a good reason for the purposes of subsection (5); and in this subsection the reference to dismissal by reason of redundancy shall be read in accordance with section 139 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 (c.18).

The default position, therefore, is that premature retirement costs must be charged to the schools' delegated budget, while redundancy costs must be charged to the local authority's budget. In the former case, the local authority has to agree otherwise for costs to be centrally funded, and that it cannot include having a no redundancy policy. Ultimately, it would come before the courts to decide what a good reason was, but the examples set out below indicate the situations in which exceptions to the default position might be taken.

Charge of dismissal / resignation costs to delegated school budget:

- If a school has decided to offer more generous terms than the authority's policy, then it would be reasonable to charge the excess to the school
- If a school is otherwise acting outside the local authority's policy
- Where the school is making staffing reductions which the local authority does not believe are necessary to either set a balanced budget or meet the conditions of a licensed deficit
- Where staffing reductions arise from a deficit caused by factors within the school's control
- Where the school has excess surplus balances and no agreed plan to use these
- Where a school has refused to engage with the local authority's redeployment policy

Charge of premature retirement costs to local authority non-school's budget;

- Where a school has a long-term reduction in pupil numbers and charging such costs to their budget would impact on standards
- Where a school is closing, does not have sufficient balances to cover the costs and where the central Schools Budget does not have capacity to absorb the deficit
- Where charging such costs to the schools budget would prevent the school from complying with a requirement to recover a licensed deficit within the agreed timescale
- Where a school is in special measures, does not have excess balances and employment of the relevant staff is being / has been terminated as a result of local authority or government intervention to improve standards

Costs of early retirements or redundancies may only be charged to the central part of the Schools Budget where the expenditure is to be incurred as a result of decisions made before 1st April 2013. Costs may not exceed the amount budgeted in the previous financial year.

It is important that the local authority discusses its policy with its School Forum. Although each case should be considered on its merits, this should be within an agreed framework. It may be reasonable to share costs in some cases, and some authorities operate a panel to adjudicate on applications.

A de-delegated contingency could be provided, if Schools Forum agree, to support individual schools where "a governing body has incurred expenditure which it would be unreasonable to expect them to meet from the school's budget share".

For staff employed under the community facilities power, the default position is that any costs must be met by the governing body, and can be funded from the school's delegated budget if the governing body is satisfied that this will not interfere to a significant extent with the performance of any duties imposed on them by the Education Acts, including the requirement to conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Section 37 now states:

(7) Where a local education authority incur costs –

- (a) In respect of any premature retirement of any member of the staff of a maintained school who is employed for community purposes, or
- (b) In respect of the dismissal, or for the purpose of securing the resignation, of any member of the staff of a maintained school who is employed for those purposes.

They shall recover those costs from the governing body except in so far as the authority agrees with the governing body in writing (whether before or after the retirement, dismissal or resignation occurs) that they shall not be so recoverable.

(7a) Any amount payable by virtue of subsection (7) by the governing body of a maintained school in England to the local authority may be met by the governing body out of the school's budget share for any funding period if and to the extent that the condition in subsection 7(b) is met.

(7b) The condition is that the governing body are satisfied that meeting the amount out of the school's budget share will not to a significant extent interfere with the performance of any duty imposed on them by section 21(2) or by any other provision of the education Acts.

(8) Where a person is employed partly for community purposes and partly for other purposes, any payment or costs in respect of that person is to be apportioned between the two purposes; and the preceding provisions of this section shall apply separately to each part of the payment or costs.

12 RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Governing bodies will be responsible for all, non-capital building repairs and maintenance. The attached Annex B gives details of the split between capital and repairs and maintenance work. Reference in Annex B to substantial / substantially shall be defined as, an area in excess of 50 percent of the whole element under consideration, subject to the integrity of the building not being threatened prior to this percentage being reached.

In all matters of dispute, the professional view of the Consultants will take precedence.

The authority will accept no responsibility for work occasioned by neglect of regular maintenance.

All work undertaken must comply fully with Health and Safety requirements, buildings regulations and all current legislation. Work adjudged to be required under Health and Safety, must take priority, with work instigated as a matter of urgency.

Governors must be able to demonstrate that work undertaken has been subject to the Principles of 'Best Value' and shows active and effective stewardship of school property. School compliance with this process will be monitored by Halton LA. (see Section 2.4 of the Scheme)

Halton Borough Council has a statutory duty to monitor all work undertaken and to institute work where Governors have failed in their responsibilities or duty. The full cost of this remedial work will be charged to the school's budget. (see Section 6.2.4 of the Scheme).

13 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

13.1 Schools which choose to exercise the power conferred by s.27 (1) of the Education Act 2002 to provide community facilities will be subject to a range of controls. First, regulations made under s.28 (2), if made, can specify activities which may not be undertaken at all under the main enabling power. Secondly, the school is obliged to consult its authority and have regard to advice from the authority. Thirdly, the Secretary of State issues guidance to governing bodies about a range of issues connected with exercise of the power, and a school must have regard to that.

However, under s.28 (1), the main limitations and restrictions on the power will be

- a) those contained in
- b) In the maintaining authority's Scheme For Financing Schools made under section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 2002. This amendment extended the coverage of schemes to include the exercise of the powers of governing bodies to provide community facilities.

Schools are therefore subject to prohibitions, restrictions and limitations in the Scheme For Financing Schools.

This part of the scheme does not extend to joint-use agreements; transfer of control agreements, or agreements between the authority and schools to secure the provision of adult and community learning.

- 13.2 The budget share of a school may not be used to fund community facilities – either start-up costs or ongoing expenditure – or to meet deficits arising from such activities.
- 13.3 Mismanagement of community facilities funds can be grounds for suspension of the right to a delegated budget.
- 13.4 Section 28(4) of the Education Act 2002 requires that before exercising the community facilities power, governing bodies must consult the local authority, and have regard to advice given to them by their LA.
- 13.5 Schools are required to seek LA advice. No charge will be made for this advice.
- 13.6 The provision of community facilities in many schools may be dependent on the conclusion of a funding agreement with a third party which will either be supplying funding or supplying funding and taking part in the provision. A wide range of bodies and organizations could be involved.
- 13.7 Any proposed funding agreements should be submitted to the LA for comment. The LA must receive at least two months' notice to comment.
- 13.8 The LA reserves the right, where it believes a project carries significant financial risk, to require a governing body to make arrangements to protect the financial interests of the authority by either carrying out the activity concerned through the vehicle of a limited company formed for the purpose, or by obtaining indemnity insurance for the risk associated with the project in question.
- 13.9 Section 28 provides that the exercise of the community facilities power is subject to prohibitions, restrictions and limitations in the Scheme For Financing Schools.
- 13.10 Every six months, schools exercising the community facilities power will be required to provide a summary statement in a form to be determined by the LA. This form will show the income and expenditure arising from the previous six months.
- 13.11 The LA after giving notice to a school that it believes there to be a cause for concern as to the school's management of the financial consequences of the exercise of the community facilities power, may require financial statements to be submitted every three months. It may also require the submission of a recovery plan.
- 13.12 Schools must allow internal and external audit access to their records connected with the community facilities power.
- 13.13 Schools must ensure that any funding agreement allows adequate provision for access by the authority to the records and other property of those persons held on the schools premises, or held elsewhere if they relate to the provision of the community facility. This information is needed for the LA to satisfy itself as to the propriety of expenditure on the facilities in question.

- 13.14 Schools may retain income derived from community facilities except where otherwise agreed with a funding provider, whether that be the LA or some other person.
- 13.15 Schools may carry forward from one financial year to the next any surplus income as a separate community facility surplus or subject to the agreement at the end of each financial year, transfer all or part of it to the budget share balance.
- 13.16 Any accumulated retained income obtained from the exercise of the community facilities power in a community school or community special school will revert to the authority unless otherwise agreed with the funding provider.
- 13.17 All health and safety provisions within the main scheme will extend to the community facilities power.
- 13.18 The governing body will be responsible for the costs of securing Criminal Records Bureau clearance for all adults involved in community activities taking place during the school day. Governing bodies would be free to pass on such costs to funding partners as part of an agreement with that partner.
- 13.19 It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure adequate arrangements are made for insurance against risk arising from the exercise of the community power. Governing bodies should take professional advice where necessary. Such insurance should not be funded from the school budget share.
- 13.20 The LA may undertake its own assessment of the insurance arrangements made by a school in respect of community facilities. If they are judged to be inadequate, the LA may make arrangements itself and charge the resultant cost to the school. Such costs could not be charged to the School's budget share.
- 13.21 Schools should seek advice of the LA and the local VAT office on any issues relating to the possible imposition of VAT on expenditure in connection with community facilities; including the use of the local authority VAT reclaim facility.
- 13.22 If any member of the staff employed by the school or LA in connection with the community facilities at the school is paid from funds held in a school's own bank account, the school is likely to be held liable for the payment of income tax and national insurance, in line with Inland Revenue rules.
- 13.23 Schools should follow LA advice in relation to the Construction Industry Scheme where this is relevant to the exercise of the community facilities power.
- 13.24 Schools should set up separate bank accounts for community facilities funds.
- 13.25 Schools will be required to select a bank account from the designated list produced by the Resources and Corporate Services Directorate. The provisions under the restriction of accounts in the scheme shall apply except where the budget share and community facilities fund are kept in the same account the mandate which shows the LA as owner should exclude the community facilities funds. However, in the case of a bank account which is used by the school in connection with community facilities (whether or not the account also contains funds from the schools' budget share), the account mandate should not show the LA as the owner of the community facilities fund in the account, except insofar as these funds have been provided by the LA itself.

Schools may not borrow money without the written consent of the Secretary of State. This requirement does not extend to monies lent to schools by the LA.

Annex A

LIST OF SCHOOLS COVERED BY THE SCHEME

DfE	School	DfE	School
7202	Ashley	2711	Simms Cross Primary
7206	Brookfields	3561	St Augustine's Catholic Primary
7200	Chesnut Lodge Special	3648	St Basil's Catholic Primary
3179	All Saint's Upton CE Voluntary Controlled Primary	3615	St Bede's Catholic Infant
2700	Astmoor Primary	3614	St Bede's Catholic Junior
2382	Beechwood Primary	3640	St Berteline's CE Primary
2725	Brookvale Primary	3510	St Clement's Catholic Primary
2283	Castle View Primary	3509	St Edward's Catholic Primary
2109	Daresbury Primary	3649	St Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery
3175	Spinney Avenue CE Voluntary Controlled Primary	3650	St John Fisher Catholic Primary
2406	Ditton Primary	3637	St Martin's Catholic Primary
2425	Fairfield Primary	3506	St Mary's CE Primary
3177	Farnworth CE Controlled Primary	3651	St Michael's Catholic Primary
2383	Gorsewood Primary	2295	The Brow Community Primary
3176	Hale CE Voluntary Controlled Primary	3511	The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary
3050	Halebank CE Voluntary Controlled Primary	2107	Victoria Road Primary
2689	Hallwood Park Primary & Nursery	2723	Westfield Primary
2712	Halton Lodge Primary	2281	Weston Primary
2376	Hill View Primary	2118	Weston Point Community Primary
2428	Lunts Heath Primary	2387	Windmill Hill Primary
2104	Moore Primary	2297	Woodside Primary
2415	Moorfield Primary	4625	Saints Peter & Paul Catholic High
2381	Murdishaw West Community Primary	4614	St Chad's Catholic High
2727	Oakfield Community Primary	4104	The Grange All Through School
3632	Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary		Ditton Nursery School
2726	Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary		Warrington Road Nursery School
2325	Pewithall Primary		Birchfield Nursery School
3502	Runcorn All Saints CE Primary		The Bridge PRU

ANNEX B

CAPITAL /REVENUE SPLIT

Illustrative examples in line with DfE interpretation of the CIPFA Code of Practice.

NB Actual interpretation of the CIPFA Code of Practice for these purposes will be for each local authority.

ELEMENT	CAPITAL: AS CIPFA CODE OF PRACTICE	REVENUE: REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE
Roofs (Flat)	Structure. New (not replacement) structure	Repair/replacement of small parts of an existing structure
	Structure. Replacement of all or substantial part of an existing structure to prevent imminent or correct actual major failure of the structure	Replace small areas of rotten or defective timber, make good minor areas of spalling concrete where reinforcing bars exposed
	Screed / insulation in a new building/extension	Repair/replacement of screed/ insulation where defective.
	Screed/insulation Replacement /repair of substantially all. Improve effectiveness of insulation	Work to improve insulation standards, during work to repair/ replace small areas of roof.
	Finish on new build. Replacement of all/substantially all on existing roof	Replacement of roof finish on existing building. Re-coating chippings to improve life expectancy
	Edge Trim/ Fascia on new build	Repairs/ replacement. (uPVC) Repainting.
	Edge Trim/ Fascia, Replacement of all/substantially all on existing roof	Repairs/ replacement. (uPVC) Repainting.
	Drainage on new build	Clearing out gutters and downpipes. Replacement/repair/ repainting of/ individual gutters/pipes
	Other e.g. Flashings, Roof lights on new build Replacement of all/substantially all on existing roof	Repair/ Replacement/ cleaning of individual items
Roofs (Pitched)	Structure. New (not replacement) structure	Repair/replacement of small parts of an existing structure
	Structure. Replacement of all or substantial part of an existing structure to prevent imminent or correct actual major failure of the structure	Replace/ repair small areas of rotten/ defective joists, rafters, purlins etc. Not complete trusses
	Insulation in a new building/extension	Repair/replacement/ increasing thickness of insulation in an existing roof
	Insulation. Replacement /repair of substantially all. Improve insulation to current standards	
	Roof finish in a new building /extension, replacement of all /substantially all on existing roof	Replace missing/ damaged small parts
	Bargeboards/ Fascia's in a new building/extension, replacement of all/substantially all on existing	Repairs/ replacement/ Repainting

	roof	
	Drainage in a new building/extension	Clearing out gutters and downpipes. Replacement/repairs of individual pipes/gutters
	Drainage. Replacement of all/ substantially all on existing roof	
	Other e.g. Flashings, Roof windows in a new building/ extension, replacement of all/ substantially all on existing roof	Repair/ Replacement /cleaning
Roofs (Other)	Provide new covered link etc. between existing buildings	Minor repairs, maintenance to existing covered link
	Rebuild or substantially repair structure of existing covered link	
	Add porch etc. to existing building	Minor repairs, maintenance to existing structure
	Rebuild or substantially repair structure of existing porch	
Ground Floor	Structure and dpc in new building	Repair/replacement of small parts of an existing structure
	Structure and dpc - Replacement of all or substantial part of an existing structure to prevent imminent or correct actual major failure of the structure	
	Screed and finish in new build, replacement of all/substantially all on existing floor - e.g. replacement of most carpets/ tiles in a room	Replacement and repair of screed and finishes/ Replacement of mats/ matwells. Maintenance e.g. revarnishing wooden floors.
Upper Floor	Structure - as ground floor	As ground floor
	Screed and Finish - as ground floor	Repairs of finishes/ Replacement - as ground floor
Ceilings - Top/ only storey	Suspension	Repair/ replacement incl. From water damage, & necessary decoration
	Membrane	
	Fixed	Repair/ replacement inc. from water damage
	Access panels	Repair/ replacement
Lower storeys	Suspension	Repair/ replacement
	Membrane	
	Fixed	Repair/ replacement
All	Specialist removal/ replacement of damaged/ disturbed Asbestos based materials, planned or emergency	Inspection/ air testing Applying sealant coats to asbestos surfaces for protection
External Walls - Masonry/	Structure Underpinning/ propping for new build	Repairs Preventive measures e.g. tree removal

cladding		
	External Finish on new build	Repair/replacement of small parts of an existing structure. e.g. repointing/ recladding a proportion of a wall where failure has occurred.
	External Finish on existing build where needed to prevent imminent or correct actual major failure of the structure. e.g. repointing/recladding work affecting most of a building /replacement build	
Windows and Doors	Framing - new build	Repair/ replacement of individual frames. Repainting frames
	Framing - structural replacement programme	Repair/ replacement of individual windows. Repainting frames
	Glazing - new build	Replacing broken glass
	Glazing Upgrading existing glazing	
	Ironmongery Improved security	Repair/ replacement, upgrading locks etc.
	Jointing including mastic joints	
	Internal and external decorations to new build	Internal and external decoration to include cleaning down and preparation.
Masonry chimneys	Structure	
	Jointing including expansion and mortar joints/ pointing/ DPC	Repair/ re-pointing
Internal Walls - Solid	Complete including various internal finishes, linings and decorations	Repairs and redecoration to internal plaster/ linings tiles, pin boards etc.
	Refurbishment and alterations	Minor alterations
Partitions	Complete structure including linings, framing, glazing, decoration etc.	Repairs and redecoration.
	Refurbishment and alterations	Minor alterations
Doors & Screens	Framing/ Screens/ Doors to new buildings including glazing, ironmongery, jointing and internal decorations	Internal maintenance and redecoration. Repair/ replacement of defective doors and screens
All	Glazing to meet statutory Health & Safety requirements	Replacement of broken glass
Lavatories	In new buildings provision of all toilet fittings, waste plumbing and internal drainage.	Repair/ replacement of damaged sanitary ware, fittings, waste plumbing etc.
	Large scale toilet refurbishment	Small areas of refurbishment
	Provision of disabled facilities, and specialist facilities related to pupils with statements	Repair/ replacement of damaged fittings, waste plumbing etc.
Kitchens	Kitchens in new buildings complete with fittings, equipment, waste plumbing and internal	Maintain kitchen to requirements of LA Cleaning out drainage systems Redecoration

	drainage. Internal finishes and decorations.	
	General refurbishment	Repairs
	Large and costly items of equipment	Repairs/ replacement parts
Heating/ hot water	Complete heating and hot water systems to new projects, including fuel, storage, controls, distribution, flues etc.	General maintenance of all boiler house plant including replacement of defective parts. Regular cleaning. Energy saving projects
	Safe removal of old/ damaged asbestos boiler and pipework insulation, where risk to Health & Safety.	Monitoring systems Health & safety issues
	Planned replacement of old boiler/ controls systems past the end of their useful life	Replacement of defective parts
	Emergency replacement of boiler plant/ systems	
Cold water	Provision of cold water services, storage tanks, distribution, boosters, hose reels etc. in major projects	Maintenance and repair/ replacement of defective parts such as servicing pipes. Annual servicing of cold water tanks.
Gas	Distribution on new and major refurbishment's, terminal units	Repairs, maintenance and gas safety All servicing
Ventilation	Mechanical ventilation/ air conditioning to major projects	Provision of local ventilation. Repair/ replacement of defective systems and units
Other	Swimming pool plant and its complete installation, including heat recovery systems	Repair/ replacement of parts to plant, pumps and controls. Water treatment equipment and all distribution pipework. Simple heat recovery systems. Solar heating plant and equipment.
Electrical Services - General	Main switchgear and distribution in major projects.	Testing/ replacement of distribution boards. The repair and maintenance of all switchgear and interconnecting cables including that in temporary buildings.
	Replacement of obsolete and dangerous wiring systems, including distribution boards	All testing, earthing and bonding to meet Health & Safety. All servicing.
Power	Control gear, distribution, fixed equipment, protection etc.	All testing, repair and replacement of small items of equipment
Lighting	Provision of luminaires and emergency	Replacement of luminaires, all testing, adjustments and improvements to emergency
Other	Lightning protection in new build	Repair/ replacement
	Alarm systems, CCTV, lifts/ hoists etc.	Repair and maintenance
	New installation of communication systems, radio/ TV, call, telephone, data transmission, IT etc. and provision in new build.	Repair/ replacement/ maintenance, including all door access systems
External Works -	Provision of new roads, car parks, paths, court, terraces, play	Maintenance and repair Car park and playground markings.

Pavings	itches, steps and handrails, as part of major project, including disabled access	
Miscellaneous	Provision of walls, fencing, gates and ancillary buildings as part of major project	Maintenance and repair of all perimeter/ boundary/ retaining walls, fencing and gates.
Drainage	Drains, soakaways, inspection chambers and sewage plant as part of new projects	Maintenance and repair of drains, gullies, grease traps and manholes between buildings and main sewers. Cleaning of the above and unblocking as necessary.
Open air pools	Structure, Hygiene/ safety in new build	Hygiene, cleaning, maintenance and repairs, including replacement parts. Simple energy saving systems.
Services distribution	Heating mains, gas mains, water mains, electricity mains, renewal of any above.	Annual servicing

Notes

This illustrative list is the DfES interpretation of the CIPFA Code of Practice and local Authorities should refer to the Code when defining capital and revenue.

VALUE FOR MONEY AND SCHOOLS

1. This statement is intended to assist schools in considering the relevance of best value principles to the expenditure of funds from their delegated budget share. When submitting annual budget plans, schools are required to say how best value principles are being followed.

2. Best value will be a statutory duty to deliver services to clear standards, covering both cost and quality, the most effective, economic and efficient means available. Legislation is to place a duty on local authorities to secure best value in respect of the way in which they exercise their functions. The new duty is not intended to apply to those functions which are exercised by the governing bodies of LA maintained schools. However, schools will be encouraged to adopt the best value performance management framework.

3. In relation to schools and expenditure from delegated budgets, the main features of best value can be summarised as a need for the governing body of a school to ensure:

A. the existence of a programme of performance review which will aim for continual improvement. Existing mechanisms such as school development plans and post-OFSTED inspection plans can be developed to satisfy the requirements for review.

The reviews should include:

- challenging how and why a service is provided (including consideration of alternative providers);
- comparison of performance against other schools taking into account the views of parents and pupils;
- mechanisms to consult stakeholders, especially parents and pupils;
- embracing competition as a means of securing efficient and effective services;

B. the development of a framework of performance indicators and targets which will provide a clear practical expression of a school's performance, taking national requirements into account;

C. that the following are included in school development plans -

- a summary of objectives and strategy for the future;
- forward targets on an annual and longer term basis;
- description of the means by which performance targets will be achieved;
- a report on current performance

D. that internal and external audit takes place ensuring that performance information is scrutinised. LA oversight of school finances provides external review.

4. The independent inspection and intervention elements of the best value framework will be the responsibility of other bodies and therefore not relevant to demonstration by a governing body of adherence to best value principles.

PROCUREMENT / PURCHASING GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

Introduction

The aim of this guidance is to support Governing Bodies and Headteachers in meeting their responsibilities for school improvement by:

- identifying and evaluating options for delivering a service (in-house/Council provision/external provider)
- effectively carrying out their purchasing responsibilities;
- ensuring value for money decision-making; and
- becoming better-informed purchasers of services.

Governing Bodies must meet any statutory requirements in the area of service provision, including those required by the LA to enable its statutory responsibilities to be met.

This guidance is given against the background that for maintained schools a contract signed by an authorised member of staff or governor of the school will be binding on the Council as well as the Governing Body of the school.

Schools should seek legal advice when procuring goods / services and in the event of any difficulties being experienced during the period of a contract.

Role of the LA

The Council promotes school autonomy through effective services to support school management, including promoting good purchasing practices.

Schools should have real choice over how they meet their delegated responsibilities (within school resources, Council support services, other providers), including the level, volume and amount spent. This choice must ensure compliance with their statutory duties. The Council should ensure that schools have sufficient information to exercise that choice, including information on statutory requirements which will need to be reflected in service specifications developed by schools.

The Council continues to have some statutory responsibilities and retains funding for aspects of a number of service areas for which general responsibility has been delegated to schools (eg Payroll – link to the Teacher Pension Agency).

Accountability

Schools are accountable through their governing bodies to the Council as the LA and to the parents of children at the school for the efficiency and effectiveness with which they carry out their functions. The Council has a duty to satisfy itself that funds delegated to schools are managed properly. The Council will ensure that the necessary systems are in place to check that functions are being carried out in an effective and efficient way.

Principles of Good Procurement

1. Value for Money

To achieve Value for Money (VfM) there should be recognition that 'price' is not the only consideration. Consideration has to be given to 'cost' which includes price, delivery costs, insurance, invoice processing, etc. Other factors will include:

- Economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- Quality
- Qualifications and experience
- Range of provision
- Capacity of the supplier to be responsive to the current and future needs of the school
- Financial viability of the supplier
- Compatibility with the School's ethos and culture

2. Best Value

Schools are not covered directly by Best Value legislation but are responsible for a large proportion of LA expenditure and are required to adhere to the Best Value principles. In recognition of Governing Bodies' responsibilities the statutory guidance on LA schemes for financing schools makes provision that schools should demonstrate that they are following Best Value principles in expenditure. OfSTED will inspect this area of responsibility as part of their inspection of a school's financial management. Governing Bodies are required to submit with their annual budget plan, a statement setting out the steps they will take to ensure that expenditure reflects the principles of good practice.

Best Value involves testing purchasing decisions against 'the four Cs'

- Challenge why, how and by whom a service is provided
- Compare performance with other providers
- Consult service users, the community, etc as appropriate
- Compete – use fair competition to ensure economic, efficient and effective services.

Governing Bodies and Headteachers should consider the following main features of Best Value in schools:

- The existence of a programme of performance review which will aim for continual improvement in the cost-effectiveness of bought-in services. School development plans and post-inspection action plans can be developed to satisfy the requirements for review
- Reviews should follow the principles of the 'four Cs'
- Documenting how Best Value requirements have been met

3. Purchasing

Governing Bodies should already have in place written procedures which have regard to the following purchasing issues:

- Agreed financial limits on purchasing decisions which can be made by the Headteacher or by other members of staff (if appropriate) without reference to the Governing Body or Headteacher respectively (known as the Scheme of Delegation);
- Agreed purchasing limit above which quotations and tenders must be sought;
- Separation of duties so that no one person is independently responsible for the entire purchasing process (ordering, receiving and authorising payment);
- Ensuring that legal advice is taken before contracts are entered into;
- Audit trails so that purchasing decisions can be tracked and evidenced; and
- Requirement that all involved in making purchasing decisions sign a declaration of interest statement so as to minimise potential conflicts of interest.

4. Quotations and Tendering

Key features underpinning quotation and tendering processes include:

- A clear statement of the school's requirements;
- A clear statement of the statutory responsibilities (School and, where applicable, LA) which must be met;
- A format with which suppliers' bids must comply;
- A timetable for submitting, opening and evaluating quotations and tenders; and
- Written processes for opening and evaluating the submitted quotations and tenders.

EU Procurement Rules of Tendering may apply for large purchases, likely significant building works or services provided by schools grouped together. The TUPE regulations may also apply.

Entering into contracts creates significant and sometimes surprising legal implications and liabilities for the school and the Council which is why taking legal advice is a must. Specific care should be taken where the contract is a standard document produced by the supplier of goods or services.

Areas of particular issue can arise with contracts for the supply of agency staff and for equipment leases. There is evidence of cost and time resource repercussions to schools where activities in these areas have been inappropriate.

5. School's Requirements

Schools need to identify clearly both their requirements and the way in which they will measure performance. These need to be contained in a written document which can be checked against submitted quotations, tenders etc to ascertain which best meets the school's needs and which provides the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the service delivered.

A school's purchasing procedures should comply with the contract Standing Orders for Schools as incorporated in the Authority's Scheme for Financing Schools.

A school should write its own detailed specification or require that a supplier's specification be tailored to more closely match school's needs.

A specification should include:

- Required frequency of delivery;
- Deadlines for service delivery;
- The price and structure / conditions for payment;
- The range of service to be provided, including statutory requirements;
- Desired outputs and outcomes;
- The required level of performance;
- Liquidated damages for non-performance;
- Health and Safety requirements;
- How contractor's employees will be identified on site (proof of identify / uniform,etc); and
- Contract conditions (as given in section 7)

Where a service features staff employed working in close contact with pupils schools should satisfy themselves that all appropriate background checks are being or can be carried out (eg agency staff).

6. Measuring Performance

Performance measures should be identified at the time of defining requirements so that they are known and understood by all parties and underpin any monitoring processes in place. Application of the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Related) approach will support this but it is important that measures are:

- Unambiguous and not open to misinterpretation by either party;
- Attributable so that responsibility for achieving good performance is clear;
- Written in such a way as to facilitate easy monitoring;
- Limited in number; and
- Reflect the school's culture, aims and objectives.

7. Contracts and Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

These are written agreements between two parties for the supply of goods or services. Contracts are normally between school and private suppliers and SLAs between schools or between a school and the LEA.

Contracts and SLAs should include:

- details of all parties involved;
- duration of the agreement;
- the goods and services to be provided including level and frequency;
- the obligations of both parties;
- the location of service delivery;
- the names, qualifications and other relevant factors of those providing the service;
- the performance measures;
- the price of the service and the payment mechanism;
- complaints and dispute resolution procedures;
- provision to exclude undesirable employees from school sites;
- anti-corruption conditions;
- the exclusion of third party rights; and
- a section for the agreement to be signed and dated by all parties.

Agreements must be signed only by those with appropriate authorisation.

Before entering into an agreement schools should assure themselves of:

- the financial viability of the supplier (the Council's Internal Audit Division can undertake financial reference checks on request);
- the method of service delivery;
- the quality of their work;
- the suitability of their insurance cover;
- the existence and application of health and safety policies and practice;
- the mechanisms for dealing with complaints;
- the arrangements for recompensing schools where the supplier has failed to deliver to the agreed specification; and
- English Courts jurisdiction.

Written references should be requested and taken up.

8. Purchasing Options

The full range of purchasing options should be considered. As the range of private suppliers is increasing and the Council may reduce the range of services on offer, options may include:

- purchasing consortia where schools come together to increase their purchasing power
- use of a brokerage service to arrange the purchase of goods and services on behalf of schools
- development of e-commerce for purchasing in accordance with any future guidance issued by the Council under its Implementation of Electronic Government Strategy (IEG)

Purchasing Consortia

Many of the services used by schools are common to most types and sizes of school. It may therefore be useful to consider whether forming a purchasing consortium can offer economic or organisational advantages. Clear statements of requirements of each member of the consortium must be identified and must form the basis of a legal agreement between the schools in the consortium. It is important that legal advice is taken before the agreement is signed.

Brokerage

This would be an arrangement by which an organisation procures goods or services on behalf of schools. This service might be provided by the LA or an independent provider. A written contract is needed in the case of an independent provider and legal advice sought before it is signed.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective monitoring and evaluation is an integral part of the purchasing process and is underpinned by clear statements of requirements, specifications, contracts and SLAs.

Monitoring will focus on regular, routine checking that goods / services are delivered as specified and any shortcomings are reported and responded to within specified timescales.

Evaluation will be concerned with whether the quality of goods / services is meeting the needs of the school as effectively, efficiently and economically as possible.

Effective monitoring and evaluation both involve:

- the allocation of responsibility for ensuring that the process takes place;
- clarity of desired outcomes, outputs and performance measures;
- the collection of evidence (qualitative and quantitative);
- early reporting of faults and follow up until satisfaction is achieved; and
- making judgements and decisions about future service provision

February 2002

Acknowledgements

the Purchasing section of the DfES A – Z website.
the Purchasing guide for Schools – VFM Unit website
Code of Practice on Local Education Authority and Schools Relations

OPERATION OF LOCAL BANK ACCOUNTS

1 General

1.1 In order to maintain separation of duties, all cheques should be signed by two signatories who are first provided with appropriate supporting documentation relating to the payment. The governing body should nominate a small number of senior members of staff, as authorised signatories for the local bank account. Each should be given a limit of financial authorisation; appropriate to their needs, above which further authorisation is required.

1.2 The governing body shall ensure that blank cheque books and records relating to the local bank account, shall be stored securely and access to such is restricted to authorised members of staff at all times.

1.3 Schools shall not arrange any overdraft or credit facilities in relation to their local bank account. The governing body should ensure that procedures exist within the school, to confirm that there are sufficient funds available in the local bank account, before any expenditure commitment is entered into.

1.4 The governing body should be presented with a cash flow budget at the beginning of each financial year, and progress statements during the year, to enable to governing body to monitor the local bank account and ensure that it is correctly managed so as to avoid becoming overdrawn.

1.5 Funds which are surplus to immediate requirements may be invested in the Borough Council's Deposit Savings Scheme. Alternatively they may be invested with the financial institutions named on the list of authorised institutions drawn up by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources, but only in accounts which provide immediate access to the whole of the sum invested.

1.6 All year end procedures, as provided by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources, in respect of local bank accounts, shall be complied with.

2 Monthly reconciliations

2.1 Monthly reconciliations of transactions made via the local bank account of the approved format, shall be undertaken and forwarded to the Financial Management Division by the 20th of the following month, in order to ensure that the appropriate accounting analysis is entered into the school's accounts with the Borough Council. Failure to provide the monthly reconciliation analysis by the due date may result in delays in cash advances being made to schools.

2.2 The final reconciliation of the financial year should be completed and submitted to the Financial Management Division by the last day of the Spring Term. Due to the tight deadlines for closing the council accounts, failure to submit by this date will result in the March expenditure not being included within the correct financial year. If the submitted return is in any way incorrect it will be processed as it is received and any corrections will be required on the April return. Therefore, incorrect or late submissions will impact on schools' end of year balance and Consistent Financial Reporting return.

2.3 It is however, recommended that schools undertake reconciliations for their own benefit more frequently than monthly, in order to avoid difficulties in balancing the local bank account and to permit discrepancies to be identified, investigated and resolved as soon as possible. If any discrepancies do occur, it is the individual School's responsibility to resolve

and rectify them. However, even if the reconciliation at school level balances it does not guarantee reconciliation with the Council's ledger. Any discrepancies between the school and Council ledger should be investigated and if found to be an error with the school, the school must rectify the error on the next return.

2.4 The governing body shall ensure that a separate reconciliation is performed at least monthly by the school, between the school's bank reconciliation and the Borough Council's accounts as provided via Central Reports from the Financial Management Division.

2.5 The reconciliation should be certified by the person undertaking it and should then be checked and certified by a second member of staff who is familiar with the operation of the local bank account. Wherever possible the person who reconciles the local bank account should not be in a position to process invoices for payment, or receive or process income.

2.6 Monthly reconciliations should be performed (by the Financial Management Division, if purchased via an SLA) of the amounts shown as credited on the Central Reports provided by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources. Any discrepancies should be investigated promptly.

3 Expenditure

3.1 Payments for goods and services shall always be made through the school's official bank account and not through an officer's or governors personal bank account. An exception to this is for the purchase of minor items under £25, where a member of the school's staff may pay for items in the first instance, obtain a receipt, and then be reimbursed from the school's petty cash facilities. Care shall be taken to ensure that this facility is not abused.

3.2 Any circumstances affecting the salaries, wages or other payments to any school employee, including appointments, promotions, re-grading, secondments, suspensions, dismissals, retirements and absences from duty (other than normal leave), shall be notified to the HR Division in the appropriate manner. Governing bodies are advised to consult the HR Division on any matters relating to conditions of service, salary and wage scales. Any School who opts out of the payroll and personnel SLA no longer use the services previously provided. Despite this, contact does remain between the new providers and HBC payroll relating to payments of pensions and to the General Teaching Council. All Local Government Pension, Teacher's pension and Prudential AVC contributions deducted by the alternative providers are paid to HBC payroll, who in turn forward the payments to the three organisations. This procedure has been undertaken as HBC as employer remains responsible for the end of year pension returns. Payroll also undertake the notification of appointments, changes and terminations to Teacher's pensions, as the TPA will not accept notifications from an agency and HBC remain responsible for the completion of the Annual Service Return.

3.3 Governing bodies are responsible for providing the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources with any information required to calculate and pay salaries and wages. They shall also provide any information necessary to enable the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources to maintain records of service and make deductions for superannuation, income tax, national insurance and statutory sick pay.

3.4 Time sheets and other pay documents in a form approved by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources shall be checked and certified by an officer authorised by the governing body, who shall be a different person to that who has completed the documents. The names and specimen signatures of all authorised officers shall be submitted to the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources, along with notification of any subsequent changes. Claims by any member of the school's staff for expenses incurred in carrying out

official duties, shall also be certified by an authorised officer and produced in a form approved by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources.

3.5 In authorising such documents, authorised officers should particularly ensure that the payment was necessary, has been coded to the appropriate code, is within the sum available in the appropriate school budget, and that the school's records have been updated to record that the document has been passed for payment.

3.6 Governing bodies should ensure that the duties of authorising or terminating the appointment of staff, are performed by different staff to those responsible for undertaking the processing of salaries, wages, travelling and other employee related payments.

3.7 Unless a school operates a local bank account for pay budgets, all payments to school staff for work done, and travelling and subsistence claims (see below) shall be paid through the Borough Council's payroll system, to ensure that the school complies with income tax regulations. No employee related payments shall be processed through the central payment system, local bank account, and imprest account or school fund, except where a school has a local bank account for pay and non-pay budgets.

3.8 School staff shall conform to the terms and conditions for the use of a car on official business as printed on car allowance claim forms, issued by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources unless the school has agreed its own procedures.

3.9 The correct accounting detail, including the separate analysis of VAT, should be made on the appropriate part of the school income paying-in slip in order that VAT is accurately identified in the Borough Council's accounts. The paying-in slip should indicate the relevant school receipt numbers and amounts to be paid in alongside the income description and account code.

4 Assets

4.1 An inventory should be maintained of all permanent, valuable and transportable items with a value above £100, including vehicles, visual aid equipment, computer equipment, power tools, camping and sports equipment.

4.2 Whenever an item is disposed of, the inventory entry should be deleted with a reference to the reason or circumstances. The inventory should specify the following details for each item: location, cost; date of acquisition; source of funding; description (including serial numbers where applicable), order number and disposal details.

5 Income

5.1 The collection of all income should be immediately acknowledged by the issue of an official, pre-numbered receipt, or in a form approved by the Strategic Director for Policy and Resources and a record should be made immediately in the accounting system of the income received, including an analysis of VAT where appropriate.

5.2 The governing body should separate, as far as is practicable, the responsibility for identifying sums due to the school from the responsibility for collecting and banking such sums.

5.3 In order to ensure compliance with the 1992 Cheques Act, all cheques, which represent official Borough Council income must be, made payable to 'Halton Borough Council' and not the individual school. This is necessary in order to comply with VAT regulations.

5.4 Personal cheques must not be cashed from money held on behalf of the Borough Council.

5.5 Goods or materials sold for cash, or paid for by cheque, cannot be released until the cash has been received by the school or the cheque cleared in to the Borough Council's bank account or approved local bank account. Cheques offered with a valid guarantee card may be treated as cash, subject to the conditions under which the card has been issued.

5.6 The governing body should ensure that cash or cheques are placed in a locked safe or locked drawer, as soon as possible after receipt, and that access to safes and locked drawers is strictly controlled. The governing body should ensure that insurance cover is sufficient in respect of the amounts of cash and cheques held in the school. Further advice is available from the Insurance Manager or Internal Audit Division.

5.7 All documentation and records in relation to income due to, or received by the school, shall be retained securely.

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 22nd June 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2014-15

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report to the School Forum the final Dedicated Schools Grant position for 2014-15 and note the amount of DSG carried forward into the 2015-16 financial year.

2.0 Recommendation

RECOMMENDED: That the amount of unspent DSG from 2014-15 of £2,625,589 is carried forward into the 2015-16 financial year be noted by the School Forum.

3.0 Background

Each year all local authorities are required to submit a Section 251 Outturn return to the Department for Education. The authority records its total income and expenditure for the previous financial year (2014-15). This includes income and expenditure at individual school level, taken from the Consistent Financial Reporting return plus central local authority income and expenditure.

- 3.1 The DSG available for distribution in 2014-15 totalled £83.1M as below:

Final allocation of DSG for 2014-15	£79.3M
Plus unspent DSG from 2013-14 carried forward	<u>£ 3.8M</u>
Total DSG available in 2014-15	£83.1M

- 3.2 The DSG expenditure in 2014-15 totalled £80.5M as below:

Actual DSG School level expenditure	£68.5M
Actual DSG Central expenditure	<u>£12.0M</u>
Total DSG expenditure in 2014-15	£80.5M

- 3.3 The unspent DSG from 2014-15 brought forward into 2015-16 is therefore £2.6M as below:

Total DSG available in 2014-15	£83.1M
Total DSG expenditure in 2014-15	<u>£80.5M</u>
Total DSG brought forward into 2015-16	£ 2.6M

- 3.4 The centrally held DSG budgets were overspent by £1.2M in 2014-15. The main overspends were on funding to the PVI sector and top-up funding, especially to special schools. The remaining funds brought forward will be used to fund budget pressures in the current 2015-16 financial year. Regular

monitoring meetings will be held over the course of the year to identify areas of concern and in order to put in place ways of minimising over spends.

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 22nd June 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Education, Inclusion and Provision

SUBJECT: Contingency Update 2015/2016

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report provides an update on the value of the Dedicated School Grant contingencies for 2015/2015.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

2.1 **School Forum note the current balance on each of the Contingencies.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The General Schools Contingency for 2015/2016 is £207,966. To date the following support has been agreed leaving a balance of £100,930.

Description	Allocation
The Grange	£80,000
Licences	£27,036
Total Allocated	£107,036

3.2 The Pupil Growth Contingency for 2015/2016 is £100,000 plus carry forward of £80,001 which gives a total of £180,001. Growth funding will be allocated following January Forum meeting.

3.3 The High Needs Contingency budget for 2015/2016 is £1,129,210 plus carry forward from 2014/2015 of £404,726 giving a total of £1,533,936. To date enhanced provision for schools and academies and funding for Ashley post 16 and post 16 administration has been agreed to the value of £356,242. This leaves a current balance of £1,177,694.

3.4 The Early Years Contingency budget for 2015/2016 is currently nil. There is a carry forward budget of £142,996. The LA have been notified that there will be a reduction of £74,000 to the early years budget. In addition,

School Forum sub agreed financial support of £43,294 to Ditton Nursery. The remaining balance is therefore £25,702.

- 3.5 The total Central Contingency carry forward from 2014/2015 is £1,840,337. £50,000 is committed as a contribution to IWIST this leaves a balance of £1,790,337.

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 22nd June 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: School Balances 2014-15

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report to the School Forum the level of balances brought forward from 2014-15 by Halton Schools.

2.0 Recommendation

RECOMMENDED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That School Forum requests explanations from schools which have balances in excess of 8% (5% for secondary schools) as to why their balances are so high.
3. That School Forum considers asking schools with carry forward levels in excess of 8% (5% for secondary schools) to provide explanations for those levels to be submitted to Schools Forum with the school balances report each summer term.

3.0 Background

3.1 Following discussion at the School Forum meeting in January 2013, the excess surplus balance limits previously imposed on schools were lifted for 2012-13 and has continued up to 2014-15. However the balances were still to be monitored.

3.2 The level of balances in the Individual School Budget held by Halton Schools brought forward into 2015-16 is £7,451,751. This is an increase of £120,224 to the balance carried forward into 2014-15 of £7,331,527.

3.3 It should be noted that the Primary sector balances have increased by £1,363,883 from £3,765,186 to £5,129,069 over the year. Out of the 46 maintained primaries, 26 have balances that exceed the former excess surplus balance limit of 8% and eight of those 26 have balances in excess of 16%, double the former excess surplus balance limit.

No nursery or secondary school has a balance more than double their respective former excess surplus balance limit and overall the balances within the two sectors have decreased. Within the secondary sector the majority of this decrease is due to the conversion of one school to academy.

For special schools, one school has more than double the former excess surplus balance limit.

- 3.4 Given the increasing pressures on the Dedicated Schools Budget as a whole, it is strongly recommended that schools with balances above the former excess surplus balance limit are requested to provide an explanation as to how they plan to spend this high balance.
- 3.5 It is also strongly recommended that Schools Forum agree that schools with balances above the former excess surplus balance limit are required to provide such explanation for submission to Schools Forum in future years with the School Balances report at the Summer Term meeting.
- 3.6 Appendix A details the Individual School Budget balances with comparison to the previous year. Schools which have balances above the former excess surplus balance limit are highlighted.
- 3.7 A total of £263,181 Non-LMS funds were carried forward into 2014-15 by schools. This balance has increased by £31,649 to give a balance of £260,916 to be carried forward into 2015-16.
- 3.8 Appendix B details the Non-LMS (Devolved Formula Capital) balances brought forward into 2015-16.

Appendix A

Code	School	2013-14				2014-15			
		Approved Budget £	Amount £	Balance £	%	Approved Budget £	Amount £	Balance £	%
5001	Ditton Nursery	301,401	300,595	806	0.27%	283,796	276,557	7,239	2.55%
5002	Birchfield Nursery	382,984	325,452	57,532	15.02%	389,084	350,124	38,960	10.01%
5003	Warrington Road Nursery	443,997	402,365	41,633	9.38%	465,478	417,729	47,749	10.26%
Sub-total Nursery Schools		1,128,383	1,028,412	99,971	8.86%	1,138,358	1,044,410	93,948	8.25%
5100	St Mary's Primary	1,104,388	998,511	105,877	9.59%	1,202,772	986,322	216,450	18.00%
5101	St Edwards Primary	708,093	618,776	89,317	12.61%	719,428	618,244	101,184	14.06%
5102	Weston Point Community Primary	847,900	742,794	105,106	12.40%	934,499	773,227	161,272	17.26%
5105	Victoria Road Primary	1,111,476	959,992	151,484	13.63%	1,210,239	1,044,211	166,028	13.72%
5106	Weston Primary	671,721	618,918	52,803	7.86%	765,420	661,129	104,291	13.63%
5107	St Clements Primary	884,447	855,483	28,964	3.27%	824,535	794,609	29,926	3.63%
5108	Westfield Primary	916,442	883,125	33,317	3.64%	919,185	903,821	15,364	1.67%
5109	Halton Lodge Primary	986,687	862,487	124,200	12.59%	1,195,493	1,077,528	117,965	9.87%
5110	Castle View Primary	898,976	788,656	110,320	12.27%	949,649	825,932	123,717	13.03%
5111	Astmoor Primary	914,508	841,112	73,396	8.03%	957,792	863,317	94,475	9.86%
5112	The Brow Community Primary	1,065,441	1,070,628	-5,188	-0.49%	1,146,358	1,065,538	80,820	7.05%
5113	Woodside Primary	1,065,547	970,018	95,529	8.97%	1,126,414	1,044,094	82,320	7.31%
5114	The Holy Spirit Primary	645,969	599,049	46,920	7.26%	685,002	619,156	65,846	9.61%
5116	Pewithall Primary	868,797	795,405	73,392	8.45%	868,444	816,185	52,259	6.02%
5118	Hallwood Park Primary	812,401	826,400	-13,999	-1.72%	874,367	789,582	84,785	9.70%
5119	St Augustine's Primary	564,232	518,673	45,559	8.07%	630,516	622,954	7,562	1.20%
5120	Runcorn All Saints Primary	674,876	589,252	85,624	12.69%	696,348	565,783	130,565	18.75%
5121	Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Primary	893,747	755,000	138,746	15.52%	1,035,584	820,720	214,864	20.75%
5122	Hillview Primary	913,020	843,476	69,543	7.62%	903,922	759,093	144,829	16.02%
5123	Beechwood Primary	662,497	566,208	96,289	14.53%	666,788	579,207	87,581	13.13%
5125	Brookvale Primary	1,410,174	1,187,741	222,433	15.77%	1,597,404	1,296,119	301,285	18.86%
5126	St Martins Primary	902,602	885,832	16,770	1.86%	973,045	953,828	19,217	1.97%
5127	Murdishaw West Comm Primary	1,050,836	960,970	89,866	8.55%	1,119,683	1,032,708	86,975	7.77%
5128	Gorsewood Primary	986,068	878,328	107,740	10.93%	1,161,706	969,615	192,091	16.54%
5129	St Bertelina's Primary	1,085,495	1,058,074	27,421	2.53%	1,195,420	1,083,306	112,114	9.38%
5130	Windmill Hill Primary	786,525	745,163	41,363	5.26%	844,024	784,891	59,133	7.01%
5131	Daresbury Primary	504,891	485,365	19,526	3.87%	530,192	511,148	19,044	3.59%
5132	Moore Primary	786,322	743,609	42,713	5.43%	813,090	781,042	32,048	3.94%
5133	Hale Primary	643,799	574,133	69,666	10.82%	708,636	632,680	75,956	10.72%
5134	St Bedes Junior	1,043,929	970,412	73,517	7.04%	1,126,459	1,048,505	77,954	6.92%
5135	St Bedes Infant	882,906	807,192	75,714	8.58%	1,019,925	917,107	102,818	10.08%
5136	Spinney Avenue Primary	855,401	796,854	58,547	6.84%	930,943	903,978	26,965	2.90%
5137	St Michael's Primary	1,096,322	978,752	117,570	10.72%	1,226,671	1,080,226	146,445	11.94%
5138	Farnworth Primary	1,298,889	1,280,137	18,752	1.44%	1,348,679	1,305,257	43,422	3.22%

Appendix A

Code	School	2013-14				2014-15			
		Approved Budget £	Amount £	Balance £	%	Approved Budget £	Amount £	Balance £	%
5139	Halebank Primary	568,322	487,035	81,287	14.30%	604,815	514,469	90,346	14.94%
5140	St Gerard's Primary & Nursery	1,081,308	954,647	126,660	11.71%	1,223,917	1,028,639	195,278	15.96%
5141	Ditton Primary	1,499,440	1,465,831	33,609	2.24%	1,703,118	1,635,189	67,929	3.99%
5142	Simms Cross Primary	1,331,279	1,177,636	153,644	11.54%	1,502,064	1,281,066	220,998	14.71%
5144	Oakfield Primary	1,708,117	1,532,898	175,219	10.26%	1,922,117	1,728,871	193,246	10.05%
5146	Moorfield Primary	1,089,232	1,065,125	24,107	2.21%	1,103,532	1,060,076	43,456	3.94%
5148	Our Lady Of Perpetual Succour Primary	844,994	810,156	34,838	4.12%	856,721	795,139	61,582	7.19%
5149	St Basils Primary	1,537,247	1,469,070	68,177	4.44%	1,719,409	1,653,725	65,684	3.82%
5150	All Saints Upton Primary	943,431	924,521	18,909	2.00%	1,082,093	1,061,726	20,367	1.88%
5151	Fairfield Primary	2,498,700	2,161,767	336,933	13.48%	2,716,835	2,195,329	521,506	19.20%
5153	Lunts Heath Primary	1,151,080	1,025,035	126,044	10.95%	1,285,021	1,147,219	137,802	10.72%
5154	St John Fisher Primary	1,013,381	939,845	73,535	7.26%	1,116,179	982,875	133,304	11.94%
Sub-total Primary Schools		46,750,635	43,000,187	3,750,449	8.02%	49,744,452	42,237,591	5,129,069	10.31%
5301	St Chads High	7,646,142	7,333,816	312,326	4.08%	7,005,333	6,564,569	440,765	6.29%
5303	The Grange All Through	8,184,349	7,713,759	470,590	5.75%	7,376,616	7,124,101	252,515	3.42%
5312	St Peter & Paul High	8,888,058	7,974,837	913,220	10.27%	9,255,368	8,456,075	799,293	8.64%
5313	The Bridge PRU	1,250,969	1,223,707	27,262	2.18%	1,278,472	1,213,837	64,635	5.06%
Sub-total Secondary Schools		31,083,683	28,905,797	2,181,356	7.02%	24,915,789	23,358,581	1,557,209	6.25%
5401	Ashley	1,491,337	1,425,002	66,336	4.45%	1,872,846	1,782,473	90,373	4.83%
5402	Chesnut Lodge Special	1,667,123	1,432,233	234,890	14.09%	1,755,087	1,486,490	268,597	15.30%
5403	Brookfields	1,580,184	1,390,058	190,126	12.03%	1,787,513	1,474,958	312,555	17.49%
Sub-total Special Schools		7,181,053	5,896,638	1,284,415	17.89%	5,415,446	4,743,921	671,525	12.40%
Total - All Schools		86,143,754	78,831,034	7,316,190	8.49%	81,214,044	71,384,501	7,451,751	9.18%

Non-LMS School Balances 2013-14 to 2014-15

	2013-14	2014-15
5502 Weston Point Community Primary	(4,636.39)	2,720.00
5505 Victoria Road Primary	13,071.00	10,042.00
5506 Weston Primary	8,430.00	10,614.00
5508 Westfield Primary	0.00	0.00
5509 Halton Lodge Primary	6,261.00	3,555.00
5510 Castle View Primary	15,645.00	15,725.00
5511 Astmoor Primary	0.00	2,802.00
5512 The Brow Community Primary	3,504.00	2,182.00
5513 Woodside Primary	11,619.00	9,801.00
5516 Pewithall Primary	8,716.82	5,556.00
5518 Hallwood Park Primary	(138.12)	(195.00)
5522 Hillview Primary	11,021.00	12,767.00
5523 Beechwood Primary	0.00	5,508.00
5525 Brookvale Primary	2,947.00	6,462.00
5527 Murdishaw West Comm Primary	11,972.00	7,997.00
5528 Gorsewood Primary	4,720.40	4,297.00
5530 Windmill Hill Primary	0.00	13.00
5531 Daresbury Primary	58.00	2,625.00
5532 Moore Primary	(442.69)	0.00
5533 Hale Primary	(98.00)	5,275.00
5536 Spinney Avenue Primary	9,424.68	15,489.00
5538 Farnworth Primary	2,126.43	1,843.00
5539 Halebank Primary	7,893.00	9,687.00
5541 Ditton Primary	7,651.42	8,617.00
5542 Simms Cross Primary	15,004.08	3,244.00
5544 Oakfield Primary	9,414.00	13,096.00
5546 Moorfield Primary	3,281.80	(3,423.00)
5550 All Saints Upton Primary	2,681.42	4,093.00
5551 Fairfield Primary	4,203.00	34,023.00
5552 Fairfield Infants	17,271.00	0.00
5553 Lunts Heath Primary	14,447.00	7,229.00
Sub-total Primary Schools	188,215.23	201,644.00
5591 Ditton Nursery	2,261.00	6,837.00
5592 Birchfield Nursery	3,690.50	3,558.00
5593 Warrington Road Nursery	12,435.63	14,382.00
Sub-total Nursery Schools	18,387.13	24,777.00
5563 The Grange All Through	0.00	0.00
5595 The Bridge PRU	253.00	3,291.00
Sub-total Secondary Schools	0.00	3,291.00
5581 Ashley	6,546.00	9,101.00
5582 Chestnut Lodge Special	11,086.00	14,082.00
5583 Brookfields	5,306.13	8,021.00
Sub-total Special Schools	22,938.13	31,204.00
Total - All Schools	229,540.49	260,916.00

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 22nd June 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Headteacher of Halton Virtual School

SUBJECT: Expenditure of Pupil Premium Plus for Children in Care 2014-15

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide an update to Schools Forum on the expenditure profile of the Pupil Premium Plus grant for Children in Care 2014-15.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

2.1 (a) **School Forum note the report on the use of the Pupil Premium Plus for Children in Care for 2014/2015.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) for Children in Care (CIC) is governed by the conditions of grant published by the Department of Education (DfE). In February 2014 these conditions changed resulting in significant differences from the conditions applied in previous years. A summary of the major differences were:

1	The basis of the allocation of PP+ is the Local Authority Children Looked After Data Return SSSDA903 and not on the school census. This return identifies the number of Children in Care to the LA for at least one day as recorded in March of the previous year. This year's allocation of the PP+ grant is calculated based on £1900 per the number of these children aged 4 to 15 as at 31 st August 2013 but is then finalised in October 2014 following an update of numbers in March 2014. This means that the PP+ fund for each LA is different and is not a fixed budget until October 2014.
2	Page 9 of the conditions of grant clearly states that: <i>'The grant allocation for Looked After Children must be managed by the designated Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after those children to be used for the benefit of the looked after child's educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP).'</i>

	This is different to other Pupil Premium funding in that it is not the school who manages the funds but the Virtual School Head, and that the PP+ is to be used for individual children rather than incorporated into a whole school budget.
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- 3.2 The DfE also produced further statutory guidance (March 2014) that described the 'Role of the Virtual School Head in managing the PP+ for Children in Care'. A summary of the key differences were:

1	Children and young people are eligible 24 hours after they enter care, rather than the previous criteria that required a period of six months in care as a qualification.
2	The PP+ grant allocation does not have to be distributed on a per capita basis as there is recognition that children and young people in care have differing levels of need at different stages of their journey through the education and care systems
3	The grant must be managed by the Virtual School Head.
4	<p>The PP+ must always be used to improve educational outcomes and close the gap as identified in each child's Personal Education Plan (PEP). The Virtual School Head is responsible for making sure that the following effective arrangements are in place:</p> <p>That PP+ funding is spent effectively and fully, as any underspend must be returned to the DfE at the end of the financial year;</p> <p>That the PP+ has been linked to raising achievement for CIC and closing the gap between their achievement and that of their peers;</p> <p>By undertaking constructive dialogue with the school, usually through the Designated Teacher, ensuring the PP+ will contribute to meeting the child's needs as identified in his/her PEP.</p>
5	There is no requirement for the Virtual School Head to pass the funding onto the school where the child is on roll to contribute towards meeting the needs identified in their PEP. There is, however, a strong expectation that the Virtual School Head will consult with the Designated Teacher around how to meet the child's learning needs, and pass the money on to support this. There is no requirement to pass on the PP+ to non-mainstream schools.

6	Schools cannot insist that they get the full PP+ grant for each child on their roll as it is up to the Virtual School Head to manage the PP+ grant allocation.
7	It is for the Virtual School Head to decide the amount of PP+ and the frequency of payments. This means that there is no set amount that each child is eligible to receive and that the Virtual School Head can link payments to the completion of the PEP.
8	The Virtual School Head can pool some of the budget allocation and keep this centrally for activities that are of holistic benefit to the LA's CIC. However, the PP+ must not be used for activities that the LA would normally be expected to fund as the corporate parents, including support for foster carers, or for administrating the PP+ grant.

- 3.3 In response to these changes Halton adopted a 'child's individual needs driven model' of allocation that was linked to the completion of effective, timely and high quality PEPs. This also coincided with the move to termly PEPs as outlined in the revised statutory guidance for Local Authorities on 'Promoting the education of looked after children' (July 2014). This is a summary of the key overarching principles of the model adopted by Halton:

1	The core question guiding the decision making of the Virtual School Head, Social Worker, and Designated Teacher, regarding the use of the PP+ must be - 'would this be good enough for my child?'
2	The PP+ must be used to improve the educational outcomes for all Children in Care, wherever they live.
3	The PP+ must be responsive to the identified needs of each Child in Care as each one will have a differing set of needs and these individual needs may vary over time.
4	The PP+ must be clearly linked to each PEP. Any PP+ funding allocated must be used for the specified child in a way that has been clearly identified within the child's PEP. The PP+ must make a difference to the educational outcomes of the child. Therefore, the impact of the PP+ must be rigorously monitored and evidenced.
5	The Virtual School Head will have a constructive dialogue with schools regarding improving the educational outcomes for each of

	their Children in Care, as schools are accountable for the educational attainment and progress of all disadvantaged pupils on their roll who attract pupil premium.
6	The Virtual School Head wants to fully and appropriately utilise the PP+ grant and not return any underspend to the DfE at the end of the financial year. However, it is for the Virtual School Head to manage and deploy this funding in accordance with the identified needs of the children within the Virtual School.

This model was deemed to be good practice by Ofsted during Halton's recent inspection (Nov – Dec 2014).

4.0 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION OF PP+ FOR CIC 2014-15

- 4.1 As per the conditions of grant the initial allocation of PP+ for CIC was based on the Local Authority Children Looked After Data Return SSDA903. This meant that Halton received a grant of £157,700 based on 83 identified children in care.
- 4.2 Whilst Halton's PP+ practice guidance and the new termly PEPs were being developed, an initial payment was made in the Summer term 2014 to ensure that there was no disruption to the support that schools were providing for CIC.
- 4.3 From September 2014 the termly PEPs were in place and the practice guidance was disseminated to all schools. This detailed the process for requesting the PP+ for CIC through the completion of the PEP. However, there were some technical issues with PEP completion as the process was being embedded so, in order to ensure that all schools and CIC had the maximum opportunity to request and utilise PP+ funding, the Virtual School issued a PP+ Pro-forma in the Spring Term 2015.
- 4.4 On 23rd March 2015 Halton received notification that the DfE had revised the allocation of PP+ for Halton. This adjustment was based on 170 identified CIC resulting in an additional allocation of £165,300. As per the conditions of grant, this additional money also had to be spent by 31st March 2015. To ensure that we complied with this requirement and did not return any money to the DfE, the Headteacher of the Virtual School identified key children and schools that would receive a top up to their previous PP+ requests. The additional one off payment was for the following:

	Personalised support for any child in care who is in key test/examination years
	Personalised support for any child in care who is in a transition year
	Adjusted delegated budget payments to recompense schools who did not receive their full delegated CIC allocation through their formal budget 2014/2015 as this funding was based on the October 2013 census.

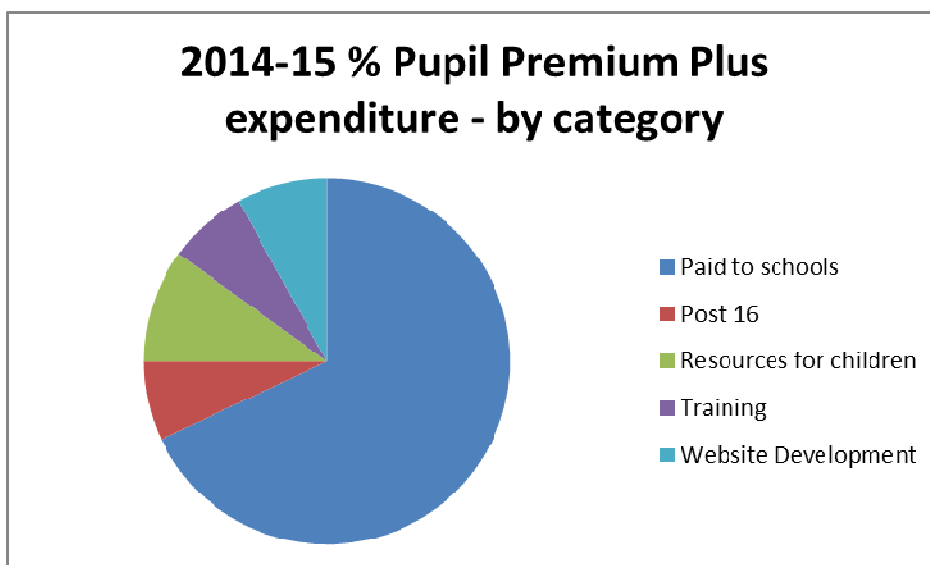
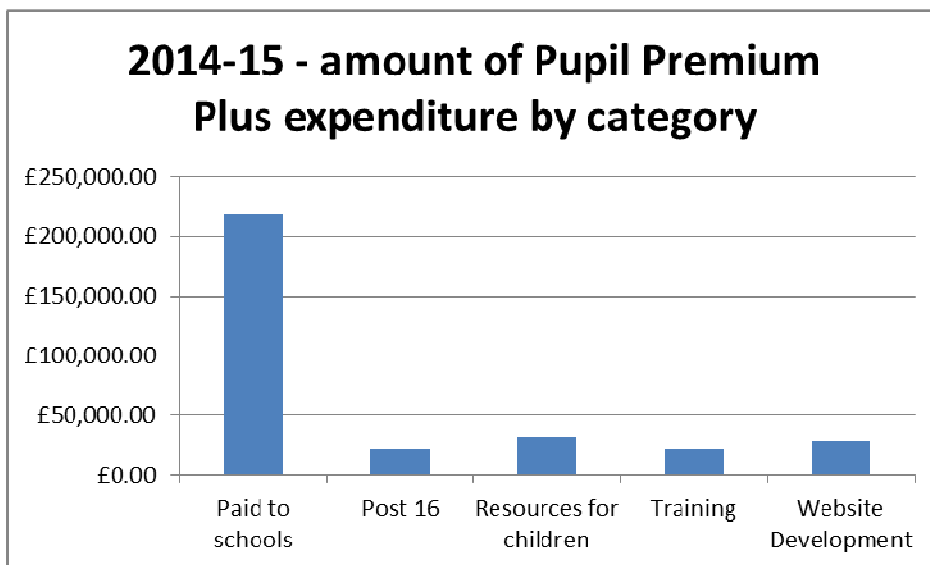
It was made clear to all schools that the PP+ practice guidance criteria were still to be adhered to, the interventions were to be recorded on the PEP and expected impact measures identified.

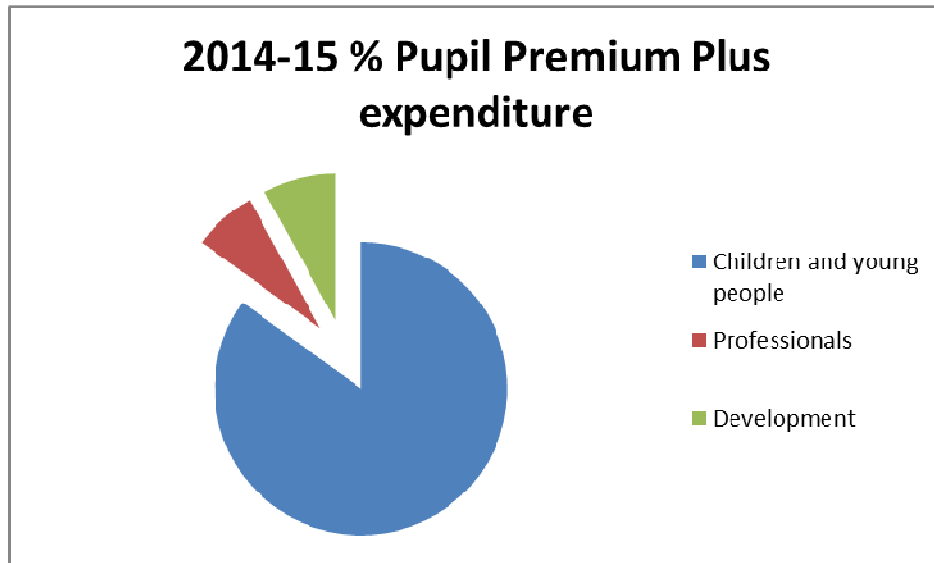
- 4.5 In summary the total grant allocation of PP+ for CIC 2014-15 was as follows:

Initial allocation	£157,700
Additional revised allocation	£165,300
Total PP+ for CIC grant	£323,000

(No PP+ grant was returned to the DfE)

- 4.6 The following graphs present summaries of the expenditure of the PP+ funding for CIC:





- 4.9 The following is a brief summary of some of the different ways that the PP+ has been used to support the learning of CIC and also develop the practice and understanding the professionals in schools who are working with them:

Paid to schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 support for a range of subjects Small group interventions to boost literacy and numeracy 1:1 GCSE tuition Play therapy Music therapy Specialised assessments Additional emotional and social interventions Creative activity groups Academic mentoring Out of school learning activity opportunities Personalised transition programmes Personalised interventions to support integration and engagement Targeted revision sessions
Post 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course equipment Additional learning resources 1:1 support Targeted revision and coursework sessions
Resources for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision guides Curriculum equipment IT software to support additional learning Additional learning/course materials Sensory equipment

Training	Conference delivered by a nationally recognised speaker New on-going comprehensive training programme New Designated Teacher's Handbook CPD resources purchased so Designated Teachers can cascade knowledge and understanding in the broader school community
Website development	It is important to note that the website development is a virtual learning resource that will benefit both children and professionals when it is fully established. This is the only portion (8%) of the overall allocation that was retained for a pooled development.

Sharon Williams
Headteacher of the Virtual School
June 2015

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 22nd June 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Education, Inclusion and Provision

SUBJECT: Personal Budgets

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide the Board with an overview on the implementation of Personal Budgets for Children and Young People with Education Health and Care plans.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 2.1 (a) School Forum note the contents of the presentation; and**
- (b) The Board supports the proposed approach and the next steps for implementation.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The presentation.

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 22nd June 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer

SUBJECT: Department for Education Analysis of Schools Block funding formulae 2015-16

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To share with School Forum the overview of the formula factor values chosen by local authorities to set their Schools Block funding formula for 2015-16.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) **That the report be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Education Funding Agency has published a report giving an overview of the funding formula submitted by each local authority. It provides charts and brief commentary on the ranges of unit funding amounts they have selected and the proportions of the Schools Block funding attributed under each of the permitted factors.
- 3.2 The report is attached as Appendix A. On each graph the cash value that corresponds to Halton's funding formula is highlighted.
- 3.3 The Education Funding Agency has also published a data file showing each element for each funding factor. This can be used to compare cash values across other local authorities.
- 3.4 The analysis report and data file can be found on the DfE website.

4.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Schools Block funding formulae 2015-16 Analysis of local authorities' Schools Block funding formulae	Kingsway House	Anne Jones



Education
Funding
Agency

Schools block funding formulae 2015-16

**Analysis of local authorities' schools
block funding formulae**

March 2015

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Introduction

In January 2015, local authorities in England submitted to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) their formulae for allocating their dedicated schools grant (DSG) schools block funding for 2015-16 to schools in their area. For 2015-16, schools are funded using a maximum of thirteen clearly defined factors. Details of the school funding arrangements for 2015-16 were described in the document Fairer schools funding: Arrangements for 2015 to 2016, which was published by the Department for Education (DfE) in July 2014.

This document provides an overview of the 2015-16 formula factor values chosen by local authorities as at 2 March 2015. It provides charts and brief commentary on the ranges of unit funding amounts they have selected, and the proportions of schools block funding distributed under each of the permitted factors. This note is accompanied by a data file, more details about which can be found in the "Information about the data file" section at the end of this note. Small details of funding formulae may change subsequently compared to the figures presented here as a result of late amendments.

A similar summary about local authorities' funding formulae for 2014-15 was published by the DfE last year.

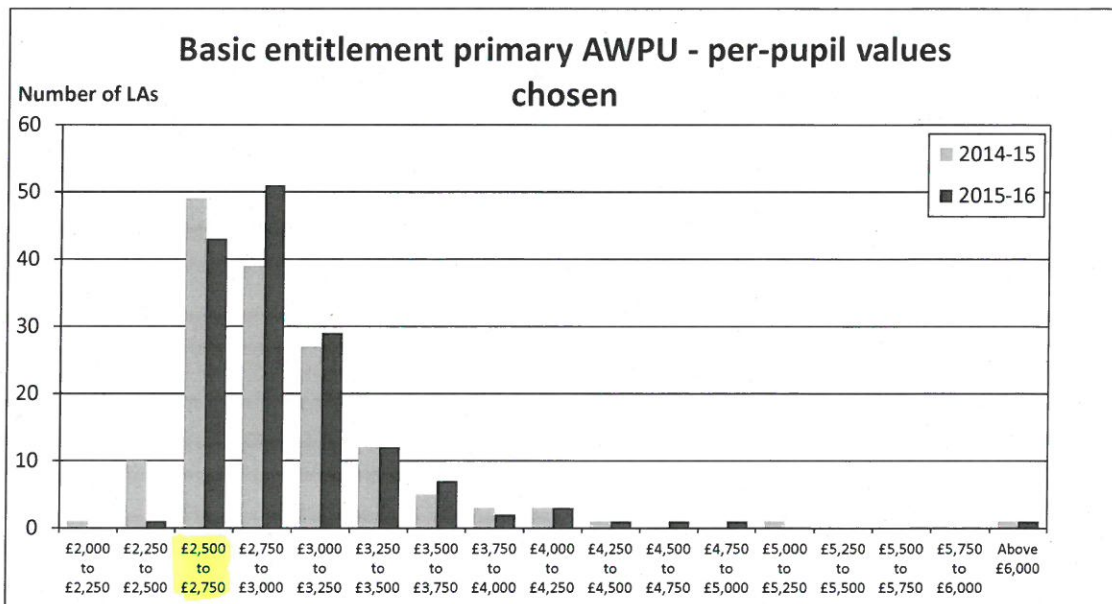
Commentary

This chapter looks at each of the principal formula factors in turn.

Basic per-pupil entitlement

This is a mandatory factor which every local authority must use in their 2015-16 formula. Local authorities are permitted to choose different age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) rates for primary pupils, for key stage 3 pupils and for key stage 4 pupils; but they must specify a primary AWPU of at least £2,000, and key stage 3 and key stage 4 AWPU values of at least £3,000.

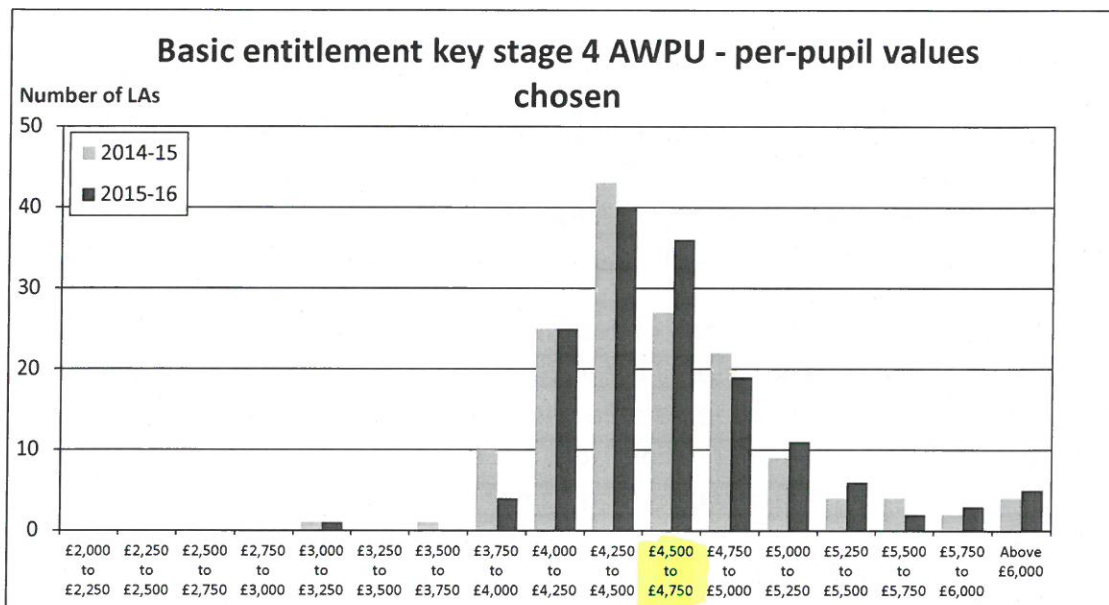
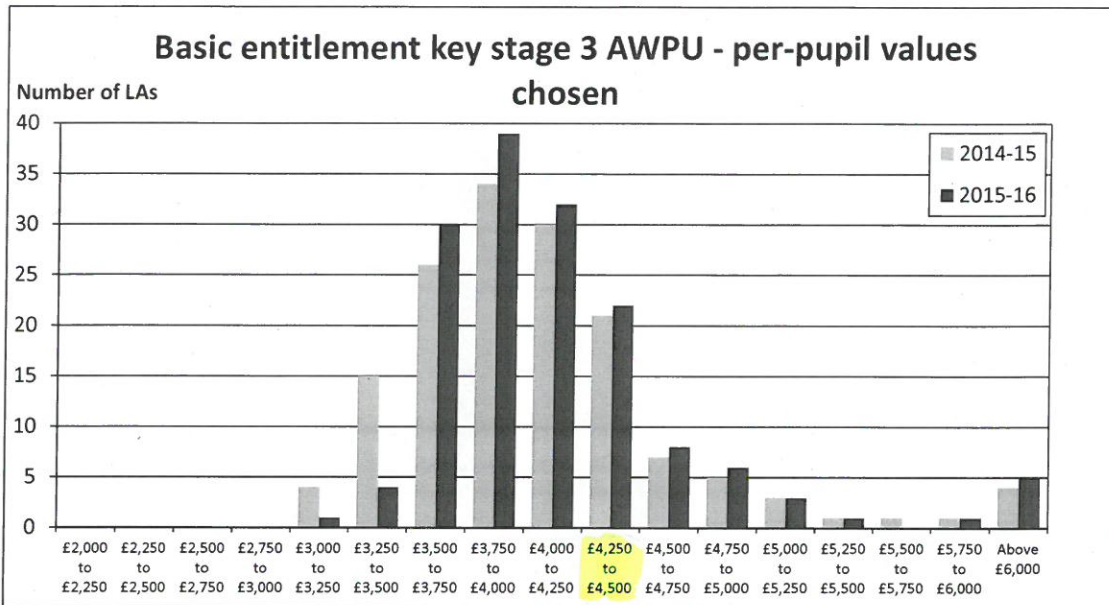
The majority (81%) of primary AWPU selected by local authorities are in the range of £2,500 to £3,250, although there are a few significant outliers of over £4,000. Most authorities with a primary AWPU below £2,500 for 2014-15 increased it to above that level for 2015-16, and most of these were authorities gaining per pupil funding for their DSG schools block through the minimum funding levels. Nineteen of the 20 local authorities with the highest primary AWPU are in London¹.



The secondary AWPU values show a similar pattern. For key stage 3 AWPU values, 81% of local authorities are allocating between £3,500 and £4,500 per pupil, and for key stage 4, the

¹ In the charts showing the ranges of unit funding amounts local authorities have used for the formula factors, only those authorities which have chosen to use that factor in their formula in each year are shown. However, in the charts showing the proportion of funding allocated using the factors, all local authorities are displayed, with those not choosing to use the factor (where its use is not mandatory) shown as allocating 0%.

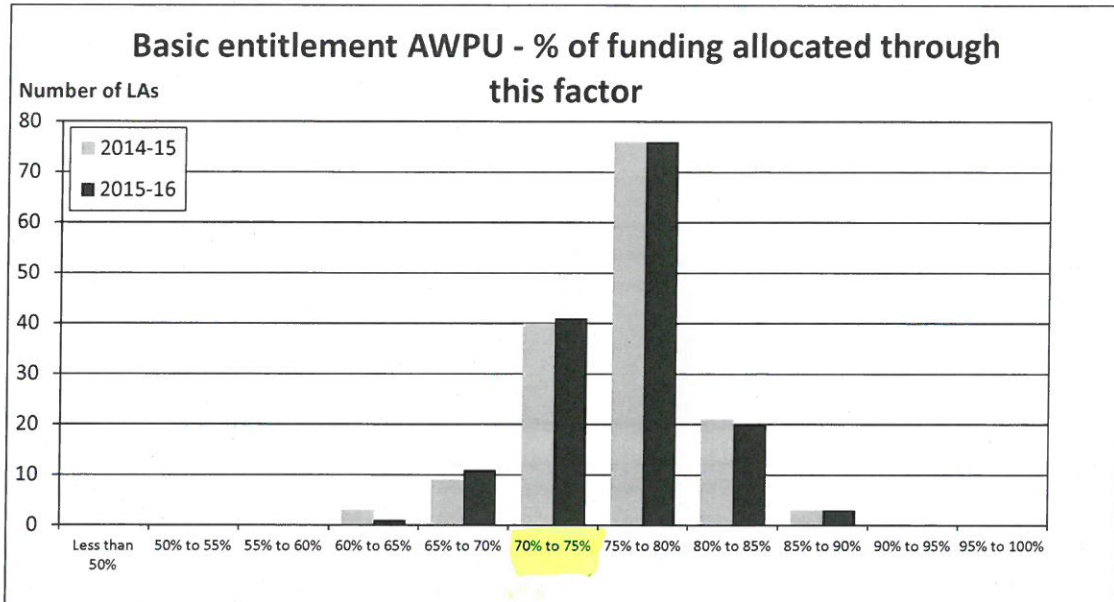
majority (79%) are allocating between £4,000 and £5,000 per pupil . Again, the authorities with the largest secondary AWPU's are mostly in London².



The final chart in this section shows the proportions of schools block funding that local authorities are allocating through the basic entitlement factor. Overall, the proportion of funding being spent on the AWPU's ranges from 61% to 88%, with half of local authorities allocating between 75% and 80%. Across all authorities, 76.2% of funding is being

² City of London have a value of £3,000 for their key stage 3 and key stage 4 AWPU in 2014-15 and 2015-16, which is shown on the chart; however they do not have any key stage 3 or key stage 4 pupils at their sole school so allocate no funding through these indicators.

allocated through basic entitlement, a slight increase compared to 76.0% in 2014-15 formulae³.



Deprivation

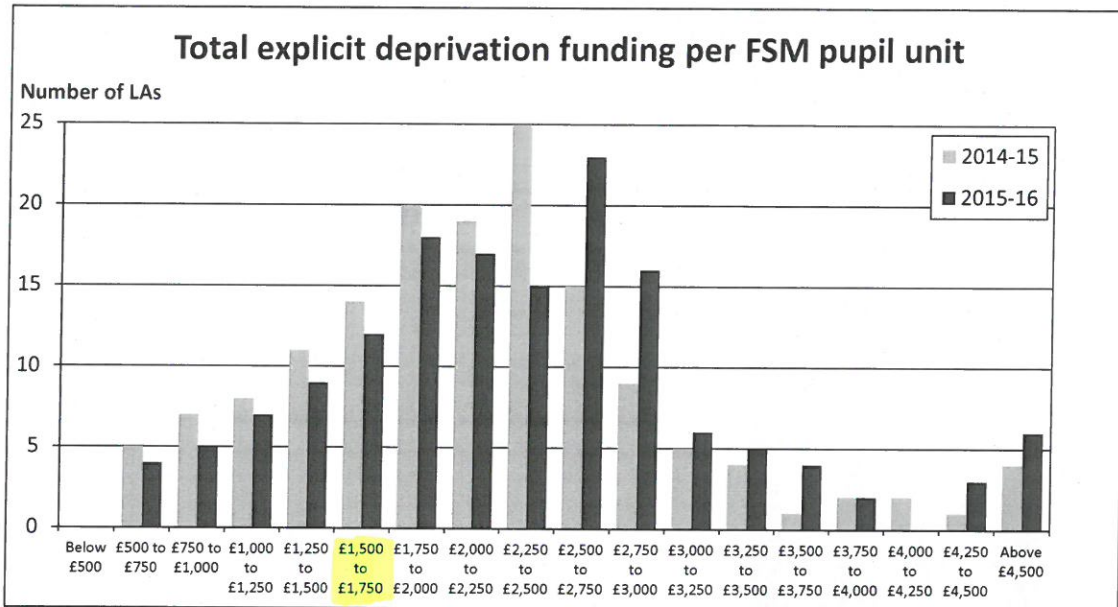
This is another mandatory factor which every local authority must use in their 2015-16 formula. Local authorities can distribute their deprivation funding using one or both of two indicators: children eligible for free school meals (FSM; which could be either straight FSM or Ever 6); or Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) data.

Because of the different permutations of deprivation indicator selections available for local authorities to use for this factor, it is not immediately straightforward to calculate per-pupil funding amounts on a comparable basis. For the purpose of this analysis, total funding allocated through the deprivation factors is divided by the number of FSM pupils, to obtain an estimate of the deprivation funding per FSM pupil, as below.

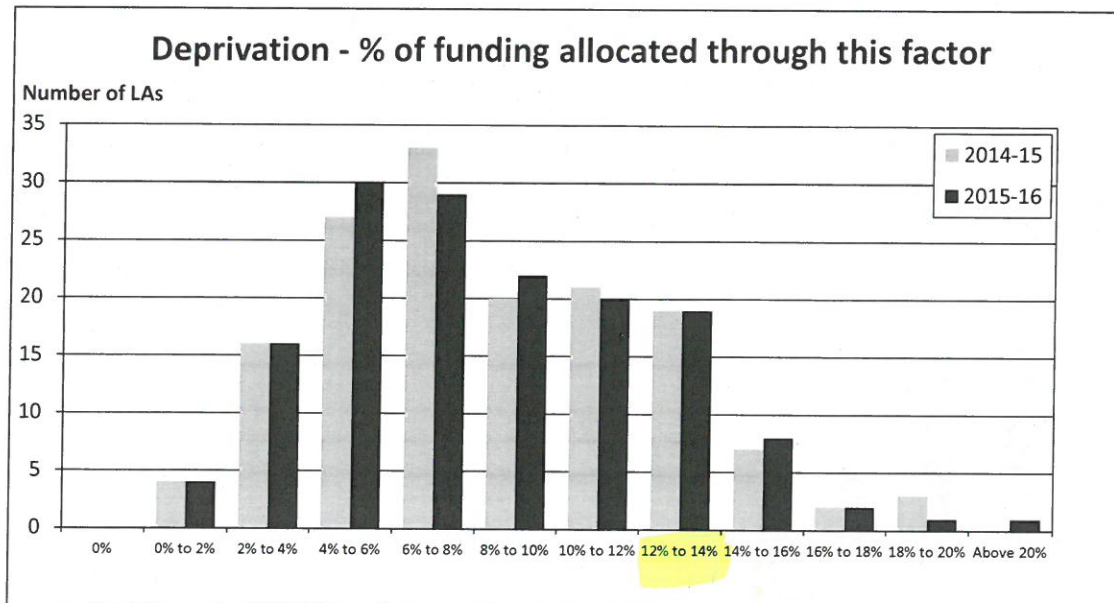
$$\text{Total deprivation per FSM pupil for each LA} = \left(\frac{\text{Total Deprivation funding in FSM+IDACI}}{\text{Number of FSM pupils}} \right)$$

³ For the 2015 to 2016 funding years, academies which were previously non-recoupment are being made recoupable. Recoupment is the process by which deductions are made to local authorities' DSG allocations for funding given directly to academies by the EFA. This change means that in this report, in the charts showing the proportions of funding allocated using the factors, funding to these academies is taken into account in the 2015-16 figures shown. However these academies are not included in the figures for 2014-15.

The first chart in this section indicates that there is some variation between local authorities in the amount of funding allocated per FSM pupil. Two-thirds (66%) are allocating between £1,500 and £3,000 per FSM pupil.

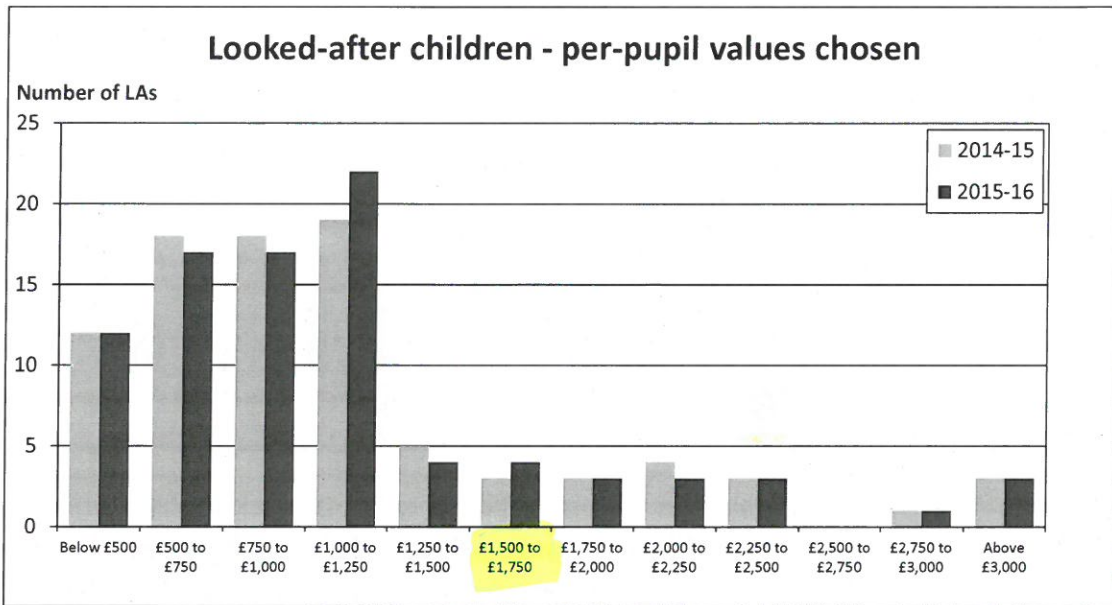


There is also considerable variation in the proportion of schools block funding which local authorities are allocating to schools through the deprivation factor, ranging from 1% to 21%, as illustrated by the chart below. No local authorities are allocating 0% of funding through deprivation since its use is mandatory. Across all authorities, 8.1% of funding is being allocated through deprivation, the same proportion as in 2014-15 formulae.

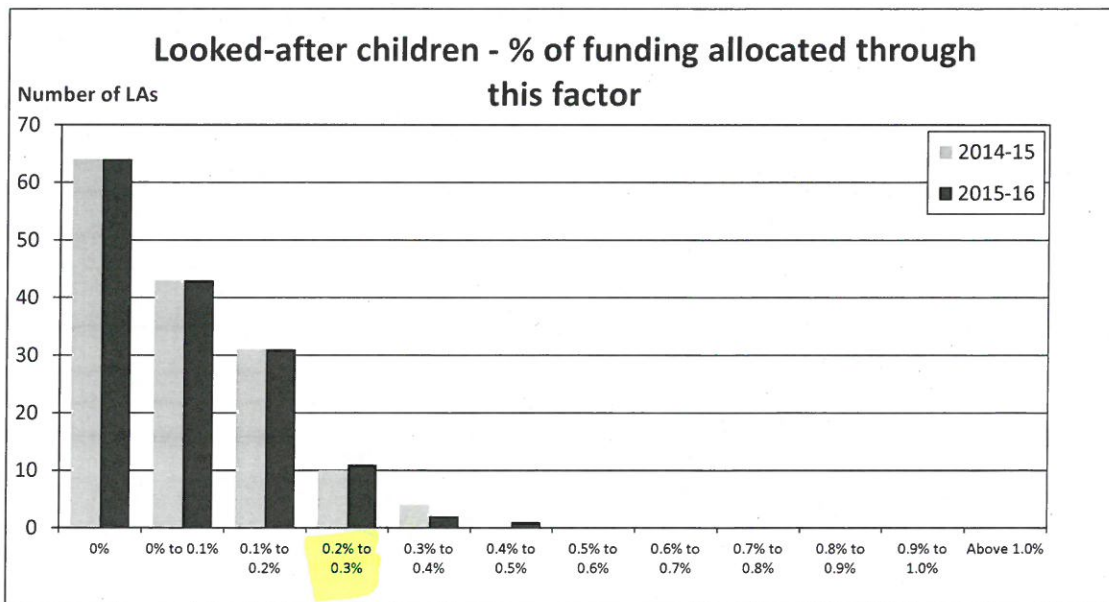


Looked-after children

Use of this factor in funding formulae is optional, and 88 local authorities have chosen to use it, the same as in 2014-15. Like in 2014-15, the indicator authorities can use for this factor is children looked after for any period of time as at the end of March 2014 (as recorded on the March 2014 SSDA903 collection). Three quarters of the authorities that are using the factor are allocating less than £1,250 per pupil.

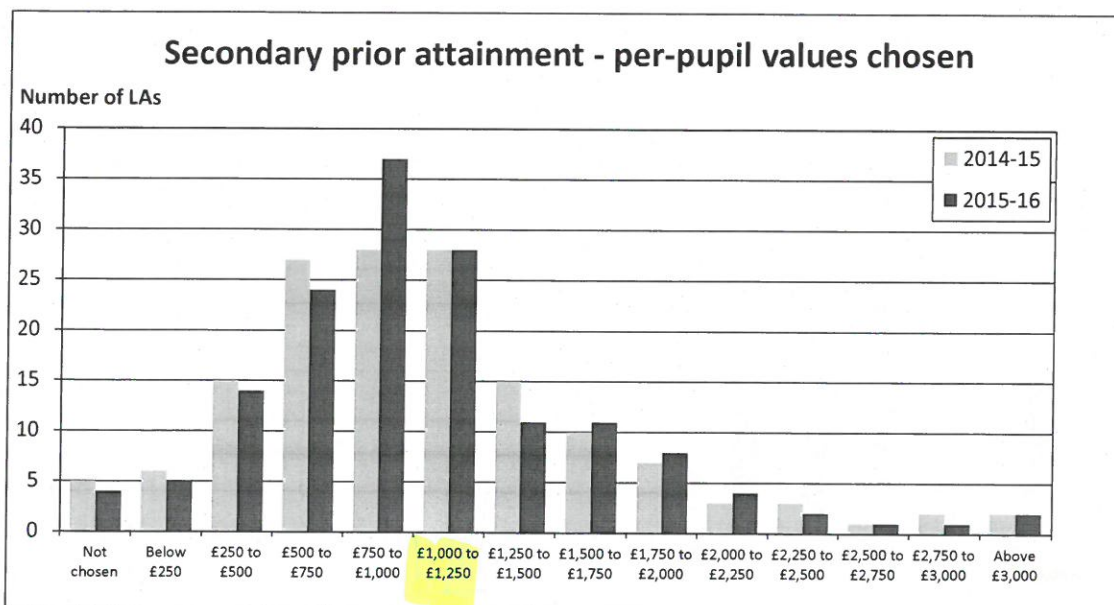
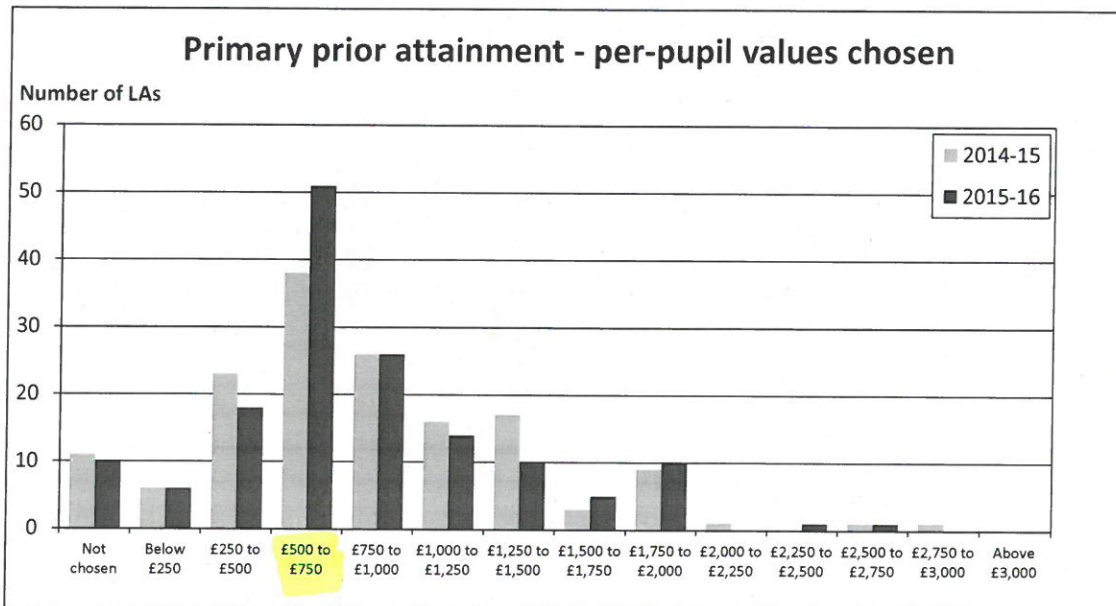


Across all local authorities as a whole (including those not using the factor), 0.1% of schools block funding is being allocated through the looked-after children factor.



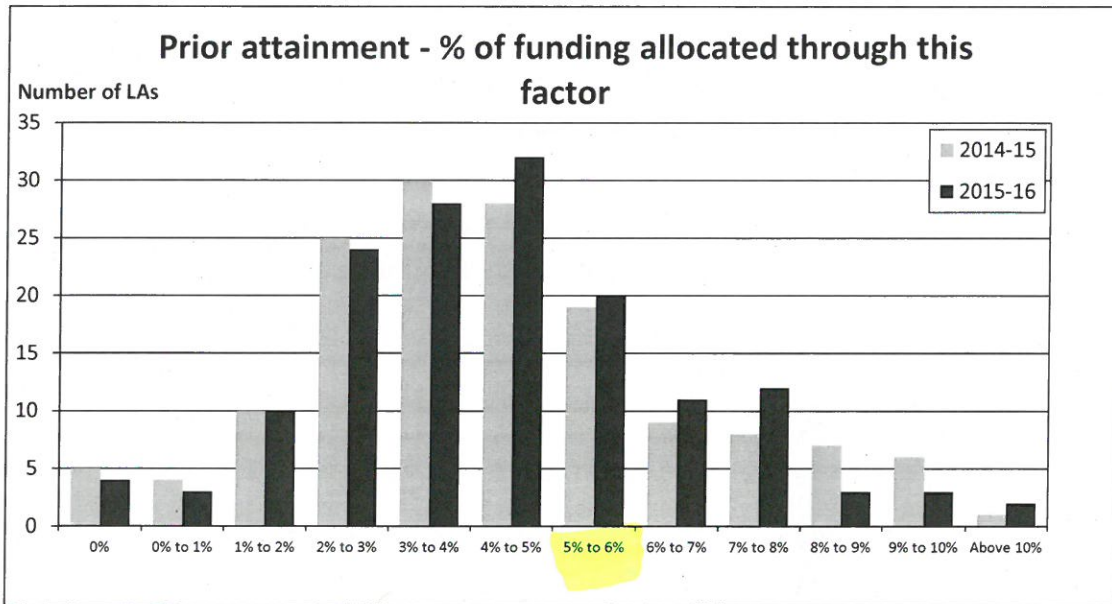
Prior attainment

Use of this factor is optional, with 142 local authorities using the indicator for primary pupils (compared to 141 in 2014-15 formulae) and 148 using the indicator for secondary pupils (147 last year). Four authorities are not using this factor at all. For primary pupils, the indicator is the number of children in years 1 and 2 assessed under the new early years foundation stage profile as not achieving a good level of development, and the number in years 3 to 6 not achieving 73 points or more or 78 points or more (authorities could pick between whether to use the 73 or 78 point indicator) under the old profile. In their formula local authorities can scale back the proportion of years 1 and 2 pupils not meeting the 'good development' criterion. For secondary pupils a single indicator was available: the number of pupils who fail to achieve level 4 or above in either English or mathematics at key stage 2.



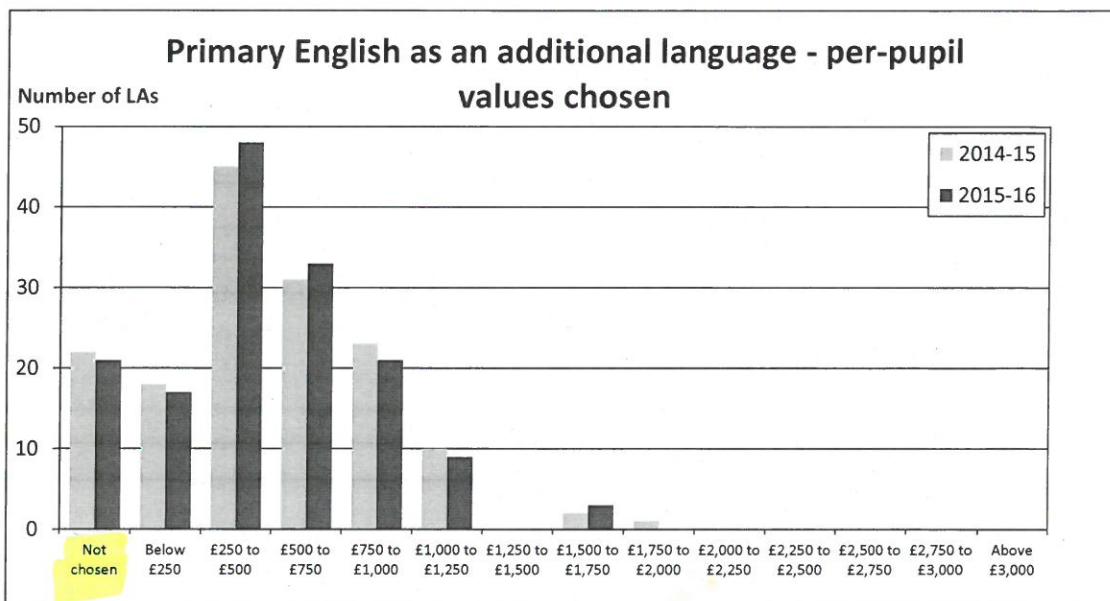
Like last year, there is considerable variation in the per-pupil amounts selected. They range from £115 to £2,651 for the primary indicator and from £36 to £3,229 for the secondary indicator.

The following chart shows that over two-thirds (68%) of local authorities are allocating between 2% and 6% of their schools block funding through this factor. Across all authorities, 4.4% of funding is allocated through this factor, a slight decrease from 4.5% last year.



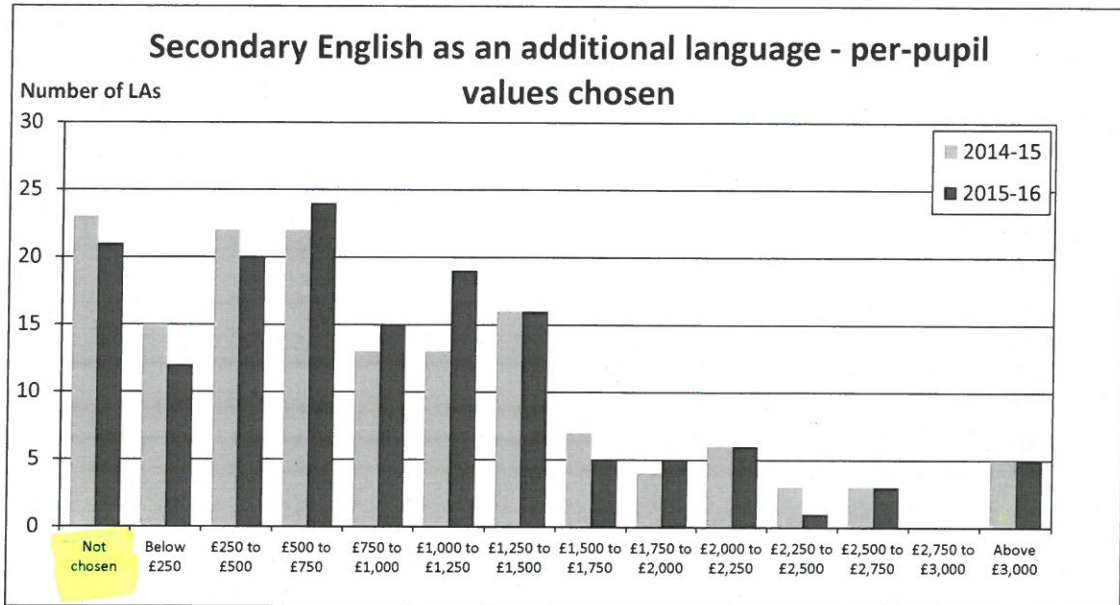
English as an additional language (EAL)

Use of this factor is optional, and 132 local authorities have chosen to use it, compared with 130 in 2014-15.

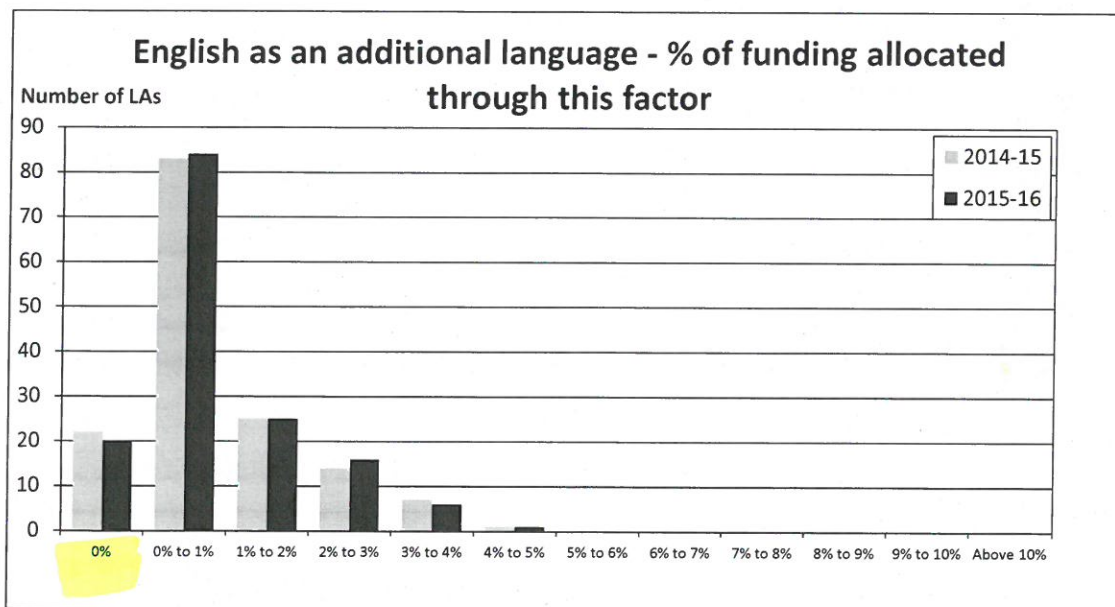


Local authorities can choose one of three indicators for this factor: the number of pupils with EAL who entered the compulsory school system in either the last one, two or three years.

For the primary indicator, the distribution of per-pupil values is relatively narrow with two-thirds (67%) of local authorities allocating between £250 and £1,000 per pupil. There are three authorities allocating over £1,500. By contrast there is rather greater variation in the per-pupil values selected for the secondary indicator; these range from £75 to £4,500.

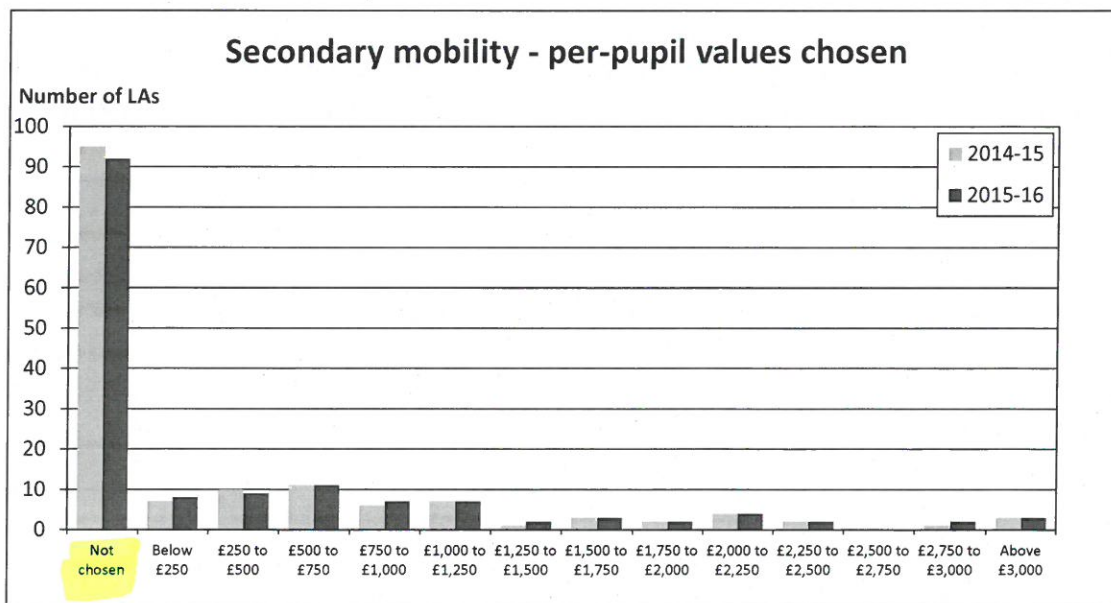
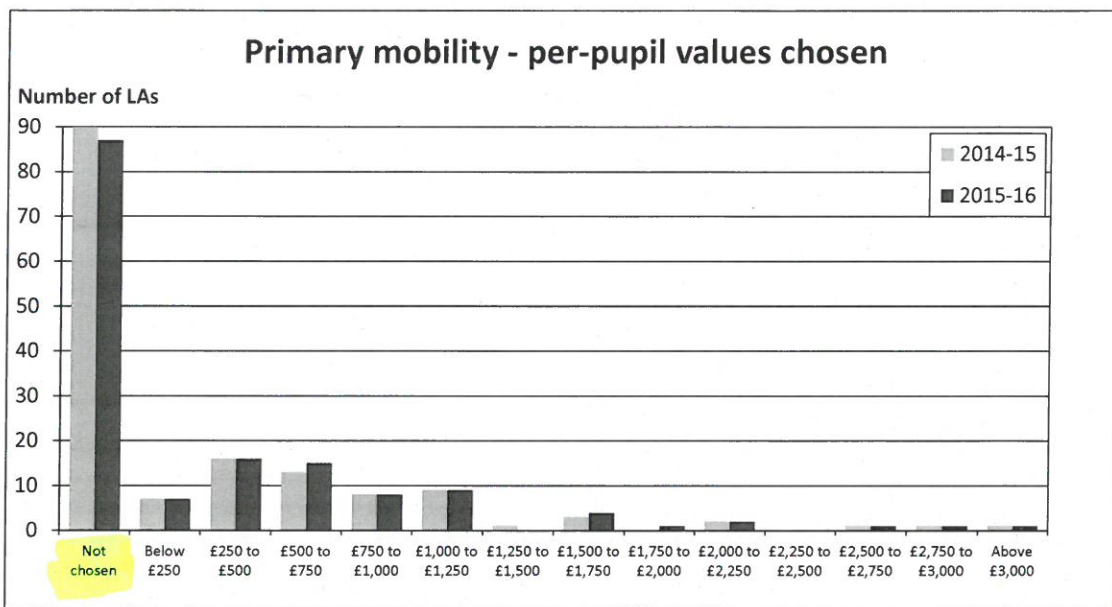


With pupils attracting funding through the EAL factor being smaller in number than those attracting funding through many other factors, across all local authorities 0.8% of funding is allocated through this factor, the same proportion as in 2014-15.



Mobility

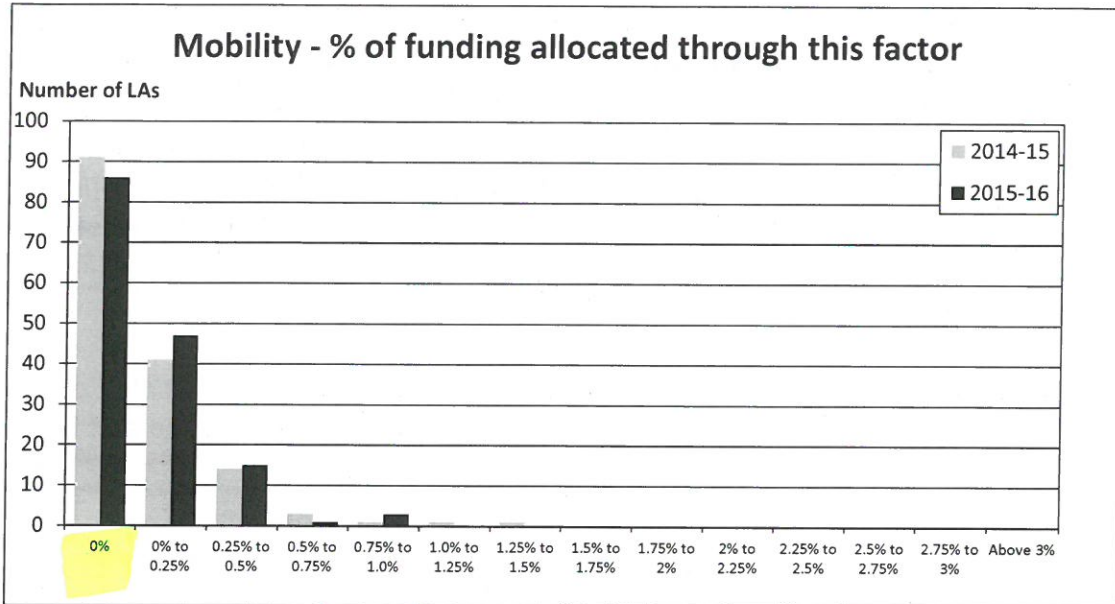
Use of this factor is optional, and only 66 of the 152 local authorities have chosen to use it (although this is five more than in 2014-15 formulae). The indicator for this factor is the number of 'mobile' pupils in excess of 10% of pupils, and is payable on the number of pupils exceeding this cut off (e.g. if a school has 12% mobile pupils, funding is applied to 2%).



Primary per-pupil amounts range from £10 to £18,690, and the secondary per-pupil amounts from £10 to £19,068.

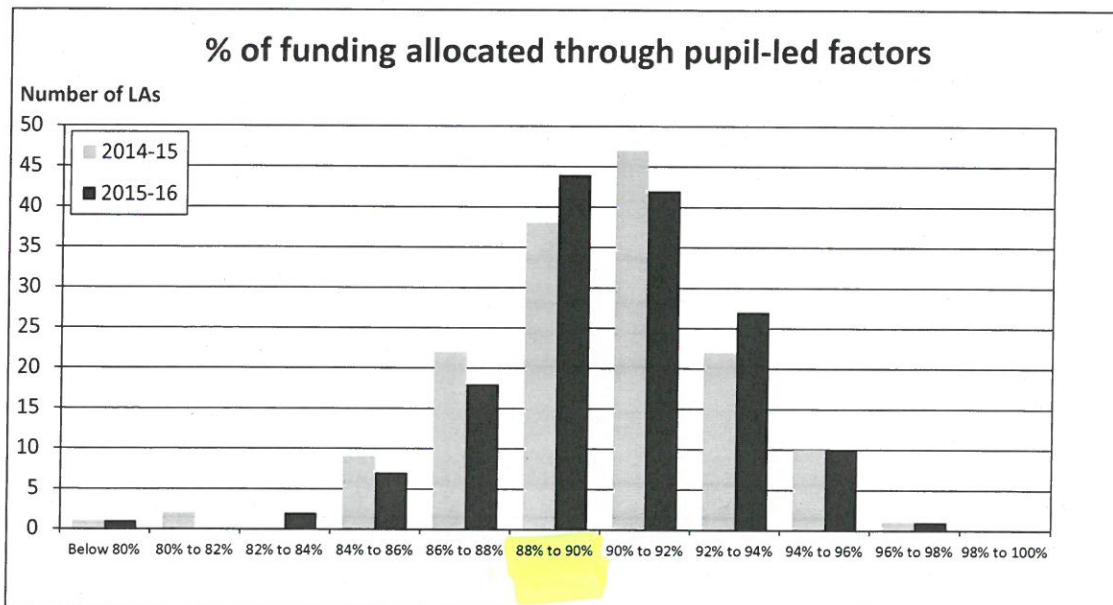
All the local authorities which are incorporating the mobility factor into their 2015-16 funding formulae are using it to allocate less than 1% of their schools block funding, and only four are allocating more than 0.5%. Across all local authorities as a whole, some

0.1% of schools block funding is being allocated through this factor, the same as in 2014-15 formulae.



Total funding through the pupil-led factors

The factors highlighted above (i.e. basic per-pupil entitlement, deprivation, looked-after children, prior attainment, English as an additional language, and mobility) are pupil-led. Although there is considerable variation across local authorities in the choices of factors used, the per-pupil amounts, and the proportions of funding allocated through each one, overall there is strong consistency in the proportions of funding allocated through the pupil-led factors as a whole.



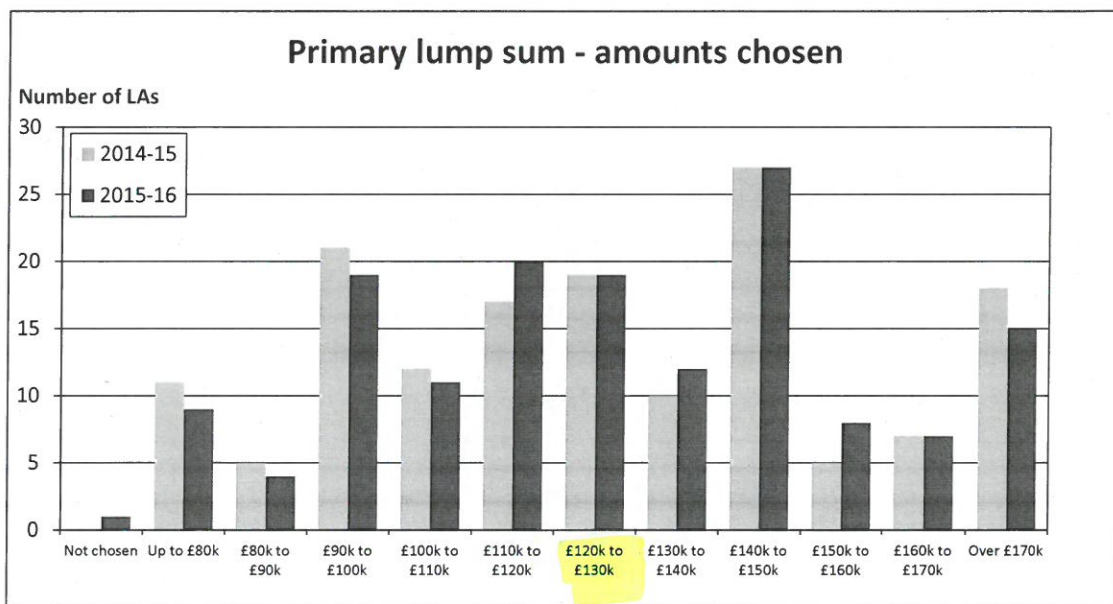
A requirement for the 2015-16 formulae is that across each local authority as a whole, a minimum of 80% of schools block funding must be allocated through these pupil-led factors. Note that the Isles of Scilly has only a single school, and does not formally receive DSG schools block funding in the same way as the other authorities, so the 80% requirement, which is set out in the DSG conditions of grant, does not apply to them; they are the block on the chart above shown below the 80% level.

All other authorities are indeed allocating more than 80% of their funding through a combination of the pupil-led factors, the lowest being 82.0%. In total, nearly three-quarters (74%) of authorities are allocating between 88% and 94% of their funding through these factors.

Across all authorities, a total of 89.73% of funding in 2015-16 formulae is being allocated through the pupil-led factors. This compares to 89.56% in 2014-15 formulae and 89.46% in 2013-14.

Lump sum

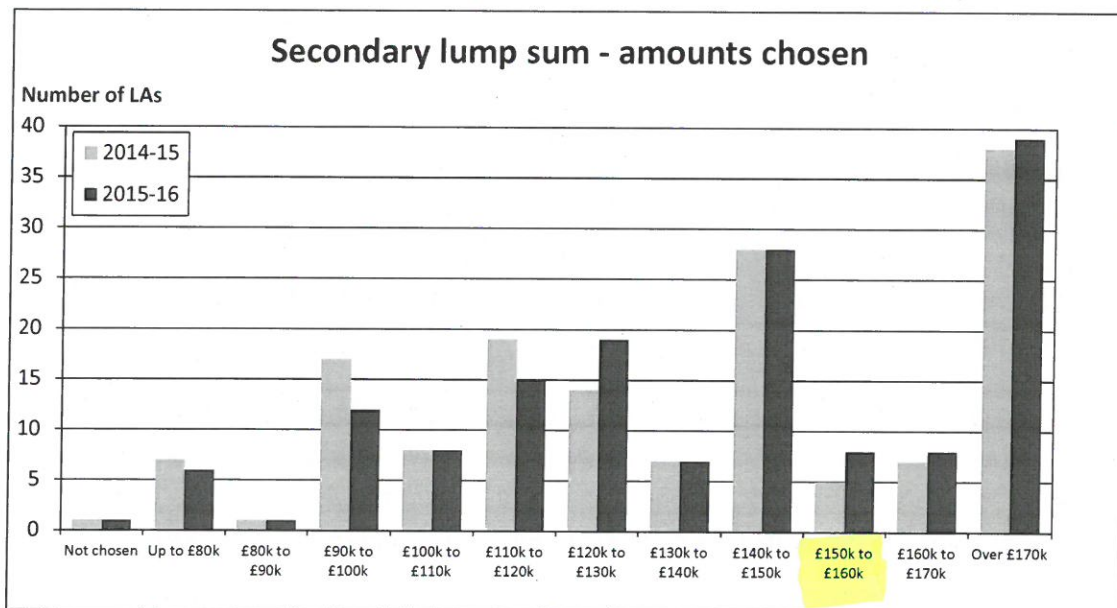
In 2015-16 formulae, local authorities can use this factor to allocate a lump sum of the same amount to all schools, up to a maximum of £175,000. Separate lump sums can be specified for primary schools and secondary schools, up to a maximum of £175,000. All-through schools receive the lump sum specified for secondary schools. Middle schools receive a weighted combination of the two, based on the number of year groups of each phase present at the school. For a school which amalgamated during the 2014 to 2015 financial year, authorities must allocate it additional lump sum funding, so that it receives 85% of the combined lump sums that its predecessors would have received under the 2015-16 formula.



Although this is an optional factor, like last year all local authorities have chosen to include it in their 2015-16 funding formulae⁴. There is substantial variation in the value of the lump sums selected. For both primary and secondary lump sums, they range from £48,480, up to the maximum £175,000, which was chosen by 14 authorities for their primary lump sum amount and 38 for their secondary lump sum.

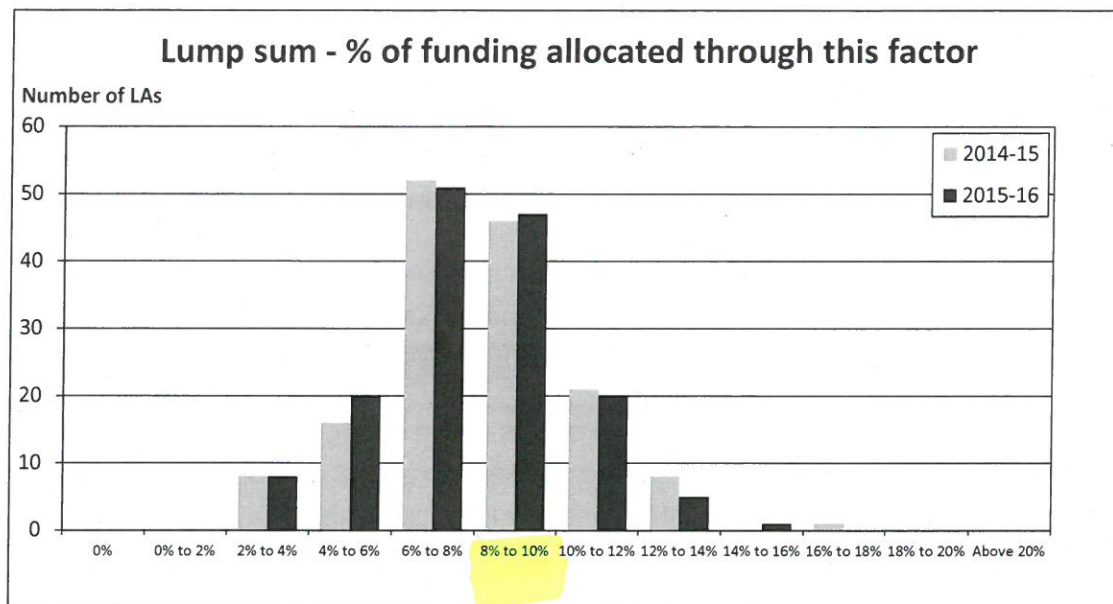
There are 89 authorities that have selected equal primary and secondary lump sum amounts. Fifty-four have selected a greater secondary lump sum than primary; and 9 authorities have selected a greater primary lump sum than secondary.

Note that in the lump sum amounts chosen charts, lump sum choices of exactly a multiple of £10,000 are shown in the category for which that is the top of the band: so for example the three local authorities with a primary lump sum of £140,000 are included in the “£130k to £140k” category.



Overall, local authorities are allocating a slightly lower proportion of their schools block funding through the lump sum factor than last year: 8.3% compared to 8.5%.

⁴ Isles of Scilly are the LA represented by the “Not chosen” bar for 2015-16 primary lump sum amounts; they did not select a primary lump sum but did specify a secondary lump sum. City of London are the LA represented by the “Not chosen” bar for 2015-16 secondary lump sum amounts; the LA has only a single primary school, and they selected a primary lump sum but not a secondary lump sum. So all LAs have used the primary and/or secondary element of the lump sum factor in their formula.

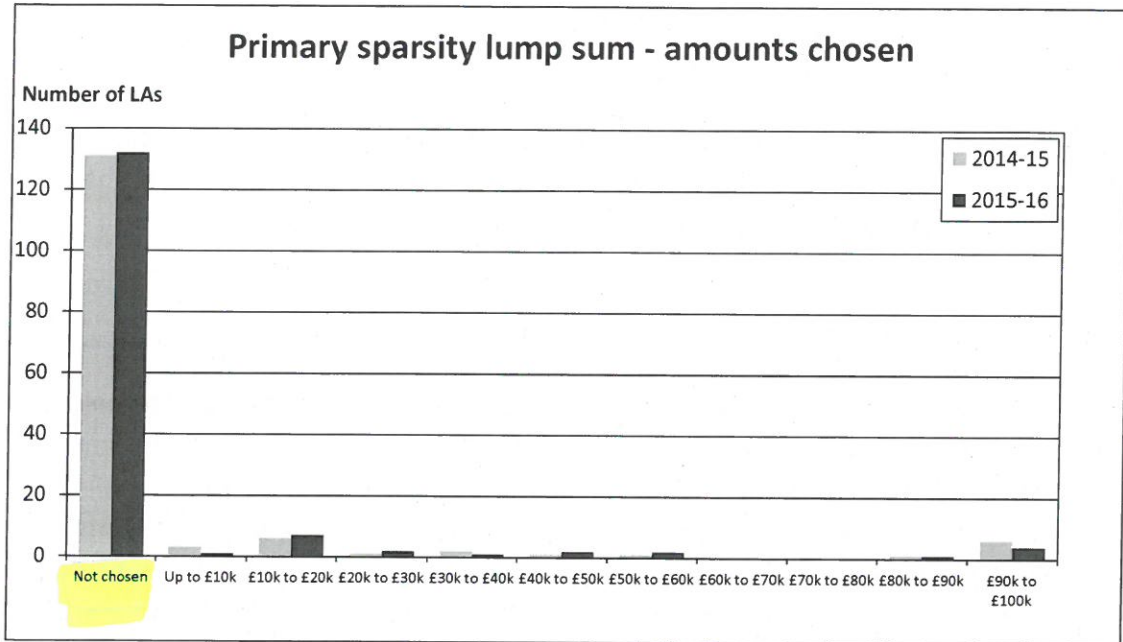


Sparsity

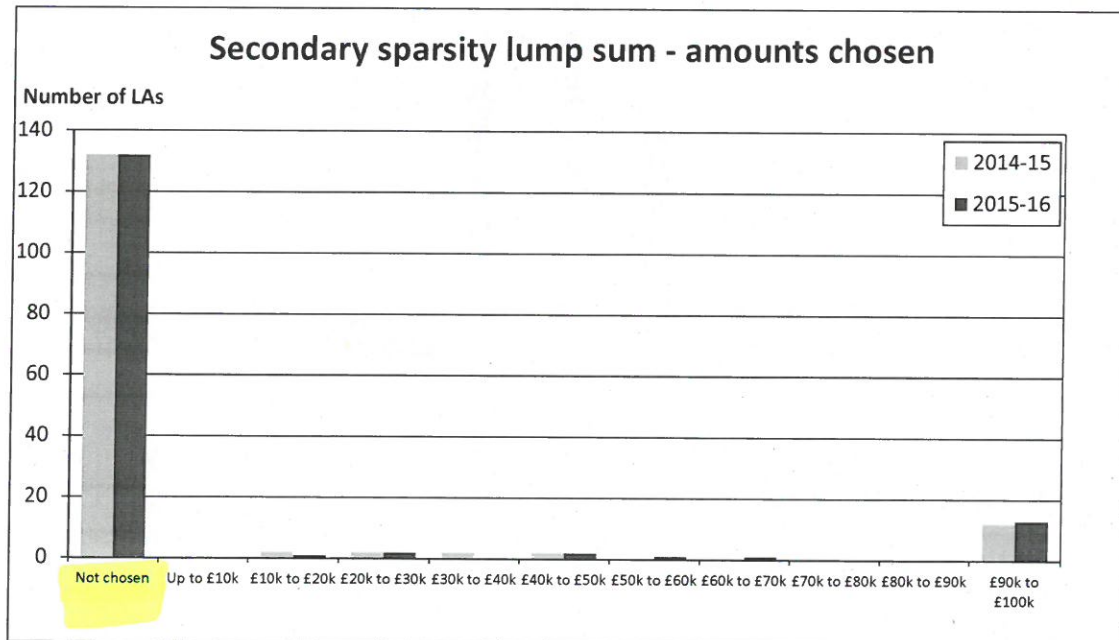
This factor was introduced into the funding formula arrangements last year, but has been changed slightly for 2015-16. Whether a school is deemed to be sparse depends on two considerations: its “sparsity distance” and the average number of pupils per year group. In 2014-15, the total number of pupils at the school was one of the criteria instead of the average number of pupils per year group.

A school’s sparsity distance is derived from those pupils for whom it is their closest school (irrespective of whether they attend it). For all those pupils, the average distance to their second nearest school for these pupils is calculated. Distances are calculated using the crow flies distance from a pupil’s postcode to a school’s postcode.

The sparsity factor may be applied to small schools where the average distance to pupils’ second nearest school is at least 2 miles (for primary schools, middle schools and all-through schools) or 3 miles (for secondary schools). Schools must also have an average number of pupils per year group no larger than 21.4 pupils for primary schools, 120 pupils for secondary schools, 69.2 pupils for middle schools or 62.5 pupils for all-through schools. Local authorities can narrow the eligibility criteria for the factor, by increasing the average distance to the second nearest school and / or reducing the average pupil number maximum thresholds, but they cannot widen the eligibility criteria. Local authorities can set different sparsity lump sum amounts for each of these four phases of school, up to a maximum of £100,000 per school. They can also choose in each case whether to apply a ‘taper’ so that the funding given to a sparse school depends on how many pupils they have (so that the smaller schools receive higher sparsity funding) or that all sparse schools receive the same specified sparsity lump sum. Additional sparsity funding of £50,000 can also be allocated to very small, sparse secondary schools.



Only 24 local authorities are using the sparsity factor in 2015-16 (compared to 23 in 2014-15) with 128 not incorporating it into their formula. Many of those authorities not using the factor do not have any schools meeting the maximum permissible average year group size and minimum permissible distance thresholds for eligibility for funding through the factor, so do not have any sparse schools.



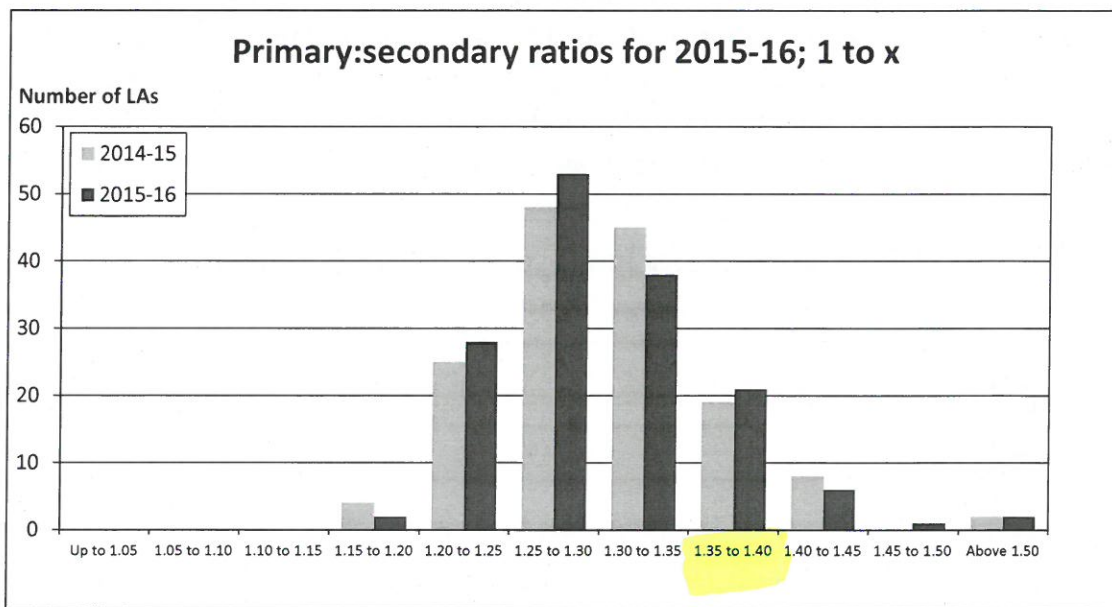
Of those that are using the factor, and excluding the Isles of Scilly (a notional 4%), the proportion of their schools block funding which they are allocating through this factor ranged from 0.01% to 0.92%. Across all authorities, 0.05% of funding has been allocated through this factor, the same as in 2014-15 formulae.

Other formula factors

Information for each local authority on the formula factors not discussed in this note (London fringe, split sites, rates, PFI funding, historic commitments of dedicated schools grant funding for sixth forms, and exceptional circumstances) can be found in the accompanying data file.

Primary:secondary funding ratios

Local authorities' 2015-16 schools block funding formulae have been used to calculate the relative differences in per-pupil funding allocated to secondary pupils compared to primary pupils. With the exception of the City of London, which has a single maintained primary school so does not have secondary pupils, the ratios of secondary to primary per-pupil funding under 2015-16 formulae are shown on the chart below. A ratio of 1 : 1.24, for instance, indicates that secondary-age pupils in a local authority receive, on average, 24% more funding per head than primary-age pupils.



The overall ratio nationally across all local authorities is 1 : 1.28, very slightly higher than in 2013-14 and 2014-15 formulae when the figure was 1 : 1.27. The move to make academies which were previously non-recoupment into recoupment academies for 2015-16 (see footnote 3) has pushed the ratio up a little, however the ratio is still 1 : 1.28 for 2015-16 even if their funding is excluded from the calculation. The median local authority ratio is 1 : 1.29, the same as in the previous two years. For 25 authorities, their ratio in 2015-16 has decreased by more than 0.01 compared to last year, while for 48 authorities, their ratio has increased by more than 0.01. For the remaining 78 authorities, their ratio changed by less than 0.01 either way.

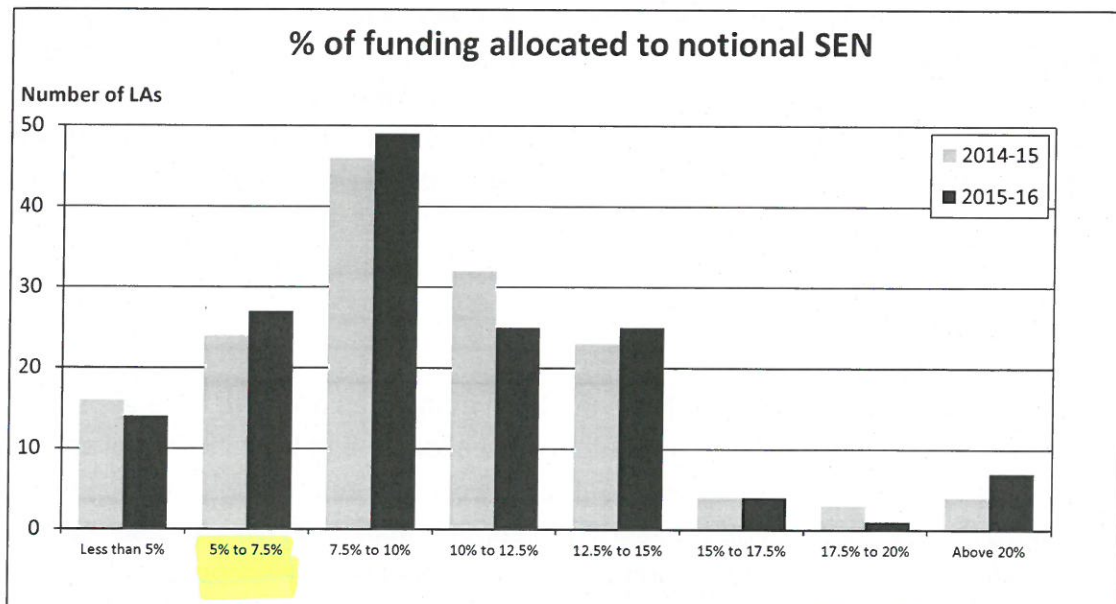
These ratios have been calculated for each local authority from the information they submitted to the EFA as follows. The first step is to split funding for primary pupils and

funding for secondary pupils. For the factors with separate primary and secondary indicators (for example, basic entitlement and deprivation), this split is simply the amount of funding allocated through each type of indicator. For the other factors (with the exception of historic commitments for sixth form funding, which is excluded), the amount of funding allocated to each school in the local authority area is split between primary and secondary in proportion to the number of pupils in each phase at the school. These amounts are aggregated to estimate the total funding for primary pupils and the total funding for secondary pupils. These amounts are then divided, respectively, by the number of primary schools block-funded pupils on roll and the number of secondary schools block-funded pupils on roll in the authority. This gives per pupil funding amounts for primary and secondary phases, and the ratio of the two is taken.

This calculation excludes the effects on schools' funding of applying the minimum funding guarantee (MFG), and excludes any further capping or scaling factors applied by local authorities to ensure that the total funding allocated through their formulae is affordable within the total DSG schools block they have been allocated for financial year 2015 to 2016. For academies, the calculation is based on the amount of schools block funding they would receive in 2015-16 were they a maintained school.

Notional SEN

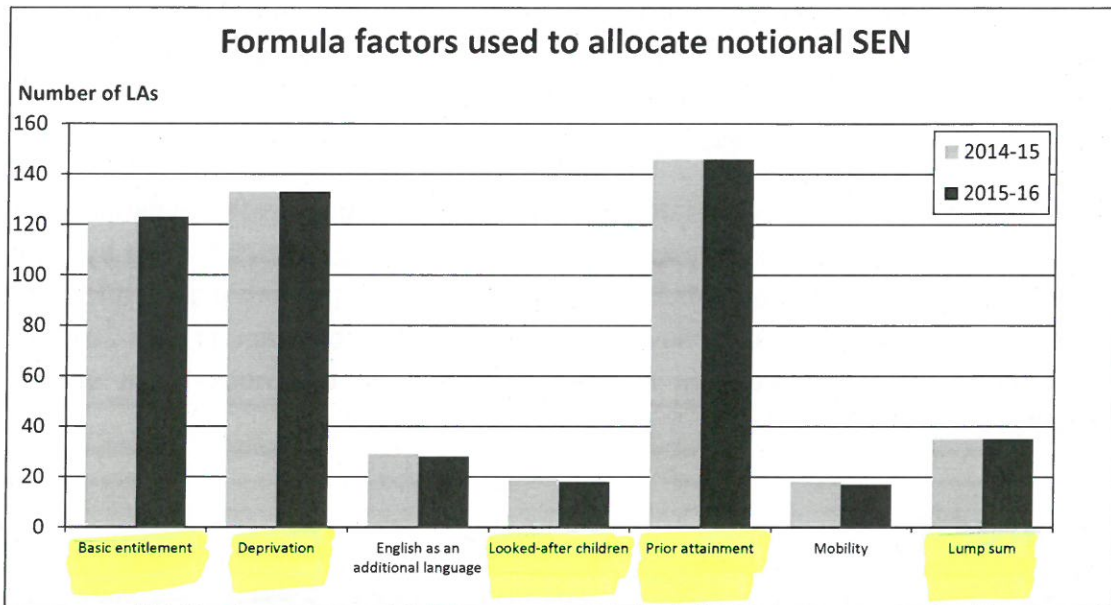
Funding for notional special educational needs (notional SEN) is not a separate formula factor. Rather, local authorities must specify how much of the schools block funding a school receives through the formula constitutes its notional SEN budget. In their funding formulae for 2015-16, local authorities specify what percentage of funding allocated through each factor contributes to the notional SEN budget.



The chart above shows how, at overall local authority level, the notional SEN budget in 2015-16 varies as a percentage of the total schools block formula allocation (before the

application of MFG, capping and scaling). Some 126 (83%) of authorities are allocating between 5% and 15% of schools block funding as notional SEN.

The overall percentage of formula allocation which is designated as the notional SEN budget across all local authorities is 10.0%, the same as in 2014-15. The median notional SEN allocation is 8.9%. However, as the chart shows, like last year there is a wide variation across local authorities with no clear clustering around these averages.



The chart above shows the number of local authorities for which each factor is being used to determine schools' notional SEN budgets. In 2015-16 formulae, prior attainment is again the factor most commonly contributing to notional SEN; 146 of the 148 authorities featuring the factor in their formula are doing this. The majority of authorities are also assigning a percentage of their basic entitlement and deprivation funding into notional SEN. For the formula factors not displayed on the chart (such as sparsity, split sites, etc.) only at most a few authorities are using these for notional SEN in each case. Full details on the use of factors to calculate notional SEN in 2015-16 can be found in the accompanying data file. Overall, the pattern of factors used to calculate notional SEN is similar to 2014-15 formulae.

Growth fund

Subject to the approval of their schools forum, local authorities are able to retain some of their schools block funding centrally (i.e. rather than allocate it to their individual schools) for a growth fund. This can be used only for the purposes of supporting growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need pressures, to support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulation, and to meet the costs of new schools. Authorities must use the fund on the same basis for the benefit of both maintained schools and academies in their area.

Some 132 of the 152 authorities are retaining a growth fund in 2015-16, an increase compared to 121 doing this in their 2014-15 formulae. The total value of these growth funds is £156.6m. Growth fund amounts for individual authorities range from £50,000 to £6m.

Falling rolls fund

Local authorities were also able to retain funding centrally for falling rolls to prepare for a future population bulge, again subject to the approval of their schools forum. The falling rolls fund should be restricted to population increases expected in two to three years in necessary schools which are classed by Ofsted as good or outstanding. The fund cannot be used by authorities to prop up unpopular or failing schools.

Only 29 authorities are retaining a falling rolls fund in their 2015-16 formulae (compared with 26 in 2014-15), with a total value of £8.0m. Falling rolls fund amounts for individual authorities range from £7,000 to £1,072,657.

Information about the data file

Alongside this document, the DfE has published a detailed data file in Microsoft Excel format showing the 2015-16 funding formula used by each local authority, as they stood at 2 March 2015.

“Proforma” sheet

The sheet entitled “Proforma” allows the full data for a single authority to be displayed on the screen. Click on the purple cell near the top of the page next to the LA Name label, then click on the drop-down arrow that appears alongside, to select a new local authority.

“FINAL MI Data Jan” sheet

The sheet entitled “FINAL MI Data Jan” gives the proforma data values for each authority in a large table. This section provides a description of all the columns displayed here.

Reception Uplift

The “Reception Uplift” column indicates which local authorities have opted to increase the count of primary pupils to which the basic entitlement primary indicator applies, to include pupils with deferred entry into reception later in the year. The other two columns in this section indicate the number of pupils this applies to and the proportion of schools block funding allocated through the basic entitlement primary indicator through the inclusion of these pupils.

Basic entitlement

This section shows the per-pupil funding amounts local authorities have chosen for the primary and secondary indicators in their 2015-16 formulae; the number of pupils in mainstream maintained schools and academies in the authority as a whole to which each indicator applies; the total amount of schools block funding allocated to maintained schools and academies through each factor; the proportion of schools block funding allocated through each factor; and the proportion of the factor’s funding which contributes towards notional SEN budgets.

Deprivation, looked-after children, prior attainment, English as an additional language, mobility

These sections also show the per-pupil amounts chosen, the number of pupils, the total/proportion of funding allocated to schools through each factor, and contribution to notional SEN budgets. For the indicators where local authorities had a choice as to which specific measure to use for their formulae, columns indicate the selection. Explanations

for the entries in these columns are given below. For each, the entry “Not Applicable” means that a local authority has chosen not to use a particular factor or indicator.

Deprivation – Primary FSM Factor, Secondary FSM Factor:

- FSM % Primary / FSM % Secondary: Indicator used is the number of pupils who are eligible for FSM.
- FSM6 % Primary / FSM6 % Secondary: Indicator used is the number of pupils who are FSM Ever 6.

English as an additional language – Primary (1/2/3/NA), Secondary (1/2/3/NA):

- EAL 1 Primary / EAL 1 Secondary: Indicator used is the number of pupils with EAL who entered the compulsory school system in the last year.
- EAL 2 Primary / EAL 2 Secondary: Indicator used is the number of pupils with EAL who entered the compulsory school system in either of the last 2 years.
- EAL 3 Primary / EAL 3 Secondary: Indicator used is the number of pupils with EAL who entered the compulsory school system in any of the last 3 years.

Prior attainment – Primary Low Attainment (73/78/NA):

- Low Attainment % Y3-6 73: Indicator used is the number pupils in years 3 to 6 who did not achieve 73 points or more in the old early years foundation stage profile.
- Low Attainment % Y3-6 78: Indicator used is the number pupils in years 3 to 6 who did not achieve 78 points or more in the old early years foundation stage profile.

Lump sum

Lump sum funding is shown in two places in the data file. Most funding through the lump sum factor is shown in the group of columns entitled “Lump sum”. However there is also a small amount of lump sum funding displayed in the “Exceptional circumstances” section, in the first five columns of this group (all of which have a column title “Additional lump sum...”). The data here relates specifically to additional lump sum funding which authorities are allocating to schools which amalgamated during the 2014 to 2015 financial year. As explained previously, authorities must allocate such schools additional lump sum funding, so that they receive 85% of the combined lump sums of its predecessors. Authorities could also apply to continue protection for schools which amalgamated during the 2013 to 2014 financial year. The data are presented in this way because authorities recorded any additional lump sum funding for previous year amalgamations in a different section of their formula submission.

Therefore the total amount of funding that each authority is allocating through the lump sum factor is obtained by summing the values in the “Lump Sum total” and “Additional

lump sum total” columns. Similarly, the proportion allocated through the lump sum factor is obtained by summing the values in the “Lump Sum proportion” and “Additional lump sum proportion” columns.

Sparsity

Sparsity funding is also shown in two places in the data file. Most funding through the sparsity factor is shown in the group of columns entitled “Sparsity”. However there is also a small amount of sparsity funding displayed in the “Exceptional circumstances” section, in the second group of five columns here. The data here relates specifically to additional sparsity funding which authorities are allocating to very small, sparse secondary schools.

(London) fringe payments, split sites, rates, PFI funding, sixth form, exceptional circumstances

These sections of the data file show the total funding and proportions of funding allocated to schools through each factor.

Schools block

The “Total Funding (excl. MFG)” column gives the total amount of money allocated to mainstream maintained schools and academies in 2015-16 under local authorities’ basic funding formulae.

Minimum funding guarantee

The MFG protects the per-pupil funding of schools from one year to the next and for 2015-16 has been set at -1.5%. The column “Minimum Funding Guarantee” is the total funding authorities are allocating to their schools, over and above the amounts derived through their basic formula, to ensure this condition is met.

In addition, local authorities are allowed to set capping and scaling factors to ensure that the amount of funding allocated through their formula (and including any additional funding to ensure the MFG is met) fits within the total DSG schools block available to them. Any change in the per-pupil funding amount in 2015-16 compared to 2014-15 for an individual school can be capped at a level specified by the local authority: these caps are given in the column “Capping Factor”. Any school which sees its per-pupil funding increase by more than the level of the cap will see any additional increase scaled back, to some extent (see next paragraph). For example, in this column a 0% cap means that the local authority will start scaling back any increase in per-pupil funding. A capping factor of 2% means that any rise in per-pupil funding of more than 2% will be scaled back.

The column “Scale Factor” indicates the amounts by which schools’ increases in per-pupil funding over the level of the cap will be reduced. So, for example, a 100% scaling

factor means that ALL increases in per-pupil funding above the level of the cap will be removed – in other words the cap is a strict limit on the increase in per-pupil funding in 2015-16 compared to 2014-15. Similarly, a 50% scaling factor means that schools will lose half of any per-pupil funding increase above the level of the cap. Authorities showing 0% values in both the “Capping Factor” column and the “Scaling Factor” column are not restricting per-pupil increases compared to 2014-15 in order to stay within their available funding.

The “MFG total deduction” column shows the total amounts that have been taken off school budgets due to the application of the capping and scaling factors. Clearly, any school requiring additional funding in addition to that specified by a local authority’s basic formula in order to meet the MFG will not also be subject to capping and scaling reductions. Any entry of zero in this column means that capping and scaling has not led to any deductions in funding compared to the basic formula for any schools in the local authority area.

Totals

The “Schools Block Total funding” column shows the total schools block funding allocated to mainstream maintained schools and academies in each local authority under their 2015-16 formulae, after additions for MFG funding and deductions from capping and scaling. Note that these figures will not exactly match the total DSG schools block funding for 2015-16 that has been allocated to each local authority. This is for a number of reasons. The funding formulae specify the funding allocated to individual schools, and so exclude central schools block budgets (such as the growth fund and falling rolls fund, which are shown in the correspondingly named columns). The DSG funding blocks are notional and local authorities can move funding between blocks. Also the funding formulae will reflect any brought forward over- and under-spends, and authorities supplementing DSG from other funding sources.

For the other columns in this section:

- Basic Entitlement % – the proportion of schools block funding being allocated through the basic entitlement factor in each local authority, prior to MFG and capping and scaling.
- Pupil Led Funding % – the proportion of schools block funding being allocated through the pupil-led factors (i.e. basic entitlement, deprivation, looked-after children, prior attainment, English as an additional language, and mobility), prior to MFG and capping and scaling.
- Primary / Secondary Ratio – the local authority’s primary:secondary funding ratio; a figure of 1.24, for example, denotes a ratio of 1 : 1.24, meaning that secondary-age pupils in a local authority receive, on average, 24% more funding per head than primary-age pupils.



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