

KEY STAGE 2 PUPIL GROWTH/ BASIC NEED FUND

Purpose of the Report

1. This report seeks the approval of Schools Forum to extend the use of the Pupil Growth Fund (PGF) allocation from financial year 2015/16 to ensure that schools whose basic need expansion required the employment of an additional teacher in Key Stage 1 can meet the additional staffing costs incurred as cohorts move into Key Stage 2. As funding for school budgets is based on January predictions and not September actuals, there is an interim period of time during which the cost of employing an additional teacher is not reflected in the staffing budget allocated to schools.
2. In addition, this report seeks the approval of the Forum to use £81,000 from the Pupil Growth Fund in the current financial year, to ensure that the schools who are admitting a significantly increased cohort into Key Stage 2, as a result of the 2012/13 Basic Need expansion building programme, can be funded appropriately for 2 terms of the cost of the additional teacher.
3. Schools Forum are asked to note that a number of schools will meet the criteria of meeting infant class size legislation for additional Key Stage 1 teachers as a result of the 2016 school expansion programme, currently being finalised.
4. Schools Forum are asked to note that the non-staffing PGF, which provides additional financial support towards the energy and resourcing costs of new classrooms, is continuing as previously approved.

Information and Advice

5. Schools Forum will be aware that there is increasing pressure on school places and that the County Council has embarked on an ambitious programme of expanding existing schools in areas where the supply of pupil places does not meet demand.
6. Schools Forum have previously approved the creation of a Pupil Growth Fund to support schools whose expansion to meet the basic need for additional places in their area resulted in the need to employ an additional teacher in order to comply with infant class size legislation. The criteria for the distribution of the PGF were agreed and since 2013, this fund has increased to support the year-on-year school expansion programme.
7. The larger Key Stage 1 cohorts will eventually progress into Key Stage 2. In the majority of cases, school expansions will be / have been modest raising the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) by less than 20, typically by an additional 5, 10 or 15 places at first admission. In these cases schools will be expected to accommodate rising Key Stage 2

numbers from within existing budgets and class organisations. Where cohort expansions are 20 or more, schools cannot reasonably be expected to accommodate these numbers within the existing budgets or classroom organisation. In providing a fund for Key Stage 2 staffing, the County Council hopes to alleviate the financial pressure on school budgets. It is therefore proposed that the principle criterion to be met before the Key Stage 2 support is provided, is that the PAN will have increased by at least 20 following expansion instigated by the local authority.

8. A further key criterion on which the fund is allocated relates to school expansion at the instigation of the Local Authority under the Basic Need school expansion programme
9. In relation to PGF allocations to schools to support additional costs into Key Stage 2, the funding of additional staffing will be for the benefit of both maintained schools and academies.
10. The rationale for requesting use of the Pupil Growth Fund underspend in 2015 is to ensure that the basic need expansions of 2012/13 onwards which includes Heymann, Abbey and Chuter Ede Primary Schools, will be able to employ an additional teacher in Year 3 and beyond. As school budgets are retrospective, schools that have been significantly expanded will have to employ an additional teacher which will not have been budgeted for.
11. The solution to the issue outlined above is based upon the need to fund qualifying schools for 7/12th of a full time teacher to cover the 2 terms during which the funding arrangements are out of step. On average this would be approximately £27,000 per qualifying school. The same formula is proposed to support those specific schools that are required to employ an additional teacher into Year 3 and beyond.
12. The funding provided would be via the normal funding route, and would arrive in school budgets in the April preceding the children entering Key Stage 2.
13. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) have advised that Schools Forum have the ability to approve such in-year variations to criteria.
14. Schools Forum have previously approved the creation of a non-staffing PGF, with associated criteria, to provide a one-off financial contribution towards initial increased energy and resourcing costs for those schools being expanded at the instigation of the LA. Schools do not have to apply for these payments.
15. The total PGF funding for 2015/16 (April 2015 – March 2016) is £1m, with £800,000 available for infant class size support and £200,000 available for the non-staffing costs associated with school expansions. An underspend of £136,000 is to be carried forward from 2014/15.

Proposed qualification criteria for receiving funding support for additional teachers at Key Stage 2

16. Schools will only receive funding for additional teachers at Key Stage 2 if they have their Published Admission Numbers increased by 20 or more as a direct result of the County Council's Basic Need School Places expansion programme. Schools will not need to apply for Key Stage 2 financial support from this fund. The PGF at Key Stage 1 will continue to be allocated based on existing criteria to ensure those schools required to employ an additional teacher can comply with infant class size regulation.

17. The criteria used to determine payments to support additional teachers in Key Stage 1 and the distribution of the non-staffing PGF will remain as previously approved.

Basis of financial support

18. The following allocations will apply:

- 7/12th of the cost of a main scale teacher at point 6 on the salary scale (£22,832) to schools who are required to employ an additional teacher at Year R and beyond in order to meet infant class size requirements.
- 7/12th of the cost of a main scale teacher at point 6 on the salary scale (£22,832) for each Key Stage 2 teacher appointed to mitigate the budgetary mismatch encountered arising from large (20+) cohort expansions due to Basic Need growth.
- £1,000 one-off contribution towards increased energy costs for each new build classroom space and £1,500 one-off contribution towards resourcing new classroom spaces created as a result of new building or internal re-modelling work.

Report of expenditure to the Schools Forum

19. A report detailing the schools and academies that have received payments from the Key Stage 2 growth fund would be presented to the Schools Forum at each ordinary meeting.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Schools Forum:

- 1) Agrees to extend the use of PGF allocations to support staffing costs in key stage 2 for those schools that have increased their PAN by 20 pupils or more, following school expansion.
- 2) Agrees to maintain the total Pupil Growth Fund at £1m for financial year 2016/17 (£800k staffing PGF and £200k non-staffing PGF), in preparation for the increased demands placed on school budgets following school expansions and meeting the additional demand for school places.
- 3) Approves the use of £81,000 from the carry forward underspend to ensure that the 3 schools who increased their PANs by 20 or more in 2012/13 can receive PGF allocations from September 2015 to support Key Stage 2 staffing costs.
- 4) Continues to monitor the allocations of PGF on an annual basis.

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