

APPENDIX 1

Agenda Item 3b

School Funding 2015-16: Consultation with Schools on the local funding formula

Number of responses received	19
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Primary to Secondary Funding Ratio (paragraphs 26 to 29)

Question 1

Do you agree that the primary to secondary ratio should be maintained at 1:1.265 for the 2015-16 financial year?

Yes	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would seem fair - Yes if the lump sum for primary schools in increased to at least £115,000 / year - If it is agreed to increase the lump sum.
No	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't understand why secondaries do better - primary pupils especially juniors are underfunded and this needs consideration! comment received separately by 2 schools - I would prefer that this was actually the same as the national average
Not Sure	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not sure as there is a balancing act between this and the lump sum. I believe the current proportions between lump sum and AWPU are driving small schools under and one way to address this is to pull at secondary AWPU. A preferred mechanism would be to increase the lump sum.
No Response	5	

Basic Entitlement – Age Weighted Pupil Unit (paragraphs 30 & 31)

Question 2

Do you agree that the 2014-15 AWPU rates should be proportionally adjusted in order to maintain the overall primary to secondary funding ratio of 1: 1.265 for 2015-16?

Yes	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Needs to be done to achieve above - Yes if the lump sum for primary schools in increased to at least £115,000 / year - It would make sense if there is a re-alignment that it should mirror the already agreed primary to secondary ratio. - If it is agreed to increase the lump sum.
No	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't understand why secondaries do better - primary pupils especially juniors are underfunded and this needs consideration! comment received separately by 2 schools - All factors (i.e. deprivation, mobility, EAL etc) should be

		proportionately adjusted not just the AWPU
Not Sure	1	
No Response	6	

Deprivation and the treatment of the Pupil Premium (paragraphs 28 to 31)

Question 3

Do you agree that the same percentage of total funding, deprivation indicators and weightings should be used to allocate deprivation funding in 2015-16?

Yes	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The County needs to maintain our collective responsibility to those who are deprived despite increased funding via Pupil Premium - However, in recognising the significant needs of children in the 0.5 and 0.6 IDACI groups, there should be a protection against losses in this area. In the case of the gains cap on Priority C of E Primary, the most deprived children in the County lose their funding.
No	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater weighting should be given to FSM as IDACI doesn't identify pockets of deprivation that exist within a generally un-deprived area. Some significantly un-deprived cancel out the few deprived. - As per question 2, in the event of a change of overall funding availability then all factors should be affected not just the AWPU
Not Sure	0	
No Response	5	

Low Cost, High Incidence SEN (paragraphs 32 to 37)

Question 4

Do you agree with retaining the Prior Attainment factor in the Nottinghamshire formula for 2015-16?

Yes	11	
No	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My concerns centre around the accuracy and validity of assessments which are teacher based in the primary sector
Not Sure	1	
No Response	6	

Question 5

If the factor continues to be included, do you agree to retaining the current proportion of funding, & method for distributing that funding?

Yes	11	
No	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Again my concerns centre around the methodology of identifying these pupils in the primary sector.
Not Sure	1	
No Response	6	

Looked after Children (paragraphs 38 to 40)

Question 6

Do you agree with retaining the Looked After Children factor in the Nottinghamshire formula for 2015-16?

Yes	12	- It is essential that these most vulnerable students have additional funding to be able to meet their very individual needs.
No	2	- I think it wrong that LACs lose their funding once adopted; this should carry on as a legacy a bit like the pupil premium money- experience shows they continue to struggle comment received separately by 2 schools
Not Sure	0	
No Response	5	

Question 7

If the factor continues to be included, do you agree that a fixed unit value of £3,000 should continue to be used to allocate this funding in 2015-16?

Yes	12	
No	2	- I think this figure is disproportionately high. I do not know of a school that is spending this money and the LAC pupil premium- this is a case of money not being the answer to everything. - All factors (i.e. deprivation, mobility, EAL etc) should be proportionately adjusted not just the AWPU
Not Sure	0	
No Response	5	

English as an Additional Language (paragraphs 41 to 42)

Question 8

Do you agree with retaining the EAL factor in the Nottinghamshire formula for 2015-16?

Yes	14	
No	0	
Not Sure	0	
No Response	5	

Question 9

If the factor is retained, do you agree that the same percentage of total funding should be allocated through the EAL factor with a single unit value in 2015-16?

Yes	13	
No	1	- All factors (i.e. deprivation, mobility, EAL etc) should be proportionately adjusted not just the AWPU
Not Sure	0	
No Response	5	

Pupil Mobility (paragraphs 43 to 44)

Question 10

Do you agree with retaining the Pupil Mobility factor in the Nottinghamshire formula for 2015-16?

Yes	14	- For small schools, particularly Sutton, we have high mobility and have had the situation last year where 8 pupils joined after the October 2013 census therefore we were not funded for the increase in pupils, our AWPU equates to £24,000 approx.
No	0	
Not Sure	0	

No Response	5	
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Question 11

Do you agree that the same percentage of total funding should be allocated through the Pupil Mobility factor in 2015-16, with a single unit value?

Yes	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I agree to this funding however, the proportion per pupil adjustment is considerably different to the actual AWPU figure. - All factors (i.e. deprivation, mobility, EAL etc) should be proportionately adjusted not just the AWPU
No	0	
Not Sure	0	
No Response	5	

Sparsity (paragraphs 45 to 57)

Question 12

Do you agree with the proposal not to adopt a Sparsity factor for 2015-16?

Yes	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This only impacts on a very small number of schools - I would prefer to have an increased lump sum where more schools benefit rather than the few who do for the sparsity factor.
No	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopting the sparsity factor would provide a crucial extra source of income for a few of the smaller schools. comment received separately by 4 schools - Adopting the sparsity factor would provide a crucial extra source of income for smaller schools like us and we feel that this should be considered. - small schools are really struggling due to the cuts imposed with the previous arrangement-sparsity needs serious thought comment received separately by 2 schools - Adopting the sparsity factor would provide a crucial extra source of income for smaller schools in rural areas.
Not Sure	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although the number of schools this affects is small, there is some disadvantage for those schools.
No Response	0	

Lump Sum (paragraphs 48 to 51)

Question 13

Do you agree with retaining the lump sum factor in the Nottinghamshire formula for 2015-16?

Yes	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The principle is right but the sum is too low - Essential for small schools to survive. - Essential for small schools
No	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small schools are really struggling due to the cuts imposed with the previous arrangement- they urgently need an increase in the lump sum which would by percentage pupil ensure they had a little more money. THIS needs serious thought as small schools are REALLY STRUGGLING with this budget rearrangement! comment received separately by 2 schools - All the lump sum factor does is keep open unviable schools
Not Sure	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are not convinced that all schools for whom this was initially devised are actually using it for this purpose. With clarification on

		this, we would be inclined to agree.
No Response	0	

Question 14

Do you agree with the proposal to keep the lump sum value at £100,000 in 2015-16 for the

a) Primary phase?

b) Secondary phase

a) Yes = 3	No = 15	Not Sure = 0	No Response = 1
b) Yes = 10	No = 2	Not Sure = 6	
Comments:			
Yes(a) / Yes(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The fixed costs met by both Primary and Secondary phases in my opinion, is best suited by the maintenance of the 100k, I would be against a weighting to either phase 		
No(a) / Yes(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small primaries are suffering and this needs increasing - I would suggest £130,000 for primaries - this would replace what is lost JUST! comment received separately by 2 schools - The lump sum for primaries should be raised to £115,000. This more closely reflects the actual cost of head, caretaker and admin officer. Schools below 130 on roll should have this raised lump sum, with NOR over 130 maintaining £100,000. The small school's scoping work identified that for small schools to continue to be viable, the lump sum for these schools needed to be raised. There has been commitment from the LA to identify how to support small schools; this is a time when the LA should seize an opportunity to demonstrate this commitment. - The lump sum for primaries with fewer than 130 pupils should be increased to £115,000. Schools with fewer than 130 would receive £115,000 lump sum and schools over this number would receive £100,000. The recent 'Small Schools Scoping' work which was undertaken by the LA and Heads identified that in order for small schools to continue to be viable, an increased lump sum would be required. There is obviously a commitment from the LA to support small schools and an increased lump sum is an ideal opportunity to back this up with appropriate financial support. - Lump sum for Primary schools needs to be increased to ensure sustainability. However this amount needs to be increased significantly as it no longer covers basic costs. - Propose that the lump sum be increased to £115,000 for primaries with less than 130 on roll. Schools over this number to retain £100,000 lump sum. Local Authority Small School Scoping work identified that for a small school to continue to be viable a larger lump sum would be necessary. Small schools do not necessarily benefit from additional pupil premium money, due to low numbers, making the increased lump sum even more important. - Schools with fewer pupils lose more money (Appendix 1). There was a piece of work commissioned earlier this year by Anthony May and John Peck looking at the difficulties that small primaries face. One of the outcomes was to look at increasing the lump sum for small schools, therefore showing a commitment by the LA to keeping small schools viable. I propose a lump sum of £115 000 lump sum for primaries under 130 pupils and to retain the £100 000 for schools of 		

	<p>131+.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools of 130 pupils or below should have a lump sum of £115,000 minimum. The work carried out by the Local Authority as part of the Small Schools Scoping Meetings has been positive in taking steps to address our small school issues. A financial commitment, with an increase to the lump sum, would evidence this further.
No(a) / Not Sure(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We would strongly urge you to increase this to £120, 000. This 'uplift' will make the difference for our smaller schools to ensure they will not face a budget deficit. <p>comment received separately by 3 schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We feel that this figure is not sufficient and we would strongly urge you to increase this to £120, 000. This 'uplift' will make the difference for our smaller schools to ensure they will not face a budget deficit. - Increasing the lump sum would support smaller schools who are vulnerable and at risk of further staffing shortages or changes in staffing to accommodate smaller budgets. - I really believe that this is the better driver to preserve small schools in our communities. Amalgamations and federations do not work (e.g. Radcliffe not proceeding because of the finances) What is not recognised in small schools is that the small school head has exactly the same number of documents to produce and areas to supervise as the head of a large school- Health & Safety, Sef's , School Improvement Planning & Monitoring, Parent newsletters, etc. whilst often teaching two to three days as well. I think the lump sum needs to reflect this in the calculation as I believe it doesn't currently acknowledge quite how much a small school head does- it is just costed in as 1 head.- yet that head has to have all the expertise in everything from Child Protection, CAF, SEN, and is doing the frontline work on these as well as the strategic direction. An increase of this to £120, 000 is a minimum necessary recognition of this. This 'uplift' will make the difference for our smaller schools to ensure they will not face a budget deficit.
No(a) / No(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As stated before in previous consultations, we are the poor relation in terms of the lump sum compared to all of our LA neighbours. Increasing this lump sum to 120k would have a huge beneficial effect to small school budgets.

Question 15

Do you agree that Nottinghamshire should not apply for an exceptional factor in order to pay a further allowance to amalgamating schools in the second year after amalgamation?

Yes	7	
No	1	
Not Sure	5	
No Response	6	

Split Sites (paragraph 52)

Question 16

Do you agree with retaining the Split Site factor in the Nottinghamshire formula for 2015-16?

Yes	6	
No	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think they can manage on what they get! <p>comment received separately by 2 schools</p>

Not Sure	4	
No Response	5	

Question 17

Do you agree to continue with the current methodology and funding for split site schools?

Yes	6	
No	3	- All factors (i.e. deprivation, mobility, EAL etc) should be proportionately adjusted not just the AWPU
Not Sure	4	- Not being a split site school it is difficult to ascertain whether this is required for actual split site services or a bonus for each individual school. I am sure that colleagues will have stringer opinions if they are in that situation.
No Response	6	

Rates (paragraph 53)

Question 18

Do you agree to continue with the current arrangement to pay rates centrally?

Yes	14	- Absolutely comment received separately by 5 schools
No	0	
Not Sure	3	- I am not certain that this is applicable to us as an Academy
No Response	2	

Exceptional factors (paragraphs 54 to 55)

Question 19

Do you agree to continue with the exceptional factors for joint use and rental?

Yes	15	- Absolutely essential where rent has to be paid for school site. comment received separately by 5 schools - All factors (i.e. deprivation, mobility, EAL etc) should be proportionately adjusted not just the AWPU
No	0	
Not Sure	3	- It seems a small percentage of total costs, however I have no real opinion on this matter.
No Response	1	

Growth Fund (paragraphs 56 to 57)

Question 20

Do you agree that the growth fund should continue?

Yes	11	- Looking at population factors in certain areas of Notts this could be essential for the forthcoming years.
No	0	

Not Sure	1	
No Response	7	- But so long as systems are in place to ensure that schools do not manage admissions to trigger these payments

Question 21

Do you agree that the growth fund should be increased to £1m, to provide for anticipated demand?

Yes	9	- But there should be clarity over when it is applied and discretionary conditions to support small schools when there is a significant (to them) increase in pupil numbers AFTER the main funding is allocated. - As long as it doesn't impact negatively on the sums being proposed for schools in appendix 1.
No	1	
Not Sure	2	- As part of the small schools scoping work, consideration was made to the possibility of the growth fund criteria supporting schools with a fluctuation in numbers (linked to question 11).
No Response	7	

De-delegation (paragraphs 58 to 59)

Question 22

As a representative of either a maintained primary or secondary school, do you agree to the de-delegation of the following in 2015-16:

- a) Contingencies for pre-agreed amalgamation transitional support?***
- b) Free school meals eligibility assessment?***
- c) Staff costs / supply cover (trade union facility time)?***
- d) Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners?***
- e) Contingency for crisis communications?***

a) Yes = 8	No = 1	Not Sure = 1	No Response = 9
b) Yes = 6	No = 3	Not Sure = 1	
c) Yes = 7	No = 3	Not Sure = 0	
d) Yes = 9	No = 1	Not Sure = 0	
e) Yes = 9	No = 1	Not Sure = 0	

Gains Cap and Minimum Funding Guarantee (paragraphs 60 to 64)

Question 23

Do you agree with the proposal to apply a further gains cap of 2.5% per pupil in 2015-16 in order to achieve the cumulative gains cap of 10% per pupil proposed in the 2013-14 consultation?

Yes	8	- The smallest amount of 'volatility' in the system will be the best way to maintain the improvements that have been evident in Nottinghamshire over recent years.
No	1	- Until the gains cap has either a top end cap (ie a cap on the maximum amount any school can have withheld from their gross budget allocation) or has the Deprivation Factor protected from the cap, it will be totally unfair for the most deprived children in the County.
Not Sure	3	- If it helps to reduce significant potential budget reduction then yes.

Additional comments

Please add any additional comments you have regarding the consultation below:

- I hope making a response makes a difference. It feels as if decisions have often already been made.
comment received separately by 4 schools
- We need to address the shortfall small schools have suffered with this and the prior funding rearrangement!
comment received separately by 2 schools
- To be honest, I lack confidence in these 'consultations'. Are they just a box ticking exercise or are small school views actually considered? I was informed by Stuart Edmonds (Abbey Road Primary) that the last time a decision had to be made Re this issue, primary school representation was diluted due to the absence of a primary representative (s) and that the meeting was stacked in favour of secondary school representatives. I was told that the casting vote came down to a private nursery representative. If this is true, it beggars belief and shows how some decisions are based more on luck and the force of certain individuals rather than balanced reasoning. I do hope that REAL consideration can be given this time to increasing the lump sum element for the benefit of smaller schools who operate under tight budget restraints.
- Smaller schools are continually pressured into making unwanted staffing changes which ultimately impacts on children's progress. Smaller schools are still a choice for some parents who for whatever reason choose them. Many heads in smaller school already have a teaching commitment on top of their headship role ultimately this is not sustainable or attractive to those seeking first headships. How the funding is organised is challenging – a reduction in budget compromises the quality of education as cuts need to be made. With the bulk of budgets already spent on staffing there is little left. I hope that some consideration will be given to the future of smaller schools and how locally funding could support those who will see a reduction year after year.
- Further correspondence has been made with Nottinghamshire County Council, Bassetlaw District Council and John Mann MP regarding the £280,000 held back from the deprived children of Worksop Priory C of E Primary School over the last 3 years. This value is by far and away the biggest amount of any Primary School in Nottinghamshire. The school is disappointed by the lack of proactive support for our school, the most heavily penalised in the County. In particular, we had hoped that it would be seen as essential that our concerns were met with potential solutions, rather than just dismissed as an unfortunate hard-luck story.
- It appears from the Appendix 1 document that there is a net loss of funding for all small primary schools. In order to maintain standards and improve those standards, these small schools must be able to employ and retain good and outstanding teachers. With the rise in pupil numbers, the LA is relying on the spaces available in small rural schools to provide school places. If the LA has a commitment to small schools, then this is an opportunity to show their true commitment.
- We find ourselves in the fortunate position of becoming popular with parents and our pupil numbers are growing. In order to support this increase, we need to be able to retain the staffing levels we have with limited funding. Our year on year number fluctuations (and particularly in year increase) make future plans difficult and as a "growing" school we want to continue to be a choice for parents and our local community, retaining 3 classes.