

SCHOOLS FORUM
5th December 2023



Report sponsor: Sharon Buckby, Service Director – Learning Skills and Inclusion, and Alison Parkin, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
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ITEM
02/23

Dedicated Schools Grant 2024-2025– Proposal for Items for Re Pooling

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Funding within the Schools Block of the Dedicated School Grant is ring-fenced for schools however where **maintained** schools agree that a service should be provided centrally, they can pool those resources, if maintained schools in a phase collectively agree, they can be provided centrally by returning funding to the local authority. The final delegated budget available to each school would then exclude these amounts.
- 1.2 This report makes recommendations to Schools Forum from the perspective of the Local Authority and the Strategic Director of People Services in the context of delivering Children’s Services in Derby. It should also be noted that the funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant (detailed within this report) forms part of a total service funding stream alongside funding from the local authority resources.
- 1.3 Schools Forum is asked to consider the recommendations and the maintained representatives on the Forum will vote on the delegation levels to inform schools budgets for 2024-25. If re-pooling was not successful, the Local Authority would have to consider operating alternative models, such as a sold service model or cease the support. as sold service models will only be provided where there are no costs to the Local Authority. This makes the future sustainability of the service subject to take-up.

De-delegation only applies to mainstream primary and secondary schools. Academies, early years, special and pupil referral units will take an individual decision outside of Forum although it should be noted that the services contained in this report are reliant on a whole sector support in order that they are viable and sustainable.

Where funding is delegated to schools, this will be done on a per pupil basis. Schools need to recognise that the amounts eventually delegated through a per pupil model will not reflect the costs of that service to an individual school through a sold services model. Some schools may receive relatively smaller

amounts through a delegation model yet may require higher levels of service provision; a reason why central services exist.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To consider the pooling of resources to continue to provide services based on the current model as detailed in the report for a 1-year period. Values are provisional and based on indicative numbers.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Where maintained schools agree that a service should be provided centrally, they can pool resources to fund those services. There is a limited range of services where central provision for maintained schools may be argued for on the grounds of economies of scale or pooled risk.

The following items are for re-pooling considerations.

- 3.2 **Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty: £68,193 approx. £6.44 per pupil (no changes to the per pupil amount)**

This is a resource used to support schools' budgets directly, particularly where schools are either in deficit or on the verge of deficit with standards issues and require additional contributions for one-off expenditure. The additional amounts are generally allocated to deal with restructure costs where the school may already be in deficit, or the budget plans of the school indicate that a deficit would not be recoverable within the terms of a licensed deficit.

This resource will also be used to cover any deficits remaining for schools converting to an academy through the 'sponsored' route. Forum should be assured that the local authority manages this very closely to protect the risk to the Council and the DSG through the issuing of financial warning notices and where appropriate removal of financial delegation.

It must be stressed that school's own delegated budgets are always considered in the first instance.

It should be noted that this re-pooling is for maintained schools only and excludes early years, special schools, and academy schools.

- 3.3 **Insurance: £170,641. approx. £16.12 per pupil (an increase of 10% from 2023/24) this reflects the latest increases to insurance premiums.**

The centrally funded insurance arranged by the Council provides cover for both the schools liabilities and property assets. The Councils liability insurance provision provides cover for Employers, Public and Hirers Liability, Officials

and Professional Indemnity and Libel and Slander. Personal Accident cover is also provided for employees and teachers employed by the Council. The Councils insurance provision for property provides cover for catastrophic loss of buildings and contents and or business interruption due to Fire, Lightning, Explosion, Aircraft, Earthquake, Riot, Civil Commotion and Terrorism. In addition, the provision also includes cover for the loss of money and fidelity guarantee for acts of employee fraud. Schools with lifting and pressure plant will also benefit from the Councils engineering insurance and competent person inspections under the current LOLER (1998), PUWER (1998) and PSSR (2000) regulations.

In addition to the centrally funded insurances the Council also offers extended buildings and contents insurance cover offering additional perils (Malicious Persons, Storm, Flood, Escape of Water, Full Impact, Theft and Accidental Damage) and lower excess. The Council also offers additional Personal Accident, School Journey, and School Minibus motor insurance upon request. These additional covers are not included in the centrally funded provision but can be arranged directly with the Councils insurance team.

**3.4 Central Staff Cover: £261,124 approx. (£24.66 per pupil)
Breakdown £19.66 per pupil for Maternity cover; approx. £5.00 for Trade Union recharges. (no changes to the per pupil amount)**

This funding is pooled to reimburse schools the costs of maternity pay and trade union activity. Should this budget not be re-pooled then schools will have to fund the costs of this through their delegated budgets.

3.5 Support for Inclusion

It is permitted under the current Schools Funding Regulations to remove amounts from schools' delegated budgets to support inclusion including improving the performance of underperforming pupils from minority ethnic groups or to meet the specific needs of bilingual pupils. This allocation supports a wide range of activity, and each item is considered separately.

3.5.1 Primary Pupil Support Grant: £30,785 approx. £4.36 primary only (no change to the per pupil amount)

This funding is used to provide financial support to the Primary in Year Fair Access process, as outlined in the Fair Access Agreement. This would ensure that central support is provided for all managed moves, through the Behaviour Strategy, both school to school and PRU to school, and that financial support is offered to schools on a case-by-case basis as outlined in the agreement. This service also supports behaviour in all schools across the City, to prevent the use of repeat suspension and permanent exclusion.

The local authority would recommend its continuation.

3.5.2 Behaviour Support Services: £48,156 approx. £6.82per pupil primary (no change to the per pupil amount)

This service supports behaviour in LA Maintained schools across the City. In the primary phase this service supports children at risk of exclusion in LA mainstream schools. In addition, this funding contributes to the support offered for Y6/7 transition for the most vulnerable.

3.6 Support to Underperforming Ethnic Minority Groups and Bilingual Learners.

This funding covers a wide range of service areas and is part of a total budget of circa £1.5 million funding, partly from the DSG and partly from Council resources. The service is an integrated service and managed as an Inclusion and Intervention service.

3.6.1 New Communities Support Team £159,4980 approx. £15.06 per pupil (an increase of 56 pence per pupil 3.88% from previous years.).

The New Communities Achievement Team (NCAT) supports families from new and emerging communities to fully integrate into the community in which they now live and to allow them access to services, provided at local level, including access to education in our city.

The Schools' Forum funding is used to support the integration of new arrivals, who do not speak or understand English and to support schools in their preparation for the arrival and the induction of EAL pupils/students. This includes provision of in-class language/ curriculum support, home/school liaison, interpreting /translation service for school staff and families, attendance monitoring, delivery of ESOL programmes for unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC), supporting EAL New Arrival children at risk of exclusion in mainstream schools, mentoring, development of bi-lingual resources and sign posting families to appropriate mainstream service providers.

NCAT currently delivers one half a day support session each week for every primary and secondary school in Derby which have regular half-termly admissions of EAL New Arrival children. All other schools can secure support from the team as requested and for the minimum period of one school term or until the supported child /children is/are well integrated into the school. The support is delivered in the form of language/curriculum in class support, admission/induction support, home/school liaison, attendance monitoring, mentoring and interpreting /translation service provision.

In addition to the above support, there are a number of support programmes which are designed to help children and their families with better access to universal services and better integration into the community. The support programmes include: The Bridge project (education programme for EAL New

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Arrival children of primary school age, waiting to be admitted to local primary schools on the basis of – 4 half days a week/ 52 weeks a year), One Stop Shop Advice and Support service (advice, guidance and signposting service for EAL New Arrival families in Derby – 5 days a week / 52 weeks a year), Homework Club for New Arrival children, Safeguarding, Citizenship and Parenting programmes for EAL New Arrival parents (half-termly, with provision of interpreting service) and SEND / ASD training programmes for parents (half-termly, with provision of interpreting service). Schools are entitled to refer parents /families to access these services and the cost of these support services/programmes is covered by the School's Forum funding.

The School's Forum funding contributes towards staffing costs of 11 members of the team, who are involved in provision of services of NCAT.

In order to meet high demand within the support for new and emerging communities, NCAT delivers support through 11 support packages and these include: initial support for the induction of new arrival EAL pupils, language / curriculum support, support in working with parents of EAL New Arrivals, training provision, SATS / GCSE preparation for EAL pupils, mentoring, ESOL support, improved engagement with families from EAL New Arrival communities, support with overcoming barriers to educational engagement and attainment of Roma pupils in primary and secondary schools and also provision of interpreting / translation service.

This element of the service is provided through Traded Service.

For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Janice Hadfield, email Janice.hadfield@derby.gov.uk
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