

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 23 January 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: School Improvement Funding Update for 2017-18

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update School Forum on the recent government announcement in relation to School Improvement funding.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

The government announced new funding to address underperformance and help ensure every child has a good school place

Information

New resources to ensure the number of good school places continues to rise were announced on 30th November 2016 by the Secretary of State for Education Justine Greening. Less than a week after this announcement new figures showed the number of good or outstanding places had risen by 420,000 in the last year, and she reiterated her determination to continue that upward trend by making new funds available to the school system.

These include:

- From September 2017, a £50 million a year fund for local authorities to continue to monitor and commission school improvement for low-performing maintained schools
- A new £140 million 'Strategic School Improvement Fund' for academies and maintained schools – aimed at ensuring resources are targeted at the schools most in need of support to drive up standards, use their resources more effectively and deliver more good school places
- Alongside this new work, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has committed to spend a further £20 million over the next 2 years to scale up and disseminate evidence-based programmes and approaches

The government's ambition remains that all schools will become academies forming a fully school-led system, where head teachers and school leaders collaborate to drive improvement in their schools. In the meantime, while there continues to be a dual system of maintained schools and academies, it is vital that all schools have the resources they need to tackle underperformance.

This announcement provides further support for local authority schools ahead of the move to the new National Funding Formula. Maintained schools may choose to pool funding from their Dedicated School Grant to buy school improvement services such as bringing in subject or curriculum experts.

Summary

It is important to note that while this announcement is welcome news we do not have any information regarding how these funds will be allocated.

A further announcement was made on 20th December indicating that this grant will receive an allocation of at least £1,800 per maintained school as at September 2017, subject to a total minimum allocation of £50,000 per authority. It is hoped we will receive a minimum of £80,000 from this grant.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None