

**REPORT TO:** Schools Forum  
**DATE:** 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Operational Director - Finance  
**SUBJECT:** Schools funding for 2021-22  
**WARDS:** Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To report to the Schools Forum the Schools funding for 2021-22.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- 2.1 The report is noted.
- 2.2 The level of Minimum Funding Guarantee to be applied to the Schools Block funding formula for 2021-22 is agreed.
- 2.3 That maintained school representatives decide by phase which de-delegated budgets they agree to fund in 2021-22.

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Grant settlement**

The Dedicated Schools Grant settlement was announced on 17<sup>th</sup> December giving a total of £99,050,733 for the Schools Block for 2020-21, an increase of £6,469,708 to the 2020-21 settlement but this includes £4,082,348 funding transferred from the Teachers Pay and Pension Grants into DSG.

### **3.2 Pupil Numbers**

Pupil numbers in primary and secondary mainstream schools have again increased overall, although primary numbers have decreased.

|           | 2021-22 | 2020-21 | Variance |
|-----------|---------|---------|----------|
| Primary   | 10,668  | 10,671  | -3       |
| Secondary | 7,617   | 7,610   | 7        |
| Total     | 18,285  | 18,281  | 4        |

### **3.3 Current position**

As in previous years at the time of writing the individual Schools Block budgets have not been calculated. As the October census data and grant allocations have now been received, we should be able to issue the indicative allocations for the meeting. Once approval has been given by the ESFA to our funding formula, we will confirm individual Schools Block budgets for 2021-22.

#### 3.4 Minimum Funding Guarantee

We are required to agree the level of MFG to be applied to the Schools Block funding formula for 2021-22. As per the outcome of the consultation with schools, the decision on the level of MFG is to be taken at the January meeting of Schools Forum. For 2021-22 the level of MFG can be set between plus 0.5% and plus 2.0%. The recommendation of the actual level of MFG will be tabled at the meeting but initial calculations indicate that it cannot be set at the highest level of 2.0%.

#### 3.5 De-delegation

Maintained school representatives will be asked to decide at the January meeting which de-delegated budgets they wish to fund for 2021-22. The services, per pupil amounts and totals for each school will be tabled at the meeting as they have not yet been calculated.

#### 3.6 Transfer of funding to the High Needs Block

For 2021-22 the High Needs Block allocation has increased by £2,399,206 to £18,554,788 after recoupment. We have not requested any transfer of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2021-22. Therefore, the grant of £99,050,733 will be fully allocated to mainstream schools and academies through the Schools Block funding formula. As stated at the last meeting, if we are unable to clear this year's deficit balance and keep expenditure within budget in 2021-22 we will have no choice but to request a transfer from schools and School Forum for 2022-23.

However, in line with the Inclusion Charter developed with schools in 2019 and school's responsibility as part of the Local Offer, it is essential that schools ensure they use this year's funding to improve their provision for children and young people with SEND, thereby reducing the need for specialist placements.

Details of High Needs budgets will be presented at the February meeting.

#### 3.7 Early Years Block

For 2021-22 the Early Years Block indicative allocation is £9,862,865 which is very similar to the initial allocation for the current year. The funding to Halton has increased by £0.08 per hour for 2 year old provision but the hourly rate for 3&4 year olds has remained the same at £5.12 per hour. Please note this is the funding that is coming into Halton rather than the hourly rates paid to providers. Once the EY census data is released in February we will calculate the likely grant allocation for the current financial year which in turn will give an indication of the outturn position. We can then calculate the funding formula for 2021-22, the details of which will be presented at the February meeting.

### 3.8 Pupil Premium Grant 2021-22

The DfE have confirmed the Pupil Premium grant will continue into 2021-22 and that the funding rates are staying at the same level as this year. However there is a significant change in how the allocations are calculated for 2021-22 as the DfE are using the October census instead of the normal January census.

## **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Schools Block funding formula must comply with all relevant regulations as set out by the Department for Education and be submitted to the Department by the end of 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

4.2 If de-delegation is rejected for any budget by any phase of maintained schools, the Council will need to decide if it can source other funding to continue the service(s) to schools.

## **5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **5.1 Children & Young People in Halton**

It is essential that schools and education support services receive sufficient funding to allow them to support all children and young people.

### **5.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None.

### **5.3 A Healthy Halton**

None.

### **5.4 A Safer Halton**

None.

### **5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None.

## **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 We need to comply with the regulations otherwise could have formula imposed on us.

## **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 The Local Authority must discharge its statutory responsibilities in relation to all schools and settings.