

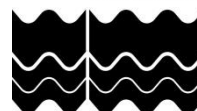
East Sussex County Council Schools' Forum

Friday 17 November 2023

08.30

Remote Meeting

**East Sussex
County Council**



Agenda

Item	Heading	Paper	Lead	Item for
1.	Welcome and Apologies	N	Chair	Note
2.	Minutes of previous meeting 15 September 2023	Y	Chair	Approval
3.	Matters Arising and Declaration of Interests	N	Chair	Discussion
4.	Growth Fund / Falling Rolls Fund	Y	Gary Langford	Approval
5.	DSG – Central School Services Block 2024/25	Y	Ed Beale	Approval
	AOB			

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EAST SUSSEX SCHOOLS' FORUM

MINUTES of a meeting of the Schools' Forum held remotely with Microsoft Teams on 15 September 2023

PRESENT

Secondary

Secondary Governors

Monica Whitehead (Claverham Community College)

Secondary Academy

Kelly Johnson (UoBAT)

Primary

Richard Blakeley (Harlands Primary)

Laura Cooper (St John's CE School)

Primary Governors

Debra Vice Holt (Oak Tree Federation)

Peter Hughes (South Malling Primary School)

Primary Academy

James Freeston (King Offa Primary Academy)

Gavin Bailey (Swale Academy Trust)

Special Schools

Jo Foulkes (Sabden Multi Academy Trust) **Acting Chair**

Julie Campion (Grove Park School)

Special Academy

Richard Preece (Saxon Mount and Torfield)

Non School Members

Joanna Sanchez (Diocese of Arundel and Brighton)

Jon Gilbert (Diocese of Chichester)

ESCC representatives

Cllr Bob Standley (Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability)

Elizabeth Funge Assistant Director Education

Sian Hedger (BSD Finance)

Nathan Caine (HofEd SEND & Safeguarding)

Edward Beale (Acting Finance Manager - Childrens Services)

Sarah Rice (Finance Manager - Schools)

Kirsten Coe (Schools Funding Manager - Acting)

Rachel King (Clerk)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES (Note)

The chair welcomed all and thanked everyone for their attendance. Jo Foulkes welcomed new Forum member Peter Hughes from South Malling Primary School to represent Primary Governors.

1.1 It was confirmed the meeting was quorate, recognising the apologies below.

Helen Key (Chailey School)
Alison Jeffery (Director Children's Services)

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 14 July 2023 (Approval)

2.1 The minutes for the meeting held were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chair and scanned to clerk.

2.2

3. MATTER ARISING AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Discussion)

3.1 Matters arising - none
Declarations of interest - none.

4. De-delegation (Approval)

4.1 Recommendation; the Primary and Secondary maintained Schools Forum representatives were asked to decide which services should be provided centrally by the Authority for 2024/25. The forum was advised which budgets were de-delegated by schools in 23/24 and asked for approval on de-delegated budgets for 24/25.

Votes were as follows:

	Primary Phase		Secondary Phase	
	No. of 'Yes'	No. of 'No'	No. of 'Yes'	No. of 'No'
Contingency	4	0	2	0
Administration of FSM	4	0	2	0
Jury Service and Union Business	4	0	2	0
Behaviour Support Services	4	0	1	1
Support for Ethnic Minority Pupils	4	0	1	1
Head Teacher Partnership	3	1	2	0

**Note that it was agreed that Helen Key could vote via email, in this instance, given there are currently only two Secondary School representatives and the importance of the decision.*

For the 'Behaviour Support Services' and 'Support for Ethnic Minority Pupils' items, the result was that each had one 'Yes' and one 'No' vote meaning we revert to the previous year's decision. The outcome being that, in the Secondary Phase, these were not agreed / approved.

5.0 Review of School Forum membership (Information)

5.1 Forum members were asked to consider the proposed Schools' Forum membership changes.

5.2 The Forum were reminded that if a member is unable to attend then a substitute can attend instead.

5.3 At a recent Headteacher meeting it was discussed that other senior members of staff can potentially become members. This would ensure full representation across both phases.

Forum members were reminded that training can be provided for members.

5.4 ACTION It was discussed that some communication will be prepared to go out to headteachers to attract more members and to give more information about Schools' Forum. Setting out the importance and role of how the Forum operates and makes decisions of behalf of the schools in East Sussex. Elizabeth Funge and Ed Beale will take this forward.

6. Election of Chair/Vice Chair (Approval)

Members were asked to volunteer to take on the role of Chair and Vice Chair on a permanent basis. The recent Chair has stepped down and it is a crucial role that needs to be filled.

James Freeston volunteered this position and will be contacted by the relevant ESCC officers to discuss the new role.

The Chair (interim) thanked James for coming forward.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was asked if Schools Forum has a role in the upcoming OFSTED inspection for ASEND. Forum members were told there would be certain references to Schools' Forum in the self-assessment and potentially an overlap, however OFSTED won't be directly contacting Schools Forum as a group.

Meeting concluded at 09:11 am

Next meeting - Friday 17 November 2023 08:30am. To be held on Microsoft Teams

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Report to: **East Sussex Schools Forum**
Date: **17 November 2023**
Title of Report: **Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund**
By: **Gary Langford, Senior Manager School Organisation and Admissions**
Purpose of Report: **To update Schools Forum on spend in the 2023/24 financial year and to seek approval for funding in the 2024/25 financial year.**

Recommendation:
Schools Forum is asked to approve an allocation of £1,038,400 for the 2024/25 Growth Fund.

1. Introduction

1.1 The 2023/24 Growth and Falling Rolls Funds were approved by Schools Forum on 18 November 2022.

1.2 The Growth Fund supports maintained and non-maintained mainstream schools which are required to provide extra places to meet basic need within the local authority. The fund is provided for:

- Key Stage 1 top-up: paid to schools to enable them to comply with Key Stage 1 class size legislation, which sets a maximum class size of 30 pupils with one teacher. There are a few exceptions where class sizes can exceed 30, but there is no entitlement to Growth Fund, for example, arising from admissions through the Fair Access Protocol.
- Additional classes: where the local authority has made a formal request for a school to set up one or more additional classes or requests a permanent increase in a school's Published Admission Number.
- New school funding: when new schools open in a local authority area, they receive pre-opening funding through a formula to cover costs incurred prior to the opening and diseconomy funding to cover costs incurred while the school fills to capacity. The funding decreases year on year as more year groups in the new school are admitted.

1.3 The Falling Rolls Fund is used to support good or outstanding schools that have temporary, but significant, falling rolls, but where local planning data shows the places will be needed in the near future. It is designed to avoid the need for a school to restructure and then recruit again shortly afterwards. The funding is for maintained and non-maintained schools. The circumstances in which a payment is made from the Falling Rolls fund are:

- The school is judged to be good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection (this is a mandatory requirement from the DFE).
- The number on roll has dropped by more than 5% between the October 2022 census and the October 2023 census.
- Local planning data (East Sussex County Council pupil forecasting model) predicts that the number on roll will, in October 2025, be equal to or exceed their number on roll as in October 2022.

2. Growth Fund 2023/24

2.1 The Growth Fund budget for 2023/24 is £1,102,000. This is made up of £985,000 approved by Schools Forum on 18 November 2022 and £117,000 carried forward from 2022/23. The budget

was based on estimated Key Stage 1 pupil numbers, the predicted additional classes required for the 2023/24 academic year and the number of new schools that required diseconomy funding.

2.2 In 2023/24, the numbers of schools eligible for either Key Stage 1 top-up funding, additional class funding and new schools funding were:

- 30 primary schools eligible for Key Stage 1 top-up funding
- 1 primary school eligible for additional class funding
- 5 secondary schools eligible for additional class funding
- 1 all-through school eligible for new schools funding

2.3 To date, £1,065,430 of the Growth Fund budget has been spent in 2023/24, leaving a balance of £36,570. In accordance with DfE regulations, the balance is being used to support local schools that have taken additional pupil numbers as a direct result of the proposed closures of Holy Cross CE Primary School on 31 December 2023 and St Pancras Catholic Primary School on 31 August 2024. Therefore, the Growth Fund budget for 2023/24 is fully spent. A summary of the spend in 2023/24 is provided in **Appendix A**.

3. Growth Fund 2024/25

3.1 The proposed allocation for 2024/25 is based on the following assumptions:

- Key Stage 1 top-up funding: the estimated October 2023 pupil numbers and the estimated Key Stage 1 numbers as in October 2024. A 10% contingency has been added to the top-up element to allow for any unforeseen changes.
- Additional class funding: the predicted need for places identified through the annual update to the pupil forecasting model, most recently updated in July 2023 and available in the impending School Organisation Plan 2023 to 2027. A 10% contingency has been added to the additional class element to allow for any unanticipated pressures.
- New school funding: one school being eligible for funding.
- Further support for local schools as a direct result of the proposed closures of Holy Cross CE Primary School and St Pancras Catholic Primary School. Any balance remaining at the final closure of the school accounts, will be transferred to the Growth Fund in accordance with DfE regulations.

3.2 It is currently estimated that the following numbers of schools will be eligible for Growth Fund support in 2024/25:

- 28 primary schools potentially eligible for Key Stage 1 top-up funding
- 1 primary school eligible for additional class funding
- 5 secondary schools potentially eligible for additional class funding
- 1 all-through school eligible for additional class funding and new schools funding

3.3 In total, the Growth Fund requirement for 2024/25 is £1,038,400. A breakdown of the Growth Fund calculation for 2024/25 is provided in **Appendix B**. The updated Growth Fund guidance document for 2024/25 will be available online ahead of the new financial year.

4. Falling Rolls Fund 2023/24 and 2024/25

4.1 The Falling Rolls Fund budget for 2023/24 is £42,000. No schools qualify for the fund in 2023/24, so we propose carrying forward the budget in its entirety to 2024/25. As a result, we do not require any additional funding for the Falling Rolls Fund next year.

4.2 The updated Falling Rolls Fund guidance document for 2024/25 will be available online ahead of the new financial year.

5. Conclusion and recommendation

5.1 In conclusion, the report updates Schools Forum on Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund spending in the 2023/24 financial year and sets out the rationale for funding in 2024/25.

5.2 Accordingly, Schools Forum is recommended to approve an allocation of **£1,038,400** for the 2024/25 Growth Fund.

Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund summary 2023/24

School	Total
Hankham Primary School	£10,013
Laughton Community Primary School	£12,760
St Michael's Primary School, Withyham	£39,190
Manor Primary School	£17,722
Beckley CE Primary School	£3,950
Burwash CE Primary School	£25,975
Forest Row CE Primary School	£21,569
High Hurstwood CE Primary School	£7,443
Southover CE Primary School	£12,760
Ninfield CE Primary School	£18,165
St Michael's CE Primary School, Playden	£12,582
Salehurst CE Primary School	£10,013
Firle CE Primary School	£25,975
Bodiam CE Primary School	£43,595
Iford & Kingston CE Primary School	£30,380
Staplecross Methodist Primary School	£3,950
Framfield CE Primary School	£8,355
St Mark's CE Primary School, Hadlow Down	£16,329
St Mary the Virgin CE Primary School, Hartfield	£12,760
All Saints' and St Richard's CE Primary School	£2,304
Little Horsted CE Primary School	£25,975
Mark Cross CE Primary School	£30,380
Groombridge St Thomas' CE Primary School	£21,571
Heron Park Primary Academy	£17,722
West St Leonard's Primary Academy	£10,013
The Baird Primary Academy	£7,443
Robsack Wood Primary Academy	£6,838
Ditchling (St Margarets) CE Primary School	£28,000
Northiam CE Primary School	£3,283
St Paul's CE Academy, St Leonard's-on-Sea	£9,142
Christ Church CE Primary School	£10,013
TOTAL KS1 Top Up funding April 2023 to March 2024	£506,170
Wivelsfield Primary School	£39,260
Willingdon Community School	£48,000
Beacon Academy	£150,000
Hailsham Community College	£164,000
Seaford Head School	£48,000
Seahaven Academy	£82,000
TOTAL Additional Class funding April 2023 to March 2024	£531,260
Hailsham Community College	£28,000
TOTAL New School funding April 2023 to March 2024	£28,000
Funding to support pupils from closing schools	£36,570
TOTAL SPENT 2023/24	£1,102,000

Growth Fund requirement 2024/25

Funding type	Funding required
Key Stage 1 top-up funding	£474,100
Additional class funding	£550,300
New school funding	£14,000
Total funding required in 2024/25	£1,038,400

Falling Rolls Fund requirement 2024/25

Funding type	Funding required
Carry forward from 2023/24	£42,000
Additional funding required in 2024/25	£0
Allocation in 2024/25	£42,000

Report to: Schools' Forum

Date of meeting: 17 November 2023

Report By: Alison Jeffery

Title: Central School Services Block (CSSB) 2024/25

Purpose: To provide an update on the CSSB allocations for 2024/25

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Schools' Forum are asked to note and approve the proposals for the Central School Services Block for 2024/25.

1 Background

1.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2024/25 will be allocated by the Department for Education (DfE), like 2023/24, into four notional blocks: Schools, High Needs, Early Years and Central School Services Block (CSSB). Each block is calculated on a different basis and subject to separate regulations as to eligible expenditure.

1.2 This paper specifically relates to the CSSB. This block includes funding that has been allocated to Local Authorities (LAs) to carry out functions on behalf of pupils in both maintained schools and academies and has two distinct elements:

- **Ongoing responsibilities** This comprises:
 - funds specified by the DfE and retained centrally (Admissions, Copyright Licencing Agency (CLA) Licence and Servicing Schools Forum); and
 - funds that were previously known as 'Retained Duties Education Services Grant' which, up to 2017/18, the LA received and held separately for its on-going responsibilities to maintained schools and academies.
- **Historic Commitments** These are what were previously known as "Combined Services" and is funding for previously specified financial commitments.

2 2024/25 On-going responsibilities

2.1 The DfE fund On-going responsibilities on a per pupil basis using the Oct census and have increased the funding rate for, 2024/25, from £37.26, to £38.55 per pupil.

2.2 As with 2023/24, the LA is asking to retain the full amount that the DfE is allocating for 2024/25.

2.3 Table 1 shows the 2024/25 proposals for the 'On-going Responsibilities' element of the CSSB which totals £2.46m. (Please note that this is separate funding from the Schools Block DSG which funds Maintained school budget shares / Academy General Annual Grants (GAGs).

Table 1: Proposals for 2024/25 On-going Responsibilities

Category	Responsibility	2023/24 Allocations	Additional Funds required	2024/25 Proposed Allocations
Specified by the DfE	Admissions	£539,800	£18,700	£558,500
	CLA Licences	£397,100	£13,800	£410,900
	Schools Forum	£24,400	£800	£25,200
Statutory and Regularity Duties	Revenue budget preparation, preparation on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education. Formulation and review of the LA Schools Funding Formula	£143,000	£5,000	£148,000
	Leadership of Children's services and support staff.	£98,000	£3,400	£101,400
	Planning for the Education Service as a whole.	£129,000	£4,500	£133,500
	Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating to specifically maintained schools.	£52,000	£1,800	£53,800
	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)	£11,800	£400	£12,200
	Internal Audit and Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer	£30,000	£1,000	£31,000
	Consultation Costs relating to non-staffing issues. Plans involving collaboration with other LA services or public or voluntary services	£34,000	£1,200	£35,200
Asset Management	Management of LA's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions	£109,400	£3,800	£113,200
Education Welfare	Functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils. Responsibilities regarding the employment of children.	£119,000	£4,200	£123,200
	School Attendance	£350,000	£12,100	£362,100
Other Ongoing Duties	Places in Independent Schools for NON SEN Pupils	£199,800	£6,900	£206,700
	Employer Contributions for Centrally Managed Staff	£139,500	£4,800	£144,300
	Total	£2,376,800	£82,400	£2,459,200

3. Historic Commitments

- 3.1 The Historic Commitments are funded by the DfE as a lump sum amount, and for 2024/25 the DfE are allocating £2.02m to ESCC for Historic Commitments.
- 3.2 The LA are not intending to use any of this DSG funding element and instead propose to transfer the full £2.02m to schools and academies (Based on Oct '23 Numbers On Roll).
- 3.3 Table 2 is a summary of the proposals for 2024/25 funding for historic commitments.

Table 2: Proposals for 2024/25 Historic Commitments

Historic Commitments	2023/24 Allocations	CSSB Changes	2024/25 Proposed Allocations
Funds transferred to Schools	£2,521,100	-£504,200	£2,016,900
*Total	£2,521,100	-£504,200	£2,016,900

**Please note that the DfE reduce the Historic commitments value by 20% each year. This means that for 2024/25, the value has reduced by £504k.*

4. Summary and Conclusion

4.1 This report lays out the proposals for the retention of the £2.46m for 'on-going responsibilities' and the transferring of £2.02m 'Historic Commitments' to schools and academies in addition to their budget shares/ GAG. Schools' Forum members are asked to approve these proposals.

Alison Jeffery

Director Childrens Services

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