

Delegation of Schools Block Budgets 2014/15

School Improvement – PRIMARY SCHOOLS ONLY (as per original funding allocation)

Implications of delegation: This funding buys in support for schools where some intervention or assistance may be required. It does not support staffing but without the funding, the staff employed by the LA to carry out statutory intervention work would have no resources to offer practical support to schools, such as training and development or ad hoc advice and assistance.

Whilst there is a risk to vulnerable schools if this funding is delegated, the LA would still be able to carry out its statutory functions.

Free School Meal Eligibility

Implications of delegation: As with academy schools where Warwickshire's service is not purchased, schools will need to develop their own systems for receiving applications and checking eligibility. Schools will need to check eligibility on a regular basis and respond to any queries or complaints from parents. Parents will no longer be able to apply for Free School Meals via Warwickshire County Council's Customer Service Centre or website and schools will not have access to real-time eligibility data or the dedicated Department for Work and Pensions helpline (only available to Local Authorities). Should funding not be de-delegated the Local Authority will offer no guidance or support on Free School Meals eligibility.

Gypsy & Romany Travellers – PRIMARY SCHOOLS ONLY (as secondary schools decided to have funding delegated in 2013/14)

Implications of delegation: If this service was not provided centrally, then schools may well see an increase in special needs costs with these children attending less and having lower attainment. Someone from the school would need to contact/visit these families to get the pupil back into school and it would mean that the relationships and understanding of the culture of these families would need to be available in many schools. There is a significant safeguarding issue at stake; if these vulnerable children are not being kept track of in schooling, then there is the increase potential that they may fall outside of the LA radar.

English as an Additional Language

Implications of delegation: Support includes initial language assessment and reports, meetings with parents, guidance on admission and induction arrangements, short term targeted intervention and advice on EAL pedagogy at no cost to the school. During 2011/12, the service worked with 163 pupils from 53 schools. There is also a traded service which offers provision for Advanced EAL learners.

There are around 200 new EAL children in Warwickshire and these are again vulnerable children in the new OFSTED regime with issues of safeguarding if they are not monitored in schools.

Behaviour Support Services - PRIMARY SCHOOLS ONLY(as per original funding allocation)

Implications of delegation: This money goes directly into primary schools outside the ISG pilot areas for non-statement pupils at risk of permanent exclusion or following a managed transfer. The pupils will have met the criteria for commissioned support so will have been assessed by EIS and the subject of a multi-agency plan via CAF or LAC. In 2011/12 this money enabled additional school based staff support to compliment the commissioned support from EIS with 29 pupils.

The money has for the schools concerned been a key part of the transitional planning and provision prior to a statement being finalised. Often the pupils concerned are unexpected arrivals with very complex home circumstances and it has been crucial to ensure the child, school and family get appropriate support rapidly.

Not having this facility would introduce a detrimental delay that could see placement breakdown at home and school. Supported children have been located in all parts of the county including small rural schools and the need is felt most keenly in schools that are unused to meeting such needs and in many of our primary schools this is the case

Trade Union Facility Time Funding

Implications: The Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 creates a statutory right for Union Representatives of recognised unions to reasonable paid time off from employment to carry out trade union duties and to undertake trade union training. The County Council recognises the following Unions: NASUWT, NUT, ATL, ASCL, NAHT, VOICE, GMB, Unison and Unite.

In order to comply with these Regulations, WCC operates a county wide "pool" arrangement covering all maintained schools, whereby appointed union representative of each of the recognised unions attend consultative meetings on a county basis and are also called upon to represent members in individual schools. This pool arrangement avoids schools needing to establish individual bargaining arrangements for each school.

Where appointed representatives are absent from the classroom to attend to their union duties, the school where they are employed are reimbursed from this centrally held budget, for the cost of a supply/cover teacher.

The implications of this budget being delegated to schools would be that there would be no further reimbursement of supply cover arrangements which would have a disproportionate effect on the schools that employ union representatives leaving these schools financially disadvantaged.

Medical Referral of employees

WCC manages a contract for the provision Occupational Health Services. Schools access this service and a budget is held centrally to which the costs of the medical referral of school based staff are charged. This relates to both the costs of pre-employment medical checks and the referral for medical advice in the management of short term and long term medically related absences from the workplace. The referral process is accessed by all school based staff.

Should the budget be delegated then schools would be invoiced separately for their usage of the service. There is a risk that the current provider may want to review their charging structure if there is a change to invoicing arrangements.