

## Schools Forum

3 December 2020

### Pupil Growth Fund 2021/22

This report relates to all representatives and is for decision

#### Recommendations

Funding from the Schools Block DSG is allocated to the Pupil Growth Fund to support the requirements outlined in this report:

- a. Proposed revision to the pupil growth funding criteria;
- b. Estimated growth funding required for 2021/22 to support pupil growth in existing provision and the opening of new provision as set out in section 5;
- c. Where there is insufficient funding to support allocations described in this report, the level of protection funding for schools will be scaled back accordingly.

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Warwickshire Education Strategy (2018-2023) sets out the County Council's aspirations and priorities for Education in Warwickshire. Within this strategy Priority WE3 aims to ensure all learners enjoy a high quality learning experience.
- 1.2. In this context, the [Education Sufficiency Strategy \(2018-2023\)](#) accompanied by the [Annual Sufficiency Update](#) aims to help schools, parents, council officers, local partners and stakeholders understand how Warwickshire County Council plans for and anticipates the growth in demand for places ensuring that all children and young people thrive in sustainably good or outstanding schools and settings throughout their education, wherever they live in Warwickshire.
- 1.3. The Local Authority is responsible for providing sufficient school places.
- 1.4. Warwickshire is entering a period of significant growth, with larger primary cohorts now entering secondary provision and large scale housing development proposed across the county over the next 15 years and beyond. As development progresses across the county there will be the need for the delivery of new provision and the expansion of existing provision during the next 5 years and effective planning for further new provision beyond that period.

- 1.5. The growth fund is used to support schools which are required to provide extra places in order to meet basic need within the authority, including the pre-opening and post opening costs of new schools and reorganisation costs.

## **2. Current criteria in Warwickshire for administering Growth Funding**

### **2.1. Primary School (Reception to Year 6)**

- 2.1.1. When a primary school agrees to admit an additional class at the request of the LA they are paid £36,317 for each new class to cover the seven month period before these pupils begin to be funded through the formula based on the October Census. For bulge classes this would be a one off payment, while for expansions the payment would be made for a maximum of seven years depending on the number of new classes opened. In terms of academies, which are funded on academic year, there is a 12 month period before funding for the additional class is received, therefore an additional £23,798 is paid to academies in April and recouped from the ESFA by the LA.
- 2.1.2. Primary schools that are in the process of expansion, or those that have admitted a bulge class at the request of the LA, also receive protection funding for up to seven years from when an additional class is opened (inclusive of the first year of funding). For the first year of funding, the additional protection funding is based on the primary AWPU figure (£3,123 for 2021/22) and is for 5/12 of the year, as the school would have already received the Pupil Growth Funds to support with first 7/12 of the year<sup>1</sup>. In second and subsequent years of funding, if the class has 25 pupils or fewer, the school is eligible to receive AWPU for the difference up to 25 pupils, capped at £50,000. Where applicable, this protection funding can also be applied to new free schools opened via the LA presumption route or through the Central Government Free School Programme.
- 2.1.3. The growth fund can also provide support for those schools undergoing reorganisation, for example, an extension of the age range. Costs incurred can vary considerably, and in order to ensure an equitable yet flexible approach, each re-organisation will be assessed and the appropriate method and level of funding agreed follow consultation with the relevant officers.

### **2.2. Secondary School (Year 7 to Year 11)**

- 2.2.1. When a secondary school agrees to admit an additional form of entry at the request of the LA they are paid £38,611 for the seven month period before these pupils begin to be funded through the formula based on the October Census. For bulge classes, this would be a one off payment, while for expansions the payment would be made for a maximum of five years.

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<sup>1</sup> Protection funding in the first year not applicable to academies that received full 12 month growth funding payment

For academies, which are funded on academic year, an additional £25,436 is paid to academies in April and recouped from the ESFA by the LA.

### **3. Proposed change to growth funding criteria**

#### **3.1. Revision 1 – removal of protection funding cap**

- 3.1.1. Currently primary schools in the process of permanent expansion or that have admitted a bulge class at the request of the LA are eligible under the current criteria to receive protection funding up to 25 pupils for up to seven years from when the additional class is opened (inclusive of the first year of funding). This funding, based on the AWPU for the difference up to 25 pupils, is capped at £50,000 per class.
- 3.1.2. It is proposed to remove this funding cap at £50,000 to provide greater reassurance to schools in terms of managing a balanced budget when admitting additional pupils at the request of the LA. However, where the funding required exceeds the budget available there may be a requirement to scale the protection funding back.

### **4. School Pre-Opening and Post Opening Funding**

4.1 Under the free school presumption local authorities are required to meet the capital costs of providing the new school and the revenue costs of opening the new provision.

4.2 In providing the revenue support, provision must be made in the LA's growth funds to finance pre-opening development costs and post-opening funding to reflect the additional costs of establishing and operating a new school during the first few years when pupil-led revenue funding is not sufficient to cover the full running costs.

#### **4.3 Pre-Opening Funding (Project Development Grant)**

4.3.1 The pre-opening funding is intended to cover revenue costs up to the opening of the school. This can include project management, staff recruitment, salary costs and office and administration costs. The grant is paid in three instalments during the year prior to opening.

4.3.2 The current pre-opening funding grant follows a similar funding level to the project development grant given to new schools opened through the Central Government Free School Programme.

4.3.3 The Project Development Grant proposed by WCC breaks down as follows:

Primary £195,000 (£125,000 if the trust is opening more than one school in an academic year)

Secondary and all-through £275,000 (£175,000 if the trust is opening more than one school in an academic year)

4.3.4 An ICT grant would also be provided to fund the ICT equipment and expenditure not covered by the Capital Build. A grant of £50,000 is proposed for Primary Schools and £100,000 for a Secondary School.

4.3.5 It should be noted that all LA presumption schools also receive a £25,000 project development grant from the Department for Education.

#### 4.4 Post Opening Funding – New Mainstream Free School

4.4.1 The current approach follows a similar format to the post opening grant paid by the DfE to free schools opened through the Central Government Free School Programme. There are two elements to the post-opening grant: non-staffing resources paid on a per pupil basis and a leadership grant.

4.4.2 The Resources element: Paid each year that the school builds up to capacity for each new pupil expected to be on roll. It is paid at the following rates:

- £250 for each new mainstream pupil in the primary phase (R to 6)
- £500 for each new mainstream pupil in the secondary and 16 to 19 phases (7 to 13)

4.4.3 The Leadership element: Paid annually based on the number of year groups that the school will ultimately have that do not yet have pupils. The amount paid to mainstream schools depends on how many year groups are empty.

Table 1: Leadership element of post opening grant

Phase	Number of empty year groups						Max
	6+	5	4	3	2	1	
Primary	£80,500	£67,500	£54,000	£40,500	£27,000	£13,500	£283,000
Secondary			£125,000	£93,500	£62,500	£31,000	£312,000
All Through	£125,000	£93,500	£62,500	£54,000	£40,500	£27,000	£402,500

NB. Leadership element not affected by school size or whether there is a sixth form

Table 2: Total Cost\*

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Max. Total
Primary (1FE)	£88,000	£75,000	£61,500	£48,000	£34,500	£21,000	£7,500	£335,500
Secondary 7 to 11 (6FE)	£215,000	£183,500	£152,500	£121,000	£90,000	-	-	£762,000
All Through 11-16 (1FE primary & 6FE Secondary)	£222,500	£222,500	£222,500	£125,000	£97,500	£7,500	£7,500	£905,000

\*Maximum cost assuming school growing 1 year group at a time. Cost would be subject to change depending on the timing of year groups being opened. Funding will be adjusted over the opening period in line with the maximum total paid

## 5. Growth Funding requirements for 2021/22

5.1 For 2021/22 the growth funding requirements to support pupil growth in primary and secondary provision and to support the opening of new provision is estimated at £2,422,827 (including recoupable amounts); of which:

- £2,086,414 is required to support pupil growth in line with the growth funding criteria outlined in this report<sup>2</sup>. £327,392 of this growth funding can be recouped from the ESFA.
- £336,413 is required to support the pre-opening and post opening of new LA presumption schools

### **Bern Timings**

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<sup>2</sup> This also includes an amount to support additional secondary bulge classes in Rugby in the event that planned new provision for September 2021 does not open.