

Lancashire Schools Forum

eNewsletter



• Issue 109 • October 2020 •

Fair Exchange?

Welcome to Issue 117 of 'Fair Exchange?' a Post-Forum Edition of the eNewsletter of the Lancashire Schools' Forum. This issue deals with matters considered at the Forum meeting of 19 October 2021

De-delegations 2022/23

Following the consultation process undertaken with schools early this term, the Schools Forum decided that the following services would continue to be de-delegated in 2022/23 in primary and secondary schools:

- Staff costs – Public Duties/Suspensions; (in line with consultation responses, this de-delegation will continue using the same policy as 2021/22);
- Heritage Learning Service – (Primary Schools Only);
- Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty,
- Inclusion Hubs (Primary Schools Only) .

Funding relating to these services will be delegated to schools in the first instance, however, it will then be de-delegated from maintained primary and secondary school budgets so that the services can be provided by the LA. The final net delegated budget available to each maintained primary and secondary school would then exclude these amounts.

These services will be offered as group buy backs to schools in other phases, as appropriate.

Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) 2022/23

The autumn term consultation also sought views on the level of Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to be applied in Lancashire for 2022/23.

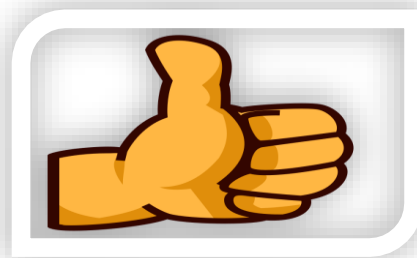
Consultation responses favoured the proposal to provide the maximum level of protection allowable by the DfE from April 2022 and supported the MFG being set at +2%.

The positive +2% MFG figure will be used in the finalising 2022/23 school budgets in Lancashire, which will be issued in February 2022. This means that primary and secondary schools will receive at least 2% more pupil-led funding per pupil compared to 2022/23.



Thank You!

107 responses were received in the recent de-delegation and MFG consultation. The Schools Forum would like to pass on a big thank you to all the schools that responded, as these views are crucial in assisting the Forum in making de-delegation decisions.



Future Consultation on Schools Block Transfer

In recent years, headroom has been available in the Schools Block once the National Funding Formula (NFF) methodology has been implemented in full. After consultations, this headroom has been transferred to other funding blocks to help mitigate funding pressures in other block (High Needs Block and Early years Block).

Initial modelling of the 2022/23 Schools Block allocations suggests that there will be pressure on the Schools Block from April 2022, so no headroom will be available and there are therefore no proposals to make a transfer from the Schools Block to other funding blocks in 2022/23.

If any headroom becomes available in the 2022/23 Schools Block when final allocations are issued from the DfE in mid-December 2021 then schools and the Schools Forum will be consulted on any proposals before the 2022/23 Schools Budget is finalised.

Revised Sparsity Factor 2022/23

Fair Exchange Issue 116 contained information about changes to the National Funding Formula (NFF) being introduced in 2022/23, including around the revised Sparsity factor. Following consultation, the DfE have amended the Sparsity factor from April 2022, including:

- Increasing the maximum sparsity values for the both the primary and secondary phases by £10,000. Maximum sparsity values will be £55,000 for primary schools and £80,000 for secondary, middle, and all-through schools.
- Updating the schools sparsity distances calculations so that they are now based on road distances, instead of straight-line distances,
- Introducing a sparsity distance taper, in addition to the existing year group size taper.

The final calculation of the Sparsity factor for 2022/23 will be based pupil data from the October 2021 census, which will then be modelled using the revised distance methodology. This data will only be made available to the LA in mid-December 2021 and we are not in a position to model the outcome in advance.

Schools that may be on the edge of qualification for this factor are asked to treat their budget forecasts and associated decisions with caution until more accurate information about the factor becomes available.

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

There is a statutory requirement on all maintained schools to complete the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) each year and to provide a copy of the completed return to the authority, by 31 March each year.

A formal core agenda item is included on the autumn term governors meetings and governing bodies must formally discuss the SFVS annually with the head teacher and senior staff and ensure that the standard is completed and returned to the LA by the DfE statutory deadline. Whilst the DfE extended the submission deadline for schools for the 2020/21 SFVS return, there is no indication that there will be any extension for 2021/22. Schools must ensure that they have arrangements in place to achieve completing the return with governor approval and submitting the SFVS to the LA by the DfE statutory deadline of **31 March 2022**.

The approved SFVS document should be uploaded on the 'Forms' section of the Schools Portal. This can be accessed via the schools portal home page under Forms > Finance > Schools Financial Value Standard.

The DfE have made a number of changes to the SFVS for 2021/22 and the updated documentation and accompanying guidance are available from the DfE website [here](#).

The 2021/22 SFVS document is now a word document (not a spreadsheet) and contains an updated checklist plus a summary of outcomes and sign-off information.

The 'dashboard' that formed part of the 2020/21 SFVS spreadsheet has been separated out and a link to access the self-assessment dashboard on the DfE school benchmarking website, instructions and guidance are available from the SFVS website. Schools are still expected to access the dashboard or other DfE benchmarking tools and a question on the checklist asks about this.

There is a new requirement for schools to submit information to the LA about any related party transactions as part of the SFVS submission. The DfE have provided a template for this purpose and a question on the checklist asks about this.

The checklist contains some new questions and amended wording on other questions and further information was provided in a letter published on the Schools Portal dated 7 October 2021.

If you have not already done so, we urge you to commence the SFVS process now to ensure your school will achieve submitting your governor approved return prior to the DfE statutory deadline of 31 March 2022 .

What Else is Happening?

Oracle Fusion

Over the last few months, the county council has been reviewing the Oracle Fusion implementation plan to ensure some critical business functions can be accommodated. This has resulted in a delay to the overall delivery of Fusion and the revised target implementation date for HR & Payroll is now early July 2022.

Significant support and training will be provided to schools ahead of the implementation.

For more information is available [here](#) (Schools portal access required)

Who's Who? - Forum Membership

A number of new members were welcomed to the Forum from September 2021, including:

Primary School Governors

- Daniel Baron, St Bartholomew's CE Primary School
- James Johnstone, Barrow URC Primary School
- Tim Young, Howick CE Primary School, Penwortham

Primary School Headteachers

- Angela Aspinwall-Livesey, St. John's Catholic Primary and Hillside Community Primary School
- Anna Smith, Burscough Village Primary School
- Sarah Robson, Ribby with Wrea Endowed CE Primary School

Secondary School Governor

- Jackie Lord, Penwortham Girls' High School

Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers of early years education

- Sharon Fenton, Rosy Apple Childcare Ltd
- Philippa Perks, University of Cumbria Pre School Centre

Short Stay School Governor

- Liz Laverty Shaftesbury High School

NASUWT Representative

- Steve Jones

Special School Headteacher Representative

- Claire Thompson, Headteacher at Moorbrook School

Secondary Headteacher

- Mike Wright, Headteacher at St Augustine's RC High School, Billington

Director of Education, Culture and Skills

- Julie Bell, Acting Director of Education, Culture and Skills

The Forum also thanked a number of other colleagues who were leaving/left the Forum, including:

- Sharon Alexander, Early Years Representative
- Eric Harrison, NASUWT Representative
- Peter Higham Special School Headteacher Representative
- Sarah Callaghan, Director of Education, Culture and Skills

A current Schools Forum membership list for the new academic year is available [here](#).

Questions?

Remember, if you have any questions about the Schools Forum, please contact Paul Bonser, Forum Clerk, 01772 531815, or email schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk