

Lancashire Schools Forum

eNewsletter

Fair Exchange?

January 2022

Welcome to Issue 120 of 'Fair Exchange?' a pre-Forum Edition of the eNewsletter of the Lancashire Schools' Forum.

Schools Budget for 2022/23

Information about the key school funding decisions relating to the 2022/23 financial year taken by the Schools Forum and the LCC Cabinet in January 2022 were set out in Fair Exchange, Issue 119.

Proposals for the Schools Block budget then had to be submitted to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for compliance checking against the relevant Regulations. The ESFA subsequently contacted the LA seeking various clarifications and explanations and once satisfied with the responses provided approval for the Lancashire proposals :

Budget information was subsequently prepared and issued to all schools and early years providers on 21 February 2022, including:

- Individual School Budgets (ISBs);
- Forecast High Needs Block allocations;
- Forecast Early Years funding statements.

Pupil Premium Grant

For 2022/23, the DfE are calculating the PPG allocations for most schools on the basis of October school census data, rather than the January school census. This means that actual PPG information will be available much sooner, and the DfE have indicated that 2022/23 allocations should be notified to the LA in March 2022.

The LA did not therefore include an indicative PPG statement with the budget notifications. Once we receive the confirmed 2022/23 PPG allocations from DfE, we will inform schools.

Schools Supplementary Grant 2022/23

Initial information about the additional £1.6bn funding for schools and high needs, to be paid as a Schools Supplementary Grant in 2022/23 was also included in Fair Exchange 119.

We are still awaiting final allocations from the DfE for individual Schools Supplementary Grant allocations for 2022/23, but DfE have indicated that these should be available before the end of March 2022. In addition, the DfE hope to make a 'ready reckoner' available shortly to enable schools to calculate their own allocation level.

Discussions will take place with the Schools Forum during the spring term cycle of meetings to finalise the local arrangements for the High Needs Supplementary Grant.

Final information will be provided for schools once confirmations are received from DfE.

What else is happening?

Closure of Accounts 2021/22

Notes on the Closure of School Accounts for 2021/22 have been issued via the schools portal on 7 February 2022.

The guidance documentation is also available on the Schools Forum website, which can be accessed from the links below:

- [Closure of accounts guidance 2021/22](#)
- [Closure of accounts guidance for schools operating a local bank account 2021/22](#)

School Teaching & Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme

2022/23 offer letters for the School Teaching & Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme were issued on the Schools Portal on 25 January 2022. Final confirmations for the level of cover, if any, for each school from April 2022 will be issued in March 2022.

If you have any queries please email schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

Please remember that 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 spring 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 in full. The approved SFVS spreadsheet 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.

Please also note that the DfE's Schools Financial Benchmarking data, including the Schools Financial Value Standard Self-assessment dashboard has now been updated to 2020/21 data for maintained schools.

The DfE's SFVS website is available [here](#) and contains links to the financial benchmarking.

Schools are asked to ensure that their completed SFVS template is approved by governors and submitted to the LA by the statutory deadline of 31 March 2022.

Forum Membership

Current membership

A current list of Forum members is provided in the link [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