

Lancashire Schools Forum

eNewsletter



• Issue 108 • September 2020 •

Fair Exchange?

Welcome Back

Welcome to Issue 108 of 'Fair Exchange?' a Pre-Forum Edition of the eNewsletter of the Lancashire Schools' Forum. This is the first newsletter of the 2020/21 academic year, which will no doubt offer a host of new challenges. The Schools Forum hopes that all colleagues managed to enjoy some rest and recuperation over the summer. This issue deals with matters to be considered at the early autumn term 2020 cycle of meetings

The minutes of the last Forum meeting held, virtually, on 2 July 2020 have now been added to the Schools Forum website. All Schools Forum agendas and minutes are in the public domain and can be accessed [here](#).

Schools Budget 2021/22

On 20 July 2020, announcements from the Prime Minister and the Education Secretary confirmed increases in school funding allocations for 2021/22, which are part of the 3 year settlement first publicised for 2020/21, and provide more than £14b extra funding over the three year period.

The DfE have confirmed that the National Funding Formula (NFF) funding factors, which, as agreed by the Forum, are also used as the Lancashire school funding formula, will remain unchanged for 2021/22. The NFF will be used to distribute this funding based on schools' and pupils' needs and characteristics.

The main features in 2021/22 are:

- Every mainstream school will be allocated at least 2% more pupil-led funding per pupil compared to its 2020/21 NFF baseline;
- Additional funding for small and remote schools will increase in 2021/22, with primary schools attracting up to £45,000 through the sparsity factor, and secondary schools up to £70,000;
- Funding from the teachers' pay grant and the teachers' pension employer contribution grant, including the supplementary fund, has been added to schools' NFF allocations from 2021/22. This provides the following revised minimum pupil funding (MPF) levels in 2021/22:
 - £4,180 per pupil for primary schools;
 - £5,415 per pupil for secondary schools;
- The 2019 update to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) has been incorporated so that deprivation funding allocated through the formulae is based on the latest data, but the banding structure has been amended to minimise turbulence at school level;
- The national increase in high needs funding, from 2020/21 to 2021/22, will amount to £730m, which equates to circa 10%.

De-delegation Consultation 2021/22

The soft NFF arrangements in 2021/22 will continue to allow de-delegations and a consultation was issued to schools on 17 September 2020 via the portal, seeking views about which services should be de-delegated. Proposals seek views about the continuation of services de-delegated in 2020/21, which were:

- Staff costs – Public Duties/Suspensions;
- Heritage Learning Service (Museum Service) - Primary Schools Only;
- Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty;
- Primary Inclusion Hubs Primary Schools Only..

It is extremely important to the County Council and the Schools Forum to be able to reflect the views of Lancashire schools when making decisions about de-delegation arrangements for 2021/22, as these decisions are binding on all primary and secondary schools. Responses are requested by **9 October 2020**, so that an analysis can be shared with the Schools Forum on 20 October. A link to the consultation questionnaire is available [here](#).

Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) 2021/22

Local authorities continue to set a local Minimum Funding Guarantee in the formula, which in 2021/22 must be between +0.5% and +2.0%.

The level to be applied in Lancashire is the subject of a consultation with schools, but in keeping with the NFF methodology, it is proposed that a 2% value is implemented. Responses are requested by **9 October 2020**, and the MFG feedback is available from the de-delegation eform link above.

Scheme for Financing Schools in Lancashire

Following an update of Statutory Guidance, the Authority has reviewed the Lancashire scheme and introduced the relevant amendments. A revised draft Lancashire Scheme can be viewed [here](#), with amendments to the existing scheme shown as tracked changes.

A letter was distributed on the Schools Portal on 9 September 2020, seeking views on the proposed changes by 9 October 2020, via email to yourview@lancashire.gov.uk

The revised scheme, together with any comments received, will be reported to the Schools Forum in October 2020. Approval of the scheme is one of the Forum's formal decision making powers and maintained school members of the Forum will be asked to formally vote on the revised scheme. Once approved, a final version of the Scheme will then be published on the County Council website.

Supply Cover Insurance and Maternity Scheme for Lancashire Schools – September 2020

The operation of the 2020/21 Supply Cover Insurance and Maternity Scheme for Lancashire Schools was updated in April 2020 and June 2020 to reflect the changing government advice on schools in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The updated operation of the scheme has also tried to strike a balance between supporting schools with additional costs incurred during the pandemic and ensuring the scheme reserve is not exhausted, leading to significant increases in premiums for school members.

Government advice and expectations on schools was updated again in preparation for the full reopening of schools from September 2020 and a new update of the scheme operation has therefore been introduced. This policy update was agreed with the Schools Forum and the Director of Education and Skills and will apply for the autumn term 2020 onwards. A copy is available [here](#).

The policy will be kept under review in light of changes to national and local COVID policy.

Schools Forum Autumn Term Cycle 2020

The early autumn term cycle of meetings will culminate in the Schools Forum meeting on 20 October 2020. This meeting will consider the responses to the consultations on

- 2021/22 service de-delegations;
- The 2021/22 Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) level.

The Autumn Term Forum cycle will also consider a number of other reports, including:

- An update on the Schools Budget Outturn for 2019/20;
- High Needs Block budget monitoring for 2020/21;
- Initial information about Schools and High Needs Block Funding 2021/22;
- An Emotional Health and Wellbeing Commissioned Early Help Service Performance Update report;
- Implications from the Government actions in response to the financial transparency of local authority maintained schools and academy trusts consultation.



Financial transparency of local authority maintained schools and academy trusts: Government consultation response

The DfE have published their response to a consultation on 'Financial transparency of local authority maintained schools and academy trusts', which had taken place in 2019. The Government response had been delayed due to COVID-19. A copy of the full document is available [here](#).

The DfE are to proceed with a number of their original proposals, which will be implemented at various stages over next couple of years, including some future changes to the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS). Many of the new requirements to be introduced are aimed at local authorities but may have implications for schools and further information will be provided in due course. It should be noted that a number of the requirements that are being introduced are already operating in Lancashire, so the DfE changes should not create significant changes for Lancashire schools.

There are a small number of requirements that have direct implications for schools in 2020/21, and these relate to additional financial information that maintained schools must publish on their website:

- how many school employees (if any) have a gross annual salary of £100,000 or more in increments of £10,000

DfE recommend using a table to display this information

- a link to the webpage which is dedicated to your school on the DfE's [schools financial benchmarking](#) service

DfE advise to follow the prompts to find your school's specific page

Originally it was intended that this information requirement would come into force at the start of the school year in September 2020 as is customary for requirements on schools. However, due to delays caused by Covid-19 and in order to provide schools with a term's notice to comply with the incoming regulations, the requirement will be included in amending regulations to come into force on 1 January 2021.

What's Happening Nationally

School funding: exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19)

The DfE have processed the first batch of school claims relating to exceptional COVID-19 costs. Journals/pro-payments will be made in September to schools who submitted claims within their limit for the total of the three eligible categories of additional costs, and did not claim for other costs.

This will show on the following code:

I18B	ADDITIONAL GRANT EXCEPTIONAL COSTS	COVID	21032	COVID-19 Schools exceptional costs
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DfE are currently assessing the claims from other schools and will issue the outcome in due course.

Who's Who?

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

The normal Forum membership and election process was paused in the summer term 2020 due to the pandemic, but we will be seeking nominations for any Forum vacancies this term.

Posting were issued on the Schools Portal on the 9 September seeking nominations for the primary school headteacher and primary school governor vacancies.

Links to the nomination eforms are provided below:

[Primary Governor](#)

[Primary Headteacher](#)

The closing date for nominations is 2 October 2020.

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