

Schools Forum September - October 2023

This is Issue 2 of the new 'Lancashire Schools Forum eNewsletter', a Post Forum Edition, which deals with matters considered at the Forum meeting on 17 October 2023.

School Funding Arrangements 2024/25

The Department first published the 2024-25 NFF in July 2023. Following the discovery of a technical error made by officials during the initial calculations, an update was made to the schools NFF in October 2023.

The error was due to incorrect processing of pupil numbers in the initial calculations. This error meant that the overall cost of the schools NFF was underestimated, and incorrect factor values were published in July. Overall, the error overestimated funding by 0.62%

Overall, core schools funding (including funding for mainstream schools and high needs) is increasing by £2 billion in 2024/25 compared to the previous year.

Funding through the schools NFF is increasing by 1.9% overall in 2024-25, compared to 2023-24.

The basic structure of the National Funding Formula (NFF) remains unchanged for 2024/25, but DfE have increased factor values and made some other changes to the arrangements. Further details are provided below:

- introducing a new formulaic approach to allocating split sites funding in the NFF in 2024 to 2025, replacing the previous locally determined split sites factor
- rolling the 2023 to 2024 mainstream schools additional grant (MSAG) into the NFF
- increasing NFF factor values (on top of the amounts we have added for the mainstream school's additional grant)
- introducing, for the first time, a methodology for calculating and allocating funding for falling rolls

The DfE announcements included the relevant minimum pupil funding (MPF) levels for primary and secondary schools, which incorporate the 1.9% uplift for 2024/25:

- The primary schools, the MPF level will be £4,610 per pupil in 2024/25 compared to £4,405 per pupil in 2023/24.
- For secondary schools, the MPF level will be £5,995 per pupil from 2024/25 compared to £5,715 per pupil in 2023/24.



De-delegations 2024/25

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 2024/25 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 2023/24)
- Heritage Learning Service – (Primary Schools Only)
- Schools Requiring Additional support, formally known as the Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty
- Inclusion Hubs (Primary Schools Only)
- Children's Champions

Funding relating to these services will be delegated to schools and academies 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 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 2024/25

The autumn term consultation also sought views on the level of Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to be applied in Lancashire for 2024/25.

Consultation responses favoured the proposal to provide the maximum level of protection allowable by the DfE from April 2024 and supported the MFG being set at +0.5%.

The positive +0.5% MFG figure will be used in the finalising 2024/25 school budgets in Lancashire, which will be issued in February 2024. This means that primary and secondary schools will receive at least 0.5% more pupil-led funding per pupil compared to 2024/25.

Thank You!

156 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.

Clawback at March 2024

Due to the continued high level of balances within Lancashire schools, the Schools Forum on unanimously voted to Implement Clawback to excess balances at March 2024.

The Clawback Policy can be found on the [Schools Forum Website](#).



Who's Who? - Forum Membership October 2023

The Schools Forum would like to welcome Sharon Bennett as the newly appointed Shorty Stay Governor representative.

A membership list can be found on the Forum [website](#)

Questions?

Remember, if you have any questions about the Schools Forum, please contact Millie Dixon, Forum Officer, 01772 534844, or email schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk

