



SCHOOLS FORUM

23 MARCH 2022

DE-DELEGATION FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROPOSAL

Content Applicable to;		School Phase;	
Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools	X	Pre School	
Academies		Foundation Stage	
PVI Settings		Primary	
Special Schools / Academies		Secondary	
Local Authority		Post 16	
		High Needs	

Content Requires;		By;	
Noting	X	Maintained Primary School Members	X
Decision	X	Maintained Secondary School Members	X
		Maintained Special School Members	
		Academy Members	
		All Schools Forum	

Purpose of Report

1. This report presents the consultation response on the proposal for de-delegation of funding for school improvement functions for Local Authority maintained schools.

Recommendations

2. That Schools Forum is asked to note the changes to the way that Local Authority school improvement functions are funded.
3. The Schools Forum representatives for maintained schools are recommended to approve the de-delegation of £9 per pupil for Local Authority school improvement functions from maintained schools' budgets.

Background (details in Appendix 1)

4. The DfE is implementing a policy to reduce the Local Authority level School Improvement Monitoring & Brokering Grant by 50% from financial year 2022/23 and to remove it entirely from 2023/24. Instead, it is using the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations 2022 to allow local authorities to de-delegate funding from maintained school budget shares with the approval of the Schools Forum maintained school representatives or by agreement of the Secretary of State.
5. If no de-delegation funding is agreed the capacity of the Local Authority to maintain its schools in a systematic and strategic way would be significantly at risk.
6. No alternative funding stream has been identified to support this work; therefore the implications of not continuing would potentially leave schools isolated and dependent on the capacity of local leadership and governance. Whilst some higher performing schools may benefit financially in the short term, this approach would conflict with both national policy (for schools to be within strong groups) and local experience (that a proactive approach to school improvement ultimately achieves better outcomes for children alongside better long-term value for money).

Consultation

7. A consultation was undertaken with maintained schools over a two-week period. Details of the consultation are shown in Appendix 1.
8. The results show that of 20 schools who responded, 18 “fully understand the impact on the Local Authority core offer for maintained schools resulting from this proposal”; 16 agreed (question 2) that the core offer represents value for money, 1 did not respond to this question, 2 no opinion and 1 disagreed. For question 7, “I support the proposal”, 14 respondents agreed, 2 expressed no opinion, and 4 disagreed.
9. If respondents are representative this suggests strong, but not unanimous support for the proposal. Comments received (from a limited number of schools) suggest a strength of feeling on both sides.
10. The consultation results are shown in Appendix 2.

Resource Implications

11. No additional resource implications identified.

Equal Opportunity Issues

12. None identified.

Background Papers

[DFE consultation](#)

Officers to Contact

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APPENDIX 1

Consultation on the De-delegation* of funding to deliver Local Authority School Improvement Functions

**De-delegation effectively means the retention of part of a school budget by the LA before the total is calculated*

Introduction

1. On 11 January 2022 the DfE published the outcome of their consultation on reforming how local authorities' school improvement functions are funded. Since 2017, the Local Authority School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering grant has been allocated to local authorities to support them in fulfilling their statutory school improvement functions under Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and their additional school improvement expectations as set out in the Schools Causing Concern (SCC) guidance (collectively referred to as core school improvement activities). In summary, these activities require councils to monitor performance of maintained schools, broker school improvement provision, and intervene as appropriate
2. As a result of the consultation the LA level School Improvement Monitoring & Brokering Grant will reduce by 50% from financial year 2022/23 and be removed entirely from 2023/24. Instead, the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations 2022 will allow LAs to de-delegate funding from maintained school budget shares with the approval of the Schools Forum maintained school representatives.
3. In recent years Leicestershire has received the following amounts:
 - 2019/20 £330,371
 - 2020/21 £339,189
 - 2021/22 £314,887
 - 2022/23 £157,444 (projected future income as a result of the funding reduction)
 - 2023/24 and onwards £0
4. It is proposed that £9 per pupils is de-delegated from maintained school budgets in 2022/23 to deliver the local authority's core school improvement functions. Approval for this will be sought from the Schools Forum.
5. Based on current pupil numbers this would equate to £166,500 to compensate the 50% reduction in grant. This amount would reduce as maintained school pupil numbers reduce through academy conversion.

Background

6. The DfE launched a consultation seeking views on a proposal to remove the LA level School Improvement Monitoring & Brokering Grant (SIMBG) and instead allow local authorities, with the approval of their maintained Schools Forum representatives, to replace the funding for this function by de-delegating funding from maintained schools' budget shares.
7. The outcome of the consultation was published on 11 January 2022 when it was confirmed that the SIMBG would reduce by 50% in financial year 2022/23 and be

removed entirely from 2023/24. The Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations 2022 will be amended to allow LAs to de-delegate funding from maintained school budget shares so that they can continue to carry out their core school improvement functions.

8. The timing of the announcement has made planning for the next financial year challenging. This proposal is an interim measure to effectively maintain the status quo, ease the transition and prepare a longer-term offer for maintained schools in Leicestershire from 2023/24 onwards.
9. If that status quo were to be extended into following years there would need to be an ongoing de-delegation of £18 per pupil to cover the same level of per pupil funding. This amount would reduce as schools move from maintained to academies.
10. This proposal only relates to 2022/23 in order to allow time for a longer term approach in 2023/24. Funding forum is only being asked for a decision relating to 2022/23 at this time.

Statutory School Improvement Functions for the Local Authority

11. Local Authorities have statutory school improvement functions under [Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) and additional school improvement expectations as set out in the [Schools Causing Concern \(SCC\) guidance](#) (collectively referred to as core school improvement activities). In summary, these activities require councils to monitor performance of maintained schools, broker school improvement provision, and intervene as appropriate.

The Use of this funding in Leicestershire

12. This funding is used to fulfil Leicestershire Local Authority statutory responsibilities around maintained schools including:
 - An Education Effectiveness Partner linked to each school developing a relationship between the school and LA offering advocacy and oversight: a watchful eye and critical friend giving support and somewhere to go in challenging times; ad hoc responses and signposting; knowledge of the position of schools and if and when intervention is needed.
 - Partnership development to support collaborative groups to become self-supporting, sustainable and robust “strong families of schools”.
 - Commissioned health checks and audits as appropriate; support in preparation for, and response to, inspection.
 - Development support around safeguarding, financial planning and governance, and support with working with a range of linked LA and wider services.
 - Commissioned school improvement support, from former Teaching School Alliances, MATs and other quality assured providers.
13. Maintaining this service and engagement with schools strengthens the ability of the Education Effectiveness Team to add value to all schools and academies through its universal offer, funded alongside the LAMB grant via County Council funding, (Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership strategic improvement activities,

communications, advocacy for schools and signposting) and insight into the education sector in Leicestershire.

14. The core offer for LA maintained schools currently includes the following:-
 - a. Partnership working with a dedicated Education Effectiveness Partner (EEP), providing a single point of contact, help & advice, support & signposting (local authority, localised and Hubs), advocacy and confidential conversations
 - b. Support for the development of local collaborative families of schools
 - c. A rolling programme of independent checks and audits to provide external validation, confirmation and feedback including;
 - i. Health-check and evaluation (quality of teaching and learning)
 - ii. Safeguarding audit
 - iii. Pupil Premium review
 - iv. SEND review
 - v. External Review of Governance
 - vi. Web site audit
 - d. Next steps support with the above points, in partnership with school leaders. The EEP will discuss how best to support whether this is through commissioned input, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or other additional support
 - e. Support in advance of, during and after OFSTED inspection.
 - f. The EEP will track any commissioned support to ensure the timeliness and quality, ensuring it meets the desired outcomes
 - g. The EEP can commission specialised audits for HR and Finance
 - h. Fully funded CPD opportunities in targeted areas, recent examples include: KS2 Reading Comprehension, Talk for Writing, Preparing for Ofsted and SEF/ SDP Best Practice as well as accessing other external funded CPD opportunities, e.g. Curriculum and ARS (Audience Response System) Training
 - i. Commissioned School Improvement Plan (SIP) support, mentoring and or targeted peer support
 - j. Financial support with evidenced-based research projects in schools
 - k. A range of regular communications
 - l. Full day local authority induction for new headteachers
 - m. Regular meetings, seminars and webinars

15. It is proposed that this core offer continues to be delivered through the de-delegation.

16. The Education Effectiveness Team engages with and supports all schools and education settings in Leicestershire through strategic planning and partnership (including the Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership (which acts as a hub for this activity); managing communications such as the headteacher briefing, social media and meetings with headteachers; and fulfilling statutory duties around safeguarding, moderation and SACRE. The team identifies opportunities to make appropriate connections for the benefit of children in Leicestershire. **This activity is funded separately**, and alongside the LAMB grant funded activities for maintained schools. This proposal sets out the proposed use of the de-delegated funding from maintained schools.

School Improvement Budget 2022/23

17. The regulations allow for LAs to deduct the funding from maintained schools budget shares as an Education Function for services relating to maintained schools only in much the same way as for de-delegated services. If the maintained schools' School Forum representatives agree that this funding can be deducted from school budget shares, £9 per pupil will be de-delegated in 2022/23. The per pupil rate will be the same for both primary and secondary schools, in accordance with the guidance issued.
18. It is not possible to transfer any year end surplus to a future year. Should any of this funding not be spent in the financial year it is anticipated that it would be returned proportionately to the collaborative maintained school groups to facilitate local school improvement.
19. It should be noted that if the Schools Forum maintained schools representatives do not approve to de-delegate funds for this function that the Secretary of State retains the power to approve the de-delegation contrary to the decision of the Schools Forum if it is deemed necessary to ensure that the local authority is adequately funded to exercise its core school improvement functions.

Consultation on De-delegation of Funding for School Improvement in Maintained Schools

School Name:

URN/ DfE No:

Completed By: (Headteacher)

1 - The DfE has now outlined that funding for school improvement and monitoring should no longer be allocated to the local authorities in the form of a grant. This should/ could instead be funded through the de-delegation of funds from the maintained school budget share with the approval of their Schools Forum maintained schools representatives

Do you understand the impact on the Local Authority core offer for maintained schools resulting from this proposal?

Fully understand – Partially understand – Not fully understanding

2 - The LCC Core Offer for maintained schools includes:

- a. Partnership working with a dedicated Education Effectiveness Partner (EEP), providing a single point of contact, help & advice, support & signposting (local authority, localised and Hubs), advocacy and confidential conversations
- b. Support for the development of local collaborative families of schools
- c. A rolling programme of independent checks and audits to provide external validation, confirmation and feedback including;
 - i. Health-check and evaluation (quality of teaching and learning)
 - ii. Safeguarding audit
 - iii. Pupil Premium review
 - iv. SEND review
 - v. External Review of Governance
 - vi. Web site audit
- d. Next Steps support with the above points, in partnership with school leaders. The EEP will discuss how best to support whether this is through commissioned input, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or other additional support
- e. Support in advance of, during and after OFSTED inspection.
- f. The EEP will track any commissioned support to ensure the timeliness and quality, ensuring it meets the desired outcomes
- g. The EEP can commission specialised audits for HR and Finance
- h. Fully funded CPD opportunities in targeted areas, recent examples include: KS2 Reading Comprehension, Talk for Writing, Preparing for Ofsted and SEF/ SDP Best Practice as well as accessing other external funded CPD opportunities, e.g. Curriculum and ARS (Audience Response System) Training
- i. Commissioned School Improvement Plan (SIP) support, mentoring and or targeted peer support
- j. Financial support with evidenced-based research projects in schools
- k. A range of regular communications
- l. Full day local authority induction for new headteachers
- m. Regular meetings, seminars and webinars

Do you agree that this represents a comprehensive core offer which represents value for money?

Agree – No opinion – Disagree

3 - Which areas of the LA Core Offer are you most likely to access?

- a. Partnership working with a dedicated Education Effectiveness Partner (EEP), providing a single point of contact, help & advice, support & signposting (local authority, localised and Hubs), advocacy and confidential conversations

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely – Unlikely

- b. Support for the development of local collaborative families of schools

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely – Unlikely

- c. A rolling programme of independent checks and audits to provide external validation, confirmation and feedback;
- i. Health-check and evaluation (quality of teaching and learning)
 - ii. Safeguarding audit
 - iii. Pupil Premium review
 - iv. SEND review
 - v. External Review of Governance
 - vi. Web site audit

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- d. Next Steps support with the above points, in partnership with school leaders. The EEP will discuss how best to support whether this is through commissioned input, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or other additional support

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- e. Support in advance of, during and after OFSTED inspection.

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- f. The EEP will track any commissioned support to ensure the timeliness and quality, ensuring it meets the desired outcomes

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- g. The EEP can commission specialised audits for HR and Finance

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- h. Fully funded CPD opportunities in targeted areas, e.g. KS2 Reading Comprehension, Talk for Writing, Preparing for Ofsted and SEF/ SDP Best Practice as well as accessing other external funded CPD opportunities, e.g. Curriculum and ARS (Audience Response System) Training

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- i. Commissioned School Improvement Plan (SIP) support, mentoring and or targeted peer support

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- j. Financial support with evidenced-based research projects in schools

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- k. A bi-weekly bulletin

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

- l. Full day local authority induction for new headteachers

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely
m. Regular meetings, seminars and webinars

Highly Likely – Neither Likely nor Unlikely - Unlikely

5 - LCC proposes that a phased approach should be supported in year one by de-delegating £9 per pupil to maintain the LA core offer to all maintained schools. Do you agree that this represents short term value for money?

Agree – No opinion - Disagree

6 - LCC proposes that a more detailed and sustainable longer-term proposal is put in place year two and onwards. This could most efficiently combine all aspects of LA services. Would this be a helpful approach?

Agree – No opinion - Disagree

7 - I support this proposal of a £9 per pupil de-delegation to deliver the local authority's core school improvement functions for maintained schools for 2022/23

yes – No opinion - no

I understand that the final decision around the de-delegation of funding to support these functions is retained by the Secretary of State for Education.

PLEASE RETURN THIS CONSULTATION TO educationeffectiveness@leics.gov.uk BY 9 am ON FRIDAY 18th MARCH together with any comments on or questions about the proposal.

APPENDIX 2 Consultation Results

	Fully understand	Partially understand	Not fully understanding
1. Do you understand the impact on the Local Authority core offer for maintained schools resulting from this proposal?	18	1	0 (1 no response)
	Agree	No opinion	Disagree
2. The LCC Core Offer for maintained schools represents a comprehensive core offer which represents value for money	16	2	1 (1 no response)
Which areas of the LA Core Offer are you most likely to access?	Highly Likely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Unlikely
a) Partnership working with EEP	15	3	1 (1 no response)
b) Support for the development of local collaborative families of schools	12	2	5 (1 no response)
c) A rolling programme of independent checks and audits	17	0	2 (1 no response)
d) Next Steps support with the above points	11	4 (3 no response)	2
e) Support in advance of, during and after OFSTED inspection.	14	3	2 (1 no response)
f) The EEP will track any commissioned support	15	1 (2 no response)	2
g) The EEP can commission specialised audits for HR and Finance	9	7	3 (1 no response)
h) Fully funded CPD opportunities in targeted areas	14	2 (3 no response)	1
i) Commissioned School Improvement Plan (SIP) support, mentoring and or targeted peer support	7	5 (3 no response)	5
j) Financial support with evidenced-based research projects in schools	10	3 (3 no response)	4
k) A bi-weekly bulletin	11	6	2 1 (no response)

l) Full day local authority induction for new headteachers	5	4	9 2 (no response)
m) Regular meetings, seminars and webinars	11	6 (3 no response)	0
	Agree	No opinion	Disagree
5. LCC proposes that a phased approach should be supported in year one by de-delegating £9 per pupil to maintain the LA core offer to all maintained schools. Do you agree that this represents short term value for money?	12	4 (1 no response)	3
6. LCC proposes that a more detailed and sustainable longer-term proposal is put in place year two and onwards. This could most efficiently combine all aspects of LA services. Would this be a helpful approach?	15	3 (1 no response)	1
	Yes	No opinion	No
I support this proposal of a £9 per pupil de-delegation to deliver the local authority's core school improvement functions for maintained schools for 2022/23	14	2	4