

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'SPROPOSALS FOR 2015/16 SCHOOL FUNDING

1. Leicestershire County will receive an additional £240 per pupil in school funding for 2015/16, the background and context are set out in the following document;

This document sets out the process followed by the local authority in defining the basis for the allocation of this funding.

The proposed approach to allocate the additional funding received support from the Schools Forum at its meeting on 16 June and have been formulated in conjunction with the 2015/16 School Funding task and Finish Group consisting of a cross section of headteachers, governors, business managers and Schools Forum Members from maintained schools and academies across Leicestershire

Do you agree with the approach taken by the local authority for the distribution of the additional funding?
Yes
Yes
YES
Yes
Yes we agree with the principles determined by the local authority for the distribution of the additional monies.
Yes
<p>The Chair of Governors and Chair of Finance, Pay and Personnel of xxxx Primary Academy Trust in consultation with our Head xxxx agree wholeheartedly to the approach. We have based our agreement on points 7 and 8 in the consultation document (shown below). Furthermore we have calculated that the academy will receive in the region of £44,000 additional funding should the suggested funding formulae be applied. This would have significant positive impact upon the learning environment for pupils, staff and support staff within the academy.</p> <p>7. Analysis of the 2014/15 Leicestershire school funding formula identified two areas where funding levels were out of line with those in similar authorities, the level of funding provided to primary schools through the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) was low and that the level of funding targeted at low prior attainment was also below that in other authorities. The first call on the additional 2015/16 funding is to redress this position.</p> <p>8. The local authority established a School Funding Task and Finish Group consisting of headteachers, governors, members of the Schools Forum and</p>

<p>school business managers to challenge the local authorities perspective and engage schools in developing the proposals for 2015/16. The Task and Finish Group have concluded that the proposals present the best overall option for all educational providers in Leicestershire</p>
<p>I agree with the process.</p>
<p>We note that the LA approach is based upon working towards providing similar levels of funding to that of statistical neighbours, and we acknowledge that primary AWPU's should be the first priority. Whilst we recognise cost pressures in all phases, we are not convinced of the argument that Early Years provision should benefit from the additional funding which was given to support the Schools block particularly.</p>
<p>No.</p> <p>The announcement made by Ministers earlier in the year led all Leicestershire Schools to assume they would be getting a £242 per pupil rise.</p> <p>As an Upper School this would equate to a welcome 5.6% increase in AWPU. In reality less than 2% is now proposed for KS4.</p> <p>Whilst we accept that the Dedicated Schools Grant is allocated in three blocks covering Schools, High Needs and Early Years, the announcement did not mention as far as we recall, Early Years or High Needs.</p> <p>As a result we do not agree with the approach being taken by the Local Authority for the distribution of additional funding and feel the money should be allocated to schools only. Similarly, if the Government had announced additional revenue for Early Years and/or High Needs, we would not as a school, expect to receive any of the additional funding.</p>
<p>Agree this is difficult and appreciate that school staff have been included in the consultation.</p>
<p>No.</p> <p>Using statistical neighbours to compare funding allocations lacks validity and is potentially flawed. Each forum will decide on how much to spend at each key stage and many LAs will have spent more money on key stages 1 and 2 in order to bring about improvements in outcomes. Given that our key stage 2 outcomes are broadly comparable with our neighbours it would suggest that we are providing good value for money and delivering an efficient service.</p>
<p>No.</p> <p>The original announcement and the final guidance document (Fairer schools funding, Arrangements for 2015 to 2016, July 2014) set a very clear rationale for the additional funding and very clear recommendations about how it should be spent (although the advice is not mandatory).</p>

We believe that Leicestershire should top up all AWPU's by £240. If necessary, the lump sum should be reduced (to the recommended minimum) to fund this.

The benchmarking exercise which has prompted this proposal has chosen to look only at the pupil led elements and has ignored the fact that some benchmarked authorities have smaller lump sums.

This means that primary schools that already benefit from high lump sum amount will benefit disproportionately from this proposal.

If the original allocations AWPU have been wrong historically, this should be addressed, but not through this particular process.

2. For schools the proposals will deliver:

- An increase of 7% to the primary Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)
- An increase in the funding targeted at low prior attainment by 100%

These increases will bring the proportion of funding allocated to Leicestershire schools in line with that recorded in similar local authorities in 2014/15.

- Increase primary, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 AWPU by 1.5% (subject to any adjustment for underlying school data changes)

All maintained schools and academies receive funding through the AWPU and low prior attainment factors.

It is further proposed that early years providers will receive an increase in the base rate of funding of 3.6%

Do you agree with the proposed distribution?
Yes
Yes
I would prefer to see a higher % allocated to AWPU and a lower % to low prior attainment.
Yes
Yes we agree with the proposed distribution which recognises the comparative shortfalls for Leicestershire Schools.
Yes
Yes we agree with this proposal because it looks to redress the balance of funding to Primary AWPU and for prior low attainment. It should be pointed out that at present KS3 funding is significantly greater than for KS1/2. The proposal

<p>above only closes the gap by approximately 20%.</p>
<p>No. I do not agree that there should be any differential between the increase in the primary and the secondary AWPU.</p> <p>I do agree with the proposal to double the low prior attainment factor.</p>
<p>As above, we recognise the LAs approach to distributing the additional funding in a manner which will bring us in line with statistical neighbours and may make any future transition to a national formula less of a radical change</p>
<p>No.</p> <p>Whilst acknowledging the need to redress the issue of funding for Primary children and those with low prior attainment, we feel the percentage increase to Primary Schools compared to Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 is too great (we assume the third bullet point 'Increase in Primary, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 AWPU by 1.5%' is a mistake and the Primary AWPU is not increasing by a further 1.5% in addition to the 7% increase proposed in bullet point one). Assuming my interpretations are correct we feel the difference in the increase in AWPU between Primary, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 should be lower and propose for the first bullet point an increase of 5%. For the third bullet point an increase of 3.5%. If the percentages included in the proposals remain as in bullet point one and three we disagree fully with the proposals and feel the percentage increase should be identical for all Primary, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupils.</p> <p>We disagree with bullet point two as additional income has and continues to be targeted predominantly to students with low prior attainment, i.e. Pupil Premium money and this is already in school budgets.</p>
<p>Feel there is disproportionate amount being allocated to both early years and primary. Understand wanting to be fair with funding, however, feel that comparing with statistical neighbours does not take into account local context. If there is any balancing of funding it should be in line with moving towards national funding as planned for the future.</p>
<p>No, the rationale for such an enormous variation in key stage increases is unclear as using statistical neighbours is a dubious model given that we don't know why other LAs have made their decisions.</p> <p>Funding an increase for key stages 1 and 2 at over four times the rate for secondary age funding increase and funding early years by two and half times the secondary is unfair and unjust.</p> <p>The funding should be used to create a fairer funding platform at all key stages and to increase one key stage at the expense of another is inappropriate.</p> <p>The decision to target the funding at low attaining students by doubling the amount is again without foundation. In recent times the forum has altered the</p>

funding mechanism to provide additional funding to students in areas of deprivation. Many of these students already attract Pupil Premium funding which has already increased. Given that many of these students have already attracted significant increases in funding there is little or no evidence to indicate a significant impact on outcomes. Until we see the benefits of the existing funding increases I believe that more funding should be allocated to the AWPU. A further increase will be the fourth substantial increase affecting many of the same students.

If you then look at the total schools budget (taking all funding sources into account) you will see a huge differential that is increasing.

There is very little evidence to indicate that all of this additionality is having an impact.

I would prefer to see a greater AWPU contribution given across all sectors and less targeted funding at particular groups.

Many schools were anticipating a significant increase in their AWPU funding and at secondary level this actually amounts to £67 per pupil. Given the national headlines and publicity of £240 per pupil this will add a major financial pressure for many schools.

No.

This money is for statutory aged children, not early years.

The idea of fairer funding is to fairly fund pupils across the country, therefore raising the primary and secondary AWPU in line with similar authorities makes sense. However, the extra funding relates to Schools Block only, so should not be used to raise allocations for Early Years or High Needs provisions.

The extra funding should be directed at the area it is meant for only. Would like to see fairer funding for schools as per the DfE published minimum funding levels for 2015-2016, increase in AWPU and a reduction in deprivation and lump sum funding. KS3 funding, in particular is grossly out of line.

3. All modelling has been completed using October 2013 school census data, final school budgets will be based upon October 2014 data and it may be necessary to adjust the funding values in order to deliver a balanced budget in 2015/16. It is proposed that in this instance that the general increase in AWPU of 1.5% will be amended.

Do you agree with this proposal?
Yes
Yes
Yes

Yes
We agree that any subsequent minor adjustments should be made to the AWPU.
Yes
We agree with this proposal in principle, as it accepted that school census data changes year on year. We do request however, that any necessary amendments required to deliver a balanced budget are communicated in advance to all parties affected.
Yes
Yes. It is acknowledged that other pupil characteristics will vary from census to census, and that the first priorities shall be Primary AWPU uplift, and Prior Attainment, and that once these costs have been met, then any balance should be used to increase AWPU's across the board.
We agree with this proposal.
Yes.
We do not agree with the starting point, however, if the proposal is approved, then we would only agree to a change in the AWPU if it was increased. By more than 1.5%

4. We would like to capture any other views that you may have on the proposals.

Please detail any general comments you may have on the proposed allocation of the additional funding
This seems fair to me given the criteria the funding is to address. It is concerning that we are still very poorly funded compared to other authorities. I trust this level of funding will be maintained.
We are pleased with the proposed arrangements, it gives our school a fairer allocation.
It is right that LCC is brought into line with similar authorities. It will be essential to know as soon as possible if these funding rates will remain in place in 2016.
None
With respect to each school individual funding calculation detail. Will each school receive advance notification of the calculation detail together with the funding value?

I feel strongly that this additional funding should have been utilised at least partly to fully compensate schools adversely affected by age-range changes. The move to actual NOR funding for 7/12 of the financial year led to a one-off financial penalty on schools with falling rolls created by competing schools increasing their age range. Only 80% protection was provided, leaving a considerable shortfall for schools like XXXXXX College.

The issue of Early Years funding is already emerging as a potential topic of debate ahead of the general election. If a decision is made to use some of the additional funding to increase Early Years rates at this time, we trust that this will be reciprocated in future, should Early Years funding be increased by a future govt, and that the value of funding (uplifted for inflation) which is transferred to early years by these proposals is transferred back to schools funding in future

It is disappointing that the consultation for the proposals and the decision making process does not allow sufficient time for adequate reflection and discussion. We note that the consultation report by necessity of the timescale will not be published in advance of the next school forum and will be handed out at the meeting. It is generally accepted practice to have reports 2 weeks prior to any meeting and this should have been the case for this meeting particularly when such important decisions are being made.

We are pleased to note that Age Range Funding protection remains at 80%, without this some schools including ourselves, would have had a deficit which would be irretrievable. However we need to draw the Forum's attention to the potential consequences of the Age Range changes, particularly as when previous decisions regarding this were made no modelling of the impact on individual schools was taken into account. So we believe Schools Forum were making decisions without having the detailed information they required.

Even with the protection one school will lose over 3 years £1.8million that it would have normally received through lagged funding. This clearly is unacceptable as it will have an adverse effect on the quality of education provided for the young people at the school.

It is ironic that this loss occurs after the majority of schools in the county are implementing the recommendation from the County Council that schools change their age range to become 11-16 or 11-18 establishments. This was also supported by the Schools Minister and DfE as it was envisaged the standards of achievement for young people at 16 would improve as a result - something we all passionately desire! Little did we know that this would result in some schools educating young people without receiving any revenue to do so - surely this cannot be right?

It would appear that each of the three High Schools that first changed their age range to 11-16 benefited enormously from the EFA who awarded additional finances to ensure the change in age range did not disadvantage any student being educated in Leicestershire.

We feel strongly that the lagged funding system should have remained and that either the EFA or LA should have continued to provide start-up funds to schools gaining pupils through Age Range changes, rather than penalising some schools by removing lagged funding. Funding which has been unfairly taken from existing students already in year 10 at Upper schools that would have been entitled to the full funding (not 80%) at year 11.

There is no doubt that if this funding regime does not change and protection funds are not found for schools that 'lose out' under Age Range reform then it will have significant consequences and inconsistencies on the quality of education delivered in any given area. In addition, with 80% protection some schools (including ours) will have no alternative but to set a deficit budget and the Schools Forum members need to be aware of this (please note this is not a threat it is just reality and would be unavoidable).

Both the LA and EFA have advocated Age Range changes across the County, yet neither appear to have given sufficient thought as to how this will be financed.

In light of this I feel that one of the proposals for 2015/16 which should have been included in this paper for Schools Forum to consider should have been to suggest redressing the significant loss of income some schools are facing as a result of age range change. I firmly believe some of the additional monies should have been used to address the massive imbalance which has been experienced by those schools. This would have allowed all schools who are changing their age range either from 14-16 to 11-16 or 14-18 to 11-18 to have started these exciting ventures on an equal footing. As mentioned earlier for a school to receive £1.8m less over three years than it would have under lagged funding cannot be deemed fair and I feel that the Schools Forum did not look at this issue with the seriousness that it deserved in recent times.

Given that increased numbers of students with additional needs are joining or engaged with mainstream provision, why are funds being reallocated to special schools from the contingency. Special schools are already funded at an exceptionally high base level, so why is this additional funding necessary?

I have spoken to special school heads and in several cases they are happy with their funding allocation.

This extra funding shouldn't be used for Early Years or High Needs funding increases. These areas **are** scheduled for a review, and LA should wait for the outcomes of these reviews before allocating funding.

In moving towards fairer schools funding, the Government has produced minimum funding levels for 2015-16, and the LA should attempt to replicate these as closely as possible. Would this be attainable if Early Years & High Needs increases were removed from the proposal?

The following email responses are presented for completeness, the consultation document clearly stated that email and verbal responses would not be considered as a formal response.

Email Responses in addition to the Consultation Pro-Forma
<p>To whom it may concern, I support the proposal to increase the primary awpu by 7%. If there is somewhere else I need to respond please let me know.</p>
<p>I have read the school funding consultation (for the first time) and don't profess to understand it completely yet. I have also discussed it (again very briefly) with my Business Manager.</p> <p>Firstly let me say that I fully appreciate this is an extremely complex issue and I am grateful for the consultation that has taken place during the summer and the work that has been put into this document. I also appreciate that proposals have been put forward based on the most noble of intentions.</p> <p>Having said that, the figure of £240 per pupil, which was quoted when the extra money was devolved to Leicestershire and is, indeed, mentioned in the very first paragraph of this consultation, is greatly reduced by page 4 of the document where, if my understanding is correct, it states that key stage 3 pupils will receive an extra £53.56 and key stage 4 pupils an extra £63.87. On the same page it states that the primary allocation per pupil (AWPU) is £216.45.</p> <p>Once again, I reiterate that I have read and think I understand the reasons for this large discrepancy. However, I do feel it is too large and ask that the AWPU allocation is reconsidered to arrive at a fairer settlement for secondary schools.</p> <p>As I have said, after a first reading of the document, I do not profess to understand all the complexities but in general terms, if my first impression is correct, secondary schools with low levels of deprivation will be disadvantaged by this proposal and I would ask that the School Forum considers further ways redress this inequality. The AWPU funding would seem to be the easiest solution.</p> <p>I know this will seem like we are robbing Peter to pay Paul but the discrepancy in funding needs to be addressed.</p>
<p>In principle, the Governing Body agrees to the proposals outlined for 2015/16 funding.</p>
<p>Complete agreement with proposals put to Funding Forum on 5 th Sept (and congratulations to working party) Good selection of principles on which proposals founded - sound number crunching to reach final proposals. Only blip is that this is a one year only proposal - but this should not prevent us from</p>

agreeing these proposals

I would like to state that we would make the following points in response to the consultation document:

- We do not understand the decision behind the split-level funding to primary and secondary schools, without information provided on primary and secondary funding across Leicestershire and for statistical neighbours. This data is not available in the consultation document and we do not feel well informed about this. We need this information to understand why secondary schools in Leicestershire will receive less fairer funding uplift than primary schools and less than other secondary schools in LAs, also currently unfairly funded. How can we be reassured that the current Leicestershire funding system is unfair and that Leicestershire is wrong and not statistical neighbours, without this information?
- Why was the decision to change the funding system brought in at this time by the LA. Why was the system not changed previously if there are strong feelings that it is unfair? Why wait until this point, when there is very little time to make decisions that have far-reaching effects. The two matters should not be confused
- On this basis, the consultation requires the provision of further information and also opportunities to be briefed/meet, alongside a longer consultation period than 17 days
- We cannot understand the weighting being proposed to high needs pupils above other pupils, considering the finance currently already given to high needs pupils through the pupil premium and the catch-up funding. This would be money better shared amongst non high need pupils to retain equality for all

Consequently, based upon these views and the lack of pertinent information, as well as not having enough time for briefing and discussion, we cannot agree to the proposals made.

Having read the consultation document and rationale behind the proposal, we would like to make the following comments;-

- There is a disproportionate amount of funding that will be allocated to Early Years and Primary providers in comparison to the amount allocated to KS3 and 4 students. Recent funding has been targeted at Early Years provision and, at the Secondary end, we have felt no impact of this.
- Leicestershire Upper Schools, such as ourselves, have waited in hope for the fairer funding to have an impact on deficit budgets, caused by the poor funding of Leicestershire. Suddenly, the hope of a levelling of students funding in comparison with other counties appears to have been taken away from us. Whilst understanding that there are no

sureties, we were hoping that this additional funding would address issues which have gradually decreased our budget and our ability to raise standards.

- Whilst we can understand the need to compare situations in similar Authorities, the variables between Authorities are so great that a true comparison would be difficult to make. This was an ideal opportunity for Leicestershire to review historical funding formulas in order to achieve equity amongst its own county schools.
- Leicestershire supports age range change and has used much of its resources to support whole areas with such age range change (Melton , Loughborough.) It is now essential that those areas and schools who are now trying to accomplish those changes, for the good of the learners, receive the same level of support, in order to do so successfully.
- Whilst it is not part of the consultation, we were surprised to learn that all schools receive the same lump sum small school protection of £150k regardless of NOR. This cannot possibly be fair and should, in future funding formula, be related to students numbers.

I suspect I may be too late as I have been away but:

As a Governor for many years I have struggled to understand why in Leicestershire we are so poorly funded compared to other Counties. I thought we were supposed to carry out the same function, teaching and Learning!! If we moved The xxxxx less than a mile due south we would be in a much better financial position! I have written to the new Minister as being a Leicestershire MP, asking why this unfair funding has been allowed to continue for so long and apparently is going to continue.

Why do young people, Early Years, Primary providers warrant a greater finance share, surely older pupils require more expensive resources!

Response to 2015/16 School Funding Consultation

Whilst I understand the rationale behind the proposals I have to express my severe misgivings and disappointment. There seems to be merely a desire to bring funding in line with 'statistical neighbours' rather than analyse the issues in educational provision in Leicestershire and respond to these. I would argue that if the solution is to be anything other than to follow the £240 extra per pupil in every school (that is the government headline), then there must be educational reasons for a difference. Sadly, I cannot see any educational arguments made in the document or any reference as to how outcomes will be raised and to what level as a result of the proposals.

According to OFSTED and the LA, the vast majority of Leicestershire schools are good or better and this proportion is increasing. Seemingly, Leicestershire is doing well. Yet this is not borne out in the outcomes of young people where

iT most matters at KS4 GCSE. Leicestershire schools have produced lower than national average GCSE outcomes for the last two years at least, and the picture appears to be deteriorating. This is also echoed by OFSTED, outcomes where a frighteningly low proportion of schools delivering GCSE's and A level qualifications are rated 'Good' or better. Either the Local Authority believes that these schools are uniformly staffed with below average teachers and below average leaders or there must be other factors at work. As there is no dialogue about the former hypothesis at the LA then we must assume the latter.

In this time of huge transition from split secondary system to an 'all through' one, there is an immense threat to outcomes for young people. The LA's decision on transport has affected secondaries far more than primaries. It is upper schools that are affected by age range change and it is these schools that face the prospect of huge budget cuts. I would agree that in this context any other solution (other than £240 per pupil in every school) needs at least to be argued on an educational basis. We only have to look across the border into Leicester City to see the impact that the LA's funding of secondaries can have. Here significant additional resources were made available with clear expectations and highly aspirational targets. The results speak loudly for themselves. Surely we can show similar levels of wisdom in Leicestershire.

I look forward to your response to the points I have raised.