

22 November 2023

2024-25 SCHOOLS FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Report of the Director of Finance & Public Value and Director of Children and Young Peoples Futures

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that DEF:

- a) Specifically approve the proposals for schools funding (in line with the results of the consultation):
 - i. to set the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to at 0%
 - ii. to distribute any unallocated funding in the following order:
 - a. Go towards the amount being transferred to the high needs block up to a maximum of 0.5% **Provided Proposal 4 is agreed.**
 - b. Increase AEN factors by up to the allowed maximum of 2.5%.
 - c. Increase all other factors up to the allowed maximum of 2.5%.
 - d. Increase the MFG up to a maximum of 0.5% per 2024-25 guidance.
 - iii. to bridge any funding gap in the following order:
 - a. Reduced AWPU by up to the allowed maximum of 2.5%.
 - b. Reduced all other factors by up to the allowed maximum of 2.5%.

All to Vote

- b) Specifically approve the de-delegation of the services listed in Section 5.1 in line with the results of the consultation. The mainstream maintained schools' representatives of Schools Forum will be required to vote on each service (unless there is unanimous agreement to vote on all services together), with Primary and Secondary voting separately.

Vote: Maintained primary representatives.

Vote: Maintained secondary representatives.

- c) Specifically approve the funding of central services listed in section 6.1 in line with the results of the consultation.

All to Vote

- d) Specifically approve the proposal to submit a disapplication request for exceptional circumstances relating to school premises for 2024-25.

All to Vote

1. Consultation 2024-25.

- a) The consultation documents for [Schools Funding Arrangements 2024-25](#) were published on the Devon County website and 3 online drop-in sessions were held. All schools were invited to respond to the proposals contained within the document by 22nd October 2023.
- b) This report should be read in conjunction with the [consultation documents](#).
- c) The outcomes strive to deliver the fairest distribution of funding for the majority of schools whilst keeping within both the funding envelope and adhering to the NFF guidance.

2. Responses.

- a) 117 out of 352 individual schools (33% of all schools) submitted responses to the consultation and these represent just over 34,600 pupils,

Responses	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Total Academy	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained	Total Schools
Individual schools	36	19	55	61	1	62	117
Individual schools %	31%	16%	47%	52%	1%	53%	100%
NOR	6,601	15,403	22,004	11,961	649	12,610	34,614
NOR %	19%	44%	64%	35%	2%	36%	100%

3. Proposals – Schools Funding.

a) A majority of schools agreed with the first three proposals.

b) **Proposal 1 - Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)**

Do you agree with Devon's decision to set the MFG at 0% for 2024-25?

	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Total Academy	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained	Total Schools
Individual Schools:							
Agree	29	18	47	46	1	47	94
Disagree	6	0	6	10	0	10	16
Neither agree nor disagree	1	1	2	5	0	5	7
Total	36	19	55	61	1	62	117
Individual Schools %:							
Agree	25%	15%	40%	39%	1%	40%	80%
Disagree	5%	0%	5%	9%	0%	9%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	1%	1%	2%	4%	0%	4%	6%
Total	31%	16%	47%	52%	1%	53%	100%

c) **Proposal 2 - Excess funding available**

Do you agree in principle with Devon's decision to distribute any unallocated funding in the following order?

- i. Go towards the amount being transferred to the high needs block up to a maximum of 0.5% **Provided Proposal 4 is agreed.**
- ii. Increase AEN factors by up to the allowed maximum of 2.5%.
- iii. Increase all other factors up to the allowed maximum of 2.5%.
- iv. Increase the MFG up to a maximum of 0.5% per 2024-25 guidance.

	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Total Academy	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained	Total Schools
Individual Schools:							
Agree	14	6	20	43	1	44	64
Disagree	22	13	35	17	0	17	52
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Total	36	19	55	61	1	62	117
Individual Schools %:							
Agree	12%	5%	17%	37%	1%	38%	55%
Disagree	19%	11%	30%	15%	0%	15%	44%
Neither agree nor disagree	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Total	31%	16%	47%	52%	1%	53%	100%

d) **Proposal 3 - A funding gap**

Do you agree in principle with Devon's decision to bridge any funding gap in the following order?

- i. Reduced AWPU by up the allowed maximum of 2.5%.

- ii. Reduced all other factors by up the allowed maximum of 2.5%.

	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Total Academy	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained	Total Schools
Individual Schools:							
Agree	28	16	44	31	1	32	76
Disagree	1	2	3	23	0	23	26
Neither agree nor disagree	7	1	8	7	0	7	15
Total	36	19	55	61	1	62	117
Individual Schools %:							
Agree	24%	14%	38%	26%	1%	27%	65%
Disagree	1%	2%	3%	20%	0%	20%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	6%	1%	7%	6%	0%	6%	13%
Total	31%	16%	47%	52%	1%	53%	100%

4. Proposals – Movement between Blocks.

- a) A majority of 61% disagreed with proposal 4.

b) **Proposal 4 - Movements into Another Block**

Do you agree to transfer funding of 0.5%, for one year only, from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to develop an Early Help (Education) Offer for schools as part of the Safety Valve agreement?

	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Total Academy	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained	Total Schools
Individual Schools:							
Agree	14	6	20	17	1	18	38
Disagree	22	13	35	36	0	36	71
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0	0	8	0	8	8
Total	36	19	55	61	1	62	117
Individual Schools %:							
Agree	12%	5%	17%	15%	1%	15%	32%
Disagree	19%	11%	30%	31%	0%	31%	61%
Neither agree nor disagree	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	7%	7%
Total	31%	16%	47%	52%	1%	53%	100%

- c) The proposal for the transfer between blocks will be presented separately as a standalone paper.

5. Delegation and De-delegation.

- a) A majority of maintained primary schools and a majority of maintained secondary schools opted to keeping all the services funded through de-delegation. See [Appendix A](#) for details:
- Social Emotional & Mental Health Support Team (Behaviour Support)
 - Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service: EAL
 - Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service: GRTS
 - Copyrights, Licences and Subscriptions
 - Trade Union Facilitation
 - Jury Service and Magistrate Support
 - Maternity Service
 - Schools in Difficulties and Exceptional Events
 - School Effectiveness

- b) De-delegation applies to mainstream, maintained schools only and is not an option for academies, special schools, nurseries or PRUs, but where de-delegation has been agreed for maintained primary and secondary schools, it is the Department's presumption that the Local Authority will offer the service on a buy-back basis to those schools and academies in their area which are not covered by the de-delegation.

6. Central Services.

- a) A majority of schools opted to keeping funding all the central services for 1 year only. See [Appendix B](#) for details:
- Emotional, Psychological & Social Wellbeing Services - £60,000 for 2024/25
 - Phase Association - £223,000 for 2024/25 (This is in addition to the £47,000 pooled from the High Needs Block for Devon Special School Heads (DSSH))
 - Schools Admissions - £569,000 for 2024/25

7. Disapplication request - exceptional circumstances relating to school premises.

- a) We have been advised by the ESFA that they expect Schools Forum to vote on disapplication requests.
- b) As in previous years Devon is proposing to submit a disapplication application request to use exceptional circumstances relating to school premises to allocate funding through the NFF to schools that incur exceptional costs relating to dual use sports facilities, rent and other exceptional premises costs.
- c) For exceptional circumstances relating to school premises, we are only able to submit applications where the value of the factor is more than 1% of a school's budget and applies to fewer than 5% of the schools in the local authority's area (17 school for Devon).
- d) This means that we are only able to submit a disapplication for the 17 schools with the highest total premises costs each year. Cost per school will vary each year based on contractual obligations (for example a large contribution to repairs) so the 17 schools will not be the same schools every year.
- e) The ESFA has been conducting a review of Devon's Exceptional Circumstances relating to school premises (including rents, dual use facilities and other exceptional premises costs). Unfortunately, we have been advised that a number of items that we have requested funding for in 2023-24 should not have been funded. While the ESFA are not proposing to claw back any funding for 2023-24, we will not be able to claim for these items from 2024-25 onwards.
- f) We are not allowed to claim for:
- Any capital costs.
 - Any leasing costs where a copy of the lease is not available.
 - Leasing costs for car parking areas.
 - Maintenance costs.
 - Any costs relating to a nursery site. Funding for mixed year group may still be approved to some extent by the ESFA based on NOR.
 - Leasing costs where the property has been transferred to the legal entity the school is part of.
- g) The above list includes everything we are currently aware of, but it may not be exhaustive.
- h) We are still finalising the data for the submission in conjunction with the ESFA and affected schools.

8. Recommendations

- a) That DEF specifically approve the proposals for schools funding (in line with the results of the consultation):
 - iv. to set the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to at 0%
 - v. to distribute any unallocated funding in the following order:
 - a. Go towards the amount being transferred to the high needs block up to a maximum of 0.5% **Provided Proposal 4 is agreed.**
 - b. Increase AEN factors by up to the allowed maximum of 2.5%.
 - c. Increase all other factors up to the allowed maximum of 2.5%.
 - d. Increase the MFG up to a maximum of 0.5% per 2024-25 guidance.
 - vi. to bridge any funding gap in the following order:
 - a. Reduced AWPU by up the allowed maximum of 2.5%.
 - b. Reduced all other factors by up the allowed maximum of 2.5%.

All to Vote

- b) That DEF specifically approve the de-delegation of the services listed in Section 5.1 in line with the results of the consultation. The mainstream maintained schools' representatives of Schools Forum will be required to vote on each service (unless there is unanimous agreement to vote on all services together), with Primary and Secondary voting separately.

Vote: Maintained primary representatives

Vote: Maintained secondary representatives

- c) That DEF specifically approve the funding of central services listed in section 6.1 in line with the results of the consultation.

All to Vote

- d) That DEF specifically approve the proposal to submit a disapplication request for exceptional circumstances relating to school premises for 2024-25.

All to Vote

Angie Sinclair
Director of Finance & Public Value

Stuart Collins
Director of Children and Young Peoples Futures

Please ask for: Adrian Fox
Adrian.fox@devon.gov.uk

22 November 2023

Appendix A

1. Delegation and De-delegation

1.1. Social Emotional & Mental Health Support Team (Behaviour Support)

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	51	1	52
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	10	0	10
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	82%	2%	84%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	16%	0%	16%
Total	98%	2%	100%

1.2. Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service: EAL

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	46	1	47
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	15	0	15
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	74%	2%	76%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	24%	0%	24%
Total	98%	2%	100%

1.3. Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service: GRTS

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	46	1	47
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	15	0	15
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	74%	2%	76%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	24%	0%	24%
Total	98%	2%	100%

1.4. Copyrights, Licences and Subscriptions

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	61	1	62
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	0	0	0
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	98%	2%	100%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	0%	0%	0%
Total	98%	2%	100%

1.5. Trade Union Facilitation

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	55	1	56
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	6	0	6
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	89%	2%	90%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	10%	0%	10%
Total	98%	2%	100%

1.6. Jury Service and Magistrate Support

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	58	1	59
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	3	0	3
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	94%	2%	95%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	5%	0%	5%
Total	98%	2%	100%

1.7. Maternity Service

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	61	1	62
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	0	0	0
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	98%	2%	100%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	0%	0%	0%
Total	98%	2%	100%

1.8. Schools in Difficulties and Exceptional Events

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	54	1	55
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	7	0	7
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	87%	2%	89%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	11%	0%	11%
Total	98%	2%	100%

1.9. School Effectiveness

	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained
Individual Schools:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	48	1	49
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	13	0	13
Total	61	1	62
Individual Schools %:			
Option 1 - De-delegate	77%	2%	79%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	21%	0%	21%
Total	98%	2%	100%

22 November 2023

Appendix B

2. Central Services

2.1 Emotional, Psychological & Social Wellbeing Service

	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Total Academy	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained	Total Schools
Individual Schools:							
Option 1 - De-delegate	19	3	22	54	1	55	77
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	17	16	33	7	0	7	40
Total	36	19	55	61	1	62	117
Individual Schools %:							
Option 1 - De-delegate	16%	3%	19%	46%	1%	47%	66%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	15%	14%	28%	6%	0%	6%	34%
Total	31%	16%	47%	52%	1%	53%	100%

2.2 Phase Association

	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Total Academy	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained	Total Schools
Individual Schools:							
Option 1 - Maintain Phase Association funding for 2024-25	20	10	30	13	1	14	44
Option 2 - As Option 1, but for a 3-year term (2024-25 - 2026-27)	8	6	14	25	0	25	39
Option 3 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	8	3	11	23	0	23	34
Total	36	19	55	61	1	62	117
Individual Schools %:							
Option 1 - Maintain Phase Association funding for 2024-25	17%	9%	26%	11%	1%	12%	38%
Option 2 - As Option 1, but for a 3-year term (2024-25 to 2026-27)	7%	5%	12%	21%	0%	21%	33%
Option 3 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	7%	3%	9%	20%	0%	20%	29%
Total	31%	16%	47%	52%	1%	53%	100%

2.3 Schools Admissions

	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Total Academy	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Total maintained	Total Schools
Individual Schools:							
Option 1 - De-delegate	30	19	49	59	1	60	109
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	6	0	6	2	0	2	8
Total	36	19	55	61	1	62	117
Individual Schools %:							
Option 1 - De-delegate	26%	16%	42%	50%	1%	51%	93%
Option 2 - Monies remain in schools' budgets	5%	0%	5%	2%	0%	2%	7%
Total	31%	16%	47%	52%	1%	53%	100%