

**Report of the Cabinet Member
Children's Services and Schools**

I have been asked to Report as follows for Full Council on 25 May 2023:

1. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

The Government has announced £600m of ringfenced funding to support primary school physical activity and sport, alongside an additional £22m of funding for the nationwide network of 450 School Games Organisers. Both sets of funding will provide support for the next two academic years and will help schools to ensure PE and school sport are inclusive, engaging and fun for all young people, allowing every child the opportunity to compete.

Recent research conducted by the Youth Sport Trust highlighted the potential impact should the funding not have been confirmed. This included an estimated increase in children leaving school unable to swim, and three in four schools (73%) unable to maintain their current physical activity and after-school sport offer, at a time when fewer than half of all young people in England meet the minimum recommended activity level of 60 minutes a day.

To include, how much funding Devon County Council will receive, how many School Games Organisers will be established, and how will team sports be secured for girls.

Also, how will Devon County Council work with its own maintained schools, and the wider local education communities to make the most of this funding and promote new opportunities?

2. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

Regarding serious concerns and allegations about the Ted Wragg Schools. To include what role, responsibilities and statutory duties DCC has when these issues are being raised in regard to non local authority maintained schools. Furthermore, where the allegations are in direct relation to the health, welfare, care, support and dignity of children and young people attending these schools.

3. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

On the ongoing situation at the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust. To include their financial situation, job losses, potential curriculum reductions, and their long-term viability.

4. By Councillor Adams as follows:

On an outline plan for future engagement with the Devon SEND Parents and Carers for Change (DSPCC) and how this group will work with the Devon Parents Forum? How will this group's voice be heard and how will communication with families be improved? What response has been given to DSPCC after the presentation of their report to Children's Services and what is the subsequent response of the DSPCC?

Responses

1. School Sports Funding

The DfE has announced the Primary PE and Sport Premium will continue for academic years 2023-24 and 2024-25 with a total of over £600 million of funding across the two years. Further guidance, including school allocations, priorities and reporting requirements, are expected in the summer and will include a new digital tool to support schools in using the funding to the best advantage of their pupils

In 2022-23, the DfE allocated £320m nationally with Devon primary schools receiving at total of £5.6m and it is expected individual school allocations will remain broadly the same over the next two years with the average primary school receiving £18,000 per year. The funding goes directly to schools and all schools in receipt of the 2022-23 grant are required to publish details of how they have used the grant, the impact and for the 2022-23 allocation, an analysis of the Y6 cohort and their swimming ability. It is again anticipated that guidance for 2023-24 and 2024-25 will require similar reporting against the priorities for this programme.

The £22 million of funding for School Games Organisers (SGOs) is invested through specific host schools who employ the SGOs. These are not new posts being created but rather the funding is to continue roles that are already established. There are five SGOs in Devon (plus three across Plymouth and Torbay). Active Devon works closely to support their work as a collaborative network since the local activities they promote feed into countywide provision which we coordinate.

It is currently unclear yet how girls team sports will be mandated, however, it has been confirmed that the current [Schools Games Mark](#) will be expanded to reward parity of provision for girls. This kitemark scheme, delivered by the Youth Sport Trust through the School Games Organiser network, recognises schools that create positive sporting experiences across all sports for young people, supporting them to be active for 60 minutes a day.

Active Devon is leading work locally on Opening School Facilities (OSF) which is a part of the £600 million funding allocation. This programme aims to help schools to open their existing sport facilities, including school swimming pools, for a broader range of young people and to support the wider community by partnering with sporting organisations, who can help deliver activities in these settings. It has a particular emphasis on groups who face greater inequality in terms of participating in sport and physical activity: Children in receipt of Free School Meals, Females, Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and Children from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Investment is in place to March 2025 and there are

24 schools in the Devon County Council area that Active Devon are working with. The investment is worth up to £1.2m in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.

2. Ted Wragg Schools

Whilst we have every sympathy for the concerns of parents and staff it is important for members to understand the relationship Devon County Council has through the cabinet member (lead member) and the statutory director of children's services with both maintained schools and academies.

With the exception of specific powers in relation to vulnerable children, Schools are self-governing institutions, and whilst enquiries are made in relation to a school's actions and performance, it is the role of the governing body to address school issues. This is reflected in the schools complaints procedures

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/state-schools>

Where a LA maintained school is not performing well, for example through a poor Ofsted inspection the council can take action in relation to the governing body there is a defined legal process to do this

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-causing-concern--2>

Devon County Council has no powers to interfere with the running of Academy schools this responsibility sits with the Department for Education and ultimately with parliament.

Where there are concerns within the Academy school representations are made directly to the head teacher or executive head if the school is in a multi Academy trust and/or to the Department for Education through regular meetings.

As you can see building relationships with schools is a key task, and it is important that members where possible establish relationships with their local schools to best serve their residents.

3. Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust

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4. Engagement with the Devon SEND Parents and Carers for Change (DSPCC)

I thank Councillor Adams for her report request. It is a very important matter, but I am not in a position today to outline the plan requested. I will however undertake further investigation and respond more fully in due course.

Andrew Leadbetter
Cabinet Member
Children's Services and Schools