



## Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**Report from the Director of Children and Families**

**For Action**

**Wards Affected:  
ALL**

**Report Title: The Schools Budget and Review of School Funding Formula 2008/09 to 2010/11**

### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out details of the Schools Budget (SB) and the proposed changes to the Fair Funding Formula for Brent schools in respect of factors relating to Additional Educational Need (AEN) and the delegation of the budget for Threshold and Performance Pay for the three year period 2008/09 to 2010 /11.
- 1.2 The proposals in respect of the SB were discussed by the Schools Forum at its meeting 12 December 2007 and the Executive is asked to confirm its recommendations.
- 1.3 The AEN formula proposals have been the subject of an extensive consultation process over a period of 18 months involving a Headteacher/Governor Formula Working Group set up by the Schools Forum, a wider consultation process with all schools during October and November 2007 and finally with the Schools Forum itself ( the statutory consultative body for such proposals).
- 1.4 The proposal in respect of the delegation of the Threshold and Performance Pay budget has also been the subject of detailed analysis by the Formula Working Group, with headteacher representatives consulting their respective headteacher colleagues and the Schools Forum itself.
- 1.5 The primary aim of the AEN formula proposals has been to achieve a greater degree of equity in the distribution of funding to schools in the light of national

requirements to review how deprivation is reflected in local authorities formulae and where not in conflict with this to simplify and make more transparent the basis of the formula allocation.

- 1.6 The proposal to delegate the Threshold and Performance Pay budget has been developed in the light of the additional growth funding that has been made available by the DSG settlement for the next three year budget period and a recognition that the existing basis of allocating the frozen budget on the basis of actual teacher numbers is not sustainable in the longer term.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note and comment on the following recommendations which will go the Executive on the 11<sup>th</sup> February for final agreement.

### **The Schools Budget:**

- a) the Schools Budget for 2008/09 and provisional budgets for 2009/10 and 2010/11 as detailed in Appendix 1 ( with supporting detail in Appendix 2)
- b) that any variation in the DSG that may arise when actual January 2008 pupil numbers are taken account of, is accommodated by an adjustment to the rising rolls contingency and the amount allocated to the ISB for pupil number growth.

### **Schools Formula:**

- c) replace the five existing formula factors for SEN Non Statemented, Needs Led, Social Deprivation, Mobility and Pupil Retention with three new factors for Attainment, Social Deprivation and Underachieving Groups as detailed in paras 3.30 to 3.44;
- d) the basis of allocation of the three new formula factors to be actual pupil numbers with the exception of the Attainment factor for primary and nursery schools where 25% of the resources would be allocated on the basis of the number of qualifying pupils expressed as a percentage of roll ( Model C );
- e) the allocation of growth funding to the new formula factors for 2008/09 and the indicative allocations for 2009/10 and 2010/11 as set out in para 3.55;
- f) the delegation of the budget for Threshold and Performance Pay in respect of Nursery, Primary and Secondary schools with effect from 2008/09 with the resources being allocated on the basis of Aged Weighted Pupil Units;
- g) that in respect of the delegation of Threshold and Performance Pay that transitional protection should be provided to limit gains and losses in year 1 (2008/09) to 33.3%, Year 2 to 66.6% with full allocation in year 3;
- h) defer the delegation of the budget share for Threshold and Performance Pay in respect of Special schools pending a planned review of the Special School formula during 2008.

### 3.0 Detail

#### Schools Budget 2008/09 to 2010/11

- 3.1 Provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for the three year period 2008/09 to 2010/2011 were announced in a written statement 12 November 2007.
- 3.2 Nationally the Total Dedicated Schools Grant for 2008/09 will increase by 4.6% per pupil for 2008/09, 3.7% per pupil for 2009/10 and 4.3% per pupil for 2010/11.
- 3.3 In comparison with the national picture Brent has fared better as can be seen from the table below:

Year	Allocation	Cash Increase	Annual Increase per Pupil	Guaranteed Funding per Pupil
	£m			£
2007/08	174			4,663
2008/09	188	8.0%	5.0%	4,894
2009/10	200	6.4%	4.3%	5,102
2010/11	214	7.0%	4.7%	5,342

- 3.4 The annual increase per pupil, For Brent, is greater than the national picture due to the inclusion in the above figures of a £4.1m top-up, spread over 3 years, to bring Brent's funding up to the level of its Formula Spending Share.
- 3.5 The cash allocations above assume significant increases in pupil numbers which are not supported by our own projections based on the September 2007 pupil count. The DSG allocations assume pupil increases of 1087, 858, and 777 respectively for the years 2008/09 to 2010/1. Brents' own estimate for 2008/09 is for an extra 500 pupils i.e. 587 less than the DSG assumption.
- 3.6 For Budget planning purposes, the Schools Forum decided to take a prudent approach, pending receipt of details of the January pupil census, to use the per per pupil increase percentages to determine the DSG available. On this basis the DSG for 2008/09 would be £182.7m, for 2009/10 £190.5m and for 2010/11 £199.1m. This in effect assumes static pupil numbers over the 3 years and will therefore understate the likely actual DSG allocation.
- 3.7 A schedule at Appendix 1 sets out the detailed breakdown of the proposed Schools Budget for the years 2008/09 to 2010/11 assuming the annual increase in DSG per pupil of 5%, 4.3% and 4.7% referred to above. The table also shows the additional DSG that would be available for additional pupils at the level assumed by the DCSF and Brent's own estimate for 2008/09 of 500 pupils based on the September 2007 pupil count.

- 3.8 All budget headings have been increased for inflation by 2.5% in each year. The ISB, Early Years and PRUs have been allocated growth of 2.5% in 2008/09, 1.8% in 2009/10 and 2.2% in 2010/11.
- 3.9 For the ISB these growth rates translate as £3.758m 2008/09, £2.846m 2009/10 and £3.628m 2010/11. However, for 2010/11 provision needs to be set aside for the potential implications of implementing the governments Early Years proposals i.e. a common funding formula for maintained and private, voluntary and independent early year's providers. The Schools Forum agreed that provision of £1m in 2010/11 should be set aside leaving net growth of £2.628m for the ISB for 2010/11.
- 3.10 Additional Central Budget Pressures totaling £1.970m in 2008/09, a further £200k in 2009/10 and a further £160k in 2010/11 were approved by the Schools Forum. Details of these items are provided in the schedule at Appendix 2.
- 3.11 The intention had been to return to the ISB £1.5m allocated on a temporary basis to the CEL in 2007/08. The one off provision included in the budget line for Independent Residential Special has been reduced by £1.5m in 2008/09. However, additional budget pressures referred to above mean that it was possible to restore £297k to the ISB. The Schools Forum, understandably, challenged this position but did approve it.
- 3.12 Despite these agreed increases in central expenditure the percentage increase in the ISB plus Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Years expenditure is greater than the increase in the Total Schools Budget and therefore the CEL is not breached. This is also the case for years 2 and 3.

### **Review of the Schools Fair Funding Formula – Additional Educational Need (AEN) and Deprivation Factor**

- 3.13 In June 2006 the Schools Forum decided to set up a working group to consider a fundamental review of the Funding Formula with the aim of reducing the number of formula factors, thereby simplifying the formula and to revisit those formula factors that distribute resources on the basis of pupils expressed as a percentage of roll.
- 3.14 In August 2006 the DfES published details of a survey of LAs funding on deprivation. A covering letter raised concerns that there was a wide degree of variation between local authorities' strategies for assessing and funding the costs of deprivation and that there had in many cases been no systematic approach to reviewing need or how to use funding to drive up attainment of pupils from deprived backgrounds. Local authorities in conjunction with their Schools Forum were required to undertake a full and systematic review of their local arrangements to ensure that their formula better targets funding on deprived pupils from the start of the 2008 three year funding period.
- 3.15 Three elements were specified for the review:

The adequacy of funding on deprivation

A review of AEN factors with the aim to simplify and make more equitable

The basis of the pupil count

- 3.16 The approach taken by the Working Party was to review systematically the factors within the Brent schools' funding formula with the aim of ensuring that the formula is fit for purpose, conforms with current best practice and is seen to be fair by all stakeholders, as well as one which is seen to be meeting the government guidance.

### **Adequacy of the Funding on Deprivation**

- 3.17 A template issued by the DfES, which each authority had to complete and return to the Department by 31 August 2007 showed Brent allocated only 31% of the resources it received in Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) related to deprivation being allocated to schools by deprivation factors in the formula or otherwise counting as eligible expenditure. In cash terms Brent needed to increase the level of funding it allocated by deprivation factors in the formula by £10.6m to achieve a threshold of 80% of the funding it received by deprivation factors.
- 3.18 Guidance notes issued to local authorities included details of which formula factors would qualify as funding deprivation and AEN. Of particular interest was that funding allocated by proxy measures for prior attainment would count 100% for AEN and Deprivation targets whereas the existing Brent formula factors for SEN based on counts of pupils at School Action and School Action Plus count only 25% for both targets. In other words a significant improvement in the level of eligible expenditure could be achieved by changing the basis of the formula allocation.

### **Adequacy of Existing AEN Factors**

- 3.19 The Working Group identified a number of deficiencies with the existing formula factors relating to AEN which were set out in the consultation document issued to schools.
- 3.20 In relation to the SEN Non-Statemented factor the problem of using counts of the numbers of pupils at School Action and School Action Plus was highlighted i.e. that there is an incentive to undertake such assessments and that this requires extensive moderation to ensure that schools are adopting common standards in applying the SEN code. Of significance in the Brent context is that there is only a very light touch moderation given limited staffing resources and consequently there must be big questions about the consistency of practice in schools. Many local authorities are reported as having moved away from funding SEN based on direct measures to using proxy measures.
- 3.21 The Needs Led factor is such a proxy factor but uses Free School Meals (FSM) for the whole of the primary allocation. The use of Key Stage

Assessment test scores was identified as an alternative used by many other authorities.

- 3.22 The present Social Deprivation factor allocates a limited amount of resources based on pupils with addresses in the most deprived London Boroughs, determined on the basis of the Index of Multiple Deprivation, and who are eligible for FSM. Those pupils that do not satisfy this very restrictive criteria receive no funding. This of particular significance for those pupils who live in very deprived areas which fall just outside the 200 most deprived. The use of data at ward level itself may be considered to be distorting due to the size of the area and the fact that at sub ward level there may be areas of significant deprivation alongside areas of lower deprivation. Given the imperative to allocate significantly higher levels of funding to deprivation factors a widening of criteria was identified as being necessary.
- 3.23 The Pupil Retention factor is a remnant of a discontinued Standards Fund Grant and questions were raised as to whether it was still relevant in its current form.
- 3.24 Finally the continued need for the Mobility factor was questioned by the Working Group as having only £192,000 allocated and a lack of clarity as to what the factor was attempting to fund.

### **Pupil Count**

- 3.25 Deficiencies were identified with the pupil count used in the existing formula factors. Allocations made in the existing AEN factors in the formula are made on the basis of the number of pupils with particular characteristics as a percentage of roll. This was demonstrated as being inequitable and inconsistent with the principle of funding following the pupil.
- 3.26 An example of the distortion created by using percentage of roll was provided:

	FSM Pupils	% of Roll	Allocation	Per Pupil
Primary School A	240	54	£14,427	£60
Primary School B	121	53	£14,124	£117

- 3.27 In the example above School A has twice the number of qualifying FSM as School B yet receives virtually the same cash allocation, or put another way half the amount per qualifying pupil as School B.
- 3.28 The distortion of using percentage of roll is particularly evident in the case of Nursery schools where each SEN pupil is allocated £2053 on average under the percentage of roll basis as compared with £326 that would be allocated under the actual pupil count basis.

- 3.29 The consultation document issued to schools also highlighted distortions in the allocation of resources between Primary and Secondary sectors as a consequence of using percentage of roll.

### **Proposed new AEN Factors**

- 3.30 Having considered the deficiencies of the existing formula factors, the stated objective of simplifying the formula and the imperative of allocating substantial additional funding to the AEN factors the Working Group recommended a basket of AEN factors comprising three main elements to replace the five existing factors:

- Attainment
- Social Deprivation
- Underachieving Groups

- 3.31 The detailed makeup of each of the new factors proposed is provided below.

#### **Attainment**

- 3.32 The existing SEN and Needs Led factors would be replaced by a new factor called Attainment with resources allocated by proxy measures of prior attainment as follows:

##### Nursery

The number of pupils registered for FSM

##### Primary

Funding for Pupils in KS1 - The number of pupils registered for FSM in those year groups

Funding for Pupils in KS2 - The number of pupils achieving less than Level 2B in KS1 SATs in Reading, Writing and Maths weighted as follows:

Working towards Level 1 - weight as 2

Level 1 - weight as 1.5

Level 2C - weight as 1

Disapplied - weight as 2

Absent - weight as 1.2

##### Secondary

Funding for pupils in KS3 and KS4:

50% based on the number of pupils achieving less than Level 4 KS2 tests for English, Maths and Science weighted as follows:

Level 2 and below – weight as 1.5

Level 3 – weight as 1  
Disapplied – weight as 2  
Absent weight as 1.2

50% based on the number of pupils achieving an average score of 90% or less in Cognitive Ability Tests.

- 3.33 The recommended combination of SATs and CAT scores for secondary funding above is based on Ofsted evidence that this is the best predictor of future attainment.
- 3.34 The possibility of using the Foundation Stage Profile for funding KS1 as a replacement for the use of FSM (the latter is presently used in the Needs Led factor for prior attainment) was explored by the working group but the data was found to be insufficiently robust for funding purposes. The WG have proposed that this option is further explored over the next the three year period with a view to the data being used from 2011 onwards.

### **Social Deprivation**

- 3.35 Following consideration of many different formula models using various permutations of IMD and FSM the Working Group decided to recommend using the Sum of IMD scores at Super Output Area level.
- 3.36 Under this model each pupil is given an IMD score based on the SOA in which the pupil lives. The individual pupil scores are summed to produce a school score and the total funds available for this factor are allocated pro rata to each schools score.
- 3.37 This proposal is an extension of the existing Social Deprivation factor in using the IMD. The use of data at SOA level rather than ward level means it is much more sensitive in picking up smaller pockets of deprivation and in consequence should produce a more equitable outcome.
- 3.38 The use of the Sum of IMD means that all pupils attract some funding and not just those from the most heavily deprived areas. This is considered important given the intention of allocating significant additional resources by this factor.
- 3.39 The most deprived SOA in Brent (in Harlesden) has a IMD score of 53.7 whereas the least deprived (in Kenton) has an IMD score of 7.7. In other words a pupil from the most deprived area would get nearly 7 times the resource of a pupil from the least deprived.
- 3.40 The DCSF has very recently announced that it is intending to make available to local authorities Tax Credit data at Lower Level Super Output Area level. This data is used as the new basis of allocating deprivation funds to local authorities within the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Schools Forum has decided to consider the use of this data when it becomes available as a possible supplement or indeed replacement for IMD data as part of an ongoing review of the formula.



## **Underachieving Groups**

- 3.41 This factor recognises the fact that certain groups of pupils, which may change over time, require additional targeted support to address the level of underachievement. The Development Plan currently identifies Black Caribbean and Somali boys and Children Looked After as being those of concern.
- 3.42 A further group, White Irish boys, has been recently identified as being appropriate for inclusion but this is still the subject of ongoing analysis. Should this group be added to the Children's Plan as a priority for action then at that point this factor could be amended to include them.
- 3.43 The funding would be allocated as an amount per designated pupil for each of these underachieving groups.

## **Discontinued Existing Factors**

- 3.44 The existing factors for SEN, Needs Led, Pupil Retention and Mobility factors would be deleted with the resources allocated to the new Attainment factor with the exception of the elements of the Pupil Retention Factor relating to Black Caribbean Boys and Children Looked After which would be added to the new Underachieving Groups.

## **The Basis of Allocation**

- 3.45 Having considered the deficiencies identified above the working group recommended that the main basis of allocation under the new formula factors should be the actual number of pupils rather than percentage of roll as used under the existing formula factors.
- 3.46 However, it was considered that there would be merit in considering an option whereby the funding for the Attainment and Social Deprivation factors was allocated on part percentage of roll in recognition of the argument that there were additional pressures in smaller schools as a result of having a high percentage of pupils with certain needs.
- 3.47 Accordingly in addition to the models based on 100% actual pupils for these two factors it was decided by the Schools Forum to consult schools on models using 75% Actuals and 25% Percentage of Roll for Attainment (Primary and Nursery only) and Social Deprivation. In the latter case because it was not possible to allocate an IMD score as a percentage of roll the 25% element on percentage of roll had to be allocated by using FSM data.

## **Financial Modelling of the Proposed Formula Factors**

- 3.48 For the purposes of the financial models developed to consult schools a reasonably pessimistic view was taken that growth funding would be only £3.5m over the three year period. It was proposed that the additional funding should be allocated £500,000 to Attainment, £2,000,000 to Social Deprivation and £500,000 to Underachieving Groups.

- 3.49 Details of the new formula factor allocations for each of the possible combinations of options identified above were provided in the following models:

**Model A**

Based on 100% Actual pupils for all three factors

**Model B**

Based on 100% Actuals for Attainment and 75% Actuals and 25% FSM as Percentage of Roll for Social Deprivation

**Model C**

Based on 75% Actuals and 25% Percentage of Roll for Attainment and 100% Actuals for Social Deprivation

**Model D**

Based on 75% Actuals and 25% Percentage of Roll for Attainment and 75% Actuals and 25% FSM as Percentage of Roll for Social Deprivation.

- 3.50 A summary of the variations between the new formula models and existing formula allocations was also provided.

**Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)**

- 3.51 The MFG in the formula guarantees that each school has a minimum percentage increase in funding one year to another after adjustments for changes in pupil roll and certain excluded items such as changes in funding for statements and changes in non domestic rates. No school will receive less than a 2.1% increase in its budget as adjusted above.

**Consultation with Schools and the Analysis of Responses**

- 3.52 A detailed report was made to the Schools Forum providing an analysis of the consultation responses and the detailed responses themselves. A summary is provided at Appendix 3.
- 3.53 In summary there was strong support from both primary and secondary schools for the proposal to replace the five existing formula factors with three new factors for Attainment, Social Deprivation and Underachieving Groups and that growth funding should be directed to the new formula factors. There was also strong support for making the basis of the pupil count actual pupil numbers.
- 3.54 There was no clear overall preference expressed for one particular model.

## Recommendations of the Schools Forum in Respect of AEN Formula Changes

- 3.55 Following the announcement of the DSG allocations for 2008/09 to 2010/11 in November 2007 the Schools Forum 12 December 2007 agreed to recommend that the allocation of growth funding to AEN factors of £3.5m in 2008/09, a further £2.5m in 2009/10 and a further £2.5m in 2010/11 allocated to the three new AEN factors should be as per the table below:

Formula Factors	2008/09 £m	2009/10 £m	2010/11 £m	Total £m
Social Deprivation	2.5	1.8	1.8	6.1
Attainment	0.5	0.4	0.4	1.3
Underachieving Groups	0.5	0.3	0.3	1.1
	3.5	2.5	2.5	8.5

- 3.56 Formula models using the above growth allocations for each of the three years were considered by the Schools Forum 9 January 2008 and the analysis of the variations with the funding allocations for existing formula factors is provided at Appendix 4.
- 3.57 The recommendation of the Formula Working Group to the Schools Forum to adopt Model C was agreed by the Schools Forum. It was felt that this model achieved an equitable balance in the level of resources allocated as between Primary and Secondary whilst also improving the position of Primary funding relative to the London Average for Primary (see Financial Implications below). The 25% allocation on percentage of roll under Model C for Attainment also provides additional protection for smaller schools with high levels of low attaining pupils. The position of small schools is to be the subject of further review in 2008 as part of a planned review of the Lump Sum factor in the formula.

### Delegation of Threshold and Performance Pay

- 3.58 The Formula Working Group and Schools Forum have considered this issue in some detail at a number of meetings and have agreed that the present basis of allocation is not considered to be sustainable in the long term and is at odds with the principles of delegated school funding. (All other aspects of teachers pay are funded in practice through the AWPU and/or Pupil Places. Each school makes decisions on staffing either opting to have experienced staff at a higher cost or the potential to have more newly qualified or less senior teachers.)

- 3.59 Two options for allocating the threshold funding on the basis of AWPU were considered:
- Total funding allocated pro rata to AWPU across all sectors
  - Existing funding levels for Primary, Secondary and Nursery sectors allocated pro rata to AWPU for each sector.
- 3.60 The latter model using sector control totals was rejected on the basis that it would perpetuate existing funding patterns whereas there was no intrinsic reason why there should be a greater proportion of teachers in receipt of Threshold and Performance pay allowances in one sector relative to another.
- 3.61 Since the greater part of Special school funding is allocated on the basis of planned places and it has been agreed that the Special schools formula will be reviewed in 2008 it was agreed that Special Schools' allocations should be excluded from the analysis.
- 3.62 Both models considered by the Schools Forum involved significant losses for some schools and relatively large windfall gains for other schools. It was therefore agreed to limit gains and losses over a three year transition period.
- 3.63 The spreadsheet at Appendix 3 details the existing allocations for Threshold and Performance Pay based on the number of qualifying staff and the alternative basis of the funding being allocated on the basis of AWPU. The Annex also shows the effects of limiting losses and gains to 33.3% in 2008/09 and 66.6% in 2010/11 with the full effect of the change applying in 2010/11.
- 3.64 It will be seen that there is a movement of resources from secondary to primary of £392k in a full year.

### **Recommendations of the Schools Forum on Delegation of Threshold and Performance Pay**

- 3.65 The Schools Forum agreed to recommend the Executive:
- a) that the Threshold and Performance Pay budget in respect of Primary, Secondary and Nursery schools should be delegated with effect from 2008/09 and allocated through the AWPU factor (with no sector controls);
  - b) to agree that transitional protection should be provided by limiting gains and losses in year 1 to 33.3%, Year 2 to 66.6% with full allocation in year 3;
  - c) to defer the delegation of the Budget share for Special schools to 2009/10 the basis of which is to be determined as part of the planned review of the Special School formula during 2008.

## **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The combined effect of implementing the recommendations of the Schools Forum in respect of the new formula factors for AEN and the delegation of the Threshold and Performance Pay budget by AWPU for each of the three years 2008/09 to 2010/11 for each school is set out in Appendix 4.
- 4.2 Under the recommended Model C Plus Threshold column by 2010/11 Primary sector funding will increase by £6.1m as compared with an increase of £ £2.5m for Secondary. In per pupil terms the primary sector will gain £66 per pupil more than the funding for Secondary 11 to 16 moving the primary sector funding above the Total London average.
- 4.3 Those few schools that have a net loss will be protected by the minimum funding guarantee. The MFG guarantees that each school has a minimum percentage increase in funding one year to another of 2.1% after adjustments for changes in pupil roll and certain excluded items such as changes in funding for statements and changes in non domestic rates.
- 4.4 Since all proposals in this report are in relation to the allocation of the DSG there is no impact on the council tax.

## **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 All proposals in this report have been considered by the School Forum as a statutory consultee and in the case of the AEN formula changes the proposals have also been the subject of wider consultation (not required in law) with all schools.

## **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 The AEN formula changes recommended will target resources to schools on the basis of various measures of deprivation and additional educational need. In particular the creation of a new funding factor for Underachieving Groups identifies Black Caribbean and Somali boys and Children Looked After as priority funding needs. The evidence to support this recommendation was provided by an in depth study of performance and progress of the groups. The children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel and a task group oversaw the study and fully support the proposals.

## **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct staffing implications as a consequence of proposals in this report. Individual schools will of course make staffing decisions based on the resources they will receive. The MFG will ensure that each school receives an increase in its adjusted budget of 2.1% each year compared with the previous year.

## **Background Papers**

- i) DSG Indicative Allocations 2008/09 to 2010/11 – Teachernet website

- ii) DCSF letter 2 August 2007 : Review of Deprivation Funding and accompanying deprivation guidance.

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