

Agenda Schools Forum

**Monday 6 November 2023 at 2.30 pm
in the Council Chamber - Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

1 Election of Chair

To elect the Chair of Schools Forum for a period of two years.

2 To note the new Academy Secondary Representatives

To note Leigh Moore, George Faux, Lisa Mason and Keziah Featherstone as the new Academy Secondary Representatives.

3 Apologies for Absence

11 - 12

To receive any apologies for absence.

4 Declarations of Interest

13 - 14

Members to declare any interests in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

5 Minutes

15 - 26

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2023 as a correct record.



- 6 **2024-25 Schools Funding Consultation** 27 - 92
- To consider the 2023/24 Draft Schools Funding Consultation document.
- 7 **Special School in Financial Difficulty** 93 - 100
- To consider the creation of the Special School in Financial Difficulty Fund to be funded from High Needs Block.
- 8 **Constitution Working Group Appendix** 101 - 104
- To consider the Constitution Working Group Appendix.
- 9 **Future Meeting Dates**
- All meetings are in person at the Sandwell Council House.
- 11 December 2023
 - 15 January 2024
 - 18 March 2024
 - 1 July 2024
- 10 **AOB**

Shokat Lal
Chief Executive
Sandwell Council House
Freeth Street
Oldbury
West Midlands

Distribution

N Toplass (Chair)
J Barry, M Arnull, S Baker, D Barton, E Benbow, L Bray, D Broadbent,
G Faux, K Featherstone, Flowers, C Hadley, C Handy, K Hazlewood, D Irish,
W Lawrence, L Mason, S Mistry, L Moore, D Steen, J Topham and Union

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Schools Forum Distribution to Members:

Body / Number of positions on Forum	Nominated Member	Nominated Substitute
Head Teachers Advisory Forum – Maintained Primary Schools (5)	Sally Baker Jamie Barry Wendy Lawrence Vacancy Seema Mistry	Lynne Paino Alison Connop Sarah Penny Nomination awaited Kelly Duff
School Governors – Maintained Primary Schools (2)	Deborah Steen Elaine Benbow	Nomination awaited Nomination awaited
Head Teachers Advisory Forum – Maintained Secondary Schools (1)	Christina Handy-Rivett	Mike Smith
School Governors – Maintained Secondary Schools (1)	Dawn Broadbent	Nomination awaited
Special School (Maintained) (1)	Oliver Flowers	Nomination awaited
Pupil Referral Unit (Maintained) (1)	Kate Hazelwood	Nomination awaited
Academies Primary (3)	Lucy Bray Vacancy Vacancy	Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited
Academies Secondary (6)	Mark Arnull James Topham Leigh Moore George Faux Lisa Mason Keziah Featherstone	Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited Nomination awaited
Special Academies	Neil Toplass	Nomination awaited
Trade Union (1)	Darren Barton	Phil Jones
Early Years Partnership (1)	Vacancy	Nomination awaited
14-19 Provider (1)	Claire Hadley	Mark Salter

Schools Forum: Voting Blocks (Who can vote and on what?)

Secondary Maintained Block	Voting
Headteachers	Can vote on all business except primary school de-delegation.
J Christina Handy-Rivett	
Governors	
Dawn Broadbent	

Primary Maintained Block	Voting
Headteachers	Can vote on all business except secondary school de-delegation.
Sally Baker	
Jamie Barry	
Vacancy	
Wendy Lawrence	
Seema Mistry	
Governors	
Deborah Steen	
Elaine Benbow	

Special Block	Voting
Oliver Flowers	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and education functions.

Academies Block	Voting
Lucy Bray (Primary)	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and education functions.
Vacancy (Primary)	
Vacancy (Primary)	
James Topham (Secondary)	
Mark Arnull (Secondary)	
Leigh Moore (Secondary)	
George Faux (Secondary)	
Lisa Mason (Secondary)	
Keziah Featherstone (Secondary)	

Schools Forum: Voting Blocks (Who can vote and on what?)

Continued...

Pupil Referral Unit	Voting
Kate Hazelwood	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and education functions.

NON-SCHOOL MEMBERS

Early Years Partnership	Voting
Vacancy	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and education functions.

Trade Union	Voting
Darren Barton NUT	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and school funding formula.

16-19 Provider	Voting
Claire Hadley	Can vote on all business except primary and secondary school de-delegation and school funding formula.

Schools Forum: Quorum

- (a) A meeting will only be quorate if 40% of the total active membership is present (Voting Members Only). Where a nominated substitute member is in attendance on behalf of a duly appointed member, he/she shall be included in the number of persons present for the purposes of determining if a quorum has been achieved.
- (b) If the meeting is inquorate, it will be able to proceed but cannot legally take decisions (E.g. Election of a Chairperson, or a decision relating to funding conferred by the funding regulations). An inquorate meeting can respond to authority consultation and give views to the authority. The authority can take account of such views

Information about meetings in Sandwell



If you are attending the meeting and require assistance to access the venue, please contact Democratic Services (democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk).



If the fire alarm sounds, please follow the instructions of the officers present and leave the building by the nearest exit.



Only people invited to speak at a meeting may do so. Everyone at the meeting is expected to be respectful and listen to the discussion.



Agendas with reports with exempt information should be treated as private and confidential. It is your responsibility to ensure that any such reports are kept secure. After the meeting confidential papers should be disposed of in a secure way.



This meeting may be recorded and broadcast on the Internet. If this is the case, it will be confirmed at the meeting and further information will be provided.



You are allowed to use devices for the purposes of recording or reporting during the public session of the meeting. When using your devices they must not disrupt the meeting – please ensure they are set to silent.



Members who cannot attend the meeting should submit apologies by contacting Democratic Services (democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)



All agenda, reports, minutes for Sandwell Council's meetings, councillor details and more are available from our [website](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

Schools Forum

Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence from the members of Schools Forum.



This page is intentionally left blank

Schools Forum

Declarations of Interest

Schools Forum members to declare any interests in matters to be discussed at the meeting.



This page is intentionally left blank

Minutes of Schools Forum

**Monday 2 October 2023 at 2.30pm
in the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council, Oldbury**

Present: N Toplass (Chair)
J Barry (Vice-Chair), M Arnull, D Barton, E Benbow, L Bray,
D Broadbent, O Flowers, K Hazelwood, D Irish, W Lawrence,
S Mistry, M Smith (substitute), D Steen and J Topham

Officers: Julie Andrews (Assistant Director - Education Services)
Sue Moore (Assistant Director - Education Support Services)
Elaine Taylor (Finance Business Partner)
Sara Baber (Early Years Lead)
Lavena Kuku (Inclusion Advisor)
Connor Robinson (Democratic Services Officer)

In Attendance: Councillor Hackett (Cabinet Member for Children, Young
People and Education)

30/23 **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Nominations had been sought for the position of Chair of Schools Forum for a period of two years. No nominations had been received. Neil Toplass indicated he was willing to Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Nominations had been sought for the position of Vice Chair of Schools Forum for a period of two years. Jamie Barry indicated that he would be happy to undertake the role.



Resolved that:-

(1) Neil Toplass is elected Chair for the duration of the meeting;

(2) Jamie Barry is elected Vice Chair of Schools Forum for the period of two years.

31/23 **Special Academies Representative and Special Schools (Maintained) Representative**

The Forum noted Neil Toplass as the new Special Academies Representative and welcomed Oliver Flowers as the new Special Schools (Maintained) Representative.

32/23 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from S Baker, C Hadley, C Handy-Rivett.

33/23 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

34/23 **Minutes**

Forum members expressed strong disappointment that no High Needs Block Monitoring report had been submitted. The Assistant Director of Education Services explained that due to staff absence it had been difficult to compile the report and work would continue to rectify this.

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2023 be approved as a correct record.



School Funding 2024-25

Forum was advised that it was now the second year of a five-year Government plan to implement a direct National Funding Formula (NFF). The NFF would be allocated directly to schools based on a single national formula with an expectation of full implementation by 2027-28.

To ensure a smooth transition towards the direct NFF Local Authorities were required to bring their own formulae closer to the schools NFF.

The headlines for the 2024-25 period set out that the total core school's budget would total over £59.6 billion in 2024-25 which was the highest ever level per pupil in real terms.

Funding through the mainstream schools NFF was increased by 2.7% per pupil in 2024-25 compared to 2023-24 which meant that funding through the NFF would be 8.5 % higher per pupil in 2024-25 compared to 2022-23.

The government had also announced additional funding for teachers pay. This would be allocated to mainstream schools through Teachers Pay Additional Grant (TPAG). Information and funding related to the TPAG would be allocated outside the NFF for 2024-25.

From 2024-25 Local Authorities would be required to move their local formula factor values a further 10% closer to the NFF. Sandwell had been named as one of only 21 authorities whose formulae are substantially different to the NFF compared with 72 who now mirror the NFF and a further 24 who mirror the NFF in most factors in 2023-24.

Other headlines included:

- the core factors in the schools NFF (such as the basic entitlement, and the lump sum that all schools attract) would increase by 2.4%;



- through the minimum per pupil funding levels, every primary school would receive at least £4,655 per pupil, and every secondary school at least £6,050;
- the funding floor would ensure that every school will attract at least 0.5% more pupil-led.

High Needs funding was increased by a further £440m (4.3%) in 2024-25 following the £970m increase in 2023-24 and £1 billion increase in 2022-23. This was a total increase of over 60% since 2019-20.

The high needs NFF would ensure that every Local Authority received at least 3% increase per head of their ages 2-18 population.

The APT formula model calculated school allocations based on an updated funding formula for 2024 to 2025. The main changes related to:

- the introduction of a national formulaic approach to allocating split sites funding. This ensured that split sites funding would be provided on a consistent basis across the country. This would affect one school in Sandwell;
- a new worksheet had been added to allow Local Authorities to provide details of eligibility criteria for growth and falling rolls funding;
- a validation check had been added to ensure sufficient funding was allocated to notional SEN;
- an adjustment had been added to the MFG baselines to ensure that funding previously allocated through the mainstream school's additional grant was protected.

The 2023-24 Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) was planned to be rolled into the schools NFF from 2024-25 by:

- adding an amount representing what schools receive through the grant into their baselines;
- adding the value of the lump sum, basic per pupil rates and free school meals Ever 6 parts of the grant onto the respective factors in the NFF.



The Minimum Funding Guarantee would continue in 2024-25 between +0.0% and +0.5%.

Growth funding was provided within a Local Authorities schools block DSG allocation but unlike other factors in the NFF a provisional growth allocation was not published.

New for 2024-25 and to support Local Authorities to plan ahead for their growth fund allocation in the DSG settlement, was a forecasting tool which would be supplied to Local Authorities by the Department for Education (DfE). School organisation colleagues would be able to input the October 2023 census data into the tool to give an estimate of the growth fund that could expect to receive in 2024-25.

It would be based on the observed differences between the primary and secondary number on roll between October 2022 and October 2023. The growth allocation for each Local Authority would be £1,550 per new primary pupil and £2,320 per new secondary pupil plus a lump sum of £76,195 for each brand-new school.

Falling Rolls fund was also provided within the NFF Schools block and the new forecasting tool could also be used to calculate an estimate of the funding.

Forum was being asked to consider the three proposed modelling options that would be put out for wider consultation. The three models were:

- Minimum Transition (using the maximum transition period)
- Accelerated Transition (using a 2-year transition period)
- National Funding Formula

The Finance Business Partner addressed the concerns expressed around timescales in relation to the implementation of Teachers Pay Additional Grants. It was anticipated that the implementation would be around December time however, no date was currently known.



Forum members questioned the slow process of implementing the NFF and if greater funding was available why it was not being implemented sooner. The Finance Business Partner suggested that the question was one for the consultation.

Forum was reassured that the issues experienced the previous year would not be repeated and lessons had been learned.

Resolved that:-

- (1) Forum note the changes to the National Funding Formula;
- (2) Forum approve the consultation approach and modelling options to the 2024-25 Local Formula as laid out:
 - a. Minimum Transition (using the maximum transition period)
 - b. Accelerated Transition (using a 2-year transition period)
 - c. National Funding Formula

36/23

De-Delegated, Education Functions & Central Schools Services Block - Impact 2022-23 and Funding 2024-25

Forum considered the impact reports on the 2022-23 spending on the De-Delegated and Education Functions.

Summary of the De-Delegated and Education Functions was presented to Forum as follows:

REF	Full Title of Proposal	Lead Officer	Budget 23-24	Request 24-25
De-delegated - Maintained Schools only				
DD1	Health and Safety Licences and Subscriptions	Julie Andrews	£5,990	£5,800
DD2	EVOLVE Annual Licence Fee	Chris Davies	£6,300	£7,300
DD3	Union Facilities Time	Julie Andrews	£159,000	£159,000
DD4	School Improvement Services	Julie Andrews	£150,000	£150,000
DD5	Schools in financial difficulty	Julie Andrews	£100,000	£100,000
	TOTAL DD		£421,290	£422,100
Education Functions - Maintained Schools only				
EF1	Education Benefits Team	Sue Moore	£134,000	£134,000
EF2	Children's Clothing Support Allowance	Sue Moore	£33,000	£33,000
EF3	Safeguarding & Attendance	Sue Moore	moved to CSSB5	moved to CSSB5
	TOTAL EF		£167,000	£167,000



A Summary of the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) was presented as follows:

REF	Title	Budget 23-24	Provisional Budget 24-25
CSSB - As per ESFA			
CSSB1	Statutory/Regulatory/ Education Welfare/Asset Management	£1,724,680	£1,801,593
CSSB2	Schools Forum	£3,000	£3,000
CSSB3	Admissions Services	£452,600	£452,600
CSSB4	Historical Commitment - Pensions Administration	£116,720	£93,376
	TOTAL CSSB (Provisional - Updated December 2023)	£2,297,000	£2,350,569
CSSB5	Safeguarding & Attendance (ALL Schools)	£455,000	£512,000

The 2023-24 CSSB Budget was spent with no variances.

The only known 2024-25 figure was the 20% reduction in the historic commitment – Pensions Administration. The Council had retained the proposed allocation of the same as 2023-24 levels and any additional allocation had been earmarked against Statutory responsibilities.

Forum expressed some concern around the cost of the union facilities time and how resources were used. The Assistant Director for Education Services advised that a union representative would be invited to the next meeting to address concerns.

Forum members questioned if the resources allocated to the Schools Admissions Services was adequate. The Assistant Director for Education Support Services advised that school holidays increased the difficulty of processing admissions, a process of working with schools before the start of the new academic year may help improve service outcomes.

The move to the Oracle Fusion system had raised some concerns and Forum wished to receive more information on how the move would impact administrative changes in the future.



Resolved that:-

- (1) the Impact Reports on the 2022-23 spending on De-Delegation and Education Functions be received and noted;
- (2) the consultation on requests for funding on De-Delegation and Education Functions for 2024-25 be approved for the following:
 - a. Health and Safety Licenses and Subscriptions
 - b. EVOLVE Annual Licence Fee
 - c. Union Facilities Time
 - d. School Improvement Services
 - e. Schools in financial difficulty
 - f. Education Benefits Team
 - g. Children's Clothing Support Allowance
 - h. Safeguarding and Attendance
- (3) the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) 2024-25 Budget is approved;
- (4) the funding from the Schools Block for Safeguarding and Attendance is moved to the to the Central Schools Services Block.

37/23

Falling Rolls Fund 2024-25

Following the establishment of the Falling Rolls Fund Working Group at the 12 December meeting (Minute No. 63/22), the Working Group met in July 2023 to discuss the criteria to be used for eligibility for schools accessing a falling roll fund. Five options had been identified and were considered and it was acknowledged that there were two viable options that could potentially work for Sandwell.

In August 2023 the Department of Education had updated the Growth and Falling rolls funding guidance. The new guidance included only two eligibility options.



It was noted that previously only schools rated good or outstanding could qualify for falling rolls funding and this criterion had now been removed.

It was also noted that where Local Authorities operated a falling roll fund they would only be able to provide funding where school capacity data (SCAP)¹ shows that school places would be required in the subsequent three to five years.

Where the places were not expected to be required the expectation was that the PAN2 would be reduced.

Until October census figures had been released and finalised, it was difficult to estimate how much funding would be needed for the 2024-25 falling roll fund.

Two [options](#) had been circulated detailing the impact across schools and were considered by Forum.

Resolved that:-

- (1) approval is given for the introduction of a Falling Rolls Fund for all Sandwell schools experiencing falling rolls from 2024-25.
- (2) approval is given for option 2 as detailed in the [appendix](#).

38/23 Early Years 2023-24 Funding

Forum considered the 2023-24 funding rates and budgets available to the Local Authority which had been introduced by the Education and Skills Funding agency.

The main changes from the requirements for the 2022/23 financial year were noted as:

- clarification of local authorities' responsibilities in notifying providers of changes to local funding formulae;



- additional information on the allocation of supplementary funding to maintained nursery schools;
- in paying EYPP to early years providers, additional clarification on the payment of EYPP to childminders and further clarification on the payment of EYPP to providers for children in local authority care;
- increased value of the EYPP and DAF.

The DfE funds local authorities on the same basis for both the universal 15 hours entitlement and the additional 15 hours entitlement for working parents. This was because the statutory framework and the quality requirements for the 2 entitlements were the same.

Local authorities were to fund their providers in the same way for both sets of hours and not to distinguish between the two. This meant using the same hourly base rate and same supplements for both entitlements.

Local authorities were required to plan to pass-through 95% of their 3- and-4-year-old funding from the government to early years providers.

The breakdown of the funding for the early years block as per the July 2023 allocation was presented as follows:

Description	Funding (£m)
Universal entitlement – 3 & 4 Year olds	16.051
Additional 15 hours entitlement	4.788
2-year old entitlement	4.166
Early Years Pupil Premium	0.350
Disability Access Funds	0.135
Total Funding	25.490

At the Spring Budget, the Chancellor had announced an investment of additional funding for the existing early years entitlements worth £204m in 2023-24 (from September 2023) and £288m in 2024-25.



This was for local authorities to increase hourly rates paid to childcare providers for the government’s existing entitlement offers.

The grant provided supplementary funding for all existing early years funding streams: 3-4YOs; 2YOs; Disability Access Fund (DAF); Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP).

It covered the funding period September 2023 to March 2024

The funding rate was as follows:

	2023-24 EY DSG (Apr-Mar)	2023-24 EYSG (Sept-Mar)	2023-24 Effective rate (Sept-Mar)
2-Year-Olds (per hour)	£5.81	£1.90	£7.71
3-4-Year-olds (per hour) Flexibility & Deprivation is unchanged	£4.44	£0.35	£4.79
EYPP (per hour)	£0.62	£0.04	£0.66
DAF (per year)	£828	£30.00	£858

Forum noted the report.

39/23 **Future Meeting Dates**

The Forum noted the future meeting dates:-

- 6 November 2023
- 11 December 2023
- 15 January 2024
- 18 March 2024
- 1 July 2024



Forum was reminded of the review and change in the Forum membership that had been agreed at the previous meeting. There existed a number of vacancies across the represented groups which needed to be filled. Forum members and officers agreed to work together to get these positions filled.

Forum members raised the possibility of re-establishing the SEND Working Group that had been paused owing to the ongoing Workstreams across the service. The Assistant Director for Education Services advised that a meeting was scheduled to be held the following week which would be considering the streamlining of ongoing Workstreams and that concerns expressed by Forum would be communicated.

A number of Forum members raised concerns relating to Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and Private Finance Initiatives (PFI). Forum requested support from the Local Authority in relation to the BSF/PFI costs in relation to their premises costs which had been increasing dramatically. Costs had been spiralling out of control and this had been impacted due to the inflationary pressure within the wider economy. Where there would be other fiscal mechanisms to implement for non-BSF estates this was not the case for the BSF schools. The Assistant Director for Education Services advised that the Director of Children and Education was in conversation with the DfE and had met with headteachers to address concerns.

Dave Irish informed Forum that he had taken a new position and would therefore be resigning from the Forum. Forum wished Dave all the best for the future.

Meeting ended at 4.06pm

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk



Schools Forum

6 November 2023

2024-25 Schools Funding Consultation

This report is for decision (ALL)

1. Recommendations:

That school forum members approve:

- 1.1 The 2023/24 Draft Schools Funding Consultation document

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To present and get approval of the 2024/25 Draft Schools Funding Consultation document to be issued to schools and academies.
- 2.2 Schools Forum should note that Sandwell's basic entitlement factors for primary schools and KS3 are significantly higher than the equivalent National Funding Formula factors. This will have impact on setting the level minimum funding guarantee (MFG) and may lead to capping and scaling to make the funding fit within the available overall Schools Block budget.

3. Report Details

- 3.1 The Consultation Document for schools for 2024/25 includes the following 7 questions.

QUESTION 1 (ALL SCHOOLS)

- 3.2 THREE options have been modelled at the request of Schools Forum at the last meeting.

Question 1 - Please indicate the option you prefer to use for calculating school funding for 2024/25:

- OPTION 1 – Minimum Transition
- OPTION 2 – Accelerated Transition
- OPTION 3 – National Funding Formula Factor Values

- 3.4 There is an assumption at this stage that we will allocate £1.60m for Growth Fund and that Schools Forum and all schools will support the top-slice of the Schools Block to fund the Attendance service to £0.512m.
- 3.5 There is also an assumption that the De-delegated and Education Functions options proposed by Officers will also be accepted.

QUESTION 2 (ALL SCHOOLS)

- 3.6 At the end of the 2022/23 financial year there was a Pupil Number Growth (PNG) Funding carry forward of £0.282m. The PNG required for 2024/25 is estimated to be £1.90m and so it is proposed that the growth funding be set at £1.6m (rounded) within this consultation.

Question 2 - Do you agree to the use of the Brought Forward of a £0.282m to set the Pupil Number Growth Fund at £1.60m?

YES

NO

QUESTION 3 (ALL SCHOOLS)

- 3.7 Two Falling Rolls Fund modelling options were presented to the schools forum at their meeting of 2nd October 2023. The criteria for allocating this fund was approved (Option 2). It should be noted that the modelling was based on the comparison census data for 2021 and 2022 and very few schools attracted this funding for the modelling purposes. This will be repeated again for census data 2022 and 2023 and the results presented in December.

Question 3 - Do you agree to the introduction of a Falling Rolls Fund?

YES

NO

QUESTION 4 (ALL Schools)

3.8 The Attendance Service is a legitimate function that can be funded from the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) and is a statutory service from the LA for ALL schools.

Question 4 - Do you agree to the top slice of £512,000 from the Schools Block to the Central Schools Services Block (see Q5 re CSSB5) to fund the Attendance Team?

YES

NO

QUESTION 5 (ALL Schools)

3.9 The provisional 2024/25 funding allocation for the CSSB was announced in July 2023 by the DfE and is £2.350m. This is made up of £2.257m of on-going responsibilities and £0.093m of historic commitment

CSSB1	Statutory/Regulatory/ Education Welfare/Asset M	£1,801,593
CSSB2	Schools Forum	£3,000
CSSB3	Admissions Services	£452,600
CSSB4	Historical Commitment - Pensions Administration	£93,376
	TOTAL CSSB (Provisional - Updated Decemb	£2,350,569
CSSB5	Safeguarding & Attendance (ALL Schools)	£512,000

Question 5 - Do you agree with the indicative allocation of the Central Schools Services Block funding proposals? (For each proposal)

YES

NO

QUESTION 6 (MAINTAINED ONLY SCHOOLS)

3.10 There are 5 de-delegated proposals to be considered by maintained schools:

DD1	Health and Safety Licenses and Subscriptions	£5,800
DD2	EVOLVE Annual Licence Fee	£7,300
DD3	Union Facilities Time	£159,000
DD4	School Improvement Services	£150,000
DD5	Schools in financial difficulty	£100,000
	TOTAL DD	£422,100

Question 6 - Please indicate YES / NO if you agree with the de-delegated proposals

QUESTION 7 (MAINTAINED ONLY SCHOOLS)

3.11 There are 2 Education function proposals to be considered by maintained schools.

EF1	Education Benefits Team	£134,000
EF2	Children's Clothing Support Allowance	£33,000
EF3	Safeguarding & Attendance	moved to CSSB5
	TOTAL EF	£167,000

Question 7 - Please indicate YES / NO if you agree with the de-delegated proposals

Responses

3.12 The Draft Schools Funding 2023/24 Consultation document is attached.

3.13 The Modelling Options are attached in their entirety and will be available for individuals to access in due course.

3.14 The deadline for stakeholders to respond is **noon on Monday 27th November 2023 (subject to change).**

4. Recommendations

4.1 That school forum members approve the Schools Funding 2024/25 Consultation document so that it can be issued to schools and academies and other interested stakeholders.

Elaine Taylor
Finance Business Partner - Children's Services
Date: 30/10/2023

This page is intentionally left blank

2024/25

DRAFT

**SCHOOLS FUNDING
CONSULTATION
DOCUMENT**



Children's Services

Email: schools_financialservices@sandwell.gov.uk

Electronic Document & Response Form

CONTENTS

1. Introduction, Context, Summary & Timetable
2. Funding Formula Options
3. Growth Fund
4. Schools/CSSB Block Movement & Attendance
5. CSSB - Proposals
6. Schools Block - De Delegation Proposals
(Maintained Only)
7. Schools Block - Education Functions Proposals
(Maintained Only)

Appendices

- A1: Schools Block - De-delegation Proposals
- A2: Schools Block - Education Functions Proposals
- A3: Statutory and Regulatory Responsibilities

1. INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT, SUMMARY & TIMETABLE

1. INTRODUCTION

There have been some slight changes to the National Funding Formula (NFF) for 2024/25 announced by DfE/ESFA in the Summer and these are summarised as follows:

- 1.1 From 2024/25 local authorities must once again move their local formula factor values at least 10% closer to the NFF, except where local formulae are already mirroring the NFF. This is called “**tightening**” and is the minimum requirement. The expectation is that the full move to the NFF will be completed by 2027/28.
- 1.2 When considering the modelling options in this consultation document there are a few changes from 2023/24 and a number of assumptions set out below which will mean that the funding indicated in each option is a guide only and does not represent the actual amount each school will get. It is important that schools therefore provide their views on how quickly to move towards the National Funding Formula.
- 1.3 For the purpose of the tightening criteria, local factor values within 2.5% of the respective NFF values are deemed to be mirroring the NFF. This means that local authorities which had factor values within +/- 2.5% of the NFF values in 20203/24 will be allowed to set their 2024/25 factor values anywhere within +/- 2.5% of the 2023-24 NFF values. At the end of the transition period (i.e. in 2027/28), no Local Authority will be required to move their factor values away by more than +/- 2.5% of the NFF.
- 1.4 The 10% movement is calculated such that local authorities are required to bring their local formula factor values 10% closer to the NFF, compared to the difference between the local factor value and the NFF value in 2023/24.
- 1.5 The data in this modelling is as at the 2022 Census date and will be updated for 2023 data in the Final Funding calculations in December.
- 1.6 It should be noted that the Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) is being rolled into the schools NFF from 2024/25. To ensure schools do not lose funding as a result of this change, additional funding has been added

to each school's MFG baseline. The amount added reflects the number of pupils included in the school's MFG baseline.

- 1.7 Split sites funding is now mandatory and is calculated using the DFE formula.
- 1.8 The Minimum Funding Guarantee will continue in 2024/25 to be between +0.0% and +0.5% without the need for a disapplication request to the DFE.
- 1.9 The basic structure of the high needs NFF for 2024/25 is not changing.
- 1.10 Local authorities will continue to be able to transfer up to 0.5% of their schools block to other blocks of the DSG, with Schools Forum approval. A disapplication request is required for transfers above 0.5%, or for any amount without Schools Forum approval.
- 1.11 The authority will once again be requesting a movement of funding from the Schools Block to the Central Schools Services Block.

SANDWELL CONTEXT

- 1.12 Sandwell has an ambition to ensure that all schools and academies in the borough are rated as Good or Better by Ofsted. To achieve this during times of austerity will require astute and prudent usage of finite, and reducing, resources.
- 1.13 There remains significant financial challenges in the education sector at present. It is clear that proposed schools funding arrangements will not fully offset for some the recent challenges of rising inflation, the national pay wards, recent cost of living pressures and increasing fuel prices. Equally, schools continue to have to source many services once provided free by the council.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1.14 The Consultation has 7 key questions (5 questions for all schools and additional 2 for maintain schools only).

1.15 The form should take no more than 20 minutes to complete.

NOTE:

1.16 This consultation is applicable for one year only (2024/25).

1.17 *The Schools Forum at its meeting on 6th November 2023 approved the options for wider consultation with schools. *assumed

- Officers will seek to provide answers to stakeholders who require clarification on any of the issues raised during the consultation period. Please send all queries to schools_financialservices@sandwell.gov.uk and we will endeavour to respond within 3 working days.

The deadline for schools to respond to the consultation is 12 noon on Thursday *27th November 2023. Consultation responses should be completed electronically using the link below. *assumed

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/consultation>

TIMETABLE

MEETING	DATE
Schools Forum	6 th November 2023
Electronic Consultation Document	8 th November 2023
ASGB	8 th November 2023
All Head Teachers Consultation Meetings	JEG – TBC Secondary Partnership meeting – TBC Primary meeting – TBC
Joint Union Panel	TBC
Deadline for Schools response	27th November 2023
Cabinet Member briefing (Initial Briefing report)	TBC
Schools Forum (Consideration of Outcome and recommendation to Cabinet Member)	11 th December 2023
School Forum (Draft Funding model)	16 th January 2023
School Funding Report 2024/25 to Cabinet	17 th January 2023

2. FUNDING FORMULA OPTIONS

2. FUNDING FORMULA OPTIONS

- 2.1 These modelling options should be used only to assist you with deciding how quickly you would like Sandwell schools to move to the National Funding Formula (NFF). It is indicative and is not the actual amount your school will get in 2024/25 under any of the options.
- 2.2 Bearing in mind the information in the Background and Context above, the authority has modelled 3 options for calculating the schools block budget as follows:
- OPTION 1 - Minimum Transition (close the gap by 10%)
 - OPTION 2 - Accelerated Transition (close the gap by 20%)
 - OPTION 3 - National Funding Formula Factor Values
- 2.3 Below is a table setting out the values per pupil used for each factor under the 3 options.

2.4 There are a number of assumptions in the 3 modelling options that you will need to be aware of. This does not intend to anticipate the outcome of the consultation but has been done purely to make all 3 options comparable to aid with your decision:

- There is an assumption at this stage that Growth Fund will be set at **£1.600m**.
- There is an assumption at this stage that £0.512m will be transferred from the Schools Block to Central Schools Services Block (see below)

2.5 In order to assist you make an informed decision, we have prepared a modelling microsite where you can view indicative allocations under each of the modelling options.

Consultation Question 1 (ALL SCHOOLS)

Please indicate the option you prefer to use for calculating school funding for 2024/25:

OPTION 1 - Minimum Transition

OPTION 2 - Accelerated Transition

OPTION 3 - National Funding Formula factor values

3. PUPIL NUMBER GROWTH FUNDING & FALLING ROLLS FUND

3. Pupil Number Growth Funding

- 3.1 At the end of the 2022/23 financial year there was a Pupil Number Growth (PNG) Funding carry forward of £0.282m. The PNG required for 2024/25 is estimated to be £1.90m and so it is proposed that the growth funding be set at £1.6m (rounded) within this consultation.

Falling Rolls Funding

- 3.2 Two modelling options were presented to the Schools Forum at their meeting of 2nd October 2023. The criteria for allocating this fund was approved (Option 2). It should be noted that the modelling was based on the comparison census data for 2021 and 2022 and very few schools attracted this funding for the modelling purposes. This will be repeated again for census data 2022 and 2023 and the results presented in December.

The introduction to including a Falling Rolls Fund within the consultation document was approved by Schools Forum and is as per Question 3.

Consultation Question 2 (ALL SCHOOLS)

Do you agree to the use of the Brought Forward of a £0.282m to set the Pupil Number Growth Fund at £1.60m?

YES

NO

Consultation Question 3 (ALL SCHOOLS)

Do you agree to the introduction of a Falling Rolls Fund?

YES

NO

4. TRANSFER OF FUNDING FROM SCHOOLS BLOCK TO CSSB

4. Transfer of funding from Schools Block to CSSB

- 4.1 The Central Schools Service block (CSSB) was introduced, to fund local authorities for the statutory duties they hold for both maintained schools, and academies.
- 4.2 These are outlined, in Appendix A3, at the end of this document.
- 4.3 The Attendance Service is a legitimate function that can be funded from CSSB and is a statutory service from the LA for ALL schools.
- 4.4 Over the years, the maintained schools have largely paid for this service by de-delegating part of their budget share. This is against the operational guidelines and once again it is now being proposed to rectify this.
- 4.5 Schools are asked to consider the transfer of £0.512m from the Schools Block to the CSSB.

Consultation Question 4 (ALL SCHOOLS)

Do you agree to the top slice of £512,000 from the Schools Block to the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) to fund the Attendance Team?

YES

NO

5. Central Schools Services (CSSB) BLOCK - PROPOSALS

5. CSSB Proposals 2024/25 (ALL Schools)

- 5.1 The CSSB is used to fund two distinct elements:
- ongoing responsibilities, which funds the local authorities (LA) for central functions they have to deliver for all pupils in maintained schools and academies;
 - historic commitments, which funds some LAs for commitments they made prior to 2013-14 that are unwinding.
- 5.2 The provisional 2024/25 funding allocation was announced in July 2023 by the DfE and is £2.350m. This is made up of £2.257m of on-going responsibilities and £0.093m of historic commitment.
- 5.3 The only known figure is the 20% reduction in historic commitment. Where possible, we have retained the proposed allocation at the same as 2023/24 levels and any additional allocation has been earmarked against Statutory responsibilities:

Service Area	2024/25 CSSB Budget (£'000)
School Forum	3
Pension Administration Historic Commitment	93
Stat/Regulatory/Education/Welfare/Asset Mgt	1,478
Admissions & Appeals	453
Copyright Licenses*	323
Total	2,350

- 5.4 Copyright licenses will change to actual sum and will be advised by the DfE sometime early in 2024. In addition, the October 2023 census will inform the overall CSSB. Once known, the School's Forum will be updated.

Consultation Question 5 (ALL SCHOOLS)

Do you agree with the indicative allocation of the Central Schools Services Block funding proposals?

YES

NO

6. SCHOOLS BLOCK - DE- DELEGATION PROPOSALS

6. Schools Block - De-Delegation Proposals 2024/25 (Maintained Schools Only)

- 6.1 Schools forum received a report on Maintained Schools De-delegation proposals at its meeting of 2nd October 2023¹ and 6th November 2023.
- 6.2 This report contained impact assessments of 2022/23 funding as well as justification for funding in 2024/25. Proformas explaining each proposal are included in this document as Appendix A1 below.
- 6.3 The table below summarises the de-delegated budget proposals that are being consulted on for 2024/25.

De-delegated - Maintained Schools only		
DD1	Health and Safety Licenses and Subscriptions	£5,800
DD2	EVOLVE Annual Licence Fee	£7,300
DD3	Union Facilities Time	£159,000
DD4	School Improvement Services	£150,000
DD5	Schools in financial difficulty	£100,000
TOTAL DD		£422,100

Consultation Question 6 (MAINTAINED ONLY SCHOOLS)

Please indicate YES / NO if you agree with the de-delegated proposals below:

DD1 - Health & Safety Licences

DD2 – EVOLVE

DD3 - Union Facilities Time

DD4 - School Improvement

DD5 - Schools in financial difficulties

¹<https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=443&Year=0>

7. SCHOOLS BLOCK - EDUCATION FUNCTIONS PROPOSALS

7. Schools Block - Education Functions (Maintained schools only)

- 7.1 Schools forum received a report on Maintained Schools Education function proposals at its meeting of 2nd October 2023².
- 7.2 The report contained impact assessments of 2022/23 funding as well as justification for funding in 2024/25. The table below summarises the de-delegated budget proposals that are being consulted on for 2024/25.

EF1	Education Benefits Team	£134,000
EF2	Children's Clothing Support Allowance	£33,000
EF3	Safeguarding & Attendance	moved to CSSB5
	TOTAL EF	£167,000

- 7.3 Proformas explaining each proposal are included later as Appendix A2 in this document.

Consultation Question 7

Please indicate YES / NO if you agree with the Education Functions funding proposals below:

EF1 - Education Benefits Team

EF2 - Children's Clothing Support Allowance

²<https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=443&Year=0>

A1

**SCHOOLS BLOCK – DE-DELEGATION
PROPOSALS**



DSG CENTRALLY RETAINED PROPOSAL 2024-25		
Full Title of Proposal	Health & Safety Licences & Subscriptions - CLEAPSS	
Lead Officer	Julie Andrews	
Reference Number	DD1	
Annual Funding Proposal (£)	£5,800.00	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)	Primary	Secondary
	✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear? Please state as an amount per pupil.	Primary	Secondary
	Service to be apportioned on an amount per pupil, subject to confirmation of 2024-25 subscription formula from CLEAPSS.	
Is the service provided a statutory function	Yes	
If Yes please provide detail		
As detailed in the 'benefits to schools' forum' section below		
How has this proposal been calculated?		
<p>This proposal has been calculated based on the subscription and licence cost for the service outlined below, with a support element (salary costs) to administer the associated functions. Please note that costs included in this proposal have been estimated, based on 2023 - 2024 subscription rates from CLEAPSS as costs for 2024-25 have not yet been confirmed and so may be subject to change. However, based on the current subscription rate the cost is likely to be around 16.5 pence per pupil. An individual charge of £65 per school is included for the radiation protection advisor subscription (RPA) for the 3 Sandwell MBC secondary schools, pending confirmation of the actual cost from CLEAPSS (£195 in total). The salary costs for administering the subscription and conducting the monitoring visits for 24/25 will be £1260</p> <p>CLEAPSS: subscription to the national school science and design and technology advisory body.</p>		
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)		
<p>CLEAPSS membership allows access to termly newsletters, a wide range of free safety publications, model risk assessments, and a telephone helpline. An additional element of the subscription for Secondary schools meets the statutory duties as required by the Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999, of having an appointed suitable Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA) and ensuring the safe management of radioactive substances.</p>		
What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only? (Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)		
All elements of the subscription proposal relate to statutory requirements		
What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?		

Employers have specific responsibilities to ensure the safety of their employees who work with ionising radiations (and others affected by their work). Schools are not exempt and if the practical work comes within the scope of the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017, schools must comply with the regulations. Failure to comply with their statutory duty could result in action being taken by the Enforcing Authorities (Health and Safety Executive), Head Teacher and Governing Body.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)	£1,300	
Services (£)	£4,300 + £200	(subscription rates tbc)
Schools (£)		

How will expenditure be monitored?

Expenditure will be monitored by the Assistant Director for Education Services, on behalf of the schools.

How will impact be evaluated?

The proposal facilitates specialist advice and support for safe Design & Technology and Science curricular activities across both primary and secondary phases.

Please detail any income generated by the service?

N/A

DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2022-23**Impact report**

Title of the Budget	DD1 Health and Safety Licences and Subscriptions
Lead Officer:	Julie Andrews
2022-23 Funding:	£5,990

A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)

CLEAPSS: subscription to the national school science and design and technology advisory body.

CLEAPSS advice and guidance documents cover many aspects of practical science and technology, including:

- Guidance and training on how to carry out effective experiments and demonstrations - safely.
- Guidance on all aspects of health and safety in school science, D&T and art
- How to use particular pieces of apparatus
- How to look after various species of animals or plants.

A helpline run by qualified staff in a variety of disciplines provides additional support to schools as required throughout the school year

For those schools that store and use radioactive materials, CLEAPSS provides comprehensive guidance on managing, storing, and handling the materials and the equipment that is used for teaching about radioactivity.

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2024-25		
Full Title of Proposal	Renewal of EVOLVE Licence – educational visits.	
Lead Officer	Christopher Davies	
Reference Number	DD2	
Annual Funding Proposal	£7,300	
Date of Funding Proposal	19/9/2023	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)	Primary	Secondary
	✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear Please state as an amount per pupil.	Primary	Secondary
	16 pence (£5,4k)	16 pence (£1,9k)
Is the service provided a statutory function	Yes	
The software being licensed is not a statutory requirement, but it is an essential tool used to ensure the Council fulfils its H&S duty in respect of its employees, and those in their care.		
How has this proposal been calculated?		
This is the license fee for the EVOLVE software provided by eduFOCUS.		
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)		
Schools and LA use this software to ensure the safe and robust management of off-site educational visits.		
What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only? (Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)		
N/A		
What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?		
Schools will lose access to a key mechanism used to safely plan and deliver learning outside of the classroom.		
How will the amount be deployed?		
Salaries	£	
Services	£	7,300

Other costs	£	
How will expenditure be monitored?		
This is an annual license.		
How will impact be evaluated?		
By the number of schools and children attending off-site visits.		
Please detail any income generated by the service?		
Income is not generated solely through the license. Income is generated by Service Level Agreements – of which access to the software is an element – and also training delivered by the LA Educational Visits Advisers to teachers and visit leaders. The SLA revenue equates to approximately £50kp/a		

DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2022-23			
Impact report September 2022			
Title of the Budget	EVOLVE Annual License Fee		
Lead Officer:	Christopher Davies	Reference no:	DD2
2022-23 Funding:	£6,300		
A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)			
To renew the licence for the LA and all schools to access the computerised EVOLVE system supporting the safe and effective management of Educational Visits; and fulfilling the Council's H&S duty in respect of its employees, and those in their care.			

DSG CENTRALLY RETAINED PROPOSAL 2024-25			
Title of Proposal	DD3 Union Facilities Time	Date	September 2023
Lead Officer	Julie Andrews	Contact Tel.	07919 291012
Annual Funding Proposal (£)			
	£135,028		£23,972
	Primary		Secondary
Which phase of school does this support (✓)?	✓		✓
What proportion will each phase bear? Please state as an amount per pupil.	Primary		Secondary
(Please note that this year some Academy MATs have made contributions to the Facilities Fund enabling the per pupil cost to be reduced for maintained schools. Discussions for further contributions are taking place and should further contributions be received, this will enable further reductions for the maintained sector in the future.	£5.58		£5.58
Is the service provided a statutory function? (Please provide detail below if yes)	Yes		Yes
<p>Facilities time is for ‘trade union representatives’ i.e. “employees who have been elected or appointed in accordance with the rules of [their] union to be a representative of all or some of the union’s members in the particular company or workplace, or agreed group of workplaces where the union is recognised for collective bargaining purposes.” (ACAS)</p> <p><u>The legal position:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Union representatives have a statutory right to reasonable paid time off from employment to carry out trade union duties and to undertake trade union training.” (ACAS) • “You must give appointed [by a trade union] safety representatives the paid time necessary to carry out their functions [and to] undergo training in these functions, as is reasonable under the circumstances.” (Health & Safety Executive) <p>There is no definition of “reasonable” other than that it should be enough time for representatives to “perform effectively”, taking into account factors such as the size of the organisation and its workforce and the need for workers to be able to access their union representatives.</p> <p>Withdrawal from a pooled arrangement does not remove legal obligations under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 to provide paid time off for trade union duties Although there is no specific budget heading, all schools receive funding for facility time through the core grant, and therefore this should be spent on facility time release as intended</p>			
How has this proposal been calculated?			
In 2016, The JUP agreed a re-distribution of funding within the unions. This takes account of union membership numbers and a commensurate allocation of facilities time for representatives that reflects those numbers.			

The spend in 2012-13 was £350k. For 2013-14 and 2014-15, Schools' Forum decided that it would de-delegate £238k (Primary phase only) and £0k (Secondary phase). This meant a one-third reduction in the overall funding available to fund facilities time (since 2012-13) and also meant 100% of the central arrangement was funded by the Primary phase. In 2015-16 & 2016-17 & 2017-18, this was reduced to £199k with a slight increase to £202k in the subsequent three years. The total amount increased slightly to £207k in 2022-23 to take into consideration increases in staffing costs. The request for funding was reduced in 2023-24 to £136k for the Primary phase, plus £23,000 for the Secondary phase should they decide to continue their UFT funding. In total, funding allocated was £159,000. As stated above, in light of MAT contributions, the per pupil cost is reduced for maintained schools

The proposal is to request funding for 2024-25 of £159,000 to include both the Primary and Secondary phases as detailed above based on current pupil numbers in each one. This would remain consistent with the level of funding requested in 2023-24.

**What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal?
(Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)**

- The benefit to Primary and Secondary schools of agreeing to de-delegate funding is that it will enable a single central arrangement to be administered by the LA on behalf of all contributing, maintained schools in Sandwell. Otherwise individual schools will have to arrange and fund their own negotiations, whilst staff will not have recourse to local officials.
- Local officials have local knowledge and are available quickly. The current 'local officials and a central arrangement' provides a mechanism for resolving issues at a local level that could otherwise escalate.
- Local Union Officials play a key role in updating key policies and guidance documentation through Joint Union Panel meetings (JUP), Central Health and Safety Committee meetings and side panel meetings
- Facilities funding also ensures local casework can involve a local rep, who, unlike regional reps, will usually be available at short notice and have good local knowledge. This frequently enables issues to be resolved more quickly and effectively.
- Trade union duties that might be undertaken on behalf of members include:
 - Disciplinary/grievance hearings
 - Formal capability meetings
 - Sickness absence meetings
 - Terms and conditions of employment
 - Investigations
 - Termination of employment
 - Suspension of employment
 - Consultation relating to TUPE
 - Section 188 redundancy notices
 - Investigating members' complaints regarding health, safety or welfare at work
 - Making representations to the employer on the above
 - Representing members in workplace consultations on Health & Safety
 - Attending safety committee meetings
 - Facilitating settlement agreements

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

- The statutory aspect of this policy relates to the facilities time that union representatives are entitled to. Please see below for impact if forum do not agree to the proposal.

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

- Facilities funding enables the local authority to negotiate directly with trades unions on behalf of all maintained schools. This means individual schools do not have to spend time being involved in a similar process on their own. As a result, this saves both, significant time and money, allowing more to be achieved in the long run.
- The impact would be that LA maintained schools where the governing body is the employer – Trust and Voluntary Aided schools - have sole responsibility for providing “reasonable” union facilities time but may choose to exercise this through participation in a centrally-run system.
- For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, funding and employer powers rest with governing bodies whilst the LA remains ‘employer of last resort’ – therefore there is a joint responsibility to ensure “reasonable” facilities time.
- If Schools Forum do not agree to fund a central arrangement, each school would become individually responsible for meeting the legal requirement to give union officials representing their staff reasonable paid time off for their union duties.
- School-level union representatives are not necessarily accredited by their unions to carry out the full range of union duties. If school reps without appropriate accreditation are used to represent members during a dispute this can adversely affect both the member and the school. The union has the responsibility to ensure that the rep is correctly accredited or they leave themselves vulnerable to being sued by their members for incorrect support and advice.
- The loss of area reps, who have local knowledge of and relationship with both members and school leaders, would push the work onto the regional reps who do not have those relationships or time to provide the service that the current system allows for.
- The LA would still need to maintain a much smaller ‘residual function’ covering Community and VC schools, i.e. a central forum for borough-wide policies so funding for this would have to come from reducing funding for other services, as there is no other alternative funding source.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)	100% on salaries	The LA would allocate this funding amongst the unions in accordance with the agreed funding formula
Services (£)		
Schools (£)		

How will expenditure be monitored?

- The salaries and on-costs are maintained in a single cost centre and subject to regular monitoring.

How will impact be evaluated?

- The proposed central arrangement enables employers and those with delegated employer responsibilities to fulfil their legal responsibilities in a simple and cost-effective way.
- The arrangement also enables union officials to perform their essential duties as defined by ACAS.
- An outline of the strategic work undertaken by unions over the past year.

Please detail any income generated by the service?

- None. However, income has been received from a number of Academy MATs and this has been re-invested in the Union Facilities funding allowing for a per pupil reduction in the charge to maintained schools.

DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2022-23**Impact report**

Title of the Budget	DD3 - Union Facilities Time
Lead Officer:	Julie Andrews
2022-23 Funding:	£177,000

A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)

Facilities Funding was distributed between the unions represented on the Joint Union Partnership in line with the 2016 agreement on facilities time.

Facilities funding enables the local authority to negotiate directly with trades unions on behalf of all contributing, maintained schools. This means individual schools do not have to spend time being involved in a similar process on their own. As a result, this saves both, significant time and money, allowing more to be achieved in the long run.

In conjunction with Sandwell HR a clear programme of policy review has been established for the forthcoming year (this takes account of issues raised by schools). As made clear above, this allows for a LA-wide policy to be negotiated via Joint Union Panel (JUP) and avoids individual schools having to follow the same time-consuming and costly process.

JUP continues to play a key role in reviewing and updating a range of key policies and guidance documentation. In the recent past this has included:

- Disciplinary
- Management of Absence
- Grievance
- Redundancy
- Model Pay Policy
- Appraisal
- Leave of Absence
- Teachers Capability
- Domestic Abuse

Facilities funding enables local union representation to work with the LA on a number of other matters for all maintained schools. Policies that have been reviewed over time include:

- A single Managing Allegations policy in conjunction with LADO
- School Complaints Procedure
- Social Media guidance for schools
- A policy for supporting employees from malicious behaviour
- A Workload Charter (in conjunction with JEG)
- Place planning and school expansions
- Maintaining an overview of the way the Apprenticeship Levy is being used
- School Amalgamations
- Academy conversion
- Physical Intervention/Restraint policy
- Redundancies
- Drugs, Alcohol and Substance misuse policy

Facilities funding also allows unions to meet regularly with LA Health and Safety representatives via the Central Safety Committee to both monitor and consult on specific H&S matters. This includes the development and reviewing of any school specific health & safety guidance documents which will be circulated to unions. Updates will also be provided on the health and safety training offer made available to our schools. Monitoring activities include reviewing statistical incident data, summaries of health and safety management audits and workplace inspections to identify trends and any

DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2022-23
Impact report

possible remedial action.

Facilities funding also ensures local casework can involve a local representative, who, unlike regional representative, will usually be available at short notice and have good local knowledge. This frequently enables issues to be resolved more quickly and effectively.

The number of meetings that union officials attend is significant with twice termly JUP meetings, three Health and Safety Committee Meetings per year as well as a significant number of side panel committees. This is in addition to the numerous meetings, phone calls and the preparation needed to cover individual casework.

Throughout the pandemic unions met remotely with the Local Authority Officers on a regular basis, initially this was daily but then reduced to take place twice a week. This continued to provide an important forum to discuss immediate concerns in a timely manner, allowing for quick resolution of issues.

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2024-25

Full Title of Proposal	School Improvement Service	
Lead Officer	Julie Andrews	
Reference Number	DD4	
Annual Funding Proposal	£150,000	
Date of Funding Proposal	01 September 2023	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)	Primary	Secondary
	✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear? Please state as an amount per pupil.	Primary	Secondary
	£5.26	£5.26
Is the service provided a statutory function?		
If Yes please provide detail		
No		
How has this proposal been calculated?		
The amount requested is a contribution to the current School Improvement Service and would contribute towards the cost of advisory support, including 3 core visits per term to each maintained school.		
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)		
<p>Aa a minimum entitlement, all maintained primary, secondary, special schools and PRUs to receive a termly visit from a School Improvement Adviser (SIA). Each visit will have a clear focus and an agenda which has been prepared and sent to schools in advance of the visits. Visits will focus on the school's self-evaluation. Where appropriate, support packages will be developed in discussions between leaders, managers, and governors of schools to help schools to improve standards and provision.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support school self-evaluation processes offering support and challenge where appropriate to ensure every school is at least a 'good' school using the current Ofsted criteria • Support schools to improve at any stage of their development from inadequate to outstanding • Early identification of those schools that need particular levels of support and those that may be able to offer support to other schools and providers • Target resources to narrow the gap between vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people and their peers • Take decisive action to address poor performance, by providing a programme of targeted support to enable standards to improve 		

- Promote high standards in education by supporting effective school-to-school collaboration through a range of options including Learning Communities, Learning Hubs and Teaching Schools
- Support schools to deliver an appropriate curriculum, including the National Curriculum
- Provide support to leadership at all levels including senior and middle leaders as well as governing bodies
- Support schools in becoming autonomous, self-evaluating and successful inclusive institutions.
- Support schools by providing up to date information on Ofsted Inspection. Helping schools before, during and after an inspection
- Provide a service of quality assurance to schools relating to all aspects of school improvement
- Support school leaders and governors in recruitment processes
- Support for school improvement costed at a very competitive rate

Through this arrangement, School Improvement Advisers are able to monitor schools and ensure that they can:

- Be an evaluative friend: facilitating opportunities for leadership to reflect on the school's performance, identify strengths and priorities for improvement and plan for effective change and improvement
- Provide an external perspective on aspects of the school's performance, development, and improvement through joint evaluation activity
- Provide an objective review of the school's performance data by considering its most recent national test results, trends over time, other pupil achievement and well-being data, and the views of pupils, parents and carers and elected councillors
- Discuss and agree priorities for the forthcoming year to ensure that they are suitably ambitious to meet the school's and community's aspirations
- Challenge the school on its capacity to improve and its priorities for improvement
- Signpost to effective provision and practice
- Agree the overall school effectiveness category
- Evaluate the impact of any brokered support package

What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?

(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)

N/A

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

- Schools will need to purchase school improvement support from other providers to provide all the above, which may be less cost-effective
- Potential for individual school performance to decline
- Schools are more likely to slip into Ofsted categories without school improvement support
- Greater responsibility on schools to resolve significant issues which may occur e.g. underperformance or a sudden decline in leadership capacity.
- Reduction in the information advice and guidance that is provided to schools over the year including Ofsted updates.
- Schools will need to find alternative ways to ensure effective quality assurance across all aspects of school improvement including governor support and challenge
- Less effective signposting to effective provision and practice
- Reduction in guidance for governors

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)	£150,000	Contribution to the total SIA salaries budget
---------------------	----------	---

Services (£)		
---------------------	--	--

Other costs (£)		
------------------------	--	--

How will expenditure be monitored?

- Existing budget meetings with LA finance officers
- Quality assurance of visits to schools by senior officers
- Quality assurance of visit reports by senior officers

How will impact be evaluated?

- End of year performance of schools across the Local Authority
- Outcomes of Ofsted inspections across the year

Please detail any income generated by the service?

- Income will not be directly generated from this funding although the service as a whole generates some additional income through a variety of ways including support to other schools and academies both in Sandwell and in other local authorities.

DE-DELEGATED OUTTURN 2022-23
Impact report

Title of De-Delegated Budget	DD4 School Improvement Services
Lead Officer:	Julie Andrews
2022-23 Funding:	£100,000

A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (eg KPI's, service statistics, etc)

- Core visits were undertaken to all maintained schools over the year.
- Feedback received from headteachers and governors confirm that they continue to value this support
- Numerous schools have been supported to appoint Headteachers through a rigorous recruitment process over the last 12 months.
- Safeguarding and attendance have been key focuses over the last 12 months through core visits. Safeguarding has also been impacted on through additional one-off supportive reviews.
- Additional support visits have been provided to maintained schools where there has been a need identified. This has had a direct impact on outcomes before inspection.

Monitoring and evaluation confirmed the following strengths:

- Significant evidence of high-quality evaluative writing in many reports (see below for feedback evidence).
- Helpful comments included in many reports which support school improvement (see feedback section).
- Reports indicate a wealth of activities taking place in termly visits, which support school improvement.
- Reports confirm that activities that are relevant and appropriate to individual schools
- Clear evidence that SIAs know their schools well and discussion is focused on relevant key priorities, providing support as well as challenge
- Head teachers and governors value the range of meetings and support that the SIAs offer.

Feedback from schools:

All of the below were sent on email and cover feedback from head teachers, subject leaders, governors and OFSTED HMI inspectors. There are contributions about all advisers:

- Just a quick email to thank you for your support this year. We have very much appreciated your input as we seek to do things better and better for the sake of our little people.
- Your support for XXXX paid dividends on her maths deep dive. Thanks again.
- Thank you, I thoroughly enjoyed the visit yesterday. Your approach and line of questioning were exactly what I like. Thank you for the speed at which you have produced the draft report. The report is an accurate and helpful account of the visit and our discussion. Thank you.
- Before the inspection: Thank you for your visit feedback. I think you captured it all very well. ***** and I found it very useful. Once again thank you for your really good input.
- After the inspection: Thank you for all of your support over the past few weeks and months. We really appreciated it and it has certainly made a difference to our approach to lots of our teaching and our other systems particularly attendance and safeguarding. Just thank you for being there for us before and during the inspection!
- Thank you, everyone found you very supportive, it's appreciated.
- As you know, you have been a real help to me and the school over the last few terms. Thank you. Thank you for your time today. We found it to be an enjoyable and supportive experience.
- Thanks for emailing the visit report. Both ** and I found the visit very useful and supportive.
- Thanks for this. The visit was very useful and my staff were very positive about the whole experience. It enabled them to really clarify future improvement properties, so they valued your input.
- Feedback from yesterday has been very positive. Everyone found the process very useful. It has made us all think about being succinct when answering the question and has given us all action points to work on. They have all said they would like more sessions like this to improve their confidence and to help them effectively answer questions.'
- XXXX has just messaged me to say how useful she found the session after school today and how it has really helped to build her confidence. Thanks so much for your support, she certainly feels more prepared and

hopefully this will steer her in the right direction!

- I just wanted to thank you again for your time today I found the meeting very helpful and I think XXXX did too. Thank you so much for your time and support yesterday. XXXXX and XX_X have both said how helpful the meetings were and I certainly found them very helpful and supportive too.
- Thanks for your support and challenge. Thank you very much for your support, SIA visits and SEF work.....
- Much thanks for the support you have given myself (as Chair) and the school this year
- On behalf of ***** and myself, thank you for all of your support and advice over this year and we appreciate the input you've had with what we are aiming for at *****.
- Thanks, this report reads really well and has the accuracy and clarity we sought. Thank you for all your support with the Ofsted.
- Ofsted final feedback by the HMI to the school: External support from the LA has helped and HT mentoring, SIG group, SIAs and EYFS lead and adviser have all been recognised as contributing by leaders and this impact can be seen by the HMI.
- Governor feedback: you are good to work with, always professional, but also with humour. As I wrap up after 40+ years (of working in education) I can honestly say you've been one of the most professional, intelligent and lovely folk I've had the privilege of meeting on the road!
- Governor on HT recruitment: I would like to thank you both for all your support yesterday with the interviews. I really appreciated your guidance and expertise. It was a daunting task but having your support helped me enormously. I appreciate it is what you do, but it was the level of professionalism and kindness you both offered, gave me the confidence with the whole process. It took away any feelings of inadequacy I had.
- A HT reflecting on a difficult visit: Thank you so much for your support. Difficult messages may be hard to hear, but you deliver them kindly and we always trust that you are honest and objective. Thank you.
- There are many more!!

Ofsted inspections:

- The latest data (June 2023) shows that there has been a further increase in the proportion of schools and academies across all phases rated good or better by Ofsted (September 2022 - 85%; June 2023 - 85.7%).

DSG DE-DELEGATED PROPOSAL 2024-25		NO: DD5	
Title of Proposal	DD5 Schools in Financial Difficulty	Date	September 2023
Lead Officer	Julie Andrews	Contact Tel.	07919 291012
Annual Funding Proposal (£)		2023-24	
		£100,000	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)?		Primary	Secondary
		✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear? Please state as an amount per pupil.		Primary	Secondary
		£3.51	£3.51
Is the service provided a statutory function? (Please provide detail below if yes)			
Maintained			
How has this proposal been calculated?			
<p>The DSG and the Council continue to face greater financial risk due to the increasing number of schools falling into financial difficulty. This is largely due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School unable to set a balanced budget and getting into financial difficulties. • Sponsored Academy conversions, when a school with a deficit becomes a sponsored academy, the deficit remains with the LA, to be funded from its core budget. If it converts with a surplus this goes to the new trust. • It is expected that the impact from the National Funding Formula may lead to further requests from this funding source. <p>School deficits are not an allowable charge on the LA's schools budget (funded by its allocation of Dedicated Schools Grant); however, if the schools forum has agreed to de-delegate a contingency provision, then the deficit may be funded from that contingency, depending on the criteria agreed for its use.</p> <p>All schools are required to submit a balanced budget that has been agreed with Governors by 15th May each year. Those schools that are unable to balance their budgets can submit a licensed deficit application by the same date that will be considered in line with the scheme guidance. This has to be agreed by the Director for Children's Services and the Chief Finance Officer of the Council.</p> <p>This contingency would be to assist maintained schools where, for a range of potential reasons they are experiencing financial difficulty to a degree likely to impact adversely on the education of pupils. The maximum bid that schools can request is £125,000.</p> <p>The amount proposed of £100,000 in 2024-25 is to maintain a contingency to fund schools in financial difficulty and to be able to deal with deficit balances of closing schools. This request would add to the existing £495,600 carried forward from the previous year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contingency cannot be overspent in any financial year. Once the funding has 			

finished, no more applications/cases will be considered for that financial year.

- Schools are expected to self-fund a proportion of any claim equivalent to an agreed percentage of their annual budget and eligibility for support also takes into account the school's previous, current, and future balances.

**What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal?
(Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)**

The funding provides temporary support to schools to temporarily to resolve issues systematically to meet immediate financial pressures.

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

Not applicable

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

A deficit incurred from a sponsored academy conversion has to be retained by the authority. The funding of a deficit would have a detrimental impact on the services the Council are able to provide to schools.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries (£)		
Services (£)		
Other costs (£)		

How will expenditure be monitored?

The expenditure will be monitored by the Assistant Director for Children and Education. Regular updates will be reported to School Forum.

How will impact be evaluated?

Via reports to Schools Forum annually on how the funding has been deployed and through budget monitoring.

Please detail any income generated by the service?

N/A

DE-DELEGATED/EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OUTTURN 2022-23**Impact report**

Title of the Budget	Schools in Financial Difficulty
Lead Officer:	Julie Andrews
2022-23 Funding:	£100,000

A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)

One request was received between April 2022 and March 2023 for £29,000 (Brickhouse Primary School). The amount remaining from the 2022-23 allocation was £71,000. In addition, £408,944.93 was carried forward from the previous year. Therefore, the amount held within the contingency fund at this point stands at £479,944.93

It is expected that the impact from the National Funding Formula may lead to further requests from this funding source.

A2

**SCHOOLS BLOCK - EDUCATION FUNCTION
PROPOSALS**



EDUCATION FUNCTIONS PROPOSAL 2024-25

Full Title of Proposal	Education Benefits Service	
Lead Officer	Sue Moore	
Reference Number	EF1	
Annual Funding Proposal	£134,000	
Date of Funding Proposal	September 2023	
Is the service provided a statutory function	YES	
If Yes please provide detail		
<p>There is a statutory duty for eligibility for FSM to be checked There is a statutory duty for Home to School transport entitlement to be assessed</p>		
How has this proposal been calculated		
<p>Calculations based on the number of pupils in maintained schools eligible for FSM's as at October 2023. Funding will be deducted from each school based on the number of pupils eligible for FSM. Academies will be charged separately cost of service per eligible pupil.</p>		
What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)		
<p>As with previous years the service has been enhanced to support schools to maximise income for schools from Pupil Premium and offer support above and beyond normal service provision. This has been beneficial to schools particularly as it ensures they secure additional funding. However, the removal of Education Service Grant (£2.9m) by DfE has had significant impact on the council's ability to maintain services at the current enhanced level. It is not the council's intention to pass the entire loss of this grant on to schools but will make significant savings to ensure that minimal requests are passed to schools for funding. The Education Funding Agency requires the council to negotiate with schools on the amount that can be held back as a de-delegated proposal for this service. Given the current financial climate the council is proposing that a proportion of these costs are met by schools. The above DSG de-delegated proposal is based on schools contributing to of anticipated costs for financial year commencing Apr 2024.</p> <p>Administration for FSM eligibility is undertaken by Education Benefits Team and the team's performance targets are to increase FSM eligibility and maximise Pupil Premium for Sandwell Schools.</p>		

This funding will provide an auditable system to schools that has reduced the bureaucracy for school's administrators regarding FSM eligibility applications

- a) FSM eligibility is determined and instant eligibility checks done for schools/families, removing requirement for benefit evidence to be produced.
- b) Education Benefits check for new FSM claims each month to ensure continuous auditable eligibility for schools. Schools are updated weekly, using secure data transfer systems, of new and discontinued eligibility to FSM's
- c) All administration for the roll out of Universal Credit ensuring schools benefit from accurate 'protection' period dates to ensure Pupil Premium is maximised. No renewal/checking system for schools to administer.
- d) No need for families to reapply and claim continues until pupil leaves school if parent/carer remains in receipt of eligible benefits. Those families that are not eligible will continue to be checked on a monthly basis so that if circumstances change and they become eligible, school/family will be notified and there will be no need for family to make another application.
- e) Real time updated eligibility to schools.
- f) on-line application facility available for parents/carers
- g) Schools benefit from the increased FSM applications which have been generated by the following initiative. The School Clothing Scheme now generates FSM applications for those families who apply for clothing vouchers and do not have a current live FSM's claim.
- h) Continued awareness campaign and promotion of FSM's at events throughout the Borough.
- i) Universal FSM's for all KS1 pupils – eligibility checks on all KS1 pupils to ensure that all Pupil Premium pupils can be identified for those families entitled to a Universal meal.
- j) Eligibility checks, appeals and policy development for statutory Home to School transport entitlement
- k) Administration of School Clothing Scheme
- l) Administration of Home to School Transport (mainstream)

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

Schools will have to administer an auditable system for new FSM applications and all revisions of current applications as they would have no access to the Eligibility Checking System and Inland Revenue support for queries.

Evidence/proof of benefits will need to be obtained by school to determine eligibility for FSM's, Universal meals pupils eligible for Pupil Premium and Early Years Pupil Premium (nursery).

Schools will not benefit from the increased eligibility to FSM created by initiatives managed by the LA/Education Benefits Team (See (g) above)

Loss of expertise and knowledge from the Education Benefits Team who provide an

advice/guidance service to schools and families.

School clothing support would need to be administered and managed by schools who would need to set up their own schemes to support low income families who cannot afford to purchase school uniforms.

Schools would need to administer all changes of eligibility and eligibility protection periods within the legislation re the roll out of the Universal Credit benefit scheme.

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries	£134,000	
Services	£	
Schools	£	

How will expenditure be monitored?

Ongoing budget monitoring procedures

How will impact be evaluated?

Numbers eligible to FSM's and Pupil Premium generated

Please detail any income generated by the service?

Academies are charged for service and costs to maintained schools are reduced pro rata
Income generated from external customers is offset against costs to reduce costs of service to Sandwell maintained schools

EDUCATION FUNCTIONS PROPOSAL 2024-25	
Full Title of Proposal	Children's Clothing Support Allowance
Lead Officer	Sue Moore
Reference Number	EF2
Annual Funding Proposal	£33,000
Date of Funding Proposal	September 2023
Is the service provided a statutory function	NO
<p>Please provide overview</p> <p>Sandwell Local Authority (LA) has traditionally provided a contribution towards the purchase of school clothing to parents on a low income with children transferring to, or in, secondary school and to those starting school for the first time, where there is a requirement for them to have a uniform (year reception and years 7 to 11).</p>	
<p>How has this proposal been calculated</p> <p>Cost of £20/£25 vouchers for school uniform issued to low income families entitled to receive FSM</p>	
<p>What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal? (Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)</p> <p>Assists families most in need of financial support who struggle with the cost of school uniform. Generates FSM application – Criteria is the same as for FSM's and an application is generated by the clothing application thus identifying those who have not made an application for FSM.</p> <p>The scheme captures those families who are unwilling to apply for FSM's but do apply for the clothing voucher.</p>	
<p>What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only? (Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)</p> <p>N/A</p>	
<p>What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?</p> <p>Schools will not benefit from the additional FSM/Pupil Premium generated by the Sandwell scheme.</p> <p>Risks identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have impact on attendance for those pupils no longer entitled if they are unable to purchase a uniform; • Could result in pupils being unable to purchase a uniform and subject to bullying; • Pupils from low income families in Sandwell would be affected. 	

How will the amount be deployed?		
Salaries	£	
Services	£33,000	
Schools	£	
How will expenditure be monitored?		
Secure vouchers issued are monitored on a weekly basis		
How will impact be evaluated?		
Number of new FSM applications /Pupil Premium generated		
Please detail any income generated by the service?		
Academies are charged for this service and have not been included in the 33K figure which is for maintained schools only		
Administration costs are absorbed by the Education Benefits Service		

CSSB (EDUCATION FUNCTIONS) FUNDING PROPOSAL 2024-25

Full Title of Proposal	Safeguarding / Schools Attendance Support Service	
Lead Officer	Sue Moore / Ramsey Richards	
Reference Number	CSSB5 (EF3)	
Annual Funding Proposal	££512,000 (from April 2024)	
Date of Funding Proposal	September 2023	
Which phase of school does this support (✓)	Primary	Secondary
	✓	✓
What proportion will each phase bear Please state as an amount per pupil.	Primary	Secondary
	£8.60 per pupil	£8.60 per pupil
Is the service provided a statutory function	Yes	

If yes, please provide detail

1. Safeguarding (MASH / Domestic Abuse screening & notifications / Support for designated safeguarding leads plus Position of Trust / Child death and serious case reviews/ SSCB s175/s157 safeguarding audits etc.
2. School support to improve & maintain pupil attendance (data plus guidance, and advice).
Legal action - penalty notices and prosecution of irregular attendance.
Monitoring and enforcement of pupil registration regulations / removal from roll etc.
3. Child employment & entertainment licensing
4. Children Not in School: Children missing education / Children missing from education / Welfare Support
5. Children Educated Otherwise than at school e.g. Elective Home Education and Alternative Provision

How has this proposal been calculated?

Schools Funding Forum: Safeguarding / Schools Attendance Service

This DSG Education Functions proposal based on 34.3% of anticipated costs for financial year commencing Apr 2024..

Cost of current service delivery (financial year commencing Apr 2023)

1. £307,800 – Safeguarding (including Service line management / supervision)
2. £662,000 – Schools Attendance Support (front facing plus duty and admin)
3. £260,100 – Child employment & licensing plus Elective home education
4. £ 95,200– Children not in school x1 plus PNs and Court

Total: £1,325,100

**What will be the benefits to schools in Schools Forum agreeing this proposal?
(Please give any details of previous proposals of a similar nature or specific details of requirements such as staffing and services)**

The Schools Attendance Support Service, core offer, as from September 2023 is in line with the DFE expectations based on the White paper. The current provision includes 1.5 allocated attendance support officer per town plus continuing support from, a duty practitioner, a court practitioner and 1 CME Officer.

The Service will ensure:

- Targeted schools' meetings for those with greatest need this academic year.
- Locality based "attendance solutions panel" meetings with Strengthening Families.
- Cohort focused interventions e.g., persistent absence plus educational neglect.
- Attendance campaign: "Attend School for Best Start in Life" (launched September 2022 & 2023).
- Permanent duty practitioner providing consistent support & guidance to schools.
- Permanent Court practitioner to focus on prosecutions and evidential reliability.

The National average for front facing attendance support officers is 1 ASO per 5000 pupils - excludes CNiS / CME. Sandwell has 52600 pupils and 9 front (locality) facing attendance support officer posts = 1 ASO per 5800 students.

**What will be the impact if School Forum agree to purchase the statutory element of the service only?
(Please give details on the total cost for the year, cost per pupil for each phase, service delivered)**

All service functions are statutory.

What will be the impact if Schools Forum do not agree to this proposal?

Based on available data, any reduction in capacity / resources and/or loss of income is likely to have a detrimental impact of the Local Authorities ability to maintain and enhance support as required by current statutory duties and responsibilities.

Please see additional Impact Report submitted with this funding proposal.

To effectively manage the significant increase in referrals, including penalty notices and court work we will need to further increase the capacity of the team from income generated – see

table below * (next page)

How will the amount be deployed?

Salaries	£512,000	
Services	£	
Other costs	£	

How will expenditure be monitored?

Finance / Quality standards programme executive

How will impact be evaluated?

Quality standards programme executive

Please detail any income generated by the service?

*	2020-21 (Sept - Aug)	2021-22 Sept - Aug)	2022-23 (Sept - Jul)
1. Penalty notices issued by the local authority to parents or guardians in relation to their child or children's school attendance.	44	927	3011
2. Revenue generated from penalty notices issued in relation to school attendance.	£2,880	£49,920	£150,000 (@ July 2023)
3. Prosecutions pursued / pending due school absence	Nil (Covid)	83	191 @ 040723

This income is used to maintain the “administration of justice” as per current legislation.

CSSB / (EDUCATION FUNCTIONS) OUTTURN 2022-23

Impact report September 2023

Title of the Budget	Safeguarding / Schools Attendance Support Service		
Lead Officer:	Sue Moore / Ramsey Richards	Reference no:	CSSB5
2022-23 Funding:	£455,000 - option 2 as agreed previously		

A brief outline on how the funding was used, and the service impact to maintained schools and academies. (E.g. KPI's, service statistics, etc.)

Safeguarding

Please see data below for academic year 2022/23:

Type of Referral	Number
MASH	1844
DA Notifications	7707
MARAC	937
TOTAL	10488

Outcomes for MASH/STRAT	2022/23
Section 47 (Joint and single agency)	707
Single Assessment	685
Early Help/Targeted Support	106
Universal Services (Single Agency Responses)	66
NFA: No Role for services	73
Total – MASH involvements	1637
<i>Outcome not recorded</i>	207

Snapshot - Impact of other duties completed by MASH education staff:

- Advice support and guidance including Sample policy development has been offered to all education providers
- Training materials for Safeguarding material developed and made available to DSL's to use with school staff
- Facilitation of School DSP's visiting MASH to better understand Sandwell Safeguarding Processes

- Development of, support for and analysis of schools S175/157 Safeguarding audit
- Onsite school audits have also been carried out this academic year.
- 12 Single agency training sessions have been delivered including Threshold moderation and Safeguarding awareness sessions
- 5 DSP Forums facilitated
- Support provided to CDOP via the completion of child death returns liaising with schools and supporting rapid reviews etc
- LH chairs the L & D Subgroup and represents LA education on the neglect strategy subgroup. This will help drive the Attendance is everyone's business / Educational Neglect agendas.
- LH has delivered 24 Multi Agency Safeguarding courses (including GCP2, Core working together and Neglect) over the academic year 2021/22 and has supported the development of courses and training events over the year.
- QPPA support via engagement and information gathering from education providers around key themes
- 7 -minute briefing and guidance has been developed and has been uploaded onto the SCSP website following the "School Attendance is everyone's business event – 29th September 2022.

Attendance

Our journey so far

- Changed Service Name from Attendance & Prosecution Service to Schools Attendance Support Service
- Produced a 'Schools Attendance Support Pack'
- Held multiple training sessions for schools
- Introduced an Attendance Audit Tool
- Supported with County Lines Intensification Week
- Produced an Illness Guidance
- Started work on Educational Neglect with Partners
- Held Half Termly Attendance Forums
- Produced Half Termly Newsletters
- Started to build relationships with schools



Working Together

- Children's Commissioner, Rachel de Souza, confirms shared duty of all agencies responsible for safeguarding to take action to improve school attendance
- Conference held 29th September 2022 included
 - Sandwell Schools
 - Sandwell Children's Trust including Strengthening Families, Horizons and the Youth Justice Service
 - Health and Public Health colleagues including School Nurses
 - Police
 - Violence Reduction Partnership
 - SCVO and our voluntary and community sector partners.



Data period ending Half term 6 2022/23

- Data confirms the challenges ahead in terms of attendance / persistent absence and the expectations of the DFE / White Paper.

%	ALL 54,910	Primary	Secondary	Special	PRU	Authorised	Unauthorised
90-100%	41,557 (75.68%)	24,259	16,880	354	64	3.12%	1.00%
70-90%	10,989 (20.01%)	5,799	4,939	159	92	9.12%	6.15%
50-70%	1,208 (2.20%)	405	700	30	73	16.27%	21.38%
0-50%	1,156 (2.11%)	291	675	39	151	22.25%	48.25%



Number of Referrals to HT6 2022/23

	HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	HT6	TOTAL
Leave of Absence	300	188	281	210	372	608	1959
Legal Intervention Referral	43	59	93	61	113	138	507
Attendance Support Request	68	82	71	45	53	126	445
Removal from Roll	649	295	239	151	191	201	1726
Removal from Roll EHE	67	52	71	40	45	68	343
Non-Arrival / Refusal of Place	143	55	27	22	26	40	313
School Attendance Orders	7	1	5	2	2	0	17
Children Missing Education - Closed	124	101	96	54	54	104	533
TOTAL	1401	833	883	585	856	1285	5843



Legal work undertaken

Court action as at 29/08/2023

3396 Penalty Notices prepared and still more to come (compared to 925 in the 21/22 academic year)

365 Court files produced/part produced - including

63 have been heard in court, found guilty and fined

101 are in preparation

42 are currently in the Legal process awaiting trial

Total fines imposed by Court – including Victim Surcharge and Costs £24,865

Lowest total fine to any one parent £141

Highest total fine to any one parent £1709



Our Work Continues 2023-24

- Revised the Schools Attendance Support Pack
- About to launch the Illness Guidance and Educational Neglect
- Start to work with Faith Groups to help support the local communities
- Potential LA 'Rewards Scheme' to celebrate good and improved attendance
- Work with schools to promote 'Whole School Approach'

RESPONSIBILITIES – ALL Schools & Maintained Only

Statutory and regulatory duties

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of children’s services and personal staff for director (Sch 2, 15a) • Planning for the education service as a whole (Sch 2, 15b) • Revenue budget preparation, preparation of information on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education (Sch 2, 22) • Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure not met from schools’ budget shares (Sch 2, 15c) • Formulation and review of local authority schools funding formula (Sch 2, 15d) • Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority’s chief finance officer’s responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 except duties specifically related to maintained schools (Sch 2, 15e) • Consultation costs relating to non-staffing issues (Sch 2, 19) • Plans involving collaboration with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions of LA related to best value and provision of advice to governing bodies in procuring goods and services (Sch 2, 58) • Budgeting and accounting functions relating to maintained schools (Sch 2, 74) • Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure in respect of schools which do not have delegated budgets, and related financial administration (Sch 2, 59) • Monitoring of compliance with requirements in relation to the scheme for financing schools and the provision of community facilities by governing bodies (Sch 2, 60) • Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority’s chief finance officer’s responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 for maintained schools (Sch 2, 61) • Functions made under Section 44 of the 2002 Act (Consistent Financial Reporting) (Sch 2, 62)

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<p>other LA services or public or voluntary bodies (Sch 2, 15f)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Advisory Committees for Religious Education (SACREs) (Sch 2, 17) • Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating specifically to maintained schools (Sch 2, 21) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations of employees or potential employees, with or without remuneration to work at or for schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 63) • Functions related to local government pensions and administration of teachers' pensions in relation to staff working at maintained schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 64) • Retrospective membership of pension schemes where it would not be appropriate to expect a school to meet the cost (Sch 2, 77) • HR duties, including: advice to schools on the management of staff, pay alterations, conditions of service and composition or organisation of staff (Sch 2, 65); determination of conditions of service for non-teaching staff (Sch 2, 66); appointment or dismissal of employee functions (Sch 2, 68) • Consultation costs relating to staffing (Sch 2, 68) • Compliance with duties under Health and Safety at Work Act

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	<p>(Sch 2, 69)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown relating to schools (Sch 2, 70) • School companies (Sch 2, 71) • Functions under the Equality Act 2010 (Sch 2, 72) • Establish and maintaining computer systems, including data storage (Sch 2, 73) • Appointment of governors and payment of governor expenses (Sch 2, 74)

Table 8a: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (statutory and regulatory duties)

Education welfare

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils (Sch 2, 20) • School attendance (Sch 2, 16) • Responsibilities regarding the employment of children (Sch 2, 18) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection of attendance registers (Sch 2, 80)

Table 8b: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (education welfare)

Asset management

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the LA's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions (Sch 2, 14a) • General landlord duties for all buildings owned by the local authority, including those leased to academies (Sch 2, 14b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General landlord duties for all maintained schools (Sch 2, 76a & b (section 542(2)) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) to ensure that school buildings have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate facilities for pupils and staff (including medical and accommodation) • the ability to sustain appropriate loads • reasonable weather resistance • safe escape routes • appropriate acoustic levels • lighting, heating and ventilation which meets the required standards • adequate water supplies and drainage • playing fields of the appropriate standards • General health and safety duty as an employer for employees and others who may be affected (Health and Safety at Work etc.

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	Act 1974) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the risk from asbestos in community school buildings (Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012)

Table 8c: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (asset management)

Central support services

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing grants (Sch 2, 54) • Provision of tuition in music, or on other music-related activities (Sch 2, 55) • Visual, creative and performing arts (Sch 2, 56) • Outdoor education centres (but not centres mainly for the provision of organised games, swimming or athletics) (Sch 2, 57)

Table 8d: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (central support services)

Premature retirement and redundancy

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismissal or premature retirement when costs cannot be charged to maintained schools (Sch 2, 79)

Table 8e: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (premature retirement and redundancy)

Monitoring national curriculum assessment

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of National Curriculum assessments (Sch 2, 76)

Table 8f: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (monitoring national curriculum assessment)

Therapies

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is now covered in the high needs section of the regulations and does not require schools forum approval

Table 8g: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (therapies)

Other ongoing duties

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licences negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State for all publicly funded schools (Sch 2, 8); this does not require schools forum approval Admissions (Sch 2, 9) Places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils (Sch 2, 10) Remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies (Sch 2, 11) Servicing of schools forums (Sch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No functions

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<p>2, 12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back-pay for equal pay claims (Sch 2, 13) • Writing to parents of year 9 pupils about schools with an atypical age of admission, such as UTCs and studio schools, within a reasonable travelling distance (Sch 2,23) 	

Table 8h: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (other ongoing duties)

Historic commitments

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital expenditure funded from revenue (Sch 2, 1) • Prudential borrowing costs (Sch 2, 2(a)) • Termination of employment costs (Sch 2, 2(b)) • Contribution to combined budgets (Sch 2, 2(c)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No functions

Table 8i: Central services responsibilities held by local authorities (historic commitments)

Additional note on central services

Services set out in the tables above will also include administrative costs and overheads relating to these services (regulation 1(4)) for:

- expenditure related to functions imposed by or under Chapter 4 of Part 2 of the 1998 Act (financing of maintained schools), the administration of grants to the authority (including preparation of applications) and, where it's the authority's duty to do so, ensuring payments are made in respect of taxation, national insurance and superannuation contributions
- expenditure on recruitment, training, continuing professional development, performance management and personnel management of staff who are funded by expenditure not met from schools' budget shares and who are paid for services
- expenditure in relation to the investigation and resolution of complaints
- expenditure on legal services

ILO - UNCLASSIFIED

Schools Forum

6 November 2023

Special School in Financial Difficulty

This report is for decision

1. Recommendations:

That Schools Forum members:

- 1.1 Approve the creation of the Special School in Financial Difficulty Fund (SSFDF) to be funded from High Needs Block.
- 1.2 Approve that SSFDF will not exceed £500,000.
- 1.3 Approve that SSFDF be topped up every year if it is less than £500,000.
- 1.4 Approve the set-up of an ad-hoc working group to consider the request from a Special School and make recommendation back to the Forum.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the SSFDF is to support Special and AP schools showing financial difficulty.
- 2.2 The fund will work by providing cashflow support (additional fund) to Special and AP schools that the Schools Forum approves to be the case.
- 2.3 The balance of SSFDF shall not exceed £500,000 at beginning of every financial year.
- 2.4 The amount of cashflow support shall be limited to £100,000 and £150,000 for primary (including AP) and secondary schools respectively.
- 2.5 A school (or AP) can only be funded from the SSFDF once in 3 financial years.

3. Reasons for these proposal

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

- 3.1 Maintained mainstream schools, through de-delegation of their schools' budget, have created a Schools in Financial Difficulty Fund.
- 3.2 This fund provides bridging support, in form of cash flows, to schools showing financial difficulties whilst they work with the local authority (LA) to overcome/mitigate the financial pressure.
- 3.3 Special Schools (both maintained and academies) have no similar support whenever there are signs of, or when they are in, financial difficulty.
- 3.4 Special Schools are exclusively funded from the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
- 3.5 The SSFDF is not a permanent financial fix for special schools (and AP) showing financial problem. But is a mechanism to provide temporary cashflow reprieve whilst these schools work with the LA and/or ESFA to overcome the problem.
- 3.6 Once a school has been considered and approved for this support, it cannot access the SSFDF for another 3 financial years.
- 3.7 Based on the last report presented to Schools Forum, the HNB is currently underspending and can afford to set-up this fund in 2023/24.
- 3.8 The fund will be topped-up every year to the £500,000 maximum (during the budget setting process). If no school has been supported in a particular year, there will be no need to top-up the fund.
- 3.9 The Schools Forum can decide at any point, to increase or reduce the size of the SSFDF fund as well as vary the maximum amount that can be paid to each phase of special school/AP as suggested in paragraph 2.4 above.
- 3.10 The Schools Forum can also decide to discontinue the use of this fund at any point in the future. This must however take account of any request that is undergoing the process of being approved.
- 3.11 The SSFDF will only be made available to those special schools (and AP) that were unsuccessful in securing support from the DfE

plans to support Academies and Maintained schools (once it becomes operational¹).

4. Process for Application and Approval

4.1 Schools showing financial difficulty that requires urgent cashflow support will contact the Finance team within Children's and Education department. The issue should be well known to the finance team and the request should not come as a surprise.

4.2 Finance team will send an application form for the school to complete. See Appendix A below for sample.

4.3 The finance team will thereafter present the case before Schools Forum and request that a working group be set-up to consider the request and report back to the Forum. In exceptional situation, the finance team can contact the Chair (and if they are not available the Deputy Chair) to request that the ad-hoc working group be set up ahead of the next Schools Forum meeting.

4.4 The ad-hoc working group will comprise of:

- 2 or 3 members of the Schools Forum one of whom must be a special/AP head or governor.
- 2 or 3 co-opted heads from special school/AP.
- LA officers including one representative each from SEND, SEN finance & education finance (in attendance and to support).

4.5 The working group will submit its report with recommendation to the Forum.

4.6 The Schools Forum will thereafter approve, reject or amend the recommendation of the working group.

4.7 The finance team will thereafter inform the school of Schools Forum decision.

5. Request to set up Ad-hoc Working Group

5.1 If the above proposal is accepted. We hereby request that Schools Forum set-up an ad-hoc working group to consider the request from Orchard School.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/additional-support-for-schools-in-financial-difficulty-in-2023-to-2024#:~:text=Details,themselves%20in%20particular%20financial%20difficulties.>

- 5.2 The working group composition should be in accordance with the suggested process in section 4 above.

Elaine Taylor, Finance Business Partner – Children’s Services

Date: 06/11/2023

Contact Officer: Elaine Taylor

Email: elaine_taylor@sandwell.gov.uk

SCHOOLS FORUM: Funding Support Application Form for Special School in Financial Difficulty

School Name	
Chair of Governors	
Chair of GB Finance	
Chair of GB Staffing	
Overview of reasons why the school is applying for support	
Final outturn Previous financial year.	
Budget In-year deficit Current financial year	
List actions already undertaken in current and previous years to reduce in-year deficit (produce on a separate sheet if helpful)	
Will school return to surplus/balanced position within 3 years? (Yes/No)	
If yes. List further action and savings required to return to a balanced budget position within three years	

If no. What actions/opportunities is being explored by school to reduce deficit and/or generate surplus?	
Have the school applied to use DfE/ESFA support for Schools in Financial Difficulty (if yes, please include outcome of that request)	
Funding Support Requested (Amount £)	
How will the support funding be used and what will be the impact of the funding?	

Information required to be attached to this request form

- The school budget summary of expenditure for the current financial year.
- The school budget summary expenditure plan for next financial year.
- Staffing structure chart showing all posts and any affected by any proposed restructuring plans
- The full deficit recovery plan signed by Chair of Governing Body and agreed by Finance officers.
- Request for support from DfE/ESFA and outcome.

Process

- School to financially manage in year deficit to best of their ability leading up to financial close down including using all financial reserves available from previous years
- School to contact Council Finance Department and work together to agree a deficit recovery plan
- School to contact HR and agree restructuring plans (if this is required)
- Once end of year closedown figures have been finalised and the deficit recovery plan is agreed the school can apply to Schools Forum for Financial assistance.

ILO - UNCLASSIFIED

- An ad-hoc working group of the Schools Forum will review the submission and make a recommendation to Schools Forum.
- Schools Forum votes on the recommendation from the working group at the next available meeting.
- Schools which are successful in their bid to School Forum will receive funding as agreed to support their recovery plan.

Schools Forum: Working group representatives

- 2 or 3 members of the Schools Forum one of which must be a Special School Head/Governor.
- 2 or 3 co-opted heads from special school/AP.
- LA Finance Officer/SEN Finance Officer
- LA School Improvement Officer
- LA ILS/SEND representative
- Democratic Services support or someone to clerk the meeting

The working group may request attendance from the school (finance officer and/or leadership team) to represent it and present the case for support funding.

FOR SCHOOL FORUM USE -----

School Forum Assurances Questions

Has all information been submitted as required? Yes/No

Comment:

Has the school taken sufficient steps in year to manage their in-year deficit? Yes/No

Comment:

Are plans to reduce expenditure in the future robust and will they deliver the required savings to achieve a balanced budget within 3 financial years? Yes/No

Comment:

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

Is the proposed use of the support funding a reasonable and prudent use of resource? Yes/No

Comment:

Working group recommendation

N.B. A Yes recommendation can only be given where the bid has met all four criteria.

Recommend bid: YES/NO Amount _____

Comment:

Chair of Working Group _____

Date: _____

Schools Forum

6 November 2023

Constitution Working Group Appendix

This report is for approval

1. Recommendations:

That Schools Forum members:

- 1.1 consider and approve the Constitution Working Group Appendix

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To set out the addition of an appendix to the Schools Forum Constitution as it relates to Working Groups and their management.

3. Report Details

- 3.1 The Schools Forum Constitution and membership structure was updated in June 2023. An additional appendix has been established to set out how Working Groups will be run and managed.
- 3.2 The appendix reflects DfE guidelines plus suggested points that will allow the Local Authority to support Schools Forum Working Groups.

Connor Robinson – Democratic Services Officer

Date: 2630/10/2023

This page is intentionally left blank

Schools Forum Working Group Guidelines

- The Schools Forum will be responsible for determining the terms of reference, duration and membership of any Working Group and these must be clearly set out when establishing any Working Group.
- Working Groups may only comprise members of the Forum (or their substitutes) and may be supported in an advisory capacity only by officers of the Council or member appointed bodies.
- Formal decisions cannot be made by the Working Group. All recommendations must be referred to the Forum for consideration and final decision.
- Working Groups can include wider representation and draw on professional experience as required.
- Working Groups will take place in person at the Sandwell Council House or as an online virtual meeting.
- There will be a maximum of four Working Groups per year and they shall not run simultaneously.
- Administrative support shall be determined on a case by case basis. Decisions and actions will be captured and circulated as necessary.
- Officer and expert support shall be provided as required.
- Chairs of Working Groups will as required produce reports and recommendations with the support of officers.

This page is intentionally left blank