

Appendix 2 - Results of the consultation - School Funding Formula for 2020-21

Final responses following close of consultation (20th November 2019)

Question 1	No of Respondents	No of Respondents answering yes	No of Respondents answering no
Should the National Funding Formula continue to be used to allocate funding to schools in 2020-21?	78	78 (100%)	0 (0%)

Comments Made

This is about equity and transparency
This will give greater stability when predicting future budgets.
Having a positive impact on my school.
the National Funding Formula should be used with no cap on gains
The principle of a NFF is fine, however the values just need to be higher. Although the factors are increasing by 4%, we as a school on the figures provided are just receiving around 1.6%. Clearly there are lots of anomalies to sort, but 1.6 % doesn't even cover the pay rises so we will still be looking at redundancies. The formula adjustment seems to favour very small primary and large secondary rather than larger primaries and small secondary school. For larger secondaries, they can achieve much better economies of scale and optimum class sizes, so a one size fits all doesn't really work.
The School's Forum recommendation is instructive.
The NFF would benefit the school and as a small school we need all the funds that are available.
As the national funding formula contains no gains cap, and additional funding for high needs has been provided, I agree that this should also be the case for the local formula applied to schools too.
It is fairer for primary schools who have lost out to secondary school funding in the past. It is a fairer distribution of funding in line with the national framework.
Absolutely yes, it re-addresses the balance of over funding secondary schools. It allows a re-distribution of the funding fairly across all our schools, inline with national framework. Also the gains cap has been removed, therefore schools
Continued concerns regarding teacher pension contributions as DFE have not announced what will happen after
The gradual implementation was a good move but I think that has now run its course and the full, hard implementation should now be applied. This has been long enough coming and schols need some certainty to move forward.
This has already been agreed by the Schools forum and allows Schools to project figures over the transition period. Reversing this decision now would cause them to have to spend valuable hours re-budgeting and gaining further approval from governors, it is not acceptable to change the course mid-way.
Conditional upon there being no gains cap and all schools will attract their full core funding allocations under the formula, and that Cumbria LA do not choose to set a gains cap in their local formula.
There seems to be a huge difference between primary and secondary
It's the only fair way to allocate funding to schools.

Question 2	No of Respondents	No of Respondents answering yes	No of Respondents answering no
Do you agree a transfer of Schools Block to the High Needs Block?	71	30 (42%)	41 (58%)

Comments Made

Only in the circumstances proposed. Moving money around is not solving the issue and the risk level to individual schools is high.
Schools block funding should go direct to schools.
As previous question. If funding were to be transferred, model 1 would be preferred to maintain the highest AWPU.
These are our most vulnerable pupils.
Schools are already financially penalised for having pupils with EHC Plans as they have to fund the first £7000+ per EHC Plan from the budget. As well as this, small schools often attract a disproportionate number of children with extra needs and/or deprivation. This means extra pressures on a small budget.
As before, it would be great to see the 4% increase in funding across all schools. The impact of the formula and the High Needs Block would provide 1.6%, which is not enough when looking at rising costs.

There has to be more money in the high needs block, to help schools with the increasing number of SEND children that we have to provide for.
The deficit needs correcting but I repeat the comment above that more should be made available from DfE absolutely.
The High Needs Block deficit is growing each year - the Government needs to address this shortfall and not schools that are already struggling financially.
As noted previously, if the intention is not to cap funding, then all available funding should go to schools. For small schools, 0.39% of the schools block may be sufficient to invest in resources that benefit all pupils. As we are already bearing costs associated with HN it seems unfair to discretely siphon off further funds that could be used to offset those costs in individual schools.
No. I strongly oppose this and feel that this national underfunding issue should not be supported by the schools block under any circumstances.
I would prefer to see the expected surplus put in to the schools block by increasing the AWPU or School lump sum.
Way are we not being asked if we should share the expected surplus back into the schools block by increasing Awpu or the School lump sum?
On the basis of model 1
I think the whole system needs to be reviewed.
Yes. However, it is concerning that the Schools Forum are consulting on two options neither of which would set a balanced High Needs budget in 2020/21 and consequently both options in this consultation are expected to further increase the High Needs deficit. It is unclear as to what the School Forum's longer-term strategy is for addressing the deficit recovery and the impact this may have on schools, many of whom are already under-funded to support their own pupils with additional needs. It is also unclear as to whether there has been an equality impact assessment on the budget proposals particularly those associated with the High Needs budget.
We do not agree with the transfer of any funds from the Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block; the government have increased High Needs Funding.
Model 1 should be used
The school budget is already overstretched and schools are responsible for additional provision the first 11 hours of each EHCP. It cannot support any transfer of funding.

Question 3	No of Respondents	No of Respondents answering Model 1	No of Respondents answering Model 2	No of Respondents answering Do not agree a transfer
Do you agree a transfer of Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block on the basis of Model 1 or Model 2?	74	40 (54%)	7 (10%)	27 (36%)

Comments Made:
A loaded question. Model 1 is the least bad option because it retains a higher AWPU
The impact of the High Needs deficit is huge on individual schools and directly affecting their capacity to meet the needs of all children.
School budgets are already too stretched, to take more from them is unacceptable. All our pupils deserve the best opportunities
£1.17m surplus should be reallocated to schools. HND deficit should be solved by clawing back funding from LA maintained schools with huge deficits
Any surplus of schools block funding should be allocated back to schools on a pro rata basis.
The surplus, after the NFF has been applied, should be reallocated to schools. Funding should be clawed back from Local Authority maintained schools with huge deficits to address the High Needs Block deficit.
Looking at the figures it seems to be the most favourable model with least turbulence on school funding and budget pressures whilst having significant impact on the High Needs Block
In principle, we do not agree with a transfer to the HNB. The document notes a £1.17M surplus after applying the NFF - this should be reallocated to schools. The management of the HNB deficit should be achieved by clawing back funding from LA maintained schools with huge deficits and direct management of their finances to ensure that they run a balanced budget in the future.
School budgets are already stretched - hence why not model 2.
Schools currently already pay for the first 11 hours of any statement. For the last couple of years we have been subsidising the High Needs Block and we can't continue to do so. Demands/Pressures on schools to provide more than education e.g. counselling etc. are consuming budgets. The High Needs Block and its administration need to be reviewed so that a) it is managed effectively and b) if the deficit keeps growing representation to Government needs to be made. Schools cannot continue to keep bailing out the High Needs Block, all our efforts are just being diluted.
Model 2 is also fine as long as schools receive the full amount of funding that is highlighted and does not have funding gains capped again.
If the transfer goes ahead, we as a school do not even achieve this 1.84% MFG. As a school we already fund most of the cost of statements in school. Moving money around does not fix the problem.
More allocation in absolute terms should come from DfE, not a greater allocation from the current block.
Although Model 1 seems the most sensible option overall, I would prefer the 'spare' £1.170 million to be distributed to schools. For our school, that seems to equate to around £1000 which would, for example, pay for a complete set of new phonics reading books... Whilst I appreciate that the high needs block is a challenge at authority level, meeting high needs costs within the school budget is what stops us investing in quality resources for other pupils - I'd rather have it than see it go into a communal pot.

Schools are already struggling to manage incredibly challenging budgets. This includes meeting the needs of SEN pupils up to the first 11 hours of any support/provision. It is unacceptable to strip further funding out of our budgets to cover costs that should be met by the LA SEN High Needs allocation.
LGA told us that High Needs Block would be underfunded by £3.6bn by 2022 so we will never get it paid off and just keep under funding our schools which have already lost out on £81.2m (Institute of Fiscal Studies)
High needs had £555,000 agreed to be transferred in Jan 2019- this has not come back, neither has other transfers. therefore this generation are been asked to have their core funding cut to repay a previous cohorts historic underfunding from central government. LGA recognise that High needs underfunded to the tune of £3.6bn by 2022. if we keep transferring 0.5% each year this will never reach that figure and we will just end up underfunding our schools which have already lost out on £81.2m as confirmed by Institute for Fiscal Studies.
We do not agree with either. Our current children should not suffer as a result of poor LA management. Schools have already contributed to the deficit by paying more each individual EHCP contribution. Whilst we understand the current issues, we have struggled with reduced support staff and run our school with mimium staffing to be able to fund support needed. THE LA has continued to provide an inadequate service!
The mess in the high needs block is not the fault of those schools who plan their finances. Some support needs to be given but at a lower level is more appropriate.
The current arrangements for SEND are not workable at present. We have to fund the first 11 hours which is significantly more than other parts of the country.
We agree to a transfer on the basis of Model 2, however, it is concerning that the Schools Forum are consulting on two options neither of which would set a balanced High Needs budget in 2020/21 and consequently both options in this consultation are expected to further increase the High Needs deficit. It is unclear as to what the School Forum's longer-term strategy is for addressing the deficit recovery and the impact this may have on schools, many of whom are already under-funded to support their own pupils with additional needs. It is also unclear as to whether there has been an equality impact assessment on the budget proposals particularly those associated with the High Needs budget.
Close surplus schools and clear the deficit on the high needs budget
We would support transferring money from the SB to the High Needs Block if the current model for EHCP support was changed so that schools no longer have to fund the first 11 hours of support from . The proposed model where a transfer is made IN ADDITION to the 11 hours means schools with high numbers of pupils with ECHP hours are paying in twice, which is unfair. It would be fairer for all schools to contribute by slicing at source (as a transfer) rather than paying the first 11 hours, but to ask for both is not fair.
Ridiculous proposal - the Schools Block funding should not be used to reduce the deficit in the High Needs Block.
In our context of a small school our non -EHCP students are already significantly disadvantaged due to the under-funding currently in place. Model 1 and 2 only make this worse, however if forced - Model 1 would be our preference
The school budget is already overstretched and schools are responsible for additional provision the first 11 hours of each EHCP. It cannot support any transfer of funding.