

## REPORT FOR SCHOOLS FORUM

1.	Date of meeting:	26th June 2020
2.	Title:	DfE School Funding guidance - COVID pandemic
3.	Directorate:	Finance and Customer Services

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To remind members of the Schools Forum of the DfE guidance issued and the current financial support the DfE has put in place at these extraordinary times.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That Schools Forum members note and supports the information contained within this report.

### 3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 To ensure that Schools Forum members are kept informed of the

### 4.. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

#### 4.1 Context

DfE have already confirmed that schools will continue to receive their core funding allocations – as determined by the local authority for maintained schools and through the general annual grant (GAG) for academies – for the 2020 to 2021 financial year (April 2020 to March 2021 for maintained schools and until August 2021 for academies and non-maintained special schools). This will happen regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure and will ensure schools can continue to pay staff and meet other regular financial commitments, as we move through these extraordinary times.

Local authorities will also continue to receive their high needs budgets and should continue to pay top-up and other high needs funding to schools. This will ensure that the employment and payment of staff supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can continue.

Similarly, where schools pay top-up or other funding for pupils attending alternative provision (AP), or pay for other SEND or AP services, we expect these payments to continue so that teachers and other staff can be paid in accordance with their existing employment contracts.

**If placements and services for the summer term have not yet been agreed, schools should fund on the basis of previous patterns of placements**

There will be some instances where schools that remain open have already, or will over the coming weeks, face additional costs as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. In some instances, schools will not be able to cover these from their existing resources.

Funding will be available for all state-funded mainstream and special schools, and alternative provision (PRU's). The monies will be to cover costs relating to specific items necessary to allow schools to provide appropriate support to those children who will continue to attend school under the current arrangements. The items are deemed to be;

- **increased premises related costs**
- **support for free school meals (FSM) for eligible children who are not attending school**, (where those costs are not covered by the FSM national voucher scheme)
- **additional cleaning** – required due to confirmed or suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) cases

### **Funding allowances**

Where they need to, schools will be eligible to claim up to the limits set out below.

#### **Mainstream schools**

250 pupils or fewer	£25,000
251 to 500 pupils	£30,000
501 to 1000 pupils	£50,000
Over 1000 pupils	£75,000

#### **Special schools and alternative provision**

All schools £50,000

This funding is focused on additional costs that schools face, over and above their expected expenditure, in delivering appropriate support for their pupils through this period.

*While the DfE are not asking schools to draw on existing reserves to meet these costs, they do not expect schools to make a claim against this funding if they are anticipating that they will be able to add to their reserves in the 2020 to 2021 financial year.*

#### **Expectations of schools**

Schools will continue to receive their budgets for the coming year as usual, regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure, and this will ensure they are able to continue to pay for staff and meet their other regular financial commitments, while delivering the provision required during this unprecedented period.

#### **Expectations of the local authority.**

The local authority will support schools to ensure the DfE School Funding Guidance is enacted, eligible costs are recovered from the DfE and ensure schools are charged based on previous patterns of demand, to avoid financial difficulties for service providers.

### **Names and contact details**

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