

Schools Forum Briefing

1.	Date of meeting:	15th January 2021
2.	Title:	Falling Rolls Fund Criteria
3.	Directorate:	Finance and Customer Services Directorate

1. SUBJECT: FALLING ROLLS CRITERIA

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Schools Forum members of the criteria for a falling rolls fund.

3. RECOMMENDATION (S)

That members note this information and ensure they make school/academies that they represent aware of this information.

4. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S)

To ensure Schools Forum members are aware of the operational guidance on falling roles funding.

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5.1 Local authorities may set aside schools block funding to create a small fund to support good schools with falling rolls, where local planning data shows that the surplus places will be needed within the next three financial years.

5.2 The Schools Forum should agree both the value of the fund and the criteria for allocation, and the local authority should consult Schools Forum before expenditure is incurred.

5.3 The Falling Rolls Funds is ring-fenced. It operates in a similar way to the Growth Fund, in the sense that both maintained schools and academies are top sliced for the cost of the Fund and both are eligible to receive support through it.

6. SETTING FALLING ROLLS FUNDING CRITERIA

6.1 Following consultation with all schools, Schools Forum agreed at the November 2020 meeting to set aside a small fund of £50,000 in 2021/2022 to support good schools with falling rolls. It is proposed the criteria for allocating falling rolls funding contains clear objective trigger points for qualification and a clear formula for calculating allocations

6.2. **CRITERIA FOR FALLING ROLLS FUNDING**

- Support is available only for schools judged good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection (this is a mandatory requirement)
- There is a reduction in numbers comparing the October School Census with the previous October census that results in substantial disruption to the provision of education in the school
- Admission' demographic data evidences that the reduction is temporary – i.e that numbers are expected to rise again over the next two years
- The school's roll includes at least 80% of the pupils that live within the area
- Reduction in numbers due to pupil migration to other local schools is not eligible.

6.3 **FUNDING DISTRIBUTION METHODOLOGY**

- Annual agreement requiring application each year if the impact of reduction is expected to last for 2 years
- Schools will be expected to cover the temporary funding shortfall from existing carry forward balances prior to application to the Falling Rolls Fund.
- Funding will be allocated up to the AWPU rate for the difference between: the current year October number on roll and; the lower of number on roll at the previous October census and the forecast number on roll using admissions data
- CYPS Finance will oversee the allocation of the Falling Rolls Fund and report to Schools Forum. Applications for financial hardship to the Strategic Director of CYPS will recognise if money has been awarded through this route and may, where appropriate recommend an approach is made to the falling rolls fund.
- The falling rolls fund is open to all schools equally whether academy or maintained. Funding will be kept entirely separate from the contingency for schools in financial difficulties which is of course only open to maintained primary schools.

The local authority will report any falling rolls funds remaining at the end of the financial year to Schools Forum. Funding may be carried forward to the following funding period, as with any other centrally retained budget.

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