

School Forum 5th December 2013

As part of the changes to school funding School Forum have to decide on a range of delegated, de delegated budgets for maintained schools and centrally spent budgets for 2014/15.

The table below outlines how centrally allocated budgets can now be treated.

(a) Has to be allocated through formula but can be de-delegated for maintained schools (approval is by the relevant phase members of the schools forum)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Contingencies (including previous amounts for schools in financial difficulties)2. Free school meals eligibility3. Insurance4. Staff costs – supply cover5. Support for minority ethnic pupils and underachieving groups
(b) Can be centrally retained before allocating formula with agreement of schools forum	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth (any underspend has to be added to the following year's formula allocations)
(c) Can be centrally retained before allocating formula but no new commitments or increases in expenditure from 2012-13 (schools forum approval is required to confirm the amounts on each line)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Admissions2. Servicing of schools forum3, Capital expenditure funded from revenue

Optional de-delegation for maintained schools

There are some services where the Schools Forum on behalf of maintained schools are able to decide that some funding should be taken out of their pre-16 formula budgets before they receive them and moved to central funding. These are:

- a. contingencies (including support for schools supporting schools networks, TGA and NNDR re evaluations);
- b. administration of free school meals (FSM) eligibility;
- c. insurance;
- d. staff costs – trade union facilities agreement;
- e. support for minority ethnic pupils or underachieving groups;

For each of these, it is be for the schools forum members in the relevant phase (primary or secondary) to decide whether that service should be retained centrally. The decision will apply to all maintained schools in that phase and will mean that the funding for these services was removed from the formula before school budgets were issued. There could be different decisions made for each phase. Academies can buy back into local authority services, as is the case for maintained schools where funding remains delegated. There is an issue here that if only some schools buy back a service the delivery of the service may not be viable and will not be available to any schools.

A1. Contingencies – Schools Supporting Schools network- £165,000 , NNDR re-evaluations- £39,000 and TGA- £211

National Non Domestic Rates(NNDR) contingency

National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) contingency is for in year support to schools who have rate re evaluations and have to pay higher rates as a result. The higher amount is fed into the following years formula allocation this is just for the in year increases which can be substantial. Delegation will mean that schools who have in year re evaluations will have to pay for these and any previous years back payments from within their formula allocation. These can be substantial.

Schools supporting schools network .

Subscription to this service provides access to:

- all curriculum networks- literacy network, maths network, ICT network, SEN and Inclusion network, Curriculum Development network.
- school evaluation partner annual data/head teachers performance management visit.
- activities outlined for the school leadership Academy which supports newly qualified head teachers, aspirant leaders
- support for all primary and special school NQTs including additional support for those not making appropriate progress.

Torbay Governors Association

This funding is to contribute towards the administration costs of TGA to aid the communication between TGA, schools and the LA.

A2. Administration of free school meals (FSM) eligibility- £9,000

Introduction

A parent or guardian can claim free school meals for their child if they meet specific criteria related to benefit entitlement and level of income. This is to ensure that children from low income families receive a nutritious meal each day to maximise their capacity for learning. For every child who receives free school meals the school can claim a pupil premium to pay for the additional support these children are likely to need. This is currently worth £630 per year for each pupil who has been entitled to free school meals at any time in the last 6 years and has risen to £900 in 2013/14. It is therefore in a school's interest to ensure that all pupils who are entitled to free school meals are identified. It is also worth noting that more than £4m is distributed through the Torbay Schools Funding Formula according to the numbers of pupils in a school eligible for free school meals.

Entitlement Process

The Department for Education has a database, the Eligibility Checking Service, that organisations can use to check eligibility of individual parents and guardians. The process involves inputting national insurance number, parent's date of birth and surname. The system then checks against listed benefit claimants and indicates whether there is a match with the data on the system.

Options

Schools have the option of purchasing an eligibility checking service that will undertake the above process very cheaply. However, this is generally where the service stops.

Torbay Council's Free School Meals Service, however, will contact any parent who has applied for free school meals and who is not found on the system and will invite them to provide other proof of entitlement e.g. a letter from the relevant government department. This is important because there is often a considerable time lag between date of entitlement and listing on the database.

Often the parent has made a simple error, e.g. an incorrect digit in their national insurance number. The council checks these details with parents who believe that they should be entitled.

The council notifies schools of all pupils who are recorded as being entitled to free school meals and all pupils where a query is being followed up.

The council checks all claimants periodically to verify their continued entitlement and again, will pursue any claimant who is shown as no longer entitled. Schools are notified about these parents and encouraged to support them in providing new evidence if their claim should be ongoing.

When the last check was made against the database, of approximately 3,200 children there were 328 queries, i.e. where the database indicated no entitlement. When these were followed up individually 33 pupils were found to still be entitled to free school meals i.e. 10% of rejected claims.

Equality issues

It is important that children who are entitled to free school meals receive them; also that parents who are no longer entitled to claim are identified and asked to pay for school meals. The council undertakes to check eligibility during the second part of the summer term for existing pupils and in September for new pupils so that schools have accurate data for the October census date. Additional checks are undertaken during the winter months. The council checks eligibility for all children at the same time, including siblings attending different schools. This ensures consistency.

Conclusion

A centralised free school meals service is good value and supports

- Children from low income families in receiving regular nutritious meals

- Parents in receiving the financial help to which they are entitled
- Schools in receiving appropriate funding for the entitled pupils who are more likely to need additional support

A 3. Insurance. £106,000

School Insurance Service

The Council's dedicated Insurance and Claims Handling Team is responsible for arranging and administering the Council's Corporate insurances as well as providing advice and guidance with all insurance/claims related matters, general risk management and dealing with all aspects of civil liability.

Structure and Functions of the Insurance and Claims Handling Team

The Insurance team will:

- arrange placement of a comprehensive package of insurances
- information and clarification on existing policy cover.
- advice and guidance regarding insurance implications for events and activities, property issues, school trips and hiring of school facilities.
- advice on potential claims and management of claims along with associated correspondence.
- undertake mid term adjustments, additions and deletions in cover required to reflect risk exposure as well as arrangements and management of engineering inspection reports.
- Upon request, the team can assist in scrutinising legal documentation, such as contracts with third parties, to ensure that as far as possible any residual risk is transferred through appropriately worded indemnities.
- arrange statistical reporting and claims analysis

The Civil Litigation Claims Handling will:

In the event a liability claim arises, a legally qualified member of the claims handling team will deal with all correspondence with Solicitors and third parties and undertake a

detailed investigation into the causes of the incident. This may involve interviewing staff and inspecting the accident location by prior arrangement with the school.

The Insurance and Claims Handling teams are based at the Town Hall in Torquay. However, there may be occasions when attendance at schools is appropriate and these visits can be arranged by appointment.

Advantages of the Council's Corporate Insurance and Claims Handling Services

There are many advantages of being part of the Council's corporate insurance and claims handling service, not least because of:-

- The economy of scale and managed risk profile ensures that Torbay Council are able to pass on to Schools the advantageous premium costs and insurance terms obtained.
- The provision of a comprehensive range of insurance policies with high levels of indemnity to ensure financial risk protection of key exposures which includes:- public and employer's liabilities (including Governors liability whilst acting on behalf of the LA), motor, officials' indemnity, fidelity guarantee, property (buildings and contents), school journey and personal accident insurance – all arranged through a competitive tender in accordance with industry best practice, EU Service Procurement Directives and Financial regulations.
- Financial security for schools with excess payments being centrally met by the Council.
- management of all corporate insurance claims related matters
- advice and guidance regarding insurance implications for events and activities, property issues, school trips and hiring of school facilities
- reinstatement valuations of LA properties
- Regulatory engineering inspections
- guidance and support on day to day management of risks and Insurance implications
- mid term adjustments, additions and deletions in cover required to reflect risk exposure
- Continuity of service.
- Proven track record for schools with existing local knowledge of specific insurance and claim requirements enabling closer communications.
- Support and access to the Council's corporate services.

Please note that when funding for insurance is delegated to any school, the school shall demonstrate at the time of application for delegated funds, to the satisfaction of the Section 151 Officer (Executive Head of Finance), that cover relevant to the Council’s insurable interests, under a policy/policies to be arranged by the Governing Board, is as good as the relevant minimum cover arranged by Torbay Council and is sufficient to protect Torbay Council.

Failure to comply with the minimum levels of insurance cover may result in additional costs being recharged to Schools.

A 5. Staff costs – supply cover (trade union) £10,000.

The only budget funded from this area is the Teacher Unions Facilities funding which releases union representatives to negotiate with the Council to resolve disputes and produce draft school policies.

A6. English as an Additional Language support service. Support for minority ethnic pupils or underachieving groups - £32,000

Gypsy Roma and traveler education. £9,000

Local context	Need for central EAL service	Risks of not providing a service
Approximately 2% of the school population across Torbay (children of compulsory school age have EAL. This figure varies greatly between schools, some having up to 20% EAL. Between 35 and 40 different first languages are	Because Torbay has a relatively small EAL, it is difficult for individual schools to develop and maintain specialist knowledge about supporting the acquisition of English language skills, and the needs of pupils from many different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Local authorities have the	Specialist knowledge lost Funding not targeted to areas of most need.

represented within the EAL group at any one time.	discretion to retain funding to continue to run a centralised service in cases where local school forums consider that this would be appropriate. Funding would be spread too thinly if it was all funding devolved to schools.	
Raising attainment	Need for central service	Risks of not providing a service
Local and national aims are to maintain improvement in the numbers of pupils gaining 5 or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics, improvement in KS2 result for English and maths and to ensure that fewer pupils leave school with no qualifications.	It is essential that an Ethnic Minority Achievement Service is retained in its current form. Taking immediate steps to 'mainstream' EAL funding will not support the government's aim of ensuring 'funding reflects pupil characteristics more closely' and jeopardises the academic progress and well being of many of our most vulnerable learners. It is more cost-effective to maintain a central service to help schools to meet the needs of bilingual learners and to support schools in narrowing achievement.	Pupils who arrive at upper KS2 beyond would not receive adequate or appropriate support and may not reach full potential for academic progress.
Quality of provision	Need for central service	Risks of not providing a service
Effective use of data Specialist advice, support and intervention	Data collection and analysis – <i>spreadsheet design, comparing like with like, identifying problems</i> Specialist support. Advisory teacher and TA - <i>Targets, assessment, monitoring impact, resources – T&L materials, schemes of work, lesson plans</i>	Data relating to EAL children will not be collected and analysed as a group. Problems will not be identified or addressed appropriately. Specialist knowledge and expertise lost. Effectiveness of

<p>EAL assessment</p> <p>Rapid response to requests for information and advice</p> <p>Access to resources</p> <p>Training</p>	<p>Assessing impact of support – <i>impact sheets shared with school</i></p> <p>EAL assessment – <i>materials linked to national scale, training, monitoring, targets</i></p> <p>Availability – <i>close links with EAL coordinators for telephone/email advice. Quick response</i></p> <p>Training – <i>central training sessions to reflect national initiatives, local need (responsive)</i></p>	<p>intervention will not be measured.</p> <p>EAL assessment in line with national guidelines not carried out.</p> <p>Schools may not know where to access information and resources. Time wasted.</p> <p>Opportunities for CPD through annual programme of training sessions at PDC lost. Knowledge and expertise in schools diminished</p>
<p>Efficient use of funding</p>	<p>Need for central service</p>	<p>Risks of not providing a service</p>
<p>Government guidelines now state that EAL funding to schools should be for the first 3 years only. (This seems to assume that children arrive in pre-school or KS1)</p>	<p>Every year, a significant number of children arrive at upper KS2, KS3 and KS4 with little English. It potentially takes these children 5-7 years to reach the level of English required for academic proficiency. They need to be monitored and given appropriate support throughout their school life. Learners of EAL have, on average, lower levels of attainment than pupils whose first language is</p>	<p>Children who arrive 'late' will develop adequate understanding and communication skills for every day use but they may not receive targeted and adequate support for reading and writing skills. SAT's and GCSE</p>

	English	results will be lower.
Vulnerable children	Need for central service	Risks of not providing a service
Refugees/asylum seekers EAL children who also have SEN	<p>When these children arrive in schools, it is essential that a sensitive induction procedure is followed which includes all agencies involved. EAL/EMA service has knowledge and experience in this area – with flexibility to attend multi-agency meetings. As there are only a few of these children, schools do not have the capacity to develop this experience.</p> <p>It is important that these children accurately identified and receive the support/funding to which they are entitled. The EAL service has developed a list of procedures and comprehensive questionnaires/checklists to ensure that this is the case. This includes an assessment of first language skills through an interpreter. Central EAL funding covers the cost of an interpreter. The EAL service also has close liaison with educational psychologists, SEN department and with advisory teachers and speech and language therapists.</p>	<p>Specialist knowledge and experience lost</p> <p>Schools will find it difficult to follow the necessary procedures. Interpreters may not be used. EAL children may be identified as SEN inappropriately. EAL children who have SEN may not be recognised.</p>
Dealing with racism	Need for central service	Risks of not providing a service
Publicly-funded schools remain under a statutory duty to promote	The Ethnic Minority Achievement services is able to collect and analysis racist incident report	Some racist bullying in schools may not be identified.

community cohesion. It is for schools themselves to decide how to fulfil this duty in the light of their local circumstances.	forms and to provide central or INSET sessions to help schools to recognise and address issues of racism. Pupil voice sessions organised in schools by EMA empower children to talk about their experiences.	Schools often do not feel confident about addressing wider issues of racism. Racism in schools may not be addressed.
Home school liaison	Need for central service	Risks of not providing a service
Providing information and advice Facilitating meetings	The EAL service provides leaflets in a range of languages for parents about the requirements of the English education system and how to find a school in Torbay + additional advice about attendance. The EAL service provides funding for the use of interpreters and advice about how to access interpreters	Parents/carers may not be able to access appropriate information. We have recently become aware of a small number of children being kept out of school beyond the statutory school age due to the parents' lack of awareness. Parents and teachers may not be able to access interpreters when they need to.
Gypsy Roma Traveller children	Need for central service	Risks of not providing a service
Traveller achievement service currently bought in from Devon EMA. Contract to be reviewed.	Torbay EMA has capacity to carry out this work which involves: visiting temporary traveller sites to carry out education checks Supporting 'guest pupil' school admission Liaising with 'base' schools Providing education packs to support literacy and numeracy. Monitoring and supporting settled	Education checks may not be carried out. GRT children may not obtain school places. Movements and progress may not be monitored.

	GRT in schools.	
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These budgets can be centrally retained before allocating funding through the formula with the agreement of Schools Forum

B.1 Significant pre 16 pupil growth £134,000

In 2012/13 there is £134,000 to allocate 7/12ths AWPU to those primary schools who have agreed to expand mid year to take more pupils, Cockington, White Rock, Torre, Warberry, St Margaret Clitherow and Ellacombe. This recognises that the in year growth is planned but that the additional pupils will not be funded until the following years pupil census although the schools have to make additional provision.

The recommendation is that this funding continues to be held centrally and allocated to these schools which have planned pupil growth. This budget will have to increase slightly if 7/12ths of the 2013/14 per pupil entitlement is used .

The budgets in section D can be held centrally at the same level as 2013/14 but the amounts need approval of Schools Forum.

C.1 School Admissions Service £94,000

Services provided

Services provided by the school admission service include:

- Co-ordination and planning of consultation on admission arrangements – legal requirement
- Review and advice re admission policies for other admission authorities – legal requirement
- Preparation, publication and distribution of range of booklets related to admissions processes – legal requirement
- Preparation and publication of range of other information to alert parents to admissions process
- Provision and monitoring of online application process
- Management and delivery of allocation processes for all Reception and year 7 places – legal requirement
- Allocation of school places for Community and VC schools

- Allocation of school places to all people moving to Torbay; liaison with other LAs for pupils moving out of Torbay; processing of applications to transfer between schools in Torbay – legal requirement until September 2013; requested by majority of schools to continue after this date
- Management of process to allocate places for difficult to place and vulnerable children – legal requirement
- maintaining a database of children being home educated
- Preparation for and presentation of statements at admission appeals for community and VC schools – legal requirement
- Preparation and publication of booklet for parents re exclusions
- Advice, guidance and maintenance of records re exclusions from school

Funding

As can be seen, many of the services provided by Admissions are statutory and therefore have to be maintained. Currently Academies can choose to buy in to the admission service; this buy-in secures completion of the entire admission process and preparation for/presentation of appeals.

If this funding is not available for 2013/14 there will have to be a very significant reduction in the admission service. This would inevitably result in a less responsive service and place a greater burden on schools e.g. there would potentially be more excepted pupils in reception classes because of higher levels of error, and higher numbers of appeals for all schools. It would result in a less responsive service for both parents and schools.

C 2. Servicing the School Forum £53,000

This is an amount which is used to offset costs of a range of staff including the Head of Schools Commissioning, Children's Services Group Accountant, Children's Services Principle Accountant and support of democratic Services.

C 3 Capital Expenditure funded from Revenue £9,000

In 2012/13 there is a budget of £9k. This was used to contribute to the management and delivery of a range of capital initiatives across the whole Children Services (schools) capital Programme. The proposal is to allocate the same level of funding for 2013/14

Recommendations for School Forum

1. School Forum decide on behalf of maintained schools for the financial year 2014/5 on funding for centrally provided services.
 - a. School Improvement for the schools supporting schools networks (primary)
 - b. Contribution to TGA (secondary)
 - c. Free School Meals eligibility service(primary and secondary)
 - d. School Insurance (primary and secondary)
 - e. Support for Minority Ethnic service (primary and secondary)
 - f. Support for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller service (primary and secondary)

2. School Forum decide on behalf of all schools for the financial year 2014/5 provided services(all schools)
 - a. Funding for significant pre 16 planned growth

3. School Forum decide on level of central funding for services outlined below (all schools)
 - a. Admissions service
 - b. Servicing the School Forum
 - c. Capital Expenditure funded from Revenue