



Northumberland County Council

Children, Young People and Education

Agenda Item 8

SCHOOLS FORUM

14 February 2024

ESFA Funding for Maintained Schools in Financial Difficulty

1. Purpose of the Report

To update School Forum regarding the Northumberland's allocation from the ESFA funding for distribution for schools in financial difficulty.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Schools Forum notes this report.

3. Background

Initial information was announced by the ESFA in August. LA level allocations have now been published, the details of which have been attached at Appendix A. The latest information and the grant conditions are available at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/additional-support-for-schools-in-financial-difficulty-in-2023-to-2024>

4. Latest Information

Of the £40 million allocated by the ESFA, £20 million has been allocated to Local Authorities for maintained schools. A total of 35 local authorities have received funding, with amounts paid ranging from £1,741,000 to £179,000. Northumberland has received £344,356, one of 4 North East local authorities to receive funding.

The ESFA methodology for the distribution of funding was as follows:

This funding will be allocated proportionately among local authorities who have aggregated school-level deficits which represent more than 1% of their total maintained schools' income.

For academies, the remaining funding will be used to expand the existing route for academies in financial difficulty, and allocated to academy trusts in line with existing criteria and processes.

The funding is in addition to other support available to schools and academies, such as the Schools Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) programme, or the licensed deficits available to maintained schools. Where schools are in serious financial difficulty, schools should contact their local authority or ESFA, who can provide advice and support on a case by case basis.

5. Northumberland Position

To provide some context in relation to the sum received by Northumberland, the latest School Forum report in relation to school balances in July 2023, reported that, as at 31 March 2023, there was 23 maintained school with total deficit balances of £2,708,039. The sum received therefore only represents 12.7% of this figure.

A targeted approach is therefore required in relation to the allocation of this funding. It is therefore proposed that funding will be awarded to schools only in the most serious financial

position, as demonstrated by the issue of a notice of concern, and where a school is actively working towards producing a balanced in year budget.

It is anticipated that funding would then be allocated proportionately on a per pupil basis or similar.

6 Summary and Conclusion

The ESFA has stated that this funding for schools in financial difficulty is very much one off funding and "*the department has no plans for similar additional funding in 2024 to 2025*". It is therefore felt that the funding should be used on a very targeted basis as outlined above, in line with other support measures to maintained schools.

B Parvin
Education and Skills Business Manager
07 February 2024

Funding for local authorities to support their maintained schools in financial difficulty: allocations for 2023-24			
LA Name	LA numbe	Allocation	
Liverpool	341	£	1,741,291.50
North Tyneside	392	£	1,868,147.92
Worcestershire	885	£	1,563,479.89
North Yorkshire	815	£	972,188.39
Enfield	308	£	965,741.96
Lambeth	208	£	959,277.21
Bradford	380	£	934,212.12
Southampton	852	£	559,332.03
Bristol, City of	801	£	675,992.45
South Tyneside	393	£	605,844.96
County Durham	840	£	582,480.41
Greenwich	203	£	554,688.45
Southwark	210	£	516,380.60
Sheffield	373	£	517,960.04
Isle of Wight	921	£	517,146.08
Hillingdon	312	£	491,623.25
Leicester	856	£	422,217.56
Lewisham	209	£	458,226.44
Wiltshire	865	£	405,502.97
Cumberland	942	£	371,578.64
Islington	206	£	364,816.41
Hackney	204	£	359,975.15
Northumberland	929	£	344,356.84
Waltham Forest	320	£	343,459.83
Oxfordshire	931	£	331,272.92
Walsall	335	£	309,601.02
Somerset	933	£	288,318.49
Wirral	344	£	296,310.10
Westminster	213	£	290,418.52
Westmorland and Furness	943	£	301,410.78
Croydon	306	£	264,529.05
Windsor and Maidenhead	868	£	222,129.63
Reading	870	£	218,584.70
Sutton	319	£	202,475.48
Gateshead	390	£	179,028.20
		£	20,000,000.00