

SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM
4th July 2019

Growth Fund 2018-19 - Outturn
(Directorate of Children Learning and Skills)

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To ask that Schools' Forum note the outturn for the Growth Fund 2018-19, note the latest estimates for 2019-20 and consider amending previously agreed underwriting sums for Grove Academy.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Schools' Forum:

- 2.1 note the contents of this report

and

- 2.2 agrees to reduce the level of underwriting for Grove Academy in 2018-19 from £90k to £25k and increase the maximum level of underwriting for 2019-20 from £60k to £90k.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The prescribed methodology for calculating revenue funding for schools means that growing schools are not fully funded for the extra pupils attending the school. The reason for this shortfall in funding is due to the lag in the period from pupils starting until they appear on the School Census and funding is allocated at a later date. To support schools through this period of lag in funding while they are expanding the LA requests an annual sum of money through Schools' Forum called the "Growth Fund".
- 3.2 The methodology for qualification and allocation of the Growth Fund is reviewed and agreed by Schools' Forum on an annual basis, usually in December or January. Schools' Forum is asked to consider the financial impact on schools of expansion and agree an affordable level of additional revenue support.

4. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 A report was presented to Schools' Forum in January 2018 seeking approval for the criteria by which funding would be allocated in 2018-19. The table below briefly summarises these criteria:

Criterion	
School permanently expands at the request of the LA	The number of primary schools qualifying under this criterion is reducing each year, while more secondary schools are beginning to qualify.
School opens a bulge class at the request of the LA	One bulge class opened in 2018-19. Academies receive additional funding in the second year of a bulge class equal to the growth between October censuses.
School admits pupils above their PAN at the request of the LA	This is a 'last resort' option that may be considered when a handful of places are required and a bulge class offering 30 places would not be value for money.
New school opens	New schools may require additional support to ensure viability when first opened.

Outturn Figure

- 4.1 The outturn for 2018-19 is shown in Appendix A. When all payments are deducted from the funding available there is a carry forward of £203,301.
- 4.2 The only changes to the table from the version presented to School's Forum in December 2018 are that contingency sums have been removed and underwriting support for Grove Academy has been reduced.
- 4.3 Schools' Forum agreed to fund 50% of the underwriting costs for Grove Academy in 2018-19 up to a maximum of £90K. However, at this point Slough is uncertain of the level of underwriting that is required for the full year as the DfE have made some adjustments that have still to be understood.
- 4.4 Due to this uncertainty Slough has agreed to provide £50k to Grove for the period September to March, so 50% of this or £25k has been charged to the Growth Fund, this is a reduction from the £90k previously agreed by Schools' Forum. As can be seen in Appendix B it is very likely that Slough will request £90k from the Growth Fund in 2019-20 covering the period April 2019 to March 2020.

Estimated 2019-20 Requirements

- 4.5 The anticipated changes from 2018-19 to 2019-20 are:
- St Anthony's and James Elliman will no longer be growing and will no longer be entitled to receive Growth Funding
 - Wexham School will increase its PAN by 60 places – it's uncertain at this time whether one or both classes will be required
 - Funding requested by the LA to support underwriting costs at Grove Academy will rise back to £90k.

5 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 5.1 Local Authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential.

Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Resources

- 5.2 The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information.

Access Implications

- 5.3 There are no access implications.

6 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

None

Method of Consultation

Representations Received

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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