

SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM
14th July 2020

Growth Fund 2019-20 - 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 2019-20 and note the latest estimates for 2020-21 and future years.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Schools' Forum:

- 2.1 note the contents of this report.

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. 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 November 2019 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 2019-20 is shown in Appendix A. When all payments are deducted from the funding available including the contribution towards Grove Academy underwriting costs there is a carry forward of £284,165. This is higher than necessary even allowing for contingency and means that only £600K of 'topslice' funding is required for 2020-21 down from £800K in 2019-20.
- 4.2 The only change to the table from the version presented to School's Forum in November 2019 is the removal of a contingency sum.

Estimated 2019-20 Requirements

- 4.5 Appendix B shows the expected expenditure including contingency allowances for 2020-21. The changes between 2019-20 and 2020-21 are:
- St Mary's will have fully expanded and will no longer be entitled to receive Growth Funding.
 - Wexham School will increase its PAN up to 240 by opening one additional permanent class.
 - A final request for funding to support the Council in funding the underwriting costs related to the opening of Grove Academy. This funding covers the period April to August 2020 and represents the completion of the 3 year's of support required to ensure Grove Academy opened when required by Slough. This figure is currently being checked by Schools Finance.
 - It is uncertain at this time whether the DfE will agree to fund the 5th Year 7 class at Grove Academy, so an allowance has been included to ensure the class is fully funded. Due to delays with the completion of their new school building Grove Academy took a decision to retain the 2019 PAN for another year rather than increase the admission number. However, Slough's projections for 2020-21 indicated that this class would be required to reduce the risk that pupils would be diverted out of borough.

The DfE may claim that they were informed too late to be able to fund the class.

- 4.6 Appendices C and D are projections of Growth Fund expenditure for 2021-22 and 2022-23 assuming no changes to either local criteria or Growth Fund guidance. Please note the suggested topslices for both years.

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

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