



Report to: Schools' Forum

Date:

Report of: Jaswinder Didially

Title: Falling Rolls Fund 2023/24

Status: For Discussion

1. Introduction

Local Authorities are able to use DGS School block reserves funding to support good schools with falling rolls where local planning data shows that surplus places will be required within the next three financial years. For 2022/23 the fund was set at £1.061. The fund applies to all schools including Academies.

The funding amount and criteria for both Growth and Falling Rolls funds must be agreed by Schools' Forum in accordance with criteria set by the Department for Education. Whilst Schools' Forum can alter the criteria to accommodate local needs, changes to the mandatory criteria requires DfE consent.

The purpose of this report is to seek Forum's approval to an allocation for 2023/24 and criteria against which the allocations will be determined. Funding will only be allocated to schools for one-year with no ongoing commitment to fund further surplus places in future years.

Our Surplus Places paper (November 2022) outlines how we will be working with schools experiencing ongoing and significant reduction in demand (leading to surplus supply); in such a case a re-organisational change will need to be considered.

2. Proposed Criteria

It is proposed that the criterion stays the same. Support will **only** be available for schools:

- Judged to be Good or Outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection; this is a mandatory requirement unless the disapplication is agreed by the DfE. Where a school has no designation, this will need further discussion with DfE. We are seeking Forum's approval to apply to the DfE for the disapplication of this criterion for business cases submitted in 2023/24 academic year only.

For the purpose of this report we have modelled the disapplication of this criteria where it is the only criterion not met; if disapplication of the criteria is approved by School Forum, the LA can submit a request to the DfE for the number of schools affected.

- Surplus capacity exceeds 15% and numbers on roll are at least 5% lower than October 2022 census. Surplus capacity is defined as the difference between number on roll versus operational capacity (this could be Published Admission Number (PAN) or Current Pupil Number (CPN), whereby a lower operational number is in practice).
- Local planning data shows the places will be required within the next 2 academic years.
- The school will need to make redundancies in order to contain spending within its formula budget. Schools will be funded for April-August allocation if required to meet staffing costs until end of academic year.
- School does not have a surplus balance in excess of 5% of its school budget share as at 31st March 2022 and 31st March 2023 (or the relevant academic years in the case of academies).

Schools who meet the above criteria in 2022/23 will be able to prepare a Business Case for approval by the authority. Any agreed funding will be for a specified number of surplus places (within the operational PAN or CPN) pro-rated based on the point in the year, funding permitted. The below information models funding the places at full AWPU or at reduced AWPU (less 25%) to account for variable costs that are not incurred e.g. learning resources, energy, admin etc.

3. Proposed Allocation

The proposed allocation is higher than previous allocations as a result of the following:

- The change in place planning forecasts.
 - Forecasts indicate that numbers in primary year groups will fall by 1500 pupils between 2022/23 and 2023/24. Reception intake alone is expected to fall by 450 pupils. **FIGURES NEED CHECKING FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF OCT CENSUS**
 - School capacity needs to be retained to ensure sufficiency in areas where there is minimal surplus places or robust expectations around in-year growth (such as in areas of temporary accommodation or local regeneration/housing.)

The table below models proposed allocation based on 12/12 funding for 100% or 75% AWPU, for either option A good or outstanding schools only or, B including those less than good. Funding will be provided by 7/12 and accrued for 5/12 in the following financial year.

Modelling	%		100% AWPU	75% AWPU
	Primary AWPU		£3,394	£1,980
Option	Funding period	No. places	i	ii
Option A -Good/ Outstanding Only	September 2023 – August 2024 (12/12)	400	£1.357m	£0.792 m
Option B – including schools less than Good (disapplication of Ofsted criterion)		580 (400 + 180)	£1.968m	£1.148m

4. Decision Requested

Schools' Forum to make a decision on each of the following items for 2023/24:

- a. Decision on whether to fund:
 - i) good or outstanding schools only **or**
 - ii) allow a request for disapplication of Ofsted criterion

- b. Decision to fund the rate at:
 - i) 100% AWPU **or**
 - ii) 75% AWPU

Option A – for good/ outstanding schools only		Option B – including schools less than Good (disapplication of Ofsted criterion)	
i	ii	i	ii
100% AWPU	75% AWPU	100% AWPU	75% AWPU
£1.357m	£0.792 m	£1.968m	£1.148m