

Response ID ANON-6NX3-YAZV-S

Submitted to **Schools national funding formula - stage 2**

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Introduction

A What is your name?

Name:

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C Response type

Please select your role from the list below::

Sector organisation representative

Please select your organisation type from the list below::

Organisation name::

Essex Primary Headteachers' Association

Local authority area: :

Essex

D Would you like your response to be confidential?

No

Reason for confidentiality::

Page 2 - overall approach

1 In designing our national funding formula, we have taken careful steps to balance the principles of fairness and stability. Do you think we have struck the right balance?

No

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account: :

The starting point of the NFF should be to calculate how much funding per pupil is required to provide a decent education. It is essential that the basic level of funding allocated to all schools is adequate for schools and staff to operate properly. The funding for the remaining factors should then be based on the remaining funding available.

2 Do you support our proposal to set the primary to secondary ratio in line with the current national average?

Yes

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account: :

We agree in the absence of further evidence, in adopting the current national average and think this approach should be applied to all funding factors.

3 Do you support our proposal to maximise pupil-led funding?

No - you should keep the balance between pupil-led and school-led funding in line with the current national average

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

Without any further evidence to suggest why there is a need to move funding from school - led to pupil - led, funding should be based on current national averages.

A consequence of reducing the lump sum for authorities that currently fund a higher lump sum is that the funding floor becomes more necessary and it is the funding floor that is undermining fairness.

Page 3 - pupil-led factors

4 Within the total pupil-led funding, do you support our proposal to increase the proportion allocated to the additional needs factors?

No – allocate a lower proportion to additional needs

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

There is no evidence that additional funding is required for additional needs. Should additional funding be required it should not undermine the basic level of funding for schools and therefore there should be an increase in funding.

5 Do you agree with the proposed weightings for each of the additional needs factors?

Deprivation - FSM - Deprivation - pupil based at 5.5%:

Allocate a lower proportion

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

It is essential the basic level of funding allocated to ALL schools is adequate for schools to staff and operate sufficiently and therefore the balance between pupil-led and school-led funding needs to be set at national averages.

Deprivation IDACI - Deprivation - area based at 3.9%:

Allocate a lower proportion

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

LPA - Low prior attainment at 7.5%:

Allocate a lower proportion

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

EAL - English as an additional language at 1.2%:

Allocate a lower proportion

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

6 Do you have any suggestions about potential indicators and data sources we could use to allocate mobility funding in 2019-20 and beyond?

Comments::

The new factor needs to take account of the factors that impact on school mobility such as benefits and housing. Cultural issues can lead to disengagement and the heritage section of the census should be used. There is an increase in people moving into Essex especially from London to Coastal Communities.

Page 4 - school-led factors

7 Do you agree with the proposed lump sum amount of £110,000 for all schools?

Primary lump sum - Primary:

Allocate a higher amount

Secondary lump sum - Secondary:

Allocate a higher amount

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

Funding the lump sum must come in line with the national averages.

8 Do you agree with the proposed amounts for sparsity funding of up to £25,000 for primary and up to £65,000 for secondary, middle and all-through schools?

Primary sparsity - Primary:

Allocate a higher amount

Secondary sparsity - Secondary:

Allocate a higher amount

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

With a properly funded lump sum that reflects the costs that do not vary with pupil numbers, there is no need for a sparsity factor. Need for a sparsity factor is an admission that there are pupils in 'non-sparse' areas who are being deprived of appropriate disposable funding.

9 Do you agree that lagged pupil growth data would provide an effective basis for the growth factor in the longer term?

Comments:

Yes but it would be preferable if funding could be adjusted in year to reflect the latest growth data. Essex Primary schools are constantly being asked to go over the PAN which is causing a funding lag for these schools.

Page 5 - funding floor

10 Do you agree with the principle of a funding floor?

No

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

The principle of a funding floor completely eliminates the stated purpose of the National Funding Formula. It reintroduces and worse still, codifies a postcode lottery based on historical funding rates.

11 Do you support our proposal to set the funding floor at minus 3%?

No – the floor should be lower (i.e. allow losses of more than 3% per pupil)

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

The majority of schools in Essex will gain funding under the NFF, the funding floor caps these gains. There is no evidence that the higher funded schools are over funded but there is evidence that funding in LONDON has resulted in higher outcomes for pupils in LONDON schools. Therefore school funding should be levelled up so that the higher funded schools are protected and the lower funded schools have an increase in funding.

12 Do you agree that for new or growing schools (i.e. schools that are still filling up and do not have pupils in all year groups yet) the funding floor should be applied to the per-pupil funding they would have received if they were at full capacity?

No

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

We do not support the funding floor.

Page 6 - transition

13 Do you support our proposal to continue the minimum funding guarantee at minus 1.5%?

No – the minimum funding guarantee should be higher (i.e. restrict losses to less than 1.5% per pupil in any year)

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

We support the existence of a MFG as a way of phasing in funding changes. However at the current financial climate a MFG of -1.5% is problematic coming on top of other issues such as the radical reduction in the ESG and the apprenticeship levy.

Page 7 - further considerations

14 Are there further considerations we should be taking into account about the proposed schools national funding formula?

Comments::

Whilst we agree that schools funding is at record levels this is due to the continuing rise in pupil numbers. As a % of GDP funding for education has fallen from 5.9% in 2010 to 4.5% in 2016 (National Audit Office Figures) which demonstrates a lack of political commitment to support education, especially at Primary Level.

Page 8 - central school services block

Page 9 - central school services block

15 Do you agree that we should allocate 10% of funding through a deprivation factor in the central school services block?

No - a lower proportion should be allocated to the deprivation factor

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

There is no evidence to suggest and justify that a figure of 10%. The central schools block is far too low. In effect schools are seeing a significant cut to their funding because they will need to fund services previously provided through the ESG.

16 Do you support our proposal to limit reductions on local authorities' central school services block funding to 2.5% per pupil in 2018-19 and in 2019-20?

No - limit reductions to less than 2.5% per pupil per year

Please explain your reasoning and any further evidence we should take into account::

The ESG funding should not have been reduced. Many schools will now have to pay for these services which were funded through the ESG.

17 Are there further considerations we should be taking into account about the proposed central school services block formula?

Comments::

The NFF should start with ensuring the basic level of funding allocated to schools is adequate for schools and staff to operate properly. Therefore the balance between pupil-led and school-led funding needs to be set at current national averages.

We refer you to Sir David Ames, MP for Southend West in the debate Education Funding: 21st February 2017 which mirrors our concerns for the proposed national funding formula.

Page 10 - equalities analysis

18 Is there any evidence relating to the 8 protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 that is not included in the equalities impact assessment and that we should take into account?

Comments::

No