

TO: Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning
DATE: 19 February 2024

**Local Authority Proposals for the 2024-25 Early Years Block Element of the
Schools Budget
Executive Director: People / Executive Director Resources**

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement from the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning to set the 2024-25 Early Years Block element of the Schools Budget based on recommendations made by the Schools Forum.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Executive Member agrees the recommendations proposed for the 2024-25 budget by the Schools Forum in respect of the Early Years Block budget as set out in paragraph 2.3 of Appendix A.**

3 Reasons for recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that relevant elements of the 2024-25 Schools Budget are set in accordance with the views of schools, other providers of education, the Schools Forum, the funding framework and the available level of resources.

4 Alternative options considered

- 4.1 None. The proposals reflect current operational guidance and the overall affordability within the financial settlement allocated by the Government.

5 Supporting information

- 5.1 Whilst spending on the Schools Budget is funded by the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), and therefore outside of the Council's funding responsibilities, Local Authorities (LA) retain a legal duty to set the overall level of the Schools Budget before the start of each financial year. In deciding the relevant amount, LAs must plan to spend at least to the level of estimated DSG and can also take account of any accumulated under or overspending on the Schools Budget from previous years.
- 5.2 At its meeting of 6 February 2024, the Executive agreed that the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning approves the detailed budget allocations for Early Years provisions, up to the estimated level of available resources.
- 5.3 Appendix A presents the proposals agreed by the Schools Forum on 11 January in respect of the Early Years Block element of the DSG.
- 5.4 The Executive Member has observer status at the Schools Forum and therefore receives all reports and is familiar with matters being discussed.

- 5.5 Budget decisions taken by the council have always been in accordance with the wishes of the Schools Forum, and the recommendations on this paper maintain that position.

6 Advice from statutory and other officers

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of the relevant Schools Forum reports.

Director of Finance

- 6.2 The financial implications arising from this report are set out within the supporting information of the relevant School Forum reports and present a budget that can be funded from the overall level of anticipated resources.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 There are no specific impacts arising from this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 These are contained within the main body of the relevant Schools Forum reports.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.5 These are contained within the main body of the relevant Schools Forum reports.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Schools, the Schools Forum and People Directorate Management Team.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Formal consultations and written documents.

Representations Received

- 7.3 Set out in reports to the Schools Forum.

Background Papers

None.

Contact for further information

Paul Clark, Finance Business Partner - People

4054

Doc. Ref

Doc. Ref <https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/fina/bpm/FIBPSCB-FIN9.6/Schools Forum/Exec Member Reports/2024-25 EY Block Elements of the Schools Budget.docx>

Extract from Schools Forum agreement

TO: Schools Forum
DATE: 11 January 2024

2024-25 Proposals for the Early Years Block Budget
Executive Director: People / Executive Director: Resources

3 Recommendations

That Schools Forum considers the council's proposals for allocating funds to schools to contribute to the cost of the September 2023 Teachers' Pay Award and AGREES:

- 2.1 A fixed lump sum payment of £1,489.12 to each eligible provider for the period September 2023 to 31 March 2024 (point Error! Reference source not found.).**
- 2.2 A fixed lump sum payment of £3,500 to each eligible provider for the 2024-25 financial year (points Error! Reference source not found. to Error! Reference source not found.).**

That Schools Forum considers the early years budget proposal from the council and AGREES:

- 2.3 That for the 2024-25 financial year the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning sets:**
 - i. The early years dedicated schools grant (DSG) income budget at £15.149m (Table 2)**
 - ii. The funding rates in the early years funding formula are as set out in Tables 3, 4 and 5**
 - iii. The proposed budgets as set out in Annex 2**
- 2.4 That Schools Forum notes the Council's plan to consult with childminders on the introduction of monthly payments from April 2024, as set out in points 5.32 to 5.34.**

The full paper can be viewed under item 24 of:

[Agenda for Schools Forum on Thursday, 11 January 2024, 4.30 pm | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](#)