

Schools Forum Working Group – 7th September

As part of the review of the DSG the Schools Forum Working Group had looked initially at finding a saving of around £1.5m from within the primary sector only, and by making the saving across the lump sum and deprivation. The LA went out to consultation with all schools on this basis, to which a number of schools replied that they felt that this was not the fairest way and suggesting a) that the savings should be applied to AWPU funding and b) that the savings should be found across the primary and secondary sectors.

At the last Schools Forum Meeting in June the Schools Forum considered the consultation responses but did not make any final decisions as they felt that the consultation was inconclusive, and was also hoping that the NFF second consultation would be issued before a final decision needed to be made.

Over the summer there have been a number of unexpected changes to the NFF timetable – the implementation of this has now been delayed until 2018/19 so no further details have been published yet. Also, the APT which is provided to schools to model the funding formula does not have to be returned to the DfE in October this year which means that the final decision on any changes to the funding formula does not need to be agreed until January 2017.

This was discussed with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Schools Forum and it was proposed that at the WG meeting on the 7th September, the group would look at further modelling data with a view to going out for a further consultation with all schools during the Autumn term.

The modelling data attached is as follows:

Sheet 1 – comparison of Attainment/ Lump sum to AWPU across primary schools only.

As part of the original review, only the impact of reductions to the lump sum and attainment factors was shared with schools. A number of schools indicated that they felt that AWPU would be a fairer option to use. This sheet shows the impact of both methods and provides a comparison between the actual reductions and also provides an indication of the types of schools where the variation between the two methods is greatest.

Sheet 2 – reduction of AWPU across primary and secondary schools.

In response to the initial consultation, a number of primary schools expressed concern that the savings were only being found from the primary sector. As the Schools Forum had not actually been asked to make this a formal recommendation, it was proposed that the WG should have the opportunity to see what the impact would be across all schools. The disadvantage of this proposal is that there would be no change to the ratio between primary and secondary schools, however as the NFF consultation has not been released there is no further evidence to support what the correct ratio should be.

Proposal

The Schools forum meeting is to be rescheduled for the 15th September primarily to review the LA responses for the consultations on Free School funding and Early Years funding which needs to be submitted by the 21st and 22nd September respectively. The Schools Forum will be asked at that meeting to discuss/agree whether there should be further consultation with all schools and on what basis.