

43 responses in favour of Option 5 (BFF)

Comments:

- I am concerned by the funding cuts presented and the continued cuts that schools are facing over the next three years. As a result, schools will be under greater pressure to provide the best education that they can, while having less resources to do so. I am also concerned by the unfairness of the Secondary to Primary ratio (especially in the NFF, it is noted that this are reduced in the Bromley formula). Primary schools are key to a child's early development and it is disappointing that this does not seem to be reflected. It is of great concern that the reduced funding to specialist provisions comes at a time where there is more need than ever and when all schools are required to implement the proposed changes across SEND provision. Option 5 provides the best options for all schools. Those that gain will gain the most they can. Those that loose will lose the least.
- I have chosen Option 5 because I believe that, as many schools have had a reduction in their budgets for this financial year (2017-18), having another year to get used to managing on this new budget would help with stability in schools. I also think that it is not helpful to primary schools to move to the national funding formula before we actually need to – this allows us time to plan for it, knowing that many of us may be facing a further cut at this point.
- Bickley Primary School has chosen the Bromley Funding Formula as we feel this offers the best financial outcome for Bromley Primary Schools. As we understand it, the National Funding Formula will in effect shift funding from Primary to Secondary Schools and this is not in our best interest. Whilst we want the best outcomes for **all** Bromley children, the NFF, while offering protection with the MFG, is not the preferred choice for Bickley.
- As a Head teacher of two schools, I have taken both schools into account when considering the funding formulas. For Dorset Road Infant School,

the fact that the lump sum is larger under the BFF will be better for the small school. For Castlecombe, I do think that the school would be better off with the NFF (as pupil support is calculated using FSM and IDACI.) However, under the BFF the FSM payment is higher than the NFF. Therefore, for both schools together, I believe that the BFF would be better for 2018-19 than the NFF.

- As Bromley primary schools, this is the only choice for us for the next two years. We are already in very hard times, and the NFF when implemented in two years' time, looks set to exacerbate that.
- Firstly, to remain with the Bromley funding enables Primary schools a greater level of flexibility in the short term to continue to focus on Early Intervention that is nationally recognised as an area of importance. As a group of schools with a moral purpose to support all children in Bromley, I believe we need to focus on being proactive (early Intervention) rather than reactive (intervention as needed at a later time). Secondly, we all acknowledge that the NFF will mean that Primary Schools are generally worse off and I think we need to stay with the Bromley funding to give schools time to plan for these cuts.
- I feel that the Bromley funding Formula will give us time to plan for the reductions in funding which is crucial in ensuring sustainability for all primary schools in Bromley.
- After careful consideration, DWJS believes that the Bromley Funding Formula represents the best option both for us as a school and for Bromley schools in a wider sense, particularly those operating provision at KS1&2. As we know, the intention with the review of school funding and the resulting formulae, was to address a disparity between school funding at primary and secondary levels; this disparity is best addressed via the Bromley formula. Pursuing the National Funding Formula in 2018/19 would represent a backward step in this respect and would unfairly favour secondary schools over primaries, exacerbating the significant pressures already being placed on primary school budgets. Taking a more narrow view, the NFF will negatively impact DWJS relative to the Bromley Funding Formula and we see no merit in introducing such a change sooner rather than later. Having already seen a reduction in our budget of over £35,000 this year, it makes no sense for the school to

recommend a funding path that reduces our budget further and, therefore, presents a significant obstacle in the school offering the highest quality of provision that it can for its pupils. In a wider sense, with similar reductions in funding being felt proportionally by primary schools across Bromley, and with cuts to staffing now being made as a result, it is crucial that we pursue a funding path that secures provision for primary age children across the authority.

- I attended the briefing by Mandy Russell yesterday – Thank you for doing that. It was, as they always are, very clearly expressed and informative which is of great help when trying to understand a complex situation. I appreciate the time that the Finance Department put in to assist and advise schools in these difficult times of budget constraints. I do not really think that any of these options meet the needs of any schools. I believe that all schools are being under funded and that it will have a very negative effect on the education and life chances of our children. I think that the staff in schools at all levels work very hard and have continued to do so in very difficult times, demonstrating great professionalism and good will, putting the needs of children first. Downe has made cuts this current year including the loss of support staff and dinner staff. To balance the budget going forward, more cuts will have to be made. There is a limit to the amount of cuts that can be made. Every cut has a detrimental effect on the morale and workload of current staff, the necessary training to ensure professional development and actual resources for children. All of which makes it even harder to provide the same high standards that we continuously aim for. We are already providing more for less.
- Although option 5 is by no means the best for my individual school I think it is the best option for Bromley as a group of schools until we have total clarity on NFF and if and when it is to take place. The date has changed regularly and therefore does not give me a great deal of confidence in the new NFF so far. I also think that since we are all suffering under the financial crisis in education, to make the move back to national unfairness in the Secondary to Primary ratio is not something I would be rushing to do as I believe in early intervention, which then makes children better equipped to move on to Secondary schools successfully.

With weighted ratios expected to increase with the NFF I think it will make it harder for primary schools to meet all of the growing needs they face and provide for all children.

I think it is outrageous that despite the cuts primary schools already face, they are still being asked for more due to supporting the growing SEND hi-needs budget. All schools and provisions are becoming stretched too thinly. We all need to have government and LA commitment to ensuring that we have the resources to provide the best education for all children.

- We would like to opt for the continuation of the Bromley funding formula as we strongly believe it is the most appropriate option for children at Green Street Green. This formula was established to rectify a previous disparity between Primary and Secondary funding and this disparity continues to be in place. Pursuing the National Funding Formula in 2018/19 will prevent any further progress in 'closing the gap' and reintroduce the previous model favouring secondary funding over primary. There remains a degree of uncertainty around the National Funding Formula. Its introduction is taking place at a time of political upheaval, and we must therefore be cautious. It is set for a period which will be 'post-Brexit' and there may even be a general election before 2020. We do not believe it would be prudent to make a decision which will result in drastic changes to Primary school funding in Bromley against such a backdrop. The NFF will negatively impact Green Street Green Primary School relative to the Bromley Funding Formula and we see no merit in introducing such a change sooner rather than later. For our school the difference between option 1 and option 5 equates to approximately £23,000, which is about the cost of a class teacher for three days a week. At a time when budgets have already been reduced in 'real terms' the quality of our provision would be significantly affected should we need to reduce the teaching team **even** further. Finally, as a school with a specialist Speech and Language provision attached, we are deeply concerned about the impact of further budget reductions on our ability to meet the needs of all of our children. We have already struggled this year with a significant decrease in speech and language therapy support. A powerful review of SEND provision in Bromley is about to be published which will make recommendations that will require additional funding if they are to be met effectively. To further reduce Primary school funding unnecessarily at this point will impact

significantly on the capability of all schools to address and meet those recommendations.

- The Bromley funding formula is our preferred option as it retains the lump sum at a higher level than the NFF.
The Bromley funding formula will ensure that we can support our most vulnerable pupils including pupil premium children who in our setting have a double disadvantage.
I feel that investing in primary education across the borough will have a positive impact on all children.
- I am concerned that SEND spend has been an issue for a number of years and has not been addressed by the Local Authority despite lots of discussion. In order to ensure permanent change and not continual patches investment will be needed on behalf of the Local Authority to ensure that out borough placements are minimised. In addition cuts in funding to schools will create additional pressure as schools deal with more children with complex needs in mainstream settings. This combination will inevitably lead to huge challenges to individual schools which will have an impact on the overall development of all children in Bromley.
- Option 5 would be the best formula for our school going forward
- This consultation is set against a grossly unfair settlement for schools nationally and for schools in Bromley.
It needs to be noted that schools nationally are suffering a £4billion cut in real terms by 2020. This is unsustainable nationally and unsustainable in Bromley. All Bromley primaries face a real cut in funding year on year over the next 3 years to an extent where for some schools providing a safe and high quality education may become impossible. To implement the proposed changes across SEND provision will require resources and training. Early intervention for all children in Bromley must be an aim. Any further cuts in Primary funding will inevitably put increased pressure on less resource. I am ambivalent about the use of the NFF or Bromley formula.

The NFF institutionalises national unfairness in the Secondary to Primary ratio, which the Bromley formula has addressed. A move to the NFF, though, would be a less turbulent process for all schools.

Option 5 provides the best options for all schools. Those that gain will gain the most they can. Those that lose will lose the least.

We should have a process that enables the misleading announcements from the Secretary of State, that all schools will gain 0.5% per child funding, to be followed as closely as possible. This promise has proved to be incorrect and unaffordable for Bromley schools. At least option 5 means no school will lose money per child.

- Option 5 is most suited for both Midfield and Leasons because although these schools will be better off with the NFF (as pupil support is calculated using IDACI) at least the FSM element is higher with the BFF than the NFF for 2018-19
- The Bromley FF provides the best option for all schools. At least option 5 means that no school will lose money per child. We appreciate that this is a difficult position for all and the “pot” of money is only getting smaller.
- **Nexus Education Schools Trust has a range of schools across the trust from 1 form entry to schools with a resource and all will be affected adversely under the National Funding Formula. Option 5 will enable schools to have a year of stability whilst the LA reviews High Needs funding and schools can begin to plan for the long term implications of the hard NFF which will impact significantly on the education of primary school children in Bromley.**
- Modelling in scenario 5 means 95% of primary schools would be in a financially more positive situation than scenarios 1-4. Primary education builds the foundations of children’s future success and reducing primary funding even further jeopardises children’s long term life chances.
- Option 5 I feel is the best option for Bromley as a group of schools until we have confirmation on the National Funding Formula. I also believe that investing early in children’s education is cost effective rather than playing ‘catch up’ once at secondary school. I do not think it is fair that secondary schools receive so much more funding per pupil. This is historic in Bromley and certainly working in a school with a high

percentage of deprivation it has made our job very difficult indeed. We have two classes of severely autistic children and we have to subsidise this through our mainstream budget in order to meet their needs. The money we receive for 1:1 or 2:1 does not match the costs and yet the parents expect it because it is on their Education Health Plan. I urge our councillors to encourage the government to review funding for our primary children's education so that the National Funding Formula enables us to.

- I believe option 5 is the best option for Bromley as a group of schools until we have total clarity on the National Funding Formula and if and when it is to take place. Option 5 will keep the differential between primary and secondary as it is. A few years ago we fought to have the differential lowered as primary schools were inadequately funded and it was impacting on our ability to provide a breadth and depth of experiences for our children. This was changed last year and the gap widened slightly, again. A move to widen the differential even further will have a negative impact on primary schools. Early intervention is essential and adequate funding at primary will ensure that children are better equipped to move on to secondary schools successfully. Changes to SEND high needs proposals will impact on Bromley schools for those with bases and EYFS. There will be a lag in funding as prior attainment will not be an option. Investment in the Primary phase supports early intervention and impacts on long term gains for pupils' educational career. The costs associated to primary schools are the same as secondary but the pupil numbers and weighting impacts on primary budgets. Primary budgets have little room to absorb even small minus amounts to budgets.
- I strongly believe the most appropriate option to be continuation of the Bromley Funding Formula. This formula was established to rectify a previous disparity between Primary and Secondary funding and this disparity remains in place. Pursuing the National Funding Formula in 2018/19 will prevent any further progress in 'closing the gap' and reintroduce the previous model favouring secondary funding over primary. There remains a degree of uncertainty around the National Funding Formula. Its introduction is taking place at a time of political upheaval, and we must therefore be cautious. It is set for a period which will be 'post-Brexit' and there may even be a general election before 2020. We do not believe it would be prudent to make a decision which will result in drastic changes to Primary school funding in Bromley

against such a backdrop. The NFF will negatively impact Pratts Bottom Primary School relative to the Bromley Funding Formula and we see no merit in introducing such a change sooner rather than later. At a time when budgets have already been reduced in 'real terms' the quality of our provision would be significantly affected should we need to reduce the teaching team even further. The need for fresh investment in SEND in Bromley is clear with the LA being rated as 'Special measures' in this area. To implement the proposed changes across our SEND provision will require greatly enhanced resources and staff training. Early intervention for all children in Bromley must be addressed. Any further cuts in Primary school funding will inevitably put increased strain on this already significantly disadvantaged group.

- I think option 5 is the best option for Bromley as a group of schools. Option 5 keeps the ratio of funding in favour of primary schools. I believe in the importance of early intervention, which in order to be effective needs to be properly funded. With appropriate support and intervention at primary level to avoid learning gaps developing, children are better equipped to move on to Secondary schools successfully. With weighted ratios expected to increase with the NFF I think it will make it harder for primary schools to meet all of the growing needs they face and continue to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children.
I think it is outrageous that despite the cuts primary schools already face, they are still being asked for more due to supporting the growing SEND hi-needs budget. All schools and provisions are becoming stretched too thinly. We all need to have government and LA commitment to ensuring that we have the resources to provide the best education for all children. I agree with the philosophy of children's SEND being met in mainstream schools, however in order for this model to be implemented effectively in ALL Bromley schools there needs to be adequate funding, to ensure all staff have the necessary expertise and to ensure that children's needs are actually being met.
I am concerned that under new funding proposals there will be a lag in funding for schools with provisions, as the prior attainment element of the funding will not be available for children entering reception.
- Early Intervention is the key therefore we should be directing our finances towards primary schools.

- I have selected option 5 because; Hayes and Dorset Road because Option 5 retains the lump sum at a higher level than the NFF
Option 5 for Midfield, St Mary Cray, Leasons and Castlecombe because although these schools will be better off with the NFF (as pupil support is calculated using the IDACI), at least the FSM element is higher with the BFF than the NFF for 2018-19.

I believe that staying with the BFF for 2018-19 will be better for the LA budget because many of our disadvantaged pupils come into school with very low prior attainment. If we do not provide an outstanding EYFS education they will not stand a chance of achieving in line with national by the time they are 16. Furthermore, some of them face permanent exclusion because their SEMH needs are so high, we cannot meet them in mainstream without investing in significant nurture provision as an early intervention.

We invest in 'nurture' type provision in all our schools to ensure pupil's wellbeing is catered for. We are working towards having parity of access for counselling, psychological diagnosis and support and speech and language therapy in all our schools. This is a key area in The Spring Partnership Strategic plan. The weight of funding must be loaded at the start of many of these pupil's lives or they will not be able to access mainstream education however 'inclusive' our schools are in KS2, 3 and 4.

- Anything other than Option 5 would negatively impact the quality of the education at my school. Despite my school losing-out from the move to the NFF, I think Option 4 could be argued as being the fairest for our Borough's children. Whilst I do concede that secondary schools have had a 'raw deal' in terms of funding for the past few years, and that the NFF looks set to address this, any option from 1-3 would have a catastrophic and all too sudden impact on primary school finances. The economies of scale are simply not available in primary schools, particularly small ones, to deal with any sizeable reduction in funding. If a move away from BFF was to happen, and as a move to NFF looks inevitable, I believe that a soft introduction in the form of Option 4 could be fairest for our Borough's children and would find some middle ground in the primary versus secondary debate which this subject will inevitably provide. For my school specifically, which looks set to be in a budget-deficit this year (for the first-time ever), anything other than Options 1-3 would result in redundancies, and more importantly, a potentially unsafe environment for our children.

- The BFF for 1 year would allow all schools to maintain a relative status quo and provide at least 12 months of onward relative financial stability.
- Although I am disheartened by either of the proposed funding formulae, at this stage I prefer the Bromley option as it appears to provide the best outcome for all but a handful of schools across Bromley and keeps the differential between primary and secondary as it is. In particular, if I have understood correctly, the Bromley Funding Formula appears to be more favourable to schools with higher numbers of disadvantaged pupils. The costs associated to primary schools are the same as secondary but the pupil numbers and weighting impacts on primary budgets. Primary budgets have little room to absorb even small minus amounts to budgets. Small schools are particularly vulnerable. The need for fresh investment in SEND in Bromley is clear and to implement the proposed changes across our SEND provision will require greatly enhanced resources and training. Early intervention for all children must be addressed and any further cuts in funding will inevitably put increased strain on this already significantly disadvantaged group.

- We strongly believe the most appropriate option to be continuation of the Bromley Funding Formula. This formula was established to rectify a previous disparity between Primary and Secondary funding and this disparity remains in place. Pursuing the National Funding Formula in 2018/19 will prevent any further progress in 'closing the gap' and reintroduce the previous model favouring secondary funding over primary.

There remains a degree of uncertainty around the National Funding Formula. Its introduction is taking place at a time of political upheaval, and we must therefore be cautious. It is set for a period which will be 'post-Brexit' and there may even be a general election before 2020. We do not believe it would be prudent to make a decision which will result in drastic changes to Primary school funding in Bromley against such a backdrop. The NFF will negatively impact Tubbenden Primary School relative to the Bromley Funding Formula and we see no merit in introducing such a change sooner rather than later. For our school the difference between option 1 and option 5 equates to approximately £34,000, which is about the cost of a teacher. At a time when budgets have already been reduced in 'real terms' the quality of our provision would be significantly affected should we need to reduce the teaching team

even further. Finally, as a school with a specialist provision attached, we are deeply concerned about the impact of further budget reductions on our ability to meet the needs of all of our children. A powerful review of SEND provision in Bromley is about to be published which will make recommendations that will require additional funding if they are to be met effectively. To further reduce Primary school funding unnecessarily at this point will impact significantly on the capability of all schools to address and meet those recommendations.

- After managing significant recent cuts, the funding settlement for 2018/2019 presents further challenge. The NFF itself has not achieved what we had been led to believe ie that there would be at least a 0.5% increases for all schools. After the response to the national consultation, there have been adjustments to the formula but this has not gone far enough. Whilst any further changes to the NFF are largely out of our hands, the wider picture continues to be an uncertain one - the NFF continues to be a moving target the shape of which continues to be subject to further consideration and potential change. In Bromley the introduction of the NFF at this early stage would have serious repercussions for primary schools. Further cuts will inevitably see provision adversely affected and potentially children's outcomes. Bromley primary schools have been for many years relatively poorly funded when compared to the secondary sector and it has only been relatively recently that this inequity has been addressed. The move towards a more inclusive in-borough provision for SEND is laudable. This strategy will however require adequate resources in mainstream primary schools so high quality teaching and learning is provided with additional support when required. Special needs will therefore be addressed as early as possible and children as well prepared for the transition into their respective secondary settings. Early intervention is an essential principle behind the SEND strategy, cuts to primary budgets will jeopardise its success. Whilst times are changing fast, careful and considered management of change must be an overriding aim for all Bromley schools. The use of the Bromley formula for the 2018/2019 budget would provide exactly that.

- This consultation appears to be grossly unfair in terms of settlement for schools nationally and in particular for schools in Bromley. It also prejudices against primaries versus secondaries. A £4billion cut in school funding by 2020 is unsustainable nationally as well as in Bromley. All Bromley primary schools face a real cut in funding year on year over the next 3 years – this will lead to some schools struggling to provide a safe learning environment and to maintain a high quality educational provision. The changing demographic of Bromley suggests that we need greater funding not less and our 76 primary schools are under increasing pressure to take more and more children with less and less resources – how can we hope to sustain our high performance when under such strain? The need for fresh investment in SEND in Bromley is clear with the LA being rated as ‘Special measures’ in this area. To implement the proposed changes across our SEND provision will require greatly enhanced resources and staff training. Early intervention for all children in Bromley must be addressed. Any further cuts in Primary school funding will inevitably put increased strain on this already significantly disadvantaged group. Bromley have reached their ‘rainy day’ when it comes to the SEND sector and now is the time to release their reserves and invest in this area over the next 3 years. New money is needed – robbing Peter to pay Paul is a farce!

I am disheartened by either of the proposed funding formulae but of the two at this stage I prefer the Bromley option. My rationale for this is that it seems to provide the best options for all bar 4/5 primary schools across Bromley. Those that gain will gain the most they can. For those that lose it will not be devastating as they are part of a very large MAT and can access central resources and funding. Bromley Primary Schools are rated within the top 10% in the UK and as such prepare children well for our secondary colleagues, who don’t want to be playing catch-up when the new year 7s arrive. We need more funding not less

- I am not sure any of the options are good. We are being made to make a decision with no real clarity on the NFF. The date has changed regularly and therefore does not give me a great deal of confidence in the new NFF so far. Although I am in a MAT with secondary schools I do not know if they will support us financially or have the capacity to. I think it is outrageous that despite the cuts primary schools already face, they are still being asked for more due to supporting the growing SEND hi-needs budget. All schools and provisions are becoming stretched too thinly. We all need to have government and LA

commitment to ensuring that we have the resources to provide the best education for all children.

The SEND Reform team will not be able to bring back the money form out of borough unless policy changes at council level! Until policy changes we go around in circles!

- This consultation is set against a grossly unfair settlement for schools nationally and for schools in Bromley.

For an improving school, seeking to make sustainable changes in the safety provisions and quality of education, the best option for securing effective funding is Option 5; although it will continue to create a financial pressure in meeting the needs of all pupils successfully. It has the assurance that at least no school will lose money per child.

Recent educational evidence has suggested for effective learning outcomes for pupils, issues must be addressed at the start of schooling and that requires appropriate funding. Primary funding has been reducing for the last three years. The initiative to move towards NFF supports funding in secondary schools which has required a rebalance of funding. However the current proposals do not support the increasing demands placed upon primary schools. Therefore, Option 5 could be argued as being the fairest for our Borough's primary children. Those that gain will gain the most they can. Those that lose will lose the least. However, if the proposed move to NFF looks inevitable, I believe that a soft introduction in the form of Option 4 could be the fairest for our Borough's children and would be a less turbulent process for all schools.

- Valley Primary has already had to make cuts to staffing to produce a balanced budget for 2017-18 academic year. In the current climate and to allow a gradual reduction in school budgets, Option 5 appears to be the most appropriate. Option 5 allows the school a similar level of funding in the near future which will us to maintain standards of education and care we afford our pupils. Secondary schools in the London Borough of Bromley have fared much better than primary schools for many years and the NFF would allow this continue which totally compromises the notion of ensuring sufficient funding for early intervention. While NFF 4 might be worth considering in the longer term, in the short term, we have no option but to choose Option 5 due to the fact that the London Borough of Bromley might not agree for the school to take an additional class in September 2018, the £18,000 deficit we will already face due to the vacancies across the school on Census Day and the lack of funding foe SEN means that the school will not be

able to deliver the quality of education it is well known for in the area. From looking at the projected figures for all primary schools, Option 5 also seems the fairer option for all schools.

- I have chosen to support the Bromley (Option 5) because:
In a climate of multi-pressure on Primary schools e.g. recruitment; SEND funding etc. this represents the best deal for the Primary sector and keeps a more favourable ratio 1:1.25

The NFF is still some way off and, in political terms, a very long way off. There could be further changes to the NFF and a more equitable ratio would allow Primaries more time to prepare for changes either way. I don't see the advantage in anticipating a move to a formula (NFF) that is yet to be clearly defined and still not providing the scope for planning ahead much beyond a year.