

REPORT TO SCHOOLS FORUM

11 November 2021

TITLE OF REPORT: Growth Fund

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to bring to Schools Forum the estimated amount of Growth Funding that will be received for 2022/23.

Background

2. The Growth Fund is a portion of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block which enables local authorities (LAs) to support schools with significant in-year pupil growth which is not otherwise immediately recognised by the lagged funding system.
3. Prior to the National Funding Formula (NFF) the Department for Education (DfE) did not provide discrete growth fund allocations to LAs; Gateshead therefore set aside a portion of the overall Schools Block funding settlement to meet the calculated requirement for growth. This has meant that the Growth Fund was able to increase/decrease to meet the required demand - subject to the overall affordability of the Schools Block.
4. From 2019/20 the DfE has provided Growth Fund allocations on a formulaic basis for the first time. This means that the level of growth funding Gateshead receives will be directly linked to the increasing number of pupils one year to the next on a middle super output area basis.
5. The DfE issue a growth fund calculator each year to enable local authorities to estimate how much growth funding they may receive in the next funding year.
6. The tool requires the estimated pupil numbers for October 2021 for each mainstream school. In order to carry this out process before the actual October 2021 census information is known, the September 2021 admission numbers are requested from School Admissions Team for reception and year 7 for each mainstream school in Gateshead. The October 2020 pupil numbers are then updated losing year 6 and adding the new reception numbers for primary schools, losing year 11 in secondary schools and adding a new year 7 pupils.
7. The losses and gains are calculated at the middle super output area level (MSOA), and only gains are used for the calculation and reduction in pupil numbers are ignored.

8. For 2021/22 Gateshead received £607,005 in growth funding. Undertaking the above process for October 2021 pupils the estimated growth funding that will be received for 2022/23 will be approximately £580,425.

Proposal

9. It is proposed that Schools Forum note the estimated amount of growth funding that Gateshead will receive. The actual allocation will be confirmed in the December 2021 settlement.

Recommendations

10. It is recommended that Schools Forum notes this report.

For the following reasons:

- To provide Schools Forum with the estimated amount of growth funding that could be received in the December 2021 settlement.

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