

TITLE OF REPORT: Admissions Funding

Purpose of the Report

1. This report builds on the Admissions Funding Report brought to Schools Forum May 2022.

Background

2. From 2012/13 there have been several structural changes to school funding and the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in particular, together with changes in operational guidance.
3. For 2018/19 the Department for Education (DfE) introduced the central services schools block (CSSB), which brought together:-
 - funding previously allocated through the retained duties element of the education services grant (ESG)
 - funding for ongoing central functions, such as admissions, previously top-sliced from the schools block
 - residual funding for historic commitments, previously top-sliced from the schools block
4. Updated operational guidance now states that local authorities cannot charge academies for services such as admissions if they do not charge maintained schools.
5. The Admissions and Admissions Appeals Services rely on buyback from academies to fund the full cost of the services. It is not possible to maintain the current level of service to all schools without the current staffing levels in both areas.
6. Following clarification provided by the DfE, CSSB spend can be increased with the approval of Schools Forum and this can be funded from a block transfer from the Schools Block without the approval of the Secretary of State (SoS) if it is below the 0.05% threshold for block transfers.

Proposal

7. It is proposed that Schools Forum approve a small top slice of £85K to support the staffing structures to provide admission services to all Maintained schools and academies in Gateshead. This top slice will be well below the 0.5% that requires the SoS approval.

Recommendations

8. That Schools Forum approves the small top slice of the Schools Block to support the admissions process for all maintained schools and academies in Gateshead.

For the following reasons:

- To enable the admissions and admissions appeals services to be carried out for all Gateshead Schools.

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