

**Bristol Schools Forum**  
**Schools Block School Funding Formula 2023/24**

<b>Date of meeting:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
<b>Time of meeting:</b>	5:00 pm
<b>Venue:</b>	City Hall

## 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform and seek agreement of the Schools Forum on the principals of the funding formula for mainstream schools and academies for 2023/24, prior to final allocations being made available by the ESFA in December, for final formula agreement in January 2023.

## 2. Recommendations

Schools Forum is invited to:

- 2.1 Note the changes in the formula methodology for 2023/24
- 2.2 Provide feedback, as appropriate on the proposed arrangements for the 2023/24 mainstream funding formula, including the amount set aside for the Growth Fund to allow final proposals to be made and agreed on the Schools' Budget for 2023/24 in January 2023; specifically:
- a. On the transfer 0.5% to High Needs Block
  - b. set MFG at 0.0%
  - c. set the value of the lump sum
  - d. how to allocate remaining funding (after mandated items)
  - e. the value to allocate for the Growth Fund

## 3. Changes between the 2022/23 formula methodology and the 2023/24 methodology

- 3.1 The main formula in 2023/24 is similar in operation to the formula in 2022/23. However, the ESFA has announced that 2023/24 is the first year of transition to a hard funding formula, and so is mandating a number of changes for 2023/24. These changes were presented to School Forum at the meeting held 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022, and explored in more detail at the sub-group meetings held in October and November; there has been no further updates since these changes were communicated.
- 3.2 Additional to the changes in methodology, the minimum per pupil funding amounts have been increased from the 2022-23 levels. KS1 & KS2 are now £4,405 from £4,265. KS3 is now £5,503 from £5,321 and KS4 is now £6,033 from £5,831.
- 3.3 All other NFF factor unit values have been increased. The increases in NFF unit values are as set out in **Appendix A**.

## 4. Funding available

- 4.1 Provisional school block allocations were announced in July 2022 are set out in the table below, and are based upon the October 2021 school census data. Schools Forum is cautioned to note that final allocations will be different, being based upon the October 2022 school census data.

This indicates that the provisional funding for Schools Block in 2023/24 is £319.860m. The equivalent figure for 2022-23 was £302.762m (increase of £17.1m). In addition, there will be an as yet unannounced allowance for Growth. For 2022-23 this was £1.88m. **Table 1** sets out how the indicative 2023-24 funding is composed.

**Table 1: Initial indicative Schools Block Budget 2023/24**

	Unit of funding	2022/23 pupil numbers	£ total
Primary	£4,946.84	35,360	£174,920,232
Secondary	£6,513.22	20,579	£134,035,524
Funding through the premises factors			£10,904,631
Growth funding element			Not yet announced
<b>Provisional NFF 2023-24 schools block funding (excluding funding through the growth factor)</b>			<b>£319,860,387</b>

## 5. Funding formula

- 5.1 The DfE is moving to a hard funding formula, and 2023-24 is the first year of formal transition. As in previous years, the school block funding received into the LA is calculated on National Funding Formula, but now there are increased restrictions and requirements on how Local Authority may distribute this funding to schools via the local formula.
- 5.2 **Minimum per pupil funding levels.** Minimum funding levels per pupil are set as part of the NFF, for 2023/24 these will be £4,405 for primary schools and £5,503 for KS3 and £6,033 for KS4 in secondary schools (the calculation includes the lump sum but excludes other premises factors).

- 5.3 **Positive Minimum Funding Guarantees (MFG).** For 2023/24 funding formula the MFG can be set within the range +0.0% and +0.5%. This is a tightening as compared to 2022/23, which was the range +0.5% to 2.0%.
- 5.4 For the 2022/23 funding formula, an MFG of +0.5% was agreed and applied, as both the LA and Schools Forum recognises the effect the MFG has in protecting funding that is no longer due to schools, for reasons of changing pupil characteristics.
- 5.5 **For 2023/24 the LA is proposing setting at the minimum allowable again, at +0.0% for the same reasons as last year.** This is in line with discussions at the sub-group and in line with the consultation results (the consultation is discussed at 6.33 – 6.36 and summary consultation results are shown at 6.37).
- 5.6 **Growth Funding.** Developing a fair and sustainable way of including sufficient resource in the formula to take account of growing pupil numbers continues to be a challenge. Previously the DfE have used historic spend as the basis, but this did not help authorities with new, rapid growth. For 2023/24, the DfE is continuing with the formulaic basis for distributing growth funding, based on population changes in medium super-output areas, that was introduced for 2019/20. The allocation for 2023/24 will not be known until it is announced, which is expected during December 2024.
- 5.7 Growth funding is discussed in greater depth later in the paper, however as in previous years it is expected that the final allocation into Schools Block to be similar to the anticipated commitment.
- 5.8 **Movements between blocks.** The government's announcement of more funding into schools will raise expectations that the additional funding will be passed on to them, and indeed a number of the changes to the formula for 2023/24 enforce this. However, LAs retain much discretion over application of the formula and so, discretion over how increases are passed on.
- 5.9 As in previous years, the position of the High Needs budget remains of concern. Whilst additional funding again has been made available for the High Needs block directly, in 2022/23 we transferred 0.5% of the Schools Block (£1.5m) to develop the Education Transformation programme. For 2023/24 the LA has scope to again seek agreement to transfer up to 0.5% of the Schools Block (up to an estimated £1.6m) into the High Needs Block.
- 5.10 The Authority continues to explore all options in closing the High Needs funding gap and create a stable platform for the future, and this includes considering the transfer of funding from Schools Block. Transfers between blocks to support the Education Transformation Programme and support Delivering Best Value (DBV) in SEND Programme are discussed elsewhere in the agenda. However for the purposes of this paper the maximum transfer that can be locally agreed has been modelled, based on current funding announcements and in line with the feedback from the consultation, alongside the results with no transfer.

## 6. Funding formula proposals

- 6.1 **Block transfer of up to 0.5% to High Needs:** The LA seeks School Forum views on whether a transfer of up to 0.5% of the available Schools Block to High Needs would be supported.
- 6.2 The LA is aware School Forum has previously expressed concerns around transfers not supporting general High Needs activities and so, just as with the transfer last year, any funds transferred would be earmarked for specific utilisation to support the continuing education transformation and Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND Programme. This amount would be ring-fenced for this purpose and there will be clear and transparent reporting to Schools Forum on the use of this fund. The prime focus of the continuation of the education transformation journey will need to be the sustainability of the High Needs Budget.
- 6.3 A block transfer was one of the areas consulted upon, with 25 of the 36 responses supporting a transfer of up to 0.5%. **The LA is therefore supporting the 0.5% transfer from Schools' Block to the High Needs Block.**
- 6.4 **Minimum Funding Guarantee:** The range in which the MFG can be set for 2023-24 has been reduced from that allowed in 2022/23. The allowed MFG value now must be set between +0.0% and +0.5%.
- 6.5 The LA has discussed this in previous years with Schools Forum and this term worked with the finance sub-group, where the prevailing view has been that the MFG should be set at the lowest allowed value in order to avoid overly protecting schools with reducing AEN characteristics, and also to maximise any available funding remaining after dominating formula commitments to target areas of local priority.
- 6.6 The consultation with schools also sought their views on the level of MFG for 2023/24 and out of the 31 schools who answered this question, 20 were in favour of setting the MFG at +0.0%.
- 6.7 Given the strong preference expressed, and previous practice, **the LA once again proposes to set the MFG at the lowest allowable value, this time at +0.0% for 2023/24.**
- 6.8 Application of the formula funding for 2023/24: Once mandated formula commitments such as the minimum per pupil funding, minimum funding guarantee, premises factors, growth fund and any falling rolls fund allocations have been met, the LA seeks the views of School Forum as to **how to apply any remaining available funding remaining within the Schools Block.**
- 6.9 In previous years formula funding has been targeted at preserving the value of the lump sum and prioritised the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) factors: Deprivation, EAL and Prior Attainment.
- 6.10 Forum is being asked whether it will continue to support preserving the lump sum and targeting the AEN factors as far as possible within the new parameters, or if the

AWPU should be prioritised, or any other component of the funding formula such as supporting unit values for a specific sector.

- 6.11 The question as to preserving the lump sum and whether the AWPU or the AEN should be targeted in the formula was put to schools in the consultation. Schools were free to choose from nine options, in various combinations of the AWPU, the AEN and the lump sum. Out of 36 responding schools, 31 answered this question, with 14 opting to keep the lump sum at minimum allowed and support the AEN over the AWPU, 2 schools voted to prioritise the AEN factors only, if possible. 3 schools voted to keep the lump sum at minimum allowed and support the AWPU over the AEN. 7 schools voted to increase the lump sum and prioritise AWPU to maximum allowed, 3 schools voted to keep the lump sum at minimum allowed and support both AWPU and AEN. 1 school voted to increase the lump sum and support AWPU and AEN, 1 school voted to support AWPU and AEN and not preserving the lump sum.
- 6.12 **Preference to target any particular sector in the unit funding:** Forum will have noticed that the school funding formula uses differing unit values for factors for primary and secondary schools. This has been a feature of the funding formula since its inception and remains a feature of both the LA local formula and the NFF.
- 6.13 In previous discussions Forum has noted that locally the shift towards the NFF has benefitted larger schools to a greater degree than smaller schools. Forum has also noted that primary schools are no longer seeing substantive growth in pupil numbers, and indeed any primary schools are experiencing a decline in roll.
- 6.14 The LA seeks Forum's views on whether the LA should target or prefer the primary unit values over the secondary unit values to any degree when allocating any remaining available formula funding.
- 6.15 This question was asked of schools responding to the consultation. Of the 36 schools in the voting pool, 31 schools responded to this question, 16 schools wanted to see Primary targeted exclusively, with the remaining 15 responding schools wanting no distinction between sectors made.

Given the consultation outcome (no clear distinction of preferences) and government's Autumn Statement announcement of additional funding to address schools' cost pressures, **the LA is proposing no bias of this distribution to Primary and Secondary and prioritise remaining available funding on Additional Educational Needs (AEN) factors: Deprivation, EAL and Prior Attainment** which is consistent with previous years' practice and in line with consultation outcome.

- 6.16 **Other formula factors – premises factors:** In addition to other considerations, and in keeping with established practice, **the LA is proposing to continue with:**
- **Appropriate allocations for NNDR**
  - **Appropriate allocations for PFI**
  - **Retaining the current split-sites policy**
- 6.17 **GROWTH FUND:** The forecast costs of growth, funded from both the Growth Fund and via the APT for “new and growing schools” are set out in **Appendix C**. This

projection is based on the current policy, the growth anticipated in September 2022 and the current rates at which the LA supports growth.

- 6.18 This table also includes a forward projection of growth in these schools through to September 2026.
- 6.19 New school openings are treated as “New and Growing Schools” and funded as such via the Schools Block formula rather than as bids to the Growth Fund.
- 6.20 It should be noted that the growth in secondary schools will be moving through year groups, and some will move from KS3 to KS4, becoming proportionately more expensive to support due to the higher KS4 AWPU, over the KS3 AWPU. This will increase the cost to the Growth Fund.
- 6.21 The actual level of cost will depend on actual pupil numbers recorded in the census and on the final formula considerations in those financial years. The projections shown are at an average of the current 2022/23 funding values.
- 6.22 Existing growth pressures continue to shift away from Primary Schools and into Secondary Schools. The degree at which there will need to be expansion of existing secondary schools in September 2023 and beyond is not yet certain, but the projection allows for some expansion of existing schools.
- 6.23 The commitment on the Growth Fund for 2023/24 – projected in the appendix at 2022 funding levels – is projected at £1.2m. The actual cost will depend on actual pupil numbers recorded in the Autumn 2023 census, the prevailing 2023/24 funding formula values, and the possible need to identify further expansions resulting from the Spring 2023 admissions round. Therefore, the actual cost is likely to be higher than £1.2m, but this increase cannot be quantified at this time.
- 6.24 The LA proposed and School Forum supported establishing a Growth Fund of £2.0m for 2022/23. Whilst commitments in Primary schools is expected to reduce in 2023/24, commitments to secondary school growth will increase, so again **the LA is proposing to allocate £2.0m to the Growth Fund.**
- 6.25 Funding for the Growth Fund is primarily supported from the as yet unannounced Growth element of the Schools Block. The actual allocation is expected to be announced in December 2022 alongside the release of the final DSG allocations and the final school census data.
- 6.26 Allocations will be available once the ESFA releases the data on their website and will be shared with School Forum at the January 2023 meeting, alongside presentation of the proposed final formula.
- 6.27 **FALLING ROLL FUND:** The LA may set aside some of the school block funding in order to create a small fund to support Good or Outstanding schools with falling rolls, where planning data shows the surplus places will be needed within the next three financial years.

- 6.28 BCC last operated the Falling Rolls fund in the 2016/17 financial year. At the meetings of November 2016 and January 2017, Forum received reports on the Falling Rolls fund and subsequently decided against continuation of the fund.
- 6.29 The School Forum finance sub-group revisited consideration of a Falling Rolls fund for 2020/21 at their meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019. The decision was not to re-establish a Falling Rolls fund for 2020/21.
- 6.30 The wording of the current (though dormant) locally agreed criteria restricts eligibility to secondary schools. Given the current and expected pupil population in secondary schools, it is questionable whether any school would qualify for support under the current criteria. Any re-establishment of a falling rolls fund would be at the expense of funding applied through the mainstream formula, reducing the available funds to all schools. The wording of the currently dormant Falling Rolls fund is reproduced in **Appendix B**
- 6.31 **At this time the LA is not proposing to reinstate the Falling Rolls fund for 2023/24.**
- 6.32 **Summary of LA's proposals:**
- a. Note the changes made to the formula by the ESFA
  - b. That the MFG be set at +0.0%
  - c. The transfer of 0.5% of the Schools Block to High Needs, to continue support Education Transformation Programmes such as Delivering Better Value (DBV) for SEND.
  - d. The lump sum be set at minimum allowed, £126,627 for both Primary and Secondary
  - e. That fund remaining after meeting mandated requirements be distributed to the AEN factors in line with consultation outcome
  - f. No bias of this distribution to either primary or secondary
  - g. Premises factors (NNDR, PFI, Split Sites) are appropriately funded, consistent with previous years
  - h. £2.0m be allocated to the Growth Fund
  - i. No re-establishment of a Falling Rolls fund
- 6.33 **Consultation with schools:** the LA consulted with schools on various aspects of the funding formula for 2023/24. The consultation was communicated to schools through the Service Director Education, Skills regular newsletter, via email and through school forum members. The consultation ran from 4<sup>th</sup> October to 14<sup>th</sup> November.
- 6.34 The consultation consisted of two main sections. The first was open to all schools and sought opinion on:
- a. any block transfer to High Needs
  - b. on the MFG
  - c. on the prioritisation of any available funding after mandated commitments
  - d. on whether primary should be prioritised in the distribution of any remaining available funding
  - e. any other comments

6.35 The second section was open to the maintained mainstream schools only and asked their views on the areas open to de-delegation. The results of the de-delegation section are discussed in a separate paper elsewhere on the agenda.

6.36 Thirty-six schools responded to the consultation:

	Maintained	Academy
Primary	10	12
Secondary	2	5
All-through		1
Special		3
PRU		3
Nursery	0	0
Grand Total	12	24

6.37 The summarised responses to the questions were:

		Yes	No
Q1	Agree to Block transfer	25	11
Q2	Comments received	5 from "Yes"	9 from "No"
Q3	Agree to MFG 0.5%	20	11
Q4	Comments received	14 from "Yes" A=14, B=0, C=2, D=3. E=7. F=0, G=3, H=1,	3 from "No" response I=1
Q5	Preferred formula option		
Q6	Prefer any sector? All / Primary	All = 15, Primary = 16	
Q7	Comments received	Eighteen comments,	

Note: Comments received in response to Question 1 are available in Appendix D.

## 7. Future funding arrangements

- 7.1 2023/24 is the first firm year of transition to a hard funding formula, and it's clear that the intention of the ESFA is to continue on this transition in 2024/25 and following years, although no end or target date has yet been set.
- 7.2 Elements of funding in scope yet to transition include split site policy, falling rolls support and growth funding methodology, and it can be expected that local formula factor unit values will further converge towards NFF absolute values in coming years. Guidance issued on 3<sup>rd</sup> November indicates that Split Site eligibility criteria will be mandated for 2024/25 and suggests that some BCC schools currently receipt of split site funding will no longer be eligible under the proposed NFF criteria.
- 7.3 Bristol's Schools Block is funded at a level above that needed to implement a hard NFF in full. Whilst it is not clear whether that once any hard NFF is in operation if Bristol schools will be protected at this higher funding level by any future MFG or

other floor mechanism, it seems likely that NFF minimum per pupil funding levels will grow to a point to provide floor protections to Bristol schools.

**Appendix A - comparison of 2023/24 NFF unit values to Bristol's 2022/23 formula unit values**

Factor	2023/24 National Funding Formula values (with ACA applied)	Range in which 2023/24 Local Formula value must be applied	Local 2022/23 Formula Values	Factors used for 2023/24 modelling (Mandatory factors highlighted in Green)
Basic Entitlement (Primary)	£3,444	£3,317 - £3,530	£3,123	£3,317
Basic Entitlement (KS3)	£4,855	£4,677 - £4,976	£4,404	£4,677
Basic Entitlement (KS4)	£5,472	£5,271 - £5,609	£4,963	£5,271
Free School Meals (Primary)	£487	£475 - £556	£554	£554
Free School Meals (Secondary)	£487	£475 - £556	£554	£554
Free School Meals Ever 6 (Primary)	£715	£697 - £800	£692	£697
Free School Meals Ever 6 (Secondary)	£1,045	£1,019 - £1,165	£1,011	£1,019
IDACI (P F)	£233	£228 - £265	£259	£259
IDACI (P E)	£284	£277 - £319	£313	£313
IDACI (P D)	£446	£435 - £507	£494	£494
IDACI (P C)	£487	£475 - £549	£536	£536
IDACI (P B)	£517	£505 - £585	£572	£572
IDACI (P A)	£680	£663 - £767	£746	£746
IDACI (S F)	£340	£331 - £384	£373	£373
IDACI (S E)	£452	£440 - £513	£500	£500
IDACI (S D)	£629	£613 - £714	£698	£698
IDACI (S C)	£690	£673 - £779	£758	£758
IDACI (S B)	£741	£722 - £838	£819	£819
IDACI (S A)	£944	£920 - £1,068	£1,041	£1,041
EAL3 (P)	£588	£574 - £668	£662	£662
EAL3 (S)	£1,588	£1,548 - £1,800	£1,788	£1,788
Low Attainment (P)	£1,172	£1,143 - £1,326	£1,318	£1,318

Low Attainment (S)	£1,776	£1,731 - £2,013	£1,998	£1,998
Primary mobility	£959	£114 - £983	not used	£114
Secondary mobility	£1,380	£165 - £1,414	not used	£165
Primary sparsity	£57,124	£6,901 - £58,552	not used	£6,901
Secondary sparsity	£83,099	£10,046 - £85,176	not used	£10,046
Lump Sum P	£129,874	£126,627 - £133,121	£125,000	£126,627
Lump Sum S	£129,874	£126,627 - £133,121	£125,000	£126,627

## Appendix B – Falling Rolls bid criteria (dormant document, from September 2016)

### Falling Rolls Fund Bid Criteria

As outlined in the EFA document “2014-15 Revenue Funding Arrangements”, Local Authorities may topslice the DSG in order to create a small fund to support good schools with falling rolls where local planning data show that the surplus places will be needed in the near future.

In Bristol, a small fund is available for those secondary schools & secondary academies to **bid for funding** if they meet **all** of the following criteria:

- 1) The school was deemed good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection (an EFA stipulation).
- 2) The School has a falling roll in this financial year or the school had a falling number on roll in the last financial year.
- 3) School is deemed to be significantly below PAN, (15%), when looking at total pupil numbers.
- 4) Where local planning data suggests vacant spaces will be needed within the next 3 years.
- 5) The School needs to show how it cannot support its number of pupils with the funding allocation. The School will be expected to cover the temporary funding shortfall from existing carry forward balances prior to application to the falling rolls fund.

If after review the bid meets these criteria, the allocation would be based on the following formula.

### Formula Calculation

The formula would look at the actual census and compare it to the PAN of the school, funding an average of the difference between 85% of the PAN and the actual census across all the year groups.

Example:

Year Group	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Total
Actual Census: October 2014	122	134	147	133	151	687
School PAN	216	216	216	216	216	1080
85% of the PAN	184	184	184	184	184	920
Difference between 85% of PAN and actual census	65	50	37	51	33	233

The total difference between 85% of PAN and actual census of 233 pupils is divided by 5 year groups to get an average of 46.6 pupils under PAN (233/5).

The 46.6 pupils are multiplied by the KS3 basic entitlement rate £4,103 (currently for 15/16) = **£191,200.**

**Notes**

- 1) Falling rolls bids are capped at a maximum of £200,000 per establishment per annum.
- 2) The deadline for applications to the falling rolls fund is **1<sup>st</sup> December** each year.
- 3) Unspent falling rolls funding will be used to support the overall DSG fund as directed by the Service Director of Education and Skills in consultation with the Head of Finance (People).

**Appendix C – Current and projected Growth commitments**

Type of Growth	Sector	School	Additional Forms of Entry				
			Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24	Sep-25	Sep-26
Growth Fund	Primary	Perry Court	1	1	1	1	1
Growth Fund	Primary	Marksbury	1	0	0	0	0
Growth Fund	Secondary	Orchard	2	1	1	1	1
Growth Fund	Secondary	City Academy	2	2	1	1	0
Growth Fund	Secondary	Bristol Brunel	2	2	1	1	0
Growth Fund	Secondary	Bristol Met	2	1	0	0	0
Growth Fund	Secondary	Colston Girls	3	2	1	1	1
Growth Fund	Secondary	Cotham	1	0	0	0	0
Growth Fund	Secondary	St Bedes	1	0	0	0	0
Growth fund	Secondary	Trinity	1	1	1	1	1
Growing school APT	Secondary	Trinity	6	6	6	0	0
Growing school APT	Secondary	Oasis Temple Q	0	6	6	8	8

Growing school APT	Secondary	Oasis S Bristol	0	4	6	6	6
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<b>TOTAL number of forms of entry (ie classes of 30)</b>			<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>
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Type of Growth	Sector	Average amount for 7/12ths of year	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24	Sep-25	Sep-26
Growth Fund	Primary	£3,029	2	1	1	1	1
Growing school APT	Primary	£3,029	0	0	0	0	0
Growth Fund	Secondary	£4,017	14	9	5	5	3
Growing school APT	Secondary	£4,017	6	16	18	14	14
<b>TOTAL number of forms of entry (ie classes of 30)</b>			<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>

<b>Forecast cost (£'000)</b>			<b>£2,592</b>	<b>£3,103</b>	<b>£2,862</b>	<b>£2,380</b>	<b>£2,139</b>
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Growth fund cost (£'000)	1,869	1,175	693	693	452
Growing schools cost (£'000)	723	1,928	2,169	1,687	1,687
Total (£'000)	2,592	3,103	2,862	2,380	2,139

	<b>Sep-22</b>	<b>Sep-23</b>	<b>Sep-24</b>	<b>Sep-25</b>	<b>Sep-26</b>
TOTAL number of forms of entry (ie classes of 30)	22	26	24	20	18
Forecast cost (£'000)	£2,592	£3,103	£2,862	£2,380	£2,139

## Appendix D – Comments for Q1: 0.5% transfer to High Needs Block

Comments from establishments who voted 'Yes':

- I would refer to the information received from HT questionnaire in relation to SEND provision in the city (2 schools sent this comment)
- I think it is important to note the increase in mandatory minimum per pupil funding and requirement to set a positive (at least 0%) MFG, school will not lose per-pupil funding. Alongside this the work that has begun within the SEND transformation programme is having a positive impact on the support offered to schools, as well as, developing a deeper understanding of the expectations for inclusion from Bristol. This is vital work which should be allowed to keep its momentum.
- Yes the funding and arrangement for Early Years and KS1 is currently poor, a redress in the balance of early support and places at specialist settings is of paramount importance. The falling roll in Bristol.

- Transfer to the high needs block should be used for the benefit of SEN provision in mainstream school, where need is increasing and lack of funding causing real financial difficulties.

Comments received from establishments who voted 'No':

- Schools like ours are really struggling to meet the needs of children with SEND without the funding. Our low PAN means we don't have any TA's. I would like to see a plan to reduce the deficit without taking from/negatively impacting on schools.
- Current budget deficits for the majority of schools.
- If the decision was taken to transfer the funds, we would like to see BCC's plans to reduce the deficit without impacting on schools. (3 schools sent this comment)
- Huge funding issue in the main block with pay rise etc. We can't afford another transfer.
- If the decision was taken to transfer the funds, I would like to see BCC's plans to reduce the deficit without impacting on schools. BCC's high needs block is heavily in deficit. My opinion is that transferring the maximum permitted by the LA (approx. £1.5m) will have negligible effect and the money can be better used within the C Schools block. Something significant needs to happen to the high needs block and the DfE should be funding this further. I do not support this transfer.
- Our position remains the same as previous years. Our main concern is that the special needs funding situation means that the Schools' block funding gets drawn on. This needs to be perceived as a short-term strategy as in the future at the point when a "hard" formula is introduced this will not be possible. Therefore, we need a very clear strategy in place to bring the High Needs budget into balance in the long term without drawing from the Schools Block indefinitely. It is important that the High Needs budget is sustainable moving forward without constantly raiding the Schools Block funding. The Local Authority needs to be aware of the possible implications of the funding unknowns hitting schools, such as unfunded additional COVID expenditure and future pay increases. It is therefore important to maximise the impact of any potential funding increases to provide schools with long term security.
- If/when NFF is introduced this will not be allowed and high needs is going to need to become self-sufficient. We would rather our per pupil funding increased and we managed/directed the funding ourselves.