

# MERTON School Forum

Induction and Refresh

[Services for schools : Schools Forum | Merton Council](#)

18<sup>th</sup> September 2024

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# Agenda

- Introduction (and refresh) of School Forum meetings
- Schools Forum Role, Powers and Operation
- School Funding System
- Questions

# Clerk to the School Forum

Patricia Kearney

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# Forum History

Government wanted:

- Effective partnership throughout the country
- To ensure that schools in every area have a voice in a range of matters directly relevant to schools funding.

# Establishing a Schools Forum

- Established by Education Act 2002
- Membership and powers updated by Schools Forum Regulations 2020 (*previously 2012*)
- Other changes enacted by subsequent School Finance regulations (*e.g., COVID-19 and accepted remote meetings*)

# Merton School Forum

<b>Total Membership</b>	<b>14 (Voting)</b>
Schools & Academy members	12
Non-schools members	2
<b>Observers</b>	<b>5 (Non voting)</b>
LA Officers	
Non-schools members	

# Forum Powers and Responsibilities

- Powers set out in Regulation
- Specific decision making powers regarding:
  - Formula – voting school, academy and early years members only
  - Certain central items expenditure
  - De-delegations – voting by phase – primary and secondary schools only
  - Scheme for Financing Schools – School members only
  - Movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks

# Working Groups

- Working groups are set up for example
  - High Needs sub working group
  - DfE Safety Valve group



# Communication

- Forum agendas and minutes
- Forum reports
- Forum verbal updates
- Consultation exercises
- School Finance updates

## Schools Forum

The Schools Forum is made up of representatives from schools and academies, but with some representatives from other non-school organisations, such as nursery and 16-19 education providers. The forum acts as a consultative body on some issues and a decision-making body on others.

The forum acts in a consultative role for:

Changes to the local funding formula. (The local authority is responsible for the final decision, although in some cases it may delegate the decision-making power to the Schools Forum.)

Proposed changes to the operation of the minimum funding guarantee

Changes to or new contracts affecting schools

Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in pupil referral units and in Early Years provision

The forum is responsible for decisions on:

How much funding may be centrally retained within the Dedicated Schools Grant  
Any proposed carry forward of deficits on central spend from one year to the next  
Proposals to delegate funding from maintained primary and secondary schools  
Changes to the Scheme of Financial Management

Meetings are held between 4pm and 6pm. If you would like to join the meeting, please contact the clerk on 020 8545 3631. The clerk will advise whether the meeting is being held virtually in Teams or at Malmesbury Primary School.

Meeting dates for 2024/25 academic year:

18 September 2024

13 November 2024

16 January 2025

12 March 2025

25 June 2025

# School Funding System

# Schools Block

- Primary and Secondary Schools / Academies only
- Distributed through nationally prescribed framework (Authority Proforma Tool) - APT
- LA formula limited to 15 factors
- LA can request limited additional premises factors (rent)
- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) review formula to ensure compliance
- Government provide modelling data

# Early Years

Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) supports nursery schools, nursery classes, and private, voluntary and independent providers to deliver the Government funded early education entitlements;

- 9-months-olds up to 2 years for the new working parent entitlement (from 1 September 2024)
- 2-year-olds which will be the same for both the disadvantaged and the working parent entitlements (from 1 April 2024)
- 3 and 4-year-olds for the universal and extended hours entitlements
- Inclusion Funding for all age ranges

Additionally, Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP), Disability Access Fund (DAF) are available for eligible children.

The pass through and other regulations on how to distribute the Early Years Block of the DSG are the same across each allocation and age range.

# Central Services Schools block

- Funds LA responsibilities for all schools and academies
- Calculated on a formulaic allocation for ongoing responsibilities and a cash sum for historic commitments
- Funding for historic commitments expenditure reducing to zero over time (*20% reduction each year*)

# Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)

PPG is additional funding for schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities and to close the gaps between them and their peers

PPG is funded outside the DSG based on:

- Children Looked After (CLA )
- Ever 6 Free School Meals\* (FSM) in primary and secondary
- Service Children
- Any child that has received a free school meal at any time in the last 6 years generates PPG funding



# Other Government Grants

The DfE targets additional funding at schools through specific grants, including:

- PE and sport premium
- Free school meals supplementary grant
- Universal infant free school meals (UIFSM)
- National Tutoring Programme (NTP)
- Job Retention Scheme (JRS) (limited circumstances for schools)
- 6 Form funding, Bursaries, T-Level funding
- Teachers Pay and Pension Grant (TPECG)
- MSAG

# De-delegation

- Funding for de-delegated services must be allocated through the formula but can be de-delegated for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools with Schools Forum approval
- Service de-delegations must be approved on an annual basis following consultation with schools
- For 2023/24 approved de-delegations are:
  - Staff costs – Public Duties/Maternity;
  - Kitchen equipment - Primary Schools Only;
  - Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty;
  - Licences, Subscriptions
  - Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners
  - School Improvement
  - School Improvement & Brokering grant (new)

# Questions