

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM

DE-DELEGATION OF BUDGETS 2023/24

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 As part of the Department for Education's School Funding Reforms introduced from April 2013, local authorities were directed to delegate specific budgets to schools and academies.
- 1.2 The regulations allow for the de-delegation of budgets for specific services for maintained primary and maintained secondary schools only.
- 1.3 This paper sets out the details, costs and charges of the services on which maintained school representatives are required to vote annually.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Funding for de-delegated services must be allocated through the formula but can be passed back, or de-delegated, for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools with schools forum approval.
- 2.2 De-delegation does not apply to special schools, or pupil referral units (PRUs). However, those schools and academies will have the option to buyback these services at a cost based on the same amount per pupil as for maintained primary and secondary schools.
- 2.3 In the case of special schools and PRUs, the funding to buy such services will be included in any top-up payments. Any decisions made to de-delegate in 2022 to 2023 related to that year only, new decisions will be required for any service to be de-delegated in 2023 to 2024.

- 2.1 Schools forum members for primary maintained schools and secondary maintained schools must decide separately for each phase whether each service should be provided centrally; the decision will apply to all maintained mainstream schools in that phase.
- 2.2 They must decide on fixed contributions for these services so that funding can then be removed through the formula before school budgets are issued.
- 2.3 There may be different decisions for each phase.
- 2.4 The following table provides details of services that can be de-delegated and those de-delegated in North Lincolnshire Council

Services which may be de-delegated	De-delegated in North Lincolnshire
additional school improvement services	No
contingencies (including schools in financial difficulties and deficits of closing schools)	No
behaviour support services	Yes
support to underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners	Yes
free school meals eligibility	Yes
insurance	No
RPA	No
museum and library services	No
staff costs supply cover (for example, long-term sickness, maternity, trade union and public duties)	Yes
licences and subscriptions; except for those which are paid for by the DFE	No

- 2.5 The de-delegation of resources provides an opportunity to further strengthen the relationship between the maintained schools sector and the local authority. Building on our shared objectives for safeguarding the positive mental health and well-being and education outcomes of all children and young people within our area. De-delegation provides a mechanism for strengthening mutual accountability for outcomes, reaffirming standards of quality and continuing the discussion on the design and delivery of services.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Decisions made to de-delegate in 2022/23 related to that year only; new decisions are required for any service to be de-delegated in 2023/24.
- 3.2 Maintained school members are asked to consider the de-delegation of the following service budgets.
- Behaviour Support (Social Emotional Mental Health SEMH)
 - Support to Ethnic Minorities and bilingual pupils
 - Free school meals eligibility
 - Staff Costs

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 **Behaviour Support (SEMH)** – Under the SEND Code of Practice 2014, there is statutory need to provide a professional service to support schools to meet their requirements under this code. Provision of de-delegation funding enables the continuation of this professional service.
- 4.2 Educational Psychologists provide a support service to deliver training to staff and schools to enable learning environments to achieve better outcomes for children and young people who may have a range of needs including social, emotional and mental health needs. The service enable and empower parents and staff in learning environments to problem solve complex situations by utilising evidence based interventions and therapeutic approaches and through solution focused approaches, functional analysis and assessment.
- 4.3 Education Psychology support and interventions include:
- Raising achievement through targeted interventions
 - Evaluation of interventions
 - Learning styles and cognitive development
 - Functional analysis of behaviours
 - Social and emotional well-being
 - Psychological impact of a disability on a child or young person
 - Guidance on mental health of children and young people in school settings
 - Whole school development
 - Paths, maps and solution circles
 - Staff professional development and training
 - Working with parents as partners in supporting their children and young people
- 4.4 **Support to Ethnic Minorities, those with English as an additional language and Gypsy/Roma and Traveller children** – this support is provided by the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) through a traded service with academies specifically in the

context EAL (English as an additional language) and BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) pupil and provides a service to maintained schools. EMTAS provides support to pupils at risk of underachieving which also includes Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils. Both EAL and BAME populations have seen a significant increase in North Lincolnshire with approximately 86 different languages being spoken by our bilingual children.

- 4.5 At any given time of year, EMTAS will work with a significant number of primary and secondary schools across North Lincolnshire in a range of different ways dependent on need. The service continues to provide an immediate response to provision of support when highly mobile BAME/EAL/GRT learners move between or into new schools, particularly new arrivals. There is a current and immediate focus on Afghan resettlement families into North Lincolnshire and the support network they will need as they become part of this community. The team are focused upon closing the gaps and raising the attainment and outcomes of BAME groups and supporting schools to demonstrate how they meet the needs of their pupils to OFSTED when required. This is particularly important as the number of BAME pupils has more than tripled in the last six years to over 3500 children. Many of our schools rely upon the support and advice given by EMTAS. In recognition of the need to build capacity in schools EMTAS also delivers a wide range of CPD courses to schools, either centrally, bespoke and more recently via on-line learning platforms to schools and services.
- 4.6 **Free School Meals Eligibility** – de-delegation funds the administration process of free school meals on behalf of schools. The council has access to online DfE Eligibility Checking System, which is populated with Benefits Agency and Tax Credit Agency claim data and can access eligibility information quickly, accurately and efficiently. The system is also used to review claims in large batches instead of manually checking each individual claim. This database is not available to individual schools. Schools would have to set up time consuming manual systems should the Admissions team not undertake this function.
- 4.7 The service continues to work with schools to promote the importance of families continuing to register for free school meals in light of the universal free school meals funding for KS1 children.
- 4.8 **Staff Costs** – this covers the cost of staff nominated as Local Officers undertaking approved teacher union duties. The de-delegation will fund the on-going central approach to reimburse individual schools that employ teachers who need to be released to carry out such union duties..
- 4.9 Having a local/central fund in place means that all staff in our schools have access to experienced union representatives. There is great benefit in having locally based representatives involved in a variety of

procedures and situations. It ensures that an employers' legal responsibilities are covered, that local caseworkers and representatives are available and that staff have easy access to union representation – reducing any waiting times for key meetings and reducing the likelihood of employment matters escalating.

- 4.10 Being part of a locally agreed facility arrangement is also an effective way of meeting employer responsibilities, including under the Trade Union & Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, the Employment Relations Act 1999, the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations Act 1997 and the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, to release and give access to union representatives. In addition, it ensures compliance with the ACAS Code of Practice which provides for time off for trade union duties and activities. Local Academies are also actively encouraged to contribute to the central fund.

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The overall underspend on de-delegated budgets in 2021/22 was £58k
- 5.2 It is proposed not to increase de-delegation costs per pupil for 2023/24 and to use the de-delegated earmarked reserve to finance any cost pressures.
- 5.3 The appendix shows the amount per pupil which is being requested for de-delegation in 2023/24 (at the same rates as for 2022/23).
- 5.4 If school forum members decide not to de-delegate then funding for these services would remain within school budgets and schools would need to pay for such services direct from their own resources.
- 5.5 It should be noted that final data from the ESFA on which our final formula funding for 2023/24 will be based will not be available until December, and as such the sums proposed below are approximations based on the October 2021 census data and assumes that the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, EAL funding etc is the same as 2022/23.
- 5.6 Any unspent de-delegated funding remaining at the year-end will be reported to School Forum. Funding may be carried forward to the following funding period and can be used specifically for de-delegated services. The total de-delegation carry forward as at 31st March 2022 was £450k.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The services that are funded centrally provide support for vulnerable pupils and therefore ensure that there will be the same level of service

available for all children and young people across North Lincolnshire.

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Schools Forum members for primary maintained schools decide for the maintained primary phase the de-delegation of budgets as detailed in appendix 1.
- 7.2 Schools Forum members for secondary maintained school decide for the maintained secondary phase the de-delegation of budgets as detailed in appendix 1.

STRATEGIC LEAD (FINANCE)

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –

Schools Revenue Funding 2023 to 2024 Operational Guide