

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM – 25th SEPTEMBER 2012

REPORT OF ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

FINAL DSG ALLOCATIONS 2012-13

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The final Dedicated School Grant allocation for Wirral in respect of 2012-13 is £227,017,000 (before any academy adjustments). This is £1,413,000 less than the amount included in the budget. The variation arises mainly from an error in the submission of the Early Years census and is the subject of ongoing dialogue with the Department for Education (DfE) / Education Funding Agency (EFA).

2.0 BACKGROUND

DSG for 2012-13 is calculated from January 2012 PLASC and Early Years Census Data. This information can not be finalised before the budget process has been completed and was finally confirmed by the DfE on 26th June 2012.

The Schools Budget was set using an expected level of DSG of £229,260,200. This represented estimated pupil numbers (including Early Years) of 45,427 and a Guaranteed Unit of Funding (GUF) of £5,028.39

A comparison of the estimated and final census data is shown below, together with a financial breakdown:

	Pupil		Variation	£
	Estimate	Final		
Schools Census	43,549	43,589	+40	201,135
Alternative provision	78	69	-9	(45,255)
Early Years	1,800	1,376	-424	(1,568,857)
3 year old adjustment	-	112	+112	
Total	45,427	45,146	-281	(1,412,977)

The grant reduction arises from an error in the submission of Early Years census data. This was not identified at the time due to a breakdown in validation checks in Wirral and passed through the DfE's checks despite being a reduction that was by far the largest in the country.

There has been lengthy correspondence over the summer, describing the circumstances, the accuracy of data, the impact of the reduction and the need for flexibility and fairness, but with little progress. The DfE / EFA view is that mistakes can not subsequently be corrected.

This is a very significant sum, which if uncorrected will impact on future spending and budget decisions. Further discussion will take place with the Department this

month. Members of the Forum will be kept informed of progress in a report to the next meeting

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

That members note the report and request a further update at the next meeting.

Julia Hassall
Acting Director of Children's Services