

## **WIRRAL COUNCIL**

**WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY 2013**

### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

#### **Scheme for Financing Schools – Changes for Approval**

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Schools have been consulted on changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools as reported to the April meeting (appendix 1). This report seeks final approval from the Forum for the changes to be made.

#### **Consultation**

Three schools have responded to the consultation, with only 1 making a comment. The comment received is in respect of de-delegation of school budgets and the absence of any requirement to formally consult with schools and governing bodies. However, it should be noted that only those forum members representing school sectors are eligible to vote and that having considered items in advance and where possible through their cluster groups.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Forum agrees the changes to the Scheme.

**Julia Hassall**  
**Director of Children's Services**

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM 10<sup>th</sup> April 2013

## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Summary of Changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report informs Schools Forum of the revisions required to the Scheme for Financing Schools from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

The scheme was last updated in April 2012 with a number of revisions that were directed by the DfE, including the removal of FMSiS and the GTC payment and the inclusion of Schools Financial Value Standards.

The revisions required from April 2013 are in respect of the new funding arrangements from April 2013. These are detailed below:-

**1. Clarification that school's detailed budgets are no longer included in the section 251 collection.**

Wirral LA will publish each year, under Section 251 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, a statement which sets out details of its planned Schools Budget and LA Budget, showing the amounts to be centrally retained and funding delegated to schools. (Paragraph 1.1.6 of the Scheme.)

**2. Application of the Scheme now applies to WASP**

The scheme will apply to all maintained schools, community, voluntary, foundation, nursery, community special, foundation special schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). (Paragraph 1.2.2 of the Scheme.)

**3. Forum Approval to Scheme Revisions**

Revisions to the scheme will be subject to consultation with the governing body and head teacher of every maintained school before submission to the Schools' Forum for approval by members of the forum representing maintained schools. (Paragraph 1.4.1 of the Scheme.)

**4. Spending for the Purposes of the School**

Governing Bodies are free to spend budget shares for the purpose of the school subject to the provisions of this scheme. The Secretary of State, under Section 50 (3)(b) of the Standards and Framework Act 1998 may prescribe additional purposes for which expenditure of the budget share may occur. The School Budget Shares (Prescribed Purposes)(England) Regulations 2010 allows schools to spend their budget on pupils who are on the roll of other maintained schools. (Paragraph 2.13.1 of the Scheme)

**5. SEN Place Funding and Top ups to be included in the Budget Share**

For the purposes of this section, budget share includes any place led funding for special schools and PRUs. (Paragraph 3 of the Scheme.)

Where schools have chosen to have their budget shares provided to them in cash, the installment will be provided on a monthly basis. Top up payments for pupils with high needs should be made on a monthly basis unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with the provider. (Paragraph 3.1.0 of the Scheme.)

#### **6. Writing off Debts**

Where the LA wishes to provide assistance to schools to reduce or eliminate a deficit balance this should be through the allocation of a cash sum, from the Authority's school budget. (From a centrally held budget specified for the purpose of expenditure on special schools and pupil referral units in financial difficulty or, in respect of mainstream maintained schools, from a de-delegated contingency budget where this has been agreed by Schools Forum). (Paragraph 4.7 of the Scheme)

#### **7. Clarification that Schools Forum can agree De-delegation**

For the avoidance of doubt, LAs may de-delegate funding for permitted services without the express permission of the governing body, provided this has been approved by the appropriate phase representatives of the Schools Forum. (Paragraph 6.1 of the Scheme.)

#### **8. Amended Wording in relation to charging a School if appropriate Support has not been made for High Needs Pupils.**

Costs incurred by the LA in securing provisions specified in a Statement of SEN where the Governing Body of a school fails to secure such provision despite the delegation of funds in respect of low cost high incidence SEN and or specific funding for a pupil with High Needs. (Paragraph 6.2.15 of the Scheme)

#### **9. Restriction to existing commitments for redundancy/PRC payments**

The LA will determine the basis on which services from centrally retained funds in the Schools and LA Budget will be provided to schools. For the purposes for this section, the costs of existing PRC and redundancy payments are included as services.

#### **10. Deletion of reference to optional delegation**

Section 11.8.1 to be removed.

#### **11. Update Annex A – list of maintained schools**

Remove Calday Grange Grammar School, Hilbre High School, Woodchurch High School and St John Plessington from the Maintained School List.  
Add WASP, Pupil Referral unit.

#### **12. Restriction of termination of employment costs funded from central schools budget to the Value of the previous year and existing commitments.**

##### **Extract from Annex B**

Costs of new early retirements or redundancies may only be charged to the central part of the Schools Budget where the expenditure is to be incurred as a result of decisions made before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. Costs may not exceed the amount budget in the previous financial year.

It is important that the local authority discusses its policy with its Schools Forum. Although each case should be considered on its merits, this should be within an agreed framework. It may be reasonable to share costs in some cases, and some authorities operate a panel to adjudicate on applications.

**13. Clarity that contingency for schools in financial difficulty needs to be de-delegated.**

**Extract from Annex B**

*A de-delegated contingency could be provided, if Schools Forum agree, to support individual schools where “a governing body has incurred expenditure which it would be unreasonable to expect them to meet from the school’s budget share”.*

For staff employed under the community facilities power, the default position is that any costs must be met by the governing body, and can be funded from the school’s delegated budget if the governing body is satisfied that this will not interfere to a significant extent with the performance of any duties imposed on them by the Education Acts, including the requirement to conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Section 37 now states:

**Actions Required**

The above revisions to the scheme will be subject to consultation with the governing body and headteacher of all maintained schools by the 21<sup>st</sup> June ready for submission to the Schools Forum on 3<sup>rd</sup> July for Approval.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Forum notes the report.

**Julia Hassall**  
**Director of Children’s Services**