

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Schools Forum

19th June 2013

**Report of the Strategic Director for
Children and Younger Adults**

School Contingency Fund 2013-14

1. **Purpose of the Report**

To inform the Schools Forum of the decisions made to date in respect of the school specific contingency funds.

2. **Information and Analysis**

Funding for the school specific contingency fund was delegated to mainstream primary and secondary schools/academies through the formula for 2013-14. Following consultation with schools the Schools Forum agreed that sums delegated in respect of schools should be re-pooled for 2013-14. Accordingly, the primary and secondary contingency pools have £808k and £129k respectively. In addition the Forum agreed to retain £300k centrally within the High Needs Block to deal with claims relating to additional educational needs issues.

At its last meeting in March the Forum agreed a set of criteria to be taken into account in determining eligibility for financial support. In order to provide a timely response to schools the Forum also agreed that decisions on schools' applications would be a matter for the Strategic Director of Children's Services and outcomes would be reported periodically to the Forum.

Attached as Appendix 1 is a summary of contingency accounts in respect of the pooled funds which shows the amounts collected, the estimated interest payable and administration charges levied. The Forum has previously agreed that the costs of suspension should be charged to the pooled contingency, the figure quoted is a notional estimate based on 2012-13 expenditure levels.

The second part of the Appendix lists the claims made by schools and the funding decisions.

With regards to the £300k AEN contingency, claims have been received from 3 schools totalling £43,712 and these are currently being assessed.

It should be noted that so far relatively few claims have been submitted. If this continues throughout the year, and an underspend were to occur on the pooled contingency fund, the expectation is that the balance would be carried over into 2014-15. However, there may be another option. Funding has been re-pooled for

other purposes e.g. insurances. Should there be an overspend on one or more of these other funds then it may be possible to offset them against any underspend on the contingency. If this approach were adopted sector splits of funding would need to be maintained.

DfE clarification on the options available to the Forum is currently being sought and a report on the position of all the pooled funds will be produced for the Forum in the autumn.

For completeness, special schools have received their funding via the top up allocations. There is no general power for the Forum to re-pool the funding of special schools, any decisions to re-pool are a matter for each individual governing body. Whilst any exceptional costs could be met from the High Needs Block, this would have to have due regard to the delegated funding and the claim meeting the same criteria which have been applied to mainstream schools.

No funding has been delegated through the formula to PRUs or nursery schools. The cost of any claims would have to be met from the High Needs and Early Years budgets respectively. Claims would however be judged against the same criteria as those applying to mainstream schools.

3. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: - prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity; environmental, financial, health, legal and human rights, personnel and property considerations.

4. Background Papers

DfE publication – “School funding reform: Next steps towards a fairer system” 2012-13 consultation papers held in CAYA Finance.

5. Strategic Director’s Recommendation

That the Forum:

- (i) Notes the report and the allocations approved so far; and
- (ii) Offers any views on the operation of the school specific contingency fund to date.

Forecast income and expenditure

	Primary	Secondary
	£	£
Pooled resource/budget	808,063	129,124
Estimated interest – 0.5%	4,040	646
Sub total – available resources	812,103	129,770
Estimated costs of suspensions	100,000	85,000
Admin fee – 1.5% of pool	12,120	1,938
Cost of claims – see below	37,934	-
Estimated balance remaining	662,049	42,832

School	Primary basis of claim	Claimed*	Approved	Notes	Fund
		£	£		
Great Hucklow	Pupil nos.	19,750	11,050	Small school (47) with increase in NOR post census and school has SEN hours per pupil in top quartile. Approved amount based on AWPU funding for 4 pupils	Pool
Baslow St Anne's	School admission issue**	8,884	8,884	School admitted children in January 2013 rather than Oct 2012 unaware of funding implication. Incomplete LA information contributed to problem	Pool
Earl Sterndale	Pupil number issue	18,000	18,000	Very small school (NOR 17) which suffered significant loss which was not protected by MFG	Pool

* Gross amount of claim i.e. before 1% school contribution

** Agreed in 2012 i.e. prior to new framework