

SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM
15th January 2014

Growth Fund
(Directorate of Wellbeing)

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request permission to hold a Growth Fund in 2014-15.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Forum allow a Growth Fund of £1.5million in 2014-15.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The current growth fund is sufficient to provide support for bulge classes and the first year in a permanent expansion only. At the December 2013 forum it was suggested the fund should provide support for the full duration of a permanent expansion.
- 3.3. The expected increase in pupils for the academic year 2014-15 is 590, these additional pupils will be accommodated by existing schools that are in the process of a permanent expansion. £1.2million would be required to fund these additional pupils.
- 3.4 £200,000 broadly relates to four new classes, which officers have estimated as the potential number of new classes that will be required in 2014-15.
- 3.5 It should also be noted that there is a current commitment of £78,726 in 2014-15 relating to academic year payments to Godolphin Infants and Willow Primary.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Growth Fund is one of the centrally held budget areas that Forum has decision making powers over.

- 5.2 DfE guidelines state what the growth fund can be used for:

“the growth fund can be used only for the purposes of supporting growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need, to support

additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulation and to meet the costs of new schools.”

- 5.3 The methodology for distributing funding, is based on AWPU per pupil, reflecting the proportion of the year which is not funded within the school's budget share.
- 5.4 Slough maintained schools will be provided growth funding from September till March and academies will be funded from September through till August. This is because of a difference in financial years, as maintained schools receive their funding in April, whilst academies must wait until the following September.
- 5.4 Slough has incurred significant increase in pupil numbers over the last 5 years, with 15 schools expanding permanently to meet the demand for places.
- 5.5 All extra classes must be agreed by the School Organisational Group before funding will be provided. Funding will only be provided where at least half a class (15 pupils) is planned.
- 5.6 The growth fund will now provide financial support for all the years a school incurs a shortfall in funding whilst going through a permanent expansion, and the first year only for a bulge class.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of this report.

Section 151 Officer – Strategic Director of Resources

- 6.2 The financial implications of the report are outlined in the supporting information.

Access Implications

- 6.3 There are no access implications.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 None.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Not applicable.

Representations Received

7.3 Not applicable.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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