

**SLOUGH SCHOOLS' FORUM**  
**9<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

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**Growth Fund 2016-17**  
**(Directorate of Wellbeing)**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Schools' Forum of the 2016-17 Growth Fund requirement and to seek their approval to fund this from the School's block budget. The authority also seeks permission to fund additional places in schools from 2015-16 to reduce the need for future bulge classes.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Slough Borough Council requires a topslice of £1,100,000 for the Growth Fund. This figure has increased from last year by £250,000 mainly due to requiring 3 emergency bulge classes in November 2015 which has reduced the amount of estimated underspend in 2015-16.
- 2.2 Slough Borough Council requests new funding for 2 additional places per class where class sizes are increased to 32, to ensure all new arrivals entitled to a place are offered one for 2015-16. The advantage of increased class sizes over bulge classes is that places are only funded when required rather than funding a full class of 30 places that may only be partially full.
- 2.3 See Appendix A and B.

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Slough continues to have an increasing pupil population alongside a significant growth in numbers already working through the primary sector therefore the growth fund should be reviewed in light of future pressures.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 All options for creating new places in 2015-16 will require some additional revenue support as pupils will not have been recorded on the October census,.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 Only new classes that have formally been approved by School Organisation Group (SOG) will be funded from the Growth Fund.
- 5.2 The DfE allows the local authority to have a Growth Fund for children that start a new class after the October census and are therefore not funded. The increase in Growth Funding relates to new classes for the September 2016 intake.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 Local Authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential.

### 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 School Organisation Group and all primary schools.

### Method of Consultation

- 7.2 School Organisation Group were consulted at the last 2 meetings 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015.  
Consultation was issued to all primary schools 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015.

### Representations Received

- 7.3 No school objected to the principle of larger classes but some stated they were unable to offer this due to the physical size of classrooms or other issues.  
7 schools responded that they would consider larger classes but only if revenue funding was provided. Some also requested capital funding.  
St Anthony's offered to admit children up to 32 in year 3.  
Marish Primary School agreed to open 2 bulge classes in the 2 year groups facing the most pressure on places.

Cippenham Primary opened a class that was agreed in-principle earlier this year.  
No other bulge classes were suggested.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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