

Subject Heading:

De-delegation of funding for central services 2023-24

Report Author:

Nick Carter – Principal Finance Officer (Schools)

Eligibility to vote:

LA maintained school representatives

SUMMARY

This item considers, again, three proposed items for the de-delegation of funding to maintain services provided centrally.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For LA maintained primary school representatives to agree the de-delegation of funding for the following services:
 - (i) EAL service
 - (ii) Behaviour support service

2. For LA maintained primary and special school representatives to agree the de-delegation of funding for the following:
 - (i) Core school improvement activities

REPORT DETAIL

The de-delegation of funding for central services was an agenda item at the meetings of the Schools funding Forum held on 22nd September and 20th October 2022. At the meeting on 20th October 2022, the representatives from LA maintained schools agreed to the de-delegation of funding for the following services:

- (i) Contingency to support schools in financial difficulty
- (ii) Insurance
- (iii) Free school meals eligibility checking
- (iv) Maternity leave insurance
- (v) Trade Union Facility Time
- (vi) Statutory and regulatory duties

A decision was deferred on the EAL service, Behaviour support service and Core school improvement activities to allow time for further discussion within clusters before taking a decision at this meeting of the Forum. Further information was requested regarding these services and this was sent to Cluster chairs and School Funding Forum Representatives.

EAL service

The funding requested through de-delegation is as follows:

2023-24	Primary
Formula factor	EAL 3
Amount	£38.00
Total	£99,000

2022-23 rate	£38.00
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The additional information sent to Cluster chairs and Forum representatives is shown at Appendix A.

Behaviour support service

The funding requested through de-delegation is as follows:

Formula factor	AWPU	FSM Ever 6	IDACI E	IDACI D	IDACI C	IDACI B	IDACI A	Low attainment	
Amount	£5.00	£2.00	£14.08	£22.08	£12.05	£7.71	£10.07	£5.00	
Total	£87,780	£6,836	£31,075	£26,082	£6,710	£4,671	£1,300	£24,859	£189,314

2022-23 rates	£5.00	£2.00	£14.08	£22.08	£12.05	£7.71	£10.07	£5.00	
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The additional information sent to Cluster chairs and Forum representatives is shown at Appendix B.

Core school improvement activities

The funding requested through de-delegation is as follows:

2023-24	Primary	Special
Formula factor	AWPU	Place
Amount	£5.11	£15.33
Total	£90,000	£2,400

2022-23	£5.11	£15.33
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The additional information sent to Cluster chairs and Forum representatives is shown at Appendix C.

English as an Additional Language service

To retain a central EAL Team to maintain the high levels of support and response to Havering's maintained primary schools, it is proposed that £38 per EAL pupil be de-delegated in the financial year 2023-24. This would provide funding of £99,000 towards the costs of the team which would otherwise be put at risk should an insufficient number of schools decide not to buy into the service.

The level of funding requested in 2022-23 remains unchanged from 2022-23 despite an increase in the numbers of pupils with EAL (3.4% increase between 2018 and 2021).

Through the national funding formula, primary schools receive £629.61 per EAL3 pupil so would retain 94% of their funding to provide support to their EAL pupils.

Rationale for maintaining a central team with EAL expertise in Havering

Demographics are changing rapidly

Havering's demographic is continuing to change at an accelerated rate. Over a 2-year period from January 2020 to January 2022, the percentage of EAL learners in Havering Primaries has increased from 2.7% to 5.5% above National. Unlike the majority of local authorities, Havering saw an increase (rather than a decrease) in its EAL population during the pandemic.

The numbers continue to increase rapidly with children coming from a wide range of countries, including areas of conflict. From mid-August 2022 to the end of September, 158 Havering primary school applications were received from children transferring from abroad of whom 73 (46%) were recorded as having no English.

The service is well-used by schools

From April to March 2021-2022:

- 37 LA-maintained primaries accessed the service for consultancy support and/or CPD. This figure does not include the additional ongoing support that was given to schools in response to telephone queries and emails, mostly related to individual pupils for whom detailed advice was given with signposting to key documents and links.
- 64 bookings to attend half-termly EAL networks were made by staff in LA-maintained primaries. It should be noted that these networks do not fit the Hsis Curriculum Matters model but instead alternate between online twilights and morning meetings to allow for the attendance of any staff, such as EAL TAs, that otherwise would not be able to attend. In addition to these networks, 106 bookings for EAL courses were made by staff in LA-maintained primaries.
- The HES EAL resources pages are well used by Havering schools. Whilst some of the content is available publicly, key documents can only be accessed via log in. Over the past year, there have been 410 views by staff logged in via their LA-maintained primary school HES accounts.

Fluctuating school needs could put the service at risk

Unlike other service areas which generate a more consistent level of need, EAL needs fluctuate across schools due to changing populations and the experience and expertise of individual staff. School demographics can change rapidly which, in addition to changes in staffing, can lead to needs arising where there may have been none previously.

This makes it more difficult for the EAL team to project a guaranteed income to fund salaries. Without collective buy-in from schools, EAL support could cease to exist within HES and schools would have to source support from elsewhere. The sum de-delegated from a school is an average of £2,263, which means the majority of schools would benefit financially from de-delegation compared to the cost of buying a similar level of service externally.

A discrete EAL service allows flexibility

The benefit of maintaining the current model, as opposed to incorporating EAL into the Hsis packages, is the flexibility of the support. Schools can request visits as and when required without having to allocate package time; they can request a number of short visits or online calls throughout the year which can be arranged in response to the admission of new children as opposed to full consultancy days which need to be timetabled in advance.

These flexible visits can cover a wide range of areas from pupil-focused observations to in-house EAL CPD and/or teacher surgeries. In addition, the model for EAL networks, as explained above, allows for networking between teaching assistants as well as teachers, helping maximise the real expertise that exists amongst our EAL TAs.

The EAL service could not, at this stage, be incorporated into the Hsis packages for the period 2023-24. If it were to be incorporated for the period 2024-25, this would lead to an increase in the overall costs of Hsis packages and the loss of the flexibility set out above.

EAL team capacity

The EAL Advisers are available to provide termly EAL visits to schools as requested by individual EAL Co-ordinators/SLT. In terms of the impact of the Advisers' split Safeguarding/EAL role, the increased workload means they have less time to market services and chase up visits with individual schools, hence the onus is on the school to arrange these with their allocated Adviser. Schools are reminded by email at least three times a year of upcoming courses and the availability of support.

The capacity of the team has been enhanced with the addition of a specialist secondary EAL consultant who is increasingly working with secondary subscribers. If needs dictate, her role can be increased to work with a greater number of schools including primary schools.

Across the three Advisers, all requests for support have been met and, to date, there has been no instance of a request not being met.

The offer for LA-maintained primaries:

- Termly consultancy visits on request (more available as required, depending on the needs of individual schools – may be virtual or face-to-face)
- Consultancy visits may consist of: development of the role of the EAL co-ordinator; pupil-focused advice/observations; in-house EAL CPD; teacher surgeries/trouble-shooting; EAL reviews
- Twice-termly networks for EAL co-ordinators and EAL TAs (one virtual and one face-to-face per term)
- Unlimited access to centrally-held EAL CPD (may be virtual or face-to-face)
- Telephone and email support
- Access to the subscriber-only content on the HES EAL resources pages:
<https://www.hes.org.uk/Page/147>

Impact of the EAL team:

The targeted work of the EAL team with EAL co-ordinators, class teachers and TAs helps schools tailor their provision to ensure EAL learners make rapid progress. As a result, pupils that start with limited English across all phases make accelerated progress in order to reach age-related expectations or close the gap towards this.

Havering is attracting considerable migration from other London boroughs, including families with limited proficiency in English. In addition, increasing numbers of displaced families are arriving from areas of conflict with very little English. Central EAL funding will ensure that schools receive EAL support in order to meet the needs of these vulnerable children as and when required.

Behaviour support service

In previous years, the Schools Forum has been asked to approve the de-delegation of funding for the Behaviour and Attendance services. For 2023-24 the LA is seeking de-delegation for behaviour support services only, which now forms part of CAD.

De-delegated funding will be used to provide an enhanced resource of School Support Family Practitioners (SSFPs), meaning that this will be provided to maintained schools without an additional charge. This element of the service would, from April 2023, otherwise be chargeable or would cease.

The primary purpose of this service is to work closely with families of vulnerable children to prevent permanent exclusion, maintain placement and positive working relationships between home and school. SSFPs work in a similar way to family practitioners within Early Help, but with a focus on educational outcomes alongside family support.

Rationale for maintaining a central SSFP service in Havering

For the 2023-24 financial year the LA is proposing that support provided by the SSFPs is financed from de-delegated funds for LA maintained primary schools.

The allocation of practitioner time is determined by reference to the schools' Vulnerability Table, which is produced by statistical analysis of the volume of SEN, LAC, mobility and EAL in each school.

SSFPs provide tailored support and interventions based on the identified needs of the family. This can include intensive work with those in care, on the cusp of care or stepping down from statutory services. In partnership with families and other agencies, specifically Education provisions, they carry out a comprehensive assessment, address identified needs and ensure sustainable long-term change is achieved.

They also have a thorough understanding of local need and available resources enabling them to engage partner agencies effectively to ensure that families achieve optimum outcomes.

The offer for LA-maintained primaries:

Currently, the service includes 1 x Senior SSFP and 2 x SSFPs, which provides sufficient capacity to support c100 families per 12 month period.

Under the revised de-delegated arrangements, the service would be enhanced and would include 1 x Senior SSFP and 4 x SSFPs, providing sufficient capacity to support c180 families per 12 month period.

Referrals will be allocated based on an minimum of 2 cases per year per school (core offer = approx 90 families) and remaining referrals will be allocated (approx.

90) according to the vulnerability data and needs of the situation – with priority given to the more vulnerable schools. This would represent a 90% increase on the current offer.

Schools would complete an Inclusion Gateway Referral Form (IGRF) following the advice of their behaviour lead and/or discussion at the case load meeting, selecting the SSFP box and submit to Inclusions@havering.gov.uk and these are triaged each Friday during term time.

The SSFP role supports the family in working alongside the child's current education setting where challenging behaviour is a concern giving the opportunity to work on shared goals and where possible preventing permanent exclusion, improving the quality of life and experiences for Havering families.

The provision is for children and young people aged between five and ten years old and their families who have been identified as risk of exclusion.

SSFPs provide tailored support and interventions based on the identified needs of the family. The SSFP will contact the family and within five days of case allocation, and undertake an initial home visit. The SSFP will complete an assessment with the family using the Outcome Star Assessment tool. This will in addition highlight any other areas of support needed and the wishes and feelings of the child / children will be gained. From the identified needs, an action plan will be devised for the family.

Once the assessment has been completed, TAF (Team Around the family) meetings will be facilitated at regular intervals, which will be dependent on the needs of the family and the level of support implemented. On average, this meeting will be scheduled every 4-6 weeks and provides an opportunity where the parent/s and a team of multi-agency professionals working with the family will review and update the SMART action plan.

The SSFP will work directly with the parents and child/ren offering support and interventions which will be tailored to the individual family needs. Various evidence-based parenting programmes are currently being run by qualified facilitators which parents can access through a referral with the main focus being around managing undesirable behaviours, enabling the child to return to mainstream education.

Impact of the SSFPs:

The SSFPs receive very positive feedback from the schools that they support, and have successfully engaged children and families to ensure that behaviour improves, and the risk of suspension and/or permanent exclusion reduces.

102 families were supported in 2021 across 2 full time and 1 supervisory SSFP positions - 98% of these children are still within their original placements, 2% are now receiving their education outside of Havering in out-of-borough placements.

Below are a couple of direct quotes from parents.

Parent A - "Carla was amazing and always there when we need her, without her we wouldn't get to where we are now. Thanks a lot for her help and support."

Parent A is the parent of a young person with social communication needs, the SSFP was able to help the parents with seeking support from the appropriate health care professionals and organise next steps. The young man in question was previously receiving regular fixed term exclusions, SSFP was able to support the school in communicating with the parents and linking behaviour strategies to the home environment.

Parent B - "Carla was amazing from the start, I didn't really know about Early Help I thought it was for bad parents. But Carla explained everything they do, Carla was very helpful and really listened to me, she went above and beyond what I expected. Carla really helped me with my relationship with the school and got the necessary outside agencies involved like Linda Mckay. Carla was like an agony aunt, she was there for me at any time when I needed to let off steam about school. And she always found out answers for me if she didn't at the time. Carla really listened to XXXX as well, and at times XXXX enjoyed talking to Carla over zoom even asking when he will she be coming to his school. Carla has even helped me with housing information too. I feel without Carla, my situation with XXXXX and the school and the acorn centre would never have improved. We have all come along way since the beginning and it wouldn't of been able to do it without her."

Parent B is the mother of a child with complex needs who had experienced multiple fixed term exclusions and was on the brink of permanent exclusion, following SSFP support his mother has built a positive relationship with the school/developed an understanding of her sons behaviour and how to manage it. She has also obtained support with applying for housing/ work and her son is no longer at risk of permanent exclusion.

Core school improvement activities

In January 2022, the DfE announced that the School Improvement, Monitoring and Brokerage Grant paid to local authorities would be reduced by 50% for financial year 2022-23 and then removed completely from 2023-24.

At the same time, local authorities (LAs) were given the power to fund all improvement activity, including core activity, via de-delegation with the agreement of schools forums or the Secretary of State.

Havering received £178k in the 2021-22 financial year. Making up the 50% shortfall for 2022-23 required £89k of de-delegated funds, which equated to £5.11 for each pupil Year R-11. At the February 2022 meeting of the Schools Funding Forum, the members representing LA maintained primary schools agreed the de-delegation of £5.11 per pupil for core school improvement activities for the financial year 2022-23.

For 2023-24 the LA is proposing that de-delegation remains at £5.11 per pupil as this will be the first year of the new QA framework. This means that the LA is seeking to de-delegate only 50% of the total grant funding removed for the year.

Rationale for maintaining core school improvement activities

During the Summer term, the LA worked with a group of school and academy leaders to refresh its Quality Assurance (QA) Framework. A key objective of the LA is that all children will attend a school this is judged to be Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. To support the maintenance of high standards, all LA maintained schools will be included in the QA cycle.

Following the pattern set by Ofsted of inspecting Good or Outstanding schools every five years, the LA proposes a five-year cycle of QA where schools retain a judgement of unreservedly Good or Outstanding. If graded Requires Improvement following a Graded Inspection, or the evidence gathered during an Ungraded Inspection suggests that the grade may be lower than Good if a Graded Inspection was to be carried out, then the school will become subject to 'Requiring Additional Support and Intervention' by the LA in the case of maintained schools.

For maintained schools (and academies by election), where a school is considered vulnerable and 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support', the school relevant LA officers will discuss the situation fully with the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher/Principal and the Chair of Governors.

Where a school is judged to be 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support':

- Progress Review Meetings (PRMs) will be implemented following an Ofsted grading less than good, or suggestion that it will be less than good following an Ungraded inspection.
- If significant risk is identified, this will lead to a full school or area review, and
- the school will be subject to regular PRMs.

The purpose of PRMs is for the LA to:

- oversee the implementation of action plans to secure rapid and sustained improvements, so are likely to be 'front-loaded' with more frequent meetings at the outset.
- monitor progress of actions taken to ensure they have maximum impact.
- commission additional resources when needed to support rapid improvement.

- monitor the impact of brokered support, including partnership support.
- where possible, gather direct evidence of progress for LA monitoring and reporting to Schools' Funding Forum' and for Ofsted.

In previous years, an average of 12 schools have been designated as a 'School Causing Concern' (or as 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support' under the revised QA Framework) in each academic year. Of these, an average of 8 schools have been maintained schools, and therefore have been subject to regular PRM's. In addition to PRMs, these schools have also received in-school support, including a full school or area review. These have ranged from reviews of the whole phase, such as Early Years, to targeted areas such as SEN or Reading.

This number of schools subject to PRMs and direct intervention reduced in 2020-21 and 2021-22 due to the pandemic, and the subsequent reduction in Ofsted inspections and QA visits in schools.

However, as with the increased inspection activity and focus on Ofsted in schools, we are expecting this number to increase in the coming year, and are likely to see around 14 schools 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support' and therefore subject to PRMs and/or further in-school support.

When schools are subject to PRMs, this is generally because they are at risk of not retaining their 'Good' or better Ofsted judgement at their next inspection. Over the past five years, the PRM process has proven to be effective, with currently 100% of maintained schools being graded as 'Good' or better by Ofsted. This includes schools which have been subject to PRMs and have been inspected over the period they have been under some form of intervention.

The offer for LA-maintained primaries

PRMs will be resourced for maintained schools by the LA as part of their statutory QA offer and funded from Core Council funding.

However, further in-school support such as a full school review, or review of an area of the school's practice, would be chargeable if deemed that the school is a vulnerable school, and it is proposed that this would be charged to the de-delegated 'School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant' (subject to Schools' Funding Forum approval). If this proposal is approved, spend will be reported to Schools' Funding Forum in the same way as the Schools Partnership and Schools Causing Concern Fund.

An analysis of expenditure will be presented to the Schools Forum after the year end, and any underspends at year end can be carried forward, or re-distributed, subject to Funding Forum approval.