



Proposed School Funding for 2015/16

Consultation document

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Please read this consultation document and then answer the questions on our proposals for school funding in 2015/2016 by completing our [online form](#). Paper copies of the form are available on request by contacting Gezim Leka on gezim.leka@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or 0300 300 6162.

All responses must be received by 15 October 2014.

Introduction and key changes

1. On 13 March 2014 the Department for Education (DfE) launched a consultation on Fair Schools Funding in 2015/2016. The DfE proposed to allocate £350m to the least fairly funded areas by setting Minimum Funding Levels (MFL) that every local area should attract for its pupils in 2015/2016. The DfE used seven characteristics to set minimum funding levels that a local authority should attract. These characteristics are listed below:
 - i. Basic Entitlement
 - ii. Deprivation
 - iii. Looked after Children
 - iv. Low Prior Attainment
 - v. English as Additional Language
 - vi. A lump sum
 - vii. Sparsity
2. After consideration of the views from the consultation responses the DfE has set out the arrangements for 2015 to 2016 which were published on 17 July 2014. The DfE announced that it will allocate £390m to the least funded authorities, £40m more than initially proposed. These announcements indicate that Central Bedfordshire will receive a **one off** additional allocation of £5.3m in 2015/2016.
3. The DfE has made it clear that local authorities will not be obliged to use all MFL in their local formula. It will remain for the local authority, working with its Schools Forum, to decide how best to design its local formula. Local Authorities will have the same freedom to set a local formula for their schools in 2015/2016, as they did in 2014/2015. Individual schools should not expect that their funding will necessarily be at or above the MFL.
4. We are keen to hear your views before we make our final decision on the funding arrangements for 2015/2016. You will notice that we have included questions throughout this document to support you in thinking about these changes. To find out how you can respond to these questions, please read the consultation section at the end of this document.
5. An optional factor for 'sparsity' was introduced by the DfE in 2014/2015, which is aimed at supporting necessary small schools, mainly in rural areas. Specific criteria have been drawn up by the DfE to control how this factor operates. Further details of changes for 2015/2016 can be found in paragraph 59.

6. As in 2014/2015 the Council can choose to have different lump sums for Primary and Secondary (with middle schools getting a weighted average). This is capped at £175,000 per school.
7. Where schools are amalgamating, the amalgamated new school will receive 85% of the total of the combined lump sum but only for the following financial year. For 2015/2016 the LAs may apply for an exceptional factor to pay a further allowance to amalgamating schools in the second year after amalgamation.
8. If a factor for Looked After Children is applied in a council's funding formula this will apply to any child who has been in care for at least one day, whereas in the past this was set at six months.
9. The guideline on the way prior attainment factor is measured is the same as in 2014/2015, using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) data. The measures are:
 - EYFSP – not achieving a good level of development (2013 cohort)
 - KS2 – not achieving level 4 in English or Maths for all cohorts.
10. The mobility factor, if used, can only be applied when the number of 'mobile' pupils exceeds 10%.
11. The basic entitlement for primary pupils (the Age Weighted Pupil Unit - AWPU) must be at least £2,000, and for secondary pupils (KS3 and KS4) at least £3,000. Central Bedfordshire figures for 2014/2015 were well within these parameters.
12. Councils must ensure that at least 80% of delegated funding is distributed via pupil led factors (in Central Bedfordshire in 2014/2015 88% is distributed through pupil led factors). There are currently no constraints on the Primary/Secondary ratio proposed in the latest guidelines but limits may be introduced in the future.
13. The 2015/2016 guidelines required the creation of a Growth Fund to be used to resource demographic increases in basic need. Following analysis of demand for growth to meet basic need, this was agreed by Schools Forum at £2m for 2015/2016, an increase of £1m from 2014/2015. The guidelines state that with the agreement of the Schools Forum, councils can now create a fund to cover temporary falls in a school's roll. This can only be applied to schools that have been judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding'. Schools Forum must also agree the criteria by which this will be applied and be consulted on allocations. This factor can only be applied if it relates to local place planning decisions and cannot be used to support unpopular or failing schools
14. The Operational Guidance for 2015/2016 provides information regarding financing schools that are planning to change their age ranges. Councils are now able to request approval to vary the pupil numbers for specific schools where:
 - there has been, or is going to be, a reorganisation; or
 - a school has changed, or is going to change, its age range either by adding or losing year groups.

15. In these cases, a weighted average of pupil numbers can be used, taking into account the changes in pupil numbers from the new academic year. Due to the 'school-driven' nature of the age range changes in Central Bedfordshire where numbers will continue to be affected by parental preference, the Council will need to apply for a variation in pupil numbers for specific schools for the funding period 2015/2016. Councils' budgets will be adjusted to recoup budget so that the Education Funding Agency (EFA) can fund affected Academies.
16. There will be some minor changes to the membership of the Schools Forum in the Schools Forum Regulations. The DfE is proposing to extend the membership of the forum to include representative of AP academies, Free School and Special Academies.
17. The Council will be able to apply for exceptions from the finance regulations in relation to:
 - Premises factors
 - Minimum Funding Guarantee
 - Changes in pupil numbers as a consequence of reorganisation or changes in years of admission
 - Sparsity calculation
 - Variation to lump sum for amalgamated schools.
18. All maintained schools and Academies must be treated equally when incurring central expenditure, with the exception of the figure that can only be de-delegated for maintained schools.
19. Pupil Premium will remain a separate grant in 2015/2016 and the rates for 2015/2016 will be confirmed by the DfE in due course.
20. The table below provides a summary of the timetable for implementation of the 2015/2016 Funding Arrangements.

When	Activity
9 th September 2014	School Forum Technical Funding Group meeting
15 th September 2015	Discussion at the Schools Forum meeting
24 th September to 15 th October 2015	Consultation with Schools
30 th September 2014	Deadline for applications exclusion/variations to pupil numbers
October 2014	Political Approval for provisional 2015/16 funding formula
End of October 2014	Councils submit provisional pro-forma to Education Funding Agency.
15 th December 2014	DfE confirms DSG Schools Block for 2015/16
31st December 2014	Deadline for submitting final application for exclusion/variation to pupil numbers
13 th January 2015	CBC Executive to approve the 2015/16 Funding

	distribution
20 th January 2015	Councils submit final pro-forma to Education Funding Agency.
27 th February 2015	Council issues Individual School Budgets

Proposed Formula Factors for Distributing the 2015/2016 Schools Block

Mandatory Factors

Basic per-pupil entitlement (AWPU)

21. This is a compulsory funding factor that assigns funding to individual pupils based on the October pupil census.
22. In 2015/2016 a minimum value of £2,000 for Primary and £3,000 for Secondary (KS3 and KS4) has been set.
23. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum agreed that the remaining additional allocation (after top slicing £1m for Growth Funding) for 2015/16 should be distributed to schools using the AWPU factor. The Council and Schools Forum agreed that allocation through AWPU is the simplest and most transparent method, particularly as this additional DSG is a settlement for one year only.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree that the remaining one off additional allocation for 2015/16 should be distributed through the AWPU factor in 2015/2016? (Please answer Q6 on the consultation response form).

Deprivation

24. This is a compulsory factor. In 2014/2015 councils could choose to use free school meals and/or the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) to distribute deprivation funding. There could be separate unit values for Primary and Secondary and it could be weighted for IDACI data.
25. Both indicators direct funding through a unit rate per deprived pupil.
26. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose no change to the methodology or unit rates for the distribution of the 2015/2016 funding.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree that the deprivation funding methodology and unit rates should remain as in 2014/2015? (Please answer Q7 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Optional factors

27. Any funding used for optional factors that are not currently in use would be deducted from the basic entitlement (AWPU).

Looked After Children (LAC)

28. In 2014/2015 Central Bedfordshire Council introduced LAC as a new factor. A single unit value of £468 was allocated for any child that has been looked after for one day or more as recorded on the March return completed by councils each year, mapped to schools using the January school census.
29. Central Bedfordshire Council and Schools Forum proposes to continue with the inclusion of this factor, as data shows that these pupils underperform, and all available additional support should be provided in order to improve outcomes for LAC.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue to include Looked After Children as a factor in the funding formula?
(Please answer Q8 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Prior Attainment

30. In 2014/2015 Central Bedfordshire Council did not direct funding through this optional factor. For 2015/2016 the primary indicator will include those who failed to achieve a good level of development for the cohort of pupils in the 2013 assessments. This will only apply to this cohort; for older year groups in the school EYFSP will apply. The Secondary indicator will be based on the number of pupils not achieving level 4 in English or Maths.
31. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose that there should be no change to 2015/2016. It is felt that introducing this factor could be seen as allowing extra funding to be targeted at low performing schools rather than underperforming pupils, therefore rewarding schools for their poor performance.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue not to distribute funding based on prior attainment?
(Please answer Q9 on the consultation response form if applicable).

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

32. In 2014/2015 Central Bedfordshire Council did not direct funding through this optional factor. Pupils with English as an additional language could attract funding for up to three years after they enter the statutory school system. Councils could choose to use indicators based on one, two or three years. There could also be separate values for Primary and Secondary.
33. There is no change to these criteria for 2015/16.

34. The table below shows the number of pupils where English is an Additional Language and the years the pupil enters the statutory school system.

Number of Years in statutory Education	Lower	Middle	Upper
1st	251	43	11
2nd	490	69	26
3rd	666	107	36

35. The school with the largest number of pupils with EAL is in an area where their parents are at the local University, with the pupils achieving well and learning through the medium of English. The other areas of impact are mostly deprived and are already in receipt of funding through the Deprivation factor. While demographic growth may change this picture over time, at present there is no effect or change to the need for an EAL factor. This can be revisited to accommodate any future changes in demographic profile.
36. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose not to include a separate funding factor for EAL.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue to exclude English as an Additional Language (EAL) as a factor in the funding formula? (Please answer Q10 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Lump sum

37. This is an optional factor although it is used by all local authorities. The purpose of the lump sum is to provide all mainstream schools (including Academies but not including Special Schools), irrespective of size, with a contribution to the basic costs of operating a school.
38. As in 2014/2015 for 2015/16 Councils can set different lump sums for Primary and Secondary with a maximum level set at £175,000. Where schools amalgamate they will retain 85% of the total lump sums in the year after the amalgamation, rather than reducing to one lump sum immediately. Also for 2015/16 the LA may apply for an exceptional factor to pay a further allowance to amalgamating school in the second year after amalgamation.
39. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose no change to the 2015/2016 lump sum value of £120,000.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the continuation of one lump sum of £120,000? (Please answer Q11 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Split sites

40. Central Bedfordshire Council currently funds schools through a split site factor. The purpose of this factor was to support schools which have unavoidable extra costs because they have a split site. The allocation was based on objective criteria, both for the definition of a split site and for the amount funded. The EFA checked the definition submitted to ensure it was objective and transparent, and easily applied to Academies. This only applied to two schools in 2014/2015 (Greenleas Lower School from September 2013 and Church End Lower School from September 2014).
41. The definition of a split site for 2015/2016 is 'a single school, based on two or more sites that do not share a common boundary, where use of a public highway is necessary to travel between each site and where staff teach more than one curriculum subject area on a daily basis in order to support the principle of a whole school policy.' For 2015/2016 one more school (St Andrews Lower School) will fit the criteria from September 2015.
42. Note: Federated schools are not eligible for this factor as they remain separate schools receiving individual delegated budgets for each within its federation and therefore each retaining a lump sum.
43. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose to continue to allocate an additional lump sum (£120,000) to those schools meeting the definition of a split site. This will be revisited in future years as more schools may merge and work across more than one site.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the continuation of funding schools through a split site factor?

(Please answer Q12 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Rates

44. This is an optional factor but used by all councils in 2014/2015. It is funded on the authority's estimate of actual costs. Any adjustment can be made in the following financial year.
45. There are no changes proposed for 2015/2016.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the continuation of funding rates on an actual basis?

(Please answer Q13 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts

46. There is not currently a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) factor within the local formula. The purpose of this factor is to support schools which have unavoidable extra premises costs because they are a PFI school and/or to cover situations where the PFI 'affordability gap' is delegated and paid back to the local authority.
47. The funding gap for Central Bedfordshire's two PFI schools is not met by DSG contributions, as it is in many councils, but paid from the Council's core funding that

it receives through revenue support grant. It is not a requirement to delegate the PFI affordability gap as this can continue to be funded outside of the DSG.

48. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose not to introduce a factor for PFI for 2015/2016.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue with excluding a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) factor from the funding formula for 2015/16?

(Please answer Q14 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Pupil Mobility

49. In 2014/2015 Central Bedfordshire Council did not fund schools through a Pupil Mobility factor. This measure counted pupils who entered the school in the last three academic years, but did not start in August or September (or January for reception pupils). There could be separate unit values for Primary and Secondary.
50. There are no changes proposed for 2015/2016.
51. The table below shows the number of pupils in Central Bedfordshire Schools that were admitted to schools outside of the timelines specified above and applies the 10% threshold. The school level data has been provided by the Department for Education and is based on the academic year 2012/2013.

Lower	Middle	Upper	Total
119	35	0	154

52. The issue of mobility in Central Bedfordshire has only been raised previously in relation to service children. This particular group of pupils will not be specifically targeted by this new threshold. In addition, service children receive Pupil Premium Grant.
53. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose not to include a new factor for 2015/2016 for pupil mobility given that it is not targeted at any particular group of pupils where mobility may be an issue.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue excluding pupil mobility as a factor from the funding formula for 2015/16?

(Please answer Q15 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Dedicated School Grant (DSG) spent on Post 16 pupils

54. This is an optional factor but can only be used where the local authority used such a factor in 2014/2015. It is a per pupil factor which continues funding for post-16 pupils up to the level that the Council provided in 2014/2015. Central Bedfordshire Council did not provide Dedicated School Grant for this purpose in 2014/2015 and therefore a factor it is not permitted going forward.

Exceptional premises factors

55. The exceptional factors must relate to premises costs and councils are advised that applications should only be submitted where the extra factor would be more than 1% of a school's budget and covered fewer than 5% of the schools in the authority's area.
56. For 2014/2015 Secretary of State approved the application for both joint use and rent (rent has only been approved for 6 out of the 9 schools applied for). 3 schools were declined because they were well below the 1% threshold of school budget share.
57. Any factors which were used in 2014/2015 can automatically be used in 2015/2016 provided that the above criteria are still met. Also a further school(s) may receive the factor if it meets the existing approved criteria.
58. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose the continuation of funding the joint use arrangement and the inclusion of a rent factor for those schools as approved by the Secretary of State.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue funding the joint use arrangement?

(Please answer Q16 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with continuing a rent factor for schools that are eligible?

(Please answer Q17 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Sparsity Factor

59. The DfE has identified the nearest school to pupils' home addresses. For each school, the average distance as the crow flies to those pupils' second nearest school has been calculated by the DfE. Schools can only qualify for sparsity funding if this distance is greater than two miles for Primary and three miles for Secondary and if they have fewer than 150 pupils for Primary or 600 for Secondary.
60. Councils can narrow the criteria (set at a greater distance or smaller maximum distance). The maximum amounts which can be allocated to an individual school through this factor is £100,000. Councils can also choose whether to use a single amount for all sparse schools, or to use a tapered amount which increases the smaller the school.
61. For 2015/2016 the average size of year groups within the school will determine the eligibility. Schools will qualify if total pupils divided by number of year groups are below the threshold prescribed below:
 - Primary: 21.4
 - Secondary: 120
 - Middle: 69.2
 - All-through: 62.5

Example 1:

- School A is a primary school with 120 pupils and a sparsity distance of 2.5 miles. The school provides for 3 year groups. The average year

group size is $(120 / 3)$ 40, which is too high to meet the sparsity size criterion. School A is not eligible for sparsity funding.

Example 2:

- School B is a primary school with 120 pupils and a sparsity distance of 2.2 miles. The school provides for 7 year groups. The average year group size is $(120 / 7)$ 17.14, which meets the sparsity size criterion and the distance is greater than the primary distance threshold. School B is eligible for sparsity funding.

62. Should this factor be introduced, only 5 Central Bedfordshire schools would attract funding.
63. Central Bedfordshire Council and the School Forum propose not to include sparsity as a new factor for 2015/2016. The general consensus is that this factor is for supporting schools in rural or remote areas like North Yorkshire, Cumbria and Norfolk. Although it was recognised that some schools may be relatively isolated, all schools are protected by the lump sum.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue not to include a sparsity factor for 2015/16?

(Please answer Q18 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Protections and limits to gains

64. The pre-16 Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for mainstream schools will continue to be set at minus 1.5% per pupil in 2015/2016, continuing with the simplified calculation. This applies to pupils in age ranges 5 – 16 and therefore excludes funding for early years children (see Early Years section below) and young people over 16.
65. The only factors which are automatically excluded from the MFG are:
- Post 16 funding (sixth form factor)
 - The lump sum
 - Sparsity factor
 - Rates
66. Additional funding delegated due to an increase in DSG (in respect of Minimum Funding Levels) does not constitute new delegation and should not be excluded from the MFG calculation.
67. As there could be significant amounts of protection required as a result of the formula simplification, the Department for Education allows overall gains for individual schools to be capped as well as scaled back to make it affordable to run the formula.
68. Capping and scaling must be applied on the same basis to all schools and cannot be differentiated by phase. It is applied by the EFA to Academy budgets on the same basis as for maintained schools.

69. Capping and scaling must not be applied to schools which have opened in the last seven years and have not reached their full number of year groups.
70. A commitment has been made that MFG will continue beyond 2015/2016, but it is not possible to confirm at what level, as this is subject to the outcomes of the spending review.
71. Central Bedfordshire Council and the Schools Forum have considered the options and propose to cap those schools that gain in order to fund the MFG for those schools that lose.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue to cap those schools that gain in order to fund the Minimum Funding Guarantee? (Please answer Q19 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Proportion allocated through pupil led factors

72. Councils must allocate at least 80% of the delegated schools block funding through pupil-led factors. In 2014/2015 CBC funded 88% of the schools block through these factors. The proposals in this consultation and accompanying financial model demonstrating the effect of these proposal targets 88.06% of funding through the pupil led factors.

Primary/Secondary ratio

73. There will not be a Primary/Secondary ratio at this stage but they have not been ruled out for future years. The ratio for Central Bedfordshire assuming the proposals in the financial model is 1:1.30.

Centrally Provided Services

74. The 2013/14 reforms significantly reduced the number of centrally held budgets within the schools block. There are two groups that central services fit into:-
 - De-delegated Services. These have to be allocated through the formula but can be de-delegated for maintained primary and secondary schools.
 - Centrally Retained Services. These can be centrally retained before allocating the formula with the agreement of the Schools Forum and include; funding for pre-16 pupil growth and infant class size, funding for falling roles and Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) and Music Publishers Association (MPA) licenses. In addition Admissions and Servicing of Schools Forum are permitted. No new commitments or increases in expenditure are allowed from 2013/2014.
75. The following services were delegated in 2014/2015 but were able to be de-delegated from the Primary and/or Secondary maintained schools budget subject to a Schools Forum decision by the representative of each sector. **De-delegation is not an option for Academies, Special Schools, Nurseries or PRU's.**
 - Facilities Time (Union representation at meetings etc) and
 - Schools Specific Contingency (Closing and re-organising, Schools in financial difficulty etc)

76. Any unspent de-delegated funding remaining at the year end is reported to the Schools Forum. Funding may be carried forward to the following funding period but its use is subject to the regulations operating in the new financial year.
77. The de-delegation provision is available in 2015/2016 and arrangements need to be reviewed as decisions on de-delegation were for 2014/2015 only.

78. The table below represents the maintained school contribution in 2014/2015

Services	Distributed through formula factor	Total Value	Per-pupil
Facilities Time	Basic entitlement	£48,240	£3.31
School Specific Contingency	Basic entitlement	£100,000	£5.63

79. The per pupil unit rate will be calculated on the pupil numbers in maintained schools following the October 2014 census. The table below (in paragraph 81) estimates the cost per pupil for 2015/2016 and has taken into account any proposed Academy conversions prior to 1 April 2015. However, it does not take into account changes to trade union membership numbers and therefore the unit rate is likely to change once pupil numbers and trade union membership numbers are known.
80. The School and Early Years Finance Regulations state that
- “expenditure on the schools specific contingency” is central expenditure deducted for the purpose of ensuring that monies are available to enable an increase in a school’s budget share after it has been allocated and where it subsequently becomes apparent that a governing body have incurred expenditure which it would be unreasonable to expect them to meet from the school’s budget share which may include expenditure in relation to—
- (i) schools in financial difficulty,
 - (ii) the writing-off of deficits of schools which are discontinued, excluding any associated costs and overheads,
 - (iii) new, amalgamating or closing schools, or
 - (iv) other expenditure where the circumstances were unforeseen when initially determining the school’s budget share.”

The additional sum proposed for Schools Specific Contingency in 2015/16 is to support schools facing particular financial challenges, specifically Streetfield, Ashton and Brewers Hill middle schools which are subject to closure in August 2016 (Ashton and Streetfield) and August 2017 (Brewers Hill), should it be required. The additional contingency will be used by the LA to fund support if required where the schools’ budgets are impacted by the reducing pupil numbers and forecast pupil numbers. It will ensure continued effective delivery of the full curriculum for those

children in the schools until the point of closure. A project group has been set up for each of the schools to provide support and challenge (if appropriate) until the date of closure.

81. The table below illustrates the maintained school contribution should the items above be de-delegated.

Services	Distributed through formula factor	Total Value	Per-pupil
Facilities Time	Basic entitlement	£48,240	£3.31
School Specific Contingency	Basic entitlement	£500,000	£31.23

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue to de-delegate Facilities Time?

(Please answer Q20 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue to de-delegate School Contingency although at a higher rate?

(Please answer Q21 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Falling Rolls and Growth Fund

82. This is funding that can be retained centrally before the formula is calculated for falling rolls where a populations bulge is expected in the future but where a good and necessary school or academy currently has surplus places and faces unmanageable funding shortfall in the short term.
83. Funding can also be retained for a growth fund, and additional classes needed as a consequence of infant class size regulations.
84. The requirements of the Falling Rolls Fund and the Growth Fund are that:
- The falling rolls fund should be restricted to population increases expected in 2 – 3 years in necessary schools which are classed by OFSTED as good or outstanding. It must not be used to prop up unpopular or failing schools.
 - The growth fund can be used only for the purpose 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.
 - Both funds must be used on the same basis for the benefit of both maintained schools and recouperment academies.
 - Any funds remaining at the end of the financial year must be added to the following year's DSG and reallocated to maintained and academy schools through the formula.
 - Councils are required to produce criteria on which any falling rolls or growth funding is to be allocated. These should provide a transparent and consistent basis (with differences permitted between phases) for the allocation of funding.
 - Councils need to propose the criteria for both funds to the Schools Forum and gain its agreement before funding is allocated. The Council also needs to consult Schools Forum on the total sum to be top-sliced from each phase. The EFA will check the criteria for compliance with the regulations.

85. The Growth Fund should not be used to support schools which are undergoing reorganisations to change the age range and/or admitting additional year groups. The council is expected to apply to vary the pupil numbers in these cases, based on the estimated intake in September. However, councils may wish to add criteria for the use of the Growth Fund where the estimated pupil numbers are significantly short of the actual September intake and where the additional pupils are admitted because of basic need requirements.
86. In 2014/2015 Central Bedfordshire Council agreed with the School Forum the criteria for the Growth Fund and an amount of £1,000,000 to be retained centrally for this purpose. It also included a factor to assist lower and primary schools, to meet the infant class size regulations, where a breach is unavoidable. The EFA approved the criteria as being compliant with the regulations.
87. Central Bedfordshire is an area that will see significant growth in school aged children over the coming years, triggered by the increase in birth rate (which is impacting now and for at least the next five years), and by the rate of local housing development that is forecast over the next 25 years. The Council's School Organisation Plan outlines the pattern of this growth across phases and its New School Places Programme establishes an investment strategy for major projects to ensure that the council continues to meet its statutory obligations to provide sufficient high quality school places. In addition the Council will continue to utilise its programme of temporary accommodation where appropriate and will work with schools and academies in each of our planning areas to discuss school organisation and admissions issues and agree management options.
88. Central Bedfordshire Council and the Schools Forums agreed to increase the centrally held funding for the Growth Fund by £1,000,000, to reflect the increased number of schools meeting the criteria for funding. However, it is proposed to continue to not include a new fund for falling rolls and to leave the existing funding within the AWPU values.

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to retain centrally £2,000,000 for the purpose of the Growth Fund?
(Please answer Q22 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Question: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to continue not to retain central funding for the purpose of falling rolls?
(Please answer Q23 on the consultation response form if applicable).

Requests to vary pupil numbers

89. The EFA expect requests to vary pupil numbers to be submitted by Councils where maintained schools or academies are changing their age range or are part of a reorganisation. Applications approved so far use a weighted average of pupil numbers, taking account of the increase or reduction in pupil numbers from the start of the new academic year.
90. As in year changes to budgets are not permitted, any proposals which involve adjusting budgets where actual numbers differ from estimates could only be agreed on the basis that the adjustment would not take place until 2016/2017, subject to any

restrictions imposed by a National Funding Formula. It is important therefore that a realistic estimate is made for the adjustment in 2015/2016.

91. Where an Academy is part of the pupil number variation, then the full effect of the change will be incorporated in their 2015/2016 budget, as this is effective from September 2015.
92. The Growth Fund should be used where schools are being asked to take on extra classes within their existing age range because of basic need and not where the age range is changing. It could be used where basic need growth results in actual numbers being significantly greater than estimated in schools changing their age range.
93. Central Bedfordshire Council has made an application to vary the application of The School and Early Years Finance Regulations 2013 for the financial year 2015/2016 and dis-apply the use of October census data for specific schools, with the intention to more accurately reflect pupil numbers in schools and academies affected by changes of age range in the Dunstable and Houghton Regis area. The application detailed how the calculation would be made and how adjustments would be made where the actual numbers differ from estimates.
94. To inform the 2015/2016 budget setting process for maintained schools and for Academies the Council needs to be able to provide estimates in late January 2015 for numbers expected in each affected school in the following September 2015.
95. Secondary/Upper transfer applications for September 2015 will be known by the admissions application deadline at the end of October 2014. This will provide clarity on numbers of pupils seeking a Year 7 and a Year 9 place at an upper/secondary (excluding late applications, in year transfers and subsequent changes in preferences).
96. 15 January 2015 is the admission transfer application deadline for middle schools and will provide clarity on numbers of pupils seeking transfer to any school with a Year 5 transfer point (excluding late applications, in year transfers and any changes of preference) for the following September 2015.
97. For those schools who are already offering Year 5 or Year 7 in September 2014 (i.e those schools who are in second year of transition to a primary or secondary school) the Council will assume a roll on in those schools of these numbers into Years 6 and 8 in September 2015.
98. In addition, the Council intends to establish a budget correction mechanism to ensure that schools are not significantly over or under funded on the estimates established in January 2015 through the process as set out above, versus actual admissions in September 2015. Any estimate that is +/- 5% different to actual pupil numbers in the new year group(s) or group(s) affected only by the age range changes from other schools will be corrected through a corresponding increase or decrease in funding in the next financial year (2016/2017). This assumes that national regulations in place at that time will allow this correction to be made and also reflects advice already received from the EFA that corrections cannot be made in 2015/2016.

99. For budget modelling purposes (which accompanies this School Funding Consultation), the Council has based the calculations on the latest information with a clear grid showing each affected school and the assumptions we have made of the number of pupils anticipated in the new year groups created from September 2015.

Early Years Block

100. There are no changes proposed for 2015/2016.

High Needs Block

101. There will not be any substantial changes to the distribution of High-Needs funding for 2015/2016.

Financial Model

102. Below is a summary of the proposed changes and the basis of the modelling attached:

Factor		2014/15	2015/16
A basic per pupil entitlement	Primary AWPU	£2,959	£3,034
	Key Stage 3 AWPU	£4,221	£4,296
	Key Stage 4 AWPU	£4,930	£5,005
Deprivation	IDACI Band 2 and 3	£554	£554
	IDACI Band 4	£1,108	£1,108
	IDACI Band 5	£1,662	£1,662
	IDACI Band 6	£2,216	£2,216
Looked After Children		£468	£468
Prior Attainment		£0	£0
EAL		£0	£0
Lump Sum		£120,000	£120,000
Split Site		£120,000	£120,000
Rates		Based on actual	Based on actual
PFI		£0	£0
Pupil Mobility		£0	£0
Post -16		n/a	n/a
Exceptional Premises factors	Joint Use	£98,330	£98,330
	Rent	£40,060	£40,060
Sparsity		£0	£0
Growth Fund		£1,000,000	£2,000,000
Falling Roles Fund		£0	£0
School Admissions		£260,490	£260,490
School Forum		£3,000	£3,000
Copyright Licenses		£142,240	£142,240

103. The MFG has been calculated using the DfE's simplified calculation, the only exceptions being the lump sum, sixth form funding, rates and sparsity.

104. Winners have been capped by 5% (this allows schools to gain up to 5% of their School Budget Share based on previous years). In 2014/15 the cap only allowed schools to gain 1.7%. The cap is necessary to fund the required protection calculated for MFG.
105. Any decrease on 2015/2016 estimated allocation is due to MFG reduction for 2015/2016.
106. Facilities Time has been assumed at the same unit rate as 2014/2015.
107. Statutory functions; coordinated admissions scheme and servicing of Schools' Forum assumed as at current levels.
108. The figures are illustrative and must not be taken as final allocations.

Do you have any other comments about the proposals for school funding in 2015/16?
(Please answer Q24 of the consultation form).

The Consultation Process

109. The Council is consulting schools in the council area to ensure that you have every opportunity to have your say on the final funding scheme.
110. The consultation is open between Wednesday 24 September and Wednesday 15 October 2014. You can respond to the consultation through our [online response form](#). Paper copies of the form are available on request by contacting Gezim Leka on gezim.leka@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or 0300 300 6162.
111. The feedback from the consultation will be presented to the Council's Executive on 13 January 2015 where a final decision will be made.



A great place to live and work

Contact us...

by telephone: 0300 300 6162

by email: Gezim.Leka@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

on the web: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Write to: Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands,
Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ