

SCHOOLS FAIR FUNDING – EARLY CLOSES

Education Participation and Skills



This report outlines the impact that the National Funding Formula (NFF) has had to date within Plymouth schools. However the question that officers were asked was regarding the impact of the NFF on the length of the school day. We do not at present hold this information centrally and at the end of this report there is a recommendation that may want to be considered.

The introduction of the National Funding Formula from 2018/19 is an attempt by Central Government to address historic inequities in funding for Schools.

Plymouth's Schools Block funding has increased from £143.056m in 2017/18, to £149.550m in 2018/19 and an initial allocation of £154.619m in 2019/20. However, in 2019/20 Plymouth is still receiving £283 less per pupil than the national average.

In addition to this, a 3% gains cap was introduced alongside the NFF to phase the impact of the formula. Under the NFF Plymouth should have gained £10.6 million in 2018-19. However, as a result of the gains cap, Plymouth schools only gained £5 million. Below are examples of Plymouth schools that lost funding through the cap in 2018/19.

- Sir John Hunt (Budshead) lost £320,000
- Tor Bridge High (Moor View) lost £380,000
- Beechwood Primary (Southway) lost £86,000

Despite these challenges none of the Maintained Schools in Plymouth are forecasting a deficit position at the end of the 2019/20 financial year.

	SCHOOL*	2019-20 forecast cumulative surplus/(deficit)
Primary Schools	College Road	£35,305
	Compton CE	£87,287
	High View	£81,610
	Laira Green	£128,620
	Lipson Vale	£7,684
	Mary Deans CE	£17,815
	Pennycross	£90,279
	Plympton St Marys	£39,556
	Riverside Primary	£45,633
	St Andrews CE	£54,498
	St Budeaux	£41,386
	St Peters CE	£53,675
	Tor Bridge Primary	£104,742
	Whitleigh Primary	£9,852
	Yealmpstone Farm	£6,483
Special Schools	Brook Green	£6,244
	Cann Bridge	£11,568
	Longcause	£96,915
	Mill Ford	£32,865
	Mount Tamar	£150,917
	Woodlands	£22,671
Secondary Schools	Plymouth High Girls	£355,785

Sir John Hunt CC

£23,568

*the table excludes the maintained nursery schools as forecasts are pending for funding announcements.

Enquiries made among schools have found that a small number of Special Schools close early at some point during the school week, but this does not appear to be correlated to levels of funding. There may be one or more Academy Schools that close early, but the Local Authority are not aware of the reasons for the schools taking this action and have no role in monitoring the financial position of Academies.

Proposal

Although maintained schools appear to be managing their budgets, it is unclear of any changes they have been forced to make to balance their budgets. It is proposed that the Local Authority engage with schools to investigate;

- Staffing reductions including Teaching Assistants
- Increase in class sizes
- Collapsing the school day
- Concerns schools have for the children over the City