



ISLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM

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C/o Governor Services
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SCHOOLS FORUM

MEETING DATE	16 July 2020
AGENDA ITEM 7	2021-22 Falling Rolls Funding
RECOMMENDATIONS	That Schools Forum: a) Discuss and agree the period for which falling rolls funding be applied to primary and secondary schools

1 Context

- 1.1 In accordance with the 2020-21 Schools Operational Guidance, local authorities may set aside schools block funding to create a small fund to support good schools with falling rolls, where local planning data shows that the surplus places will be needed within the next three financial years.
- 1.2 Falling rolls funding should only be used to support schools where the places are forecast to be needed over the short-medium term.
- 1.3 Islington, prior to and since the introduction of national funding formula in 2013-14, has retained central funds to support schools that were experiencing temporary falling rolls. The majority of schools have benefitted from these funds during the time.
- 1.4 The process of retaining funds for this purpose is through consultation with all primary and secondary schools in the autumn term. Schools' Forum ratifies the consultation result with final allocations agreed at the January meeting.
- 1.5 The current criteria and funding methodology for Islington has been agreed as follows:
 - As per the DfE - The school must have been judged good or outstanding at their last OFSTED inspection. *DfE requirement*
 - The total number of pupils on roll (NOR) has dropped by at least 5% between last October census and the previous year's October census. *Islington requirement*
 - Vacancy Capacity of school is a minimum of 15% of PAN (Published Admission Number). *Islington requirement*
 - Local planning data shows the places will be required within the next 3-5 years.
 - Schools receiving growth funding are excluded.
- 1.6 At present, where a school meets all the above criteria, funding will be provided using the following calculation:

the NOR as at last October census (2019) will be deducted from the NOR of the previous year October's census (2018). The result will be multiplied by the current Base Rate, appropriate to phase, pro rata April-August i.e. 5 months.

- 1.7 The Growth and falling rolls fund guidance: 2020 to 2021, issued by the DfE uses Islington's model as an example of local authorities' compliant criteria and, therefore, good practice.
- 1.8 The funding is intended to be a short-medium term measure and during the period that schools experience falling rolls, the schools are expected to adjust their resources to meet the requirements of the school, including a realignment of staffing levels.

2 Future year proposals

- 2.1 The latest published Primary and Secondary School projections 2019-20 to 2025-26¹ report highlights the borough-wide position indicating current and projected sufficiency of places across Islington. As the evidence shows, the current strategy has ensured that there is sufficiency of places in the borough.
- 2.2 During the period 2010-11 to 2016-17 London experienced the biggest rise in pupils, however, since 2016 the GLA projects a lower rate of increase than previously estimated. Taking into account planned expansions, adjusted GLA projection estimates suggest that primary school places have at least a 14% margin for the next 10 years.
- 2.3 The Place Planning Report states Islington will be working in consultation with schools and school governors to address surplus capacity and this may include reductions to some schools Planned Admission Numbers (PAN). By reducing the PAN in some schools may negate the draw on the falling rolls funding in future years.
- 2.4 The impact of these changes can be seen in the number of schools experiencing falling rolls. Whilst this is not the picture in every planning area in Islington, consideration needs to be given as to how and the length of financial support from falling rolls funding can be provided.
- 2.5 It should be noted that as schools budget positions become tighter, schools may not agree to centrally retain funds for falling rolls which would have a direct impact on those schools facing reduced pupil numbers.
- 2.6 The purpose of this report, should schools agree to retain funds, is to explore the length of time financial support should be given to schools.
- 2.7 The table shown in Appendix A shows the allocation of funds, at school level, since 2014-15, as well as indicative funding requirements for 2021-22.
- 2.8 The table shows that of the schools which have benefitted from the falling rolls funding the number of occurrences by school varies from only once to five. Copenhagen has benefitted most often, with 4 consecutive years, but for 2021-22 will see this funding cease as they no longer meet the criteria of 5% movement from one year to the next.
- 2.9 There are three schools with two consecutive years of falling rolls funding, of which two will require further funds in 2021-22.
- 2.10 The falling rolls budget for 2020-21 increased to £400k to recognise the increased demand but as can be seen in the table in appendix A, the draft allocations for 2021-22 have reduced to £133k. However, there are currently five schools that do not hold a good or outstanding Ofsted rating who would otherwise benefit from falling rolls funding. Should all five move to good or outstanding the level of required funding would increase to £562k.

1. ¹ <https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/schools/islington-schools> updated 24th February 2020

- 2.11 Consideration and discussion should now be held as to the length of continued funding for schools with falling rolls.
- 2.12 The data as shown in the table would suggest a reasonable approach would be to fund no longer than three consecutive years. This would allow the benefitting schools time and additional resources to plan their adjusted workforce requirements in future years whilst also providing some level of protection to retain staffing levels in the short term to meet the needs of the school.
- 2.13 During the agreed recommended period of protected funding, Islington would require that benefitting schools remain in a sustainable financial position. The falling rolls funding should not be used to mask a longer term financial issue in the school.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That Schools Forum discuss and agree the period for which falling rolls funding should be applied. The decision will be applied to the 2021-22 financial year, following the annual autumn term consultation with schools.

Contact

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Appendix A – Allocated Falling Rolls Funding & Indicative 2021-22 allocations

Planning Area	School	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total	Occurrences	2021-22 Indicative
2	AMSI	74,922							74,922	1	
4	Blessed Sacrament						14,878	35,229	50,107	2	12,683
2	Christ the King							56,367	56,367	1	22,547
4	Copenhagen		42,429		27,152	30,461	17,583	19,728	137,353	5	
3	Drayton Park							21,138	21,138	1	
3	Highbury Quadrant			50,000			62,215		112,215	2	
1	Hungerford *					99,690			99,690	1	
4	Laycock				36,203				36,203	1	
2	Montem						35,165	57,776	92,941	2	
2	Mount Carmel	106,825	95,199	135,418					337,442	3	
5	New North Academy			34,692		26,307		54,112	115,111	3	64,258
2	Pooles Park						43,280	45,093	88,373	2	33,820
4	Vittoria							16,910	16,910	1	
4	Winton	40,722							40,722	1	
	Total	222,469	137,628	220,109	63,355	156,458	173,120	306,353	1,279,492		133,307

* Hungerford was a one-off exceptional case, agreed by Schools Forum, supporting the school experiencing falling rolls at a time of forced academisation.