

Chief Education Officer's Report to Governors

SPRING TERM (1) 2006

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Summary

The DfES recently announced schools funding for the next two financial years, 2006/7 and 2007/8. The introduction of a multi-year funding cycle is designed to give schools greater certainty and stability to inform their financial planning. The initial cycle will be for two years only, to be followed by three year cycles from 2008/9.

Dedicated Schools Grant

Under the new arrangements, from 2006/7 local authorities will receive a ring-fenced grant called the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to fund education. The major part of this, the Individual Schools Budget (ISB), is distributed to schools using the funding formula. The rest is retained centrally to fund items such as pupil referral units, looked after children, early years and fees to independent special schools. The Schools Forum will be consulted on the split between the ISB and centrally retained, but it is in any case regulated by the Central Expenditure Limit (CEL) which prevents central expenditure increasing faster than the ISB.

Barnet's Funding

Barnet's per pupil DSG has been set by the DfES at a level which represents an increase of 6.6% (06/07) and 6.4% (07/08) over previous funding (the baseline). This was at the low end of the range compared to other authorities (6.4% to 9.0% for 06/07 and 6.1% to 8.4% for 07/08). Our final DSG can only be confirmed once the final school census figures have been collated after PLASC day on 19 January 2006.

In calculating the per pupil DSG, authorities were given an uplift on the baseline (5.0% nationally, 5.1% in London) plus funding for 5 key government priorities:

- Personalised Learning at Key Stage 3
- Personalised Learning at primary level
- Practical learning options for pupils aged 14
- The final phase of workforce reform
- Increased entitlement to early years provision from 33 to 38 weeks.

School Budgets

Provisional budgets for both 2006/7 and 2007/8 will arrive in schools on Wednesday 22 February. After a brief period for corrections and adjustments, the schools will receive their final budget shares on Wednesday 8 March.

School Teachers' Review Body (STRB)

The STRB recommendations on teachers' pay proposed a 2.5% increase in both September 2006 and September 2007. This would apply to the main and upper pay scales for qualified teachers, unqualified teachers, the leadership group, TLRs and SEN. Some pay points in bands A and B (inner and outer London) would be enhanced to correct the differentials with other pay bands. The proposals are based on the inflation rate remaining within the range 1.75% to 3.25% in each of the financial years of the funding cycle.

Minimum Funding Guarantee

The minimum funding guarantee (MFG) will continue to operate for all schools as in previous years, except that for secondary schools, the Learning Skills Council funding will be included in the calculations, when previously it was excluded. The Minimum Funding Guarantee will be 4.0% for primaries and nurseries and 3.4% for secondaries and special schools in 2006/7. In 2007/8 the rate will be 3.7% for all schools.

In setting the MFG, the DfES took into account the extra expected cost pressures on schools of teaching salaries, support staff salaries, energy, exam invigilation in secondary schools and PPA time in primaries.

PLASC

PLASC day is 19 January 2006 and schools have until 27 January to submit their returns.

This year, more than ever, we are reliant on schools to make accurate PLASC returns in a timely manner, because the data is needed to calculate total school funding as well as individual schools' budget shares. We appreciate the efforts of everyone involved.

From 2006/7 school allocations will be made on a single pupil count using PLASC data from the January before the financial year begins. There will be no adjustment for mid-year changes in pupil numbers at the year end, only for statement top-ups.

Standards Funds

The School Development Grant is now an amalgamation of several previous grants and allocations to schools will be subject to a minimum funding guarantee of 3.4% in 06/07 and 3.7% in 07/08. The School Standards Grant continues but with a fairer pupil-led formula replacing the old banding system.

More detailed information can be found on Teachernet:-

www.teachernet.gov.uk/schoolbudgets200608 - and the chart below provides a summary of the key facts.

Websites increasingly provide interesting information and the following are useful for governors:

Department for Education and Skills www.teachernet.gov.uk / schoolfinance
www.governornet.co.uk

National College for School Leadership (NCSL) www.ncsl.org.uk managing your school/ financial management

Governors Role

- To note the above information

For consideration by

- All Governors

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HEADLINE SCHOOL FUNDING FACTS – DECEMBER 2005		
	2006/07	2007/08
Barnet increase in DSG	6.6%	6.4%
National increase in DSG – min.	6.4%	6.1%
- max.	9.0%	8.4%
MFG – primary and nursery	4.0%	3.7%
- secondary and special	3.4%	3.7%
MFG for School Development Grant	3.4%	3.7%
Important dates		
PLASC day	19 Jan 2006	
Deadline for schools to submit PLASC data	27 Jan 2006	
Provisional budgets for 06/07 and 07/08 to schools	22 Feb 2006	
Final budgets for 06/07 and 07/08 to schools	8 Mar 2006	

2. Inspection of Children's Services – Joint Area Review

Summary

The Children Act 2004 introduced a new framework for the inspection of children's services. A multi-disciplinary inspection team led by OfSTED assess children's services each year and once every three years undertakes an in-depth Joint Area Review (JAR). Barnet's Joint Area Review will take place this term between March and May 2006.

So what is a Joint Area Review?

A Joint Area Review inspects the outcomes achieved by children and young people and evaluates the way local services, taken together, contribute to their well-being. It focuses on the extent to which children and young people are healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being.

The JAR will report on the well-being of all children and young people in Barnet and will cover universal, preventive and targeted services. Particular attention will be given to joint action by local services on behalf of those groups of children and young people who are vulnerable to poor outcomes.

How are schools involved?

There are several elements to a JAR, all of which either involve schools directly or require co-operation or support.

- Self assessment: children's services are required to complete a self assessment. This will reflect Barnet's school's contribution to each of the five Children Act 2004 outcomes.
- Case tracking: a paper based survey of 100 families (including school records), followed by an in-depth case study of 10 of these families with face –to-face interviews
- Survey of children and young people: a web based survey of 600 young people (known as the 'Tell Us' survey) administered through schools.
- A neighbourhood study: an in depth look at a selected geographical neighbourhood which will include touring the area, visiting schools, nurseries, health services, youth and voluntary services, meeting children, young people, their parents and staff.

When is this happening?

The period of review is March to May 2006. The 'Tell Us' and the paper based case tracking will start the process and the inspectors will then be on-site to conduct the fieldwork between the 2 May and 12 May 2006. Work has already started within the authority to facilitate and prepare for the inspection.

When will we know the results of the Joint Area Review?

The results of the inspection will be published on the 14 August 2006.

Governors' Role

- To note the above information

**For
consideration /
action by**

- All Governors

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Building a Future for Barnet's Children The Primary School Capital Investment Programme

Summary

On 5 December 2005 the Cabinet of Barnet Council approved a programme of investment to improve the borough's primary school buildings. Essentially, the programme will bring together a number of different funding streams, along with capital investment from the Council, and procure a private sector partner to rebuild or refurbish many of Barnet's primary schools.

The programme aims to deliver 21st Century learning and teaching environments for Barnet's primary school children. The Council will work in close partnership with schools to deliver the programme, involving them in the selection of the partner and the design of the buildings.

Driver for the Programme

In 2003 OfSTED found that *"the lack of capital resources to improve school buildings, coupled with years of under-investment in building maintenance, has contributed to the significant backlog of repairs."* It is estimated that undertaking essential backlog repairs, followed by the minimum necessary maintenance to keep the community primary estate operational would cost the Council approximately £200 million over 25 years.

Programme Phasing

The programme proposes phased investment in Barnet's community primary schools over a ten year period, running to 2015/2016. Schools were placed in different waves of the programme on the basis of the priority of their investment needs and the ease of delivering an appropriate project. Reflecting significant recent investment in their buildings, eight schools are currently not in the phasing structure.

At the moment the programme only includes community primary schools. However, over the coming months similar proposals for Barnet's voluntary aided and foundation primary schools will be developed.

Wave 1 of the Programme

The Council's Cabinet have made a commitment to Wave 1 of the programme, which comprises the new build of eleven primary schools and the major refurbishment of a further primary school and a nursery. **Table 1** (shown below) summarises Wave 1 of the programme.

Stakeholder Consultation & Next Steps

A period of consultation and discussion on the proposals will run until 28 February 2006. This will encompass the overall phasing structure for the programme, as well proposals for Wave 1. The views of governors, headteachers, parents and other stakeholders will be sought.

Following the consultation period, a report will be considered by the Council's Cabinet Resources Committee. This will confirm the programme's phasing structure and the preferred procurement model. Once this report has been approved, the Council will commence procurement of Wave 1 of the programme.

Table 1	Year	School	Proposals
Phase 1 2007/8		Broadfields	New build two form entry primary school with an integrated Children's Centre on existing site
		Foulds	New build two form entry primary school on Byng Road site
		The Hyde	New build two form entry primary school with an integrated Children's Centre on existing site
Year	School	Proposals	
	Barnet Hill and Whittings Hill	Amalgamate the schools and provide a new build two form entry primary school on the current Whittings Hill site	
	St Margaret's Nursery	Remodel school to provide a Children's Centre offering integrated education and childcare	
Phase 2 2008/09	Coppetts Wood and Hollickwood	Amalgamate the schools and provide a new build two form entry primary school with an integrated Children's Centre on the current Coppetts Wood site	
	Fairway/Northway	New build Fairway as a one form entry primary school and new build Northway as a primary special school. Co-locate the schools on the existing site with an integrated with Children's Centre	
	Summerside	New build or remodel as a two form entry primary school on existing site	
Phase 3 2009/10	Chalgrove	Remodel as one form entry primary school on existing site	
	Brunswick Park and Hampden Way Nursery	Amalgamate the schools and provide a new build two form entry school with an integrated Children's Centre on the existing site	
	Bell Lane	New build two form entry primary school on existing site with the possibility of an integrated Children's Centre	
	Cromer Road	New build two form entry primary school on the existing site	

Governors Role

- To note the above information
- To respond with any comments

For consideration by

- All Governors

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Summary

Since September 2003 Barnet schools have been required to undertake an annual School Review and Self Evaluation (SRSE) process, and return the completed documentation to the Local Authority by the end of the Autumn term.

Under the new Ofsted framework, schools are now required to complete an annual School Evaluation Form (SEF), which is a summary of the more comprehensive SRSE. Schools expecting an early inspection under the new framework have been encouraged to work on their SEF, using last year's updated SRSE as a basis for their evaluation.

The Learning Network Inspectors Spring term visit will focus on the SRSE and/or SEF, resulting in the drafting of a Compact between the Local Authority and the school.

For schools that are clerked by Barnet's Clerking Service the clerk will support Governing Bodies in the Spring term meeting to be assured they are completing the annual Governing Body Audit of statutory requirements.

It is vital that Governors are aware of the schools self evaluation procedures, which highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the school and identify areas for improvement and the action being taken to secure this.

Governors' Role

- To note the above information and complete the Governor's Audit of Statutory requirements

For consideration by

- All Governors

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