

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) School Funding Formula– 2022/23

Split Sites factor

Schools Forum – 8 November 2021

Recommendation

The Schools Forum is asked to:

Adopt Option 1 having considered all the alternatives presented in this paper

Members of Forum allowed to vote: -

All school and academy members are able to vote. Only early years representatives from the non schools members are able to vote. Non-school members even if represented by school staff are not eligible to vote.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** 'Split sites' is an optional factor used to support schools that have additional unavoidable costs because the school buildings are on separate sites. The guidance states that the allocations must be based on objective criteria for the definition of a split site and for how much is paid.
- 1.2** This paper is therefore a follow up request from Schools' Forum regarding the split site criteria and funding awarded to qualified schools. It provides an additional insight into the current split site criteria agreed by Schools forum on 5th October 2020 and assesses that in line with the ESFA guidelines.
- 1.3** The paper seeks to evaluate the budget implications of the current criteria as well as funding awarded to schools when compared with four other London Local Authorities for possible best practices.
- 1.4** A look at Table 1 and appendix (a) provides some useful data analysis which may help facilitate the decision-making process at the next meeting in deciding on either:
- (a) To keep the current 3 criteria + additional criteria [d] and keep funding at £35k per site;
 - (b) Or to amend one of the above or both;

The report therefore compares Croydon's position against four other local authorities as shown in table 1 and appendix (a) below.

Table 1

Local Authority	Cost per site - Primary	Number of schools	Cost per site – Secondary*
Croydon Council	£35k	4	£35k
Waltham Forest	£35k	21	150k*
Southwark Council	60.4k	6	
Sutton & Royal Borough of Kingston	50k	3	

*See appendix (A).

2. ESFA guidance :

- 2.1** ESFA allows this factor to be determined by Schools' Forum but examples include:
- a) The sites are a minimum distance apart, as the crow flies, and the sites are

separated by a public highway;

- b) The school has remote playing fields, separated from the school by a minimum distance, and there is no safe walking route for the pupils.
- c) A percentage of staff are required to teach on both sites on a daily basis, to support the principle of a whole school policy, and to maintain the integrity of the delivery of the national curriculum;
- d) A minimum percentage of pupils are taught on each site on a daily basis
- e) the provision on the additional site does not qualify for an individual school budget share through the DSG

2.2 Allowable ESFA methods of calculation:

- a) Agreed lump sum payment;
- b) Agreed per-pupil rate;
- c) Agreed rate per square metre of the additional site;
- d) Values for primary and secondary schools may be different

2.3 ESFA online guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945784/Schools_Operational_guide_2021_to_2022_V4_.pdf

3. Croydon Current criteria

- 3.1 As shown in Appendix A below Croydon has three main criteria currently in place that applied at the time when these payments were previously made through Croydon's growth fund. These arrangements have been in place for many years and are approved annually by Schools Forum when reviewing growth fund criteria. Schools are expected to meet all the set requirements to qualify for the split site award. Appendix A shows that four schools currently meet the requirement hence the overall financial burden on the school's block is presently £140k. Following a previous Schools Block working party we also suggest the inclusion of new criteria [d] highlighted in Appendix A below

4. Waltham Forest criteria

- 4.1 Significant number of schools qualify since it appears Waltham Forest has adopted just one main criterion. This might indicate why 21 schools qualify - costing the schools block £744k.

5. Southwark Council and Sutton & Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

- 5.1 Southwark Council also use one main criteria as shown in Appendix A. This was adopted from the ESFA guide. Six schools qualified and are paid £60.4k each - making a total of £362.4k.
- 5.2 Sutton and Royal Borough of Kingston has four criteria like Croydon Council hence only three schools qualify. The overall cost to the local authority is £150k as each split site attracts a funding of £50k.

6. Conclusion

The decision to keep or amend the current criteria should be considered in line with the following underlisted observations from the benchmarking exercise:

- (a) The criteria set by Council is in line with the ESFA guideline published in the operational guide. It is clear and transparent and includes all the trigger points

listed in the operational guide.

- (b) There appears to be direct correlation between number of criteria and number of qualified schools hence less budget pressure on the school's block with high number of criteria.
- (c) Amount payable by Croydon per split site appears low when compared to the four other local authorities listed in this report.

Recommendation that the Schools Forum Adopt Option 1 having considered all the alternatives presented in this paper.
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Appendix A

Four other Local Authorities – Split Site Analysis

	Criteria	Funding per site	Cost implications
Option 1 Croydon	<p><i>Possible criteria:</i></p> <p>a) The two or more sites must belong to a single school that by definition has one DfE number;</p> <p>b) The two or more stand-alone sites are not physically connected or directly accessed from another part of the school;</p> <p>c) Each site has its own reception that is consistent in appearance with a reception for a one site school. Over 18 % of the school's curriculum for pupils in the age range R to 11 are taught on the site;</p> <p>d) The provision on the additional site does not qualify for an individual school budget share through the DSG</p>	a) One rate, regardless of school phase determined as part of Croydon formula funding each year. Factor relates to the extra staffing/contract costs of running an extra school office/boilers etc.	Presently four (4) schools costing £35k per school totals £140k. This is the amount currently allowed and less than what was given in previous Croydon formulas
Option 2 Waltham Forest's	The two or more sites must belong to a single school with two separate receptions ⁱ	<p>a) Primary School rate per site £36k;</p> <p>b) Secondary School – Second site building footprint more than 50% of main site £140k;</p> <p>c) Secondary School – Second site building footprint less than 50% of main site £70k</p>	Twenty- one (21) schools £744.5k. (This cost means less available through AWPU) ⁱⁱ
Option 3 Southwark Council	Schools are awarded lump sum of £60,400 if they operate on two sites separated by a public road carrying through traffic ⁱⁱⁱ	Agreed lump sum payment of £60.4k to each school either primary or secondary school.	Six schools are currently paid £60.4k each making a total cost of £362.4k

<p>Option 4</p> <p>London Borough of Sutton & Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames</p>	<p><i>Current criteria</i></p> <p>a) The school has a single DfE number and has two or more distinct campuses that do not share a common boundary and where travel between the sites requires access via a public high way.</p> <p>b) Teaching and learning unavoidably occurs on both sites and involves a significant number of pupils and where it is necessary to maintain permanent staffing on both sites.</p> <p>c) Funding is not already provided for additional costs through a separate mechanism.</p> <p>d) The creation of any new split site will require prior agreement with the local authority to ensure it is unavoidable in delivering core education. .</p>	<p>Agreed lump sum payment of £50k to each school either primary or secondary school.</p>	<p>Three schools are currently paid £50k each making a total cost of £150k</p>
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ii Just one of the criteria used

ii Highlighting by Schools Forum steering group