
Schools Forum 24th February 2015

Report of the Interim Director of Children's Services

Dudley Grid for Learning (DGfL) Programme

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Schools Forum with information in respect of the Dudley Grid for Learning programme.

Discussed at HTCF – BWG

2. Yes – 11th February 2015.

Discussed at DGfL Steering Board

3. Yes – 5th February 2015.

Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities

4. From 1 April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct Department for Education (DfE) grant: the Dedicated School Grant (DSG).
5. The Forum is the 'guardian' of the local Schools Budget, and its distribution among schools and other bodies, and therefore must be closely involved throughout the development process.
6. Dudley schools use their delegated schools budget, which is funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant, to make their annual contributions to fund the Dudley Grid for Learning programme.

Actions for Schools Forum

7. To note the Directorate's core offer in respect of the remaining five years of the Dudley Grid for Learning programme, which commences on 1st February 2016.
8. The DGfL Steering Board supported the financial framework and the core offer per pupil rates presented at the meeting on 5th February 2015.

Attachments to Report

9. None

Ian Curnow/Karen Cocker

Divisional Lead - Commissioning & Procurement/ Children's Services Finance
Manager

6th February 2015

Schools Forum 24th February 2015

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Dudley Grid for Learning (DGfL) Programme

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Schools Forum with information in respect of the Dudley Grid for Learning programme.

Background

2. Building on the success of DGfL 1 and 2, the 10 year Dudley Grid for Learning 3 (DGfL3) contract commenced on February 1st 2011. The DGfL programme has since inception been funded by a contribution from schools' budgets together with the grant funding made available by the Department for Communities and Local Government in respect of private finance initiative schemes. 106 Dudley schools chose to take up the DGfL3 offer at the point of renewal.
3. Shortly before the commencement of DGfL3 in February 2011, the Department for Communities and Local Government chose to end the PFI subsidy and annualise the grant in respect of DGfL. This decision was unsuccessfully challenged through judicial review. Although a final settlement payment was received from central government, this left the programme as defined in deficit by the end of 2021. In order to not destabilise the DGfL3 contract and programme at such a late stage, the local authority at this point was able to support the ongoing delivery of the programme to the point of the 2016 five year break clause by making good this funding shortfall but the funding in respect of the second five years of the contract was subject to future discussions with Dudley schools.
4. Schools Forum was fully appraised of the central government funding reduction and consequences of the DGfL3 programme during the 2011/12 financial year meeting cycle.

1st February 2016 Onwards

5. Feedback from schools has made clear a wish to update the DGfL3 offer. As a result the second five years of the contract have been remodelled to provide a core with modular options rather than 'one size fits all'. Schools will therefore have far greater control over the elements of the service they wish to purchase.
6. Alongside full consultation with all schools, the DGfL Head Teacher Steering Board has worked with the DGfL Client Team and RM PLC (DGfL3 delivery partner) to agree a core and options model that provides choice and value for money. As a result of the new modularity and the reduction in subsidy level, the

per pupil unit rates payable by Dudley schools for the core DGfL3 service are detailed in Table 1. This compares with the current per pupil rates which are detailed in Table 2.

7. The DGfL Client Team and RM PLC are in the process of compiling a catalogue of options for schools to purchase as additional items to supplement the core service. It is intended that this catalogue is issued to schools before 31st March 2015. DGfL will schedule a meeting with each school in order to discuss the options. Schools will be required to advise the local authority of their intentions in respect of the core and additional services by the 31st July 2015.
8. For 2015/16 budget setting, as the revised offer commences on 1st February 2016 schools will be advised to set a DGfL budget for 2015/16 equivalent to 2014/15 as a very minimum unless they have good reason not to do so.
9. In respect of the core service per pupil rates detailed in Table 1, there remains a Local Authority subsidy arising from the residue of the central government grant of 34% per pupil.

Table 1 – Dudley Grid for Learning Core Service Per Pupil Rates from 1st February 2016 to 31st January 2021 for Dudley Schools

Financial Year	Per Pupil Unit Rate after the subsidy	Comments
2015/16 from 1.2.16 – 31.3.16	£36.75	Cost of new core service year 1
2016/17	£36.75	Cost of new core service year 1
2017/18	£37.48	2% inflation included
2018/19	£38.23	2% inflation included
2019/20	£38.99	2% inflation included
2020/21 to 31.1.21	£39.77	2% inflation included

Table 2 - Dudley Grid for Learning Per Pupil Rates from 1st February 2011 to 31st January 2016

Sector	Per Pupil Unit Rate	Comments
Primary school	£57.60	Per pupil rate applicable for five years 2011 to 2016
Secondary school	£66.40	Per pupil rate applicable for five years 2011 to 2016
Special school	£65.60	Per pupil rate applicable for five years 2011 to 2016

Finance

10. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2014 which are effective from 12th January 2015 and relate to the 2015/16 financial year.
11. Schools Forums are regulated by the regulated by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by the 2013 and 2014 the School and

Early Years Finance (England) Regulations.

12. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct grant; Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

Law

13. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

Equality Impact

14. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

Recommendation

15. Schools Forum to note the Dudley Grid for Learning programme offer to Dudley schools from 1st February 2016 as supported by the DGfL Steering Board on 5th February 2015, and the core service per pupil unit rates payable by schools as detailed in Table 1 of the report.



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