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**Schools Forum 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

**Report of the Interim Director of Children's Services**

**Universal Infant Free School Meals**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Schools Forum with updated information in respect of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) grants, both revenue and capital for 2014/15.

**Discussed at HTCF – BWG**

2. Yes -11<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

**Schools Forum Role and Responsibilities**

3. From 1 April 2006, the Schools Budget has been funded by a direct Department for Education (DfE) grant: the Dedicated School Grant (DSG).
4. The Schools Forum Regulations state that with regard to:
  - Financial issues relating to: arrangements for pupils with special educational needs;
  - Arrangements for use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school;
  - Arrangements for early years provision;
  - Administration arrangements for the allocation of central government grants;

then the Local Authority must consult annually with Schools Forum in order that Forum can give a view and inform the governing bodies of all consultations.

**Actions for Schools Forum**

5. For Schools Forum to note the contents of the report.

**Attachments to Report**

6. None.

Sue Coates  
Senior Principal Accountant  
9<sup>th</sup> February 2015

**Schools Forum 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Schools Forum with updated information in respect of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) grants, both revenue and capital, for 2014/15.

**Background**

2. The Government announced in the Spring 2014 that from September 2014, they would provide funding to enable schools to offer a free lunch to every primary school child in reception classes, year 1 and year 2. It is now a legal duty for primary schools to deliver this Government commitment.
3. In addition to making over £1billion in revenue funding available over the next two years, the Chancellor announced that the Government would be making capital funding of £150million available in 2014/15 to support schools in providing free school meals to all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 from September 2014.
4. Information was provided to Schools Forum at the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014 regarding the revenue and capital funding allocations to Dudley schools, for 2014/15 and along with detail of bids for additional capital funding made on behalf of two Dudley schools.
5. Further information is now available with regard to both revenue and capital funding and this is referred to in paragraphs 6 to 15 below.

**Revenue Funding**

6. The Government's revenue grant funding for the Universal Infants Free School Meal (UIFSM) is £2.30 per eligible pupil.
7. Initial 2014/15 academic year indicative revenue funding allocations have been received from Central Government and have been based on the total pupils in reception classes, years 1 and 2 at January 2014 census less pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in reception classes, year groups 1 and 2 at the meal rate of £2.30 by 190 days and then abated to 87% (the estimated average national take up).
8. Final allocations will be based on the average of pupils eligible for free school meals in reception classes, year groups 1 and year 2 at October 2014 and January 2015 census at a meal rate of £2.30 based on 190 meal days.

9. The School Census data is now available for the October 2014 School Census (reflecting take up range from 100% to 54%). The final January School Census data is expected to be available on or around 12<sup>th</sup> February 2015.
10. Children's Services Accountancy team will calculate the final revenue funding allocations for schools based on an average of both the October 2014 and January 2015 School Census data by the end of February 2015. Revised allocations will be published on iDudley at that time and adjustments to funding already received by schools will be processed during March 2015.

### **Revenue Expenditure**

11. Dudley catering services provide catering for most maintained Dudley schools and had initially worked on a target take up of 75%. Evidence from the previous three months trading indicates that the take up of the universal infant free school meal is averaging at 82% with some schools recording a maximum of 100% and minimum take up of others 70%. However the funding will as outlined in paragraph 10.
12. Those Schools using Dudley catering services will be issued with their Autumn term trading statement in respect of this new requirement from February 2015. However, at this stage Catering Services remain confident that schools will see some headroom within the grant receivable of £2.30 per pupil; the amount will vary with the degree of take up.

### **Capital Funding for Universal Infant Free School Meals**

13. On 16th October 2014, Mr David Laws the Secretary of State for Schools issued a communication in respect of an additional bidding round for capital funding for Universal Infant Free School Meals. The £20million of capital funding available for new projects aimed at enhancing kitchen and dining facilities funding was to ensure that in all instances the meals being provided are of as high a quality as possible.
14. The DfE invited local authorities to submit prioritised bids for funding to support the delivery of UIFSM in particular schools, including voluntary aided schools by Thursday 20th November. Dudley submitted a funding bid for two schools that met the criteria Lutley Primary and Netherton C of E Primary School, the detail of the bid is summarised below:

School	Reason for submission of bid
Lutley Primary School	To create an extension enabling the creation of a new dining hall and internal reorganisation of accommodation and services to ensure the existing hall and new hall can be used simultaneously to deliver meals at this three form entry school. The school currently only has one hall and this hall is being used to deliver meals, the sports curriculum and assemblies. The rollout of the UIFSM initiative is therefore causing disruption

	and conflict with delivering the curriculum.
Netherton C of E Primary School	To install a new kitchen in the existing main school hall. Currently meals are being transported through a teaching area causing disruption of the school day. The dishwasher facilities can also only be accessed through internal steps through a teaching area or via external steps which poses as health and safety risk of transporting plates and equipment etc.

15. On the 20th January 2015 the DfE published the list of schools that were successful with their capital bid; for this bidding round Netherton C of E primary school was the only successful school. The DfE stated that the process was competitive and funding had been allocated to the projects which demonstrated a clear need for capital to achieve the policy aims, particularly to those schools which are currently unable to provide hot meals. In order that recipient schools are not compromised in their ability to achieve value for money in negotiations with suppliers, the DfE will not be publishing the funding amounts per school at this time however they have confirmed that amount requested has been granted in full. The grant amounts will be published in July 2015.

### **Finance**

16. The funding of schools is prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) through the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2014.

17. 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 .

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

### **Law**

19. 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.

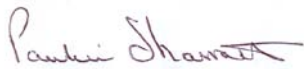
### **Equality Impact**

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

## **Recommendation**

21. In respect of the Government's new initiative "Universal Infants Free School Meals" grant, Schools Forum to note:

- The latest information in respect of both revenue funding and expenditure for Dudley schools;
- The outcome of the recent capital bid submitted in respect of two Dudley maintained schools.



**Pauline Sharratt**  
**Interim Director of Children's Services**

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