

11th JUNE 2019RESULTS OF SCHOOL FUNDING SURVEY 2019/20REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & SKILLS**Executive Summary**

This report sets out the results of the recent school funding survey that was published on 1st May 2019. The aim of the survey was to better understand the context of school budget pressures and the general picture of the challenges faced by schools across West Sussex.

In total, the funding survey was completed by 90 (32%) schools within the county.

Recommendation

That the Schools Forum notes the findings of the school funding survey, and comments on the actions being taken by schools in order to achieve a balanced budget in 2019/20.

Background

- 1.1 The School Funding Survey was included in the headteacher weekly correspondence email on Wednesday 1st May 2019, and closed just over three weeks later at the end of half term on Friday 24th May.
- 1.2 In total 90 (out of 283) schools completed the survey. 88 of these schools were maintained (out of 212) and only 2 were academies/free schools (out of 71).

Sector	Maintained		Academy/Free		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	2	50%	n/a	-	2	50%
Primary	71	40%	1	2%	72	32%
Secondary	10	50%	1	5%	11	28%
Special/APC	5	45%	0	0%	5	38%
Total	88	42%	2	3%	90	32%

- 1.3 A summary of the headline results from the survey are set out in section 2 of this report, together with some of the supporting comments made by the respondents. A full breakdown of the responses to the survey is set out in the annex to this report, and is broken down into the following areas:
- General
 - Pupils on roll
 - Teaching staff
 - Non-teaching staff
 - Other expenditure

Summary of Results

- 2.1 Of the 90 schools who responded to the survey 12 (13%) said that they had requested a licensed deficit in 2019/20, and 47 (52%) believed that they would be unable to set a balanced budget next year (2020/21). Many of the schools who are setting a balanced budget in 2018/19 are only able to do so because of management actions taken in previous financial years or through having a healthy balance of funds in their reserves.

'The savings that we made from the action taken in 2018/19 meant that we have not had to make any savings in order to set our 2019/20 budget.'

'A substantial carry forward and careful budgeting have ensured the last 5 years have been positive for the school with a healthy budget. Moving forwards however the carry forward is being eroded.'

'We are currently relying on growth fund and historic carry forward to balance our budget. With increased SEN putting a strain on support staff I am not expecting to be able to balance our budget long term.'

- 2.2 Due to the current funding pressures, 36 (40%) of the responses stated that they asked parents for a contribution to help fund their school, whilst 15 (17% were looking to federate with another school. Most schools already ask parents to contribute towards the cost of school trips etc, but an increasing number said that they are also looking for these funds to help meet some of the school essentials.

'We are asking parents to donate more money towards costs of curriculum activities and trips.'

'The contribution we ask from parents is to keep the use of our swimming pool.'

'Headteacher spending more time looking for grants, sponsorship and meetings with PTA to look at range of ways to increase income for school from parents.'

'We are having to rely on donations from parents & PTA to pay for music provision, curriculum resources, books, special events to support the termly topics and to keep the minibus running between the two schools.'

'We have already lost subjects such as French in KS1, which are not compulsory and parents have now requested that they are allowed to fund this!'

'There is no curriculum spending planned in the 19/20 budget, essential resources such as exercise books are being funded by parental donations and fund raising and Governors funds from donations will also be used to purchase washroom supplies and resources throughout the year.'

Pupils on Roll

- 2.3 In total, only 18 (20%) schools forecasted an increase in their pupil numbers in both of the next two years. Although 25 (35%) primary schools were expecting an increase this September, the majority (90%) thought that their numbers would either fall or stay the same the following year. Most secondary and special schools were not expecting a reduction in their pupil numbers.

- 2.4 The change in the funding formula means that the number of pupils on roll, and the characteristics of those pupils, is having an increasing impact on the funding that the school receives. Many schools are therefore looking to attract more pupils in the future, however, with primary numbers expected to plateau over the next couple of years, an increase in numbers at one primary school is only likely to have a detrimental impact at a neighbouring school.

'Our biggest issue is the loss of our bubble year group in 2020/21, unless we get another bubble year group or hard federate with another school, we will not be able to balance our budget and would have to run with a deficit for at least 2 years, until the bubble year group completely leaves the school.'

'Increasing the PAN for our school, as supported by our governing body would ensure our future sustainability. There is parental demand for further places as seen by number of applications for reception, appeals and waiting lists in other year groups. Our current and planned numbers on roll next year and past 2 years are above the predicted migration figures provided by WSCC. We have space internally for further classrooms.'

- 2.5 64 (71%) schools are experiencing an increase in their number of pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), whilst 74 (82%) are also seeing a rise in the number of pupils on their SEND register who don't qualify for an EHCP. With funding remaining tight in many cases, this means that a larger proportion of the funding that schools are receiving is being used to support those most at need.

'We are experiencing more children with SEND needs, both children to apply for EHCPs and other SEN support which we don't have the funding to hire staff to meet their needs. Often other TAs are being taken away from other interventions and class support to give individual children support. This is impacting on progress and achievement of the other children in the school.'

'Services that used to be available to schools are no longer there and we are having to buy in many services for our SEN pupils who have more and more complex and varied needs, that means the funds are not available for the rest of the pupils.'

'Our school is going into a licensed deficit this year with a recovery plan which will be difficult to achieve. We currently have 5 pupils on roll requiring one to one LSA support, only one of which who has an EHCP (funding for which still does not nearly cover the salary of full time one to one support). We have further pupils with extra needs joining us in September for which we have no LSA provision.'

Teaching Staff

- 2.6 29 (32%) schools stated that they are looking to reduce their number of teaching staff in 2019/20. The majority of these schools were looking to do this through not filling vacant posts [15 (52%)], and/or through ceasing temporary contracts [16 (55%)]. 5 (17%) schools also said that they will need to make redundancies in order to balance their budget. The impact of these reductions will mean both increased class sizes and the increasing likelihood of classes needing to span more than just one year group. 7 (24%) schools also said that they will need to reduce the number of subjects on offer as part of their curriculum.

'We are only appointing teachers on a one year temporary contract as we may have to reduce the number of classes - this will mean teaching across key stages and possibly three year groups in one class.'

'We have increased class sizes and cut key roles (ie counselling) to reduce costs.'

- 2.7 A further impact of reducing staffing levels (both teaching and non-teaching) is that many schools are having to make cuts in areas of intervention and providing pastoral care to pupils.

'Our viable staffing allocation only leaves a handful of unused teaching periods per week. The impact on us is that cuts have to be made outside the staffing budget, often in intervention work for pupils that fall beneath an EHCP and are non PP pupils.'

'Our ongoing concern is providing sufficient staffing to meet the educational needs of children with SEN as well as meeting the pastoral needs of a growing number of children and their families that require support from the school directly as well as helping them to get the social support they need. We are concerned that our staffing represents 86% of our funding and income but feel that this staffing level is necessary to meet the educational and welfare needs of pupils.'

'Huge cuts to other support services in areas such as speech and language and County's Educational Psychology team has also placed a greater strain on our capacity. Significant additional needs for children in areas such as mental health are also well documented. Our school is currently spending £23k annually on two external counsellors because there is no provision elsewhere.'

- 2.8 A number of schools also mentioned the reduced capacity that they now have at senior leadership level, either due to not being able to afford to fill these posts or where posts are filled, headteachers and deputies having to spend more time in the classroom and less time looking at the strategic issues within the school.

'Supply cover is being provided by the headteacher and deputy head as there is no additional funding available for staff release or sickness cover and staff CPD is at the very minimum.'

'Reduction across all staff teams causing reduced strategic capacity of leadership team as they are required to take on more operational roles; e.g. covering classes, cleaning building; covering lunch etc.'

'Senior leaders including HT are taking an increase in teaching commitments, therefore reducing the capacity to drive forward the development of the school.'

'All release time to support the School Development Plan has been removed in entirety, this will impact on the already heavy workload for teachers and support staff.'

'During 2019/20 we will be making savings at Leadership level as our Head is moving on in September, this has helped with our shortfall.'

Non-teaching Staff

- 2.9 55 (61%) schools stated that they are looking to reduce their number of non-teaching staff in 2019/20. The majority of these schools, 44 (80%), are doing this through not filling vacant posts, and 15 (27%) are ceasing temporary contracts. 9 (16%) schools also said that they are considering redundancies in order to balance their budget.
- 2.10 Of the 55 schools reducing their numbers of non-teaching staff, 42 (76%) stated that they will have reduced capacity to support pupils with SEND as a result of this. In order to avoid this, some schools said that they are looking to replace staff with cheaper alternatives where possible.

'The school will not be able to run our well established Nurture programme, meaning pupils of high need will have to return to the classroom setting; not receiving the alternative provision they require. Our Every Child Counts daily maths groups will also stop; these children will have to be taught within a class of 30 by one teacher.'

'The funding shortfall has meant that we have not been able to replace 1 admin post and 2 TA posts that have arisen this year. This has directly impacted on our ability to support pupils and has also impacted on teacher work/life balance as teaching staff are having to cover additional break duties.'

'If funding does not increase for 2021/22 then we would make our entire TA staff redundant which would be a total of 14.'

'We have not replaced our outgoing HLTA, and when UPS staff have moved on we have recruited cheaper staff to replace them.'

Other Expenditure

- 2.11 67 (74%) schools stated that they have had to cut non-teaching budgets in 2019/20. Of these schools, 54 (81%) are reducing the size of their curriculum budget, whilst 48 (72%) are looking to reduce their premises costs. Other budget areas such as staff training, school trips and extra-curricular activities are also being cut in 42 (63%) schools.

'We have achieved savings on photocopying, marketing and postage etc. over time but the savings in these areas are minimal when looking at the bigger picture. We keep a focus on these costs as it is good practice and we can buy paper cheaper here or there, but it is salaries, PFI and student numbers that matter.'

'Spending on curriculum resources etc is at an all time low. This is not sustainable for the long term.'

'Staff CPD opportunities are significantly restricted. Unless training is free we are unable to send teachers on courses. More and more cover is being done by Headteacher or TA staff.'

'The shortfall is meaning that we have cut back on staffing, resources, software packages that improve parental communication, SLAs and extra-curricular activities (e.g. music lessons), giving a less varied curriculum and less parental engagement. We cannot afford absence insurance and have no supply budget so HLTAs cover PPA and SLT cover staff absence and lunch duties. The building is falling into disrepair as we have cut the repairs and maintenance budget.'

'There is less money to repair an ageing building and to keep our resources up to date or even respectable. The parent body is purchasing an awful lot for us via Amazon Wish List and dedicated fundraising activities. Professional Development is severely hampered for staff as I can't pay for any without getting grants.'

'School trips and visits have also decreased due to no longer having the ability to use the budget to subsidise any shortfall.'

- 2.12 Of the 10 secondary and special schools who responded to the survey and who receive sixth form funding directly from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), 7 (70%) said that they are having to make changes to their post-16 provision this year.

'Our Sixth Form income is our biggest risk to financial stability. Numbers change each year of students going from Year 11 into Year 12. When funding is lagged we need to ride out potential funding drops we see in the future. If numbers in the sixth form increase then naturally we see an increase in funding down the line. It is the biggest variable to our income.'

'Reduction in 6th form funding has meant we will be unable to run some of the courses we have historically been able to put on - especially where they have traditionally recruited lower numbers, but have been subsidised off the back of other higher enrolled courses.'

'Our KS4 and KS5 curriculum offer has been reduced, subjects which could not attract sufficient students are not being supported in 2019/20; this includes GCSE Textiles, A Level Dance, A Level Textiles, A Level German, A Level French, A Level Spanish, Level 3 Child Development, Level 3 Public Services.'

PAUL WAGSTAFF

Director of Education & Skills

Contact: Andy Thorne, 0330 222 3349, andy.thorne@westsussex.gov.uk

2019/20 School Funding Survey Results

1. General

1.1 Have you had to request a licensed deficit in 2019/20?

Sector	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Nursery	1	50%	1	50%
Primary	7	10%	65	90%
Secondary	2	18%	9	82%
Special/APC	2	40%	3	60%
Total	12	13%	78	87%

1.2 Do you think that you will be able to set a balanced budget in 2020/21?

Sector	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Nursery	1	50%	1	50%
Primary	31	43%	41	57%
Secondary	9	82%	2	18%
Special/APC	2	40%	3	60%
Total	43	48%	47	52%

1.3 Do you currently ask parents for a contribution to help fund your school?

Sector	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Nursery	2	100%	0	0%
Primary	27	37%	45	63%
Secondary	6	55%	5	45%
Special/APC	1	20%	4	80%
Total	36	40%	54	60%

1.4 Is your school considering federating with another school?

Sector	Yes		No		N/A	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	0	-	1	50%	1	50%
Primary	13	18%	53	74%	6	8%
Secondary	1	9%	9	82%	1	9%
Special/APC	1	20%	1	20%	3	60%
Total	15	17%	64	71%	11	12%

2. Pupils on Roll

2.1 Are you expecting an increase or a decrease in your pupil roll in September 2019?

Sector	Increase		Decrease		Same	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%
Primary	25	35%	20	28%	27	37%
Secondary	5	45%	1	10%	5	45%
Special/APC	1	20%	1	20%	3	60%
Total	32	36%	22	24%	36	40%

2.2 Are you expecting this increase/decrease in pupil numbers to continue next next year (2020/21)?

Sector	19/20 Increase		19/20 Decrease		19/20 Same	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	18	56%	15	68%	3	8%
No	*13	41%	4	18%	2	6%
N/A	*1	3%	3	14%	31	86%
Total	32	100%	22	100%	36	100%

* Note: The 14 schools who are not expecting their pupil numbers to continue rising next year are all primary schools.

2.3 Do you have an increasing number of pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)?

Sector	Yes		No		N/A	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%
Primary	53	74%	19	26%	0	0%
Secondary	9	82%	2	18%	0	0%
Special/APC	1	20%	0	0%	4	80%
Total	64	71%	22	24%	4	5%

2.4 Do you have an increasing number of pupils on your SEND register who don't qualify for an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)?

Sector	Yes		No		N/A	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%
Primary	64	89%	8	11%	0	0%
Secondary	9	82%	2	18%	0	0%
Special/APC	0	0%	1	20%	4	80%
Total	74	82%	12	13%	4	5%

3. Teaching Staff

3.1 Are you having to reduce your number of teaching staff in 2019/20?

Sector	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Nursery	0	0%	2	100%
Primary	23	32%	49	68%
Secondary	4	36%	7	64%
Special/APC	2	40%	3	60%
Total	29	32%	61	68%

3.2 How are you achieving this?

Sector	Not Filling Vacancies		Ceasing Temp Contracts		Redundancy	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	n/a	-	n/a	-	n/a	-
Primary	10	43%	14	61%	4	18%
Secondary	3	75%	2	50%	1	25%
Special/APC	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	15	52%	16	55%	5	17%

Note: 2 of the 23 primary schools who answered yes to 3.1 answered n/a to this question

3.3 Are you having to remove subjects from your curriculum as a result?

Sector	Yes		No		N/A	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	n/a	-	n/a	-	n/a	-
Primary	5	22%	12	52%	6	26%
Secondary	2	50%	2	50%	0	0%
Special/APC	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%
Total	7	24%	15	52%	7	24%

Note: 1 primary school and 1 secondary school who answered no to 3.1 also said that they had removed subjects from the curriculum

4. Non-teaching Staff

4.1 Are you having to reduce your number of non-teaching staff in 2019/20?

Sector	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Nursery	2	100%	0	0%
Primary	46	64%	26	36%
Secondary	5	45%	6	55%
Special/APC	2	40%	3	60%
Total	55	61%	35	39%

4.2 How are you achieving this?

Sector	Not Filling Vacancies		Ceasing Temp Contracts		Redundancy	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	2	100%	1	50%	0	0%
Primary	36	78%	13	28%	6	13%
Secondary	4	80%	1	20%	2	40%
Special/APC	2	100%	0	0%	1	50%
Total	44	80%	15	27%	9	16%

4.3 Will you have reduced capacity to support your pupils with SEND as a result of this?

Sector	Yes		No		N/A	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%
Primary	39	85%	7	15%	0	0%
Secondary	1	20%	4	80%	0	0%
Special/APC	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%
Total	42	76%	12	22%	1	2%

Note: 4 primary schools, 1 secondary and 1 Special/APC who answered no to 4.1 also said that they would have reduced capacity to support pupils with SEND.

5. **Other Expenditure**

5.1 Are you having to cut your non-staffing budgets in 2019/20?

Sector	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Nursery	2	100%	0	0%
Primary	56	78%	16	22%
Secondary	5	45%	6	55%
Special/APC	4	80%	1	20%
Total	67	74%	23	26%

5.2 What non-staffing budgets are you having to cut?

Sector	Curriculum		Premises		Other	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	1	50%	2	100%	2	0%
Primary	46	82%	37	66%	35	63%
Secondary	3	60%	5	100%	4	80%
Special/APC	4	100%	4	100%	1	25%
Total	54	81%	48	72%	42	63%

5.3 Are you having to make changes to your post-16 provision in 2019/20?

Sector	Yes		No		N/A	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursery	n/a	-	n/a	-	n/a	-
Primary	n/a	-	n/a	-	n/a	-
Secondary	6	20%	1	80%	4	0%
Special/APC	1	20%	2	40%	2	40%
Total	7	44%	3	19%	6	37%