



# Walsall Council

## Walsall Children's Services

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| <b>Report to:</b>             | Schools Forum   |
| <b>Date:</b>                  | 1 March 2011  |
| <b>Subject:</b>               | Central retention of a proportion of the allocation which was within the former Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) Grant   |
| <b>Contact:</b>               | Sue Wedgwood ( <a href="mailto:sue.wedgwood@walsallcs.serco.com">sue.wedgwood@walsallcs.serco.com</a> )   |
| <b>Purpose of the report:</b> | <p>To request that Schools' Forum allow the Local Authority to retain a 6% proportion of the funding that was formerly provided through the EMA grant of £1.6 millions (2010-11). This would allow an element of core funding ( approx. £98k or £852/school) towards the salaries of two consultants and an administrator who would provide core consultancy support to all schools and would earn the rest of their salaries through traded services. Last year it was agreed that 12% was held centrally.</p> <p>The Education Bill indicates that the 'Community Cohesion' element will cease to be a core element of the proposed new Ofsted inspection framework, but it remains a key priority for the Council and for schools in this borough. Also in Walsall there are many individuals and groups who are vulnerable to under attainment and this includes some groups of individuals of specific ethnic minority heritage, some of whom do not have English as a first language, including the increasing 'new to English' cohort of pupils. 'Pupil premium' funding and the distribution of the majority of the funding that was formerly EMA grant funding will help individual schools to target interventions for these individuals and groups</p> |
| <b>Recommendation:</b>        | That the Schools' Forum support this request to ensure continued provision of some core professional support to schools relating to improving outcomes for ethnic minority heritage students and supporting governors and schools to engage communities in supporting learning and improving community understanding, while traded services are developed.  |

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The original purpose of the grant was two-fold:  
To enable strategic managers in schools and LAs to lead whole-school change to narrow achievement gaps and ensure equality of outcomes; and  
To meet the costs of some of the additional support to meet the specific needs of bilingual learners, the 'new to English' and the under-achieving pupils.
- 1.2 As a general rule, the LA retained elements of these grants have been abolished. Therefore, a request is being made to the Schools' Forum to allow the central retention of 6% of this funding from 01 April 2011 and support the continuation of a vital support service to schools, particularly as there is still an attainment gap for young people from different ethnic heritage, including white boys with parents and carers with low incomes.
- 1.3 Without the continued support of this funding, the capacity to bring specialist support to schools on these development areas will be compromised.

LA staff have a key role to:

- support of those managing interventions for pupils with ethnic minority heritage, including the analysis of progress data, action planning and target setting for improvement, support and advice including appropriate training to schools
- provide positive challenges, support and advice including appropriate training to schools on strategies to meet the needs of bilingual pupils, the 'new to English' and tracking of their progress
- analyse data to look at trends and changes in the cohorts of children and young people to identify their needs for support and intervention, and to disseminate good practice
- advise on curriculum changes that reflect the languages, cultures, histories and religions, and heritages of different communities
- support schools in parental and community engagement, celebrating diversity and developing inclusive practice.

## **2. Use of the funding**

- 2.1 The analysis of data at a school and at a borough-wide level indicates that there are still individuals and groups of children and young people that are vulnerable to underachievement, where the gap between their levels of attainment and the average level locally and nationally is still too high. We are in a position to work with schools and governors to identify where this is the case on an individual level and to plan interventions that will help the schools to demonstrate the impact of their interventions in narrowing the gap.
- 2.2 A Corrective Action Plan has been written outlining the strategy that we are promoting for all such groups of young people where the gaps are too high. We believe that it is important to retain the expertise of this team to support schools in addressing this joint priority.
- 2.3 The funding, if approved, will be used to maintain a service to support schools that are facing challenges relating to the outcomes for students from an ethnic minority heritage and for bilingual learners including the increasing 'new to English' cohort. This will pay for a fraction of the core costs, the rest of which will have to be earned through trading of the team's services.

- 2.3.1. Option One – the funding of approximately £98k held centrally, could partially fund posts which would enable the local authority to build the capacity of schools to meet the needs of targeted students on the ‘narrowing the gap’ issue. This will allow the interpretation of data to help head teachers to identify individuals and groups, will support them in identifying intervention strategies and to identify impact measures for success in equalising opportunity.
- 2.3.2. Option Two – the funding could be distributed to schools and if this was equally split across the 116 schools, this would mean an additional (approximately) £850 per school which could support ‘narrowing the gap’ work for students from an ethnic minority heritage who are falling behind expected levels of attainment, but of course this funding is not ring-fenced. It could be used to buy in from traded packages from the Quality and Improvement team or from other quality assured agencies brokered to meet your needs.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 The Schools’ Forum is asked to support the Option One proposal to retain £98k within the Schools’ Specific Contingency, to secure some core costs for this specialist support to schools that will help governors and head teachers to identify individuals and groups that require intervention to ‘narrow the attainment gap’ and to help them to develop and measure the impact of these interventions. The service will be expected to find the rest of their salary costs through traded services.
- 3.2 The retention of £98k may cause a breach in the central expenditure limit, as former grant funding is not included in the baseline for comparison purposes. If approval is given to the retention of the central EMA funding, then Forum will need to approve a possible breach as a result of this agreement.