



North Tyneside Council

Briefing note

To: Schools Forum

Author: Jon Ritchie, ENGIE

Date: 13 January 2016

Title of Briefing: Falling rolls and headroom funding for 2015/16 – allocation process

Purpose

To agree the process to allocate the funding available for falling rolls and headroom funding during the spring term.

1. Background

There are two budgets in place to support schools with financial pressures:

- Falling rolls funding - £0.250m
- Headroom funding – circa £0.190m

Whilst the criteria for allocating these budgets differ, the Deficit Sub-group has played a key role in the process in recent years and it is proposed to maintain this process moving forward.

The July 2015 meeting received a report ([click here for report](#)) which set out the outline methodology for the award of these funding sources. This paper sets out a proposed approach and timetable to be applied to allocate the 2015/16 funding.

2. Falling rolls

Schools Forum considered and approved the criteria for falling rolls allocation at meetings last term, with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) approving the North Tyneside approach with a minor clarification. The final process is set out in Appendix A for reference.

One of the key criteria for this funding, which is mandated by the EFA, is that schools must have a good or outstanding Ofsted rating when the funding is awarded. We are aware of several schools who are awaiting Ofsted inspections, which are expected by the end of the spring term i.e. within this financial year. To ensure that the Sub-group can meet to consider the applications towards the end of the term, it is proposed that schools not currently satisfying this criteria, but meeting the other criteria, will be invited to apply for the funding. The school will be advised that they will not be allocated funding if the required Ofsted rating is not subsequently achieved by the end of the spring term.

The criteria applied in North Tyneside looks at pupil numbers based on the 2013, 2014 and 2015 census data. The 2015 data was received in draft form shortly before Christmas and the indications are that 15 schools meet at least one of the initial pupil number criteria. Eight schools are not eligible based on the level of their balances as at 31 March 2015. Of the remaining seven schools, three do not currently have the required Ofsted rating.

Proposed approach

In order to ensure the process can be concluded by the end of the spring term, the following process is proposed:

- Schools meeting the pupil reduction and budget threshold are contacted by finance officers by email on 1 February (to allow time for final census data to be reviewed) and the application process is explained
- Schools wishing to apply submit their application by 29 February
- Sub-group meeting takes place during early-mid March
- Final decision by 24 March (end of term)
- Notification to schools on 11 April, with a summary note to Schools Forum members (as the next meeting is not until 18 May)

3. Headroom funding

Headroom funding is only applicable for those schools with approved deficit budgets for 2015/16, with the added requirement that their outturn position is within the approved level. Whilst the allocation process is undertaken during 2015/16, the final award is not made until the outturn position, i.e. as at 31 March 2016, is known.

Proposed approach

The Sub-group will consider headroom funding at the same time as the falling rolls (expected early-mid March). Schools and Schools Forum will be notified of the draft award at the same time as the falling rolls process (11 April) although the final confirmation will not be possible until the year end position is known (expected May 2015).

4. Membership

The current membership of the group is set out below:

- Viv Buller
- David Erskine
- Andrew James
- Adrian Smith
- Jim Stephenson
- Gavin Storey
- Peter Thorp

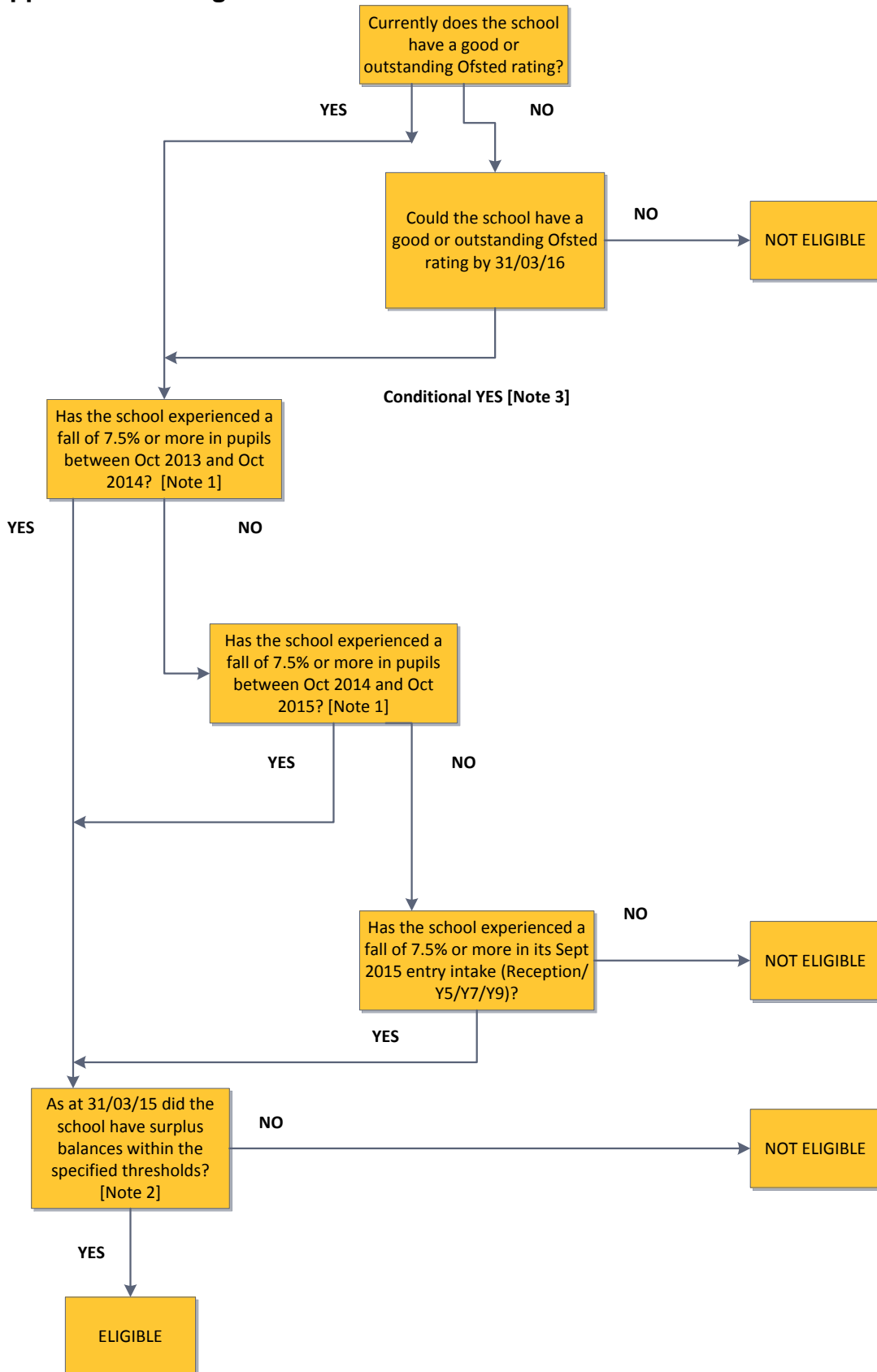
This group works well but it may be beneficial to invite additional members onto this important group as it provides further resilience in terms of attending meetings. On that basis, Schools Forum may wish to consider inviting additional members, as well as confirming that the current Sub-group are happy to continue in this role.

5. Recommendations

Schools Forum is asked to:

1. Approve the process for Falling Rolls funding as set out in section 2
2. Approve the process for Headroom funding as set out in section 3
3. Consider the membership of the Sub-group and invite people to volunteer if applicable

Appendix A: Falling rolls flow chart



Note 1: pupil numbers only relate to Reception to Year 11 (ie exclude nursery and sixth form)

Note 2: applicable thresholds are 2.5% of budget for secondary, 4% for primary

Note 3: If a good or outstanding Ofsted rating is not received, any application for support will be invalidated