

## **Falling Rolls Policy Update from 2021-22**

### **Key Messages**

Forum members are asked to:

- Note the Falling Rolls claims received, and any support awarded for 2021-22.

### **1. Introduction/Background**

- 1.1. The policy was originally developed due to the number of births in Sheffield falling since 2012 which has resulted in a growing number of surplus places in primary schools and the expectation is that this trend will continue for the next few years.
- 1.2. The Local Authority developed a Falling Rolls policy, throughout the year, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders at the Funding Working Group and the policy was agreed at the September 2021 Schools Forum.

### **2. Implementation of the Policy**

- 2.1. Upon approval of the Falling Rolls Funding Policy, it was subsequently published on the SCC website and School Point to enable schools to apply for not only financial support but for other avenues of support from the School Organisation Team, as detailed in the policy.
- 2.2. The School Organisation Team used their RAG rating system to prioritise support from a non-financial aspect and regular meetings were held to review progress.
- 2.3. Schools applied in writing to the School Resourcing Team for further financial support.
- 2.4. The applications for financial support received from schools were processed by the Schools Resourcing Team.

### **3. Applications Received**

- 3.1. The Local Authority received three applications from the following schools:
  - Angram Bank Primary
  - Emmanuel Junior Academy
  - Shortbrook Primary

## **4. Financial Support Provided**

- 4.1. Schools need to meet ALL of the following eligibility criteria to receive financial support:
- Schools have balances of less than 8% of their current budget share or GAG; and
  - schools should have a reduction in cash terms of more than 3%;
  - schools submit a forecast balance signed by the Head Teacher (Maintained Schools) or equivalent MAT Trustee (Academies);
  - Schools should not have received any funding through the growth funding policy.
- 4.2. None of the three schools met the financial criteria as indicated below, as all criteria needed to be met to qualify for financial assistance.
- 4.3. Angram Bank had 2% in school reserve balances; although the qualifying threshold is below 8%, their GAG reduction of -2.8% did not meet the eligibility criteria for funding of -3%. The school did not receive growth funding in 2021/22 and they did not hold a licensed deficit.
- 4.4. Emmanuel had 6% in school reserve balances; the qualifying threshold is below 8%, however, their GAG increased by 5.8% where the eligibility criteria for funding is -3%. The school did not receive growth funding in 2021/22 and they did not hold a licensed deficit.
- 4.5. Shortbrook had -25% in school reserve balances, the qualifying threshold is below 8%, however, their budget share increased by 9.2% where the eligibility criteria for funding is -3%. The school did not receive growth funding in 2021/22 but they did hold a licensed deficit of £195k.

## **5. Non-Financial Support Provided**

- 5.1. All schools have been provided with data packs so they can see the likely impact of falling rolls on future pupil numbers in reception and the implications on the future finances for the school. This was intended to provide them with enough lead-in time to make the necessary changes to staffing and delivery structures required.
- 5.2. Schools were Red Amber Green, rated according to the level of surplus places and those rated red with the highest levels of surplus places, were offered individual meetings with the commissioning team to ensure they fully understood the data and the implications for their school when Governors and heads were making decisions on future PAN levels.

## **6. Outcomes**

- 6.1. Schools who claimed for financial support were unsuccessful generally due to the level of balances they currently hold. These schools did have sufficient balances to support the current staffing structure.
- 6.2. School mobility issues were also a concern contributing to falling rolls, e.g. pupils who leave and start within each term can cause issues for schools. However, schools were signposted to the levels of mobility funding that they attract through the funding formula to deal with such issues.

## **7. Recommendations**

The Schools Forum members are asked to note:

- The outcomes of the claims on the Falling Rolls Policy.
- That given that no financial award was made, the outturn position of the Falling Rolls fund remained at £250k.