



Northumberland County Council

Wellbeing and Community Health

Agenda Item : 8

SCHOOLS FORUM

02 October 2019

School Balances as at 31 March 2019

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Schools Forum of the position regarding School Balances as at 31 March 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools Forum members are recommended to read the report prior to the meeting and table any questions, preferably in advance or at the meeting.

3. BACKGROUND

Maintained schools submitted their returns regarding the use of School Balances as at 31 March 2018. This is separate to their budget plans, and details their balances. Schools are allowed to carry forward a percentage of the budget without penalty, any funds in excess of this figure need to be supported with details of future spending intentions. The relevant percentages are shown below:

- Primary/Special schools 16% of the new financial year budget share;
- Middle/High schools 10% of the new financial year budget share

No schools were above the limit; therefore no funds need to be clawed back.

4. CURRENT POSITION

The original figure brought forward into 2017/18 was £4.186m, as reported to Schools Forum in September 2018. However this figure has been reduced by £587,000 to reflect those schools closing or academising during the course of the year. The adjusted balances therefore reflect those schools reflected in both the 2018/19 opening and closing balances.

Of the 125 schools that remained maintained throughout 2018/19, overall balances actually increased by £90k, from £3.599 million to £3.689 million. Differences between the different phases were evident:

OVERALL BALANCES : Change between years	2017-18 Balance	2018-19 Balance	Change (£)	Change (%)
First/Primary	2,865,850	3,057,339	191,489	6.7%
Middle	725,105	857,745	132,640	18.3%
High/Secondary	(1,198,842)	(1,321,087)	(122,245)	-10.2%
Special	1,207,315	1,095,476	(111,839)	-9.3%
	3,599,428	3,689,473	90,045	2.5%

Overall increases in balances were reported in respect of the 102 first / primary and 10 middle schools within the overall scope of the analysis. While the 8 Special Schools showed a fall in balances overall, this was influenced by a significant revenue contribution to capital of £420,000 to assist with a capital project, without which a £308k increase in balances would have been recorded.

Our maintained high/secondary schools continue to show a falling level of balances, consistent with previous years. In practice this means expenditure is continuing to exceed income in this phase.

Further analysis is available of the respective phases to identify the % of schools in each phase with surplus balances:

- At first / primary 78 (76.5%) of schools have a surplus or positive balance, these total £4.133 million, the average balance of these schools is £53k.
- 8 (80%) of the 10 middle schools have a surplus balance, totalling £986,390, the average balance of these schools is £123k.
- 2 (40%) of the 5 high / secondary schools have a surplus balance, totalling £681,578; the average balance of these schools is £341k. Because the majority of the secondary / high schools in Northumberland are now academies, caution should be taken when interpreting these results due to the small sample size.
- Including the PRU, 7 of the 8 Special Schools have a surplus balance, totalling £1.317 million; the average balance of these schools is £188k.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

Individual School balances will not be published at this stage in the year while we continue to work with Schools in relation to their budgets. All maintained school figures are published by the DfE in December 2019, after which they will be reported to Schools Forum.

Bruce Parvin
Education and Skills Business Manager

10 September 2019

ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENT IN MAINTAINED SCHOOL BALANCES 2018/19

	(as at 31 March 2018)	(as at 31 March 2019)	Movement in Year
Change in balances for schools with deficit	2017-18	2018-19	Change
First/Primary	(681,056)	(1,075,970)	(394,914)
Middle	(118,461)	(128,644)	(10,183)
High/Secondary	(1,707,965)	(2,002,664)	(294,699)
Special	(170,378)	(221,996)	(51,618)
	(2,677,860)	(3,429,274)	(751,414)
Number of schools with deficit balance	2017-18	2018-19	Change
First/Primary	20	24	4
Middle	2	2	0
High/Secondary	3	3	0
Special	1	1	0
	26	30	4
Average Balance of Schools in deficit			
First/Primary	(34,053)	(44,832)	(10,779)
Middle	(59,231)	(64,322)	(5,092)
High/Secondary	(569,322)	(667,555)	(98,233)
Special	(170,378)	(221,996)	(51,618)
AVERAGE ALL SCHOOLS WITH DEFICIT	(102,995)	(114,309)	(11,314)
Change in balances for schools with surplus	2017-18	2018-19	Change
First/Primary	3,546,906	4,133,309	586,403
Middle	843,566	986,390	142,824
High/Secondary	509,124	681,578	172,454
Special	1,377,693	1,317,471	(60,222)
	6,277,289	7,118,748	(186,491)
Number of schools with surplus balance	2017-18	2018-19	Change
First/Primary	82	78	(4)
Middle	8	8	0
High/Secondary	2	2	0
Special	7	7	0
	99	95	(4)
Average Balance of Schools with surplus			
First/Primary	43,254.95	52,991.14	9,736.19
Middle	105,445.75	123,298.75	17,853.00
High/Secondary	254,562.00	340,788.75	86,226.75
Special	196,813.29	188,210.18	(8,603.10)
AVERAGE ALL SCHOOLS WITH SURPLUS	63,407	74,934	11,527