
Consultation Response

2017/18 Early Years Single Funding Formula

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Children, Schools and Families Department

Director: Yvette Stanley

Introduction

In Merton, Early Years Funding is accessed by 43 primary schools, 85 private, voluntary and independent settings (PVI) and 45 childminders.

17 settings (4 PVI, 6 schools and 7 childminders) provided a response to this consultation. Their answers are summarised below.

Response to questions

1. Government has stated that there must be a single base rate by 2019/20 for 3 and 4- year-olds. Merton Council proposes to introduce a single base rate from 2017/18. Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes	100%
No	0%
Don't know	0%

Comments

- I still feel the funding should be incentivised to cover the cost of staff and more expensive equipment (PVI)*

2. Government has stated that there are no changes to the funding formula for 2-year-olds and Merton's intention is to use the funding allocation for two-year-olds solely for this purpose. Please provide any comments.

Comments

- We don't do 2yrs funding (PVI)*
- Agreed! (school)*
- I need to find out more but I am happy with the formula (childminder)*

3. Do you agree with the proposal to use children's eligibility for EYPP as the metric to determine allocation of the mandatory deprivation supplement?

Yes	75%
No	12.5%
Don't know	12.5%

Comments

- I do not agree as at this time it is determined by postcode. If you change it to EYPP providers can only access this if they fill in the EYPP section. In my experience, not all parents are happy to do this so potentially we could lose out on funding. Can there be another way of determining the eligibility via Merton rather than the parents having to agree and sign for it much like the early years website? (PVI)*
- It would be interesting to see modelling of this for schools (school)*
- We will not receive as much money as now as our IDACI rating is higher than our EYPP take-up/eligibility. The Ahmadiya community's religion discourages members from applying for any state support, including PP for their children. This affects numbers considerably as we are one of their nearest schools (school)*

4. Merton Council proposes to include a sparsity supplement for childminders in the formula. Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes	75%
No	18.8%
Don't know	6.2%

Comments

- Why do childminders get a supplement when nurseries are also struggling? (PVI)*
- Our nursery is not full and we are in competition with other providers (school)*
- I don't know enough about this proposal to comment (PVI)*

5. A flexibility supplement, quality supplement and EAL supplement are not currently in the Merton formula and there are no proposals to change this for 2017/18. Please provide any comments.

- Why don't Merton follow suit? (PVI)*
- For early acquisition of English stage - EAL supplement should be paid (school)*
- Agreed, we feel the formula should be as transparent and simple as possible. Any additional elements would be difficult to both implement and monitor (school)*

- *This seems sensible (school)*
- *We would welcome an EAL supplement. Many of our intakes are Stage 1 EAL with no or limited English & it is a significant financial drain on our budgets to support them. Numerous academic studies (E.g. EEF) show early intervention (i.e. Nursery) in supporting language acquisition & development increases children's chances of success. As for the EYPP point, most of our EAL children are linked to the Ahmadiya community, so this could give us the funds we miss out on with EYPP (school)*
- *I think the EAL supplements do support settings as most have a high level of EAL (PVI)*

6. Merton Council currently has an embedded model of support for SEN. It is proposed that the framework/model continues and will become the mandatory SEN Inclusion Fund funded through the retained element. Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes	87.5%
No	0%
Don't know	12.5%

Comments

- *SEN children as well as SENCo need extra funds to improve our services (PVI)*
- *It would appear at the moment schools receive little benefit from this. Applications for EHCPs take a long time. Early Years inclusion team - very little support available (school)*
- *Access to funding early on needs to be addressed as current requirements are 6 months of evidence (school)*

7. Merton Council proposes a contingency as part of the high pass through rate, which is allocated at the end of the year in accordance with guidance. Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes	86.6 %
No	6.7%
Don't know	6.7%

Comments

- *Schools desperately need funding and need this upfront not at the end of the year. More transparency required from Local Authority (school)*
- *As the contingency redistribution can cover 2 financial years, this makes forward planning difficult for schools (school)*

8. Merton Council intends to retain 7% of the total budget to fund key statutory duties (administration, information, securing training for staff in the sector) support and advice to the sector, focussing on support to weaker settings and settings working with children with additional needs. Please provide any comments.

Comments

- *All of these are important to nurseries to improve and survive (PVI)*
- *There needs to be more transparency of actual figures - amounts retained and where it's spent, value added to schools (school)*
- *Agreed! (school)*
- *This is a good proposal (school)*
- *Yes I understand about key fund (childminder)*
- *I am pleased that there is no proposal to charge for work in settings as part of the work in relation to inclusion and early identification of need (school)*
- *I think this shows the intention to fully support the service by allowing retention of 7%. (PVI)*

Any Other comments

- *Thank you very much to Allison Jones and her team for making this presentation clear and easy to understand, together with her patience in relation to the 30 hour nursery offer (school)*
- *Clear presentation. We agree with making the formula as simple as possible (school)*
- *Single entry admissions (Sept only) is better for the EY cohort as a whole, in terms of settling in (social and emotional development) and academic progress. However, we are fully aware that a single entry admission would significantly disadvantage us. To offer 30 hour places, we would drop from a 52 place setting to a 26 place setting (school)*