

## **Schools Forum – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

### **School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant**

#### **Recommendations:**

1. That Schools Forum notes the content of this report.

#### **PART A**

#### **Reasons for recommendations:**

2. Schools Forum requested an update on the use of the allocated school improvement monitoring and brokering grant.
3. In November 2016 the government announced the introduction of the school improvement monitoring and brokering grant. This grant has been allocated to local authorities since September 2017.
4. The report outlines the use of the school improvement monitoring and brokering grant during the academic years 2017/ 2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020

#### **PART B**

#### **Background**

5. In 2017 the government removed of the Education Services Grant (ESG) which funded those statutory education services that must be provided by local authorities.
6. The school improvement monitoring and brokering grant was allocated to local authorities to 'monitor performance of local authority maintained schools, broker school improvement provision and intervene as appropriate'.
7. Staffordshire County Council retains the duty (under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998) to ensure that all pupils in our area have the opportunity to attend schools that are good or better, and the local authority has powers to intervene where we have concerns about standards in maintained schools (and liaise with the regional schools commissioner (RSC) where we have concerns about an academy school).
8. At the meeting of Schools Forum in October 2017 members took the decision to devolve previously centrally retained school improvement funding to schools via the agreed formulae. Schools would then be required to commission their own support to address areas for improvement or aspects of concern.
9. The School Quality Assurance and Intervention – options for devolving the funding for school improvement School Forum report in October 2017 indicated

that the local authority would use the allocated school improvement monitoring and brokering grant to commission Entrust to monitor the effectiveness of maintained schools.

10. The local authority has continued to undertake the school categorisation process for all state funded mainstream schools. The process results in every school being placed in one of three categories:
  - Category 1 - No concern;
  - Category 2 - Some concern;
  - Category 3 - High concern.
11. The categorisation of local authority maintained schools is used to inform the level of quality assurance commissioned from Entrust.

**Category 1** schools are not routinely visited.

**Category 2** schools typically receive two quality assurance visits from Entrust, the focus of which is to evaluate the impact of leadership on improving the quality of teaching and learning and therefore pupil outcomes.

**Category 3** schools typically receive quality assurance visits each half-term from Entrust, the focus of which will be to evaluate the impact of leadership on improving the quality of teaching and learning and therefore pupil outcomes.

12. The table below indicates the number of schools that received commissioned QA visits.

	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
No of LA Schools	251	208	173
Category 2	73	63	tbc
Category 3	28	31	tbc

13. The School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant has been allocated to local authorities since September 2017 and is allocated in two periods from April to August and then from September to March. Funding beyond March 2020 is still to be confirmed. However commissioned quality assurance visits will continue through to the end of the academic year 2019/2020.
14. The local authority has also used this funding to broker school improvement provision including disadvantaged projects, reviews of governance, aspiration research project, intervention in schools causing concern and district SEND model set-up costs.
15. Confirmation of the total grant received to date and the grant allocations is set out in the table below

Grant Funding Received	Grant Funding Allocated	Grant Funding remaining
<b>£1,881,438</b>	<b>£1,695,029</b>	<b>£186,409</b>

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