



NORTH YORKSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date of meeting:	Thursday, 15 th May 2025
Title of report:	Pupil Growth & Falling Rolls Contingency Funds – DfE Funding Regulations Update
Type of report: Delete as required	For decision
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	The report provides an update on the DfE recent changes to the funding regulations for Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Funds for the 2025-26 financial year. The proposed changes to the North Yorkshire Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Funds in response to the regulation changes are detailed in the report.
Budget / Risk implications:	Financial implications for schools experiencing a significantly rising pupil roll or a temporary reduction in pupil numbers. Affordability within the current funding limits of the two Contingency Funds. Future funding requirements on the Funds will impact on the level of funding needed to be retained from school budgets in order to meet the funding requirement.
Recommendations:	The Schools Forum is asked to note the DfE changes to the statutory guidance on Falling Rolls Funds for the 2025-26 financial year and to provide approval for the proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for the Falling Rolls Fund from 1 April 2025 in order to comply with the DfE requirements for 2025-26. The Schools Forum is also asked to note the DfE update to the funding rate for Pupil Growth Fund
Voting requirements:	All voting members
Appendices:	None
Report originator and contact details:	Howard Emmett, Assistant Director – Resources Howard.Emmett@northyorks.gov.uk 01609 532 118
Presenting officer: If not the originator	

Pupil Growth & Falling Rolls Contingency Funds**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The report provides an update on the DfE recent changes to the funding regulations for Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Funds for the 2025-26 financial year. The proposed changes to the North Yorkshire Pupil Growth and Falling Rolls Funds in response to the regulation changes are detailed in the report.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Falling Rolls and Pupil Growth Contingency Funds were first introduced in the 2014-15 financial year, where the eligibility criteria and funding methodology was endorsed by the Schools Forum. A review of the eligibility criteria for funding was last undertaken in 2020. In May 2022, the Schools Forum approved the expansion of the Pupil Growth Contingency Fund criteria to include provision for the allocation of additional funding to schools and academies that admit pupils as a direct result of the closure of a LA maintained school or academy. In November 2022, the Schools Forum approved changes to the funding levels and methodology provided through the Pupil Growth Funding for new schools within North Yorkshire.
- 2.2 In November 2023, the Schools Forum approved changes to the funding methodology and eligibility criteria for the Pupil Growth Fund from 1st April 2024 in order to comply with changes to the DfE requirements for the 2024-25 financial year.
- 2.3 At the School Forum meeting in November 2023, the Local Authority recommended that the Schools Forum approved that the Falling Rolls Fund was discontinued for the 2024-25 financial year. The Local Authority considered both the relatively low levels of funding that have been awarded from the Falling Rolls Fund over recent years and the problematic use of historic SCAP data where large geographical areas are covered, with differing pupil number trends across the schools in the area. However, the Schools Forum decision was to continue to operate a Falling Rolls Fund for the 2024-25 financial year. In March 2024 and September 2024, the Schools Forum approved changes to the Falling Rolls eligibility criteria in order to comply with the DfE changes to the statutory guidance and to ensure schools with falling rolls over a medium-term period are treated equitably across the local authority area and ensure that any Falling Rolls Fund can operated within the funds available and delivers the DfE stated purpose.
- 2.4 For 2025-26 the DfE have introduced a change to the mandatory requirements which the local authority will need to implement in respect of the local eligibility criteria for Falling Roll Funds. The new DfE requirement for 2025-26 is summarised as follows:
- *Local Authorities with a falling rolls fund must follow the new requirements for falling rolls funding. Local Authorities can only provide falling rolls funding to schools where the most recent school capacity survey (SCAP) data shows that school places will be required in the current financial year and/or the subsequent 2 years.*
- 2.5 For 2025-26 the DfE has not introduced any change to the mandatory requirements which the local authority will need to implement in respect of the local eligibility criteria for Pupil Growth Funds. Local Authorities must continue to follow the local formula requirements for growth funding whereby additional classes (identified by basic need)

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must be funded in line with minimum levels in the funding calculation. As a minimum, local authorities will have to provide funding to a level which is compliant with the following formula:

primary growth factor value x number of pupils x area cost adjustment (ACA)

The primary growth factor value is updated to £1,570 for the financial year 2025-26 and is expected to increase each financial year. The ACA is a multiplier applied to funding factors to reflect geographical variation in labour market costs and for North Yorkshire Council this remains at 1.00 for the financial year 2025-26.

3.0 FALLING ROLLS FUND

3.1 The current eligibility criteria and operating methodology for the North Yorkshire Council's (NYC) Falling Rolls Fund is as follows:

- The current year pupil roll is compared to the previous year census
- The eligibility threshold is a decrease of the greater of 5% or 5 pupils for Primary Schools and 5% for Secondary Schools between the current year census and the previous year census
- **SCAP data shows that the school places will be required in the subsequent three to five years (this was previously a mandatory requirement)**
- **Pupil numbers at the school are forecast (as per NYC Strategic Services pupil forecast data) to return to the level of the previous census within 3 years of the current year.**
- At least 60% of the pupils attending the school are from the catchment area of the school.
- Funding allocations from the Falling Rolls Fund are based on the Primary AWPU funding level for Primary Schools and the average of the key stage 3 and 4 AWPU funding levels for Secondary Schools. Funding is applied to the number of pupils above the relevant threshold. Schools are limited to 2 consecutive years for the receipt of funding. The overall funding allocation which any school could receive from the Fund over 2 consecutive years is capped at £100k in order to ensure overall affordability
- Exceptional requests from any school who does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Fund but feels that they have a strong case for the receipt of a funding allocation from the Falling Rolls Fund will be considered. This consideration will take the form of the submission of an application for funding which would be presented to a Panel of LA officers and Schools Forum representatives. However, in order to be considered for an exceptional funding request, the eligibility requirement in respect of the SCAP data required school places must be met as this a DfE mandatory requirement for the allocation of a funding award from Falling Rolls Funds. The consideration of exceptional requests will take the form of the submission of an application for funding which would be presented to a Panel of LA officers and Schools Forum representatives.

3.2 Proposed changes to the Falling Rolls Fund eligibility criteria and operating methodology for the financial year 2025-26 onwards

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The DfE requires that local authorities can only provide falling rolls funding to schools where the most recent school capacity survey (SCAP) data shows that school places will be required in the current financial year and/or subsequent 2 years. The North Yorkshire local authority Falling Roll Funding allocation criteria does not currently meet this mandatory requirement. It is proposed to update the North Yorkshire local authority Falling Roll Funding allocation for the 2025-26 financial year onwards to comply with this requirement.

3.3 The proposed eligibility criteria and operating methodology for the North Yorkshire Council's (NYC) Falling Rolls Fund is as follows:

- The current year pupil roll is compared to the previous year census
- The eligibility threshold is a decrease of the greater of 5% or 5 pupils for Primary Schools and 5% for Secondary Schools between the current year census and the previous year census
- **The most recent SCAP data shows that the school places will be required in the current financial year and/or the subsequent 2 years (this is a mandatory requirement)**
- **Pupil numbers at the school are forecast (as per NYC Strategic Services pupil forecast data) to return to the level of the previous census within 2 years of the current year.**
- At least 60% of the pupils attending the school are from the catchment area of the school.
- Funding allocations from the Falling Rolls Fund are based on the Primary AWPU funding level for Primary Schools and the average of the key stage 3 and 4 AWPU funding levels for Secondary Schools. Funding is applied to the number of pupils above the relevant threshold. Schools are limited to 2 consecutive years for the receipt of funding. The overall funding allocation which any school could receive from the Fund over 2 consecutive years is capped at £100k in order to ensure overall affordability
- Exceptional requests from any school who does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Fund but feels that they have a strong case for the receipt of a funding allocation from the Falling Rolls Fund will be considered. This consideration will take the form of the submission of an application for funding which would be presented to a Panel of LA officers and Schools Forum representatives. However, in order to be considered for an exceptional funding request, the eligibility requirement in respect of the SCAP data required school places must be met as this a DfE mandatory requirement for the allocation of a funding award from Falling Rolls Funds. The consideration of exceptional requests will take the form of the submission of an application for funding which would be presented to a Panel of LA officers and Schools Forum representatives.

4.0 PUPIL GROWTH FUND

- ### 4.1
- The purpose of this fund is to provide financial support to schools experiencing significant pupil growth where such growth results in funding pressures from the system of lagged funding. Pupil growth funding is only available for schools to support

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the revenue costs associated with exceptional pre-16 pupil growth to meet basic need in three clearly defined circumstances, being:

1. Primary schools - class expansion to meet basic need or in-year pupil number increases
 2. Growth in secondary schools
 3. New schools
- 4.2 There are no changes required to the current operation and eligibility criteria for the Pupil Growth Fund. The primary growth factor value is £1,570 for 2025-26 financial year (an increase of £20 from 2024-25) and is expected to increase each financial year going forward. The primary growth factor value will be used for all school types – recognising there is one teacher pay scale and that this funding is a minimum value. The ACA value remains at 1.00 for 2025-26.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Schools Forum is asked to note the DfE changes to the statutory guidance on Falling Rolls Funds for the 2025-26 financial year and to provide approval for the proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for the Falling Rolls Fund from 1 April 2025 in order to comply with the DfE requirements for 2025-26. The Schools Forum is also asked to note the DfE update to the funding rate for Pupil Growth Fund.

SIR STUART CARLTON
Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service