
CQ091-14 from Councillor Terry Lenton**To Councillor Tim Pollard**

Why is funding per primary school pupil in Local Authority maintained schools so much lower in Croydon than in other local authorities? Please can you give some examples of how the money could be spent if Croydon's funding per pupil was as high as it is in neighbouring Lambeth?

Reply

The answer to this question is in two parts:

1 The impact of the formula used by the Department for Education to allocate funding to local authorities for maintained schools

Funding for Local Authority maintained schools is dependent upon the guaranteed unit of funding (GUF) per child that the Department of Education (DfE) uses to fund each pupil counted in the schools census. This unit of funding is calculated by the DfE and varies markedly between boroughs, especially inner vs. outer London. It is intended to be reflective of need across different Local Authority areas, but has remained "cash flat" in recent years.

The table below shows the difference in GUF between the highest and lowest London Borough, as well as Croydon's rate compared to neighbouring boroughs.

Council	Per pupil unit of funding 2014-15 £
Tower Hamlets (Highest London Borough excluding City of London)	7,014.38
Bromley (Lowest London Borough)	4,082.33
Croydon (28 out of 32)	4,559.18
Lambeth (3 out of 32)	6,384.03
Sutton (31 out of 32)	4,360.26
Surrey County Council	4,096.45

Croydon receives the 28th lowest per pupil funding in London. Because Lambeth receive 40% (£1,824.85) more per pupil than Croydon for mainstream school pupils, it is inevitable that per pupil funding in Croydon schools is lower than that in Lambeth.

Were the per pupil GUF rate the same as Lambeth's, mainstream school aged pupils would be sharing an extra £83.4m of dedicated schools grant (DSG).

The regulations for the administration of the DSG were changed by the DfE recently, so that from April 2012 all School's Block has to be allocated to schools, unless maintained schools vote to de-delegate.

2: The actual money received by schools

The January 2014 cabinet report set out in Appendix 4 the levels of primary school per pupil funding received by schools with different levels of free school meal (FSM) eligibility.

This further demonstrates that Croydon's primary schools receive lower per pupil funding than their London neighbours. Croydon primary schools with the highest FSM eligibility receive the lowest per pupil funding across all of London (£4,481), and Croydon primary schools with medium and low FSM eligibility receive the 3rd and 2nd lowest per pupil funding respectively (£4,262 and £3,875).

This discrepancy is a direct result of Croydon's per pupil DSG allocation being one of the lowest in London. If this were not the case maintained schools in Croydon would be in a much stronger position to provide a greater range of curriculum expertise, a greater range of support staff to help children overcome barriers to learning, as well as additional resources.