

# HARINGEY SCHOOLS FORUM

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Attention of Nadhim Zahawi, SoS for Education

Via email: [nadhim.zahawi.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:nadhim.zahawi.mp@parliament.uk)

16 December 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing on behalf of Haringey's Schools Forum to set out our concerns and opposition to the recommendations in the consultation on the school improvement and monitoring brokering grant (SIMBG) which aims to reduce and eventually remove the grant.

The DfE's own guidance on local authorities' use of SIMBG states it should assist them to:

*"fulfil a range of responsibilities" including "understanding the performance of maintained schools in their area, using data as a starting point to identify any that are underperforming, while working with them to explore ways to support progress" as a 'core' responsibility"*  
**(Schools Causing Concern 2020)**

Haringey Local Authority has already set out a detailed objection to the removal of the grant, as have Haringey Education Partnership (HEP), a schools led partnership which delivers school improvement (very effectively) within Haringey and also Enfield. Other school leaders within the LA's boundary will have also written to object to the aims of the consultation and, through our network groups within London, the Schools' Forum is aware that most London authorities strongly oppose the removal of the grant and inform us that they have responded to the consultation to this effect.

In addition to the objections set out in the attached responses to the consultation (from the LA and from HEP), I would like to draw your particular attention to the following important points:

1. The timing of the cuts presents considerable difficulty both in impact and decision making - with the impact starting in April 2022 - when the DfE is intending to only respond to the outcome of the consultation in January 2022: this makes it impossible for any local authority's Schools Forum to consult on de-delegation and take a timely decision.
2. That this comes only four months after the previous consultation, meaning that the changes from the previous consultation have not even been implemented. Starting this new consultation appears hasty and not in the spirit of meaningful public consultation on which stakeholders can be confident that views are heard and shape the outcome.
3. That the description of the legitimate use of SIMBG has been completely altered from the previous consultation and the previous guidance, now giving an extraordinarily narrow interpretation in this consultation (see also above, Schools Causing Concern extract).
4. That as there is no legislation in place to force schools to academise, and therefore explicitly linking these proposals to smoothing the process of academisation, it is inherently wrong

and reduces the confidence that LAs have in a government department to be transparent and to act in the best interest of its partners, ultimately for children and young people.

5. That DfE has not shared any evidence base backing up this consultation and appears to be using the consultation to gather relevant evidence – which is not permissible.
6. That the consultation is not supported with a completed equalities impact assessment (EQIA) or any equalities analysis, which we expect cannot be produced as the DfE is unlikely to be clear on how each individual LA uses the grant. In Haringey, as we expect will be the case in several other boroughs, there will be a disproportionate impact on schools serving economically disadvantaged areas, which also correlates with a higher proportion of BAME communities.

The Schools' Forum look forward to your responses on the points that we have raised and to an outcome of the consultation that takes note of the unacceptable and disproportionate impact of removing the grant.

Yours sincerely



Tony Hartney CBE  
Chair Haringey Schools Forum

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[thy@gladesmore.co.uk](mailto:thy@gladesmore.co.uk)