



Department  
for Education

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20/09/2018

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to inform you about changes we are intending to make to how voluntary-aided (VA) schools access capital funding to maintain and improve their school buildings.

As you may know, we currently provide capital funding to voluntary-aided schools through a programme known as the Locally Coordinated Voluntary-Aided Programme (LCVAP). Under LCVAP we ask each local authority to co-ordinate discussions among their local VA partners as to the best use of a nominal funding allocation provided for that area. However, we recognise this system can often be complex and bureaucratic.

Following discussion with VA representative bodies, it is therefore our intention to retire the present LCVAP system from the financial year 2020-2021, and to move VA schools to the same capital funding system used by other types of schools: School Condition Allocations (SCA), and the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF).

As you (the diocese) will typically coordinate capital funding on behalf of your schools, we intend to recognise that relationship by providing you with an annual SCA allocation directly, providing you meet the size criteria outlined below.

The small number of VA schools belonging to other faith traditions, or that do not possess a religious character, will be asked to express a preference between receiving an SCA allocation, as we are intending for diocesan schools, or where those schools may not have access to an equivalent regional or national administrative body, to enter the bid-based Condition Improvement Fund instead.

### **School Condition Allocations**

School Condition Allocations is the funding route currently available to local authorities and large multi-academy trusts. From financial year 2020-21, dioceses will also be eligible for this funding. Allocations are determined formulaically, and are largely based

on pupil numbers with some additional funding available for those bodies with significant levels of condition need.

This change will not impact on the overall funding available to VA schools; funding for LCVAP, SCA and CIF is already determined using the same funding formula. However, by bringing these programmes together we believe we can reduce complexity for you and increase transparency over how capital funding is allocated. Whilst it is not possible at this time to provide an indication of the allocation you may receive, all previous SCA allocations are available to view on our website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-allocations>

### **Further Information**

We will not be making this change until the financial year 2020-2021. This means there will be **one further year** of the existing LCVAP process (2019-2020). We are letting you know now, so you can plan accordingly – including on how best to use any final LCVAP allocations.

It is also important to note that VA governing bodies will continue to be required to contribute towards the costs of capital works. Like LCVAP, both SCA and CIF grants will continue to be capped by statute at 90% of incurred expenditure, and you will need to be able to demonstrate you have made or sourced a 10% contribution to the costs of any resulting works. You should also note that both SCA and CIF funding will continue to recognise the position of VA governing bodies in respect of VAT.

Finally, you should also note that for multi-academy trusts to be eligible for SCA they must have at least five schools, and at least 3000 pupils. This is to ensure that any resulting allocations are large enough to address significant work. This requirement will also apply to dioceses, and at this stage, we can only consider VA schools towards your total when considering eligibility for SCA. Diocesan multi-academy trusts who are eligible for SCA funding will continue to receive their own allocation.

We expect that a small number of dioceses will not meet this threshold, and we are in on-going discussion with the National Society and the Catholic Education Service on how any such dioceses will access funding. We are likely to ask such dioceses to work with a larger, neighbouring diocese to manage a joint allocation, or to access funding through the bid-based Condition Improvement Fund. We will contact any affected dioceses, in conjunction with the National Society/CES, in due course.

### **What do I need to do now?**

You do not need to take any action at this stage, and you do not need to reply to this email.

### **How can I find out more information about this change?**

We are working closely with church bodies on these reforms. If you have queries and concerns regarding this change we would recommend speaking to your normal contact

within the National Society or Catholic Education Service in the first instance.  
Alternatively, please do not hesitate to send any questions or concerns you may have to  
our mailbox: [LCVAPchanges.2020@education.gov.uk](mailto:LCVAPchanges.2020@education.gov.uk)

Kind Regards,

**Alice Lakeman**

Deputy Director, Central Capital Unit

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alice Lakeman', written in a cursive style.