

Medway Anglican Schools Trust Pooling Policy and Appeals Process.

Medway Anglican Schools Trust (MAST) has a policy (as allowed by the DfE Academies Financial Handbook see extract below) of pooling (known colloquially as top slicing) a proportion of the General Annual Grant (GAG) and retaining this in the central MAST bank account to pay for staffing, services and projects which will benefit academies in the MAT.

Pooling of GAG by trusts with multiple academies

5.30 *A trust with multiple academies can amalgamate [GAG](#) for its academies to form one central fund. This can be used to meet the running costs at any constituent academy within the trust. In accordance with its funding agreement a trust **must not pool** [PFI funding](#).*

5.31 *The trust **must** consider the funding needs and allocations of each constituent academy and **must** have an appeals mechanism. If a constituent academy's principal feels the academy has been unfairly treated, they should appeal to the trust. If the grievance is not resolved, they can appeal to the Secretary of State, via ESFA. Where ESFA receives an appeal, it will review the process that the trust has followed, including whether the trust has considered the funding needs of the constituent academy, and whether the trust's internal appeals process has been applied. ESFA will provide the constituent academy and the trust with the opportunity to provide any evidence they feel is relevant to the case. ESFA's decision will be final and can result in the pooling provisions being dis-applied*

The proportion of the GAG pooled at the centre will be decided by the Board having considered both the financial position of each individual academy, including draft forecast budgets, and the funding needed to address strategic priorities during the next year and meet statutory requirements for multi-academy trusts. This will be notified in writing to the local governing body before the date for submission of forecast budgets for the next financial year. The pooled amount will be collected from the monthly EFA funding to each academy once salaries, pensions, national insurance and taxes have been paid.

If necessary, the proportion pooled at the centre from the individual academy GAG may vary across the Trust.

Appeals Process:

Should an individual academy feel that they have been unfairly treated, they should put their concerns in writing to the Board of Directors, giving reasons for their concerns and including financial reports to show the impact of pooling on their budget and planned provision.

The appeal should be sent to Directors by 1 July so that the Board can meet to consider the appeal before the end of the summer term.

The decision of the Board will be communicated to the LGB in writing by the 31 July. This will facilitate budget planning for the year commencing 1 September.

Should the Academy feel that their concerns remain unresolved they should notify the Board in writing of their intention to appeal to the Secretary of State via EFA and then follow the processes laid out by EFA for such an appeal.