

LEEDS SCHOOL FORUM

Meeting to be held in on
Thursday, 16th January, 2025 at 4.30 pm

MEMBERSHIP

Bradley Taylor, A, Primary Governors - Kirkstall Valley Primary
Kate Burton, E. Academy Reps – Alder Tree Primary
Rebecca White, B. Primary Heads, Sharp Lane Primary
Victoria McWalker, A. Primary Governors, St Margaret's Horsforth C of E
Stratis Koutsoukos, B. Primary Governors, St Nicholas Catholic Primary
Nick Tones, J. Non Schools, Schools JCC
Christopher Thornton, J. Non Schools 16-19 Providers
Simon Prinsep, E. Academy Reps, Abbey Grange CofE
Peter McQuillen Strong, J. Leeds Catholic Diocese
Gavin Hosford, E. Academy Reps - Green Meadows
Rachel Colbourn, E. Academy Reps - Bramhope Primary
Dave Kagai, A. Primary Governors - St Nicholas Primary
Sarah Talbot, E. Academy Reps - East Ardsley Primary
John Garvani (LSF), A. Primary Governors - Broadgate Primary School
John Hutchinson, B. Primary Heads - St Theresa's Catholic Primary
Peter Harris, B. Primary Heads - Farsley Farfield Primary
Julie Harkness, B. Primary Heads - Carr Manor Community school - Primary Phase
Emma Wraight, B. Primary Heads - Fieldhead Carr Primary
David Webster, C. Secondary Governors - Pudsey Grammar
Delia Martin, D. Secondary Heads - Benton Park
David Gurney, E. Academy Reps - Cockburn School
Rob Dixon, E. Academy Rep, Pudsey Waterloo Primary
John Thorne, E. Academy Reps - St Mary's Academy Menston
Joe Barton, E. Academy Reps - Woodkirk Academy
Russell Trigg, F. Governor East SILC
Cllr Dan Cohen (Leeds School Forum), J. Jewish Faith Schools
Samantha Jefferson, Secondary Heads - Wetherby High
Mark McKelvie, Secondary Heads - Pudsey Grammar
Louise Quinn, Special - East SILC
Katherine Somers, Academy Reps - Dixons
Ailsa Hoyland, Academy Reps - Bruntcliffe Academy
Christina Smith, PVI Providers

A G E N D A

Item No	Title	Lead	Time	Purpose
1.	APOLOGIES	Chair	16:30	For information
2.	SCHOOL FORUM MEMBERSHIP	Chair	16:35	For information
3.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING <i>3 - 6</i>	Chair	16:40	For decision
4.	MATTERS ARISING	Chair	16:55	For decision
5.	SCHOOL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS 2025/26 <i>7 - 24</i>	Lucie McAulay	17:00	For decision
6.	DE DELEGATION OF SERVICES 2025/26 <i>25 - 48</i>	Lucie McAulay	17:35	For decision
7.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	Chair	18:15	For information
8.	MEETING DATES FOR 24/25 AND FORWARD PLAN <i>49 - 50</i>	Chair	18:25	For information
9.	CLOSE	Chair	18:30	For information

Leeds Schools Forum meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting
Thursday 9th December 2024 at 16:30

Membership (Apologies in Italics)	
GOVERNORS	HEADTEACHERS
Primary (6 seats)	Primary (6 seats)
David Kagai <i>St</i>	Peter Harris (Chair) Farsley Farfield
Nicholas	Julie Harkness Carr Manor Community School
John Garvani	Julian Gorton Shakespeare Primary
Broadgate	Rebecca White Sharp Lane
Victoria McWalker <i>St Margaret's</i>	Kate Cameron Calverley C/E
Horsforth Stratis Koutsoukos	Jane Astrid Devane Shire Oak C/E
St Nicholas	
Bradley Taylor <i>Kirkstall</i>	
Valley	
Jatinder Ubhi <i>Swarcliffe</i>	
Secondary (1 seat)	Secondary (2 seats)
David Webster <i>Pudsey Grammar</i>	Samantha Jefferson Wetherby High
	Mark McKelvie Pudsey Grammar
Special (1 seat)	Special (1 seat)
Russell Trigg <i>East SILC, John Jamieson</i>	Louise Quinn East SILC
Non School	Academies – Mainstream (11 seats)
Christina Smith <i>PVI Providers</i>	David Gurney Cockburn School
Vacancy	Katherine Somers Dixons
Nick Tones <i>Schools JCC</i>	John Thorne St Mary's Academy Menston
Christopher Thornton <i>16-19 Providers</i>	Joe Barton Woodkirk Academy
Dan Cohen <i>Jewish Faith Schools</i>	Rob Dixon Cockburn School
Peter McQuillen-Strong <i>Catholic Diocese</i>	Jason Patterson Dixons Trinity Chapeltown
	Sarah Talbot East Ardsley
	Kate Burton Alder Tree Primary
	Simon Princep Abbey Grange CofE
	Ailsa Hoyland Bruntcliffe Academy
	Vacant
Officers	
Phil Evans, Chief Officer resources Transformation and Partnerships	Academy – Special School (1 seat)
Louise Hornsey, Head of Service, Finance	Vacant
Chris Sutton, Admissions and Family Information Lead	
Lucie McAulay, Head of Service, Finance	Academy – Alternative Provision (1 seat)
Shirley Maidens, Finance	Vacancy
Dan Barton Deputy Director, Learning	Academy – Special Provision (1 seat)
	Mary Ruggles

	Title	Actions
1.0	Welcome and Apologies	
	Chair welcomed all and acknowledged apologies	
2.0	Schools Forum Membership	
	Vacancies remain for: 1X Primary Governor 2 x Academy Mainstream 1 X Academy Alternative 1X Academy Special 1X Non School	
3.0	Minutes of Previous meeting	
	Agreed as accurate.	
4.0	Matters Arising	
	Peter reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting on October 3 rd . Action Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gary was to bring a detailed report on out-of-area and residential placements to a future meeting. Dan advised that Gary was on leave but confirmed the report would be brought forward. ○ Shirley and Lucy were to look at previous figures related to Leeds position relative to the national average over the years. Shirley provided detailed figures, noting a reduction in the funding gap over time. ○ Lucie was to check figures around sentences and update the report. Lucy confirmed a typo was corrected, and the report was reissued. It is at the end of the agenda pack. 	Gary
5.0	School Funding Proposal 25/26	
	School Funding Proposal 25/26 Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction: Lucie presented the outcome of the recent consultation with mainstream schools on the funding arrangements for 2025-26. The consultation covered three main areas: transferring 0.5% from the school's block to the high needs block, the school's funding formula, and a contribution towards severance costs for maintained schools. ● High Needs Block Transfer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale: Lucie explained the need for the transfer due to a projected significant overspend against the high needs block, with a pressure of £15.27 million for the current year and an increased pressure of £38.2 million for 2025-26. ○ Consultation Outcome: 70% of the 92 responses supported the proposed block transfer. ○ Discussion: 	

- Question raised about implications if the government disallowed the transfer in the future. Lucie and Shirley mentioned that the transfer is reviewed annually, and there is no current indication that it will be disallowed.
- Dan emphasised the need for adequate funding and the strategies to manage the high needs block, including reducing dependence on independent provisions and increasing early interventions.
- Question was asked about the comparability of Leeds approach with other local authorities. Shirley and Dan confirmed that many authorities request similar transfers, and some even request more than 0.5%.
- A member questioned the implications of not doing the transfer. Dan explained that the money would be used for various interventions and support within the high needs block.
- Question was asked about the budget increase for special needs. Shirley mentioned an additional £10 million for Leeds and a national grant of £480 million for special schools, though details were not yet available.
- There was a query around the potential impact on per-pupil funding. Shirley and Lucie noted that detailed modelling was not yet possible due to a lack of data.

• **Voting:**

- Peter initiated the voting process for the high needs block transfer using a Google form.
- A member confirmed the link worked, and several members confirmed they had voted.

High Needs Block Transfer:

Final Vote Count:

- The final vote count was 16 votes, with the proposal passing by a narrow margin of 56% to 44%.

Funding Formula:

- Lucie introduced the discussion on the schools funding formula for 2025/26, explaining that while the full national funding formula (NFF) has not yet been implemented, there remains some flexibility in setting the formula.
- **Consultation Basis:** Due to the lack of detailed information at the time of consultation, the discussion was based on principles rather than specific figures. The ESFA had published a policy update allowing for a minimum funding guarantee (MFG) of between 0% and -0.5%.
- **Options Presented:** Two options were presented for consultation:
 - **Option 1:** A 0% MFG, which aligns more closely with the NFF.
 - **Option 2:** A -0.5% MFG, which effectively represents a reduction in funding. 3
- **Consultation Responses:** Out of 92 responses, 83% supported Option 1 (0% MFG), while 17% supported Option 2 (-0.5% MFG). The main comments favoured Option 1 as it is closer to the NFF and avoids reductions in funding.

Final Vote Count:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options Voted On: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option 1: 0% Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) ○ Option 2: -0.5% MFG • Voting Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option 1: Received 81% of the votes. ○ Option 2: Received 12.5% of the votes. ○ Abstentions: 1 vote. <p>The majority supported Option 1, aligning with the consultation results favouring a 0% MFG.</p> <p><u>Severance Costs Contribution Discussion and Voting Outcome:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal: The proposal was for maintained mainstream schools to contribute £2.50 per pupil towards severance costs, totalling £140,000. This aligns with the practice in academies, which do not receive additional funding for severance costs and must cover these costs themselves. • Consultation Responses: Out of 50 responses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 33 schools (66%) supported the proposal. ○ 17 schools (34%) did not support the proposal. • Comments: Comments were received both in favour and against the proposal, reflecting the varied opinions among the schools. <p>Final Vote Count:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Votes in Favor: 7 ○ Votes Against: 1 <p>The proposal to contribute £2.50 per pupil towards severance costs was approved by the majority of the maintained mainstream school members.</p>	
6.0	Any Other Business	
	None	
7.0	Meeting Dates for 2023-24 and Forward Plan	
	<p>The forward plan is part of the papers.</p> <p>Forward Plan Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Meeting Date: The next meeting is scheduled for the 16th of January. • Main Agenda Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ De delegated Funds: The primary focus will be on the de delegated funds, including voting on the proposals. ○ Growth Fund: Voting on the Growth Fund will also be part of the agenda. ○ Final Funding Proposals: The final funding proposals will be presented. • Additional Items: There may be a high needs monitoring report, but this is yet to be confirmed. <p>The Next Meeting will be held on the 16th of January 2025</p>	
	Close	



Report of the Director of Children and Families

Report to the Leeds Schools Forum

Date: 16th January 2025

Subject: 2025/26 School Funding Arrangements

Report Author: Lucie McAulay / Shirley Maidens

Contact telephone number: 0113 3788766

Summary of main issues

1. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is allocated in four blocks: schools, high needs, early years and central school services. Regulations set by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) require that we consult with Schools Forum, and in some cases ask Schools Forum to make decisions, on proposals relating to the use of the DSG. This report provides an update on the 2025/26 arrangements relating to the schools, high needs and central school services blocks. An update on the early years block will be provided at the February 2025 meeting.
2. In relation to the Schools Block, the report covers the Growth Fund, Falling Rolls Fund and the schools funding formula:
 - For the Growth Fund, the Council is proposing that
 - The existing criteria be retained for primary schools and secondary expansion.
 - The existing criteria for additional resources be retained at £150 per pupil for existing schools and £250 per pupil for new presumption free schools.
 - The existing criteria be retained for new presumption free schools
 - In relation to a Falling Rolls Fund, the Council is proposing that we do not establish a Falling Rolls Fund for 2025/26.
 - The final proposal for the schools funding formula provides a per-pupil increase of 0.0% through the Minimum Funding Guarantee and a 2.53% cap on gains. The Minimum Funding Guarantee is equivalent to the 0.0% that was the preferred option from the funding consultation, and it follows the MFG within the National Funding Formula. The final proposal retains the Minimum Funding

Levels of £4,955 for primaries and £6,465 for secondaries that were consulted on.

3. The report also includes the proposed expenditure for 2025/26 against the central school services block (CSSB), which funds local authorities for the statutory duties they hold for both maintained schools and academies. Approval is sought from Schools Forum on the proposed expenditure from this block.

Recommendations

4. Schools Forum is asked to note the arrangements for the school funding formula for 2025/26.
 - The final decision on the formula will be taken by the Director of Children and Families in accordance with the council's decision-making framework.
5. In relation to the Growth Fund for 2025/26, Schools Forum is asked to approve that:
 - a) In relation to the funding criteria:
 - a. The existing criteria be retained for both primary schools and secondary schools.
 - b. The existing criteria for additional resources and rental costs within existing schools be retained at £150 per pupil.
 - c. The existing criteria for leadership costs for new presumption free schools to be retained at over a 4-year period.
 - d. The existing criteria for additional resources for new presumption free schools to be retained at £250 per pupil.
 - b) The total Growth Fund should be £870k which is fully funded from the Schools Block 2025/26. The Growth Fund would be split between £107k for primary growth and £763k for secondary growth.
 - This is a Schools Forum decision. In the event that Schools Forum does not agree, the DfE is able to adjudicate if the council requests this.
6. In relation to a Falling Rolls Fund Schools Forum is asked to note that the Council will not be establishing a fund for 2025/26.
7. In relation to the Central School Services Block, Schools Forum is asked to approve the 2025/26 amounts detailed within the report.
 - This is a Schools Forum decision. In the event that Schools Forum does not agree, the DfE is able to adjudicate if the council requests this.

1 Main issues

1.1 Schools block funding formula

- 1.1.1 At the December 2024 meeting Schools Forum noted the results of the consultation for the 2025/26 schools funding formula which demonstrated a preference for option 1 among schools that voted. 83% were in favour of option 1 compared to 27% for option 2. Option 1 proposed a Minimum Funding Guarantee of 0.0% at the time of the consultation we were unable to estimate the cap on gains per pupil. In the absence of indicative funding allocations the consultation was based on principal only and no figures were able to be provided at the time, therefore the assumptions were subject to change pending confirmation of the final funding allocation in December 2024.
- 1.1.2 The final schools block funding for 2025/26 has been confirmed by the ESFA as £765m, an increase of £9m compared to 2024/25 when the allocation was £754m. Schools Forum in December agreed to transfer 0.5% to the high needs block and this value has now been confirmed as £3.82m. Subject to the proposed Growth Fund of £0.870m set out in section 1.2 below, £760m would remain to be allocated to mainstream schools through the funding formula.
- 1.1.3 The funding formula has been updated to take into account the views of Schools Forum and the final funding allocation from the ESFA. The revised formula provides for the same Minimum Funding Levels of £4,955 for primaries and £6,465 for secondaries, which are the amounts used in the National Funding Formula. It has been possible to retain the Minimum Funding Guarantee at 0.0% which is the level used in the National Funding Formula, and the cap on gains has been set at 2.53%.
- 1.1.4 The school level allocations proposed for 2025/26 are attached to this report as appendix 1. These are subject to finalisation, including quality checks by the ESFA and approval by the Director of Children and Families.
- 1.1.5 The approach taken in the local formula replicates the National Funding Formula as closely as possible, including the use of the same unit values. In line with the National Funding Formula, our calculation of the MFG and cap on gains for PFI schools excludes the PFI funding they receive. This will ensure that both PFI and non-PFI schools are treated equally in the funding formula and receive equivalent levels of funding protection.
- 1.1.6 The decision on the final formula will be made by the Director of Children and Families, in line with the council's decision-making framework.
- 1.1.7 The final funding formula proposals will be submitted to the ESFA for them to quality check by the deadline of 22nd January 2025. Once the ESFA has confirmed they are satisfied with the formula and the decision on the formula has been taken by the Director of Children and Families, the council will send out funding statements to maintained mainstream schools by the end of February. The ESFA will issue funding statements to mainstream academies in line with their usual timescales.

1.2 Growth Fund 2025/26

- 1.2.1 Funding for growth is allocated to local authorities by the ESFA as part of the Schools Block of the DSG. This allocation funds pupil number variations within the funding

formula for new schools that are still growing, as well as being used to establish a separate Growth Fund, which supports costs incurred by schools that are being established or extended to meet basic need and where admission numbers are increased. The Growth Fund recognises that these pupils are not recorded on the October census, and so will not attract funding through the usual schools funding formula.

- 1.2.2 The funding allocated to local authorities is calculated by the ESFA on the basis of pupil growth between the previous two October censuses, so it will not always match the actual growth in the coming year. For 2025/26, the Leeds total allocation for growth and falling rolls from the ESFA has reduced and is £2,953k for 2025/26, compared to £3,731k in 2024/25.
- 1.2.3 In addition to the decrease in funding, the estimated requirement for 2025/26 has reduced compared to 2024/25. The total 2025/26 allocation is expected to be sufficient to fund both the cost of new and growing schools within the standard funding formula and the anticipated growth fund requirements.
- 1.2.4 The total growth fund fully funded from the Schools Block 2025/26 is £870k this would be split between £107k for primary growth and £763k for secondary growth.

Growth Fund Criteria

- 1.2.5 Schools Forum is asked to approve the criteria for allocating funding from the Growth Fund.
- 1.2.6 We are proposing to retain the existing criteria for Leeds schools that were in place for 2024/25. Schools in Leeds would be eligible for growth funding where a permanent expansion has occurred following an increase in the Published Admission Number (PAN), to meet basic need. Growth funding will be paid until the permanent change in PAN is accommodated in every year group.
- 1.2.7 Local authorities are required to provide growth funding where a school or academy has agreed with the local authority to provide an extra class to meet basic need in the area (either as a bulge class or as an ongoing commitment). Funding, either through the growth fund, or by adjusting pupil numbers in the APT, will need to be provided regardless of whether the additional class is within or outside of the PAN
- 1.2.8 Schools would be eligible for Growth Funding where a temporary bulge has been created to meet basic need. Funding will be allocated for the bulge year only.
- 1.2.9 For existing schools, an allocation of £150 per pupil will be made to fund immediate additional resources, equipment or furniture costs to reflect increased costs.
- 1.2.10 For new presumption free schools, we are proposing to retain the provision of £250 per pupil for additional resources.
- 1.2.11 Additional funding would be available for existing schools that incur additional rental costs or for new schools with pre-opening costs.

1.2.12 In line with ESFA requirements to support pre and post start-up costs for academies where they are created to meet basic need, we are proposing to retain the criteria for leadership costs introduced in 2021/22 for any new schools opening through a free school presumption route over a 4-year period on a reduced sliding scale.

1.2.13 As a minimum, local authorities are required to provide funding to a level which is compliant with the following formula:

Primary growth factor value (£1,570) x number of pupils x ACA

For Leeds, the ACA is 1.000168 which means this value is £1,570.26. Leeds uses the AWPU value for primary and key stage 3 which is greater than this value.

1.2.14 The proposed funding for 2025/26 is as follows:

Growth funding available	Basis for allocation	Rate
Funding for all schools eligible for Growth Funding:		
Pupil funding	<p>Age Weighted Pupil Unit rate for each pupil (pro rata if part year).</p> <p>This is the basic entitlement all pupils receive through the schools funding formula.</p>	<p>The 2025/26 AWPU rates per year are shown below and are the same as used in the funding formula:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary - £3,847.65 • KS3 - £5,422.92 <p>As noted in the report, the funding formula rates are subject to approval by the Director of Children and Families in line with the council's decision-making framework.</p>
Funding for existing schools:		
Immediate additional resources, equipment or furniture	Standard per pupil rate. In the case of a single 'bulge' year group this is only paid in the year of expansion.	£150 per pupil is proposed for 2025/26
Funding available for new presumption free schools:		
Leadership costs for a new presumption free school	Amount allocated will be equivalent to that which would be received from the ESFA in the first 4 years of opening.	<p>The funding proposal for 2025/26 is:</p> <p>Year 1 £125k Year 2 £93.5k Year 3 £62.5k Year 4 £31k</p>
Presumption free schools: additional resources	Standard per pupil rate: In the first year of each new cohort	£250 per pupil is proposed for 2025/26.
Funding available where applicable to schools:		

Growth funding available	Basis for allocation	Rate
Additional rental costs	For temporary accommodation needed to meet agreed growth.	Funded at cost through the growth fund until the financial year following the increase in numbers, at which point we would seek to fund the rental costs through the funding formula (assuming the criteria for this are met).

1.2.15 Attached at appendix 2 is a schedule of how this funding is projected to be used in 2025/26.

1.3 Falling Rolls Fund

1.3.1 For the first time in 2024/25 funding was allocated to local authorities based on both growth and falling rolls, this has continued for 2025/26.

1.3.2 Funding is allocated based on the reduction in pupil numbers that middle super output areas (MSOA) within each local authorities experience for each year. For 2025/26 it has been based on the observed differences between the primary and secondary numbers on roll in each local authority between the October 2023 and October 2024 school censuses. The falling rolls allocation for each local authority will be £141,890 x ACA per MSOA which sees a 10% or greater reduction in the number of pupils on roll between the 2 census years.

1.3.3 Local authorities have discretion over whether to operate a falling rolls fund. Where local authorities operate a fund, they will only be able to provide funding where the most recent school capacity data (SCAP) shows that school places will be required in 2025/26 and / or the subsequent 2 years.

1.3.4 If a Local authority decides to operate a falling rolls fund then the Schools Forum should agree both the value of the fund and the criteria for allocation, and the local authority should consult Schools Forum before expenditure is incurred.

1.3.5 For 2025/26 Leeds has received a falling rolls funding allocation of £141,914. However, this is as a result of falling pupil numbers as a result of a primary school in that area reducing it's PAN a number of years ago. Therefore it is proposed not to operate a falling rolls fund for 2025/26. If this funding is not used for a falling rolls fund, it is added to funding available to support growth fund payments. The criteria will be reviewed again when considering funding allocations for 2026/27.

1.4 Central School Services Block

1.4.1 The Central School Services Block (CSSB) was introduced by the ESFA in 2018/19 to fund local authorities for the statutory duties they hold for both maintained schools and academies. The CSSB brings together:

- funding for statutory duties

- funding for ongoing central functions, such as admissions, previously top-sliced from the schools block
- residual funding for historic commitments, previously top-sliced from the schools block

1.4.2 In December 2024, the Government issued a notification giving the amount of funding for this block. For 2025/26, this allocation has been set at £5.571m for Leeds. This is an increase of £446k compared to 2024/25. This increase is partly as a result of the centrally employed teachers elements of the 2024/25 Teachers Pension Grant and the Core Schools Budget Grant being rolled into the CSSB for 2025/26 and partly to fund the significant increases in the various copyright licences in the past 2 years.

1.4.3 Within the overall total, there has been a reduction of 20% on the historic commitment element in line with previous DfE statements to reduce funding on this element. However, the historic commitment funding is now less than the unavoidable prudential borrowing costs this element is expected to fund. The Schools operational guide: 2025 to 2026 states that local authorities will be able to apply for protection if this happens. Therefore, Leeds will be requesting an additional £68k of historic commitment funding. If approved, this will be confirmed in March 2025. This means that the total funding expected is £5,639k.

1.4.4 Schools Forum approval is required each year to confirm the amounts on each line. Schools Forum previously gave full approval for the 2024/25 proposals. The amounts requested to be approved for 2025/26 are shown below and can be afforded within the allocation of CSSB funding received for these duties.

Statutory Duties

1.4.5 This funding contributes towards the cost to the Council of carrying out central functions on behalf of maintained schools and academies.

1.4.6 Costs can be funded for certain functions relating to statutory and regulatory duties, education welfare and asset management. Examples of functions which could be funded within each category include, but are not limited to, the following.

1.4.6.1 Statutory and regulatory duties

- Director of children's services and planning for the education service as a whole.
- Revenue budget preparation, preparation of information on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education.
- Formulation and review of local authority schools funding formula.
- Internal audit and other tasks related to the local authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 except duties specifically related to maintained schools.

- Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating specifically to maintained schools.

1.4.6.2 *Education welfare*

- Functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils.
- School attendance.

1.4.6.3 *Asset management*

- Management of the LA's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions.
- General landlord duties for all buildings owned by the local authority, including those leased to academies

1.4.7 The CSSB funding can provide a contribution towards these functions, however it is not sufficient to cover all of these duties and the remainder of the cost is therefore met from the Council's budget.

The amount of funding available from CSSB for the Statutory Duties in 2025/26 is £2,079k This is a decrease of £81k compared to 2024/25, when funding of £2,160k was agreed. The cost of providing these duties has increased since 2024/25, so this means that there is an increased cost to the Council's budget for these duties. The Council's costs for these functions have been calculated as £2.785m which means there is still a net cost to the council for these services.

Centrally employed teachers' pension costs

1.4.8 The separate grant received in 2020/21 (£216k) for the additional pension costs for teachers employed by local authorities was added to the ongoing responsibilities element of CSSB and has been part of this block for a number of years.

1.4.9 Similarly, the 2024/25 Teachers Pension Grant and Core Schools Grant funding relating to centrally employed teachers has been added to CSSB for 2025/26. This funding totals £361k

Historic commitments

1.4.10 Historic commitments are subject to a limitation of no new commitments or increases in expenditure from 2020/21. The amounts requested for 2025/26 are as follows.

1.4.11 Prudential borrowing (amount requested £515k). This budget supports borrowing costs in relation to the ongoing debt repayment from the 2004/05 primary capital program and is paid back over 25 years.

1.4.12 Ongoing Central functions

- 1.4.13 Admissions Service – for 2025/26, it is proposed to increase the funding from this service from £1,499k to £1,558k. The School Admissions Code (September 2021) introduced new responsibilities for the School Admissions Service in terms of statutory timescales and mandatory requirements in relation to in-year admissions. These additional requirements are currently being met within the current staffing and funding commitment, with the service prioritising the mandatory requirements. As such, the increase in Admissions service funding is to cover pay award and inflation and no additional duties.
- 1.4.14 Servicing of Schools Forum – this budget supports the administration and running of Schools Forum and associated sub-groups. This service has not changed, but as a result of unavoidable inflationary costs, it is proposed to increase funding from £35k to £36k.
- 1.4.15 The ESFA has agreed with a number of agencies to purchase a single national licence for all state funded schools in England. A full list of licences included in the single national licence is available on their website. The ESFA will pay the agencies and provide the service to local authorities. We have not yet received confirmation of the costs for 2025/26, but based on guidance issued in November 2024, for Leeds this is estimated to amount to £874k in 2025/26 which is an increase of £174k compared to the original budget for 2024/25. This arrangement covers maintained schools and academies, and local authorities are allowed to hold the budget centrally rather than include it in school budgets. The licences covered by this charge are:
- Copyright Licencing Agency
 - School Printed Music Licence
 - Newspaper Licensing Agency
 - Education Recording Agency
 - Public Video Screening Licence – Filmbank Distribution Ltd.
 - Motion Picture Licensing Company
 - Phonographic Performance Ltd.
 - Performing Rights Society Ltd.
 - Mechanical Copyright Protection Society Ltd.
 - Christian Copyright Licensing International

This item does not require Schools Forum approval.

- 1.4.16 Schools Forum is therefore requested to approve the amounts summarised below, totalling £5,639k centrally for Statutory duties, centrally employed teachers' pension costs, ongoing central functions, historic commitments, and to note the increase in the charge for the single national licence.

	2024/25 (for information) £	2025/26 (for approval) £
Local Authority Costs		
Statutory duties	2,160,000	2,079,000
Centrally employed teacher funding	216,000	577,000
Historic Commitments		
Prudential Borrowing	515,000	515,000
Ongoing Responsibilities		
Admissions Service	1,499,000	1,558,000
Schools Forum	35,000	36,000
ESFA central licences (for information only, no vote required by Schools Forum)	700,000	874,000
	5,125,000	5,639,000

1.5 High Needs Block

- 1.5.1 Since the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) report on high needs projected funding and expenditure was presented to Schools Forum in October 2024, a number of outstanding elements in the funding allocated have been confirmed. The main difference is that the gains limit factor has been set at 10% rather than the 3% assumed in the MTFS.
- 1.5.2 Although there are still some outstanding elements, this means that the high needs block funding for 2025/26 is now estimated to be £133.8m, which is £9.4m higher than assumed in the MTFS. However, this is still not sufficient to meet the expected demand in 2025/26.
- 1.5.3 Work is ongoing to finalise budgets for 2025/26 to produce a budget and a more detailed report on this will be brought to the next Schools Forum meeting.
- 1.5.4 In line with the council's decision-making framework, a high level summary of the proposed HNB budgets will be presented to the Executive Board in January to be approved by Full Council in February.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Schools Forum is asked to note the arrangements for the school funding formula for 2025/26.

- The final decision on the formula will be taken by the Director of Children and Families in accordance with the council's decision-making framework.

2.2 In relation to the Growth Fund for 2025/26, Schools Forum is asked to approve that:

a) In relation to the funding criteria:

- i. The existing criteria be retained for primary and secondary schools.
- ii. The existing criteria for additional resources and rental costs within existing schools be retained at £150 per pupil .
- iii. The existing criteria for leadership costs for new presumption free schools be retained as over a 4-year period.
- iv. The existing criteria for additional resources for new presumption free schools to be retained at £250 per pupil.

b) The total Growth Fund of £870k. The Growth Fund would be split between £107k for primary growth and £763k for secondary growth.

- This is a Schools Forum decision. In the event that Schools Forum does not agree, the DfE is able to adjudicate if we request this.

2.3 In relation to the Central School Services Block, Schools Forum is asked to approve the amounts summarised below for 2025/26 (apart from the ESFA central licence charge, which does not require approval).

- This is a Schools Forum decision. In the event that Schools Forum does not agree, the ESFA is able to adjudicate if we request this.

	2024/25 (for information) £	2025/26 (for approval) £
Local Authority Costs		
Statutory duties	2,160,000	2,079,000
Centrally employed teacher funding	216,000	577,000
Historic Commitments		
Prudential Borrowing	515,000	515,000

Ongoing Responsibilities

Admissions Service	1,499,000	1,558,000
Schools Forum	35,000	36,000
ESFA central licences (for information only, no vote required by Schools Forum)	700,000	874,000
	5,125,000	5,639,000

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Explicit Growth Fund Impact 2025/26 Financial Year

School Name	£000
Primary Schools	
Bramhope Primary School	47
St Edwards Boston Spa	24
Secondary Schools	
Trinity Academy Leeds *	38
Benton Park School	182
Horsforth School	195
Allerton High	199
Cockburn Academy	99
Provision for new primary places (15)	36
Provision for new secondary places (15)	50
	<hr/> <hr/> 870 <hr/> <hr/>

* presumptive free school

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Report of the Director of Children and Families

Report to the Leeds Schools Forum

Date: 16th January 2025

Subject: De-delegation of funding for maintained schools – 2025/26

Report authors: Lucie McAulay / Alex Russell

Contact telephone number: 0113 37 88766

Summary of main issues

1. Schools Block funding within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is delegated to schools each year by the local authority. Schools Forum can however agree that the local authority retains some of this funding for maintained primary and secondary schools, in order to provide certain central services for schools. This is known as 'de-delegation' of funding.
2. This report informs Schools Forum members of the outcome of the recent consultation with all maintained primary and secondary schools on the de-delegation of funding in 2025/26. The majority of schools submitting a response wished to continue to de-delegate the funding for all services.
3. The local authority's recommendation is that de-delegation continues in 2025/26 for these services. Maintained primary and secondary members of Schools Forum are responsible for deciding whether this should be the case and will be asked to vote for each service.

1 Main issues

- 1.1 The Education and Skills Funding Agency requires that the local authority consults all maintained primary and secondary schools on whether to delegate funding to schools for the services detailed below or whether to opt to de-delegate this so that the funding is retained centrally. A copy of the consultation paper is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The consultation was for maintained primary and secondary schools only as the regulations set by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) do not allow other settings, such as academies or SILCs, to de-delegate their funding in this way.
- 1.3 In total the 2025/26 consultation proposed de-delegated funding of £5.55m. This is an increase of £389k compared to 2024/25 proposals which totalled £5.16m
- 1.4 A summary is provided below of the proposals that were consulted on for each de-delegated budget for 2025/26 compared to 2024/25 along with the results of the consultation for each budget. Further information on each area that was consulted on is available in the attached consultation document (Appendix 1).
- 1.5 Of the 160 maintained mainstream schools in Leeds, responses were received from 58 schools (36%); 53 primary schools and 5 secondary schools. This is an increase against the response rate for 2024/25 of 41 (36 primary schools, 4 secondary schools and 1 through school). A summary table of the consultation results is provided in section 2 of this report.
- 1.6 Whilst the outcome of the consultation does indicate a reduction in support for the de-delegation of these budgets, the majority of respondents do continue to support the de-delegation of all budget proposals within the consultation. Therefore, it is recommended that members of Schools Forum as representatives of all maintained mainstream schools support the outcome of the consultation to enable funding for all the services listed below be retained centrally in 2025/26, in order for these services to be provided.
- 1.7 In acknowledgment of the reduced majority and in response to comments and queries received from schools through the consultation there will be a further review of all the de-delegated budgets. This review will also consider the timing of future de-delegation consultations, options for consideration will be presented to a future Schools Forum meeting. A summary of all comments received during the consultation is attached as appendix 2.
- 1.8 Where possible de-delegated budgets have been held at the same level as the previous year. However, due to the impact of academy conversions the pupil numbers used to calculate the per pupil rates may have reduced, resulting in the need to increase the per pupil rate to achieve the same total budget. Where de-delegation budgets have been increased this is due to recent trends in expenditure in that area and known pressures, such as pay inflation or a reduction in funding. The Local Authority looks for every opportunity to reduce de-delegated budgets wherever possible, based on prudent assumptions.
- 1.9 Differences in the contributions between schools reflect the fact that primary schools are able to delegate an additional service compared to secondary schools, in addition

to there being variances in schools' individual funding levels, due to both pupil and premises related factors.

1.10 **Contingency and support for schools in financial difficulty**

Purpose of the budget

- 1.10.1 The School Contingency Fund is retained centrally for maintained schools but only for a limited range of circumstances:
- a. Exceptional unforeseen costs which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet (including some costs relating to Managed Staff Reductions),
 - b. Schools in financial difficulties,
 - c. Additional costs relating to new, reorganised or closing schools; and
 - d. A schools urgent improvement fund that schools can apply to if they require additional support from local authority services for urgent school improvement priorities.
- 1.10.2 The budget can be considered as one to pool risk, providing a safety net for schools.

Proposed budget

- 1.10.3 It is proposed that the funding would be de-delegated as an amount per pupil of £4.33.
- 1.10.4 Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of £250,000, with £50,000 of this being ringfenced for the Urgent School Improvement Fund.
- 1.10.5 It is proposed that the overall contingency budget is reduced to £500,000 for 2025/26, this is to reflect previous years underspend trends against this budget. These figures include an additional £250,000 to the contingency budget from the de delegated reserve 2024/25, ensuring an overall budget remains of £500,000 in 2025/26.

Consequences if de-delegation does not continue

- 1.10.6 If de-delegation does not continue there will be no central contingency fund available to schools. Schools would have to take all action necessary to balance their own budgets and there would be no central budget available for schools finding themselves in financial difficulty, requiring urgent support for school improvement or for funding capitalised pension costs where staff have been made redundant due to financial difficulties. The budget is not suitable for operation under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) or traded offer.

Consultation responses

- 1.10.7 Of the 58 responses received, 52 (90%) were in favour of continuing to de-delegate this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.10.8 As the majority of schools supported the proposals it is recommended that funding for this service continues to be de-delegated in 2025/26.

1.11 Maternity and other cover

Purpose of the budget

- 1.11.1 This budget reimburses schools for the cost of staff that are on maternity, parental or adoption leave, working as a justice of the peace, magistrate or on reserve services duties.
- 1.11.2 This budget does also include shared parental leave, this is a legal family leave entitlement which can be accessed by the birth parent or adoptive parent and their partner. The birth or adoptive parent's leave is paid at maternity leave rates. However this budget does not include the costs of a school employee returning to work on full pay either before a school closure period or during a break in the shared parental leave blocks.

Proposed budget

- 1.11.3 The total budget proposed for 2025/26 is £2,950,000, which is a £246k (9.1%) increase compared to 2024/25. The increase in the total de-delegated funding is due to the additional costs of maternity leave payments.

Consequences if de-delegation does not continue

- 1.11.4 If de-delegation does not continue schools must meet all costs of maternity and other cover from their delegated budgets. There would cease to be any central support for schools that incur cover costs for staff away from school for the above reasons.

Consultation responses

- 1.11.5 Of the 58 responses received, 54 (93%) were in favour of continuing to de-delegate this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.11.6 As the majority of schools supported the proposal it is recommended that funding for this service continues to be de-delegated in 2025/26.

1.12 Suspended staff cover

Purpose of the budget

- 1.12.1 This budget provides support for schools where employees are suspended, after the first three months. It can be costly for a school to continue to pay a member of staff

that is suspended pending investigations being completed and also paying for cover.

Proposed budget

- 1.12.2 The total budget proposed for 2025/26 is £150k, which is a £50k increase from 2024/25 and is based on recent trends. This equates to a rate of £2.60 per pupil.

Consequences if de-delegation does not continue

- 1.12.3 If the de-delegation does not continue there will be no central support for schools where staff have been suspended, and schools will have to meet the continuing cost of the staff concerned and any cover costs from their delegated budgets.

Consultation responses

- 1.12.4 Of the 58 responses received, 35 (60%) were in favour of continuing to de-delegate this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.12.5 As the majority of schools supported the proposal it is recommended that funding for this service continues to be de-delegated in 2025/26.

1.13 Trade Union facilities

Purpose of the budget

- 1.13.1 The Trade Union Facilities budget covers the cost of providing convenor salaries, physical facilities and other associated costs. The allocation of union convenor time is based on a ratio of convenors to members of 1:1000. Where convenors work within a school, this budget provides the school with funds to cover the cost of release to undertake city-wide Trade Union duties.

Proposed budget

- 1.13.2 The total budget proposed for 2025/26 is £383,000. This budget is an increase of £13k from the 2024/25 proposals. The amount per pupil has increased to £6.64 from £6.17 in 2024/25.

Consequences if de-delegation does not continue

- 1.13.3 The future access to local trade union representatives to support staff at all levels of seniority within schools is at stake if the current budget is not de-delegated. By retaining this budget for TU release time centrally schools will benefit from access to a pool of experienced TU convenors who will: seek to resolve issues locally, consult and negotiate with all maintained schools on a range of employment matters, and

also represent their members in grievance, performance, absence, disciplinary and redundancy processes.

- 1.13.4 With regards to collective bargaining with the recognised TU's, the Council will continue to consult and / or negotiate on terms and conditions of employment on behalf of schools where LCC is the employer, or where the school purchase an SLA with LCC Schools HR Service.

Consultation responses

- 1.13.5 Of the 58 responses received, 36 (62%) were in favour of continuing to de-delegate this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.13.6 As the majority of schools supported the proposal it is recommended that funding for this service continues to be de-delegated in 2025/26.

1.14 **School library service (primary schools only)**

Purpose of the budget

- 1.14.1 The School Library Service (SLS) provides a range of resources to underpin the curriculum, inspire creativity and raise attainment for primary-aged pupils.

Proposed budget

- 1.14.2 It is proposed that the funding would be de-delegated for primary schools as an amount per pupil of £8.26. Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of £363,000.
- 1.14.3 This is an increase of £30k in total funding compared to 2024/25 (£333,000). The amount per pupil has increased from £7.17 in 2024/25.

Consequences if de-delegation does not continue

- 1.14.4 If de-delegation does not continue primary schools would have to meet School Library Service costs from their delegated budget provided the service was able to continue by operating on a traded basis.

Consultation responses

- 1.14.5 Of the 53 primary responses received, 35 (66%) were in favour of continuing to de-delegate this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.14.6 As the majority of schools supported the proposal it is recommended that funding for this service continues to be de-delegated for primary schools in 2025/26.

1.15 **Free school meals eligibility**

Purpose of the budget

- 1.15.1 The budget supports the administration cost of carrying out free school meal eligibility assessments and is provided by the council's Welfare & Benefits Service. The service is provided to all Leeds schools and charges are made separately to academies for the service where they choose to use it.

Proposed budget

- 1.15.2 It is proposed that the funding for FSM eligibility checks would be de-delegated as £1.93 per pupil plus £4.49 per pupil in receipt of FSM in the past six years. This mechanism reflects the additional volume of work for schools with higher measures of deprivation.
- 1.15.3 Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of £178,000. The individual rates per pupil have increased; for 2024/25 the rates were £1.80 per pupil and £4.18 per pupil in receipt of FSM in the past six years.

Consequences if de-delegation does not continue

- 1.15.4 If de-delegation does not continue, then each school would need to make arrangements to administer its own free school meals service. The Leeds Welfare & Benefits Service would continue to provide a traded service that assesses entitlement to FSM and assuming all schools continue to buy into the service would charge the above rates plus any additional costs created by the administration of charging individual schools. If all schools do not buy into the service, then the rates charged above may need to increase.

Consultation responses

- 1.15.5 Of the 58 responses received, 51 (88%) were in favour of continuing to de-delegate this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.15.6 As the majority of schools supported the proposal it is recommended that funding for this service continues to be de-delegated in 2025/26.

1.16 **Behaviour support services**

Purpose of the budget

- 1.16.1 This budget is for the Inclusion Support Team which provides support to schools for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs. Work is undertaken to develop capacity within schools supporting key staff to identify and meet needs as part of a graduated approach for children and young people with SEND. The team

provide advice to settings and, where appropriate, may provide assessments, recommendations, and training to build capacity and support needs.

- 1.16.2 The Inclusion Support Team is part of the SEND Inclusion Service based within Learning Inclusion. Aligned with the Educational Psychology SENIT and STARS teams to ensure consistent high quality SEMH practice, the Inclusion Support Team work with children and young people with complexities of SEMH need identified by school and settings, and often include other aspects of vulnerability such as extended non attendance, at risk of exclusion, care experienced.

Proposed budget

- 1.16.3 It is proposed that this funding would be de-delegated at £1.12 per pupil plus £3.47 per pupil in receipt of FSM in the past six years. This reflects the additional need at schools with higher measures of deprivation. Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of £116,000 for 2025/26, which is an increase of £3,700 from 2024/25.

Consequences if de-delegation does not continue

- 1.16.4 If de-delegation does not continue, then there would be no centrally retained budget for behaviour support unless the service operates under a traded basis. The difficulty in operating under a traded basis would be the fact that the budget would be delegated to all schools but as the service provided is targeted, the charging levels and income collection would be difficult to calculate and predict. The ability to operate the service under an SLA could not therefore be guaranteed.

Consultation responses

- 1.16.5 Of the 58 responses received, 38 (66%) were in favour of continuing to de-delegate this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.16.6 As the majority of schools supported the proposal it is recommended that funding for this service continues to be de-delegated in 2025/26.

1.17 Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners

Purpose of the budget

- 1.17.1 This budget makes provision for staff who build capacity within schools to improve the educational outcomes for vulnerable New Arrivals (NA), Ethnically Diverse (ED) pupils as well as those for whom English is an additional language (EAL), in order to narrow the attainment gap.
- 1.17.2 They provide support and challenge to school leadership; specialist advice and guidance on EAL and race and culture related issues at a school level and within the

LA on actions that impact on schools, culturally cohesive teaching and learning strategies, EAL assessment and induction, New to Schooling learners, Anti-racist schooling, decolonised curriculum development support and materials for Ethnically Diverse and EAL pupils; consultancy support to individual schools or localities and bespoke programmes such as Arooj, in order to meet specific identified New Arrival, BAME and EAL needs..

- 1.17.3 A review of the formula used to determine de-delegation of this funding has been undertaken to ensure that the service is funded in a fair manner that reflects the universal offer available.

Proposed budget

- 1.17.4 The total budget proposed for 2025/26 is £300,039, which is an increase of £10k from 2024/25. It is proposed that funding will be de-delegated at a rate of £1.21 per pupil and £32.37 per English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupil for primary schools and £1.82 per pupil and £86.93 per EAL pupil for secondary schools.

Consequences if de-delegation does not continue

- 1.17.5 If not delegated, then there would be no centrally retained budget to support narrowing the attainment gap for NA, BME, cultural diversity and EAL pupils across the city. This service would be difficult to operate as traded service and so should funds not be de-delegated, the consequence is the likely cessation of the service.

Consultation responses

- 1.17.6 Of the 58 responses received, 30 (52%) were in favour of continuing to de-delegate this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.17.7 During the last year, this service has been under review. This review will continue into the next financial year. As part of this review, further possible changes in this budget have been identified that link with the Local Authorities current financial challenge opportunities. It is anticipated that these changes, if realised, could result in a potential reduction in the overall cost of the service to schools. These changes are not confirmed and so have not been included in the budget consultation at this stage.
- 1.17.8 As the majority of schools supported the proposal it is recommended that the budget for support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners should continue to be de-delegated.

1.18 **School Improvement**

Purpose of the budget

- 1.18.1 The Local Authority previously received a School Improvement and Brokerage Grant (SIBG) to enable it to undertake its statutory and core support, monitoring and intervention duties to maintained schools, as well as to broker additional support to schools requiring additional support. The grant supported the work of the Learning Improvement to undertake these roles.
- 1.18.2 With the removal of the grant in 2023/24, Schools Forum approved the de-delegation of the equivalent full grant cost that the Local Authority would no longer receive.
- 1.18.3 The SI allocation is used centrally for maintained schools. It:
- Provides support to school leaders through the Headteacher Support Service
 - Funds a core School Improvement Adviser support offer to all maintained schools
 - Funds a school improvement adviser offer to Governing Bodies during Headteacher recruitment
 - Provides additional time from School Improvement Advisers to support schools during an OfSTED inspection
 - Enables officers to undertake risk analysis of schools, providing support and intervention as appropriate
 - Provides an enhanced school improvement adviser offer to schools judged as requiring improvement at no cost to the school
 - Provides a school improvement adviser to support the Governing Body of a vulnerable school as part of additional joint improvement committees
 - Provides an additional offer of school improvement adviser and/or Learning Improvement officer (e.g. Head of Service) where schools have significant issues to manage i.e. Inadequate Ofsted judgements, financial difficulties, safeguarding issues, complaint/grievance issues etc
 - Provides the co-ordination and facilitation of Team Around the School meetings for vulnerable schools
 - Provides additional senior improvement adviser support to manage and co-ordinate the work of the school improvement team and provide additional support in more challenging situations
 - Provides Learning Improvement Officer support (e.g. via Head of Service) to co-ordinate the work of other services and external bodies working with maintained schools e.g. Safeguarding, HR, complaints, Governance support, Learning teams, CPD teams, finance, data teams, audit, DfE, RSC, OfSTED, Trade Unions etc.
 - Provides officer time to co-ordinate the relationship between the LA and maintained schools e.g. Headteacher Forums, briefings, communications etc.
 - Provides financial support to schools and/or brokers support to schools that require additional improvement support from external sources and/or from other schools
 - Provides line management of teams undertaking statutory services, such as assessment and moderation

Proposed budget

- 1.18.4 The total budget proposed for 2025/26 is £860k.
- 1.18.5 It is proposed that the funding would be de-delegated as an amount per pupil of £14.90 per pupil; this is an increase of £1.04 per pupil from 2024/25.

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

- 1.18.6 Without de-delegation there will be a very significant reduction, and potential removal, of the Learning Improvement services as described above that are currently available to all maintained schools.
- 1.18.7 Schools and Governing Bodies would need to take the action necessary to source and fund external support required for school improvement activity, including Headteacher recruitment, Headteacher support and managing complex improvement situations in school.

Consultation responses

- 1.18.8 Of the 58 responses received, 44 (76%) were in favour of de-delegating this funding.

Recommendation

- 1.18.9 As the majority of schools supported the proposal it is recommended that funding for this service continues to be de-delegated in 2025/26.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Schools Forum members representing maintained primary and secondary schools only are requested to vote (by phase) on the de-delegation of funding for each of the services above in 2025/26. It is recommended that all nine services be de-delegated.
- 2.2 The services to be voted on are shown in the table below, along with the number and percentage of schools that voted in support of de-delegation continuing.

Service area	Schools in support of de-delegation continuing					
	Primary		Secondary		Total	
School contingency fund	47	89%	5	100%	52	90%
Maternity and other cover	49	92%	5	100%	54	93%
Suspended staff cover	32	60%	3	60%	35	60%
Trades union facilities	33	62%	3	60%	36	62%

School library services (primary only)	35	66%			35	66% (of Primary schools)
Free school meals eligibility	47	89%	4	80%	51	88%
Behaviour support services	36	68%	4	60%	38	66%
Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners	27	51%	3	60%	30	52%
School Improvement	42	77%	3	60%	44	76%

Appendix 2: Summary of De delegation Consultation Comments

Contingency and support for schools in financial difficulty

- 1 Supported the contingency fund overall but would have preferred not to fund the £50k for the Urgent School Improvement Fund.

Maternity and other Cover

- 1 Do we know how much a private insurance scheme might be for maternity cover? Presumably academies use that sort of scheme. Are we sure that our current arrangements are competitive? (I am perhaps more conscious of this currently as we will be getting new deals for every other type of insurance.)
- 2 I am interested in looking at alternatives for next year and would welcome some insight from academies on this. According to the Bradford paper, very few local authorities run this sort of insurance. Why? This accounts for about half of the total de-delegated costs and surely warrants some investigation: hopefully confirming that this is a good deal based on academies' and other LAs'

Suspended Staff cover

- 1 Suspension should be in our experience a very unusual occurrence. Any individual school will have to deal with this themselves.
- 2 Suspended staff cover should only be for those schools acting under HR advice and where there is not a history of using suspension as a tactic for managing out staff where the face doesn't fit.
- 3 This fund is going up 56% per pupil. There isn't much impetus to get matters resolved quickly if schools can just rely on this fund.

Trade Union Facilitators

- 1 Never used local convenors. We have a HR SLA in place to cover collective bargaining.
- 2 We are being asked for £6.64 per pupil, whereas Central Bedfordshire charge just £3. North Yorkshire is proposing £3.94. Bradford charged £4.75 last year and were reducing their charges per pupil by 5%. The national median appears to be about £3
- 3 The increased costs of Trade Union Facilities feels excessive and I do not support this without wider due diligence as to whether this could be brought down.
- 4 As employers, we do have a legal duty to provide paid union time but the level is not set. Per pupil rates in Leeds are proposed to go up by 7.6%. Our charges seem to be more than twice the national median
- 5 I do not have the details to support this measure, I am in favour of trade unions but feel that schools should not be funding them and that this is done through members' contributions. I would be prepared to change my vote on this after receiving further information as to how this is beneficial.
- 6 Why is the percentage more than double in Leeds compared to some authorities. We do not object to providing union time but the rate for Leeds does seem extremely high.

School Library Service

- 1 I think the library service ought to be opt in as schools with their own facilities need the money to support those.
- 2 I am not sure that the Leeds School Library Service offers value for money. I would much rather spend this money on actual books for the children in all honesty
- 3 This is going up massively: by over 15% per pupil (9% service budget increase overall when pupil/school numbers are taken into account). This will cost my school £3400. I could buy a lot of books with that every year and is much higher than my annual spend on library/topic books! I do think that this is a good service but I am not sure every one of my classes uses it well. I think that this
- 4 Could this be changed to a traded service

Free school meals eligibility

- 1 Can the LA explain why this service is costing over £2.00 per pupil in Leeds when the Bradford document suggests they charge just £1 and that appears to be the median?

Behaviour support services

- 1 School has to deal with all its own issues. External support is not easy to source'
- 2 This feels like an historic anomaly although behaviour support services are one of the headings in the operational guidance that can be funded. It is not clear to me what service this is supporting: possibly one or two posts that can have only a very marginal impact across 200 schools. Since 2014, this has cost my school over £6k at current rates for no apparent benefit. I am not clear how I could access this service to make use of my annual £600+ contribution. (I think I may have inadvertently used this service in
- 3 According to Bradford Schools Forum, only 30% of LAs de-delegate this service.
- 4 Not beneficial

Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners

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Leeds City Council
Consultation on the De-Delegation of Funding for
Services for the 2025-26 Financial Year

MAINTAINED MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS ONLY

1. Introduction

Funding provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) must be delegated to schools each year by the local authority. Schools Forum can however agree that the local authority retains some of this funding to provide services for maintained mainstream schools. This is known as 'de-delegation' of funding.

Before seeking approval from Schools Forum, the local authority must consult with all maintained mainstream schools to obtain their views on whether funding should continue to be de-delegated for these services in 2025/26. Primary and secondary maintained mainstream schools are therefore requested to complete the online consultation response form by the end of **7th January 2025** in order to inform the vote to be taken by Schools Forum at their meeting on 16th January 2025.

<https://surveys.leeds.gov.uk/s/AS8OZP/>

Please direct any queries by email to SchoolFunding@leeds.gov.uk

This consultation is for maintained mainstream schools only as the ESFA regulations do not allow other settings, such as academies or SILCs, to de-delegate their funding in this way.

The figures quoted below are draft and are based on October 2023 pupil data, adjusted for expected academy conversions. The actual figures de-delegated for 2025/26 will be updated to reflect the actual October 2024 pupil data once this information is available.

All of the services listed below have been de-delegated since 2013/14 when de-delegation was first introduced, with the exception of the Schools Urgent Improvement Fund which was included within the Schools Contingency Fund in 2019/20 and the School Improvement service, which was a new proposal in 2022/23.

2. Estimated de-delegated budget requirements

The initial estimated amount of funding required for de-delegated services in 2025/26 is £5.550m. This is an increase of £389k compared to 2024/25 proposals which totalled £5.161m.

Where possible de-delegated budgets have been held at the same level as the previous year. However, due to the impact of academy conversions the pupil numbers used to calculate the per pupil rates may have reduced, resulting in the need to increase the per pupil rate to achieve the same total budget.

Where de-delegation budgets have been increased this is due to recent trends in expenditure in that area and known pressures, such as pay inflation or a reduction in funding. The Local Authority looks for every opportunity to reduce de-delegated budgets wherever possible, based on prudent assumptions.

3. De-delegated Services

In the following section each de-delegated service is described, and the proposed budget and per-pupil rates explained. The consequences of not de-delegating are also described to assist with decision making.

School Contingency Fund

Purpose of the budget

The School Contingency Fund is retained centrally for maintained schools but only for a limited range of circumstances:

- a. Exceptional unforeseen costs which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet;
- b. Schools in financial difficulties;
- c. Additional costs relating to new, reorganised or closing schools; and
- d. Establishing a schools urgent improvement fund that schools can apply to if they require additional support from local authority services for urgent school improvement priorities.

The budget can be considered as one to pool risk, providing a safety net for schools.

An amount of £50,000 would be ringfenced for the Urgent School Improvement Fund and applications to this fund would be prioritised taking into account the level of need and the ability of the school to meet the costs through their existing budget, with consideration given in particular to the following scenarios:

- Schools in difficulty that require additional support, for example where a new Headteacher takes up post and identifies urgent issues that require additional support in resolving.
- Support to schools with resolving more complex whistleblowing allegations, investigations, or grievances.
- Proactive support for schools that have previously received an Outstanding or Good judgement from Ofsted but are now considered vulnerable.
- Costs incurred beyond those usually expected in supporting the Headteacher recruitment process due to school improvement issues.

Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that the funding would be de-delegated as an amount per pupil of **£4.33**.

Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£250,000** with £50,000 of this being ringfenced for the Urgent School Improvement Fund.

This has increased by £0.17 in comparison to 2024/25 (£4.16 pp).

It is proposed that the overall contingency budget is reduced to £500k for 2025/26, this is to reflect previous years underspend trends against this budget. These figures include an additional £250k to the contingency budget from the de delegated reserve 2024/25, ensuring an overall budget remains of **£500,000** in 2025/26. In the event that the de delegated reserves are no longer available the impact would be an increase of 108.3% per pupil from £4.16 in 24/25 to £8.66 in 25/26.

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

If the funding remains delegated to schools, there will be no central contingency fund available to schools. Schools would have to take all action necessary to balance their own budgets and there would be no central budget available for schools finding themselves in financial difficulty, requiring urgent support for school improvement or for funding capitalised pension costs where staff have been made redundant due to financial difficulties. The budget is not suitable for operation under a Service Level Agreement or traded offer.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the budget for the School Contingency Fund should continue to be de-delegated and a central contingency fund retained for primary and secondary maintained schools.

Maternity and other cover

Purpose of the budget

The budget reimburses schools for the cost of staff that are on maternity, parental or adoption leave, working as a justice of the peace, magistrate or on reserve services duties.

This budget does also include shared parental leave this is a legal family leave entitlement which can be accessed by the birth parent or adoptive parent and their partner or adoptive parent and their partner. The birth or adoptive parent's leave is paid at maternity leave rates. However this budget does not include the costs of a school employee returning to work on full pay either before a school closure period or during a break in the shared parental leave blocks.

.Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that this funding would be de-delegated based on an amount per pupil and an amount per pupil in receipt of FSM in the last six years, to reflect the additional staff numbers at schools with higher measures of deprivation, as follows:

2025/26 proposals for consultation

Phase	Per Pupil (Yr R to 11)	Per FSM (ever 6)
Primary	£43.66	£26.02
Secondary	£46.45	£27.84

Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£2,950,000**. This is a £246k (9.1%) increase in funding compared to 2024/25. The increase in the total de-delegated funding is due to the additional costs of maternity leave payments.

2024/25 figures for comparison

Phase	Per Pupil (Yr R to 11)	Per FSM (ever 6)
Primary	£38.59	£23.01
Secondary	£41.07	£24.61

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

If the funding remains delegated, schools must meet all costs of maternity and other cover from their delegated budgets. There would cease to be any central support for schools that incur cover costs for staff away from school for the above reasons.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the maternity and other cover budget should continue to be de-delegated and that funding should be retained centrally to meet costs in maintained primary and secondary schools.

Suspended staff cover

Purpose of the budget

This budget provides support for schools where employees are suspended, after the first three months. Whilst this is very rare, it can be costly for a school to continue to pay a member of staff that is suspended pending investigations being completed and also paying for cover.

Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that this funding would be de-delegated based on an amount per pupil of **£2.60**. In 2025/26 the de-delegated budget required has increased from a per pupil contribution of £1.67 in 2024/25.

Based on forecast pupil data and expected academy conversions this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£150,000** in 2025/26, an increase of £50k compared to 2024/25.

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

If the service remains delegated there will be no central support for schools where staff have been suspended, and schools will have to meet the continuing cost of the staff concerned and any cover costs from their delegated budgets.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Suspended staff cover budget should continue to be de-delegated.

Trade Union Facilities

Purpose of the budget

The Trade Union Facilities budget covers the cost of providing convenor salaries, physical facilities and other associated costs. The allocation of union convenor time is based on a ratio of convenors to members of 1:1000. Where convenors work within a school, this budget provides the school with funds to cover the cost of release time to undertake city-wide Trade Union duties. This includes support on casework and consultation and negotiation on changes to terms and conditions.

This agreement requires that all unions work towards realigning their convenor levels to ensure that convenor allocation across both schools and Leeds City Council reflects the membership in both areas and that school convenor time is maintained at the agreed levels of support. Historically, in addition to those convenors employed in schools, LCC directorate-based convenors also provide convenor support to schools. This agreement also incorporates a mechanism which provides for in year reductions in funding as a result of academy conversions.

A prerequisite of the involvement of all parties will be a commitment to ensuring positive and constructive support based on behaviours centred on transparency, integrity and a genuine commitment to resolve issues. Leeds City Council believes that this agreement provides an effective partnership approach to city-wide Trade Union Facilities.

Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that this funding would be de-delegated in 2025/26 based on an amount per pupil of **£6.64** which is an increase in the per pupil rate compared to 2024/25 (£6.17). Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£383,000** which is an increase of £13k compared to 2024/25.

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

The future access to local trade union representatives to support staff at all levels of seniority within schools is at stake if the current budget is not de-delegated. By retaining this budget for TU release time centrally schools will benefit from access to a pool of experienced TU convenors who will: seek to resolve issues locally, consult and negotiate with all maintained schools on a range of employment matters, and also represent their members in grievance, performance, absence, disciplinary and redundancy processes.

With regards to collective bargaining with the recognised TU's, the Council will continue to consult and / or negotiate on terms and conditions of employment on behalf of schools where LCC is the employer, or where the school purchase an SLA with LCC Schools HR Service.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the budget for Trade Union Facilities should continue to be de-delegated.

School Library Service (primary only)

Purpose of the budget

The School Library Service (SLS) provides a range of resources to underpin the curriculum, inspire creativity and raise attainment for primary-aged pupils.

Part of Leeds' public library service, SLS is a vibrant and pro-active specialist provider of the most up to date books for primary schools, providing schools with newly published children's factual topic books to support classroom teaching; fiction books to support reading for pleasure; and professional support to schools through an annual advisory visit, helping to develop school libraries through support for design, stock acquisition and editing.

In addition, SLS organises a range of reading for pleasure and cultural events for all pupils, engaging both reluctant and high achieving readers through both the Leeds Book Awards, and offering schools the opportunity to take part in Meet the Author events, embedding a reading for pleasure culture across schools.

Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that the funding would be de-delegated for primary schools as an amount per pupil of **£8.26** which is an increase in the per pupil rate compared to 2024/25 (£7.17). Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£363,000**.

This is an increase of £30k in total funding compared to 2024/25 (£333,000).

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

If delegated, primary schools would have to meet School Library Service costs from their delegated budget provided that the service was able to continue by operating on a traded basis.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the School Library Service budget should continue to be de-delegated for primary schools.

Free school meals (FSM) eligibility

Purpose of the budget

The budget supports the administration cost of carrying out free school meal eligibility assessments and is provided by the council's Welfare & Benefits Service. The service is provided to all Leeds schools and charges are made separately to academies for the service where they choose to use it.

Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that the funding for FSM eligibility checks would be de-delegated as **£1.93** per pupil plus **£4.49** per pupil in receipt of FSM in the past six years. This mechanism reflects the additional volume of work for schools with higher measures of deprivation.

Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£178,000**. The individual rates per pupil have increased; for 2024/25 the rates were £1.80 per pupil and £4.18 per pupil in receipt of FSM in the past six years.

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

If the budget is delegated to schools, then each school would need to make arrangements to administer its own free school meals service. The Leeds Welfare & Benefits Service would continue to provide a traded service that assesses entitlement to FSM and assuming all schools continue to buy into the service would charge the above rates plus any additional costs created by the administration of charging individual schools. If all schools do not buy into the service, then the rates charged above may need to increase.

Schools buying into the service would continue to receive electronic weekly listings of new qualifiers and those pupils who no longer qualify; termly listings of all pupils on the roll who qualify; direct telephone and email enquiry service; assistance to identify potential qualifiers and notifications to parents.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the budget for FSM eligibility checks should continue to be de-delegated.

Behaviour support services

Purpose of the budget

This budget is for the Inclusion Support Team which provides support to schools for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs. Work is undertaken to develop capacity within schools supporting key staff to identify and meet needs as part of a graduated approach for children and young people with SEND. The team provide advice to settings and, where appropriate, may provide assessments, recommendations, and training to build capacity and support needs.

The Inclusion Support Team is part of the SEND Inclusion Service based within Learning Inclusion. Aligned with the Educational Psychology SENIT and STARS teams to ensure consistent high quality SEMH practice, the Inclusion Support Team work with children and young people with complexities of SEMH need identified by school and settings, and often include other aspects of vulnerability such as extended non attendance, at risk of exclusion, care experienced.

Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that this funding would be de-delegated at **£1.12** per pupil plus **£3.47** per pupil in receipt of FSM in the past six years. This reflects the additional need at schools with higher measures of deprivation.

Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£116,000** for 2025/26 which is an increase of £3.7k from 2024/25.

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

If funding is delegated to schools, then there would be no centrally retained budget for behaviour support unless the service operates under a traded basis. The difficulty in operating under a traded basis would be the fact that the budget would be delegated to all schools but as the service provided is targeted, the charging levels and income collection would be difficult to calculate and predict. The ability to operate the service under an SLA could not therefore be guaranteed.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Behaviour Support budget should continue to be de-delegated.

Support to underperforming minority ethnic groups and bilingual learners

Purpose of the budget

This budget makes provision for staff who build capacity within schools to improve the educational outcomes for vulnerable New Arrivals (NA), Ethnically Diverse (ED) pupils as well as those for whom English is an additional language (EAL), in order to narrow the attainment gap.

They provide support and challenge to school leadership; specialist advice and guidance on EAL and race and culture related issues at a school level and within the LA on actions that impact on schools, culturally cohesive teaching and learning strategies, EAL assessment and induction, New to Schooling learners, Anti-racist schooling, decolonised curriculum development support and materials for Ethnically Diverse and EAL pupils; consultancy support to individual schools or localities and bespoke programmes such as Arooj, in order to meet specific identified New Arrival, BAME and EAL needs.

During the last year, this service has been under review. This review will continue into the next financial year.

Following feedback from consultation, the service has taken a more pro-active role in engaging with schools and sharing the offer it provides to them. Evaluation of budget use has enabled the service to provide an additional EAL consultant post to support maintained schools.

A review of the formula used to determine de-delegation of this funding has been undertaken to ensure that the service is funded in a fair manner that reflects the universal offer available. The new funding method is being consulted on for 2025/26.

As part of the review, further possible changes in this budget have been identified that link with the Local Authorities current financial challenge opportunities. It is anticipated that these changes, if realised, could result in a potential reduction in the overall cost of the service to schools. These changes are not confirmed and so have not been included in the budget consultation at this stage.

Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that the budget for support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners should be de-delegated as an amount per pupil with EAL and an amount per pupil AWPU.

25/26 proposals for consultation

Phase	Per Pupil (Yr R to 11)	Per EAL 3 Pupil
Primary	£1.21	£32.37
Secondary	£1.82	£86.93

Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£300,039** for 2025/26 which is an increase of £10k from 2024/25. Individual rates can be compared to 2024/25 amounts which are shown below for information.

2024/25 figures for comparison

Phase	Per EAL 3 Pupil	Per FSM (ever 6)
Primary	£32.92	£1.39
Secondary	£186.57	£1.48

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

If not delegated, then there would be no centrally retained budget to support narrowing the attainment gap for NA, BME, cultural diversity and EAL pupils across the city. This service would be difficult to operate as traded service and so should funds not be de-delegated, the consequence is the likely cessation of the service.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the budget for support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners should continue to be de-delegated.

School Improvement

Purpose of the budget

The Local Authority previously received a School Improvement and Brokerage Grant (*SIBG*) to enable it to undertake its statutory and core support, monitoring and intervention duties to maintained schools, as well as to broker additional support to schools requiring additional support. The grant supported the work of the Learning Improvement to undertake these roles.

With the removal of the grant in 2023/24, Schools Forum approved the de-delegation of the equivalent full grant cost that the Local Authority would no longer receive.

The SI allocation is used centrally for maintained schools. It:

- a. Provides support to school leaders through the Headteacher Support Service
- b. Funds a core School Improvement Adviser support offer to all maintained schools
- c. Funds a school improvement adviser offer to Governing Bodies during Headteacher recruitment
- d. Provides additional time from School Improvement Advisers to support schools during an OfSTED inspection
- e. Enables officers to undertake risk analysis of schools, providing support and intervention as appropriate
- f. Provides an enhanced school improvement adviser offer to schools judged as requiring improvement at no cost to the school

- g. Provides a school improvement adviser to support the Governing Body of a vulnerable school as part of additional joint improvement committees
- h. Provides an additional offer of school improvement adviser and/or Learning Improvement officer (e.g. Head of Service) where schools have significant issues to manage i.e. Inadequate Ofsted judgements, financial difficulties, safeguarding issues, complaint/grievance issues etc
- i. Provides the co-ordination and facilitation of Team Around the School meetings for vulnerable schools
- j. Provides additional senior improvement adviser support to manage and co-ordinate the work of the school improvement team and provide additional support in more challenging situations
- k. Provides Learning Improvement Officer support (e.g. via Head of Service) to co-ordinate the work of other services and external bodies working with maintained schools e.g. Safeguarding, HR, complaints, Governance support, Learning teams, CPD teams, finance, data teams, audit, DfE, RSC, OfSTED, Trade Unions etc.
- l. Provides officer time to co-ordinate the relationship between the LA and maintained schools e.g. Headteacher Forums, briefings, communications etc.
- m. Provides financial support to schools and/or brokers support to schools that require additional improvement support from external sources and/or from other schools
- n. Provides line management of teams undertaking statutory services, such as assessment and moderation

Method of de-delegation

It is proposed that the funding would be de-delegated as an amount per pupil of **£14.90** which is an increase of 7.5% from **£13.86** in 2024/25. Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of **£860,000** for 2025/26 which is an increase of £29k from 2024/25.

Consequence if the budget is not de-delegated

Without de-delegation, there will be a very significant reduction, and likely removal, of Learning Improvement services as described above that are currently available to maintained schools.

Schools and Governing Bodies would need to take the action necessary to source and fund external support required for school improvement activity (described above), including Headteacher recruitment, Headteacher support and managing complex improvement situations in school.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the School Improvement Fund budget should continue to be de-delegated.

4. Consultation responses

Primary and secondary maintained mainstream schools are requested to consider the de-delegation of each of the above services for the 2025/26 financial year and to complete the online consultation response form by **7th January 2025**. Appendix 1 shows the illustrative school by school allocations for the above services. The views of schools will be reported to Schools Forum on 16th January 2025 to inform their decision on de-delegation for 2025/26.

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Schools Forum forward plan 2024/25

Schools Forum date	Driver for date	Agenda items	Purpose	Responsible officer	Comments
Thursday 20/06/2024	No external requirements	School balances 2023/24 outturn	Information	Lucie McAulay/Rosie Harrison	
		DSG 2023/24 outturn	Information	Lucie McAulay/Shirley Maidens	
Thursday 03/10/2024	Get views from SF before consultation	DSG budget monitoring 2024/25	Information	Lucie McAulay/Shirley Maidens	
		School funding update 2025/26, including consultation plans	Information	Lucie McAulay	
		DSG Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 - 2029/30	Information	Lucie McAulay	
Thursday 14/11/2024	Assume consultation the week before and after half term then need time to clear reports before SF. Disapplication deadline usually 20th November, SF	School funding formula arrangements 2025/26, including any transfers of funding between the DSG blocks	Decision and consultation	tbc - Rosie Harrison	
Thursday 16/01/2025	APT deadline usually XX Jan, SF needs to be before this. Final funding figures received from ESFA at end of Dec. Need as much time as possible at start of Jan to do modelling before SF meeting.	Final school funding arrangements 2025/26	Information	Lucie McAulay	
		De-delegation 2025/26 decision	Decision	Lucie McAulay	
Thursday 27/02/2025	Approval of EY funding by SF before end of Feb. Can't hold SF meeting during half term.	Free Early Education Entitlement rates and centrally retained funding 2025/26	Decision and consultation	Chris Sutton	
		High Needs Budget 2025/26	Information	Lucie McAulay / Shirely Maidens	
		DSG budget monitoring 2024/25	Information	Lucie McAulay/Shirley Maidens	

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