



# City of Doncaster Council

## Agenda

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Meeting: Doncaster Schools Forum

Date/Time: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 08:30

Venue: The Laurel Academy

Items for Discussion		Time
1	1.1. Apologies 1.2. Substitutes 1.3. Observers 1.4. To consider the extent, if any, to which the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting. 1.5. Declarations of interest 1.6. Minutes of last meeting & matters arising	
2	2.1 Update from Leanne Hornsby, Service Director, Education & Skills  <b><u>Reports requiring Decisions</u></b>  2.2 Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) and Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) funding rates 2025/26 [ <i>Rebecca Brookes</i> ]  2.3 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Initial Budget 2025-26 [ <i>Stephen Boldry</i> ]  2.4 Future meetings of the Schools Forum 2025/26 [ <i>Rebecca Brookes</i> ]  2.5 High Needs Funding Update [ <i>Martyn Owen</i> ]  <b><u>Reports for Information</u></b>  2.6 Dedicated Schools Grant Revenue Monitoring Quarter 3 2024-25 [ <i>Stephen Boldry</i> ]	08:40    08:50  09:10  09:25  09:35   10:00
3	Any other Business	
4	Dates and times of next meeting Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 @ The Laurel Academy	

## Schools Forum

### Membership List 2023-25

#### Schools Members

### Maintained Members

#### Primary

##### Main Member

Rachel Train	Warmsworth Primary
Amanda Painter	Tickhill Estfeld Primary School

##### Substitutes

Vacant
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#### Governor Member

Janine Reid	Copley Junior School
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#### Special School

##### Headteacher Main Member

Paul Scotting	Stone Hill School
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#### Governor Member

Vacant
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#### Pupil Referral Unit

Vacant
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Vacant
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### Academy Members

#### Primary

##### Main Member

Andy Hibbet	Exceed Learning Partnership
Matthew Ridley	Shaw Wood Academy
Nevine Towers	Diocese of Sheffield Academy Trust
Rebecca Broadbent	Venn Academy Trust
Rob Harvey	Crookesbroom Primary Academy

Vacant
Vacant

#### Secondary

##### Main Member

Simon Swain	Hallcross Academy
Richard Brooke	Delta
Lesley Bailey	Delta
Vacant	
Vacant	

Vacant
Vacant

#### Special School

Karen Smith	Nexus Multi Academy Trust
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Joel Hardwick	Nexus Multi Academy Trust
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#### Alternative Provision Academies

Dirk Pittard	St Wilfrid's Academy
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Jo Pittard	St Wilfrid's Academy
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#### Non-Schools Members

##### Diocesan Representatives

Philip Patterson	Diocese of Hallam
Philippa Cousins	Diocese of Sheffield

##### Substitutes

Clare Thorpe	Diocese of Hallam
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##### Early Years, Private, Voluntary & Independent Sector

Lesley Clark	Little Oaks
Adie Brown	Sticky Mits Childcare Centre

##### 16-19 Providers

Julie Kaye	Doncaster College
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#### Observers

Keith Hawker	Trade Union Representative NASUWT
Fiona Campbell	NEU
Sue Farmer	Elected Member (Councillor) - Equalities, Education and Skills
Leanne Hornsby	Service Director Education and Skills
Riana Nelson	Executive Director of Children Young People and Families
Stephen Boldry	Local Authority - Finance Manager

## **CITY OF DONCASTER COUNCIL**

### **SCHOOLS FORUM**

**Minutes of the Schools Forum held at The Laurel Academy on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025, commencing at 08:30am.**

**PRESENT:** A Painter, N Towers, R Train, R Brooke, K Davis, D Pittard, P Cousins, L Clark, A Brown.

**APOLOGIES:** R Harvey, S Swain, P Scotting, P Patterson, J Kaye, L Bailey, M Ridley, J Reid, L Hornsby.

#### **1 SUBSTITUTES**

None

#### **2 OBSERVERS**

S Farmer, S Boldry, K Hawker, M Lowe, M Owen, J Reed, A Tomes, .

#### **3 DECLARATIONS OF BUSINESS INTEREST & OTHER MATTERS**

There were no declarations of specific business interest in respect of any item on the agenda or raised at the meeting.

#### **4 MINUTES 14 November 2024**

RESOLVED (1)

- a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2024 be agreed as a true record.

#### **5 MATTERS ARISING**

Members were informed that two review groups are now running alongside the schools forum, the High Needs Review Group and the Early Years Review Group.

#### **6 UPDATE FROM JANE REED ON BEHALF OF LEANNE HORNSBY, SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION & SKILLS**

- 6.1 Members were reminded of the recent ILAC inspection and thanks went out for the systems and support. The LA are pleased with the process, education features strongly and the results should be published mid-March. Early Help was also featured heavily, and thanks also went out to those schools that helped during the inspection.

- 6.2 Members were also informed that the pyramid funding panels have been taking place which are identifying new and emerging cases.

## **7 EARLY YEARS NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA (EYNFF) AND EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM (EYPP) FUNDING RATES 2025/26**

Members were presented with a report outlining the funding rates for 2025/26.

Discussion took place on the following issues: -

- 7.1 Members were informed that the local authority funding rates were published by the government in December and the funding rates have increased for 2025/26.
- 7.2 Following a consultation with providers, shown at appendix A, the following rates have been agreed: 3- & 4-year-olds Basic rate will increase to £5.27 with the supplements remaining the same - Deprivation £0.28 and flexibility £0.24. 2-year-olds receiving additional support £8.20 with no supplements, 2-year-olds of working families £7.95 with no supplements and 9 months to under 2's of working families £10.82 with no supplements. The formula makes sure that at least 96% of the funding is passed through to providers.
- 7.3 Members were also informed of the increase in funding for the Disability Access fund from £910 to £938 annually, and the Early Years Pupil Premium hourly rate from 68p per hour to £1.00 per hour.
- 7.4 The hourly rate and the pressures on providers were discussed. It was mentioned that there is a good working relation between providers and the LA.
- 7.5 Members discussed the Early Intervention Allowance and if the rate of £10 per hour was going to be updated as it is not enough. It was agreed that a report would go to the High Needs Review Group to discuss. EIA is referred to as SENDIF by central government and Doncaster fund this through the High Needs Block whereas a lot of other LA's fund this through the Early Years Block.

### **RESOLVED (2)**

- a) That the update be received and noted.
- b) That the new EY rates have been agreed and will be published
- c) That a report on EIA will be produced and discussed at the High Need Review Group.

## **8 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) INITIAL BUDGET 2025-26**

Members were presented with a report to outline the proposed initial DSG budget for 2025/26.

Discussion took place on the following issues: -

- 8.1 Members were informed that the School Block Budgets have been sent to the DfE to go through the final checks and should be approved and sent out to schools by the end of February.
- 8.2 Members were reminded that the Central Schools Services Block is still subject to the copyright license being agreed which is done nationally.
- 8.3 The High Needs Budget has the provisional funding allocations but will not be confirmed until March 2025.
- 8.4 The Early Years Budget has the provisional funding allocation but is subject to adjustments in July 2025 based on the January 2025 census.
- 8.5 Members were asked to consider whether to approve an increase to Caretakers' rent for 2026/27 of 2.7% in line with the proposal for other council house rents. AGREED.
- 8.6 Caretakers rent led to discussions around the use of caretaker bungalows and whether the empty ones could be used for other purposes such as SEMH, other types of provisions and wraparound for Early Years. The next round of capital funding for the early year's wraparound might be out in April so this could be considered.

RESOLVED (3)

- a) That the reports be received and noted.
- b) With reference to 8.5 members approved an increase of 2.7% (subject to Full Council Approval) to Caretakers' rents for 2025/26.
- c) Further work to be looked at in relation to the landscape of school bungalows and how they could be used for other purposes.

## **9 FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM 2025/26**

Members were presented with a report detailing the proposed meeting dates for the next year.

Discussion took place on the following issues: -

- 9.1 Members were informed of the proposed dates for the four meetings in 2025/26. The date for June was an issue so this has been rearranged for the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2025.
- 9.2 Meetings will be held at The Laurel Academy, meeting requests will be sent out to add these to individual calendars.
- 9.3 Members were also reminded that the new 2-year term for membership will be starting, and members will be contacted to seek continuation along with going out to all providers for interest.

RESOLVED (4)

- a) That the report be received and noted.
- b) Change the date for the June meeting to 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025

## **10 High Needs Element 3 Funding Update**

Members were presented with a Power Point document outlining the high needs Element 3 funding update.

Discussion took place on the following issues: -

- 10.1 Members were informed that 17 locality panels are now in place which was previously discussed at Schools Forum regarding agreement to devolve funding to localities. This is a long-term project which is about ownership around schools and providing support. The LA are pleased with how it has gone so far and schools are bringing strong cases to the panels. There is also now a complex needs panel for cases that cannot be met through the standard process.
- 10.2 There has been a lot of learning and consultations with schools, 300-400 children that have received support through the process so far. There will be surveys sent to a selection of schools via google forms, with a review of the data and impact and analysis of the time and cost. A report will be written up and taken to the High Needs Review Group then discussed at the June School Forum meeting.
- 10.3 Funding schools is better and easier and the DfE are interested and keen to see the output as part of the government solution.
- 10.4 Members received feedback from maintained heads on the new process for the locality panels: There is a lot for SENCOS to do and to meet the level of training, some attend with SLT. The representation for maintained schools at the Pyramid panels feels unbalanced as half of the pyramid are trust representatives. There is a feeling of being judged with work being pulled apart and throw away comments being made. Clarity is needed going forward on the timing of the meetings, as some knew and others didn't, they were termly but now annually with 6 weeks mop up meetings. Members were informed that the dates are going out to schools in next couple of days and that there is a need for training to understanding thresholds.
- 10.5 Although schools can now get funding quicker there are still things to iron out through the High Needs Sub Group project. We need to work together to get the balance right and build relationships, this should be reflected in the report – who attends, work around language and rules of engagement. The idea is for Pyramids to own and understand the demand and discuss examples of working together. There will be more to share at next meeting.
- 10.6 The next High Needs Review Group is on the 24 March, if anyone else would like to attend please get in touch.
- 10.7 Maintained schools need to be aware of funding for budget setting before April, there is a SEND quality assurance panel end of February.

RESOLVED (5)

- a) That the reports be received and noted.
- b) A report will be written up and taken to the High Needs Review Group then discussed at the June School Forum meeting.
- c) Members to get in touch if interested in attending the High Needs Review Group.

## **11 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT REVENUE MONITORING QUARTER 3 2024-25**

Members were presented with a report outlining the forecast outturn for the DSG in 2024/25 as at Q3.

Discussion took place on the following issues: -

- 11.1 Members were informed that the forecast in-year overspend is now £13.9m, with High Needs Block £14.1m overspend offset slightly by an underspend on the Growth Fund payments.
- 11.2 The current High Needs Medium Term Financial Plan is forecast to be overspent by £39.2m by the end of 2024-25, with total overspends of £7.4m expected in the year of 2025-26, with total DSG overspends of £46.6m expected at the end of 2025-26 and total overspends of £52.2m by 2027-28.
- 11.3 Members discussed how this is being managed. They were informed that demand for High Needs is far exceeding and happening everywhere. The LA are working to obtain an additional 400 specialist places over next 5 years and that there has been a change in need at special schools. The national deficit is out of control and is unlikely to change until there is a change in national policy.
- 11.4 Members discussed taking the data behind the figures to discuss at the High Needs Review Group mentioning how early intervention is working, creating a sufficiency report to explore the data and possible reviewing the last 15 cases to look at the reasons for them being OOA.
- 11.5 It was also mentioned that some of the costs are due to parental choice with them going to tribunal and the LA loses. There needs to be better communication with parents. The SENCO will use the need descriptors, a parent handbook and toolkit are being sent out and the framework is changing.
- 11.6 CPDs through funding panel. Ethos and tone need to be professional, and all follow the same system. The work is around the 'Doncaster child' and it was mentioned that Doncaster is good at supporting children back into a mainstream setting.
- 11.7 It was also suggested about the caretaker bungalows possible being used for specialist accommodation.

**RESOLVED (6)**

- a) That the reports be received and noted.

- b) Further information on the data of the High Needs overspends to be discussed at the High Needs Review Group

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Strategic event next week looks at concept of school alliance. When looking at agenda planning for the schools forum need to feed into programme planning and priorities from PLACE. Need to look at curriculum lead financial planning and shared commitments.

It was discussed at the Early Years Review Group about changing the name of the school forum to something like education forum which other LAs are doing as this is more inclusive.

KPI - Richard Brooke to produce draft development plan for secondary schools as a templet to start from. Create a working group for proposal and feed in from other representatives.

The next date for the Early Years Review Group was 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 but this needs to be rearranged.

### **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next full meeting of the School Forum will be held on Thursday 26 June 2025 at The Laurel Academy at 08:30am.





## **REPORT TO THE SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF), Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Disability Access Fund 2025-26**

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#### **Purpose**

1. This report outlines the funding formula for the Early Years Funded Entitlement, which covers funding for 2, 3 and 4 year olds at all types of nursery provision. The report also covers the Early Years Pupil Premium and the Disability Access Fund.

#### **Recommendation**

2. That Schools Forum:
  - a) Notes the report;
  - b) Provides comments on the content of the report.

#### **Background**

3. In March 2007 the DfE launched a consultation on School, Early Years and 14-16 funding. The consultation document detailed the government's commitment to extending the funded entitlement to 15 hours' funded provision that could be taken more flexibly. As the extension was rolled out the pattern of provision was expected to change. The different funding methodologies for maintained schools and PVI providers posed a challenge for funding the flexible provision in a consistent and fair manner.
4. The introduction of an Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) aimed to ensure that funding of PVI settings more closely resembled that of maintained schools. The EYSFF was implemented in April 2011.
5. The School funding formula changed significantly in 2013/14 in light of the Government's School Funding Reforms. Even though the EYSFF was not part of the reforms, it was felt that this was an appropriate time to review the EYSFF. Following a comprehensive review, changes were made to the EYSFF which were implemented in April 2013 (in line with the schools funding formula).
6. During 2013/14, the two year old offer was incorporated into the EYSFF as per Regulations.
7. In the summer of 2014 the Government announced its intention to introduce an Early Years Pupil Premium.
8. In August 2016 the DfE launched a consultation on An Early Years National Funding Formula. The consultation document detailed the government's commitment to

extending the current funded entitlement of 15 hours for three and four year olds to 30 hours for working parents. In order for this to be delivered the government have set out to establish a sustainable, fair and transparent source of funding to early year providers. In December 2016 the government released the response to the consultation explaining how the new formula will work.

9. The new formula changes the way in which funding to the local authority is calculated and also outlines how local authorities should distribute funding to providers. The government have also introduced a Disability Access Fund (DAF) with the purpose to aid access to funded childcare for disabled children.
10. In July 2022 the DfE updated to the early years funding formulae which focused on the way in which the entitlements funding is distributed from the DfE to local authorities through the national funding formulae in relation to the datasets underpinning the various factors within the formulae as they did not use the latest available data. It also detailed the transfer of the Teachers pay and pension grant into the early years funding formulae.
11. In March 2023 the government announced changes to extend the eligibility to free entitlement so that all eligible working parents will be able to access 30 hours of free entitlement for 38 weeks of the year from the term after their child turns 9 months old. The roll out started in April 2024 for working parents of 2-year olds accessing 15 hours per week then from September 2024 all eligible working parents of children aged 9 months up to 3-years old could start to access 15 hours per week.
12. From September 2025 all eligible working parents will be able to access 30 hours of free entitlement for 38 weeks of the year from the term after their child turns 9 months old.

## **Issues for consideration**

### **EARLY YEARS NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA (EYNFF)**

13. The new formula was implemented in full for 2017/18 and all the requirements on how local authorities should distribute funding to providers were met in the first and second year and continues to be delivered this way.
14. On 10 December 2024, the government announced the local authority hourly funding rates for April 2025 to March 2026. The City of Doncaster council will see an increase in the hourly funding rates for all the free entitlements. A consultation has taken place with our early years providers about the new proposals and the results of this consultation are included at appendix A.
15. The following is a summary of the proposed hourly rates for 2025-26 to be paid to providers.

16. **Universal and Additional Base Rate Funding (3 & 4 year olds)** – for all hours of the funded entitlement including the additional 15 hours for working families the funding rate to all providers will be **£5.27 per hour**.
17. **Flexibility Funding (3 & 4 year olds only)** – only those providers deemed to be flexible will receive this funding. A rate of **£0.24 per hour** will be allocated for all hours to providers who qualify.
18. **Deprivation funding (3 & 4 year olds only)** – Allocated entirely by the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) on a termly basis. A rate of **£0.28 per hour** will be allocated to those whose postcode has an IDACI score of 26.14 and above.
19. **2 year old funding for children from families receiving additional support entitlement** – the new hourly rate of funding eligible two year olds will be **£8.20**.
20. **2 year old funding for children of eligible working parent's entitlement**– the new hourly rate of funding eligible two year olds will be **£7.95**.
21. **9 months to 2 years old funding for children of eligible working parent's entitlement**– the hourly rate of funding for 9 months to under 2 year olds for eligible children will be **£10.82**
22. All funding rates are provisional at this time. They can't be confirmed until indicative provider allocations have been finalised, but it is unlikely that any further changes will be required.
23. The indicative funding allocation for all providers will be distributed in March 2025 – these will be based on the termly headcount information from 2024-25. Actual headcount information will be collated for each term during 2025-26 with the funding allocations being subsequently updated. Notification of the changes to the allocations will be sent to providers following each termly revision.

#### **DISABILITY ACCESS FUND (DAF)**

24. The LA will receive additional funding in its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to cover DAF allocations paid to providers.
25. The DAF is to aid access to funded childcare places for disabled children. From April 2025 all eligible children receiving funded early education and in receipt of child Disability Living Allowance (DLA) are eligible for DAF.
26. A lump sum of **£938** is payable per eligible child per financial year. The lump sum cannot be split between providers or transferred if a child moves providers. DAF funding received by the original setting will not be recouped. The provider's local authority is responsible for funding the DAF for the child and eligibility checking.
27. Providers are responsible for identifying eligible children and obtaining a copy of the child's DLA award letter. This will then be submitted to the LA who will then check in

the current financial year that the funding has not previously been allocated before releasing the funds to the provider.

### **SEN INCLUSION FUND**

28. LA's were required to establish a special educational needs inclusion fund from 2017. The purpose of the fund is to support local authorities to work with providers to address the needs of individual children with SEN. Doncaster currently provides additional support for nursery aged children through the Early Intervention Allowance at a rate of **£10 per hour**.

### **EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM (EYPP)**

29. The LA will receive additional funding in its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to cover EYPP allocations paid to providers.
30. The EYPP will support the delivery of the funded entitlement for disadvantaged children. From April 2025 all eligible children receiving funded early education and in receipt of certain state benefits will be eligible. EYPP is only payable on 15 hours of the working parents entitlement to the parents nominated provider. The Government has set a national hourly rate that must be paid to all providers; this rate has increased in 2025-26 to **£1.00p per hour**. EYPP will be paid on a termly basis.
31. Providers must request information from parents to determine eligibility via the parent declaration form, but whether a parent decides to complete the EYPP section this is voluntary. Providers will collate responses from parents and then submit a return to the LA who will then perform checks to determine eligibility for EYPP.
32. Children are likely to be eligible if their parents are in receipt of certain state benefits, and will be eligible if they have left Local Authority care due to adoption, special guardianship order or child arrangement order, or if they are currently in Local Authority care.

### **Conclusion**

33. It is our aim to pay hourly rates that distribute the maximum amount of funding to providers. Allocations will continue to be revised based on actual in-year headcount data with providers being informed of the resultant changes in a timely manner. DAF payments will be made to providers in line with guidance received to further support disabled children accessing the funded entitlement. EYPP allocations will also continue to be made to providers to further support disadvantaged children accessing the funded entitlement.

### **Author and Contact Officer:**

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## Early Years Funding Consultation 2025-26 results

Dear All

Below is a summary of the consultation for the Early Years Funding entitlement

### Table of response:

	Total No. of Funded providers	Response s	%
Childminder	185	65	35%
Day Nursery	69	21	30%
Schools	78	13	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>30%</b>

### What we asked:

#### 3 & 4 Year Old entitlements

The current Universal 15 hours and Extended 15 hours Funding Formula has a base rate plus supplements for Deprivation and flexibility. There are no changes proposed to the funding formula for the 3 and 4-year-olds entitlements.

Doncaster are proposing to pay an hourly base rate of £5.27 to Providers for 3 and 4-year-olds Universal 15 hours and Extended 15 hours in 2025-2026, this is an increase of 5.2% from 2024-2025. **The rate of £5.27 does not include the flexibility rate of £0.24 and the deprivation rate of £0.28 which are paid in addition to this for meeting certain eligibility criteria.**

***Do you agree with hourly base rate of £5.27 to Providers for 3 and 4-year-olds Universal 15 hours and Extended 15 hours in 2025-2026?***

#### **Answers:**

Yes	64	67%
No	35	35%

*The majority of responses have agreed to the hourly base rate of £5.27 for 3 & 4 year olds for 2025/26.*

## 2 Year Old children from families receiving additional support entitlement (formerly known as the 2-year-old disadvantaged entitlement)

Local authorities are required, through regulations, to ensure that the final hourly funding rate (that is the base rate, plus supplements if applicable) paid to providers for the entitlement for families of 2-year-olds receiving additional support is at least equal to the final hourly funding rate for the 2-year-old working parent entitlement at individual provider level.

Doncaster are proposing not to introduce supplements and to apply the full 100% passthrough for 2-year-old children from families receiving additional support so this rate remains higher than that of a 2-year-old accessing the working parent entitlement. This will provide an hourly base rate of £8.20 per hour to providers.

***Do you agree with passing on the full rate of £8.20 to providers for 2-year-old children from families receiving additional support so this rate remains higher than that of a 2-year-old accessing the working parent entitlement?***

**Answers:**

Yes	84	88%
No	15	15%

*The majority of responses have agreed to the hourly base rate of £5.27 for 3 & 4 year olds for 2025/26.*

## 2-year-old children of eligible working parent's entitlement

Doncaster are proposing to apply the 96% passthrough requirement to the entitlement for 2-year-old children of eligible working parents to help support the increased need for additional capacity around business planning, quality, inclusion and SEND as per the information provided in the Centrally Retained Funding 2025-2026 section. Based on the December 2025 budget the passthrough of funding to providers will be 96.91%.

***Do you agree with applying a 96.91% passthrough requirement to the entitlement for 2-year-old children of eligible working parents to help support the increased need for additional capacity around business planning, quality, inclusion and SEND?***

**Answers:**

Yes	92	93%
No	7	7%

*The majority of responses have agreed to the passthrough rate of 96.91% to the entitlement for 2-year-old children of eligible working parents for 2025/26*

## Base rate and supplements

The City of Doncaster Council asked for your view on applying supplements for deprivation and flexibility to the entitlements for 2-year-old children of eligible working parents, in the same way as they are applied to the 3- & -4-year-old funding entitlements. There were three options provided:

**Option A** provides one single rate of £7.95 paid to providers for all the hours of the 2-year-old children of eligible working parents.

**Option B** provides a base rate of £7.84 paid to providers for all the hours of the 2-year-old children of eligible working parents plus an additional £0.28 where a pupil's postcode is in a deprived area.

**Option C** provides a base rate of £7.62 paid to providers for all the hours of the 2-year-old children of eligible working parents plus an additional £0.28 where a pupil's postcode is in a deprived area and an additional £0.24 where the provider delivers the hours in a delivery model that offers a choice to the Service User.

**Answers:**

Option A	40	40%
Option B	18	18%
Option C	34	34%
None of the above	7	7%

*The majority of responses have agreed to Option A for one single rate of £7.95 paid to providers for all the hours of the 2-year-old children of eligible working parents for 2025/26*

**Other discretionary supplements:**

Doncaster do not propose to include any other supplements to the entitlements such as Rurality or sparsity, Quality or English as an additional language.

Do you agree with not including any other supplements?

**Answers:**

Yes	91	92%
No	8	8%

*The majority of responses have agreed not to include any other supplements to the 2-year-old children of eligible working parents entitlement for 2025/26*

## **9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parent's entitlement**

Doncaster are proposing to apply the 96% passthrough requirement to the entitlement for 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents to help support the increased need for additional capacity around business planning, quality, inclusion and SEND as per the information provided in the Centrally Retained Funding 2025-2026 section. Based on the December 2025 budget the passthrough of funding to providers will be 96.91%.

***Do you agree with applying a 96.91% passthrough requirement to the entitlement for 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents to help support the increased need for additional capacity around business planning, quality, inclusion and SEND?***

**Answers:**

Yes	94	95%
No	5	5%

*The majority of responses have agreed to the passthrough rate of 96.91% to the entitlement for 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents for 2025/26*

**Base rate and supplements**

The City of Doncaster Council asked for your view on applying supplements for deprivation and flexibility to the entitlements for 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents, in the same way as they are applied to the 3- & -4-year-old funding entitlements. There were three options provided:

**Option A** provides one single rate of £10.82 paid to providers for all the hours of the 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents.

**Option B** provides a base rate of £10.72 paid to providers for all the hours of the 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents plus an additional £0.28 where a pupil's postcode is in a deprived area.

**Option C** provides a base rate of £10.48 paid to providers for all the hours of the 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents plus an additional £0.28 where a pupil's postcode is in a deprived area and an additional £0.24 where the provider delivers the hours in a delivery model that offers a choice to the Service User.

**Answers:**

Option A	40	40%
Option B	17	17%
Option C	33	33%
None of the above	9	9%

*The majority of responses have agreed to Option A for one single rate of £10.82 paid to providers for all the hours of the 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents entitlement for 2025/26*

**Other discretionary supplements:**

Doncaster do not propose to include any other supplements to the entitlements such as Rurality or sparsity, Quality or English as an additional language.

Do you agree with not including any other supplements?

**Answers:**

Yes	91	92%
No	8	8%

*The majority of responses have agreed not to include any other supplements to the 9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parents entitlement for 2025/26*



**Below are some of the concerns raised in the comments sections:**

**3 and 4-year-olds entitlements:**

- Childminder ratios do not increase when a child turns 3 so the drop in the hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds from 2 and under is too big a change and not sustainable.
- The rate does not reflect the increases over the past 12 months
- Does not match or cover private day rate
- All funded rates should be the same

**2-year-old children from families receiving additional support entitlement (formerly known as the 2-year-old disadvantaged entitlement):**

- The rate should be the same for all 2 year olds
- Working parents should get the same
- All funded rates should be the same
- The rate does not reflect the increases over the past 12 months

**2-year-old children of eligible working parent's entitlement:**

- All funded rates should be the same
- The rate does not reflect the increases over the past 12 months
- A supplement for EAL would be appreciated
- Armed forces are not eligible until reception

**9 months up to 2-year-old children of eligible working parent's entitlement:**

- All funded rates should be the same
- The rate does not reflect the increases over the past 12 months
- A supplement for EAL would be appreciated

*The Local Authority is very aware of the pressures on Early Years settings nationally and are committed to raising these issues at both a national and local level wherever possible.*

**New funding rates for 2025/26 will be:**

<b>3 &amp; 4 year old funding rates:</b>	
15 universal & 15 additional	£5.27
Flexibility	£0.24
Deprivation	£0.28
EYPP	£1.00
Disability Access Fund	£938.00
<b>2 year old funding rates</b>	
Most deprived 2 year olds	£7.95
Under 2 Year Olds	£10.82

## **Further information**

The early year's formula was designed by the DfE to allocate funding fairly, efficiently and transparently, to ensure that sufficient numbers of providers were willing and able to deliver 30 hours of free childcare on a sustainable basis.

Funding to providers for the free entitlement is allocated in line with the [Early years funding: 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

### **3 & 4 year old funding**

The rate of £5.71 paid to Doncaster for 3 & 4 year olds is allocated as follows:

<b>Total funding rate to Doncaster</b>	<b>£5.71</b>	<b>%</b>
Providers Basic rate on all 3 & 4 year old hours	£5.27	92%
Providers supplement rates on eligible 3 & 4 year old hours (flexibility and deprivation)	£0.28	5%
Doncaster Central services	£0.16	3%

#### **Central Services:**

Local Authorities can allocate a maximum of 4% of all the free entitlement funding streams for central services. For 2025/26 Doncaster have allocated 3.08% of the estimated allocation of 3&4 year old free entitlement funding for this purpose. Funding for the Early Years central Services are approved by members of the schools forum each year. Attached to this email is the approved report that went to the school forum on 14 November 2024, this provides details of the services that this funding covers.

#### **Supplements:**

Local authorities **must** have a deprivation supplement for 3 & 4 year olds and are permitted to use other funding supplements. Local authorities should not distinguish between the universal 15 hours entitlement and the additional 15 hours for working parents; any supplement should apply equally to both entitlements.

Doncaster bases the mandatory deprivation supplement on the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) this uses the pupil's postcode to generate a score. This method can be applied equally to both entitlements, the universal 15 hours entitlement and the additional 15 hours for working parents. The IDACI database can be access via the following link <http://imd-by-postcode.opendatacommunities.org/imd/2019>. The data in the column titled 'IDACI Score' is used for this purpose and multiplied by 10.

Flexibility is the only other supplement that Doncaster uses. This is a discretionary supplement and not mandatory. This is to support providers in offering flexible provision for parents.

### **2 year old funding for children from families receiving additional support entitlement**

Doncaster transfers the full hourly rate of £8.20 for eligible 2 year olds from families receiving additional support to providers, there is no funding set aside for central services and no supplements attached to this allocation.

## **2 year old funding for children of eligible working parent's entitlement**

The rate of £8.20 paid to Doncaster for 2 year old of eligible working parent's is allocated as follows:

<b>Total funding rate to Doncaster</b>	<b>£8.20</b>	<b>%</b>
Providers Basic hourly rate on all 2 year olds of eligible working parent's	£7.95	97%
Doncaster Central services	£0.25	3%

### **Central Services:**

Local Authorities can allocate a maximum of 4% of all the free entitlement funding streams for central services. For 2025/26 Doncaster have allocated 3.08% of the estimated allocation of 2 year olds of eligible working parent's free entitlement funding for this purpose. Funding for the Early Years central Services are approved by members of the schools forum each year. Attached to this email is the approved report that went to the school forum on 14 November 2024, this provides details of the services that this funding covers.

## **9 months up to 2-year-old funding for children of eligible working parent's entitlement**

The rate of £11.17 paid to Doncaster for 3 & 4 year olds is allocated as follows:

<b>Total funding rate to Doncaster</b>	<b>£11.17</b>	<b>%</b>
Providers Basic hourly rate on all 9 months up to 2-year-old of eligible working parent's	£10.82	97%
Doncaster Central services	£0.35	3%

### **Central Services:**

Local Authorities can allocate a maximum of 4% of all the free entitlement funding streams for central services. For 2025/26 Doncaster have allocated 3.08% of the estimated allocation of 9 months up to 2-year-old funding for eligible working parent's free entitlement funding for this purpose. Funding for the Early Years central Services are approved by members of the schools forum each year. Attached to this email is the approved report that went to the school forum on 14 November 2024, this provides details of the services that this funding covers.



## **REPORT TO THE SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) Initial Budget 2025-26**

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#### **Purpose**

1. The report is provided to update School Forum on the Department for Education (DfE) 2025-26 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) settlement and to outline Doncaster's initial proposed DSG budget for 2025-26.

#### **Recommendations**

2. That Schools Forum
  - Notes the report;
  - Approves caretaker's rents for 2025-26.

#### **Dedicated Schools Grant**

3. All Local Authorities receive a ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from the Department for Education (DfE) for their schools provision. For 2025-26 the DfE funding settlement was received in December 2024.
4. The DSG budget is split into 4 blocks, as set out in Appendix A:
  - Schools Block (funding allocation based on October 2024 census);
  - Central Schools Services Block
  - High Needs Block (final allocation & deductions expected to be confirmed March 2025); and,
  - Early Years Block (final allocations expected to be confirmed June 2025).

#### **Schools Block Budget**

5. The Schools Block consists of:
  - the Individual Schools Budget (ISB);
  - Maintained Primary de-delegation; and,
  - Growth Fund.
6. The ISB is based on the DfE pro-forma, submitted in January 2025, as consulted upon with School Forum in January 2025. The total ISB shown in Appendix A includes Academies funding, which will be withheld and paid directly by the ESFA.

7. The Maintained Primary De-delegated Budgets are those budgets that must be delegated out to all schools, with maintained Primaries agreeing to de-delegate them from their funding formula budget share in November 2024.
8. The formula factors and resulting Minimum Funding Guarantee set out in appendix B are now final and based on October 2024 census data. These were submitted to DfE in January 2025 and will be provided to schools in February 2025 following DfE checking and validation exercise.
9. Doncaster Council is set to receive £962,590 in Growth funding for 2025-26, however in order to ensure that as much funding as possible is passed to schools we have set aside £500,000 for growing schools to balance the overall Schools Block.
10. Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) is set at 0% for 2025-26. A school falling below this MFG level will be allocated additional funding by the MFG Factor. Any school with gains above 0.5% will keep 50.31% of those gains.
11. In summary the final formula:
  - Uses all factors in the formula the same as the National Funding Formula as detailed above and we are able to set the Minimum Funding Guarantee at 0% and any school with gains above 0.5% will keep 50.31% of those gains.
  - £500k Growth Fund has been set aside and is expected to be sufficient to fund the 2025-26 allocations based on conversations that are taking place with schools.

### **Central School Services Block Budget**

12. The Central School Services Block funds those budgets that are retained and managed centrally by the LA, as agreed by School Forum in November 2024 and set out in the DfE operational guide. These budgets are listed in Appendix A.

### **High Needs Block Budget**

11. Provisional High Needs Block funding allocations and deductions for place funding are as included in the December 2024 funding settlement, however will not be confirmed until March 2025 from the DfE.
12. All High Needs budget lines have either been set initially at the same overall level as for 2024-25, or updated to reflect projected actual costs during 2024-25, with inflationary increases to be incorporated and final allocations not expected until March 2025. These budgets will be updated and reported back to Forum as part of monitoring reports provided, with any changes expected to be managed within the overall allocations.

### **Early Years Block Budget**

13. A provisional Early Years Block Funding allocation for 2025-26 totalling £43.3m was advised by the DfE in December 2024 but is subject to adjustment in July 2025, based on January 2025 census. The provisional budget allocations for 3 & 4 year old funding, additional 15 hours entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds, 2 year olds funding, 2 year old additional support, 2 year old working parent, under 2 year old entitlement, Early Years Pupil Premium and Disability Access Fund have all been set in line with the initial DfE allocations. These will be updated in line with January 2025 pupil numbers based on the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) and Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) rates 2025-26 (which are included at agenda item 2.2).
14. Central Early Years budgets for Retained Duties, Development Officers and Sufficiency, Capacity and Planning were approved by School Forum in November 2024.

### **Caretakers' Rent Income 2025-26**

15. St Leger Homes collects the income from the caretakers for the rent of their house. As a Caretaker's house is a service tenancy then a subsidised rent is payable, this was originally agreed to be 35% of the economic rent.
16. Each year there is usually an annual increase to council house rents – in previous years the same percentage increase has been applied to caretakers' house rents as other council house rents. St Leger Homes has advised that the proposed council house rent increase for 2025-26 is 2.7% (subject to Full Council Approval). Consideration must now be given to the appropriate action for caretakers' rents.
17. In February 2019 the Government published "Policy statement on rents for social housing" and this document set out the principles of rent setting for the next 5 years from 1 April 2020. A further announcement in Summer 2024 confirmed that CPI plus 1% would continue for 2025/26. A consultation, "Future Social Housing Rent Policy" was issued in October 2024 and is currently ongoing.
18. It is recommended that the Schools Forum approve the proposed increase of 2.7% (subject to Full Council Approval) on caretakers' rents for 2025-26.

### **Risks and Assumptions**

19. Whilst the Schools Block funding formula is only subject to formal ESFA approval and the Central Schools Services Block budget has been fully approved previously the High Needs Block budgets is continually being reviewed in light of demand pressures and changes resulting from the LA's Equitable and Inclusive Access to Education for All cabinet report.

20. The main risks are contained within the High Needs Block given the significant overspend position for 2024-25. These budgets will continue to be monitored and scrutinised and brought back to schools forum for reporting at each meeting.
21. The LA will then monitor and review all aspects of the budget closely throughout the year to ensure the accuracy of these assumptions and will provide quarterly updates at School Forum.

**Conclusion**

22. Forum members are asked to consider and provide comment upon the initial proposed DSG budget for 2025-26, which will then be revised prior to presenting a final budget position in June 2025.

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**Initial Budget 2025-26 Appendix A**

	Schools Block	Central School Services Block	High Needs Block (including Post 16)	Early Years Block	Notes
<b>Initial DSG Settlement 2025-26</b>	281,445,847	1,927,911	60,822,903	43,376,400	DfE Settlement as at December 2024
Deduction for School Rates	-1,708,117				
Individual Schools' Budgets - Academies Delegation					
High Needs Places deductions			-7,710,000		Initial deductions provided by DfE for Apr 25 - March 26
0.5% Transfer From Schools Block to the High Needs Block	-1,407,229		1,407,229		As approved via a Schools Forum vote in November 2024 for 25-26 financial year.
<b>Funding Available 2025-26</b>	<b>278,330,501</b>	<b>1,927,911</b>	<b>54,520,132</b>	<b>43,376,400</b>	
<b>Individual Schools' Budgets - Maintained Delegation (incl Academies)</b>	277,167,517				Based on Maintained Schools as at 31st December 2024
<b><u>Centrally Retained Schools Budgets</u></b>					
Servicing of Schools Forum		35,220			Budget held at 2024/25 level as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
School Admissions		314,470			Budget held at 2024/25 level as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
Behaviour & Attendance Management		57,130			Budget held at 2024/25 level as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
Recharges - Corporate Services/Management		90,530			Budget for 'Historic Commitment' held at 2024/25 level as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
Miscellaneous Provision		22,820			Budget for 'Historic Commitment' held at 2024/25 level as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
ICT revenue funding		99,080			Budget for 'Historic Commitment' held at 2024/25 level as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
National Copyright Licences		316,092			Amount estimated (due to be confirmed by the DfE)
ESG Retained Duties		992,569			Included in DSG from 2018/19, budget as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
Growth Fund	500,000				Growth Fund estimated for 2025/26
<b><u>Maintained Primary De-Delegated Budgets</u></b>					
Other Insurances	6,321				Per pupil rate held at 2024/25 level in APT, as approved at November 2024 School Forum vote.
Travellers Service	86,645				Per pupil rate held at 2024/25 level in APT, as approved at November 2024 School Forum vote.
Museums-Art Gallery (Education Service)	27,792				Per pupil rate held at 2024/25 level in APT, as approved at November 2024 School Forum vote.
Staff Absence - Compensation Maternity	218,465				Budget Increased for maternity level in APT, as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
Staff Absence - Compensation TU Facility Time	63,213				Budget amended for TU Facility time in APT, as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
Free School Meals Eligibility	20,280				Per pupil rate held at 2024/25 level in APT, as approved at November 2024 School Forum vote.
Support for Schools in Financial Difficulties	44,739				Per pupil rate held at 2024/25 level in APT, as approved at November 2024 School Forum vote.
Additional school improvement services (Maths/Lit Lead)	64,738				Per pupil rate as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
Education Functions	130,792				Per pupil rate as approved at November 2024 School Forum.
<b><u>High Needs Block Provision</u></b>					
Mainstream EHCP Banded Top Up funding			5,603,391		Assumed that due to the devolving of funding to schools the number of children will remain static with
SEN Children additional Funding			5,138,231		Assumed that due to the devolving of funding to schools the number of children will remain static with
Special Schools			13,248,480		Increases in line with inflation for future years and additional places included where agreed. Budget includes
Contributions to Centrally Retained & De-delegated Schools Budgets			90,000		
Primary Outreach			395,760		Assumes existing staffing establishment with pay inflation only.
Secondary Outreach			116,280		Assumes existing staffing establishment with pay inflation only.
Specialist AP Provision			1,256,381		AP budget at existing levels with additional numbers included through the AP framework.



	Schools Block	Central School Services Block	High Needs Block (including Post 16)	Early Years Block	Notes
Key Stage 4 Support for BESD pupils - North Bridge Enterprise College			877,300		Revised estimate for 2024-25 based on updated number of pupils at NBEC
PRUs Incl. Mulberry Unit			2,501,353		Revised estimate for 2025-26 based on updated number of pupils at PRU's
SEMH Provision			762,715		3 Primary and 1 Secondary SEMH.
SpED - HI / VI / ASD Teams			1,761,540		Assumes existing staffing establishment with pay inflation only.
SEN Pre School Inclusion, Portage, Seedlings & Early Intervention Allowance			1,342,480		Assumes existing staffing establishment with pay inflation only.
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - LA/SEN			12,263,527		SEN care Ladder MTFS budget 25/26 + CPI inflation.
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - LA/CWD			723,060		Care Ladder MTFS budget 25/26 + CPI inflation
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - Trust			1,977,600		Care Ladder MTFS budget 25/26 + CPI inflation (Figures assumes a reduction in placements to 29 by March 27).
Pupil Educated At Home			102,000		Assumes existing staffing establishment with pay inflation only.
Learning & Behaviour Support Service			1,655,460		Assumes existing staffing establishment with pay inflation only.
SEN Statemented Pupils - Recoupment			886,830		Figures assume zero growth, increase to figures reflect price inflation estimates only.
INDEPENDENT BEHAVIOUR PROVISION (TOPS Team)			188,900		Assumes existing staffing establishment with pay inflation only.
Post 16 - Element 3 Top Up payments to SPI's			7,952,935		Assumed that due to the devolving of funding to schools the number of children will remain static with inflation for future years.
Post 16 - Element 3 Top Up payments to FE College			350,628		
Children's Specialist Equipment			173,040		Figures assume zero growth, increase to figures reflect price inflation estimates only.
Big Picture Learning			2,598,196		Expected increase in numbers at Big Picture and VEGA college .
<b>Early Years Block Provision</b>					
Early Years 3 Year Olds Universal				13,554,207	Figures based on funding settlement - budget to be revised and based on January 25 pupil numbers and school forum report for the 2025-26 rates to be paid.
Early Years - additional 3 & 4 year olds funding (eligible working parents)				5,743,489	Figures based on funding settlement - budget to be revised and based on January 25 pupil numbers and school forum report for the 2025-26 rates to be paid.
2-year-olds of families receiving additional support				3,800,110	Figures based on funding settlement - budget to be revised and based on January 25 pupil numbers and school forum report for the 2025-26 rates to be paid.
Early Years - 2 year old working parent element				7,339,862	Figures based on funding settlement - budget to be revised and based on January 25 pupil numbers and school forum report for the 2025-26 rates to be paid.
Under 2 Year Olds				10,890,632	Figures based on funding settlement - budget to be revised and based on January 25 pupil numbers and school forum report for the 2025-26 rates to be paid.
Early Years Service - Retained Duties				111,310	As approved at November 2023 School Forum for 25/26 financial year.
Early Years Service - Sufficiency, Capacity & Planning				108,530	As approved at November 2023 School Forum for 25/26 financial year.
Early Years Service - Development Officers				972,100	As approved at November 2023 School Forum for 25/26 financial year.
Early Years Pupil Premium				553,186	Figure based on December 2024 funding settlement.
Early Years Disability Access Fund				302,974	Figure based on December 2024 funding settlement.
Early Years Contingency				0	
	<b>278,330,501</b>	<b>1,927,911</b>	<b>61,966,086</b>	<b>43,376,400</b>	

Balance required to balance the overall 2025/26 budget. 0 0 7,445,954 0



## **REPORT TO THE SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **Future meetings of the Schools Forum 2025/26**

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#### **Purpose**

1. To outline proposed dates for future meetings of the Schools Forum.

#### **Recommendation**

2. That the Schools Forum considers the 2025/26 future meeting dates and provides comments as appropriate.

#### **Background**

3. The regulations require that the Forum should meet at least four times per annum and that these meetings should be held on a need rather than regular basis. The local authority will set the dates based around statutory duties and potential areas of benefit. In previous years the Schools Forum in Doncaster has generally met four or five times a year.
4. This report gives early confirmation to members of the meeting dates for the upcoming year.
5. The proposed dates are as follows: -

#### **Meetings - 2025/26 Financial Year**

**Summer Term – Thursday 19 June 2025**

**Autumn Term 1 – Thursday 18 September 2025**

**Autumn Term 2 – Thursday 13 November 2025**

**Spring Term – Thursday 5 February 2026**

6. All meetings will be held at a venue to be confirmed and will commence at 08:30am. Further meetings can be convened if required.
7. The dates have been checked so they do not interfere with any other Headteacher events and agreed that no other large meetings would then be booked for the same dates.

8. The agenda items for each meeting will be set during the financial year to include recent developments and other items that come to light that will be of interest to the Forum. Updates such as DSG revenue monitoring and DSG Budget will be included as standard. Members may suggest additional agenda items, but it is the local authority's role to determine whether they are appropriate.
9. An email confirming the meeting arrangements will be distributed to the entire Schools Forum establishment (members, observers and substitutes) following this meeting.

### **Conclusion**

10. In order to assist members in scheduling their diary it is felt that scheduling dates for the forthcoming year would be beneficial

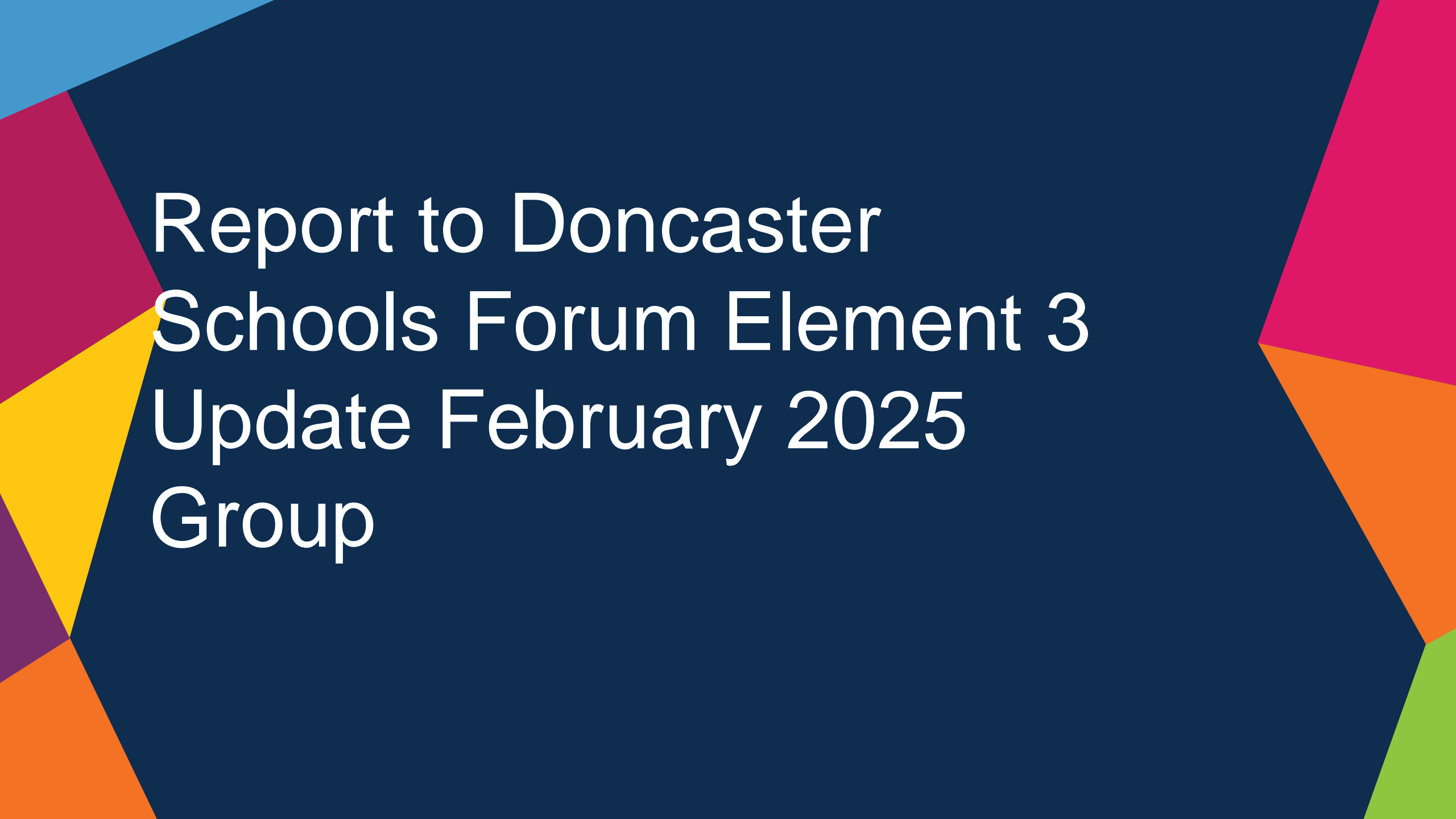
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# Report to Doncaster Schools Forum Element 3 Update February 2025 Group



# 4.Element 3 Evaluation

MO

# Element 3 Evaluation Group

- ▶ Element 3 devolution began in Jan 25.
- ▶ Increased amount of HNB has been devolved to schools to support early intervention
- ▶ Panels have taken place in each of all 17 pyramids in Doncaster
- ▶ Schools Forum have delegated the role of evaluating processes to this group.
- ▶ Forum require a report in June 25
- ▶ This group may require to widen the group to conduct this evaluation. I will set out in following slides a basic suggestion for how we will do this

# Element 3 Evaluation 1. Surveys Feb 25

- ▶ Collect data from SENCOS regarding school (and wider professionals) views on the process.
- ▶ Interviews with Chairs to understand reflections on process.
- ▶ Interviews with SENCOS- if they volunteer.
- ▶ Views of parent/ carers?
- ▶ We aim to send out surveys to schools around February half term.
- ▶ This will look at key themes:
  - ▶ Workload
  - ▶ Running of the day- how to organise cases- by band? By school? Low incidence cases first etc?
  - ▶ Fairness and Equity
  - ▶ Partnership working
  - ▶ Consistency of decision making
  - ▶ 'Even Better Ifs'
  - ▶ Online or in the room options
  - ▶ How do we manage continuations in future.

# Element 3 Evaluation- 2. Understanding Impact May 25

Small task and finish group to meet in March and May to evaluate following impacts:

- ▶ Context data- Shift in % of pupil population supported by HNB.
- ▶ Distribution of high needs funding to more deprived population.
- ▶ Impact on EHCNA and EHCP pathway and associated professional caseloads (EP and SEND Team)
- ▶ Impact on high level referrals to JRP, SQUAP
- ▶ Impact upon overall spending growth trajectory for high needs
- ▶ Impact upon specific lines of high needs budgets
- ▶ Engagement data. Across schools. Transition impacts and themes.

What will have happened if we didn't have the process? What will impacts have been?



# Element 3 Evaluation 3. Efficiency and Continuity- April 2025

Time Cost Benefit analysis/ sustainability

- ▶ How long has it taken to administrate this process for LA and schools? Cost.
- ▶ Relative cost of process overall vs EHCP statutory process.
- ▶ Options around how to best administer this system

Analysis of decision making pathways:

- ▶ What have we learned from the E3 process?
- ▶ How smooth is the continuum of multi-agency working around this process?
- ▶ How smooth is the continuum of decision making?
- ▶ Future model of administering panels

# Final Evaluation

- ▶ Presentations on all elements covered so far Early June at HNG workshop
- ▶ Draft and agree final report- Late June
- ▶ Forum presentation June 25
- ▶ Present to Schools in leadership events and DASH etc September 25.

# Element 3 Evaluation

- ▶ Who will be happy to support each part of the process?
- ▶ Do we need to add anyone else to help us?
- ▶ Who will author final report?
- ▶ Reflect on progress towards three year plan.
- ▶ June- July draft then agree here
- ▶ Publish to forum in June.



## **REPORT TO THE SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Revenue Monitoring Quarter 3 2024-25**

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#### **Purpose**

1. This report details the forecast outturn for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets for the year 2024-25, as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 (with known updates included).

#### **Recommendation**

2. That Schools Forum
  - Notes the report;

#### **Background**

3. All Local Authorities receive a ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from the Department for Education (DfE) for their schools provision. For 2024-25, the DfE funding settlement received in December 2023 was based on October 2023 census.
4. The DSG is split into 4 blocks, as presented in Appendix A:
  - Schools Block
  - Central Schools Services Block
  - High Needs Block
  - Early Years Block

#### **Issues for consideration**

5. The attached report at Appendix A shows the budget for 2024-25, projected year-end outturn and projected year-end variance for 2024-25 based on information as at the end of Quarter 3, updated to reflect latest information.
6. The report shows a forecast in-year overspend of £13.9m for 2024-25. Reasons for variances against budgeted spend lines for 2024-25 are detailed in Appendix A with the main reasons outlined in this report.
7. The attached report at Appendix B shows the Medium-Term Financial Plan (2024-25 - 2027/28) for the High Needs Block.

#### **Schools Block**

8. The Schools Block budget overall is showing a projected (£0.2m) underspend for the year based on actual Growth Fund payments for 2024-25 which are included at Appendix C with the final payments now confirmed following confirmation of the

October 2024 census. This has resulted in an underspend of (£0.2m) for the Growth Fund following these updated pupil number.

### **Central Schools Services Block**

9. The Central Schools Services Block budget overall is showing a projected (£0.01m) underspend position for the year due to underspends within the Schools Forum budget with funding for these functions as agreed by School Forum in November 2023.

### **High Needs Block**

10. The High Needs Block budget overall is showing a projected £14.1m overspend for the year.
11. Budgets for 2024-25 have increased to estimated expenditure figures (based on 2023-24 outturn levels and known changes) with the balance of these increases showing a £8.1m overspend against the contingency budget.
12. Other reasons for the overspend is on the pupils educated out of authority budgets with additional cost pressures on SEN out of authority residential placements being identified, which require additional funding of £0.2m for 2024-25.
13. Further reasons for the overspend include projected overspends of £0.7m against the Specialist Post 16 institutions budget, EHCP Top ups to schools and SEN Children additional funding £2.8m, Special School additional costs for specific children and additional places £1.8m and North Bridge Enterprise College budgeted overspends of £0.8m.

### **Early Years Block**

14. The Early Years Block budget overall is predicting a break even position for the year.
15. Early Years funding for 2024-25 is being provided by the DfE based on each termly census data. Further updates will be known following the Quarter 3 monitoring process and the January census data.

### **High Needs Block Medium Term Financial Plan (2024-25 - 2027/28)**

16. Appendix B sets out details of the High Needs block budget across the current and following 3 financial years.
17. Grant income and expenditure assumptions are as listed and the plan incorporates the known changes in funding through the DfE's announcement in December 24 of the new funding levels published for 2025-26. High Needs grant income in 2025-26 has been confirmed to increase by £4.5m compared to 2024-25 levels with assumptions of a 3% increase included for 2026-27 and 2027-28 as per specific advice from the DfE.

18. An assumption has been made that the 0.5% contribution from the Schools Block budget to the High Needs budget as agreed by Schools Forum at the November 2024 meeting will continue into 2026-27 and 2027-28.
19. Expenditure budgets have been reviewed based on current spending and expected outturn positions and other known changes resulting from the LA's Equitable and Inclusive Access to Education for All cabinet report. Savings figures in later years are anticipated from the data modelling produced by Newton's & CIPFA as part of the Council's participation within the Delivering Better Value in SEND Programme.
20. Allowing for the above, the current High Needs Medium Term Financial Plan is forecast to be overspent by £7.4m during 2025-26, as shown within appendix B with total DSG overspends of £46.6m expected at the end of 2025-26 and total overspends of £52.2m by 2027-28.
21. Doncaster is currently one of 55 councils working with DFE to deliver a high needs sustainability strategy called the Delivering Better Value Programme. The objectives of this work are closely aligned to the new local area SEND Strategy. It is anticipated that our long term strategy will begin to reduce this pressure, whilst also ensuring quicker access to funding and expertise to support young people in mainstream schools. Further Schools Forum report will be presented on this area.

### **Consultation**

22. Individual budget holders have considered the current estimated outturn position. The revenue monitoring position for Children's Services has been reported to the Director of Learning and Opportunities, Children & Young People Services and management team through the monthly reporting process.

### **Conclusion**

23. The adjusted quarter 3 position (end of December 2024) shows a forecast in-year DSG overspend of £13.9m. This will continue to be monitored throughout the remainder of the year with the final position brought to the next Schools Forum meeting with resources redirected as required to ensure that Doncaster children benefit from funding available.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**Revenue Monitoring 2024/25 Month 9**

**APPENDIX A**

Service	DSG Budget for Year	Month 9 Projection	Projected DSG Variance	Notes	Month 6 Actual Budget	Month 6 Actual	Month 6 Variance	Difference
	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>HIGH NEEDS BLOCK DSG</b>								
High Needs Contingency/Unallocated	(8,118)	0	8,118	Original budget overcommitted based on original estimates	(8,023)	0	8,023	95
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - LA SEN	13,062	13,270	208	Q3 - Figures based on current numbers/packages agreed however growth figures (as included in Cabinet report) require review with service to determine if still realistic.	13,062	12,979	(83)	291
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - LA CWD	707	702	(5)	Figures as per Month 6 Social Care Ladder	706	731	25	(30)
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - Social Care	2,644	1,920	(724)	Reducing split of packages relating to Education reducing DSG spend proportion of costs (figures as per Month 6 Social Care Ladder)	2,644	1,911	(733)	9
Specialist Post 16 Institutions	6,567	7,255	688	£688k overspend overall - 3% price inflation included for 24/25. Service to confirm if growth figures for the remaining months of the year are reasonable.	6,567	7,241	674	14
Post 16 FE Colleges	319	341	22		319	325	6	16
Mainstream EHCP Banded Top Up funding	6,558	7,381	823	Figure based on summer and autumn term data from SEN Team. Spring term (Jan-March) then expected to be at budget as localities to receive 3/12th budget (maximum).	6,558	7,421	863	(40)
SEN Children additional Funding	3,479	5,424	1,945	Budget for SEN AP, Tuition and additional payments for mainstream children above element 3 allocations. Predicted expenditure based on decisions to date including growth at the 2023-24 level with an estimate included for cases extended to the end of the academic year.	3,479	3,726	247	1,698
Special Schools - ISB	10,625	12,416	1,791	Overall overspend of £1.8m due to additional places agreed at Bader, North Ridge and Pennine View (unbudgeted for) This alongside additional payments being made for specific children within special schools is causing the overspend. Future growth numbers subject to agreement by the Service.	10,625	12,068	1,443	348
Other LA recoupment	794	861	67		794	858	64	3
PRUs Incl. Mulberry Unit	2,995	3,215	220	Actuals based on revised pupil numbers of 35 from January 25 following consultation exercise compared to the budget set at 32 places from September 24. Figure also includes additional payments being made for specific children within PRU agreed through the SENQA panel.	2,995	3,215	220	0
SEMH Provision	998	1,084	86	Cost increases from those originally expected to be commissioned (£168k on top of original £175k per hub, approved until August 25, projection includes full year) plus additional payments agreed through SENDQA panel for specific children. (Consideration required if any knock on impact on potential new capital plans for additional SEMH hubs).	998	1,070	72	14
North Bridge Enterprise College	852	1,662	810	Budget based on 24 places from Sept 24 however 48 places now occupied. Confirmation required from Service on future numbers at this provision.	851	1,723	872	(62)
Big Picture Learning	2,212	2,212	0		2,212	2,212	0	0
Specialist AP provision	885	680	(205)		885	680	(205)	0

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**Revenue Monitoring 2024/25 Month 9**

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Service	DSG Budget for Year	Month 9 Projection	Projected DSG Variance	Notes	Month 6 Actual Budget	Month 6 Actual	Month 6 Variance	Difference
	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Pre-School Inclusion - Portage/SEN	1,241	1,324	83		1,220	1,257	37	46
Children's Specialist Equipment	168	168	0		168	168	0	0
ASD Schools Support	462	445	(17)		440	444	4	(21)
HI Schools Support	825	747	(78)		825	732	(93)	15
VI Schools Support	552	535	(17)		525	535	10	(27)
Primary Outreach	375	388	13		375	386	11	2
Secondary Outreach	114	114	0		114	114	0	0
Learning & Behaviour Support Service	1,370	1,623	253	Overspend expected due to payments to schools for work connected with the reduction in permanent exclusions offset by payments expected for the Day 6 provision.	1,355	1,597	242	11
Pupils Educated At Home	109	100	(9)		100	101	1	(10)
Independent Behaviour Provision (Tops Team)	185	185	0		186	178	(8)	8
Contributions to Centrally Retained & De-delegated Budgets	90	90	0		90	90	0	0
<b>HIGH NEEDS BLOCK Sub-total</b>	<b>50,070</b>	<b>64,142</b>	<b>14,072</b>		<b>50,070</b>	<b>61,762</b>	<b>11,692</b>	<b>2,380</b>
<b>SCHOOLS BLOCK DSG</b>								
Individual School Budgets	30,942	30,942	0		30,942	30,942	0	0
Staff Absence Compensation - Maternity	207	214	7		207	224	17	(10)
Staff Absence Compensation - TU Facility	56	56	0		56	56	0	0
Museums-Art Gallery(Education Service)	28	28	0		28	28	0	0
EMTAS & GRT Virtual School	86	86	0		86	86	0	0
Other Insurances	6	6	0		6	6	0	0
Free School Meals Eligibility	20	20	0		20	20	0	0
Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty (Causing Concern)	44	44	0		44	44	0	0
Growth Fund	520	290	(230)	Actual figures based on the October 24 census, which were lower than originally budgeted for. Actual pupils admitted into the new classes were accurate however numbers leaving schools from other year group account for this difference to budget.	520	470	(50)	(180)
Additional school improvement services (incl. Maths/Literacy Lead)	64	64	0		64	64	0	0
Education functions for maintained schools (former ESG general duties)	118	118	0		118	118	0	0
<b>SCHOOLS BLOCK Sub-total</b>	<b>32,091</b>	<b>31,868</b>	<b>(223)</b>		<b>32,091</b>	<b>32,058</b>	<b>(33)</b>	<b>(190)</b>
<b>CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK DSG</b>								
Servicing of Schools Forum	35	20	(15)		35	20	(15)	0
School Admissions	314	314	0		314	314	0	0
Miscellaneous Provision (Safeguarding)	23	23	0		23	23	0	0
Recharges Corporate Services/Management	91	91	0		91	91	0	0
ICT revenue funding	99	99	0		99	99	0	0
National Copyright Licences	286	315	29		286	286	0	29
Education functions for all schools & academies (former ESG retained duties)	864	864	0		864	864	0	0
Learning & Behaviour Support Service	57	57	0		57	57	0	0
<b>CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK Sub-total</b>	<b>1,769</b>	<b>1,783</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>1,769</b>	<b>1,754</b>	<b>(15)</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>EARLY YEARS BLOCK DSG</b>								
Nursery Education Fund - 2 year olds	9,692	9,692	0		9,692	9,692	0	0



**APPENDIX A**  
**Revenue Monitoring 2024/25 Month 9**

**APPENDIX A**

Service	DSG Budget for Year	Month 9 Projection	Projected DSG Variance	Notes	Month 6 Actual Budget	Month 6 Actual	Month 6 Variance	Difference
	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Nursery Education Fund - 3 & 4 year olds	19,251	19,251	0		19,251	19,251	0	0
Under 2 Year Olds	3,694	3,694	0		3,694	3,694	0	0
Early Years Retained Duties	838	838	0		838	838	0	0
Early Years Pupil Premium	519	523	4		519	523	4	0
Early Years Contingency	0	(4)	(4)		0	(4)	(4)	0
High Needs Block transfer to EY Block - Early Help funding	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
Disability Access Fund	265	265	0		265	265	0	0
<b>EARLY YEARS BLOCK Sub-total</b>	<b>34,259</b>	<b>34,259</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>34,259</b>	<b>34,259</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>EARLY YEARS BLOCK DSG</b>								
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>118,189</b>	<b>132,052</b>	<b>13,863</b>	In-year 2024/25 overspend of £13.86m	<b>118,189</b>	<b>129,833</b>	<b>11,644</b>	<b>2,219</b>

**APPENDIX B**

4.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	Price inflation used in 24/25 council budget/MTFS report (as at Nov 23) with 3% estimate future years.
5.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	Pay inflation used in 24/25 council budget/MTFS report (as at Nov 23).
3.4%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	DSG increase as per DfE - applies to Special/PRU/EHCP.

**Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block Medium Term Financial Plan (2023/24 - 2026/27)**

<u>High Needs Block Funding</u>	2021-22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Initial DSG Settlement	42,747,785	48,504,344	54,023,648	56,270,393	60,822,903	62,647,590	64,527,018
less High Needs Places deductions (Academies)	-6,670,669	-6,881,335	-7,124,168	-7,499,168	-7,710,000	-7,710,000	-7,710,000
Agreed 0.5% contribution from the Schools Block Budget	0	0	1,217,806	1,298,568	1,407,229	1,449,446	1,492,929
less HN funding transfer to EY block (Early Help Strategy)	-450,000	-450,000					
	<b>35,627,116</b>	<b>41,173,009</b>	<b>48,117,286</b>	<b>50,069,793</b>	<b>54,520,132</b>	<b>56,387,036</b>	<b>58,309,947</b>
<u>High Needs Block Expenditure Projections</u>							
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - LA SEN	7,147,810	9,624,414	12,093,990	13,270,000	12,263,527	11,738,779	11,785,021
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - LA CWD	1,776,110	1,632,233	1,143,073	702,000	723,060	744,752	767,094
Pupils Educated Out Of Area - Social Care	4,210,670	5,038,802	2,342,680	1,920,000	1,977,600	2,036,928	2,098,036
Specialist Post 16 Institutions	3,197,460	5,163,864	5,900,865	7,255,000	7,952,935	6,746,687	6,723,161
Post 16 FE Colleges	453,680	290,108	284,958	341,000	350,628	361,147	371,981
Mainstream EHCP Banded Top Up funding	5,985,557	5,356,168	6,342,486	7,381,000	5,603,391	5,172,399	5,327,571

<b>High Needs Block Funding</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>
SEN Children additional Funding	799,619	1,826,270	3,365,010	5,424,000	5,138,231	4,280,547	4,408,963
Special Schools - ISB	7,458,037	8,623,897	9,850,545	12,416,000	13,248,480	13,645,934	14,055,312
Other LA recoupment	561,130	568,586	767,614	861,000	886,830	913,435	940,838
PRUs Incl. Mulberry Unit	3,023,770	3,236,451	3,280,263	3,215,000	2,501,353	2,576,394	2,653,685
SEMH Provision	0	0	265,050	1,084,000	762,715	785,596	809,164
North Bridge Enterprise College	1,171,600	1,186,812	1,281,746	1,662,000	877,300	221,846	0
Big Picture Learning	418,470	749,410	1,321,419	2,212,000	2,598,196	3,058,640	3,150,399
Specialist AP provision	721,310	623,597	654,062	680,000	1,256,381	1,423,692	1,466,403
Pre-School Inclusion - Portage/SEN	915,500	994,319	1,180,767	1,324,000	1,342,480	1,361,330	1,388,556
Children's Specialist Equipment	100,000	161,176	161,180	168,000	173,040	178,231	183,578
ASD Schools Support	681,680	685,800	419,383	445,000	453,900	462,978	472,238
HI Schools Support	773,330	753,490	785,901	747,000	761,940	777,179	792,722
VI Schools Support	323,180	421,445	499,578	535,000	545,700	556,614	567,746
Behaviour Outreach Team - Primary	308,960	351,397	357,471	388,000	395,760	403,675	411,749
Behaviour Outreach Team - Secondary	107,000	109,000	109,000	114,000	116,280	118,606	120,978
Learning & Behaviour Support Service	891,580	885,760	1,290,145	1,623,000	1,655,460	1,688,569	1,722,341
Pupil Educated At Home	83,180	88,266	94,927	100,000	102,000	104,040	106,121
Independent Behaviour Provision (Tops Team)	150,080	154,762	176,989	185,000	188,700	192,474	196,323
Contributions to Centrally Retained & De-delegated Schools Budgets	73,730	87,094	90,098	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>41,333,443</b>	<b>48,613,120</b>	<b>54,059,201</b>	<b>64,142,000</b>	<b>61,965,886</b>	<b>59,640,471</b>	<b>60,609,982</b>
<b>High Needs Budget Variance (in Year)</b>	<b>5,706,327</b>	<b>7,440,111</b>	<b>5,941,915</b>	<b>14,072,207</b>	<b>7,445,754</b>	<b>3,253,435</b>	<b>2,300,035</b>
DSG Schools Block, Early Years Block Variance	-1,130,173	-1,253,982	-432,727	-209,000			

<b>Overall DSG Balance</b>	<b>13,626,072</b>	<b>19,812,201</b>	<b>25,321,390</b>	<b>39,184,597</b>	<b>46,630,351</b>	<b>49,883,786</b>	<b>52,183,820</b>
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Summary table

Description	2022/23 £000's	2023/24 £000's	2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's
DSG High Needs Block grant (after deductions)	41,173	48,117	50,070	54,520	56,387	58,310
High Needs Block expenditure	48,613	54,059	64,142	61,966	59,640	60,610
In year High Needs Block variance (less other DSG underspends)	6,186	5,509	13,863	7,446	3,253	2,300
<b>Overall DSG Balance</b>	<b>19,812</b>	<b>25,321</b>	<b>39,185</b>	<b>46,630</b>	<b>49,884</b>	<b>52,184</b>

2024/25 Q2 projection

Description	2022/23 £000's	2023/24 £000's	2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's
DSG High Needs Block grant (after deductions)	41,173	48,117	50,070	51,797	53,576	55,408
High Needs Block expenditure	48,613	54,059	62,512	60,191	60,010	60,737
In year High Needs Block variance (less other DSG underspends)	6,186	5,509	12,394	8,394	6,434	5,329
<b>Overall DSG Balance</b>	<b>19,812</b>	<b>25,321</b>	<b>37,716</b>	<b>46,109</b>	<b>52,544</b>	<b>57,873</b>

<b>Change from Q2 to Q3</b>			<b>1,469</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>-2,660</b>	<b>-5,689</b>
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Appendix C: Growth Fund Payments																		
Growth Fund Payments for Financial Year 2024/25																		
School	Criteria met	Increase in PAN per year group	Year Groups increase applies to	£ AWPU per pupil increase	Original PAN	Increased PAN - Agreed by LA, from Sept 2024	Final October Census 2024 pupil numbers Reception	actual pupil number increase on original PAN	Total pupils Oct 23 (excl. nursery)	Total pupils Oct 24 (excl. nursery)	Funded increase in pupil number (Capped at overall increase from Oct 23 to Oct 24 census)	Minimum Funding (Average Taught Cost for 7 months) for Criteria 1 ONLY	Maintained / Academy	Growth Fund payment for period Sept 24 - March 25 (7 months)	Growth Fund payment for period April 25 - August 26 (5 months) ACADEMIES ONLY	Growth Fund payment for period April 24 - August 25 (5 months) CRITERIA 1	NOTES	End Date
Don Valley	1	16	7	£5,022	224	240	235	11	1114	1107	-7	£24,410	Academy	£24,409.58	£17,435.42	£0	New class for year 7 pupils to increase pupil numbers by 30	AY 25-26
Ridgewood	1	25	7	£5,022	240	265	253	13	1203	1199	-4	£24,410	Academy	£24,409.58	£17,435.42	£0	New class for year 7 pupils to increase pupil numbers by 30	AY 25-26
Hayfield	1	30	7	£5,022	210	240	237	30	1071	1085	14	£24,410	Academy	£41,013.00	£29,295.00	£0	New class for year 7 pupils to increase pupil numbers by 30	AY 25-26
														£89,832.17	£64,165.83	£0	Total Payments 24/25 Growth Fund	
																£153,998		
AWPU Rates 2024-25 APT																		
Primary (Years R-6)	£3,562.00													Financial Year breakdown		24-25	25-26	
Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	£5,022.00													Apr - Aug 24	£199,375.00			Growth Fund 23-24 (Apr - Aug 24 payments)
Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)	£5,661.00													Sept - Mar 25	£89,832.17			Growth fund 24-25 (Sept 24 - March 25 payments)
														Apr - Aug 25		£64,165.83		Growth Fund 24-25 (Apr - Aug 25 payments)
														CN029	£289,207.17	£64,165.83		