

LEICESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

The Leicestershire Schools Forum will be held on **Wednesday 12 February 2025 at 2pm via Microsoft Teams**. The primary contact for the forum arrangements is as follows:

Antoine Willie (Clerk)

- **Email.** LeicestershireSchoolsForum@leics.gov.uk
- **Tel.** 0116 305 1158

Please see the agenda for the meeting below.

AGENDA

Item	No. of Papers
1. Apologies for Absences/Substitutions	
2. Minutes of Meeting held on 04/11/2024 (Previously Circulated) and Matters Arising.	1
3. Schools Forum in Operation.	2
4. De-Delegation – School Improvement.	1
5. 2025-26 Schools Budget.	1
6. Appendix	3
7. Any Other Business.	
8. Date of Next Meeting.	

The date for the next Leicestershire Schools' Forum is **Tuesday 10th June 2025** from **2pm – 4pm**.

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**Minutes of the Leicestershire Schools' Forum
via Microsoft Teams on Monday 4th November 2024 at 2pm.**

Chair / Vice-Chair

Martin Towers	Academy Secondary Governor
Suzanne Uprichard	PRU Representative & Maintained Primary Governor

Attended

Jane Moore	Director of Children & Family Services
Deborah Taylor	Lead Member for Children & Family Services
Jenny Lawrence	Finance Business Partner for Schools & High Needs
Michelle White	Head of Service – SEND & Children with Disabilities
Rebecca Wakeley	Education Quality & Inclusion Service
Ed Petrie	Academy Primary Headteacher
Rosie Browne	Academy Primary Headteacher
Lauren Charlton	Academy Primary Trustee
Val Moore	Academy Primary Governor
Dan Cleary	Academy Secondary Headteacher
Kath Kelly	Academy Secondary Headteacher
Peter Leatherland	Academy Secondary Headteacher
Kelly Dryden	Academy Special Headteacher
Alison Ruff	Maintained Primary Headteacher
Phil Lewin	Maintained Primary Headteacher
Adina Murataj	Maintained Primary Governor
Rosalind Hopkins	Maintained Special School

Substitute

David Warwick	GMB Union
Jon Mellor	Academy Secondary Headteacher

Observing

Nerinder Samari	LCC Business Partner - Finance
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Apologies

Alison Bradley	Assistant Director for Education, SEND & Commissioning
Dr Jude Mellor	Academy Secondary Headteacher
Jo Beaumont	Maintained Primary Headteacher
Felicity Clark	Academy Primary Headteacher
Samantha Cooke	DNCC Representative
Carolyn Shoyer	Diocese of Leicester Director
Beverley Coltman	PVI Early Years Provider
Mark Mitchley	Academy Secondary Headteacher
Simon Grindrod	Academy Secondary Governor
Rebecca Jones	Maintained Primary Governor
Robert Martin	Maintained Nursery Governor

Jason Brooks
Lisa Craddock

Maintained Special Headteacher
Post-16 Provider

1. **Apologies for Absence/Substitutions.**

Apologies received from Alison Bradley, Beverley Coltman, Jo Beaumont, Felicity Clark, and Carolyn Shoyer. Dr Jude Mellor and Samantha Cooke also sent their apologies; they were substituted by Jon Mellor and David Warwick respectively.

Mark Mitchley, Simon Grindrod, Rebecca Jones, Robert Martin, Jason Brooks, and Lisa Craddock did not attend.

2. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 17/09/2024 (previously circulated) and Matters Arising.**

Martin Towers discussed the minutes of the last Leicestershire Schools' Forum with forum members, presenting the opportunity to raise any issues or request amendments to the record. There were no amendments to previous minutes.

Jenny Lawrence reviewed the actions of the previous forum:

1. There have been no further headteacher meetings to consider the establishment of a SEN Investment Fund. Jenny Lawrence has confirmed that Peter Leatherland and Rosalind Hopkins were invited to the initial meeting with Headteachers on 1 July 2024.
2. Jenny Lawrence confirmed that the LA's administrative costs are met within the 30% retained early years funding.
3. Jenny Lawrence shared a link in September's minutes to bring to the attention of Forum to how the Department for Education (DfE) publishes financial data for individual schools.
4. The ISOS Publication report was included in September's minutes.
5. Martin Towers gathered input from Schools' Forum members and provided a response to the Local Authority (LA) on the Schools Block Transfer consultation (see **Appendix A**).

Peter Leatherland raised that forum had requested data on Special Provision capacity Leicestershire, detailing whether all units were full. This data has not been provided to the forum. **Jane Moore agreed to provide an overview of Special Provision capacity**, although noted that filling special provisions to capacity will not alleviate the financial difficulties experienced by the LA and schools. Jane assured the forum that all information relevant to the 0.5% transfer proposal has been provided to the forum for review.

3. **Resetting the SEND Finance System.**

The Resetting the SEN Finance System paper reports on the outcome of the school consultation on the establishment of a SEND Investment Fund and a transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. The LA received 70 responses, although 6 were duplicates, which represented 23.3% of Leicestershire

maintained and academy schools. In addition, the LA also received several direct emails which were also reviewed. Concerns were raised regarding the duplicate responses being removed from the consultation, Jane Moore confirmed that, although the report acknowledged the duplications, reported percentages are representative of all responses received for the consultation.

The report detailed that 83% of responses strongly disagreed with the LA proposal to create a SEND investment fund; only 15% either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal. The key points from the consultation were the LA's ability to administer a SEND Investment Fund effectively, 63% of responses strongly disagree with the proposal that Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) should be the initial focus of a SEND investment fund, with only 21% either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the proposal; the primary reason for disagreement with the establishment of the SEND Investment Fund was disagreement with the proposed funding transfer but a number of responses acknowledged that SEMH was a pressing need. 86% of responses strongly disagreed with the proposal for an annual funding transfer of 0.5%, with only 9% strongly agreeing or agreeing. Comments referred to the uneven impact on schools with a view that schools with higher SEN needs contributing more to the transfer.

The report analyses key themes identified within the consultation responses and provides the LA's response. To address themes of school underfunding, the report reiterates that the purpose of the SEND Investment Fund would be to give funding back to the schools, rather than directing funding to the LA. The formula for the High Needs block does not consider the number of EHCPs; funding is determined by various demographic factors, general population, and levels of need and low deprivation. Several LA responses address a perception of the LA's mismanagement of the High Needs block and a lack of faith in the LA to deliver support for children and young people with SEND. The LA has limited control on how the High Needs block is spent, £120m is spent on placements, High Needs DSG is £109m. The report sets out a reset of the SEND Finance System in line with that delivered by TSIL and a joint responsibility for supporting children and young people with SEN between LAs and schools.

The report addressed concerns of political bias within the LA's proposal. The funding framework is set nationally by the DfE, including funding protections for schools, and it is the DfE that makes decisions on the factors within the National Funding Formula including the targeting of additional school funding. The LA has exceptionally limited ability to make changes to the nationally set funding frameworks for both Schools and High Needs. To address concerns that TSIL has not delivered improvement to the SEND system, the report noted that TSIL delivered more robust and consistent decision making through the introduction of more robust triage and decision-making processes. The proportion of EHCNAs with Decisions to Assess and Decisions to Issue has reduced over time and is now in line with operational targets. There is a significant year on year reduction in tribunal requests overall (as of 7th October, requests were down 14% year on year), and specifically on tribunals around refusal to assess or refusal to issue.

The consultation responses cited many concerns regarding school funding cuts, but the report detailed that the transfer would occur through the reduction in annual funding gains. The proposals do not reduce the funding currently available to schools

through the NFF but would reduce any annual gain in funding at a school level between 2024-25 and 2025-26.

SEMH is the primary focus of the proposed SEND Investment Fund given its prevalence within the Leicestershire EHCP population but also within inclusion support services such as Oakfield and the SEIPs, Children with Medical Needs and Children Missing Education. The fund will ensure that funding remains within the mainstream sector who will benefit from its activity and will ensure the co-production of sustainable solutions to improved pupil outcomes to the benefit of all children and young people, and their parents and carers in Leicestershire whilst being an effective use of funding.

Jane Moore noted that this report was written prior to the government's new budget announcement and that the real-time impact of that on Leicestershire and its schools is unclear. However, whilst feedback from the consultation was negative on the proposed transfer, no alternative proposals were made to address the financial difficulties, so the LA proceeded with the following **Recommendations**:

1. That Schools Forum note the responses to the consultation on Resetting the SEN Finance System.
2. That Schools Forum note and consider the LA's response to the key themes within consultation responses.
3. That Schools Forum support the establishment of a SEND Investment Fund.
 - a. Based on discussions below, this recommendation has been amended to the following: That the Forum approves a Schools Forum establishment of a SEND Investment Fund through a Schools Block Transfer.
4. That Schools Forum approve a 0.5% transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to establish a SEND Investment Fund.
5. That Schools Forum note the next steps of the LA should Schools Forum not approve the proposed 0.5% transfer, notably to seek a decision from the County Councils Cabinet on 22 November 2024 on seeking Secretary of State approval.

Peter Leatherland questioned why the LA could not wait until the outcome and impacts of the new government's budget are cleared. Government understands there is a need for more SEND High Needs funding. Jane Moore clarified that the approval for the 0.5% transfer was time sensitive as it required a formal Cabinet decision to seek Secretary of State approval which had to be lodged with the DfE by 18 November. Delaying the transfer until the impact of the government budget were better understood would mean that any transfer would be delayed until 2026-27, rather than 2025-26. Kath Kelly noted that schools would be aggrieved if more money to the High Needs block was agreed by government after the 0.5% transfer had occurred.

Kath Kelly raised concern regarding the language used throughout the report. Whilst the 0.5% would be capped from additional money schools receive, inflation and increased staffing costs are higher than increases in funding meaning that schools would not receive a real term increase in funding, so the proposals do set out a budget cut. Kath believed that not addressing the transfer as a budget cut was disingenuous. This position was supported by Jon Mellor who further said that the report could be perceived to have indicated that the LA can spend funding better

than schools, especially if the transfer is not approved by schools. Martin Towers referred to Paragraph 20, in which the report needed to be clearer that the LA would seek approval from Secretary of State and that the transfer would not be used to reduce existing deficit. **Jane Moore agreed that the Cabinet report would make the cap in gains more explicit.** However, the LA proposed that the SEND Investment Fund could be administered by the schools, not the LA and schools would be fully involved in the detail of the proposal and its governance.

Kath Kelly noted from SEN experts that better interventions introduced earlier results in fewer EHCPs and a better SEND system. Jane Moore questioned where the responsibility for proposed earlier interventions would sit, as the LA has no funding within the High Needs block to do this. Where other LAs have been more successful with earlier intervention there has been more inclusive practice in mainstream schools. However, tribunals recommend expensive interventions and parents request EHCPs. A reset of funding is required, as additional funding will not resolve the current problems.

Kath Kelly noted that Leicester City Council provides pupils with lower-level support earlier. There is a difference between Leicester City and Leicestershire County's Element 3 funding and noted that County's Element 3 rates haven't been updated for a significant period. Schools considering themselves to be at a disadvantage without pursuing an EHCP is disincentivised by City because City offers more funding earlier. However, Jenny Lawrence noted that different school funding decisions had been taken over time and indeed both Councils have different funding settlements.

Rosalind Hopkins noted that the transfer could result in schools demonstrating less inclusive practice. The reduction in funding could lead to more schools applying for EHCPs to obtain the support needed for pupils, rather than using available funding. Jane Moore agreed that a breakdown in LA relationships with schools and changes in school practices were significant risks.

Alison Ruff has questioned how the funding generated by the transfer would be used. The LA's proposals on how the funding would be used is vague. Jane Moore noted that the proposed uses of the funding were vague deliberately because the LA wanted to work with the schools to administer the funding; the LA hasn't been able to work with schools on how the funding would be administered because schools are not in agreement to the transfer. Suzanne Uprichard felt that the governance of the fund should have been determined before Forum was required to vote. Jane assured the Forum that the LA is committed to working with schools on the governance of the investment fund.

Rosie Browne has questioned the timescales of a SEND Investment Fund should it be approved by Forum or Secretary of State. Rosie expressed concern regarding the delay between the transfer being agreed, funding to schools being removed, and the support from the investment fund being put in place. Rosie noted that TSIL did not meet its proposed timescales. Jane Moore acknowledged that the LA would need to work quickly upon obtaining approval to the transfer to ensure delays in delivery were minimal.

The LA was obligated to pursue a 0.5% transfer due to financial difficulties but also needs to look at the use of funding differently. Kath questioned whether Secretary of State would be more or less likely to approve the transfer if the money is not being used to directly reduce the High Needs block deficit. Jane Moore answered that the

Secretary of State would be less likely to approve a direct transfer to reduce the deficit.

Peter Leatherland raised concern that the LA and schools don't have a positive track record in working together to reach best outcomes. Jane Moore has endeavoured to demonstrate through the report and previous Schools' Forums how the High Needs budget works; failure of the High Needs is not a failure of the LA. Jane has been explicit that the LA proposal is to target the funding back to mainstream schools and work with schools on functioning plans as to how the fund should be administered.

The Schools' Forum had the following responses to the LA's recommendations:

1. The Forum has seen and noted the responses to the consultation on Resetting the SEN Finance System. The Forum also challenged the language throughout the report in referring to a cap on funding gains as not being a cut in funding.
2. The Forum has noted and considered the LA's response to key themes identified in the consultation.
3. The Forum questioned the wording of this recommendation; members would approve a SEND Investment Fund if alternative funding was available. However, proposals for the SEND Investment Fund are reliant on the 0.5% transfer being approved. Jane Moore has agreed and amended the wording of the recommendation (see above).

To approve a Schools Forum establishment of a SEND Investment Fund through a Schools Block Transfer, the Forum has voted as follows:

Yes: 2 **No:** 9 **Abstained:** 2

4. To approve a 0.5% transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to establish a SEND Investment Fund Schools Forum, Forum attribute their decision to the detrimental financial impact on schools and the management and administration of the Fund. The Forum has voted as follows. In coming to this decision:

Yes: 1 **No:** 9 **Abstained:** 3

6. The Schools' Forum has noted the next steps of the LA to seek a decision from the County Councils Cabinet on 22 November 2024 on seeking Secretary of State approval on the proposed 0.5% transfer.

4. **Any Other Business.**

For 2024-25 school budgets the Department for Education asked for the first time for Schools Forum support to continue with two aspects of school funding, which were approved and incorporated into 2024-25 budgets. The DfE are again asking for approval to continue these to 2025-26 budgets.

Without support for these adjustments, they cannot remain in place with the following implications for schools with exceptional premises funding. This funding will be removed and, whilst immaterial to total school funding, is material to the schools receiving it. The remaining schools with a pupil and MFG adjustment because of age range changes will not have the adjustments previously agreed by the County

Council's Cabinet and the DfE applied which would be inequitable with those schools fully through the age range change process.

Jenny Lawrence will recirculate the 2024-25 Disapplication report to members to review, as shared in the [Schools' Forum, November 2023](#). Martin Towers will obtain the views of school members and feedback to the LA before 18th November (see Appendix B).

5. **Date of Next Meeting.**

The date for the next Leicestershire Schools' Forum is **Wednesday 12th February 2025** from **2pm – 4pm**.

6. **Actions.**

1. Jane Moore will provide Schools' Forum with an overview of capacity within Leicestershire special provisions.
2. Jane Moore will review the language used in the Resetting the SEN Finance System report to ensure clarity before submitting to the Leicestershire County Cabinet.
3. Jenny Lawrence will recirculate the 2024-25 Disapplication report to school members to review. Martin Towers will obtain the views of school members and feedback to the LA before 18th November.

7. **Appendix.**

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The Leicestershire Schools Forum¹ in Operation

The Schools Forum:

- Makes decisions and provides advice based on a balanced view of the needs of all children and young people in Leicestershire.
- Provides challenge to the Council over aspects of school and early years funding.
- Provides support to the Local Authority in meeting its funding responsibilities for schools – the DfE is moving away from Local Authorities making direct school funding decisions to Local Authorities facilitating national systems and changes.
- Is a body with some decision-making powers on proposals put to it by the Local Authority.
- **Is not** a platform to air or discuss individual school issues.

The requirements of membership is that members:

- Are elected / nominated from specific school phase or stakeholder group.
- Represent the views of their stakeholder group **not** those of individual schools' MATs.
- Are governed by the constitution and the code of practice within it.
- Use informed decision making based on best options for Leicestershire schools and providers as a whole within the constraints of the national funding system.

The Role of the Local Authority is to:

- Present structured expert information produced by professional analysis and evidence.
- Provide guidance and views on national and local trends to inform decision making.
- Develop, guide & support Member knowledge to ensure effective decision making.
- Base information and decisions within the constraints of the national funding system and what is and is not in the power of the Local Authority to change.

CONSTITUTION OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

INTRODUCTION

- 1) The Schools Forum for Leicestershire County Council is established by virtue of Section 47A of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (as amended by the Education Act 2002). It also operates under the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012, which set out the legal parameters for Schools Forums and which came into force on 1st October 2012.
- 2) The Schools Forum for the Authority has a legal existence but is not a corporate body. Its functions are a combination of an advisory and consultative body and a decision-making body on certain proposals presented to it by the Local Authority.
- 3) The Schools Finance (England) Regulations charge Schools Forums with taking some decisions on the Schools Budget.

FUNCTIONS

- 4) The Local Authority is required to consult the Schools Forum on the following matters:
 - a) Amendments to the schools funding formula, for which voting is restricted by the exclusion of non-schools' members except for PVI representatives.
 - b) Any proposed exclusions from the Minimum Funding Guarantee for application to the Department for Education
 - c) Any proposed contract for supplies or services being:
 - i) a contract to be paid from the Schools Budget; and
 - ii) the estimated value of which is not less than the specific threshold which applies to Leicestershire County Council in pursuance of Regulation 7(1) of the Public Services Contracts Regulations 1993 (c), or Regulation 7(2) of the Public Supply Contracts Regulations 1995(d).

Consultation on such items must take place at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender.
 - d) There must also be an annual consultation on financial issues relating to:
 - a) The arrangements to be made for the education of pupils with special educational needs.
 - b) Arrangements for the use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school.
 - c) Arrangements for early years education.
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- d) Administration arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the Authority.
- 5) The Schools Forum has decision making powers in respect of the following:
- a) De-delegation for mainstream schools for prescribed services to be provided centrally:
 - a) Contingencies
 - b) Administration of free school meals
 - c) Insurance
 - d) Licences and subscriptions
 - e) Staff costs – supply cover
 - f) Support for minority ethnic pupils / under achieving groups
 - g) Behaviour support services
 - h) Library and museum services
 - b) Retention of budgets to meet central costs up to the value of the 2012/13 budget and where expenditure is committed:
 - a) Admissions
 - b) Servicing of the Schools Forum
 - c) Carbon reduction commitment
 - d) Capital expenditure funded from revenue
 - e) Contribution to combined budgets
 - f) Schools Budget centrally funded termination of employment costs
 - g) Schools Budget funded prudential borrowing costs
 - c) Authorising a reduction in the Schools Budget in order to fund a deficit arising in central expenditure carried forward from a previous funding period.
 - d) Amendments to the Scheme for Financing Schools with the exception of revisions directed by the Secretary of State
6. The Forum may be consulted on any aspect of the management of school funding and may commission work to scrutinise aspects of schools funding.

MEMBERSHIP

7. The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 lay out parameters within which the Local Authority determines the membership, this membership will be reviewed annually to ensure that membership is fully representative of different phases of schools. The Leicestershire County
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Council has decided that the membership of the Leicestershire Schools Forum shall be made up as follows:

21 Schools Members – who are “elected”.

- a) Two governors of maintained primary schools
- b) Three headteachers of maintained primary schools
- c) Two governors of academy primary schools
- d) Three headteachers of academy primary schools
- e) 1 governor / headteacher of maintained nursery school
- f) Four governors of secondary academy schools
- g) Four headteachers of secondary academy schools
- h) One headteacher / governor of special maintained school
- i) One headteacher / governor of special academy school

6 Non-school Members – who are “appointed”.

- j) One representative of the Catholic Diocese
 - k) One representative of the Church of England Diocese
 - l) One representative of private, voluntary, and independent early years providers
 - m) One representative of pupil referral unit
 - n) One representative of Trade Unions
- 8) The “Schools Members” represent schools and must, to accord with the Regulations, be in some way elected. In the case of the Leicestershire Schools Forum, the following arrangements will apply:

- Category a) e), – elected via the Association of Leicestershire Governors.
- Category b) - elected via the Leicestershire Association of Primary Heads
- Category d) - elected via the Leicestershire Association of Secondary Heads
- Category g), h) - elected via the Leicestershire Association of Special School Heads
- Category c), f) - elected via Leicestershire Academies
- Category m) - nominated by the pupil referral unit.

In relation to the non-Schools members, the following arrangements will apply:

- Category i) and j) - Appointed by the County Council on the nomination of the relevant Diocesan

	Authority.
Category k)	Appointed by the County Council on the nomination of the Childcare Sector group.
Category m)	Appointed by the County council on the nomination of the Joint Consultative Committee.

All newly elected / nominated members shall receive an induction into the role and functions of the Forum prior to taking an active involvement in the business undertaken at Forum.

VOTING RIGHTS

9. Each member will be entitled to a vote but will be subject to the following restrictions:
 - a) Only school members and PVI representatives may vote on issues affecting the funding formula
 - b) Voting for items of de-delegation will be limited to the specific primary and secondary schools' members.

EXECUTIVE/CABINET MEMBER

- 10) The Lead Member and the Cabinet Support Member for Children and Young People's Service on the County Council's Cabinet will have the right to attend meetings. He / she will be entitled to speak at the meeting but will not have any voting rights.

ATTENDANCE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICERS AT MEETINGS

- 11) Attendance at meetings and the right of officers to speak at meetings is limited to:
 - a) Director of Children's Services or their representative.
 - b) Chief Financial Officer or their representative.
 - c) Any person invited by Schools Forum to provide financial or technical advice.
 - d) Any person presenting a paper to Schools Forum but their ability to speak is limited to the paper that they are presenting.

SUBSTITUTES

- 12) Each body electing or nominating representatives will be entitled to maintain one member who is able to act as a substitute for Schools Forum Members.
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Substitute members may attend meetings of the Leicestershire Schools Forum, Substitutes may attend meeting to accompany their elected member, in this capacity substitutes are not entitled to speak or vote at the meeting. Substitutes, when actively representing their elective group, will be entitled to speak at the meeting and have voting rights.

OBSERVORS

- 13) The secretary of State may appoint an observer to attend and speak to Schools Forum meetings. It is expected that this will be fulfilled by a representative of the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

INFORMING SCHOOLS OF MEMBERSHIP OF FORUM

- 14) The Leicestershire County Council must inform all its maintained schools of the details of any non-school members appointed to the Forum, within 1 month of such an appointment being made. As good practice, the Authority will inform all such schools of the whole membership of the Forum, and of any subsequent changes.

TERM OF OFFICE AND NON-ATTENDANCE

- 15) Members will be appointed for a maximum of 4 years.

The Local Authority may end the appointment of any Forum member before the expiry of his / her term of membership if the member concerned ceases to hold the office by virtue of which he / she became eligible for appointment to the Forum.

Where any member of the Forum is absent for three consecutive meetings, without what the Forum considers to be acceptable reasons, membership of the Forum will cease. The Clerk to the Forum will write to that member's constituent group, informing them of the cessation of the individual's membership, and asking them to elect a replacement for the position on the Forum.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

- 16) The Leicestershire Schools Forum will meet on a minimum of four occasions per year, of which two will be in the Autumn Term of the academic year. Other meetings above the minimum will be arranged at the request of the Forum.

QUORUM

- 17) The Schools Forum must have a quorum of 40% of the total number of Forum members being present at each meeting i.e. ten members. If a meeting is inquorate, it may proceed and give its views to the Local
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Authority, but it cannot take decisions. There is no provision requiring at least one member from each of the sectors to be present. Where substitute members are present, they shall count towards the members present to decide on whether the meeting is quorate.

ACCESS TO THE MEETING

- 18) The meetings of the Leicestershire Schools Forum will be open to the public. Access to information will be through the Schools Forum meetings section of the Leicestershire County Council website.

The attendance of observers or other persons invited by the Forum, will not be precluded, if the Forum agrees to extend that facility to representatives of other groups, or to individuals.

The decision as to whether the persons should be invited to attend will be made at the preceding meeting of the Forum, or where not practicable, by the Chair of the Forum between meetings.

It will be a matter for the Chair of the Forum to decide if such observers or invitees should be invited to address the Forum. Such persons would not have any voting rights.

CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR OF THE FORUM

- 19) The Forum shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair from amongst its members. This will be done on an annual basis, at the first meeting of the Forum held in the Autumn Term.

The term of office for Chair and Vice-Chair will not exceed 3 years.

To be elected, a candidate must receive more than half the number of votes cast. Where there are more than two candidates, and no candidate receives the required number of votes, the candidate with the least votes in the first ballot will be removed, and a second ballot held.

- 20) The Chair will retain his/her right to vote but will not have a second or casting vote.

APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

- 21) The Schools Forum may establish working groups when the Forum deems them appropriate. Where such Working Groups are established:

- a) The membership will be decided by the Schools Forum.
 - b) Membership of such groups may include persons who are not themselves members of the Forum.
 - c) The Working Group will have no individual right to take decisions. All advice should be formally passed to the LA through the Schools Forum and decisions taken must be undertaken Schools Forum as a whole.
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URGENT BUSINESS

- 22) In the event of urgent business, the Local Authority may:
- a) Call an unscheduled meeting
 - b) Communicate the issue through email to all members. Responses will be collated by the Local Authority and make recommendations to the Chair. Any decision would be reported to the next meeting of the Schools Forum together with the process taken, the role of the Chair in that decision and the reason for the urgency.

CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- 23) The conduct of meetings will follow the rules/standing orders which are appropriate to the County Council as a whole.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- 24) The conduct of Members at meetings will follow the principles laid down by the County Council to govern the conduct of the County Councils' Elected Members as defined in Part 5A – Members' Code of Conduct of the Constitution of Leicestershire County Council (Appendix A).

Members shall declare at the commencement of each meeting, whether they have any personal, or individual school interest in the business to be undertaken at Forum and abstain from any subsequent voting process.

Personal interest is deemed to be a decision that affects an individual school, and not a decision that has an equal application for all or a specific group of schools.

OPERATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

- 25) The operational understanding defines the expectations of the LA and Forum Members in undertaking the business of the Forum as per Appendix B.

SETTING OF AGENDA

- 26) The Chair of the Forum shall consult with the LA's lead officer to draw up the agenda for the next meeting. Where a request is received from any two members of the Forum to place an item on the agenda, it shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting.
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DECISIONS OF THE FORUM

- 27) The Clerk to the Forum shall ensure that all such advice and decisions, if appropriate, are submitted to the Cabinet or other Committee of the County Council.

In addition, in the course of the Summer Term, a report will be submitted to the County Council's Cabinet on behalf of the Schools Forum, summarising the issues on which the Forum has been consulted in the course of that academic year, the advice given and the decisions taken.

- 28) The Forum shall, as soon as reasonably possible, via its Clerk, inform the governing bodies of all schools maintained by Leicestershire County Council, of all recommendations made to the Local Authority in relation to issues on which the Forum has been consulted.

This will be done by placing details on the Leicestershire County Council website.

MEMBERS' EXPENSES

- 29) Under the terms of the Regulations, the Local Education Authority is required to pay the reasonable expenses of members of the Forum, incurred in connection with attendance at meetings of the Forum. Details of the reimbursement of expenses and expenses claim forms may be obtained from the Clerk to the Forum.

- Supply cover
 - Travel expenses
 - Loss of earnings
 - Childcare costs – where these would not otherwise have been incurred.
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LEICESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Leicestershire County Council has adopted ten principles to govern the code of conduct of members and co-opted members, these principles have been adopted and will be applied to the conduct of Schools Forum members.

The ten principles are:

1. Selflessness

Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage on any person or individual school.

2. Honesty and Integrity

Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

3. Objectivity

Members should take decisions on merit.

4. Accountability

Members should be accountable for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their role.

5. Openness

Members should be as open as possible about their actions and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

6. Personal Judgement

Members should take account of the views of their elective / nominating bodies to reach conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

7. Respect for Others

Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the Local Authority's officers.

8. Duty to Uphold the Law

Members should uphold the law, and on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that their elective / nominating group is entitled to place in them.

9. Stewardship

Members should do whatever they are able to ensure that the Local Authority uses Dedicated Schools Grant prudently and in accordance with regulations.

10. Leadership

Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, should act in a way that secures or preserves schools' confidence.

LEICESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM OPERATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

The purpose of the operational understanding is to define the expectations of, and responsibilities of the Local Authority and Schools Forum Members in undertaking the business of the Schools Forum.

Local Authority

The Local Authority will:

- 1) Ensure that reports and other documents to be discussed at Forum meetings to be published 1 week in advance of meetings and minutes within 1 week of the meeting.
- 2) Ensure that all Forum meetings will be supported by appropriate senior officers relevant to the items to be discussed at the meeting.
- 3) Provide a pre meeting briefing for the Forum Chair and Vice Chair in the week preceding the meeting.
- 4) Publish reports, other relevant documents, and minutes of meetings on the County Councils' website.
- 5) Ensure that Forum is informed of any proposed changes in legislation that will impact upon the work of the Forum.
- 6) Provide appropriate training and induction to new Forum Members and provide appropriate on-going training to Forum Members to ensure they are able to effectively discharge their responsibilities.
- 7) Ensure that in presenting formal budget proposals for approval that the meeting is a single agenda to ensure sufficient time for discussion of proposals.
- 8) Keep Forum informed of strategic developments and service issues which may result in a request for additional funding where the financial impact would fall to be met from the Schools Budget.
- 9) Facilitate and support workshops and working groups necessary to support both the consultative and decision-making responsibilities of Forum.

Schools Forum Members

Schools Forum members will:

- 1) Follow the principles as set down in the Members' Code of Conduct.
 - 2) Ensure that any personal interest in any item for discussion at Forum meetings is declared at the beginning of all meetings. Personal interest is deemed to be a discussion or decision that affects an individual school, and not a decision that has an equal application for all or specific group(s) of schools.
-

- 3) Ensure that they are representative of, and present the views, of their elective / nominating group at meetings.
 - 4) Ensure that all reports and other papers tabled at meetings are reviewed prior to each individual meeting.
 - 5) Consider the needs of the whole educational community rather than advancing issues pertaining to a particular school phase or an individual school.
 - 6) Gather views and provide feedback to individual elective / nominated groups in advance of and after School Forum meetings.
 - 7) Are responsible to their elective groups for the feedback of items discussed at, and decisions taken by, School Forum.
 - 8) Identify any training requirements to the Local Authority to inform the Forum induction and training programme.
 - 9) Ensure, through the use of substitutes, that each elective / nominating group is represented at all meetings.
 - 10) Within their representative group, consider nominations for the Chair and Vice –Chair prior to the elections to this position held annually at the first meeting of the Forum at the commencement of the academic year.
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SCHOOLS FORUM

De-delegation for School Improvement

12 February 2025

Content Applicable to:		School Phase:	
Maintained Primary	X	Pre School	
Academies		Foundation Stage	X
PVI Settings		Primary	X
Special Schools / Academies		Secondary	
Local Authority		Post 16	
		High Needs	

Content Requires:		By:	
Noting	X	Maintained Primary School Members	X
Decision	X	Maintained Special School Members	
		Academy Members	
		All Schools Forum	

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report presents the consultation response on the proposal, and approval, for de-delegation of funding for school improvement functions for Local Authority maintained schools.

2. **Recommendations**

The Schools Forum representatives for maintained schools are recommended to approve:

the de-delegation of £18 per pupil for Local Authority school improvement functions from maintained schools' budgets.

3. **Background** (details in ***Appendix A***)

The DfE removed the former School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant in 2023/24. This was replaced with the ability within the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations to allow LAs to de-delegate funding from maintained school budget shares with the approval of the Schools Forum

maintained school representatives following consultation with schools and if not approved or by agreement of the Secretary of State. De-delegation applies to maintained mainstream schools only, a different funding framework applies to maintained special schools

If no de-delegation funding is agreed the capacity of the Local Authority to support maintained schools in a systematic and strategic way would be significantly at risk.

No alternative funding stream is available to support this work; therefore, the implications of not continuing could potentially leave maintained schools isolated and solely dependent on the capacity of local leadership and governance

Consultation

A consultation was undertaken with maintained schools over a two-week period (19th November- 6th December 2024). Details of the consultation are shown in Appendix 1.

The results show that of 47 schools who responded:

- 26 “strongly agree that they understand the impact on the Local Authority core offer for maintained schools resulting from this proposal”.
- 17 tended to agree that the core offer represents value for money, 2 neither agrees nor disagreed to this question and 2 disagreed.
- For question 8, Do you support the proposal of a £18 per pupil de-delegation to deliver the Local Authority’s core school improvement functions for maintained schools for 2025-26? 35 respondents agreed, 8 expressed that they don’t know, and 4 disagreed.

This suggests strong, but not unanimous support for the proposal. Comments received (from a limited number of schools) suggest a strength of feeling on both sides.

The full consultation results are shown in ***Appendix B***.

4. **Resource Implications**

The school funding regulations make provision for de-delegation as the prime funding methodology to continue school improvement activity in mainstream schools, without this the service offer would need to be significantly reduced.

5. **Equal Opportunity Issues**

None identified.

6. **Background Papers**

[Schools Forum Report 13 February 2024 – De-Delegation for School Improvement](#)

7. **Officers to Contact**

Rebecca Wakeley, (Interim) Senior Education Effectiveness Partner
Jenny Lawrence, Finance Business Partner, Schools and High Needs

APPENDIX A – Consultation on the De-delegation* of funding to deliver Local Authority School Improvement Functions

**De-delegation effectively means the retention of part of a school budget by the LA before the total is calculated*

Introduction

1. On 11 January 2022 the DfE published the outcome of their consultation on reforming how local authorities' school improvement functions are funded. Since 2017, the Local Authority School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering grant has been allocated to local authorities to support them in fulfilling their statutory school improvement functions under Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and their additional school improvement expectations as set out in the Schools Causing Concern (SCC) guidance (collectively referred to as core school improvement activities). In summary, these activities require councils to monitor performance of maintained schools, broker school improvement provision, and intervene as appropriate
2. As a result of the consultation the LA level School Improvement Monitoring & Brokering Grant will reduce by 50% from financial year 2022-23 and be removed entirely from 2023/24. Instead, the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations 2022 will allow LAs to de-delegate funding from maintained school budget shares with the approval of the Schools Forum maintained school representatives.
3. In recent years Leicestershire has received the following amounts:
 - 2019/20 £330,371
 - 2020/21 £339,189
 - 2021/22 £314,887
 - 2022-23 £139,000
 - 2023/24 and onwards £0
4. It was agreed by Schools Forum on March 23, 2022, that £9 per pupils be de-delegated from maintained school budgets in 2022-23 to deliver the Local Authority's core school improvement functions.

Background

5. The DfE launched a consultation seeking views on a proposal to remove the LA level School Improvement Monitoring & Brokering Grant (SIMBG) and instead allow local authorities, with the approval of their maintained Schools Forum representatives, to replace the funding for this function by de-delegating funding from maintained schools' budget shares.
6. The outcome of the consultation was published on 11 January 2022 when it was confirmed that the SIMBG would reduce by 50% in financial year 2022-23 and be removed entirely from 2023/24. The Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations 2022 were amended to allow LAs to de-delegate funding from maintained school budget shares so that they can continue to carry out their core school improvement functions.

7. To maintain the status quo, it was proposed the offer be extended into following years when there would need to be an ongoing de-delegation of £18 per pupil to cover the same level of per pupil funding.
8. Funding forum is only being asked for a decision relating to 2025-26 at this time.

Statutory School Improvement Functions for the Local Authority

9. Local Authorities have statutory school improvement functions under [Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) and additional school improvement expectations as set out in the [Schools Causing Concern \(SCC\) guidance](#) (collectively referred to as core school improvement activities). In summary, these activities require councils to monitor performance of maintained schools, broker school improvement provision, and intervene as appropriate.

The Use of this funding in Leicestershire

10. This funding is used to fulfil Leicestershire Local Authority statutory responsibilities around maintained schools including:
 - An Education Effectiveness Partner linked to each school developing a relationship between the school and LA offering advocacy and oversight: a watchful eye and critical friend giving support and somewhere to go in challenging times; ad hoc responses and signposting; knowledge of the position of schools and if and when intervention is needed.
 - Partnership development to support collaborative groups to become self-supporting, sustainable and robust “strong families of schools”.
 - Commissioned health checks and audits as appropriate; support in preparation for, and response to, inspection.
 - Development support around safeguarding, financial planning and governance, and support with working with a range of linked LA and wider services.
 - Commissioned school improvement support, from former Teaching School Alliances, MATs and other quality assured providers.
11. Maintaining this service and engagement with schools strengthens the ability of the Education Effectiveness Team to add value to all schools and academies through its universal offer, funded via County Council funding, (Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership strategic improvement activities, communications, advocacy for schools and signposting) and insight into the education sector in Leicestershire.
12. The core offer for LA maintained schools currently includes the following:
 - a. Partnership working with a dedicated Education Effectiveness Partner (EEP), providing a single point of contact, help & advice, support & signposting (Local Authority, localised and Hubs), advocacy and confidential conversations
 - b. Support for the development of local collaborative families of schools

- c. A rolling programme of independent checks and audits to provide external validation, confirmation and feedback including.
 - i. Health-check and evaluation (quality of teaching and learning)
 - ii. Safeguarding audit
 - iii. Pupil Premium review
 - iv. SEND review
 - v. External Review of Governance
 - vi. Web site audit
 - d. Next steps support with the above points, in partnership with school leaders. The EEP will discuss how best to support whether this is through commissioned input, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or other additional support
 - e. Support in advance of, during and after OFSTED inspection.
 - f. Safeguarding training and advice commissioned with LCC Safeguarding in Education
 - g. Moderation training commissioning through LCC Moderation (Year 6 and writing)
 - h. The EEP will track any commissioned support to ensure the timeliness and quality, ensuring it meets the desired outcomes
 - i. The EEP can commission specialised audits for HR and Finance
 - j. Fully funded CPD opportunities in targeted areas, recent examples include: KS2 Reading Comprehension, Talk for Writing, Preparing for Ofsted and SEF/ SDP Best Practice as well as accessing other external funded CPD opportunities, e.g. Curriculum and ARS (Audience Response System) Training
 - k. Commissioned School Improvement Plan (SIP) support, mentoring and or targeted peer support
 - l. Financial support with evidenced-based research projects in schools
 - m. A range of regular communications
 - n. Full day Local Authority induction for new headteachers
 - o. Regular meetings, seminars and webinars
13. It is proposed that this core offer continues to be delivered through the delegation.
14. The Education Effectiveness Team engages with and supports all schools and education settings in Leicestershire through strategic planning and partnership (including the Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership (which acts as a hub for this activity); managing communications such as the headteacher briefing, social media and meetings with headteachers; and fulfilling statutory duties around safeguarding, moderation and SACRE. The team identifies opportunities to make appropriate connections for the benefit of children in Leicestershire. **This activity is funded separately**, and alongside the de-

delegated funded activities for maintained schools. This proposal sets out the proposed use of the de-delegated funding from maintained schools.

School Improvement Budget 2025-26

15. The regulations allow for LAs to deduct the funding from maintained schools budget shares as an Education Function for services relating to maintained schools only in much the same way as for de-delegated services if approved by the Schools Forum. If the maintained schools' School Forum representatives agree that this funding can be deducted from school budget shares, £18 per pupil will be de-delegated in 2025-26.
16. It should be noted that if the Schools Forum maintained schools' representatives do not approve to de-delegate funds for this function that the Secretary of State retains the power to approve the de-delegation contrary to the decision of the Schools Forum if it is deemed necessary to ensure that the Local Authority is adequately funded to exercise its core school improvement functions.

Consultation Questions

Consultation on De-delegation of Funding for School Improvement in Maintained Schools

Q1 Which area is your school located, Blaby, Charnwood, Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth, Melton, Northwest Leicestershire, Oadby & Wigston?

Q2 Please provide the following details:

School name:

DfE number:

Q3 In what role are you responding to this survey, Headteacher, Other (please specify)? Please specify 'Other'.

Q4 The DfE has now outlined that funding for school improvement and monitoring will no longer be allocated to the local authorities in the form of a grant. This should/ could instead be funded through the de-delegation of funds from the maintained school budget share with the approval of their Schools Forum maintained schools' representatives.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I understand the impact of this proposal on the Local Authority Core and Additional Improvement Function offers for maintained schools'?

Strongly agree, Tend to agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Tend to disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know.

Why do you say this?

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the comprehensive Additional Improvement Function offer (described in the introduction) represents value for money?

Strongly agree, Tend to agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Tend to disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know

Why do you say this?

Q6 How likely, if at all, is your school to access the following areas of LCC's Additional Improvement Function offer?

The LCC Core Offer for maintained schools includes:

	Very likely, Fairly likely, Not very likely, Not at all likely, Don't know?
Partnership working with a dedicated Education Effectiveness Partner (EEP)	
Support for the development of local collaborative families of schools	
Participation through a Collaborative Committee for maintained and academy members schools	

<p>The rolling programme of independent checks and audits to provide external validation, confirmation and feedback</p> <p>(including health-checks and evaluation, safeguarding audit, Pupil Premium review, SEND review, External Review of Governance and Website Audit)</p>	
<p>Next steps support with recommendations from the check and audits, from support commissioned in partnership between school leaders and their EEP and brokered by the LA</p>	
<p>Development and support of Governing Boards, in partnership with the Governor Support and Development service</p>	
<p>Support in advance of, during and after OFSTED inspection</p>	
<p>Commissioned specialised audits for HR and Finance</p>	
<p>Fully funded centralised CPD opportunities</p> <p>recent examples include: KS2 Reading Comprehension, Talk for Writing, Preparing for Ofsted and SEF/ SDP Best Practice, Inspection Skills training as well as accessing other external funded CPD opportunities, e.g. Curriculum training</p>	
<p>Commissioned School Improvement Plan (SIP) support, mentoring and/ or targeted peer support</p>	
<p>Financial support with evidenced-based research projects in schools</p>	
<p>A range of regular communications, including the headteacher bulletin</p>	
<p>Full day Local Authority induction for new headteachers and mentoring, plus an onsite safeguarding visit for all new to headship headteachers from LCC Safeguarding and Compliance</p>	

Regular meetings, seminars and webinars provided by the LA and associated partners	
Access to LCC online training tools as a resource for managers and staff development – where appropriate (for 2025-26)	

Q7 What, if anything, else should we consider as part of our Additional Improvement Function offer?

Q8 Do you support the proposal of a £18 per pupil de-delegation to deliver LCC's Additional Improvement Function and Core school improvement functions for maintained schools for 2025-26?

Yes, No, Don't know

Why do you say this?

Q9 Do you understand that the final decision around the de-delegation of funding to support these functions is retained by the Secretary of State for Education?

Yes, No, Don't know

Why do you say this?

Q10 Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

APPENDIX B – Consultation Results

Questions	Answers					
Q1- Which area is your school located?	Blaby-3, Charnwood-7, Harborough-7, Hinckley & Bosworth-9, Melton-3, Northwest Leicestershire-17, Oadby & Wigston-1					
	Headteacher	Other	No response			
Q3- In what role are you responding to this survey?	43	3	1			
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Q4- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? 'I understand the impact of this proposal on the Local Authority Core and Additional Improvement Function offers for maintained schools'	26	17	2	2	0	0
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Q5- To what extent do you agree or disagree that the comprehensive Additional Improvement Function offer (described in the introduction) represents value for money?	14	21	10	0	-	-
	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know	
Q6- How likely, if at all, is your school to access the following areas of LCC's Additional Improvement Function offer?						
Partnership working with a dedicated	38	8	0	0	1	

Education Effectiveness Partner (EEP)						
Support for the development of local collaborative families of schools	31	13	1	1	1	
Participation through a Collaborative Committee for maintained and academy members schools	27	12	6	0	2	
The rolling programme of independent checks and audits to provide external validation, confirmation and feedback (including health-checks and evaluation, safeguarding audit, Pupil Premium review, SEND review, External Review of Governance and Website Audit)	37	6	0	2	1	
Next steps support with recommendations from the check and audits, from support commissioned in partnership between school leaders and their EEP and brokered by the LA	28	13	2	2	2	
Development and support of Governing Boards, in partnership with the Governor Support and Development service	25	19	1	1	1	
Support in advance of, during and after OFSTED inspection	25	15	2	3	1	

Commissioned specialised audits for HR and Finance	18	20	5	2	2	
Fully funded centralised CPD opportunities (recent examples include: KS2 Reading Comprehension, Talk for Writing, Preparing for Ofsted and SEF/SDP Best Practice, Inspection Skills training as well as accessing other external funded CPD opportunities, e.g. Curriculum training)	26	17	2	1	1	
Commissioned School Improvement Partner (SIP) support, mentoring and/ or targeted peer support)	19	14	10	1	3	
Funding support with evidenced-based research projects in schools	23	14	6	1	3	
A range of regular communications, including the headteacher bulletin	34	10	0	0	1	
Full day Local Authority induction for new headteachers and mentoring, plus an onsite safeguarding visit for all new to headship headteachers from LCC Safeguarding and Compliance	16	3	13	12	3	
Regular meetings, seminars and webinars provided by the LA and associated partners	25	19	2	0	1	

Access to LCC online training tools as a resource for managers and staff development – where appropriate (for 2025-26)	23	16	6	1	1	
	Yes	No	Don't know			
Q8- Do you support the proposal of a £18 per pupil de-delegation to deliver LCC's Additional Improvement Function and Core school improvement functions for maintained schools for 2025-26?	35	4	8			
	Yes	No	Don't know			
Q9- Do you understand that the final decision around the de-delegation of funding to support these functions is retained by the Secretary of State for Education?	46		1			

Comments

Q3 In what role are you responding to this survey? Headteacher, Other (please specify) Please specify 'Other':

- Governor

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I understand the impact of this proposal on the Local Authority Core and Additional Improvement Function offers for maintained schools'?

Why do you say this?

- to access the following areas of LCC's Additional Improvement Function offer?
- explained well
- Services will not be able to be offered without it.
- I agree with the statement
- We appreciate that the LA have allowed us to have a dialogue about the support we need, so we feel we have co-led the SI for our school
- Fully explained
- the functions need to be done - DFE should fund all schools properly

- I value the EEP work and feel it is necessary for development of schools particularly those with new heads. I understand that it therefore is necessary for schools to pay back into a pot to support school improvement work.
- It is clear that this service could not be provided without a de-delegation for schools. However, I feel that there should be a fairer tiered system as schools that do not need as much support are not gaining value from the way the de-delegated funding system currently operates.
- lots of information available
- I understand that the LEA needs further funding to offer support to maintained schools
- This has been clearly communicated to schools.
- The support through our XXX Collaborative has been very productive.
- While I understand the impact of the loss of grant funding, we are in no position at all to de-delegate funds in response. Due to inadequate funding, low pupil numbers, high costs and an explosion of SEND needs, we have a high "in year" deficit and will be in "absolute" deficit within a few months. This proposal is totally unacceptable.
- I understand the Local Authority seeks ways to support Mainstream Schools through the best possible way and consults appropriately on what this looks like as an offer
- Understand this is a continuation as agreed last year. My chair of Governors also agrees
- It was explained to us last year in a meeting at school. We were able to have our questions answered.
- I have read the information
- Communication explains this and we have previously discussed as a board.
- School improvement is important, especially with being a small school as we relish the support and training that the LA gives us. Otherwise, this is not possible.

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the comprehensive Additional Improvement Function offer (described in the introduction) represents value for money?

Why do you say this?

- Mainly in the OFSTED window, the offer gives good reassurance to schools that they are doing the right things.
- Some services represent value for money.
- we need support from LCC
- Not clear on how it supports Collaborations e.g. Funding available and opportunities
- We have used many of the packages on offer Some of the services on offer are valued by school and governors The additional improvement function offer provides a range of support services that are valuable. However, schools not requiring the same level of support are paying the same amount even though they do not need to access the majority of the offered support. The support doesn't always meet the needs of the school and there should either be a tiered system of payment in operation or far greater flexibility and central decision making given to the school on what this money can be spent on. This would ensure better value for money as schools can shape the way their money is

spent to better meet their needs, rather than making a selection from a pre-agreed list.

- The number of courses offered have significantly increased this year.
- As a school we have accessed some of the improvement available
- We have received a lot of support over this year that justified the amount that we have paid as a school.
- Some provision has been excellent. For example, the provision of Talk for Writing projects had real impact on the school. I am also enthusiastic about the SPP project in our collaborative and how this might enable links across the county in future years. The commissioning of quality assurance (health checks etc) in schools can vary in quality and depend on who is commissioned. I would value having less choice and working with someone consistent across a number of years to see progress from one health check to another or one safeguarding check to another.
- With budgets so tight every penny counts and we do not agree that the offer we receive represents value for money.
- The signposting support provided by the EEP is helpful, always timely and clear
- Both schools have been part of the school partnership peer review program, had safeguarding audits and an independent learning walk
- Elements of the provision are very effective. Others do not meet minimum requirements
- This offer which is currently in place has been well received. The additional suggested improvements: Development and support of Governing Boards, in partnership with the Governor Support and Development service (I would welcome this as further support is needed as this is an area I have had to seek support from other Headteachers when I was new to headship and didn't know who to seek support from to support the board!) Support and development of safeguarding arrangements post inspection, audit or new headteacher one-to-one visit - an experienced headteacher/SIP to provide this support would have been invaluable as a first time headteacher. Support in advance of, during and after OFSTED inspection - This would be welcomed if the support was given by an experienced, current Headteacher or inspector. The EEP will track any commissioned support to ensure the timeliness and quality, ensuring it meets the desired outcomes The EEP can commission specialised audits for HR and Finance - yes, as HR is an area which still needs so much support in a maintained primary school. Centralised fully funded CPD opportunities in targeted areas, recent examples include: KS2 Reading Comprehension, Talk for Writing, Preparing for Ofsted and SEF/ SDP Best Practice, Inspection Skills training as well as accessing other external funded CPD opportunities, e.g. Curriculum training (These are all good examples. Another way would be asking for school's priorities and then grouping schools accordingly or giving collaboratives the money to commission CPD opportunities? - Commissioned School Improvement partner (SIP) support, mentoring and/ or targeted peer support with a school improvement consultant - This would be very beneficial to all schools. - Financial support with evidenced-based research projects in schools - I would be very interested in this area of support. - A range of regular communications including regular meetings, seminars and webinars - Full day Local Authority induction for new headteachers plus an onsite safeguarding visit for all new to headship headteachers from LCC Safeguarding and Compliance – This would

be very worthwhile and well-received. - Access to LCC online training tools as a resource for leadership and staff development – where appropriate (for 2025-26) - would be very well-received.

- This is very difficult to answer as we have never actually had to pay or had visibility of the associated costs. We do appreciate the support that has been historically provided.
- Both myself and Chair of Governors. Have been very satisfied with the level of support we have received this year.
- It is a lot of money from my non-existent budget so only value for money if I take up all the offers available
- Without all of this support, I as Headteacher, would not have been able to turn our school around in less than 2 years. the EEP and SIP support has been extremely beneficial.

Q7 What, if anything, else should we consider as part of our Additional Improvement Function offer?

- I feel the offer covers a lot already.
- Not found the training with Leicester useful due to not knowing what will be available.
- From my perspective I have had great support and feel like I have great value for money.
- Improved access to resources on LTS - very hard to navigate website and find relevant documents. Would like clearer guidelines on what support collaboratives are receiving.
- More bespoke specialist advice on our resource base. We attend the regular general resource base meetings and they are useful, but a specific Resource Base audit/health check with specific advice and also advice on how to use the high needs funding spreadsheets would really help
- Whole school training offer for INSETs and staff meetings
- As said in my previous answer, a smaller pool of trained SIP style leaders with a proven track record in school development would be desirable over a health check by a commissioned person that may never visit the school again. This would allow impact to be evaluated and work in a cyclical nature.
- I would be really interested in coaching or mentoring a new head teacher or a headteacher in need of support of this nature. I am not sure if this is something the LA currently offer or would consider offering. Some CPD around coaching would be really helpful and be beneficial for heads in various situations.
- Offer a professional coach for all leaders rather than just those new to the role
- Seems fine to me but recognise it is graduated
- A bank of finance support people for when problems with staff occur. Just like getting a supply teacher when needed, being able to access office staff short term would be invaluable.
- Providing some centralised back-office functions for business manager services/premises/H and S/ finance/complaints/SEND. Whilst not directly education improvements these issues are reducing effectiveness of educators.

Q8 Do you support the proposal of a £18 per pupil de-delegation to deliver LCC's Additional Improvement Function and Core school improvement functions for maintained schools for 2025-26?

Why do you say this?

- We have to have the support
- It feels a bit unfair as we get the same 'offer' and yet I will pay significantly more with being a bigger school
- Sounds quite steep as I am heading into deficit. Cannot recall the figures for this year though
- As started earlier, there needs to be a fairer system of use to ensure this represents good value for money for all schools. I feel there should be a tiered payment system determined by use or a lower flat fee for all with top up payments for additional school improvement support.
- I support the need for these services and support to continue and if this is what it costs then I have to support it. £1800 per year for my school represents value for money with the CPD and wider offer provided. Pooling funds for buying power is sensible. Further conferences with engaging speakers would also be welcome and using these shared funds to enable CPD and speakers that schools my size cannot afford is value for money.
- I don't think we have much choice, even though we are asked to fill out this survey. I feel this is a lot of money for things we could access ourselves e.g. CPD - bespoke to our school groups, external reviews etc... with good quality Ofsted inspectors and HMIs without the need of the EEPs as 'facilitators'. On the two occasions I asked my EEP for support I was sent a link to DFE training on finance and a list of funding, none of which was appropriate to the question I asked and didn't solve my immediate problem. We are an SPP school and this has ended up being not quite what was sold to us and the SEND reviewers were also promised 3 days' supply costs and now it has been reduced to £200 per school (£400 per report). What will happen if a school refuses to send the report to the LA?
- I will go with what the majority decide, however 8K to a school which is in a 500k deficit is a lot
- We don't feel it is value for money for our school and with our budget heading into absolute deficit this money could be used more effectively elsewhere,
- Because it is necessary for the delivery of the work undertaken and for our school it represents a very good value for money.
- My school (like many) is currently running a deficit budget. Would the LA consider any flexibility with the price per pupils for schools in this position?
- I feel that the schools get back what we put in
- I would agree with this is the additional offer, which has been communicated to us, is added to the core offer.
- As noted previously, with our overall budgetary situation we simply don't have any money to pay! If this is taken, our deficit will simply get larger. There are no ways left to save money!
- Due to the changes in funding, the de-delegation of funds per pupil is an appropriate method of allocating funding across all maintained schools. The challenge for the Local Authority is that services are delivered to service level agreements all maintained schools.
- Value for money and we have trust built up. Headteachers do not have time to find suitable providers. This can be seen clearly with the problems that "pay roll" support and finding a competent company to help. We are still experiencing problems which takes time when the HT should be working on school improvement.

- I am not saying I disagree, but I don't really think I have a choice ... I will do it and take up the offers available to me and my school to try and get the most out of my funding!
- However, strengthening the core offer of useful support with finance / HR would be a better spend. It feels very isolated in schools now in particular around running our own payroll which has been so negative it may affect staff turnover for us, it is certainly negatively impacting on wellbeing / trust in relationships.

Q9 Do you understand that the final decision around the de-delegation of funding to support these functions is retained by the Secretary of State for Education?

Why do you say this?

- So if it happens, we just blame the SoSfE!!!!!!!
- As before it was explained to us.

Q10 Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

- None
- Thank you for all the support and hard work to establish collaborative working. It really feels like the LA and maintained schools have rapidly developed strength in this over the last few years.
- I have found our EEP to be very efficient and supportive when queries have been raised.
- No
- I am happy with the support and opportunities we have been given this year by the LEA. This has certainly had an impact on our pupils and staff.
- No, thank you!
- With the overall situation related to school funding I cannot believe that this is even being suggested! I do understand that the LA are also facing budgetary challenges but this is not the answer and will seriously damage relationships at a time when we really all need to be pulling together
- None
- Thank you for your support this year.
- See previous question

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SCHOOLS FORUM

12 FEBRUARY 2025

2025-26 SCHOOLS BUDGET

Content Applicable to:		School Phase:	
Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools	X	Pre School	X
Academies	X	Foundation Stage	X
PVI Settings	X	Primary	X
Special Schools / Academies	X	Secondary	X
Local Authority	X	Post 16	X
		High Needs	X

Content Requires:		By:	
Noting	X	Maintained Primary School Members	
Decision	X	Maintained Secondary School Members	
		Maintained Special School Members	
		Academy Members	
		All Schools Forum	X

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the 2025-26 Dedicated Schools Grant Settlement for Leicestershire and the 2025-26 Schools Budget.
2. This report builds upon several reports presented through the 2024-25 financial year.

Recommendations

3. That Schools Forum approves the retention of the budget to fund future school growth (Paragraph 17, Item 2).
4. That Schools Forum approve the retention of budgets to meet the prescribed statutory duties of the Local Authority and to meet historic costs (Paragraph 17, Items 3 & 4).

5. That Schools Forum approve the centrally retained early years funding (Paragraph 17, Item 5).
6. That Schools Forum note the use of the exceptional premises factor in respect of schools that incur rental costs for premises and / or sports facilities and the adjustments made in respect of age range changes. (Paragraph 38).
7. That Schools Forum note the actions taken by the Local Authority in applying Capping to the National Funding Formula for the purposes of effecting a 0.5% transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block and to address an affordability gap (Paragraphs 36 - 42).
8. That Schools Forum notes the number and average cost of commissioned places for children and young people with High Needs (Paragraph 63).
9. That Schools Forum notes the approach to setting Early Years Provider payment rates for 2025-26 (Paragraph 68).
10. That Schools Forum approve the actions taken to align the Notional SEN Budget to the SEND population in schools and the action to be taken in respect of schools where it is insufficient to meet the aggregated value of High Needs Funding Element 2 (Paragraphs 76-78).
11. That Schools Forum note the average per pupil funding to be considered for recoupment for excluded pupils and other purposes (Paragraph 79).

Background

12. This report builds upon those presented to Schools Forum during 2024 and sets out the Local Authority's Schools Budget for 2025-26.
13. The Schools Budget is the term given overall to the services funded from Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and consists of budget for individual schools, revenue funding for new and expanding schools, prescribed centrally retained budgets held by the authority, early years, and high needs. Local authorities are required to set the Schools Budget at least equal to the amount of DSG received. For 2025-26 the High Needs Block will continue to record a deficit which is required to be carried forward for recovery from future DSG under current legislation. The Local Authority can make no contribution to DSG without the approval of the Secretary of State, the Schools Budget is therefore set at the level of grant and must contain all its spending pressures within that grant.
14. There is no change to the basic structure of DSG for 2025-26 and remains divided into four separate funding blocks:
 - Schools Block funds delegated budgets for maintained schools and academies and school growth.
 - The Central Services Block funds historic costs and other prescribed Local Authority areas of expenditure including the Local Authority's statutory duties for all schools.
 - Early Years funds the free entitlement to early education for 2-, 3- & 4-year-olds, including the extended offer for 2-year-olds from April and September 2024 and a maximum of 4% allocated to meet for the cost of the services that support the early years sector.

- High Needs funds provision for pupils with SEN, services for children excluded from school or at risk of exclusion, Children with Medical Needs, and Specialist Teaching Services
15. The 2025-26 Children and Family Services Budget was considered by the Children and Family Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 January 2025, by the Cabinet on 17 December and on 7 February 2024, and the County Council will consider budget proposals on 19 February 2025 and is shown in full as **Appendix C**.

Role of the Schools Forum in setting the 2025-26 Schools Budget

16. The Central School Services Block holds the retained budgets for several areas of expenditure centrally retained by the Local Authority through provisions contained within the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations, these budgets are subject to restrictions, and some are subject to some decisions for the Schools Forum.
17. Whilst the DfE have alluded to changes in Schools Forum responsibilities because of the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF) which restricts local decision making in respect of school budgets, the role of Schools Forum is unchanged. It can be envisaged that the Schools Forum will have a key role in the final stages of the national implementation of the NFF for maintained and academy primary and secondary schools and preparing schools for any changes that may impact upon school funding. The following table sets out the areas of expenditure that through legislation fall to be met through the Schools Budget and with decisions vested in the Schools Forum and which apply to all local authorities for 2025-26:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Approval For</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	De-delegation from mainstream school budgets	A decision on de-delegation for School Improvement Services for maintained schools is required and is a separate item on the agenda. De-delegation can only be in respect of maintained schools only, all budgets for academies are required to be fully delegated. Only mainstream school members of Schools Forum are able to make de-delegation decisions.
2.	To create a fund for pupil number growth to support the Local Authority's duty for place planning and agree the criteria for maintained schools and academies to access this fund.	Schools Forum approved the policy for funding school growth from April 2024 at its meeting on 21 November 2023 A revenue budget to meet the cost arising from commissioning additional school places required to meet the basic need for sufficient school places. The proposed budget is £2.1 (2024-25 £2.3m)

3.	<p>Funding for the Local Authority to meet prescribed statutory duties placed upon it.</p> <p>This funding now includes funding for Local Authority statutory duties for all schools.</p>	<p>The budgets falling into this category are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Servicing the Schools Forum £8,570 (2024-25 £8,570), this budget meets the cost of operating the Schools Forum • Admissions £0.4m (2024/245 £0.4m). This meets the Local Authority's statutory responsibilities for admissions and is funded from the Schools Block. • Local Authority Statutory / Regulatory Duties, Asset Management and Central Support Services £2.1m. This largely consists of recharges from services outside the Children and Families Department that support budgets funded from DSG such as finance, ICT, property. It also includes funding previously allocated as central teacher pension grant.
4.	<p>Funding for historic costs met by the Local Authority. Following the baselining exercise undertaken to determine the 2017/18 DSG baselines the Department for Education have set out their expectation that these costs should unwind over time and have begun annual reductions in funding. This may be the case for the element relating to schools causing concern, but no funding will be released from premature retirement for significant periods of time given that the Local Authority remains supporting such costs arising from pre-1997. The DfE retain a guarantee that funding for premature retirement costs will not fall below DGS commitments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premature Retirement Costs £674,900 (2024-25 £674,900), these are historic costs relating to school staff where the commitment remains with the Local Authority and relates to both maintained schools and academies. This appears on the Human Resources line of the budget statement. • Miscellaneous £248,000 (2024-25 £248,000). This is the commissioning budget for maintained schools causing concern, whilst the number of maintained schools has reduced overall the number of schools requiring LA support is largely unchanged.
5.	<p>Funding for the Local Authority's statutory responsibilities for early years provision as set out</p>	<p>Schools Forum are asked to approve expenditure of £3.6m.</p>

	annually by the DfE. Centrally retained funding, including any contingency, must not exceed 4% of the Early Years DSG.	
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18. Where the decision-making power is vested in the Schools Forum, the Local Authority may seek adjudication from the Secretary of State should approval not be granted. This would be sought should Schools Forum not approve the centrally funded items, there is no other source of funding for the Local Authority to meet these commitments which are all incurred because of the Local Authority's statutory role in schools. Retention of these budgets is consistent with that of previous years and financial regulations.
19. A further budget for school copyright is held centrally under provisions within the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. This funds copyright licences within a nationally negotiated contract by the Secretary of State for all academies and maintained schools, because of this national contract individual schools no longer meet these costs directly. The Local Authority cost is determined by the DfE which has not been confirmed.

Dedicated Schools Grant

20. For 2025-26 the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) remains calculated in four separate blocks as set out below:

Funding Block	Areas Funded	Basis for Settlement
<p>Schools Block Est £561.885m consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School formula funding £559.749m • School Growth which of £2.136m 	<p>Individual budgets for maintained schools and academies.</p> <p>Growth funding for the revenue costs of delivering additional mainstream school places and to meet the Local Authority's duty to ensure a sufficient number of school places. This funding meets pre-opening costs and the cost of the revenue budget for the first 7 months of opening, at that point funding is within school formula funding.</p> <p>DSG is notionally allocated to Leicestershire for all maintained schools and academies. A locally agreed funding formula is applied to this to determine school budgets Leicestershire fully replicates the NFF. For</p>	<p>The NFF continues to attribute units of funding to pupil characteristics. The grant settlement is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the aggregate of pupil led characteristics for each individual school: • a block allocation for school led factors. <p>These allocations are required to be fully delegated to schools, the only exception being any elements of de-delegated funding for maintained school agreed by the schools Forum following consultation with schools.</p> <p>The NFF means that all local authorities receive the same amount of funding for several pupil related characteristics. Differences</p>

		<p>maintained schools' budgets are allocated directly by the Local Authority, for academies the funding is recouped from the DSG settlement by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) who then directly funds academies.</p>	<p>in funding levels relate to the incidence and proportion of pupil characteristics within schools rather than differing funding levels.</p> <p>The allocation of funding to support new school growth will be retained to meet the future costs of new and expanding schools.</p> <p>In respect of school formula funding this represents a cash increase of 8.1%.</p>
<p>Central Services £4.361m</p>	<p>School Block</p>	<p>This funds historic financial commitments related to schools such as premature retirement costs, some budgets related to schools that are centrally retained e.g. admissions, servicing the schools Forum and school copyright licences. This block now includes funding from the retained duties element of the former Education Services Grant for the responsibilities that local authorities have for all pupils such as school place planning and asset management.</p>	<p>This is distributed through a per pupil allocation basis and is retained by the Local Authority.</p> <p>The funding allocation for some historic financial commitments is being reduced by 20% annually as the DfE have an expectation that these financial commitments will naturally expire. Local authorities will continue to receive sufficient funding to meet school historic premature retirement costs.</p>
<p>High Needs Block provisional allocation £116.636m</p>		<p>Funds special schools and other specialist providers for high needs pupils and students, the pupil referral unit and support services for high needs pupils including high needs students in further education provision.</p> <p>As with the Schools Block this includes funding for special academies and post-16 providers which is recouped by the ESFA who then directly fund academies.</p>	<p>The formula is based upon population of 0–19-year-olds, rather than the 0-25-year-old population it supports, and proxy indicators for additional educational need including deprivation, ill health, disability, and low attainment. Also included is an element based on historic spend. The formula also includes a funding floor to ensure that local authorities do not receive a funding reduction because of the introduction of the</p>

	Confirmation of the 2025-26 grant is not expected until March 2025.	formula. Leicestershire receives £2.8m (2%) through this element.
Early Years Est £109.191m	<p>Funds the Free Entitlement to Early Education (FEEE) for 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds and an element of the early learning and childcare service. The entitlement to FEEE expands to 30 hours for eligible working parents of children 9 months – 2 years old from September 2025.</p> <p>The grant is based on the universal hourly base rate plus additional needs measured with reference to free school meals, disability living allowance and English as an additional language.</p> <p>The initial settlement is based on the January 2024 census. The grant will be updated in July 2025 for the 2025 January census and again in June 2026 for the January 2026 census. The final grant will not be confirmed until June 2025.</p>	<p>The allocation is based on individual pupil characteristics and converted to a rate per hour of participation.</p> <p>Leicestershire receives the lowest rate of £5.71 per hour for 3- and 4-year-olds and the second lowest rate of £7.53 per hour for 2-year-olds and £10.18 per hour for under 2's.</p>
£792.073m	2025-26 Estimated DSG	

21. The 2025-26 MTFS continues to set the overall Schools Budget as a net nil budget at Local Authority level. However, an annual funding gap remains of £15.32m on the High Needs Block which will be carried forward as an overspend against the grant. Cumulatively the deficit on the High Needs Block is forecast at £79.4m for 2025-26, rising to £116.2m in 2028-29.
22. An overall deficit in DSG of £67.5m in 2025-26 rising to £108.8m in 2028-29 is forecast because of a surplus in the school block arising from funding to meet the revenue costs of new and expanding schools' growth set aside for use in future years.

Schools Block

23. School funding remains delivered by the National Funding Formula (NFF) which funds all pupils at the same rate irrespective of the authority in which they are educated. The NFF uses pupil characteristics each with a nationally set funding

rate to generate school level funding to local authorities, as such all local authorities are funded equally.

24. Local authorities remain able to set their own school funding formula, but the DfE require that formula values must be brought 10% closer to the NFF values. This has no impact on the Leicestershire formula which continues to fully mirror the NFF. Data published by the DfE shows that in 2024-25 123 (81%) of authorities set all formula factors within 2.5% of NFF values.
25. Within the NFF only the per pupil entitlement is universal to all pupils with other factors reflecting the incidence of additional pupil needs such as deprivation and low prior attainment. Whilst all authorities are funded equally funding levels between local authorities and individual schools within those local authorities vary purely because of the proportion of pupils with additional needs. Nationally basic per pupil funding accounts for 74.6%, additional needs 17.8% and school led & premises funding 7.6% of the NFF.
26. Approval for a transfer of 0.5% (£2.8m) funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant was sought from the Secretary of State and subsequently approved. The proposal includes the reinvestment of the funding into a SEND Investment Fund with a focus on building capacity in mainstream schools to meet the needs of pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). With approval of the transfer now granted the Local Authority is developing the detail of the fund including how it will be governed and its success measured. A return on investment through a reduction in special places is factored within the MTFs for 2026-27 onwards and an annual transfer of funding will be sought.
27. The DfE have been approached to confirm how many requests for a funding transfer were requested from the Secretary of State who said they could not provide that information. However, a survey undertaken by the Society of County Treasurers showed that of thirty authorities that responded and clearly shows a deteriorating High Needs position and transfer of funding from the school block being seen as a routine adjustment to the overall funding system:
 - In 2024-25 17 requests for transfers were submitted to Schools Forums of which twelve were agreed in full, one agreed at a reduced rate with 4 rejected but subsequently approved by the Secretary of State.
 - For 2025-26 just six respondents did not make a Schools Forum request. Eleven were successful in their requests (eight at 0.5%, three at 1%), whilst three received partial support (one from 0.75% to 0.5%, one from 0.5% to 0.25% and one from 1% to 0.25%), and five were rejected. Eight submitted requests to DfE, though one is likely to withdraw. This leaves two at 1%, one at 0.75% and four at 0.5% (two of which have been approved, one rejected).
28. The 2025-26 Schools Block DSG settlement is £561.885m, an overall cash increase of 8.4%. The increase reflects changes in pupil number as well as the national funding guarantees.
29. Whilst the NFF for schools is based upon the 2024 School Census, funding for local authorities is based upon the pupil characteristics recorded in the 2023 school census. For 2024-25 it has not been possible to meet the cost of fully

delivering the NFF from the Schools Block DSG. A funding gap of £0.7m was present because of an increase in the number of pupil eligible for Free School meals and pupils with English as an Additional Language between census dates. The national regulations allow for an adjustment to the Minimum Funding Guarantee which can be used in conjunction with capping and scaling within the school funding formula to ensure the budgets for schools are affordable within the Schools Block DSG.

30. Additionally, within the Schools Block, but separate to funding for individual schools, local authorities receive funding for the initial revenue costs of commissioning additional primary and secondary school places which is confirmed at £2.1m. This funding meets the costs of school growth currently within the system that is not fully completed, largely new schools not yet with their full contingent of year groups, and school expansions undertaken from September 2025. Once new places for September 2025 have been confirmed this will be combined with revised expectations on when new schools arising from housing growth will open to assess the full call on the grant.
31. School funding continues to be delivered by the National Funding Formula (NFF) which funds all pupils at the same rate irrespective of the authority in which they are educated. The NFF uses pupil characteristics each with a nationally set funding rate to generate school level funding to local authorities. Within the NFF only the per pupil entitlement is universal to all. Other factors reflect the incidence of additional needs such as deprivation and low prior attainment. Funding levels between local authorities and individual schools within those local authorities vary because of pupil characteristics rather than national funding levels.
32. Local authorities remain responsible for setting their own local funding formula. However, the DfE have established significant restrictions and only minimal movements from the NFF are allowed. The Leicestershire funding formula reflects the NFF with two exceptions as additional to the NFF, the first being changes to pupil numbers and subsequent pupil funding protections for school affected by age range change and some funding for school required to rent either premises or playing fields. The former of these changes has been approved by the DfE, for the latter approval is contingent on the provision of lease agreements to the DfE.
33. Additionally, within the Schools Block, but separate to funding for individual schools, local authorities receive funding for the initial revenue costs of commissioning additional primary and secondary school places The DfE have changed the funding methodology for the grant and introduced minimum funding requirements linked to payment by place rather than by block allocations. This has in turn required a new policy to be adopted which links the payment rates received within the grant allocation to the payments made to schools. The revised policy was considered and approved by the schools Forum on 21 November and will be applicable to schools encountering new growth from April 2024. The grant is £2.8m and will need to meet the costs of school growth currently within the system that is not fully completed, largely new schools not yet with their full contingent of year groups, and school expansions undertaken from September 2024. Once new places for September 2024 have been confirmed this will be combined with revised expectations on when new schools arising from housing growth will open to assess the full call on the grant.

2025-26 School Funding Formula

34. The NFF for 2025-26 delivers a minimum amount of funding per pupil, £4,955 for primary and £6,465 secondary pupils. These amounts are increased from that in 2024-25 to reflect the full year impact of the 2024 Teachers' pay award. The detail of the Leicestershire Funding Formula is shown at **Appendix D**.
35. The consultation on the transfer of funding from the school block to the high needs block set out a proposed transfer of 0.5% estimated at £2.6m. The final DSG settlement was higher than anticipated meaning a transfer of £2.8m.
36. Overall, after enacting the schools block transfer and closing the affordability gap school budgets have a cap in the funding gains between 2024-25 and 2025-26 of 0.28% per pupil and fully deliver the minimum per pupil funding levels set by the DfE. 101 schools remain on the funding floor and at protected levels of funding so under the national funding framework cannot be affected by the transfer.
37. As set out within the consultation on the funding transfer the intention is for this to become an annual process. The timeline for 2025-26 budgets did not allow for any detailed modelling to be undertaken on the NFF to identify additional options that may have been available to deliver the transfer, further work will be completed on the 2025-26 data which will be used to inform a transfer for 2026-27. As transfer approval is granted annually full consultation on this and any potential changes to the NFF will be required.
38. As discussed to Schools Forum on 4 November 2024 a dis-application request, pending support from Schools Forum, was submitted to the DfE for factors additional to the NFF and included in the Leicestershire Funding Formula:
 - An exceptional premises factor that funds costs incurred in some school on rent for either additional premises and / or sports grounds for seven schools who receive a total of £82,670. Whilst immaterial within the totality of school funding for the small school in receipt it is essential.
 - An adjustment to the pupil count in respect of September pupil movements as a result of schools undertaking age range changes or schools affected by them together with an adjustment to the Minimum Funding Guarantee to ensure they budgets are not disproportionately affected by the differential between the funding for KS3 pupils and KS4 pupils which is higher. Age range change in secondary schools is almost complete and this adjustment will no longer be required once the process is complete.

The DfE have partially approved the disapplication requests for 2024-25 pending confirmation of the support of Schools Forum.

39. Whilst local authorities are required to apply the funding cap equally to maintained school and academy budgets, for academies the values may differ from that modelled as the baseline for academy budgets applied by the DfE when calculating GAG may differ from that provided to the ESFA by the Local Authority.
40. The protections within the funding formula are at a per pupil level rather than overall budget, schools with falling rolls may receive a fall in the level of cash they receive for 2025. The budgets submitted to the ESFA identifies twenty-four schools in this position. It is essential that schools are cognisant of changes in

pupil numbers between October census' and plan accordingly. Overall, 91.07% of the funding formula is pupil driven with 78.03% delivered through the basic entitlement. Reducing numbers in primary schools are being seen because of a decreasing birth rate and is resulting in financial vulnerability that cannot be addressed purely by changes to internal staffing structures.

41. Overall delegated budgets for 2025-26 will deliver the minimum per pupil funding set by the DfE and include an increase of 0.28% per pupil. The funding from the Schools Block transfer will be held in the SEND Investment Fund.
42. The school funding formula has been submitted as required to the DfE for validation against the school funding regulations and the approval granted for the Schools Block transfer. Once this has been received, the Local Authority will issue budgets for maintained schools in February and the ESFA will issue budgets to academies in March.

De-Delegation

43. Following consultation with maintained schools, Schools Forum have approved de-delegation for school improvement functions annually since 2022-23. A further request for de-delegation for 2025-26 is a separate item on the agenda for today's meeting.

High Needs

44. The structure of the High Needs NFF is unchanged from 2024-25. The provisional settlement at £116.6m and is a 7% increase per head of population. However, it should be noted that the population factor accounts for just £43.8m (38%) of the settlement figure meaning that 62% of the formula, and funding for special schools, is subject to no uplift unlike the schools NFF where all funding factors have been increased for 2025-26.
45. Leicestershire remains at the funding floor i.e. the application of the high needs NFF would generate a lower settlement without this protection. The NFF remains unresponsive to changes in the overall SEN population and does not consider the number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP):
 - £10.1m (9%) of the NFF is driven by the number pupils in special school and independent school places
 - £30.1m (26%) of the formula relates to historic spend from 2017/18.
 - £2.8m (2%) of the formula is from the funding floor.
46. Despite the continued financial challenge, the financial plan makes provision, in the absence of an inflationary uplift in high needs funding, to provide additional funding for special schools to reflect the 2024 local government pay settlement for special schools and to increase the hourly rate paid to support EHCP's in mainstream schools, which has been fixed for a number of years, to £12.21.
47. Future government policy in respect of SEND has yet to be confirmed although messages from the DfE suggest a spring announcement. However, the Policy Note that presents the 2025-26 funding arrangements sets out that the DfE are working on a range of reforms which will establish a mainstream school and

college environment that is more inclusive for children and young people who require specialist SEND support. There is no indication of whether the high needs NFF will be reviewed.

48. The Leicestershire Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) classifies any action that reduces cost through several actions such as efficiency gains and growth reduction as saving. The High Needs finance plan presented within the MTFS, and through the TSIL Programme, includes the unmitigated cost of SEN placements and represents the forecast cost and number of placements if no cost reduction activities take place.
49. The financial plan makes provision for two levels of savings achieved purely by cost reduction through operational changes delivered through TSIL. Whilst shown as savings, both areas represent reductions in predicted future costs and do not affect the level of provision for pupils which remains driven by ensuring that the right children, have the right support within the provision appropriate for their needs and at the right time:

Additional Local Specialist Places - Overall, over the MTFS period a total of 254 additional places are scheduled to be delivered, which will be achieved through the opening of the Farley Way Free School in Quorn expected in 2027-28 and expansion of current provision in both special schools and resource bases attached to mainstream schools. This is estimated to result in a cost reduction of £0.4m in 2024-25 rising to £14.5m in 2028-29 by meeting pupil needs in local provision without the need for a higher cost independent school. It should be noted that whilst expanding specialist provision has both an educational and cost benefit, it does not offer a full solution to the financial position.

Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire – Through reducing the number of starts in specialist provision, improved decision making and consistency in allocation of resources, the TSIL programme is forecast to reduce cost by £12.4mm in 2025-26 rising to £34.2m in 2028-29. The programme is a seven-year programme with total of £36.5m of cost savings achieved in the seven years to 2028-29, current performance is in line with expectations. Savings presented assume a cost reduction against a higher cost provision offset against the cost incurred in the alternative placement.

50. The financial benefits accruing from the TSIL Programme are set out below:

	2025-26 £,000	2026-27 £,000	2027-28 £,000	2028-29 £,000
Reduction in the number of EHCP Needs Assessment Requests	-714	-1,285	-1,832	-2,271
Reduced Mainstream EHCP Cost	-974	-1,660	-2,340	-2,737
Reduction in the number of Early Years Specialist Starts	-1,312	-1,945	-2,584	-3,230
Reduction in the number of Non-Early Years Specialist Starts	-3,912	-6,792	-9,850	-12,219
Reduction in Non-Early Years Specialist Cost	-3,912	-6,792	-9,850	-12,219
Savings Achieved at Annual Reviews	-1,560	-1,560	-1,560	-1,560
Total - Potential Cost Reduction Savings	-12,384	-20,034	-28,018	-34,237

51. The forecast position on the High Needs element of the DSG over the MTFS period is shown below:

	2025-26 £,000	2026-27 £,000	2027-28 £,000	2028-29 £,000
Grant Income	-117,413	-120,912	-124,516	-128,228
Placement Costs	133,176	147,214	163,382	181,901
Other HNB Cost	12,265	12,865	12,865	12,865
Pre-Opening Costs - New Places	0	264	236	0
Schools Block Transfer	-2,799	-2,799	-2,799	-2,799
SEND Investment Fund	2,799	2,799	2,799	2,799
Total Expenditure	145,441	160,343	176,483	194,766
Funding Gap Pre Savings	28,028	39,431	51,966	66,537
TSIL Programme Defined Opportunities	-12,384	-20,034	-28,018	-34,237
Increase in Local Specialist Places	-389	-4,252	-11,193	-14,486
SEND Investment Fund - Return on Investment	0	-2,799	-2,939	-3,086
Total Savings	-12,773	-27,085	-42,149	-51,809
Annual Revenue Funding Gap	15,255	12,346	9,817	14,729
2019/20 Deficit Brought Forward	7,062			
2020/21 High Needs Deficit Brought Forward	10,423			
2021/22 High Needs Deficit Brought Forward	11,365			
2022/23 High Needs Deficit Brought Forward	6,683			
2023-24 High Needs Deficit Brought Forward	5,650			
2024-25 Forecast High Needs Deficit Brought Forward	24,170			
Cumulative High Needs Funding Gap	80,608	92,954	102,771	117,500
Surplus (-ve) / Deficit Other DSG Blocks	-11,834	-10,834	-9,334	-7,334

Dedicated Schools Grant Surplus (-ve) / Deficit	68,774	82,120	93,437	110,166
High Needs Spend as % of High Needs DSG	125%	133%	143%	153%
Surplus / Deficit as % of Total DSG	10%	11%	13%	15%

52. Unmitigated placement expenditure is 113% of High Needs DSG in 2025-26 rising to 142% in 2028-29 if no actions are taken to achieve value for money and effective management of placements. With planned saving cost reductions placement costs alone remain above the level of funding received.
53. Local authorities are required to carry forward DSG as an unusable reserve through the continued use of a Statutory Accounts override and may only now contribute to DSG with the approval of the Secretary of State. The accounts override legislation is confirmed to March 2026 when it is expected to end. An announcement was expected in December but has been delayed. Unless further legislation changes this, from this point local authorities will be required to make financial provision for the deficit.
54. It is nationally recognised that additional funding alone will not address the financial difficulties many of which are created by a system where school and parental expectations have a greater influence than a Local Authority assessment of needs, appropriate provision, and affordability. Policy changes are needed. Whilst the DfE's Change programme may deliver some of that change in the long term there are no short- or medium-term solutions to address the financial challenges. At the continued levels of expected growth, the position is completely unsustainable and puts the Council's finances in a very difficult position. As such it is essential that the planned measures to contain ongoing growth, are successful, but additional measures put in place to reduce both demand and costs.
55. Despite the challenging financial position, the Local Authority budget makes provision for growth funding to support SEN services post TSIL through an additional annual investment of £1.2m.
56. The TSIL programme is now well into its 'implementation phase', with most of the designed changes having been implemented across the target areas – ranging from specific teams within the County Council to the entirety of the SEND system in Leicestershire. This will deliver significant improvements and cost reductions. The programme predominantly aims to deliver solutions to this for new entrants into the SEND system, and not to inappropriately change provision for a child.
57. The TSIL programme has considered workload and performance within the Special Educational Needs Assessment (SENA) Service. The Service is responsible for delivering the local authorities statutory duty under the SEND Code of Practice to carry out statutory assessment and review of children and young people who have an EHCP from age 0 – 25, write Education Health and Care (EHCP's) plans and identify and secure the provision to meet the needs and are key contributors to meeting the 20 week statutory timeline for assessments but are dependent upon other advice givers to do so.

58. The review identified that the current model was failing to achieve statutory duties:
- i. 1% of new EHCP's were delivered on time.
 - ii. 10% of EHCP amendments were completed in the required 12 week.
 - iii. 33% of annual reviews were completed.
 - iv. 12% of phase transfers were completed on time.
59. A review of the SENA Service considered 'ways of working' as well as well as capacity. A new operating model has created three specialist teams focusing on assessments, reviews, and placements. This will improve productivity by creating expert teams in each of these areas and is estimated to improve productivity by c30%. The review also considered capacity from a performance perspective but also the current position of agency staff. The growth request will increase staffing through expanding case manager numbers and management capacity. Workflow tracking will allow the effective management of staffing levels to respond to peaks and troughs in service demand as well as changing trends with a clear link between staffing needs and service volume.
60. The growth funding will, alongside changes in the Education Psychology (EP) Service, will support a new service structure and approach to managing workload will:
- Improve the timeliness of assessments, reviews, and placements – 11% of assessments are now being completed within the 20-week timeframe, compared to 2% in 2022 and 0% for the first half of 2023. The programme will be continuously seeking to drive this number up.
 - Improve communication with parents and schools with clear steps in all processes, in turn reducing complaints and tribunals in the longer term.
 - Ensure that every child achieves the right support at the right time, and placements will meet need.
61. Under the Schools and Early Years Finance (England) regulations the costs of the SEN assessment service falls to the Local Authority budget. However, the financial benefit is through reduced placement costs which, under the same regulations, fall to be met from High Needs DSG. Whilst local authorities cannot directly contribute to DSG without the permission of the Secretary State this position clearly sets out the contradictory nature of the SEN funding system.
62. The achievement of some TSIL benefits is also dependent upon the delivery of the above but also sufficient capacity to engage proactively with parents and schools, managing performance through case tracking and understanding specialist provision particularly the capacity they have and the children they can best support. To respond to this position and mitigate its impact on both the delivery of statutory duties and programme savings a growth bid of £1.2m has been considered necessary within the MTFs without which it is estimated that c£9m of TSIL benefits could be at risk.
63. **Appendix E** set out the number of specialist places commissioned for 2025-26 and their average unit cost. It should, be noted that these are the minimum number of places being commissioned and additional places may be commissioned throughout the year as need arises. The average unit cost will also vary as needs and costs change throughout the year.

Central Services Block

64. The central services block funds several school-related expenditure items such as existing school-based premature retirement costs, copyright licences under a national DfE contract for all schools and other historic costs. The 2024-25 settlement is £4.4m.
65. The provisional settlement continues an annual reduction of 20% for the Historic Costs element of the settlement but a guarantee remains in place to ensure that funding does not decrease below the financial commitment to meet former teacher employment costs.

Early Years Block

66. The provisional Early Years Block is £109.2m and funds both the entitlement to Early Years Education for 2025-26 as set out below and the costs of early years' service. The entitlement for 2025-26 is:
 - 15 hours for eligible working parents for children aged 9 months to 2 years. This will extend to 30 hours in September 2025.
 - 15 hours for 2 years olds requiring additional support, this was formally disadvantaged 2-year-olds.
 - Universal offer of 15 hours for 3- and 4-year-olds.
 - 15 hours entitlement for work parents for 3- and 4-year-olds.
67. Leicestershire will receive £5.71 per hour for the 3- and 4-year-olds, £7.53 for 2-year-olds and £10.18 for under 2's, rates are increased from 2024-25 and reflect the full year impact of the 2024 Teachers pay award. Local authorities are required to pass through a minimum of 96% of the settlement to providers, the remaining 4% meeting the cost of the Early Learning and Childcare service. There is also the continuing need to recoup the early years deficit recorded in 2022/23. The Early Years DSG deficit as of 31 March 2024 was £3.1m. The plan is to clear this deficit over 4 years which would be by March 2027.
68. Taking the above into consideration, work is underway within the service to enable the Local Authority to calculate and notify providers of their funding rates no later than 28 February 2025. The decision on rates is one vested to the Director of Children and Family Services by the County Council's Cabinet, the DfE view Local authorities being best placed to determine how to use their total funding allocation to meet the needs of their communities.
69. The minimum 96% pass through rates includes:
 - the universal hourly base rate, which is paid to all providers.
 - supplements for deprivation.
 - special educational needs inclusion fund (SENIF), which should be targeted at children with lower level or emerging special educational needs (SEN).
 - contingency funding, which is extra money set aside for changes in the number of children taking up the entitlements throughout the year.

Funding School Growth

70. Within the Schools Block, but separate to funding for individual schools, local authorities receive funding for the initial revenue costs of commissioning

additional primary and secondary school places For 2025-26 the grant is confirmed as £2.1m.

The growth fund can only be used to:

- support growth in pre-sixteen pupil numbers to meet basic need.
- support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulation.
- meet the revenue cost of new schools.
- meet revenue costs, for schools, of removing or repurposing surplus places.

From 2024-25 local authorities were 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). The rates paid under the policy reflect the rates of funding set by the DfE.

The growth fund cannot be used to support:

- schools in financial difficulty; any such support for maintained schools should be provided from a de-delegated contingency.
- general growth due to popularity; this is managed through lagged funding. This includes cases where academies have admitted above pupil admission numbers (PAN) by their own choice.

71. Schools Forum agreed a revised Growth Policy at its meeting of 21 November 2023 as a result in The DfE's introduction of new minimum requirements for local authorities. It should be noted that the growth fund relates exclusively to mainstream schools and cannot be used to support new SEND provision without a transfer from the schools to high needs block, the cost of commissioning new SEND provision falls to be met from the high needs block as there is no DfE revenue funding for establishing additional specialist provision and therefore contributes to the overall deficit.

Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve

72. Local authorities continue to be required to carry any DSG deficit forward for recovery against future years grant and may also only contribute local resources to the Schools Budget with the permission of the Secretary of State.
73. Leicestershire is one of fifty-five authorities within the DfE's Delivering Better Value in SEND (DBV) Programme. The programme provides support through both a SEND and a financial advisor and has resulted in a grant of £1m to support SEND transformation. Whilst the DfE have stated that no more local authorities will offered Safety Valve Agreements the future of DBV and DfE intervention and support programmes is currently unknown.
74. It is forecast that the DSG reserve will remain in deficit for the period of the MTFS as a result of the continued and increasing overspend on high needs, this will partially be offset by the accumulation of funding allocated to the authority to meet the revenue costs of new and expanding schools. Overall, the DSG deficit is forecast at £68.8m (10% of Total DSG) rising to £110.2m (15% of DSG) in 2028-29 which is an increase on previous projections.

75. Whilst the TSIL programme will deliver further cost reductions in future years outside the current MTFS period the financial position is clearly unsustainable and remains the most significant financial risk for the Council.

Notional SEN Budget

76. The Notional SEN budget is an identified amount of funding within a schools overall delegated budget that is to contribute to the special educational provision of children with SEN or disabilities and is to guide schools in the allocation of resources to meet additional needs of pupils. In terms of high needs, the national funding system sets out that Element 2 funding is met from the notional SEN budget:

£10,000	↑ Paid by Local Authority for each occupied place - may be more than one funding authority ↓	Total cost of provision specified in Education, Health and Care Plan Needs less £6,000 High Cost, Low Incidence	E l e m e n t 3	Element 3 funding - sometimes referred to as 'Top-up' is paid where the additional provision within the Education, Health and Care Plan exceeds £6,000 by the local authority with financial responsibility for the pupil and is in addition to the school delegated budget
	↑ £6,000 ↓	First £6,000 of cost of provision specified in Education, Health and Care Plan Low Cost, High Incidence	E l e m e n t 2	Element 2 Funding is met within the school delegated budget from the Notional SEN Budget. This is subsidiary calculation within the delegated budget consisting of 4% AWPU, 50% Low Prior Attainment and 67% IDACI. It is a financial measure of the expected level of SEND within the school population.
	↑ £4,000 ↓	Universal provision for all Pupils Universal	E l e m e n t 1	Element 1 Funding is the delegated pupil led funding for all schools and not affected by the individual level of need of pupils

* Delegated budget refers to the S251 Statement for maintained schools, GAG for academies and Core Funding for FE Providers

77. The calculation of the Notional SEN Budget is locally defined. Schools Forum received a report on 18 June 2024 setting out that the Notional SEN budget in Leicestershire was out of line with that in other local authorities and the SEND population in Leicestershire Schools. A further report on 17 September 2024 set out that 50% of the FSM and Ever6 NFF factors would be included to closer align its allocation to the school population, both factors are deemed to correlate with additional needs and indeed also used to distribute the Pupil Premium which remains outside the NFF. It should be note that the Notional SEN Budget is not additional funding to schools but a guide to the expected level of SEN within any school. The proportions and funding factors upon which the notional SEN budget is calculated are detailed out in the following table, the calculation is individual to each school and therefore the proportion of the overall school budget will vary:

Funding Factor	2025-26 NFF Factors % to Notional SEN
Age Weighted Pupil Unit	4%
Prior Attainment	50%
IDACI	67%
Free School Meals	50%
Ever 6	50%
Total Notional SEN Budget Contained within the Funding Formula	£53.482m

78. In accordance with the High Needs Operational Guidance the Local Authority will continue to assess schools where the notional SEN budget is insufficient to meet commitments to element 2 funding. This compares the aggregated commitment to Element 2 costs and notional SEN budget. Where the notional budget is shown to be insufficient to meet commitments an additional payment will be made to schools. Schools should, within their management processes, consider how their SEN notional budget is fully deployed to support pupils within the mainstream school environment.

Excluded Pupils

79. The arrangements for reclaiming funding are set out in the School and Early Years Finance Regulations are mandatory for any pupil permanently excluded. They are required to reflect the funding attributable to a pupil of same age and circumstances and is therefore based on the average per pupil funding value for primary, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. These values are detailed in the following table and will be applied as the deduction to school budgets from April 2024.

School Phase	Annual Rate £	Daily Rate £
Primary	4,466.51	23.51
Key Stage 3	6,295.14	33.13
Key Stage 4	7,097.42	37.35

Deductions will also be made in respect of the pupil premium if applicable to an individual pupil.

80. It should be noted that budget deductions for permanently excluded pupils are required from the excluding schools under the finance regulations irrespective of whether the excluded pupil was recorded on the October census driving the school budget.
81. These rates will also be applied to the funding adjustments for local arrangements such as dual registered pupils at Oakfield, the charges levied for the education of children with medical needs and will be recommended to the Secondary Education Inclusion Partnerships.

Pupil Premium

82. Pupil Premium rates and arrangements have not been confirmed for 2025-26, the table below sets out the 2024-25 rates.

	2024-25 £ per Pupil
Primary Free School Meals 6	1,480
Secondary Free School Meals 6	1,050
Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	2,570
Service Premium	340

83. The allocations are passported intact by the Local Authority to maintained schools for eligible pupils on the school roll but are retained by the Local Authority for looked after children which is allocated by the Head of the Virtual School, academies receive funding directly from the ESFA.

The Local Authority Budget

84. Demand for Children and Family Services continues to increase with growth of £56.8m projected over the period of the MTFs, as the requirement to meet CFS needs before intervention, arising from demographic growth and an increased need for social care. Growth includes a further £0.9m for TSIL sustainability.
85. The provisional MTFs for 2025-29 projects a gap of £6.3m in the first year that (may be subject to changes from later information such as the Local Government Finance Settlement) will need to be balanced using earmarked reserves. There is then a gap of £42m in year two rising to £96m in year four. The gaps in the second, third and fourth years of the MTFs are particularly concerning, especially as several mitigations have already been included, such as future increases in Council Tax. To have a realistic chance of closing the gap the County Council will need to quickly identify additional savings or income generation options that allow 2026-27 to be balanced without the use of reserves. For this reason, existing financial control measures remain in place and the introduction of further measures are kept under review to ensure a tight focus on eliminating non-essential spend.
86. To set out the full context of the financial challenges facing the department the provisions for growth and savings set out in the Children and Family Services budget for 2025-26 – 2028-29 are summarised below. The significant challenge within this section of the budget continues to be the growth in the number and cost of social care placements and the staff required to support both services for both looked after children and vulnerable children and their families. The growth and savings attributed to the department are shown below:

References	GROWTH			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
				£000	£000	£000	£000
	CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES						
**	G1	Demographic growth & increasing cost of Social Care Placement mix		15,000	23,300	33,000	44,500
**	G2	Front-line social care staff - increased caseloads		500	500	750	750
**	G3	Post Transforming SEND & Inclusion In Leicestershire(TSIL) sustainability		900	900	900	900
**	G4	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) - increased demand/cost		3,250	5,500	8,000	11,200
*	G5	Demand management		-100	-260	-1,240	-1,240
	G6	Children In Need Financial Support - Section 17/23		750	750	750	750
	TOTAL			20,300	30,690	42,160	56,860

References				2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
				£000	£000	£000	£000
	SAVINGS						
	CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES						
**	CF1	Eff	Innovation Partnership - Creation and investment in Internal Residential provision	-750	-1,250	-1,750	-2,000
**	CF2	Eff	Departmental establishment modelling / Re-design	-390	-390	-390	-390
**	CF3	Eff/SR	Defining CFS For the Future Programme - Phase 2 - Social Care Workforce Strategy (Recruitment and Retention)	-250	-500	-900	-900
**	CF4	Eff	Reduced Care Costs through growth of internal family based placements	-150	-450	-750	-1,000
**	CF5	Eff/Inc	Smarter commissioning, Procurement and Demand Management - Social Care Placements and externally commissioned services				
			Strand 1 - Contain & Minimise impact of market cost pressures for children placements - external providers	-910	-2,180	-3,900	-6,300
			Strand 2 - Review of care packages /cost (Pro-active and Reactive) ensuring value for money and effectiveness	-1,400	-2,050	-2,450	-2,850
			Strand 3 - Development of a wide range of other accommodation and support options.	-1,000	-1,250	-1,500	-1,500
			Strand 4 - Increased Partner Income	-750	-1,500	-1,850	-2,000
	TOTAL			-5,600	-9,570	-13,490	-16,940

Capital Programme

87. The proposed Children and Family Services capital programme totals £83.1m, for which the majority (£62.3m) there is external funding or capital receipts expected, and £20.6m prior years' external funding held in reserves, resulting in £225k call on LCC capital funding over the four-year life of the proposed MTFS as per the summary table below and further details in **Appendix D**.
88. The programme continues to focus upon the delivery of additional primary and secondary school places and additional places to be delivered to support the Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire (TSIL) programme. £50.1m is proposed to be invested in the provision of additional placements; £20.4m for SEN and £12.6m for investment in other capital requirements including completing the investment in residential homes, strategic capital maintenance and improved schools' access and security.

CFS Capital Programme '£000	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Additional School Places	34,752	10,614	4,052	700	50,118
SEND Programme	2,000	8,458	10,000	0	20,458

Other Capital	4,115	2,848	2,800	2,800	12,563
Total	40,867	21,921	16,852	3,500	83,140

Provision of Additional School Places

89. The investment in additional school places totals £50.1m over four years including £34.8m next year. The programme is funded through the Basic Need grant from the DfE and S106 developer contributions.

SEND Programme

90. The four-year investment in the SEND programme is £20.4m and includes High Needs Capital Grant funding received from the DfE in previous years.

Other Capital

91. There is £12.6m “other capital” included comprising of:

- £8m Strategic Capital Maintenance (£2m assumed per annum subject to funding).
- £2m Schools Dedicated Formula (£0.5m assumed per annum subject to funding).
- £1.2m to invest in improvement in schools’ access and security.
- £225k investment in residential properties within the Children’s Innovation Partnership (CIP) with more details outlined in the savings section above.

Funding Sources

92. Most of the capital programme is likely to be funded by external grant and developer S106 contributions as follows:

Capital Resources '£000	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Grants	20,367	3,548	3,500	3,500	30,915
External Contributions / S106	17,603	8,569	3,507	0	29,679
Earmarked capital receipts	0	1,672	0	0	1,672
Discretionary Capital Funding	225	0	0	0	225
Prior Years’ grant funding held in reserve	2,672	8,132	9,845	0	20,649
Total Resources	40,867	21,921	16,852	3,500	83,140

93. Basic Need Grant is received from the DfE based upon the need to create additional school places. Grant of £17.1m has been confirmed for 2025-26 and included in the programme. The DfE has delayed the announcement of future years grant allocations until at least Spring 2025. The grant reflects the overall place need across the County and for both maintained schools and academies.

The grant meets the infrastructure costs of creating new places in primary and secondary schools. Eligible revenue costs fall to be met from the Local Authority's growth fund, funded from DSG for primary and secondary schools.

94. High Needs Provision Capital Grant in early December 2024 the DfE announced that there will be an allocation of High Needs Capital Grant for 2025-26 to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or who require alternative provision. However, no indication was given of the LA level allocations, and what conditions may be attached to the funding.
95. Strategic Maintenance Grant is received from the DfE for the maintenance of maintained schools only. This grant is based on a formula that considers pupil numbers and the overall condition of the school estate. The grant reduces as schools convert to academies. Local authority allocations are yet to be confirmed. An assumption of £2m per annum has been included in the MTFS.
96. S106 Contributions it is estimated that a total of £29.7m of S106 contributions fund the proposed programme, of which £17.6m is in 2024-25. Estimates for the latter years of the MTFS are less certain and are dependent upon the speed of housing developments.

Appendices

Appendix C – 2025-26 Children and Family Services Proposed Budget

Appendix D – 2025-26 Leicestershire Schools Funding Formula

Appendix E – 2025-26 High Needs Commissioned Places

Background Papers

[Report to Schools Forum 18 June 2024 – Resetting the SEND Funding System](#)

Reports to [Schools Forum 17 September 2024](#):

1. School Financial Standing
2. SEN Investment Fund and Schools Block Transfer

[Report to Schools Forum 4 November 2024 – Resetting the SEND Funding System](#)

[Report to Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Proposed Transfer of Funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant](#)

[Report to Cabinet 22 November 2024 – Proposed Transfer of Funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant](#)

[DfE Guidance – The Notional SEN Budget for Mainstream Schools: Operational Guide 2024 to 2025](#)

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CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

REVENUE BUDGET 2025-26

Budget 24/25		Employees	Running Expenses	Internal Income	Gross Budget	External Income	Net Total 25/26	Schools	Early Years	High Needs	Dedicated Schools Grant	LA Block
£		£	£	£	£	£	£					
1,536,303	C&FS Directorate	1,532,756	94,238	0	1,626,994	0	1,626,994	18,121	43,628	150,803	212,553	1,414,442
1,536,303	C&FS Directorate	1,532,756	94,238	0	1,626,994	0	1,626,994	18,121	43,628	150,803	212,553	1,414,442
2,842,328	C&FS Safeguarding	3,632,963	4,243,481	-3,471,250	4,405,194	-1,149,000	3,256,194	0	0	0	0	3,256,194
134,873	LSCB	350,153	308,843	-77,232	581,764	-439,340	142,424	0	0	0	0	142,424
2,977,201	Safeguarding, Improvement & QA	3,983,116	4,552,324	-3,548,482	4,986,958	-1,588,340	3,398,618	0	0	0	0	3,398,618
5,027,931	Asylum Seekers	1,609,874	13,924,338	0	15,534,212	-8,076,508	7,457,704	0	0	0	0	7,457,704
5,973,627	C&FS Fostering & Adoption	5,618,616	471,297	0	6,089,913	-21,500	6,068,413	0	0	0	0	6,068,413
55,761,295	C&FS Operational Placements	0	67,678,295	0	67,678,295	-1,127,000	66,551,295	0	0	0	0	66,551,295
4,330,127	Children in Care Service	3,869,373	957,628	0	4,827,001	-228,509	4,598,492	0	0	0	0	4,598,492
0	C&FS Adoption	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
71,092,980	Children in Care	11,097,864	83,031,558	0	94,129,422	-9,453,517	84,675,905	0	0	0	0	84,675,905
4,326,605	CPS North	2,600,491	1,708,226	0	4,308,717	0	4,308,717	0	0	0	0	4,308,717
2,772,895	CPS South	2,606,988	398,019	0	3,005,007	0	3,005,007	0	0	0	0	3,005,007
766,430	Childrens Management	1,279,707	730	0	1,280,437	0	1,280,437	0	0	0	0	1,280,437
3,474,624	C&FS First Response	3,519,018	76,748	0	3,595,766	-35,000	3,560,766	0	0	0	0	3,560,766
2,132,420	Child Sexual Exploitation Team	2,102,297	118,030	0	2,220,327	0	2,220,327	0	0	0	0	2,220,327
44,000	Social Care Legal Costs	0	44,000	0	44,000	0	44,000	0	0	0	0	44,000
3,827,376	C&FS Disabled Children	835,923	3,009,149	0	3,845,072	0	3,845,072	0	0	0	0	3,845,072
17,344,351	Field Social Work	12,944,424	5,354,902	0	18,299,326	-35,000	18,264,326	0	0	0	0	18,264,326
574,516	Practice Excellence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
574,516	Practice Excellence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1,771,316	C&FS Community Safety	303,019	1,511,207	-1,935	1,812,291	-36,171	1,776,120	0	0	0	0	1,776,120
1,771,316	Community Safety	303,019	1,511,207	-1,935	1,812,291	-36,171	1,776,120	0	0	0	0	1,776,120
3,839,790	C&FS CFWS East	3,562,335	360,271	0	3,922,606	0	3,922,606	0	0	0	0	3,922,606
5,170,894	C&FS CFWS West	4,835,984	440,738	0	5,276,722	-275	5,276,447	0	0	0	0	5,276,447
3,716,914	C&FS CFWS Youth	4,768,923	799,571	-629,824	4,938,670	-1,140,527	3,798,143	0	0	0	0	3,798,143
414,408	C&FS CFWS Central	75,000	339,408	0	414,408	0	414,408	0	0	0	0	414,408
-2,239,496	Supporting Leicestershire Families / Teen Health	1,278,918	15,762	-750,000	544,680	-2,760,297	-2,215,617	0	0	0	0	-2,215,617
3,756,357	C&FS Family Help	3,538,041	198,339	0	3,736,380	0	3,736,380	0	0	0	0	3,736,380
14,658,866	C&FS Children & Families Wellbeing	18,059,202	2,154,089	-1,379,824	18,833,467	-3,901,099	14,932,368	0	0	0	0	14,932,368
1,234,990	C&FS Education Sufficiency	1,524,000	29,800	-180,000	1,373,800	-210,200	1,163,600	427,240	0	0	427,240	736,360
1,234,990	Education Sufficiency	1,524,000	29,800	-180,000	1,373,800	-210,200	1,163,600	427,240	0	0	427,240	736,360
64,528,749	C&FS 0-5 Learning	2,958,017	109,083,974	-251,225	111,790,766	-1,015,783	110,774,983	0	108,747,235	1,647,593	110,394,829	380,155
642,106	C&FS 5-19 Learning	1,033,339	454,640	-496,479	991,500	-331,791	659,709	480,936	0	0	480,936	178,773
5,100,399	Inclusion	2,008,115	4,703,503	-215,357	6,496,261	-953,077	5,543,184	0	0	4,190,564	4,190,564	1,352,620
1,833,395	Oakfield	0	1,833,395	0	1,833,395	0	1,833,395	0	0	1,424,995	1,424,995	408,400
0	Music Services	1,674,172	612,887	-92,086	2,194,973	-2,194,973	0	0	0	0	0	0
477,335	Education of Children in Care	1,122,899	1,627,156	-445,000	2,305,055	-1,807,686	497,369	0	0	0	0	497,369
72,581,983	Education Quality & Inclusion	8,796,542	118,315,555	-1,500,147	125,611,950	-6,303,310	119,308,641	480,936	108,747,235	7,263,152	116,491,324	2,817,317
115,046,566	C&FS SEN	2,464,455	119,232,499	-636,023	121,060,931	0	121,060,931	0	0	118,742,309	118,742,309	2,318,622
	SEND Investment Fund	0	2,798,747	0	2,798,747	0	2,798,747			2,798,747	2,798,747	0

2,423,669	C&FS Specialist Services to Vulnerable Groups	3,184,086	246,540	-859,011	2,571,615	-147,946	2,423,669	0	0	2,423,669	2,423,669	0
1,323,241	C&FS Psychology Service	1,755,208	3,393	-140,227	1,618,374	-269,000	1,349,374	0	0	0	0	1,349,374
1,245,972	HNB Development Programme	166,327	998,083	-19,046	1,145,364	0	1,145,364	0	0	1,145,364	1,145,364	0
-17,026,938	DSG Reserve income	0	0	-15,254,886	-15,254,886	0	-15,254,886	0	0	-15,254,886	-15,254,886	0
103,012,510	SEND & Children with Disabilities	7,570,076	123,279,262	-16,909,193	113,940,145	-416,946	113,523,199	0	0	109,855,203	109,855,203	3,667,996
7,567,454	C&FS Business Support	8,772,635	702,723	-1,049,688	8,425,670	0	8,425,670	9,048	189,465	182,244	380,757	8,044,914
2,285,220	Central Charges	0	2,285,220	0	2,285,220	0	2,285,220	1,434,683	210,848	639,689	2,285,220	0
303,315	C&FS Finance	0	615,902	-443,992	171,909	0	171,909	747,307	0	0	747,307	-575,398
1,349,900	C&FS Human Resources	1,399,900	0	0	1,399,900	-50,000	1,349,900	674,900	0	0	674,900	675,000
919,087	C&FS Commissioning & Planning	949,921	21,600	-28,368	943,153	0	943,153	0	0	0	0	943,153
576,139	C&FS Sub Transformation	0	1,006,956	0	1,006,956	0	1,006,956	0	0	0	0	1,006,956
13,001,115	Business Support & Commissioning	11,122,456	4,632,401	-1,522,048	14,232,808	-50,000	14,182,808	2,865,938	400,313	821,933	4,088,184	10,094,625
0	C&FS Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
-175,744,283	C&FS Dedicated Schools Grant	0	259,810	-400,555	-140,745	-229,923,465	-230,064,210	-4,096,005	-109,191,176	-116,777,029	-230,064,210	0
523,143,568	Delegated School Budgets	0	570,384,964	0	570,384,964	-9,509,966	560,874,998	559,390,313	0	1,484,685	560,874,998	0
-521,355,114	Delegated Dedicated Schools Grant	0	0	0	0	-561,885,291	-561,885,291	-561,885,291	0	0	-561,885,291	0
0	Schools Block Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,798,747	0	-2,798,747	0	0
0	Dedicated Schools Grant Recoupment	0	-492,199,806	0	-492,199,806	492,199,806	0	0	0	0	0	0
-173,955,829	C&FS Other	0	78,444,968	-400,555	78,044,413	-309,118,916	-231,074,503	-3,792,236	-109,191,176	-118,091,091	-231,074,503	0
125,830,301	Total	76,933,455	421,400,303	-25,442,184	472,891,573	-331,113,498	141,778,075	0	0	0	0	141,778,075

Local Authority Funding Reform Proforma

LA Name:	Leicestershire
LA Number:	855

Primary minimum per pupil funding level	Secondary (KS3 only) minimum per pupil funding level	Secondary (KS4 only) minimum per pupil funding level	Secondary minimum per pupil funding level
£4,955.00	£6,221.00	£6,831.00	£6,465.00

Disapplication number where alternative MPPL values are used
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Pupil Led Factors

1) Basic Entitlement Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)	Reception uplift	No	Pupil Units		0.00		Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Notional SEN (%)	
	Description	Amount per pupil	Pupil Units		Sub Total					
	Primary (Years R-6)	£3,847.00	54,299.72		£208,891,014	£437,251,752	37.28%	4.00%		
	Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	£5,422.00	24,500.00		£132,839,000		23.71%	4.00%		
	Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)	£6,113.00	15,626.00		£95,521,738		17.05%	4.00%		
2) Deprivation	Description	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Eligible proportion of primary NOR	Eligible proportion of secondary NOR	Sub Total	Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Primary Notional SEN (%)	Secondary Notional SEN (%)
	FSM	£495.00	£495.00	8,567.88	7,314.95	£7,862,004	£36,118,801	6.45%	50.00%	50.00%
	FSM6	£1,060.00	£1,555.00	8,636.88	7,547.96	£20,892,175			50.00%	50.00%
	IDACI Band F	£235.00	£340.00	4,193.59	3,152.83	£2,057,458			67.00%	67.00%
	IDACI Band E	£285.00	£450.00	2,634.20	1,905.36	£1,608,162			67.00%	67.00%
	IDACI Band D	£445.00	£635.00	1,046.58	861.30	£1,012,656			67.00%	67.00%
	IDACI Band C	£490.00	£695.00	766.21	624.05	£809,160			67.00%	67.00%
	IDACI Band B	£520.00	£745.00	913.05	869.00	£1,122,190			67.00%	67.00%
IDACI Band A	£685.00	£950.00	342.02	548.12	£754,997	67.00%			67.00%	
3) English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Description	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Eligible proportion of primary NOR	Eligible proportion of secondary NOR	Sub Total	Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Primary Notional SEN (%)	Secondary Notional SEN (%)
	EAL 3 Primary	£595.00		3,540.47		£2,106,580	£3,564,274	0.58%		
EAL 3 Secondary		£1,595.00			700.48	£1,117,267				
4) Mobility	Description	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Eligible proportion of primary NOR	Eligible proportion of secondary NOR	Sub Total	Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Primary Notional SEN (%)	Secondary Notional SEN (%)
	Pupils starting school outside of normal entry dates	£965.00	£1,385.00	346.86	4.12	£340,427		0.06%		
5) Low prior attainment	Description	Weighting	Amount per pupil (primary or secondary respectively)	Percentage of eligible pupils	Eligible proportion of primary and secondary NOR respectively	Sub Total	Total	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Primary Notional SEN (%)	Secondary Notional SEN (%)
	Primary low prior attainment		£1,175.00	29.25%	15,882.68	£18,662,150	£33,360,404	5.95%	50.00%	
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 7)	57.71%		21.58%						
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 8)	55.77%		20.68%						
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 9)	54.47%	£1,785.00	19.87%	8,234.32	£14,698,255				
	Secondary low prior attainment (year 10)	54.47%		19.75%						
Secondary low prior attainment (year 11)	64.53%		20.73%							

Other Factors

Factor	Lump Sum per Primary School (£)	Lump Sum per Secondary School (£)	Lump Sum per Middle School (£)	Lump Sum per All-through School (£)	Total (£)	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Notional SEN (%)
6) Lump Sum	£145,100.00	£145,100.00			£39,698,565	7.08%	
7) Sparsity factor	£57,400.00	£83,400.00			£1,586,235	0.28%	
Rows 45 to 48 are populated with the NFF methodology, please leave this as is if you wish to follow the NFF. As per the Operational Guidance, the distance thresholds can be increased or the year group size thresholds decreased and the distance threshold taper is optional. An alternative method of allocation to the NFF's average year group size taper can be chosen: the continuous taper (Tapered) or fixed sum (Fixed). Examples of each are provided in the Operational Guidance.							
Primary distance threshold (miles)	2.00	Primary pupil number average year group threshold	21.40	Apply primary distance taper	Yes	NFF, tapered or fixed sparsity primary lump sum?	NFF
Secondary distance threshold (miles)	3.00	Secondary pupil number average year group threshold	120.00	Apply secondary distance taper	Yes	NFF, tapered or fixed sparsity secondary lump sum?	NFF
Middle schools distance threshold (miles)	2.00	Middle school pupil number average year group threshold	69.20	Apply middle school distance taper	Yes	NFF, tapered or fixed sparsity middle school lump sum?	NFF
All-through schools distance threshold (miles)	2.00	All-through pupil number average year group threshold	62.50	Apply all-through distance taper	Yes	NFF, tapered or fixed sparsity all-through lump sum?	NFF
8) Fringe Payments			Fringe multiplier	1.0000	£0	0.00%	
9) Split Sites		Basic eligibility funding	£54,000.00	Distance funding rate	£27,000.00	£196,218	0.04%
10) Rates					£3,712,595	0.66%	
11) PFI funding					£0	0.00%	
12) Exceptional circumstances (can only be used with prior agreement of ESFA)							
Circumstance	Total (£)	Proportion of total pre MFG funding (%)	Notional SEN (%)				
Additional lump sum for schools amalgamated during FY24-25	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%			
Additional sparsity lump sum for small schools	£0	0.00%					
RENT	£82,670	0.01%					
Exceptional Circumstance4	£0	0.00%					
Exceptional Circumstance5	£0	0.00%					
Exceptional Circumstance6	£0	0.00%					
Exceptional Circumstance7	£0	0.00%					

Total Funding for Schools Block Formula (excluding minimum per pupil funding level and MFG Funding Total)	£555,571,515	98.15%
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13) Additional funding to meet minimum per pupil funding level	£4,763,013	0.85%
Total Funding for Schools Block Formula (excluding MFG Funding Total)	£560,334,527	100.00%

14) Minimum Funding Guarantee	0.00%	£614,994
Where a value less than -0.5% or greater than 0% has been entered please provide the disapplication reference number authorising the value		
Apply capping and scaling factors? (gains may be capped above a specific ceiling and/or scaled)		Yes

Capping Factor (%)	0.28%	Scaling Factor (%)	100.00%			
Total deduction if capping and scaling factors are applied				-£3,504,063		
				Total (£)	Proportion of Total funding (%)	Notional SEN (%)
MFG Net Total Funding (MFG + deduction from capping and scaling) <small>(Please note that the total deduction for capping and scaling is greater than the total MFG)</small>				-£2,889,070	-0.52%	
Total Funding for Schools Block Formula				£557,445,457		£53,481,659
Notional SEN	Top-up - proportion of NOR	3.29%	SEN support plus EHCP minus Top-up - proportion of NOR	12.77%	Notional SEN funding per eligible pupil	£2,881
High Needs threshold (only fill in if, exceptionally, a high needs threshold different from £6,000 has been approved)				£0.00		
Additional funding from the high needs budget				£0.00		
Growth fund (if applicable)				£1,641,067.00		
Falling rolls fund (if applicable)				£0.00		
Other Adjustment to 24-25 Budget Shares				£0		
Total Funding For Schools Block Formula (including growth and falling rolls funding)				£559,086,544		
% Distributed through Basic Entitlement				78.03%		
% Pupil Led Funding				91.07%		
Primary: Secondary Ratio				1: 1.27		
25-26 NFF NDR allocation, excluding prior year adjustments				£3,712,595		
Total Funding For Schools Block Formula (including growth and falling rolls funding) after deduction of 25-26 NFF NDR allocation				£555,373,949		

Appendix E - High Needs Commissioned Places

Special School	Category	Total High Needs Places 25/26	Average top up per place
Forest Way	Academy	271	7,647
Dorothy Goodman	Academy	378	9,069
Ashmount	Maintained School	210	10,659
Birch Wood	Maintained School	200	12,611
Maplewell Hall	Maintained School	215	5,940
Birkett House	Academy	252	9,332
Foxfields	Academy	95	18,342
Fusion	Academy	93	18,342
Bowman	Academy	29	18,342
Forest Way (C&I Unit)	Academy	13	16,800
Dorothy Goodman (C&I Unit)	Academy	26	21,580
Birch Wood (C&I Unit)	Maintained School	40	21,580
Maplewell Hall (C&I Unit)	Maintained School	62	21,580

Special Unit	Category	Total High Needs Places 25/26	Average top up per place
Hugglescote Community Primary School	Maintained School	6	4,588
Newbold Verdon Primary School	Maintained School	24	7,671
Iveshead (ASD)	Academy	11	19,983
Iveshead (SEMH Unit)	Academy	12	16,800
St Denys Church Of England Infant School	Maintained School	10	5,844
Westfield Infant School	Maintained School	23	7,672
Westfield Junior School	Maintained School	25	5,636
Thorpe Acre Junior School (C&I Unit)	Maintained School	10	16,800
Brookside Primary School	Academy	20	7,174
Sherard Primary School And Community Centre	Academy	30	6,734

Appendix E - High Needs Commissioned Places

Asfordby Captains Close Primary School	Academy	10	16,800
Winstanley SHINE Secondary	Academy	17	16,800
Kingsway Primary	Academy	8	16,800
Woodcote Primary School	Academy	5	16,800
Christ Church & St Peters Primary School	Academy	7	16,800
Wigston Academy Trust	Academy	4	19,983
Glenfield Primary School	Academy	18	4,800
Beacon Academy	Academy	36	5,342
Rawlins Academy (MLD)	Academy	70	5,492
The Beauchamp College	Academy	5	3,171 plus HI teachers supplied by STS
Robert Smyth C&I Unit	Academy	7	16,800
The Cedars Academy	Academy	3	2,189
The Cedars (SEMH Unit)	Academy	11	16,800
Wreake Valley (C&I Unit)	Academy	30	16,800
Thomas Estley (C&I Unit)	Academy	9	16,800
Hinckley Parks Primary (SEMH Unit)	Academy	0	16,800
Rawlins Academy (C&I Unit)	Academy	10	21,580
Wigston All Saints (C&I Unit)	Academy	13	17,563
Oasis The Retreat Specialist Pre-School	Pre-School	6	12,482
Wigston Menphys Early Years	Pre-School	21	9,084
Sketchley Menphys Early Years	Pre-School	24	8,337
Beacon Early Years	Pre-School	5	7,556

Transferring to Foxfields (CIT) WEF 1/2/25

Appendix E - High Needs Commissioned Places

Further Education Provider / Alternative Provision	Category	Total High Needs Places 25/26	Average top up per place
SMB Group College	Further Education	60	4,615
Loughborough College	Further Education	77	4,920
Oakfield School	Maintained Alternative Provision - Pru	30	10,634

Post 16 in mainstream	Category	Total High Needs Places 25/26	Average top up per place
Ashby School	Academy	1	6,902
The Beauchamp College	Academy	0	6,173
Bosworth Academy	Academy	0	5,220
Brookvale Groby Learning Campus	Academy	5	4,939
The Castle Rock School	Academy	0	5,107
De Lisle College	Academy	0	2,976
The Hinckley School	Academy	2	2,976
Lutterworth College	Academy	4	5,593
The Robert Smyth Academy	Academy	0	5,220
Melton Vale Sixth Form College	Academy	3	4,995
Wigston College	Academy	0	5,780
Countesthorpe Academy	Academy	0	4,098
The Cedars Academy	Academy	0	5,220

Appendix E - High Needs Commissioned Places

Special Independent Schools - Primary Need	Category	Total High Needs Places 25/26	Average cost of day placement
C&I	Independent	236	£69,505
SEMH	Independent	206	£62,960
Dyslexia	Independent	10	£23,396
VI	Independent	2	£61,405
HI	Independent	8	£34,474
Total / Average		463	£64,883
Independent Specialist Provision (16+)		248	£24,019

Special School top up rates incorporating outreach, fixed allowances, split site and satellites	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 7A	Band 8	Band 9	Band 10	Band 11
Forest Way	£2,959	£4,834	£6,709	£8,583	£12,336	£16,086	£19,837	-
Dorothy Goodman	£3,065	£4,940	£6,815	£8,689	£12,442	£16,192	£19,943	-
Ashmount	£3,056	£4,931	£6,806	£8,680	£12,433	£16,183	£19,934	-
Birch Wood	£3,445	£5,320	£7,195	£9,069	£12,822	£16,572	£20,323	-
Maplewell	£3,253	£5,128	£7,003	£8,877	£12,630	£16,380	£20,131	-
Birkett House	£3,383	£5,258	£7,133	£9,007	£12,760	£16,510	£20,261	-
Foxfields	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£20,032
Fusion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£19,568
Bowman	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£22,273