
SCHOOLS' FORUM

Thursday 21 September 2023 – 10am

Rehearsal Studio, CECA

A G E N D A

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------|
| 1. | Apologies | Chair |
| 2. | Minutes from Schools' Forum meeting on 13 th June 2023 and Matters Arising | Chair |
| 3. | Dedicated Schools Grant – Extension of the Early Years Offer 2024/25 (I) | Danielle Swainston |
| 4. | Dedicated Schools Grant – Early Years Block Centrally Retained Budget 2024/25 (D) | Danielle Swainston |
| 5. | Indicative Schools Block Budgets 2024/25 (I) | Amanda Whitehead |
| 6. | Statutory Services Provided by the Local Authority (R) | Amanda Whitehead |
| 7. | Indicative Central School Services Block Budgets 2024/25 (D) | Amanda Whitehead |
| 8. | High Needs Block (HNB) Projected Outturn 2023/24 (I) | Danielle Swainston |

Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting –
Wednesday 18 October 2023, CECA Dance Studio

Schools' Forum Meeting

13 June 2023

Attendees:

Members

Carole Bradley (Academy Primary)
 Chris Connor (Maintained Primary)
 Sara Crawshaw (Diocese – RC)
 Tracey Gibson (Secondary)
 Martyn Gordon (Horizon School)
 Lisa Grieg (Academy – Special)
 John Hardy (Academy – Primary)
 Toni Ray (Early Years)
 Linda Richardson (Early Years)
 Sue Sharpe (Maintained Primary)
 Christopher Simmons (Academy Governors)
 Mark Tilling (Chair) (Maintained Secondary)
 David Turner (Maintained Primary)
 Joanne Wilson (Academy Primary)
 Zoe Westley (Academy – Special)
 Leanne Yates (Maintained Primary)

Local Authority Officers

Sandra Shears - Children's Finance

 Danielle Swainston – Assistant Director Joint Commissioning

 Denise Wimpenny – Administrator

 Jane Watt - Children's Finance

Agenda Item	Action
<p>1 Apologies -</p> <p>Apologies were submitted by the following and accepted by Forum:</p> <p>Jo Heaton (Diocese C of E) Andrew Jordan Phil Pritchard (Academy Primary) - Louise Mazzy in attendance as substitute Lee Walker (Academy Primary) Amanda Whitehead (LA Officer)</p>	
<p>2 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 1 March 2023 – and Matters Arising</p> <p>Minutes approved.</p> <p>Outstanding Actions Log</p> <p>DT advised that he had contacted Alison Darby, who had agreed to host the Growth Fund Working Group. However, dates and times were awaited.</p>	

	<p>DS to follow up an outstanding action for Amanda Whitehead who had agreed to speak to Sally Robinson in relation to a previous action as follows:</p> <p>“AD suggested that there be discussions with parents who had removed their children, even though conversations may prove difficult. AW to talk to Sally Robinson regards this”</p>	<p>DS / AW</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Updates to Scheme for Financing Schools</p> <p>The Forum was provided with details of a change to the Scheme for Financing Schools statutory guidance which had been published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on 31 March 2023. The changes included any retention of funds from the sale of land assets by schools requiring the consent of the Secretary of State, treatment of COMFAC deficits and an update to reflect school payments by BACS as the norm.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the ESFA changes be noted, confirmed and published in the Scheme documentation</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>DSG Final Outturn 2022/23</p> <p>The report provided an update on the outturn position for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets for the financial year 2022/23. Members were referred to the table included in the report which summarised the DSG actual spend against budget with an overall call on DSG reserves of £0.497m. Details of the overall financial position across the 4 blocks in relation to early years, high needs, central school services block and schools block including growth fund were provided as set out in the report.</p> <p>As previously reported, it was highlighted that the high needs block budget for 2023/24 exceeded the grant available by £2.146m, the impact of which was provided, as detailed in the report.</p> <p>The Chair commented on the benefits of recording reserve balances separately for each of the 4 DSG blocks, despite the overall DSG reserve position being of sole importance to ESFA. The implications of holding an overall DSG reserve deficit were discussed and clarification was provided in response to queries raised. SSh commented on the need for Forum to establish a deficit recovery plan including invest to save arrangements.</p> <p>The impact of the growth fund reserve being absorbed into an overall DSG reserve deficit was highlighted. The Chair suggested that the Policy be reviewed by the Growth Fund Working Group and it was also suggested that a member of the HBC Finance Team be invited to attend.</p>	

	<p>Decision</p> <p>That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted and actioned as appropriate.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>High Needs Block Final Outturn 2022/23</p> <p>The Forum was updated on the final outturn for high needs services for 2022/23. The latest projection presented to Schools’ Forum estimated a year end overspend of £0.906m (mid-case) and the final outturn for 2022/23 was an overspend of £0.752m, a breakdown of which was provided. The main changes in the final outturn from the last update were outlined as detailed in the report. Whilst the budget deficit was more positive than anticipated, the need to continue to closely monitor the deficit was emphasised.</p> <p>MG referred to discussions at a previous meeting in relation to Horizon, the pressures of exclusions on the high needs block and took the opportunity to convey his thanks and to all members of the Schools’ Forum for their support in terms of allowing facilities and capacity at Horizon to build. It was noted that Martyn would shortly be leaving Horizon and Forum Members took the opportunity to convey their best wishes to Martyn in his new role.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed that Horizon would be full from September and the need for change in the system to address this issue was emphasised. DS outlined the measures in place to prevent children having to be placed out of area and it was agreed that this be included as an action on the HNB review plan to monitor. A number of further concerns were also raised in relation to the pressures on places for primary specialist provision. DS responded to a number of further issues raised in relation to the pressures around school places generally including specialist provision and the measures in place to prevent out of area provision. An update on progress to date on the free school proposals was provided and it was agreed that a further update report be provided to the next meeting of the Forum to allow further consideration of the issues raised. Given the level of discussion around school admissions, it was agreed that a request be made for copies of the minutes of admissions forum to be made available to all members of this Forum.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the report and comments of Members be noted and actioned as appropriate.</p>	

	<p>That an update report be provided to the next meeting of the Forum in relation to the free school proposals and the pressures on specialist school provision.</p> <p>That the Forum be provided with copies of School Admissions Forum minutes.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>High Needs Block Review – Special Schools Funding</p> <p>Members’ approval was sought in relation to the new funding model for special schools in Hartlepool from September 2023. Schools’ Forum had agreed in principle to a cost model basis for special school top-up rates. A cost model arrangement had already been implemented for Horizon School. Subsequently, Children’s Services Committee had agreed the high needs block proposals in March 2023 and it had been agreed to return to Committee for approval of special school costs in June/July.</p> <p>The report set out proposed top up rates for Springwell and Catcote based on the three needs based pathways. The proposed costs as a comparator with the amounts paid to special schools in the financial year 2022/23 were outlined. The budget available in 2023/24 to fund special school top was £3.762m and the budget would need to fund the April to August interim request of £1.354m along with 7 months pro-rata of the new cost model basis which resulted in a total budget requirement of £3.657m against the budget available of £3.762m.</p> <p>Further to discussions in relation to out of area provision, during the previous item of business (minute 5 above refers), a number of further comments were raised around the need to avoid out of area provision, the costs associated with out of area provision as well as the importance of ensuring special schools received sufficient funding to meet the needs of children in Hartlepool.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>The Forum unanimously agreed the new funding model for special schools in Hartlepool.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>High Needs Block Review – Progress Update</p> <p>DS was pleased to report a recent successful funding bid where Hartlepool had been appointed as the regional lead to test the reforms which are set out in the national SEND/ AP improvement plan. The DFE would be visiting the Council on 30 June to discuss the proposals, feedback from which would be reported in due course.</p> <p>Forum Members were referred to the High Needs Block Review Progress Checklist, a copy of which was tabled at the meeting. The table provided an update on progress made to date in terms of actions against the following objectives:-</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement Horizon School Funding Model - Inclusion Strategy - Top-up Ranges - Special Schools – Increase Capacity - Special Schools – Review of Funding Model - Speech and Language Provision - Additionally Resourced Provision - Capacity of SEND Team - Early Years - Develop HNB Recovery Plan <p>DS advised that exclusions would be added to the plan and placed emphasis upon the importance of input and ideas from Forum Members and Head Teachers in terms of implementing the plan. Given the level of work in developing the HNB plan volunteers from the Forum were sought to participate in a task and finish group. DS to organise meetings and send invites.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That the contents of the update be noted and information and ideas from Forum Members be provided to DS.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>CB confirmed that Jo Heaton was to leave her position as a Schools’ Forum Member and that Vicki Wilson be nominated as her replacement (Diocese – Church of England).</p> <p>SSh to confirm this with Paul Rickeard.</p>	<p>SSh</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting – Thursday 21 September 2023, CETL Conference Suite.</p> <p>It was suggested that the next meeting be held at CECA.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 11.05 am.</p>	



Schools Capital Sub-Group Meeting

Thursday 26th January 2023

Held remotely via Microsoft Teams



PRESENT	
Mark Tilling	Headteacher - High Tunstall College of Science (Chair)
Louise Robson	Head of Corporate Services – Catcote Academy
Carole Bradley	Executive Headteacher – Northern Lights Learning Trust
David Turner	Headteacher – Rift House Primary
Claire Appleton	Group Accountant (Corporate and Schools) - HBC
David Mitchell	Capital Projects Officer - HBC
Julie Reed	Pupil Place Planning, Admissions & Capital Manager - HBC
APOLOGIES	
<p>Amanda Whitehead - Assistant Director (Education) – HBC Kieran Bostock - Assistant Director (Place Management) – HBC Jo Heaton - CEO - Northern Lights Learning Trust Sara Crawshaw - Headteacher – English Martyrs Chris Connor - Headteacher – Fens Primary</p>	

Item		Action
1.	Review of minutes from 3rd November 2022.	
	<p>MT confirmed that High Tunstall now has funding for “Connect to the Classroom”.</p> <p>MT requested that the information, regarding the breakdown of SEMH in terms of how the funding went in and how it came out (i.e. was it based on pupil numbers), is still required.</p> <p>Minutes of previous meeting agreed.</p>	CA
2.	2022/23 Schools’ Capital Works Programme - Progress Update (JR)	
	JR updated the group on the current position for the 2022/23 schools’ capital programme. The majority of the 2022/23 programme is complete and we are awaiting final accounts. However, some of the fire stopping works will not be completed this financial year due to the complexity of the projects.	
3.	2023/24 Schools’ Draft Capital Works Programme (JR)	
	The School Condition Allocation (SCA) for 2023/24 has not been received yet, however it is expected to be less than last year due to four schools converting to Academy status. Therefore, schemes may be subsequently added or removed depending on the funding actually received from the DfE.	

Item		Action
	<p>CB queried if projects have to be removed from the programme what methodology is to be used to select these projects? JR confirmed that, where possible, schemes will be re-phased or reduced in scope with the priority on compliance and keeping schools open.</p> <p>MT queried funding for The Horizon school as the school rents the building from the local authority (however there is no lease drawn up). JR confirmed that Corporate funding has been requested and if any project is required to be removed from the programme, as a result of insufficient funding allocation, these projects will be considered first.</p> <p>MT asked if the group was happy to accept the draft capital programme for 2023/24.</p> <p>Group members unanimously approved the programme.</p>	
4.	Finance Update (CA)	
	<p>So far not much spend has gone through, although there has been some final accounts gone through recently.</p> <p>LR queried the amount of unallocated funding. It was confirmed that the contingency and the unallocated 111k were SCA and will be taken into account within the overall funding envelope for the 2023/24 capital programme.</p> <p>Approximately £1.5 million is either carried forward (SEMH unallocated) or ring-fenced (Special Provision). Basic Need is to provide additional places.</p>	
5.	Additional Capital Funding – Energy Efficiency (DM)	
	<p>The DfE has allocated an additional £447 million in capital funding for schools to improve energy efficiency.</p> <p>The funding will be made available to institutions already eligible for Devolved Formula Capital (DFC).</p> <p>This includes eligible maintained nursery, primary, secondary, and special schools, academies and free schools, pupil referral units, non-maintained special schools, sixth form colleges and specialist post-16 institutions with eligible students.</p> <p>Schools have discretion to spend this capital funding on energy efficiency measures or other capital projects. For example, schools could use it for their 10% contribution to capital schemes in the 2023/24 programme.</p> <p>The DfE expects schools to spend the funding in the financial year 2022 to 2023, however normal terms of DFC apply.</p> <p>In support of this funding the DfE has published guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ sensible steps for reducing energy use and ○ works to improve energy efficiency of your buildings. 	

Item		Action
	<p>MT commented that it would be useful to share at the Headteachers meeting.</p> <p>It was also outlined that HBC electrical team had identified a classroom lighting model, should schools want to use the funding to improve the classroom lighting.</p> <p>DM to forward the cost estimate to MT/DT.</p> <p>MT/DT to share at the Headteachers meeting.</p>	<p>DT/MT</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DT/MT</p>
6.	Tree Surveys (DM)	
	<p>DM informed the group that Newcastle Council had recently been fined £280,000 by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) due to the tragic death of a primary school pupil in one of their schools as a result of a decayed willow tree falling on her.</p> <p>Newcastle Council was contracted to carry out tree inspections, which they did, however after identifying tree decay for further investigation no action was taken.</p> <p>The Council pleaded guilty to failing to inspect the tree properly and failing to inform the school of the results of the tree survey.</p> <p>This serves as an unfortunate reminder that If schools don't have regular tree inspections then they a) need to arrange these and b) need to implement any surveyor's recommendations as part of their duty of care.</p> <p>MT suggested that this information be put on Schools Forum agenda.</p> <p>CB suggested that it would be useful for schools to share contractor details on tree surveyors.</p> <p>JR commented that tree surveys, for both maintained and academies, could be funded from school revenue funding streams.</p> <p>It was further queried what qualifications were required for tree surveyors.</p>	<p>DM</p>
7.	High Needs Capital (JR)	
	<p>JR provided an update on behalf of Kelly Armstrong:</p> <p>Currently we are just taking the one ASD ARP forward at St Helens, while we look at future demand. This may be reviewed again in the future depending upon the needs of children and young people across the town.</p> <p>The planning permission for Kingsley will be taken to planning committee on 15th Feb, after this planning should be in place and the demountables will be on site asap, so that the 60 (year 2) children, currently having lessons in the main hall/dining room, can be accommodated in the temporary accommodation. Kelly Armstrong, Danielle Swainston, Amanda Whitehead, Louise Allen and Julie Reed are working through a number of strategies with Kingsley to alleviate this pressure. Danielle Swainston will provide further detail of this in the high needs block review.</p>	

Item		Action
	<p>Danielle Swainston is taking a paper on SEND capital spend to committee in mid-March which highlights how the funding can be best spent to meet the needs of children and young people across the town going forward in a more planned way</p> <p>The MLD ARP has been put out via the CPC framework for expressions of interest, the aim is for the build to be in place by December 2023.</p>	
8.	Free School (JR)	
	<p>Currently no further update, the next meeting with the DfE is scheduled mid-February 2023.</p> <p>DT commented about the cost to schools due to the delay in building the Free School. Can the DfE be contacted to see if affected schools can be supported? DM to forward query to KA in commissioning team.</p>	DM
9.	SEMH Update (MT)	
	<p>MT provided an update.</p> <p>MT commented on the remaining SEMH funding that has been on in the accounts for some time and doesn't want to it to be wasted.</p> <p>CA commented that Danielle Swainston is to draft plans on how best to spend the remaining SEMH budget.</p>	
10.	DfE School Rebuilding Programme (JR)	
	<p>St Helens has been provisionally prioritised in the school Rebuilding Programme.</p> <p>Timescales for completion of the design phase is expected to be April 2023 to March 2024.</p> <p>CB also commented that it was hoped that the capital works currently planned for the school (fencing and reception rebuild) would progress as planned. CB also appreciated the need to be pragmatic and not over invest in a school (identified for demolition) but also wanted to ensure that current health and safety concerns are addressed.</p> <p>CB commented that it was also hoped that there would be an opportunity to work with the DfE in order to incorporate an additional resourced provision (ARP) into the new build. It was mentioned that as the ASD ARP was not up and running yet, funding may have to come from Special Provision or Basic Need if required.</p>	
11.	Any other business	
	None.	

Item		Action
12.	Date and Time of Meetings for 2022/23 Academic Year	
	Thursday 22 nd June 2023 at 10:00	

Item 3: Dedicated Schools Grant – Extension of the Early Year's Offer 2024/25

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to introduce the extension of the Early Year's offer.
- 1.2 The Early Years Block forms part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

2. Background

- 2.1 In the Spring Budget 2023, the Chancellor announced a significant expansion of the Early Year's offer - 30 hours childcare for every child over the age of 9 months with working parents by September 2025, where eligibility will match the existing 3-4YO 30 hours offer.
- 2.2 In addition, schools and local authorities will receive £289m in funding for a to increase the supply of 'wraparound care; (out of school provision), so that parents of primary school age children can drop their children off between 8am and 6pm – tackling the barriers to working caused by limited availability of wraparound care. The provision can be in a school or elsewhere in the community based on local need.
- 2.3 Children with SEND are expected to be fully included within both the new early years offer and the new wraparound offer.
- 2.4 Leading up to the changes from April 2024, government has increased existing provider hourly rates for 2YO and 3-4YO provision with effect from September 2023. This funding is via a supplementary grant in 2023/24.

3. Expansion of the Early Year's Offer

- 3.1 This will be introduced in phases, with 15 hours childcare for working parents of 2YO's coming into effect in April 2024 and 15 hours childcare for working parents of 9 months –3 years old in September 2024.
- 3.2 Rough estimates prepared to date, taking account of our participation rates for existing provision suggest that early year's block funding will increase from £6.9m to in the region of £11m to £13m in 2024/25.
- 3.3 DfE intend to introduce the same framework as the existing 3-4YO formula for both 2YO and under 2YO. This would include the pass through requirement, centrally retained, contingency, SEN Inclusion Fund and supplements.

- 3.4 DfE intend to increase the pass-through rate from 95% to 97%, meaning that centrally retained budgets reduce to a maximum 3%, albeit across a wider scope of funding.
- 3.5 As there will be no data within the January 2024 census for either 2YO children of working parents, or under 2YO children, DfE will use a proxy. No details have been released on the calculation methodology for this proxy as yet.

4. Wraparound Provision

- 4.1 Hartlepool is one of 16 local authorities chosen to participate in the Pathfinder programme for wraparound provision.
- 4.2 The intention of the programme is to support areas to test and deliver different models of provision, which will best suit the needs of local working families. This includes developing a funding process that will support local authorities, primary schools and PVI providers to deliver their chosen model of provision effectively and efficiently.
- 4.3 The Pathfinder funding is for local authorities to introduce or expand childcare provision on either side of the school day and enable them to test flexible ways of providing childcare and gather evidence of what works. Funding would be for expansion of existing provision or development of new provision. It will not be for subsidised places but for the creation of new places.
- 4.4 The government expects that most schools will be able to deliver wraparound childcare that is self-financing and sustainable by September 2026.

5. 2023/24 Early Years Supplementary Grant

- 5.1 Investment of £204m nationally was announced in the 2023 Spring Budget to increase funding to providers for the existing childcare offer.
- 5.2 The additional funding is effective from September 2024 and is being paid as an Early Year's Supplementary Grant (EYSG). The grant is on the basis of an hourly rate increase for both 2YO and 3-4YO provision. As with the core DSG funding, the funding to local authorities will be based on the January census points.
- 5.3 Local authorities are expected to pass on the EYSG in full to providers.
- 5.4 For Hartlepool, the base hourly rate payable to providers for 2YO provision increased from £5.63 to £7.27. The base hourly rate payable for 3-4YO provision increased from £4.56 to £4.80. These changes are in place for autumn term 2023 onwards.

6. Further Information

- 6.1 DfE have provided a stakeholder information pack attached at **appendix A** to this report.
- 6.2 DfE are updating a regular post on changes online at: [Free childcare: How we are tackling the cost of childcare - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 Forum is recommended to note the contents of the report



Transforming childcare support up to 2025

DfE stakeholder information pack

Version: May 2023

About this pack

This stakeholder information pack is for **stakeholders with an interest in childcare, including early years providers, sector bodies, employers, and parents and carers.**

This pack contains **key messages, communications resources and answers to frequently asked questions** to support you to communicate with providers and parents about the changes to childcare policy announced in the [Spring Budget](#) on 15 March 2023. This includes:

- Expansion of childcare support for working parents to include children age 9 months up to school age
- Wrap-around care and childminders
- Changes to universal credit childcare payments

These are transformational changes that will make a difference to families across the country. We are working to help parents and providers understand the new entitlements, as well as how and when they will be able to access it.

This pack will be regularly updated. For more information on these resources, please contact external.affairs@education.gov.uk.

Key messages

We are focused on giving children the best start in life, including supporting parents to access affordable, high-quality childcare.

More parents are going to be able to return to work while balancing childcare commitments, thanks to the government's **£4 billion per year expansion of childcare** in England.

This is the largest expansion of funded childcare ever and will remove barriers to work for nearly half a million parents with a child under 3 in England.

Cost of living pressures are affecting families across the country. This childcare transformation will expand 30 hours childcare for parents with children over the age of nine months, saving up to £6,500 a year for parents for just a single child. This is on top of the upfront childcare support we're providing for parents in Universal Credit, and the support that is available through Tax-Free Childcare.

Explaining the changes to your audiences

- Download and share this [childcare explainer](#), which summarises the offer available to parents for children aged [9 – 23 months](#), children aged [2 years](#) and children aged [3-4 years](#).
- The [Childcare Choices campaign](#) helps parents understand the government childcare offers available to them. Further resources are available to support sharing information about the campaign with your audiences:
 - [Childcare Choices parent information toolkit](#)
 - [Childcare Choices provider information toolkit](#)
- The DfE [Education Hub](#) provides accessible information for parents, pupils and education professionals, including these pieces on [how we are growing our 30 hours free childcare offer](#) and [Budget 2023: Everything you need to know about childcare support](#).
- Support and share information and content provided on DfE social channels, including [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).
- Information about wider support for families and households is available on the [Help for Households website](#).
- **Please share this information with your audiences, including your own employees with children, or who may be going on maternity or paternity leave.**



Childcare
Choices

Help for
Households



What was announced in the Spring Budget?

In the Spring Budget 2023 the Chancellor announced a revolution in childcare. 30 hours childcare for every child over the age of 9 months with working parents by September 2025, where eligibility will match the existing 3-4 year-old 30 hours offer.

- This will be introduced in phases, with 15 hours childcare for working parents of 2-year-olds coming into effect in April 2024 and 15 hours childcare for working parents of 9 months – 3 years old in September 2024.
- The funding paid to childcare providers (including nurseries and childminders) for the existing offers will also be increased by £204 million from this September rising to £288 million next year.
- Schools and local authorities will receive £289m in funding for a 'pathfinder' to increase the supply of wraparound care, so that parents of primary school age children can drop their children off between 8am and 6pm – tackling the barriers to working caused by limited availability of wraparound care.
- Childcare costs of parents moving into work or increasing their hours on Universal Credit paid upfront rather than in arrears, with maximum claim boosted to £951 for one child and £1,630 for two children – an increase of around 50%.
- In recognition of both the importance and short supply of childminders, incentive payments of £600 will be piloted from Autumn of this year for those who sign up to the profession (rising to £1,200 for those who join through an agency) to increase the number available and increase choice and affordability for parents





What is the existing offer for free childcare?

Currently, all parents are entitled to 15 hours per week childcare for 3 and 4-year-olds. Parents who work more than 16 hours a week and earn less than £100,000 are entitled to [30 hours free childcare](#) a week for children aged 3 and 4. Parents of disadvantaged 2-year-olds are also entitled to 15 hours per week childcare.



How will this change up to 2025?

We're extending [childcare](#) to support more parents returning to work after their parental leave ends. By September 2025, working parents of all children over the age of nine months will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare. So that nurseries and childminders can prepare to deliver such a major expansion, it will be rolled out in phases:

- From **April 2024**, working parents of 2-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours childcare.
- From **September 2024**, 15 hours childcare will be extended to all children from age of 9 months
- From **September 2025**, working parents of children under the age of 5 will be entitled to 30 hours childcare per week.



Why won't this additional support be fully available until 2025?

This staggered approach will give nurseries and childminders time to prepare for the changes, ensuring there are enough places and staff ready to meet increased demand. We want to make sure that taxpayers' money is used efficiently, and the new offer is delivered in the best way.

As with the current offer, providers may ask for charges in addition to the free childcare. Visit childcarechoices.gov.uk for further information.



Will there be changes to childcare available for primary school-age children?

Yes. Local authorities and schools will be given more funding to set up what's known as 'wraparound care' outside of normal school hours, so that parents of school-age children can access childcare in their local area from 8am – 6pm. This could include [breakfast clubs](#) and after-school clubs. We expect that by September 2026, most primary schools will be able to provide their own before and after school care.



How are you supporting nurseries, childminders and childcare providers to deliver the new offer?

We're increasing the hourly rate paid to childcare providers by the government, to help them to deliver their existing 30 hours entitlement.

An investment of £204 million from this September rising to £288 million next year (financial year 2024 to 2025) will allow the national average rate for local authorities for 2-year olds to increase by 30% from the current national average rate of £6 per hour to around £8 per hour from September 2023.

The national average 3 to 4 year old rate for local authorities will rise in line with inflation from the current national average rate of £5.29 per hour to over £5.50 per hour from September 2023.



We will provide further details on the distribution of additional funding to local authorities as well as local authority level funding rates for 2023 to 2024 in due course and for 2024 to 2025 in the autumn in line with the usual funding cycle. The department has also published an [early education entitlements and funding update](#).



How many children can a childcare provider look after?

We are increasing the number of children a member of staff can look after - known as the staff-to-child ratio. From September 2023, one member of staff will be allowed to look after five 2-year olds, up from four 2-year olds which is the current rule. This brings England in line with Scotland and other comparable countries. These changes to ratios are optional and intended to give providers more flexibility in how they run their businesses.



What childcare support is available for people on universal credit?

Parents on [Universal Credit](#) are also set to get further support. Currently, up to 85% of childcare costs can be claimed back. However, by Summer 2023 parents will be able to access the funds upfront to make it easier for them to get a job or increase their hours. This removes any gap in funds and eases parents into the childcare costs payment cycle.

The maximum amount of support will also be increased by almost 50%, to £951 for those with one child and to £1,630 for those with two.

Item 4: Dedicated Schools Grant – Early Years Block Centrally Retained Budget
2024/25

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval to the central spend element of the Early Years funding for 2024/25.
- 1.2 The Early Years Block forms part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

2. Background

- 2.1 The Early Year's offer is expanding significantly from April 2024. The expansion is a graduated programme with children coming through with new eligibility in 2024/25 and then 2025/26, meaning that it may not be until 2026/27 that we have a full understanding of provision in Hartlepool under the new offer.
- 2.2 Once funding levels are published for 2024/25, proposed hourly rates to providers will be reported to Schools' Forum and subsequently to Children's Services Committee for approval.
- 2.3 Ahead of presenting proposals for 2024/25 hourly rates, this report seeks approval to the centrally retained element of funding for 2024/25.
- 2.4 The level of new funding, and therefore the amount allowable for retention is uncertain. Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) are unlikely to publish funding rates until December at the earliest which will not provide sufficient time should Forum not agree with the maximum 3% retention. In such a case the authority would need to apply to the Secretary of State for disapplication by mid-November 2023.

3. 2024/25 Early Years Block Funding

- 3.1 At this stage, only broad brush estimates are possible to estimate funding levels for 2024/25. As well as the extension of the offer from 9 months, eligibility for 2 year old provision will extend to working parents.
- 3.2 Clearly estimates need to include expected volumes of children but this is hugely impacted by parental choice.
- 3.3 Rough estimates prepared to date, taking account of our participation rates for existing provision suggest that early year's block funding will increase from £6.9m to in the region of £11m to £13m in 2024/25.

4. Centrally Retained Funding

- 4.1 ESFA guidance relating to centrally retained budgets will change from April 2024. Existing guidance allows up to 5% retention of the EYNFF for 3/4 year old entitlement only. Schools' Forum have historically approved the maximum 5% retention. For 2023/24, centrally retained budgets amount to £0.250m.
- 4.2 The centrally retained funding is currently used to:
- Support the delivery of the key priorities as outlined within the approved Early Years Strategy for Hartlepool
 - Support the costs of the early years and childcare staff team to deliver the increasingly growing early years free entitlement offer, including the Head of Service, Senior Officer – early years, Senior officer – Childcare and Early Years Assistant
 - Support the costs of the Early Years Teaching and Learning Consultant to support delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage across provision
 - Administration of the SEN inclusion fund for low level and emerging needs
 - Support the costs of the EYES system required to administer early years that is mandated by DfE
 - Administration of the Disability Access Fund (DAF) including advice and support.
- 4.3 Should 2024/25 funding be in line with our initial estimates of £11m to £13m, the maximum 3% retention would range from £0.330m to £0.390m.
- 4.4 Implementation and administration of the extended offer will necessitate additional resources in the early years and childcare staff team and development of the EYES system will be required for implementation of the new offer for under 2YO provision, along with the extension of the 2YO offer to working parents.
- 4.5 As the value of our EYNFF increases, the need for robust budgeting and forecasting is a key priority. Further investment in tracking and projecting spend will be needed to reflect the significant size of the EYNFF and the associated financial risk.
- 4.6 As the future levels of funding, participation and resource requirements are so uncertain at this stage, Schools' Forum are asked to approve the maximum 3% retention. The actual amount cannot be provided with any certainty until funding levels are published in December 2023 or January 2024.
- 4.7 A report will be presented at a later meeting to confirm the centrally retained amount and the planned use of the funds alongside the extended offer.
- 4.8 Should the centrally retained budget return an underspend in 2024/25, the balance would be taken to DSG reserves.

5. Recommendation

5.1 Forum is recommended to:

- a) note the contents of the report
- b) approve the centrally retained funding at 3% which is used to administer and deliver early years provision in line with legislative requirements.

A vote is required and ALL Schools' Forum members are eligible to vote.

**Report to Hartlepool Schools' Forum 21 September 2023
From Amanda Whitehead – Assistant Director Education**

Item 5: Indicative Schools Block Budgets 2024/25

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information on the 2024/25 Schools Block indicative funding issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on 17 July 2023, along with options to be considered for setting Individual School Budgets (ISBs).
- 1.2 Information on the key ESFA funding and policy changes for schools is also presented in this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 ESFA have published indicative National Funding Formula (NFF) allocations for 2024/25. These allocations are based on pupil numbers and characteristics from the October 2022 census.
- 2.2 In consultation with their Schools' Forum, local authorities are required to consider how they set ISBs for 2024/25.
- 2.3 Any transfers to and from the Schools Block should be considered. For 2024/25, there is a potential transfer-in of residual funding after meeting commitments against the Central School Services Block (CSSB).
- 2.4 Finally, a local approach to setting both a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) and Capping must be considered and implemented.

3. Key National Funding Formula (NFF) Changes in 2024/25

- 3.1 The core factors in the schools NFF (such as basic per-pupil funding, additional needs factors, and the lump sum that all schools attract) will increase by 2.4%.
- 3.2 The full list of factor values is included at **Appendix A** to this report.
- 3.3 The mandatory element for Minimum per Pupil Funding (MPPF) has increased from £4,405 to £4,655 for primary pupils and from £5,715 to £6,050 for secondary pupils. Forum Members will recall that the MPPF calculation includes the lump sum so that schools with lower pupil volumes are less likely to benefit from the MPPF guarantee.
- 3.4 ESFA continue to expect to move to the hard national funding formula by 2027/28. As in 2023/24, ESFA have introduced reduced discretion for local authorities in setting their formula in order to begin transition to a nationwide hard formula. As Hartlepool already mirrors the hard formula, this does not affect our budget setting approach.
- 3.5 The 2023/24 Mainstream Additional Grant (MAG) has been rolled into the NFF for 2024/25.

- 3.6 For the first time, in 2024/25 ESFA will allocate funding to local authorities on the basis of falling rolls, as well as growth. It is not clear at this stage, what funding Hartlepool may receive under the new factor.
- 3.7 Local authorities will continue to have discretion over whether or not to operate a falling rolls fund. Where local authorities operate a fund, they will only be able to provide funding where the 2022 school capacity data (SCAP) shows that school places will be required in the subsequent three to five years.

4. Indicative NFF 2024/25

- 4.1 Indicative 2024/25 figures issued by ESFA are currently based on pupil numbers and characteristics from the October 2022 census. Allocations will be updated for the October 2023 census and reissued during December 2023.
- 4.2 The following table shows the authority-level NFF Schools Block indicative allocation for 2024/25. The growth and any falling rolls allocations for 2024/25 has not yet been announced so is excluded from the table below (and excluded from the 2023/24 comparison).

Schools Block	Pupil Numbers (Oct 2022)	2024/25 NFF £m
Primary	7,581	41.177
Secondary	5,635	39.395
Premises		0.546
TOTAL 2024/25		81.118

The **£81.118m** compares with the equivalent figure of **£79.062m** for 2023/24 (Schools block NFF plus the separate Mainstream Schools Additional Grant), an increase of 2.6% (subject to pupil number changes in October 2023).

- 4.3 Although the pupil numbers will be updated in December to reflect the October 2023 census volumes, the Primary Unit of Funding (PUF) and Secondary Unit of Funding (SUF) remain the same. These are £5,431 and £6,991 respectively for 2024/25. Therefore, once census volumes are confirmed for October 2023, these will be multiplied by the PUF and SUF to establish Hartlepool's confirmed schools block allocation for 2024/25.
- 4.4 Using admissions data for September 2023, a forecast for pupil numbers as at the forthcoming October 2023 census has been completed. This forecasts suggests that primary pupil numbers will reduce from 7,581 to 7,512 and secondary pupil numbers will increase from 5,635 to 5,735. The forecast would give a more accurate indicative funding position as shown in the table below.

Schools Block	Est Pupil Numbers (Oct 2023)	Est 2024/25 NFF £m
Primary	7,512	40.798
Secondary	5,735	40.093
Premises		0.546
TOTAL 2024/25		81.437

5. Proposed Block Transfers

- 5.1 Schools' Forum will recall that a transfer-in to the Schools Block from the Central School Services Block (CSSB) has become usual practice in recent years. The CSSB is made up of two elements – funding for ongoing commitments and funding for historic commitments. Since 2020/21, funding of historic commitments is being cut at 20% per year on the assumption that historic costs should reduce over time.
- 5.2 The indicative NFF allocation for Central Services Block in 2024/25 is £0.689m (£0.712m in 2023/24). Again, the indicative allocation is subject to changes for October 2023 census volumes.
- 5.4 The budget requirement for CSSB in 2024/25 is presented in a separate report to this meeting. Should Forum agree the budget proposal for 2024/25, an estimated £0.093m would be available for transfer to the schools block.
- 5.5 Schools' Forum will be considering budget proposals for high needs block spending in 2024/25 at a future meeting. At this stage, nil transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block has been assumed for 2024/25.

6. Setting a Local Policy for MFG and Capping

- 6.1 The regulations continue to allow a local policy for a minimum funding guarantee (MFG) and cap so that any excessive year-on year changes can be protected against.
- 6.2 For 2024/25, a local MFG can be applied in the range of +0.0% to +0.05%. This is unchanged from 2023/24.
- 6.3 For 2023/24, a local policy was applied on the basis of the maximum allowable MFG of +0.05%. In order for the 0.05% MFG to be affordable, a cap of 3.29% was applied. This meant all schools received at least 0.05% more funding per pupil and no more than 3.29% per pupil in 2023/24 ISBs.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Forum is recommended to note the formula changes for 2024/25 outlined in this report.

APPENDIX A: Funding Factor Increases

Factor	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Basic Entitlement (AWPU) – Primary	£3,217	£3,394	£3,597
Basic Entitlement (AWPU) – KS3	£4,536	£4,785	£5,072
Basic Entitlement (AWPU) – KS4	£5,112	£5,393	£5,717
IDACI Band A - Primary	£640	£670	£685
IDACI Band B – Primary	£490	£510	£520
IDACI Band C – Primary	£460	£480	£490
IDACI Band D – Primary	£420	£440	£450
IDACI Band E – Primary	£270	£280	£285
IDACI Band F – Primary	£220	£230	£235
IDACI Band A - Secondary	£890	£930	£950
IDACI Band B – Secondary	£700	£730	£750
IDACI Band C – Secondary	£650	£680	£695
IDACI Band D – Secondary	£595	£620	£635
IDACI Band E – Secondary	£425	£445	£455
IDACI Band F – Secondary	£320	£335	£345
FSM – Primary	£470	£480	£490
FSM – Secondary	£470	£480	£490
FSM Ever 6 – Primary	£590	£705	£830
FSM Ever 6 – Secondary	£865	£1,030	£1,210
Low Prior Attainment – Primary	£1,130	£1,155	£1,185
Low Prior Attainment – Secondary	£1,710	£1,750	£1,790
EAL – Primary	£565	£580	£595
EAL – Secondary	£1,530	£1,565	£1,605
Mobility – Primary	£925	£945	£970
Mobility – Secondary	£1,330	£1,360	£1,395
Lump Sum	£121,300	£128,000	£135,700

Report to Schools' Forum 21 September 2023
From Amanda Whitehead Assistant Director: Education

Agenda Item 6: Statutory Services provided by the Local Authority

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The local authority provides statutory duties for both maintained schools and academies. This report explains the funding streams for these responsibilities.

2. Background

- 2.1 Forum members will recall as part of the introduction of the National Funding Formula, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) introduced a Central Schools Services Block (CSSB).
- 2.2 The CSSB funds local authorities for the statutory duties they hold for both maintained schools and academies which was previously allocated through the *retained duties* element of the Education Services Grant (ESG).
- 2.3 In addition, the local authority carries out statutory duties on behalf of maintained schools only. These duties were previously funded from ESG *general rate*. In 2017/18, regulations were amended which allowed local authorities to retain some of their Schools Block funding to cover these statutory duties.

3. Central Services for Schools: Retained and General Duties

- 3.1 Details on the type of *retained duties* provided to both maintained schools and academies are listed in **Appendix 1** (Column 1) and *general duties* provided to maintained schools only in **Appendix 1** (Column 2).
- 3.2 Schools Forum is required to agree the funding for retained duties (all School Forum Members) and the general duties (maintained school members only).
- 3.3 For retained duties, an indicative budget requirement of £0.214m has been included in the CSSB to cover these activities. Schools' Forum will be asked to approve this funding from the CSSB in a separate report at this meeting.
- 3.4 For general rate duties, the local authority is proposing a rate of £60 per pupil from all maintained schools to fund the cost of providing these services. The £60 per pupil rate is unchanged since 2017/18.
- 3.5 The local authority is asking schools to fund central services at a consistent rate of £60 per pupil. The nil increase since 2017/18 demonstrates the commitment of

the local authority to minimise the financial burden on schools, whilst retaining appropriate funding to discharge statutory duties.

- 3.6 Had the rate kept pace with pay inflation, the rate would have been set at £77 per pupil for 2023/24.

4. Funding of General Duties – Historic Context

- 4.1 This £60 rate for 2023/24 was not agreed by Schools' Forum and the local authority made a disapplication request to the Secretary of State on the basis that the local authority could not carry out its full statutory duties and responsibilities without this funding. The local authority scrutinised all duties funded from the proposed rates in its responses to the questions posed by the Secretary of State regarding the disapplication request. In carrying out this review, the local authority had due regard to its duties and responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The local authority believes that the proposed rates would have no adverse impact on the PSED under the Equality Act 2010.

- 4.2 The Secretary of State responded to the disapplication request as follows:

“It is clear that you would not be able to meet the local authority’s statutory responsibility held for maintained schools if you do not retain this level of funding. We also acknowledge that you have demonstrated your commitment to minimising the financial burden on schools, whilst retaining appropriate funding. “

- 4.3 Forum members will recall that the local authority has already absorbed a 31.9% cut in ESG funding which supports the services detailed at appendix A. The services funded from ESG cut across all departments of the Council and by their nature are not provided by a single person but by a cross-cutting team of staff, with no person contributing 100% of their time to services. These arrangements are designed to provide resilience and continuity of services to our schools. Should this funding not be agreed for 2024/25 then the local authority would not be able to maintain services at the level required by statute.

- 4.4 If the local authority and Schools' Forum are unable to reach a consensus on the amount to be retained, the matter would then need to be referred to the Secretary of State once again. This would be the eight consecutive request for disapplication.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Schools' Forum is asked to consult with the members they represent to ensure that sufficient information is available in order for a decision to be taken at the next Schools' Forum in October 2023.

5.2 Should further information be required Schools' Forum members will need to notify the local authority at the meeting on 21 September 2023, to ensure sufficient time is available to provide any additional information.

6. Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that Schools' Forum:

a) Note the contents of the report;

b) Consult those maintained schools that individual members of the Forum represent to ensure that sufficient information is available in order to vote on a general rate of £60 per pupil at Schools' Forum in October 2023.

Retained & General School Duties

Black text denotes the Responsibility,
Blue text provides additional information of how the LA meets the responsibility and any additional non-statutory services provided under an SLA

School Improvement

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expenditure related to core school improvement activities of local authorities with respect to maintained schools (Sch 2, 54)

Statutory and regulatory duties

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of children’s services and personal staff for director (Sch 2, 15a) Planning for the education service as a whole (Sch 2, 15b) Revenue budget preparation, preparation of information on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education (Sch 2, 22) Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure not met from schools’ budget shares (Sch 2, 15c) Formulation and review of local authority schools funding formula (Sch 2, 15d) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functions of LA related to best value and provision of advice to governing bodies in procuring goods and services (Sch 2, 57) Budgeting and accounting functions relating to maintained schools (Sch 2, 74) Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure in respect of schools which do not have delegated budgets, and related financial administration (Sch 2, 58) Monitoring of compliance with requirements in relation to the scheme for financing schools and the provision of community 	<p>Provision of individual Schools Budget Pack.</p> <p>Budget Setting Visit.</p> <p>Provision of multi year forecasts.</p> <p>Budget monitoring visits and provision of reports for Governors.</p> <p>Provision of benchmarking data.</p> <p>Advice and guidance regarding capital allocations and accounting treatment.</p> <p>SIMS Finance module support.</p> <p>Provision of a bank account and procurement card for purchases.</p>

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 except duties specifically related to maintained schools (Sch 2, 15e) • Consultation costs relating to non-staffing issues (Sch 2, 19) • Plans involving collaboration with other LA services or public or voluntary bodies (Sch 2, 15f) • Standing Advisory Committees for Religious Education (SACREs) (Sch 2, 17) • Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating specifically to maintained schools (Sch 2, 21) 	<p>facilities by governing bodies (Sch 2, 59)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 for maintained schools (Sch 2, 60) <p>The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to provide all schools with budget determination allocations each year. For maintained schools the finance team is responsible for Production, consultation and implementation of the Scheme for Financing Schools.</p> <p>Monitoring the schools compliance within the Scheme.</p> <p>In order to ensure that financial information provided by Schools is of the necessary standard for inclusion in the Councils statutory accounts the Local Authority produces and distributes a detailed financial operating handbook to all maintained schools. This manual provides advice and guidance on the requirements of the Scheme for Financing Schools. For example: leasing, contract and procurement rules, VAT regulations and processes, Financial management systems procedures and maintenance and Small Charity accounting requirements</p> <p>Ensuring schools set a balanced budget, this involves reviewing the submission from the Governing Body, checking the correct funding</p>	<p>Management of sales invoicing.</p> <p>Processing of income sheets.</p> <p>Preparation of information for statutory Consistent Financial Reporting returns.</p> <p>Year End procedures.</p> <p>VAT advice, Lease advice.</p>

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>determination has been used, and if not referring this back to the school. This also includes COMFACs.</p> <p>Taking action in accordance with the Scheme for Financing Schools should the School not agree to amend the budget in line with the issued budget determination This includes reporting to the Director of Finance and Policy and Assistant Director of Education.</p> <p>Check and load Schools budget on to the Councils FMS system, for incorporation in to the Councils accounts and monitoring reports.</p> <p>Facilitate the deficit recovery process where a School is unable to set a balanced budget.</p> <p>Ensuring the appropriate VAT returns are submitted to HMRC – to reclaim / pay the correct amount of VAT.</p> <p>Closure of accounts and incorporation of schools accounts in to the LA accounts statutory accounts. Liaison with external auditors and any costs in relation to the external audit of the statutory accounts.</p> <p>Production and submission and publication of the S251 Outturn (excludes academies)</p> <p>Ensure all maintained schools complete and Governing Bodies approve the SFVS. The Local Authority then collates the SFVS, review and submit to EFA.</p> <p>Completion and submission of grant certifications. Eg Pupil Premium</p> <p>Payments to the HMRC. eg for NI & Taxation deduction, CIS payments and apprentice levy</p>	

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>Implementation of new government initiatives, for example the apprentice levy.</p> <p>The Audit Team carry out maintained school audits to test the compliance with the required legal and legislative framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions made under Section 44 of the 2002 Act (Consistent Financial Reporting) (Sch 2, 61) <p>The finance team co-ordinate the annual distribution and collation of the CFR return, ensuring it is checked, reconciled and submitted in accordance with the guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations of employees or potential employees, with or without remuneration to work at or for schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 62) <p>The HR Team: Investigations of employees, potential employees, paid and non-paid workers, in relation to issues arising from safeguarding checks required by DoE Keeping Children Safe in Education including DBS trace certificates, rejected pre-employment medical assessments, concerns arising from responses from referees, refusal to provide information in relation to gaps in employment history, false records in relation to qualification or professional registration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An allocated named senior HR Business Partner • Support for all casework including independent investigations, conciliation and management support in negotiations with staff representatives • Participation in any formal hearings under disciplinary, grievance, capability, sickness absence and redundancy procedures.

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions related to local government pensions and administration of teachers' pensions in relation to staff working at maintained schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 73) <p>Day to day administration of the Teachers Pension Fund and Local Government Pension scheme. This includes the monthly deduction, accounting and payment of employee and employers contributions.</p> <p>Compliance with the annual return responsibilities for both the Teachers Pension Fund and Local Government Pension schemes on behalf of maintained schools. This includes the completion, reconciliation and submission of the annual returns. These returns are also required to be independently audited involving significant officer time and external audit costs.</p> <p>Introduction and compliance with Teachers Pension Monthly Data Collection arrangements and obligations.</p> <p>Provision of Local Government Scheme Discretionary Policy / review</p> <p>Approval of decisions made under the above policy</p> <p>Access to Local Authority Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure Adjudicating Officer for Stage 1 appeals against decisions (not relevant to academies)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex issues dealt with at no additional charge

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrospective membership of pension schemes where it would not be appropriate to expect a school to meet the cost (Sch 2, 76) <p>Should this instance occur the Local Authority would be mindful of its obligations and ensure inappropriate costs were not charged to the School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR duties, including: advice to schools on the management of staff, pay alterations, conditions of service and composition or organisation of staff (Sch 2, 64); determination of conditions of service for non-teaching staff (Sch 2, 65); appointment or dismissal of employee functions (Sch 2, 66) • Consultation costs relating to staffing (Sch 2, 67) <p>Advice to schools on the management of staff through the provision of key HR policies and procedures (excluding those where the governing body has responsibility) and signposting to the relevant policy for individual employee cases</p> <p>Advice to schools on pay alterations through the maintenance of pay scales for various staff groups</p>	

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>Advice on conditions of service through the signposting to relevant national / local terms and conditions (sections and paragraphs that apply)</p> <p>Advice on the composition / organisation of staff including the provision of recruitment policy/procedures and managing staffing levels policy/procedures, and signposting to relevant sections and paragraphs</p> <p>Determination of conditions of service for non-teaching staff through negotiation with trade unions and maintenance of the Single Status Agreement</p> <p>Appointment or dismissal of employee functions through the provision of appointment letter templates and drafting/sending dismissal letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with duties under Health and Safety at Work Act (Sch 2, 68) <p>Under health and safety legislation, the Chief Executive and Director of Child and Adult Services are personally responsible for health and safety standards and performance in all schools where the Local Authority is the employer.</p> <p>The Health, Safety & Well Being Team (HSWT) provides the schools with an effective range of professional health and safety services which includes access to competent advice, assistance, guidance, support, training and auditing in terms of health and safety management.</p>	<p>The service also provides a wide range of cost effective</p>

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>To meet this requirement the Chief Executive must appoint competent persons under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. This person will assist in developing, implementing, auditing and reviewing the health and safety management systems in schools so they may manage the health and safety risks created by activities and comply with the legal requirements.</p> <p>Policies and Procedures This includes development, production, and monitoring of Council wide and school specific health and safety policies and procedures. These documents assist the Chief Executive, Head teacher and Governing Body to meet their statutory responsibilities. The documents establish standards to be achieved and provide relevant forms and templates which can be used to demonstrate compliance.</p> <p>The HSWT provide a monitoring service of the policy on behalf of the Chief Executive to ensure it reflects the standards of health and safety management required by legislation.</p> <p>Advice and Information (including liaison with enforcement agencies)</p> <p>The HSWT provide advice, on health, safety & fire issues as requested. The advisory service includes guidance on: the cost effective implementation of health, safety & fire law and the development of safe systems of work and management systems; the development of practical health, safety & fire standards</p>	<p>well being services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to a full range of occupational health services • Physiotherapy services • Counselling services • Workplace health assessment following Occupational health referral • On site training • Pregnant worker assessments • DSE assessment • Additional health and safety inspections

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>based on results of risk assessments and legal requirements;</p> <p>the development of procedures and strategies for the conduct and review of statutory risk assessments under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, the Manual Handling Operations Regulations, the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations, COSHH Regulations and The Fire Safety Order</p> <p>Prioritisation, on health and safety grounds, of repairs to buildings, plant and equipment.</p> <p>Initial fire risk assessment and competent person review as dictated by the initial assessment (3-5 yearly).</p> <p>The HSWT will lead on all interaction with the Health and Safety Executive, Health Protection Agency and Fire Authority.</p> <p>Annual Health & Safety Review</p> <p>The HSWT audits school health and safety performance on an annual basis. The audit involves Opening meeting with the Headteacher or health and safety co-ordinator</p> <p>A desk top review of health and safety records, (Including policy, risk assessments, fire risk assessments, COSHH assessments, training records, relevant minutes of meetings where health and safety is discussed, maintenance records)</p>	

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>Safety tour/ inspection of the building and grounds.</p> <p>Closing meeting with the Headteacher and/or health and safety co-ordinator to provide initial feedback and clarify points</p> <p>Written report and action plan</p> <p>The objectives of the audit is to monitor the school health and safety policy, arrangements and standards of compliance, on behalf of the Chief Executive & Governing Body, to provide re-assurance that legislative compliance is being achieved and as such a safe and healthy environment is provided.</p> <p>Incident Investigation and reporting to Enforcement Agencies</p> <p>Review of incidents reported via the Metastorm Incident Reporting Portal (schools with access to the HBC network) or via a local safety incident report form (for those with no access to HBC network). Investigation of incidents & reporting to the Health and Safety Executive as required by RIDDOR</p> <p>Annual HSW Schools Training Programme</p> <p>Schools are provided with unlimited access to the Schools HSW Annual Training Programme. This includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H&S training for Headteachers and/or Business Managers; risk assessment training; H&S for maintenance personnel; Asbestos Awareness for Site Asbestos Checking Officers; Fire Warden Training; Managing Maintenance Contractors 	

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>Generic school risk assessment templates</p> <p>These templates cover typical school based risks which are tailored by school.</p> <p>Termly H&S Newsletter</p> <p>Access to CLEAPSS</p> <p>Access to the information and guidance material published by the Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services, including template science risk assessments.</p> <p>CLEAPSS is an advisory service providing support in science and technology for a consortium of local authorities and their schools including establishments for pupils with special needs.</p> <p>CLEAPSS covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> model risk assessments for science and technology, chemicals, living organisms, equipment, sources of resources, laboratory design, facilities and fittings, technicians and their jobs, D&T facilities and fittings. <p>School Radiation Protection Officer (secondary schools)</p> <p>To comply with the Ionising Radiation Regulations, schools with radiation sources must have access to a radiation protection adviser, a radiation protection officer and a radiation protection supervisor.</p> <p>The HSWT provide school's with access to</p>	

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>Radiation Protection Adviser (current provider is CLEAPSS),</p> <p>Radiation Protection Officer (Council Officer)</p> <p>Radiation Protection Guidance containing local rules, emergency contact details, risk assessments, various pro-forma for source accountancy etc.</p> <p>The radiation protection officer's role is to undertake a period inspection and leakage test of radiation sources in the school and</p> <p>Liaise with the HPA and the school based radiation protection supervisor to resolve any local issues</p> <p>Schools with radiation sources must appoint a Radiation Protection Supervisor on site to manage the schools radiation sources and liaise with the Radiation Protection Officer (Council Officer). Schools wishing to arrange disposal or movement of radiation sources must contact the Radiation Protection Officer (Council Officer) and seek advice and guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown relating to schools (Sch 2, 69) <p>Providing information as required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School companies (Sch 2, 70) <p>The Local authority will ensure that if required then we would</p>	

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>meet our statutory requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions under the Equality Act 2010 (Sch 2, 71) <p>The provision of relevant policies and procedures to avoid discrimination in the workplace. This obligation would be met by the provision of advice or recommendations as a result of any discrimination complaint triggered via the employee grievance process or Employment Tribunal claims.</p> <p>The LA provides advice in respect to characteristics contained in the act, such as sex or disability or with regard to issues regarding provision of community facilities for members of the public. Advice is also provided to schools relating to reasonable adjustments needed to comply with the act.</p> <p>The LA will be required to report on the new requirement in respect of the gender pay gap which will include community schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintaining computer systems, including data storage (Sch 2, 72) <p>In relation to the links between maintained schools and the LA we utilise the following:</p> <p>Anycomms provides a means of securely exchanging files between the LA and schools, provision of a security device to maintain access to corporate network post NGfL , a system for automatic transfer of data between schools/academies and the LA and a system for</p>	

Responsibilities held for all schools <u>and</u> academies [RETAINED DUTIES]	Responsibilities held for maintained schools <u>only</u> [GENERAL DUTIES]	SLA Duties
	<p>storing and sharing performance data between schools and the LA</p> <p>The LA chairs and administers the Schools Information Governance Support and the School ICT Strategy Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of governors and payment of governor expenses (Sch 2, 73) <p>The local authority checks to ensure that schools have the appropriate instrument of government is in place.</p>	

Education welfare

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils (Sch 2, 20) • School attendance (Sch 2, 16) • Responsibilities regarding the employment of children (Sch 2, 18) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection of attendance registers (Sch 2, 79)

Asset management

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only	Duties provided under the SLA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the LA's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions (Sch 2, 14a) • General landlord duties for all buildings owned by the local authority, including those leased to academies (Sch 2, 14b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General landlord duties for all maintained schools (Sch 2, 77a & b (section 542(2)) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) to ensure that school buildings have: • appropriate facilities for pupils and staff (including medical and accommodation) <p>Annual condition surveys are carried out by the Building Design & Construction Team. These surveys record a detailed breakdown of the facilities in each School, identifying the use of each different room. In addition, the survey will identify condition items that require attention on a priority basis together with associated costs. This feeds into the Education Asset Management Plan and assists in the production of an agreed rolling programme of work subject to funding.</p> <p>When Schools wish to carry out work to the School building they complete a Building Improvement Form (BIF). The scheme is vetted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of a full design and build service to clients. • Annual review of Asbestos Survey findings to comply with the legislation, including advice and guidance on any findings. • Provision of CCTV systems, ranging from small access and intruder alarm systems through to complex single site, multi site and town centre CCTV systems, with off site monitoring, utilising up to date wireless and IP technology. • Advice and guidance on the Equality Act and its impact on the way in which all public services are run and on improving the lives of disabled people.

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only	Duties provided under the SLA
	<p>and feedback is provided to the School.</p> <p>Provision of professional advice on building related matters at the Schools request. This will include advice on suitability of schemes and use of school buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to sustain appropriate loads <p>All proposed building schemes will include a structural engineer's input as part of the design process. In addition, advice is provided on an ad-hoc basis for any other structural issues identified by the School. As part of the annual condition survey any unusual loads would be identified and listed on the survey for review by the School/ Education department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reasonable weather resistance <p>Annual condition surveys carried out by Building Design & Construction Team will identify condition items that require attention on a priority basis together with associated costs. This will assist in the production of an agreed rolling programme of work subject to funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safe escape routes <p>This will be picked up by Health & Safety when undertaking the Fire Risk Assessment (FRA). This will identify any necessary alterations to the building structure or management procedures which will be discussed with the School. See section 1.6.4 item 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate acoustic levels 	

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only	Duties provided under the SLA
	<p>A Suitability Survey carried out between Building Design & Construction Team and the Education Asset Management Team records the appropriateness of the classroom / room use. Room users are asked to contribute to the survey. Ad hoc guidance is given to Schools when there is a change of use in the room.</p> <p>In addition, all building schemes are designed in accordance with Part E of Bldg Regs. However, any issues identified by the client would be investigated and appropriate design solutions identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lighting, heating and ventilation which meets the required standards • adequate water supplies and drainage • playing fields of the appropriate standards • General health and safety duty as an employer for employees and others who may be affected (Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974) • Management of the risk from asbestos in community school buildings (Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012) <p>Annual Condition Surveys and the Suitability Surveys assess the items above to ensure that the necessary standards are met. In addition, in relation to Asbestos Management the Local Authority maintains a register of location and type of asbestos which is updated as required.</p>	

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only	Duties provided under the SLA
	<p>Duties and responsibilities in relation to general Health & Safety are covered in Section 1.6.4</p>	

Central support services

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clothing grants (Sch 2, 53) Provision of tuition in music, or on other music-related activities (Sch 2, 54) Visual, creative and performing arts (Sch 2, 55) Outdoor education centres (but not centres mainly for the provision of organised games, swimming or athletics) (Sch 2, 56)

Premature retirement and redundancy

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dismissal or premature retirement when costs cannot be charged to maintained schools (Sch 2, 78)

Monitoring national curriculum assessment

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of National Curriculum assessments (Sch 2, 75) Statutory assessment and moderation Early Years moderation and assessment activities – in line with 2017 EYFS Assessment and Reporting Arrangements statutory guidance; Section 3 and Section 7.4 LA EYFS moderation plan 2017; Attendance at Learn Explore Debates – includes updates on EYFSP, provided by Action for children (appointed by DfE) to disseminate information, share good practice and facilitate discussion and consultation with key LA staff and other key stakeholders STA assessment training (EYFSP)- Attendance at central training events provided by STA for LA personnel for the implementation and delivery of statutory assessments Tees Valley EYFS moderation - meet with colleagues from across the Tees Valley to plan procedures, evaluate moderation process and carry out cross LA moderation and standardisation to ensure consistency of judgements Moderator training/update – training for moderators to ensure all are clear about current developments and understand the moderation process. Includes moderation and standardization EYFSP moderation meetings - provided for school staff for evidence trialling and cross school moderation and standardization Meet the moderator meeting – to ensure selected schools are sufficiently prepared for the moderation visit. EYFSP moderation visits –actual visits to schools to moderate school judgements EYFSP school moderation and QA of data at schools' request, visits to schools not selected

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	<p>by LA but who have requested external LA validation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Assurance of data at data collection, (includes, review of data, telephone calls to schools and visits if needed) • Moderation admin. • Strategic planning • KS1 and KS2 assessment and moderation activities – in line with STA statutory guidance for schools and local authorities regarding KS1 and KS2 Assessment and Reporting Arrangements 2017; 2017 teacher assessment external moderation key stage 1; 2017 teacher assessment external moderation: key stage 2 writing • STA assessment training (KS1 and KS2: Attendance at central training events provided by STA for LA personnel for the implementation and delivery of statutory assessments • KS1 and KS2 STA Lead moderators training attendance at STA training for LA nominated Lead Moderators • KS2 Lead moderator testing – statutory STA standardisation exercise for LA Lead moderators • KS1 Lead moderator test – Facilitation and adjudication of statutory standardisation exercise for KS1 moderator • Delivery of KS2 moderator training –training for KS2 moderators to ensure all are clear about current developments and understand the moderation process. Includes invigilation of online statutory STA standardisation exercise • School based moderators' attendance at KS2 moderator training • Delivery of KS1 moderator training (LA staff) training for KS1 moderators to ensure all are clear about current developments and

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
	<p>understand the moderation process. Includes invigilation of written statutory STA standardisation exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School based moderators' attendance at KS1 moderator training (above) • Assessment of KS1 written statutory STA standardisation exercise • Delivery of KS1 and KS2 SATs training for schools – dissemination of key messages around statutory testing and teacher assessment requirements to teaching staff in Y2 and Y6 • Preparation for all moderator training and sats training – essential preparation time for delivery of all training listed • Prep and delivery of English and mathematics Subject leaders meeting for SATS etc To ensure subject leads are clear about statutory assessment and reporting arrangements for their area of responsibility, and of training programme available to support school staff with the process • KS1 & KS2 moderation activities - (10 schools) • Formulation of Moderation plans • Training for moderation visits • Data checks for moderated schools • Strategic planning (self explanatory – ref KS1 and KS2 LA moderation plans) • Phonics checks - 10% of schools • Test monitoring & Test storage monitoring • KS2 SATS monitoring – 10 % of schools (including storage and package checks)

Therapies

Responsibilities held for all schools	Responsibilities held for maintained schools only
<ul style="list-style-type: none">No functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">This is now covered in the high needs section of the regulations and does not require schools forum approval

Agenda Item 7: Indicative Central School Services Block Budgets 2024/25

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is to consult and decide on the budget requirement for the Central School Services block for 2024/25.

2. Background

- 2.1 Upon introduction of the National Funding Formula, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) established a Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) to fund local authorities for the statutory duties and other commitments they hold for both maintained schools and academies. The CSSB brings together:

- funding previously allocated through the retained duties element of the Education Services Grant (ESG)
- funding for ongoing central functions, such as admissions, previously top-sliced from the Schools Block
- residual funding for historic commitments, previously top-sliced from the Schools Block.

- 2.2 This report covers budget requirements for both the historic commitments and the ongoing commitments, including former ESG retained duties and seeks Schools' Forum approval where appropriate.

3. Central School Services Block Funding 2024/25

- 3.1 The CSSB is funded within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation and comprises a fixed amount for historic costs, along with a rate per pupil for ongoing costs. Pupil numbers within the provisional CSSB allocation are based on the October 2022 school census. Final figures will be updated for the October 2023 school census and published in December 2023.
- 3.2 The rate per pupil for ongoing costs in 2024/25 is £40.65. Taking total number on roll from the October 2022 census (maintained and academies), this gives a provisional CSSB funding estimate of £537k for ongoing responsibilities in 2024/25. The fixed rate funding for historic commitments in 2024/25 is £152k (£190k in 2023/24), resulting in total funding of £689k for 2024/25.
- 3.3 Schools' Forum will recall that a 20% year on year funding reduction is applied to historic commitments within the CSSB. 2024/25 is the fifth year of the funding cut being applied. Despite the funding cuts to date, the budget requirement for 2024/25 remains within the reduced funding available. However, this position is likely to change by April 2026.

- 3.4 Although adequate funding is available in 2024/25 to cover historic costs, this does mean that the surplus funding that has historically been transferred into the Schools Block is depleting over time.
- 3.5 DfE has agreed to protect any local authority from having a reduction that takes their total historic commitments funding below the total value of their ongoing prudential borrowing and termination of employment costs, in recognition of the lead in times required for such costs to unwind.
- 3.6 The sections that follow outline the draft budget requirement for 2024/25 in relation to central services – firstly for historic commitments and secondly for ongoing responsibilities, including former ESG retained duties.
- 3.7 **Appendix 1** outlines the individual approval requirements by Schools' Forum for each element of the CSSB budget requirement.
- 3.8 When using centrally held funding, local authorities must treat maintained schools and academies on an equivalent basis.

4. Historic Commitments

4.1 Schools' Forum are asked to consider and approve CSSB budgets for the following historic commitments relating to:

- Licences, and;
- Termination of Employment Costs.

4.2 Licences

Historically all expenditure in relation to licences used to deliver education services were recorded on a specific 'Licences' line on the Authority's Section 251 statement. In 2013/14 when the Schools Block was introduced, this line, amongst other lines was recorded by the EFSA as 'Centrally Retained Combined Budgets'.

4.3 The local authority previously procured its licences from Capita. The Capita licence expired in September 2018 and the local authority introduced a new solution called EYES to support the following areas:

- Data Team
- Attendance Team
- School Improvement Team
- Governors Support Team
- Virtual School
- SEND Team
- NEET/September Guarantee/Raising the Participation Age
- Childcare Placements – 15hrs and 30hrs
- Home to School Transport
- Education Psychology
- Alternative Learning provision

- Groupcall – data transfer
- Schools Portal - a secure means of communicating information between the local authority and schools.

4.4 Using the CSSB funding, schools are asked to fund a contribution to the Council-wide system. The introduction of the EYES system has produced savings against the original CSSB funding of £0.77m. Therefore, the budget requirement in 2024/25 is a contribution of £0.067m towards the costs of these licences, effectively transferring the savings of £0.010m made back to the Schools Block. The EYES system supports a number of wider Council operations and funding from Council service teams, including Early Years to fund the Childcare module, supports the overall EYES system cost. Schools' Forum is asked to approve the contribution of £0.067m for 2024/25.

4.5 Termination of Employment Costs (Brierton)

This budget covers the ongoing termination costs for ex-Brierton staff. This historic pension commitment will only diminish on the death of the ex-employees. Although the historic budget was set at £0.031m, the ongoing budget requirement is actually £0.039m. The difference is linked to an error in the original pension cost estimate provided upon the school closure. As the regulations do not allow for budgets for historic commitments to be increased, Schools' Forum is asked to approve the original funding amount of £0.031m for 2024/25. The remaining cost has been funded from DSG reserves in previous years.

4.6 Upon enquiry, ESFA have clarified that the additional £0.008m expenditure could be funded under a successful disapplication request. Such a request would need to be submitted each financial year for approval by the Secretary of State. The figures contained in this report assume that Schools' Forum are not minded to approve a disapplication request on the basis of materiality. However, as described in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.5 of this report, the local authority would look to apply to ESFA for additional funding from April 2026.

4.7 Were Schools' Forum to approve the amounts shown at paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5 above, the remaining £0.054m CSSB funding for historic commitments would transfer to the Schools Block in 2024/25 to support school budget shares.

5. Ongoing Responsibilities

5.1 The table below summarises the provisional budget requirement for CSSB ongoing responsibilities in 2024/25. As the charges marked with an asterisk are calculated on the basis of pupil numbers, they are subject to change when October 2023 school census data is published in December 2023.

CSSB Ongoing Responsibilities	£m
Funding 2024/25*	0.537
Budget Requirement – Retained Education Services*	(0.214)
Budget Requirement – Admissions	(0.156)
Budget Requirement – Copyright Licences*	(0.083)
Budget Requirement – Servicing Schools' Forum	(0.045)
Funding remaining (before final updates)	0.039

*these figures are subject to pupil number / other changes and will be updated in December 2023

5.2 Retained Education Services

Details regarding this element of funding are covered in a separate report on Statutory Services presented to Schools' Forum at this same meeting. The budget requirement for 2024/25 is set at £16.18 per pupil (unchanged from 2023/24), with pupil volumes currently based on October 2022 school census data.

The charge reflects the cost of services delivered by the local authority to all schools, including academies. A list of services provided is included in the appendix attached to the separate report.

5.3 Admissions

Details describing the service provided are shown in **Appendix 2**. Schools' Forum approved a budget of £146k for 2023/24. The local authority is proposing to increase the charges for the provision of the Admissions service by 7% to reflect the cost of the estimated NJC pay award from April 2024. This is a proposed increase of £10k.

5.4 Copyright Licences

The ESFA has negotiated copyright licences for schools with most copyright holders. The licences are purchased by the ESFA, who charge the local authority by way of a reduction in DSG. In 2023/24 the licence cost is £0.083m. The licence cost for 2024/25 will not be known until the ESFA confirm the final cost later in the year at which point the draft budget will be revised before approval by Children's Services Committee. The list of current licences procured on behalf of schools is as follows:

- Christian Copyright Licensing International
- Copyright Licensing Agency
- Education Recording Agency
- Filmbank Distributors Ltd. (for the public video screening licence)
- Mechanical Copyright Protection Society
- Motion Picture Licensing Company
- Newspaper Licensing Authority
- Performing Rights Society
- Phonographic Performance Limited
- Schools Printed Music Licence.

5.5 Servicing Schools' Forum

This amount reflects the cost of delivering Schools' Forum, including the preparation and attendance of at least four meetings per year. This includes staff costs for preparation of reports. Schools' Forum agreed a budget of £39k for 2023/24. An increase of 7% is proposed for 2024/25 to reflect the cost of the estimated NJC pay award from April 2024. This is a proposed increase of £6k.

5.6 Were Schools' Forum to approve the amounts shown in the table at paragraph 5.1 above (subject to final updates), the remaining £0.039m CSSB funding for ongoing commitments would transfer to the Schools Block in 2024/25 to support school budget shares.

6. **Recommendations**

6.1 Schools' Forum are recommended to

- a) note the contents of the report
- b) consult those schools that individual members of the Forum represent with a view to deciding on the following:
 - i. agree to fund the budget requirement for historic commitments as detailed in paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5 (*Please note: a separate vote per service is required and all Forum members are eligible to vote*)
 - ii. agree to fund the budget requirement for ongoing responsibilities as detailed in paragraphs 5.2 to 5.5 (*Please note: a separate vote per service is required and all Forum members are eligible to vote. However, a vote is not required for copyright licences as these are agreed on a consultation-only basis*).

Voting: All Schools' Forum members are eligible to vote on these recommendations.

ESFA Guidance on approvals required

Centrally retained service	Approval required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high needs block provision • central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State • funding of brought forward deficits 	<p>Schools' Forum approval is not required (although they should be consulted)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement • back pay for equal pay claims • remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies • places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils • admissions • servicing of schools forum • contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools • contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools (voted on by relevant maintained school members of the forum only) • de-delegated services from the schools block (voted on by the relevant maintained school members of the forum only) 	<p>Schools' Forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • central early years block provision • any movement of funding out of the schools block 	<p>Schools' Forum approval is required</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capital expenditure funded from revenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013; no new projects can be charged 	<p>Schools' Forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis.</p> <p>The budget cannot exceed the value agreed in the previous funding period, and no new commitments can be entered into.</p> <p>Read establishing local authority DSG baselines for more information.</p>

Centrally retained service	Approval required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of the remaining costs should be presented • contribution to combined budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources • existing termination of employment costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • costs for specific individuals must have been approved prior to April 2013; no new redundancy costs can be charged • prudential borrowing costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013 • details of the remaining costs should be presented • SEN transport where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget (this is now treated as part of the high needs block but still requires schools forum approval as a historic commitment) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy • funding for good or outstanding schools with falling rolls where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years 	<p>Schools' Forum approval is required on a line-by-line basis, including approval of the criteria for allocating funds to schools</p>

School Admissions Service

Centrally Retained

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that admission arrangements are compliant with the Admissions Code (2014). Local Authorities are expected to incur costs for requirements in relation to admissions and retain central DSG funding which contributes towards a team which comprises of an admissions manager, two admissions officers, one admissions assistant for these responsibilities:

- Devise, consult, determine and publish admission arrangements
- Produce composite prospectus
- Set Admission Number (PAN)
- Devise co-ordinated admissions scheme
- Produce application packs for entry into Reception and Year 7 admission rounds
- Produce reminder letters
- Ranking of application forms for entry into Reception and Year 7 admissions rounds
- Process application forms for entry into Reception and Year 7
- Reallocation of places following national offer days (primary and secondary)
- Produce and present school appeals cases for own admission authority schools and schools which converted to academy status prior to 2013/14 (this includes, legal and democratic services officer time)
- Produce and maintain waiting lists
- Complete DfE statistical returns (eg sufficiency survey/schools adjudicator report, national offer day report, appeals report)
- Development of Admissions Service - changes within Admissions Code
- Process in-year transfer requests (which can be quite complex and can include LAC, SEN, Asylum Seekers, Out of Area and Overseas pupils)
- Purchase, maintenance and development of IT software (parent online application portal)
- Process in-year fair access applications

- Dissemination of admissions information and daily support to parents, schools and other agencies
- Process Managed Move requests
- Attendance at and produce reports for Admissions Forum
- Provision of data and information to support Behaviour & Attendance Partnership meetings
- Provision of data and information to support Vulnerable Pupils Meetings
- Respond to freedom of information and data requests

Report to Hartlepool Schools' Forum 21 September 2023
From Danielle Swainston (Assistant Director – Joint Commissioning)

Item 8: High Needs Block (HNB) Projected Outturn 2023/24

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the projected 2023/24 outturn for high needs services based on spending to the end of quarter one.

2. Background

- 2.1 Financial pressures affecting the provision of services for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are reported to Schools' Forum at regular intervals.
- 2.2 Projected outturns for 2023/24 based on worse-case, mid-case and best-case have been prepared.
- 2.3 The final position for 2022/23 was a year-end overspend of £0.752m. Total expenditure was £14.696m, an increase of £2.024m from 2021/22.
- 2.4 Children's Services Committee approved the recommendation of Schools' Forum to set a budget requirement exceeding available HNB funding by £2.147m in 2023/24. Schools' Forum will establish a recovery plan to bring high needs block spending back in line with budget within 3 years.

3. 2023/24 Block Funding

- 3.1 The original Hartlepool HNB allocation for 2023/24 is **£18.661m**. Of this, ESFA recoup £3.330m to pay place funding direct to academies, leaving a net £15.331m.
- 3.2 Schools' Forum will recall that there is an in-year funding adjustment for the HNB – the import / export adjustment. The adjustment credits the authority at £6k per pupil where any non-Hartlepool pupils are attending Hartlepool schools and charges the authority £6k where any Hartlepool pupils are being educated outside of Hartlepool. The £6k reflects a place funding amount for the pupil.
- 3.3 For 2023/24, Hartlepool has a net adjustment of 70.5 pupils at £6k charge. This means we have 70.5 more Hartlepool children educated outside of Hartlepool than non-Hartlepool pupils attending Hartlepool schools. This gives a total adjustment of £0.423m.
- 3.4 The 2023/24 import / export adjustment charge is £0.117m greater than in 2022/23. This change is a direct reduction to the HNB funding in 2023/24 so presents a budget pressure.
- 3.5 ESFA allow a short time period for Councils to review the detail of their import / export adjustment in case errors are found. We have been able to complete the review and have submitted a list of 9 potential errors to ESFA. If these errors are agreed for correction, the £0.117m charge would reduce by £0.054m.

4. 2023/24 Outturn Projection

- 4.1 Based on spending in quarter 1, along with estimated expenditure for the remainder of the financial year, the projected outturn position for high needs ranges from £1.673m overspend best case to £2.764m overspend worse case. This is summarised by each area of spend in the table below.
- 4.2 The paragraphs that follow explain the main variances to budget based on the mid-case projection of £2.250m.

High Needs Expenditure 2023/24	Worse Case		Mid Case		Best Case	
	Projection £m	Variance Over/(under) Spend £m	Projection £m	Variance Over/(under) Spend £m	Projection £m	Variance Over/(under) Spend £m
ESFA recoupment – academy place funding	3.330	-	3.330	-	3.330	-
Place funding (LA)	0.805	-	0.805	-	0.805	-
Independent school fees	5.080	0.064	4.942	(0.074)	4.666	(0.350)
Out of Area top-ups	0.642	0.055	0.598	0.011	0.598	0.011
Top-up funding and support	8.448	0.381	8.201	0.135	8.055	(0.012)
Horizon School and AP	0.932	-	0.932	-	0.932	-
Post-16 top-ups	1.291	-	1.205	(0.086)	1.105	(0.186)
Support services	0.705	-	0.705	-	0.705	-
Borrowing Costs	0.075	-	0.075	-	0.075	-
Import / Export Adj Increase	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.063	0.063
Approved budget shortfall		2.147		2.147		2.147
Total projection	21.425	2.764	20.910	2.250	20.334	1.673

4.3 Local authority place funding (on budget).

This budget head covers payment of place funding to ARPs within maintained schools. Outturn is expected to be in line with budget.

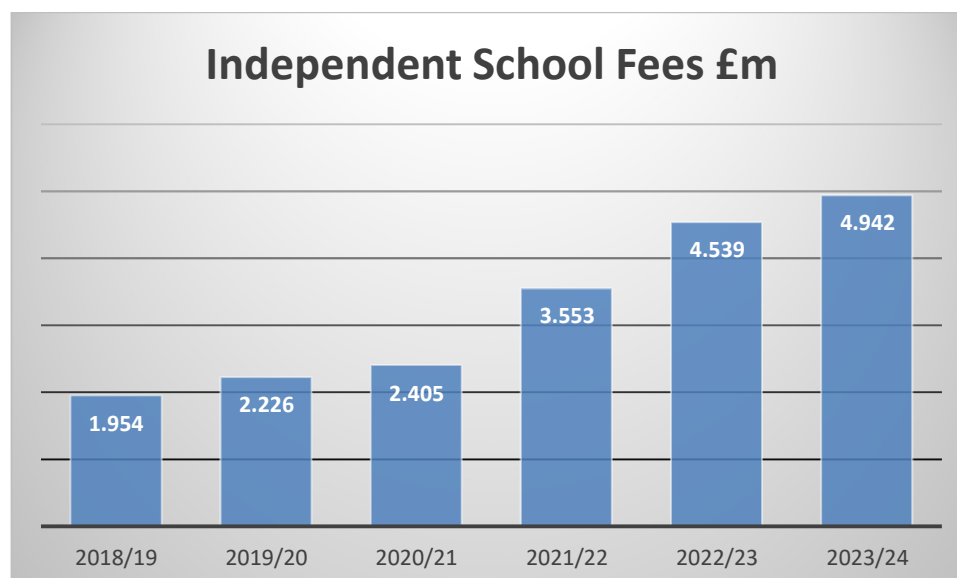
4.4 Independent school fees (£0.074m underspend)

The mid-case projected spend for independent school placements is £4.942m. This compares to expenditure of £4.539m in 2022/23. A summary of changes from 2022/23 to quarter 1 forecast is shown in the following table.

2022/23 Expenditure	£4.539m
Full year placements in 2023/24 that were only part year in 2022/23	£0.532m
Part year placements in 2023/24 that were full year in 2022/23	(£0.805m)
Leavers during 2022/23	(£0.280m)
New placements 2023/24	£0.680m
Estimate for further new placements in 2023/24	£0.276m
2023/24 Forecast Expenditure	£4.942m

Eleven new placements make up the estimated expenditure of £0.680m, eight of which are planned to start in September 2023. Reasons for new placements include: children moving into area, lack of internal provision (Free School aiming to be open Sept 2024), increase in schools saying they cannot meet need, tribunal outcomes.

As at summer term 2023, there are existing placements for 74 pupils at an average cost of £22k per term. Placement costs range from £10k per term to £54k per term.



4.5 Out of authority top-ups (£0.011m overspend)

The mid-case projected spend for out of authority placements is £0.598m. This compares to expenditure of £0.427m in 2022/23. A summary of changes from 2022/23 to quarter 1 forecast is shown in the following table.

2022/23 Expenditure	£0.475m
Full year placements in 2023/24 that were only part year in 2022/23	£0.095m
Part year placements in 2023/24 that were full year in 2022/23	(£0.058m)
Changes in provision from 2022/23	£0.063m
New placements 2023/24	£0.023m
2023/24 Forecast Expenditure	£0.598m

There is one new placement planned from September 2023 at a cost of £0.023m, along with changes to 2 existing placements at a cost of £0.063m.

Changes to out of authority provision in-year are unlikely as available places are scarce.

4.6 Exclusions, including Horizon School (on budget)

This budget head funds the cost of place funding and top-ups for Horizon School, along with the costs of alternative provision for permanently excluded pupils. It receives income from AWPU clawback from schools for those pupils that are permanently excluded.

At quarter 1, net expenditure is expected to be in line with budget.

4.7 Top-up funding and support (£0.135m overspend)

This budget heading includes funding for Individual Pupil Support (IPS) and funding for Special Schools and ARP top-ups.

The overspending is linked to increased spending for IPS, particularly for new group funding agreements. Seventeen new agreements totalling £0.195m have been agreed by the SEN Panel so far in 2023/24.

New group funding agreements are in place to assist with early identification in younger children. There are also agreements to fund a member of staff to continue a specific pupil's education in mainstream school whilst a more specialist place is sought. Exceptional group funding requests have been approved when there is evidence that this prevents children needing specialist provision and if a group approach is more cost effective than individual pupil allocations. The group funding requests are checked to ensure that children accessing any cohort provision are not being double funded via IPS.

The mid-case outturn projection for IPS assumes there will be 10 new individual child IPS agreements for quarters 2 to 4, along with further group funding agreements amounting to £0.100m.

The mid-case outturn projection assumes no pupil growth in our 2 special schools up to 31 March 2024. Forum will recall that the new cost funded payments start from September 2023.

4.8 Post-16 top-up funding (£0.086m underspend)

Take-up for post-16 education is difficult to predict prior to the September intake. At this stage, costs are based on 2022/23 take-up, giving an estimated underspend of £0.086m.

4.9 Support Services (on budget)

The contribution from high needs to local authority support services is assumed at budget level.

4.10 Borrowing Costs (on budget)

This budget is for borrowing costs to fund part of the capital works needed to extend SEND provision within the town during 2021/22. Year 2 interest costs are expected at £0.075m in line with budget.

4.11 The approved budget shortfall of £2.147m is added to the outturn position as this represents unfunded expenditure included in the budget headings above.

5 DSG Balances Summary

5.1 There is now a negative reserve balance recorded against the High Needs Block of £0.426m. Should the mid-case projection of £2.250m included in this report materialise, there would be a total high needs block deficit reserve of £2.676m.

5.2 Forum are aware that although DSG reserves are historically earmarked to individual blocks (e.g. high needs block) for internal reporting purposes, ESFA consider DSG reserves as one overall balance in terms of accounting and reporting of deficits.

5.3 The current balance of total DSG reserves is £0.734m. Should the movement on reserves in 2023/24 be limited to the projected high needs block overspend and budget deficit, DSG reserves would move to a deficit position of £1.516m.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Forum is recommended to note the contents of the report.