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# SCHOOLS' FORUM

**Monday 12 January 2026 – 10 am**

**Events Hall,  
Centre for Independent Living (CIL), Burbank Street**

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## **A G E N D A**

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|-----------|---|---------------------------|
| <b>1.</b> | Apologies   | <i>Chair</i>              |
| <b>2.</b> | Draft Minutes from Schools' Forum meeting on 9 December 2025 and Matters Arising  | <i>Chair</i>              |
| <b>3.</b> | Central School Services Block Budgets 2026/27 - Update ( <i>For Information</i> ) | <i>Amanda Whitehead</i>   |
| <b>4.</b> | Dedicated Schools Grant – Early Years Block 2026/27 ( <i>For Decision</i> )       | <i>Rebecca Stephenson</i> |
| <b>5.</b> | Update - School Budget Shares 2026/27 ( <i>For Information</i> )                  | <i>Amanda Whitehead</i>   |
| <b>6.</b> | Permanently Excluded Pupils (PEXs) ( <i>Standing Item</i> )                       | <i>Emma Rutherford</i>    |

Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting –  
Monday 26 January 2026, 10 am at the CETL

## Schools' Forum Meeting

9<sup>th</sup> December 2025

### Attendees:

#### Members

Carole Bradley (CB) (Academy Primary) (Chair)  
 Tim Blades (TB) (Maintained Governors)  
 John Hardy (JH) (Academy Primary)  
 David Leane (DL) (Diocese RC)  
 Adam Palmer (AP) (Academy Secondary)  
 Linda Richardson (LR) (Early Years PVI)  
 Emma Rutherford (ER) Horizon School  
 Sue Sharpe (SS) (Governor)  
 Mark Tilling (MT) (Maintained Secondary)  
 David Turner (DT) (Primary)  
 Lee Walker (LW) (Academy Primary)  
 Zoe Westley (ZW) Academy Special  
 Vicki Wilson (VW) (Diocese C of E)  
 Leanne Yates (LY) (Academy Primary)

#### Local Authority Officers

Claire Mcpartlin (Administrator)  
 Sandra Shears (SSh)  
 (Children's Finance)  
 Fiona Stobbs (FS) (Inclusive  
 Learning and SEND)  
 Jane Watt (JW) (Children's  
 Finance)  
 Amanda Whitehead  
 (Assistant Director Education)

Agenda Item	Action
<b>1 Apologies -</b>  Philip Pritchard (Academy Primary) Caroline Reed (Academy Primary) Andy Rogers (Academy Secondary) Jo Wilson (Academy Primary)	
<b>2 Minutes of the Last Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and Matters Arising</b>  SEND Cluster Model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MT advised concerns regarding secondary SENCO's attending a secondary network as well as the primary cluster had not been discussed to date.</li> </ul> <p>The minutes were approved following the below amendment on page 3;</p> <p><i>Consider the concept of cluster budget setting; Forum unanimously agreed in principle however proposed to defer until the direction of the new Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services and new legislation (within the anticipated SEND White Paper) is realised to allow for a cohesive vision moving forward.</i></p>	

<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>High Needs Block Projected Outturn 2025/26</b></p> <p>The report provided the projected 2025/26 outturn for high needs services based on spending to the end of quarter two.</p> <p>Estimated expenditure ranged from £4.643m to £5.226m overspend, an improved position from the last estimate. Reasons for this were primarily based on anticipated overspend on Independent School Fees and Top-Up Funding and Support. There was a negative reserve balance recorded against the DSG Block of £4.932m.</p> <p>AW clarified the latest position on the DSG Management Plan with members. The Plan is closely monitored, and regular meetings were scheduled with officers working within the mitigation areas.</p> <p>MT raised a query around independent fees and whether they were shared with Social Care. JW confirmed this was a shared cost.</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>i) Forum noted the contents of the report.</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Dedicated Schools Grant 2026/27 Decision Timeline</b></p> <p>The report outlined the draft timing for consideration and decision making of key DSG budget decisions.</p> <p>Recommendations and approvals made by Schools' Forum would be considered by Children's Services Committee. Meetings of the Committee to discuss budget were scheduled for 3 February 2026 and 3 March 2026.</p> <p>There were several deadlines to meet DSG regulations, they included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Budget Shares must be made available in the Authority Pro-Forma tool by 23 January and ratification must be confirmed shortly afterwards.</li> <li>• Nursery settings must be notified of their new hourly rates for each entitlement by 28 February.</li> </ul> <p>Forum may be required to approve a percentage of growth funding being used to support ISBs. This would be subject to the maximum MFG of +0.00% after the 0.5% transfer to the High Needs Block proving viable.</p> <p>DfE had not provided funding information for the Early Years Block (EYB) 2026/27 or High Needs Block (HNB) 2026/27 at the time of this meeting. This was expected W/C 15 December 2025.</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>i) Forum noted the contents of the report.</p>	

5	<p><b>School Budget Shares 2026/27</b></p> <p>The report outlined information released at the time of the meeting relating to School Budget Shares for 2026/27.</p> <p>The DfE had released information relating to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block allocation for 2026/27. The Authority Proforma Tool (APT) was expected on 17 December 2025, when received the calculations and modelling of indicative budgets for individual schools would be completed.</p> <p>Following a query, JWa advised the funding allocation received from DSG is now fixed as the Primary Unit of Funding (PUF) and Secondary Unit of Funding is confirmed. How that fixed amount will be allocated across schools and the assessment of whether the NFF is affordable will be established once the APT is issued and completed from 17 December.</p> <p>MT asked Forum to be mindful that following a recent report, pupil premium may change going forward which could have major implications around who is eligible to access it.</p> <p>JH questioned whether there had been any communication to the DfE around the way funding is allocated. It does not seem reasonable that the DSG funding allocation may not cover the cost of the NFF. It was suggested that a letter could be written on behalf of Forum or a briefing paper provided to the MP to raise in the house. DT suggested a DfE representative be invited to a future Forum to provide a presentation around the funding allocation process.</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>i) Forum noted the contents of the report.</p>	
6	<p><b>Permanently Excluded Pupils (PEXs) – standing item</b></p> <p>11 pupils had been permanently excluded within this academic year. Of these 11, two had been cancelled and one child was out of area leaving the total number at eight. This was a significant reduction on previous years.</p> <p>There were 105 children on roll at Horizon. This comprised of 85 standard places, 14 in Alternative Provision and 6 Dual Registered at Haven.</p> <p>Numbers of Elective Home Education pupils had continued to increase. Following the Census in October there had been 280 pupils home educated.</p>	
7	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>None.</p>	

	Meeting closed: 11:10 am.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Date and Time of Next Forum Meeting</b>  Monday 12 January 2026, 10 am, Events Hall, Centre for Independent Living (CIL), Burbank Street, Hartlepool, TS245 7NY.	

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## OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LOG

Meeting	Description	Owner
14/10/25	MT raised concerns around the secondary SENCO attending a secondary network as well as the primary clusters. This would impact on staff time and pupil support. It was agreed to discuss this further with Head Teachers not in attendance at Forum and SENDCO outside of this meeting.	FS

Financial Year 2025/26: Children's Services Committee – Log of Schools' Forum  
Recommendations and Committee Decisions

Last Updated: 23 December 2025

Committee Date	Report	Recommendation and Decision Details
02/12/25	Special School Growth Proposals	<p>a) Approve the growth proposals for Springwell school recommended by Schools' Forum for AY 2025-26 of <b>£0.179m</b>;</p> <p>b) Approve the growth proposals for Catcote school recommended by Schools' Forum for AY2025-26 of <b>£0.453m</b></p>

**Report to Hartlepool Schools' Forum 12 January 2026**  
**From Amanda Whitehead – Assistant Director Education**

**Item 3: Central School Services Block Budgets 2026/27 - Update**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to confirm the final funding allocation for the 2026/27 Central School Services Block (CSSB) following the publication of information by the Department for Education (DfE) on 17 December 2025.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Schools' Forum considered the CSSB budget requirement for 2026/27 at their meeting on 16 September 2025. Forum agreed to recommend the budget requirement to Committee for approval.
- 2.2 After meeting the CSSB budget requirement, Schools' Forum agreed to transfer any residual CSSB funding to the High Needs Block (HNB) in 2026/27.

**3. Funding Update**

- 3.1 The confirmed CSSB funding is £0.097m for historic commitments and £0.569m for ongoing commitments, a total of £0.666m.
- 3.2 The allocation for ongoing commitments is based on total number on roll for October 2025 census of 13,002 multiplied by the funding rate of £43.75.

**4. Budget Requirement 2026/27 and Transfer to HNB**

- 4.1 At their meeting on 16 September 2025, School's Forum agreed to recommend the budget requirement below for Committee approval. The budget requirement for Statutory Services – Retained is based on census numbers so has now been updated for 13,002 pupils. The budget requirement has reduced by £0.004m.

Historic Commitment	Budget Requirement 2026/27	Description
Licences	£0.067m	Contribution to the Council-wide EYES system. The introduction of the EYES system has produced savings against the original CSSB funding of £0.077m. Therefore, the budget requirement in 2026/27 is a reduced contribution of £0.067m towards the costs of these licences. 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.
Termination Costs (Brierton School)	£0.031m	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 £0.044m. 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, <u>Schools' Forum is asked to approve the original funding amount of £0.031m for 2026/27</u> . The remaining cost has been funded from DSG reserves in previous years.
Ongoing Commitment	Budget Requirement 2026/27	Description
Copyright Licences	£0.098m	The DfE has negotiated copyright licences for schools with most copyright holders. The licences are purchased by the DfE, who charge the local authority by way of a reduction in DSG. The licence cost for 2026/27 is estimated at £0.098m.
Admissions Service	£0.165m	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 an Admissions Team. The budget requirement includes a 3.2% increase from 2025/26 to reflect the estimated pay award in April 2026.
Servicing of Schools' Forum	£0.048m	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. The budget requirement includes a 3.2% increase from 2025/26 to reflect the estimated pay award in April 2026.
Statutory Services - Retained Duties	£0.214m (amended to £0.210m)	<p>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 2026/27 is set at £16.18 per pupil (unchanged from 2025/26), with pupil volumes currently based on October 2024 school census data.</p> <p>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.</p>

- 4.2 This gives a revised total budget requirement of £0.098m historic commitments and £0.521m ongoing commitments – a grand total of £0.619m.
- 4.3 The financial position can now be confirmed as funding available of £0.666m against the budget requirement of £0.619m. This gives residual funding of £0.047m.
- 4.4 As agreed by Schools' Forum at their meeting on 16 September 2025, the £0.047m will be transferred to the High Needs Block.

## 5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Forum is recommended to note the contents of this report.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Report to Hartlepool Schools' Forum 12 January 2026</b> <b>From Assistant Director (Early Intervention, Performance and Commissioning)</b></p>
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**Item 4: Dedicated Schools Grant – Early Years Block 2026/27**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consult on the 2026/27 Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) and funding of Providers.
- 1.2 A summary of the consultation responses will be tabled at the meeting for consideration by Schools' Forum.
- 1.3 Children's Services Committee will receive the results of all consultation, along with the recommendations from Schools' Forum at their meeting on 3 February 2026.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The Early Years Block (EYB) is issued to local authorities specifically for the delivery of the early year's offer. Funding and associated entitlements expanded in 2025/26 with the extension of both the 9 months to 2 years entitlement and the 2-year-old working parent entitlement to 30 hours per week. These changes build on the significant expansion introduced in 2024/25, which saw the launch of 2-year-old entitlements for working parents from 1 April 2024 and new entitlements for 9 months to 2 year olds from 1 September 2024.
- 2.2 2026/27 will be the first full year of the expanded entitlements. As changes continue to embed, there remains a level of uncertainty to budget planning for the local authority. As such, careful consideration of proposed hourly rates for providers is required, along with an appropriate amount that should be centrally retained to fund the effective management of expanded entitlements by the aulItem 4 - Dedicated Schools Grant – Early Years Block 2026-27hority.
- 2.3 Funding provided through the 2025 to 2026 early years national insurance contributions and teachers' pay grant (EYNTPG) has been rolled into the national average funding rate for 3 and 4-year-olds, 2-year-olds and 9 months to 2-years-old. Local authorities will not, therefore, pass on a separate EYNTPG allocation to providers in 2026 to 2027.
- 2.4 Local authorities are required to consult providers on proposed annual changes to local early year's funding formulas, although the final decision rests with the local authority.
- 2.5 Consultation with providers was open between the 5th January and noon 9th January 2026.
- 2.6 The Council is consulting on proposed hourly rates for the following provisions in 2026/27:
  - 3- to 4-year-old provision;
  - 2-year-old FRAS (Families Receiving Additional Support) provision (formerly known as disadvantaged provision);
  - 2-Year-old Working Parent provision;
  - 9 months to 2-year-old provision.

- 2.7 The table below provides the provisional early year's funding for Hartlepool provision in 2026/27. DfE (Department for Education) are now moving to three census points for all entitlements, not just the newer entitlements. This means our funding will be adjusted three times during 2026/27 to reach the final confirmed allocation.
- 2.8 For the 3 and 4-year-old entitlements, DfE analysis shows that changing from an annual to a termly census will result in a lower number of funded hours being reported across the year, at a national level. However, DfE recognise that local authorities will still need to fund the same number of hours locally. To compensate for the budget reduction local authorities would otherwise see from reduced headcounts under a termly funding model, DfE have adjusted the 3 and 4-year-old rates, reflecting the termly variation at the national level. This means, in financial year 2026 to 2027, each local authority will receive an 'adjusted' hourly rate for 3 and 4-year-olds after allowing for the termly funding adjustment. This change will only take place in 2026 to 2027 to support transition and will not be an ongoing adjustment.
- 2.9 DfE expect local authorities to pass-on an uplift to their provider rate which is broadly in line with their DfE's unadjusted year-on-year percentage uplift, that is, using the rates and uplifts from the 'without termly adjustment'. Funding shown in the table below is based on the 'with termly adjustment' rate of £6.25, whereas the figures used in section 4 of this report are based on the 'without termly adjustment' rate of £6.07.

Early Years Block 2026/27	Hourly Rate Funding £	Part Time Equivalents (Estimate)	Indicative Funding £
3 to 4 Year Olds – Universal	6.25	1,238.88	4,413,510
3 to 4 Year Olds – Additional	6.25	475.25	1,693,078
3 to 4 Year Olds – Pupil Premium	1.15	399.16	261,649
3 to 4 Year Olds – Disability Access Fund			82,875
2 Year Olds – FRAS	8.63	312.40	1,536,727
2 Year Olds – Working Parents	8.63	621.36	3,056,532
2 Year Olds – Pupil Premium	1.15	149.39	97,925
2 Year Olds – Disability Access Fund			21,450
Under 2 Year Olds	11.69	755.31	5,032,857
Under 2 Year Olds – Pupil Premium	1.15	18.03	11,819
Under 2 Year Olds – Disability Access Fund			4,875
<b>Total Indicative Funding 2026/27</b>			<b>16,213,297</b>

### 3. **Considerations for the Hartlepool Formula**

- 3.1 Local authorities need to consider the following in proposing an hourly rate structure for each provision:
- At least 97% of the funded hourly rate must be passed to providers. This has increased from 96% last year;

- The level of funding needed to effectively administer and manage the expanded early year's offer by the Council. This can be up to 3% of the hourly rate in 2026/27;
- An appropriate level of contingency in case payments to providers during the year exceed census funding levels;
- A Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) to support individual children with low level and emerging needs – an area of growing concern. The authority is appointing to a new Outreach Worker post for 2026/27. This will be funded from the Centrally Retained budget. The new post holder will be visible across settings and will offer greater support to providers in strategies for managing early intervention. The SENIF funding proposed within each hourly rate is in addition to investment in the new Outreach Worker post;
- Additional financial support for those children living with a greater level of deprivation.

- 3.2 The sections that follow outline proposed changes to current hourly rates, along with the rationale for how we plan to allocate additional funding.
- 3.3 Appendix A to the report provides an illustrative increase in funding should providers have been paid in line with the proposed 2026/27 increases contained in this report. So as to base the analysis on the increased 30 hour entitlements, the period covers headcount payments for September 2025 to November 2025 inclusive (3 months). The National Insurance grant has been included in the payments made (pro-rata) to ensure a like for like comparison. The grant has been rolled into the hourly rate funding for 2026/27.
- 3.4 The figures in appendix A exclude amounts payable to settings for pupil premium, Disability Access Fund or SEN inclusion.
- 3.5 The analysis shows that several school settings benefit to a lesser extent from the hourly rate increase compared to their allocation of the separate NI grant in 2025/26. The NI grant was only payable to school settings (as per the grant conditions). In mainstreaming the grant into the 2026/27 hourly rate, the rate is less favourable than the separate grant allocation. This seems to be the case across all school settings as can be seen from the table at paragraph 3.5 below.
- 3.6 The average increase in payments across each type of setting is shown in the following table.

Setting Type	Average increase 2026/27 (proposed) %
Childminder	4.49%
PVI	4.60%
Schools	0.62%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.08%</b>

#### **4. Centrally Retained Budget**

- 4.1 For 2026/27, a maximum of 3% funding can be retained to deliver the early year's service. This has reduced from 4% in 2025/26 and 5% historically. The change to 3% for 2026/27 results in a budget reduction of £0.024m, when compared to 2025/26 (at 4%).
- 4.2 The authority proposes to retain the maximum of 3%, or £0.465m (£0.489m in 2025/26).
- 4.3 The majority of centrally retained funding supports staffing costs, including the new Outreach Worker role (2-year fixed term). The centrally retained budget requirement allows the service 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
  - Ensure the Families Information Directory is relevant and up to date as part of Ofsted requirements
  - 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.

#### **5. 3- to 4-Year-Old Hourly Rate**

- 5.1 Government have increased the funded hourly rate (without termly adjustment as outlined in paragraph 2.9) by 17p to £6.07. After applying the additional 17p and increasing the pass-through rate from 96% to 97%, there is an increase of 23p to allocate.
- 5.2 The local authority priorities for allocating the extra funding are:
- We would like to target additional financial support to providers caring for those children living with a greater level of deprivation;
  - We would prefer for the remainder of the increase to benefit all providers by supporting increased pay costs and other inflation.
- 5.3 In line with these priorities we propose to:
- Increase the deprivation supplement from 1p to 4p – an overall budget increase from £10k to £39k;
  - Increase the base rate from £5.36 to £5.56 – an increase of 3.7%

- 5.4 The proposed hourly rate payments for 3- to 4-year-old provision are shown in the table below.

3- to 4-Year-Old Provision	Hourly Rate	Percentage	Funding Split (using estimated PTE)
Total funded hourly rate	£6.07	100%	£5,930,718
Retained by local authority	£0.18	3%	£175,870
<b>Proposed split for the 97% pass through to Providers</b>			
Base rate	£5.56	97%	£5,432,421
Deprivation Supplement	£0.04		£39,082
Teacher Pay / Pension Supplement (unchanged)	£0.24		£234,493
Contingency (unchanged)	£0.02		£19,540
SEN Inclusion (unchanged)	£0.03		£29,312

## 6. **2-Year-Old Working Parent Hourly Rate**

- 6.1 Government have increased the funded hourly rate by 35p to £8.63. After applying the additional 35p and increasing the pass-through rate from 96% to 97%, there is an increase of 42p to allocate.
- 6.2 The local authority priorities for allocating the extra funding are:
- We would like to increase SENIF funding significantly across 2-year-old provision. Additional targeted funding for those providers seeing increased SEN needs would help us intervene early, prior to children reaching school age.
  - After increasing SENIF funding, we propose to apply the remainder of the available funding to the base rate to benefit all providers.
- 6.3 In line with these priorities we propose to:
- Increase SENIF funding from 3p to 16p per hour – growing the budget from the current £7k to £57k. This injection of funds could make a real difference at this age group;
  - Increase the base rate from £7.82 to £8.11 per hour.

- 6.4 Proposed hourly rate payments for 2-year-old Working Parent provision are shown in the following table.

2-Year-Old Provision (working parent)	Hourly Rate	Percentage	Funding Split (using estimated PTE)
Total funded hourly rate	£8.63	100%	£3,056,532
Retained by local authority	£0.26	3%	£92,086
Base rate	£8.11	97%	£2,872,361
Deprivation (unchanged)	-		-
Contingency (unchanged)	£0.10		£35,417
SEN Inclusion	£0.16		£56,668

## 7. **2-Year-Old FRAS Hourly Rate**

- 7.1 Government have increased the funded hourly rate by 35p to £8.63. After applying the additional 35p and increasing the pass-through rate from 96% to 97%, there is an increase of 42p to allocate.
- 7.2 The top priority for the local authority is to pay as much as possible over and above the 2-year-old Working Parent rate. There is growing concern that placing 2-year-olds from FRAS will not be sustainable if providers take up the 30-hour opportunity for children of 2-year-old working parents. We recognise that an improved financial incentive should be in place to reduce this risk.
- 7.3 In line with this top priority, proposals are:
- We need to match the base rate for 2-year-old Working Parent provision – an increase from £7.82 to £8.11 per hour
  - We would like to target additional financial support to providers caring for those children living with a greater level of deprivation by increasing the deprivation supplement from 7p to 20p. This means that all providers of 2-year-old FRAS provision would be paid at £8.31 per hour compared to £8.11 per hour for 2-year-old Working Parent provision.

- 7.4 Proposed hourly rate payments for 2-year-old FRAS provision are shown in the following table.

2-Year-Old Provision (FRAS)	Hourly Rate	Percentage	Funding Split (using estimated PTE)
Total funded hourly rate	£8.63	100%	£1,536,727
Retained by local authority	£0.26	3%	£46,298
Base rate	£8.11	97%	£1,444,131
Deprivation	£0.20		£35,614
Contingency (unchanged)	£0.03		£5,342
SEN Inclusion (unchanged)	£0.03		£5,342

## 8. Under 2 Year Old Hourly Rate

- 8.1 Government have increased the funded hourly rate by 42p to £11.69. After applying the additional 42p and increasing the pass-through rate from 96% to 97%, there is an increase of 52p to allocate.
- 8.2 The local authority priorities for allocating the extra funding are:
- Based on projected spending in 2025/26, we believe the contingency funding can be reduced from 10p to 5p. This provides an additional 5p for reallocation – a total of 57p
  - We would prefer for the full increase to benefit all providers by supporting increased pay costs and other inflation.
- 8.3 In line with these priorities, we propose to increase the base rate from £10.69 to £11.26 per hour.
- 8.4 Proposed hourly rate payments for the under 2-year-old provision rate are shown in the following table.

Under 2-Year-Old Provision	Hourly Rate	Percentage	Funding Split (using estimated PTE)
Total funded hourly rate	£11.69	100%	£5,032,857
Retained by local authority	£0.35	3%	£150,684
Base rate	£11.26	97%	£4,847,731
Deprivation (unchanged)	-		-
Contingency	£0.05		£21,526
SEN Inclusion (unchanged)	£0.03		£12,916



## **9. Consultation Responses**

- 9.1 The consultation with providers ended on 9 January 2026. A summary of the responses will be tabled at the meeting.

## **10. Recommendations**

- 10.1 Schools' Forum are asked to:
- Note the contents of the report and the consultation responses tabled at the meeting;
  - Approve retention of the maximum 3% for the authority to deliver the early year's service;
  - Approve the hourly rate for 3- to 4-year-old provision shown at paragraph 5.4 of this report;
  - Approve the hourly rate for 2-year-old Working Parent provision shown at paragraph 6.4 of this report;
  - Approve the hourly rate for 2-year-old FRAS provision shown at paragraph 7.4 of this report;
  - Approve the hourly rate for under 2-year-old provision shown at paragraph 8.4 of this report.

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

Illustrative Provider Increases (based on actual headcount payments September to November 2025 Inclusive)

[illegible]

**Report to Hartlepool Schools' Forum 12 January 2026**  
**From Amanda Whitehead – Assistant Director Education**

**Item 5: Update - School Budget Shares 2026/27**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide updated information on the 2026/27 Schools Block funding. DfE (Department for Education) issued updated funding information on 17 December 2025 based on October 2025 census numbers and pupil characteristics. The information included Hartlepool's growth funding allocation.
- 1.2 Appendix A is an anonymous schedule of Individual School Budgets (ISBs). The further appendix B provides worked examples for individual schools.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Schools' Forum have already agreed the following principles affecting 2026/27 ISBs at their meeting on 16 September 2025:
- Application of the maximum MFG (Minimum Funding Guarantee) of 0.0%.
  - Transfer of 0.5% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.
  - Application of an appropriate cap to ensure affordability.

**3. Schools Block National Funding Formula 2026/27**

- 3.1 The following table shows the Hartlepool Schools Block allocation of £90.841m based on confirmed October 2025 census numbers.

<b>Schools Block</b>	<b>Pupil Numbers (Oct 2025)</b>	<b>2026/27 Funding (£m)</b>
Primary	7,440	46.078
Secondary	5,562	44.142
Premises		0.529
Growth		0.092
<b>NFF Schools Block 2026/27</b>		<b>90.841</b>
NFF Schools Block 2025/26, including grants rolled into the formula in 2026/27		89.674
Funding increase		1.167
Percentage increase in funding		1.3%

The **£90.841m** compares with the equivalent figure of **£89.674m** for 2025/26 (Schools block NFF plus the separate SBSG and NIC Grants), an increase of 1.3%. Primary pupil numbers have reduced by 155 from the October 2024 census. Secondary pupil numbers have reduced by 67 from the October 2024 census.

- 3.2 After growth fund of £0.005 and the 0.5% block transfer £0.454 to the High Needs Block, funding available for ISBs in 2026/27 is £90.382m (£86.930m in 2025/26), an increase of 3.94%. In both 2025/26 and 2026/27, the remaining growth funding after disbursement is being used to support ISBs.

3.3 The table below outlines the use of £90.382m Schools Block funding for 2026/27.

School Budget Share 2025/26	Proposed Budget £m
Schools Block funding (including growth funding)	90.841
Growth disbursement	(0.005)
Transfer-out to High Needs Block	(0.454)
<b>School Budget Share Proposed 2026/27</b>	<b>90.382</b>
School Budget Share Increase from 2025/26 (£m)	(3.422)
School Budget Share Increase from 2025/26 (%)	(3.94%)

3.4 After applying the maximum MFG of 0.0%, a cap of 2.97% is required to limit ISBs to the funding available of £90.382m.

3.5 One Hartlepool primary school fails the Minimum Per Pupil Funding (MPPF) guarantee in the 2026/27 formula. As required by the regulations, the school's ISB has been uplifted to the guaranteed amount of £5,115 per pupil.

3.6 Appendix A provides an anonymous listing of ISBs for 2026/27.

3.7 Appendix B shows worked examples for individual schools.

#### 4. **Recommendations**

4.1 Forum is recommended to:

- note the confirmed ISBs contained in this report.
- note that the remaining growth funding, following disbursement has been utilised to fund ISB's in 2026/27 (as 2025/26).
- note that the Hartlepool ISB information is required to be submitted to DfE by the statutory date of 22 January 2026, with ratification being sought from Children's Services Committee on 3 February 2026.

## APPENDIX A: ISBs 2026/27

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
School Reference	MPPF Test Result	2026/27 Pre MFG Budget (Excl ESG and De-Del)	MFG 0.00%	Cap 2.97%	2026/27 Post MFG Budget	2025/26 post MFG Budget (incl NI and SBSG grants)	Budget Increase +£ / Decrease (£)	Budget Increase +% / Decrease (%)	Per Pupil Increase %
1	PASS	1,712,401	0	(399)	1,712,002	1,790,207	(78,205)	(4.37%)	2.97%
2	PASS	916,357	0	(10,542)	905,815	960,601	(54,786)	(5.70%)	2.97%
3	PASS	10,036,383	0	(190,559)	9,845,825	9,776,517	69,308	0.71%	2.97%
4	PASS	8,323,579	0	(57,005)	8,266,573	7,953,798	312,776	3.93%	2.97%
5	PASS	10,866,835	0	(17,225)	10,849,610	10,549,401	300,209	2.85%	2.97%
6	PASS	1,111,508	0	(4,334)	1,107,174	1,075,217	31,957	2.97%	2.97%
7	PASS	1,944,975	0	(33,240)	1,911,735	1,888,677	23,057	1.22%	2.97%
8	PASS	604,485	0	(2,891)	601,594	568,488	33,106	5.82%	2.97%
9	PASS	1,715,800	0	0	1,715,800	1,721,570	(5,770)	(0.34%)	2.84%
10	FAIL	1,499,852	0	0	1,499,852	1,493,496	6,356	0.43%	0.12%
11	PASS	2,528,210	0	0	2,528,210	2,555,572	(27,362)	(1.07%)	1.49%
12	PASS	2,105,339	0	(73,666)	2,031,673	2,060,697	(29,025)	(1.41%)	2.97%
13	PASS	2,362,908	0	(3,568)	2,359,339	2,295,794	63,545	2.77%	2.97%
14	PASS	1,966,153	0	(44,514)	1,921,639	1,898,797	22,841	1.20%	2.97%
15	PASS	1,990,641	0	(32,481)	1,958,160	1,869,644	88,516	4.73%	2.97%
16	PASS	1,036,724	0	(7,075)	1,029,649	1,123,854	(94,205)	(8.38%)	2.97%
17	PASS	604,327	32,551	0	636,877	588,746	48,131	8.18%	0.00%
18	PASS	10,419,777	0	(45,189)	10,374,588	10,037,383	337,204	3.36%	2.97%
19	PASS	4,916,141	0	0	4,916,141	5,277,673	(361,532)	(6.85%)	1.38%
20	PASS	1,231,750	0	0	1,231,750	1,202,254	29,497	2.45%	1.79%
21	PASS	1,565,390	0	0	1,565,390	1,546,145	19,245	1.24%	1.38%
22	PASS	598,794	0	(27,039)	571,754	713,484	(141,730)	(19.86%)	2.97%
23	PASS	1,263,713	0	(37,651)	1,226,062	1,226,342	(280)	(0.02%)	2.97%
24	PASS	624,605	16,239	0	640,844	590,783	50,061	8.47%	0.00%
25	PASS	2,154,422	0	(59,478)	2,094,944	2,064,424	30,520	1.48%	2.97%
26	PASS	2,158,260	0	0	2,158,260	2,078,400	79,860	3.84%	2.06%
27	PASS	1,431,263	0	0	1,431,263	1,498,406	(67,142)	(4.48%)	1.32%
28	PASS	1,748,158	0	(12,393)	1,735,765	1,805,559	(69,794)	(3.87%)	2.97%
29	PASS	2,252,765	0	(43,203)	2,209,561	2,121,434	88,127	4.15%	2.97%
30	PASS	1,451,440	0	(3,135)	1,448,305	1,416,817	31,488	2.22%	2.97%
31	PASS	2,430,249	0	(47,948)	2,382,301	2,379,493	2,809	0.12%	2.97%
32	PASS	2,178,439	0	0	2,178,439	2,101,954	76,485	3.64%	2.68%
33	PASS	1,930,984	0	(56,748)	1,874,237	2,070,827	(196,590)	(9.49%)	2.97%
34	PASS	706,385	0	(12,053)	694,332	690,615	3,718	0.54%	2.97%
35	PASS	797,247	0	(30,570)	766,677	680,957	85,720	12.59%	2.97%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>91,186,256</b>	<b>48,790</b>	<b>(852,907)</b>	<b>90,382,139</b>	<b>89,674,024</b>	<b>708,115</b>		

## APPENDIX B: Sample ISBs – Worked Examples 2026/27

School 27 (205 pupils on roll)	£	Notes
What is the total MPPF guarantee for this school?	1,048,575	This is calculated as 205 pupils @ £5,115. £5,115 is the MPPF guarantee for primary schools in 2026/27
MPPF Test Result	<b>PASS</b>	
What is the actual MPPF for the school?		
Basic entitlement	833,120	205 pupils @ AWPU
FSM	232,735	
IDACI	98,540	
EAL	2,858	
Low Attainment	77,354	
Sparsity / Mobility	0	
Lump Sum	152,700	
Actual MPPF total	1,397,307	Actual MPPF is £6,816 (compared to £5,115 Minimum)
Difference between MPPF guarantee and actual MPPF total	(348,732)	A negative figure here means the school is above the £5,115 MPPF so does not receive an uplift
Budget decrease	(67,142)	This is a decrease of 4.48%
<b>Explained by:</b>		
Decrease in Basic entitlement	(9,373)	
Decrease in FSM	(1,575)	
Decrease in IDACI	(6,155)	
Increase in EAL	86	
Decrease in Low Attainment	(5,865)	
Mobility	0	
Increase in Lump Sum	7,600	
Change in Premises (NNDR)	477	
Grants mainstreamed into NFF	(52,337)	
Movement in cap	0	
TOTAL	(67,142)	

School 19 (580 pupils on roll)	£	Notes
What is the total MPPF guarantee for this school?	3,851,200	This is calculated as 580 pupils @ £6,640. £6,640 is the MPPF guarantee for secondary schools in 2026/27
MPPF Test Result	<b>PASS</b>	
What is the actual MPPF for the school?		
Basic entitlement	3,462,952	580 pupils @ AWPU
FSM	689,490	
IDACI	336,285	
EAL	27,710	
Low Attainment	212,750	
Sparsity / Mobility	1,786	
Lump Sum	152,700	
Actual MPPF total	4,883,673	Actual MPPF is £8,420 (compared to £6,640 Minimum)
Difference between MPPF guarantee and actual MPPF total	(1,032,473)	A negative figure here means the school is above the £6,640 MPPF so does not receive an uplift
Budget decrease	(361,532)	This is a decrease of 6.85%
<b>Explained by:</b>		
Decrease in Basic entitlement	(126,031)	
Decrease in FSM	(22,070)	
Decrease in IDACI	(37,502)	
Increase in EAL	5,345	
Decrease in Low Attainment	(30,183)	
Decrease in Mobility	(3,966)	
Increase in Lump Sum	7,600	
Grants mainstreamed into NFF	(147,417)	
Change in Premises	527	
Movement in Cap	0	
Decrease in MFG	(7,834)	
TOTAL	(361,532)	

School 10 (292 pupils on roll)	£	Notes
What is the total MPPF guarantee for this school?	1,493,580	This is calculated as 292 pupils @ £5,115. £5,115 is the MPPF guarantee for primary schools in 2026/27
MPPF Test Result	<b>FAIL</b>	
What is the actual MPPF for the school?		
Basic entitlement	1,186,688	292 pupils @ AWPU
FSM	28,650	
IDACI	18,550	
EAL	710	
Low Attainment	69,250	
Sparsity / Mobility	0	
Lump Sum	152,700	Lump sum per pupil is £499
Actual MPPF total	1,456,548	Actual MPPF is £4,988 (compared to £5,115 Minimum)
Difference between MPPF guarantee and actual MPPF total	37,032	The actual MPPF is below the guarantee of £5,115 so the school receives an uplift
Budget Increase	6,356	This is an increase of 0.43%
<b>Explained by:</b>		
Increase in Basic entitlement	67,211	
Increase in FSM	1,155	
Decrease in IDACI	(3,575)	
Increase in EAL	25	
Increase in Low Attainment	5,714	
Increase in Lump Sum	7,600	
Decrease in MPPF Uplift	(26,456)	
Change in Premises (NNDR)	102	
Grants mainstreamed into NFF	(45,421)	
TOTAL	6,356	