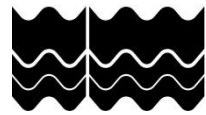


East Sussex County Council Schools Forum**Friday 10th Jan 2025****08.30****Remote Meeting****East Sussex
County Council****Agenda**

Item	Heading	Paper	Lead	Item for
1.	Welcome and Apologies	N	Chair	Note
2.	Minutes of previous meeting 15th Nov 2024	Y	Chair	Approval
3.	Matters Arising and Declaration of Interests	N	Chair	Discussion
4.	Growth Fund / Falling Rolls Fund	Y	Gary Langford	Approval
5.	DSG Budget 2025/26	Y	Ed Beale	Information
6.	DSG – Central School Services Block 2025/26	Y	Ed Beale	Approval
7.	DSG Budget 2025/26 – Early Years	Y	Jane Spice	Approval
8.	High Needs (EHCP) Top Ups 2025/26	Y (to follow)	Nathan Caine	Approval
	AOB			

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EAST SUSSEX SCHOOLS' FORUM

Minutes of a meeting of the Schools' Forum held remotely with Microsoft Teams on 15 November 2024

MEMBERS

Primary

Richard Blakeley (Parkside Primary)
Laura Cooper (St John's CE School)
Vicky Anderson (Catsfeld CEP School)

Primary Governors

Peter Hughes (South Malling Primary School)

Secondary

Emily Winslade (Priory School)
Helen Key (Chailey School)

Secondary Governor

Monica Whitehead (Claverham Community College)

Special School

Vacancy

Academies

James Freeston (King Offa Primary Academy)
Gavin Bailey (Swale Academy Trust)
Sam Cornelius (University of Brighton Academies Trust)
Zoe James (MARK Education Trust)-Chair
Sally Hill (Aquinas Trust)

Special Academy

Kirsty Prawanna (Glyne Gap)

Pupil Referral Unit

Neil Miller (LSEAT)

Non School Members

Phil Clarke (Trade Union representative)
Joanna Sanchez (Diocese of Arundel and Brighton)
Jon Gilbert (Diocese of Chichester)
Hannah Caldwell (Post 16 East Sussex College Group)

ESCC representatives

Cllr Bob Standley (Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability)
Elizabeth Funge Assistant Director Education
Nathan Caine (H of Ed SEND & Safeguarding)
Honor Green (BSD Finance)
Sarah Rice (Finance Manager - Schools Accountant)
Edward Beale (Finance Manager - Education and Schools)
Kirsten Coe (Funding Manager - Reporting and Systems)
Sarah Allen (Clerk)

1 Welcome and Apologies (Note)

- 1.1 It was confirmed the meeting was quorate, recognising the apologies below.

Peter Hughes

Joanna Sanchez - (Paul Barber attended as a substitute)

Helen Key- (Sara Marshallsay attended as a substitute)

Debra Vice Holt - (No longer governor)

2 Agenda Item 2: Minutes Of Previous Meeting 20 September 2024 (Approval)

- 2.1 The minutes for the meeting held were agreed as a true record and will be signed by the Chair.

3. Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising and Declaration of Interests (Discussion)

- 3.1 Matters arising - none
3.2 Declaration of interest -none

4. Agenda Item 4: High needs block - Interblock transfer request-Nathan Caine (Approval)

4.1 Recommendations:

Recommendations were made in relation to the High Needs Funding, the LA's current forecast financial position and the request for an inter block transfer from the Schools Block.

4.3 Comments:

It was asked what the spend of the INMS is for East Sussex and what is the percentage of that spend compared to the high needs budget overall? - We spend over a quarter of high needs budget (£22m) on around 500 children.

Is there a strategy to either bring children back into mainstream education or prevent further movement to independent schools?

Our approach is on exploring a range of strategies aimed at reducing the demand for independent school places. There are multiple challenging factors, including a high number of independent special schools, with visible availability that is contributing to increased demand.

Efforts are being made to boost parental confidence in mainstream schools. There are plans to expand facilities within mainstream schools to provide a more specialised offer for children and young people.

A query was raised as to what communication will be cascaded to schools regarding this matter. We will further consider how we disseminate information in relation to the High Needs Block.

The question regarding why funds are not being taken from the early year's budget was raised. The matter is still under consideration. There has been an increase in the offer for disadvantaged 2-year-olds, but the impact of the regulatory changes and the uptake of the offer are still unclear. If there is any remaining balance at the end of the year, it may be necessary to utilise that budget.

A point was raised regarding when the money will be returned to schools if the settlement is favourable. It was clarified that the HNB settlement will be clear in April 2025.

A letter from headteachers representing from several maintained secondary schools was shared.

A question was raised about whether the issues related to SEND provision are being looked at nationally. It was mentioned that the new government aims to support inclusion in mainstream schools to help manage demand. Additionally, the Change Programme is expected to influence policy moving forward.

Members were requested to vote and approve the High Needs Block interblock transfer request. Results as below:

High needs block- Interblock transfer request	No. of 'Yes' 11	No. of 'No' 2	No. of Abstention 1
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5. Agenda Item 8: Any Other Business

Meeting concluded at 09:17

Next meeting - To be held Friday 10th January

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Report to:	East Sussex Schools Forum
Date:	10 January 2025
Title of Report:	Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund
By:	Gary Langford, Senior Manager School Organisation and Admissions
Purpose of Report:	To update Schools Forum on spend in the 2024/25 financial year and to seek approval for funding in the 2025/26 financial year.

RECOMMENDATION:

Schools Forum is asked to approve an allocation of £868,100 for the 2025/26 Growth Fund.

1. Introduction

1.1 The 2024/25 Growth and Falling Rolls Funds were approved by Schools Forum on 17 November 2023.

1.2 The Growth Fund supports maintained and non-maintained mainstream schools which are required to provide extra places to meet basic need within the local authority. The fund is provided for:

- Key Stage 1 top-up: paid to schools to enable them to comply with Key Stage 1 class size legislation, which sets a maximum class size of 30 pupils with one teacher. There are a few exceptions where class sizes can exceed 30, but there is no entitlement to Growth Fund, for example, arising from admissions through the Fair Access Protocol.
- Additional classes: where the local authority has made a formal request for a school to set up one or more additional classes or requests a permanent increase in a school's Published Admission Number.
- New school funding: when new schools open in a local authority area, they receive pre-opening funding through a formula to cover costs incurred prior to the opening and diseconomy funding to cover costs incurred while the school fills to capacity. The funding decreases year on year as more year groups in the new school are admitted.

1.3 The Falling Rolls Fund is used to support good or outstanding schools that have temporary, but significant, falling rolls, but where local planning data shows the places will be needed in the near future. It is designed to avoid the need for a school to restructure and then recruit again shortly afterwards. The funding is for maintained and non-maintained schools. The circumstances in which a payment is made from the Falling Rolls fund are:

- The school is judged to be good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection (this is a mandatory requirement from the DFE).

- The number on roll has dropped by more than 5% between the October 2023 census and the October 2024 census.
- Local planning data (East Sussex County Council pupil forecasting model) predicts that the number on roll will, in October 2026, be equal to or exceed their number on roll as in October 2023.

2. Growth Fund 2024/25

2.1 The Growth Fund budget for 2024/25 is £1,038,400 and was approved by Schools Forum on 17 November 2023. The budget was based on estimated Key Stage 1 pupil numbers, the predicted additional classes required for the 2024/25 academic year and the number of new schools that required diseconomy funding.

2.2 In 2024/25, the number of schools eligible for either Key Stage 1 top-up funding, additional class funding and new schools funding were:

- 35 primary schools eligible for Key Stage 1 top-up funding
- 1 primary school eligible for additional class funding
- 4 secondary schools eligible for additional class funding
- 1 all-through school eligible for new schools funding

2.3 To date, £894,204 of the Growth Fund budget has been spent in 2024/25, leaving a balance of £144,196 unspent. A summary of the spend in 2024/25 is provided in Appendix 1.

2.4 In addition, further support has been provided to schools in Uckfield which admitted additional pupils as a direct result of the closure of Holy Cross CE Primary School on 31 December 2023. In accordance with DfE regulations, any unspent budget following closedown of the school's accounts was transferred to the Growth Fund and paid to eligible local schools in August 2024. A similar exercise will be undertaken following closedown of the accounts for St Pancras Catholic Primary School which closed on 31 August 2024.

3. Growth Fund 2025/26

3.1 The proposed allocation for 2025/26 is based on the following assumptions:

- Key Stage 1 top-up funding: the estimated October 2024 pupil numbers and the estimated Key Stage 1 numbers as in October 2025. A 10% contingency has been added to the top-up element to allow for any unforeseen changes.
- Additional class funding: the predicted need for places identified through the annual update to the pupil forecasting model, most recently updated in July 2024. A 10% contingency has been added to the additional class element to allow for any unanticipated pressures.
- The cost of teachers and support staff have been uplifted by recent pay awards.

3.2 It is currently estimated that the following numbers of schools will be eligible for Growth Fund support in 2025/26:

- 35 primary schools potentially eligible for Key Stage 1 top-up funding
- 1 primary school eligible for additional class funding
- 2 secondary schools potentially eligible for additional class funding

3.3 In total, the Growth Fund requirement for 2025/26 is £1,012,300. This is partially offset by the underspend in 2023/24, meaning the requirement for 2025/26 is reduced to

£868,100. A breakdown of the Growth Fund calculation for 2025/26 is provided in Appendix B.

4. Falling Rolls Fund 2024/25 and 2025/26

4.1 The Falling Rolls Fund budget for 2024/25 is £42,000. No schools qualify for the fund in this financial year, so we propose carrying forward the budget in its entirety to 2025/26. As a result, we do not require any additional funding for the Falling Rolls Fund next year.

5. Conclusion and recommendation

5.1 In conclusion, the report updates Schools Forum on Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund spending in the 2024/25 financial year and sets out the rationale for funding in 2025/25.

5.2 Accordingly, Schools Forum is recommended to approve an allocation of £868,100 for the 2025/26 Growth Fund.

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Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund summary 2024/25

Key Stage 1 top-up funding	Amount
Alfriston Primary School	£14,544
All Saints' and St Richard's Church of England Primary School	£1,900
Beckley Church of England Primary School	£1,900
Bodiam Church of England Primary School	£18,079
Breakwater Academy	£1,108
Buxted C of E Primary School	£6,487
Castledown Community Primary and Nursery School	£25,311
Chiddingly Primary School	£3,798
Christ Church, Church of England Primary School	£4,652
Ditchling (St Margarets) Church of England Primary School	£1,108
East Hoathly C of E Primary School	£6,487
Etchingham Church of England Primary School	£6,487
Firle Church of England Primary School	£18,079
Fletching Church of England Primary School	£28,000
Framfield Church of England Primary School	£24,950
Groombridge St Thomas' Church of England Primary School	£16,158
Hamsey Community Primary School	£1,108
Hankham Primary School	£38,780
Heron Park Academy	£10,158
High Hurstwood Church of England Primary School	£11,120
Iford & Kingston Church of England Primary School	£6,511
Laughton Community Primary School	£2,713
Little Horsted Church of England Primary School	£4,633
Mark Cross Church of England Primary School	£15,730
Oakwood Primary Academy	£28,000
Peasmarsh Church of England Primary School	£28,000
Phoenix Academy	£28,000
Southover C of E Primary School	£1,900
St Andrew's Church of England Infants School, Eastbourne	£22,622
St Mary the Virgin Church of England Primary School, Hartfield	£29,560
St Michael's Primary School, Withyham	£16,158
St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Chailey	£28,000
St Thomas' Church of England Primary School, Winchelsea	£28,000
The Baird Academy	£13,809
West St Leonard's Community Primary School	£34,554
Total	£528,414

Additional class funding	Amount
Wivelsfield Primary School	£23,790
Willingdon Secondary School	£48,000
Hailsham Community College	£164,000
Seahaven Academy	£82,000

Seaford Head	£34,000
Total	£351,790

New school funding	Amount
Hailsham Community College	£14,000
Total	£14,000

Total spend in 2024/25	£894,204
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Funding to support eligible Uckfield schools	£142,000
Funding to support eligible Lewes schools	£tbc

Growth Fund requirement 2025/26

Funding type	Funding required
Key Stage 1 top-up funding	£760,500
Additional class funding	£251,800
Total	£1,012,300
Less 2024/25 Carry forward	-£144,200
Total Requested	£868,100

Falling Rolls Fund requirement 2025/26

Funding type	Funding required
Carry forward from 2024/25	£42,000
Additional funding required in 2025/26	£0
Total	£42,000

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Report to: Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 10 Jan 2025

Report By: Carolyn Fair

Title: DSG Budget 2025/26

Purpose: To provide an update on the DSG budget for 2025/26

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Schools Forum are asked to note the DSG allocations for the Schools, Central School Services, High Needs and Early Years Blocks

1 Background

1.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2025/26 is, like last year, allocated by the DfE into four blocks. Each block is subject to separate regulations as to eligible expenditure and the use of the four blocks is outlined below:

- **The Schools Block** comprises the funding which must be delegated to schools and academies through the Funding Formula. Maintained schools can agree to de-delegate budgets and these are spent on their behalf by the local authority. Subject to Schools Forum approval, there are a limited number of exceptions, the Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund, which enable local authorities to hold this funding centrally. The funding for these funds goes to eligible schools and academies.
- **The Central School Services Block (CSSB)** is a block of funding that provides funding for Local Authorities to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in maintained schools and academies. LAs' CSSB is split into funding for historic commitments and funding for ongoing responsibilities.
- **The High Needs Block** provides funding to support the provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from their early years to age 25. This includes provision in maintained schools, academies, alternative provision, FE colleges and Independent providers, as well as supporting central spending on pupils with special educational needs and disabilities from their early years to age 25.
- The **Early Years Block** funds payments to early years providers in settings and schools and supports central spending on early years pupils.

2. Appendices

- 2.1 The appendices below provide a breakdown of the DSG allocations:

Appendix A - DSG Summary
Appendix B - Schools Block DSG
Appendix C – Central School Services Block DSG
Appendix D - High Needs Block DSG
Appendix E – Early Years Block DSG

3. Schools Block Funding

- 3.1 The Schools Block for 2025/26 is based on the October 2024 pupil census data and equates to £392.6m.
- 3.2 The DfE have allocated £25.4m more to the Schools Block compared to 2024/25. There are two reasons for this:
- 1 £26.0m relates to the previously separate mainstream grants now being added into the Schools Block. These are the 'Teachers Pay Additional Grant' (TPAG), 'Teachers Pensions Employer Contribution Grant' (TPECG) and the 'Core Schools Budget Grant' (CSBG).
 - 2 A reduction in overall NOR resulting in £3.7m less funding offset by additional funding of £3.1m due to increase in National Funding Formula rates. (Overall net reduction of £0.6m).

4. Central School Services Block (CSSB) Funding

- 4.1 The DfE have confirmed that £4.3m has been allocated to the local authority. (£1.6m to Historic Commitments and £2.7m to on-going responsibilities)
- 4.2 See Agenda Item 6 for more information on this block of funding and the LA's proposed use for this funding.

5. High Needs Block (HNB)

- 5.1 The total High Needs Block funding is calculated by the DfE and for 2025/26 is £94.1m which is an increase of £7.1m compared to 2024/25. The £7.1m increase equates to a 8% increase from 2024/25. Of the £7.1m increase, £700k relates to an increase in pupil numbers. The remaining £6.4m is linked to the broader formula indicators which are used to determine funding allocations.
- 5.2 The DfE have stated that special schools/ academies and alternative providers will continue to receive place funding at £10,000 per agreed place. As in previous years, the Local Authority has realigned agreed places at some schools and academies to more effectively reflect need.
- 5.3 Special Schools and Alternative Providers will continue to receive separate additional grant funding in relation to the 'Teachers Pay Additional Grant', 'Teachers Pension Employer Contribution Grant' and the 'Core Schools Budget Grant'. To simplify the administration of the continuation of these grants, the DfE are combining them into a single grant It will be called the 'Core Schools Budget Grant' (CSBG).

- 5.4 For specialist facilities attached to mainstream schools, as per DfE regulations, the place funding will continue to be £6,000 for every occupied place and £10,000 for an unoccupied place. (Funding for occupied places is £6,000 per place because these pupils are also funded via the school's budget share.)

6 Early Years Block

- 6.1 Appendix E is a summary of the funding allocations, for 2025/26. However, more detailed explanations are provided in Agenda Item 7.

Carolyn Fair

Director Childrens Services

Contact Officer: Ed Beale

Tel. No. 01273 337984

Email: Edward.beale@eastsussex.gov.uk

Appendix A

DSG Summary 2025/26	Schools	Central School Services	High Needs	Early Years	Total
Total DSG including Academies	£392,583,300	£4,331,300	£94,100,900	£29,880,200	£520,895,700
2 Year Old / Under 2's Funding Entitlement	£0	£0	£0	£38,672,000	£38,672,000
Inter Block Transfer	-£1,000,000		£1,000,000		
Total Funding Available	£391,583,300	£4,331,300	£95,100,900	£68,552,200	£559,567,700

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Appendix B

Schools Block 2025/26	£	£	Comments
Schools Block DfE notification		392,583,300	
InterBlock Transfer		-1,000,000	
Adjusted Schools Block Total 2025/26		391,583,300	
Distribution of Funding at LA Level			
Growth Fund			
Key Stage 1 top up	760,500		See Agenda Item 4
Additional Classes	251,800		
New Schools - Dis-economies of scale funding	0		
Less Funds B/fwd from 2024/25	-144,200		
		868,100	
Falling Rolls Fund		0	See Agenda Item 4
Funds allocated to Schools & Academies		390,715,200	
Total		391,583,300	

Schools Block 2024/25	£	£
Schools Block DfE notification		367,230,200
Adjusted Schools Block Total 2024/25		367,230,200
Distribution of Funding at LA Level		
Growth Fund		
Key Stage 1 top up	474,100	
Additional Classes	550,300	
New Schools - Dis-economies of scale funding	14,000	
		1,038,400
Falling Rolls Fund		0
Funds allocated to Schools & Academies		366,191,800
Total		367,230,200

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Appendix C

Central School Services Block 2025/26	£	Comments
Central Schools Services Block notification	4,331,300	
Central School Services Block Total 2025/26	4,331,300	
Historic Commitments (HC)	1,613,500	
On-going Responsibilities	2,717,800	
Total	4,331,300	

Central School Services Block 2024/25	£
Central School Services Block notification	4,456,800
Central School Services Block Total 2024/25	4,897,900
Historic Commitments (HC)	2,016,900
On-going Responsibilities	2,439,900
	4,897,900

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Appendix D

HIGH NEEDS BLOCK 2025/2026	£	£
Block total (From DfE)	94,100,900	
Inter Block Transfer	1,000,000	
Distribution of Funding at LA Level		95,100,900
Funding for Commissioned Places		
Special Academy place funding (Pre 16)	11,769,200	
Maintained Special School place funding (Pre 16)	1,200,000	
Academy Special Facilities place funding (Pre 16)	674,100	
Maintained Special Facilities place funding (Pre 16)	684,000	
Maintained Special Schools place funding (Post 16)	210,000	
Special Academy place funding (Post 16)	650,000	
Post 16 FE Places	1,724,000	
Alternative Provision	1,866,000	18,777,300
Other High Needs Budgets		
Top up funding Pre 16	30,513,400	
Top up funding Post 16	2,654,800	
Fees for pupils at independent schools	26,500,000	
Education out of School	3,326,100	
SEN support	13,329,300	76,323,600
Total		95,100,900

HIGH NEEDS BLOCK 2024/2025	£	£
Block total (From DfE)	87,033,800	
Distribution of Funding at LA Level		87,033,800
Funding for Commissioned Places		
Special Academy place funding (Pre 16)	11,769,200	
Maintained Special School place funding (Pre 16)	1,100,000	
Academy Special Facilities place funding (Pre 16)	739,400	
Maintained Special Facilities place funding (Pre 16)	746,000	
Maintained Special Schools place funding (Post 16)	210,000	
Special Academy place funding (Post 16)	650,000	
Post 16 FE Places	1,444,000	
Alternative Provision	1,404,200	18,062,800
Other High Needs Budgets		
Top up funding Pre 16	28,160,800	
Top up funding Post 16	2,654,800	
Fees for pupils at independent schools	21,500,000	
Education out of School	3,326,100	
SEN support	13,329,300	68,971,000
Total		87,033,800

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Appendix E

Early Years Block 2025/26	£	£
3/4 Year Old Entitlement	28,861,400	
2 Year old funding entitlement	18,344,800	
Under 2 Funding Entitlement	20,327,200	
Pupil Premium funding	656,700	
Disability Access Fund	362,100	
Early Years block total 2025/26		68,552,200
LA Central Budgets		
Early Years Formula Funding (Payments to PVI's and Schools)	67,431,200	
Early Years Team (Which includes training & moderation)	1,121,000	
Total		68,552,200

Early Years Block 2024/25	£	£
3/4 Year Old Entitlement	28,289,700	
2 Year old funding	11,617,600	
Under 2 Funding Entitlement	4,759,900	
Pupil Premium funding	564,400	
Disability Access Fund	294,900	
Early Years block total 2024/25		45,526,500
LA Central Budgets		
Early Years Formula Funding (Payments to PVI's and Schools)	44,405,500	
Early Years Team (Which includes training & moderation)	1,121,000	
Total		45,526,500

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Report to: Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 10 Jan 2025

Report By: Carolyn Fair

Title: Central School Services Block (CSSB) 2025/26

Purpose: To provide an update on the CSSB allocations for 2025/26

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Schools Forum are asked to note and approve the proposals for the Central School Services Block for 2025/26.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2025/26 will again be allocated by the Department for Education (DfE), into four notional blocks: Schools, High Needs, Early Years and Central School Services Block (CSSB). Each block is calculated on a different basis and subject to separate regulations as to eligible expenditure.
- 1.2 This paper specifically relates to the CSSB. This block includes funding that has been allocated to Local Authorities (LAs) to carry out functions on behalf of pupils in both maintained schools and academies and has two distinct elements:
 - **Ongoing responsibilities** This comprises:
 - funds specified by the DfE and retained centrally (Admissions, Copyright Licencing Agency (CLA) Licence and Servicing Schools Forum); and
 - funds that were previously known as 'Retained Duties Education Services Grant' which, up to 2017/18, the LA received and held separately for its on-going responsibilities to maintained schools and academies.
 - **Historic Commitments** These are what were previously known as "Combined Services" and is funding for previously specified financial commitments.

2 2025/26 On-going responsibilities

- 2.1 The DfE fund Ongoing responsibilities on a per pupil basis, using the October census, and have increased the funding rate for 2025/26 from £38.55 to £43.41 per pupil. The vast majority of this increase is because the DfE have now included funding for Centrally Employed Staff that was previously funded as a separate grant. Additional funding has also been provided for the cost of the Copyright Licencing. (The cost for the CLA Licenses are recouped, by the DfE, so a net nil effect).
- 2.2 As with 2024/25, the LA is asking to retain the full amount that the DfE is allocating for 2025/26.
- 2.3 Table 1 shows the 2025/26 proposals for the 'Ongoing Responsibilities' element of the CSSB which totals £2.72m. (Please note that this is separate funding from the Schools Block DSG which funds Maintained school budget shares / Academy General Annual Grants (GAGs).

Table 1: Proposals for 2025/26 On-going Responsibilities

Category	Responsibility	2024/25 Allocations	Additional Funds for 2025/26	2025/26 Proposed Allocations
Specified by the DfE	Admissions	£558,400	£16,400	£574,800
	CLA Licences	£426,800	£66,000	£492,800
	Schools Forum	£25,000	£700	£25,700
Statutory and Regularity Duties	Revenue budget preparation, preparation on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education. Formulation and review of the LA Schools Funding Formula	£148,700	£4,400	£153,100
	Leadership of Children's services and support staff / Planning for the Education Service as a whole.	£234,000	£6,900	£240,900
	Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating to specifically maintained schools.	£53,800	£1,600	£55,400
	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)	£11,800	£300	£12,100
	Internal Audit and Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer	£30,000	£900	£30,900
	Consultation Costs relating to non-staffing issues. Plans involving collaboration with other LA services or public or voluntary services	£39,400	£1,200	£40,600
Asset Management	Management of LA's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions	£109,400	£3,200	£112,600
Education Welfare	Functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils. Responsibilities regarding the employment of children.	£135,300	£4,000	£139,300
	School Attendance	£350,000	£10,300	£360,300
Other Ongoing Duties	Places in Independent Schools for Non SEN Pupils	£202,400	£5,700	£208,100
	Employer Contributions for Centrally Managed Staff	£144,600	£126,600	£271,200
	Total	£2,469,600	£248,200	£2,717,800

3. Historic Commitments

3.1 The Historic Commitments are funded by the DfE as a lump sum amount and for 2025/26 the DfE are allocating £1.61m to ESCC for Historic Commitments. This is a reduction of £403k when compared to 2024/25.

3.2 The LA proposes to use these funds to offset High Needs Block 2025/26 spending pressures.

3.3 Table 2 is a summary of the proposals for 2025/26 funding for historic commitments.

Table 2: Proposals for 2025/26 Historic Commitments

Historic Commitments	2024/25 Allocations	CSSB Changes	2025/26 Proposed Allocations
	£2,016,900	-£403,400	£1,613,500
*Total	£2,016,900	-£403,400	£1,613,500

**Please note that the DfE reduce the Historic commitments value by 20% each year. This means that for 2025/26, the value has reduced by £403k.*

4. Summary and Conclusion

4.1 This report sets out the proposals for the retention of the £2.72m for 'on-going responsibilities' and the £1.61m 'Historic Commitments'. Schools Forum members are asked to approve these proposals.

Carolyn Fair

Director Childrens Services

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Tel. No. 01273 337984

Email: Edward.beale@eastsussex.gov.uk

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Report to:	East Sussex Schools Forum
Date:	10 January 2025
Title of Report:	Early Years Funding Reforms
By:	Carolyn Fair, Director of Children's Services
Purpose of Report:	To update Schools Forum on the government's early years funding reforms.

RECOMMENDATION:

Schools Forum is asked to note the changes to the early years education entitlements as a result of the government's early years funding reforms, which will take effect in stages from April 2025 to September 2025 and approve the Early Years DSG Budget.

1. Introduction

1.1 In the government's autumn budget in October 2024, the Chancellor announced reforms introduced by the previous government would remain in place. These included new early years funding streams to provide working families access to funded childcare places for children aged 9 months to two years old.

1.2 By September 2025, eligible working families will be able to access 30 hours of funded childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year. This offer is in line with the Extended 30 hours offer already in place for eligible three- and four-year-olds. To ensure fair distribution of funding across all age ranges the DfE updated the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) from April 2025. The refreshed formula will distribute funding entitlements for children aged from 9 months, building on the existing formula used to fund the three- and four-year-old entitlements.

1.3 The framework outlines how councils will be expected to pass funding on to providers. Councils will have support and flexibility to deliver the childcare offers whilst ensuring funding reaches providers in a fair and transparent way.

2. Changes

2.1 From April 2025, early years funding will now include funding of 15 hours, for 38 weeks of the year, for children aged 9 months plus of working parents. As well as eligible disadvantaged two-year-olds. From September 2025, the offer to working parents of children aged 9 months plus will increase to the full 30-hour Extended entitlement.

2.2 For the financial year 2025 to 2026 the increased minimum pass-through requirement for councils will increase from 95% to 96%.

2.3 The funding formula across all age groups will include a statutory deprivation supplement, Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Disability Access Fund (DAF) payments.

2.4 Councils are also required to expand their Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) to include all eligible children from age 9 months who are taking up the universal and extended funded entitlements.

3. Funding rates

3.1 For 2025/26, the DfE are increasing the national minimum base funding rate for three and four-year olds in East Sussex to £5.97 per hour, a £0.27 per hour increase. The Council is proposing to pass on 100% of the £0.27 per hour increase received to providers. This increases the hourly rate for three and four-year-olds in East Sussex to £5.69 per hour. This will equate to a pass-through rate of over 96% with the addition of the statutory deprivation supplement and SENIF for eligible children. This is in line with DfE requirements. The funding rate in East Sussex remains under the national average base rate of £6.14 per hour for the universal 15-hour entitlement. For the extended 15-hour entitlement the national average base rate is £6.06 per hour

3.2 For 2025/26, East Sussex will passport through 96% of funding received through DSG to support disadvantaged eligible two years olds and two-year-olds whose parents are in employment. The base rate of £8.20 will remain at 2024/25 funding levels as these rates were already in excess of the required pass-through rate in 2024. On top of the base rate there will be a statutory deprivation supplement and SENIF for eligible children.

3.3 The national funding rate for under twos, whose parents are in employment, will remain at £11.15 per hour from April 2025. On top of the base rate there will be a statutory deprivation supplement and SENIF. This equates to over 96% pass-through to children in this age range. This enables providers to provide funded places for working parents of children aged under two and reflects the commitment of the Council to support economic growth for families in East Sussex.

3.4 The EYPP payment is additional funding for early years settings to improve the education they provide to disadvantaged children. Historically EYPP has only been paid to three- and four-year-olds but in the 2025/26 financial year this will include eligible children aged 9 months plus. The EYPP rate for 2025/26 will be £1.00 per hour for each eligible child, per year.

3.5 The DAF is for early years settings to support children with disabilities or special educational needs. It aids access to early years places by supporting providers to make reasonable adjustments to their settings. The DAF rate for 2025/26 will be £938 per eligible child, per year.

3.6 During the autumn of 2024, the Council revisited the consultation with providers on whether to use EYPP as the measure of deprivation to inform the statutory deprivation supplement or use EYPP as the indicator. The outcome of the consultation was to use EYPP as a more robust indicator of need. EYPP will be used across all age ranges.

3.7 Council's should consult with early years providers to set the value of their local SENIF. Early Years providers will be consulted with during the spring of 2025 to agree how the grant available will be distributed to best support the needs of children in their care.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

4.1 In conclusion, Schools Forum is asked to note the changes to the early years education entitlements as a result of the government's early years funding reforms, which will be fully implemented from September 2025, and approve the Early Years DSG Budget.

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