

Report to: **East Sussex Schools Forum**

Date of meeting: **16 January 2026**

Report By: **Carolyn Fair**

Title: **Central School Services Block (CSSB) 2026/27**

Purpose: **To provide an update on the CSSB allocations for 2026/27**

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Schools Forum are asked to note and approve the proposals for the Central School Services Block for 2026/27.

1 Background

1.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2026/27 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 Licensing Agency (CLA) Licence and Servicing Schools Forum)
 - funds that were previously known as 'Retained Duties Education Services Grant' which, up to 2017/18, the LA received and held separately for its ongoing responsibilities to maintained schools and academies
 - Funds previously received as separate grants (Support and NI Grants) for Centrally Employed Staff.
- **Historic Commitments** This is funding for LA's historic financial commitments.

2 2026/27 On-going responsibilities

2.1 The DfE fund Ongoing responsibilities on a per pupil basis and use the October census. For 2026/27, the funding rate has increased from £43.41 to £48.62 per pupil. However, within the 2026/27 per pupil rate, £6.46 has been added which relates to funding that used to be received, by the Local Authority, as a separate grant for Centrally Employed Staff.

2.2 Therefore, on a like for like basis, the per pupil rate has decreased by £1.25 from 2025/26. Table 1 shows a summary of the change in funding from 2025/26 to 2026/27.

2.3 As with 2025/26, the LA is asking to retain the full amount that the DfE is allocating for 2026/27.

2.4 Table 2 shows the 2026/27 proposals for the 'Ongoing Responsibilities' element of the CSSB which totals £3.00m. (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: Summary of Funding Change

2025/26 Allocation	£2,717,700	
Movement due to change in Per Pupil Rate	-£78,200	
Movement due to change in Numbers on Roll (NOR)	-£38,300	-£116,500
Movement due to external grants now received within the DSG.	£398,600	
2026/27 Allocation	£2,999,800	

Table 2: Proposals for 2026/27 On-going Responsibilities

Category	Responsibility	2025/26 Allocations	Funding Adjustments for 2026/27	2026/27 Proposed Allocations
Specified by the DfE	Admissions	£574,800	£13,000	£587,800
	Copyright Licences	£464,500	£32,500	£497,000
	Schools Forum	£25,700	£0	£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	£153,000	£0	£153,000
	Leadership of Children's services and support staff / Planning for the Education Service as a whole.	£240,900	£0	£240,900
	Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating to specifically maintained schools.	£55,400	£0	£55,400
	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)	£12,100	£0	£12,100
	Internal Audit and Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer	£30,000	£0	£30,000
	Consultation Costs relating to non-staffing issues. Plans involving collaboration with other LA services or public or voluntary services	£40,600	£0	£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	£112,600	£0	£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.	£139,300	£31,000	£170,300
	School Attendance	£360,300	£0	£360,300
Other Ongoing Duties	Places in Independent Schools for Non SEN Pupils	£193,000	-£193,000	£0
	Employer Contributions for Centrally Employed Staff (Previously received as separate external grants)	£315,500	£398,600	£714,100
	Total	£2,717,700	£282,100	£2,999,800

3. Historic Commitments

3.1 The Historic Commitments are funded by the DfE as a lump sum amount and for 2026/27 the DfE are allocating £1.29m to ESCC for Historic Commitments. This is a reduction of £323k when compared to 2025/26.

3.2 The LA proposes to use these funds to offset some of the High Needs Block 2026/27 spending pressures.

3.3 Table 3 is a summary of the proposals for 2026/27 funding for historic commitments.

Table 3: Proposals for 2026/27 Historic Commitments

Historic Commitments	2025/26 Allocations	CSSB Changes	2025/26 Proposed Allocations
	£1,613,500	-£322,700	£1,290,800
*Total	£1,613,500	-£322,700	£1,290,800

**Please note that the DfE reduce the Historic commitments value by 20% each year. This means that for 2026/27, the value has reduced by £323k.*

4. Summary and Conclusion

4.1 This report sets out the proposals for the retention of the £3.00m for 'on-going responsibilities' and the £1.29m 'Historic Commitments'. Schools Forum members are asked to approve these proposals.

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