

Schools Forum

Agenda


Tuesday 20 January 2026 at 2.00 pm

This meeting will be held remotely. If you'd like to observe the meeting please contact: Liam.Oliff@lbhf.gov.uk

<u>Item</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING To agree the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record.	
3. SCHOOLS BLOCK BUDGET AND MAINSTREAM BUDGETS 2026/27 This report sets out the final Schools Block allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2026/27 following the receipt of final funding allocations and the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) in December 2025.	2 - 14
4. EARLY YEARS BUDGET 2026/27 This report updates forum on the initial allocation of Early Years Block funding for 2026/27 including the extended entitlements for working parents of two-year-old children and children from age 9 months.	15 - 25
5. FORWARD PLAN MARCH 2026	26

Agenda Item 3

Agenda Item 3

	<p style="text-align: center;">London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SCHOOLS FORUM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20th January 2026</p>
Schools Block Mainstream Budget 2026/27	
Open	
Classification - For scrutiny, review and comment	
Wards Affected: All	
Accountable Director: Jacqui McShannon, Executive Director of People	
Report Authors: Peter Haylock – Operational Director of Education and SEND Tony Burton – Head of Finance Children’s Services and Education	
Purpose of the report This report sets out the final Schools Block allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2026/27 following the receipt of final funding allocations and the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) in December 2025. Schools Forum are asked to review and agree the recommendations. This will determine the final budget allocation for the financial year 2026/27. The paper also details the proposed Central Services Schools Block funding allocations for 2026/27.	

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The final allocation of the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2026/27 has been received from the Department for Education (DfE) at £127.775m based on October 2025 census numbers.
- 1.2. In 2025/26, mainstream schools received funding through the National Insurance Contributions Grant and the Schools Budget Support Grant in addition to their DSG allocation through the Schools Block. From 2026/27 the funding previously distributed through these grants will be allocated through the Schools Block. The DfE has made a 2025/26 baseline adjustment to ensure schools are not disadvantaged. The value of the adjustment is £3.140m and has been allocated through the basic per pupil funding factor, Free School Meals Ever 6 factor and the lump sum factor.

- 1.3. Table 1 below details the change in the final allocation for 2026/27 notified in December 2025 compared with the final 2025/26 Schools Block allocation adjusted for the separate grants as described in paragraph 1.2.

Table 1 Schools Block Funding Allocation Year on Year

	2025/26	2026/27	
Number of pupils (R to Y11)	15,625	15,466	
	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	Movement between years £m
Schools Block Baseline (excludes growth funding)	121.859	125.680	
Additional Grants:			
NICS	1.945		
SBSG	1.195		
Premises Factor	1.425	1.431	
Sub-total before growth and falling rolls funding	126.424	127.111	0.687
Per pupil funding before growth and falling rolls £	8,091	8,219	1.58%
Growth funding	0.228	0.328	
Falling rolls funding into LA level funding	0.840	0.335	
Total Schools Block Funding	127.492	127.775	

- 1.4. Per pupil funding has increased by 1.58% for Hammersmith and Fulham mainstream schools. This compares to a 2.48% increase nationally.

2. Schools Block 2025/26 Budget Consultation Feedback

- 2.1. A short consultation for the 2026/27 schools block budget was launched on 12th January 2026 following the release of the proposed budget model to Schools Forum on Friday 9th January. The consultation consisted of briefing workshops and requests for feedback on the proposed model from schools. This ended on Friday 16th January. An update will be tabled for Schools Forum in January 2026 on the consultation responses from schools and in with respect to responses on the proposed Schools to High Needs block transfer of 1%.

3. 2026 to 2027 Final Budget Modelling

- 3.1. The final modelling uses the Department for Education (DfE) Authority Proforma Tool (APT) and 2026/27 schools' budget operational guidance. Pupil numbers are based on the October 2025 census.
- 3.2. The final model has been produced consistent with the principles agreed by Schools Forum in December 2025. The model follows the principles used over recent years in Hammersmith and Fulham and as required by the National Funding Formula for the 2026/27 financial year.
 - National Funding Formula (NFF) factor rates set to the higher of:
 - NFF values after area cost adjustment for inner London
 - Factor rates uplifted by a percentage across all factor rates in so far as this is affordable within each model to ensure all funding is allocated.
 - Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) set within the required level by the NFF.
 - This is the minimum increase in funding through pupil led funding factors year on year.
 - MFG must be set between minus 0.5% and 0.0% increase for 2026/27.
- 3.3. The agreed principles modelled sets the MFG at minus 0.50% and mirrors the NFF factor rates allowing for a percentage uplift of 0% on the inner London NFF rates.
- 3.4. The agreed model assumes continuing support to the High Needs Block through a 1% transfer from the Schools Block.
 - Continues the level of block transfer agreed by Schools Forum and the Minister of State for the 2025/26 budget.
 - The value of the block transfer is £1.262m based on the final allocations.
 - A disapplication of above 0.5% level requires Schools Forum approval and a disapplication to the Minister of State.
 - The continued disapplication is required for the short to medium term sustainability of the High Needs Block pending details of the governments' SEND reforms expected in 2026.
- 3.5. Minister of State approval for the 1% block transfer was received on 9th January 2026, following approval at Schools Forum in November 2025.
- 3.6. The key elements of the model applicable for maintained primary schools only:
 - De-delegated budget provision of £0.564m of maintained schools' budgets – see Section 5 for details.

- Education functions fund of £0.285m of maintained schools' budgets – see Section 5 for details.
- 3.7. Appendix 1 shows the factor rates for each model and appendix 2 shows how total funding is allocated across the factors in each model.
- 3.8. Appendix 3 shows the impact of the recommended model at school level, with a comparison to 2025 to 2026 final budget shares. The pupil numbers used for this modelling is from October 2025 pupil numbers on roll. Note:
- Per pupil funding rates given here are total funding divided by numbers on roll and not pupil led funding used for the minimum funding guarantee in the NFF
 - The final two columns show maintained de-delegation and education functions per section 5.

4. Recommended Budget Model 2026 to 2027

- 4.1. It is recommended that the model with a MFG at minus 0.50% is adopted for the 2026 to 2027 schools budget shares.
- 4.2. After a 1% transfer to the High Needs Block , this model mirrors the NFF factor rates and allows for a 0.0% uplift on the inner London NFF rates. This means as with the 2025/26 schools budget model, the 2026/27 budget funds schools at NFF rates for inner London, plus £0.539m of MFG protection. It is assumed MFG protection will continue to wind down over the medium term from 2027/28.

5. De-delegation and Statutory Education Functions for Maintained Schools Only

- 5.1. Further inflation and local government pay settlements continue to put the budgets for de-delegated services and statutory education functions under significant pressure. Increases are within the 1.58% overall block funding increase.
- 5.2. Within this a contribution to statutory HR has been added to ensure base funding for the statutory responsibilities of the local authority for maintained schools from 2026/27.

Table 3 – Maintained Mainstream Schools De-delegated Budgets Proposed

Area of Expenditure	2025/26 Maintained Mainstream Primary De- delegation £	2026/27 proposed Maintained Mainstream Primary De- delegation £	Change from 2025/26 £
De-delegation Total	554,900	564,000	9,100
Schools in Financial Difficulty/Contingency	96,900	100,000	3,100
Maintained Schools Trade Union Facilities Cover	24,100	22,100	(2,000)
Maintained Schools Maternity Cover Fund	117,600	120,000	2,400
Behavioural Support to mainstream (SEND)	49,700	49,700	0
Free School Meals Eligibility	29,600	23,500	(6,100)
School Improvement	237,000	248,700	11,700

Table 4 – Maintained Mainstream Education Function Budgets Proposed

Area of Expenditure	2025/26 Maintained Mainstream Primary De- delegation £	2026/27 Maintained Mainstream Primary De- delegation £	Change from 2025/26 £
Education Functions Total	288,600	285,000	(£3,600)
Finance	108,800	121,900	13,100
HR	0	12,500	12,500
Asset Management	61,300	51,600	(9,700)
Asbestos Risk Management and Surveys	94,400	75,700	(18,700)
Business Intelligence	24,100	23,300	(800)

6. Contributions from All Schools – Trade Union Facilities Cover and Free School Meals Eligibility Checking

- 6.1. Schools Forum are asked to agree the approach that all schools should make a contribution to the following areas on the same basis as maintained primary schools. This would include academies and free schools where they benefit from free school meals eligibility checking and trade union facilities cover.
- 6.2. Table 5 shows the contributions proposed from the schools block budget that would ensure a sustainable offer and funded appropriately via the schools budget. Currently costs are supported from the council's general fund budget which is unsustainable.

Table 5: Contributions requested and unit rates

	Free Schools Eligibility	Trade Union Facilities
	£4.36 per pupil on roll	£4.43 per pupil on roll
	£	£
Mainstream Maintained Primary Schools	23,500	22,100
Mainstream Academies and Free Schools	43,900	42,300
Total	67,400	64,400

- 6.3. Appendix 4 shows the contributions by school using the per pupil rate for numbers on roll as is the mechanism for maintained primary schools.
- 6.4. There is no mechanism to top slice the budgets for academies and free schools for these contributions. Therefore, the local authority proposes to invoice academies and free schools for their share of the contribution based on August 2025 roll numbers.
- 6.5. Academy Trusts and Free Schools who discharge their statutory responsibilities for trade union facilities via alternative means should notify the local authority schools finance team.

7. Falling Rolls Funding

- 7.1. An allocation of £0.335m has been included in the overall NFF funding for falling rolls at local authority level. This has been allocated by the DfE using the net impact within each Middle Layer Super Output area (MSOA) within the borough. MSOA's are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales.
- 7.2. The DfE introduced new criteria for local authorities to allocate falling rolls funding to schools from 2024/25. They expect that funding should be based on clear objective trigger points for qualification and a clear formula for calculating allocations.

7.3. The DfE suggests that compliant criteria for a falling rolls funding would contain some of the features set out below:

- the most recent SCAP data shows that school places will be required in 2026 to 2027 and/or the subsequent 2 years (this is a mandatory requirement).
- surplus capacity exceeds a minimum number of pupils, or a percentage of the published admission number
- formula funding available to the school will not support provision of an appropriate curriculum for the existing cohort
- the school will need to make redundancies to contain spending within its formula budget.

7.4. The SCAP requirement is mandatory. Data based on current H&F census and birthrate information does not indicate that school places will be required in 2026 to 2027 and/or the subsequent 2 years. H&F does not meet this mandatory requirement.

7.5. It is therefore proposed that H&F do not create a separate falling rolls fund and that the funding is included in the Schools Block allocation being distributed to schools using the funding factors. This is how the recommended model has been calculated.

8. Central Services Schools Block (CSSB) 2026/27

Table 4 - Central Services Planned Expenditure 2026/27

Area of Expenditure	2025/26	2026/27 Proposed	Change
	£	£	£
Copyright Licensing (Estimated)	145,900	149,200	3,300
Asset Management and Place Planning	197,100	202,200	5,100
Management, Support, Finance/Business Intelligence and SACRE	654,200	649,900	-4,300
Virtual School	106,000	0	-106,000
Admissions and ACE	592,700	584,000	-8,700
Time limited Support to High Needs Block Expenditure	243,400	172,500	-70,900
Total Spend/Funding	£1,939,300	£1,757,800	-181,500

- 8.1. In 2026/27 there is a significant reduction in funding year on year for the historic funding being wound down. There is no change to the overall arrangements for the CSSB. The CSSB allocation for 2026/27 provides funding for:
- The retained duties element of the Education Services Grant (ESG) for all schools
 - Ongoing central statutory functions – for example, Admissions – for maintained schools
 - Ongoing historic commitments
- 8.2. Planned expenditure reductions have been made with respect to the expected historic funding reduction via the Virtual School in 2026/27. This has been achieved through streamlined resources while enhancing support through collaborative partnerships. These changes ensure continuity of enrichment and mentoring while leveraging external funding and partnerships for greater impact.
- 8.3. Reduced funding also limits the extent to which the CSSB budget can support the High Needs Block budget in 2026/27 with planned contribution reduced to £0.172m.

9. Recommendations and Decisions required

- 9.1. Recommendation 1: It is recommended that the January 2026 APT for the recommended model is submitted to the DfE for the 2026 to 2027 schools budget share. This is with the revised uplifted NFF rates detailed in paragraph 4 and in appendix 1 and an MFG value of minus 0.50% per pupil.
- 9.2. Recommendation 2: It is recommended that the Schools Forum confirm agreement of the disapplication request to transfer 1% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2026/27 as part of the recommended model based on principles agreed in the Autumn Term Schools Forum meetings. The 1% transfer is now approved by Minister of State at £1.262m.
- 9.3. Recommendation 3: It is recommended that maintained school representatives at Schools Forum agree to the proposed 2026-27 de-delegation budget of £0.564m.
- 9.4. Recommendation 4: It is recommended that maintained school representatives at Schools Forum agree to the proposed 2026/27 Education Functions budget of £0.285m.
- 9.5. Recommendation 5: Is that Schools Forum agree the approach to ensure statutory trade union facilities and free school meals eligibility costs are sustainable within the schools budget.

- 9.6. Recommendation 6: It is recommended that Schools Forum agree to the Central Services School Block budget allocations proposed for 2026/27.

10. Key dates

Date	Activity
22nd January 2026	Deadline for submission of the final 2026 to 2027 APT to the DfE
February to March 2026	Council approval of the 2026/27 Schools budget
28 February 2026	Deadline for confirmation of school budget shares to maintained schools.

Report ends

Item 3, Appendix 1 - Factor Rates 2026/27 Final Allocation

Area Cost Adjustment	1.18248			
Uplift on NFF rates	0.00%	0.00%		
	2025/26 Final			
	A	B		
	2025/26 Final factors	Recommended MFG Model 2026/27 with 1% SB to HNB transfer		NFF Rates pre ACA weighting
Basic/pupil funding	2025/26 NFF Weighted & Uplifted MAX MFG with Falling Rolls £	2026/27 NFF ACA Weighted (ACA 1.18248) £	25/26 H&F Unit vs 26/27	NFF Unit Values 26/27 from NFF for Schools and HN 26/27
MFG	-0.25%	-0.50%		
AWPU				
Primary AWPU	4,556.46	4,805.60	249.14	£4,064
KS3 AWPU	6,421.93	6,723.58	301.65	£5,686
KS4 AWPU	7,240.36	7,579.70	339.34	£6,410
Additional Needs Funding				
Deprivation				
Primary FSM	586.29	597.15	10.86	£505
Secondary FSM	586.29	597.15	10.86	£505
Primary FSM6	1,255.49	1,430.80	175.32	£1,210
Secondary FSM6	1,841.77	2,039.78	198.00	£1,725
Primary IDACI A	811.33	827.74	16.41	£700
Primary IDACI B	615.90	626.71	10.82	£530
Primary IDACI C	580.37	591.24	10.87	£500
Primary IDACI D	527.07	538.03	10.96	£455
Primary IDACI E	337.56	342.92	5.36	£290
Primary IDACI F	278.34	283.80	5.46	£240
Secondary IDACI A	1,125.20	1,147.01	21.81	£970
Secondary IDACI B	882.39	898.68	16.29	£760
Secondary IDACI C	823.17	839.56	16.39	£710
Secondary IDACI D	752.11	768.61	16.51	£650
Secondary IDACI E	532.99	543.94	10.95	£460
Secondary IDACI F	402.70	407.96	5.25	£345
Low Prior Attainment				
Primary LPA	1,391.69	1,418.98	27.28	£1,200
Secondary LPA	2,114.19	2,158.03	43.84	£1,825
EAL				
Primary EAL	716.03	721.31	5.28	£610
Secondary EAL	1,923.58	1,927.44	3.86	£1,630
Mobility				
Primary Mobility	1,142.97	1,164.74	21.78	£985
Secondary Mobility	1,640.42	1,673.21	32.79	£1,415
Looked After Children	-	-		£0
School Led Funding				
Lump Sum				
Primary lump sum	171,859.34	180,564.70	8,705.35	£152,700
Secondary lump sum	171,859.34	180,564.70	8,705.35	£152,700
Sparsity				
Primary sparsity	67,985.71	69,293.33	1,307.62	58,600
Secondary sparsity	98,780.63	100,747.30	1,966.67	85,200
Middle-school sparsity	98,780.63	100,747.30	1,966.67	85,200
All-through sparsity	98,780.63	100,747.30	1,966.67	85,200
Premises				
Split sites basic eligibility funding	63,958.68	65,154.65	1,195.97	82,700
Split sites distance funding	31,979.34	32,636.45	657.11	-
Difference between funding allocated and the available funding post-HNB transfer	£0	£0		
Transfer to HNB - Value	£1,230,510	£1,262,204		
Transfer to HNB - % of SB	1.00%	1.00%		

Item 3, Appendix 2 - Total Funding across the Final APT Model 2026.

(
before maintained schools de-delegation and education functions
)

0%

School Block Allocation

£124,352,256.78

£127,775,420.00

		2025/26 Final Factors -0.25%	Final Model 1% HNB 2026/27 -0.50%
AWPU	MFG		
	Primary (Years R-6)	£37,959,868	£39,780,746
	Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	£27,717,050	£28,635,733
	Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)	£21,583,513	£22,200,932
Total AWPU		£87,260,431	£90,617,411
Deprivation	FSM	£2,739,137	£2,813,185
	FSM6	£8,025,979	£9,095,536
	IDACI Band F	£588,033	£604,022
	IDACI Band E	£1,226,024	£1,244,776
	IDACI Band D	£934,663	£944,526
	IDACI Band C	£1,214,328	£1,217,460
	IDACI Band B	£796,194	£761,525
	IDACI Band A	£180,341	£174,503
Total Deprivation		£15,704,700	£16,855,532
EAL 3 Primary		£1,560,469	£1,520,127
EAL 3 Secondary		£844,702	£849,868
Mobility		£320,740	£355,092
		£2,725,911	£2,725,087
LPA	Primary	£3,472,517	£3,689,892
	Secondary	£2,163,014	£2,168,211
Total Low Prior Attainment		£5,635,531	£5,858,103
Lump sum		£8,077,389	£8,486,541
Funding through MFG		£2,292,808.82	£539,284.92
Other Items			
HNB Transfer		£1,230,510	£1,262,204
Falling Rolls		£0	£0
Split Sites		£67,387	£68,653
Rates		£1,357,589	£1,362,604
Sparsity		£0	£0
Grand Total		£124,352,257	£127,775,420

(before maintained schools de-delegation and education functions)
0%


Recommended Model 2026/27 With 1% Transfer to High Needs

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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Item 3 Appendix 4 - Free School Meals and Trade Union Facilities - School Contributions (on roll)

		Roll Number Autumn 2025]	Maintained Schools Trade Union Facilities Cover	Free School Meals Eligibility	TOTAL
		0%			
Unit rate per Pupil on Roll			4.10	4.36	
Total Budget		17,101	70,086	67,583	
		£	£		
Maintained Primary	Addison Primary School	202	828	881	1,709
Maintained Primary	Avonmore Primary School	156	640	680	1,320
Maintained Primary	Brackenbury Primary School	272	1,115	1,186	2,301
Maintained Primary	Miles Coverdale Primary School	197	808	859	1,667
Maintained Primary	Flora Gardens Primary School	154	631	671	1,303
Maintained Primary	Kenmont Primary School	197	808	859	1,667
Maintained Primary	Melcombe Primary School	121	496	528	1,024
Maintained Primary	Old Oak Primary School	185	759	807	1,565
Maintained Primary	Sir John Lillie Primary School	163	668	711	1,379
Maintained Primary	Wendell Park Primary School	342	1,402	1,491	2,893
Maintained Primary	Wormholt Park Primary School	263	1,078	1,147	2,225
Maintained Primary	All Saints CoFE Primary School	186	763	811	1,574
Maintained Primary	Holy Cross RC School	579	2,374	2,524	4,898
Maintained Primary	John Betts Primary School	207	849	903	1,751
Maintained Primary	St John's Walham Green Church of England Primary School	400	1,640	1,744	3,384
Maintained Primary	St Mary's Catholic Primary School	154	631	671	1,303
Maintained Primary	St Paul's CoFE Primary School	131	537	571	1,108
Maintained Primary	St Peter's Primary School	210	861	916	1,777
Maintained Primary	St Stephen's CoFE Primary School	415	1,702	1,809	3,511
Maintained Primary	St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School	57	200	200	400
Maintained Primary	Good Shepherd RC Primary School	210	861	916	1,777
Maintained Primary	Larmenier & Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	412	1,689	1,796	3,486
Maintained Primary	Normand Croft Community School for Early Years and Primary Education	191	783	833	1,616
Maitained Primary Totals		5,404	22,123	23,513	45,636
Special Schools	Jack Tizard	70	287		287
Special Schools	Woodlane	110	451		451
Special Schools	Cambridge	129	529		529
Special Schools Totals		309	1,300		1,267
Maintained Nursery Schools					
Maintained Nursery Schools	Randolf Beresford	79	324		324
Maintained Nursery Schools	Vanessa	52	213		213
Maintained Nursery Schools	Bayonne	25	103		103
Maintained Nursery Schools	James Lee	49	201		201
Maintained Nursery Schools Totals		205	800		841
Maintained 6th Form	William Morris	818	3,400	-	3,400
Academy Special	Ormiston Queensmill	246	1,009		1,009
Academy/Free mainstream	Ark Conway Primary Academy	205	841	894	1,734
	West London Free School Primary	421	1,726	1,836	3,562
	Ark White City Primary Academy	268	1,099	1,168	2,267
	Earl's Court Free School Primary	210	861	916	1,777
	Langford Primary School	347	1,423	1,513	2,936
	Ark Bentworth Primary Academy	137	562	597	1,159
	Fulham Primary School	180	738	785	1,523
	Thomas's Academy	128	525	558	1,083
	Queen's Manor School and Special Needs Unit	117	480	510	990
	Sullivan Primary School	128	525	558	1,083
	Greenside Primary School	182	746	794	1,540
	St Augustine's RC Primary School	193	791	841	1,633
	St John XXIII Catholic Primary School	278	1,140	1,212	2,352
	West London Free School	653	2,677	2,847	5,524
	The Fulham Boys School	645	2,645	2,812	5,457
	The Hurlingham Academy	732	3,001	3,192	6,193
	Phoenix Academy	510	2,091	2,224	4,315
	Fulham Cross Academy	447	1,833	1,949	3,782
	Fulham Cross Girls' School and Language College	423	1,734	1,844	3,579
	Sacred Heart High School	978	4,010	4,264	8,274
	Lady Margaret School	598	2,452	2,607	5,059
	The London Oratory School	995	4,080	4,338	8,418
	Ark Burlington Danes Academy	590	2,419	2,572	4,991
	Hammersmith Academy	697	2,858	3,039	5,897
Total Academy and Free Schools		10308	42,263	43,870	86,133

Agenda Item 4

	<p style="text-align: center;">London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SCHOOLS FORUM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20th January 2026</p>
Early Years Dedicated Schools Grant Budget 2026/27	
Open	
Classification - For scrutiny, review and comment	
Wards Affected: All	
Accountable Director: Jacqui McShannon, Executive Director of People	
Report Authors:	
Peter Haylock – Operational Director of Education and SEND	
Tony Burton – Head of Finance Children’s Services and Education	
<p>Purpose of the report</p> <p>This report updates forum on the initial allocation of Early Years Block funding for 2026/27 including the extended entitlements for working parents of two year old children and children from age 9 months. The report covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update on the National Funding Formula for Early Years 2026/27 • Funding rates and draft budget for April 2026 to March 2027 for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 and 4-year-old universal entitlement and additional hours for working parents ○ 2-year-old targeted support for families with 2-year-olds receiving additional forms of support (previously known as the entitlements for disadvantaged families) and the entitlement for working parents ○ Under 2s entitlements for children aged 9 months up to 2 years 	

1. Introduction and Changes to Early Years Funding 2026/27

- 1.1. The government has extended the number of free childcare offers available to working parents (subject to eligibility) from September 2025 to a maximum of 30 hours per week for 38 weeks for all preschool children from the term after they turn 9 months old.
- 1.2. Local authorities are required to set a local formula for all government funded childcare entitlements for the 2026/27 financial year taking account of all grant conditions and operational guidance.
- 1.3. Key changes in the National Funding Formula for 2026/27 are:
 - The passthrough requirement has increased to 97% from April 2026, which is an increase on the 96% and 95% in 2025/26 and 2024/25 financial years respectively. This effectively reduces the % available for local authorities to budget for central expenditure as the additional entitlements increase.
 - 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, receive a separate EYNTPG allocation in 2026 to 2027. This represents a change in approach by the Department for Education (DfE) where in previous years the approach had been to roll into grant funding at local authority level.
 - From financial year 2026 to 2027, the DfE are introducing a termly funding system to fund all the early years entitlements on termly census headcounts, as is currently the case for working parents' entitlements for 2-year-olds and under. Data from local authorities show the funded weeks on average are: 13 weeks in the summer term, 14 weeks in the autumn term and 11 weeks in the spring term. In order to ensure all local authorities are fairly treated and the funding allocation methodology aligns closely with local authority delivery pattern, the DfE will be providing all local authorities with funding for 13 weeks in the summer, 14 weeks in the autumn and 11 weeks in the spring for all the early years funding streams.
- 1.4. As set out in the [Best Start in Life](#) publication in July 2025, the DfE will be reviewing early years funding arrangements and will consult on changes to how early years funding is allocated and distributed by the summer of 2026.

2. Background to the Early Years National Funding Formula 2026/27

- 2.1. The 2026/27 Early Years Block funding allocation and operational guidance was received in December 2025. Table 1 below gives a high-level summary of the proposed budget which totals £25.845m across all funding elements.
- 2.2. Summary explanations of the funded childcare offer including funding rates applicable in 2026/27 are set out below:

Table 1: Breakdown of Initial Early Years Funding Allocations 2026/27

Childcare Entitlement	Amount £m
3 and 4-year-olds	
Universal Offer - 15 hours	10.363
Extended Offer for Working Parents - Additional 15 hours	2.458
Disability Access Fund	0.072
EY Pupil Premium	0.122
Sub-total 3 and 4-year-olds offer	13.015
Two-year-olds	
Targeted Offer - Families Receiving Additional Support - 15 Hours	1.274
Working Parent offer - 15 hours rising to 30 September 2025	4.269
Disability Access Fund	0.019
EY Pupil Premium	0.018
Sub-total 2-year-old Offer	5.580
9 Month up to 2 years	
Working Parent offer - 15 hours rising to 30 September 2025	6.254
Disability Access Fund	0.005
EY Pupil Premium	0.000
Sub-total 9 Months up to 2 years old offer	6.259
Maintained nursery school supplementary grant funding	0.991
TOTAL	25.845

- 2.3. Universal entitlement for 3 and 4-year-olds – 15 hours free childcare for all 3 and 4-year-olds available from the term after their 3rd birthday for a maximum of 38 weeks per year. Funding will be received by LBHF at £8.93 per hour in 2026/27. This is a £0.06 per hour increase or 0.68% increase on the final 2025/26 funded rate at £8.87.

Note that:

- The funding increase provided of £0.06 per hour relates to the termly funding adjustment. This funding adjustment is to compensate for the move to termly rather than annual census funding.
- As providers in Hammersmith and Fulham are already funded on the basis of the termly headcount, it is assumed that this funding can be passported via the basic funding entitlement to all providers in 2026/27.

- Before the termly funding adjustment the year-on-year funding increase provided to Hammersmith and Fulham is nil.
- 2.4. Additional entitlement working parents 3 and 4-year-olds – additional 15 hours free childcare for eligible working parent from the term after their 3rd birthday for a maximum of 38 weeks per year. Parents are required to obtain a 30-hour code. Funding will be received by LBHF at £8.93 per hour in 2026/27 financial year.
 - 2.5. Targeted offer for families receiving additional forms of support (formerly known as the disadvantaged offer for 2-Year Olds) – 15 hours free childcare for eligible 2-year-old children from the term after their 2nd birthday for a maximum of 38 weeks per year. Funding will be received by LBHF at £12.53 per hour in the 2026/27 financial year, a 4.59% increase year on year.
 - 2.6. Working Parent entitlement for 2-year-olds – this is a new offer of up to 30 hours free childcare for eligible children following their 2nd birthday for a maximum of 38 weeks per year. Funding will be received by LBHF at £12.53 per hour in the 2026/27 financial year, a 4.59% increase year on year.
 - 2.7. Working Parent entitlement for 9 months up to 2 years old – this is a new offer of up to 30 hours free childcare for eligible children from the term after they are 9 months for a maximum of 38 weeks per year. Funding received by LBHF at £17.49 per hour in the 2026/27 financial year, a 5.49% increase year on year.
 - 2.8. Maintained Nursery School Supplementary Funding – this additional funding for maintained nurseries was initiated as part of the move to the National Funding Formula to provide funding protection with respect to historic duties to 3 and 4-year-olds. An estimated initial allocation of £0.991m in 2026/27 is based on the January 2025 census for 3 and 4-year-olds accessing the universal entitlement at £8.73 per hour. This allocation is subject to change depending on actual participation and will also be adjusted for the termly census from April 2026.
 - 2.9. Early Years (EY) Pupil Premium – additional funding for disadvantaged children has been extended to all the Early Years offers detailed above. It will be paid as a top up of £1.15 per hour up in 2026/27 to a maximum of £655.5 per year (38 weeks). This is a 15% increase on the 2025/26 rate. Eligibility relates to benefits received by the family and must be confirmed by the provider and recorded on the termly head count.
 - 2.10. Disability Access Fund – additional per pupil funding for those receiving DLA to access all EY entitlements. Funding has increased by £37 to £975 per eligible pupil per annum.

3. 2026/27 Proposed Budget Model – All Entitlements

- 3.1. The 2026/27 proposed budget model is based on the initial allocation detailed above and summarised in Table 2. The proposed breakdown of the use of the new hourly funding rates for each entitlement is shown in the Table 3.

Table 2: Proposed 2026/27 Early Years Budget by entitlement

	26/27	26/27	26/27	26/27
	3 and 4 YO Entitlements (Universal & Extended)	2 YO Entitlements (Working Parents & Targeted Additional Support)	Under 2 YO Entitlements (Working Parents)	Total All Entitlements
	£m	£m	£m	£m
A. Base Rate - Participation based on estimated hours	9.734	4.676	5.436	19.846
B. Deprivation Supplement	0.933	0.358	0.268	1.559
C. Supplement for Quality	0.388	N/A	N/A	0.388
D. SEN Inclusion Fund	0.632	0.279	0.315	1.226
E. Lump Sum to MNS	0.704	N/A	N/A	0.704
F. Contingency	0.057	0.066	0.054	0.177
G. Central expenditure - 3%	0.373	0.164	0.182	0.719
H. Maintained Nursery School Supplement	0.991	N/A	N/A	0.991
TOTAL Planned Expenditure	13.812	5.543	6.255	25.610

- 3.2. The proposed breakdown of the use of the new hourly funding rates for each entitlement is shown in the Table 3.

Table 3: Factors and Hourly Rates Proposed 2026/27

	26/27 3 and 4 YO Entitlements (Universal & Extended)	26/27 2 YO Entitlements (Working Parents & Targeted Additional Support)	26/27 Under 2 YO Entitlements (Working Parents)
	£ per hour	£ per hour	£ per hour
A. Base Rate - Participation based on estimated hours to all providers	6.78	10.57	15.20
B. Deprivation Supplement – Participation see Appendix IDACI sliding scale	0.65	0.81	0.75
C. Supplement for Quality	0.27	N/A	N/A
D. SEN Inclusion Fund	0.44	0.63	0.88
E. Lump Sum to MNS	0.49	N/A	N/A
F. Contingency	0.04	0.15	0.15
G. Central expenditure - 3%	0.26	0.37	0.51
TOTAL Funded Hourly Rate	8.93	12.53	17.49
H. Maintained Nursery School Supplement	8.73	N/A	N/A

4. Key Elements of the Proposed Budget Models 2026/27

- 4.1. All providers, both schools, private & voluntary nursery providers and childminders to be funded according to the DFE regulations. The value of

supplements for each entitlement must not exceed 12% of the total amount of the payments made.

- 4.2. Factor A - Universal base rates paid for every hour under the governments early years Entitlements for the financial year starting April 2026.
- 4.3. Factor B – Deprivation Supplement:
 - This is a mandatory supplement for 3 and 4-year-old offer and in order to remain within the overall supplements limit of 12% (including Factor C Quality). The rates have been held at 2025/26 levels to ensure overall supplements remain within the 12 limit across all entitlements. Details are provided in Appendix A.
 - A deprivation supplement has been included for both 2-year-old offers and under 2-year-old offer on the same basis as the 3 and 4-year-old offer.
- 4.4. Factor C - Quality. This supplement is for 3 and 4-year-old offer only and relates solely to the Primary Nursery Pay and Pension grants which was rolled into the EY funding since 2023.
 - Maintained Nursery Schools are not eligible for this funding as pay grants have been added to the Maintained Nursery School supplement.
 - Note the additional grants in 2025/26 for 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, receive a separate EYNTPG allocation in 2026/27 financial year to pass on to primary schools with nurseries.
- 4.5. Factor D - SEN Inclusion Fund. All providers at some stage may require additional funding to help them support the needs of individual children with lower level or emerging SEN in their settings. The 2026/27 budget is proposed across all entitlements is based on 5% of the funded rate for each element. This will enable to budget to grow as the activity from new entitlements expands for a full financial year in 2026/27.
 - The Early Years Inclusion Fund has been expanded to include all children covered by the extended entitlements who have a low level or emerging SEN from April 2024 as required by regulation.
 - The funding is for use in the setting and is allocated to the provider on an individual basis.
- 4.6. Factor E – Lumps sum to maintained nursery schools to support the enhanced offer available to families and children requiring additional support. This has increased in 2026/27 to include sector wide early intervention support which had been provided by the central budget prior to the increase in the passthrough requirement to 97%.
- 4.7. Factor F – contingency funding. The contingency is available to manage volatility in funding versus activity between terms and also intended to manage the risk with respect to deprivation for the new entitlements where average IDACI is based on estimates of uptake.

- 4.8. Factor G - Central Services Expenditure. The model assumes a budget for central services of £0.719m which is the maximum amount allowed across the entitlements under regulations with the new requirement to pass through 97% of funding to providers. The planned central budget has reduced from £0.794m and £0.850m in 2025/26 and 2024/25 respectively as a result the increase in passthrough requirement over that period.

Table 4: Proposed Central Services Budget 2026/27

Item of Central Expenditure	26/27
	Total
	£m
i. Education Early Years Services	0.443
ii. Help and Support for Families in Need	0.085
iii. Finance and Statutory Services	0.126
iv. Business Intelligence incl. census	0.065
Total Central Spend	0.719

5. Key Changes - Deployment of Hourly Funded Rate in the Proposed 2026/27 Budget

- 5.1. The key principles for the **2026/27 budget of £12.821m for 3 and 4-year-olds** in line with grant conditions, including:
- The proposed increase in the hourly base rate paid to all early years providers by £0.06 per hour to £6.78 per funded hour from April 2026 (a year-on-year increase of 0.89%).
 - A decrease in the budgeted average hourly rate for deprivation from £0.72 to £0.65 per hour based on analysis of the Autum 2025 census and using IDACI 2025 data. Funded rates per IDACI decile proposed for 2026/27 are unchanged from 2025/26 and per the rates detailed in Appendix 1.
 - The quality supplement for primary schools for historic grant funding has been set at £0.27 per hour in 2026/27. This is the maximum rate possible within the 12% supplement limit set by the National Funding Formula.
 - i. This represents an increase in £0.07 per hour on the revised 2025/26 budget after technical adjustment (see item 5, Schools Forum 11/11/25)
 - ii. Is a £0.02 reduction per hour versus the original budget discussed at Schools Forum 21/01/25)
 - Following the increase in the passthrough requirement in the 2026/27 National Funding Formula:
 - i. a reduction in the central funding of £0.09 per hour to ensure 97% passthrough requirement
 - ii. a corresponding increase in the lump sum for maintained nursery school's budget from £0.40 per funded hour to £0.49 is proposed to maintain early Intervention support services to the wider early

years sector and to continue to support families with additional needs through maintained nursery schools.

5.2. The key principles for the **2026/27 budget of £5.543m for two-year-olds** in line with grant conditions, including:

- The proposed increase in the hourly base rate paid to all early years providers by £0.52 per funded hour to £10.57 per hour from April 2026 (a year-on-year increase of 5.17%). This would apply to both the entitlements for working parents and the targeted offer for families receiving additional support.
- A decrease in the budgeted average hourly rate for deprivation from £0.87 to £0.81 per hour based on analysis of the Autumn 2025 census and using IDACI 2025 data. Funded rates per IDACI decile proposed for 2026/27 are unchanged from 2025/26 and per the rates detailed in Appendix 1.
- An increase in the provision for Special Educational Needs Inclusion by £0.15 per funded hour to £0.63 to ensure 5% of entitlement funding for inclusion across all entitlements and to accommodate the expanded entitlement in 2026/27.
- An increase in contingency of £0.05 per hour to help manage volatility in the overall budget for 2026/27.
- Following the increase in the passthrough requirement in the 2026/27 National Funding Formula, a reduction in the central budget of £0.11 per hour.

5.3. The key principles for the **2026/27 budget of £6.255m for children from 9 months up to two years old** in line with grant conditions, including:

- The proposed increase in the hourly base rate paid to all early years providers by £0.81 per funded hour to £15.20 per hour from April 2026 (a year-on-year increase of 5.63%).
- A decrease in the budgeted average hourly rate for deprivation from £0.77 to £0.75 per hour based on analysis of the Autumn 2025 census and using IDACI 2025 data. Funded rates per IDACI decile proposed for 2026/27 are unchanged from 2025/26 and per the rates detailed in Appendix 1.
- An increase in the provision for Special Educational Needs Inclusion by £0.22 per funded hour to £0.88 to ensure 5% of entitlement funding for inclusion across all entitlements and to accommodate the expanded entitlement in 2026/27.
- An increase in contingency of £0.05 per hour to help manage volatility in the overall budget for 2026/27.
- Following the increase in the passthrough requirement in the 2026/27 National Funding Formula, a reduction in the central budget of £0.15 per hour.

6. Recommendations and next steps

- 6.1. Schools Forum to note the engagement and briefings were undertaken with schools and Early Years providers from 12th January 2026 ahead of Schools Forum on 20th January.
- 6.2. Schools Forum are asked to approve the proposed deployment of central budget in Table 4 above and to note the impact of the impact of passthrough requirement on available central funds from 2026/27.
- 6.3. Schools Forum to note the proposed 2026/27 Early Year budget across all entitlements including the revised base rates, deprivation and local formulas proposed.
- 6.4. Schools Forum asked to note the change in termly funding proposed from April 2026 to align termly funding paid to providers on the same basis as funding to be received by the local authority. Funding will now be provided to all settings on the basis of 13 weeks in the summer, 14 weeks in the autumn and 11 weeks in the spring for all the early years funding streams. This is a change from the 12.66 weeks per term used to calculate termly funding per the census and headcount in 2025/26.

Report ends

Appendix A – IDACI Sliding Scale of Rates 2026/27 – Early Years Deprivation Participation Rate Proposed

IDACI Bandings used for Deprivation Supplement to universal hourly rate across all entitlements from April 2026.

IDACI banding	2026/27 Hourly Rate Proposed (All Entitlements)
	£
1	1.33
2	1.23
3	1.12
4	1.02
5	0.92
6	0.40
7	0.20
8	0.05
9	0.00
10	0.00

DFE Regulations state that the total amount paid as supplements to the universal hourly rate must not exceed 12% of the total amount payable.

Agenda Item 5

Schools Forum – Forward Plan

Tuesday 20th January 2026 2-4pm

- Final 2026/27 Mainstream school's budget for agreement
- Final 2026/27 Early Years budget for agreement

Tuesday 3rd March 2026 2-4pm

- Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring 2025/26 Qtr3
- High Needs Safety Valve Update 2025/26 Qtr3
- Update on 2026/27 High Needs National Funding Formula and Reforms (If available)
- Updated Scheme for Financing Schools and Schools Financial Procedures 2026/27