

AGENDA FOR BURY SCHOOLS' FORUM



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To: All Members of Bury Schools' Forum

Dear Colleague

Bury Schools' Forum

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Bury Schools' Forum which will be held as follows:-

Date:	Monday, 12 January 2026
Place:	Microsoft Teams
Time:	4.00 pm
Briefing Facilities:	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
Notes:	

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (*Pages 3 - 8*)

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 9 December 2025 are attached

3 MATTERS ARISING

4 SCHOOLS & ACADEMIES FUNDING 2026 - 27 (*Pages 9 - 16*)

- a) Dedicated Schools Grant
- b) Schools Block
- c) Central School Services Block
- d) High Needs Block
- e) Early Years Block

5 HIGH NEEDS BUDGET REPORT (*Pages 17 - 30*)

Report attached

Bury Schools Forum
Tuesday 9 December 2025
Microsoft Teams

Attendance

Early Years

None in Attendance

Maintained Primary

Richard Ainsworth,
Simon Waddington

Governor (Plus Governors Forum)
Headteacher

Maintained Secondary

None in Attendance

Maintained Special

Katy Neild

Millwood

Academy Primary

Ruth Onyekaba
Martin Van Hecke
James Gabrieledes

Headteacher Gorsefield Primary
Headteacher St Thomas's CE Primary
Headteacher Sunny Bank Primary

Academy Secondary

None in Attendance

Special

Pupil Referral Unit

None in Attendance

Non-Schools Sector

Helena Thom

NEU

16 – 19 Education Representative

None in attendance

Children's Services Department

Ben Dunne
Philip Herd
Alison Vidler

Director of Education and Skills
CYP Finance Business Partner
Senior Schools Finance Officer (Schools & Systems
Finance)

Observer(s)

Katherine Ashworth

Millwood School

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Kelly Macadam	MAT CEO
Carina Vitti	Holy Cross College
Joanne Hurst	Millwood School
Claire Ferguson,	Oakplc - Observor
Karen Hopwood	NASUWT

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was agreed:

That subject to a couple of typing errors, the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

3 MATTERS ARISING

Ben Dunne, Director of education and skills referred to the issue that had been raised regarding facilities time for union representatives and stated that it would be good to reach an agreement in relation to this as soon as possible.

He stated that he would arrange for a meeting with himself and Alison Vidler to meet with the teacher union representative concerned to discuss.

4 SCHOOLS ACADEMIES AND FUNDING 2026 - 27

Alison Vidler presented the Schools and Academies Funding Update 2025-26

1. Indicative Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2025-26

It was explained that for the second year, information that is usually issued to Local Authorities in the Summer Term was received at the end of November.

This includes National Funding Formula information, along with Operational Guidance for 2026-27 in relation to the Schools Block and the Central Schools Services Block. Dedicated Schools Grant allocations, and school data are due to be issued during the last week of the Autumn Term. No information has been issued yet, in relation to the Early Years Block or the High Needs Block.

1a. Schools Block

It was reported that in 2025-26 schools received additional funding through separate National Insurance Contributions(NICs) grants and the Schools Budget Support Grant (SBSG), in addition to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

The funding for these additional grants will be added to the baseline funding for 2026-27. Initial estimates indicate a per pupil increase of 5.5% (Primary pupils) and 6% (Secondary pupils) when compared with 2025-26. The additional increase in Secondary funding reflects the increase in deprivation captured on the October 2024 census. However, once the baseline is adjusted for the rolling-in of separate grants, the overall increase is around 2.1% on all factors.

The effect of the separate grants has been factored into the increase in the Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level, but no further percentage uplift has been applied for 2026-27.

The National Funding Formula uses data from the prior year's school census. For 2026-27 this means that DSG paid to Local Authorities will be based on October 2024 census data and this will not reflect the expansion in Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility. Schools will therefore receive funding for the costs of FSM expansion, starting from September 2026, through a separate grant.

Final school-level DSG allocations will be based on October 2025 pupil census data. Provisional census data demonstrates a further decline in pupil numbers in Bury Schools, which will have an impact on the overall funding and on individual schools.

The minimum funding guarantee (MFG) is a protection against changes in per pupil school budget share (SBS) funding between the 2025-26 and 2026-27. The amount of protection will vary according to the impact of local changes in the funding formula and the effect of these on individual per pupil rates.

In 2026-27, local authorities have the flexibility to set local MFG between minus 0.5% and 0% compared to the baseline. The baseline will include funding in respect of the additional grants.

1b. High Needs Block

High Needs funding allocations are subject to future announcements.

The Core Schools Budget Grants will be incorporated into DSG funding for Special Schools in 2026-27.

1c. Central Schools Services Block

The 2025-26 NIC grant for centrally employed school staff will be rolled into the 2026-27 CSSB. This will be added to each local authority's baseline Funding for historic commitments continues to be subject to a year-on-year reduction of 20%.

1d. Early Years Block

Early Years funding allocations are subject to future announcements.

2 Formula Unit Values

Schools' Forum is required to recommend the formula unit values to be applied to all Mainstream Schools & Academies funding allocations on an annual basis.

The formula unit values applied to Bury Schools and Academies funding formula already directly mirror the DfE National Funding Formula (NFF) unit values.

The NFF Unit Values applicable to 2026-27 are set out in the report.

Decision:

Bury's Schools' Forum recommends all the unit values specified in the table provided, to be applied in compliance with the National Funding Formula (NFF) to Bury's Mainstream schools and academies funding formula for 2026-27.

Schools' Forum is required to recommend the De delegated items each year. The table set out in the report proposes the level of de-delegation to be recommended for 2026-27.

Decision:

Schools' Forum (maintained school representatives) recommends the de-delegated values for 2026-27, summarised as follows:

- Schools of Concern @ £7.09 per pupil
- Free School Meals Eligibility Checking @ £5.90 per FSM6
- Trade Union Facilities Time @ £4.87 per pupil
- School Improvement Brokerage and Monitoring Grant @ £16.87 per-pupil.

4. Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)

The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) is a protection within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) that ensures a school's per-pupil funding does not decrease by more than a set percentage from one academic year to the next. For the 2026-2027 financial year, the allowed MFG range is between -0.5% and 0.0% for mainstream schools, meaning local authorities could choose to guarantee no decrease (0%) or allow a small one (-0.5%) to make the local formula work. This safeguard is a local authority decision based on guidance from the Department for Education (DfE). In 2025-26, Bury set the MFG at +0.0%. 18 schools benefitted from MFG protection. For comparison, the impact of a possible change to the MFG is shown in the table in the report, using the 2025-26 values.

Decision:

Schools' Forum recommends that the MFG protection is set at -0.5% in line with DfE guidance.

5. Headroom

After all formula factors have been updated as per the above recommendations and in accordance with the National Funding Formula unit values, there should be a balance of DSG Schools Block that remains unallocated. This balance is required to cover any outstanding updates to budget determinations as follows:

- October 2025 census variations – Pupil numbers will be adjusted for in the final Schools Block determination, however any increases in funding required due to variances in pupil cohort characteristics need to be covered from any available headroom monies, for example if increased deprivation funding is required once all up-to-date pupils have been mapped into the respective factors.
- Growth – where schools meet the criteria agreed by Schools Forum in 2023 for Local Authority approved bulge classes.
- Falling Rolls Fund – funding may be set aside from the Schools Block to create a small fund to support good schools with falling rolls, where local planning data shows that the surplus places will be needed within the next three financial years. This is unlikely to be needed.
- Minimum per pupil funding Level (MFL) and Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) protections – once all final data has been input there may be increased protections required on individual school budgets to ensure their actual budget allocations comply with the MFL and MFG funding per-pupil levels and protections.

If, when all items above have been updated to reflect the actual individual schools budget determinations, and any amounts to support growth and falling rolls have been allocated, there remains a balance of unallocated Schools Block funding, the Local Authority will factor a transfer of this balance by way of supporting the deficit recovery to the High Needs Block.

Schools' Forum may recommend up to 0.5% transfer of Schools' Block without any disapplication process being required to be approved by the Secretary of State for Education.

A 0.5% transfer to the High Needs Block has been factored into future years as part of DSG Safety Valve Management Plan submitted to the DfE.

If there is insufficient Headroom once all other updates have been completed, then Schools Forum may need to consider how to balance the overall Schools Block by reviewing all formula factors.

Decision:

Schools' Forum recommends the use of Headroom to address all outstanding items outlined above and a transfer of any balance, up to a maximum of 0.5%, of unallocated Schools Block Headroom to the High Needs Block, the amount to be confirmed at the meeting of Schools' Forum in January 2026.

Note: The meeting started at 4pm and ended at 4.50pm

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Bury Council

Department for Children and Young People

Schools and Academies Funding Update 2026-27

1. Dedicated Schools Grant 2026-27

Following the publication of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations on 17 December 2025, which takes into account the fully validated October 2025 pupil census, the 2026-27 DSG for Bury is summarised in the table below.

*Please note that the 2025-26 baselines shown below include the Core Schools Budget Grant, Schools Budget Support Grant and National Insurance Contribution Grant. This is for the purpose of demonstrating the actual variance as these have been incorporated into the 2026-27 DSG.

2026 to 2027 DSG allocations, before recoupment and deductions for national non-domestic rates, and for direct funding of high needs places by DfE						
Dedicated schools grant (DSG):		Schools block	Central school services block	High needs block	Early years block	Total DSG allocation
351	BURY	(£s)	(£s)	(£s)	(£s)	(£s)
	Final 2025-26 DSG, including additional grants	170,803,013	1,149,642	53,538,534	31,754,242	257,245,431
	2026-27	176,712,533	1,175,003	53,538,534	39,464,722	270,890,792
	Variance to 2025-26 £	5,909,520	25,361	0	7,710,480	13,645,361
	Variance to 2025-26 %	3.5%	2.2%	0.0%	24.3%	5.3%

2 Schools Block

The application of the NFF unit values, agreed at Schools Forum in December 2025, results in the allocations shown in Table 2 below. The amount of funding distributed to schools, including the centralised Rates payments, equates to almost 100% of the Schools Block Funding. The effect of pupil number variances between the October funding census collections for 2024 and 2025 needs to be noted in respect to the impact on the figures included in the table below.

Primary schools have seen an overall net reduction of 334 funded pupils.
 Secondary schools have seen an overall net reduction of 69 funded pupils.

For both sectors Forum will be aware that there will be individual schools with reductions, and others with gains to pupil numbers. They will all need to financially plan for pupil number changes, in order to achieve a balanced budget position.

Table 1 shows the pupil data variances in the individual factors. Although overall pupil numbers have fallen, there are increases in the number of pupils attracting funding

due to being eligible for Free School Meals. It should be noted that the funding rate paid to each Local Authority is based on the number of pupils, and their funding characteristics. However, where we have increases in individual factors that would attract additional funding, the DfE funding is lagged by a year.

Table 1 – Pupil Data

Factor	Sub-level	2025-26 Data	2026-27 Data	Variance	Variance %
Basic Entitlement Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)	Primary	15,637.00	15,303.00	-334.00	-2.1%
	Key Stage 3	6,982.50	6,891.50	-91.00	-1.3%
	Key Stage 4	4,509.00	4,531.00	22.00	0.5%
Deprivation Factors					
Free School Meals	Primary	3,427.00	3,457.00	30.00	0.9%
	Secondary	3,238.00	3,402.24	164.24	5.1%
Free School Meals - Ever 6	Primary	3,458.00	3,504.00	46.00	1.3%
	Secondary	3,388.76	3,527.98	139.22	4.1%
Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) Primary	IDACI F	1,366.18	1,370.79	4.61	0.3%
	IDACI E	2,638.85	2,560.07	-78.78	-3.0%
	IDACI D	1,022.15	1,013.51	-8.64	-0.8%
	IDACI C	1,732.18	1,663.40	-68.78	-4.0%
	IDACI B	603.23	618.16	14.93	2.5%
	IDACI A	441.52	423.58	-17.94	-4.1%
	IDACI F	1,016.00	1,006.10	-9.90	-1.0%
Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) Secondary	IDACI E	1,941.42	1,947.95	6.53	0.3%
	IDACI D	735.81	755.87	20.06	2.7%
	IDACI C	1,325.37	1,274.75	-50.62	-3.8%
	IDACI B	522.93	505.53	-17.40	-3.3%
	IDACI A	404.23	390.95	-13.28	-3.3%
Additional Educational Needs Factors					
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Primary	1,847.44	1,874.64	27.20	1.5%
	Secondary	400.26	360.79	-39.47	-9.9%
Low Prior Attainment	Primary	5,134.68	5,264.53	129.85	2.5%
	Secondary	2,529.00	2,481.94	-47.06	-1.9%
Mobility	Primary	117.23	130.30	13.07	11.1%
	Secondary	71.13	70.91	-0.22	-0.3%
School Factors					
Lump Sum	Primary	64.00	64.00	0.00	0.0%
	Secondary	14.00	14.00	0.00	0.0%

Table 2 – Application of Funding Formula

Note – this table shows DSG only and does not include additional grants.

Factor	Sub-level	2025-26	2026-27	Variance £	Variance %
Basic Entitlement Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)	Primary	£60,155,539	£62,191,396	£2,035,857	3.4%
	Key Stage 3	£37,859,115	£39,185,069	£1,325,954	3.5%
	Key Stage 4	£27,563,517	£29,043,710	£1,480,193	5.4%
Deprivation Factors					
Free School Meals	Primary	£1,696,365	£1,745,785	£49,420	2.9%
	Secondary	£1,602,808	£1,718,131	£115,323	7.2%
Free School Meals - Ever 6	Primary	£3,665,480	£4,239,840	£574,360	15.7%
	Secondary	£5,269,519	£6,085,766	£816,246	15.5%
Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) Primary	IDACI F	£321,052	£328,990	£7,938	2.5%
	IDACI E	£752,072	£742,420	-£9,652	-1.3%
	IDACI D	£454,855	£461,147	£6,292	1.4%
	IDACI C	£848,769	£831,700	-£17,069	-2.0%
	IDACI B	£313,680	£327,625	£13,945	4.4%
	IDACI A	£302,440	£296,506	-£5,934	-2.0%
Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) Secondary	IDACI F	£345,440	£347,105	£1,665	0.5%
	IDACI E	£873,639	£896,057	£22,418	2.6%
	IDACI D	£467,240	£491,316	£24,076	5.2%
	IDACI C	£921,132	£905,073	-£16,059	-1.7%
	IDACI B	£389,583	£384,203	-£5,380	-1.4%
	IDACI A	£384,015	£379,222	-£4,793	-1.2%
Additional Educational Needs Factors					
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Primary	£1,099,228	£1,143,532	£44,304	4.0%
	Secondary	£638,413	£588,094	-£50,319	-7.9%
Low Prior Attainment	Primary	£6,033,252	£6,317,436	£284,184	4.7%
	Secondary	£4,514,267	£4,529,541	£15,274	0.3%
Mobility	Primary	£113,125	£128,346	£15,221	13.5%
	Secondary	£98,515	£100,338	£1,823	1.9%
School Factors					
Lump Sum	Primary	£9,286,400	£9,772,800	£486,400	5.2%
	Secondary	£2,031,400	£2,137,800	£106,400	5.2%
Total Allocated via NFF		£168,000,858	£175,318,944	£7,318,086	4.4%
Other Factors					
Rates		£1,533,120	£1,614,282	£81,162	5.3%
Minimum Funding Level		£302,982	£20,960	-£282,022	-93.1%
Minimum Funding Guarantee		£198,906	£28,597	-£170,309	-85.6%
Growth fund		£0	£0	£0	-
LA prior commitment to DfE for growth in pupil numbers for new high school Sep-26 to Mar-27		-£620,000	-£620,000	£0	-
Available for transfer to High Needs Block		£184,170	£349,750	£165,579	89.9%
TOTAL		£169,600,036	£176,712,533	£7,112,497	4.2%

Note: £349,750 transfer to the High Needs Block is 0.2% of the total Schools Block. This is within the 0.5% permitted, which was approved at the last meeting. The increase from the previous year is due to the lower amount available last year as a result of the increase in deprivation factors.

3. Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)

Schools' Forum is required to approve the allocation of budgets included under the CSSB, which was created several years ago in place of the former Education Services Grant (ESG) retained functions funding for Local Authorities. The former ESG funding was added to the DSG in April 2018 to help sustain the services that it is intended to support.

The overall amount of grant in the 2026-27 CSSB has increased by 2.2%.

The following should be noted:

- each service funded via the CSSB has been increased in line with the overall funding increase.

This leaves an unallocated balance of £131,200 available to transfer to High Needs.

Movements from the Central Services Block to any other block are not subject to any limit and can be made in consultation with Schools Forum.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)	2025-26	2026-27	Variance £	Variance %
Section 251 – Central Provision				
1.4.2 Admissions	£220,400	£225,200	£4,800	2.2%
1.4.3 Schools' Forum	£18,900	£19,300	£400	2.1%
1.4.14 National Copyright Licences	£212,200	£216,900	£4,700	2.2%
Section 251 - Former ESG Services				
1.5.1 Education Welfare	£298,500	£305,100	£6,600	2.2%
1.5.2 Asset Management	£103,000	£105,300	£2,300	2.2%
1.5.3 Statutory / Regulatory inc SACRE	£72,200	£73,800	£1,600	2.2%
Section 251 - Other				
1.4.14 Teachers Pay, Pension & NIC Grant	£96,042	£98,203	£2,161	2.3%
Transfer to High Needs	£128,400	£131,200	£2,800	2.2%
Total Central School Services Block (CSSB)	£1,149,642	£1,175,003	£25,361	2.2%

PROPOSAL 1:

Bury's Schools' Forum recommend the allocation of CSSB budgets as outlined to the applicable services for 2026-27 and to transfer the remaining balance of £131,200 to the High Needs Block in support of High Needs cost pressures and the DSG Management Plan.

4. High Needs Block

High needs funding is provided to local authorities through the high needs block of the DSG, enabling them to meet their statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014.

Due to the pending review of High Needs funding, the overall amount of grant in the 2026-27 High Needs Block has been frozen at the 2025-26 grant level, with the addition of the previously separate grants.

The final allocations do not include any adjustments for census data.

Further changes to the High Needs Block funding are made in-year where there are changes, particularly in relation to import/export adjustments.

A separate report on the High Needs budget position is included in the papers for this meeting.

High Needs Block	2025-26	2026-27	Variance £	Variance %
Number of pupils in special schools/academies	764	779	15	2.0%
2025-26 Allocation	£50,991,838	£50,991,838		
2025-26 Additional Grants for Independent Provision		£518,276		
2025-26 Additional Grants for LA Special Schools & AP		£2,395,184		
2025-26 Additional Grants for SEN/RP Units		£35,235		
Import/Export Adjustment	-£402,000	-£402,000		
Total High Needs Block before Recoupment	£50,589,838	£53,538,533	£2,948,695	5.8%

5. Early Years Block

Forum should note that the Early Years Block will be adjusted in-year in respect to fluctuations in Early Years participation. The final funding allocation for 2026-27 will be based on termly census data:

Summer Term data collection 13/38ths

Autumn Term data collection 14/38ths

Spring Term data collection 11/38ths

Therefore, the funding received from the DfE is based on take up of places at the termly census dates. The Authority funds Early Years providers on actual take-up of places, as notified by providers through the Early Years Portal, which means that there is inevitably a variance in the funding allocated and the actual costs each year.

The free childcare offer has been extended so that eligible working parents in England will be able to access up to 30 hours of free childcare per week for 38 weeks per year from the term after their child turns 9 months to when they start school. The full year effect of this increase is included in the 2026-27 indicative allocation.

There has also been a further above inflation increase to the Pupil Premium funding rate in the Early Years Block. This has increased from £1.00 per hour to £1.15 per hour.

The table below shows the initial indicative funding for 2026-27, based on indicative data.

DSG Early Years Block	2025-26	2026-27	Variance	
3&4 YO Basic Entitlement	£8,810,311	£9,293,396	£483,085	5%
3&4 YO Extended Entitlement	£4,355,407	£4,492,492	£137,085	3%
2-year-old disadvantaged entitlement	£1,604,536	£1,918,499	£313,963	20%
2-year-old entitlement for working parents	£6,346,552	£8,804,894	£2,458,342	39%
Under 2s entitlement	£9,435,938	£14,135,613	£4,699,675	50%
Early Years pupil premium for 3 & 4-year-olds	£215,449	£233,798	£18,349	9%
Early Years pupil premium for 2-year-olds	£78,341	£133,893	£55,552	71%
Early Years pupil premium for under 2s	£11,634	£22,550	£10,916	94%
Disability access fund for 3 & 4-year-olds	£129,444	£117,000	-£12,444	-10%
Disability access fund for 2-year-olds	£30,016	£46,800	£16,784	56%
Disability access fund for under 2s	£9,380	£7,800	-£1,580	-17%
Maintained Nursery Supplementary Funding	£255,680	£257,987	£2,307	1%
TOTAL	£31,282,688	£39,464,722	£8,182,034	26%

For 2026-27 Local authorities are required to pass-through at least 97% of funding for each of the following funding entitlement streams individually:

- 3 & 4YO entitlements
- Under 2s
- 2YO disadvantaged
- 2YO working parents

This pass-through requirement ensures that most of the government funding reaches providers so that they can deliver the government's free entitlements. Bury has historically passported more than the minimum requirement for 2, 3 and 4 year-olds.

It should be noted that the DfE has increased the minimum pass-through requirement from 95% in 2024-25, to 96% for 2025-26, and 97% in 2026-27.

The percentage retained by Local Authorities is used to contribute to Early Years SEN inclusion costs, central support services covering advisory support, sufficiency requirements, free entitlement eligibility checking, and management and administration of the complex Early Years Single Funding Formula determinations, allocations, systems, and statutory reporting requirements.

The table below shows the proposed Central Early Years budget.

The proposed budget meets or exceeds the 97% pass-through requirement for each funding stream, as the Pupil Premium and Disability Access Funds are passed on in full. The overall proposed central budget is 2.8% of the total funding.

Individual pass-through rates:

3&4 YO 97.00%
2 YO 97.40%
Under 2s 97.00%

DSG Early Years Block	2026-27	Proposed Central Budget
3&4 YO Basic Entitlement	£9,293,396	£229,882
3&4 YO Extended Entitlement	£4,492,492	£177,784
2-year-old disadvantaged entitlement	£1,918,499	£48,946
2-year-old entitlement for working parents	£8,804,894	£224,775
Under 2s entitlement	£14,135,613	£423,285
Early Years pupil premium for 3 & 4-year-olds	£233,798	£0
Early Years pupil premium for 2-year-olds	£133,893	£0
Early Years pupil premium for under 2s	£22,550	£0
Disability access fund for 3 & 4-year-olds	£117,000	£0
Disability access fund for 2-year-olds	£46,800	£0
Disability access fund for under 2s	£7,800	£0
Maintained Nursery Supplementary Funding	£257,987	£0
TOTAL	£39,464,722	£1,104,673
		2.8%

PROPOSAL 2:

Bury's Schools' Forum approves the above central budget allocation within the Early Years Block.

Funding update prepared by
Alison Vidler – A.Vidler@bury.gov.uk

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**Bury Council****Department for Children and Young People**

High Needs Block (HNB) Funding and Estimated Spend 2026-207

Item no.

Report Author: Phil. Herd

Contact- P.Herd@Bury.gov.uk

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to: -

- i) Report on the HNB allocation for 2026-27
- ii) Note the estimated spend for 2026-27.
- iii) For Forum to note there is not the flexibility to allow for inflation on current rates.

The DFE High Needs operational guide quotes:

Local authorities must ensure any changes to SEND provision and high needs funding arrangements are made in close consultation and co-production with the schools and colleges which will be affected. The local authority's school's forum is one way through which partnership working across the education sector can be strengthened to ensure the local authority's spending decisions are most effective. Local authorities must consult with the school's forum about their high needs funding arrangements, which should include funding for place number changes and top-up funding rates, as well as budgets for independent school placements and central support services.

2. High Needs Funding Allocation for 2026-27

The DFE operational guide quotes: -

In 2026 to 2027 we are temporarily suspending the high needs national funding formula (NFF), which in previous years we have used to calculate local authorities' high needs allocations. Instead, local authorities' allocations will be based on their 2025 to 2026 allocations, with some adjustments. Following wider reforms to the SEND system, which the government will set out in early 2026, we will review the methodology for allocating high needs funding so that it supports the SEND reforms.

In practice this means that the HNB is cash flat, i.e., no inflationary increases. Previous specific grants for special schools and other providers have been rolled in to the main DSG allocation. The allocation for 26-27 is shown below:

HNB Allocation 2026-27	£k
2025-26 Baseline	50,992
Grant for Independent Special Schools	518
Grant for Bury Special Schools	2,395
Grant for Resourced Provision	35
Import/Export Adjustment	-402
Total Allocation	53,538

3 Estimated Spend for 2026-27

3.1 The estimated spend for 2026-27 and 2025-26 comparisons are shown below.

The special schools spend and HNB allocation have both increased by £2.395m due to former specific grants being rolled in to the HNB allocation.

It is expected that all local authorities will have an in-year deficit in 2026-27 due to there not being an inflationary increase. Many similar local authorities will have far higher deficits.

These figures assume the current PSV arrangements continue, i.e. the General Fund contribution of £2m and PSV contribution £0.75m will remain.

Summary of Estimated HNB Spend 2026-7				
<u>Heading</u>	Numbers	Amount	Estimated	
		2026- 27	Spend	2025-26
		£k	£k	
<u>Expenditure</u>		-	-	
Special Schools		25,606	20,941	
Resourced Provision Units		2,729	2,432	
Mainstream Top Ups		12,254	11,119	
Independent Special Schools		14,773	13,452	
Post 16 Places		2,400	2,145	
FE Recoupment		1,246	1,246	
Alternative Provision		2,000	1,698	
Other SEND Services		4,590	4,432	
Total Expenditure		65,598	57,465	
<u>Income</u>				
HNB Allocation 2026-27		-53,359	-50,590	
Health Contribution		-1,000	-1,000	
PSV Contribution (net)		-750	-720	
General Fund Contribution		-2,000	-2,000	
Bury Block Transfer		-300	-313	
Total Income		-57,409	-54,623	
In Year Deficit		8,189	2,842	
Deficit Brought Forward		21,883	19,041	
Estimated Deficit March 27		30,072	21,883	

3.2 Special Schools

Estimated spend on special schools is shown below:-

Summary of Special Schools		
Places		
And Funding		
School	Equated Places	Total Funding
Millwood	208	£k 6,710
Elms Bank	395	11,434
Brookhaven	86	2,145
Cloughside	62	1,784
Ash Grove	136	3,534
Totals	886	25,606

The funding will change as numbers change during the year. These are estimates for the purpose of the HNB only.

The total funding for special schools is £25,606m. Further details can be found in appendix 1.

3.3 Resourced Provision

The estimated funding for Resourced Provision is £2.729m: -

Resourced Provision Funding 2026-27	Numbers Summer	Numbers Sept	Numbers March	Place Funding	Top Ups	Total
TOTALS	145	157	912,000	1,817,333		2,729,333

Further details are shown in appendix 2.

3.4 Mainstream EHCP Top ups

The estimated cost of mainstream EHCP's for 2026-27 is £12.254m. A comparison of this against previous years is shown in the table below: -

Financial Year	2020/2021 Actuals	2021/2022 Actuals	2022/2023 Actuals	2023/2024 Actuals	2024/2025 Actuals	2025/2026 Est	2026/2027 Est
C/F EHCPs from Previous Year	749	800	782	913	1,089	1,141	1,263
In Year Additional EHCPs						122	360
EHCP leavers							-48
Year 11 September Leavers EHCPs							-93
EHCP at Year End	749	800	782	913	1,089	1,263	1,482
Average Cost Per EHCP Grids	8,020	8,036	8,090	8,619	9,138	9,428	9,428
C/F EHCPs Costings						10,757,348	£11,907,564
In Year Additional Costings						115,275	£1,100,519
Year 11 Leavers (Sept to March impact)						0	-£509,267
TOTAL COST BASED ON Above	6,007,228	6,428,887	6,326,380	7,869,147	9,951,282	10,872,623	£12,498,816
Reduced EHCP £ due to leavers					0	-18,598	-£244,560
FORECASTED TOTAL for EHCP's	6,007,228	6,428,887	6,326,380	7,869,147	9,951,282	10,854,025	£12,254,256

The current funding per school is shown in appendix 3.

3.5 Independent Special Schools

The spend on Independent Special Schools has been relatively stable over the last 4 years. This is due to their being far more capacity in Bury Special Schools.

Financial Years	2021-22 £	2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £	2025-26 £	2026-27 £
Independent Special Schools Spend	8,337,487	12,240,137	13,954,044	13,171,881	13,452,486	14,773,022

The 2025-26 and 26-27 figures are estimates.

3.6 Post 16 Places

Expenditure on post 16 places has been approximately £1.8m but for 2025-26 it is estimated to be £2.1m. On the basis this continues 2026-27 spend is estimated to be £2.4m

3.7 Alternative Provision

There is also a large increase this year on AP expenditure. Previous years spend has been about £0.9m but now is £1.750m. For this reason the estimate for 2026-27 is £2m.

3.8 Other SEND services

A breakdown of spend on other services is provided in appendix 4.

4 Future Funding Arrangements

Future funding will be dependent on the outcome of SEND reforms. This will include a reform of how the funding is allocated to local authorities. Bury's allocation on a per capita basis is higher than statistical neighbours' but other factors will be taken into account when a new formula is consulted on.

Appendix 1

2026-27 Funding Per Special School	Millwood		Elms Bank		Brookhaven		Cloughside		Ash Grove	
	Places Numbers	Amount £k	Places Numbers	Amount £k	Places Numbers	Amount £k	Places Numbers	Amount £k	Places Numbers	Amount £k
Places Summer Term September to March	190 220	792 1,283	387 400	1,613 2,333	80 90	333 525	62 62	258 362	136 136	567 793
Band A Summer Autumn - Spring			26 27	101 145	25 28	95 148				
Band B Summer Autumn - Spring			90 93	437 626	25 28	119 185			19	219
Band C Summer Autumn - Spring	51 59	294 472	121 125	698 1,000	16 18	95 148			9	124
Band D Summer Autumn - Spring	112 130	862 1,383	103 107	793 1,136	7 8	55 86			10	184
Band D+ Summer Autumn - Spring	24 28	259 415	6 7	68 97					8	206
Band E Summer Autumn - Spring			8 9	112 160						
Special Summer Autumn - Spring	3 3	40 64								
TPPG		137		260		57		32		90
Split Sites				147						
Rent				263						
PEX										844
Cloughside							62	953		
Historic pay Grant	190	125	387	255	80	53	48	32	136	90
Previous Central Grants	190	584	387	1,190	80	246	48	148	136	418

TOTAL FUNDING £k	6,710	11,434	2,145	1,784	3,534
EQUATED PLACES	208	395	86	62	136
FUNDING PER PLACE £k	32	29	25	29	26

	Nos	Overall £k
Totals Overall	886	25,606
Average		29

Funding Rates	£
Band A	9,180
Band B	11,530
Band C	13,770
Band D	18,360
Band D+	25,700
Band E	40,800
Historic Pay Grant	660
Previous Central Grant	3,074

Appendix 2

Resourced Provision Funding 2026-27	Numbers Summer	Numbers Sept	Place March	Top Funding	Ups	Total
			£	£	£	£
Hoyle Nursery	12	14	79,000	158,000		237,000
Chantlers Primary	10	10	60,000	120,000		180,000
East Ward RP	20	20	120,000	240,000		360,000
Higher Lane (Vision)	12	12	72,000	144,000		216,000
Mersey Drive	14	12	77,000	147,333		224,333
Our Lady of Lourdes	14	14	84,000	168,000		252,000
Peel Brow Primary	12	12	72,000	144,000		216,000
Summerseat Methodist	10	10	60,000	120,000		180,000
Unsworth Primary	14	14	84,000	168,000		252,000
Woodbank Primary	12	12	72,000	144,000		216,000
Woodhey High	15	15	90,000	180,000		270,000
Satellite Site Sept 2026 TBC		12	42,000	84,000		126,000
TOTALS	145	157	912,000	1,817,333		2,729,333

Appendix 3

Resourced Provision Funding as at 12th December 2025

SCHOOL	Notional SEN	TOP UP	EHCP Nos	CALC FOR TOPUP 1st £6k
All Saints C.E. Primary	£101,428	£112,055	12	0
Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary	£51,017	£111,194	7	0
Bury C of E High School	£589,805	£220,629	26	0
Butterstile Primary	£241,405	£165,304	18	0
Cams Lane Primary	£154,834	£108,761	12	0
Chantlers Primary	£100,808	£23,274	3	0
Chapelfield Primary	£184,100	£78,240	9	0
Chesham Primary	£197,787	£106,370	11	0
Christ Church Ainsworth C.E. Primary	£112,518	£79,757	9	0
Christ Church C.E. Primary, Walshaw	£90,197	£73,507	7	0
East Ward Community Primary	£435,392	£272,681	29	0
Elton Community Primary	£174,846	£165,836	17	0
Emmanuel Holcombe C.E. Primary	£40,931	£62,561	7	7,749
Fairfield Community Primary	£173,864	£119,970	13	0
Gorsefield Primary	£222,532	£234,343	23	0
Greenhill Primary	£87,141	£92,041	13	0
Greenmount Primary	£84,991	£54,623	7	0
Guardian Angels' R.C. Primary	£94,463	£114,423	14	0
Hazel Wood High School	£821,832	£151,425	16	0
Hazlehurst Primary	£59,174	£106,065	11	9,126
Heaton Park Primary	£229,773	£267,370	27	0
Higher Lane Primary	£249,699	£108,658	10	0
Holcombe Brook Primary	£128,294	£97,679	9	0
Hollins Grundy Primary	£96,024	£65,399	9	0
Holly Mount R.C. Primary	£94,477	£61,469	5	0
Holy Trinity C.E. Primary	£186,536	£88,268	5	0
Lowercroft Primary	£103,409	£113,745	11	0
Manchester Mesivta	£100,795	£134,353	11	0
Mersey Drive Community Primary	£175,440	£86,919	7	0
Old Hall Primary	£106,141	£99,997	10	0
Our Lady of Grace R.C. Primary	£115,989	£48,274	7	0
Our Lady of Lourdes R.C. Primary	£102,971	£98,918	12	0
Park View Primary	£171,437	£191,227	18	0
Parrenthorn High School	£764,435	£323,588	41	0
Peel Brow Primary	£84,289	£79,020	7	0
Philips High School	£756,711	£285,543	32	0
Radcliffe Hall C.E./Methodist Primary	£232,135	£160,117	18	0
Radcliffe Primary	£150,552	£102,377	11	0
Ribble Drive Community Primary	£151,394	£171,334	14	0
Sedgley Park Community Primary	£181,625	£63,957	10	0
Springside Primary	£127,791	£60,073	8	0
St Andrew's C.E. Primary, Radcliffe	£126,240	£249,326	24	25,210

SCHOOL	Notional SEN	TOP UP	EHCP Nos	CALC FOR TOPUP 1st £6k
St Andrew's C.E. Primary, Ramsbottom	£76,354	£53,788	8	0
St Bernadette's R.C. Primary	£141,073	£110,980	13	0
St Gabriel's RC High School	£785,536	£361,848	44	0
St Hilda's C.E. Primary	£102,536	£69,633	7	0
St John with St Mark C.E. Primary	£262,955	£177,445	19	0
St John's C.E. Primary, Radcliffe	£164,441	£66,768	5	0
St Joseph and St Bede RC Primary	£214,418	£137,281	15	0
St Joseph's R.C. Primary	£67,529	£102,158	9	0
St Luke's C.E. Primary	£302,405	£126,720	13	0
St Margaret's C.E. Primary	£96,438	£95,126	10	0
St Marie's R.C. Primary	£173,254	£74,288	8	0
St Mary's C.E. Primary, Hawkshaw	£41,326	£12,667	2	0
St Mary's C.E. Primary, Prestwich	£124,860	£109,918	12	0
St Mary's R.C. Primary, Radcliffe	£182,873	£194,896	21	0
St Michael's R.C. Primary	£120,343	£68,768	6	0
St Monica's RC High School	£762,305	£86,451	12	0
St Paul's C.E. Primary, Bury	£199,651	£162,843	16	0
St Peter's C.E. Primary	£169,821	£98,720	9	0
St Stephen's C.E. Primary	£116,678	£94,828	9	0
St Thomas's C.E. Primary	£261,619	£173,357	17	0
Star Radcliffe Academy	£205,406	£68,430	13	0
Summerseat Methodist Primary	£48,362	£87,499	11	9,138
Sunny Bank Primary	£87,256	£90,207	11	0
The Derby High School	£856,315	£347,766	37	0
The Elton High School	£654,774	£400,519	45	0
The Heys School	£562,323	£194,034	24	0
Tottington High School	£646,907	£299,913	33	0
Tottington Primary	£129,422	£115,220	13	0
Unsworth Academy	£807,276	£345,010	43	0
Unsworth Primary	£116,925	£98,843	11	0
Wesley Methodist Primary	£208,709	£142,453	13	0
Whitefield Community Primary	£114,645	£91,562	9	0
Woodbank Primary	£145,583	£94,553	10	0
Woodhey High School	£630,166	£390,490	44	0
Yesoiday HaTorah Boys	£229,041	£100,645	10	0
Yesoiday Hatorah Girls	£234,764	£75,786	4	0
TOTALS	£18,499,508	£10,732,083	£1,156	£51,223

The £51,223 is allocated to schools where their first £6k for ECHP, pupils exceed their notional SEN allocation.

The money attached to the EHCP bandings is as follows:-

Mainstream Bandings	
Band	Value
1	£2,500
2	£5,000
3	£7,500
4	£10,000
5	£12,500
S+	£2,500

Appendix 4

Other SEN Services	2026-27	2025-26
	£	£
Early Years SEN Support Plus Funding	25,000	25,000
Early Years EHCP Funding	250,000	250,000
Recoupment from Other LAs	-390,000	-378,341
Out-Borough - Other	1,850,000	1,794,259
Free School Meals (EOTAS)	10,000	10,000
Personal Budgets for Education (EOTAS)	875,000	838,435
Therapy Funding for SEND Pupils	30,000	28,583
Primary Inclusion Partnerships	190,000	171,300
Outreach Team	450,000	439,600
Secondary Inclusion Partnerships	34,700	34,700
Home Tuition	190,000	184,500
Hospital Tuition	35,000	35,000
Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership	40,000	40,000
Visual / Hearing Impairment (Sensory Support)	1,000,000	952,400
Total	4,589,700	4,425,436

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