

Bury Council

Department for Children and Young People

For information

Schools Balances

Schools Balances brought forward from 2022-23 totalled £4.681m. At the end of the 2023-24 financial year, the Schools Balances totalled £2.555m, a total reduction of £2.125m. These numbers do not include academies that the Local Authority does not report on.

The outturn position is split as follows:

2023-24 Closing School Balances £	
Nursery	110,143
Primary	220,808
Secondary	1,374,206
Special	849,941
Total	2,555,098

Included at Appendix 1 is the School Balances detail per Bury School.

It should be noted that, as shown at Appendix 1, the number of schools which are in a deficit position has increased from 13 at the end of 2022-23, to 17 at the end of the 2023-24 financial year.

Other areas to note

All schools are facing increasing cost pressures, particularly in relation to staff and energy costs. Energy costs for 2024-25 are expected to be lower than in 2023-24. Many Primary schools are facing additional pressures due to a reduction in pupil numbers. Academy schools, that have recently converted, are still included if the balance at conversion has not yet been finalised. However, academies funding is not included in the Council's figures once the balances at conversion are finalised. The surplus balances, for schools that converted in the 2023-24 financial year, were transferred to the academy trusts after finalisation of the accounts in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidelines. These were:

Park View Primary;
 St. Joseph's & St. Bede RC Primary;
 St. Stephen's CE Primary (balance transferred after 31st March)

St. Michael's RC Primary had a deficit balance remaining at conversion and, as this was a sponsored conversion, the deficit was transferred to the Local Authority.

There are 7 schools with a surplus above the recommended maximum percentage of 8% for Nursery, Primary and Special Schools and 5% for High Schools. These schools are shaded blue.

17 schools ended the year with a deficit and these schools are shaded red. Schools are required to adhere to their budget limits but, in the event of an unplanned deficit occurring, this will be deducted from the following year's budget share. Schools that aren't able to produce a balanced budget for 2023-24 can request approval to set a deficit budget by submitting a deficit recovery management plan to the Executive Director of Children and Young People. The deficit should normally be recovered within two years.

There are 10 schools that cannot currently set a balanced budget for 2023-24. Deficit recovery management plans for 9 of these schools are currently being reviewed by Finance staff before submission for approval. The tenth school has converted to academy status since 1st April and, as this was not a sponsored conversion, the final deficit balance will transfer to the Academy Trust.