

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Vacant

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Agenda

Date/time: Thursday 22 January 2026, 4pm to 6pm

Venue: 222 Upper Street

[Schools forum documents and reports | Islington Council](#)

	Item	Information and to note/ comments and views/decision	Author	Report
1.	Welcome and Apologies		Clerk	Verbal
2.	Declaration of Interest		JW	Verbal
3.	Forum composition		JW	Enclosed
4.	Minutes of Last Meeting		Clerk	Enclosed
5.	School Funding Formula (2026-27)	Decision	KL	Enclosed
6.	School Central Retention (2026-27)	Decision	JO	Enclosed
7.	Early Years Funding Consultation (2026-27)	Decision	KL	Enclosed

	Item	Information and to note/ comments and views/decision	Author	Report
8.	Specialist Provision Place Numbers	Decision	KL	Enclosed
9.	DSG Settlement (2026-27)	Information	KL	Enclosed
10.	Forward Planning	Information	KL	Enclosed
11.	AOB Sub Group Updates: Early Years High Needs Capital			Verbal

Contact for queries:

[Mason - John Klappholz](#) / [Governor Services](#)

T 020 7527 5755

Islington Schools Forum

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London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 22 January 2026, 4 to 6pm

Agenda item 3: Membership of Schools Forum

Recommendation: That Forum:

- i. Elects a new Chair
- ii. Notes the impact on apportionment of places on Schools Forum in line with the outcome of the Schools Census October 2025
- iii. Notes updates on vacancies/membership and discusses strategy in relation to maintained secondary and academy secondary positions.

Election of chair

The Election of the Chair of Schools Forum had been an item on the 13 November 2025 agenda, but there had been no nominations. So members are to make nominations before or at this meeting.

Members are reminded that the Terms of Reference state:

Forum Officers

The Forum officers will be a **chair and two vice chairs**: one at least to be a headteacher and one at least to be a governor, all of whom are to be elected from amongst the Forum membership. The Forum has determined the terms of office of its officers to be three years.

For information, a reminder that the current vice-chairs are:

- Susan Service – headteacher - term of office as vice-chair 1.09.2023 to 31.8.2026
- Joe Simpson – governor - term of office as vice-chair 1.09.2024 to 31.8.2027.

Therefore the Chair could be either a governor or a headteacher.

Apportionment of places in line with Census

Apportionment of Primary and Secondary Pupils - Autumn 2025

Phase	Maintained (%)	Academy/FS (%)	Total (%)
Primary	9,767 (53.5)	1,593 (8.7)	11,360 (62.2)
Secondary	3,458 (18.9)	3,450 (18.9)	6,908 (37.8)
Total	13,225 (72.4)	5,043 (26)	18,268 (100)

Distribution of Mainstream and Academies/Free School Membership following Conversions

Sector	Maintained (%)	Academies/FS (%)	Total (%)
Primary	8 (53.5)	1 (8.7)	9 (62.2)
Secondary	3 (18.9)	2 (18.9)	5 (37.8)
Total	11 (72.4)	3 (26)	14 (100%)

There does not need to be a change to the distribution of primary and secondary school places between maintained and academy settings in the light of the October Census 2025 – by eight pupils.

With Beacon High academising in January 2026, it is likely there will need to be a change in January 2027, with two places on Schools Forum for Secondary Maintained and three for secondary academies. Forum is recommended to bear this in mind in dealing with current vacancies for secondary maintained schools representatives – one headteacher and one governor.

The additional five schools members' places relate to special schools/academies, maintained nursery schools, the pupil referral unit and the free school alternative provision.

Update on vacancies

Maintained Secondary Governor Representative – one vacancy

As St Aloysius became an academy on 1 September 2025, Paul Lasok, Chair of St Aloysius, ceased to be eligible as Maintained Secondary Governor Representative on Schools. However, he is now (as of 10 December 2025 to 9 December 2029), a secondary academy representative – more details below. So there is currently a maintained secondary governor representative vacancy.

Maintained Secondary Headteacher representative – one vacancy

Due to Alan Streeter's resignation on 20 August 2025, there is a vacancy for Maintained Secondary Headteacher representative.

As stated above, it is likely there will only need to be two maintained secondary representatives in January 2027 when the next apportionment exercise will take place (following academisation of Beacon High in January 2026 and Schools Census in October 2026). Currently there are positions for two maintained secondary headteachers and one maintained secondary governor on Schools Forum.

Forum to discuss trying to fill only one maintained secondary position now and whether that is a governor or a headteacher.

Secondary Academy – one vacancy

The clerk had written to secondary academy SLTs on 2 December 2025 to let them know that her previous email in November had resulted in one email agreeing to Paul Lasok filling one of these vacancies. The clerk had confirmed that Paul Lasok would fill one of the two vacancies from 10 December 2025 unless she received any objections by 9 December. She also asked for the name of the other SLT rep to fill the other vacancy.

As of 9 December, there were no objections, so Paul Lasok was appointed as secondary academy representative on Schools Forum with a term of office 10 December 2025 to 9 December 2029.

No other names have been forwarded to the clerk by the academies so there is still one secondary academy vacancy. Forum to discuss how to encourage further engagement in Schools Forum from secondary academies.

Maintained Primary Governor representative

Due to the resignation of Donna Shah, Chair of The Growth Learning Collective (Federation of Newington Green and Rotherfield), as a governor, there had been a vacancy for a primary

governor. The clerk had written to Chairs of Maintained Primary Schools inviting them to submit applications by 18 November 2025. Andrew Parry, Chair of Ashmount, was the only governor to submit an application, so was elected unopposed – term of office, 19 November 2025 to 18 November 2029.

Contact for queries:

[Jane Wright](#)

Manager for Schools and Early Childhood Governance and Clerk to Schools Forum
T 020 7527 5560

**Item 3 - Islington Schools Forum Composition -
December 2025 (for 22 January 2026 meeting)**

Appendix A

Organisation	Nominee	Term of Office Ends	Primary	Secondary	Special	Nursery	PRU	Academy Primary	Academy Secondary	Academy AP	Academ Special	Non-school	Total	Head	Gov	Other
School Members																
Secondary Academy Representative	Vacancy															
Secondary Academy Representative	Paul Lasok								1							
Maintained Primary Governor Representative (Vittoria)	Toby Taper	04/03/2029	1												1	
Maintained Primary Governor Representative (Ashmount)	Andrew Parry	18/11/2029	1												1	
Arts and Media School Islington (AMSI) (VC)	Susan Service	27/02/2027		1										1		
Maintained Secondary School Head - vacant	Vacancy													1		
Canonbury Primary School	Patrick Mildren	25/03/2029	1											1		
Drayton Park	Annabelle Kapoor	22/01/2029	1													
Kate Greenaway and Margaret McMillan Nursery Schools and Children's Centres	Diana Valcheva with support from Karen Smith (MMc)	27/02/2027				1								1		
PRU Mgt Cttee (New River College)	Nigel Smith	24/10/2025					1							1		
Richard Cloudesley Special School	Francis Gonzalez	09/01/2027			1									1		
Maintained Secondary Governor - vacant	Vacancy														1	
St Mary's C of E Primary	Anthony David	08/11/2027	1											1		
St Peter's and St Paul's RC Primary	Joe Simpson	05/03/2028	1												1	
The Bridge MAT	Penny Barratt	31/03/2028									1			1		
The Learning Quarter (Winton and Hugh Myddleton)	Sarah Gill	13/10/2027	1											1		
The Pears Family School	Matthew Hillman	31/07/2026								1				1		
Thornhill Primary School	Jenny Lewis	05/05/2025	1											1		
William Tyndale School	Sophie Gavalda	31/08/2027						1						1		
Non School Members																
14-19 Partnership - Capital City College	David Dangana	31/08/2029										1				
LBI Exec Head/Head EY Provider	Wendy Dormer /support from Gemma White	05/05/2029										1				1
Elected Member (non executive)	Satnam Gill	05/05/2029										1				1
VCS Providers, Islington Play Association	Joy Odunayo Abegunde	05/12/2026										1				1
Total			8	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	20	12	4	3
Required			8	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	4	23			
Vacancies			0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3			

HT/Govs 60/40 split

Type	Vacancy
Total	3

Islington Schools Forum

Meeting documents and minutes published on [Islington Schools Forum webpage](#).

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2025, 4pm, on MS Teams.

Attendees

Present - Schools Forum Members

- Joe Simpson (JS): Governor, St Peter and St Paul's Primary (**Vice Chair and Chair of the meeting**)
- Susan Service (SS); Headteacher, Arts & Media School Islington (**Vice Chair**)
- Wendy Dormer (WD), Executive Head, Conewood St Children's Centre and Westbourne Early Years Centre
- Nigel Smith (NS): Headteacher, New River College (Pupil Referral Unit)
- Francis Gonzalez (FrG): Headteacher, Richard Cloudesley Special School
- Sophie Gavalda (SG): Headteacher, William Tyndale (Primary Academy)
- Joy Odunayo Abegunde (JOA): VCS Providers, Islington Play Association
- Patrick Mildren (PM): Headteacher, Canonbury Primary School
- Jenny Lewis (JL): Executive Headteacher, Thornhill and Laycock Primary Schools
- Toby Taper (TT): Primary Governor, Vittoria Primary School (arrived at 4.37pm)
- Sarah Gill (SG); Headteacher, Hugh Myddelton Primary School (The Learning Quarter Partnership)
- Annabelle Kapoor (AK): Headteacher, Drayton Park Primary
- Cllr Satnam Gill (Cllr SG): Non-executive Member of Islington Council

Others present

- Debbie Stevenson (DS); Co-Director of Education and Achievement
- Jo Frost (JF): Assistant Director Finance, Children's, Schools and Resources

- Kashmira Lad (KL), Head of Schools and Early Years Finance
- Jane Wright (JW): Manager Schools and EY Governance (Clerk)

Apologies

- Jon Abbey (JA); Corporate Director of Children and Young People
- Anthony David (AD); Headteacher, St Mary's C of E Primary School
- Candy Holder (CH): Co-Director of Education and Achievement

Not in attendance

- Diana Valcheva (DV): Headteacher, Kate Greenaway Nursery School and Children's Centre (online)
- Penny Barratt (PB); Chief Executive Officer, The Bridge MAT
- Matthew Hillman (MH); Headteacher, The Pears Family School (Alternative Provision Academy)
- David Dangana (DD), Chief Learning Officer at Capital City College (formerly City and Islington College).

Meeting minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Joe Simpson (JS - one of the vice-chairs) had agreed to chair this meeting. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were as set out above.

2. Declaration of interest

The Chair asked all present if they had any interest to declare in the agenda. There were no declarations of interest.

3. Schools Forum composition

JW spoke to a report previously circulated.

Election of Chair

Alan Streeter, Headteacher of Beacon High, had resigned as Chair of Schools Forum and from the Forum on 20 August 2025. Nominations were sought by the clerk by email to all Forum members on 3 November 2025 and nominations were sought at the meeting.

Members were reminded that the Terms of Reference stated:

Forum Officers

The Forum officers will be a **chair and two vice chairs**: one at least to be a headteacher and one at least to be a governor...terms of office of its officers to be three years.

Forum was reminded that the current vice-chairs were:

- Susan Service – headteacher - term of office as vice-chair 1.09.2023 to 31.8.2026
- Joe Simpson – governor - term of office as vice-chair 1.09.2024 to 31.8.2027.

Therefore, the Chair could be either a governor or a headteacher.

JS recommended that the chairs should alternate between headteachers and governors. As Alan Streeter had only been chair for less than a year (elected in July 2024), he recommended that a headteacher be appointed on this occasion.

There were no nominations. JS agreed to chair the current meeting, but there would need to be nominations for the chair at the next meeting in January, if necessary from governors as well as headteachers.

Action for Forum – for nominations for chair to be submitted to the clerk for January 2026 meeting - noted

Update on vacancies

Maintained Secondary Governor Representative

As St Aloysius became an academy on 1 September 2025, Paul Lasok, Chair of St Aloysius, ceased to be eligible as Maintained Secondary Governor Representative on Schools Forum. At the July 2025 Forum, it had been agreed to delay action to fill the vacancy until January 2026. At that time, there was no firm date when this vacancy would occur. Also, there was the possibility of the academisation of Beacon High later in autumn, which could mean that when reviewing the distribution of places on Schools Forum in line with the distribution of pupils by age (October 2025 Census) and by type of school (maintained schools or academies), Forum may be required to appoint more secondary academy representatives and fewer secondary maintained representatives.

Noted

Secondary Academy – two vacancies

The clerk has been trying since 2024 to get responses from the SLTs of secondary academies.

In reviewing the terms of reference of Islington's Schools Forum, there was nothing to block the appointment of governors and trustees to these positions.

Paul Lasok had confirmed to the clerk that he was willing to be considered to take up one of these vacancies. Therefore, the clerk had emailed the SLTs of secondary academies to ask for them to select two representatives, and to bear in mind that Paul Lasok, with his considerable experience on Schools Forum, was willing to take up one of the positions. A response had been asked for by 12 November 2025. A reply from COLA Highbury Grove had agreed to Paul Lasok being a secondary academy representative.

The clerk proposed to write again to secondary academy SLTs to propose Paul Lasok as one of their representatives unless objections were sent with a fortnight. In that email to ask them to identify their second representative.

Agreed

JS suggested that we ask secondary academies to consider Alan Streeter as the other representative given Beacon High was due to academise on 1 January 2026. The clerk agreed to pursue this option.

Noted

Maintained Secondary Headteacher representative

Due to Alan Streeter's resignation in August, there is a vacancy for Maintained Secondary Headteacher representative. For the same reasons as set out above for the delay in taking action in relation to the Maintained Secondary Governor vacancy, it had been suggested to July Forum that they wait until January 2026 and the apportionment exercise before action was taken to elect a new Maintained Secondary Headteacher representative.

Noted

Maintained Primary Governor representative

Due to the resignation of Donna Shah, Chair of The Growth Learning Collective (Federation of Newington Green and Rotherfield), as a governor in July 2025, there was a vacancy for a primary governor. The clerk had written to Chairs of Maintained Primary Schools inviting them and their governors to submit applications by 18 November 2025. If necessary, the clerk would write again to chairs with an extended deadline. *Post meeting note – clerk had meant to say that there had been an informal expression of interest from the Chair of Canonbury, but he was not eligible as the headteacher was already representing the school on Forum.*

Noted

16-19 Partnership

David Dangana, Chief Learning Officer at Capital City College (formerly City and Islington College) had agreed, at least on an interim basis, to join Schools Forum. His term of office was provisionally 1.9.2025 to 31.8.2029.

Noted

Terms of office due to end in autumn 2025

As reported at the last Forum meeting, the term of office of Nigel Smith, Head of the PRU (New River College) was due to end on 24 October 2025. Michele Lambert, his Deputy, observed the Forum meeting in July with a view to possibly taking on this position from the autumn 2025. But for now, Nigel was to continue in this position for a further year, with ToO ending 24 October 2026.

Noted

4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 July 2025

- Accuracy – the minutes were **agreed** as accurate.

5. School Funding Arrangements Consultation Results (2026-27)

Kashmira Lad (KL) spoke to a report previously circulated – this item was for decision in principle.

The Department for Education (DfE) had not been able to publish indicative schools and high needs national funding formula (NFF) allocations for 2026/27 to the usual timescale in July – were due later in autumn 2025.

A consultation with schools on School Funding 2025/26 ran from 18 September to 9 October 2025 . It contained eight proposals and there were seven responses.

Forum were asked to make an in-principle decision to adopt the proposed principles and then at January Forum meeting, to make a final decision.

Proposal 1: Do you agree that, to ensure affordability within the available funding pot, it may be necessary to adjust the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) according to the parameters outlined in the Operational Guidance?

The purpose of the MFG in school funding is to protect schools from experiencing significant reductions in their budgets; this does not include reductions in pupil numbers, rather pupil characteristics. All respondents had agreed.

Proposal 2: We are proposing to retain the current process for applying the exceptional circumstances factor for BSF schools. This requires the LA to apply for a dis-application ensuring that BSF schools are not negatively impacted. Do you agree with this approach?

All respondents had agreed.

Proposal 3: Do you agree that, in line with the DfE's requirements, we should continue to allocate funding for schools with previously approved additional and/or bulge classes to address basic needs?

All respondents had agreed. KL reminded the meeting that if the funds were not needed, they would be distributed across all mainstream schools this financial year.

Proposal 4: Do you agree to retain spend from growth funding on repurposing and removing surplus places; circa £50k?

5 respondents had agreed, 2 did not. KL informed the meeting that while Falling Rolls funding was previously used to support schools in Islington, we now do not meet the criteria for that funding.

Proposal 5: Do you agree to continue to de-delegate the services outlined in the consultation?

All respondents had agreed.

Proposal 6: Do you agree to establishing a Behaviour Support Service, to be funded by de-delegated funds as outlined in the consultation?

All respondents agreed.

Proposal 7: We are not proposing to offer de-delegated services for the following, do you agree?

- Library Service
- Premises Insurance

KL clarified, in relation to a comment by a respondent, that there was no need to de-delegate funding to support libraries and there were currently no policies on closing libraries.

Proposal 8: In accordance with the DfE's operational guidance, the Council will continue to retain funding for permitted services to maintained schools and academies but will be subject to appropriate scrutiny through Schools Forum; do you agree?

All respondents had agreed.

JS commented that, in relation to planning school places, there was pressure on the Government to reconsider the formula for allocating funding to councils (Fair Funding Review) given the impact of housing costs on London boroughs.

DS advised the meeting that William Clapp had won a bid on behalf of London Councils for a research project into system approaches to falling rolls.

The following recommendations were made to Schools Forum:

- Vary the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) within allowable ranges and cap budget gains as necessary to ensure school budget allocation remain within funding envelope
- Continue to retain Growth Funding plus, retain funds for re purposing and removing of surplus school places;
- Apply for a dis-application for BSF funding
- Continue de-delegated current services.
- Create a Wider Behaviour Support Service with funding through de-delegated funds
- Continue with services within the Central School Services Block, subject to annual review through Schools Forum

After discussion, the 12 members of Forum in attendance for this vote **agreed to the proposals**, including the retention of the current process for applying the disapplication for the exceptional circumstances factor for BSF schools.

6. DSG Budget Monitor (2025-26)

Jo Frost (JF) spoke to a report previously circulated. This item was for information.

At Q2, an in-year overspend of £3.066m was forecast against the **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)** in 2025-26.

Schools Block – a projected overspend of about £0.150m in relation to funding historical outstanding issues related to insurance and business rates. This would be covered by draw down from prior year balances.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) - a projected overspend of £0.165m – this related to DfE reduction in funding for historical commitments (central services) year on year, and the impact of falling school rolls. This would be covered by draw down from prior year balances. The budgets for these services were being looked at in order to keep in budget in future years.

High Needs (HN) Block- a projected overspend of £2.751m – the reasons for this (increased numbers and complexities of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities [SEND]) had been discussed at length at Forum. The overspends in London and

nationally were projected at £500m and £3bn respectively. Islington's overspend would be covered by draw down from prior year balances.

Early Years (EY) Block – there had been increases in the funding in relation to children accessing the extended free entitlement in 2024/25 (£0.808m) and in 2025/26 (£1.164m). Funding was adjusted in July 2025 in relation to the EY January Census. Currently there was a projected in-year balanced budget, but the now termly EY census would provide a more up-to-date forecast in early 2026. The extension of the entitlement for under 2s had only started in September 2025 so no data was available for that yet.

Islington was in a minority of LAs in London not in deficit for HN. Overall, there was very little cushion for the DSG from 2026-27 and a downward trajectory. JS added that next year's budget was likely to be very tough, especially if the argument about Fair Funding (referred to in Item 5) was not won.

It was agreed to provide past figures as comparators in an appendix to this report in future, and in May 2026, it should be possible to include projections as well.

JL queried why the SEND capital funding was not included in this report. DS clarified that Capital spend was not brought to Schools Forum. For information, DS explained - **SEND Capital Funding (£7.7m)** - 39 schools had submitted bids and plans to carry out projects to address inclusion issues for children with SEND (eg work on playgrounds or indoor rooms). The DfE sent this Inclusion funding to LBI which is now distributing it to schools through a process overseen by the Capital Subgroup.

In conclusion, Forum was asked to note:

- a) The forecast in-year overspend of £3.066m against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) at Q2 in 2025-26
- b) That DSG balances were forecast to be £0.842m at the end of 2025-26
- c) That these balances were earmarked for future years predominantly to manage increasing pressures on the High Needs Block (HNB)

Noted

7. Forward Planning

KL spoke to a report previously circulated. The meeting of Schools Forum on Thursday 22 January 2026, 4-6pm, in person, would require many decisions.

Noted

- 8. AOB** – not discussed.

9. AOB Subgroup Updates

HN Subgroup due take place on 3 November was cancelled because of the delays in publication of the SEND White Paper until early 2026 or possibly later.

JL felt that meetings should not be cancelled because such papers were not available – subgroup meetings were an opportunity for detailed discussion and dialogue and for preparing for events such as publication of the White Paper.

DS explained that such papers also went to other Forums, such as the Heads' Briefings, but she would take JL's point back to the meeting organisers.

EY Subgroup, 7 November 2025 – KL gave some feedback. The meeting considered the DSG monitoring paper (Item 6 on this agenda), along with EY Participation in summer term 2025 and discussed on going support for maintained nursery schools. At the next meeting, they would be looking at the termly headcounts, quality of data from EY settings – so crucial for securing correct funding.

Noted

There being no other AOB, JS thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.

The meeting ended at 4.57pm.

Dates of future meetings

(virtual meetings on MS Teams unless otherwise indicated)

Schools Forum

- Thursday 22 January 2026, 4 to 6pm, face to face at 222 Upper Street
- Thursday 21 May 2026, 4 to 6pm, face to face at 222 Upper Street
- Thursday 16 July 2026, 4 to 6pm, face to face at 222 Upper Street

Chairs Subgroup

- Wednesday 14 January 2026, 2-3pm
- Wednesday 13 May 2026, 2-3pm
- Wednesday 8 July 2026, 2-3pm

High Needs Subgroup

- Monday 12 January 2026, 11am-12.30pm
- Monday 18 May 2026, 11am-12.30pm

Early Years Subgroup

- Friday 9 January 2026, 1 to 2.30pm
- Friday 5 June 2026, 1 to 2.30pm

Capital Subgroup

- Wednesday 19 November 2025, 12.30-2pm
- Friday 25 March 2026, 12.30-2pm

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Vacant

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 22 January 2026, 4pm to 6pm

Agenda item 5 : School Funding Formula 2026-27

Purpose of report: Decision

Recommendations: School Forum to agree:

- a) 2026-27 formula factors and values
- b) Final value centrally retained for Growth

Background

A consultation with schools on School Funding 2026-27 ran from 18 September – 9 October 2025 with the results reported to the November Schools Forum meeting.

The following principles and changes were agreed to be applied to the local School Funding Formula:

- Vary MFG within allowable range of -0.5% to +0.0% and cap budget gains as necessary to ensure school budget allocation remains within funding envelope
- Continue to centrally retain Growth Funding, to include an element for re purposing and removing surplus places
- Apply for a disapplication for BSF funding as an exceptional factor
- To continue current de-delegated services
- To create a wider behaviour support service with funding through de-delegated funds
- To continue with services within the Central School Services Block, subject to annual review through Schools Forum

Data changes between October 2024 and 2025 census

Pupil number movements are as follows:

Primary	Secondary KS3	Secondary KS4	TOTAL
-368	-191	-5	-564

A summary of all the data movements is shown below:

Primary	Factor	Oct-24	Oct-25	Change	% Change
Basic Entitlement		11,728	11,360	-368	-3.14%
Deprivation	FSM	5,378	5,372	-6	-0.11%
Deprivation	FSM Ev6	5,618	5,566	-52	-0.93%
Deprivation	IDACI F	1,185	1,150	-35	-2.94%
Deprivation	IDACI E	2,014	1,947	-67	-3.32%
Deprivation	IDACI D	1,678	1,692	14	0.84%
Deprivation	IDACI C	2,291	2,109	-182	-7.95%
Deprivation	IDACI B	2,237	2,192	-45	-1.99%
Deprivation	IDACI A	439	403	-36	-8.15%
EAL	3 Yrs	2,574	2,478	-96	-3.72%
Mobility		227	297	70	30.93%
Prior Attainment		3,907	3,882	-25	-0.63%

Secondary	Factor	Oct-24	Oct-25	Change	% Change
Basic Entitlement	KS3	4,194	4,003	-191	-4.55%
Basic Entitlement	KS4	2,910	2,905	-5	-0.17%
Deprivation	FSM	3,709	3,827	118	3.18%
Deprivation	FSM Ev6	4,058	4,157	99	2.44%
Deprivation	IDACI F	688	677	-11	-1.56%
Deprivation	IDACI E	1,187	1,151	-36	-2.99%
Deprivation	IDACI D	1,105	1,105	0	-0.04%
Deprivation	IDACI C	1,617	1,570	-47	-2.92%
Deprivation	IDACI B	1,342	1,280	-62	-4.66%
Deprivation	IDACI A	353	328	-25	-7.04%
EAL	3 Yrs	358	326	-32	-9.01%
Mobility		63	76	13	20.04%
Prior Attainment		1,395	1,360	-35	-2.48%

Budget Modelling 2026-27

The initial step was to roll in the new data and apply the 2026-27 National Funding Formula (NFF) factor values.

Funding associated with PFI schools was uplifted with the permissible RPIx rate as set out within the Schools Block Technical Note, 4.2%, for the period April 2024 to April 2025. Actual charges will be based on the February RPIx, in line with each school's Governing Body Agreement. Should any variances occur, these will be retrospectively adjusted in the 2027-28 funding formula.

The BSF factor has reduced as only 3 schools remain in the BSF contract. The BSF factor is not subject to inflationary adjustments, unlike other factors. Three schools continue to receive funding through this factor, totalling £0.924 million, a reduction of £355k on 2025-26. This funding was incorporated into the Schools Block Funding formula in 2017-18, and the affected schools are required to reimburse this amount to the council to support ongoing lifecycle funds. This arrangement has a neutral impact on the overall school budgets.

The NNDR (Rates) values have been included in the formula as those provided by the DfE. These values will be recouped by the DfE in order to pay directly to the Council. Should the final value be different, an adjustment will be made in 2027-28.

Central retention for growth has been included at £50.97k. These funds will be retained to support the longer-term vision from the DfE which will allow local authorities to spend growth and falling rolls funding on repurposing and removing surplus places.

The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) was set at the maximum 0.0% thereby ensuring no school loses on their per pupil funding (pupil characteristics only, schools will receive less funding should their roll number reduce). In addition to this, schools gaining through the formula have not been capped.

Following this process, there remained a surplus balance of £347k in which to further allocate to primary and secondary schools.

Budget recommendation

The DfE require all LAs to move 10% closer to the NFF and provide each LA with a minimum and maximum value for each of the funding factors.

Islington are currently mirroring the NFF, however, the residual funds mean a deviation away from the national formula.

In previous years, Schools Forum has agreed to adjust the Base Rate factor unit value, either increasing or decreasing it, to stay within the overall Schools Block DSG funding envelope. Additionally, the Base Rate has been proportionally adjusted across the three phases, maintaining the NFF ratios for both primary and secondary schools. Islington has applied this principle when distributing the remaining funds..

The table below shows the 2025-26 Base Rate values (DfE) compared to the 2026-27 NFF vales; minimum and maximum permissible ranges and the values included in the recommended local model.

Base Rate	2026-27 NFF (incl Islington ACA)	2026-27 DfE minimum	2026-27 DfE maximum	Islington Unit Value 2026-27	Variance to NFF	% Change to NFF
Primary	£4,805.60	£4,685.46	£4,925.74	£4,821.72	£16.12	0.34%
KS3	£6,723.58	£6,555.49	£6,891.67	£6,746.13	£22.55	0.34%
KS4	£7,579.70	£7,390.20	£7,769.19	£7,605.12	£25.42	0.34%

ACA – Area Cost Adjustment

Recommended Unit Rates

The table below shows the recommended 2026-27 unit values, compared to 2025-26. Annexe A illustrates the budget implications on individual schools.

Factor	Unit	2025-26 DfE (£)		2026-27 NFF (£)		Actual Base Rate	% change	
		Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	2026-27 (£)	Primary	Secondary
Basic Entitlement	Pri	4,577.01		4,805.60		4,821.72	5.35%	
Basic Entitlement	KS3		6,450.89		6,723.58	6,746.13		4.58%
Basic Entitlement	KS4		7,273.01		7,579.70	7,605.12		4.57%
Deprivation	FSM	586.29	586.29	597.15	597.15		1.85%	1.85%
Deprivation	FSM E6	1255.49	1,841.77	1,430.80	2,039.78		13.96%	10.75%
Deprivation	IDACI F	811.33	1125.2	827.74	1147.01		2.02%	1.94%
Deprivation	IDACI E	615.9	882.39	626.71	898.68		1.76%	1.85%
Deprivation	IDACI D	580.37	823.17	591.24	839.56		1.87%	1.99%
Deprivation	IDACI C	527.07	752.11	538.03	768.61		2.08%	2.19%
Deprivation	IDACI B	337.56	532.99	342.92	543.94		1.59%	2.05%
Deprivation	IDACI A	278.34	402.70	283.8	407.96		1.96%	1.31%
EAL	3 yrs	704.73	1,889.15	721.31	1,927.44		2.35%	2.03%
Mobility		1,142.97	1,640.42	1,164.74	1,673.21		1.90%	2.00%
Prior Attainment		1,391.69	2,114.19	1,418.98	2,158.03		1.96%	2.07%
Lump Sum		171,859.34	171,859.34	180,564.70	180,564.70		5.07%	5.07%
Split Site	Basic Eligibility	63,958.68	63,958.68	65,154.65	65,154.65		1.87%	1.87%
Split Site	Distance (Max)	31,979.34	31,979.34	32,636.45	32,636.45		2.05%	2.05%

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to Schools Forum:

- Base Rate unit value be increased proportionally across primary, KS3 and KS4 to meet affordability limits of Schools Block funding
- Formula factors and values used in local School Funding Formula are agreed
- £50.97k is retained for Growth funding

Contact for queries:

[Kashmira Lad](#)

Head of Schools and Early Years Finance Service

M 07568 700120

2026-27 Funding Model		2025-26		2026-27 LA Recommended Model		Pupil Numbers (NOR)			Budget comparison impact				
DfE No.	School	Adj School Budget (budget less NNDR)	MFG incl in budget	Adj School Budget (budget less NNDR)	MFG incl in budget	Oct 2024	Oct 2025	Change	Change £	% change	Average per pupil per school	Est of impact of change in NOR	Impact of settlement
2062015	Ambler Primary and Children's Centre	2,781,033	53,992	2,904,203	0	416	418	2	123,171	4.4%	7,158	14,317	108,854
2062809	Ashmount Primary	2,497,094	0	2,673,444	0	372	378	6	176,350	7.1%	7,470	44,818	131,531
2062854	Canonbury Primary	2,798,065	0	3,042,929	0	406	415	9	244,864	8.8%	7,523	67,711	177,154
2063633	Christ The King Catholic Primary	1,776,272	0	1,830,968	0	234	224	-10	54,697	3.1%	8,174	-81,740	136,436
2062001	City of London Primary Academy	2,034,290	0	2,351,361	0	318	344	26	317,070	15.6%	6,835	177,719	139,351
2062166	Drayton Park Primary	1,672,417	0	1,952,772	0	244	260	16	280,355	16.8%	7,739	123,830	156,525
2062170	Duncombe Primary	3,131,138	0	2,802,934	0	396	343	-53	-328,204	-10.5%	8,381	-444,187	115,983
2062251	Gillespie Primary	1,336,263	0	1,447,645	0	207	210	3	111,382	8.3%	7,117	21,351	90,030
2062261	Grafton Primary	2,901,369	0	2,901,953	0	409	389	-20	77,583	2.7%	7,673	-153,457	231,040
2062279	Hanover Primary	1,584,889	0	1,719,437	0	222	230	8	134,548	8.5%	7,765	62,118	72,429
2062282	Hargrave Park Primary	1,909,766	0	2,022,817	0	257	256	-1	113,050	5.9%	8,148	-8,148	121,198
2062805	Highbury Quadrant Primary (closed July 2025)	1,261,271	0	0	0	161	0	-161	-1,261,271	-100.0%	0	0	-1,261,271
2062855	Hugh Myddelton Primary	2,936,190	0	3,073,845	0	418	419	1	137,655	4.7%	7,557	7,557	130,098
2062003	Hungerford	1,270,757	0	1,295,901	0	155	141	-14	25,143	2.0%	9,274	-129,836	154,979
2062379	Laycock Primary	1,750,872	0	1,624,516	0	228	194	-34	-126,356	-7.2%	8,725	-296,663	170,307
2062429	Moreland Primary	2,710,483	0	2,849,061	0	366	362	-4	138,577	5.1%	8,249	-32,995	171,572
2062853	Newington Green Primary	2,792,530	0	3,233,697	0	378	415	37	441,167	15.8%	7,965	294,699	146,468
2062455	Pakeman Primary	2,197,676	0	2,291,517	0	291	285	-6	93,841	4.3%	8,253	-49,519	143,360
2062004	Pooles Park Primary	1,107,914	0	1,404,396	0	130	160	30	296,482	26.8%	9,064	271,905	24,577
2062850	Prior Weston Primary and Children's Centre	1,533,889	0	1,429,988	0	202	171	-31	-103,901	-6.8%	9,058	-280,798	176,896
2062515	Robert Blair	1,406,361	0	1,342,391	0	186	165	-21	-63,970	-4.5%	8,452	-177,490	113,520
2062857	Rotherfield Primary	2,027,395	0	2,423,952	0	269	301	32	396,557	19.6%	8,233	263,460	133,097
2063384	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary	2,932,175	0	3,028,022	0	400	386	-14	95,847	3.3%	7,845	-109,825	205,672
2063606	St Andrew's (Barnsbury) Church of England Primary	1,443,026	0	1,385,468	0	183	163	-20	-57,557	-4.0%	8,500	-169,996	112,439
2063631	St Joan of Arc RC Primary	2,659,683	0	2,785,151	8,403	400	406	6	125,468	4.7%	6,860	41,160	84,308
2063456	St John Evangelist RC Primary	1,651,342	0	1,627,508	0	208	190	-18	-23,834	-1.4%	8,566	-154,185	130,351
2063471	St John's Highbury Vale CofE Primary	1,428,004	0	1,495,351	9,569	208	211	3	67,347	4.7%	7,087	21,261	46,086
2063465	St John's Upper Holloway CofE Primary	1,328,836	0	1,412,875	0	177	177	0	84,039	6.3%	7,982	0	84,039
2063483	St Joseph's Catholic Primary	2,523,197	0	2,883,161	0	400	425	25	359,964	14.3%	6,784	169,598	190,366
2063488	St Jude and St Paul's CofE Primary (closed July 2025)	958,233	0	0	0	113	0	-113	-958,233	-100.0%	0	0	-958,233
2063495	St Luke's CofE Primary	1,460,622	0	1,554,616	0	189	188	-1	93,995	6.4%	8,269	-8,269	102,264
2063501	St Mark's CofE Primary	1,487,736	0	1,611,491	0	196	197	1	123,755	8.3%	8,180	8,180	115,574
2063527	St Mary's CofE Primary	1,295,643	0	1,389,410	0	163	169	6	93,767	7.2%	8,221	49,328	44,439
2063575	St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary	1,357,549	17,588	1,484,633	0	174	181	7	127,084	9.4%	8,202	57,417	69,667
2063644	The New North Academy	1,391,060	0	1,079,069	0	165	117	-48	-311,992	-22.4%	9,467	-454,439	142,447
2062596	Thornhill Primary	2,653,592	0	2,810,384	0	409	411	2	156,792	5.9%	7,029	14,059	142,733
2062803	Tufnell Park Primary	2,816,975	0	2,978,926	0	410	410	0	161,951	5.7%	7,399	0	161,951
2062624	Vittoria Primary	1,541,476	0	1,697,743	0	196	201	5	156,267	10.1%	8,628	43,142	113,126
2062000	Whitehall Park	1,652,498	0	1,542,879	0	226	198	-28	-109,618	-6.6%	7,792	-218,185	108,567
2062643	William Tyndale Primary	2,645,388	0	2,780,163	0	420	421	1	134,774	5.1%	6,604	6,604	128,171
2062646	Winton Primary	1,471,256	0	1,607,252	0	197	203	6	135,995	9.2%	8,163	48,978	87,017
2062666	Yerbury Primary	2,463,876	0	2,553,329	0	419	414	-5	89,453	3.6%	6,358	-31,788	121,240
	Primary Total	82,503,102	71,580	84,327,155	17,972	11,518	11,148	-370	1,824,053			-992,307	2,816,360

2026-27 Funding Model		2025-26		2026-27 LA Recommended Model		Pupil Numbers (NOR)			Budget comparison impact				
DfE No.	School	Adj School Budget (budget less NDR)	MFG incl in budget	Adj School Budget (budget less NDR)	MFG incl in budget	Oct 2024	Oct 2025	Change	Change £	% change	Average per pupil per school	Est of impact of change in NOR	Impact of settlement
2064325	Arts & Media School Islington	6,440,763	0	6,509,504	0	605	574	-31	68,741	1.1%	11,341	-351,559	420,300
2064112	LIFT Beacon High	4,749,341	0	4,910,327	219,794	411	414	3	160,986	3.4%	12,392	37,177	123,809
2064614	Central Foundation Boys'	7,957,426	0	8,486,144	0	874	887	13	528,718	6.6%	9,567	124,374	404,343
2064003	City of London Academy Highbury Grove	9,591,578	0	9,127,146	0	929	829	-100	-464,432	-4.8%	11,083	-1,108,271	643,839
2064001	City of London Academy Highgate Hill	5,550,804	0	5,885,657	0	558	551	-7	334,853	6.0%	10,682	-74,772	409,625
2066906	City of London Academy Islington	8,063,178	0	8,060,821	0	815	772	-43	-2,357	0.0%	10,501	-451,560	449,203
2064324	Elizabeth Garrett Anderson	9,041,428	0	9,717,700	0	885	893	8	676,272	7.5%	11,375	91,000	585,272
2064307	Highbury Fields	6,954,428	0	7,269,466	0	686	690	4	315,039	4.5%	10,881	43,523	271,516
2064651	St Aloysius RC College	3,175,291	0	3,184,434	0	301	282	-19	9,143	0.3%	11,292	-214,554	223,697
	Secondary Total	61,524,237	0	63,151,199	219,794	6,064	5,892	-172	1,626,962			-1,904,643	3,531,605
2066905	St Mary Magdalene Academy	10,377,251	0	10,757,138	0	1,250	1,228	-22	379,887	3.7%	8,811	-193,849	573,736
	All Through Total	10,377,251	0	10,757,138	0	1,250	1,228	-22	379,887			-193,849	573,736
	GRAND TOTAL	154,404,591	71,580	158,235,492	237,766	18,832	18,268	-564	3,830,901			-3,090,799	6,921,700

2025-26 = NFF values; MFG 0.0%; no cap; increase to Base Rate proportionally

2026-27 = NFF values; MFG 0.0%; no cap; increase to Base Rate proportionally

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Vacant

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 22 January 2026, 4pm to 6pm

Agenda item: Item 6 – DSG Central Retention (2026-27)

Purpose of report: For decision

Recommendations:

That Schools Forum:

- a) Agree the proposed central retention in the CSSB.
- b) Agree the proposed central retention in the EYB

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide proposals for central retention within the Central School Services Block (CSSB) and Early years Block.
2. Schools Forum are required to agree:
 - Central retention for growth within the Schools Block. This is considered in Item 5
 - All central retention under the CSSB, except for licences which is an automatically top-sliced by the DfE. In terms of the operational guidance, where a schools' forum does not agree with the local authority's proposals, the DfE will adjudicate. There must be equality of access to centrally retained services for schools and academies under the CSSB.
 - All central retention under the Early Years Block.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)

3. CSSB funding is £1.391m for 2026-27. This represents an increase of £0.024m when compared to 2025-26 however this is made up of the annual 20% reduction against the

historic commitments element, offset by the increase of funds which relate to grants previously funded outside of the DSG for National Insurance Contributions (NIC) and Schools Block Support Grant (SBSG). The split in funding and movement from 2025-26 between the ongoing duties and the historic element of CSSB funding is shown below:

CSSB	2025/26	2026/27	Movement
	£m	£m	£m
Ongoing duties	1.151	1.218	+0.067
Historic commitments	0.216	0.173	-0.043
Total	1.367	1.391	+0.024

4. Funding in the CSSB reduces year on year as the DfE has committed to an annual reduction of 20% against the historical commitments line as well as reductions due to falling pupil numbers.
5. Expenditure in the CSSB has remained constant and has now exceeded the funding available. In 2025/26 the shortfall is being funded by prior year balances however these are projected to be used in full and therefore there will be no additional funding to support pressures in the CSSB.
6. The local authority has reviewed the planned expenditure lines in the CSSB and allocated council funding to some previously funded lines thus reducing the pressure on the CSSB.
7. Below sets out the services within the CSSB:

Cost of CSSB Services		
Service	2026/27	Service Description
	£k	
Admissions	519	School admissions service for children and young people of compulsory school age. Advice on school exclusions, representing the LA at exclusion hearings and independent review panels. Secure appropriate

Cost of CSSB Services		
		education provision for children applying in year as soon as possible. Tracking pupils missing education, including unofficial exclusions, Day 6 provision, off-rolling and in-year admissions. Coordinate Islington's Fair Access Protocol via the Primary and Secondary Securing Education Board mechanisms. Represent the LA at statutory admission appeals. Advice and guidance to parents and schools on the school admissions application and appeal procedures and exclusions procedure.
9A. School admission appeals	45	Cost of hearing admission appeals
14. Access and engagement service	270	Support to schools, children and families to secure good attendance and engagement, and ensure that all children are properly safeguarded by: advising schools in their delivery of a whole school approach to promoting good attendance and engagement and on safeguarding policy and practice; operating to an agreed borough-wide approach; empowering parents to meet their legal responsibilities regarding school; and supporting efficient and effective partnerships in the best interests of the child or young person. The service is also responsible for monitoring illegal school activity and elective home education and for issuing licenses for children in employment or entertainment, and for providing safeguarding support to schools.
18. Servicing Schools Forum	50	Support to Schools Forum
19. Capital and asset management	97	Management of the capital programme including preparation and review of asset management plan, and negotiation and management of BSF. General landlord duties.

Cost of CSSB Services		
24. Directors and assistant directors	83	Statutory and regulatory duties under the School and Early Years Finance Regulations including planning for the education service as a whole.
69. Copyright licences	156	Automatic top-slice by the DfE. Licences negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State for all publicly funded schools. The final top-slice is announced during the financial year
Previous Grants to be allocated across relevant services	172	The Teachers Pay and Pension Grants, National Insurance grant and Schools Block Support Grant allocations received outside of the DSG will be added to services with staff on Teachers pay and conditions
Total	1,390	

Early Years Block

8. Local authorities can centrally retain funding for central services to lead and support the system. Central retention for 2026-27 has reduced from 4% to 3% for the statutory entitlements to free early education and childcare. Despite an overall increase in the Early Years Block due to the rollout of the new entitlements, and then grossing up to a full year allocation, the central retention has reduced from £1.142m to £1.051m.

Entitlement	Provisional allocation £m	3% top-slice £m
Under 2 Year Olds	8.996	0.267
2 Year Old additional support	4.307	0.129

Entitlement	Provisional allocation £m	3% top-slice £m
2 Year Old working parents	6.011	0.180
3&4 Year Olds universal	12.668	0.368
3&4 Year Additional	3.705	0.108
EY Pupil Premium, Disability Access Fund, Maintained Nursery Supplement	1.095	0.000
Total	36.782	1.051

9. We are consulting with providers on retaining the £1.051m for the provision of central services. Unless there is significant opposition to the proposals, it is recommended that Schools Forum agree to the central retention of services as outlined below:

Proposed Allocations for 2026/27

Service	2026/27 Proposed £k	
Finance	61	Annual budget statements and adjustments. Technical advice to Schools Forum and its sub groups. School Funding Consultation. Financial implications on changes to funding
ICT and data services	101	Software licences and systems management to fulfil our duties in relation to safeguarding children, early years headcount and payments. Critical response to e-safety incidents, advice and guidance on information governance and digital communications with settings and schools

Service	2026/27 Proposed £k	
Family information service	101	Children's services elements of the maintenance of Family Directory and Early Years and Childcare web pages including the Local Offer providing information to families about services and support for children and young people including childcare and schools; childcare brokerage; information about events for children and young people.
Early Years Foundation Stage Team, Strategy and Management	625	EYFS school and setting improvement (primary and nursery schools, children's centres, PVI providers, childminders) through bespoke in-setting support, projects, central training, and guidance on meeting statutory requirements. EYFSP moderation; integrated health and education check at aged 2. Strategic development, management, and administration of early childhood services pregnancy to 5 and out-of-school childcare. This includes commissioning and support for setting up systems to meet national requirements and ensuring the Council meets its statutory duty to provide sufficient childcare.
Strengthening Parenting	71	Parenting programmes including Incredible Years courses
Contingency	92	Demographic Growth
Total	1,051	

Recommendations

That Schools Forum:

- a) Agree the proposed central retention in the CSSB.
- b) Agree the proposed central retention in the Early Years Block, subject to the outcomes of the Early Years funding consultation.

Contact for queries:

Jo Frost

Assistant Director of Finance, Children's Services & Schools

jo.frost@islington.gov.uk

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Vacant

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 22 January 2026, 4pm to 6pm

Agenda item 7: Early Years Funding Consultation (2026-27)

Recommendations: Schools Forum agree to the general principles of the EY funding and provider rate consultation proposed

In the absence of consultation outcomes, the consultation proposals and principles were discussed and agreed by members at the Early Years Sub Group on 9 January 2026.

Background

The Department for Education (DfE) announced the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for each of the four funding blocks for the 2026-27 financial year on 17 December 2025.

The hourly funding rates and other financial assumptions included in this section are based on the latest DfE [2026-27 Early Years Operational Guidance](#) and provisional DSG settlement, as announced in December.

Islington will be continuing to follow the number of weeks per term as outlined in the Operational Guidance. The table below shows the funding weeks per term used by Islington in 2025-26 and in 2026-27:

	2025-26	2026-27
Summer Term	13	13
Autumn Term	14	14
Spring Term	11	11

The DfE have set out changes to the [Early Years Operational Guidance](#) which sets out both how the LA is funded and how the LA must fund its early years providers. The key points are:

- an increased minimum pass-through requirement for local authorities in 2026-27 – the pass-through rate will increase from 96% to 97%, therefore a further reduction of the central retention from 4% to 3%

- a statutory requirement to announce their funding rates to childcare providers by 28 February 2026
- information on how funding allocated to local authorities with the move to a termly funding system for all the early years funding streams from financial year 2026 to 2027
- changes to the eligibility criteria for the special educational needs inclusion fund (SENIF)
- as set out in the [Best Start in Life](#) publication in July 2025 early years funding arrangements will be reviewed and there will be a national consultation on changes to how early years funding is allocated and distributed by the summer of 2026.

Local Authorities will continue to be funded with three separate hourly funding rates as follows:

- an hourly funding rate for children aged 9 months up to 2 years for the eligible working parent entitlement
- an hourly funding rate for both 2-year-old entitlements which will be the same for families of 2-year-olds receiving additional support and eligible working parents of 2-year-olds
- an hourly funding rate for 3 and 4-year-olds for the universal and additional hours entitlements

There are 2 key adjustments to the local funding rates:

- 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.
- from financial year 2026 to 2027, we are introducing a termly funding system to fund all the early years entitlements on termly census headcounts. To support local authorities to plan their budgets for 2026 to 2027 termly adjustments to the 3 and 4-year-old funding rates have been made.

Early Years Funding Consultation

For 2026-27 the majority of the existing local funding rules will be the same as in 2025-26.

Following consultation with maintained schools, early years provider and Schools Forum, the local authority will notify providers of their initial budgets for 2026-27 financial year by 28 February 2026 and will include each of the early years entitlements. As is current practice, the local authority will adjust budgets/ funding based on the termly headcount.

The following table shows the following proposed provider rates to be consulted on:

		2025-26		2026-27		* termly unadjusted rate	
3 & 4 year old	Factor	DFE RATE	LA RATE	DFE RATE*	LA RATE	% change	% change
ALL group providers	Base Rate	£8.60	£6.59	£8.71	£6.67	1.3%	1.3%
	Deprivation		£1.66		£1.68		1.3%
	Quality		£0.18		£0.18		0.6%
	TOTAL (incl PEL Places)		£8.42		£8.53		1.3%
Childminders	Base Rate	£8.60	£6.59	£8.71	£6.67	1.3%	1.3%
	Flexibility		£1.51		£1.53		1.3%
	TOTAL		£8.10		£8.20		1.3%

		2025-26		2026-27			
2 year old (FRAS)	Factor	DFE RATE	LA RATE	DFE RATE	LA RATE	% change	% change
ALL group providers	Base rate	£11.85	£9.72	£12.39	£10.16	4.6%	4.5%
	Quality factor		£1.42		£1.48		4.2%
	TOTAL		£11.14		£11.64		4.6%
Childminders	Base rate	£11.85	£9.72	£12.39	£10.16	4.6%	4.5%
	Small setting		£1.34		£1.41		5.2%
	TOTAL		£11.06		£11.57		4.6%

		2025-26		2026-27			
2 year old (working parents)	Factor	DFE RATE	LA RATE	DFE RATE	LA RATE	% change	% change
ALL group providers	Base rate	£11.85	£9.16	£12.39	£9.58	4.6%	4.6%
	Quality factor		£1.42		£1.48		4.2%
	TOTAL		£10.58		£11.06		4.6%
Childminders	Base rate	£11.85	£9.16	£12.39	£9.58	4.6%	4.6%
	Small setting		£1.90		£1.99		4.7%
	TOTAL		£11.06		£11.57		4.6%

		2025-26		2026-27			
9 months to 2 year old (working parents)	Factor	DFE RATE	LA RATE	DFE RATE	LA RATE	% change	% change
ALL providers	Base rate	£16.37	£14.15	£17.16	£14.84	4.9%	4.9%
	TOTAL		£14.15		£14.84		4.9%

SEN Inclusion Fund (SENIF)

All local authorities are required to have a SENIF for all children eligible for the entitlements and who have SEN, regardless of the number of hours taken. These funds are intended to support local authorities to work with providers to recognise and support the low-level and emerging needs of individual children with SEN who are taking up the entitlements. Children with more complex needs and with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) continue to be eligible to receive funding via the high needs block of the DSG.

Islington currently operates a SENIF fund across each of the funding entitlements to ensure funding and support is directed to those in need.

The funding will support additional needs payments to providers; access to this funding is through the termly PEL SEND funding panel and PEL panel.

Proposed SENIF retention across each of the funding entitlements is as follows:

- 9 months to under 2 year olds – £513.7k
- 2 year olds (FRAS) – £152.9k
- 2 year olds (working parents) – £368.7k
- 3 and 4 year olds - The total value of the fund for 2026-27 will increase to £1,407k in line with levels of need and allowing for a 1.28% increase
- **Total SENIF = £2.445m**

Central retention

In line with the DfE's guidance we will centrally retain 3% of Early Years Block DSG funding for each age range to fund central services.

Central services include the strategic and operational leadership and management of the early years system and its finances. It is through these central services that we can take actions to mitigate changes brought about by the DfE.

Proposed central retention across each funding entitlements are as follows:

- 9 months to under 2 year olds – £269.9k
- 2 year olds (FRAS) – £129.2k
- 2 year olds (working parents) – £180.3k
- 3 and 4 year olds - £477.5k
- **Total central retention = £1.051m**

Contingency

For all entitlements, we are proposing to set aside contingency funding to help manage fluctuations in take up of the entitlements. Contingency is, and will continue to be, an important tool in managing volumes / budgets throughout the year, playing a key role in local flexibility and responsiveness. It also provides a buffer against any in-year funding reductions from the DfE.

Proposed contingency across each funding entitlements are as follows:

- 9 months to under 2 year olds (working parents) – £432.6k
- 2 year olds (FRAS) – £61.3k
- 2 year olds (working parents) – £308.4k

- 3 and 4 year olds (universal and extended) - £298.1k
- **Total contingency held for participation adjustments = £1.1m**

SEND funding in the High Needs Block

We are not proposing to make any changes to the level of High Needs Block funding for Early Years in 2026-27. The High Needs Block will continue to fund Priority Early Learning SEND places in children's centres for children with severe and complex needs; top-up funding for children with more complex needs and with an EHCP; Early Years SENCO team, and the Priority Early Learning team. The High Needs block also funds a contribution to Speech and Language Therapy and CAMHS services for children under 5.

The high needs block funding of £1,580k, of which £973k is passported to providers, and is included in the pass-through rate. This takes the funding pass through to providers to 103.1%. Without this funding the amount passed thorough to providers from 3&4 year olds would be 97.0%. This is in line with the pass-through requirement set by DfE.

Consultation Questions

Question: Do you agree that the supplementary funding factors are used in the formula?
Y/N/Comments

Question: Do you agree we should continue to use EYPP as the measure of deprivation?
Y/N/Comments

Question: Do you have any comments on the 3&4 year old proposals?

Question: Do you agree that we continue to use a quality factor, where the criteria applies, in the 2 year old funding formula for nursery schools, primary schools, children's centres and PVI settings? Y/N/Comments

Question: Do you agree that we continue to use a small setting factor in the funding formula for childminders? Y/N/Comments

Question: Do you have any comments on either of the 2 year old EYSFF?

Question: Do you agree that funding for 9 months to 2 year olds should only use the base rate? Y/N/ Comments

Question: Do you have any comments on the 9 months to under 2 year old EYSFF proposals?

Question: Do you agree that we should provide a SEN Inclusion Fund at the level as set out above to support pupils with SEND? Y / N / Comments

Question: Do you agree to the reduced central retention of 3% for all entitlements?

Question: Do you have any comments about central retention?

Question: Do you agree to the retention of contingency to buffer in year funding reductions from the DfE and to manage fluctuations in participation adjustments for the new entitlement?

Comments

Question: Do you have any comments about SEND funding for early years in the High Needs block?

Question: Do you have any additional comments on our proposals?

Recommendations

Schools Forum agree to the proposals for the Early Years Funding Consultation.

Contact for queries:

[Kashmira Lad](#)

Head of Schools and Early Years Finance Services

M 07568 700120

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Vacant

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 22 January 2026, 4pm to 6pm

Agenda item 8: Specialist Provision Place Numbers 2026-27

Recommendations: Schools Forum agree principles of determining number of SEND places commissioned by the local authority and arrangements for allocating top-up funding

Background

Determination of place numbers at maintained special schools and resource units is an annual process.

Numbers of existing placements are taken from the current year January school census. These numbers are then reviewed with each school to assess need for the coming financial year.

The local authority informs and requests the view of Schools Forum on funded place numbers and arrangements for paying top up funding.

Special Provision Placements 2026-27

Place numbers: as in previous years, numbers used for maintained special schools and the Laycock resource unit are those occupied as at January 2026 school census date, adjusted if necessary following discussions between the school and SEND commissioning officers regarding any known movements in roll. Should unexpected demand for places arise in year, the LA will discuss provision with the school and determine any additional funding required. Schools will be asked to provide costings for any additional place/top up funding requested.

Top up funding: funds available for individual high needs pupils in special schools and resource units will, in the first instance, be increased in line with national guidance on allocating additional funds coming into the High Needs Block 2026-27. Consideration will then be given to any additional funding available and options discussed at the High Needs sub-group.

Recommendations

Schools Forum agree the commissioning and funding arrangements for maintained specials schools and resource units in 2026-27.

Contact for queries:

[Kashmira Lad](#)

Head of Schools and Early Years Finance Services

M 07568 700120

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Joe Simpson

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 22 January 2026, 4pm to 6pm

Agenda item: Item 9 – DSG Settlement 2026-27

Recommendations:

That Schools Forum notes the report

Background

The Department for Education (DfE) announced the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for each of the four funding blocks for the 2026-27 financial year on 17 December 2025. The table below details the DSG funding by block, with a more granular breakdown available in Appendix A.

Funding Blocks	2026-27 £m	2025-26 £m	Variance £	Variance %
Schools	£161.162	£157.351	£3.811	2.4%
Central (Schools)	£1.391	£1.367	£0.024	1.7%
High Needs	£53.847	£50.806	£3.040	6.0%
Early Years	£36.782	£31.030	£5.751	18.5%
Total	£253.181	£233.497	£12.626	5.2%

The total DSG funding for 2026-27 is £253.181m before recoupment for academies and free schools. This is an increase of £12.626m (5.2%) compared with 2025-26. It should be noted that much of this increase relates to rolling funding into the Schools Block that had previously been given as separate grants, and increased funding for Early Years to reflect the full year effect of the extension in nursery entitlement hours.

The Schools Block will increase by £3.811m (2.4%). However, most of this increase (approx. £4.165m) is linked to rolling in funding which was allocated through separate grants in 2025-26. It is therefore likely that the real cash per pupil increase will be nearer to 0.2%. The Schools

Block serves as the primary funding source for mainstream schools. This funding will be allocated to schools using the national funding formula.

The reduction in the number of pupils by 561.00 which means the Schools Block is approximately £4.446m lower than it would have been if pupil numbers had not reduced.

The Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) will increase by £0.024m however this is due to several grants, funded separately in 2026-27 being rolled into the formula. These grants totalled £0.078m which has been partially offset by continued reduction in the historic duties' element of the CSSB, as well as the overall reduction in pupil numbers and therefore there is a real cash reduction of £0.054m.

The High Needs Block (HNB) will increase by £3.040m (6.0%). The HNB supports provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from ages 0-25 years. Demand for EHCPs is continuing to increase and therefore funding is not keeping pace with demand.

The Early Years Block (EYB) will increase by £5.751m (18.5%). This is an initial position based on the January 2025 Early Years census and will be updated when the January 2026 census data is available next year. The EYB provides funding for the statutory entitlements to early education and childcare. Most of the increase in the EYB is due to the full year effect of the extension in nursery entitlement hours which were introduced in September 2025, as well as rolling in funding that was given as separate grants in 2025-26. However, there will be a real net increase in the hourly funding rates to the council across the entitlements: 3- & 4-year-olds +4.19%, 2-year-olds +4.56% and Under 2s +4.83%.

Recommendations

Schools Forum notes the DSG settlement as announced in December 2025.

Contact for queries:

Contact for queries:

[Kashmira Lad](#)

Head of Schools & Early Years Finance Services

M 07568 700120

2026-27 DSG Allocations

Source: DSG Settlement (17 December 2025)

AGENDA ITEM - A

	2026-27 DSG Updates (December 2025) (A)			2025-26 DSG Updates (July 2025) (B)			Change (Pupil numbers) (C) = (A - B)			% Change
	Pupil Nos	Unit value	DSG Funding	Pupil Nos	Unit value	DSG Funding	Pupil Nos	Unit value	DSG Funding	
			£			£			£	
Primary Pupils (PUF)	11,360	7,516.24	85,384,486	11,728	7,104.55	83,318,610	-368	411.69	2,065,876	2.5%
Secondary Pupils (SUF)	6,908	10,008.34	69,137,614	7,102	9,485.08	67,358,297	-194	523.26	1,779,317	2.6%
Growth			916,043			1,035,559			-119,516	-11.5%
Premises			5,723,534			5,638,056			85,478	1.5%
<i>National non-domestic rates within the premises factor</i>										
Schools Block - before recoupment	18,268		161,161,677	18,829		157,350,521	-561	-6,794	3,811,156	2.4%
<i>National non-domestic rates within the premises factor</i>			- 2,875,215			- 2,855,325			-19,890	
<i>Academy Recoupment:</i>			-			-			0	0.0%
% of Total DSG		63.7%	64.3%		65.4%	66.2%			30.0%	
Total Schools Block - after recoupment	18,268	0	158,286,462	18,829	0	154,495,196	-561	-6,794	3,791,266	2.4%
Ongoing Duties	18,268	66.68	1,218,111	18,829	61.15	1,151,394	-561	5.53	66,717	5.79%
Historic Commitments			172,807			216,008			-43,201	-20.0%
% of Total DSG		0.5%	0.6%		0.6%	0.6%			0.2%	
Total CSSB			1,390,918			1,367,402			23,516	1.7%
National Funding Formula			51,298,395			47,299,583			3,998,812	8.5%
Basic Entitlement Factor (Sp Schs & Acads)	784.17	3686.94	2,891,188	672	5636.86	3,787,970	112	-1,949.92	-896,783	-23.7%
Import / Export adjs	-83	6000.00	498,000	-82	6000.00	492,000	-1	0.00	-6,000	1.2%
Special Free Schools									0	0.0%
2025 to 2026 grant allocations for independent special schools, specialist post-16 institutions, independent learning providers and hospital education (see accompanying tables-Annualised CSBG funding: ISS, SPI, ILP and hospital education)			112,276			210,842			-98,566	-46.7%
2026 to 2027 grant funding for special units and resourced provision (see accompanying tables-SURPs)			42,703						42,703	0.0%
Supplementary Grant Funding (NiC)									0	0.0%
High Needs Block - before recoupment			53,846,562			50,806,395			3,040,166	6.0%
<i>DfE Direct funding of places</i>			- 4,176,000			- 4,202,334			26,334	-0.6%
% of Total DSG		21.3%	20.2%		21.1%	20.0%			24.3%	
Total High Needs Block - after recoupment			49,670,562			46,604,061			3,066,500	
	PTE	£/hour		PTE	£/hour		PTE	£/hour		
Under 2 Year Olds (Schs + PVI)	919.69	17.16	8,995,672	649.13	16.37	6,056,968	271	0.79	2,938,704	48.52%
2 Year Old Add'l Support (Schs + PVI)	609.79	12.39	4,306,520	540.70	11.85	3,652,159	69	0.54	654,361	17.92%
2 Year Old working parents (Schs + PVI)	851.19	12.39	6,011,360	595.95	11.85	4,025,345	255	0.54	1,986,015	49.34%
3&4 Year Old (Schs + PVI)	2,480.40	8.96	12,667,899	2,553.25	8.60	12,516,032	-73	0.36	151,867	1.21%
3&4 Year Additional (Schs + PVI)	725.50	8.96	3,705,274	763.72	8.60	3,743,756	-38	0.36	-38,483	-1.03%
EYPPG - 3&4 Year Olds	489.74	1.15	321,025	519.00	1.00	295,830	-29	0.15	25,195	8.52%
EYPPG - 2 Year Olds	168.29	1.15	110,315	145.80	1.00	83,107	22	0.15	27,208	32.74%
EYPPG - Under 2 Year Olds	2.42	1.15	1,587	13.12	1.00	7,479	-11	0.15	-5,892	-78.78%
MNS - 3&4 year olds	129.21	6.79	500,082	133.00	6.54	495,798	-4	0.25	4,285	0.86%
DAF - 3&4 Year Olds	133.00	1.71	129,675	130.00	1.65	121,940	3	0.06	7,735	6.34%
DAF - 2 Year Olds	25.00	1.71	24,375	25.00	1.65	23,450	0	0.06	925	3.94%
DAF - Under 2 Year Olds	8.00	1.71	7,800	9.00	1.65	8,442	-1	0.06	-642	-7.60%
% of Total DSG		14.5%	14.9%		12.9%	13.3%			45.5%	
Total Early Years Block			36,781,584			31,030,307			5,751,277	18.5%
Total DSG before Recoupment			253,180,741			240,554,626			12,626,115	5.2%
Total DSG after Recoupment			246,129,526			233,496,967			12,632,559	5.4%

Schools Block Notes: School Budget Support Grant (SBSG) and National Insurance Contributions (NICs) grant rolled into NFF baselines.
Central School Services Block Notes: Rolling in of the centrally employed staff elements of both the SBSG and NICs grant for 2026 to 2027
High Needs Block Notes: Core Schools Budget Grant (CSBG) (Specials)
Early Years Block Notes: EYNTPG: NICs + teacher pay rolled into formula funding; Extension to the Working family entitlement to 30 hours.

Islington Schools Forum

Chair: Vacant

C/o Governor Services

The Laycock Centre

London N1 1TH

Date/time: Thursday 22 January 2026, 2pm to 3pm

Agenda item 9: Forward Planning

Purpose of report: Information

Recommendations:

Schools Forum notes the updates and provide comments

Forward planning

The purpose of this report is to provide the foundation of a future work plan for Schools Forum meetings on a rolling 12-month period.

The report presented has been updated to reflect changes that have since emerged from the previous meeting.

The table in appendix A provides the updated work plan and includes an additional notes column to enable recognised changes.

Listed within the work plan are suggested standing items, these will be presented either via a written or oral report, dependent on the need for the meeting.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Schools Forum note the updated work plan and provide comments.

Contact for queries:

[Kashmira Lad](#)

Head of Schools & Early Years Finance Services

M 07568 700120

Appendix A - School Forum: Work plan

Standing Items:

- Declaration of Interest
- Forum Composition
- Forum Forward Planning
- Subgroup Updates
- Roll Projections
- Quality Assurance

Financial year	Agenda item	Information/comments & views/Decision	Notes
May 2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scheme for Financing Schools (DfE) 2. School Balances (DRAFT - prior year) 3. DSG Outturn (DRAFT: prior year) 	Comments & Views Information Information	
July 2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scheme for Financing Schools (Local) 2. School Balances (FINAL - prior year) 	Decision Information	

Financial year	Agenda item	Information/comments & views/Decision	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. DSG Outturn (FINAL: prior year) 4. DSG Allocations (in year) 5. DSG Schools Block estimated funding (new year) 6. Schools Internal Audit Programme Outcomes (prior year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Information Information Information 	
November 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School Funding Arrangements (future year) 2. Central School Services Block – central retention (future year) 3. Quality Assurance Survey 4. DSG Budget Monitor (in year) 5. DSG projected allocations (future year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Decision Information Information Information 	
January 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School Funding & Schools Central Retention (future year) 2. Early Years Funding Formula (future year) 3. Specialist Provision Place Numbers 4. DSG Settlement (future year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Decision Decision Information 	