

# Schools Forum

Item No.8

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>De-delegation/Central School Services Block</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>22 November 2023</b>

## Executive summary

In this paper Schools Forum members are asked to decide on the de-delegation of services from primary and secondary schools' budgets in 2024-25 (nursery and special schools are invited to buy-back into the same services), to approve the level of growth fund and growth criteria for 2024-25, and to approve the funding of central services from the Central School Services Block for 2024-25.

**Schools Forum are asked to undertake the following decisions:**

### Section 1: De-delegation and Buy-back

- Decision 1a – The **maintained primary representatives** are asked to decide whether staff cost budgets for the primary sector should be de-delegated for 2024-25
- Decision 1b – The **maintained secondary representative** is asked to decide whether staff cost budgets for the primary sector should be de-delegated for 2024-25
- Decision 2a – The **maintained primary representatives** are asked to decide whether Free School Meals eligibility for the primary sector should be de-delegated.
- Decision 2b – The **maintained secondary representative** is asked to decide whether Free School Meals eligibility for the primary sector should be de-delegated.
- Decision 3a - The **maintained special school representative** is asked to decide on the buyback of services for all maintained special schools in the 2024-25 financial year.
- Decision 3b - The **academy special school representative** is asked to decide on the buyback of services for academy special schools in the 2024-25 financial year.
- Decision 4 - The **maintained nursery school representative** is asked to decide on the buyback of services for maintained nursery schools in the 2024-25 financial year.
- Decision 5a – **All Schools Forum members** are asked to approve a £1.257m centrally retained fund for pre-16 growth in 2024-25
- Decision 5b – **All Schools Forum members** are asked to approve the pre-16 growth fund criteria as detailed in section 1.6 of this paper.

**Section 2: Schools Forum are required to approve the retention of Central School Services Block items (vote by all members)**

- **Decision 6a – All Schools Forum members** are asked to approve the level of Admissions funding (£487,000)
- **Decision 6b – All Schools Forum members** are asked to approve the level of funding for Schools Forum (£30,000)
- **Decision 6c – All Schools Forum members** are asked to approve the level of funding for Fees to Independent Schools for pupil without SEN (£100,000)
- **Decision 7 – All Schools Forum members** are asked to approve funding for responsibilities held for all schools from Central School Services Block, including Teachers' Pay Grant and Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant for centrally employed staff (£2,839,963)

**The Schools Forum members eligible to make decisions or vote on the items in this paper are as follows:**

**Decisions/votes for maintained primary representatives only:**

Martin White, Nebula Foundation (Forum Chair)

Mike Grimble, Avenue Junior School, NGN

Sarah Shirras, St Williams Primary School

**Decisions/votes for maintained secondary representatives only:**

Joanna Tuttle, Aylsham High School

**Decision/vote for maintained special school representative only:**

Carolyn Ellis-Gage, Parkside School

**Decision/vote for academy special school representative only:**

Rachel Quick, The Wherry School

**Decision/vote for nursery school representative only:**

Carole Jacques, Earlham Nursery School

**All other decisions/votes:**

All members of Schools Forum (LA Officers do not vote)

## 1. De-delegated Services/Buyback

Schools Forum are asked to vote separately by **maintained Primary and Secondary sector** on the de-delegation of services (de-delegation to be agreed amongst representatives of those sectors only).

If agreed, the cost of de-delegated services for maintained schools will be removed from the Basic Per-Pupil Entitlement at a single per pupil rate for all year groups, except for Free School Meal eligibility which will be removed from FSM deprivation funding. This paper shows budget estimates based on the October 2022 census data as the LA does not yet have the October 2023 census data which will drive the final 2024-25 de-delegation figures.

**Nursery schools, Special Schools, and Special Academies** are offered services as a buy back option, as they are not allowed to de-delegate under the statutory finance regulations. (Buy-back to be agreed by representatives of those sectors only).

### 1.1 Staff Costs

The staff cost budgets that may be de-delegated relate to redeployment and safeguarding, maternity cover, supply cover for special circumstances, suspended staff and additional costs relating to disabled staff.

It is proposed that the current practice of allowing Nursery Schools, Special Schools and Special Academies to buy-back into the same fund is continued.

**Annex A** provides more information for each of the staff budgets.

The suggested pupil amounts for each of the staffing budgets included in de-delegation have been reviewed based on 2023-24 financial year forecasts. The suggested budgets are divided by the number of pupils for which funding is estimated to be de-delegated in 2024-25 to reach a total of £30.74 per-pupil (from £28.56 in 2023-24) for the combined staffing budgets.

The rates for 2023-24 vs proposed rates for 2024-25:

<b>Mainstream De-Delegation</b>	<b>2023-24 Per-Pupil Rate (£)</b>	<b>2024-25 Per-Pupil Rate (£)</b>	<b>Increase (£)</b>
Redeployment/Safeguarding	<b>1.87</b>	<b>1.89</b>	<b>0.02</b>
Maternity Cover	<b>23.76</b>	<b>24.02</b>	<b>0.26</b>
Special Circumstances	<b>0.67</b>	<b>2.49</b>	<b>1.82</b>
Suspended Staff	<b>2.26</b>	<b>2.28</b>	<b>0.02</b>
Disabled Staff	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.05</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28.56</b>	<b>30.74</b>	<b>2.18</b>

Most of the proposed per-pupil rates have only increased slightly, by around 1%, based on current forecasts within the 2023-24 financial year. The exceptions are:

- Disabled Staff (for which no budget was requested for 2023-24 but for which expenditure has been incurred so a small budget is requested for 2024-25)
- Supply – Special Circumstances, which has had a larger increase due to re-alignment of the rate being charged to maintained vs academy schools, explained in section 1.1.1 below.

### **1.1.1 Supply – Special Circumstances, further information on rate change**

Historically, there is no split provided by the unions in the time they spend between academy and maintained schools when claiming from this budget.

It became clear that a way of understanding how the time is spent was necessary for 3 reasons:

1. To know that when the HR Business Partner (HRBP) is setting the rate for academies, it is a fair and accurate reflection of the union official's time.
2. Reporting of facility time for maintained schools on an annual basis to the Department for Education.
3. Having benchmarked our rate with other Local Authorities, it did appear we were overcharging the rate to academies and under delegating funds for maintained schools.

A discussion took place with the unions about providing this split upon claiming their time, but an agreement was not reached for various reasons, and it was concluded that this would not necessarily provide the accuracy sought.

#### Finding the split

A new way of splitting the hours was sought, and it was concluded that an accurate and fair way was for the funding to equal to the same rate per pupil for maintained and academy schools. Working out the time this way, established that the TU officials spend 35% of their time on TU duties for maintained schools and 65% of their time on TU duties for academies.

The monies delegated to the budget for maintained schools currently covers 11% of the monies, therefore the academies are currently supplementing the maintained schools funding by 24%.

#### Resolving the split

Once the issue had been discovered, steps were taken to resolve it:

1. The LA decided that a request should be made to School's Forum that a higher rate is delegated for maintained schools into the 2024-25 budgets.
2. The LA decided to change the charge to academies as soon as possible. The HRBP sets the rate for academy purchase of the service each year for the period of 1 September to 31 August. In setting that rate for the period of 23-24, the usual factors were taken into consideration including staff pay increases, but this year, also a correction of the charge to academies. Correcting these costs before the monies are delegated meant that a decision was made that the

budget would be overspent this financial year due to the lesser rate paid by academies from 1 September 2023 – 31 March 2024.

### Academy charges

For the period of 1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023 academies were charged a rate of £3.31 per pupil for use of the facility fund.

For the period of 1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024 the academy rate per pupil was set at £2.49.

The rate of £2.49 was reached by dividing the total forecast expenditure (based on all current maintained schools (all) and academies (using the service)) by the total number of pupils. The rate of £2.49 is therefore now seen as a fair rate which is applied for all schools included. The expenditure figure and pupil numbers were used as at the time of setting the rate.

The below table represents the figures used and the split:

	<b>Number of pupils on roll May 22</b>	<b>% split</b>	<b>Forecast expenditure</b>	<b>Rate Per-Pupil (£)</b>
Maintained	35,584	35.42%	£88,467	2.49
Academies	64,884	64.58%	£161,310	2.49
Total	100,468	100%	£249,777	2.49

The forecast expenditure for maintained schools is **£88,467** based on May'22 NOR used for the split. The amount requested for de-delegation is £2.49 per-pupil for all schools totalling **£82,411** based on more recent, lower, pupil numbers for maintained schools.

### **1.1.2 Proposed De-Delegation Rates and Budgets**

For maintained primary schools, the suggested de-delegation from Basic Per-Pupil Entitlement funding for 2024-25 is as follows, based on estimated pupil numbers:

<b>Primary De-Delegation</b>	<b>2024-25 Per-Pupil Rate (£) *</b>	<b>2024-25 Indicative Budget (£)*</b>
Redeployment/Safeguarding	<b>1.89</b>	<b>57,644</b>
Maternity Cover	<b>24.02</b>	<b>731,664</b>
Special Circumstances	<b>2.49</b>	<b>75,834</b>
Suspended Staff	<b>2.28</b>	<b>69,505</b>
Disabled Staff	<b>0.05</b>	<b>1,424</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30.74</b>	<b>936,071</b>
Estimated Pupil Numbers**		30,455.5

\* Per-pupil rates shown rounded to 2.d.p and budgets to nearest £

\*\* Estimated pupil numbers are from the 2024-25 draft APT

**The LA would de-delegate an indicative budget total for staffing costs of £936,071 for the primary sector.**

At the same de-delegation rates per-pupil, if the secondary sector also voted for de-delegation of staffing costs, the indicative contributions for secondary would be:

<b>Secondary De-Delegation</b>	<b>2024-25 Per- Pupil Rate (£) *</b>	<b>2024-25 Indicative Budget (£)*</b>
Redeployment/Safeguarding	<b>1.89</b>	<b>2,165</b>
Maternity Cover	<b>24.02</b>	<b>27,483</b>
Special Circumstances	<b>2.49</b>	<b>2,849</b>
Suspended Staff	<b>2.28</b>	<b>2,611</b>
Disabled Staff	<b>0.05</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30.74</b>	<b>35,162</b>
Estimated Pupil Numbers**		1,144

\* Per-pupil rates shown rounded to 2.d.p and budgets to nearest £

\*\* Estimated pupil numbers are from the 2024-25 draft APT

**The LA would de-delegate an indicative budget total for staffing costs of £35,162 for the secondary sector. However, if the secondary sector wished to de-delegate only the special circumstances budget as in previous years, the cost for 2024-25 is estimated at £2,849.**

Note that final de-delegated budgets may differ based upon final pupil numbers in the 2024-25 APT when de-delegated at the rates shown above (if those rates are agreed by the appropriate Schools Forum representatives).

**Decision 1a – The [maintained primary representatives](#) are asked to decide whether staff cost budgets for the primary sector should be de-delegated for 2024-25**

**Decision 1b – The [maintained secondary representative](#) is asked to decide whether staff cost budgets for the primary sector should be de-delegated for 2024-25**

## 1.2 Contingency

Where a school with a deficit is to open as a sponsored academy, the deficit remains with the local authority. If Schools Forum agree to de-delegate a contingency provision, then the deficit may be funded from that contingency. Otherwise, the cost must be funded from the LA's core budget and, therefore, is effectively a charge to local council taxpayers and not one that the LA has budget for. In effect, it would reduce the funding available to the LA to support schools and the wider system.

No contingency is requested for 2024-25.

## 1.3 Free School Meal eligibility

The Free School Meal eligibility budget provides schools with a central service for checking free school meal eligibility data.

Maintained mainstream schools and maintained special schools all use this service, and, therefore, the funding required to run the service, which is £29,500 for 2024-25 (1 FTE), has been apportioned between the sectors based on estimated FSM<sup>1</sup> pupils as follows:

	Primary	Secondary	Special	TOTAL
Estimated FSM Pupils*	6,160	175	643	6,978
Share of Budget (£)	26,042	740	2,718	29,500

\*Rounded to nearest FSM pupil numbers

The indicative charge to FSM deprivation funding for mainstream schools would be £4.23 (to 2 d.p.) per eligible FSM pupil to cover the costs of this service which include staff costs, postage and other administration costs.

For maintained special schools, which are funded on the basis of place numbers, the cost contribution would be split over 1,375 places equalling £1.97<sup>2</sup> per-place (the amount included in the special schools' buyback schedule) which is equivalent to the same £4.23 (to 2.d.p) per estimated eligible FSM pupil as for mainstream schools, based on 46.8% of the 1375 special places funded (i.e. 643 places) being eligible for FSM using GIAS data.

The suggested per-pupil/place amount is the rate required to de-delegate a sufficient budget to run the service, £29,500 for 2024-25 (1 FTE), based on an estimate of 6,978 pupils eligible for Free School Meals in maintained schools.

Note that the final de-delegated budgets may differ when based upon October'23 FSM pupil numbers in the final 2024-25 APT. If the final pupil data results in the de-delegated budget being less than the £29,500 required to run the service, then the rate per-pupil would need to be adjusted accordingly to reach £29,500.

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<sup>1</sup> FSM meal numbers are from draft 2024-25 APT for mainstream schools and for special schools are calculated as being 46.8% of pupils eligible (based on FSM information from the Government's 'Get Information About Schools' website).

<sup>2</sup> This methodology, based on number of places and average FSM eligibility levels of 46.8% in special schools, brings the rate for special schools in 2024-25 into line with the rate charged to primary/secondary schools for the FSM eligibility service.

**Decision 2a – The [maintained primary representatives](#) are asked to decide whether Free School Meals eligibility for the primary sector should be de-delegated.**

**Decision 2b – The [maintained secondary representative](#) is asked to decide whether Free School Meals eligibility for the primary sector should be de-delegated.**

A decision for buyback of FSM eligibility for maintained special schools is included in the next section.

#### **1.4 Special Schools – Buyback of Services**

A decision on the buyback of services in the 2024-25 financial year is required for special schools (by the maintained and academy special school representatives).

##### Buyback vs De-delegation

The local authority is not allowed, under the finance regulations, to offer de-delegation of services to special schools in the same way as for maintained mainstream schools.

Instead, special schools are allowed to buy back into the same services.

The services offered for buy back are:

- FSM Eligibility (used by all maintained special schools)
- Staff Costs (safeguarding, maternity, special circumstances, suspended staff, disabled staff)

In previous years the maintained special schools have bought into these services.

The cost for each service is the rate per place delegated to special schools within top-up funding (except for Special Circumstances and FSM eligibility which have been updated in line with costs and the current FSM % of special schools). The rates represent the higher staffing ratios of special schools compared to mainstream schools.

**Annex B** provides a schedule of the indicative costs for each service based on number of pro-rata places in each school in 2023-24. Final cost will be based on actual places funded in the 2024-25 budget share.

**Decision 3a - The [maintained special school representative](#) is asked to decide on the buyback of services for all maintained special schools in the 2024-25 financial year.**

**Decision 3b - The [academy special school representative](#) is asked to decide on the buyback of services for academy special schools in the 2024-25 financial year.**

## **1.5 Maintained Nursery Schools – Buyback of Services**

A decision on the buyback of services in the 2024-25 financial year is required for maintained nursery schools (by the maintained nursery school representative).

### Buyback vs De-delegation

The local authority is not allowed, under the finance regulations, to offer de-delegation of services to maintained nursery schools in the same way as for maintained mainstream schools.

Instead, maintained nursery schools are allowed to buy back into services.

The services offered for buy back (as previously requested by Nursery Schools) are:

- Staff Costs (safeguarding, maternity, special circumstances, suspended staff, disabled staff)

Apart from special circumstances, the rate for which has been separately re-calculated for 2024-25 to re-align costs for all schools and academies (that might the service), the cost for each service for 2024-25 is double the rate that is suggested for primary and secondary schools. Historically, the LA has charged nursery schools a buyback rate that is equal to mainstream schools but, upon review, have identified that this did not consider the requirement for nursery schools to have at least one member of staff for every thirteen children.

**Annex C** provides a schedule of the indicative costs, based on the number of hours/FTE in each school, is attached.

**Decision 4 - The [maintained nursery school representative](#) is asked to decide on the buyback of services for maintained nursery schools in the 2024-25 financial year.**

## 1.6 Growth Fund (Schools Block)

The growth fund sits within the School Block and all Schools Forum members are required to vote on the criteria and amount.

### Pupil Growth

In 2023-24, £1.101m was top sliced from the Schools Block for growth fund. The current forecast is for approximately £1.069m of growth allocations to schools in 2023-24 (c. £1.445m including academies' lagged growth payments for April'23-August'23 but the LA receives £0.376m back from DfE to cover those), so there is currently an underspend of £32k forecast (£1.101m minus £1.069m). The allocations made for growth in 2023-24 are as follows:

School Name	Apr-Aug'23		Sep'23-Mar'24		Total Growth 2023-24
	Pupils	Amount	Pupils	Amount	
<u>Pupil Growth:</u>					
Cawston Academy	10	13,404			13,404
Diss High	30	56,700			56,700
Attleborough Academy			21	58,616	58,616
Wymondham College Prep			30	59,395	59,395
Greenpark Academy	30	40,213	30	59,395	99,608
Great Yarmouth Charter Academy	25	47,250	25	69,781	117,031
Thetford Academy			26	72,573	72,573
Hethersett Academy			35	97,694	97,694
Sewell Park Academy	15	28,350	20	55,825	84,175
Ormiston Victory Academy	60	126,630	90	251,213	377,843
Downham Market Academy	30	63,900	30	83,738	147,638
Trowse Primary			15	29,698	29,698
Ingoldisthorpe VA Primary			8	15,839	15,839
Roydon Primary			10	19,798	19,798
Pre-opening costs:					
Silfield Primary*				0	0
Cringleford Primary				195,000	195,000
	<b>200</b>	<b>376,447</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>1,068,565</b>	<b>1,445,012</b>

\*Note that £0.195m was set aside in 2023-24 for a new school at Silfield, but this funding has not been needed in 2023-24. However, other growth costs for 2023-24 are higher than originally forecast, and therefore the underspend for Silfield has been mostly offset by other increased allocations from the fund.

### Pupil Growth 2024-25

The amount requested for pupil growth in 2024-25 is c£0.947m based on the current view on admissions for the next transfer rounds.

This will pay for growth at the following schools:

School	Class Size	Unit Rate (£)	Pro-Rata	TOTAL (£)
Ormiston Victory Academy	90	5,022	7/12th	263,655
Trowse Primary	15	3,562	7/12th	31,168
Downham Market Academy	30	5,022	7/12th	87,885
North Norwich (Sewell Park Academy)	30	5,022	7/12th	87,885
Wymondham High	30	5,022	7/12th	87,885
Thetford Academy	30	5,022	7/12th	87,885
Diss High	30	5,022	7/12th	87,885
Wayland Academy	30	5,022	7/12th	87,885
Greenpark Academy	30	3,562	7/12th	62,335
Wymondham College Prep	30	3,562	7/12th	62,335
	<b>345</b>			<b>946,803</b>

For the first time in 2024 to 2025 local authorities will be required to provide growth funding where a school or academy has agreed with the local authority to provide an extra class to meet basic need in the area (either as a bulge class or as an ongoing commitment). This is outside of the usual criteria (which in Norfolk require a school to be over PAN in order to receive growth funding), therefore an additional amount of £0.125m is requested for a Growth Fund to cover the cost of 2 x basic need classes against this criterion.

This figure is calculated on the basis of 60 pupils (2 classes) at £3562 x 7/12<sup>th</sup>. This estimate is based on considering the requests that have been received over the past 5 years. On average 2 classes of pupils have been declined funding as the schools had not reached their published admission numbers and therefore did not meet the growth funding criteria at the time. Therefore, we have put forward a request for this average amount.

#### New Schools

In addition to the growth funding requested for schools' admissions over PAN, a further £88,000 is requested as part of the Growth Fund to cover the post-opening costs in 2024-25 for Cringleford Primary School opening Sept'24 based on the trust's financial plan (and in line with the DfE suggested amounts for new schools).

Pre-opening funding for Silfield of £97,500 is requested for 2024-25. The total pre-opening cost funding of a new school is £195,000, but the reduced amount allows for staged payments spanning over two years – the remainder would be requested the following year. Although an amount was previously requested for this school in 2023-24 and not yet used for that purpose, the funding was used to meet higher demand for growth in other schools during 2023-24.

#### Total Growth Fund and Criteria

**The total growth fund top-slice requested for 2024-25 is therefore £1.257m (c£0.947m pre-16 growth, c£0.125m for extra classes within PAN, £0.88m post-opening costs Cringleford, c£0.98m pre-opening costs Silfield).**

The suggested growth criteria are:

- Growth has been identified by the authority as required in the area for the following academic year. i.e. a comparison of numbers between the two October counts, and;
- Growth must be the greater of 10% of a year group or 5 pupils and will be funded at 7/12th of Basic Pupil Entitlement;
- Growth for an additional year group or class will be given at 7/12th of the Pupil Admission Number, e.g. a school/academy is increasing from an intake of 30 pupils to 60 pupils p.a. - school/academy will therefore qualify for 30x7/12th AWPU.
- Growth for pre-opening costs for new maintained schools and academies (including free schools) where the school is opening in response to basic need, maximum value based upon the table below:

<b>Type of School</b>	<b>Grant funding for first school opening in a given financial year</b>	<b>Grant funding for each additional school opening in the same financial year and with the same sponsor</b>
Primary	£195,000	£125,000
Secondary and all-through	£275,000	£175,000
AP	£195,000	£125,000
16-19	£225,000	£145,000

- Growth for post-opening costs for new maintained schools and academies (including free schools) where the school is opening in response to basic need, value negotiated based upon financial plans.
- There are no additional payments to schools or academies in respect of Infant Class Size Funding.
- Where growth fund payments are made to academies for the period September-March, the payment is continued by the local authority for the following April-August.
- Pupils moving from a closing school in advance of that school's official closure date will be funded at their new school at up to 5/12th of the AWPU value (1/12th for each full month) where the number of pupils received early is the greater of 10% of a year group or 5 pupils. The number of pupils on roll does not need to exceed the PAN.

It is proposed that £1.257m is retained centrally from the Schools Block for pre-16 growth and the pre-opening costs of new schools, in 2024-25, and that funding

continues to be allocated to schools and academies using the suggested criteria above. This includes growth within existing schools and any new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained, academy or free school.

**Decision 5a – All Schools Forum members are asked to approve a £1.257m centrally retained fund for pre-16 growth in 2024-25**

**Decision 5b – All Schools Forum members are asked to approve the pre-16 growth fund criteria as detailed in section 1.6 of this paper.**

## 2. Central School Services Block (including ongoing and historic commitments)

The Central School Services Block (CSSB) funds local authorities for the statutory duties they hold for both maintained schools and academies. The CSSB brings together:

- Funding previously allocated through the retained responsibilities element of the Education Services Grant (ESG);
- Funding for ongoing central functions, in Norfolk this is admissions, servicing of the Schools Forum and fees to Independent schools without SEN;
- Residual Funding for historic commitments, previously top-sliced from the schools' block, totalling £78,643 in 2024-25 (the DfE have reduced the allocation for this by 20% compared to 2023-24);
- The licences and subscriptions paid for centrally by the DfE.

Norfolk's indicative allocation for 2024-25, based on 107,974 pupils (will be updated), for the Central School Services Block is £4,235,732 and covers centrally retained budgets that support schools.

This is just over £38.50 per pupil (£36.88 per pupil 2023-24) plus £78,643 for agreed historic costs (decreased from £98k 2023-24).

The provisional Central School Services Block figure of £4,235,732 is broken down by the LA as follows:

	(£)	
<b>Forum approval line-by-line:</b>		
Ongoing Central Functions	617,000	Approval required
<b>Central Licences (no approval required):</b>		
Central Licences	778,769	Estimated DfE deduction
<b>Ongoing Responsibilities requiring Forum approval:</b>		
TPG/TPECG	182,475	Approval required
Responsibilities held for all schools	2,657,488	Approval required
<b>Central School Services Block</b>	<b>4,235,732</b>	<b>Provisional Allocation</b>

**2.1 Schools Forum are required to approve the retention of Central School Services Block for the following items:**

Specific budgets:

Category	2023-24	2024-25	Difference	Explanation for change
<b>Ongoing Central Functions – approval required on a line-by-line basis:</b>				
<b>6a.</b> School Admissions	487,011	487,000	-11	Budget requirement reviewed. Increased staffing costs are anticipated to be absorbed by efficiencies. This is an allowable item under the regulations.
<b>6b.</b> Servicing of Schools Forum*	30,000	30,000	0	No change. This is an allowable item under the regulations.
<b>6c.</b> Fees to independent schools for pupils without SEN (Assisted Boarding Partnership)**	100,000	100,000	0	No change. This is an allowable item under the regulations.
<b>Historic Commitments – approval required on a line-by-line basis:</b>				
Contribution towards the Director of Learning & Inclusion central budgets - Early Intervention and Achievement.	119,700	0	-119,700	No longer requested. See note below.***
Termination of Employment Costs (existing pension costs)	64,994	0	-64,994	No longer requested. See note below.***
<b>Total</b>	<b>801,694</b>	<b>617,000</b>	<b>-184,694</b>	

**\*Servicing of Schools Forum - £30,000**

The LA may charge the running costs of Schools Forum to this budget including any agreed and reasonable expenses for members attending meetings, the costs of producing and distributing papers and costs room hire and refreshments and for clerking of meetings.

The £30k approximately covers the cost of the Schools Forum Clerk, direct meeting expenses, etc., but does not cover the cost of significant LA Officer time producing papers and supporting meetings. The LA could increase the requested budget but rather than incurring time estimating these costs, are content that they are covered by the overall Central School Services Block contribution to the LA.

## **\*\*Assisted Boarding Partnership - Fees to independent schools for pupils without SEN £100,000**

The Assisted Boarding Partnership (ABP) scheme has long standing success in helping families stay together and on improving outcomes for children and young people. Norfolk's Schools Forum has historically supported a contribution from the Central Services Schools Block reflecting a shared moral purpose of promoting life chances of some of Norfolk's most vulnerable children and on the benefits to Norfolk and to its education system of children being able to remain living at home and being cared for by their families.

Children who access the ABP scheme who are at acute risk of entering into the care system. Without this opportunity, children will be at greater risk of the damage and turmoil that can be associated with the care experience, such as adverse childhood experiences and attachment difficulties, with its resulting known impact on children's learning and educational needs.

Without access to this important scheme, such children will be more likely to require specialist care and educational facilities at a much greater cost to the High Needs Block, and even in cases where children are able to remain within a mainstream school setting, they will often require additional significant support, resources and provision from the school with its resulting impact on main school budgets.

The Local Authority sees the ABP as one of the cornerstones of its early help and prevention offer and considers it an effective initiative that not only improves outcomes for children and young people, reflects the Partnership's shared purpose for children and young people to FLOURISH, but is also cost effective for both schools and council budgets through its proven success in meeting children's needs at the earliest stage and before needs escalate to the point of crisis.

Following discussion of the Forum in November 2021, and again in November 2022, a link to research on the Assisted Boarding Partnership was circulated<sup>3</sup>: [Norfolk research highlights success of boarding partnerships - Norfolk County Council](#)

## **\*\*\*Historic Commitments (£0)**

Historically the LA have sought approval to fund historic line-by-line commitments related to termination of employment costs and contribution towards leadership elements undertaken or supported by the local authority. This contribution is significantly lower than the actual level of spend that the LA undertakes in relation to leadership (as well as contributions to the Norfolk Governors Network, Norfolk Association of Special School Heads, and Educate Norfolk), with the remainder funded via a combination of the Central Services Schools Block (below) and LA funding.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/news/2018/06/norfolk-research-highlights-success-of-boarding-partnerships>

Therefore, the LA is not seeking separate agreement for the funding of the historic lines previously requested, on the basis that agreement is sought to utilise the remaining Central Services Schools Block as a whole that will cover these expenses.

**Schools Forum approval (vote by all members) is required on a line-by-line basis for each of the items:**

**Decision 6a – All Schools Forum members are asked to approve the level of Admissions funding (£487,000)**

**Decision 6b – All Schools Forum members are asked to approve the level of funding for Schools Forum (£30,000)**

**Decision 6c – All Schools Forum members are asked to approve the level of funding for Fees to Independent Schools for pupil without SEN (£100,000)**

## **2.2 Central School Services Block (Central licences)**

The following licences have been negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State for all publicly funded schools, paid for by the DfE from the LA's Central School Services Block:

- Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI)
- Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA)
- Education Recording Agency (ERA)
- Filmbank Distributors Ltd. (for the PVSL)
- Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS)
- Motion Picture Licensing Company (MPLC)
- Newspaper Licensing Authority (NLA)
- Performing Rights Society (PRS)
- Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL)
- Schools Printed Music Licence (SPML)

The estimated cost of licences in 2024-25 for all schools based on historic cost is £778,769. Schools Forum approval is not required for this as the final licence cost will be deducted from Norfolk's DSG allocation by the DfE.

### 2.3 Central School Services Block (Responsibilities held for all schools)

Since April 2021, the Central School Services Block (CSSB) has included an allocation for Teachers' Pay Grant (TPG) and Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant (TPECG) in respect of centrally employed staff at a rate of £1.69 per-pupil as part of ongoing responsibilities. Based on indicative pupil numbers the amount of the grants included for centrally employed staff is £182,475.

The Education Services Grant retained element for ongoing responsibilities held for all schools became part of the Dedicated Schools Grant in September 2017 and now sits within the Central School Services Block. Based on the provisional allocation for 2024-25, indicative funding provided for ongoing responsibilities (excluding TPG/TPECG for centrally employed teachers) within the Central School Services Block is £2,657,488. **Annex D** provides a breakdown of the responsibilities held for all schools.

Schools Forum approval is required for the LA to retain funding from the Central School Services Block for responsibilities held for all schools. DfE guidance does not state that approval is required for retention of the TPG/TPECG element of the CSS Block; however, for transparency, the amount is separately identified in this paper. The total indicative funding requested for responsibilities held for all schools including TPG/TPECG (based on the provisional CSSB allocation for 2024-25 is therefore £2,839,963.

It is not possible to specifically identify services areas / provision that is funded by the Central Services Schools Block as budgeting is undertaken at an overall level with a significant contribution from the County Council. Steps have been taken to exclude elements required to be local authority funded, such as high needs leadership, assessment and casework. Budgets provided are net budgets as some services have traded elements. However, the table below provides a summary of the areas of relevant budget for 2023-24 and the associated funding sources:

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2023-24 Net Budget, £m</b>
Education Infrastructure and Partnerships	3.038
Inclusion and Opportunity	1.193
Education Intelligence and Effectiveness	0.596
Virtual School CIC	0.704
Quality Assurance, Intervention and Regulation	1.529
School Improvement - Associates	0.184
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.244</b>
Central Services Schools Block funded (inc. TPPG for centrally employed teachers)	-2.500
<b>Norfolk County Council funded</b>	<b>4.744</b>

For 2024-25, the contribution requested is the allocation of £2,839,963 (based on provisional DSG figures) after the deduction of all other items requested to be agreed on a line-by-line basis. The exact final amount will differ based on pupil numbers in the final DSG allocation in December (it may go up or down).

If this contribution was not agreed by Schools Forum, the local authority would need to ask the ESFA to adjudicate given the responsibilities held and funding required to meet these.

**Decision 7 – All Schools Forum members are asked to approve funding for responsibilities held for all schools from Central School Services Block, including Teachers' Pay Grant and Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant for centrally employed staff (£2,839,963)**

### 3. Other De-delegations / Top-slices

Within the DfE's School Revenue Funding 2024 to 2025 Operational Guide, [Schools operational guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118111/schools_operational_guide_2024_to_2025.pdf), the LA can request de-delegation or top-slices for a number of other purposes. At this time, the LA are of the view that schools would not want these responsibilities and funding de-delegated/top-sliced (including funding for audits), or the LA is of the view that schools are best placed to make their own decisions:

- De-delegate funding for maintained only responsibilities, e.g. responsibilities detailed in **Annex E** – the LA has never requested de-delegation with provision either traded, the LA core funding covering the costs of any provision required, where appropriate, not covered by the Central School Services Block;
- Top-slice Schools Block for Falling Rolls Fund – the LA has considered whether this should be de-delegated for 2024-25, however after consideration, the DfE's mandatory criteria based upon SCAP 2022 data and the requirement for demand in schools with falling rolls to be demonstrated to increase again within 3 to 5 years, combined with decreasing birth rates, make it unviable at the current time. The requirement for a Falling Rolls Fund will be reviewed annually;
- De-delegation of School Improvement Services
- De-delegation of Behaviour Support services– the LA has never requested de-delegation as it has been understood that schools would want to manage these arrangements themselves;
- De-delegation of support to under-performing ethnic groups and bilingual learners – the LA has never requested de-delegation as it has been understood that schools would want to manage these arrangements themselves;
- De-delegation of Insurance/RPA – the LA has never requested de-delegation as it has been understood that schools would want to manage these arrangements themselves;
- De-delegation of Museum and library services – the LA has never requested de-delegation as it has been understood that schools would want to manage these arrangements themselves;
- De-delegation of Licences and Subscriptions outside of central licences scheme

At this point in time, the LA is not requesting de-delegation for any of these purposes.

#### Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

**Officer Name:**            **Tel No:**                    **Email address:**

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Dawn Filtness

01603 223800  
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If you need this report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

## **Annex A – De-delegated / Buyback Staffing Budgets for maintained schools**

### **Redeployment/Safeguarding**

Where there is a risk of redundancy, the school is red rag rated, and the reason for redundancy is financial, then redeployment or salary safeguarding may be a less costly option than redundancy costs.

Redeployment/safeguarding inevitably occurs from a staffing adjustment, so the school will already be working with an HR consultant who will advise on costs and whether redeployment/ safeguarding is an option.

Where salary safeguarding costs are paid by the LA, the salary will be re-coded to reflect that contribution.

School Action: Speak to your HR Consultant at an early stage of the staffing adjustment process to establish whether this is an option.

### **Supply/Special Circumstances**

This budget covers trade union facility time and other functions, such as jury service and reservist duties.

For trade union facility time, the money pays for trade union officials who are available to all schools. These officials are paid directly from the budget by the HR Business Partner (Schools).

School Action: For jury service, and for covering reservist duties, the school should provide evidence of any additional cost incurred to the HR Business Partner (Schools). This evidence could be the relevant supply claims or invoices. Where there is additional cost incurred, the school will be reimbursed usually through a journal transfer.

### **Maternity Cover**

Anyone on maternity leave and entitled to maternity pay is automatically recoded to the de delegated maternity budget, on the basis of information provided by the school.

### **Suspended Staff**

Where a school has agreed with the HR Consultant that an employee should be suspended, the salary is recoded to this budget.

School Action: Speak to your HR Consultant before suspending staff to establish whether this is an option.

### **Disabled Staff**

This budget is accessible to schools to support staff who may have additional needs due to disability to enable them to be at work and is decided on a case-by-case

basis. In the past this has been used for equipment to enable access to work; training in respect of a disability and for supply cover where it is deemed appropriate (such as phased return to work) and is not covered by the Sickness Insurance Scheme. This does not include Capital Works such as providing ramps for accessibility for those with disabilities, etc.

School Action: The school should be in touch with the HR Consultant about this, and requests are passed to the HR Business Partner. Decisions about spend from this budget will be made alongside other routes that may also provide support, such as Access to Work.

Schools should contact HR in respect of the above for information on these funds. These budgets are not advertised on the intranet as funding is only available in certain situations and schools will usually be in contact with HR when they have an issue.

Further to the above, queries can be directed to the HR Consultant or to [ehrenquiries@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:ehrenquiries@norfolk.gov.uk) or to [Kate.Philpin@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Kate.Philpin@norfolk.gov.uk).

## Annex B – Special Schools Indicative Buyback Costs 2024-25

			RATE (£)							
			1.97	2.86	68.32	2.49	10.38	0.05		
Locn	DfE	School	Est. Number of Places* @31st March 2024	FSM Eligibility £	Safeguarding/Redeployment £	Maternity £	Special Circumstances £	Suspended Staff £	Disabled Staff £	TOTAL £
2650	7010	Chapel Green School	170.00	335	486	11614	423	1765	8	14,631
2670	7020	John Grant School	183.00	361	523	12503	456	1900	9	15,752
2675	7007	Sheringham Woodfields School	155.00	305	443	10590	386	1609	7	13,340
2695	7013	The Clare School	115.00	227	329	7857	286	1194	5	9,898
2705	7016	Harford Manor School	99.00	195	283	6764	247	1028	5	8,522
2710	7014	The Parkside School	179.00	353	512	12229	446	1858	8	15,406
2715	7006	Hall School	90.00	177	257	6149	224	934	4	7,745
2720	7001	Sidestrand Hall School	193.00	380	552	13186	481	2003	9	16,611
2721	7004	Fred Nicholson School	191.00	376	546	13049	476	1983	9	16,439
			<b>1,375.00</b>	<b>2,709</b>	<b>3,931</b>	<b>93,941</b>	<b>3,425</b>	<b>14,274</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>118,344</b>
2690	7021	Churchill Park School	236.00	465	675	16124	588	2450	11	20,313
2723	7015	Eaton Hall Academy	54.00	106	154	3689	134	561	3	4,647
7000	7000	The Fen Rivers Academy	80.00	158	229	5466	199	830	4	6,886
7002	7002	The Wherry School	116.00	229	332	7925	289	1204	5	9,984
7005	7005	Bure Park Specialist Academy**	84.67	167	242	5785	211	879	4	7,288
7011	7011	Duke of Lancaster School**	100.00	197	286	6832	249	1038	5	8,607
7997	7997	The Bridge Easton**	119.83	236	343	8187	298	1244	6	10,314
			<b>790.50</b>	<b>1558</b>	<b>2261</b>	<b>54008</b>	<b>1968</b>	<b>8206</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>68,039</b>

\*Number of places estimated at 31st March'24. These will be updated to the number of places funded in the 2024-25 budget share, so the final costs may change for each school.

\*\*For the new schools (Bure Park Specialist Academy and The Bridge Easton) the number of places has been pro-rated for 2024-25 based on growth plans.

## Annex C – Nursery Schools Indicative Buyback Cost 2024-25

**Staff Costs - Supply/Cover, buyback rate £ per converted F.T.E. (Hours/950)**

Locn	DfE	School	Total Hours (Current)*	Redeployment/ Safeguarding	Maternity	Special Circumstances	Suspended Staff	Disabled Staff	TOTAL
				3.79	48.05	2.49	4.56	0.09	
				£	£	£	£	£	£
0004	1001	Emneth Nursery School	47,016.00	187	2,378	123	226	5	2,919
0007	1002	King's Lynn Nursery School	33,763.50	135	1,708	88	162	3	2,096
0010	1005	Earlham Nursery School	35,289.00	141	1,785	92	170	3	2,191
			<b>116,068.50</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>5,870</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7,206</b>

\*Final hours will be updated to the number of hours funded in the 2024/25 budget share, so costs may change for each school.

Per-Pupil rates are shown to 2.d.p and de-delegated budgets shown rounded to nearest £.

## **Annex D**

### **Responsibilities held for all schools**

#### **Statutory and regulatory duties**

- director of children's services and personal staff for director (sch 2, 15a)
- planning for the education service as a whole (sch 2, 15b)
- authorisation and monitoring of expenditure not met from schools' budget shares (sch 2, 15c)
- formulation and review of local authority schools funding formula (sch 2, 15d)
- internal audit and other tasks related to the local authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under section 151 of LGA 1972 except duties specifically related to maintained schools (sch 2, 15e)
- consultation costs relating to non-staffing issues (sch 2, 19)
- plans involving collaboration with other local authority services or public or voluntary bodies (sch 2, 15f)
- Standing Advisory Committees for Religious Education (SACREs) (sch 2, 17)
- provision of information to or at the request of the Crown other than relating specifically to maintained schools (sch 2, 21)
- revenue budget preparation, preparation of information on income and expenditure relating to education, and external audit relating to education (sch 2, 22)

#### **Education welfare**

- functions in relation to school attendance (sch 2, 16)
- responsibilities regarding restrictions on the employment of children (sch 2, 18)
- functions in relation to the exclusion of pupils from schools, excluding any provision of education to excluded pupils (sch 2, 20)

#### **Asset management**

- management of the local authority's capital programme including preparation and review of an asset management plan, and negotiation and management of private finance transactions (sch 2, 14a)
- landlord responsibilities, including those in relation to land leased to academies for schools (sch 2, 14b)

#### **Other ongoing duties**

- licences negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State for all publicly funded schools (sch 2, 8); this does not require schools forum approval
- operation of the system of admissions and appeals (Sch 2, 9)
- fees or expenses payable in connection with the attendance of non-SEN pupils at schools not maintained by any local authority (sch 2, 10)
- remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies (sch 2, 11)
- servicing of schools forums (sch 2, 12)
- back-pay for equal pay claims (sch 2, 13)
- writing to parents of year 9 pupils about schools with an atypical age of admission, such as UTCs and studio schools, within a reasonable travelling distance (sch 2, 23)

### **Historic commitments**

- capital expenditure funded from revenue (sch 2, 1)
- prudential borrowing costs (sch 2, 2(a))
- termination of employment costs (sch 2, 2(b))
- contribution to combined budgets (sch 2, 2(c))
- special educational needs transport costs (sch 2,2(d))

Source: [Schools operational guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115422/schools_operational_guide_2024_to_2025.pdf)

## **Annex E**

### **Responsibilities held for maintained schools only**

#### **School improvement**

- expenditure related to core school improvement activities of local authorities with respect to maintained schools (Schedule 2, 53)

#### **Statutory and regulatory duties**

- functions of local authority related to best value and provision of advice to governing bodies in procuring goods and services (sch 2, 58)
- authorisation and monitoring of expenditure in respect of schools which do not have delegated budgets, and related financial administration (sch 2, 59)
- monitoring of compliance with requirements in relation to the scheme for financing schools and the provision of community facilities by governing bodies (sch 2, 60)
- internal audit and other tasks related to the local authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 for maintained schools (sch 2, 61)
- functions under regulations made under section 44 of the Education Act 2002 (Consistent Financial Reporting) in so far as the functions related to maintained schools (sch 2, 62)
- investigations of employees or potential employees, with or without remuneration to work at or for schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (sch 2, 63)
- functions related to local government pensions and administration of teachers' pensions in relation to staff working at maintained schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (sch 2, 64)
- HR duties, including advice to schools on the management of staff, pay alterations, conditions of service and composition or organisation of staff (sch 2, 65)
- determination of conditions of service for non-teaching staff (sch 2, 66)
- appointment or dismissal of employee functions (sch 2, 67)
- consultation costs relating to staffing (sch 2, 68)
- compliance with duties under Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (sch 2, 69)
- provision of information to or at the request of the Crown relating to maintained schools (sch 2, 70)
- school companies (sch 2, 71)
- functions under the Equality Act 2010 (sch 2, 72)
- establish and maintaining computer systems, including data storage (sch 2, 73)

- appointment of governors and payment of governor expenses (sch 2, 74)
- budgeting and accounting functions relating to maintained schools (sch 2, 75)
- retrospective membership of pension schemes where it would not be appropriate to expect a school to meet the cost (sch 2, 77)

### **Education welfare**

- inspection of attendance registers (sch 2, 80)

### **Asset management**

- general landlord duties for all maintained schools (sch 2, 78a & b (section 542(2)) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) to ensure that school buildings have:
  - appropriate facilities for pupils and staff (including medical and accommodation)
  - the ability to sustain appropriate loads
  - reasonable weather resistance
  - safe escape routes
  - appropriate acoustic levels
  - lighting, heating and ventilation which meets the required standards
  - adequate water supplies and drainage
  - playing fields of the appropriate standards
- general health and safety duty as an employer for employees and others who may be affected (Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974)
- Management of the risk from asbestos in community school buildings (Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012)

### **Central support services**

- clothing grants (sch 2, 54)
- provision of tuition in music, or on other music-related activities (sch 2, 55)
- visual, creative and performing arts other than music (sch 2, 56)
- outdoor education centres (but not centres mainly for the provision of organised games, swimming or athletics) (sch 2, 57)

### **Premature retirement and redundancy**

- dismissal or premature retirement when costs cannot be charged to maintained schools (sch 2, 79)

### **Monitoring national curriculum assessment**

- monitoring of national curriculum assessments (sch 2, 76)

## Therapies

- This is now covered in the high needs section of the regulations and does not require schools forum approval

## Additional note on central services

Services set out above will also include administrative costs and overheads relating to these services (regulation 1(4)) for:

- expenditure related to functions imposed by or under chapter 4 of part 2 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (financing of maintained schools), the administration of grants to the local authority (including preparation of applications) and, where it is the local authority's duty to do so, ensuring payments are made in respect of taxation, national insurance, and superannuation contributions
- expenditure on recruitment, training, continuing professional development, performance management and personnel management of staff who are funded by expenditure not met from schools' budget shares and who are paid for services
- expenditure in relation to the investigation and resolution of complaints
- expenditure on legal services

Source: [Schools operational guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101234/Schools_operational_guide_2024_to_2025.pdf)