

Rotherham Schools' Forum

Venue: Rockingham Professional Development Centre

Date: Friday 19 January 2024

Time: 8.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. Welcome and Introductions

Welcome by the Chair and introductions by all Forum Members present.

2. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies from any Forum Member who are unable to attend the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

To invite Forum Members to declare any interests they may have on agenda items to be considered at this meeting, to confirm the nature of those interests and whether they intend to leave the meeting for the consideration of the item.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 15)

Recommendation:- To receive and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1st December 2023

5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

To consider and report on any matters arising from the previous minutes:-

6. Membership and Constitution of the Rotherham Schools Forum (Standing Item)

To consider any updates or amendments to the membership of the Schools Forum.

- To consider a review of the Schools Forum and its constitution to include the need to have full representation for various types of school and representation of non-schools members.

Julien Kramer to report.

7. School Funding Formula Update (Pages 17 - 21)

Louise Keith to report.

Recommendation:- To receive the report and note the contents.

8. Early Years Update (Pages 23 - 28)

Aileen Chambers to report.

Recommendation:- (1) Approval is given to retain 5% of 3 / 4 year old & 30 hour funding and 3% of 2 year old (working and disadvantaged) and 9 month funding to cover central Early Years and Childcare Service running costs.

(2) Approval is given to consult on the Early Education funding options presented.

(3) Approval is given to continue to distribute ISG based on the current model.

(4) Approval is given to distribute the TPAG in a lump sum to all providers

(5) Approval is given to fund the above entitlement for the EY Block with any shortfall being funded through the High Needs Block.

9. Education Safeguarding Role (Pages 29 - 32)

Pam Ward to report.

Recommendation:- To receive the report and note the contents.

10. High Needs Sub Group

Julian Kramer to report.

Recommendation:- To receive the report and note the contents.

11. Schools Forum Forward Plan (Non-Finance Reports) (Page 33)

Recommendation:- To consider and agree the attached Forward Plan and suggested items and for these non-finance related reports to be scheduled on dates accordingly.

12. Any Other Business

Recommendation:- To receive any other items of urgent business.

13. Dates and Times of Future Meetings

Recommendation:- (1) To consider and agree the date and time of the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum on 26th April 2024 at 8.30 a.m. at Rockingham Professional Development Centre.

(2) To consider and amend where necessary the dates/times proposed for future meetings scheduled:-

Friday, 21st June, 2024

Friday, 13th September, 2024

Friday, 15th November, 2024

Friday, 17th January, 2025

Friday, 11th April, 2025 – TBC

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**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM
FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER 2023**

In Attendance:

Kirsty Peart - Sitwell Infant (Maintained) (in the Chair)
 Deborah Ball - Treeton Primary (Primary Academy)
 Aileen Chambers – Head of Early Years and Childcare, CYPS
 Mark Cummins, SEND Project Lead, CYPS
 Councillor Victoria Cusworth – Cabinet Member for CYPS
 Dr. Spira Deb (PVI Nursery)
 Guiseppe DiLasio – Wales (Academy)
 Chris Eccles – Oakwood (Academy)
 Wayne Greenhough – Nexus MAT (Special Academy)
 Lynsey Hadfield – Executive Head, Arnold Nursery (Observer)
 Neil Hardwick – Head of Finance, CYPS
 David Horrigan – Maltby Learning Trust (Primary Academy)
 Louise Keith – Principal Finance Officer, CYPS
 Andy Krabbendam - JMAT (Primary Academy)
 Julien Kramer – Interim Assistant Director for Education, CYPS
 Angela McComb – Primary Maintained Governor
 Lee Morritt – Aspire
 Ian Muffett, Finance Manager, CYPS
 Vera Njelic - Principal Finance Officer, CYPS
 Colin Price – NEU Representative
 Mark Ryan – RNN Group
 Steve Scott – Happy Kids (PVI Nursery)
 Sharon Stones – Head of Arnold Nursery and Children's Centre
 Nevine Towers - Head of Business and Operations (Primary Academy)
 Pam Ward – Head of Service, Education, CYPS
 Sarah Whitby - Head of Service - Access to Education
 Nathan Williams – Roughwood Primary (Primary Academy)
 Mark Windle – Badsley Primary (Primary Maintained)

Apologies were received from:

Kelly Crompton, CYPS, RMBC
 Steve Rhodes – Winterhill (Academy) (in the Chair)
 Alan Richards – Secondary Governor
 Karen Smith – Nexus MAT (Special Academy)

26. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to today's meeting and introductions were made.

At very short notice the Clerk was asked to prepare the meeting as hybrid to allow for some Forum Members joining virtually and some attending in person.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were made.

28. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes from the previous meeting held on 22nd September, 2023.

Agreed: That the minutes be approved.

29. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

30. MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUTION OF THE ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM

No changes to the membership and constitution of the Rotherham Schools Forum were proposed.

31. DSG SUSTAINABILITY AND HIGH NEEDS FINANCE UPDATE

Consideration was given to the latest Dedicated Schools Grant position and the DSG projections as outlined in the DSG Management Plan presented by Neil Hardwick, Head of Schools Finance.

The Forum were advised how in 2017/18 the ESFA undertook an historic spend data DSG block realignment exercise, the High Needs block was then realigned after taking account of a £2.9 million transfer from the Schools Block in 2016/17 and an additional £3 million transfer in 2017/18. Prior to this exercise Rotherham consistently had a lower High Needs allocation than its statistical neighbours and the transfers helped dampen the impact of rising costs associated with the increasing demand for SEND provision in the borough.

From 2016/17 to 2019/20 the DSG deficit was rising at around £5 million per annum leading to an overall deficit of just under £20 million. Even with the SEND sufficiency strategies having an impact, further work was still required as the overall DSG deficit had risen to £21.258m at the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

As part of the DSG grant conditions in 2021/22 a plan was submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) for managing future DSG spend. Rotherham became one of the local authorities with a "Safety Valve" agreement.

The details of Safety Valve Revenue Plan and the funding arrangements which were on target were set out in detail as part of the report.

The 2021/22 outturn on high needs expenditure remained at £0.73 million, however after taking account of other balances in other DSG funding blocks resulted in an in-year deficit of £0.11 million increasing the net deficit in the DSG Central Reserve of £21.37 million, which was ahead of target in terms of the £22.013 million estimated in the DSG Management Plan.

Details on the DSG deficit position to the latest 2023/24 position was outlined, but demand on the High Needs budget remained high due to rising numbers of children supported in specialist provision and the rising costs of Education Healthcare (EHC) plans.

In the 2023/24 financial year the High Needs budget position as at October 2023 showed an overspend of £1.217m (excluding safety valve funding) against a planned contribution to reserves of £2.068 million. The £2.068 million planned contribution to reserves would be reduced to £851k should the £1.217 million overspend be realised. The £851k contribution to reserves was after the £3.459 million transfer of funding into the High Needs Block. The financial pressure would be £2.608 million without the Schools Block transfer in the 2023/24 financial year.

In terms of the 2024/25 budget estimate the High Needs Block pressures remained with the High Needs Block indicative allocation for 2024/25 being £57.377 million. The current 2024/25 pressure on the High Needs Block was estimated to be £1.716 million when including a transfer amount of £1.210 million (0.5%) from the Schools Block. Without this transfer the pressure was estimated at £2.927 million.

The Safety Valve agreement would still require a transfer from the School Block for the 2024/25 financial year of 0.5% to support the in-year financial pressures, to continue to meet the Safety Valve assumptions and avoid a significant increase in the overall DSG deficit over this period.

The other factors and risks to the management plan outside of the requirement for a school block transfer were the inflationary pressures, delivery of the capital programme to continue to support growth in resource centres and accessibility schemes to avoid high cost Independent Sector Placements and the continued growth in Education and Health Care Plans.

Forum Members were, therefore, reminded that the financial sustainability of the High Needs Block still remained a significant cause for concern for the Local Authority and would require the support of the Forum and High Needs Sub-Group to implement the strategies to assist in supporting the DSG High Needs Block to operate within its annual allocation.

The Cabinet Member and the Interim Assistant Director for Education also provided their support to the process and the success of the Safety Valve arrangement and welcomed the strategies in place to help Rotherham

deliver its target.

Agreed:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

32. SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to the report presented by Louise Keith, Principal Finance Officer, which set out the indicative proposals and sought approval decisions (where needed) for two areas of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2024/25:-

- Schools block.
- Central schools services block.

As a result of the Government's intention to implement a national funding formula for school and high needs funding allocations 2024/25 represented the seventh year of the Government's planned transition towards these proposals.

To comply with the ESFA operational guidance, Local Authorities were required to consult with schools, academies and Schools Forums in respect of planned changes to the local funding formula including the method, principals and rules that were to be adopted. The final decisions in respect of the local formula remained with the Local Authority.

A number of activities have taken place in respect of the consultation on the schools block and central schools services block including a consultation document being issued via e-mail on Friday 10th November, 2023 to all mainstream schools and academies.

The consultation closed on Friday, 24th November, 2023. Of the responses received seven maintained primary schools and twenty-nine academies responded (33% in total).

Further discussion ensued on the responses as set out as part of the report where consultation responses were received from individual schools/academies and those submitted as part of a multi-academy trust. The numbers listed were detailed as individual schools/academies.

There were changes proposed both in terms of the formula factors being used and the individual rates that would be applied to those factors. Nationally, the ESFA have looked to increase NFF factor values by 1.4% for basic entitlement, low prior attainment, free school meals, income deprivation affecting children index, English as an additional language, mobility, sparsity, the lump sum and the minimum pupil levels. In addition, the ESFA have increased the funding floor by 0.5%.

Last year the Local Authority suggested that the future years should be used as a transition to the national funding formula and where possible seek to change local factors/rates to bring them in line with the national

ones as this would provide for the best possible transition to the national formula. This was a view that was supported within the Schools Forum and that strategy in Rotherham was adopted.

To ensure schools and academies were in receipt of the indicative increase in the 2024/25 Local Authority's schools block allocation of £13.4m (2.03% per pupil year on year increase) the Local Authority was aiming to set the MFG to +0.5%. The MFG must be between 0.0% and 0.5% and is a way to protect the funding on a per pupil rate.

The Schools Forum would, therefore, need to vote on a number of proposals which were set out in detail as part of the report. The proposals were based on the consultation responses received from individual schools and academies.

In accordance with the regulations, only certain Forum Members were allowed to participate in a vote regarding the local funding formula. Other Forum Members that did not represent schools i.e. Union /Post-16 representatives could engage and participate in discussions, but were not eligible to vote.

A narrative and rationale for each of the questions was provided along with any clarification as necessary.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be received and the contents noted.

(2) That the voting as indicated below be incorporated into the school and academy local funding formula for 2024/25:-

Question 1 – Do you agree with the principle that Rotherham is adopting in terms of prioritising an increase to the MFG?

Vote:- **11 For** **0 Against** **0 Abstain**

Question 2 – Considering the borough as a whole, and to ensure support for the most vulnerable children and young people in the district, do you support the Local Authority's request to transfer of the 0.5% from the schools block to the high needs block?

After the meeting Finance Officers contacted all Forum Members to clarify and identify a record of individual votes for them to retain for audit purposes.

Finance Officers validated:-

Vote:- **6 For** **6 Against**

Question 3 – Do you agree that the Local Authority should continue to provide for a growth fund? It is estimated for 2024/25 a budget from reserve of £120,000 is required.

Vote:- 12 For 0 Against 0 Abstain

Question 4 - Do you agree that the Local Authority should continue to provide for a falling rolls fund? It is proposed the fund will be funded from reserve as with the Growth Fund?

Vote:- 12 For 0 Against 0 Abstain

Question 5 – Do you agree that funding from the central school services block can continue to be held centrally for the services outlined above?

Vote:- 12 For 0 Against 0 Abstain

Question 6 – Do maintained school wish to de-delegate monies to create a Financial Difficulties Contingency Fund of £50K to support those schools with a financial deficit position?

Vote:- 4 For 0 Against 0 Abstain

Question 7 - Do maintained schools wish to de delegate funds again for trade unions facilities time, they would no longer need to buy back from the portfolio of services?

Vote:- 2 For 1 Against 0 Abstain

Question 8 - Do maintained schools wish to de delegate funds once again to support 'core school improvement activities' £24 per pupil and 'additional improvement services' £31 per pupil?

Option 1 rate of £24 per pupil

Option 2 rate of £31 per pupil

**Vote:- Option 1
 1 For 0 Against 0 Abstain**

**Option 2
 3 For 0 Against 0 Abstain**

Action:- Louise Keith/Vera Njegic

33. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK SUB GROUP

Julien Kramer, Interim Assistant Director: Education and Inclusion, sought support to revive the High Needs Sub-Group and how best to move this forward.

Forum Members were in support of the High Needs Sub-Group meeting as soon as possible given that the last meeting was cancelled. It was imperative that the Sub-Group become actively involved to pick up the

momentum from the last few months.

It was, therefore, suggested that a number of meetings be scheduled with plenty of notice to attendees. Dates/times to avoid were shared amongst Forum Members.

Agreed:- That a schedule of meetings for the High Needs Sub-Group be circulated as soon as possible.

Action:- Julien Kramer

34. SEND SUFFICIENCY PHASE 4 UPDATE

Consideration was given to a verbal update by Mark Cummins, SEND Transformation Project Lead, which provided an update on the proposal to create ten additional SEND resource bases in mainstream education and thus creating a minimum of one hundred additional SEND places across this phase of SEND sufficiency following approval by the Cabinet.

The key strategic aim set out for Phase Four was to enhance mainstream SEND capacity to meet a wider level of need across all schools and mitigate the need for children, young people, and young adults to be educated in settings outside the Borough and promote inclusive practice.

Expressions of interest were sought to identify schools that were able to host a resource provision. In total fifteen schools completed expression of interests which matched well and, in some cases, exceeded the intended schedule of provision.

An update was provided on the applications received and on which resource bases had been approved to date with work hoping to be completed ready for September, 2024.

Further information was provided on the shortlisted applications and their current status which would be funded by a mixture of capital funding and small grants.

Forum Members sought further information on the challenges being faced with capital and DfE applications, the timeline and the assessment of the impact provision.

It was pointed out that whilst the extra places were for children with Education and Health Care Plans, not all schools were aware of the extra provision being proposed in the borough.

It was, therefore, suggested that a briefing paper on the current situation and the progress made to date with SEND Sufficiency be provided. Rotherham had made some worthwhile investment and the support available needed to be shared.

Forum Members pointed out that as well as SEND there needed to be some consideration to the wider impact of SEMH both in Early Years and Primary for long term impact, but also now at Secondary level where there was a growing need for support for young people.

Forum Members welcomed the wider Phase 4 work profile and progress and looked forward to implementation and discussion as part of the High Needs Sub-Group.

Agreed:- (1) That the update be received and the contents noted.

(2) That a further update on SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 be included for the next meeting.

35. EDUCATION SAFEGUARDING ROLE UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report presented by Pam Ward, Head of Education and Inclusion, which provided an update on progress following the appointment of an Education Safeguarding Lead (in January 2023). The post was joint funded through a contribution from Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) and the remaining amount from schools.

Details of the wide and varied role of the Education Safeguarding Lead were highlighted and further detail provided on the direct partnership work taking place.

Schools and multi-agency partners valued the advice and input provided through the role, but this meant the demand for support was increasing and the workload was creating service pressure. An audit of need had also highlighted additional safeguarding priorities for 2023 -24 which were detailed as part of the report.

It was, therefore, proposed that a business case be presented to recruit an Education Safeguarding Officer who would support the work of the Education Safeguarding Lead having been raised at the last meeting of the Forum and as a result associated funding and next steps were now shared.

In terms of funding a funding formula had been developed to cover the single post for 2023-24 and to cover both posts from 2024-25 and this would lead to streamlining current responsibilities, build capacity and avoid a single point of failure.

Forum Members were advised that the posts were vital in providing support, training and challenge for the highlighted priorities.

Discussion ensued by Forum Members on the costs associated with the existing and new posts and how these were funded and whether a consultation exercise with schools would be implemented. There was

some concern where this role would sit when some Multi-Academy Trusts had different statutory responsibilities to those held within Trusts themselves which could mean they were paying twice. There was also a concern about a shortfall in funding if there was no service level agreement in place and if schools would be invoiced directly.

Forum Members whilst recognising the value of the support provided suggested that consideration be given to deferring this report to enable more information to be provided.

Agreed:- That the report be deferred and be included for consideration at the next meeting on the 12th January, 2024.

Action:- Pam Ward

36. **EARLY YEARS EXPANSION AND EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to the report presented by Aileen Chambers, Head of Early Years and Childcare, which provided an overview of the range of developments currently taking place within early years including the DfE Early Years Expansion, the DfE Wraparound Childcare Programme, the development of a Rotherham Early Years Education and Childcare Strategy, the funding availability and the actions needed locally to meet requirements.

In the Spring Budget 2023 the Chancellor announced an expansion to the current early years entitlements with thirty hours childcare for every child over the age of nine months with working parents by September 2025.

The Government were focused on giving children the best start in life and supporting parents to access affordable, high quality childcare and this expansion of funded childcare was the largest ever and would remove barriers to work for nearly half a million parents with a child under three years in England. To enable childcare providers to prepare to deliver such a major expansion, it would be rolled out in phases to ensure there were enough places and staff ready to meet increased demand and the funding paid to childcare providers to deliver these offers would be increased. The expansion delivery would be over several phases are:

Childcare Sufficiency analysis in Rotherham indicated that most areas would have sufficient capacity to meet the projected demand in April 2024. There would be a shortfall in some areas if the take-up levels were higher.

Depending on the take-up levels for children under one year old, additional places could be required across 70% of the borough based on the current market. The DfE have announced a £100 million allocation for local areas to use to make sure childcare settings in their areas have enough physical space, anticipated to add thousands of new places across the country. Confirmation on allocation amounts to local

authorities and accompanying guidance were awaited.

Increased capacity would be required within the Early Years Team to manage the increased parental enquiries, distribution of funding to childcare providers and support for the sector to increase capacity and maintain high quality of delivery. On this basis Local Authorities were able to retain a percentage of the Early Years DSG to cover central delivery. It was anticipated that the central retention would increase by approx. £380k in 2024-25. This funding currently covered the majority of the Early Years and Childcare Service delivery.

A review of the structure of the Early Years and Childcare Service was underway with proposals being developed to ensure there was sufficient capacity and skills within the Team to support the increased entitlement implementation.

In terms of Wraparound Childcare the Government was investing £289 million over two years to support the expansion of wraparound childcare for primary school-aged pupils and the ambition was for all parents of primary school children to be able to access childcare in their local area.

The wraparound programme aimed to remove barriers to setting up new provision or expanding current provision, including removing the financial risk of setting up new provision when demand was not yet guaranteed. Parents should expect to see an expansion in the availability of wraparound care from September 2024. Funding details included Capacity Funding, Programme Fund and Capital Funding.

It was also noted that a Rotherham Early Years Education and Childcare Strategy was being developed and consultation with the sector had been undertaken to inform the strategy prior to approval by Cabinet in February 2024.

Forum Members welcomed the update and the detail contained for two, three and four year old children. Whilst it was difficult to predict take-up of the provision it was acknowledged that funding would be passported through to providers as soon as was possible. Current providers were also concerned about recruitment and retention of staff.

The DfE indicated that the Early Years Block allocations and early education rates for 2024/25 would be released by the end of November and that capital funding would be allocated for both the Early Years Entitlement expansion and the Wraparound Childcare Programme; details of which were still awaited.

Agreed:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

37. **SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN**

Further to Minute No. 24(b) of the previous meeting held on 22nd

September, 2023, views were sought on the creation of a Forward Plan for non-finance agenda items for more detailed discussion.

Suggestions of future agenda items included:-

High Needs Sub-Group Updates
Attendance, Exclusions and Suspensions Data
PRU Numbers
SEND Sufficiency
Reduced Timetables – Understanding and Impact

A Forward Plan would be developed and agenda items scheduled accordingly.

Agreed:- That the information be received and noted.

Action:- Clerk

38. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Forum Members wished to place on record their thanks and appreciation to Neil Hardwick who was leaving Rotherham to take up a position in Bradford.

39. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed: That the next meeting of the Schools' Forum take place on Friday, 12th January, 2024 at 8.30 a.m. at Rockingham Professional Development Centre.

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REPORT FOR ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM
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Date of Meeting:	19th January 2024
Title:	2024/2025 DSG Schools Block Funding
Directorate:	Finance and Customer Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an update to Schools Form members as to the 2024/2025 Dedicated Schools Grant funding for Rotherham.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That members of Schools Forum note the content of the report.

3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

To ensure members are aware of the Dedicated Schools Grant funding information as set out by the Department for Education.

To ensure compliance with the School & Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2017.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Department for Education issued the final version of the Authority Pro-forma Tool (APT) to local authorities, with the autumn 2023 pupil census information shortly before Christmas. The local authority has until 22nd January 2024 to submit the final version back to the Department for Education.

In November 2023 the local authority sought consultation with schools, academies and Schools Forum on the local funding formula decisions as set out in the regulations and the tables and appendix within this report contain summary information on the impact of those decisions.

5. INITIAL DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT ALLOCATIONS

On 19th December 2023, the Department for Education issued the indicative DSG allocations for the 2024/2025 financial year.

For Rotherham, the initial allocations are;

Table 1.

	Initial Allocation
Schools block (both schools and academies)	£243.723m
Central schools services block	£1.565m
Early Years block	£30.373m
High Needs block	£57.863m
TOTAL	£333.524m

6. SCHOOLS BLOCK

The final allocation is mainly based on funding rates of £5,190.82 for primary children (£4,915.14 in 2023/2024) and £6,747.09 for secondary children (£6,426.61 in 2023/2024) as at the October 2023 pupil census counts plus actual amounts for premises related costs and historic pupil growth.

The October 2023 census count shows that there are a total number of pupils across the borough of 40,078; this is an increase of 55 (-149 in primary & +204 in secondary) pupils from the October 2022 census count.

Table 2 below shows that the overall school block funding allocation has increased from £230.617m in 2023/2024 to £243.723m in 2024/2025.

As agreed at the Schools Forum meeting on the 1st December 2023 a request to transfer 0.5% from the school block to the high needs block was submitted to the Secretary of State.

Summary position in respect of DSG schools block allocation

Table 2- Successful Disapplication request to transfer 0.5%

	2023/2024	2024/2025	Difference	Comments
Schools block allocation	£230.62m	£243.72m	£13.10m	2023/2024 Mainstream schools additional grant (MSAG) rolled into 2024/2025 Schools Block
Pupil Growth fund	£120k	£120k	-	Agreed at November meeting (from reserve)
Falling Rolls Fund	£50k	£50k	-	Agreed at November meeting (from reserve)
Transfer to High Needs	£3.44m	£1.21m	£2.23m	
Amount of Schools Block funding allocated through formula	£227.18m	£242.51m	£15.33m	Increase in funding rates, addit MSAG & lowere % transfer to HN
% of total DSG schools block allocated through formula	98.5%	99.5%		

To date the Education & Skills Funding Agency has not made a final decision regarding the local authority's request to transfer 0.5%.

A report providing details of the rates applied to the individual formula funding rates will be presented to Schools Forum at the next meeting in April 2024. The rates applied will continue to be in line with the previous decisions reached in respect of the gradual transition to the national funding formula.

7. CENTRAL SERVICES SCHOOLS BLOCK (CSSB)

The table below compares the CSSB allocation and 2024/2025 budgets with 2023/2024.

Table 3

	2023/2024	2024/2025	Difference	Comments
Central services schools block allocation	£1.51m	£1.56m	£50k	Increase in funding rates
Admissions	£201k	£207k	£6k	
National copyright licences	£312k	£327k	£15k	To be notified by DfE
Former ESG	£806k	£825k	£19k	
Centrally employed teachers pay and pensions	£180k	£190k	£10k	
Schools Forum	£5k	£5k		
Sacre	£6k	£6k		

8. PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING FOR 2024/2025

The following rates for pupil premium in 2024 to 2025 were announced on 19th December 2023:

Table 4

	2023/2024	2024/2025	Increase
Primary FSM6 pupils	£1,455	£1,480	£25
Secondary FSM6 pupils	£1,035	£1,050	£15
Looked after children	£2,530	£2,570	£40
Children who have ceased to be looked after	£2,530	£2,570	£40
Service children	£335	£340	£5

9. TEACHERS PAY ADDITIONAL GRANT (TPAG) 2024/2025

For the 2024 to 2025 financial year, the ESFA will continue to pay TPAG as a separate grant, and it will cover the whole of that financial year. Allocations for 2024 to 2025 will therefore be calculated using twelve sevenths of the funding rates in 2023 to 2024.

Mainstream academies will receive an additional allocation to cover April to August 2025 because their funding cycle follows the academic year – this will represent five-twelfths of academies' 2024 to 2025 allocations.

9. NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS

Vera Njegic
Principal Finance Officer (Schools Finance)
email vera.njegic@rotherham.gov.uk

Louise Keith
Principal Finance Officer (Schools Finance)
email louise.keith@rotherham.gov.uk

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<h1 style="margin: 0;">BRIEFING</h1>	TO:	Schools Forum																
	DATE:	19 th January 2024																
	LEAD OFFICER:	Aileen Chambers Head of Service – Early Years and Childcare																
	TITLE:	Early Education Funding Proposals 2024-25																
1. Background																		
1.1	The purpose of this report is to detail the statutory guidance in place for the allocation of early education funding and proposals for the local funding formula for 2024/25.																	
1.2	<p>The report covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The changes to the National Funding Formula and expanded entitlements • The Early Years Block and increase in DfE funding rates from 2023/24 • LA’s central retention from the Early Years Block • Funding for 9 month old entitlement • Inclusion Support Grant • Early Years Teachers Pay Additional Grant – proposals to distribute 																	
1.3	The Department for Education (DfE) have consulted on changes to the National Funding Formula for 2024-25 with the introduction of an entitlement for 2 year olds of working parents from April 2024 and children from 9 months from September 2024.																	
1.4	Local Authorities (LAs) are required to allocate the funding to early education providers based on a local funding formula as detailed below:																	
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 35%;">Funding Stream</th> <th style="width: 30%;">Base Rate Requirements</th> <th style="width: 35%;">Supplement Requirements</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3 / 4 year olds (Universal and Extended entitlements)</td> <td>Single base rate across all provider types</td> <td>Mandatory deprivation supplement</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 year olds – disadvantaged</td> <td rowspan="2">Different rates can be set for disadvantaged and working 2 year olds.</td> <td rowspan="2">DfE expect local authorities to ensure funding for deprivation is reflected in their approach to funding for these entitlements, recognising the additional costs associated with supporting children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>2 year olds – working parents*</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>9 months – 2 years working parents**</i></td> <td>Single base rate across all provider types</td> <td>Deprivation supplement can be applied but is not mandatory</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)</td> <td>Fixed Amount for children from 9 months to 4 Years subject to eligibility</td> <td>None</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Funding Stream	Base Rate Requirements	Supplement Requirements	3 / 4 year olds (Universal and Extended entitlements)	Single base rate across all provider types	Mandatory deprivation supplement	2 year olds – disadvantaged	Different rates can be set for disadvantaged and working 2 year olds.	DfE expect local authorities to ensure funding for deprivation is reflected in their approach to funding for these entitlements, recognising the additional costs associated with supporting children from disadvantaged backgrounds.	<i>2 year olds – working parents*</i>	<i>9 months – 2 years working parents**</i>	Single base rate across all provider types	Deprivation supplement can be applied but is not mandatory	Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)	Fixed Amount for children from 9 months to 4 Years subject to eligibility	None
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Disability Access Fund (DAF)	Fixed Amount for children from 9 months to 4 Years subject to eligibility	None
Maintained Nursery School Lump Sum	Identified Rate	None

**new entitlement being introduced in April 2024/25*

*** new entitlement being introduced in September 2024/25*

- 1.5 Significant changes:
- LA's can now retain up to 5% across 3 / 4 year old, 2 year old and 9 month entitlements (reducing to 3% in future years)
 - EYPP will now apply across all age ranges (previously 3 / 4 year olds only)
 - DAF will now apply across all age ranges (previously 3 / 4 year olds only)

1.6 The total EY Block funding in 2023-24 was £19m. The projected EY Block for 2024-25 is £29m. This is distributed to 250 schools / providers in line with DfE guidance, on actual take-up of places captured through twice a term submission of headcount / adjustment data for each funding stream. Payments are then distributed on a monthly basis.

1.7 The 23/24 and 24/25 rates are detailed below:

Funding Stream	DfE Rates 23/24 (Sept 23 increase)	Rotherham Rates to Providers 23/24 – base rate	Rotherham Supplement rate – 23/24	DfE Rates 24 / 25
3 / 4 year olds	5.20	4.87	17p / 12p	5.47
2 year olds	7.44	7.44		7.91
9 month – 2 year olds				10.78
EYPP	66p	66p		68p
DAF	881	881		910
MNS lump sum	6.45	6.45		7.06

1.8 LAs could previously retain a maximum of 5% of the 3 / 4 year old early years funding allocation to fund central services. From 2024-25 LA's can retain a maximum of 5% from each funding stream. This percentage will reduce to 3% in future years when the new entitlements are embedded.

1.9 We currently retain 5% to contribute to the cost of delivery of the EY&CS. It is proposed to retain 5% from 3 / 4 year old funding and 3% from 2 year old and 9 month funding in 2024/25. It is proposed to recruit three additional staff within the Early Years and Childcare Team to meet the increased workload.

1.10 Local authorities are required to consult providers on annual changes to their local formula. Schools forums must also be consulted on changes to local early years funding formulas, including agreeing central spend by 28 February, although the final decision rests with the local authority.

1.11 A number of formula options have been modelled. The current model includes distribution of 2% of the 3 / 4 year olds funding stream through High /Medium deprivation supplements to providers with an average Index of Multiple in the 30% most deprived. This equates to 62% of all children receiving 3 / 4 year old funded places.

1.12	The Early Years Block funding for 2024/25 will be allocated initially as an 'indicative' allocation in January 2024. The usual process is for the ESFA to allocate an indicative funding allocation based on the previous year January Census data with two further adjustments - one during the year (July) based on the January 2024 Census data and further adjusted in July 2025 based on 5/12ths of January 2024 Census and 7/12ths of January 2025 Census.								
1.13	<p>Early Education Funding for 9 month old children:</p> <p>As the entitlement for children from 9 months old comes into force in September 24, the DfE will provide indicative allocations based on DfE's estimated take-up numbers for the new working parent entitlements. Final allocations will be adjusted on the basis of actual take-up for each term, collected through an additional headcounts in autumn term and through the January 2025 census. <i>Whilst the additional headcounts could mean extra administration for local authorities, this will be offset by the reassurance that they will be fully funded for the hours they deliver.</i></p>								
1.14	<p>Inclusion Support Grant:</p> <p>It is proposed to retain the current three tier ISG allocation which was implemented in September 2024.</p>								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="215 813 416 846">Tier</th> <th data-bbox="416 813 1476 846">Funding</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="215 846 416 880">Tier 1</td> <td data-bbox="416 846 1476 880">advice and guidance from the EY&CS</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="215 880 416 913">Tier 2</td> <td data-bbox="416 880 1476 913">additional funding to contribute to 1:2 staffing levels</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="215 913 416 965">Tier 3</td> <td data-bbox="416 913 1476 965">additional funding to contribute to 1:1 staffing levels</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Tier	Funding	Tier 1	advice and guidance from the EY&CS	Tier 2	additional funding to contribute to 1:2 staffing levels	Tier 3	additional funding to contribute to 1:1 staffing levels
Tier	Funding								
Tier 1	advice and guidance from the EY&CS								
Tier 2	additional funding to contribute to 1:2 staffing levels								
Tier 3	additional funding to contribute to 1:1 staffing levels								
1.15	The projected Inclusion Support Grant spend for 2024/25 is £490,829. Any changes to the proposed early education funding rates following consultation would affect the ISG budget projections.								
1.16	The rate of £15 has been identified as the cost of a member of staff (real living wage plus additional on costs / delivery costs). Income settings receive from early education / parental fees are taken into account and 'ISG contributions' are awarded to enable additional staffing at a cost of £15 / hour. The increased 2 year old early education rates mean that income from two children is higher than £15, as a result, no ISG would be allocated for Tier 2 two year olds.								
1.17	This budget is profiled on expected demand, The projected cost is significantly lower than 2023/24 forecast (£670k). This is due to implementation of our 3 Tier model of support in September 2023 and DfE increase in the early education funding rates in September 2023 and April 2024.								
1.18	<p>Early Years Teachers Pay – Additional Grant 2023-24:</p> <p>The DfE have recently (16.11.23) announced an additional grant in this financial year which will be provided to local authorities to support early years providers delivering the government's early years entitlements with increased teacher workforce costs from 1 September 2023. This funding will be distributed via the early years teachers' pay additional grant (EY TPAG) to cover the 7-month period between 1 September 2023 and 31 March 2024.</p>								
1.19	For the 2024 to 2025 financial year, funding for teachers pay in early years will be incorporated into local authorities' core funding arrangements, through the early years funding block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG), rather than through a separate teachers' pay grant.								

- 1.20 The grant amounts have been calculated using part-time equivalents (PTE) count, based on January 2023 3 / 4 year old universal and additional hours, to produce each authority's total allocation under the grant (including a separate grant amount for Maintained Nursery Schools). The amounts allocated to Rotherham are:
- | Amount | Basis of Allocation |
|---------|--|
| £89,184 | Jan 23 census numbers in schools / PVI providers |
| £12,949 | Jan 23 census numbers in Maintained Nursery Schools. |
- 1.21 The DfE are providing local authorities with the flexibility to determine the most appropriate way of allocating EY TPAG funding locally.
- 1.22 Local authorities must pass on the funding in a clear and transparent way, so that providers can understand how allocations have been determined locally. Local authorities must ensure that all of the EY TPAG funding they receive is distributed to their early years providers.
- 1.23 The EY TPAG must not be used for contingency funding or local authority central or administration costs
- 1.24 Given the importance of providers receiving notification of their allocations promptly, local authorities do not need to consult with their schools forum on passing on the EY TPAG funding to early years providers. Nonetheless, DfE encourage local authorities to consult with providers, where this is possible and does not create excessive delays in finalising allocations and making payments to providers.
- 1.25 A similar additional grant was provided in advance for the whole of this financial year in relation to Teacher Pay and Pension. We consulted the sector on distribution of this grant and it was agreed to distribute it evenly across all providers.
- 1.26 Due to the relatively small amount of funding and timescales of receiving it, it is proposed to distribute it in February 2024 as a lump sum across all providers based on take-up of 3 / 4 year olds places in the Autumn and Spring term 2023/24.

Proposals

- 2.1 It is proposed to consult the sector on the following funding models. In all models it is proposed to :
- Option 1:**
- Retain the current local funding formula in 2024/25 with the addition of a Central Retention on 2 year old and 9 month old funding streams.
- | | |
|--|---|
| Retention for Central Spend | 5% of 3 / 4 year old & 30 hour funding, 3% of 2 year old (working and disadvantaged) and 9 month funding |
| 3 / 4 year old hourly rate | £5.09 plus deprivation supplement if eligible (increase of 22p) |
| 3 / 4 year old Deprivation Supplements | Up to 2% of 3 / 4 year old and 30 hour budgets to be distributed as deprivation supplement (17p high / 12p medium). |

2 year old hourly rate	£7.51 (increase of 7p per hour)
2 year old Deprivation Supplements	Up to 2% of 2 year old budget to be distributed as deprivation supplement (high / medium).
9 month – 2 year olds	£10.24
9 month – 2 year old year old Deprivation Supplements	Up to 2% 9 month – 2 year old budget to be distributed as deprivation supplement (high / medium).
Nursery Stability Funding	Lump sum to be passported to 3 nursery schools based on take-up levels as required by guidance.

2.2

Option 2:

Central Retention of 5% of 3 / 4 year and 30 hour funding and 3% from 2 year old and 9 month funding streams. Retain 1% of 3 / 4 year old budgets to distribute as a deprivation supplement

Retention for Central Spend	5% of 3 / 4 year old & 30 hour funding, 3% of 2 year old (working and disadvantaged) and 9 month funding
3 / 4 year old hourly rate	£5.14 plus deprivation supplement if eligible (increase of 27p)
3 / 4 year old Deprivation Supplements	Up to 1% of 3 / 4 year old and 30 hour budgets to be distributed as a single deprivation supplement (10p)
2 year old hourly rate	£7.59 (increase of 15p per hour)
2 year old Deprivation Supplements	Up to 1% of 2 year old budget to be distributed as a single deprivation supplement
9 month – 2 year olds	£10.35
9 month – 2 year old Deprivation Supplements	Up to 1% of 9 month – 2 year old budget to be distributed as a single deprivation supplement
Nursery Stability Funding	Lump sum to be passported to 3 nursery schools based on take-up levels as required by guidance.

2.3

Benefits: this model maximises the 3 / 4 year old base rate to all providers and still provides the mandatory additional deprivation supplement to all providers who would have qualified under Option 1 but at a single rate. There are 9% of providers who receive 2p / hour less increase than Option 1 however 91% of providers benefit from an increased base rate.

2.4

Option 3:

Either Option 1 or 2 for 3 / 4 year olds and no deprivation supplements to be introduced for 2 year olds or 9 month – 2 year olds – single rates for all providers as detailed below:

2 year old hourly rate	£7.67 (increase of 23p per hour)
9 month – 2 year olds	£10.46

2.5

Early Years pupil premium has been introduced on the 2 year funding this year which will increase the hourly rate by 68p for eligible families therefore impacting positively on the disadvantaged 2 year olds. Maximising the base rate across all providers will have a more positive impact on sustainability.

3. Key Actions and Timelines

3.1	<p>January 2024: proposals presented to DLT</p> <p>January 2023: EE formula proposals presented to Schools Forum</p> <p>January 2024: Consultation on EE formula with early education providers</p> <p>February 2024: 2024/25 funding rates confirmed to early education providers</p> <p>February 2024: Teachers Pay Award Grants distributed to schools / providers</p> <p>February – April 2024: Recruitment to new posts</p>
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4. Recommendations

4.1	<p>It is recommended that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval is given to retain 5% of 3 / 4 year old & 30 hour funding and 3% of 2 year old (working and disadvantaged) and 9 month funding to cover central Early Years and Childcare Service running costs • Approval is given to consult on the Early Education funding options presented. • Approval is given to continue to distribute ISG based on the current model. • Approval is given to distribute the TPAG in a lump sum to all providers • Approval is given to fund the above entitlement for the EY Block with any shortfall being funded through the High Needs Block.
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5. Finance Comments

5.1	The Early Education proposed options would be funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant Early Years Block. Further clarification will be required to ensure any calculated deprivation rates fall within the proposed indicative formula and allocation.
5.2	It is proposed to use DSG Early Years Block carry forward/in year surplus to fund the Inclusion Support Grant in 2024/25, with any shortfall funded by DSG High Needs Block.
5.3	TPAG allocation would be distributed to Providers in full on the agreed basis.
5.4	Financial implications of any staffing proposals would be reviewed against any subsequent business cases. Any approvals would be within the available centrally funded allocation.

6. HR Comments

6.1	Any recruitment for additional staff will be subject to RMBC recruitment procedures.
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<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	TO:	Rotherham Schools Forum
	DATE:	19 th January 2024
	LEAD OFFICER:	Pam Ward Pam.ward@rotherham.gov.uk
	TITLE:	Education Safeguarding Lead

1. Background

1.1 An Education Safeguarding Lead (ESL) was appointed in January 2023. This post has been jointly funded through a £17k contribution from Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) with the remaining £35k to be funded from CYPS through schools.

1.2 The establishment of this post was previously discussed at Schools' Forum 22nd September 2022. For reference, please see below for the minutes from the meeting.

EDUCATION SAFEGUARDING

Consideration was given to a presentation by Pam Ward, Strategic Lead for Education, which provided an update on Education Safeguarding.

The presentation set out:-

- *The key areas of focus.*
- *Current structures and support.*
- *Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership – Business Plan 2021/23.*
- *White Paper Chapter 4 – A stronger and fairer system.*
- *Final report of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care.*
- *Education Safeguarding Support 2021/22.*
- *Key areas of development.*
- *Proposed Role and Responsibility of Education Safeguarding Lead.*
- *Option Considerations:-*

Option 1 – Continue with current arrangements.

Option 2 – Enhance support through development of an Education Safeguarding Officer. Funding to be provided through the partnership and schools – approx. £350 contribution.

Option 3 - Safeguarding to be a school/trust led responsibility.

With these in mind it was recommended that the Forum consider the three options set out above in order to close the gaps that had been created with the former Safeguarding Lead leaving and to ensure a consistent local approach to safeguarding across the borough.

Whilst Forum Members noted schools could not be forced to contribute to a Safeguarding Lead it made sense for a collaborative support approach for Rotherham. In order to fill the vacant position it would cost in the region of £44,000.

As a result of several questions about funding, progression of the three year audits, if the funding would be top sliced from budgets and the impact on schools

who had far less students than others, the Assistant Director of Education confirmed consideration could be given to a tiered approach, but it would be for all schools to fund the amount as this was integral to working practices.

Forum Members in discussing how best to obtain agreement with all schools were advised that a vote was, therefore, required to agree on which option the Forum would then recommend.

Following observations of the unanimous vote, Option 2 was recommended.

Agreed:-

(1) That Pam Ward be thanked for her presentation.

(2) That the presentation be received and the content noted.

(3) That the Local Authority take forward Option 2 - the proposal to enhance safeguarding support to schools through the development of an Education Safeguarding Officer through a collaborative approach between Rotherham Children's Safeguarding Board and all schools in Rotherham.

Action:- Nathan Heath

1.3 Since being in post the ESL has had a wide and varied role:

- Supporting Rotherham schools and nursery settings, Private, Voluntary and Independent early years sector, Post 16 and Colleges
- Participation and delivery of Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership priorities through work with schools via attendance at key RSCP Safeguarding Delivery Groups and membership of key safeguarding networks (Neglect Delivery Group, Performance, Practice and Learning Review Delivery Group, Safeguarding in Education Delivery Group, Child Exploitation Delivery Group, Child Death Overview Panel, Channel Panel, Serious Violence Group – Silver)
- Leading Local Authority Safeguarding Compliance Audits to ensure that safeguarding practice, policy and systems are effective and compliant in line with Keeping Children Safe 2023.
- Leading Attendance Audits
- Supporting Behaviour Audits
- Delivery of the termly Education Safeguarding Forums for Governors, Trustees, Heads of Schools and Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Leading training for schools, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and governors
- Provided a single point of contact for education, early years and Further Education professionals in relation to safeguarding systems, pathways, and procedures.
- Multi-agency partnership work (LADO, MASH, EH, Youth Justice, Community Safety, Violence Reduction Unit, South Yorkshire Police – GRIP Team, Protective Vulnerable People Team, Counter Terrorism Team, Rotherham Public Health, Rotherham Alcohol and Drug Service, Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust)
- Responding to and supporting schools with an ever-increasing number of safeguarding complaints including Ofsted safeguarding qualifying complaints. Meetings with school leaders to monitor and quality assure safeguarding practice, Leading multidisciplinary Team to assess safeguarding provision where Ofsted/HMI express concern - S11a
- On site support during Ofsted inspections.
- Supporting schools with a potential inadequate safeguarding judgement to achieve an 'Effective' safeguarding outcome.
- Writing policies, providing updates of statutory guidance and information linked to emerging or priority issues.

- LA representation on Aspire Management Committee and Governing Boards where safeguarding capacity is identified as an area which requires improvement
- Education representation within RSCP Quality Assurance and Audit process
- Education representative for Joint Target Area Inspection (JTAI)

1.4 As a result:

- The role has ensured Rotherham schools and settings are fulfilling their safeguarding duties as required under the 2002 Education Act and ‘ Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023’.
- There is a growing consistency of effective safeguarding practice across settings.
- There is now an LA safeguarding and attendance audit.
- All maintained schools and settings are supported before and during their inspection.
- There is a training and development portfolio which provides statutory training and addresses contextual/emerging safeguarding themes has been delivered (e.g., Urban Street Gang awareness raising, knife crime)
- Schools have a single point of contact to discuss a range of safeguarding issues.
- There is greater multidisciplinary partnership.
- Education is a priority for RSCP and a new Education safeguarding driver group is evidence of this.
- Senior Leaders, Governors, DSL’s are supported to raise awareness and disseminate practice to embed Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership priority areas (e.g. Exploitation, Neglect)

There is direct partnership work between the RSCP and education settings re:

- Elective Home Education
- School exclusions
- Attendance data (including pupils missing from education)
- SEMH
- Early Years
- Post pandemic legacy issues
- Children’s Social Care – MASH, First Response

2. Key Issues

2.1 The post will be funded through a traded service with schools alongside the part funding from the RSCP.

2.2 The traded service will offer a core level of support with additional charges for some aspects of the menu outlined in 1.3. These will be offered at a small subsidy cost to schools.

3. Key Actions and Timelines

3.1 Finance have supported the generation of a funding formula to cover the single post for 2023-24.

3.2 Safeguarding post recharges

PRIMARY SCHOOLS		Band	23.24, £
Pupil Numbers	<250	1	£200
	251-300	2	£250
	301-350	3	£300
	351-400	4	£350

>400

5

£400

SECONDARY SCHOOLS		Band	23.24, £
Pupil Numbers	<1000	6	£700
	1001-1500	7	£1,100
	1501-2000	8	£1,300
	>2000	9	£1,500

3.3 A funding formula will be considered for any future posts at a later date.

4. Recommendations

4.1 That the report to be received and the content noted.

Rotherham Schools' Forum

DRAFT**Forward Plan of Non-Finance Agenda Items**

Provisional Date of Meeting	Agenda & Reports Publication Date	Item	Lead Officer
Friday 26th April 2024	Thursday 18 th April 2024		
Friday 21st June 2024	Thursday 13 th June 2024		
Friday 13th September 2024	Thursday 5 th September 2024		
Friday 15th November 2024	Thursday 7 th November 2024		
Friday 17th January 2025	Thursday 9 th January 2025		
Friday 11th April 2025	Thursday 3 rd April 2025		

Items of Business to be Scheduled for Rotherham Schools' Forum:-

High Needs Sub-Group Updates
Attendance, Exclusions and Suspensions Data
PRU Numbers
SEND Sufficiency
Reduced Timetables – Understanding and Impact

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