

## **ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM**

**Date and Time:-** Friday 13 September 2024 at 8.30 a.m.

**Venue:-** Rockingham Professional Development Centre,  
Roughwood Road, Rotherham. S61 4HY

The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

### **AGENDA**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Welcome by the outgoing Vice-Chair and introductions by all Forum Members present.

**2. Appointment of Chair**

To receive nominations and agree a new Chair of the Schools Forum.

**3. Appointment for Vice-Chair**

To receive nominations and agree a new Vice-Chair of the Schools Forum.

**4. Apologies for Absence**

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

**5. 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.

**6. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 11)**

Recommendation:- To receive and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2024.

**7. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

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

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

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

**9. Schools Budgets 2024-25 - Latest Position (Pages 13 - 19)**

Louise Keith/Joshua Amahwe to report.

Recommendation(s):- (1) To note the latest DSG funding for schools for the 2024/25 financial year.

(2) To note the financial positions of Rotherham's maintained schools and the identified financial risks against the schools DSG budgets for the year.

(3) To note the announcements of the Teachers Pay Award alongside the Core Schools Budget Grant allocation.

(4) To note the delay to the publication of the indicative schools and high needs national funding formula (NFF) allocations for 2025-26 due to the timing of the general election.

**10. Growth Fund Policy (Pages 21 - 27)**

Louise Keith/Joshua Amahwe to report.

Recommendation:- To note the changes introduced by the Department for Education (DfE) and approve the local Growth Policy to be adopted for Rotherham.

**11. Free School Meals - Auto Enrolment Update (Pages 29 - 31)**

Louise Keith / Joshua Amahwe to report.

Recommendation:- To note the total number of additional families identified through the process and the additional pupil premium generated.

**12. Matrix of Need (Pages 33 - 52)**

Cary-Anne Sykes to report.

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

**13. SEND Sufficiency Update (Pages 53 - 56)**

Mark Cummins to report.

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

**14. Reduced Timetables - Understanding and Impact (Pages 57 - 60)**

Sarah Whitby to report.

Recommendation(s):- (1) To receive the report and note the contents.

(2) To agree to receive an annual update on the use of reduced timetables.

**15. Annual Exclusions Data (Pages 61 - 65)**

Sarah Whitby to report.

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

**16. Schools' Forum Forward Plan (Pages 67 - 68)**

Recommendation:- To consider the attached Forward Plan of agenda items and receive any updates.

**17. Any Other Business**

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

**18. Date of Next Meeting**

Recommendation:- To consider and agree the date and time of the next meeting of the Rotherham Schools' Forum on 15th November 2024 at 8.30 a.m. at Rockingham Professional Development Centre.

**The next meeting of the Rotherham Schools Forum will  
be held on Friday 15 November 2024  
commencing at 8.30 a.m.  
in Rockingham Professional Development Centre.**



SHARON KEMP OBE,  
Chief Executive.

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**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM  
FRIDAY 21 JUNE 2024**

**In Attendance:**

Kirstey Peart - Sitwell Infant (Maintained) (in the Chair)  
 Carol Brookes – Wales High School (Academy)  
 Mark Cummins, SEND Project Lead, CYPS  
 Niall Devlin – Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion  
 David Horrigan – Maltby Learning Trust (Primary Academy)  
 Louise Keith – Principal Finance Officer, CYPS  
 Lee Morritt – Aspire  
 Lewis Moat – GMB Representative  
 Colin Price – NEU Representative  
 Karen Smith – Nexus MAT (Special Academy)  
 Sharon Stones – Head of Arnold Nursery and Children’s Centre  
 Cary-Anne Sykes – Head of Service, SEND  
 Nevine Towers - Diocese Sheffield Academies Trust  
 Pam Ward – Head of Service, Education, CYPS  
 Nathan Williams – Roughwood Primary (Primary Academy)  
 Mark Windle – Badsley Primary (Primary Maintained)  
 Kirsty Woodhead – Service Manager, Early Help

**Apologies were received from:-**

Councillor Victoria Cusworth – Cabinet Member for CYPS  
 Joshua Amahwe – Head of Finance, CYPS  
 Steve Rhodes – Winterhill (Academy)  
 Mark Ryan – RNN Group  
 Dr. Sipra Deb (PVI Nursery)  
 Chris Eccles – Oakwood (Academy)  
 Steve Scott – Happy Kids (PVI Nursery)  
 Alan Richards – Academy Governor  
 Sarah Whitby - Head of Service - Access to Education  
 Aileen Chambers, Head of Early Years and Childcare, CYPS  
 Kelly Robinson, Strategic Lead for Inclusion and Alternative Provision

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

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

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Consideration was given to the minutes from the previous meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**Agreed:** That the minutes be approved.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

**5. MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUTION OF THE ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM (STANDING ITEM)**

Consideration was given to the membership and constitution of the Schools' Forum and the suggested changes put forward for approval.

Niall Devlin, Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion was invited by the Chair to share an update on the progress of the review of the Schools' Forum and its constitution.

It was suggested to Forum Members that a small sub-group be established to undertake the review of the constitutional and organisational elements of the Forum, including membership, decision making of core business and voting rights.

To shape this piece of work volunteers were sought from the Forum to participate in two focused meetings to be scheduled in September and October 2024. The sub-group would report back its findings and recommendations to the November Schools' Forum meeting.

Forum Members welcomed this approach and agreed to give consideration to their involvement in the sub-group.

**Agreed:** (1) That Alexandra Dudson, representing Academy Governors be removed from the membership and constitution as they are no longer in post.

(2) That volunteers be sought to participate in the sub-group meetings in September and October.

(3) That the findings and recommendations of the review be reported back to Schools' Forum in November 2024.

**6. SCHOOLS BUDGETS 2024-25 - LATEST POSITION**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Louise Keith, Principal Finance Officer (Schools Finance) which provided an update on the school's budget for 2024/25 since the position was last reported to Schools Forum in January 2024 and initial budgets for Rotherham maintained schools were submitted to the local authority in May 2024.

The latest confirmed DSG funding allocation for Rotherham for 2024/25 was £109.3m which included a total of £30.4m in schools block funding.

The total schools block allocation for 2024-25 after deductions for academy recoupment and NNDR was £30.45m. There was no impact on the schools' budgets as a result of the funding recoupment for academies.

The revised High Needs Block allocation for 2024-25 was £46.37m after deductions of £11.5m for recoupment. These were broken down as follows:-

- Mainstream Academies - £592k
- Special Academies - £8.1m
- Special Free Schools – £1.4m
- Further Education and Independent Learning Providers – £1.3m

The £0.5m increase in the Early Years block increase in entitlement for Under 2's was due to an increase in the estimated numbers from the DfE.

The Forum was asked to note that the funding transfer of £1.2m was made from the schools' block to the high needs block in 2024-25 and reflected the confirmed DfE decision on the disapplication request made by the Local Authority.

It was confirmed that approved detailed 3-year budget plans were submitted to the Local Authority by maintained schools by the agreed deadline. All but three schools submitted a balanced budget position. Recovery and action plans have been put in place and two schools were receiving some additional financial support to help them return to a sustainable position within an agreed timeframe.

It was noted that schools within the Borough had continued to raise sustainability concerns associated with increased cost pressures linked to the cost-of-living crisis this combined with a national fall in pupil numbers was putting primary schools under significant budget pressures.

Forum Members were advised that there were a number of ways the Local Authority was able to support schools in financial difficulty and were encouraged to engage with Finance colleagues in the Local Authority to access support.

A verbal update was then provided on the free school meals auto enrolment process. The main aims of the project were to ensure families received what they were entitled to, and schools received the Pupil Premium Grant associated with free school meals. Each child currently receiving free school meals equated to £1,455 for primary students and £1,035 for secondary students.

A working group was established comprising of representatives from

Revenue and Benefits, Customer Services, Finance, Public Health and Education. The core of the process involved cross matching revenue and benefits team data with school census data to collate a list of children eligible for free school meals but who are not currently claiming them. The estimated number of families to be contacted was 500-600 and letters to those families were expected to be issued towards the end of July. Customer Service staff would receive appropriate training for dealing with any associated calls or emails.

Forum Members went on to discuss the potential barriers (language etc) that may occur through the issuing of a letter and if this had been taken into consideration. The Principal Finance Officer agreed to refer this back to the project lead officer.

Forum Members commented that primary settings appeared to be the most affected from the data presented at 5.7 of the budget report. The Principal Finance Officer confirmed that this was predominantly due to a fall in pupil numbers and that the same challenges were likely to be seen in secondary settings over the next five years.

It was recognised that it was taking time to get support to address the significant rise in SEND needs. EHCP costs were difficult to predict and ISG funding was a huge cost to schools.

The Assistant Director confirmed that a Matrix of Need would be presented to Forum for discussion in September which would set out an agreed framework for funding children. The SEND sufficiency programme was also working with schools to develop and implement increased SEND provision across the Borough.

Forum Members confirmed they would also welcome further detail on what financial assumptions were being made, and if there were any emerging patterns from the previous year's financial position to help provide further context and understanding of associated risks. The Principal Officer confirmed she would discuss this further with the Head of Finance and consider how this could be captured and reported.

**Agreed:** (1) That the latest DSG funding for schools for 2024/25 financial year be noted.

(2) That the financial positions of Rotherham's maintained schools and the identified financial risks against the schools DSG budgets for the year be noted.

## 7. SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS (UPDATED)

Consideration was given to the report presented by Louise Keith, Principal Finance Officer (Schools Finance), which built upon previous reports setting out the main amendments to the Scheme for Financing Schools to bring in line with the DfE's latest version, updated as of 28<sup>th</sup>



March, 2024.

**Agreed:-** (1) That the report be received and the updates to the Scheme for Financing Schools sections highlighted in yellow be noted.

(2) That the DfE's latest version, updated 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024 be noted.

(3) That the Updated Scheme for Financing Schools be disseminated to schools.

## 8. SEND SUFFICIENCY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a verbal update presented by Mark Cummins, SEND Transformation Project Lead which provided a further update in respect of the SEND Sufficiency Programme.

It was noted that the first phase of resource provision implementation referenced under Minute Number 59 of the previous Forum meeting remained on track and places were due to be available from September 2024.

A further element of the SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 programme was the implementation of the School's Accessibility Funding to support schools to create additional places to meet a wider level of SEND need.

Seven projects had now been approved from the accessibility capital funding small grants programme and nine other school applications had been assessed and working through due diligence. Application themes were varied and covered the development of vocational curriculum, nurture spaces, sensory areas and several other innovative projects were coming forward.

The outcomes and impacts of Phase 4 would continue to be monitored and mapped against the Safety Valve agreement.

Discussion ensued on the significant number of pupils that did not currently have access to an appropriate setting. Provision and outreach services would continue to be developed which would hopefully reduce or stabilise the number of pupils not currently accessing provision. It was also noted that SEND Sufficiency Phase 5 projects would form part of a feasibility study to identify appropriate options for specialist provision. On completion of the feasibility study a further report would be presented to Cabinet seeking approval to implement Phase 5.

Forum Members were invited to put forward suggestions on what other areas of SEND sufficiency reporting they would welcome at future meetings. The Forum agreed the provision of benchmarking data that provided detail of local comparative statistics against the national SEND position would be useful for setting the context to what Rotherham schools were dealing with in relation to SEND.

**Agreed:** That the update be received and noted.

**9. ATTENDANCE AND WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE 2024**

Consideration was given to the report presented by Kirsty Woodhead, Service Manager, Early Help and Family Engagement which provided an update in respect of attendance data and the Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024 guidance expectations.

In 2022 the DfE published a Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance to help schools, academy trusts, governing bodies and local authorities to maintain high levels of school attendance through the introduction of a core set of expectations.

A further update to the guidance was published in February 2024 which was due to become statutory from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024. There was new guidance in several areas together with further clarification on issues raised via consultation. There was also new guidance on the National Framework for Penalty Notices to support consistency in practice and compliance with changes in law around registers and codes.

The School Attendance Matters Pathway and Strategic Plan were due to be updated along with the Code of Conduct to ensure compliance with the new statutory expectations. This work was expected to be completed by August 2024 and formally launched in September 2024.

An Attendance Delivery Group was due to be established in September 2024 to enable effective multi agency delivery of the strategic plan. Representatives to join this group were welcomed.

Due to a change of circumstances the Associate Head Teacher identified to work with the Local Authority to focus on attendance and share good practice was not now able to proceed and arrangements for this role would be revisited.

Forum Members heard that Rotherham was in a positive position to be able to embed the revised statutory guidance as it already aligned well to existing pathways and approaches used in Rotherham educational settings.

**Agreed:** That the report be received, and the contents noted.

**10. SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN**

The Chair invited Forum Members to review the Forward Plan of agenda items and share any other items for inclusion.

The following proposed agenda items were discussed and dates for future reporting were noted by the Clerk for inclusion on the Forward Plan.

- Vice and Vice Chair Arrangements – September meeting
- SEND Sufficiency – Data comparison to national – September meeting
- Annual Exclusions Data – September meeting
- Feedback on Schools Forum Review – November meeting.

It was agreed the Clerk would check with the Head of Finance if any finance items were expected to be presented to the September meeting and update the plan accordingly.

**Agreed:** That the updates be received and noted.

**Action: Clerk**

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no other urgent business items to consider.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Agreed:** That the next meeting of the Schools' Forum takes place on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2024 at 8.30am at Rockingham Professional Development Centre.

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<b>REPORT FOR SCHOOLS FORUM</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Schools Budgets 2024-25 – Latest Position</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Finance and Customer Services</b>

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the school's budget for 2024/25 and to outline the main funding changes announced by the DfE since the last School Forum in June 2024.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the schools forum note the latest DSG funding for schools for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.2 That Schools Forum note financial positions of Rotherham's maintained schools and the identified financial risks against the schools DSG budgets for the year.
- 2.3 That the Schools forum note the announcements of the Teachers Pay Award alongside the Core Schools Budget Grant allocation.
- 2.4 That the Schools forum note the delay to the publication of the indicative schools and high needs national funding formula (NFF) allocations for 2025-26 due to the timing of the general election.

**3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION & CONTEXT**

- 3.1 Following the DfE notification of Rotherham's DSG funding in December 2023, a report was presented to Schools Forum outlining the overall funding envelope across all four of the DSG funding blocks (£333.5m in total, £243.7m in Schools Block funding). This informed the budget setting process for the 2024-25 financial year.
- 3.2 Individual school budget shares were issued in February 2024 in accordance with the statutory deadline; with a requirement for schools to submit approved detailed 3-year budgets to the Authority by the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2024.

**4. LATEST DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2024-25**

- 4.1 The latest confirmed DSG funding allocation for Rotherham for 2024-25 is £109.7m, which includes a total of £30.4m in Schools Block funding.

- 4.2 The latest allocation includes a change of £363k on the high needs block made up of a £234k increase for Special Free Schools and £129k import/export adjustment. All other blocks remain unchanged since the last report to Schools Forum in June.

2024-25 DSG Funding Blocks	March 2024 Allocation	Latest July Position (£m)	Change (£m)
Schools Block	30.45	30.45	-
Central Block	1.57	1.57	-
Early Years Block	30.95	30.95	-
High Needs Block	46.37	46.73	0.36
<b>Total DSG</b>	<b>109.34</b>	<b>109.70</b>	<b>0.36</b>

#### 5.0 UPDATE ON CENTRAL SCHOOLS BUDGETS 2024-25 (DSG)

These relate to budgets for schools' expenditure that are retained and where it is cost effective to be managed by the council. It comprises in the main elements of the schools' block, early years, and the high needs DSG blocks.

- **Schools Block** – After taking account of the recoupment adjustment for academies the funding allocated to the LA and delegated to maintained schools is £30.45m.

It should be noted that a funding transfer of 0.5% was made from the schools block to the high needs block and reflects the confirmed DfE decision on the disapplication request made by the LA. Consequently, the actual delegated budget for 2024-25 currently stands at £29.25m.

The de-delegated budgets for Schools in Financial Difficulty (SIFD), School Improvement & Trade Union activities are all showing a balanced position for 2024-25. The LA has committed to supporting two schools using the SIFD funding for 2024-25 and it is likely that additional commitments will need to be made as schools continue to face rising costs alongside a drop in pupil numbers.

Growth and falling rolls will be funded from DSG reserves for 2024-25.

- **Central Schools Services Block** – There has been no change to the allocation for the central block and the latest confirmed funding stands at £1.57m. The central schools DSG funding is used to support ongoing commitments such as SACRE, Teachers Pensions Grant, Schools forum servicing, Schools Admissions and Copyright Licensing.

- **High Needs Block** – A cost pressure of £1.5m is currently forecast for the High Needs block and mainly relates to SEND. This represents a £0.3m increase in the deficit compared with the position in the Safety Valve agreement (agreed with the DfE). The increased deficit is mainly due to the following; inflationary costs; increase in EHCP pupils in mainstream schools and specialist provision; and continuing placements in out of authority independent settings. Work is ongoing through the SEND sufficiency programme to create more local places and provision aimed at reducing out of authority specialist placements
- **Early Years Block** – a balance position is currently forecast across the early years block, with the brought forward balance at the start of 2024/25 to be utilised to fund the Inclusion support Grant payments to providers. At this stage it is envisaged that participation numbers for the 2 year olds and 3&4 year olds childcare entitlement (including the expansion) will be in line with budget projections.

### DSG Reserve Position

The latest DSG reserve account shows an overall deficit of £1.8m in 2024/25 and £0.9m in 2025/26 (final year of the Safety Valve programme).

## 6. UPDATE ON DELEGATED SCHOOLS BUDGETS 2024-25

6.1 The total net balances as reported by 24 LA maintained primary, secondary and special schools and nurseries in their July budget monitoring statements are shown below. It is worth noting that the July position does not include the full effects of the teachers pay award or the Core Schools Budget Grant that were announced towards the end of the month.

	2023/24 Outturn	2024/25 Original Budget	2024/25 Latest Budget Outturn	Variance
Nursery	0.440	0.558	0.627	0.069
Primary	1.466	0.590	0.877	0.287
Secondary	0.556	0.088	0.207	0.119
Special	-0.070	0.016	0.077	0.061
	<b>2.391</b>	<b>1.252</b>	<b>1.787</b>	<b>0.536</b>

6.2 Main highlights from the above:

- When compared to the original budget, the July position shows a net improvement of £536k.
- The July budget monitoring shows a decrease in net surplus of £604k compared to the 2023/24 outturn position. This is reflective of the increased financial pressures faced by schools.

- The latest position includes a total of 5 schools with deficit balances compared to the original 3 that have licensed deficits from the original budget submission in May. One school has returned to a balanced position from their original budgeted deficit position.

Schools with deficit	Original budget	Latest July position	Comments
Aston Fence J&I	-£0.009	-£0.021	Unforeseen staffing costs.
Brinsworth Manor Infants	-£0.077	£0.014	Significant changes in staffing during academisation.
Wales Primary	-£0.052	-£0.051	No significant changes from original budget and deficit reduction plan.
Badsley Primary	£0.006	-£0.035	Increased agency spend.
Blackburn Primary	£0.002	-£0.014	Budget to be revised with new headteacher.
Rawmarsh Ryecroft	£0.039	-£0.008	Significant reduction in pupil numbers. Budget to be revised with new business manager in September.

- The three schools that submitted a deficit budget have had licensed deficits approved by the LA. Two of these schools will receive funding through the Schools in Financial Difficulty (DSG) fund in 2024/25.
- Since the original budget submission, a further three schools are now projecting deficits in their July budget monitoring statements. Schools continue to raise sustainability concerns regarding cost pressures and the impact appears more severe in primary schools who are already under budget pressure from reducing pupil numbers and therefore have limited scope to absorb increasing costs. However, early indications suggest that these schools will be able to submit a more balanced position in their revised budget submissions in October. The LA will continue to monitor these deficits and work closely with schools to support them in managing their overall financial position.

## 7 TEACHERS PAY AWARD & CORE SCHOOLS BUDGET GRANT

- 7.1 The DfE has announced that teachers will receive a 5.5% pay increase from September 2024 after accepting recommendations made by the independent School Teachers Review Body (STRB) in July.
- 7.2 The DfE has said that schools including mainstream, special and alternative provision, will be provided with almost £1.1billion in additional funding to support them with overall costs in 2024-25.
- 7.3 The DfE will also provide an additional £97m for schools delivering post-16 education and £34m for schools delivering early years provision.



- 7.4 The additional funding will be provided through the new Core Schools Budget Grant (CSBG). The new grant is based on a combination of per-pupil allocation, a lump sum and weighting for disadvantaged pupils.
- 7.5 The base funding rates for the 2024-25 financial year are:
- a basic per-pupil rate of £76 for primary pupils, including pupils in reception.
  - a basic per-pupil rate of £108 for key stage 3 pupils
  - a basic per-pupil rate of £122 for key stage 4 pupils
  - a lump sum of £2,900
  - a FSM6 per-pupil rate of £70 per eligible primary pupil
  - a FSM6 per-pupil rate of £100 per eligible secondary pupil
- 7.6 In 2024-25, funding through the CSBG will cover the 7-month period from September 2024 to March 2025. The impact of the pay award covers two financial years and the funding announced therefore only covers the first seven months.
- 7.7 Schools will receive one payment to cover the 2024-25 financial year. The ESFA will pay the grant in November 2024 for local authorities and December 2024 for academies.
- 7.8 The funding for mainstream primary, secondary and all through schools will be incorporated into core budget allocations for 2025-26, by being rolled into the schools national funding formula (NFF).
- 7.9 Arrangements will be put in place to cover the CSBG for the period April – August 2025 for academies, given their funding cycle follows the academic year.
- 7.10 The Local Government pay offer of £1,290 for SCP 2-43 or 2.5% for SCP 44 upwards is still being negotiated with unions but the additional funding schools will receive through the CSBG will ensure that schools are, at a national level, covered for the current 2024-25 pay offer for support staff.

## **8. 2025-26 BUDGET SETTING**

- 8.1 Due to the timing of the general election, the ESFA were unable to announce the school's budget or publish the indicative schools and high needs national funding formula (NFF) allocations for 2025-26. As a result, the annual funding cycle will differ from previous years and new timelines will be confirmed in due course following decisions on the overall core schools budget settlement for 2025-26.
- 8.2 The Local Authority continues to experience pressure on its High Needs block. The latest position on the DSG Management Plan is forecasting a pressure of £884k at the end of 2025-26 compared to the balanced position that was originally expected in 2021/22 when RMBC became part of the Safety Valve programme. The current projection includes an assumption of a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block in 2025-26.

- 8.3 Despite the delay in indicative funding allocations being released by the ESFA, the local authority is seeking the support of the Schools Forum early to support this request as we continue to manage the deficit on the High Needs block.
- 8.4 The ESFA and the Safety Valve Delivery Team are encouraging Local Authorities to submit disapplication requests early to help schools and local authorities manage the impact of the delays to the usual NFF timings.

**9. NAMES & CONTACT DETAILS**

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Principal Finance Officer (Schools Finance)  
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<b>REPORT FOR SCHOOLS FORUM</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Growth Fund Policy</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Finance and Customer Services</b>

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the changes introduced by the DfE for the administration and distribution of growth funding by local authorities.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the schools forum note the changes introduced by the DfE and approve the local growth policy to be adopted for Rotherham.

### **3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION & CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The growth fund is intended to address shortage of school places in the short term where local authorities are responsible for funding growth needs in their area for maintained schools and academies.

- 3.2 In 2024/25 more stringent guidelines were introduced by the DfE for the administration and distribution of growth funding by local authorities.

- 3.3 The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) now specifies that the growth fund can only be used to:

- Support growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to address basic need.
- Support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulation.
- Meet the revenue cost of new schools.
- Meet the revenue costs, for schools related to removing or repurposing surplus places.
- Local authorities must provide growth funding when a school or academy provides extra places because of a request from the council to establish an extra class (either as a bulge class or as an ongoing commitment).

- 3.4 The guidelines explicitly highlight that the growth fund must not be used to support:

- Schools in financial difficulty; any such support for maintained schools should be provided from a de-delegated contingency.
- General growth due to popularity; this is managed through lagged funding.

- This includes cases where academies have admitted above pupil admission numbers (PAN) by their own choice.
  - Schools that are admitting pupils within their existing PAN and simply 'filling up' back to capacity
  - Nursery and/or post-16/sixth form education
- 3.5 Local authorities are still expected to have local growth funding policies. It is not a requirement that spending on growth will necessarily match precisely the funding allocated to Rotherham for growth, and we continue to have the ability to locally 'top-slice' our overall Schools Block funding to fund pupil growth numbers.
- 3.6 The proposed Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Growth Policy is included as an appendix for approval of the schools forum.

#### **4. NAMES & CONTACT DETAILS**

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# **Growth Fund Policy**

**Made under the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)  
Growth and falling rolls guidance 2024 to 2025.**

**Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024**

## **Growth Fund Policy**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This document sets out Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's (RMBC) policy for funding significant pupil growth in schools to support them financially.

1.2 Local authorities are responsible for funding these growth needs for all schools in their area, for new and existing maintained schools and academies. Local authorities should fund all schools on the same criteria.

1.3 The criteria should contain clear objective trigger points for qualification, and a clear formula for calculating allocations with these criteria applying to all schools on the same basis.

1.4 School funding is distributed on a "lagged census" basis. The October census figures are used for allocating funding for the following financial year (April to March) for maintained schools or academic year (Sept to Aug) for academies. The Age Weighted Pupil Unit is the main pupil led funding factor used for allocating funding to schools and is applied to the total number of pupils on roll (as per the census count) at the school.

1.5 Under the lagged census, when a child reaches "end of phase" it doesn't usually present a problem for schools as for each year group leaving, a new one generally replaces it. Any variation in numbers between those leaving and those commencing are simply managed as part of the annual school budgeting cycle.

1.6 However, when there are changes in structure because of an educational re-organisation, or when a new year is being added to a school, an allocation in respect of required places from the growth fund may be made, depending on the circumstances involved.

1.7 It should be noted that the Growth Fund is intended to address shortage of school places in the short term. Ongoing / increasing capacity issue in a localised area may need to be addressed permanently through a new build or school. It should be noted that S37 of the Education Act 2011 has made changes to the previous legislation in relation to the statutory process for establishing new schools. There is a presumption that any new school will be an academy / free school, and as such local authorities will need to seek powers to establish these schools.

1.8 In the 2024/25 fiscal year, more stringent guidelines were introduced by the DfE for the administration and distribution of growth funding by local authorities.

1.9 The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) now specifies that the growth fund can only be used to:

- Support growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to address **basic need**.
- Support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulation.
- Meet the revenue cost of new schools.
- Meet the revenue costs, for schools related to removing or repurposing surplus places.
- Local authorities must provide growth funding when a school or academy provides extra places because of a request from the council to establish an extra class (either as a bulge class or as an ongoing commitment).

1.10 The guidelines explicitly highlight that the growth fund must **not** be used to support:

- Schools in financial difficulty; any such support for maintained schools should be provided



- from a de-delegated contingency.
- General growth due to popularity; this is managed through lagged funding. This includes cases where academies have admitted above pupil admission numbers (PAN) by their own choice.
- Schools that are admitting pupils within their existing PAN and simply 'filling up' back to capacity
- Nursery and/or post-16/sixth form education

## **2.0 ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL GROWTH POLICY**

2.1 Local authorities are still expected to have local growth funding policies. It is not a requirement that spending on growth will necessarily match precisely the funding allocated to Rotherham for growth, and we continue to have the ability to locally 'topslice' our overall Schools Block funding to fund pupil growth numbers.

2.2 Local authorities should fund all schools on the same criteria. Where growth occurs in academies that are funded by Education and Schools Funding Agency (ESFA) on estimates, ESFA will use the pupil number adjustment process to ensure the academy is only funded for the growth once.

2.3 The pupil growth fund is established by top slicing the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The overall amount to be top-sliced from the schools block is agreed annually by the Schools Forum. Any under/overspend on the growth fund forms part of the overall DSG surplus or deficit balance. The following principles underpin the operation of the Growth fund in Rotherham:

- Growth funding will only be provided to meet demand for school places as identified by the council and agreed with the relevant school.
- The growth fund may only be used to support growth in pre-16 pupil numbers (i.e. primary and secondary phases) to meet the basic need and to support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulations.
- The same basis for allocation will be applied to both maintained schools and recouptment academies.
- The growth fund may also be used to meet the cost of new schools. These will include the lead-in costs for goods or services necessary in order to admit pupils. It can also include post start-up costs and any diseconomy of scale costs.
- Any unspent funds remaining at the end of the financial year should be reported to the Schools Forum. Funding may be carried forward to the following funding period as with any other centrally retained budget and can be added to the growth fund if the Council wishes.
- School Forum approval of the criteria will be required before the allocation of the growth fund to schools. Consultation with the School Forum is necessary on the total sum to be top-sliced from each phase and it must be regularly updated on the use of the funding.

2.4 It is proposed that the following criteria are applied to the Growth Fund in Rotherham:

- Growth Fund will apply to primary and secondary school phases (including academies);
- The Growth Fund is only applicable to meet additional revenue costs of increased pupil

intake and therefore cannot be used to meet capital related expenditure as any such costs will be funded separately from the capital budget.

2.5 It will only be awarded to schools or academies **that have agreed with the authority:**

- to provide an extra class in order to meet basic need in the area (either as a bulge class or as an on-going commitment). This may or may not include the internal re-modelling to maximise existing accommodation or building new accommodation.
- to accept a change and has increased their published admission numbers (PAN) either temporarily (in the case of a bulge class) or permanently.
- to take additional intake of pupils where overall pupil numbers would require the school to employ an additional teacher subject to agreement of the authority).

2.6 If the above criteria is satisfied, the allocated funding to the school or academy will be determined as follows:

- the equivalent AWPU value multiplied by the actual number of pupil intake, pro-rated from September (i.e. 7 months);
- in the case of a permanent increase in admission or continuing bulge class throughout the year groups, pro-rata AWPU funding would be provided annually for 7 years from date of increased capacity. The annual allocated funding will be based on actual intake and will include consideration of the number of Y6 pupils leaving the school in that year.
- additional one-off funding of £5000 for materials, resources and equipment for bulge classes (for the first year only)
- In the event where actual pupil intake is less than anticipated a minimum funding based on 10 pupils would be provided plus an additional one-off £2500 for materials, resources or equipment (for the first year only)

2.7 For the avoidance of doubt no growth funding would be allocated in the following circumstances:

- Where there is no prior agreement or consultation with the authority in respect of the additional school places.
- the school has surplus places and then takes additional children up to the pupil admission number.
- Admits over their pupil admission number at their own choice without agreement from the authority.
- Is directed and/or requested to admit additional pupils as a result of errors, appeals, fair access panel, SEN, LAC etc and aren't required to set up an additional class or employ additional resource.

2.8 Where a new school or academy is established in response to basic need for pupil places, one-off funding will be made available in recognition of costs incurred before the school opens.

2.9 In addition to the above, consideration may be given to support diseconomies of scale when a new school or academy opens without a full complement of year groups. The support arrangements to be negotiated and agreed with the new school.

2.10 Other Considerations:

- If schools or trusts have reserves exceeding 8% of their published budget shares, then they will be expected to use those first prior to any additional funding being awarded.
- Forecast or anticipated pupil numbers will be compared to actual census data to ensure that funding awarded reconciles to pupil intake and the costs incurred by schools.
- Funding for maintained schools is only guaranteed for the financial year to which it relates. Future years funding will be assessed annually during the budget setting process.

**3.0 AMENDMENTS TO THE FUNDING CRITERIA**

3.1 It is possible to amend the above Growth Fund criteria during the year where this becomes necessary; however, the revised criteria must be submitted to the ESFA for compliance checking and must also be approved by Schools Forum before the revised criteria can be implemented.

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<b>REPORT FOR SCHOOLS FORUM</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Free School Meals – Auto Enrolment Update</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Finance and Customer Services</b>

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the final results of the Free School Meals (FSM) auto enrolment process.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the schools forum note the total number of additional families identified through the process and the additional pupil premium generated.

## **3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION & CONTEXT**

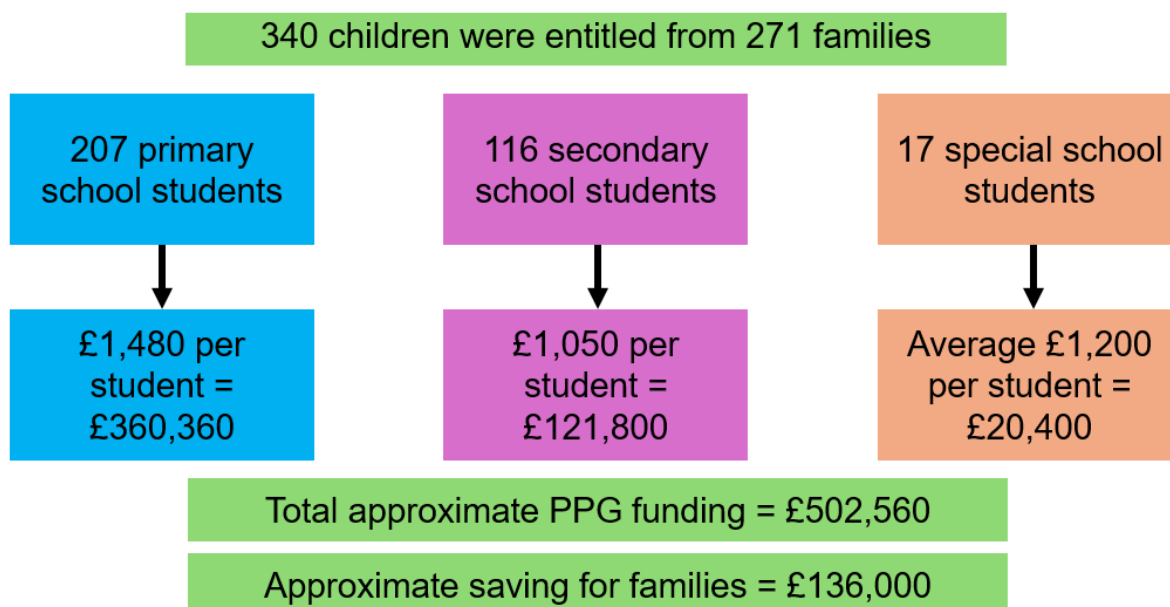
- 3.1 Work on the project began in November 2023 after a briefing highlighting that a number of children eligible for free school meals and not registered was taken to CYPS DLT and support was given the support of the directorate.
- 3.2 Many teams across the council became involved including Public Health, Revenue and Benefits, Finance and Customer Services and Education and initial meetings started in January 2024.
- 3.3 The work involved cross matching revenue and benefits team data with school census data to collate a list of children eligible for free school meals but not claiming them.
- 3.4 The main aims of the project were to ensure that families are receiving what they are entitled to and that schools are receiving the Pupil Premium Grant associated with free school meals.

## **4. RESULTS OF THE WORK UNDERTAKEN**

- 4.1 A total of 360 letters were sent out to families on 23<sup>rd</sup> July covering 489 children with an opt out period of 3 weeks.
- 4.2 There were 3 opt outs in total. Of these, 2 didn't want their data matched and the other was about to start a job.

- 4.3 A total of 340 children from 271 families were auto-enrolled following the exercise resulting in a saving of £136,000 for families and approximate additional Pupil Premium funding of £502,560 for schools.

## Total Children/Families Helped



## Biggest Totals per School

Secondary School Name	Students Identified	2023/24 Eligibility	Funding
Clifton Community School	22	59%	£23,100
<a href="#">Wickersley School and Sports College</a>	14	15%	£14,700
<a href="#">Wath Academy</a>	10	25%	£10,500
Rawmarsh Community School	10	39%	£10,500
Dinnington High School	9	29%	£9,450
Primary School Name	Students Identified	2023/24 Eligibility	Funding
Crags Community School	9	60%	£13,320
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	7	15%	£10,360
Springwood Junior Academy	7	36%	£10,360
<a href="#">Wath Central Primary School</a>	6	23%	£8,880
St Ann's Primary School	6	54%	£8,880
<a href="#">Monkwood Primary School</a>	6	34%	£8,880
Broom Valley Community	6	37%	£8,880

- 4.4 The Revenue and Benefits team will be notifying schools to let them know who is entitled for FSM.
- 4.5 A joint report will be written after the census figures are in and will be shared with the Schools Forum.
- 4.6 The project will be repeated next year to identify any new families that are eligible for FSM.

**5. NAMES & CONTACT DETAILS**

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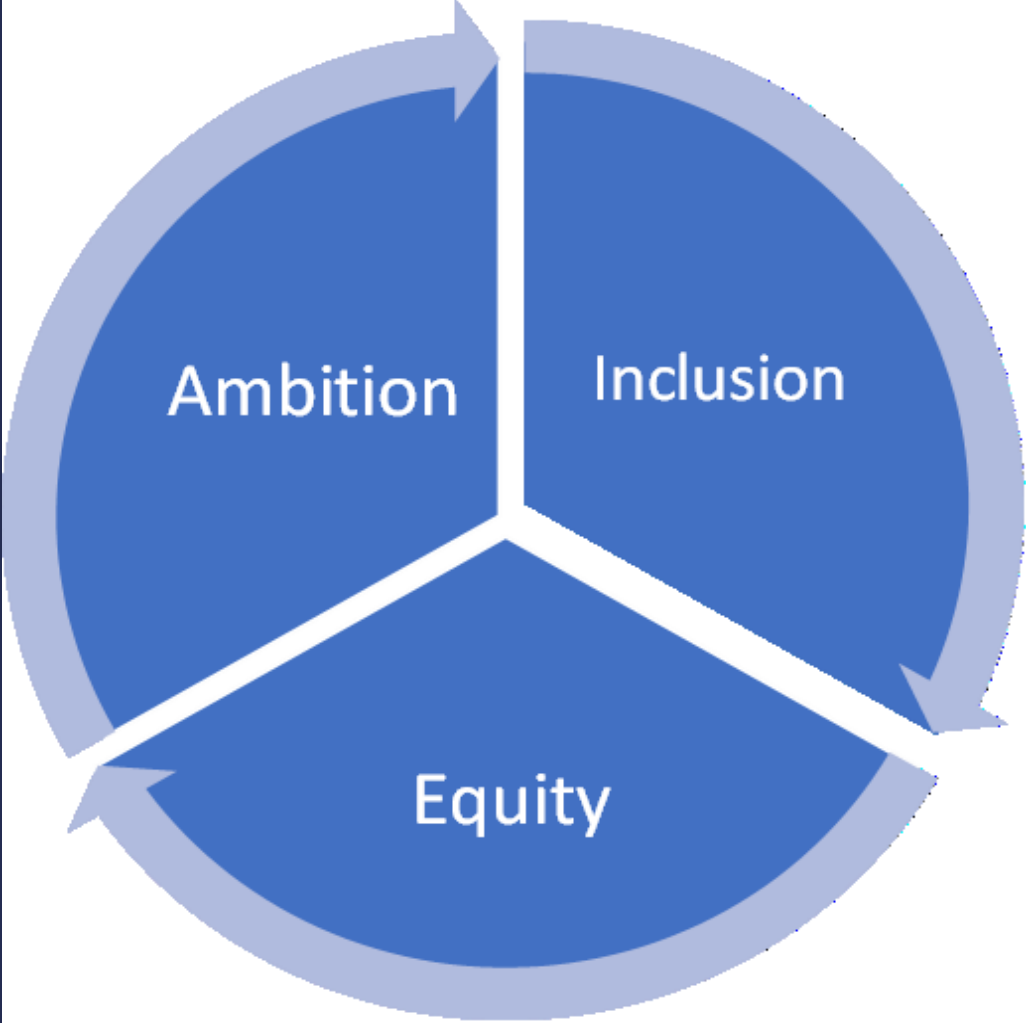


# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan

Right Support, Right Place, Right Time

March 2023









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# Threshold Descriptors Overview

## Threshold 1

### Mild

- May be below age-related expectations.
- Difficulty with the acquisition/use of language, literacy, and numeracy skills
- Difficulty with the pace of curriculum delivery
- Some problems with concept development
- Evidence of **some** difficulties in aspects of literacy, numeracy, or motor coordination
- Attainment levels are likely to be a year or more delayed

## Threshold 2

### Mild - Moderate

- Continuing and persistent difficulties in the acquisition/use of language/literacy/numeracy skills.
- The CYP is operating at a level well below expected outcomes and there is evidence of an increasing gap between them and their peers despite targeted intervention and differentiation through a support plan.
- Evidence of difficulties with aspects of cognition i.e., memory, concept development, information processing, understanding, sequencing and reasoning that impact on learning and/or limit access to the curriculum
- Progress is at a slow rate but with evidence of response to intervention.
- Support is required to maintain progress and to access the curriculum.
- Attainment is well below expectations despite targeted differentiation.
- Processing difficulties limit independence and CYP may need adult support in some areas.
- **Mild** but **persistent** difficulties in aspects of literacy, numeracy or motor co-ordination despite regular attendance, appropriate intervention, and quality first teaching, implemented over time and reviewed regularly.
- May have difficulties with organisation and independence in comparison to peers.
- Difficulties impact on access to the curriculum
- Requires reasonable adjustments to support them in the classroom.
- Self-esteem and motivation may be an issue.
- Possibly other needs or circumstances that impact on learning





## Threshold 1 - Cognition and Learning

CYP Presentation	Assessment and Planning	Teaching and Learning Strategies	Curriculum/ Intervention	Resources and Staffing
<p><b>Mild</b> difficulties in aspects of literacy, numeracy or motor co-ordination despite regular attendance, appropriate intervention, and quality teaching, implemented over time and reviewed regularly.</p> <p>May have difficulties with some or all the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Below expected rate of attainment.</li> <li>• Below age-related and national expectations.</li> <li>• Difficulty with the acquisition/ use of language, literacy, numeracy skill.</li> <li>• Difficulty with the usual pace of curriculum delivery.</li> <li>• Some problems with concept development.</li> <li>• Evidence of some difficulties in aspects of literacy, numeracy and/or motor co-ordination.</li> <li>• Attainment levels are likely to be a year or more delayed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of typical school and class assessments.</li> <li>• Typical curriculum plans include Quality First Teaching (QFT) strategies.</li> <li>• Parents and children involved in monitoring and supporting their targets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to typical classroom assessments, the teacher will also discuss next steps with the SENDCO. As appropriate, schools may choose to use screening tools, such as GL Assessment online screeners, Lucid, etc.</li> <li>• For concerns regarding motor skills use a motor skill check list and/or speak to the school nursing team/OT.</li> </ul> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typical curriculum plans to include QFT strategies and adjustments to activities to remove any barriers which difficulties may present.</li> <li>• Timetable any one-to-one /small group intervention into weekly routine as appropriate (the number of sessions would be dependent on the intervention).</li> <li>• Monitor effectiveness of interventions ensuring clear entry and exit points and detailed provision map.</li> <li>• Parents and children involved in monitoring and supporting their targets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainstream class with flexible grouping arrangements.</li> <li>• Consider Kagan structures.</li> <li>• Opportunities for small group work based on identified need e.g., listening/ thinking.</li> <li>• Mainstream class with flexible grouping arrangements</li> <li>• Opportunities for small group work based on identified need e.g., reading, maths, motor skills.</li> <li>• Opportunities for generic type one-to-one programmes aimed at addressing gaps – any intervention should have clear entry and exit criteria.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality First Teaching.</li> <li>• Simplify level/ pace/amount of teacher talk.</li> <li>• Emphasis on identifying and teaching gaps assessment.</li> <li>• Opportunities for skill reinforcement/ revision/ transfer and generalisation.</li> <li>• Formal teaching of vocabulary and concepts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main provision by class/subject teacher.</li> <li>• Mainstream class with enhanced differentiation.</li> <li>• Regular targeted small group support, where staffing allows.</li> <li>• Time limited programmes of small group work based on identified need.</li> <li>• Opportunities for 1:1 /small group support focused on specific targets, with outcomes closely monitored.</li> <li>• CYP should be in mainstream classes and should not routinely be withdrawn and taught by a TA.</li> <li>• All school staff should have access to regular, targeted Continuing Professional Development.</li> <li>• The child is likely to be part of unnamed consultations or consultations about groups of children with their link EP.</li> <li>• Full inclusion within the curriculum through use of differentiation and group support.</li> <li>• Activities planned through QFT with emphasis on concrete, experiential and visual supports.</li> <li>• Multi-sensory learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Strategies employed to encourage cognitive engagement, transferring and generalising learning e.g., Thinking Skills and problem solving.</li> <li>• Links established between new and prior learning with support from review and overlearning techniques.</li> </ul>

## Threshold 4a - Cognition and Learning

CYP Presentation	Assessment and Planning	Teaching and Learning Strategies	Curriculum/ Intervention	Resources and Staffing
<p><b>Significant and persistent</b> difficulties with literacy, numeracy and/or motor co-ordination despite regular attendance and high-quality specialist intervention and teaching, implemented over time and reviewed regularly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key language, literacy and/or numeracy skills are well below functional levels for their year group.</li> <li>• Cannot access text or record independently.</li> <li>• Significant levels of difficulty in cognitive processing requiring significant alteration to the pace and delivery of the curriculum.</li> <li>• Difficulties likely to be long term/ lifelong.</li> <li>• The condition is pervasive and debilitating and significantly affects access to curriculum and academic progress.</li> <li>• High levels of support are required which include assistive technology.</li> <li>• Social skills and behaviour may be affected, and issues of self-esteem and motivation are likely to be present.</li> <li>• May appear to be increasingly socially immature and vulnerable because of limited social awareness, difficulties with reasoning, understanding, or expressing thoughts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SENDCO takes advice from assessment by EP/specialist teacher and the involvement of education and non-education professionals, such as Health professionals as appropriate.</li> <li>• Curriculum plans, and progress are closely monitored.</li> <li>• Targets are highly individualised.</li> <li>• Continued regular engagement of parents</li> <li>• Curriculum plans, classroom support and interventions and graduated approaches to achieve outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainstream class, predominantly working on modified curriculum tasks.</li> <li>• Frequent opportunities for small group work based on identified need</li> <li>• Daily opportunities for support focused on specific support plan targets.</li> <li>• Opportunities for multi-sensory interventions to address core difficulties will be in place.</li> <li>• Schools may refer to Occupational therapy or other commissioned services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality First Teaching</li> <li>• Tasks and presentation increasingly individualised and modified in an inclusive curriculum.</li> <li>• Visual cues to support auditory information at all stages of delivery.</li> <li>• Teaching and activities are adapted to reduce the impact of processing difficulties e.g., working memory, processing speed.</li> <li>• Individualised level/pace/ amount of teacher talk.</li> <li>• Ensure transfer and generalisation of skills has occurred before teaching anything new.</li> <li>• Small steps targets within group programmes and/or 1:1.</li> <li>• Tasks and presentation are personalised to the CYP's needs and monitored regularly to ensure they remain appropriate.</li> <li>• Emphasis on literacy, numeracy, PSHEE and ICT</li> <li>• Access arrangements and adjustments are part of everyday learning and practice (typical way of working)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main provision by class/subject teacher with support from SENDCO and advice from specialist teacher and non-education professionals as appropriate</li> <li>• A consistent structured environment may include withdrawal, carefully monitored, and planned by class teacher for a specific target.</li> <li>• Additional adult, under the direction of the teacher, provides sustained targeted support on an individual/group basis.</li> <li>• Clear monitoring of effectiveness of interventions</li> <li>• Additional adult to be trained to deliver interventions and support.</li> <li>• Modified class curriculum.</li> <li>• CYP still included in activities wherever appropriate.</li> <li>• Use real objects for thinking skill activities (explore the context for the objects)</li> <li>• Appropriate thinking skills strategies</li> <li>• Access to assistive technology must be made for those CYP with SPLD – e.g., Clicker 7 Text Help Read/Write, Penfriend and audio recording devices.</li> </ul>

## Threshold 5 - Cognition and Learning

CYP Presentation	Assessment and Planning	Teaching and Learning Strategies	Curriculum/ Intervention	Resources and Staffing
<p><b>Severe and persistent</b> difficulties in the acquisition/use of language/literacy/ numeracy skills, within the curriculum and in out of school activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe learning difficulties or learning disabilities have been identified.</li> <li>• Complex and severe language and communication difficulties.</li> <li>• Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, which are lifelong.</li> <li>• Complex Needs identified.</li> </ul>	<p><b>School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As 4b with long term involvement of specialist provision and appropriate non-educational professionals in accordance with the outcomes identified within the Education, Health and Care Plan, if applicable.</li> <li>• Previous assessment informs the planning process for appropriate programmes.</li> <li>• Targets are short-term and specific, monitored and reviewed on a short-term basis.</li> <li>• Parents/carers are naturally involved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely modified and individualised work.</li> <li>• Small group and 1:1 daily developing basic skills.</li> <li>• Need for specialist intervention from time to time to model interventions for schools to follow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As 4b plus access to aids personalised to the CYP's needs e.g., communication needs.</li> <li>• Ensure that appropriate advice and materials are always available such as PECS, Makaton, ICT.</li> <li>• Functional curriculum offer.</li> <li>• Sensory curriculum offer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher than average pupil:teacher ratio.</li> <li>• Staff need to be trained and have experience working with CYP with high cognition and learning needs.</li> <li>• Access to extra staffing to support CYP in times of crisis and stress and to escort CYP on outings and trips.</li> <li>• Appropriately trained staff to deal with medical and physical issues as appropriate.</li> <li>• Extreme modification of curriculum.</li> <li>• Group activities carefully monitored to ensure the CYP is not isolated or excluded.</li> <li>• CYP still included in activities wherever appropriate.</li> <li>• Emphasis on using real objects and experiences for all activities.</li> <li>• Visual support throughout.</li> <li>• Specialist ICT hard and software.</li> <li>• Total Communication Approach.</li> <li>• AAC systems to support communication environment.</li> <li>• Specialist equipment to promote self-help, physical access, and mobility.</li> <li>• Appropriate indoor and outdoor provision in a safe and secure setting.</li> <li>• Specialist hygiene facilities if necessary.</li> <li>• Access to specialist educational and non-educational services in accordance with the EHC Plan, if applicable.</li> <li>• Therapeutic offer to support sensory needs.</li> <li>• Information regarding Services and training will be on the Local Offer.</li> </ul>

# The Real World

"I want a life not a service!"





**PfA Outcomes and Provision**

Year Group	Employability/Education	Independence	Community Participation	Health
<p><b>Reception to Y2 (5-7 years)</b></p>	<p>Child has the listening skills and concentration to increase the amount of time they are able to maintain focus upon learning tasks.</p> <p>Child is able to develop early concepts of literacy and numeracy skills to enable them to lay the foundations of later learning.</p> <p>Child has an awareness of 'growing up' and beginning to have some ideas of what they would 'like to be', when they are older.</p>	<p>Child is able to understand the concept of time and will develop the skills necessary to access digital and analogue clocks.</p> <p>Child is able to understand the concept of cooking and the contribution of ingredients to produce different foods.</p>	<p>Child has an understanding of the concept of friendships and will be applying this in their approach to shared play with peers.</p>	<p>Child is able to understand the concept of being healthy, including the benefits of exercise and making healthy food choices and will begin to apply this in the context of mealtimes and attendance at clubs and sports activities.</p> <p>Child is able to understand the need for regular dental, vision, and hearing checks to maintain good health.</p>
<p><b>Y3 to Y6 (8-11 years)</b></p>	<p>Child is able to understand and be able to talk about different careers and education options so that they are able to make choices about what they will do next.</p> <p>Child is beginning to develop a profile of interests and aspirations in order to demonstrate individual strengths and skills.</p>	<p>Child is able to understand the concept of money, demonstrating awareness that different objects are of different monetary values and beginning to use money to pay for items such as snacks in school.</p> <p>Child is beginning to understand concepts relation to travel and transport including paying for a ticket/pass, timetables, and road signs and will be aware of the role of these in facilitating independent travel.</p> <p>Child is able to understand the concept of recipes relating to preparation of food and will be able to follow these with adult support to make simple foods (cupcakes, sandwiches etc.)</p>	<p>Child is able to understand the importance of being safe within the local community, including online, and will begin to understand potential areas of risk, e.g., strangers, online hazards, bullying and ways to take steps to avoid these.</p> <p>Child is familiar with the local area, including particular places, routes of travel to enable them to begin to understand where they are going and methods to get there.</p>	<p>Child is able to understand the purpose of vaccinations and will cooperate with these to ensure good medical health.</p> <p>Child is able to understand changes to their body associated with puberty and will be aware of self-care routines required to maintain good physical health.</p> <p>Child is able to understand minor health needs that they may have, asthma, eczema, difficulties with vision and/or hearing; they will understand the strategies and resources to manage these.</p>

**Pfa Outcomes and Provision**

Year Group	Employability/Education	Independence	Community Participation	Health
<p><b>Y7 to Y11 (11-16 years)</b></p>	<p>CYP is able to understand information relating to course options (GCSE, NVQ, Entry level qualifications, vocational options etc.) including the requirements for access to a range of HE options to enable realistic and informed choices.</p> <p>CYP is able to think about subject option choices alongside longer-term career goals and</p> <p>will be able to choose subjects and course options to enable next steps in their chosen direction.</p> <p>CYP is beginning to think about and plan work experience/part-time opportunities to enable them to understand workplace demands and requirements and to gain early experience in areas of interest for future employment.</p> <p>CYP continues to develop a profile of interests and achievements in order to demonstrate individual strengths and skills. This will be used in accordance with careers sessions and guidance.</p> <p>CYP is able to understand supported employment options e.g., Access to Work.</p>	<p>CYP is able to understand monetary value, how much money they have and how much money items cost and will be able to make decisions in relation to what they spend their money on as a first step towards financial budgeting.</p> <p>CYP is able to demonstrate skills in accessing local transport services, buying a ticket/pass, understanding bus times, using these systems of travel to access school, for example.</p> <p>CYP is able to understand information relating to different food groups and meal planning and will be able to understand instructions within a recipe card/book to enable them to cook simple meals with support.</p>	<p>CYP is able to understand risks associated with social media, online gaming and online communities and will be increasingly competent in understanding how to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>CYP is able to understand social norms and conventions in relation to a variety of friendships and relationships and will be able to use this knowledge to enable them to engage appropriately within a range of social context.</p> <p>CYP is able to understand options in relation to a range of leisure and social activities available and will be able to use this to make informed and positive choices about how they want to spend their free time.</p> <p>CYP shows increased understanding of the wider picture and will build resistance to support emotional wellbeing.</p>	<p>CYP is able to understand information relating to sex education and sexual health in preparation for adulthood.</p> <p>CYP is able to understand the role of the GP and the support available to them.</p> <p>CYP is able to understand the risks associated with drugs and alcohol and will apply information learned to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>CYP has a more active role in understanding and managing more complex health needs to facilitate greater independence.</p>
<p><b>Provision</b></p>	<p>Please refer to detail provided within the Teaching and Learning Strategies and Curriculum/Interventions sections of the School Age Thresholds Guidance: Cognition and Learning.</p>			





# BRIEFING

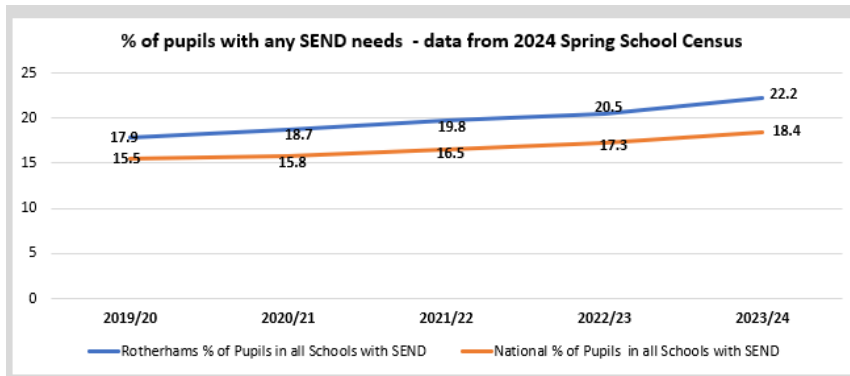
<b>TO:</b>	Schools Forum
<b>DATE:</b>	13/09/2024
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Mark Cummins (Transformation Lead) Cary-Anne Sykes (Head of Service SEND)
<b>TITLE:</b>	SEND Sufficiency update

## 1. Background

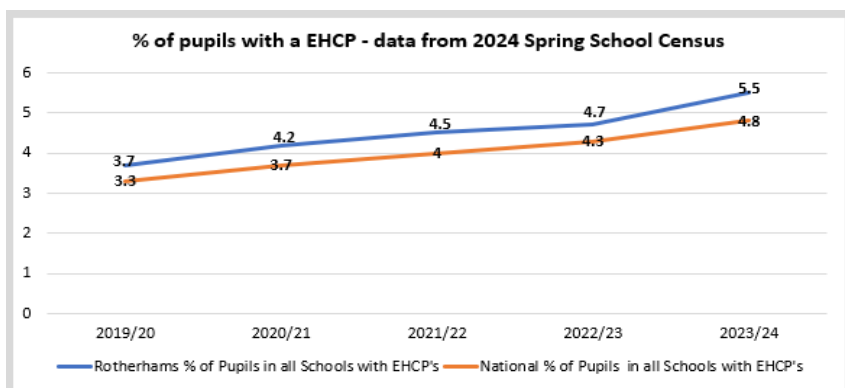
- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Schools Forum with an update on Rotherham’s SEND Sufficiency data providing relevant comparisons to the national position where available.
- 1.2 The data included in the report has been taken from a number of sources including the local authorities Safety Valve data dashboard, SEN2 statutory returns and placement tracking information. The data contained is utilised as part of Safety Valve quarterly monitoring reports to the Department for Education and to support SEND Sufficiency planning

## 2. Key Issues

2.1 22.2% of Rotherham statutory aged pupils have either a statutory plan for Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), known as an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), or are receiving SEND support. This compares to an average of 18.4% across all England Authorities.



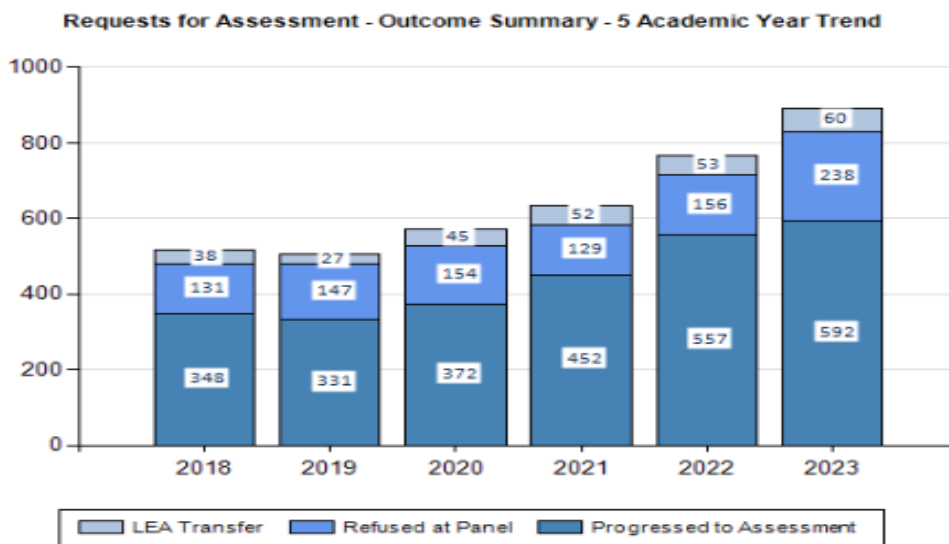
2.2 5.5% of Rotherham’s statutory aged pupils have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) compared to an average of 4.8% nationally.



**2.3** As at the SEN2 census date in January 2024, Rotherham had 3310 active EHCP's in place for all children and young people 0-25yr old. This is 425 more plans than the previous year's return representing an increase of 14.7% and compared to a national increase of 11%. When comparing to similar neighbouring areas Rotherham ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 11 local authorities in relation to the number of active EHCP's in place

**2.4** Requests for an EHCP assessment continue to rise in Rotherham with a 72% increase since 2018. Over the past 12 months there has been a 16.1% increase in requests.

**2.5** 61% of all new requests to assess for an EHCP are from schools, with 30% from parents/carers and family members. These percentages have remained relatively flat since 2018.



**2.6** The below table gives a breakdown of Primary need type and growth since 2019 for all CYP 0-25yr old whom have an EHCP in place.

No of all EHCP's (CYP 0-25yr olds) as of each year from the SEN2 Stat return	ASD	SEMH	MLD	SLCN
2019	651	388	439	182
2020	682	470	450	198
2021	747	536	445	223
2022	820	607	455	264
2023	952	686	461	334
2024	1141	786	475	459
<b>Data as of 1 July 24 (internal data used)</b>	1204	797	474	522

**2.7** The below tables give a breakdown of the most prevalent primary needs across Primary, Secondary and Special Schools. Data is taken from 2024 Spring School census as this is the only national comparison for Need available. This is inclusive of EHCP and pupils at SEND Support.

<b>Mainstream Primary Schools</b>		
Need Type	Local	National
SLCN	31.7%	37.1%
SEMH	15.5%	18.3%
ASD	15.0%	10.3%

<b>Mainstream Secondary Schools</b>		
<b>Need Type</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>National</b>
SLCN	7.9%	12.2%
SEMH	26.8%	24.9%
ASD	17.7%	15.2%

<b>Special Schools</b>		
<b>Need Type</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>National</b>
SLCN	12.5%	10.7%
SEMH	15.7%	13.6%
ASD	32.4%	37.4%

- 2.8** The local most prevalent need types are Autism, SEMH, Speech Language and Communication, and Cognition and Learning. In Rotherham there is a growth in children and young people where their SEMH and/or Autism is proving to be a significant barrier to their learning.
- 2.9** There continues to be two distinct cohorts: those whose academic ability allows them to access the mainstream school curriculum but whose anxieties and sensory sensitivities make it difficult for them to be in a busy environment, and those whose academic ability is significantly lower than age expected levels. As a result, there is a growing demand for resourced provision in mainstream and specialist provision. There is also growing demand for special school places in relation to SEMH and Autism.
- 2.10** The below table gives a breakdown of EHCP placements for all CYP 0-25 years, this data is used regularly as part of SEND Sufficiency planning. In particular the % in mainstream is utilised to support the outcomes and impact of the graduated approach, outreach services and small grants accessibility programme.

<b>High Needs / Provision Categories:</b>	<b>No of CYP with EHCP as of 1st April 24</b>	<b>% of CYP with EHCP as of 1st April 2024</b>	<b>No of CYP with EHCP as of 1st July 24</b>	<b>% CYP with EHCP as of 1st July 24</b>
Special Schools	1,061	31.5%	1,067	30.8%
Resource Provision	101	3.0%	108	3.1%
Mainstream Schools	1,167	34.6%	1,271	36.7%
Alternative Provision	74	2.2%	76	2.2%
Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools	132	3.9%	136	3.9%
Independent Specialist Provision	172	5.1%	164	4.7%
Post 16 / FE Colleges	443	13.1%	436	12.6%
Other LA Schools	72	2.1%	73	2.1%
Other provisions for CYP with EHCP's	151	4.5%	130	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,373</b>		<b>3,461</b>	

- 2.11** Not included in these figures is growth in resource provision places from September 24 linked to the new approved provisions opening. An additional 56 resource provision placements have been agreed in academic year 24/25 with numbers growing incrementally over the next two academic years.

**2.12** The nearest comparable data to this against national is taken from the SEN 2 return and is given in the table below. Please note this data is currently being updated on the publication site by the Department for Education.

High Needs / Provision Categories	% CYP in Rotherham as at SEN2 24	% CYP Nationally as at SEN2 24	Gap to National
<i>*Special Schools</i>	32.8%	26.9%	5.9%
<i>*Resource Provision</i>	2.9%	2.3%	0.6%
Mainstream Schools	34.1%	39.2%	-5.1%
<i>*Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools</i>	3.7%	5.2%	-1.5%
<i>*Independent Specialist Provision</i>	3.4%	1.5%	1.8%
Post 16 / FE Colleges	14.2%	11.7%	2.5%
<b>* All Specialist Provisions</b>	<b>42.8%</b>	<b>35.9%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>

**2.13** Indicators against national comparisons shows that Rotherham has less children attending mainstream schools with an EHCP and more children attending specialist provision. This pattern is repeated at post 16 with more children also attending independent provision in this phase in comparison to national data.

### 3. Key Actions and Timelines

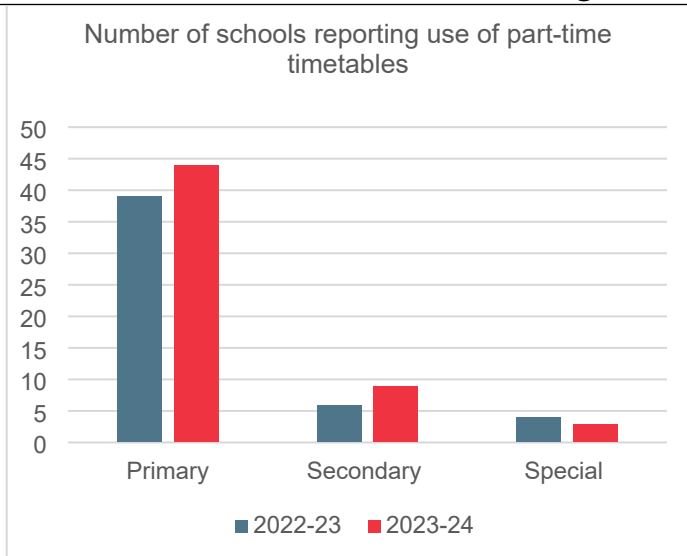
Not applicable

### 4. Recommendations

**4.1** For Schools Forum to accept the report and provide any supporting comments



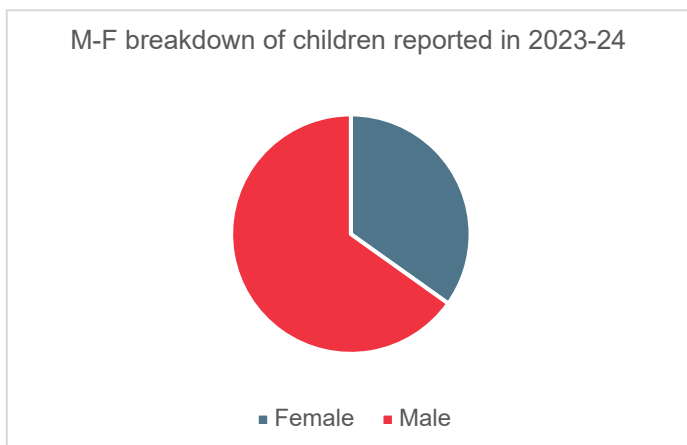
<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	<b>TO:</b>	Schools Forum
	<b>DATE:</b>	September 2024
	<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Sarah Whitby Head of Service, Access to Education 01709255097
	<b>TITLE:</b>	Use of Part-Time Timetables in Rotherham
<b>1. Background</b>		
<b>1.1</b>	Schools Forum members have been keen to understand the use and prevalence of Part Time Timetables within the Borough. This area of our work is important because we know that children who miss out on education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.	
<b>1.2</b>	All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. Department for Education Statutory Guidance; <a href="#">Working Together to Improve School Attendance</a> (May 2022, updated August 2024) makes provision for a temporary part-time timetable to be used in very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests and this is required to meet their individual needs. This could be where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a reintegration package. The guidance makes clear that a part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.	
<b>1.3</b>	The updated statutory guidance that came into force on 19 August 2024 further clarifies at para 66-69 the responsibilities on schools to be ambitious for children, ensure regular review of provision and involve the child's wider support network in the decisions made.	
<b>2. Key Issues</b>		
<b>2.1</b>	RMBC are required to report on child level data to OFSTED during inspection of Local Authority services for 'children for whom the local authority is responsible who are of school age and who are not in receipt of full-time school education at the time of inspection'. The request we make from all schools in the Borough is in line with this requirement.	
<b>2.2</b>	<p>2023-24 return</p> <p>61 Schools provided a return during the academic year. Of these, 56 schools reported use of part-time timetables and the data provided is reported on below. Five schools reported a nil return each month. It is not known for the remaining 59 settings in borough, whether they did not report as they had a nil return, or whether they were using part-time timetables and did not report them to the Local Authority. The new collection system will prompt all schools to make a return, including nil returns, to give assurance that details of all children accessing part-time provision are captured.</p>	



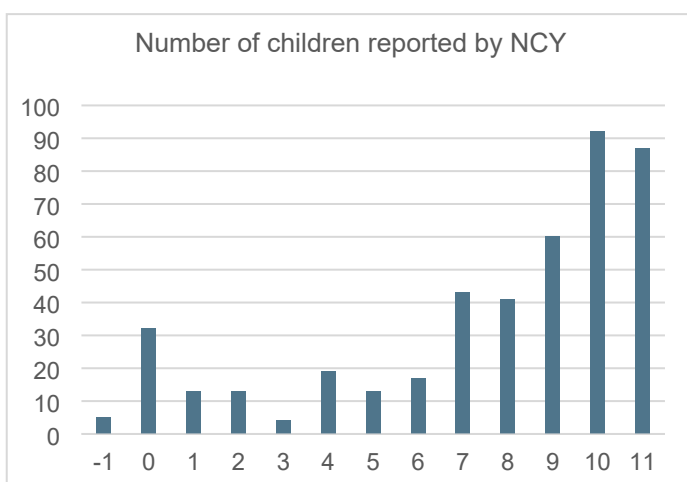
- Primary includes stand alone Infant and Junior schools

**2.3** The total number of children reported through the collection in 2023-24 was 439, this compares to 391 in 2022-23.

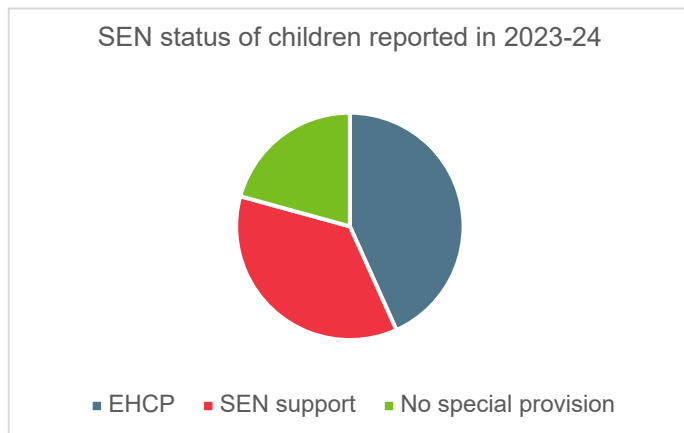
**2.4** There were more male students than female students reported as being in receipt of a part-time timetable (65% male, and 35% female)



**2.5** The use of part time timetables increases into Secondary, with a peak at KS4. The highest use of part-time timetables at Primary is for Reception, suggesting that schools may be using them at this point to support a gradual integration of children. It should also be remembered, that some children in Reception will not yet have achieved statutory school age.



**2.6** 79% of students reported were on the SEND register, with 43% having an EHCP. It is essential that the EHCP team is included before decisions are made about placing a child on a part-time timetable. To keep the use of part-time provision for students with an EHCP in close focus. It has been agreed that details will be sent termly to the EHCP team of all students with an EHCP identified through the collection. This will provide the EHCP team with additional oversight of these children.



**2.7** 96 (22%) of children reported in 2023-24 had an open Social Care involvement within the academic year, and 207 (47%) had at least one open Early Help involvement within the academic year. Update training for Social Care and Early Help colleagues is planned early in the academic year to ensure that those working with vulnerable children and young people have the skills and knowledge to support and challenge where provision being made does not appear to be in the best interests of the child involved. 2024 Guidance sets out the expectations that, where a child has a social worker, schools keep them informed and involved in any process relating to a part time timetable.

**2.8** For 164 children, schools reported that the part-time timetable had ended at a point in the academic year. This figure should be interpreted with some caution as it is possible that there were instances where schools ended a part-time provision but did not subsequently update their return. The future reporting system will issue a prompt to schools to report reviews and end dates at specified intervals.

### 3. Key Actions and Timelines

<b>3.1</b>	January- September 2024	Development of online reporting form for schools to use when reporting Part Time Timetables to RMBC
	September 2024	Re-launch of RMBC Part Time Timetable guidance alongside new online reporting form
	December 2024	Termly analysis of data to begin, identification of key issues and actions to support these. Distribution of child level data to relevant teams- Social Care, Early Help, Youth Justice, Virtual School, EHCP
	September 2025	Proposed report to Schools Forum as part of annual reporting cycle

**4. Recommendations**

<b>4.1</b>	That Schools Forum note the content of the briefing and agree to receive an annual update.
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<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	<b>TO:</b>	Schools Forum
	<b>DATE:</b>	September 2024
	<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Sarah Whitby, Head of Service, Access to Education
	<b>TITLE:</b>	Exclusions and Suspensions

## 1. Background

- 1.1** There is a rising use of suspension and exclusion Nationally, and this trending has been mirrored in Rotherham. Local rates for Permanent Exclusions have risen above National over the last 2 years.
- 1.2** It is evidenced that exclusion impacts on wellbeing, attainment and life chances of children and young people. Inclusion remains in sharp focus for teams and systems supporting children and young people in Rotherham.

## 2. Key Issues

- 2.1** Rotherham continues to exceed National rate for Exclusions and Permanent exclusions in the latest centrally published data. There is no published data yet available for 2023-24, but our local data evidences that numbers of both permanent exclusions and suspensions have increased again in borough.

Academic Year (Published)	19/20			20/21			21/22			22/23		
	Rotherham	Rotherham Rate	National Rate	Rotherham	Rotherham Rate	National Rate	Rotherham	Rotherham Rate	National Rate	Rotherham	Rotherham Rate	National Rate
Exclusions	30	0.07	0.06	23	0.05	0.05	52	0.12	0.08	62	0.14	0.11
Suspensions	3144	7.07	3.76	2429	5.46	4.25	4275	9.55	6.91	5352	11.88	9.33
1+ Suspensions	1035	2.33	1.87	1081	2.43	2.2	1539	3.44	3.02	1781	3.95	3.6

- 2.2** Comparison within the region places Rotherham just above the Regional rate for Permanent Exclusions, and just below for suspensions and the rate of pupil enrolments with one or more suspension.

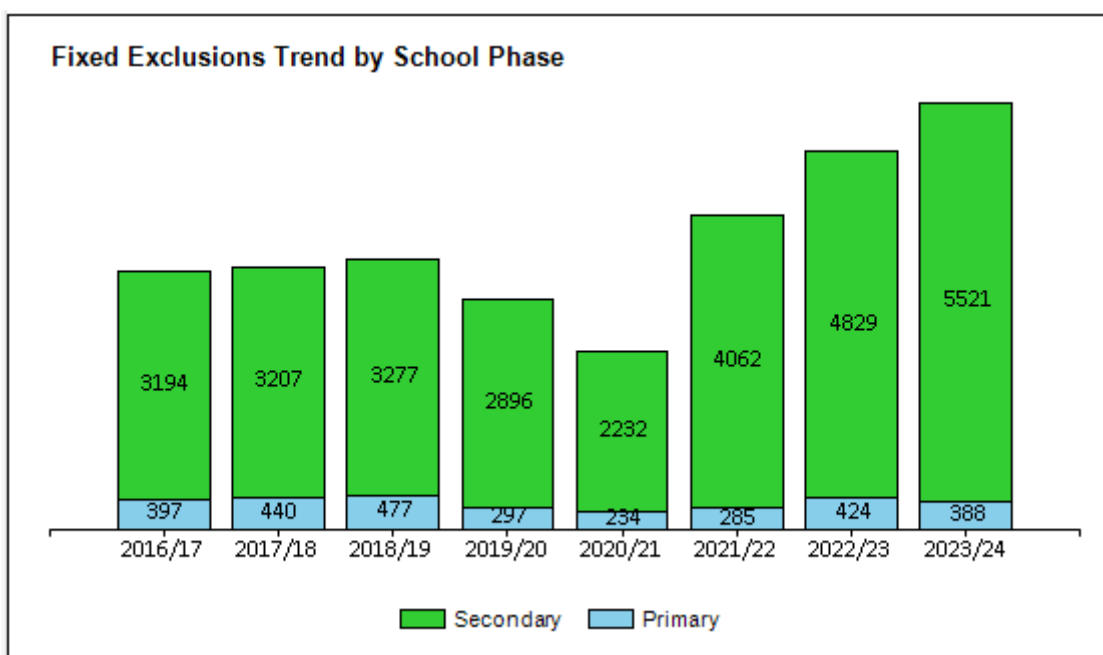
Area	PEx rate	Suspension rate	1+ Suspension rate
National	0.11	9.33	3.61
Yorkshire and Humber	0.12	13.54	4.32
<b>Rotherham</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>11.88</b>	<b>3.95</b>
North Lincolnshire	0.11	11.20	4.10
North East Lincolnshire	0.17	13.69	4.64

Barnsley	0.26	20.85	5.08
Sheffield	0.16	14.12	4.80
Doncaster	0.17	24.21	5.74
Wakefield	0.08	14.89	4.39

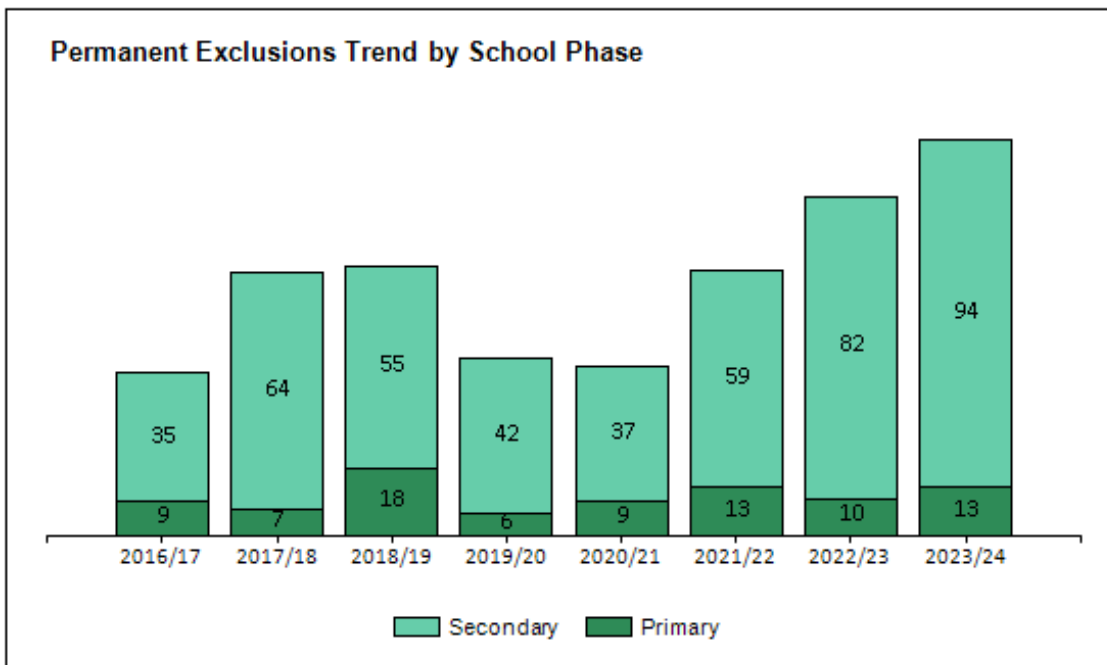
**2.3** Our locally collated and verified data shows a difference to the data reported centrally through census and our data team are currently working to understand why this is. Data reported on for the 2023-24 academic year below is taken from our locally reported data, which comes directly from school import and is verified annually with all schools.

Data for the academic years 2019-20 and 2020-2021 is impacted by periods of national lockdown so should be interpreted with caution.

**2.4** Fixed term exclusions were maintained at a relatively stable level 2016-19 for Secondary, but have subsequently been on an upward trajectory since 2021. In Primary, numbers fell into 2023-24 and less exclusions have been recorded in this academic year than the lowest yearly number 2016-2019.



**2.5** Discarding lockdown data, permanent exclusions have fluctuated at Primary between a low of 7 and a high of 18 yearly. In 2023-24 13 permanent exclusions were issued for Primary age children. The borough wide rise in exclusions has been as a result of the increase in secondary exclusions, which again have risen year on year since 2021.

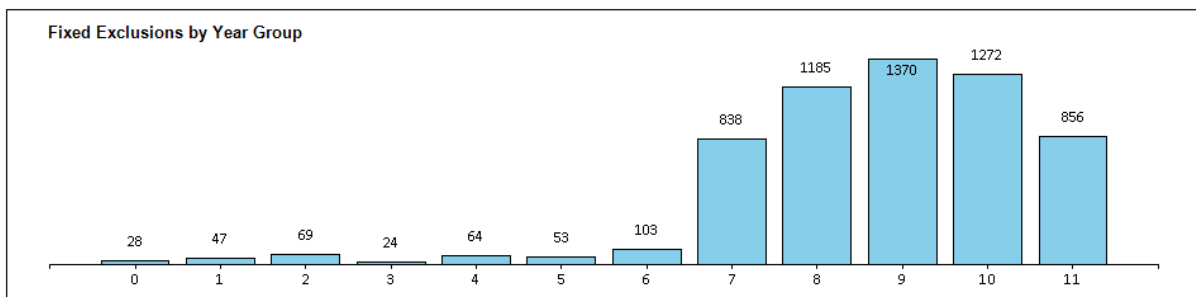


**2.6**

Closer analysis of the Secondary suspensions data shows a peak at year 9 of 1370 suspensions.

In Primary, although the number of suspensions remained comparatively low there were 69 (18% of primary) reported suspensions at year 2, with a peak to 103 (27%) at year 6.

For suspensions issued across Primary and Secondary phases, 62% of suspensions issued were for children were eligible for Free School Meals, 12% for children with an EHCP and 44% for children who were recorded as SEN K.



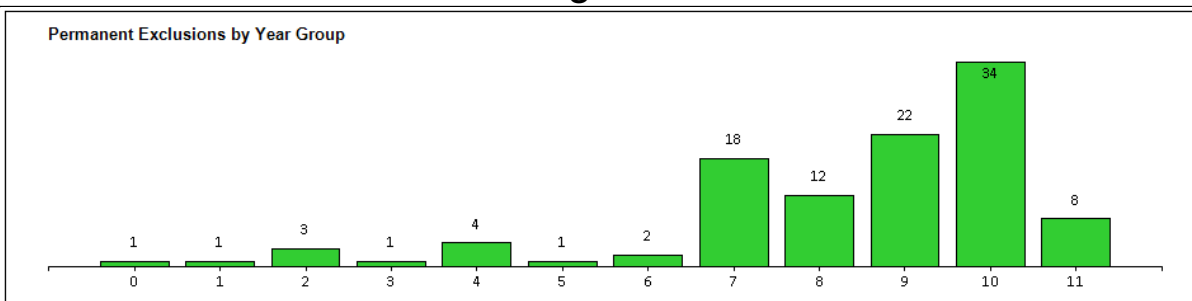
**2.7**

Permanent exclusions were highest in year 10 at Secondary with 34 (36% of Secondary) exclusions issued. Year 7 exclusions are raised as a concern, there were 18 exclusions (19% of Secondary) issued for this year group, 13 of which were for a physical assault against an adult or pupil.

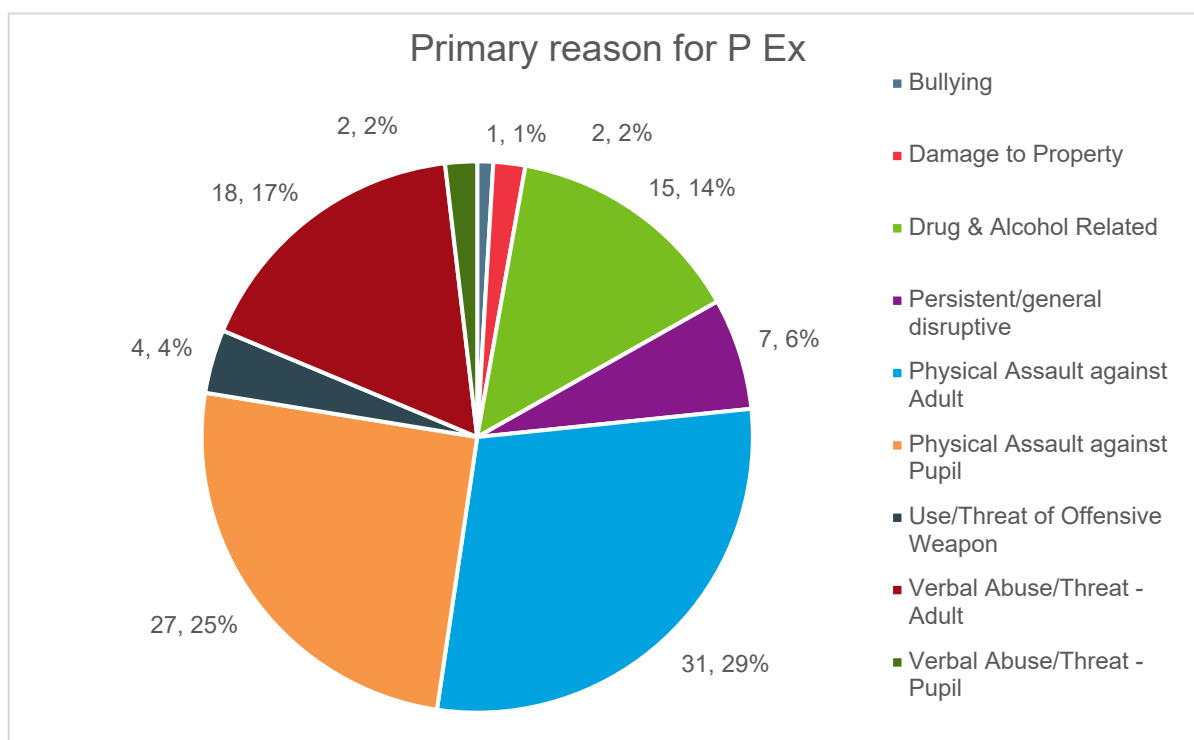
In Primary, the highest numbers were at year 2 and 4, 6 out of the total 7 exclusions for these year groups were for physical assault against an adult or pupil.

For Exclusions issued across Primary and Secondary, 65% were for children who were Free School Meal eligible, 8% for children with an EHCP and 43% children who were recorded as SEN K.

72.9% of Permanent Exclusions were for White British Young people, with the next highest being for Roma young people (4.7%) and then Gypsy/ Roma and White/ Asian young people (3.7%).



**2.8** The highest number of exclusions across both Primary and Secondary were for Physical Assault against an Adult (31 exclusions, 29%) and Physical Assault against a Pupil (27 exclusions, 25%).



### 3. Key Actions and Timelines

- 3.1** July 2024- Send out of exclusions data across all phases to allow for local comparison and benchmarking, to be completed on a termly basis.
- 3.2** September 2024- Enhancements to locality inclusion model at Secondary and revised Fair Access arrangements to provide a more effective system for support and challenge in relation to children at risk of exclusion and those already excluded.
- 3.3** September 2024- Enhancements to Outreach offer to target support and link with PRU preventative offer, where capacity allows. Promotion of Team Teach training to support settings in working with children who display behaviours that challenge.
- 3.4** October 2024- launch of updated inclusion toolkit and guidance.

### 4. Recommendations



<b>4.1</b>	That Schools Forum note the content of the briefing and consider any additional actions required.
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## Rotherham Schools' Forum

## Forward Plan of Agenda Items

Date of Meeting	Agenda & Reports Publication Date	Item	Lead Officer
<b>Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	SEND Sufficiency – Data Comparison to National Position (standing item)	Mark Cummins
		Reduced Timetables – Understanding and Impact	Sarah Whitby
		Annual Exclusions Data	Sarah Whitby
		Matrix of Need	Cary-Anne Sykes
		Vice and Vice Chair Arrangements	Chair/Clerk
		General DSG/Finance update	Joshua Amahwe/ Louise Keith
		Growth Fund Policy – for approval of members	Joshua Amahwe/ Louise Keith
<b>Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>	Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	SEND Sufficiency (standing item)	Mark Cummins
School Funding Formula Consultation	Joshua Amahwe/ Louise Keith		
High Needs Block Update	Joshua Amahwe/ Louise Keith		

		Schools Forum Review Feedback	Niall Devlin
<b>Friday 17th January 2025</b>	Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	SEND Sufficiency (standing item)  2024/2025 Early Years Funding Formula  2024/2025 Dedicated Schools Grant School Block Funding Formula	Mark Cummins  Joshua Amahwe/ Louise Keith  Joshua Amahwe/ Louise Keith
<b>Friday 11th April 2025</b>	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2025	SEND Sufficiency (standing item)	Mark Cummins

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

High Needs Sub-Group Updates – *Reporting arrangements to be agreed following the Forum's Refresh*

Education Safeguarding – Annual Progress Report