

Report for: Cabinet Member Signing – 21 January 2026

Title: Schools Block Funding Model Strategy for 2026-27

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Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration.

- 1.1. This report seeks the Cabinet Members' approval for changes to the Council's local schools funding formula for the 2026-27 financial year in line with the Schools National Funding Formula set out by the Department for Education (DfE).
- 1.2. Following consultation by the Council with all maintained and academy schools in the borough, the Schools' Forum asked the Council to agree the local school funding formula, which is aligned with the National Funding Formula (NFF). These are set out in the recommendations below.
- 1.3. The Schools' forum will meet to determine the funding formula for the financial year 2026-27 on 15th January 2026. Cabinet Member approval is required following the Schools Forum and Council agreed grant allocations.
- 1.4. The funding allocation for the year 2026-27 must then be submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) via the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) by 22nd January 2026.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1. On 17th December 2025, the Department for Education published school funding allocations going to every local authority in England.
- 2.2. The introduction of the National Funding Formula for schools has been a challenge up and down the country and Haringey support fair and local decisions that are responsive to local needs and benefits all schools in an equitable way.

- 2.3. The Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding allocation set out in this report includes local adjustments to the formula to ensure schools receive an across-the-board funding uplift for pupils and targeted allocations to support special educational needs for children in schools.
- 2.4. Local authorities must align their funding formulas more closely with the Department for Education's National Funding Formula (NFF) regulations for the 2026 to 2027 financial year. Haringey utilises the full value of the NFF factors to calculate the annual budget allocation for schools.
- 2.5. The Council has worked collaboratively with schools across the borough to ensure that the funding available is distributed as fairly as possible so that all Haringey schools can continue to deliver excellent outcomes for our children and young people.
- 2.6. Two models were presented to the Schools' Block Working Group (SBWG) for consideration on how to maximise funding to schools via the APT:
- **Model 1** – 2026–27 using 100% NFF values with a lump sum of **£172K**; final growth/falling rolls fund value: **£666K**.
 - **Model 2** – 2026–27 using 100% NFF values with the lump sum set at the maximum allowable value of **£176K**; final growth/falling rolls fund value: **£551K**.
- 2.7. The SBWG meeting on 7th January 2026 recommended adopting Model 1, which uses 100% National Funding Formula (NFF) values, to ensure consistency in school funding when the hard NFF is implemented. Moving away from the 100% NFF values could lead to funding fluctuations for Haringey schools in future years.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. The Schools' forum is scheduled to convene on 15th January 2026, to approve the funding formula for the 2026-27 financial year for schools in Haringey, taking into account the following parameters:
- a) To adopt NFF Model as outlined in the consultation with schools to set Minimum Funding Guarantee of 0% for all schools;
 - b) To note the transfer of 0.50% from the Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block as agreed by the Schools' forum under the safety valve agreement with the DfE in December 2025;
 - c) To agree the Growth/Falling rolls fund be set at £666,629;
 - d) To agree the de-delegation of £210,042 for Trade Union Representation (for maintained schools only).
 - e) To agree the Block transfer of £122,000 from the Schools Block to the Central Block for Education Welfare Services, dependent on any necessary consent from the DfE;
- 3.2. The schools' forum agreed to consult with school on the funding parameters outlined in the recommendations "a" to "e".

- 3.3. The Cabinet Member is asked to agree the local schools funding formula for the 2026-27 financial year.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 The Council is legally required to set the local schools funding formula and must submit this to the ESFA by 22nd January 2026. These changes require approval by the Council to complete the Authority Proforma Tool, as required by the ESFA. Such approval can be given on behalf of the Council by the Lead Member of Children, Schools and Families.

5. Options Considered through consultation

- 5.1. All schools in Haringey were consulted on the proposed changes for 2026-27 to the Council's Schools Funding Formula via e-survey. The consultation started on 28th November 2025, with a deadline of 12th December 2025 for responses from Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors.
- 5.2. Table 1 shows options available and total responses received for all options.

Table 1

Haringey Council				
Schools Block Funding Consultation 2026-27				
Response (Yes /No)	To support High Needs Block Transfer of 0.5% from Schools Block (as part of Safety Valve Program)	To set Growth Funding budget to £300,000	Block Transfer to CSSB of £122,000 for Education Welfare (Here is the link to the Education Welfare Paper presented at the Schools' Forum meeting on 16 October 2025: www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/do...)	ONLY For Maintained Sector Schools: Total amount de-delegated from maintained sector for Trade Union Facilities time of £210,000.
Yes	23	22	22	17
No	4	5	5	8
Total	27	27	27	25

- 5.3 Please review Appendix 2 for the consultation regarding the Schools Block Funding Formula for the 2026-27 period.
- 5.4 As a result of the delay in allocations for the 2026-27 financial year, consultation with schools was centred on identifying the proposed options presented in Table 1, and the Council opted to apply the 100% National Funding Formula (NFF) values for the Schools Block funding formula, consistent with the agreement made in the prior financial year, 2025-26.
- 5.5 While it remained the Government's intention that a school's budget should be set on the basis of a single national formula, or NFF in 2026-27, local authorities are still allowed to use either the NFF formula values or locally agreed values within the allowable NFF range to determine funding allocations for schools. Through the consultation, Haringey adopts 100% of the National Funding Formula (NFF) factor values (with Area Cost Adjustments) and the proposed amounts/percentages for block transfers and de-delegation shown in table 2 below.

Table 2

Allocation type	Schools Affected	Description	Proposed Amount
Block Transfer	All Schools	HNB transfer at 0.5%	*£1,192,565
Top Slice	All Schools	Growth Fund/Falling Rolls Fund	£300,000
De-Delegation	Maintained only	Trade Union Facility	£210,042
Block Transfer	All Schools	CSSB for Education Welfare	*£122,000

*Block transfers subject to disapplication request and Secretary of State approval

Haringey School Funding Formula 2026-27

- 5.6 The final settlement has been announced at £238.513m and the NFF funding requirements applied to the APT.
- 5.7 The allowable range for setting the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for 2026-27 is between -0.5% to 0%. With the final settlement figures the MFG for Haringey schools is therefore set at 0%.
- 5.8 The highest permissible local block transfer is set at 0.5%. However, the schools' forum has agreed to authorise a total block transfer of 0.55%, which surpasses the established maximum. This 0.55% allocation consists of a block transfer of 0.5% directed to the High Needs Block (HNB) and an additional 0.05% allocated to the Central Schools Service Block (CSSB). A request for disapplication was submitted to the ESFA in November 2025. Given that the block transfer is agreed as part of the safety valve programme, approval is highly likely. This report has been prepared on the assumption that the request will be agreed upon.
- 5.9 If the disapplication request is not approved by the Department for Education (DfE), the block transfer for both the High Needs Block (HNB) and the Central School Services Block (CSSB) will be restricted to 0.5% of the Schools Block, in line with the DfE threshold. This level of transfer does not require approval from the Secretary of State.
- 5.10 Schools were consulted on a single model that corresponds with the 100% National Funding Formula (NFF) values for the financial year 2026-27. Since a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) above 0% cannot be established, the allocations presented in Table 2 of Section 5.5 will necessitate setting the MFG at 0.26%. This adjustment will require a disapplication, which is unlikely to receive ministerial approval. To enable an MFG at 0% will require an increase in Top Slice for the Growth Fund/Falling Rolls Fund of £666,629, compared to the £300,000 consulted upon and agreed at Schools Forum on December 2025. The final de-delegations/block transfers and financial allocations to each school to set MFG at 0%, to be agreed at Schools Forum on 15th January 2026, are detailed in Table 3 and Appendix 1.

Table 3

Allocation type	Schools Affected	Description	Proposed Amount
Block Transfer	All Schools	HNB transfer at 0.5%	*£1,192,565
Top Slice	All Schools	Growth Fund/Falling Rolls Fund	£666,629

De-Delegation	Maintained only	Trade Union Facility	£210,147
Block Transfer	All Schools	CSSB for Education Welfare	*£122,000

5.11 Appendix 1 outlines the financial allocations for each school for the financial year 2026-27.

5.12 Final allocations are subject to financial and data validation by the ESFA formula validation checks.

6. Background information

6.1 The DSG is currently divided into four blocks:

- Schools Block
- High Needs Block
- Early Years Block
- Central School Services Block.

6.2 The policy document which sets out the background and principles of the new National Funding Formula for schools can be found at: [Pre-16 schools funding: local authority guidance for 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#)

6.3 The basic structure of the schools National Funding Formula (NFF) is not changing in 2026-27. There are a small number of changes in existing factors of the formula in 2026-27.

6.4 The DfE has confirmed that the School Budget Support Grant (SBSG) and the National Insurance Contributions (NICs) grant will be incorporated into the 2026 – 2027 NFF values.

6.5 The total pupil count has decreased by 767, which includes 217 pupils from three schools that closed during the 2025–26 financial year. This reduction will significantly impact the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for 2026–27. However, it is important to note that the DSG allocation has increased by £6.371 million, primarily due to additional grants rolled into the DSG totalling £6.754 million.

6.6 Haringey Council will ensure that all procedures are in place to meet the requirement to publish maintained school budgets by 28th February 2026 in line with guidance set by the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2025.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

7.1. The local school funding formula is an important element in delivering the best possible outcomes for Haringey's children and young people under the People Priority.

- 7.2. The People Priority underpins the council's approach to ensuring young people in Haringey get the best start in life, through early help, excellent education, and support.

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

8.1. Finance

The recommended changes to the Council's local schools funding formula as applied to each school is detailed in Appendix 1. This is affordable and contained within the total 2026-27 DSG funding allocation published by the ESFA in December 2025.

There are no direct implications from this decision in relation to the Council's General Fund. However, the broader impact of funding reductions due to declining pupil numbers could affect schools' reserve balances and long-term financial viability. This may ultimately impact the General Fund in the future, particularly during school restructures or closures if pupil numbers drop significantly in the coming years.

8.2. Strategic Procurement

Strategic Procurement note the contents of this report and confirm there are no procurement related issues preventing Cabinet from approving the recommendations stated in paragraph 3 of this report.

8.3. Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Local Authorities are required to determine their education budget comprising of non-schools education budget, schools budget, individual schools budget and budget share applying prescriptive statutory rules, the current regulations being the School and Early Years Finance and Childcare (Provision of Information about Young Children) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2025.

Since 2023 local authorities have been required to bring their local school funding formula closer to the National Funding Formula issued annually by the DfE; the national funding formula (NFF) for schools and high needs and the central school block for 2026 to 2027 was published on xxxx November 2025. Changes made to the schools NFF 2026-2027 are reflected in the local formula presented for approval.

The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2025 require the Council to determine budget shares for schools maintained by them and amounts to be allocated in respect of early years provision in their areas, in accordance with the formula determined. The statutory framework requires the Council to consult with its school's forum and schools maintained by it about any proposed changes to the funding formula, in relation to the factors and criteria considered, and the methods, principles and rules adopted. The same consultation obligation applies to proposed changes that will affect early years providers.

The Education & Skills Funding Agency operational guidance 'Schools revenue funding 2026 to 2027' (Updated December 2025) provides the detailed process for reviewing and consulting on the pre-16 formula. The rules are underpinned by the general principles that apply to public consultations. In this report Officers have outlined a process that is compliant with the requirements of Section 6 of the guidance and mechanism for public consultation:

Reviewing and consulting on the pre-16 formula

Local authorities must engage in open and transparent consultation with all maintained schools and academies in their area, as well as with their schools forums, about any proposed changes to their local funding formulae, including the principles adopted and any movement of funds between blocks.

Any consultation should include a demonstration of the effect of modelling such changes on individual maintained schools and academies.

Local authorities also need to set out how their proposals meet the requirements to move the local formulae towards the NFF.

Local authorities should communicate proposed formula changes to all bodies affected by the changes.

The local authority is responsible for making the final decisions on their formula; each local authority's process should ensure that there is sufficient time to gain political approval before the APT deadline in January 2026.

Political approval means approval in line with the local authority's local scheme of delegation, so this may be decisions made by the council cabinet, cabinet member or full council. The schools forum does not decide on the formula.

Local authorities should, as much as is possible, ensure that they allow sufficient time for wider consultation with schools, agreement by their schools forum, and political approval if they wish to transfer funding out of the schools block, or submit a disapplication request.

The funding formula proposed adopted by the schools forum and recommended for approval by the Cabinet member includes parameters that require the approval of the ESFA.

Local Authorities are allowed to transfer up to 0.5% of their DSG within the defined blocks. As noted in the report the permissible block transfer can be managed as part of the safety valve agreement. The formula proposed by the schools forum exceeds 0.5% in proposing a transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block and an additional 0.05% from the Schools Block to the Central Schools Services Block, a total transfer of 0.55% with the approval of the ESFA. The report advised that a request has been submitted to the ESFA and consequently the proposed funding formula for 2026/2027 is subject to a the success of the disapplication.

Approval of the formula is an executive decision that is assigned to the Lead Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Families.

8.4. Equalities comments

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant characteristic and people who do not share it.

The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: is age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status apply to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

The report proposes to change the Council local schools funding formula for 2026-27, in line with the Department of Education's School National Funding Formula. This includes local adjustments to the formula to ensure schools receive an across-the-board funding uplift for pupils and targeted allocations to support special educational needs for children in schools. This will have a positive impact on young people who are at school in Haringey, in particular disabled children affected by the targeted allocations of SEND support.

The 0.50% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block will support DfE Safety Valve programme to reduce High Needs Block deficit. These changes demonstrate due regard for the protected characteristics of disability, promoting equality of opportunity for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Consultation took place with all schools in Haringey, with headteachers and governors invited to submit responses via an e-survey. This ensured that the perspective of all schools within the borough could be taken into account.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1: DSG – Indicative allocations school level 2026-27

Appendix 2: Schools Block Funding Formula Consultation 2026-27

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

The following information was used in compiling this report:

Guidance on Dedicated schools grant (DSG):

[Dedicated schools grant \(DSG\): 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#)

The national funding formulae for schools and high needs:

[National funding formula tables for schools and high needs: 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#)

The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulation:

[The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2025](#)