



Sheffield Schools Forum 26 September 2023 Executive Summary of Decisions

Family Hubs

The Forum was updated on Family Hubs:

- Sheffield was identified as a top tier authority and awarded Trailblazer status in December 2022, and has received £5.2m of funding.
- The vision is to enable access for early help via a single point of access – [Start for Life](#).
- There will be a registered Family Hub in each locality, and we are looking to co-locate with partners.
- Forum members were asked to encourage support from schools by engaging in consultation, sharing information with key contacts, and linking into and considering schools' involvement in the wider the strategy.

Independent Placements – Update on Expenditure

- Expenditure in Sheffield on independent specialist placements (ISPs) has increased by £2m due to the increasing number of placements as well as inflation.
- The overall number of placements in special schools and ISPs has grown by 33% since 2017 (the proportion of placements in ISPs is in line with overall growth).
- The average cost of an ISP is £70k, and 45% of ISP placements are as a result of tribunals.
- In comparison to other local authorities, Sheffield's percentage of ISPs of all school placements doesn't stand out.

The Forum noted the strategy to meet anticipated growth (as detailed in Paper 4) and the drive to increase integrated resource and hub provision.

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) Debt

£422k of debt is outstanding to the PRU from 45 schools and academies, with the largest debt being £46k. The most persistent debt is historical – from 2016/17 to 2019/20.

The Forum agreed to the recommendation of pursuing these debts formally and noted the potential impact on the whole school system if they are not recovered.

Capital Update

The Forum noted the following capital allocations and updates:

High Needs Allocation

- In 2022/23 Sheffield has received an allocation of £6.7m and £7.1m in 2023/ for High Needs Capital Allocation investment.

- We have received DfE approval to build an 80-place social emotional and mental health (SEMH) school and we have also secured a new free school in a joint bid with Barnsley.
- We have set an ambition to double integrated resource provision in the city within five years and special-led hubs are also in scope of this development.
- We are seeking to improve and expand post-16 SEND provision.
- We are supporting two bids for alternative provision schools.

Basic Need Allocation

We will receive £26m in 2025/26, but it should be noted that we require approximately 1,300 more places and these will account for use of the majority of these funds.

School Condition Allocation

An allocation of £3.6m has been provided for maintained schools for 2023/24. We still have a maintenance backlog estimated at £100m with £45m considered a priority.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) Update

- 35 schools in Sheffield were built within the timeframe when RAAC was used.
- Schools have carried out visual checks and so far, only one school has been identified as having RAAC – Abbey Lane and works to rectify this will be completed in December. Where required, additional assurance has been secured through engagement of structural engineers.

School Rebuilding Programme

Six out of ten schools submitted as part of the programme have been approved and these have been prioritised nationally for re-build based on their condition.

Early Years

The Forum was updated on increases to the Early Years Rate and extended entitlement:

- From April 2024 – all working parents of 2-year-olds can access 15 hours per week.
- From September 2024 – all working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years-old can access 15 hours per week.
- From September 2025 – all working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years-old can access 30 hours per week.
- The funding rates for 2023/24 are to increase with immediate effect as a result of a one-off Early Years Supplementary Grant and 100% of the increase is to be passed on to providers. The tables at section 3 of the paper show the increase in funding rates.

Positive Balance 2021/22

Further to consultation with the sector, **the Forum approved** the recommendations of the Early Years Working Group:

- To pay all 3 and 4-year-old Funded Early Learning (FEL) providers a share of the £465k 2021/22 positive balances, based on their participation hours from 2022/23, subject to them still being open in autumn 2023.

- That any future net determined balances are added to the base hourly funding rate in the following financial year.

*Forum papers are available to download via [Sheffield Schools Forum](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/sheffield-schools-forum)
(<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/sheffield-schools-forum>)*

*You can also download a list of Forum members on this page should you wish to raise an
issue/ask a question*

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