

Telephone: (0114) 273 5380

Email: jayne.dunn@councillor.sheffield.gov.uk

Your reference:

Our reference:

Date: 26 July 2021



**Co-operative Executive Member for
Education, Children and Families
Councillor for Southey Ward**

Town Hall, Sheffield, S1 2HH

Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE
Secretary of State for Education
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Williamson

Re. LA Maintained Schools Building Condition and SEND Capital Funding

We are writing to express concerns about the level of Schools Condition Allocation (SCA) currently allocated to Sheffield and its impact on the maintained school estate in the city. In particular we would like to emphasize the disparity to access building conditions resources for maintained schools compared to academies - all children should be able to attend well maintained buildings, suitable to meet their needs, irrespective of the type of school they attend.

In addition, we would also like to highlight our concerns around the amount of SEND Capital funding that is available to Sheffield.

Building Condition

A source of increasing challenge from parents, headteachers and local councillors is schools building condition related issues. Sheffield City Council (SCC) has carried out a programme of surveys on 66 schools and five children's centres where we are the Responsible Body. The surveys have highlighted that there is required outstanding maintenance of an estimated £45m. The latest SCA for 2021/22 was £3.6m. At this rate of allocation, it would take us over 12 years to get close to implementing a meaningful programme of lifecycle maintenance.

The shortfall is critically impacting our ability to provide a nurturing and empowering learning environment, with officers and school staff working on a reactive basis with little opportunity for planned maintenance.

Continued / . . .

The data indicates the main areas requiring investment as follows:

Element	£m
Mechanical Services	8.97
Roofs	8.45
External Windows & Doors	7.68
Fire Protection	5.64
External Areas	3.29
Electrical Services	2.95
Total	36.98

SCC has prioritised a programme of fire protection projects; alongside addressing the most urgent structural, roof replacements and mechanical projects within a 'safe, warm and dry' approach. The current level of SCA is insufficient to help deliver a satisfactory environment to the school estate.

We recognise that carbon neutral education buildings will make a big contribution to our '**net zero carbon**' target of 2030. However, we also recognise that decisions to replace boilers with ground-sourced/air-sourced heating systems puts further pressure on the SCA budget.

SEND Capital Funding

In addition, we will only receive £1.9m in 2021/22 for SEND capital funding which is insufficient to meet the increasing demand. Demand for SEND places is forecast to rise by at least 30% over the next five years and could be as high as 50%. Sheffield's special schools are already at capacity, and based on benchmarking of other capital schemes, an allocation in the region of £30m is needed to create enough SEND places to meet our sufficiency requirements.

Considering the above, we need your support regarding the impact of the funding shortfall and to help increase it to a fairer and an acceptable level for Sheffield schools. We would therefore welcome a meeting with you to discuss the matter in more detail and await further contact from your office to arrange a suitable date at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Jayne Dunn
**Co-operative Executive Member
for Education, Children and Families**



Paul Stockley
Chair, Sheffield Schools Forum