



Sheffield Education Funding Forum 24 June 2025 Executive Summary

Exclusions Update

Further to a recent Committee Report, the Forum was given an update on exclusions:

- Our permanent exclusions are very high – higher than national levels, core cities and statistical neighbours – and are rising.
- We also have associated challenges regarding sixth day provision and children are waiting longer than they should be to be placed.
- There is a lack of a coherent strategy; lack of alternative provision and sixth day provision; variable levels of challenge and accountability; and a disproportionate number of vulnerable children being excluded.
- We are focussed on working towards an effective solution and to take preventative measures, and we have established a Challenge Board to provide an additional level of scrutiny and increased accountability.
- We are looking to build on good practice, for example the Compass network which has low exclusion rates.
- Further updates will be brought back to the Forum.

PFI Expiry Update

Forum Paper 4 provides an update on work to date - to ensure that Phase 1 is successfully delivered on time.

- The new project team came into force in March/April 2025 and is developing core project management principles.
- Six schools' contracts are due to expire in August 2026, and we have set out key objectives of what is required of schools in terms of the handover, for example around building condition.
- By the end of summer we will know the status of works to be completed and if there are any disputes with contractors.
- We have met with all six schools to share plans and the communications strategy.
- A further progress report will be brought back to the Forum in December.

SEND Top-up and Locality Funding Update – Standing Item

A recap of progress to date was given and an update on the latest position:

- We procured a resource allocation system banded funding system called Formulate for SEND from Imosphere. Phased implementation commenced in September 2024, and the system will go live to allocate funding for all pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans in mainstream schools from September 2025.
- We have an internal moderation process to ensure accuracy and consistency in implementation.

- We have provided additional funding – a school level high needs support fund of £2.5m - for children with additional needs but without an EHC Plan.
- Not all schools capture needs via the Sheffield Support Grid (SSG) so we have created a model that uses the SSG, Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) or a hybrid model for distributing this funding, with a minimum funding guarantee of £10,000 for standalone infant schools and nursery infant schools due to unique pressures.
- We continue to review the arrangements going forward and would ideally need to invest more to strengthen mainstream provision and avoid escalation.

Growth Funding and Falling Rolls

- The Growth Fund is reducing as a result of primary numbers falling.
- Basic need growth has now reduced to £1.055m for next year. We will be distributing this to schools in August for September starts.
- There is no funding for Falling Rolls, so we are therefore rolling forward £200k funding from last year.
- In response to previous queries about academy reserves balances, and pooling versus individual academy reserves. We have now revised the wording in both policy documents. If a trust pools reserves, they will need to provide details of an apportioned reserve for the school in question.

The Forum:

- **Noted** that the Growth Funding allocation to Sheffield has decreased to £1.21m.
- **Noted** that the Growth Funding available to schools is £1m.
- **Approved** the updated Growth Funding Policy for 2025/26 at Appendices 1 and 2.
- **Agreed** the planned Growth Funding payments of £1.05m to be paid to Sheffield schools as detailed in (Appendix 3).
- **Noted** the Falling Rolls Funding balance of 200k.
- **Approved** the updated Falling Rolls Policy for 2025/26 at Appendices 4 and 5.

Updates for information only

Papers were also circulated for information only regarding: academy reserves; school food prices and the teachers' pay award/NI additional funding allocation.

Forum papers are available to download via the [Sheffield Education Funding Forum](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/schools-childcare/sheffield-education-funding-forum) webpage(<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/schools-childcare/sheffield-education-funding-forum>)

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

If you have any queries about the Education Forum, please contact:

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