



Schools Forum

Monday 26 January 2026 at 6.00 pm
Held online

This will be undertaken as an online virtual meeting

The press and public are welcome to attend this online virtual meeting by viewing the live webcast which it will be possible to access [HERE](#)

Membership

SCHOOL MEMBERS

Nursery

Nisha Lingam	Head
Angela Turner	Governor

Primary

Vacancy	Head
Michelle Ginty	Head
Melissa Loosemoore	Head
Raphael Moss	Head
Vacancy	Governor
Vacancy	Governor
Michael Odumosu	Governor
Ernest Toquie	Governor

Secondary

Vacancy	Head (Maintained)
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Special Education Needs

Nick Cooper	Head
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Pupil Referral Unit

Ranjna Shiyani

Head

ACADEMY MEMBERS

Primary

Vacancy

Head

Jo Jhally

Governor

Secondary

Andy Prindiville

Head

Jude Enright

Head

Vacancy

Governor

Vacancy

Governor

Martin Beard

Governor

Mike Heiser (Chair)

Governor

Special Education Needs

Jayne Jardine

Head

NON –SCHOOL MEMBERS

Early Years PVI

Paul Russell

Wioletta Bura

Trade Union

Lucy Cox/Jennifer Cooper

16-19 Provider Representative

Vacancy

For further information contact: Abby Shinhmar, Governance Officer
Email: abby.shinhmar@brent.gov.uk

For electronic copies of minutes and agendas please visit:

[HERE](#)

Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest** in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also significant enough to affect your judgement of a public interest and either it affects a financial position or relates to a regulatory matter then after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

***Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences** - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

****Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

- (a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:
 - To which you are appointed by the council;
 - which exercises functions of a public nature;
 - which is directed to charitable purposes;
 - whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party or trade union).
- (b) The interests of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;

Or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who is the subject of a registrable personal interest.

Agenda

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To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 11 November 2025 as a correct record.	
5 Actions Arising	
To consider any actions arising from previous meetings.	
6 Schools Forum Update Forward Plan	5-6
To note the Forward Plan of items scheduled for consideration by Schools Forum.	
7 DSG Schools Block Budget 2026/27	7-22
This report sets out the proposed DSG Schools Budget for 2026/27 for consultation and agreement by Schools Forum ahead of the Council budget being set and approved by Full Council in February 2025.	
8 Early Years Block Budgets 2026/27	23-34
This report sets out the DSG Early Years' (EY) Block funding for Brent.	
9 Any Other Urgent Business	
10 Dates of Future Meetings	
Members are asked to note the remaining date for the meeting of the Schools Forum for the 2025-26 Municipal Year as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thursday 26 February 2026 held online at 6pm	

Agenda Item 4



MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

Held as an online meeting on Tuesday 11 November 2025 at 6:00pm

Membership

Representing

PRESENT (all in remote attendance):

Governors

Mike Heiser (Chair)
Martin Beard
Michael Odumosu

Headteachers

Jayne Jardine
Raphael Moss
Andy Prindiville
Ranjna Shiyani
Melissa Loosemore
Michelle Ginty
Nick Cooper
Jude Enright

Non School Members

Councillors

Councillor Grahl, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools

Trade Union

Lucy Cox

Officers

Shirley Parks, Director Education, Partnerships and Strategy
Roxanna Glennon, Head of Inclusion
Pallavi Shah, Senior Finance Analyst
Folake Olufeko, Head of Finance
Atera Rahman, Finance Analyst
Abby Shinhmar, Governance Team

1. Apologies for Absence and Membership

Apologies for absence were received from Jo Jhally and Nigel Chapman.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Deputations (if Any)

None.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 18 June 2025 as a correct record subject to the spelling correction of Roxanna Glennon's first name (not Roxanne).

5. **Actions arising**

None.

6. **Forward Plan**

The Forum **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the Forward Plan.

7. **Dedicated Schools Outturn Financial Outturn 2024-25**

Folake Olufeko (Head of Finance, Brent Council) introduced a report, which provided an update on the projected financial position for the 2025/26 financial year. It also provided an update on schools' additional in-year grant allocations from the DfE. For reference, Appendix 1 of this report contained a detailed budget breakdown and forecast by funding blocks.

The Forum noted the following key points as part of the update provided:

- Budget announcements were anticipated by the end of the month.
- The overall DSG allocation had decreased by £1.2m, from the position approved by Schools Forum in January 2025, due to an in-year adjustment by the DfE in July 2025. The adjustment related to £0.5m increase in the High Needs (HN) Block funding mainly due to an increase in funding for additional special free school places and £1.7m decrease in the Early Years Block following the completion of the January 2025 census, which saw a reduction in hours of childcare provision compared to the January 2024 census data. The Local Authority with its Best Start in Life planning and the new Early Years strategy was focusing on increasing and maximising take up of the local offer.
- The DSG forecast was reflecting a deficit of £2.7m, against grant funds of £250.8m mainly due to pressures from the HN Block.
- At the end of the 2025/26 financial year, the cumulative deficit stood at £13.6m.
- Ongoing growth in demand for HN provision, combined with continued pressures on top-up funding allocations, meant the DSG budget was now projected to end 2025/26 with a significantly higher cumulative deficit of £16.3m. This forecast did not include potential additional pressures within post-16 education budgets, as updated rates and student numbers for the new academic year will be confirmed by providers from October onwards. In 2024/25, this area recorded an overspend of £0.8m, and a similar level of pressure, if not mitigated, could increase the cumulative deficit to approximately £17.1m.
- A detailed financial monitor of the DSG Schools Budget monitoring report was presented in Appendix 1. The 'Actual to P6' column represented spend to date as of 30th of September 2025 and the forecasts provided were those prepared during October 2025.
- Of the total £298.1m Schools Block budget allocated by the DfE to Brent, £168m had been recouped and allocated directly to academies. £1.4m had been transferred to the HNB and £2.6m had been deducted for National Non-Domestic

Business Rates to be paid by the DfE directly to the billing authority, leaving £126m directly allocated to Brent maintained schools and to fund centrally retained items including the growth fund.

- The School's Block was currently forecast to break even.
- The HN budget, excluding the proportion allocated to academies was £82.6m. This allocation included a £1.4m transfer from the Schools Block.
- The HN Block allocation increased by £5.0m in 2025/26. The growth in EHCPs had continued at a rate comparable to previous years. Between January 2025 and September 2025, there was a 7% (8% between January 2024 and January 2025) increase in children and young people with an EHCP, with the number increasing from 3791 to 4050 over this period. Significant pressures remain within the HN Block. These include rising costs associated with independent, residential and out of borough placements as well as the growth in associated costs of increase in EHCPs outstripping increase in funding.
- The EY Block allocation reduced by £1.7m following the completion of the January 2025 census. The census had shown a reduction in take-up of the 3- and 4-year-old universal entitlement, a small increase in 3 and 4-year-old additional 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents and a reduction in take-up 2-year-old entitlements. There had also been a clawback of £88.7k from the initial supplementary funding allocation for Maintained Nursery schools. To support these settings, the Local Authority was not proposing to recover this clawback from its Maintained Nurseries for this financial year.
- At this stage, the forecast for the EY Block indicated a break-even position. However, this position was likely to change over the next two quarters, as children moved on from early years' settings and new take-up hours were confirmed from September 2025 and in the Spring term from January 2026.
- The DfE had confirmed that the structure of the Schools NFF would remain unchanged for 2026/27, with all existing factors such as basic entitlement, additional needs and minimum per pupil funding continuing to operate as in 2025/26.
- In response to a request from the February 2025 Schools Forum meeting for an update on the £44m capital investment plan approved by Cabinet in January 2022 for additional SEND places, an update on project progress was provided in Appendix 3.
- Folake Olufeko added that there was an ongoing review of the deficit and how to best manage it with work ongoing to manage the HNB funding despite the pressures continuing to be experienced.

The Chair thanked Folake Olufeko for her report and welcomed any questions from the Forum with the following being noted:

- Raphael Moss sought clarification regarding parental choice for out borough placements and if the local authority could take strategic steps to reduce. Shirley Parks clarified that parental choice was not for mainstream schools but for Special school places.
- The School Placement Strategy was being presented at Cabinet in November 2025 for additional school places, expanding existing school places and sites. Additional special school provision had been identified to manage the level of out of borough placements with the Council prioritising special schools rather than ARPs to remain ahead of demand.

- In noting the number of out of borough and independent placements, the Chair queried whether the deficit would continue year on year. Shirley Parks explained that pupils could be moved back into the borough if funding was secured. It was noted that the 19-25 year old cohort required robust education provision but it was essential to know the right time to stop that provision as well. Roxanna Glennon added that demand continued to increase and younger pupils had been assessed with a high needs profile and would require special schools. Therefore, early intervention was key. Some out of borough placements could have been made due to schools in the borough being at full capacity. It was noted that as a London borough, some out of borough schools might be closer for families than the provision available within schools in Brent. It was estimated that demand would continue to exceed supply and the department was awaiting the SEND White Paper release.
- In response to a query regarding the work being undertaken with existing schools to ensure SEND pupils needs continued to be met appropriately, Roxanna Glennon advised of the robust structures in place for specialist provision along with benchmarking undertaken and ongoing work with the inclusive mainstream schools.
- Melissa Loosemore commended the spreadsheet showing when funding will be delivered to schools. Shirley Parks confirmed that schools will continue to be informed when payments are due to be disseminated.

As no further questions or comments were raised, the Chair thanked Folake Olufeko and Shirley Parks for their work on the report and the Forum **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the report.

8. Any Other Urgent Business

It was agreed that the additional meeting scheduled for 1 December 2025 was no longer required and would be cancelled.

9. Dates of Future Meetings

Members noted the remaining schedule of dates for meetings of the Schools Forum during the 2025-26 Municipal Year as follows, with all meetings to be held online starting at 6pm:

- Monday 26 January 2026
- Thursday 26 February 2026

The meeting closed at 6:34pm.

M Heiser
Chair

Brent Schools Forum Forward Plan – January 2026

Date	Item
26 January 2026	DSG Schools Block budgets 2026/27 DSG Early Years Block budgets 2026/27
26 February 2026	DSG High Needs Block budgets 2026/27 DSG High Needs Block Deficit Management Plan update Update on Brent Special Schools' banding review
June 2026	DSG Grant Outturn Scheme for Financing Schools & Schools' Financial Regulations

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 Brent	Schools Forum 26 January 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Children Young People and Community Development
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Budget 2026/27	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	N/A
List of Appendices:	Appendix A – 2026/27 Brent Local Funding Formula Rates Appendix B – School Level Allocations 2026/27
Background Papers:	Prior Financial reports to Schools Forum
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Folake Olufeko Head of Finance – CYP觅 0208 937 2179 Email: Folake.Olufeko@brent.gov.uk Pallavi Shah Senior Finance Analyst – CYP觅 0208 937 2156 Email: Pallavi.Shah@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out the proposed DSG Schools Budget for 2026/27 for consultation and agreement by Schools Forum ahead of approval by Full Council in February 2026.
- 1.2. The Department for Education (DfE) announced the final DSG block funding allocations for 2026/27 on 17 December 2025. This report sets out the final Schools Block funding, including the growth funding allocation for 2026/27.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. Schools Forum is asked to:
 - a. Endorse the 2026/27 budget for the DSG Blocks, including the mainstream funding formula, to Full Council for approval.
 - b. Agree the 2026/27 growth fund, in line with the DfE's mandatory requirements for the treatment of the growth fund allocation.

- c. Note the application of a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) rate of 0%, in line with the DfE's MFG threshold range which is between -0.5% and 0.0% for the 2026/27 financial year.

2.2 Maintained school members of the Schools Forum are requested to approve the proposed de-delegation arrangements set out within this report. These proposals include adjustments to the de-delegated contingencies budget to:

- Reduce the allocation for supporting schools in financial difficulty in line with current spend.
- Increase the allocation for free school meals eligibility checking service based on actual cost.
- Increase allocations for staff-related costs, including maternity and paternity supply cover and trade union facility time in line with current spend.

2.3 Agree to disapply the previously approved 0.5% funding transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block (HNB) in order to set the budgets in accordance with the Schools Forum agreement and the government's directive to continue to move towards the National Funding Formula (NFF), using permitted NFF factors within DfE thresholds.

3.0 Contribution to Borough Plan

3.1 This report is linked to the Council's Borough Plan which aims to support babies, children and young people get the best start in life, by working in partnership with schools and other partners to make sure access to education is fair and equal.

4.0 2026/27 DSG Funding Announcements

4.1 The Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed school funding increases for 2026/27 based on updated pupil data and formulae assumptions and integrating existing additional grants received within the current financial year such as the Schools Budget Support Grant (SBSG) and National Insurance Contributions (NIC) grant into the NFF. Brent's confirmed DSG allocation is £452m.

4.2 Both the SBSG and NIC grants have been incorporated into the 2026/27 NFF using three methods: increasing core formula factor values (basic entitlement, FSM6, and lump sum), raising minimum per-pupil funding levels, and adjusting each school's baseline for funding protections. This mirrors the approach used for previous grant roll-ins.

4.3 Pupil premium funding, which is funding to improve education outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in England, will increase to £1,550 (£1,515 in 2025/26) for Primary aged pupils, £1,100 (£1,075 in 2025/26) for Secondary aged pupils and £2,690 (£2,630 in 2025/26) for children who are looked after by the local authority or who have been adopted from care or have left care.

5.0 Proposal to discontinue Schools Block transfer to the HNB

- 5.1 The High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) has been in deficit since the 2019/20 financial year. As at March 2025, the cumulative brought-forward deficit stands at £13.6m and is forecast to increase to £18.3m by the end of the financial year.
- 5.2 From 2022/23 onwards, a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the HNB has been implemented, following agreement by the Schools Forum, to help address increasing demand. However, these transfers have been insufficient to offset the cumulative deficit.
- 5.3 In November 2021, following consultation with schools, the Schools Forum agreed to begin aligning school budgets with the government's requirement for local authorities to adopt, or move closer to the NFF, also referred to as the hard formula.
- 5.4 Brent now applies all NFF factor rates, except for English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Low Prior Attainment (LPA), which are set at the minimum permitted levels.
- 5.5 As a result of applying these rates, there is insufficient funding available to continue a transfer to the HNB without exceeding the DfE's funding factor thresholds.
- 5.6 It is therefore proposed that, for the 2026/27 financial year, the previously approved 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the HNB be disapplied, as schools are unable to sustain this transfer.
- 5.7 An update on the DSG Deficit Management Plan, which sets out plans to address the impact of no Schools Block transfer to the HNB in 2026/27, will be brought to the Schools Forum in February 2026.

6.0 2026/27 DSG Funding Blocks

6.1 Table 1 – 2026/27 Brent DSG Funding Allocations

Brent NFF Allocation 2026/27	Schools Block	High Needs Block	CSSB	Early Years Block	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
2025/26	298,181	90,976	2,445	40,269	431,872
2026/27	309,043	95,247	2,480	45,452	452,222
Increase	10,862	4,271	34	5,182	20,350
% Change	3.64%	4.69%	1.41%	12.87%	4.71%
*Other grants included in 2026/27 allocations (SBSG, NIC)	3,591				3,591
Increase/(decrease) excluding other grants	7,271	4,271	34	5,182	16,759
% Change excluding other grants	2.44%	4.69%	1.41%	12.87%	3.88%

6.2 Brent is set to receive a total DSG funding allocation of £452m in 2026/27 compared to £432m in 2025/26. This represents an overall increase of £20m.

6.3 The growth funding allocation has reduced to £1.3m compared to £1.8m in 2025/26. This allocation is based on the difference between the number of pupils on roll in each school between the October 2024 and October 2025 school censuses. This growth funding allocation is included in the overall Schools Block funding for 2026/27 as shown in Table 1 below.

6.4 The final HNB allocation has been announced as £95.2m. This is £4.3m more than the allocation for 2025/26 and represents a funding increase of 4.69%.

6.5 The 4.7% increase in funding in 2026/27 is considerably less than the 8% increase seen in EHCPs between January 2024 and January 2025 and will not contribute towards reducing the projected cumulative DSG deficit of £18.3m. It would, however, contribute towards funding any further additional pressures due to continued increases in the number of EHCPs. A detailed breakdown of the HNB budget will be presented to Schools Forum in February 2026.

6.6 In the summer of 2023, the previous government consulted on the minimum pass-through requirement for the Early Years Block to providers and outlined its intention to increase this from 95% to 97% once the new entitlements were sufficiently embedded. This change has now been implemented, with a mandatory minimum pass-through rate of 97% for all early year's entitlements from 9 months to 4 years old from 2026/27. Last year, local authorities were permitted to retain 4% from the 3-and-4-year-old entitlement and 2% from the 2-year-old and under 2 entitlements as part of a phased approach. For 2026/27, these transitional arrangements have ended, and the full 97% pass-through applies across all age groups. The move to 97% has reduced the amount available for central expenditure allocated from the 3 & 4-year-old funding entitlement compared to previous years. This shortfall has been mitigated through the introduction of a 3% allowable deduction from all the other entitlements. This would enable the local authority to maintain central services at current levels.

6.7 The EYNFF rate for 2-year-old funding will increase from £9.77 per hour in 2025/26 to £10.04 per hour in 2026/27, while the hourly rate for 3 and 4-year-olds rises from £6.80 to £7.27 in 2026/27. To support the transition from an annual to a termly census, the DfE has introduced a termly funding adjustment for 2026/27, meaning local authorities will receive an adjusted hourly rate for 3-and-4-year-old to offset the potential reduction in funded hours under a termly model. This adjustment applies only for 2026/27 and results in most authorities seeing an additional uplift on top of the usual year-on-year increase of £0.20p. For 2026/27, the EYNFF under 2-year-old rate has increased from £13.32 to £13.67 per hour. The detailed Early Years Block budgets are presented in a separate paper to this Schools Forum.

6.8 The Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) provides funding for local authorities to deliver central functions on behalf of pupils in maintained schools and academies. The CSSB funding is split into two elements: funding for

ongoing responsibilities and funding for historic commitments. For 2026/27, the CSSB income has been confirmed as £2.5m, an increase of 1.4% compared to £2.4m in 2025/26. The national formula for CSSB remains unchanged from 2025/26 and historic commitments funding continues to reduce by 20% annually from 2025/26 baseline, with the aim that only residual protected costs remain by 2030.

7.0 Schools Block Expenditure – Mainstream Funding Formula

7.1 Table 2 – Individual Schools Block funding

Details	£m
2026/27 DSG allocation	309.04
2026/27 NFF funded NNDR	-2.90
DSG schools block after deduction of 2026/27 NFF funded NNDR	306.14
Less transfer to HN Block	0.00
	306.14
Less growth fund	-0.54
	305.60
Less De-delegation	-0.86
Less Education services	-0.52
Post De-delegation and Education functions budget after deduction of 2026/27 NFF NNDR allocation	304.23

7.2 As shown in Table 2 above, the mainstream funding formula for 2026/27 is £309m. This includes £2.9m of the Schools Block funding which has been clawed back by the DfE to pay for Non-Domestic Business Rates directly to billing authorities on behalf of schools. £0.54m has been excluded for the growth fund. The allocation has been reduced by £0.86m for de-delegated funds and £0.52m retained by the council as a contribution towards fulfilling education services including school improvement services. This leaves £304.23m to be transferred to schools.

School improvement services

7.3 The School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant was introduced in 2017 to provide local authorities with funding to support them in fulfilling their statutory school improvement functions under Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and their additional school improvement expectations as set out in the Schools Causing Concern (SCC) guidance (collectively referred to as core school improvement activities).

7.4 The government reduced the grant by 50% in 2022/23 and brought it to an end in 2023/24. Part 7 of Schedule 2 to the School and Early Years Finance

(England) Regulations 2023 allows local authorities to de-delegate for all improvement expenditure, including all core improvement activities.

7.5 Schools Forum was informed in January 2022 that the local authority would cover the cost of the 50% (£0.109m) reduction in grant funding in 2022/23 and this continued in 2023/24.

7.6 In 2024/25, there was a requirement to make a £50k saving against the budget that contributed the above 50% from the council's general fund account. As a result of this, the Schools Forum agreed to increase the de-delegated amount from schools to £0.159m with the local authority continuing to fund the balance of £59k for school improvement services to schools, to continue to support the functions of the Setting and School Effectiveness Service. It is proposed to retain this level of funding for the 2026/27 financial year.

7.7 This allocation of £0.159m plus the on-going £0.360m totals the £0.519m budget for education services as shown in Table 2 above.

8.0 De-Delegations

8.1 Agreement to de-delegate is sought on the basis that centralised budgets provide good value, and that maintained schools have open access to the services listed in the table below. Maintained school representatives are required to take a decision for their own school phase on each service on whether to de-delegate. The table below sets out the proposed de-delegated services.

8.2 Table 3 – De-delegated items

Total Maintained pupils	2025/26		2026/27	
	Rate per pupil (£)	Amount (£)	Rate per pupil (£)	Amount (£)
	17,555	175,400	17,326	150,000
	1,996	19,551	1,962	19,288
Contingencies- Schools in Financial Difficulty	8.97	175,400	7.78	150,000
Contingencies- Redundancy funding	15.34	300,000	15.55	300,000
Free School Meals eligibility service	1.28	25,000	1.81	35,000
Licenses/ Subscriptions	0.33	6,500	0.34	6,500
Staff costs - Maternity & paternity supply cover	11.41	223,000	15.29	295,000
Staff costs - Trade union facilities	3.07	60,000	3.63	70,000
Total De-delegated items		789,900		856,500

Contingencies

8.3 The proportion of schools relying heavily on reserves remains high with 43% of schools in deficit planning to use 50% or more of their reserves, compared to 42% in 2024/25. It is therefore proposed to continue to de-delegate funds to support schools in financial difficulty, however at a reduced amount of £0.150m, in line with the forecast spend in the current financial year. This would lead to a reduction in the per pupil de-delegated rate of £1.19 at £7.78 compared to £8.97 in 2025/26.

8.4 Schools Forum agreed in January 2024 that if in exceptional circumstances school redundancies are eligible to be funded centrally, where the funding criteria is met in line with the redundancy policy, then these will need to be found from within wider DSG funding. It was agreed that redundancies should be funded from the Schools Facing Financial Difficulties Fund (SFFDF). It is proposed to maintain this allocation at £0.3m. There is a £0.21 increase in the proposed rate for 2026/27 at £15.55 per pupil due to a fall in pupil numbers compared to the last financial year.

Free School Meals eligibility

8.5 The per pupil rates (£1.81) increase of £0.54 from last financial year is mainly due to a fall in pupil numbers. This is required to maintain the Free Schools Meals eligibility service at £35k, including an allocation for an increase in pay award and NIC.

Licences and Subscriptions

8.6 This covers the cost of two licences which the local authority pays for on behalf of schools. These are the British Pathe and CLEAPPS which is an advisory service that provides support in science and technology for a consortium of local authorities and their schools. It is proposed to maintain this allocation at £6.5k in line with the actual cost in 2025/26.

Staff costs

8.7 This budget covers schools' costs for maternity and paternity supply cover, as well as Trade Union services. It is proposed to increase the maternity and paternity supply cover budget by £72k, in line with the current 2025/26 outturn forecast, and to raise the Trade Union service budget by £10k to meet additional staff costs resulting from the current year's pay award. The net cost of centrally employing union representatives is estimated at £70k with £0.295m earmarked for maternity and paternity supply cover, in line with the 2025/26 forecast. This equates to de-delegation rates of £3.63 for Trade Union services and £15.29 for maternity/paternity cover.

9.0 Growth Fund

- 9.1 The proposal is to set aside a growth budget of £0.540m for the current Choice Advice and Fair Access Interview (CAFAI) arrangements with 3 schools to continue to meet the local authority's requirement to meet basic need for children who have newly arrived in the UK and require additional educational support. This programme is currently under review and further updates on any proposed changes will be brought to Schools Forum for approval.
- 9.2 There are currently no formal agreements between the local authority and any of the schools to support growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need and therefore no budget has been set aside for this.

10.0 Falling Rolls

- 10.1 Where local authorities operate a falling rolls fund, they will only be able to provide funding where school capacity data (SCAP) shows that school places will be required in 2026/27 and/or the subsequent 2 years (this is a mandatory requirement). A review of Brent's SCAP demonstrates that fallings rolls are projected for 2026/27 and the next 2 years for the schools experiencing falling rolls and therefore, the funding would not apply for the next financial year.

11.0 Funding Formula Rates

- 11.1 For 2026/27 funding year, the DfE reaffirmed that local authorities must continue to bring their local formulae closer to the NFF. Specifically, they are required to shift their local factor values by at least 10% closer to the national formula each year, unless they already mirror it. A fixed target date by which the direct NFF will be in place has not been set, although the expectation is a move to the direct NFF by the 2027/28 funding year at the latest.
- 11.2 The DfE has provided the 2026/27 factor values including an Area Cost Adjustment (ACA) for Brent. Minimum and maximum allowable rates have also been included so local authorities must either move towards the NFF within the allowable rates or use the actual NFF rates. In line with this requirement, Appendix A provides information on the proposed funding factor rates used in setting the 2026/27 Schools budgets.
- 11.3 To allocate the maximum amount of the Schools Block funding to schools via the funding formula factors, and to make use of the increased funding available

in 2026/27 to cushion the impact of the transition, the local funding formula factors used to set the budgets for 2026/27 have been applied as follows:

- (a) The Indices of Deprivation (IDACI) measure uses 6 bands and the per pupil values for each band are already 'mirroring' the NFF values.
- (b) Primary and Secondary lump sums factors are also 'mirroring' the NFF values.
- (c) All Age-Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU), Primary FSM, Secondary FSM, FSM ever6 and Primary and Secondary Mobility factors have been set at the NFF rates.
- (d) The DfE's compulsory split site rates are at the NFF rates.
- (e) Primary and Secondary EAL, Primary and Secondary LPA are set within the minimum rates.

11.4 The change in formula rates primarily allocates 25% of the additional pupil led funding through AWPU for all Primary and Secondary schools and targets schools with high deprivation via FSM as well as schools with a high number of pupils with EAL across both phases.

11.5 The MFG threshold range for 2026/27 is between -0.5% and 0.0%. The MFG has been set at the maximum allowable rate of 0%. This means that the per pupil funding rates will in the minimum remain the same as last year but not decrease. Under these proposals 17 out of 76 schools require an MFG allocation, and this totals £0.87m. This adjustment is included in the overall post de-delegations and education functions budget as shown in Appendix B.

11.6 Appendix B contains an analysis of the funding formula by individual school, giving both the total formula funding and per pupil funding against the previous year. It should be noted that changes in individual school funding are also caused by changes to the pupil cohort data for that school, for example, the number of pupils attracting the low prior attainment funding factor will change from year to year, so changes in funding are not solely driven by increases or decreases to pupil numbers.

11.7 29 schools are set to see reductions in overall budget share allocations in 2026/27, and this is mainly due to falling rolls ranging from an 8% to 14% drop in pupil numbers.

12.0 Update on Split site funding

12.1 The split site factor is compulsory for all local authorities, ensuring that split sites funding will be allocated consistently and fairly across the country.

12.2 The DfE has developed a split sites factor which recognises costs through a basic eligibility criteria that attracts a lump-sum payment of £63k, and a distance 600m eligibility criteria that attracts an additional lump-sum payment of up to £32k.

12.3 The table below sets out the split sites funding allocations for 2026/27 for schools that meet the new criteria.

12.4 Table 4 – Brents Schools’ Split Site funding for 2026/27

School	DfE's distance to second site (metres)	Basic eligibility	Distance factor	Total 2025/26 allocation	Total 2026/27 allocation
		£	£	£	£
Alperton	670	62,988	30,915	92,749	94,539
Islamia	112	62,988	952	62,786	63,959
Kingsbury High	600	62,988	30,915	92,749	94,539
Leopold	1730	62,988	30,915	92,749	94,539

13.0 Mayor’s Free School Meals Update 2025/26

13.1 For 2026/27, the Mayor has confirmed his commitment to continue delivering a universal free school meal scheme for state funded Primary schools for as long as he remains in office. Funding has already been allocated for the next academic year. However, allocations for 2026/27 and beyond will depend on updated school census data and further details from the government, which is expanding national FSM eligibility to all pupils in households on Universal Credit from September 2026. The Mayor’s funding for 2025/26 academic year was at a rate of £3.00 per meal and provision was also made for Kosher meals funded at a rate of £3.85. These rates are above the government’s rate of £2.61 which is to enable schools to fund the associated costs such as administrative and staffing costs of delivering additional FSMs.

14.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

14.1 This paper enables consultation with members of Brent’s Schools Forum. The recommendations include a requirement for the endorsement of the DSG 2026/27 budgets for approval at Full Council in February 2026.

15.0 Financial Considerations

15.1 The financial implications have been detailed in the body of this paper.

16.0 Legal Considerations

16.1 This report has been drafted with due consideration of the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2025.

17.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

17.1 Not applicable.

18.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

18.1 Not applicable.

19.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

19.1 Not applicable.

20.0 Communication Considerations

20.1 All School Forum papers are published, and all schools will have access to them. The final 2026/27 Schools' budget allocations school will be published on Best Brent by February 2026.

Report sign off:

Nigel Chapman

Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Community Development

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Appendix A - Brent 2026-27 Local Funding Formula Rates

Pupil Led Factors	25-26 LFF	25-26 LFF rates including in-year grants	26-27 NFF including ACA	Brent LFF 10% towards NFF	26-27 Proposed LFF within allowable rates	Change in LFF compared to 25-26	% Change in LFF compared to 25-26	2025-26 Units (Oct 24)	2026-27 Units (Oct 25)	Diff. in no of units	Total Funding 2025-26 £	Total Funding 2026-27 £
	£	£	£	£	£	£	No.	No.	No.	No.	£	£
Primary basic entitlement	4,405	4,537	4,645.80	4,548	4,645.80	109	2.4%	24,945	24,502	(443)	109,884,721	113,831,446
KS3 basic entitlement	6,209	6,347	6,500.01	6,362	6,500.01	153	2.4%	10,136	10,151	15	62,930,066	65,981,579
KS4 basic entitlement	7,000	7,157	7,327.66	7,174	7,327.66	171	2.4%	6,736	6,751	15	47,150,720	49,469,003
Primary FSM	567	567	577.30	568	577.30	10	1.8%	5,632	5,752	120	3,192,274	3,320,605
Secondary FSM	567	567	577.30	568	577.30	10	1.8%	4,285	5,036	751	2,428,781	2,907,262
Primary FSM6	1,214	1,340	1,383.22	1,344	1,383.22	43	3.2%	5,849	6,011	162	7,099,341	8,314,557
Secondary FSM6	1,781	1,907	1,971.95	1,913	1,971.95	65	3.4%	4,693	5,413	720	8,356,262	10,674,171
Primary IDACI F	269	269	274.36	270	274.36	5	2.0%	3,961	3,938	(24)	1,065,930	1,080,314
Primary IDACI E	326	326	331.52	327	331.52	5	1.6%	4,272	4,136	(136)	1,393,978	1,371,069
Primary IDACI D	510	510	520.14	511	520.14	11	2.1%	2,269	2,170	(99)	1,156,205	1,128,912
Primary IDACI C	561	561	571.58	562	571.58	10	1.9%	1,298	1,242	(56)	728,426	709,828
Primary IDACI B	595	595	605.87	596	605.87	10	1.8%	213	228	15	126,887	138,073
Primary IDACI A	784	784	800.21	786	800.21	16	2.0%	7	6	(1)	5,547	4,801
Secondary IDACI F	389	389	394.39	390	394.39	5	1.3%	2,443	2,384	(59)	951,269	940,195
Secondary IDACI E	515	515	525.85	516	525.85	11	2.1%	2,391	2,526	135	1,231,944	1,328,401
Secondary IDACI D	727	727	743.05	729	743.05	16	2.2%	1,368	1,317	(51)	994,709	978,349
Secondary IDACI C	796	796	811.64	797	811.64	16	2.0%	629	633	5	500,281	514,063
Secondary IDACI B	853	853	868.80	855	868.80	16	1.8%	122	108	(14)	104,169	93,883
Secondary IDACI A	1,088	1,088	1,108.87	1,090	1,108.87	21	1.9%	4	5	1	4,354	5,544
Primary EAL	681	681	697.33	683	679.89	(1)	-0.2%	9,655	9,484	(170)	6,577,828	6,448,247
Secondary EAL	1,678	1,678	1,863.35	1,696	1,729.43	52	3.1%	1,638	1,570	(68)	2,748,726	2,715,274
Primary LPA	1,345	1,345	1,371.79	1,348	1,355.89	10	0.8%	7,938	8,032	95	10,679,731	10,890,671
Secondary LPA	2,044	2,044	2,086.27	2,048	2,061.10	17	0.8%	3,579	3,491	(88)	7,316,283	7,195,656
Primary mobility	1,105	1,105	1,126.01	1,107	1,126.0126	21	1.9%	642	533	(109)	709,304	600,277
Secondary mobility	1,586	1,586	1,617.57	1,589	1,617.5714	32	2.0%	418	296	(122)	662,915	479,513
Total Pupil Led Funding											278,000,648	291,121,693
School led factors											0	0
Primary lump sum	171,964	176,315	174,560.53	176,140	174,560.53	(1,755)	-1.0%	60	60	0.00	10,317,838	10,473,632
Secondary lump sum	171,964	176,315	174,560.53	176,140	174,560.53	(1,755)	-1.0%	16	16	0.00	2,751,423	2,792,969
Primary sparsity	65,727	65,727	66,989.18	65,853	66,989.18	1,262	1.9%	n/a	n/a			
Secondary sparsity	95,499	95,499	97,397.23	95,689	97,397.23	1,898	2.0%	n/a	n/a			
Middle-school sparsity	95,499	95,499	97,397.23	95,689	97,397.23	1,898	2.0%	n/a	n/a			
All-through sparsity	95,499	95,499	97,397.23	95,689	97,397.23	1,898	2.0%	n/a	n/a			
Split sites basic eligibility funding	61,834	61,834	62,988.12	61,949	62,988.12	1,154	1.9%	NFF mandatory	NFF mandatory			
Split sites distance funding	30,915	30,915	31,551.22	30,979	31,551.22	636	2.1%	NFF mandatory	NFF mandatory			
Business Rates											2,669,016	2,900,629
Growth funding											782,225	540,000.00
MFG											1,841,435	866,796.00
0.5% Transfer to the HN Block											1,477,561	
Total School led funding 2025-26											20,180,531	17,921,602
2026-27 Total DSG funding Allocation											298,181,178	309,043,295

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Appendix B - School Level Allocations 2026-27

(2025/26 is inclusive of the mainstream schools additional grants (SBSG, NIC)

School	2025-26						2026-27						Change				
	NOR	Post De-delegation and Education functions budget (after NNDR deductions) £	2025-26 Additional grants	Total Inclusive of additional grants	Per Pupil £	MFG Adjustment (included in post de-delegations budget) £	NOR	Post De-delegation and Education functions budget (after NNDR deductions) £	Per Pupil £	MFG Adjustment (included in post de-delegations budget) £	Increase/ (Decrease) in pupil Nos.	Increase/ (Decrease) in funding £	Percentage Increase/ (Decrease) in funding	Increase/ (Decrease) in rate £	Percentage Increase/ (Decrease) in per pupil rate		
Anson Primary School	363	2,332,658	66,010	2,398,668	6,426	6,050	380	2,562,064	6,742	0	17	163,397	7%	316	5%		
Brentfield Primary School	387	2,658,502	76,477	2,734,979	6,870	0	384	2,734,949	7,122	0	(3)	(29)	0%	253	4%		
Harris Primary Academy South Kenton	739	4,205,810	114,267	4,320,077	5,691	0	611	3,735,530	6,114	0	(128)	(584,547)	-14%	423	7%		
Carlton Vale Infant School	48	498,360	16,524	514,884	10,382	0	38	447,565	11,778	0	(10)	(67,319)	-13%	1,396	13%		
Harlesden Primary School	290	2,086,827	61,688	2,148,515	7,196	0	293	2,192,694	7,484	0	3	44,180	2%	288	4%		
Mount Stewart Junior School	355	1,946,617	55,384	2,002,001	5,483	6,077	356	2,074,899	5,828	0	1	72,898	4%	345	6%		
Mount Stewart Infant School	254	1,525,859	39,564	1,565,423	6,007	22,373	245	1,521,094	6,209	48,283	(9)	(44,329)	-3%	201	3%		
Uxendon Manor Primary School	632	3,471,763	95,892	3,567,655	5,493	72,302	631	3,574,376	5,665	68,973	(1)	6,721	0%	171	3%		
Kingsbury Green Primary School	547	3,288,498	102,631	3,391,129	6,012	0	561	3,521,495	6,277	0	14	130,366	4%	265	4%		
Leopold Primary School	528	3,525,380	101,217	3,626,597	6,677	26,983	488	3,387,997	6,943	0	(40)	(238,600)	-7%	266	4%		
Lyon Park Primary School	834	4,788,131	127,532	4,915,663	5,741	0	808	4,882,911	6,043	0	(26)	(32,752)	-1%	302	5%		
Malorees Infant School	160	1,091,906	29,075	1,120,981	6,824	66,952	169	1,178,282	6,972	30,179	9	57,301	5%	148	2%		
Northview Junior and Infant School	204	1,438,786	42,048	1,480,834	7,053	0	203	1,515,200	7,464	0	(1)	34,366	2%	411	6%		
Park Lane Primary School	417	2,532,053	70,980	2,603,033	6,072	0	413	2,691,006	6,516	0	(4)	87,972	3%	444	7%		
Preston Park Primary School	545	3,169,403	95,888	3,265,291	5,815	0	540	3,354,137	6,211	0	(5)	88,846	3%	396	7%		
Roe Green Junior School	472	2,724,554	75,956	2,800,510	5,772	0	464	2,765,492	5,960	678	(8)	(35,017)	-1%	188	3%		
Roe Green Infant School	356	2,421,124	54,382	2,475,506	6,801	275,010	352	2,456,543	6,979	214,464	(4)	(18,963)	-1%	178	3%		
Barham Primary School	840	4,714,424	130,212	4,844,636	5,612	0	833	4,926,441	5,914	0	(7)	81,805	2%	302	5%		
Wykeham Primary School	417	2,556,333	73,499	2,629,832	6,130	2,891	419	2,707,142	6,461	0	2	77,311	3%	331	5%		
Elsley Primary School	776	4,846,759	130,281	4,977,040	6,246	0	718	4,742,113	6,605	0	(58)	(234,927)	-5%	359	6%		
Donnington Primary School	207	1,435,286	41,940	1,477,226	6,934	0	199	1,473,152	7,403	0	(8)	(4,074)	0%	469	7%		
The Stonebridge School	319	2,288,452	67,269	2,355,721	7,174	0	313	2,392,596	7,644	0	(6)	36,874	2%	470	7%		
Newfield Primary School	213	1,559,704	50,972	1,610,676	7,323	0	222	1,713,002	7,716	0	9	102,327	6%	394	5%		
Mitchell Brook Primary School	608	3,840,716	111,686	3,952,402	6,317	0	572	3,867,481	6,761	0	(36)	(84,921)	-2%	444	7%		
Chalkhill Primary School	413	2,676,033	74,988	2,751,021	6,479	0	410	2,812,917	6,861	0	(3)	61,897	2%	381	6%		
Salisbury Primary School	601	3,496,690	98,864	3,595,554	5,818	2,406	605	3,630,909	6,002	2,607	4	35,355	1%	183	3%		
Oliver Goldsmith Primary School	418	2,377,330	68,593	2,445,923	5,687	1,758	409	2,427,469	5,935	0	(9)	(18,454)	-1%	248	4%		
Mora Primary School	382	2,492,091	70,528	2,562,619	6,524	0	397	2,673,217	6,734	0	15	110,598	4%	210	3%		
Fryent Primary School	650	3,821,901	121,777	3,943,678	5,880	26,689	633	3,889,386	6,144	0	(17)	(54,292)	-1%	265	4%		
Christ Church CofE Primary School	153	1,077,393	30,294	1,107,687	7,042	14,541	139	1,025,944	7,381	1,611	(14)	(81,743)	-7%	339	5%		
John Keble CofE Primary School	363	2,439,048	66,766	2,505,814	6,719	32,742	379	2,640,350	6,967	0	16	134,536	5%	247	4%		
Princess Frederica CofE Primary School	414	2,290,932	62,271	2,353,203	5,534	57,200	403	2,344,203	5,817	0	(11)	(9,000)	0%	283	5%		
St Mary's CofE Primary School	179	1,340,923	38,882	1,379,805	7,491	0	172	1,370,529	7,968	0	(7)	(9,276)	-1%	477	6%		
St Joseph's Catholic Junior School	276	1,602,869	44,224	1,647,093	5,807	0	270	1,655,867	6,133	0	(6)	8,775	1%	325	6%		
St Mary Magdalene's Catholic Junior School	245	1,530,790	45,055	1,575,845	6,248	0	229	1,516,176	6,621	0	(16)	(59,669)	-4%	373	6%		
St Robert Southwell Catholic Primary School	418	2,308,501	64,562	2,373,063	5,523	6,293	413	2,380,599	5,764	0	(5)	7,536	0%	241	4%		
Convent of Jesus and Mary RC Infant School	178	1,211,514	34,342	1,245,856	6,806	19,825	170	1,202,016	7,071	6,892	(8)	(43,841)	-4%	264	4%		
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School	193	1,356,287	38,962	1,395,249	7,027	0	193	1,432,637	7,423	0	0	37,388	3%	396	6%		
St Joseph's Catholic Infant School	207	1,373,756	33,375	1,407,131	6,637	33,665	209	1,423,454	6,811	22,215	2	16,323	1%	174	3%		
Sinai Jewish Primary School	579	3,035,995	83,497	3,119,492	5,244	104,136	591	3,191,304	5,400	52,631	12	71,812	2%	156	3%		
St Mary's RC Primary School	165	1,217,530	35,023	1,252,553	7,379	298	160	1,232,980	7,706	0	(5)	(19,573)	-2%	327	4%		
Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary School	169	1,036,804	26,985	1,063,789	6,135	6,055	172	1,115,908	6,488	0	3	52,119	5%	353	6%		
Wembley Primary School	819	4,860,246	137,271	4,997,517	5,934	0	817	5,064,327	6,199	0	(2)	66,811	1%	264	4%		
Malorees Junior School	220	1,390,540	40,754	1,431,294	6,321	0	217	1,452,942	6,696	0	(3)	21,649	2%	375	6%		

School	NOR	2025-26					2026-27					Change				
		Post Delegation and Education functions budget (after NNDR deductions) £	2025-26 Additional grants	Total Inclusive of additional grants	Per Pupil £	MFG Adjustment (included in post delegations budget) £	NOR	Post Delegation and Education functions budget (after NNDR deductions) £	Per Pupil £	MFG Adjustment (included in post delegations budget) £	Increase/ (Decrease) in pupil Nos.	Increase/ (Decrease) in funding £	Percentage Increase/ (Decrease) in funding	Increase/ (Decrease) in rate £	Percentage Increase/ (Decrease) in per pupil rate	
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School	428	2,525,835	74,949	2,600,784	5,901	0	426	2,638,950	6,195	0	(2)	38,166	1%	293	5%	
The Kilburn Park School Foundation	60	554,450	20,607	575,057	9,241	0	55	541,748	9,850	0	(5)	(33,309)	-6%	609	7%	
Islamia Primary School	418	2,709,588	75,143	2,784,731	6,482	143,727	416	2,823,667	6,788	0	(2)	38,936	1%	305	5%	
Ark Franklin Primary Academy	614	3,442,681	98,561	3,541,242	5,607	127,845	613	3,550,870	5,793	65,612	(1)	9,627	0%	186	3%	
Gladstone Park Primary School	615	3,894,581	107,510	4,002,091	6,333	0	577	3,885,982	6,735	0	(38)	(116,109)	-3%	402	6%	
St Andrew and St Francis CofE Primary School	398	2,630,735	73,768	2,704,503	6,610	0	398	2,790,261	7,011	0	0	85,757	3%	401	6%	
Kilburn Grange School	202	1,515,511	45,816	1,561,327	7,503	0	184	1,503,095	8,169	0	(18)	(58,232)	-4%	666	9%	
East Lane Primary School	631	3,488,718	95,509	3,584,227	5,529	212,686	629	3,588,185	5,705	130,533	(2)	3,959	0%	176	3%	
Braintcroft E-Act Primary Academy	615	4,053,612	113,808	4,167,420	6,591	10,237	616	4,229,089	6,865	0	1	61,669	1%	274	4%	
Furness Primary School	312	2,154,552	59,042	2,213,594	6,906	0	311	2,253,540	7,246	0	(1)	39,946	2%	340	5%	
Sudbury Primary School	846	4,852,010	143,724	4,995,734	5,735	0	853	5,120,973	6,003	0	7	125,238	3%	268	5%	
Our Lady of Grace Catholic Junior School	240	1,545,579	43,263	1,588,842	6,440	25,134	240	1,595,502	6,648	10,048	0	6,660	0%	208	3%	
Our Lady of Grace RC Infant and Nursery School	175	1,220,292	31,176	1,251,468	6,973	29,773	174	1,250,158	7,185	20,890	(1)	(1,310)	0%	212	3%	
St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School	202	1,366,435	38,006	1,404,441	6,765	3,496	196	1,373,582	7,008	19,814	(6)	(30,859)	-2%	244	4%	
Oakington Manor Primary School	638	3,830,428	111,185	3,941,613	6,004	0	612	3,890,637	6,357	0	(26)	(50,976)	-1%	353	6%	
North West London Jewish Day School	178	1,112,092	28,170	1,140,262	6,248	56,089	177	1,139,313	6,437	38,911	(1)	(949)	0%	189	3%	
PRIMARY TOTAL	24,125	148,782,178	4,208,624	152,990,802		1,393,231	23,677	153,076,848		734,342	-	448	86,046	0%		
Michaela Community School	614	5,182,518	123,075	5,305,593	8,441	0	611	5,458,981	8,935	0	(3)	153,389	3%	494	6%	
Ark Elvin Academy	1073	9,276,076	214,647	9,490,723	8,645	0	1,089	9,895,790	9,087	0	16	405,067	4%	442	5%	
North Brent School	311	2,588,923	60,725	2,649,648	8,325	0	533	4,724,309	8,864	0	222	2,074,661	78%	539	6%	
Wembley High Technology College	1288	9,883,547	220,376	10,103,923	7,674	0	1,191	9,480,625	7,960	0	(97)	(623,299)	-6%	287	4%	
Claremont High School	1413	10,694,705	243,577	10,938,282	7,569	0	1,406	11,162,880	7,939	0	(7)	224,598	2%	371	5%	
Kingsbury High School	1649	13,409,267	306,085	13,715,352	8,132	0	1,669	14,476,488	8,674	0	20	761,136	6%	542	7%	
Queens Park Community School	1080	8,645,781	196,674	8,842,455	8,005	0	1,094	9,269,052	8,473	0	14	426,597	5%	467	6%	
Saint Claudine's Catholic School for Girls	767	7,251,158	156,179	7,407,337	9,454	0	689	6,823,394	9,903	0	(78)	(583,943)	-8%	449	5%	
Alperton Community School	1616	12,932,934	288,505	13,221,439	8,003	78,912	1,622	13,593,108	8,380	0	6	371,670	3%	377	5%	
St Gregory's Catholic Science College	958	7,303,295	162,403	7,465,698	7,623	103,951	957	7,502,584	7,840	0	(1)	36,886	0%	216	3%	
Harris Lowe Academy Willesden	935	8,407,200	198,032	8,605,232	8,992	0	949	9,190,513	9,684	0	14	585,281	7%	693	8%	
E-Act Crest Academy	1,035	9,643,749	216,830	9,860,579	9,318	0	1,010	10,088,539	9,989	0	(25)	227,960	2%	671	7%	
JFS	1500	10,849,953	233,817	11,083,770	7,233	265,342	1,521	11,278,460	7,415	132,454	21	194,690	2%	182	3%	
Newman Catholic College	496	4,798,748	99,618	4,898,366	9,675	0	441	4,539,225	10,293	0	(55)	(359,141)	-7%	618	6%	
SECONDARY TOTAL	14,735	120,867,854	2,720,543	123,588,397		448,204	14,782	127,483,949		132,454	47	3,895,552	3%			
Preston Manor School	1649	12,580,600	312,357	12,892,957	7,629	0	1,646	13,265,495	8,059	0	(3)	372,538	3%	430	6%	
Ark Academy	1308	9,712,887	244,021	9,956,908	7,426	0	1,299	10,400,949	8,007	0	(9)	444,041	4%	581	8%	
ALL THROUGH TOTAL	2,957	22,293,487	556,378	22,849,865		-	2,945	23,666,444		-	(12)	816,579	4%			
Total	41,817	291,943,519	7,485,545	299,429,064		1,841,435	41,404	304,227,242		866,796	(413)	4,798,178	2%			

 <p>Brent</p>	<p>Schools Forum 26 January 2026</p>
<p>Report from the Corporate Director of Children Young People and Community Development</p>	
<p>Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) 2026/27</p>	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	N/A
List of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	Prior financial reports to Schools Forum.
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	

2.1.2 Endorse Brent's EY Funding Formula for 2026/27, as supported by the EY Funding Subgroup. The following updates have been applied to the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF):

- a) A universal base rate for Brent providers for 3 and 4-year-old funding of £6.33 per hour. This represents an 9.9% increase of £0.57p from £5.76 in 2025/26.
- b) Following a review of the benchmarking data, a reduction in the deprivation supplement from 10% to 5% from the 3 and 4-year-old funding allocation, bringing it in line with other local authorities.
- c) A base rate of £9.91 to pay Brent providers for the additional support (formerly known as the disadvantaged) 2-year-old entitlement. This represents a 1.4% increase of £0.14 from £9.77 in 2025/26.
- d) A base rate of £9.51 to pay Brent providers for the 2-year-old working parent entitlement. This represents a 0.7% increase of £0.07 from £9.44 in 2025/26.
- e) A base rate of £13.00 to pay Brent providers for children aged 9 months up to 2 years. This represents a 0.6% increase of £0.08 from £12.92 in 2025/26.
- f) A reduction of 1% (from 4% to 3%) of funding centrally retained by the local authority from the 3 and 4-year-old funding, following the DfE's mandatory requirement to pass through a minimum of 97% of this funding to early years providers.
- g) An increase from 2% to 3% in centrally retained funding by the local authority from 2-year-old working parent and 9-months old to 2-year-old working parents, in line with the DfE's requirement to pass through a minimum of 97% of this funding to early years providers.
- h) An allocation of £0.644m for the Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF), in line with the DfE's expectation that local authorities earmark this funding for children below compulsory school age with special educational needs (SEN) eligible for or taking up the new and existing entitlements, regardless of the number of hours taken and based on local eligibility. This funding will be allocated by the Under 5s Nursery Panel, and both PVI and maintained providers can apply for this funding. The SENIF will continue to target children with low-level and emerging needs, ensuring inclusive provision for vulnerable children.
- i) An introduction of a contingency fund of £0.37m to help manage fluctuations in the take up of the entitlements after the census. This fund will serve as a key mechanism for maintaining flexibility and support the management of volumes and budgets throughout the year. A contingency fund is needed for 2026/27 in response to the DfE's move to a termly funding system, where all early years' entitlement will be funded based on actual termly census headcounts.

2.2 The Schools Forum is asked to note that local authorities must announce their funding rates to childcare providers by 28 February 2026, as this deadline is now a statutory requirement under the regulations from the financial year 2026/27.

3.0 Contribution to Borough Plan

3.1 This report is linked to the Council's Borough Plan which aims to support babies, children and young people to get the best start in life, by working in partnership with schools and other partners to make sure access to education is fair and equal.

4.0 Summary of funding for Brent

4.1 The 2026/27 Brent EY Block funding has increased by £5.1m to £45.4m compared to 2025/26. £22.1m (49%) of the total allocation relates to the entitlements for eligible working parents.

4.2 The indicative supplementary funding allocation for maintained nursery schools (MNS) has increased by 0.9% from £0.91m to £0.92m and the funding rate has increased by £0.27p from £7.08 to £7.35 in 2026/27.

4.3 The EYNFF hourly rate for 3 and 4-year-olds has increased from £6.80 in 2025/26 to £7.27 in 2026/27. This represents a 6.9% increase of £0.47p. For 2026/27, each local authority has received an 'adjusted' hourly rate for 3 and 4-year-olds to reflect the move from an annual to a termly census. National analysis shows that termly census reporting results in fewer funded hours being recorded across the year, even though local authorities still need to fund the same number of hours locally. To offset the potential budget reduction from lower headcounts under the termly model, the 3- and 4-year-old rates have been adjusted to account for this variation at the national level. The rate without the termly adjustments is £7.07 for 2026/27. Table 1 below sets out the key EY funding amounts.

Table 1: EYNFF funding rates

3- and 4-year-olds	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Universal 15 hours allocation	£17.2m	£17.3m	£18.0m
Additional 15 hours allocation	£4.8m	£5.0m	£5.2m
Hourly rate before central spend	£6.59	£6.80	£7.07
Maximum % for central spend	5%	4%	3%
Hourly rate after central spend removed	£6.26	£6.53	£6.86
Maximum % for deprivation	10%	10%	5%
Maximum % for quality supplement	2%	0%	0%

Maximum % for contingency	0%	0%	1%
3 and 4-year-old base rate	£5.39	£5.76	£6.33
MNS supplementary funding	£0.84m	£0.91m	£0.92m
MNS supplementary funding rate	£6.27	£7.08	£7.35
2 year olds			
2-year-old additional support funding allocation	£3.6m	£3.4m	£4.0m
2-year-old working parents funding allocation	£3.9m	£5.9m	£8.0m
Hourly rate for 2-year-old allocation	£9.59	£9.77	£10.04
Under 2-year-olds			
Under 2-year-old working parents funding allocation	£2.9m	£7.7m	£8.9m
Hourly rate for under 2 working parents	£13.07	£13.32	£13.67

4.4 The government's intention to increase the minimum pass-through rate to 97% for all early year's entitlements will be fully implemented from 2026/27. Although the requirement applies separately to all entitlements, no deduction for central spend has been made from 2-year-old additional need entitlement, with the intent to pass on a higher rate to the providers. The increase in pass-through rate has resulted in a £0.265m reduction in the central spend previously deducted from the 3 and 4-year-old funding. However, this impact has been largely offset by corresponding increase of £0.272m to 2-year-old working parent entitlement and under 2-year-old entitlements. These changes have led to a small net increase of £7.2k in the central expenditure allocation compared to 2025/26.

5 A universal base rate for Brent providers for 3 and 4-year-old funding

5.1 The 3 and 4-year-old funding will be distributed to providers as a universal base hourly rate plus additional allocations for deprivation following a 3% reduction for central spend. The universal base rate to providers has increased from £5.76 in 2025/26 to £6.33 in 2026/27 as shown below:

a) Overall hourly rate received from DfE	£7.07
b) Remove central spend of 3%	£6.86
c) Allocate to Specialist Nursery Panel (0.13p)	£6.73
d) Reduce by allocation for deprivation (£6.73 x 95%)	£6.39
e) Allocate to contingency (£6.39 x 99%)	£6.33

5.2 Funding supplements are amounts of funding paid to providers in addition to the base rate to reflect local needs or policy objectives. The DfE requires local authorities to use a supplement to recognise deprivation in their areas. While the maximum permitted for supplements at Brent remains at 10%, it is proposed to

reduce the deprivation rate from 10% to 5% from 2026/27 to better align with the approach taken by other local authorities following a benchmarking review based on data provided by the DfE. This approach would also ensure that more funding is allocated to the base rate to be passed on to providers directly. It is proposed that the deprivation supplement continues to apply to the 3 and 4-year-old entitlement in 2026/27, equating to £0.34p per hour.

5.3 Deprivation funding is allocated using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), which scores postcodes based on levels of child income deprivation. Historically, allocations were based on the 2019 IDACI dataset. For 2026/27, the Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed that the updated English Indices of Deprivation 2025, including the refreshed IDACI scores, will be used for funding calculations. This replaces the previous reliance on 2019 data (and prior to that, 2015), ensuring that allocations reflect the most recent national measures of deprivation. Brent's approach aligns with this update and benchmarks against other local authorities to maintain consistency

6 Base rates for Brent providers for 2-year-old funding for 2026/27

6.1 For 2026/27 the 2-year-old additional support provisional allocation is £4.0m, representing a 17.6% increase from the last financial year. The provisional funding for the 2-year-old working parents has increased to £8.0m, a rise of 36%, primarily driven by the expansion of 30 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of 2-year-old.

6.2 The EYNFF rate for 2-year-old funding will increase from £9.77 per hour in 2025/26 to £10.04 per hour.

6.3 The DfE's provisional funding estimates are based on the January 2025 census data and as expected, the actual funding allocation for 2026/27 has increased, reflecting the increase demand for childcare for 2-year-olds compared to January 2024 figures.

6.4 The government mandates local authorities to have a disadvantaged 2-year-old rate that is at least equal to their rate for 2-year-old children of working parents. It also recognises the expectation that local authorities have SENIFs for all children with SEN. In line with this, the proposal to distribute this rate to providers is as set out below:

Base rate for the disadvantaged 2-year-old entitlement:

a) Overall hourly rate received from DfE	£10.04
b) Allocate to Specialist Nursery Panel (0.13p)	£9.91

Base rate for the working parents of 2-year-olds' entitlement:

a) Overall hourly rate received from DfE	£10.04
b) Allocation for central spend (3%)	£9.74
c) Allocate to Specialist Nursery Panel (0.13p)	£9.61
d) Allocation for contingency (0.10p)	£9.51

7 A base rate for Brent providers for under 2-year-old funding

7.1 The 30-hour childcare entitlement for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months up to 2 years, introduced in September 2025, is now fully embedded for the 2026/27 financial year.

7.2 For 2026/27, the EYNFF rate for under 2-year-old funding is £13.67 per hour.

7.3 The local authority proposes to deduct 3% from this funding allocation to contribute towards the cost of central services and as with the other free entitlements, deduct £0.13p from the pass-through rate for a contribution towards SENIF and £0.13p for contingency funding. The rate is to be applied as follows:

Base rate for the working parents of 9 months to 2-year-olds entitlement:

a)	Overall hourly rate received from DfE	£13.67
b)	Allocation for central spend (3%)	£13.26
c)	Allocate to Specialist Nursery Panel (0.13p)	£13.13
d)	Allocation for contingency (0.13p)	£13.00

8 Retention of funding for Central Spend

8.1 The DfE's guideline mandates local authorities to pass through a minimum of 97% of the EY funding to providers of childcare and local authorities can retain up to 3% for central expenditure.

8.2 The central spend supports EY services as set out below. A significant number of Brent EY settings access this support, and members of the EY Subgroup of the Schools Forum have mentioned that they regard the service as highly valued. The services include:

- Providing specialist Early Years advice and guidance to nursery schools, Early Years' settings and Family Wellbeing Centres to improve the quality of early learning.
- Supporting the inclusion of young children who have a range of SEND that may be affecting their learning and progress.
- Expanding supply and take-up of good quality early learning and childcare opportunities for all 3 and 4-year-olds and increasing numbers of 9 months to 3-year-olds from eligible families.
- Administration of the Funded Early Education Grant and related projects.
- Learning, development and Quality Assurance for practitioners from all parts of the sector including single and multi-day courses, projects, and annual conferences.

8.3 For 2026/27, the central spend budget is based upon Brent's estimates for the take-up of provision and is then fixed for the year. However, the actual income for the year will be determined by the number of 9 months to school age children taking up free entitlement places, as recorded in the termly census returns.

8.4 It is recommended that central retention of EY funding for the existing and new entitlements for 2026/27 is as set out in the table below:

Table 2: Local funding allocation for central expenditure

Entitlements	Retention for 2026/27 %	2026/27 (£)	2025/26 (£)	Increase/ (decrease) (£)
3 and 4-year-olds	3	667,850	932,843	(264,994)
2-year-olds Additional support		0	0	0
2-year-olds of eligible working parents	3	273,757	101,787	171,970
9 months to 2 years of eligible working parents	3	251,452	151,157	100,295
Total		1,193,059	1,185,787	7,271

8.5 The proposed central retention equates to £1.193m, compared to a £1.186m equivalent in 2025/26; an increase of £7.3k from the previous financial year.

8.6 The budget requirement for delivery of the current level of central services and the training offer as set out in paragraph 8.2 above is £1.21m. Whilst this provision supports the continued delivery of valued services, it is not sufficient to fully meet the identified needs for 2026/27. The funding gap will be covered from other early years funding streams.

9 Specialist Nursery Panel

9.1 This is a multi-agency panel allocating funds for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) or Children in Need (CIN), based on eligibility criteria to assist with their successful inclusion in their setting.

9.2 The HNB allocation of £1.09m contributes to the costs associated with the children with SEND. It is proposal to deduct £0.13p across all the Early Years' entitlement funding rates to allocate to this panel to ensure the most vulnerable children receive some additional support. This equates to £0.644m for the next financial year compared to £0.587m in the current financial year. The principle remains that children with the most complex needs will be supported to attend a specialist nursery where appropriate.

Table 3: DSG Specialist Nursery Panel Budget

Proposed income	2025/26	2026/27
Income	£	£
DSG High Needs Block (HNB)	(1,089,160)	(1,090,000)
Early Years Block	(587,326)	(644,108)
Disability Access Fund	(169,778)	(223,275)
Total Income	(1,846,264)	(1,957,383)
Expenditure		
Early Years Inclusion Fund for specialist nurseries	724,988	697,500
Inclusion fund for 3 & 4-year-olds in non-specialist early years provision	294,172	322,500
Staff member for EY Inclusion team	70,000	70,000
CIN for specialist nurseries	288,000	288,000
Inclusion fund for 9 months to 3 years-olds in non-specialist early years provision	204,326	291,108
Quality Assurance staff (1.5 post)	95,000	65,000
Disability Access Fund	169,778	223,275
Total Expenditure	1,846,264	1,957,383

10 Additional funding for Maintained Nursery Schools

10.1 Local authorities with Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) will continue to receive supplementary funding for the 2026/27 financial year. The provisional allocation for Brent is £0.920m compared to £0.91m in 2025/26. This represents an increase of 0.9%.

10.2 Following the reforms introduced in 2023/24 to ensure a fairer distribution of MNS supplementary funding across all local authorities, the minimum and cap on the hourly funding rate remains in place for 2026/27. These measures continue to promote consistency and equity in funding for maintained nursery schools nationally.

10.3 This supplementary funding applies to the council's four MNSs and was previously allocated on an agreed local formula i.e., based on business rates, a lumpsum and estimated hours. The proposal is to continue to distribute this funding to the MNSs based on an hourly rate for 2026/27, in line with the DfE's change in local authority funding to an hourly rate basis.

10.4 The MNS supplementary hourly rate, inclusive of Teachers' Pay Additional Grant has increased from £7.08 to £7.35 per hour: an increase of 3.8%.

11 EY funding based on DfE's provisional allocations

11.1 Table 4 outlines the Early Years' budget based on draft allocations from the DfE and the recommendations from this paper.

Table 4: Proposed Early Years block budget

Income	2025/26 £(000)	2026/27 £(000)
Universal allocation for 3–4-year-olds	17,315	16,901
Additional hours for 3-4 years	5,077	5,361
Allocation for 2-year-olds	3,425	2,850
Allocation for 2-year-olds with working parents	5,449	9,125
Allocation for under 2-year-olds with working parents	7,709	8,382
Supplementary funding for maintained nursery schools	912	920
Disability Access Fund for 3–4-year-olds	123	165
Disability Access Fund for 2-year-olds	31	49
Disability Access Fund for under 2-year-olds	16	10
Early years pupil premium for 3–4-year-olds	166	181
Early years pupil premium for 2-year-olds	43	65
Early Years Pupil Premium for under 2 years old	3	3
Total Income	40,269	44,010
Expenditure		
Distribute to providers for 3–4-year-old universal offer	16,292	15,931
Distribute to providers for 3–4-year-old children with working parents (additional 15 hours)	4,777	5,053
Central spend	1,186	1,193
Additional panel funding	587	644
Contingency funding	0	369
Distribute to providers for 2-year-olds	3,425	2,813
Distribute to providers for 2-year-olds children with working parents	5,265	8,645

Distribute to providers for under 2-year-olds	7,444	7,970
Supplementary funding distributed to maintained nursery schools	912	920
Disability Access Fund for 3–4-year-olds	123	165
Disability Access Fund for 2-year-olds	31	49
Disability Access Fund for under 2-year-olds	16	10
Early years pupil premium for 3–4-year-olds	166	181
Early years pupil premium for 2-year-olds	43	65
Early Years Pupil Premium for under 2 years old	3	3
Total Expenditure	40,269	44,010

11.2 The Early Years allocation for 2026/27 is based on DfE estimates derived from termly census data, as set out in the operational guidance. In contrast, the expenditure reflects the local estimates of participation and provision costs. This represents a change from last year, when both allocation and expenditure were aligned to the January census, resulting in more consistency.

12.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

12.1 On January 7, 2026, the Early Years (EY) sub-group of the Schools Forum met to review the proposals for the upcoming year, including hourly funding rates, central retention percentages from the EY funding allocation, introduction of contingency fund and the SENIF allocations. The discussion reflected recent DfE changes, particularly the move to termly census funding.

12.2 The group reviewed the proposed hourly rates for 2026/27. They were made aware that for 2026/27, although the published rate for 3-and-4-year-old funding is £7.07, the DfE have provided an adjusted rate of £7.27 to reflect the termly census funding in 2026/27.

12.3 Concerns were raised about the NEG 2 additional support rate being lower than last year and the continued low take-up among eligible families. The group reiterated that they would like to see a higher base rate for NEG 2 additional support, similar to last year, as a financial incentive for providers supporting the most vulnerable 2-year-olds in the borough and to encourage inclusive provision.

12.4 Members noted that Brent had previously passed on the full rate last year, which was seen as positive. The group was reassured that Brent has undertaken significant outreach, including contacting families and working with Family Wellbeing Centres, but the uptake remains below expectations. It was proposed to model a higher NEG 2 additional support rate by adjusting allocations from the NEG 3- and 4-year-olds entitlements.

12.5 A request was made for a comparison of the proposed rates with last year's figures, and this was subsequently shared with the group. The cost pressures faced by the providers were highlighted, noting that DfE's uplift is around 4% while provider payroll costs have increased by up to 15% in the case of one setting. The group also discussed if a stretched funding model could be considered in the future to spread payments over 52 weeks rather than 38 weeks.

12.6 Members agreed to retain the current payment weeks and confirmed that no contingency is required for this decision. The impact of aligning Brent funded weeks with DfE funded weeks was discussed, but concerns were raised about the slower autumn intake and higher summer numbers led to the decision to keep the existing approach. Issues with a second headcount were also raised. Members agreed to continue funding using the actual Headcount 2, while challenging providers who consistently submit large numbers after the first headcount (Headcount 1). It was noted that sometimes late submissions are due to genuine reasons such as housing moves by parents or domestic abuse leading to children being moved across providers.

12.7 The group agreed to set aside a £0.667m contingency to manage risks associated with the new funding methodology. From 2026/27, take up of entitlement recorded during the second headcount will no longer be funded by DfE, creating a potential financial shortfall. Previously, underspends were managed across other entitlements, but tighter controls are now needed. It was agreed that contingency levels will be reviewed next year based on actual data.

12.8 Members also reviewed the deprivation funding and agreed to reduce the allocation from 10% to 5%, following benchmarking and alignment with other local authorities. The group noted that increasing the base rate was seen as a fair way to offset this adjustment and the group agreed this approach is more equitable.

12.9 Members were consulted on proposed changes to payments, both because of new statutory requirements and the need to end some local arrangements due to financial pressures. The group was consulted on the following:

1. Ceasing the local arrangements to make notice period payments to early years providers put in place in 2017 as provider sustainability support when parents left without providing the necessary notice. With a significant increase in these payments to providers, this has become financially unsustainable.
2. Ceasing of free entitlement payments for reception children during their staggered start to school. As per statutory guidance, reception children are not entitled to this funding, and it proposed to end this in Autumn term 2026.
3. Change to a system of monthly payments as result of the new statutory requirement for all LAs to offer a monthly payments system to any provider requesting this.

Proposal 1 was agreed by the group. It was also agreed that further work would take place on Proposals 2 and 3, taking into consideration feedback from

members and a further meeting of the group scheduled in February 2026 for review of this work and decision making.

13.0 Financial Considerations

13.1 The financial implications have been detailed in the body of this paper.

14.0 Legal Considerations

14.1 This report has been drafted with due consideration of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework which sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

15.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

15.1 EDI has been considered within the main body of the report.

16.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

16.1 Not applicable.

17.0 Human Resources (HR)/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

17.1 HR has been considered within the main body of the report.

18.0 Communication Considerations

18.1 All School Forum papers are published, and all schools will have access to them. The final 2026/27 EY budget allocation for each school will be published on Best Brent.

Report sign off:

Nigel Chapman

Corporate Director of Children and Young People