



Subject Heading:

**Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)
2025-26**

Report Author:

**Hany Moussa – Principal Education
Finance Officer**

Eligibility to vote:

All school and academy members

SUMMARY

This report is to inform the Schools Funding Forum of the final allocation received for the Dedicated Schools Block Central Schools Services Grant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Schools Funding Forum:

- (i) notes the final allocation of CSSB for 2025-26
- (ii) considers the revised funding retention for central statutory services

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background

As part of the introduction of a Schools and High Needs National Funding Formula in 2018-19 the DfE also introduced a fourth funding block, the CSSB, which brought together funding for services previously funded through the Schools Block

and through an Education Services Grant. The initial locally projected allocation for 2025-26, which was presented in the 17th October 2024 meeting is shown below.

2. Initial Projected CSSB allocation 2025-26

Indicative funding for 2025-26 through the DSG Central Service Block was delayed, and in line with DfE advice, the LA had to estimate the projected CSSB allocations for 2025-26, in order to ensure that the budget setting timetable is not adversely affected.

An uplift of 2.0% to the per pupil rate for the CSSB was applied for the initial proposal, however it was noted that salary costs for statutory responsibilities will increase in cost in excess of 5.0%.

The table presented based on the local projected allocation, with comparable data from 2024-25 is as follows:

	Ongoing responsibilities			Historical commitments	Total CSSB
	Pupil nos.	Per pupil £	£	£	£
2025-26 projected	39,645.0	42.50	1,684,912	75,365	1,760,277
2024-25 final	39,645.0	41.67	1,652,383	94,206	1,746,589
Difference	0	0.83	32,529	-18,841	13,688

3. Final Allocations 2025-26

Funding for 2025-26 through the DSG CSSB is as follows:

Year	Ongoing responsibilities			Historical commitments	Total CSSB
	Pupil nos.	Per pupil £	£	£	£
2025-26 final	39,883.0	46.05	1,836,612	94,206	1,911,978
2025-26 projected	39,654.0	42.50	1,684,912	75,365	1,760,277
2024-25	39,654.0	41.67	1,652,383	94,206	1,746,589
Difference 2024-25 to 2025-26	229.0	4.38	184,229	-23,551	165,389
Difference 2025-26 indicative to 2025-26	299	3.55	151,700	0	151,701

The services that the LA can fund from the CSSB are set out in the Operational Guidance on DSG allocations issued by the DfE. The Schools Funding Forum gave approval to the use of the ongoing responsibilities and historical commitments funding, based on the indicative allocations, at the meeting held on 17th October 2024. Details are shown below of the original indicative proposal and the final proposal for consideration by Forum members.

Ongoing responsibilities	Projected 2025-26*	Proposed Final 2025-26*	Change
Copyright licences	234,082	280,000	45,918
Admissions	566,853	597,418	30,565
Schools Forum	46,575	49,087	2,512
LA responsibilities to all schools	776,239	818,607	42,368
Pension funding	61,163	91,500	30,337
Unallocated	0	0	0
Total	1,684,912	1,836,612	151,700

Historical commitments	Projected 2025-26	Proposed Final 2025-26	Change £
Schools Partnerships/Schools Causing Concern	75,365	75,365	0

Total	1,760,277	1,911,978	151,700
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The copyright licence fees for local authorities are normally announced alongside the schools funding settlement in December. This has been delayed by the DfE as negotiations are still ongoing with some of the copyright management organisations for new agreements and will stretch into the new year. This means the DfE will announce the applicable charges for the copyright licence at a later date.

Therefore, the LA is proposing that the additional funding that was received to be allocated as per the table above, to cover the salary costs of the support that is increasing by more than 7%.

The services that LAs can fund from the CSSB are set out in the extract from the Operational Guidance. The ESFA Operational Guidance requires Schools Forum approval for the central retention of this funding.

Ongoing responsibility element

The copyright licence costs tend to increase each year but LAs are not notified of the increase until later in the year. An estimated sum of £280,000 has been included.

Historic Commitments element

Continuing the financial year arrangements for this element of the grant, the LA is proposing that for 2025-26 that this continues to be used for items that are accessible to a large number of schools. This includes the coaching bursary, Havering Academy of Leadership and support commissioned on behalf of all schools.

Schools Funding Forum approval is requested for this use of the CSSB.

The ESFA Operational Guidance requires Schools Forum approval for the central retention of this funding, as shown at section 3 below.