



Consultation for LA Maintained Schools De-delegation and Education Functions 2026-27

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Introduction

This consultation proposes options for the de-delegation for central services for maintained schools for the financial year 2026-27.

LA maintained primary schools are to consider for financial year 2026-27, whether to continue with the de-delegation of funding for the following services:

- Insurance
- Free school meals eligibility checking
- Maternity leave insurance
- EAL service
- Statutory and regulatory duties
- Core school improvement activities

Schools are asked to consider the options outlined in the documents and respond to the Local Authority (LA) for further consideration by the Schools Funding Forum.

At this stage, all figures used in the calculations are from the October 2024 Census, with the rates that will apply for 2026-27 de-delegation services. The final calculation will be based on the October 2025 Census data, with the rates proposed to be unchanged.

The DfE do not release the October 2025 Census data until late December 2025. Therefore, LAs consult using the previous year's dataset (October 2024 Census) to agree the principles for the forthcoming financial year.

Process

A summary of responses to the consultation will be reported to the meeting of the Schools Funding Forum on 27th November 2025, and will form part of the final decisions taken by the Local Authority in January, before schools are issued with their funding for the 2026-27 financial year.

Responding to the Consultation

This consultation is sent to the Head Teachers of all LA maintained schools only. Please bring this to the attention of Chairs of Governors, Chairs of Resources, Board Members and Trustees as appropriate.

You can contribute your views to the consultation in the online link provided in the body of the email.:

If you require clarification on any point please email:

Education Finance at: education.finance@havering.gov.uk

Closing date of consultation: 12.00pm Wednesday 26th November 2025

Schools Funding 2025-26

1. Background to De-delegation and Education Functions

This section explains how local authorities may hold funding centrally on behalf of maintained schools, through de-delegated services, education functions and school improvement, monitoring and brokerage (SIMB). It sets out what each arrangement covers, who they apply to, and how decisions will operate for 2026-27.

1.1 De-delegated services

Funding for services that may be de-delegated is initially allocated to maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools through the local funding formula.

With the agreement of the maintained school representatives on the Schools Forum, these schools may choose to allow the local authority to retain this funding centrally and deliver the service on their behalf.

De-delegation applies only to maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools. It is not available to academies, nursery schools, PRUs, or special schools. Where de-delegation is agreed, the local authority may offer the same service to academies or other schools outside the arrangement on a buy-back basis.

Decisions to de-delegate apply for one year only. New decisions are therefore required for 2026-27. Decisions are taken separately for each phase and, once agreed, apply to all maintained schools within that phase. The funding is then deducted from formula allocations before school budgets are issued.

The services eligible for de-delegation are:

- contingencies (including schools in financial difficulties and deficits of closing schools)
- behaviour support services
- support to underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners (EAL)
- free school meals eligibility checking
- insurance
- museum and library services
- licences and subscriptions
- staff costs supply cover (e.g. long-term sickness, maternity, trade union and public duties)

For each service agreed, the local authority must clearly explain how the funding is deducted, (e.g. primary insurance £20 per pupil, FSM eligibility £9.50 per FSM pupil), and how any allocations, including contingency awards, are determined.

If a school has been approved to receive funding from a de-delegated contingency and later converts to academy status, that allocation must still be honoured for the period the school is maintained.

Any unspent de-delegated funding at year-end is reported to the Schools Forum and may be carried forward for future de-delegated use.

1.2 Education Functions (Statutory Duties for Maintained Schools)

Funding for services that may be de-delegated is initially allocated to maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools through the local funding formula.

Education functions are statutory duties that local authorities must discharge for maintained schools. These responsibilities are required by law and cannot be opted out of by individual schools. To fund these duties, the local authority may seek approval from the Schools Forum to top-slice a small amount from maintained schools' budgets.

These statutory duties apply to all maintained schools, including special schools. They do not apply to academies, which receive their own equivalent funding directly from the DfE.

Education functions cover the core responsibilities that support the oversight and proper governance of maintained schools. These include:

- financial and audit responsibilities
- central administrative and regulatory functions
- statutory asset management
- governance, HR, and pension-related obligations
- duties relating to school organisation and access to education

Approval for education functions is required annually. When a maintained school converts to academy status, the education functions funding for that school is removed from the local authority's allocation from the date of conversion.

1.3 School Improvement, Monitoring and Brokerage (SIMB)

SIMB represents the local authority's monitoring, oversight, and support for maintained schools. For the purposes of the 2026-27 consultation, the LA is requesting funding only for statutory SIMB via education functions, to provide clarity and focus LA support on statutory activities.

The statutory SIMB via Education Functions (focus for consultation):

- Applies to all maintained schools, including special schools.
- Covers the minimum statutory duties the local authority must carry out, including:
 - mandatory monitoring visits
 - statutory interventions for schools requiring improvement
 - oversight of governance, leadership, and school performance
 - coordination and reporting to DfE/ESFA
- Funded via Schools Block top-slice for maintained schools only (separate from CSSB).
- The LA's support for schools in 2026-27 will focus on these statutory activities only.

To note, that there is an optional, additional SIMB support (previously funded via de-delegation) which is not being proposed. This ensures transparency about what funding is requested and how it will be used.

1.4 Table of Services and Functions

Aspect	De-delegated Services	Education Functions	SIMB (Statutory)
Nature	Optional, discretionary services funded collectively by maintained mainstream schools	Statutory duties that LAs must perform for maintained schools	Statutory school improvement, monitoring, and brokerage
Who it applies to	Maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools only	All maintained schools (including special schools)	All maintained schools (including special schools)
Academies	Cannot be de-delegated, but may buy back	Not applicable. Academies fund equivalent statutory duties directly	Not applicable. Funded only for maintained schools
Approval	Annual Schools Forum vote, separately by phase	Annual Schools Forum approval for all maintained schools	Annual Schools Forum approval via education functions top-slice
Effect of academy conversion	If a school becomes an academy mid year, provision honoured for period school is maintained	Funding removed from date of conversion	Funding removed from date of conversion
Funding block	Schools Block top-slice for maintained schools only	Schools Block top-slice for maintained schools only	Schools Block top-slice for maintained schools only (statutory)
Funding type	Traded / discretionary	Statutory	Statutory

2. De-delegation and Education Functions Service 2025-26

The following table demonstrates the services that was requested and outcome for financial year 2025-26.

Service	De-delegation requested 2025-26	Outcome
Contingencies (including schools in financial difficulties and deficits of closing schools)	No	N/A
Behaviour support services	Yes	Not Agreed
Support to underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners (EAL)	Yes	Agreed
Free school meals eligibility	Yes	Agreed
Insurance	Yes	Agreed
Museum and library services	No	N/A
Licences/subscriptions	No	N/A
Staff costs supply cover (maternity leave insurance)	Yes	Agreed
Staff costs supply cover (trade union facility time)	Yes	Agreed
Statutory and regulatory duties	Yes	Agreed
Core school improvement activities	Yes	Agreed

3. De-delegation and Education Functions Service 2026-27 Consultation

As agreed at the Schools Funding Forum meeting held on 23rd October 2025, this consultation was proposed to be issued to all maintained schools to help Schools Forum members with the decision making for the de-delegated services for 2026-27.

The summary of responses to the consultation will be reported to the meeting of the Schools Funding Forum on 27th November 2025, and will form part of the final decisions taken by the Local Authority in January.

4. Proposed De-delegated Services and Education Functions 2026-27

Consideration to the continuation of the financial year 2025-26 de-delegated services is proposed, and the list of services and functions are as provided below and in the applicable Appendices.

4.1 Insurance

Insurance for maintained schools is arranged as part of the borough's main insurance contract and funded through de-delegation.

The LA proposes increasing the 2026-27 rate to reflect expected rises in premiums and associated costs, in line with the RPA benchmark. The cost of participation in the RPA for 2025-26 was £27.00 per pupil, an increase of £2.00 from the previous year, and further increases are anticipated for 2026-27 due to rising sector-wide claims.

The proposed funding through de-delegation from LA maintained primary schools is as follows:

2026-27	Primary
Formula factor	Basic Entitlement
Amount	£27.00*
Total	£470,745

2025-26	£21.00
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**The proposed rate for 2026-27 will be updated to align with the final RPA charge once confirmed by the DfE. The current RPA rate is £27.00 per pupil for 2025-26.*

Benefits of de-delegating insurance:

- Provides comprehensive cover for maintained schools underwritten by regulated insurers.
- Ensures a £50 million liability limit, protecting schools and the LA.
- Maintains continuity of cover for both school and LA liabilities, reducing the risk of insurance gaps.
- Access to advice, claims handling, and risk management support not available through the RPA.
- Includes cover for areas that schools would otherwise need to purchase separately under the RPA.
- Ensures employer liabilities retained by the LA are appropriately insured.
- Safeguards the LA's responsibilities and reduces risk, as any external supplier would need to provide adequate cover to protect the LA from potential liabilities.
- Delivers competitively priced, high-value cover, aligned with the national RPA benchmark while maintaining local assurance.

If schools do not buy in:

- Individual schools would need to arrange separate insurance cover, potentially at a higher cost and without the pooled benefits.

- Schools may lose access to the central claims handling and risk management support, and any external arrangement would need to ensure adequate coverage to safeguard the LA's responsibilities and reduce potential liabilities.

As the LA remains the employer and retains certain liabilities, the pooled approach ensures these are appropriately insured. The pooled arrangements ensures maintained schools continue to benefit from competitively priced, comprehensive cover and support, aligned to the DfE's national RPA benchmark while maintaining local value and assurance.

4.2 Free school meals eligibility checking

This service centrally checks children's eligibility for free school meals (FSM) and the pupil premium grant via the government hub.

The LA Education Finance Team provides the service on behalf of Education Services and schools, using the dedicated Synergy software.

Various education departments rely on this centralised, "live" database to identify eligible pupils and target support for schemes, such as the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme and other initiatives where FSM status is a criterion.

The proposed funding through de-delegation from LA maintained primary schools is as follows:

2026-27	Primary
Formula factor	FSM eligible pupils
Amount	£7.75
Total	£24,761
2025-26 rate	£9.50

Benefits of de-delegating:

- Eliminates the need for individual schools to determine eligibility themselves.
- Provides a centralised, up-to-date FSM database accessible across relevant services.
- Supports targeting of support and funding to eligible families efficiently.
- Reduces administrative burden on school staff.

If schools do not buy in:

- Schools would need to make their own arrangements to check eligibility, increasing administrative work and the risk of errors.
- There would not be a central, live database that stakeholders can use for FSM-related schemes.
- Schools will need to provide the data to the relevant teams to confirm eligibility for FSM-related schemes.
- Cessation of service, effective 1st April 2026.

The 2025-26 rate was £9.50. The proposed reduction of £1.75 per FSM pupil reflects additional contributions from central services that use the FSM data for their programmes, ensuring sufficient funding to cover staff and software costs for delivering this service.

4.3 Maternity leave insurance

The LA operates a pooled maternity cover scheme for teachers and support staff in maintained schools. While it functions similarly to insurance, it is not an insurance policy. The scheme pools contributions from maintained schools to cover maternity leave costs.

The Education Finance Team administers the scheme on behalf of Education Services and schools.

The proposed funding through de-delegation from LA maintained primary schools is as follows:

2026-27	Primary
Formula factor	Basic Entitlement
Amount	£42.92
Total	£748,310
2025-26	£40.49

The per-pupil rate is proposed to increase by 6.0% (from £40.49 to £42.92) to reflect expected increases in staff salaries and on-costs, which determine maternity leave payments.

Benefits of de-delegating:

- Provides central management of maternity leave cover, reducing administrative burden on schools.
- Ensures all maintained schools have access to maternity cover without needing to arrange individual schemes.
- Maintains the financial viability of the pooled scheme by spreading risk across all maintained schools.

If schools do not buy in:

- Schools would need to make individual arrangements to cover maternity leave, which could be more complex and potentially less cost-effective.
- Schools would need to enquire whether maternity cover could be combined with their separate staffing sickness scheme. This will need to be reviewed by the supplier on a case-by-case basis.
- Cessation of service, effective 1st April 2026.

Key points about the pooled fund:

- The fund is finite. If claims exceed the pooled contributions, the LA will communicate with schools regarding the shortfall. Schools will then be advised on next steps to manage cover for the remainder of the year.

For 2024-25 and 2025-26, although the expected spend exceeded the budget, underspends in other de-delegated services offset the difference. A similar situation is anticipated for 2026-27, and the £2k shortfall is not expected to materially affect the overall de-delegated budgets.

	2024-25	2025-26*	2026-27*
Budget	£645,543	£705,943	£748,310
Spend	£680,000	£715,000	£750,750
Outturn	-£34,457	-£9,057	-£2,440

Rate	£36.96	£40.49	£42.92
Applicable pupils	17466	17435	17435

* Projected figures

4.4 English as an Additional Language (EAL) Service

The LA proposes the continued de-delegation of funding to maintain the central EAL service for maintained primary schools at a reduced rate. The proposed reduction reflects schools' differing levels of need and introduces a 39% reduction in cost for LA maintained primary schools.

The new Ofsted framework places a focus on children who face "*barriers to their learning*," identifying EAL pupils as a vulnerable group with specific inspection criteria. The expertise and support provided by the central EAL team are therefore crucial in helping schools meet these requirements and ensure that pupils with EAL achieve their full potential.

The proposed funding through de-delegation from LA maintained primary schools is as follows:

2026-27	Primary
Formula factor	EAL 3
Amount	£23.12
Total	£71,428

2025-26	£38.00
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*Funding cap: £72,000 to ensure that any additional EAL3 funding remains within school budgets.

Benefits of de-delegating:

- Schools collectively fund the central EAL team, allowing specialist support that individual schools could not provide alone.
- Provides equitable access for all maintained schools, regardless of size or individual budget constraints.
- Reduces administrative burden on individual schools, as the LA manages deployment of staff and resources.
- Ensures continuity of expertise, training, and specialist resources across the borough.

If schools do not buy in:

- Individual schools would need to arrange their own EAL support, which could be more costly and less efficient.
- Some schools may not have access to specialist resources or consultancy visits.
- Smaller schools may be disproportionately affected, as they could struggle to fund individual support packages.

Service highlights from 2024–25:

- Around two-thirds of all mainstream Havering schools received direct support from the EAL team.
- 90% of LA-maintained primary schools accessed the service via the HES portal.
- Schools benefited from consultancy visits, training, and specialist resources.
- Customer satisfaction feedback was wholly positive, with 100% of respondents rating the service as good or better.

Further details of the service offered through de-delegation are provided in [Appendix A](#).

4.5 Trade Union Facility Time

The LA proposes the continued de-delegation of funding for Trade Union Facilities Time (TUFT). This provides support from locally based, accredited trade union officials to school staff. Further details of the support provided is in [Appendix B](#).

The LA is administering this pooled arrangement on behalf of schools and the trade unions. Without the LA acting as an intermediary, individual schools and trade unions would need to make arrangements directly with each other. The Education Finance team manages the scheme on behalf of Education Services, schools, and the unions, ensuring a centralised, efficient, and equitable approach.

The following unions and the staff they support are as follows:

Union	Staff Supported
National Education Union (NEU)	Teaching
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)	Teaching
Community	Teaching
National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)	Teaching
UNISON	Support
GMB	Support

* The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) are no longer supported by this provision

Last year the Forum agreed an increase in the sum per pupil de-delegated from £2.80 to £2.96 to help meet the rise in salary costs of the local trade union representatives delivering the service.

There is a proposed 3.5% per-pupil increase for TUFT, that reflects the estimated rise in teachers' pay and associated staff costs for the local trade union representatives delivering the service. It ensures that the LA can continue to provide the same level and quality of support to school staff, maintaining the pooled arrangement's sustainability and enabling schools to access consistent, high-quality union support without managing individual arrangements.

The proposed funding through de-delegation from LA maintained primary schools is as follows:

2026-27	Primary
Formula factor	Basic Entitlement
Amount	£2.96
Total	£53,351
2025-26	£2.80

Benefits of de-delegating:

- Ensures all maintained schools have equitable access to accredited trade union support.
- Reduces administrative burden on individual schools in managing TUFT arrangements.
- Provides locally based support, helping schools manage workforce relations effectively.
- Maintains consistency of service across schools and ensures compliance with statutory obligations regarding staff consultation and representation.
- By acting as intermediary, the LA simplifies arrangements between schools and trade unions, removing the need for separate negotiations or contracts.

If schools do not buy in:

- Individual schools would need to arrange their own trade union support, which may be more costly and less efficient.
- Smaller schools may have limited access to support or struggle to meet statutory obligations for staff representation.
- Consistency and quality of support across schools could vary, potentially affecting workforce management.
- Schools and unions would need to negotiate separately without LA support, increasing administrative workload.

Education functions – applicable to LA maintained primary and special schools only

4.7 Statutory and regulatory duties

Education functions are applicable only to LA maintained primary and special schools. These contributions cover statutory and regulatory services that the LA is required to provide to maintained schools but not to academies. The approach reflects the central service charges applied by most Multi-Academy Trusts, ensuring consistency with national practice.

Historically, the Education Services Grant (ESG) funded these statutory services for both maintained schools and academies. Following the withdrawal of ESG, part of the funding was transferred into the DSG Schools Block, while the remaining statutory services for maintained schools have been funded through contributions from school budgets since the 2018-19 financial year. Rates have been adjusted annually in line with the National Funding Formula (NFF) factor values.

For 2026-27, the LA proposes a 3.5% increase to reflect the expected rise in staff salaries, which make up the majority of the cost of providing these services. The new contribution rates would be:

2026-27	Primary	Special
Formula factor	Basic Entitlement	Place
Amount	£21.71	£65.13
Total	£373,732	£10,095

2025-26	£20.98	£62.94
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This would produce a minimum total contribution of £383,827 from maintained schools.

These services are statutory. As the LA is legally required to provide them, maintained schools do not have the option to opt out. This ensures that all schools receive consistent, compliant, and centrally coordinated support, safeguarding pupils, staff, and the LA itself.

Categories of LA responsibilities funded through this contribution:

Category	Central Services functions for LA Maintained Schools (previously ESG - now part of Education Functions)
Service Strategy & Regulation	Budgeting and accounting functions relating to maintained schools (Sch 2, 73)
	Functions relating to the financing of maintained schools (Sch 2, 58)
	Authorisation and monitoring of expenditure in respect of schools which do not have delegated budgets, and related financial administration (Sch 2, 57)
	Monitoring of compliance with requirements in relation to the scheme for financing schools and the provision of community facilities by governing bodies (Sch 2, 58)
	Internal audit and other tasks related to the authority's chief finance officer's responsibilities under Section 151 of LGA 1972 for maintained schools (Sch 2, 59)
	Functions made under Section 44 of the 2002 Act (Consistent Financial Reporting) (Sch 2, 60)
	Functions related to local government pensions and administration of teachers' pensions in relation to staff working at maintained schools under the direct management of the headteacher or governing body (Sch 2, 62)
	HR duties, including: advice to schools on the management of staff, pay alterations, conditions of service and composition/organisation of staff (Sch 2, 63); determination of conditions of service for non-teaching staff (Sch 2, 64); appointment or dismissal of employee functions (Sch 2, 65)
	Consultation costs relating to staffing (Sch 2, 66)
	Provision of information to or at the request of the Crown relating to schools (Sch 2, 68)
	Establish and maintaining computer systems, including data storage (Sch 2, 71)
	Appointment of governors and payment of governor expenses (Sch 2, 72)
Asset management	General landlord duties for all maintained schools (Sch 2, 76a & b (section 542(2)) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) to ensure that school buildings have:
	• appropriate facilities for pupils and staff (including medical and accommodation)
	• the ability to sustain appropriate loads
	• reasonable weather resistance
	• safe escape routes
	• appropriate acoustic levels
	• lighting, heating and ventilation which meets the required standards
	• adequate water supplies and drainage
	• playing fields of the appropriate standards
	General health and safety duty as an employer for employees and others who may be affected (Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974)
	Management of the risk from asbestos in community school buildings (Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012)
Monitoring national curriculum assessment	Monitoring of National Curriculum assessments (Sch 2, 74)

4.8 Core school improvement activities

The School Improvement, Monitoring and Brokerage (SIMB) grant was withdrawn by the DfE from 2023-24. Local authorities were given the power to fund all improvement activity, including core school improvement activities, via de-delegation with the agreement of Schools Forums or the Secretary of State.

During the summer term of 2022, the LA worked with school and academy leaders to refresh its Quality Assurance (QA) Framework. A key objective is that all children attend schools judged to be “*effective*” (Good or Outstanding) by Ofsted.

To support the maintenance of high standards, all LA-maintained schools are included in the QA cycle. Stand-alone academies or schools within academy trusts are welcome to participate, but are not required to do so in the same way as maintained schools.

For 2026-27, the LA proposes a 3.5% increase to the per-pupil rate. This follows a reduction in 2025-26, when the rate was lowered from £5.11 per primary pupil to £3.38 per pupil, reflecting efficiencies achieved by delivering more of the intervention work internally.

The 2026-27 increase from £3.38 to £3.50 per pupil is therefore applied to this lower baseline, ensuring that schools benefit from a saving compared with previous higher rates, while still enabling the LA to provide high-quality, centrally coordinated school improvement support and account for rising staff costs. The new contribution rates would be:

2026-27	Primary	Special
Formula factor	Basic Entitlement	Place
Amount	£3.50	£10.50
Total	£60,480	£1,643

2025-26	£3.38	£10.14
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Details of the service provided are shown in [Appendix C](#).

5 Conclusion

We hope that this paper and the accompanying appendices explain the de-delegated services and education functions options that form the basis of this consultation, and the rationale behind these options.

As explained above, the rate for each of the services will remain as per the consultation proposals once the final dataset is made available in December. However, the budgets for each of the de-delegated/education functions are indicative and final calculations will be made once the validated data from the October 2025 census has been received from the DfE.

Appendix A - English as an Additional Language service

Rationale for maintaining a central EAL team

The LA proposes a continued contribution from LA maintained primary schools in order to retain a central specialist EAL team. Without a core de-delegated contribution, the service would need to operate solely on a traded basis, which would significantly reduce its viability and ability to respond to fluctuating levels of need.

For 2026–27, the proposed charge has been reduced by 39.2%, ensuring the model remains proportionate while safeguarding a level of provision that schools rely upon, particularly as the current Ofsted framework continues to identify EAL learners as a vulnerable group facing potential barriers to learning. A centrally held team ensures compliance, preparedness for inspection, and consistency of support across settings.

Proposal for 2026–27

It is proposed that £23.12 per EAL pupil be de-delegated for the financial year 2026-27. This reflects a 39.2% reduction from the 2025-26 contribution and would generate £71,428 towards the cost of the service, compared with £114,538 in the previous year.

Given expected demographic shifts, EAL3 allocations to schools are likely to increase over the year. To ensure schools retain the majority of this additional funding, the amount held centrally will be capped at £72,000, with any further increases remaining within individual school budgets.

1. Changing demographics

Havering continues to experience a rapidly changing demographic profile, with sustained increases in families arriving from abroad and from other areas of the UK. A growing proportion of pupils enter schools with limited or no English, including children from areas affected by conflict. Many of these pupils have benefited from targeted EAL interventions such as the Homes for Ukraine in-school teaching project, overseen by the EAL team.

This continued growth in new-to-English arrivals strengthens the need for a responsive and centrally coordinated service that can support schools at the point needs arise.

2. Service usage

The EAL team remains well used across the borough, with:

- Two-thirds of all mainstream Havering schools accessing support through a combination of traded and de-delegated routes.
- 90% of LA-maintained primaries using the service via the HES portal.
- 77% attending centrally delivered EAL training.
- 60% requesting direct consultancy or pupil support.

Schools also accessed ongoing telephone and email advice, as well as essential resources, including screening tools, proficiency assessment templates and teaching materials, through the HES portal.

3. Risk if the service ceases to be centrally funded

Unlike some service areas with predictable demand, EAL needs fluctuate significantly between schools due to changing cohorts and variable staff experience. This makes traded-only income unpredictable and insufficient for sustaining a specialist team.

If schools were unable to pool funding collectively, the borough-wide EAL service would likely become unviable, requiring schools to secure ad-hoc external support at a higher cost and with less flexibility. The average centrally supported value of £2,937 per school provides a more comprehensive offer than any equivalent traded service could provide.

4. Flexibility and responsiveness of the current model

Retaining a discrete EAL service provides schools with flexible and timely support. Visits can be arranged when new pupils arrive or where staff capacity changes, avoiding the constraints of package-based traded models. Schools can request short visits, remote consultations, in-house CPD, and pupil-focused observations, ensuring support is tailored to immediate needs. Twice-termly networks for EAL co-ordinators and TAs further enhance professional practice and borough-wide consistency.

5. Team Capacity

The three EAL Advisers continue to meet all requests for support. Communications are issued regularly to ensure schools are aware of available courses, consultancy, and new resources. Capacity is strengthened through a specialist secondary consultant who also supports cross-phase needs as required. No requests from LA-maintained primaries have been declined due to capacity constraints.

6. Offer to LA-maintained primary schools (2026-27)

Schools contributing via de-delegation will have access to:

- Termly consultancy visits, with further visits arranged depending on individual school needs.
- Pupil-focused support, as well as advice for pupils with combined SEND/EAL needs.
- In-house EAL CPD for teachers and support staff.
- EAL reviews and learning walks.
- Teacher surgeries for priority pupil discussions.
- Twice-termly networks for EAL co-ordinators and EAL TAs.
- Unlimited access to all centrally held EAL CPD.
- Telephone and email support.
- Access to subscriber-only content within the HES EAL resource pages (<https://www.hes.org.uk/Page/147>).

7. Impact of the EAL team:

Targeted support from the EAL team helps schools tailor provision to accelerate progress for new arrivals and early-stage learners, enabling them to reach age-related expectations or narrow attainment gaps rapidly.

In the 2024-25 HES customer satisfaction survey, 100% of respondents rated the service as good or better, with positive feedback highlighting the quality, responsiveness and practical value of the advice provided.

8. Summary

Targeted support from the EAL team helps schools tailor provision to accelerate progress for new arrivals and early-stage learners, enabling them to reach age-related expectations or narrow attainment gaps rapidly.

Appendix B - Trade Union facility time

Introduction

There is a legal obligation on schools as employers to ensure they have in place arrangements to negotiate and consult with accredited Trade Union representatives and to afford their employees Trade Union representation, in compliance with legislation. Such arrangements include paid time off ('facilities time') for accredited trade union representatives to undertake these duties.

This service provides confidence to participating schools that they are fulfilling their legal obligations and ensuring their staff have access to employee representation from local Union representatives from across the County.

The support from Union representatives, available through de-delegation, also ensures that sensitive issues do not spiral out of control into situations involving formal procedures which can be extremely costly in both senior leadership time and money.

The scheme helps avoid the risk of operational disruption and the cost of schools having to release their own staff for specific training to fulfil this role and other functions linked to Trade Union facilities time.

By not having access to this local experienced resource there is an increased risk of lengthy and stressful processes that could impact on the running of schools and the health of all staff involved.

There are also increased risks around the following:

- Schools not fulfilling their legal duty.
- Schools not having access to a local Union rep resulting in delays in case management and resolution.
- Application of HR Policies impacted due to lack of availability of Union support.
- Lack of local mediation/discussion with regional reps who know the area.
- Escalation of grievances and cases (including sickness absence management) which might otherwise be avoided.
- Schools having to provide training for staff to the standard of local branch secretaries in order to fulfil legal duties.
- Schools unable to find staff who want to take on the Trade Union representative role.

Trade union facility time and membership fees

There is also often confusion around individual member subscriptions to Unions and the facilities payments received from schools. There is a specific distinction between the two and what they cover:

- 1) **Individual membership fees** not only pay towards the overall running costs of unions, but members also receive a number of fringe benefits, from support and guidance, legal services, training, financial assistance, compensation, non-employment law and insurance.
- 2) **De-delegated Trade Union Facilities Time** from schools funds the release of local representatives within Havering. Unions work collaboratively with schools and the LA to enable a smooth and seamless service.

Service provision

School leaders and governors are likely to only see a glimpse of the activity and support provided by Unions and what actually takes place in terms of casework.

A great deal of time is spent by local reps dealing with employees' concerns and grievances 'behind the scenes' in a way which prevents things ever escalating into confrontation and formal procedures.

Local Union reps help members work through conflict and change to the benefit of the members themselves and of school leaders.

The pooled arrangements allow facility time for branch secretaries to provide support to their members in a range of areas including:

General Advice and Support

1. Access for members to advice and support on employment issues from local representatives who understand Havering school issues because they work within them.
2. Prompt response to all requests for contact or support from Trade Union/professional association representatives.
3. Joint working between Trade Union representatives, LA Officers, members and school leaders, supporting staff whilst working collaboratively with management for best outcomes - to reduce escalation; maintaining open channels of communication to create resolution in challenging and difficult circumstances.
4. Schools and their staff are kept abreast of issues on the national Trade Union agenda and pertaining to collective agreements. All Unions work at a national level, campaigning and lobbying the government to reform key issues within education to support children and their learning with the best possible outcomes for everyone.

Consultation, Compliance and Policies

5. Availability of a pool of specialist Trade Union representatives able to consult meaningfully with the Local Authority on proposed changes to HR policies on behalf of all maintained schools. This saves individual schools having to consult with the Trade Unions independently.
6. Assurance that model employment policies issued by Havering LA have been through formal negotiation and consultation with Havering Division/Branch Trade Union officials

Employee Relations

7. Employees' concerns and grievances are addressed informally wherever possible, in a way which prevents sensitive issues escalating into confrontation involving contracted formal procedures. This can be extremely costly in both senior leadership time and money as well as emotionally for all involved.
8. Matters are often addressed without recourse to regional officials.
9. Where the involvement of regional or national officials is required, named contact details are provided promptly by local reps.
10. Genuine support for the well-being of staff, through positive and productive working relationships.

Restructuring and Reorganisation

11. Specific support for staff restructurings and budget saving options.
12. Discussion about alternative individual employment options, including settlement agreements.

TUPE and Academy Conversion

13. Meaningful consultation over academy conversion.

Branch secretaries, whose facility time is funded through de-delegation are senior and experienced Trade Union representatives with a good level of knowledge and expertise on employment matters.

Appendix C - Core school improvement activities - Havering Education Quality Assurance Process 2025-2026

Quality Assurance Cycle

A key objective of the Local Authority (LA) is that all children will attend a school that is judged to be “effective” by Ofsted.

To support the maintenance of high standards, all LA maintained schools will be included in the LA Quality Assurance (QA) cycle. Schools in Federations have individual URNs and will therefore be deemed to be separate schools for purposes of the QA cycle.

Schools which are stand-alone academies, or schools that are part of an academy trust are welcome to participate in all aspects of the cycle in the same way as maintained schools. However they are not required to participate in the way that LA schools are, and if they choose to participate then there will be a charge from April 2026.

However, as a minimum, schools that are an academy will be strongly encouraged to participate in Keeping in Touch (KIT) visits. The KIT visits may focus, by negotiation on individual member schools within the cycle window, and an overview of the trust schools within Havering and trust quality assurance processes generally. The KIT will ensure that the LA has the necessary information to ensure that elected members are kept fully engaged in the local education system. We also encourage the sharing of good practice between all providers in our education community regardless of governance arrangements.

The LA proposes the following cycle of QA for “effective” schools:

Timeline

- Year 1 – Post Ofsted Inspection leaders attending to ‘Areas for Improvement’
- Year 2 - KIT visit or Peer Review Programme, if eligible
- Year 3 - Full QA (Ofsted Readiness) visit
- Year 4 - KIT visit
- Year 5 - Ofsted Inspection (possible KIT)

A school will join a point of the LA QA cycle according to when it was last inspected by Ofsted. This will be done by term as near as possible.

KIT Visits

A school judged to be “effective” will have a Keeping in Touch (KIT) visit 12 months after inspection.

A KIT visit of up to half a day, will include a discussion about:

- o the strengths of the school and evidence to support
- o area of improvement/focus, improvement planning, impact of actions taken and evidence to support this
- o pupil outcomes
- o concerns the school or the LA may have
- o brokerage of support

If a KIT visit suggests that one or more areas of the school's practice appears vulnerable, the school is strongly encouraged to engage with a specialist advisor to undertake a more in depth analysis of that area of practice in order to address any area of vulnerability.

If prior to September 2024 a school was graded Requires Improvement following a Graded Inspection or the evidence gathered during an Ungraded Inspection suggested that the grade may be lower than Good if a Graded Inspection was to be carried out, or post September 2024 a school is judged not to be "effective", then the school will be subject to 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support' by the LA in the case of maintained schools. In academies, the LA will offer additional support and encourage engagement with the plans for improvement, or if necessary engage with the DfE Regional Director. Support from the LA would be chargeable.

Where serious concern is identified the DfE will continue to intervene, including by issuing an academy order. From September 2024 the policy of government intervention for two or more consecutive judgements of "requires improvement" will be one of providing support.

In year 2 of the cycle, following inspection, schools not subject to 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support' are encouraged to be involved in school-to-school improvement programmes, e.g. facilitated peer review, peer support and HSIS school improvement packages. Where an LA officer is a participant in the facilitated peer review, in some circumstances where the focus is suitable, this may replace the KIT visit.

It is envisaged that these programmes will support leaders to address the areas for improvement noted in the inspection report and others that are identified as well as identifying excellent practice that can be shared with other schools in order to support the agenda of self-improving schools.

In year 4, the school would again receive a KIT visit. A further KIT may be agreed in year 5 or later, where the inspection timetable becomes considerably overdue.

Full QA (Ofsted Readiness) Visit

In year 3, the QA Ofsted Readiness visit will be a more in-depth school evaluation involving a team of relevant specialist advisors, and will include:

- A review of key information provided in advance of the visit e.g. School Self-Evaluation, School Development Plan, Safeguarding S175 audit (there is a requirement for the audit to have been externally validated either by the LA or an external provider within the previous 12 months.)
- A short pre-visit meeting for leaders to share their evaluation of improvements made in the areas for improvement identified during the last inspection, the Quality of Education, and to confirm visit arrangements and areas of focus. This meeting may be held virtually or in-person.
- The in-school visit will include discussions with the school's senior curriculum leader and leaders in subjects and other areas of focus, with an emphasis on their leadership and its impact. This will be led by the LA QA Link Officer supported by one or more LA Officers according to focus. The Leadership of Reading in school will always be an included area. There will also be discussions with pupils.
- Visits to lessons, looking at pupils' work and where possible discussion with teachers are also likely to be included.
- There will always be a focus on SEND.

Risk Register and Schools Monitoring Group

The LA regularly maintains a risk register analysis of all educational establishments within the borough, in order to pre-empt difficulties and offer support, fulfil our statutory duties ([Support and intervention in schools statutory guidance](#) September 2025) and engage with local elected members, Ofsted, safeguarding complaints, and the DfE Regional Directors.

The Schools' Monitoring Group (SMG) meets each half-term to monitor progress in schools at risk of not sustaining an "effective" school judgement in their next inspection (Schools 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support'), take decisions regarding the utilisation of Local Authority Powers of Intervention, engagement with the DfE Regional Directors, deploy School-to-School Support resources and broker HES support.

All teams within LA Children's Services relating to schools contribute triggers which could be areas of concern, or suggest vulnerabilities in relation to their areas of work. These triggers are published in [Appendix 1](#). Triggers are not exclusive and other situations may arise from time to time. All service areas are represented at the SMG meeting, so that relevant information can be shared to identify any emerging vulnerabilities so that activity can be coordinated.

Schools 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support':

There are five trigger points for a school to be deemed to be 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support':

1. Prior to September 2024 Ofsted grading less than "Good" /suggestion less than "Good" following an Ungraded Inspection.
2. LA year 3 Ofsted readiness QA suggests the school may not be judged to be "effective" at its next inspection.
3. Information gained during an LA KIT visit suggests significant risk.
4. LA identification following an SMG periodic risk register analysis e.g. attendance, behaviour, complaints, pupil outcomes suggests significant risk.
5. Self-identification by a school to generate additional support through strategic link officer.

Progress Review Meetings (PRMs)

For maintained schools (and academies by agreement), where a school is considered vulnerable and 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support', the school relevant LA officers will discuss the situation fully with the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher/Principal and the Chair of Governors.

Where a school is judged to be 'Requiring Additional Intervention & Support':

- Progress Review Meetings (PRMs) will be implemented if trigger 1 or 2 occurs and if required depending on outcomes of findings for trigger 3 or 4.
- Points 3, 4 and 5 will lead to a full school or area review and if deemed that the school is a vulnerable school, will be subject to regular PRMs.
- PRMs are meetings chaired by a senior LA Officer and are attended by the Headteacher, the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors and others by invitation of the LA Officer.
- PRMs will include an element of first-hand evidence validation undertaken with school leaders.

Their purpose is for the LA to:

- oversee the implementation of action plans to secure rapid and sustained improvements, so are likely to be 'front-loaded' with more frequent meetings at the outset.
- monitor progress of actions taken to ensure they have maximum impact.
- commission additional resources when needed to support rapid improvement.
- monitor the impact of brokered support, including partnership support.
- where possible, gather direct evidence of progress for LA monitoring and reporting to Schools' Funding Forum' and for Ofsted.

Summary

For maintained schools, the activity described above as part of the wider Quality Assurance Cycle, PRMs, further in-school support such as a full school review, or review of an area of the school's practice, would all be funded from the de-delegated 'School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant', and spend will be reported to Schools' Funding Forum. However, this is subject to Schools' Funding Forum approval.

PRMs are not mandatory for academies but can be offered if requested, but would be chargeable to cover direct costs of LA officer resource, as would any in-school support, such as a full school review or review of an area of the school's practice.

Appendix 1 – LA Children's Services School Vulnerability Triggers

Admissions, attendance and behaviour

- High number of deletions from school registers – parents transferring schools
- High number of Permanent Exclusions being issued
- High levels of attendance absence
- High levels of referrals from schools requesting pupils directed 'off site'
- High levels of suspensions / exclusions of pupils with undiagnosed SEND needs – where schools have not dealt with the basics
- A high number, significant increase in parents wishing to Electively Home Education as pupils unhappy with school
- A significantly high number of bullying incidents, reports and reasons pupils are not in a specific school

Asset Management

If schools chose **not to**

- Carry out their statutory tests and inspections on their school buildings i.e. building compliance
- Keep their school buildings safe and in good working order by tackling poor building condition and or health and safety issues.
- Use their devolved formula capital budget appropriately

Finance

- **Deficit Balances:** Schools with a deficit balance of more than £10,000 at the end of the previous financial year which they have not budgeted to recover within this financial year and there is no agreed recovery plan.
- **Deficit budget:** Schools setting a budget with an in year deficit ***in excess of £100,000 or 50% of their total balances at the end of the previous financial year***, with projections indicating this deficit will *increase over the next three years*.
- **High Surplus:** Schools carrying a budget surplus in excess of ***8% of their total income at the end of the previous financial year*** where the school has excess surplus balances and no agreed plan to use these.
- **Audit Outcomes:** Schools that received a ***'limited assurance' or 'no assurance' rating*** in their most recent internal audit or financial health check, highlighting significant weaknesses in financial controls, governance, and risk management practices.
- **Leadership and Financial Oversight:** Schools with a combination of an ***inexperienced or interim School Business Manager (SBM) and a newly appointed or interim Head Teacher***, indicating potential financial vulnerabilities due to a lack of experienced oversight in budget management.
- **Non-Compliance with Financial Reporting:**
 - (i) ***Failure to submit*** the school budget, three-year financial plan, or the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) by the required deadlines.
 - (ii) ***Non-submission of monthly financial reconciliations for three consecutive months***, without a valid justification, despite repeated

- reminders from the local authority.
- (iii) **Failure to submit year end returns** and backing documents by required deadlines or significant errors
- (iv) **Poor quality forecasting and budgeting** – a pattern of significant unforecast variances to budget

Governor Services

- High governor turnover
- Governor vacancies and lack of engagement by GB to fill vacancies
- Chair – new or lack of engagement
- Parental complaints
- Relationship between governors and SLT
- Meetings being re-arranged or not planned effectively
- Indications of lack of governor effectiveness
 - Gaps in skills / experience across the GB (evidenced by skills audit)
 - Evidence of lack of challenge (evidenced by meeting observation, feedback from clerks and minutes)
 - Lack of strategic working and/or over involvement in operational issues
 - Lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities by GB collectively or by individual governors and/or HT
- Non-compliance with GB Code of Conduct

Havering School Improvement Services (HSiS)

Leadership:

- Inexperienced Head Teacher –in first year of headship.
- New Head Teacher, not new to Headship
- Interim Head Teacher arrangements in place
- Lack of capacity of leadership team, including vacancies
- Substantial concerns raised following a S175 audit

Quality of Education:

- Leadership of overall Curriculum
- Leadership of a significant curriculum area or a number of areas
- Inappropriate use of alternative provisions
- Outcomes for pupils
 - Academic achievement
 - Other – PD/Well-being, support for mental health/Gatsby principles, benchmarking/Destinations/NEET/wider curriculum

Other:

- Concern re pupil behaviour/conduct
- Concern re low attendance/high persistent absence
- School recently amalgamated/become part of a federation
- Complaints, including from Ofsted
- Staffing: Absences/vacancies/turnover/ recurrent HR issues
- Lack of engagement with staff development opportunities
- Website –intelligence gathering pre a school visit e.g. PP, SEND, Reading... not compliant or out of date

Health & Safety

Management Audit Scores:

- Overall score $\leq 50\%$
- Specific sections scores:
- Risk assessment $< 80\%$
- Maintenance $< 80\%$
- Inspection $< 80\%$

Human Resources

HR monitors Employee Relations casework and how schools perform in their duty under relevant school employment policies and procedures.

- Effective use of employment policies and procedures across the whole school that demonstrates best practice in the management and motivation of all school staff. Unlikely to have any active casework.
- Any active casework completed in line with policies/procedures with effective use of HR support/guidance provided.
- Employee Relations casework complex, requiring regular HR support/guidance, likely to lead to potential collective disputes (up to and including dismissal), and where the school is not effectively following HR advice and guidance.
- Significant Employee Relations casework (high number of cases or complex casework) requiring significant leadership input and requiring regular HR support/guidance and where the school is not effectively following HR advice and guidance. One or more of these cases is likely to lead to collective disputes, dismissal(s), settlement agreement(s) or possible Employment Tribunal claim(s).

SEND

- A high number or significant increase in parental complaints (either formal or informal) to the SEND Service
- A high number, significant increase in, or inappropriate or illegal use of reduced timetables, alternative provision, suspensions/exclusions
- A high number or significant increase in placement breakdowns or requests for change of placements for pupils with SEND
- Failure to comply with statutory requirements relating to SEND processes (e.g., consultation responses, annual reviews)
- Evidence of poor, exclusionary, or potentially illegal/discriminatory practice in regards to pupils with SEND
- Resistance or a lack of openness to external services and to support from external teams to develop SEND processes, practice, and promote inclusion