



**Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Children's Services Directorate**

Agenda

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

Date: Thursday, 22nd January 2026
Time: 14.00 to 16.00
Location: Barnsley Town Hall, Meeting Room 10

Ref	Item	Papers	Officer
1	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies	Verbal	Chair
2	Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest To consider any declarations of interest from members of the Schools Forum.	Verbal	Chair
3	Minutes and action log of previous meeting of the Schools Forum To consider the minutes, action log and any matters arising from the Meeting of the Schools Forum, held on 18th December 2025	ENC A	Chair
4	Schools Budget Out turn Report (Quarter 3: 2025/26)	ENC B	Helen Perrin
5	Schools Funding: Budget Allocations (2026/27)	ENC C	Helen Perrin
6	Schools Block Dedicated Budget (2026/27)	ENC D	Helen Perrin
7	Early Years Block Dedicated Budget (2026/27)	ENC E	Helen Perrin
8	Central School Services Budget Block (2026/27)	ENC F	Helen Perrin
9	Special Educational Needs Performance and Finance Report (Quarter 2: 2025/26)	ENC G	Sue Day
10	Provisional Education Outcomes in the Borough (2025)	ENC H	Anna Turner
11	Position statement for EHE	ENC I	Anna Turner

12	Any other urgent business To consider any additional business which in the view of the Chair of the Schools Forum cannot wait until the next meeting.	Verbal	All
13	Future Agenda items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND & AP sufficiency strategy and the new Mill Special School build • Presentation of Proposals for In-Borough Provision Funding Reallocation • Special Educational Needs Performance and Finance Report (Quarter 3: 2025/26) 		

SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

Date	Time	Venue	Deadline for papers
17th March 2026	2:00- 4:00PM	Westgate Boardroom	27th February 2026
16th July 2026	2:00 - 4:00PM	Westgate Boardroom	3rd July 2026
22nd October 2026	2:00 - 4:00PM	Westgate Boardroom	9th October 2026
17th December 2026	2:00 - 4:00PM	Westgate Boardroom	4th December 2026
21st January 2027	2:00 - 4:00PM	Westgate Boardroom	8th January 2027
18th March 2027	2:00 - 4:00PM	Westgate Boardroom	5th March 2027



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Children's Services Directorate

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM HELD ON THURSDAY
18th December 2025**

Meeting Attendance

Name	Role	Present?
Officers /Non schools		
Katharine Knowles (KK)	Strategic Finance Business Partner (BMBC)	Apologies
Helen Perrin (HP)	Principal Accountant (BMBC)	✓
Nina Sleight (NS)	Service Director (BMBC)	Apologies
Anna Turner (AT)	Head of Education and Partnerships (BMBC)	✓
Sue Day (SD)	Head of SEND (BMBC)	✓
Eleanor Cooper (EC)	Governor Services adviser (BMBC)	✓
Lauren firth (LF)	Project Officer (BMBC)	✓

Councillors		
Cllr Deborah Pearson (DP)	Councillor (BMBC)	✓
Cllr Ken Richardson (KR)	Councillor (BMBC)	
Cllr Janine Moyes (JM)	Councillor (BMBC)	

Primary Schools (LA)		
Simon Tabbner (ST)	Primary Headteacher	✓
Jackie Milliner (JM)	Primary Governor	

Primary Academy Officers		
Joe Woffinden (JW)	Primary Headteacher	✓
Katie Adamski (KA)	Principal	✓
Victoria Gorton (VG)	Primary Headteacher	

Primary Academy Governors		
Michael Sanderson (CHAIR)	Primary Academy Governor	✓
Peter Bell (PB)	School Governor	✓

Nursery Provision		
Simon Sykes (SS)	Teacher	✓

Early Years Provision		
Melanie Szoke (MS)	Childcare Quality & Sufficiency Manager	Apologies

Secondary School (LA)		
Paul Crook (PC)	Secondary Headteacher	✓
Visseh Pejhan Sykes (VPS)	Secondary Maintained Governor	✓

Secondary Academy Officers		
Victoria Harrison (VH)	HCAT CFO	
Nigel Leeder (NL)	Governor	✓
Amir Arezoo (AA)	Associate Principal	Apologies

Education for Young People aged 16-19 Years		
Tom Smith (TS)	Head of Service	✓

Special & Alternative Provision		
Josh Greaves (JG) (VICE CHAIR)	Special Schools Headteacher /Board Representative	✓
George Wild (GW)	Springwell Learning Community & Greenacre Special school	✓

1. Welcome and apologies

The chair extended a warm welcome to everyone at the meeting. Formal apologies were noted from Katharine Knowles, Melanie Szoke, Nina Sleight and Amir Arezoo.

2. Declarations of interest

Visseh Pejhan Sykes declared an interest as a newly appointed Trustee for Wellspring Academy but will only be representing Penistone Grammar school at this meeting.

3. Minutes and action log of the previous meeting of the Schools Forum

The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on the 23rd October 2025 were agreed and approved as a correct record of the meeting. Actions were reviewed on the action log. No other matters arose during consideration of the minutes.

4. Schools Funding Settlement and Arrangements for 2026/27

- Helen Perrin provided an update noting that while this report was first presented in October, new information was released in November 2025 regarding school funding arrangements for 2026/27.
- The update confirmed detailed aspects of the funding settlement, including provisional schools block and central schools services allocations based on current pupil numbers, showing an overall increase of £10.5m (including £10.3m in the schools block and £0.15m in the central block).

- The Schools Budget Support Grant and National Insurance Contributions Grant have been rolled into the official allocation.
- Minimum per pupil funding levels are set at £5,115 for primary and £6,640 for secondary, with a minimum funding guarantee (MFG) range of 0.0% (cash flat protection).
- The historic commitments element of the central schools services block will reduce by 20%, equating to £46k for Barnsley.
- Helen Perrin emphasised that this update ensures all members have the latest information available for the Schools Forum.

Resolved:

- The Forum received and noted the update on the Schools Funding Settlement and Arrangements for 2026/27.

5. Outcome of the Local Authority's consultation with schools on proposed changes to the Local Schools Funding Formula

- Helen Perrin reported that 48 schools (55% of all schools, up from 22% last year) responded to the consultation, with the increase mainly due to more primary schools participating.
- The majority (92%) supported the phased approach to aligning the Free School Meals (FSM) unit value to the National Funding Formula (NFF), though some noted the lack of financial data as a limitation.
- All respondents (100%) agreed on the need to mirror and align funding values as closely as possible to the NFF, which helps schools plan for future years.
- Most respondents (98%) supported continuing to set the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) in line with previous years, and the majority (81%) agreed with applying scaling (rather than capping) if required to meet MFG requirements.
- Helen Perrin confirmed the intention to implement the formula as in previous years, moving factors, especially the FSM factor, as close as possible to NFF values, and to apply scaling only to meet the MFG requirement.
- Paul Crook asked when schools would receive indicative figures and how closely the formula would align with the NFF. Helen responded that floor budgets would be sent by the end of February, with submission to DfE in January and updates at the next meeting. Paul Crook expressed a preference for earlier figures but understood the timescales.
- Anna Turner raised concerns about consultation response rates and discussed ways to improve engagement. It was suggested including governors and considering workshops or using existing cluster meetings. Simon suggested joining cluster meetings to reach more people.
- It was proposed to review the most effective and resource-efficient way to deliver future consultations, possibly starting with clusters and then evaluating for the following year.

Actions:

- BMBC to consider the use of workshops or cluster meetings to improve future consultation engagement, with a review of effectiveness for next year.

Resolved:

- The Forum received and noted the outcome of the consultation and agreed to proceed with the proposed approach to the Local Schools Funding Formula, with actions to improve future engagement.

6. Proposal to Transfer Funding from the Schools Block to High Needs Block

- Helen Perrin outlined the ongoing financial challenges in the High Needs Block, including rising demand, cost pressures, and a projected cumulative deficit of £21.7 million by 2026/27, despite savings measures and additional government support.
- The proposal is to transfer 1% of the Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block in 2026/27, continuing the approach from previous years to address the deficit and support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- 67% of consultation respondents agreed with the transfer, with most opposition coming from secondary schools. Concerns raised included the financial impact on schools and the need for increased central government funding for high needs.
- Helen Perrin explained that the transfer is primarily used to support Barnsley children placed out of borough due to insufficient local provision, with the aim of increasing local capacity and inclusion in the future.
- Members expressed discomfort at being asked to approve a significant transfer without detailed modelling of the impact on individual schools, noting that the DfE had not provided the usual tools or data.
- There was discussion about the process feeling predetermined due to DfE safety valve agreements, and some questioned whether not approving the transfer would have any effect.
- Sue Day emphasised that the transfer supports Barnsley children and that increasing local provision would reduce reliance on costly out-of-borough placements.
- **On being put to the vote, the proposal to transfer 1% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block was approved the Schools and Academies members of the Forum, with five votes in favour and four votes against.**

Resolved:

- The Forum approved the Council's proposal to transfer 1% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2026/27.

7. Any other urgent business

No urgent business was raised.

8. Schedule of future meetings (2026)

The following meeting dates were noted:

- Thursday 22nd January 2026 - 2.00pm - Reception Room, Town Hall
- Tuesday 17th March 2026 – 2.00pm - Boardroom, Westgate Plaza

- Thursday 16th July 2026 - 2:00pm - Boardroom, Westgate Plaza
- Thursday 22nd October 2026 - 2:00pm - Boardroom, Westgate Plaza
- Thursday 17th December 2026 - 2:00pm - Boardroom, Westgate Plaza

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(Signed by the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum)



BARNSELY SCHOOLS FORUM

ACTION LOG OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM HELD ON 22nd January 2026

REF	DATE	ACTION	LEAD	UPDATE	STATUS
13	22.01.26	Eleanor Cooper to follow up with Jackie Milliner and Simon Tabbner regarding their votes and record this in writing.	EC	27.01.2025 – Vote received from Jackie Milliner and has been recorded in the meeting minutes.	
14	22.01.26	Lauren Firth to add the newly co-produced Education Improvement Strategy for the Barnsley Schools Alliance to the forward plan.	LF	22.01.2026 – Added to forward plan	Complete

ONGOING ACTIONS

REF	DATE	ACTION	LEAD	UPDATE	STATUS
11	23.10.2025	<u>Special Educational Needs Performance and Finance Report (Quarter 1: 2025/26)</u> Sue Day to follow up on the potential use of existing school space for SEN provision as part of the capital estate review.	SD	Sue Day to give a verbal update to the Schools Forum on the process that is being followed for capital. UPDATE REQUIRED	Ongoing
12	18.12.2025	<u>Outcome of the Local Authority's consultation with schools on proposed</u>	BMBC Colleagues	UPDATE REQUIRED	Ongoing



**Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Children's Services Directorate**

		<p><u>changes to the Local Schools Funding Formula</u></p> <p>BMBC to consider the use of workshops or cluster meetings to improve future consultation engagement, with a review of effectiveness for next year.</p>			
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COMPLETED ACTIONS (To be deleted after each meeting)

REF	DATE	ACTION	LEAD	UPDATE	STATUS
6	23.10.2025	<p><u>Schools Budget: Latest Forecast Position (Quarter 2: 2025/26)</u></p> <p>Kat Knowles/Helen Perrin to update the deficit commentary to reflect geographic and demographic factors, not just school size.</p>	KK/HP	Will be actioned when we complete the Q3 outturn report which will be presented at Schools Forum in January. 22.01.2026 – Paper shared and presented at the meeting.	Complete
8	23.10.2025	<p><u>Schools Budget: Latest Forecast Position (Quarter 2: 2025/26)</u></p> <p>Kat Knowles/Helen Perrin to correct any table header typos and ensure clarity in future reports.</p>	KK/HP	Will be actioned when we complete the Q3 outturn report which will be presented at Schools Forum in January. 22.01.2026 – Paper shared and presented at the meeting.	Complete



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
People Directorate

Schools Forum

Item

Title: Schools Budget 2025/26 – Latest Outturn Position

Date: 22nd January 2026

Author: Helen Perrin (BMBC Principal Accountant)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To inform the Forum of the 2025/26 latest outturn (Q3 position) of the delegated budget for **maintained schools** and centrally retained budgets – both of which are funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The following are the main recommendations:

FOR INFORMATION

- **Note the latest projected outturn position for the schools delegated budget and the centrally retained DSG budgets, particularly projected deficit position on the high needs block.**

OVERALL DSG BUDGETS 2025-26

3. The revised approved schools budget (dedicated schools grant funding) for 2025/26 totals **£121.4M** (as confirmed by DfE in November 2025). The above excludes budgets relating to schools that have converted to academies (62 schools in total). The overall revised school budgets, analysed by funding blocks and between delegated and centrally retained, is outlined in the table below:

	Delegated Budgets to Schools £M	Centrally Retained Budgets £M	Total £M
Schools Block *	44.2	0.5	44.7
High Needs Pupils	12.0	27.4	39.4
Early Years	6.3	29.3	35.6
Central Schools Services	-	1.7	1.7
	62.5	58.9	121.4

**The above reflects transfers from Schools to High Needs block (£1.7M)*

4. The above DSG budget excludes the following schools related funding:
- ✓ **Carry forward schools balances** – a total net surplus balances of £3.0M was carried forward by maintained schools from the previous year into 2025-26 financial year.
 - ✓ **Pupil Premium Grant** – a total of £3.8M has been allocated to maintained schools for 2025/26 financial year.
 - ✓ **DfE Post 16 funding** – a total of £1.7M has been allocated in the year relating to post 16 provision (mainly in relation to Penistone Grammar school) and formed part of their delegated funding.
 - ✓ **Other specific grant funding for schools** – certain grant funding has been provided by the DfE in the current financial year and allocated directly to schools in accordance with the grant conditions e.g. Universal Infant Free School Meals, Primary PE & Sports grant, Schools budget support grant (SBSG), National Insurance contributions (NICs) grant.
5. The overall resources available to schools can be analysed between the 2 main elements, the amount delegated to schools and the amount centrally retained / managed by the Council on behalf of schools.

SCHOOLS DELEGATED DSG BUDGET

6. DSG delegated funding has been allocated to individual schools through the local schools funding formula. A funding adjustment of £1.7M was made to the school block funding to reflect the confirmed DfE decision on the funding transfer application made by the Council to transfer from the school's block to the high needs block 1%.
7. Consequently, the total revised DSG budget directly managed by maintained schools is **£62.5M** (after adjustment for academies, Growth Fund and de delegated transfer). This is in addition to the £3.0M of school balances carry forward from 2023/24 and was incorporated within the detailed budgets of all the various schools.

8. The latest 2025/26 projected outturn position for all maintained schools based on the last submitted quarterly returns from schools is summarised in the table below:

Surplus Balance	2024/25 Outturn £M	2025/26 Original Budget £M	2025/26 Forecast Outturn £M
Primary*	1,868	679	679
Secondary	1,146	27	364
	3,014	706	1,043

*25/26 Original Budget amended for in year academy conversions

9. The following are the key points to note from the above projected outturn information on schools' balances:

- There is a noticeable reduction in overall surplus schools' balances when compared to the previous year's outturn position.
- Latest outturn estimates appear to be consistent with original planning assumptions made by schools and show an increase in the forecast surplus position for secondary schools.
- There are several primary schools, with small forecast surplus balances reported for the year (6 schools with less than £10k). These schools have very limited scope and flexibility within their budget to meet current cost pressures.
- 5 schools are forecasting a deficit balance in 2025/26 as detailed in the table below:

Summary of Deficit budgets	2024/25 closing position	Planned Budget 2025/26	Latest Reported position	Change in Position
Millhouse Primary School	40,125	-40,468	-28,490	11,978
Penistone St Johns Primary School	-5,277	-98,951	-104,767	-5,816
Silkstone Primary School	-2,507	-23,180	-23,124	56
Springvale Primary School	-5,481	-10,036	-56,163	-46,127
Thurlstone Primary School	-17,117	-46,057	-132,721	-86.664
Total Deficit	57,719	-190,491	-345,265	-126,573

- All of the above schools who have a forecast surplus at year end are within the Penistone Cluster. These schools are experiencing falling pupil numbers and low deprivation funding through the schools NFF, which is a contributory factor to the deficits.
- Discussions are ongoing with all of the above schools to revisit the

recovery plans and actions they have implemented to begin to address their deficit position with a view of bringing the school back into a balanced position within an agreed timeframe.

- We continue to review and challenge forecast positions where significant variances and low surplus balances are evident. This is to ensure that robust monitoring is undertaken and support can be provided where needed to so that deficit positions are forecast in a timely manner which enables them to be address.
- Schools continue to raise financial sustainability concerns regarding increasing cost pressures associated with the cost-of-living crisis and previous high levels of inflation (surpluses have been utilised to mitigate the increased costs). This is despite the additional supplementary grant funding made available by the government to schools in previous financial years. The impact of increasing cost pressures is more prevalent in the smaller primary schools who are already under budget pressure from reducing pupil numbers and therefore have limited scope to absorb such cost increases.
- The Council has held individual strategic meetings with the schools who are projecting deficits to discuss their respective future financial strategy.

CENTRALLY RETAINED SCHOOLS BUDGETS

10. These relate to several DSG budgets that are managed by the Council, where it is cost-effective to do so as opposed to delegating them directly to schools. The nature of expenditure that can be charged against centrally retained DSG is detailed in the School Finance Regulations.

11. The total DSG budget (across all the funding blocks) that is centrally retained and managed by the Council is **£58.9M**. The table below shows the budget split between the main funding blocks and the forecast outturn position for each block.

<u>Centrally Retained DSG Budgets</u>	Budget £M	Forecast £M	Over (+) / Under (-) spend £M
Schools Block	0.5	0.6	+0.1
High Needs Block	27.4	35.6	+8.2
Early Years Block	29.3	29.3	0.0
Central School Services	1.7	1.7	0.0
	58.9	67.2	+8.3

12. The financial position across all the centrally retained DSG budgets shows an overall overspend of **£8.3M** an increase of £3.8M compared to the originally planned deficit £4.5M, and an increase of £1.7M when compared

to the Q2 position. The overspend mainly relates to the high needs funding block. The following is an explanation of the key budget variances within the high needs block:

- Increase in INMSS & Other LA placements (£3.2M) – Due to the increasing demand for specialist places there has been an increase in placements of 61 compared to the planned 10 in INMSS and a net increase of 23 in Other LA Special Schools. This has resulted in additional cost pressure of £3.2M.
- Shortfall on plan savings (£0.5M) - the Council is on track to achieve 70% of its 2025/26 savings target (£1.8M) built into the 2025/26 high needs budget. However, a shortfall of £0.5M against the savings target is currently forecast due to lower than planned number of post-16 and pre 16 pupils being returned from INMSS back into local in borough provision by Sept 2025.
- Slippage in new SEND places (-£2.3M) – Due to a delay in the creation of the planned 130 placements the Council will incur reduced costs for commissioned placements. However, this has resulted in a consequential increase in demand and costs for out of borough placements.
- Increase in Mainstream Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) numbers and costs (£1.1M) – this cost pressure has arisen due to the increase in the number of EHCP Plans (493) being delivered in mainstream schools. There is also an increase in high needs top-up funding levels and exceptional funding requests (£0.251M).
- Increase in Tuition and AP Provision (£0.8M) – increase in the level of children needing tuition which is linked to a number of reasons: additional AP requirements, placement breakdown, schools inclusivity and sufficiency of places.
- Increase in Post 16 £0.6M) – increase in post 16 pupils attending Barnsley College (32 pupils) with a cost impact of £0.2M plus 6 new placements in specialist Post 16 provision (£0.4M) of which one has an annual cost of £105k.

Managing financial risks

13. Under the DSG grant conditions, deficits are expected to be managed across the DSG budgets, with the flexibility for a deficit to be carried forward to future years.
14. There are also several identified risks that have emerged which could put further pressure on the deficit position:
 - Increase in EHCP numbers and pupils in mainstream and special schools. This is being addressed by managing demand through a focused piece of work, strengthening the front door and securing support at SEN support level.

- Increase in EHCP numbers over and above the forecast position, with no sign of slowing down/reducing.
 - Increase in requests for specialist placements.
 - Increasing number of requests for additional funding from schools and settings. This is being addressed by requiring schools to provide supporting evidence and rationale for such request – which are then presented to the panel to inform decision making.
 - Increase number of placements directed following tribunal appeals. This has been mitigated by giving careful consideration to all appeals lodged, taking a needs-led approach to children & young people.
 - Increased uptake within Early Years new 2-year-old and under 2's is greater than the current DfE grant allocation and no adjustment is made before year end.
15. The latest overall financial risk in 2025/26 is **£19.5M**. This is made up of the cumulative **£13.9M** plus the **£8.3M** forecast deficit for 2025/26, offset by the 2025/26 safety valve payment of **£2.75M** (£13.9M + £8.3M - £2.75M).
16. The DSG Management Plan continues to form the basis for managing financial risks as it details the actions / measures for bringing the DSG spend back into balance over the medium term as agreed in the Safety Valve Agreement. The plan outlines projected cost pressures; it set outs the plans for commissioning additional and suitable specialist places locally to reduce reliance on INMSS. and planned actions/ measures to be implemented over the medium term to help bring spend back to a sustainable level by 2026/27.
17. The SEND Deficits statutory override which was due to end March 2025 has now been extended by the Government until 2027/28. This was announced alongside the Government's plan to reform the current SEND system. A white paper was due to be released in autumn; this has been delayed to spring 2026. We expect to receive more clarity on the treatment of future funding shortfalls and the historic deficit.

Annex 1 - Centrally Retained Budgets -25/26 (Q3)	2025-26 Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast variance
	(£)	(£)	(£)
SCHOOLS BLOCK			
<u>Schools - Delegated budgets</u>			-
school contingency	191,495		-191,495
Free school meals eligibility	5,485	5,485	-
Staff costs supply cover	124,082	462,703	338,621
<u>Schools - Top sliced Budgets</u>			
Contingency (central services block)	81,672	81,672	-
Education Function - Brokerage Grant	111,582	111,582	-
Growth Fund	100,000	73,983	- 26,017
Looked after children	200,000	200,000	-
schools causing concern	395,000	395,000	-
School admissions	275,000	275,000	-
Licences/subscriptions	231,916	231,916	-
Servicing of schools forums	7,000	7,000	-
ESG retained duties	582,678	582,678	-
	2,305,910	2,427,019	121,109
HIGH NEEDS BLOCK			
Specialist resource provisions	2,757,730	2,741,826	- 15,904
SALT provision	145,000	145,000	-
Out of Authority - INMSS / OLAs	20,415,593	24,203,206	3,787,613
SEN support and SEND Improvement services	2,146,741	1,845,741	-301,000
SEND strategy - increased SEMH/SLCN	2,507,237	225,282	-2,281,955
Tuition/Hospital/Personal Budgets/Ap Provision	479,000	1,271,936	792,936
Direct Entry pre 14-16	235,000	355,000	120,000
Special Schools & Mainstream Top up		846,935	846,935
School Improvement - virtual school	50,000	50,000	-
Home to school transport - satellite provision	50,000	50,000	-
Barnsley College (Post 16 provision) & Independent Specialist Providers	3,112,648	3,760,000	647,352
Over commitment	- 4,636,803		4,636,803
	27,262,146	35,494,926	8,232,780
EARLY YEARS BLOCK			
EYSFF - PVI's 3 & 4 year old	9,141,896	8,864,580	- 277,316
EY PVI's 2 year old funding - Disadvantaged	2,185,551	2,327,260	141,709
EY PVI's 2 year old funding - Working Parent	6,471,395	6,471,395	-
EY PVI's under 2 year old funding	9,464,715	9,464,715	-
EYSF centrally retained	1,243,292	1,243,292	0
Inclusion Fund	213,964	266,822	52,858
Disability Access Fund	235,438	235,438	-
EY Pupil Premium - Contingency	248,840		-248,840
Early Years adjustment 2024/25		331,589	331,589
	29,205,092	29,205,091	-0
OVERALL CENTRAL DSG BUDGETS	58,773,148	67,127,036	8,353,889



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Children Services Directorate

Schools Forum

Agenda Item

Title: Schools Funding Settlement 2026/27
Date: 22nd January 2026
Author: Helen Perrin (BMBC Principal Accountant)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to confirm the financial settlement for schools and an overview of other funding available for schools for 2026/27 as announced by the Government on 17th December 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Forum:

FOR INFORMATION

- **Note the Government's funding settlement for schools for 2026/27 (across the 4 funding blocks) and for these to form the basis of determining the budgets for schools / settings.**
- **Note confirmation of other funding available for schools in 2026/27, including the pupil premium grant.**

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2026/27

3. Details of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) were announced on 17th December 2025. The total DSG funding for Barnsley for 2026/27 is **£319.5M** (before adjusting for academies high needs funding recoupment). This equates to a **£18.4M** increase in funding compared to 2025/26. The allocation of DSG funding continues to be set out in four blocks, namely schools; high needs, early years and a central school services block. The table below compares Barnsley's DSG allocation for 2026/27 to the current year on an equivalent basis.

	2025/26 £M	2026/27 £M	Change £M
Schools Block*	218.095	227.140	9.045
High Needs Block	46.035	47.954	1.919
Early Years Block	35.330	42.638	7.308
Central Schools Services	1.673	1.806	0.132
	301.133	319.538	18.404

* SBSG and NI grant of £6.3M has been rolled into the 26/27 baseline allocation

4. An explanation of the increased DSG funding for Barnsley in 2026/27 is summarised as follows:

- Schools Block – despite the decrease of 311 pupils (as per the October 2025 schools census) which resulted in a reduction of £1.8M, overall there is increase in funding of £9.0M. This is attributed to the roll in of £6.3M related to previous year grants (SBSG, NIC) and increased net funding (as announced by the Government in the 2025 Autumn Statement) allocated through the National Funding Formula (£2.7M).
- High Needs Block – the £1.9M funding increase is due to increased funding through the high needs National Funding Formula (£1.2M); and roll in of CSBG grant funding for ISS, ILP, SPI and SURP HN providers (£0.7M).
- Early Years Block – the significant increase (£7.3M) in funding relates to the following:
 - a 5.2% increase in the 3- & 4-year-old early years funding rate (£1.0M);
 - a 4.9% increase in the disadvantaged and extension of the working 2-year-old early years funding rate plus increased uptake (£2.9M); and
 - a 4.6% increase in the newly introduced (September 2024) early years childcare funding entitlement for working parents with children aged 9 months and above funding rate and increased uptake (£3.4M).

Schools Block funding

5. The schools block funding (**£227M**) for 2026/27 has been allocated based on the national funding formula (NFF) schools block units of funding (for primary and secondary) and actual costs for premises and growth. The underlying NFF dataset has been updated to reflect the latest October 2025 pupil census count.

6. There are no significant changes to the schools funding system for 2026/27. The following are the key points to note in relation to the schools block funding arrangements:

1. Each local authority will continue to determine the budget allocation for individual schools in their local area in consultation with the school's forum.

2. The requirement for local authorities to bring their own local schools formulae closer to the schools NFF will continue in 2026/27.
3. Local authorities have the freedom to set the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) in their local formulae between -0% and +0% per pupil – aimed at protecting schools from adverse significant changes in the funding formula.
4. Local authorities continue to be able to transfer up to 0.5% of their schools block to other blocks of the DSG, with schools forum approval.
7. The Barnsley local schools funding formula (managed by the Council) will be used to allocate funding to individual schools. The confirmed changes to the 2026/27 funding formula, following the consultation with schools and the Schools Forum, is outlined in the schools block funding report presented separately on the agenda.

Early Years Block Funding

8. The DSG settlement announced on 17th December 2025 also confirmed Barnsley's **provisional** settlement for the early years' block of **£42.6M**, which is comprised of the following:
 1. 3&4 year old funding (**£16.8M**): consist of early years' universal entitlement of 15 hours per week and the extension to 30 hours entitlement for working parents. The LA funding allocation is determined through the Early Year's NFF;
 2. 2 years old funding (**£12.2M**): represents participation funding for delivering 15 hours of free childcare provision to eligible 2-year olds from disadvantage backgrounds in PVI settings, children centres, childminders. The allocation also includes additional funding (£6.5M) for the extension of the 15 hours free childcare entitlement for working parents, increasing to 30 hours from September 2025;
 3. Under 2's funding (**£13.0M**): represents participation funding for delivering 15 hours of free childcare provision to eligible 2-year olds for working parents in PVI settings, children centres, childminders; increasing to 30 hours from September 2025;
 4. Early years' pupil premium funding (**£0.417M**): aimed at providing additional support for 3&4 year olds, 2 year olds and under 2's from disadvantaged backgrounds;
 5. Disability Access Fund (**£0.238M**): to improve access to early years' provision for children with SEN or disability.

9. As in previous years, early years funding allocations are provisional with final allocations confirmed in July 2026. Barnsley's Early Years Single Funding Formula will be used for determining and allocating the 3&4 year old funding to all early years' settings and schools with early years provision. The 2 year old and under 2's funding will be allocated via a new Early Years Single Funding Formula which was introduced in 2024/25.

High Needs Block Funding

10. The High Needs Block consists of all funding for additional education provision for high needs pupils and students from birth to 25 years and has been allocated using the high needs national funding formula. For 2026/27, the confirmed high needs funding is **£47.9M** (before adjusting for EFA funded places in academies, non-maintained special schools and post 16 places).
11. The above funding will form the basis for setting the budgets for the following:
- top up funding to mainstream schools / academies;
 - place / top up funding to special schools / academies;
 - alternative Provision (e.g. the PRU);
 - funding for specialist resource provision;
 - payments to independent / non-maintained special schools; and
 - Element 3 payments to FE colleges and special post 16 providers.

PUPIL PREMIUM GRANT (PPG) 2026/27

13. The pupil premium grant funding will continue to be available in addition to DSG funding for schools and will enable schools to engage in activities to support / improve the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils.
14. The PPG is based on the number of eligible disadvantaged pupils (i.e. pupils on free school meals); number of Armed Forces' children and number of pupils that is looked after by the authority.
- Primary FSM6 pupils £1,550
 - Secondary FSM6 pupils £1,100
 - Looked-after children £2,690
 - Children who have ceased to be looked-after £2,690
 - Service Child £360

OTHER SCHOOLS FUNDING 2026/27

20. The following outline several schools funding where the Government is yet to confirm either its continuation or cessation for 2026/27:

- Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)
- PE & Sport Premium.



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
People Directorate

Schools Forum

Agenda Item

Title: Schools Block Funding Budget 2026/27
Date: 22nd January 2026
Author: Helen Perrin (BMBC Principal Accountant)

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Forum of the schools block funding budget for 2026/27, and specifically to confirm the changes to the schools funding formula that will form the basis for determining individual schools budgets. The confirmed schools funding formula must be submitted to the DfE by 21st January 2026.
2. DSG funding for 2025/26 has been provided in 4 funding blocks, namely schools, early years, high needs and central schools services blocks. This report deals with the distribution of DSG funding within the schools block.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Forum:

FOR INFORMATION

- **Note the Schools Block DSG allocation for 2026/27 and the implemented changes to the local schools funding formula as outlined in paragraphs 7 to 17 of this report.**
- **Note that the proposed 2026/27 schools funding formula incorporates a funding transfer of 1% to the high needs block (as approved by the Forum on 18th December 2025). This is subject to DfE approval of the disapplication request submitted by the Council.**

FOR APPROVAL

- **Agree for the funding for maintained primary & secondary schools outlined in paragraph 22 to be de-delegated and retained by the Council to fund central schools expenditure.**

- **Agree for the deduction of the Education Function funding for maintained primary & secondary schools outlined in paragraph 26 to be retained by the Council to fund central school improvement monitoring and brokerage expenditure.**

School block funding envelope 2026/27

4. Details of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) were announced on 17th December 2025. The 2026/27 DSG allocation for Barnsley's schools block as determined through the National Funding Formula (NFF) is **£227.1M**. This equates to an increase of £9.0m when compared to the current year, made up of the following:
 - Net impact of the NFF (£2.7M) taking account of reduction in pupil numbers
 - SBSG and NIC Grants £6.3M rolled into the baseline allocation.
5. The NFF schools block unit of funding (which reflects the pupil led funding element) for Barnsley for 2026/27 is **£5,859** (primary) and **£7,597** (secondary). The total level of schools block funding for Barnsley is in line with the announced schools funding settlement, although overall funding has been impacted by the decrease pupil numbers and changes to the pupil growth allocation.
6. The schools block funding represents the totality of funding expected to be allocated directly to schools using the local schools funding formula. The amount to be retained centrally by local authorities is now allocated through a separate central schools services block.
7. The 2025/26 schools budget support grant (SBSG), and NIC grants have been rolled into the schools NFF ensuring that this additional funding forms an on-going part of schools core budgets. Appropriate adjustments have been made to NFF factor values and baselines to reflect this.

Changes to the schools funding formula 2026/27

8. Although the NFF has been used to determine funding allocations to LAs, individual allocations to schools in 2026/27 will be determined by the local schools funding formula. The expectation is that LAs will align their local formulae closer to the schools NFF. In particular:
 - Local authorities will only be allowed to use NFF factors in their local formulae, and must use all NFF factors, except for any locally determined premises factors.
 - Local authorities will also be required to move their local formulae factors at least 10% closer to the NFF values, compared to where they were in 2025/26, unless they are already mirroring the NFF. For this purpose, local factor values within 2.5% of the respective NFF values are deemed to be "mirroring" the NFF. As part of the tightening requirement, local authorities

are not allowed to 'overshoot' the NFF value by more than the 2.5% mirroring threshold.

9. A consultation exercise was undertaken in November 2025, which sought views on further changes to Barnsley's local formula as well as the proposal to transfer funding from the schools block to the high needs block. The outcome of the consultation was reported to the Schools Forum on the 18th December 2025 – the consensus view is a further alignment of the Barnsley formula to the NFF.
10. The following paragraphs outline the implemented changes to the schools funding formula for 2026/27, which reflects the expressed views of schools, the School's Forum and considers changes made to the funding formula as per DfE.

Minimum Funding Factor

11. To ensure that schools continue to be funded at an appropriate level the mandatory 'minimum per pupil' funding factor rates will increase in line with the Government's recommended increase and funding rates set as follows: £5,115 for primary and £6,640 for secondary.

Basic entitlement factor

12. In line with the NFF, the majority of funding (70%) will be allocated in the formula through the basic entitlement factor i.e. the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU). The implemented changes to the AWPU rates for 2026/27 are as follows:
 - (1) Per pupil rates for secondary schools have been increased by 2.2% (after the roll in of the SBSG and NIC grants (2.7%)) with the resultant rates for 2026/27; **£5,686** for KS3 and **£6,410** for KS4, in line with the NFF rates.
 - (2) The per pupil rate for primary schools has been increased by 2.2% (after the roll in of the SBSG and NIC grants (3.5%)) with the rate being set at **£4,064** for 2026/27, in line with the NFF rate.

Additional Education Needs Factors

13. The funding rates for the additional education needs factors, namely Deprivation; Low Prior Attainment; and English as an Additional Language (EAL) have been uplifted and aligned to the NFF. The exception is the FMS6 and FSM proxy indicator which have been increased to the NFF minimum level allowed which moves it 10% closer to the NFF factor. Increases will continue to be implemented in future years to ensure a phased approach to full NFF alignment. In addition, the proportion of funding allocated through these factors has been aligned to the NFF, with the exception of the EAL factor.

Lump Sum

14. The Lump Sum unit value has been increased by 5% in line with the NFF value (£152,700).

PFI

15. PFI funding included in the School Block funding allocation included an uplift of 4.2%. All PFI funding allocations have been uplifted to match the 2026/27 NFF PFI figure as per data taken from COLLECT, with the total allocation matching the PFI allocation included within the funding for Growth, Premises and Mobility Factors.

Minimum funding guarantee

16. To increase the protection to schools the current regulations allow Councils to set the MFG between -0% and +0%. The MFG has been set at **+0%**. This would ensure that all schools are protected from adverse changes in the funding formula on a per pupil basis.

Pupil Growth Fund

17. Funding for pupil growth in 2026/27 has been allocated to local authorities (£0.5M for Barnsley) through the NFF on a formulaic basis, with flexibility allowed for local authorities to distribute the funding in line with their local arrangements. The approach for 2026/27 is to allocate growth funding to schools outside the formula based on the Council's Pupil Growth criteria / policy.
18. The amount to be top sliced from the schools block for 2026/27 for pupil growth is **£0.1M** (£0.1M in 2025/26) – based on an assessment of existing commitments and planned growth.

Transfer from the schools block to the high needs block

19. Barnsley continues to face increased cost pressures in the high needs block, with a deficit forecast in the current year and projected for 2026/27. The Government has allowed local flexibility for the transfer of funding from the schools to high needs block in 2026/27 – subject to Schools Forum and DfE approval (for transfers above 0.5%).
20. It is the intention of the Council to exercise this flexibility for 2026/76 and on this basis have consulted with schools and the Schools Forum on the proposal to transfer 1% of the schools block funding to the high needs block. The transferred funding will be used to mitigate the additional place / top up funding associated with creating new SEND places locally to stem growth in out of authority placements.

21. The 1% funding transfer proposal was approved by the Schools Forum on 18th December 2025. This is still subject to DfE approval which is not expected to be confirmed until the end of January 2026. However, the schools budget proposal put forward for 2026/27, although assumes DfE approval of the 1% funding transfer, is based on a 0.8% transfer. This is to ensure no detriment to individual school budgets resulting from changes to the funding formulas.

Outline of the 2026/27 Barnsley's Funding Formula

22. The following table gives a provisional outline of Barnsley's funding formula and the level of funding to be allocated under each of the factors for 2026/27.

	2025/26 Budget	2026/27 Budget	Variance
Pupil Numbers	32,853	32,542	-311
	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>
Schools block funding	218,095	227,140	9,045
Growth fund	-100	-100	0
Funding transfer to high needs block*	-1,735	-1,817	-82
	216,260	225,223	8,963

*2026/27 funding transfer subject to DfE approval

1) Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)	151,410	157,555	6,145
2) Deprivation	26,100	27,904	1,804
3) English as an Additional Language	1,082	1,070	-12
4) Mobility	176	143	-33
5) Prior Attainment	12,008	12,144	136
6) Lump sum	12,760	13,429	669
7) Sparsity	50	50	0
8) Split Site	122	124	2
9) Minimum pupil funding	284	75	-209
10) Minimum Funding Guarantee	232	91	-141
Capping/Scaling	-232	-91	141
11) Rates	2,006	2,047	41
12) PFI funding	10,262	10,682	420
	216,260	225,223	8,963

De-delegated Funding

23. Under the schools funding framework, the authority can de-delegate, through the local funding formula, a funding amount to be retained centrally and managed by the LA. The DfE operational guidance outlines the relevant funding that is subject to de-delegation. The table below details the de-delegated items and the level of funding to be deducted from maintained schools formula allocations:

De-delegation funding	2025-26 £'000	2026-27 £'000
Contingency	-192	-163
Free school meal eligibility	-5	-4
Teaching Staff cover	-124	-104
	(321)	(271)

24. There has been a reduction in the level of de-delegated funding compared to 2025/26 due to the academisation of **four** schools in 2025/26. De-delegation is not an option for academies who will receive a share of funding for these services in their core funding from DfE.
25. For each de-delegated funding for 2026/27, the basis of how the funding will be taken out of the formula is the same and consistent with that used in 2025/26, as follows:
- Contingency - pupil number units for the relevant school phase
 - Free school eligibility – based on number of free school meals pupils (EVER6)
 - Teaching staff cover – based on number of pupils for relevant school phase
26. For each of the above budgets, it would be for the Schools Forum members in the relevant phase (primary / secondary) to **(1) agree the delegated amount;** and **(2) decide whether that service should be provided centrally.** The decision(s) will apply to all maintained schools in that phase. Different decisions could be made for each phase of schools. Funding for these services will then be removed from the formula before school budgets are issued.

Education Functions

27. The School Improvement Monitoring & Brokering grant is allocated to local authorities to support school improvement activities. Following a consultation exercise, the Government implemented a 50% reduction of the grant in 2022/23 with the full grant removed in 2023/24. Provision was included in the School and Early Years Finance Regulations 2022 (England) to allow local authorities to deduct funding for core school improvement activities from maintained school budgets, with the agreement of the school's forum. The value of the full grant was £128k in 2022/23.

28. It was agreed in 2023/24 to deduct the £128k from maintained school's formula allocations and the value of the deduction to be reviewed each year in line with the number of schools converting to academies.
29. In order to ensure that remaining maintained schools are not adversely impacted due to increasing academisation, it is proposed that the deduction from individual maintained schools is maintained at 2023/24 levels (although adjusted for pupil numbers). Under this approach any funding gap would be retained / managed by the Council.
30. Therefore, based on the above approach the value of the proposed deduction from the current 26 maintained schools formula allocations for 2026/27 is £96k. The variance of £16k is due to the academisation of 4 schools during the year. The deduction for individual school has been calculated based on a unit cost per pupil of £13.44 multiplied by number on roll (as per October 2025 census).

Formula budget deduction for Education Functions	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
School Improvement Monitoring & Brokerage grant	(112)	(96)
	(112)	(96)



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
People Directorate

Schools Forum Agenda Item

Title: Early Years Block Funding Arrangements 2026/27

Date: 22nd January 2026

Author: Helen Perrin (BMBC Principal Accountant)

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Forum of the proposed funding arrangements for Barnsley's Early Years block for 2026/27.
2. This report deals specifically with the distribution of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding within the Early Years block (specifically the 3 & 4 year old, new 2 year old and under 2's entitlement) and the proposed arrangements for allocating this funding to schools, PVI settings and childminders.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the schools forum:

FOR INFORMATION

- **Note the provisional DSG funding settlement for the Early Years block for 2026/27.**
- **Note the DfE change from annual to termly census funding system to fund all Early Years entitlements.**
- **Note the arrangements for allocating the 3&4 year olds Early Years funding to providers and settings for 2026/27 (via the existing Barnsley's EY Funding Formula).**
- **Note the arrangements for allocating the new 2-year-old and under 2's Early Years funding to providers and settings for 2026/27 (via the new Barnsley's Funding Formula).**

Early Years Funding Settlement 2026/27

4. The DSG settlement announced on 17th December 2025 confirmed the Early Years funding rates (see table below) and Barnsley's provisional settlement for the Early Years' block of **£42.6M**.
5. Details of the Early Years provisional settlement are as follows:

Funding Rates per hour	2026/27
Early Years 3&4 year old funding (without Termly adjustment)	£6.01
Early Years 3&4 year old funding (with Termly adjustment)	£6.20
Early Years 2-year-old funding - Disadvantaged	£8.40
Early Years 2-year-old funding - working parents	£8.40
Early Years under 2's	£11.39

1. 3&4 year old funding (**£16.8M**): Early Years universal entitlement of the 15 hours per week for 3 & 4 year olds, plus funding for the extension to 30 hours for working parents.
2. 2 years old funding (**£12.2M**): represents participation funding for delivering 15 hours of free childcare provision to eligible 2-year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds and the extended entitlement to working parents from April 2024.
3. Under 2's funding (**£13.0M**): Early Years universal entitlement of the 30 hours per week for eligible working parents of children from 9 months to 2 years old (new entitlement from 1st September 2024).
4. Early year's pupil premium funding (**£0.417M**): aimed at providing additional support for 3&4 year olds, 2 year olds and under 2's from disadvantaged backgrounds.
5. Disability Access Fund (**£0.238M**): to improve access to Early Years provision for children with SEN or disability.
6. From 2026/27 the DfE are introducing a termly funding system to fund local authority Early Years entitlement on termly census headcounts. This is the same as the working parents' entitlements for 2-year-olds and under 2's. The DfE are also revising the allocation profile to better match the number of funded weeks local authorities fund providers each term.
7. For the 3&4-year-old entitlements, DfE analysis shows that changing from an annual to a termly census will result in a lower number of funded hours being

reported across the year, at a national level. However, the DfE recognise that local authorities will still need to fund the same number of hours locally. To compensate for the budget reduction local authorities would otherwise see from reduced headcounts under a termly funding model, DfE have adjusted the 3&4-year-old rates payable to local authorities, reflecting the termly variation at the national level.

8. This means, in financial year 2026/27, each local authority will receive an 'adjusted' hourly rate for 3&4-year-olds after allowing for the termly funding adjustment. This change will only take place in 2026/27 to support transition and will not be an ongoing adjustment.
9. As in previous years, the Early Years funding allocations are provisional with final funding allocations calculated as a weighted average of the termly census part-time equivalent (PTE) numbers from the Early Years and school censuses as follows:
 - thirteen-thirty-eighths of the summer 2026 census PTE numbers (to cover the April 2026 to August 2026 period)
 - fourteen-thirty-eighths of the autumn 2026 census PTE numbers (to cover the September 2026 to December 2026 period)
 - eleven-thirty-eighths of the spring 2027 census PTE numbers (to cover the January 2027 to March 2027 period)

The PTE numbers from the Alternative Provision (AP) census (annual census) will also be used, therefore the PTE weighting will be thirteen-thirty-eighths of the 2026 AP census and twenty-five-thirty-eighths of the 2027 AP census.

3&4 year olds Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) (2026/27)

10. The structure of Barnsley's local EYSFF for 2026/27 remains unchanged and consists of the following:
 - a) A basic core funding element – which is calculated by applying an average basic hourly rate to assumed participation hours.
 - b) Additional deprivation supplement to support settings with pupils from deprived backgrounds.
 - c) Inclusion Fund - identified funding pot allocated to settings to support children with special education needs.

Pass through requirement

11. There is a mandatory level of funding that the council must pass through to providers/settings (via the base rate and supplements). The pass-through amount has been confirmed by the Government at **97%** for 2026/27. The 3% balance is retained by the Council to meet central administrative costs associated with processing and auditing payments to private, voluntary and

independent (PVI) settings and childminders, undertaking eligibility checks and the central Early Years quality and sufficiency services who provide information, advice, and guidance to settings, and the wider early childhood services.

12. For 2026/27 (as per DfE operational guidance), the 3&4-year-old pass through calculation will be based on the 'without' termly adjustment rate of £6.01. This is to ensure the passthrough calculation for the 3&4-year-old entitlements takes place on a like for like basis as previous years and is not inadvertently impacted by the termly adjustment.
13. It is proposed to set the 2026/27 pass-through rate for 3&4 year-old funding, in line with the Government's confirmed **97%**, with 3% held centrally.

Funding Supplements

14. Supplements are amounts of funding within the local EYSFF which are given in addition to the base rate to reflect local needs or policy objectives and should be limited to 12%. The only supplement used in Barnsley's EYSFF is the mandatory deprivation factor. It is proposed that the funding amount for the deprivation supplement is maintained at the same level as in 2025/26 (**£406k**).

SEND Inclusion Fund

15. There is a requirement for local authorities to have a SEN Inclusion fund in their local funding systems. Funding of **£100k** was set aside from within the Early Years funding allocation in 2025/26 to meet that requirement. It is proposed to maintain the Inclusion Fund for 2026/27 at the same level.

Proposed Base Rate for 2026/27

16. Barnsley's current **core** hourly rate paid to settings is £5.41 (compared to the 2025/26 national funding rate of £5.71). The Government announced an increase of 30pence (5.3%) in the national funding rate (without termly adjustment) in 2026/27. It is proposed to increase the core rate to £5.69 and pass 28pence increase (equates to 5.2%) directly to **all** providers for 2026/27.
17. The proposed increase in the base rate has been assessed for affordability, based on estimated participation hours for 2026/27 (using data from the current PVI / childminders claims and census counts for Schools & academies). Please see table below:

	Hours	Allocation with termly adjustment (£6.20)
DfE Allocation(indicative)	2,703,818	£16,763,670
BMBC Estimated Forecast	2,626,897	£16,286,760

18. The DfE Pass through Calculator tool below shows the funding impact of the proposed increase in Barnsley’s current base rate to £5.69 (previously £5.41) based on estimated forecast hours. After taking account of the deprivation supplement and centrally retained amount this then equates to an average overall rate of £5.88:

Early years funding - pass-through calculator

3 TO 4-YEAR-OLD		
DfE hourly rate	£	6.01
MNS supplementary allocation		
TOTAL PLANNED SPEND		
Base rate	£	14,946,254.00
Deprivation	£	406,412.00
SENIF (early years block)	£	100,000.00
Contingency		
Entitlement hours		2,626,897
Pass-through hourly funding rate		£ 5.88
Pass-through %		97.9%

19. The main funding risk for 2026/27 relates to the impact of the change introduced by DfE for the funding of Early Years entitlements from annual census to termly census for funding to local authorities. A reasonable level of contingency has been allowed for within the modelling – which provides flexibility to manage the changes.
20. The table below provides a detailed breakdown of the 2026/27 forecast allocation based on the ‘with termly adjustment’ hourly rate (£6.20), and includes the forecast contingency:

	2026/27
Base Rate (£5.69)	£14,946,254
Deprivation	£406,412
Inclusion	£100,000
	£15,452,666
3% centrally retained based on forecast @ £6.20 rate	£488,603
Contingency set aside for impact of change from annual to termly census entitlement funding	£345,491
	£16,286,760

Early Years Funding Formula for 2-year-olds & Under 2's (2026/27)

21. Funding for the newly introduced (2024/25) 2-year-old and under 2's Early Years free entitlement will be allocated to providers / settings using the new Early Years Funding Formula. The structure of Barnsley's EY funding formula for 2026/27 remains unchanged and consists of the following:
- a) A basic core funding element – which is calculated by applying an average basic hourly rate to assumed participation hours.
 - b) Supplements – as in line with 2025/26, there will be no supplements in 2026/27.
 - c) Inclusion Fund – identified funding pot allocated to settings to support children with special education needs.

Pass-through funding requirement

22. There is a mandatory level of funding that the Council must pass through to providers / settings. The pass-through amount has been confirmed by the Government at **97%** for 2026/27 (in line with 3&4-year-old funding). This is a pass through increase of 1%. It is proposed to set the 2026/27 pass-through rate at the Government's mandated level (i.e. 97%), thus equating to a 1% increase to the core hourly base rate.
23. The remaining 3% retained by the Council will be used to meet central administrative costs associated with the central Early Years quality and sufficiency services who provide information, advice, and guidance to settings, and the wider early childhood services, and costs relating to undertaking eligibility checks, and processing and auditing payments to PVI's and Childminders.

Supplements

24. Unlike the 3 and 4-year-old entitlements, it is not mandatory for local authorities to include a deprivation supplement in their local funding formula for 2-year-olds and under 2's. Though the DfE expects local authorities to ensure funding for deprivation is reflected in their approach to funding these entitlements.
25. In line with the 2025/26 funding formula, it is proposed that the 2026/27 funding formula for 2-year-old (disadvantaged children and working parents) and under 2's will continue to not include any supplement, including deprivation.
26. This decision will be reviewed in 2027/28 when more data is available to provide a more robust modelling of the impact of including a deprivation supplement.

Inclusion Fund (SENIF)

27. Similar to the 3&4 year funding formula, local authorities will be expected to establish an Inclusion Fund (SENIF) for 2-year-olds and under 2's for 2026/27, for all children with special educational needs (SEN) eligible for or taking up the new and existing entitlements, regardless of the number of hours taken.
28. It is proposed for 2026/27 to continue with the same inclusion fund percentage (0.6% of total allocation) similar to the 3&4 year-old inclusion fund rate.

Base Rate for 2026/27

29. Local authorities will continue to have the flexibility to either treat the two 2-year-old entitlements (for working parents, and for disadvantaged children) the same, with a single local 2-year-old formula, or to have separate local formulae for the two entitlements.
30. It is proposed for 2026/27 to continue with the current one single base rate that covers both disadvantaged and working parent 2-year-olds, to avoid unnecessary complexity.
31. Barnsley's current **core** hourly rate paid to settings for 2-year-olds is £7.64 (compared to the national funding rate of £8.01) and for under 2's is £10.39 (compared to the national funding rate of £10.89). The Government announced an increase of 0.39pence for 2-year-olds and an increase of 0.50pence for under 2's in the national funding rate in 2026/27.
32. It is proposed to pass the full increase directly to **all** providers for 2026/27, along with the increase in pass-through rate (1%). It is proposed to increase the core hourly rate for 2-year-olds to **£8.10** (6.0% increase) and **£10.98** (5.7% increase) for under 2's.
33. The proposed increase in the base rate has been assessed for affordability, based on estimated participation hours for 2026/27 (using data from the current PVI / childminders claims and census counts for Schools & academies).
34. The table below shows the funding impact of the proposed increase in Barnsley's current base rate:

Disadvantage & working parents 2-year-old core hourly rate			Under 2's core hourly rate		
	2026/27		2026/27		
	Per hour	£M	Per hour	£M	
EY funding allocation	£8.40	12.172	£11.39	13.047	
Centrally retained	-£0.25	-0.365	-£0.34	-0.391	
Pass-through (96%)	£8.15	11.807	£11.05	12.656	
Base rate funding	£8.10	11.734	£10.98	12.577	
Deprivation	n/a	0	n/a	0	
Inclusion Fund	£0.05	0.073	£0.07	0.078	
		11.807		12.656	

35. The main funding risk for 2026/27 relates to actual participation hours and take up being higher or lower than the DfE indicative levels. This will be monitored throughout the year as the termly census collections are undertaken.

Key Actions for the Council

36. The following are the key actions in respect of determining the budget allocations to schools / settings for 2026/27:
1. Participation hours data will be updated and calculated using the last 3 census counts on May 2025, October 2025, and January 2026. This would form the basis for updating the 3&4 year old EYSFF and determining provisional allocations to schools / settings.
 2. The Council must formally notify schools and Early Years PVI settings of their 2026/27 hourly rate by end of February 2026.



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
People Directorate

Schools Forum

Agenda Item

Title: Central Schools Services Block Funding 2026/27

Date: 22nd January 2026

Author: Helen Perrin (BMBC Principal Accountant)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to outline the proposed central schools services block (CSSB) budgets for 2026/27 including the respective expenditure lines within the block funding.
2. DSG funding for 2026/27 is provided through 4 separate funding blocks, namely schools, early years, high needs and central schools services. This report deals with the distribution of DSG funding within the central schools services block.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The following are the main recommendations:

FOR APPROVAL

- **The required actions and approvals by the Schools Forum are outlined on page 5 of the report.**

BACKGROUND

4. As part of the implementation of the schools fairer funding, a central schools services block of DSG has been created to reflect the ongoing local authority role in education. This will ensure local authorities are appropriately resourced to continue to carry out their important role in supporting the provision of education to all pupils within their local area.
5. The central school services block (CSSB) includes retained functions / duties previously funded from elements of the defunct education services grant (ESG). These are duties which LAs undertake in respect of all schools / academies (e.g. asset management).

6. It should be noted that the central school services block excludes other DSG funding that are centrally retained and managed by the authority, namely:
- Schools block: - growth funding and de-delegated budgets (for maintained schools);
 - High Needs block: - budget held by the LA include SEN support services; Out of Authority SEN budgets; post schools funding; etc
 - Early Years block: - 3&4 year old; 2 year old free entitlement funding; etc.

Consultation with the Schools Forum on the level of retention of the above funding by the Council will be determined through the various budget reports to the Forum.

FUNDING ALLOCATION 2026/27

7. Funding allocation for local authority central schools services responsibilities is determined through the CSSB national funding formula (NFF). The table below compares the 2026/27 allocation for the central school services block to the current year.

	Budget 2025/26 £	Budget 2026/27 £	Change £
Ongoing responsibilities	1,443,889	1,622,194	178,304
Historic Commitments	229,376	183,501	-45,875
	1,673,265	1,805,695	132,429

8. The CSSB NFF is designed to provide funding for 2 distinct elements, namely for ongoing responsibilities and historic commitments.
- Funding for ongoing responsibilities is distributed using a simple formula based on a per-pupil factor (90%) and a deprivation factor (10%). The funding allocation for ongoing responsibilities has increased (by £178k) in 2026/27 due to the roll in of the NIC and SBSG grant to the base rate offset by a reduction in pupil numbers(311).
 - Funding for historic commitments is a fixed cash amount based on historic (baseline) spend by the LA. The expectation is that this should reduce over time (no new commitments will be allowed). An annual reduction has been applied to this funding element since 2020/21, with a reduction of £46k in 2026/27.
 - Funding reduction is usually addressed through a review and realignment of funding / spend commitments across the CSSB. It is proposed that a similar

approach is adopted to address how the increase in 2026/27 funding is allocated once confirmation of the DfE Copyright Licence Fee is confirmed.

9. The expectation is that local authorities consult with their respective Schools Forum on how to allocate their central services block funding in accordance with the published DfE operational guidance. The guidance sets out required approvals and restrictions on how LAs can allocate the funding.

FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES

10. The ***ongoing responsibilities*** of the Council that can be funded from the central school services block are outlined in regulations / issued guidance, including the respective approvals and spend limitations, and are subject to a limitation of no new commitments or increases in funding from the previous year. The proposed respective budgets and the approval requirements for 2026/27 are outlined as follows:

Annual allocations not subject to Schools Forum approval

11. The annual budgets for these ongoing responsibilities are not subject to Schools Forum approval, as they are pre-determined nationally by DfE. The budgets in this category and the proposed level of funding for 2026-27 are detailed in the table below:

	2025/26 budget £'000	2026/27 budget £'000
DfE Copyright Licences	232	232
	215	232

- Copyright Licences relating to all schools/academies are now managed nationally by the DfE on behalf of all local authorities. An adjustment is made annually to LAs funding allocation to recover the amount paid by the DfE. The amount for 2026-27 has not yet been confirmed by the DfE therefore the 2026/27 has been based on the current copyright licence amount. This will need to be updated once DfE confirm the amount for 2026/27.

Annual allocations subject to schools forum approval

12. This category of ongoing responsibilities requires Schools Forum approval on a line by line basis. These budget allocations ***can be increased for new commitments or expenditure in 2026/27.***

	2025/26 Budget £'000	2026/27 proposed £'000
Schools Admissions	275	275
Schools Forum admin costs	7	7
	282	282

It is proposed that the funding requirement for these services / responsibilities be maintained at the current level with no new commitments proposed for 2026-27.

13. This category reflect responsibilities that was previously funded by the Education Services Grant (ESG) but has now been subsumed within the CSSB. Schools forum approval is required on a line by line basis. It should be noted that these ***budgets cannot be increased and no new commitments can be entered into for 2026/27.***

	2025/26 Budget £'000	2026/27 Budget £'000
ESG retained duties		
Asset Management	234	234
Education Welfare service	208	208
Statutory & Regulatory duties	41	41
	483	483

Issued guidance allows local authorities to continue to fund those statutory responsibilities or duties previously funded from the ESG. It is proposed that the costs of these services / responsibilities be maintained at the current level.

FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR HISTORIC COMMITMENTS

14. The regulations allow the CSSB funding to meet historic commitments of the local authority relating to schools. The nature of commitments and the required approvals are detailed below.

Annual allocations subject to Schools Forum approval

15. The annual budget allocations for these commitments requires Schools Forum approval. It should be noted that ***these budgets cannot be increased and no new commitments can be entered into for 2026/27.*** The budgets within this category and the proposed funding requirements for 2026/27 are detailed in the table below.

Contributions to combined services	2025/26 Budget £'000	2026/27 proposed £'000
Looked after children	200	200
Barnsley Alliance – school improvement	395	395
	595	595

REQUIRED DECISIONS / IMPACT

16. Subject to the decision of the School Forum, the proposed 2026/27 allocations have been shown on the same basis as in 2025/26.

Actions: the following actions are required by the Forum in respect of the above:

1. Agree the 2026/27 DSG funding to the following statutory and retained functions of the Authority at the same levels as in the current year:
 - Admissions £275k
 - School Forum admin costs £7k
 - Asset Management £234k
 - Education Welfare £208k
 - Other statutory & regulatory functions £41k

2. Agree the 2026/27 DSG funding contributions for the following services on the use / impact of the funding:
 - Barnsley Alliance – School Improvement £395k
 - Looked after children £200k

3. Note the balance of funding of £214k which will be allocated once confirmation of the DfE Copyright Licence fee is confirmed and a review of spend / budget within the CSSB has been undertaken, taking into account the roll in of the NIC and SBSG grants. In line with governance processes, a report of the output of the review will be brought to the Forum for approval.

ANNEX 1

2026/27 PROPOSED CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BUDGET

	2025/26	2026/27	change
	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)
<u>Centrally retained services</u>			
Looked after children / wellbeing	200	200	-
Barnsley Alliance – school improvement	395	395	-
School admissions	275	275	-
Servicing of school forums	7	7	-
Copyright Licences*	232	232	-
Asset Management	234	234	-
Education Welfare	208	208	-
Statutory & regulatory duties	41	41	-
Historic termination/pension costs	-	-	-
Teachers' Pension Grant	-	-	-
Contingency	81	214	133
TOTAL	1,673	1,673	133

* subject to confirmation by the DfE

**Education Outcomes 2024-2025 Report for the
Schools Forum 22nd February 2026**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Schools Forum of the provisional education outcomes for children and young people in the borough across all Key Stages (KS), including those with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEND), children who are looked after, and those who are home educated.
- 1.2 The data tables in Item 4b (attached) provide more in-depth information to support this report, including attainment data, benchmarking and direction of travel comparisons between 2023 and 2025.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to advise on the education outcomes for children and young people across all Key Stages, including Early Years Foundation Stage, Phonics, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5.
- 2.2 The Key Stage 2 results reported in this document are those reported by schools and analysed using the Nexus software system. EYFS, Phonics, Key Stage 4 and 5 data are reported from the Department for Education's (DfE) statistical first releases.
- 2.3 National primary attainment data and national Key Stage 4 data in the report relates to all schools. National Key Stage 5 data relates to all state funded schools and colleges.
- 2.4 Explanation of Key Stage 4 measures:
- **Attainment 8** - Measures pupils' attainment across a range of 8 qualifications
 - **Grading levels** - Grades range from 1 to 9, with a 9 indicating the highest grade possible. Within the number grading system, a grade 4 is equivalent to a standard C and a grade 5 considered a strong C. Thus, the percentage of pupils achieving a grade 4 or above is broadly equivalent to the old measure of grade C and above.
 - **The Basics** - The percentage of pupils achieving a grade 4 or above in both English Language or Literature and Mathematics.
 - **Progress 8** - Measures the average progress of each school's pupils against their average attainment level at the end of primary school. A progress score of 0.0 means that the progress pupils have made is, on average, in line with what is expected, given their starting point. A positive score means pupils on average, have made better than expected progress and a minus (-) score, less than expected progress.
- 2.5 The information outlined in this report primarily supports the Council Plan's priority of a Learning Barnsley in which children and young people achieve the best outcomes through improved achievement and attainment.

Profile of Schools in Barnsley

2.6 The table below indicates the number of Local Authority maintained schools and those which have converted to academies as of 1st November 2025.

	LA Maintained	Academy	Free School	Total
Primary	25	52		77
Secondary	1	8	1	10
Through-School		1		1
Special		2		2
Student Referral Unit		1		1
Total	26	64	1	91

2.7 There are 91 state-funded schools in Barnsley. Holy Trinity is an all-through 3-16 academy. The Trinity St Edwards secondary school opened in September 2021 and does not yet have a Year 11 cohort, so will be excluded from any Key Stage 4 analysis.

2.8 In addition to Primary and Secondary schools, there are two main providers of Post 16 / Key Stage 5 provision, Barnsley College and Penistone Grammar School.

2.9 There are 3 independent special schools in Barnsley.

2.10 Disadvantaged pupils in this report are classified as any pupil who, on the day of the January 2025 census:

- was eligible for a Free School Meal;
- was a care leaver, or adopted from care; or
- was in care

2.11 Children and young people with SEND identified in this report are those pupils who have either SEN Support status or have an EHC Plan. There is also a breakdown of these individual cohorts available for comparison.

3.0 Executive Summary

3.1 Barnsley pupils continue to demonstrate strong progress in the early years. While the proportion achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) has slightly declined, it remains broadly in line with national averages. Notably, Barnsley ranks second among its statistical neighbours for GLD, reflecting the borough's commitment to early childhood education.

3.2 Schools across Barnsley maintain a sharp focus on early reading. For the third consecutive year, outcomes in the Y1 phonics screening check place Barnsley among the top three local authorities nationally. Disadvantaged pupils in particular, achieve well above average, highlighting the effectiveness of targeted support.

- 3.3 There has been further progress in helping pupils master their times tables by the end of Year 4. Barnsley now leads the country for the proportion of pupils achieving full marks on the Multiplication Table Check and ranks second nationally for average pupil score. This achievement reflects the borough's collective efforts to raise standards since the test was introduced in 2022.
- 3.4 By the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is now above the national average. Pupils continue to do better at the expected standard than at the higher standard/greater depth.
- 3.5 Key Stage 4 outcomes showed improvements across all key measures in 2025, resulting in a much-improved picture when comparing performance against national, regional, and statistical neighbours.
- 3.6 At Key Stage 5, pupils perform in-line with those across the Yorkshire and Humber region. Barnsley performs substantially better than comparator groups when considering the percentage of pupils achieving at least two A-levels. In 2025, male and SEND pupils performed especially well.

4.0 Summary of Outcomes by Stage

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- 4.1 The key measure in EYFS is the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD).
- Barnsley's outcomes (67.9%) are broadly in-line with the emerging National figure (68.3%).
 - Barnsley's 2025 outcomes are higher than the Yorkshire & Humber figure (66.2%).
 - Barnsley's male pupils, SEN Support and EHCP pupils made progress on 2024 outcomes. (Please see Item 4b Table 1)

Phonics

- 4.2 At the end of Year 1, children are assessed on their Phonics knowledge.
- In 2025, 85% of Barnsley pupils achieved the expected level in Phonics. This is better than national (80%), regional (80%) and statistical neighbour averages (78.4%).
 - In 2025, Barnsley pupils ranked 3rd nationally, in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in Phonics and have consistently been in the top 10 for the last 3 years. (See Item 4b Table 2)
 - SEN Support pupils made further progress in 2025. (See Appendix 1 Table 3)
 - Barnsley continues to outperform regional and national figures for children with SEND (Please see Item 4b Table 4)

Multiplication Tables Check

- 4.3 At the end of Year 4, children are assessed on their Multiplication Tables Check (MTC).
- In 2025, the average point score achieved by Barnsley pupils was 22.4, out of a maximum of 25. This was an increase on the 2024 figure of 21.7 and higher than the national score of 21.
 - The percentage of pupils achieving full marks was 50% in 2025, substantial above the national and regional averages of 37%.

Key Stage 2 (KS2)

- 4.4 DfE published data shows there have been improvements in all Key Stage 2 outcomes;
- Barnsley is above the regional and national average for total pupils achieving expected standard in RWM Combined, Reading, Writing and Maths.
 - Barnsley SEN Support pupils saw a significant increase in all areas, after a decrease in 2024. This cohort are now achieving in line with regional and national outcomes.
 - SEN Support pupils saw the greatest improvement in 2025. With increases of 11.2% in Maths, 11% in Reading, 7.6% in Writing and 8.8% in RWM overall. This cohort's performance saw a decrease in 2024 and has now returned to levels more in line with regional and national SEN Support outcomes.
 - SEN Support pupils performed particularly well in Maths, with 51.1% of the 2025 cohort achieving expected levels. This is above the national SEN Support cohort's outcome of 47.3%.
 - EHCP pupils saw an increase in Reading outcomes at the expected level.
 - Disadvantaged pupils saw increases for a second year, with 52.2% of pupils achieved expected levels in RWM Combined. (See Item 4b, Tables 5 & 6)
 - When comparing Barnsley's data for all students, to those for our Statistical Neighbours, Regional and National comparators, Barnsley is outperforming all groups in Reading, Writing, Maths and RWM Combined in 2025.
 - When ranked against statistical neighbours, Barnsley is placed 4th in Reading, 4th in Writing, 1st in Maths and 2nd in RWM Combined, for pupils achieving expected levels (Out of 11 local authorities).
- 4.5 In 2025, EHCP pupils saw a decline in their Writing, Maths and RWM Combined outcomes. RWM Combined for this cohort declined to 6.8% in 2025, from 11.3% in 2024. Barnsley's EHCP RWM outcome was below regional and national averages for EHCP pupils.

Key Stage 4 (GCSE)

- 4.6 The 2025 Key Stage 4 Cohort did not sit Key Stage 2 tests, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as such, there are no Progress 8 measures available this year.
- 4.7 Key Stage 4 results show increases in outcomes for the three key measures; Attainment 8 and the percentage of pupils achieving English and Maths at grade 4 and above and grade 5 and above.
- 4.8 In 2025, Barnsley pupils Attainment 8 has increased to 43.8, from a figure of 42 in 2024. Whilst the Attainment 8 outcome of Barnsley pupils remains below regional, national and statistical neighbour outcomes, the gap to these comparators continues to narrow.
- 4.9 The percentage of pupils achieving English and Maths at grade 4 and above increased significantly in 2025, where 63.4% of pupils achieved this measure, compared to 59.2% last year. The percentage of pupils achieving English and Maths at grade 5 and above also saw a large increase, from 41.2% in 2024, to 44.5% in 2025.
- 4.10 With the exception of SEN Support pupils, all pupil groups maintained or made improvements across the three key measures.
- 4.11 Male pupils have seen the greatest increase in the three key areas, with an increase of 2.8 points in Attainment 8 outcomes in 2025, bringing them almost in line with Female pupils. Similarly, the increases of 6.5% at grade 4+ in English and Math and 5.9% at grade 5+ in English

and Math by male pupils, has brought them more in line with the performance of their female counterparts. (See Item 4b, Tables 7,8 and 9)

4.12 **Progress 8**

Progress 8 outcomes are not included for the 2024-25 Key Stage 4 (GCSE) cohort, as this measure is reliant on pupils having undertaken Key Stage 2 assessments and this cohort did not, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key Stage 5 (A-Level)

- 4.13 Barnsley's A-Level average point score (33.92) is lower than that seen regionally (34.52) and nationally (35.94), but higher than our statistical neighbour average (33.39). However, Barnsley's equivalent average grade of C- is the same as the regional grade, with the national average grade being a B-.
- 4.14 95.91% of Barnsley pupils achieved at least 2 A-levels, which is significantly above all comparator groups. (Regional – 81.87%, Statistical neighbours – 79%, National - 85.2%). Barnsley ranks 1st out of our statistical neighbours for this measure. (See Item 4b, Table 11)
- 4.15 Males outperformed females across all measures in 2025 and 100% of SEND pupils achieved at least 2 A-levels.

5.0 Looked After Children (LAC)

- 5.1 Whilst we await validated data, our internal analysis indicates that of the 37 students who sat GCSEs, 92% made good progress in Maths and 79% in English. Additionally, five students achieved a grade 4 or above in English and four in Maths. This cohort studied 62 different courses, offering a broad range of learning opportunities, from traditional school subjects to functional skills, BTECs, engineering, and creative disciplines. Notably, one SEND student achieved 12 qualifications

It is important to recognise that this cohort missed the end of their primary education due to the first national lockdown. However, robust support mechanisms have helped to minimise the impact of this disruption.

- 5.2 The academic year hosted a post-16 cohort of 40 students. While we await validated data, internal analysis shows that 100% of Year 12 students and 90% of Year 13 students made good progress.

Our Year 12 cohort studied a broad range of subjects, including uniformed services, animal care, and opportunities to strengthen previous GCSE grades alongside more traditional academic pathways. Year 13 students built on their earlier successes, pursuing subjects such as sports coaching, childcare, and construction, securing positive employability prospects as they transition into adult life. Notably, two students applied to university, and both were successful in gaining places. All students in this cohort have secured appropriate next steps, whether in employment or further learning.

- 5.3 The Looked After Children Key Stage 2 cohort has remained consistently stable throughout the year, with most pupils placed within the borough. Of the 53 students, 87% were assessed as making good progress over the last academic year, with the vast majority working at or above their expected key stage targets. Notably, 34 students are performing above their expected targets in Maths, Reading, and Writing. 33 students in this cohort have an identified special educational need and 14 have a EHCP.

5.4 This year we have seen a stable cohort number each term. The vast majority of children are working at or above their (age related expectations) target in Maths, reading and writing. In maths and reading, 11 children (50%) are exceeding their age-related expectations, and 10 (45%) are exceeding their age-related expectations in writing.

6.0 Elective Home Education (EHE) Pupils

6.1 As of July 2025, there were 800 children Electively Home Educated in Barnsley, which was an increase on the 709 reported at the same point in 2024.

6.2 A position statement report with further detail around Electively Home Educated children, in line with the “Every Child in School Every Day Plan”, has been provided to support this document.

7.0 Future Plans and Challenges

7.1 Barnsley continues to work with schools and academy leaders to deliver a sector-led education improvement strategy. This model has proved effective in driving up standards in Barnsley schools and academies.

7.2 Barnsley Schools’ Alliance Education Improvement Strategy 2022-2025 was launched as a vehicle to support and drive the improvement of educational outcomes through our collaborative efforts. The strategy is undergoing a light refresh and will take us from 2025 –2028 building upon our ongoing commitments to provide timely early help, targeted support, as well as prevention and intervention, keeping children safe and well in education settings and enabling them to thrive in a progressive, supportive and inclusive environment.

7.3 The CPD sub-group met at the start of the academic year to determine the 5 key attainment drivers for the primary phase. These were shared with (and agreed by) the Quality of Education and Leadership Capacity sub-groups as outlined below:

- Priority 1: Continue to raise attainment for pupils working with SEND support by the end of KS2.
- Priority 2: Continue to raise GLD by the end of EYFS, especially for boys and pupils without additional barriers. Schools should also look to close the attainment gap in both Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.
- Priority 3: Continue to raise attainment in reading, especially at the higher standard.
- Priority 4: Continue to embed an effective oracy curriculum which improves pupils’ attainment in writing, especially at greater depth.
- Priority 5: Continue to raise attainment at the higher standard in mathematics by the end of KS2.

7.4 To support settings in achieving our collective priorities, the CPD sub-group of the Barnsley Schools’ Alliance continues to embed it’s bespoke and tailored CPD offer, which will contribute to stronger future outcomes by the end of the primary phase:

Enabling Greater Depth in Writing Through Effective Planning

Building on last year’s successful ‘Getting Writing Right’ programme, teachers in Year 5 and Year 6 are supported to improve curriculum planning, delivery and assessment.

Reading Language Comprehension from EYFS to Y6

In response to the findings of last year’s local reading research, this programme supports Headteachers and English Leaders to re-shape their whole-school approach to comprehension based on three key pillars: knowledge of context; knowledge of syntax and knowledge of structure.

Herts for Learning (HFL) Reading Fluency Project

A reading intervention strategy to accelerate the progress of struggling readers.

Safeguarding Essentials 2025

Connecting practice through “Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children” and CPOMs in action.

Heads DRB Briefing

Ensuring that headteachers are kept up to date with the latest information.

Peer Collaboration

Our peer collaboration model has been extended from senior leaders to SENCOs, building on last year’s highly successful SEND support programme. Headteachers have been trained as facilitators to support the work of their triads.

In addition, SEND and EYFS consultancy teams offer professional development and bespoke school improvement support. A termly newsletter is also being designed to follow on the introduction of the Barnsley Oracy Framework last year to reinforce training, share exemplification materials and connect schools with the latest research. Ongoing discussion with the South Yorkshire Maths Hub explores how achievement at the higher standard can also be further developed through their core programmes.

7.5 The Barnsley Schools’ Alliance collaborates with key partners including the Exchange Teaching Hub, Research School, Tykes Teaching Alliance, English and Maths Hubs and Public Health to maintain a robust CPD support offer across educational settings. Due to consistently strong phonics outcomes over the past three years, Barnsley has been invited by the Department for Education (DfE) to be a supporting organisation for the RISE project, sharing our effective approaches to phonics and professional development. As part of this initiative, Barnsley will organise and lead a conference for Sheffield and Rotherham Local Authorities. In addition, each LA will nominate ten primary schools to work closely with their local English Hub to mirror the approach adopted by Barnsley. The project will be delivered in partnership with the Jerry Clay English Hub and will showcase the Barnsley Schools’ Alliance’s wider system-led leadership model approach.

7.6 Equally at Secondary phase colleagues are cited on continuing to strengthen and share best practice across the borough, improving networking opportunities across all academies. Secondary Heads meetings happen regularly with all leaders being well connected and focused upon clear success measures to monitor progress and future actions.

This agreed collective approach will naturally in turn see positive tangible outcomes for all pupils. The college are also a regular attender.

7.7 Children’s Services and the Barnsley Schools’ Alliance continue to work with leaders across the education section. Meetings are held face-to-face, a CEO Sub-Group is now fully embedded and the co-produced delivery for our “Every Child in School Every Day Plan’s” activity is being closely monitored to evidence impact.

This plan helps us to coalesce and concentrate our efforts to address our collective strategic priorities which support the wider education agenda in relation to Electively Home Education, permanent exclusions, suspensions and attendance.

8.0 Background Papers and Useful Links

- Item 4b (attached) - Provisional Educational Outcomes (2024) Data Tables
- Barnsley Schools' Alliance Education Improvement Strategy Plan 2022-25:
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/22358/bsa-education-improvement-strategy-2022-2025.pdf>

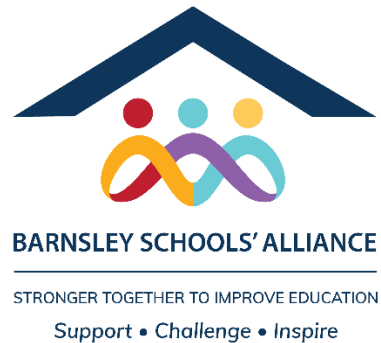
9.0 Glossary

12.1	CPD	Continuous Professional Development
	DfE	Department for Education
	EAL	English as an Additional Language
	EHCP	Education Health & Care Plan
	EHE	Elective Home Education
	EWO	Education Welfare Officer
	EWS	Education Welfare Service
	EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
	FSM	Free School Meals
	GLD	Good Level of Development
	KS	Key Stage
	LA	Local Authority
	LAC	Looked After Children
	OSC	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
	RWM	Reading, Writing & Mathematics
	SEND	Special Education Needs and/or Disability

Barnsley Inclusion Charter

Every Child in School Plan

A Partnership Agreement between Barnsley Council,
Barnsley Schools and Multi Academy Trusts serving in our Locality



Date of Charter: 21 July 2025

Purpose

This Charter represents a collective commitment by Barnsley Council, Barnsley Schools and the Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) in Barnsley to work together to deliver on the 4 key strategic objectives of the 'Every Child in School Every Day Plan', and promote inclusive education for all children and young people, ensuring that every learner has access to high-quality education regardless of their background, need, or circumstance.

Strategic Objectives

1. To reduce the total number of children on the EHE register by 30% from Sept 2025 to Sept 2027 (15% 2025/26 and a further 15% in 2026/27)
2. To ensure attendance is in line with or above the national average
3. To reduce the use of suspensions and permanent exclusions
4. To provide consistent inclusive practice with an embedded relational approach for children with special educational needs

Shared Vision

We believe that:

- Inclusion is a moral imperative that supports the development of strong, resilient, and equitable communities.
- All children and young people in Barnsley deserve to learn in environments that recognise their potential, celebrate diversity, and provide the support needed to succeed.
- No child should be left behind due to disability, SEND, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, or any other characteristic.

Core Principles

Together, we commit to:

- Ensure all learners have access to a local, high-quality, mainstream education wherever possible.
- Provide timely updates to the CEO working party sub-group on progress against the ‘Every Child in School Everyday Plan.’
- Collectively and inclusively respect, support and challenge each other irrespective of performance against the strategic priorities so children of our district get the high quality, inclusive education that they deserve.
- Openly share data, reasons, and trends on EHE, suspensions and exclusions, attendance and reduced timetables including vulnerable groups; with each other and with the Local authority, so that improvements can be made and impact can be monitored.
- Work inclusively with children, young people and their families and promote restorative approaches to behavior across all the strategic objectives of the plan.
- Support each other, share good practice and resources where possible and take up the Local Authorities CPD training offer, which helps to support the priorities.
- Actively support fair admissions processes and carefully managed moves for children who require additional support, whether to help them reintegrate into full-time education, secure a suitable school placement, or transfer to a different school that better meets their individual needs. This includes working collaboratively across schools and services to ensure decisions are in the best interest of the child and support system-wide inclusion
- Work with families, partners and health and social care to identify needs early and provide timely support and effective interventions.
- Listen to and involve children and young people, and their families, capturing their voices, to support effective decision-making at individual and strategic levels.
- Openly discuss ideas for improvement and share any practices that have a positive impact on strategic priorities.
- All Schools and MATs to commit to a ‘SEND is everyone’s responsibility’ approach across the borough.

- Schools to ensure that their commitments to the, Every Child in School Everyday Plan is featured in their individual School Development Plan.

Governance and Oversight

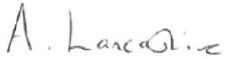

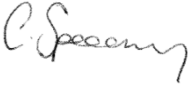
Work collectively as a CEO sub-group to provide updates and reports into the main CEO Board and overarching Barnsley Schools' Alliance Strategic Board, with representatives from the Council and MATs in Barnsley to: -

- Monitor progress against this Charter and 'Every Child in School Everyday Plan.'
- Share data and case studies.
- Identify priorities for strategic development, joint training and funding bids.

Implementation and Review

To review the Charter and 'Every Child in School Everyday Plan' annually, making changes in response to new trends, local needs, policy changes, or feedback. Proposed changes will be discussed with the CEO sub-group and presented to the CEO group with an action plan supporting any implementation. Any proposed changes/plans will be aligned with Barnsley's Education Improvement Strategy / SEND and Inclusion Strategies.

Signatories

Name of Board and Chair	Print Name	Signed
Barnsley Schools' Alliance Strategic Board Andrew Lancashire - Independent Chair	Andrew Lancashire	
CEO Working Group Tom Banham - CEO, HCAT	Tom Banham	
CEO Group Carly Speechley - EXC Director, Children's Services	Carly Speechley	

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE: Service Director, Early Start and Prevention

REPORT TO:	Schools' Forum
REPORT:	Elective Home Education (EHE)
Date of Meeting	22 January 2026
Cabinet Member Portfolio	CHILDREN'S SERVICES
Key Decision	No
Public or Private	Private

1. Purpose of the Report

This report provides School Forum members with the latest position of Elective Home Education (EHE) in Barnsley, examines key factors influencing EHE, the guidance and legislation and outlines current initiatives being driven under the 'Every Child in School Everyday Plan'.

2. Background

2.1 A definition of Elective Home Education (EHE)

Elective home education is the term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way in which they choose, instead of sending them to school full time. This is different to education provided by a Local Authority other than at a school/academy. For example, tuition for children who are too ill to attend school (EOTAS – Education Other Than at School. (*Department of Education, Elective home Education, guidance for Local Authorities 2019*)). The compulsory school age of a child is from age 5 to 16. Children may also be educated at home to participate in education and training until the age of 18.

Parents can choose to make arrangements for their child/ren to receive some of their total education at School, usually to give children access to specific subjects more easily provided in a school setting. This is known as flexi schooling and the school must be in agreement with this arrangement. The child will be marked as having an unauthorised absence from school when education is being delivered out of school.

Parents have a legal right (under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996) to educate their children at home, in this instance they are responsible for ensuring their child/ren receive a suitable, full-time education offer.

Section 7 of the Education Act (1996) states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall ensure that they receive an efficient full-time education, suitable to age, ability, aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, where parents have chosen to home educate.

Where parents choose elective home education for their children Barnsley Council wants to support families to ensure that home educated children have a positive experience and aims to achieve this by developing positive, supportive relationships with parents and by working together, to ensure the provision is in the best educational interests of the child.

2.2 Legislation/guidance and local authority responsibilities

There is no legislation that deals with home education as a specific approach. However, Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

- The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall ensure he/she receives efficient full-time education suitable:
 - (a) to his/her age, ability, and aptitude, and
 - (b) to any special educational needs, he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

There are no specific legal requirements as to the content of home education, provided the parents meet their duty in s.7 of the Education Act 1996. This means that education:

- Does not need to include any particular subjects and does not need to have any reference to the National Curriculum.
- There is no requirement to enter children for public examinations.
- There is no obligation to follow the 'school day' or have holidays which mirror those observed by schools.

The Department of Education believe that although parents are responsible for ensuring their children are properly educated at home, the **local authority** has a moral and social obligation to ensure that a child is safe and being suitably educated. If evidence is not available or clear that a child is being suitably educated the local authority should act to remedy the position.

Local Authorities have some powers at their disposal that can be used if they feel the child is not receiving adequate, safe, or appropriate education.

- **S.437(1) notice** can be used if the local authority believes that a child is not receiving suitable education at home. The notice requires the parents to demonstrate and satisfy the local authority that the child is receiving full time education suitable to their age and needs.
- If parents fail to satisfy the local authority that their child is receiving a suitable education, and the Local authority feels that they should attend school they have a legal obligation to serve the parents with a **School Attendance Order (SAO)**. This will name a specific school that the parent must register their child with and by a date provided. The SAO issued by the authority must be complied with, failure to do so is a criminal offence.

Where the local authority is clear that parents are educating their child well at home, the need for contact from the local authority should be minimal.

2.3 Reasons for home schooling

There are lots of reasons that parents/carers choose to educate their child/ren at home.

We record the reasons for EHE under the parameters of the DfE guidance outlined below:

- Parents are concerned about the child's health issues, particularly mental health issues for example, anxiety, school phobia, separation anxiety, depression.
- The child has special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and parents are concerned that their needs are not being met within the school system – for example, dyslexia, autism or gifted and talented needs.
- Parents are concerned that their child is being bullied.
- The child has demonstrated an unwillingness or inability to go to school.
- Parents want a short-term intervention for their child for a particular reason.
- The parents have ideological or philosophical views.
- The parents are dissatisfied with the school system – for example, disliking the national curriculum, believing that children start school too early or that the school system does not suit their child.
- Parents are concerned that the distance from home to school is too far to travel.

In some cases, several of the above factors are considered by families and some parents may choose EHE as a way of avoiding their child/ren being excluded.

Barnsley's EHE register informs us that the reason most often cited by parents for choosing EHE is dissatisfaction with school. 137 pupils have this recorded as the reason for EHE, 113 pupils have philosophical and religious reasons as the reason for EHE and 92 have health and emotional health recorded as the reason. The remaining reasons parents choose EHE is in line with DfE guidance outlined as above.

2.4 Potential Safeguarding Risks of Elective Home Education

The absence of formal School oversight can leave some children vulnerable.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (Safeguarding children in Elective Home Education) Panel Briefing 3, May 2024, shared learning from rapid reviews and local safeguarding practices where children who have been electively home educated have suffered serious harm or died because of abuse or neglect.

The briefing paper identified 3 groups of children who should be considered from a safeguarding perspective when being educated at home:

1. Children who were kept at home, have never been to school and had little or no contact with the world outside their family.
2. Children who are known and withdrawn from school where there is already knowledge of stressors within the family and/or known safeguarding concerns.
3. Children who are known and withdraw from school because of concerns about the school or faith or cultural reasons to electively home educate.

The council has a general duty to make sure all children are safe under section 175 of the Education Act 2002. This applies to children who are being educated at home, just as it does to children attending school. Any professional that is worried about a child will follow Barnsley Safeguarding procedures to report their concerns.

We know that children attending school consistently is a protective factor.

3. The Every Child in School Everyday Plan

The Barnsley Schools' Alliance has established a CEO Working Party sub-group. This group has been responsible for the co- production of Every Child in School Everyday Plan. The plan sets out a number of key activities and actions to meet the 4 Strategic Priorities:

- Priority 1** Reduction in EHE numbers over the next 2 academic years by 30%
(15 % target reduction agreed for 2025/26 and a further 15% target reduction
Agreed by the end of 2026/27 academic year)
- Priority 2** To ensure attendance is in line with or above the national picture
- Priority 3** Reduce the number of suspensions & exclusions issued
- Priority 4** Send & Inclusion – embedding a relational approach to practice

The CEO Working Party Sub-Group has developed a 'Barnsley Inclusion Charter', which is a shared agreement and commitment between Barnsley Local Authority, Barnsley Schools and Multi Academy Trusts serving in our locality. The Charter is a commitment in which all partners and stakeholders can coalesce to improve inclusion and outcomes for children and young people, particularly those with vulnerabilities. *(Please see Appendix A).*

4. Barnsley's Current EHE Position

Table 1 shows that as of the 24th October 2025 (the first half term of this academic year) there were 822 children on the EHE register. In comparison there were 881 children on the EHE register on the 23rd May 2025. The May data has been agreed as the comparison data that will be used to measure improvement across Every Child in School Everyday Plan over the next two academic years (2025/26 to 2026/27)

There were 141 children and young people placed on the EHE register in the new academic year from September 2025 to October 2025.

The year groups with the greatest number of children registered are Years 9, 10, and 11. The total number of children registered in these year groups are 334, which represents 40% of the overall register.

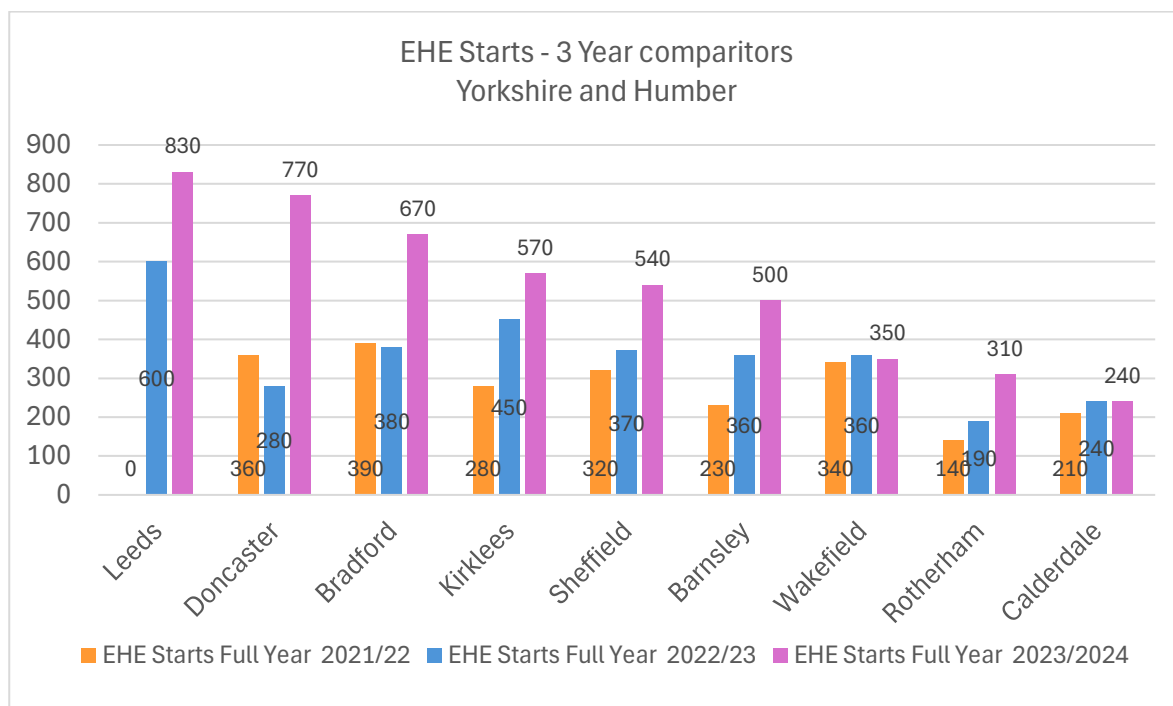
Table 1

24 Oct 2025	Count
EHE Register	822
SEN	44
Non-SEN	708
EHCP	70
CIN	9
CPP	3

The increasing numbers of children becoming home educated is a national concern.

Table 2 detailed below shows the number of children and young people that were registered as EHE in the identified academic year. Comparing the data across 3 years and against our regional neighbours.

Table 2



NB: The regional / national data for 24/25 is currently not yet published.

Barnsley (along with all other local authorities in our region other than Wakefield) shows an increasing trend of EHEs over the last 3 years.

It is important to note that this data is the number of children who went onto the EHE register during the academic year and not the total number of children registered at a specific point in time.

The Education Welfare Service supported the return of 208 children to school in the last academic year 2024 –25.

5. Every Child in School Everyday Plan Activities for EHE Priority

5.1 Education Welfare Service (EWS) – Elective Home Education (EHE) Support

The Education Welfare Service collaborates with schools to when there are requests for Elective Home Education (EHE) from parents/carers. Upon notification that a parent has chosen to home educate, the service promptly conducts home visits. These visits provide support, capture the child's perspective, clarify the legal and practical implications of home education, and, where possible, work with families to maintain or restore school-based learning. From September 2024 to July 2025, the service successfully reintegrated 208 children into school-based education. In the current academic year (September 2025 to October 2025), 141 children transitioned to EHE, while 46 were returned to school during the same period.

The Education Welfare Service fulfils these functions by delivering the following practice:

- An Education Welfare Officer (EWO) visits the family at home at the point of notification of EHE to outline the responsibilities of parents in EHE and to capture the child voice in relation to EHE.
- There is an expectation that a plan of work will be provided at the outset of EHE and where this is not available to the EWO on the initial visit a revisit is undertaken within 10 days to satisfy the service that EHE is suitable.
- Where no education or plan is provided. Intervention with the family is made to secure a return to school-based education.
- Partnership working with schools to ensure a pathway back to education in school if EHE is re-considered following the EWO visit.
- Agreed Fair Access Protocol to ensure that any parent applying to return to school following a period of EHE will be accepted back on the school roll from which they withdrew regardless of numbers on roll.
- Training has been developed for professionals in education, health, and children's social care to ensure all professionals are aware of EHE and the responsibilities they have for supporting and safeguarding the cohort.
- Annual visit by the EHE advisor to all children and young people to assess the suitability of education being provided.
- Revised process for enforcing attendance at school, utilising School Attendance Orders where education is assessed as not being suitable.
- Half termly meetings with the Integrated Front Door (IFD) regarding children not in receipt of suitable education and any wider contextual vulnerabilities.
- Referral into the IFD (Integrated Front Door) for Education Neglect when a School attendance Order is breached.
- Transfer of the EHE register to Synergy (case recording system) to provide a smart and consistent reporting system.
- EHE advisor with access to the Education, Health, and Care Hub system to support the process of Education, Health, and Care Plan Annual Reviews.
- Improved links with Barnsley College to track the attendance of EHE pupils. This includes a half termly meetings between the EHE Advisor and College SENDCO to discuss the cohort and follow up any concerns.
- EHE Advisor or EWO attendance at Child Protection and Child in Need meetings to report on the suitability of the education provided.

- Creation of a young person's guide to EHE in digital format. This will include links to where young people can gain access to emotional and health support.
- Revisions to EWS home visit record to state whether the child was seen alone where age appropriate.
- Additional recourse allocated through an EWO's responsible for EHE with a focus on returning children to school-based education and safeguarding those with additional vulnerabilities.
- The focus our additional resource has been centred on year 10 and 11 and has included partnership working with TIAG to ensure that the young people within the cohort are receiving the best possible offer to meet their needs either through a return to school based learning or a post 16 pathway.
- Attendance from EWS at the Social work forum and GP forums to raise awareness of EHE and the context with Barnsley.
- Co-creation of an education neglect strategy to incorporate co working with children's social care when EHE is not suitable and is used a mechanism to avoid engagement in education.

5.2 Great Childhood Ambition Initiative

Through the Great Childhood Ambition initiative, additional funding has enabled the recruitment of three new staff members for the Education Welfare Services, with a manager and two Education Welfare Officers (EWOs). These officers will provide sustained support to children and families, with a particular focus on students in Years 9 and 10, and those transitioning into Year 11 (GCSE cohorts).

The project team will solely focus on the EHE register and will be fully operational by January 2026. This investment supplements, but is distinct from, the statutory duties already delivered by the service.

5.3 EHE committee – Astrea Academy Trust

Two schools from the Astrea Academy Trust had a high proportion of young people following the EHE pathway last academic year. As a result of this the Education Welfare Service and leaders from the schools audited a number of cases, to better understand the rational and trigger points for why families chose this educational pathway.

The Astrea Academy Trust introduced an EHE committee at both schools, and an EWO worked alongside staff in to respond to EHE notifications at the earliest opportunity. The EHE committee has met each term and discussed individual cases to identify ways in which to change systems, culture and approaches in order to support inclusive practices.

At a recent CEO meeting (11 November 2025) the Deputy Director for Secondary, Astrea Academy Trust gave an update on their progress. Whilst she confirmed and accepted that both schools needed to improve further, she felt the EHE committee was having a positive impact. She outlined that both schools had implemented a robust response to EHE when dealing with any parental intentions to register their child on the EHE pathway, at the earliest opportunity.

Early data from the introduction of this Astrea EHE Committee is encouraging. As of 22 May 2025, 19 of the 22 Elective Home Education (EHE) referrals from one of the schools remained on roll, 17 of whom were pupil premium students and 6 had special educational needs (SEN).

6 of the 10 EHE referrals also remained on roll as the other school. Out of the 10 referrals, 7 were identified as pupil premium and 3 with SEN. These findings indicated a strong correlation between EHE referrals and vulnerable student groups, reinforcing the importance of targeted, intervention support.

5.4 Focus for Schools/MATs - Autumn /Spring Term 2025/26

Moving through this early part of the academic year schools and Multi Academy Trusts will need to focus on their internal EHE processes. This is to ensure that the EHE guidance is fully embedded with school practice, what their communication strategies will look like when they engage with children and their parents/carers, whether they are providing reasonable adjustments to keep children/young people on roll or needing to involve other services.

Over this next period of reporting improved data sharing will evidence the schools that are actively demonstrating that reducing EHE is a 'whole school approach'.

At the next CEO meeting in February 2026 the group will look in detail at the number of children on the EHE register, to establish the reasons that this has been their chosen method of education and to identify links with other services in the council e.g. contextual safeguarding, early help services; to identify better ways to support and encourage these families to return their children into mainstream education

The group will also look at how they can capture and share good practice that Schools / MAT's are doing to reduce EHE within their settings and how they can share their ideas, internal processes, strategies and activities. This will enable all schools to demonstrate and evidence improvement in line with Every Child in School Everyday Plan.

5.5 Performance against Every Child in School Everyday Plan

Every Child in School Every Day Plan is a two-year strategy designed to improve outcomes through strong collaboration and commitment from all stakeholders. Whilst parents have a legal right to educate their children at home, the Local Authority remains concerned about the rising numbers for Elective Home Education (EHE)

EHE remains a significant concern. Numbers have increased sharply over the past three years, reflecting a regional and national trend. Barnsley ranks fourth lowest regionally, in terms of EHE numbers but some schools have larger numbers of PAN. As of 24 October 2025, 822 children were on the EHE register, an increase from the previous year.

Local Authority colleagues are working closely with schools with the highest EHE figures to understand underlying causes and will review this in detail at the February 2026 CEO meeting in order to identify and share best practice.

In response, the CEO group has reaffirmed its commitment to the plan's four priorities and agreed a charter to drive improvement. Key actions include:

- Providing regular progress updates to the CEO working party
- Promoting a culture of mutual support and challenge to ensure inclusive, high-quality education for all children
- Sharing data and trends on EHE, exclusions, suspensions, attendance, and vulnerable groups to enable targeted interventions
- Working collaboratively with families and promoting restorative approaches to behaviour

- Sharing good practice and resources and engaging with the Local Authority’s CPD offer
- Supporting fair admissions and managed moves to secure appropriate placements and reintegration
- Identifying needs early and delivering timely, effective interventions with partners.
- Capturing and acting on the voices of children, young people, and families in decision-making
- Embedding a borough-wide commitment to “SEND is everyone’s responsibility.”
- Ensuring school development plans reflect commitments to the “*Every Child in School Everyday* plan”.

Stakeholders remain fully committed to driving improvement and will continue to challenge and support each other until the impact of these efforts is evident across all priorities.

6. Future Plans & Challenges

Barnsley Schools Alliance, in partnership with the Local Authority, continues to drive the “*Every Child in School Everyday* Plan” to reduce barriers and improve outcomes.

Barnsley has adopted a relationship-based strategy working closely with academy leaders, sharing best practice, and co-producing Every Child in School Everyday Plan and Charter. This approach fosters collaboration and long-term improvement, even though it takes longer to show impact and relies on the willingness of schools to engage.

The introduction of the new Ofsted framework adds an additional layer of accountability and transparency, ensuring that safeguarding, inclusion and educational standards remain at the forefront. In order to move forward, sustained partnerships and shared responsibility will be critical to achieving the plan’s priorities and improving educational outcomes for all children and young people in Barnsley.

7. Appendices

Appendix A Barnsley Inclusion Charter

Appendix B Barnsley Schools’ Alliance Education Improvement Strategy 2025- 28

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/1duhsu0w/elective-home-education-policy.pdf>

Supporting Data Tables for OSC Report on Provisional Education Outcomes

Attainment

Table 1

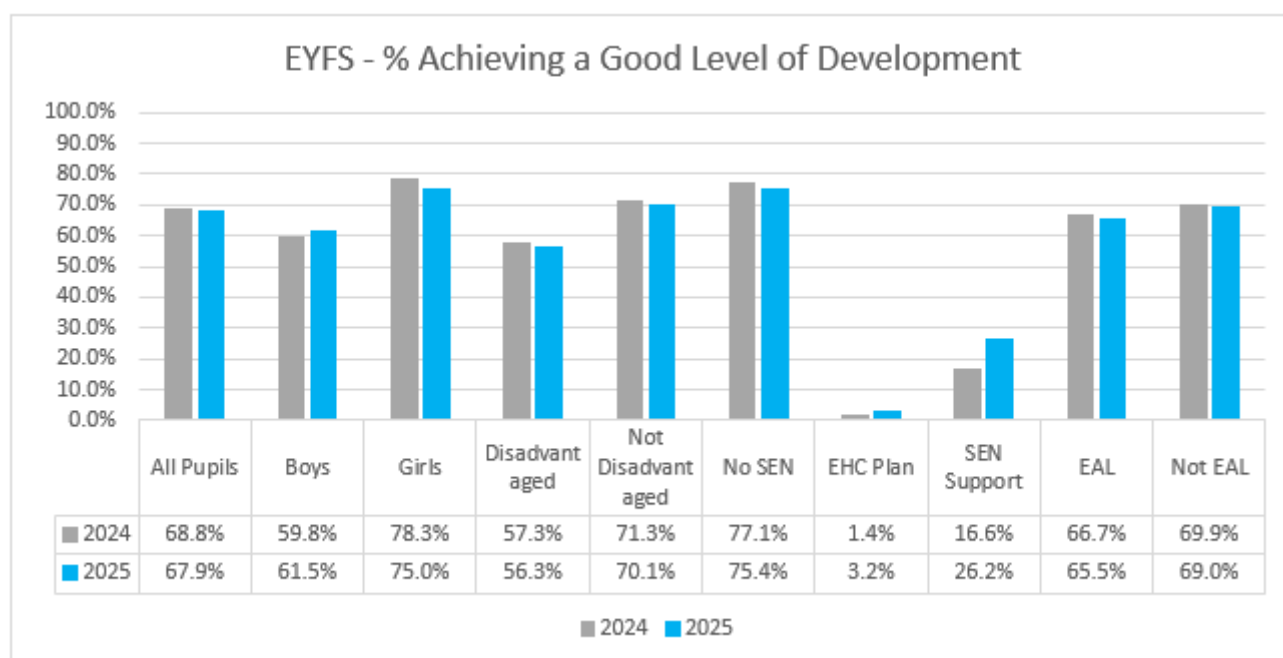


Table 2

Y1 Phonics - Meeting Expected Standard	2023		2024		2025	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Barnsley	86	3	87	2	85	3
County Durham	78	94	78	117	77	126
Doncaster	80	41	81	43	80	59
Dudley	76	123	78	117	78	107
Gateshead	78	94	80	69	77	126
Redcar and Cleveland	79	66	83	21	79	80
Rotherham	79	66	79	93	77	126
Sunderland	76	123	79	93	77	126
Tameside	75	138	77	135	75	148
Telford and Wrekin	81	25	80	69	80	59
Wakefield	82	17	85	7	84	6

Table 3

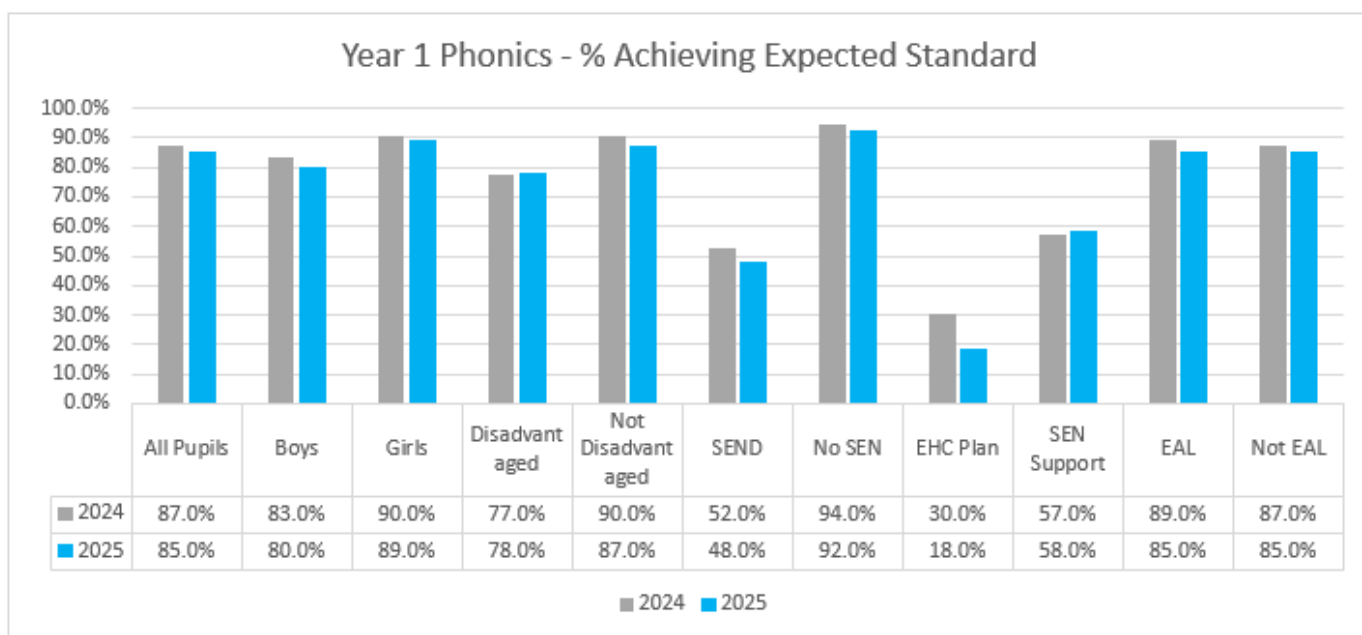


Table 4

		Y1 Phonics - Meeting Expected Standard		
		2023	2024	2025
Pupil Group		%	%	%
No SEN	Barnsley	91	94	92
	Regional	86	88	88
	National	86	88	88
SEN Support	Barnsley	53	57	58
	Regional	48	51	52
	National	48	52	52
EHCP	Barnsley	42	30	18
	Regional	18	20	18
	National	20	20	20
SEN Support & EHCP	Barnsley	51	52	48
	Regional	42	45	44
	National	42	44	43

Table 5

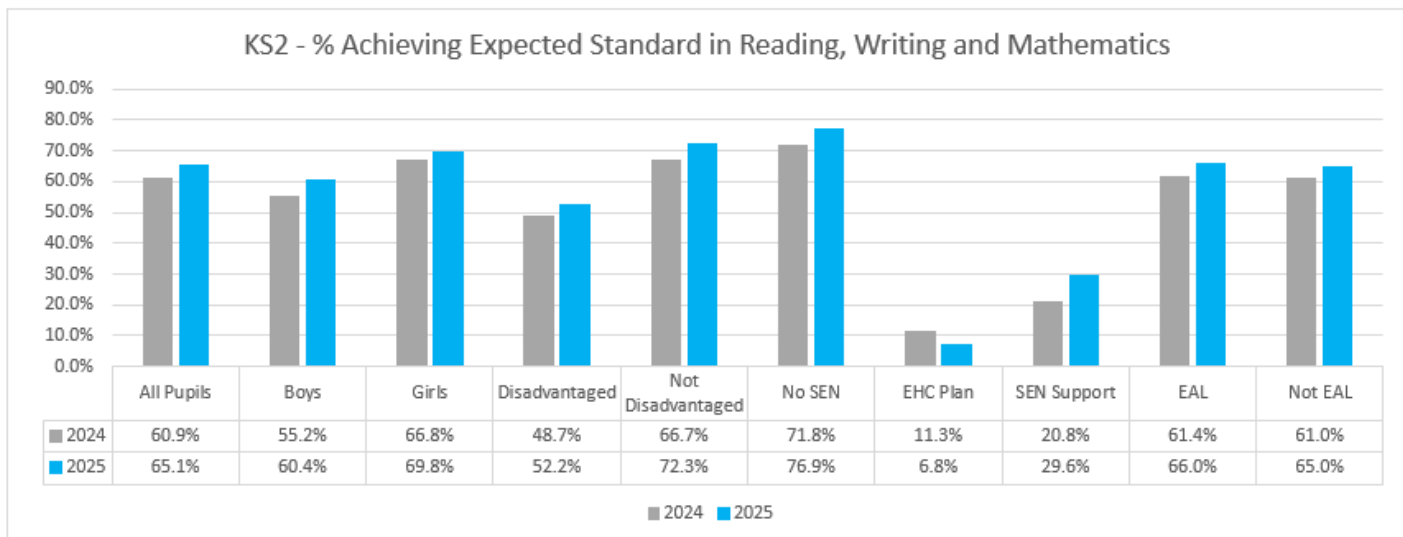


Table 6

Pupil Group	RWM Expected		Reading Expected		Writing Expected		Maths Expected	
	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024
All Pupils	65.1%	60.9%	76.4%	73.1%	73.0%	71.3%	77.2%	74.5%
Male	60.4%	55.2%	73.6%	69.0%	66.5%	64.3%	76.6%	74.1%
Female	69.8%	66.8%	79.3%	77.2%	79.5%	78.5%	77.8%	75.0%
Disadvantaged	52.2%	48.7%	65.0%	62.5%	61.3%	59.6%	65.9%	62.9%
Non-Disadvantaged	72.3%	67.7%	82.9%	79.0%	79.4%	77.8%	83.4%	81.0%
SEN No Recorded Provision	76.9%	71.8%	86.1%	83.2%	85.4%	83.1%	87.2%	84.9%
SEN Support	29.6%	20.8%	49.6%	38.6%	36.7%	29.1%	51.1%	39.9%
SEN EHCP	6.8%	11.3%	22.6%	19.6%	9.6%	14.3%	17.5%	18.5%
EAL	66.0%	61.4%	72.7%	68.7%	75.2%	75.1%	78.2%	81.1%
Non-EAL	65.0%	61.0%	76.7%	73.6%	72.8%	71.2%	77.1%	74.1%

Table 7

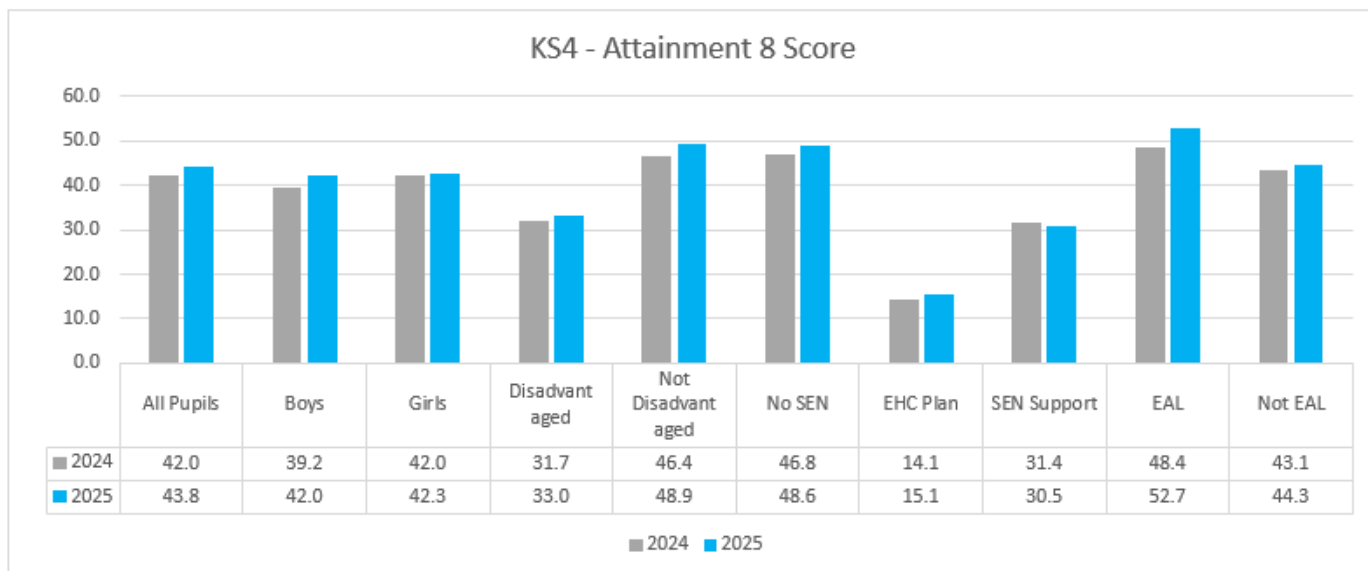


Table 8

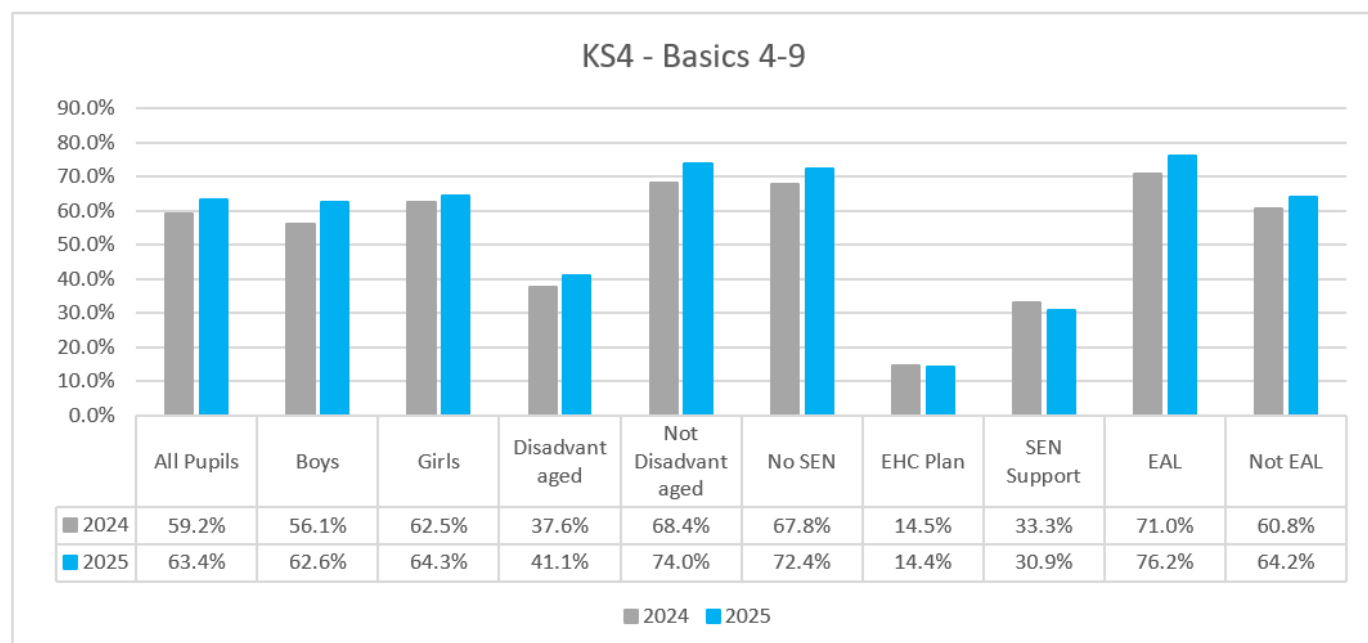


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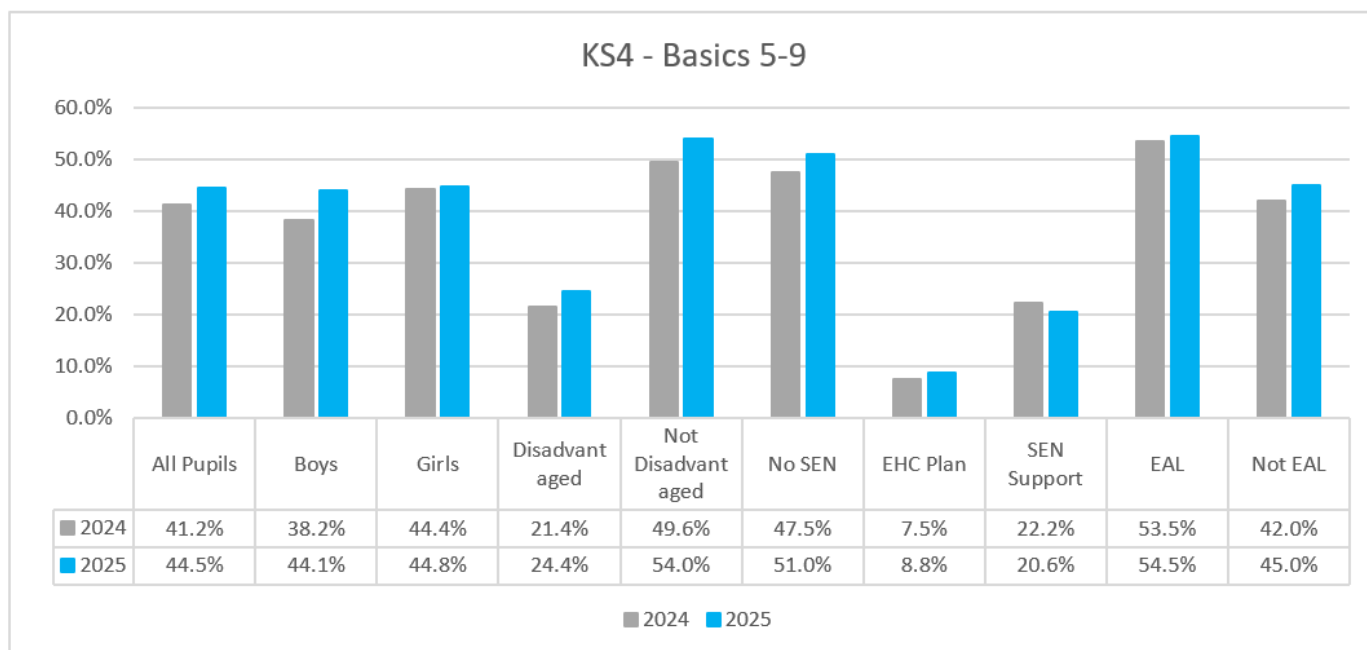


Table 10

<i>Key Stage 4</i>	Att 8	Basics 4-9	Basics 5-9
Barnsley	43.8	63.4%	44.5%
Yorkshire & Humber	44.3	62.7%	43.3%
Statistical Neighbours	44.0	62.3%	42.4%
National	45.9	64.5%	45.2%

Table 11

	A-Level APS	A-Level Average Grade	% Achieving at least 2 A-levels	% Achieving AAB & 2 Facilitating Subjects
Barnsley	33.92	C+	95.91	14.14
Yorshire & Humber	34.52	C+	81.87	16.35
Statistical Neighbour Avg.	33.39		79.00	14.30
National	35.94	B-	85.20	17.2