

Report for Schools Forum

Service Area:	Schools Finance
Presented By:	David Baxter
Report:	De-Delegation Proposals 2025/2026 – Schools Block Funding
Date:	10 th January 2025
Purpose Of Report:	To review proposed 2025/2026 de-delegation rates for maintained schools.
Is a Decision Required?	Yes
Decision context	<p>Section 8 of the Schools Forum good practice guide: De-delegation from mainstream maintained schools budgets (separate approval will be required by the primary and secondary phase members of schools forum), for prescribed services to be provided centrally.</p> <p><u>Voting procedures:</u> De-delegation is limited to the specific primary and secondary phase of maintained schools members.</p> <p>Statutory Instrument: The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012</p>

Kirklees Schools Forum (Public)

10 January 2025

Maintained Schools

De-Delegation Proposals 2025/2026 – Schools Block Funding

1. Background information

- 1.1 The Schools Operational Guide for 2025/2026 requires the specific primary and secondary phase of maintained schools members of Schools Forum to agree the De-delegated services for the upcoming financial year.
- 1.2 De-delegated services are for maintained schools only. Funding for de-delegated services must be allocated through the formula but can be passed back, or de-delegated, for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools with Schools Forum approval.
- 1.3 De-delegation does not apply to special schools, nursery schools, or Alternative Provisions. Where de-delegation has been agreed for maintained primary and secondary schools, the ESFA's presumption is that the Local Authority will offer the service on a buyback basis to those schools and academies in their area which are not covered by the de-delegation.
- 1.4 There are a number of key cost drivers involved in the de-delegation process that include reference to pay awards for both Local Authority staff (£1,290 or 2.5%, from 1st April 2024), Teacher Pay award (5.5% from 1st September 2024) and that de-delegations are calculated on a per pupil basis, which is reducing through both through academisation and overall numbers on roll.

2. De-Delegations proposal for 2025/2026

- 2.1 The De-delegation rates are reviewed annually with the proposed rates circulated to all maintained schools for consideration as part of an ongoing engagement and consultation process. The responses are then reflected in the final Authority Pro-Forma Tool (overall allocation of 2025/2026 school finances) in January 2025.
- 2.2 The De-delegations represent probable future costs of service provision for 2025/2026 and needs to consider the impact of both inflationary pressures and academisation which reduces the number of schools contributing to the de-delegated services.
- 2.3 The proposed rates for 2025/2026 are based on three main factors: fewer pupils on roll mainly due to more schools becoming academies, the respective pay increases for both local authority staff & teachers, and the need for more financial and operational support for schools. Because of these reasons, it is proposed that the rates be increased by 6.5%.

2.4 The current and proposed de-delegated services and charge rates are shown in the table below:

De-Delegation Description	Primary per pupil rate 2024/2025	Proposed Primary per pupil rate 2025/2026 6.5%	Secondary per pupil rate 2024/2025	Proposed Secondary per pupil rate 2025/2026 6.5%	Notes
School Contingency	£12.62	£13.44	£15.82	£16.85	Used to correct funding errors, support schools facing emergencies, pick up costs it would be unfair to ask schools to meet, one-off financial interventions to schools in financial difficulty to help them secure necessary savings.
Voluntary Early Retirement (VER)	£2.86	£3.05	£3.59	£3.82	Costs of historic voluntary early retirements.
Free school meals eligibility checks	£1.20	£1.28	£1.50	£1.60	Customer & Exchequer service checks to identify children eligible to claim free school meals – helps schools maximise their deprivation-related funding.
Maternity, paternity, and adoptive leave	£40.95	£43.61	£40.95	£43.61	Central payment of salary costs during these leave periods so the school only pays the replacement costs.
Trade union facilities time	£6.67	£7.10	£0.00	£0.00	Pays for the release from schools of local TU officials to manage casework (competence, attendance, disciplinary etc) involving school staff.
Public duties	£0.19	£0.20	£0.23	£0.24	School cover costs re staff on jury service, appearing as witnesses in court proceedings, serving as magistrates, serving as governors at another school.
International new arrivals	£1.84	£1.96	£2.31	£2.46	Support to schools dealing with language-related issues of children admitted from different parts of the world.
School Improvement Commissioning	£5.25	£5.59	£14.00	£14.91	Supports improvement interventions in schools – appropriate support to schools for the cost of implementing improvement action plans, brokering school-to-school support by meeting the cost of releasing staff from other schools to work with the school in need of support.
TOTALS	£71.58	£76.23	£78.40	£83.49	

2.5 To encourage active engagement and consultation, a questionnaire linked to all the proposed de-delegations and increases for 2025/2026 was circulated to the 94 LA maintained mainstream schools. The process ran from the 2 December 2024 until 9th December 2024 and generated 23 responses.

2.6 The table below summarises the responses which were asked for individual proposed de-delegation service area and proposed increase for 2025/2026.

	Question	Yes	No	Not Sure
1a	Do you support the de-delegation for Contingencies for 2025/2026?	69.6%	13.0%	17.4%
b	Do you support the proposed increase in charges for 2025/2026?	43.5%	34.8%	21.7%
2a	Do you support the de-delegation for Voluntary Early Retirements Commitments for 2025/2026?	69.6%	13.0%	17.4%
b	Do you support the proposed increase in charges for 2025/2026?	56.6%	21.7%	21.7%
3a	Do you support the de-delegation for Free school meals eligibility checks for 2025/2026?	73.9%	17.4%	8.7%
b	Do you support the proposed increase in charges for 2025/2026?	60.9%	26.1%	13.0%
4a	Do you support the de-delegation service for Maternity, Paternity and adoptive leave for 2025/2026?	82.6%	8.7%	8.7%
b	Do you support the proposed increase in charges for 2025/2026?	56.6%	21.7%	21.7%
5a	Do you support the de-delegation service for Trade union facilities time for 2025/2026?	47.8%	34.8%	17.4%
b	Do you support the proposed increase in charges for 2025/2026?	26.1%	56.5%	17.4%
6a	Do you support the de-delegation service for Public Duties for 2025/2026?	91.3%	0.0%	8.7%

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b	Do you support the proposed increase in charges for 2025/2026?	78.3%	8.7%	13.0%
7a	Do you support the de-delegation service for International new arrivals areas for 2025/2026?	82.6%	13.0%	4.4%
b	Do you support the proposed increase in charges for 2025/2026?	60.9%	26.1%	13.0%
8a	Do you support the de-delegation service for School improvement and commissioning for 2025/2026?	60.9%	21.7%	17.4%
b	Do you support the proposed increase in charges for 2025/2026?	43.5%	34.8%	21.7%

2.7 The above responses generally indicate strong support for the proposed de-delegated services only highlighting trade union facilities time as being an area for further question and challenge.

2.8 The second part to each question was less favourably received, with specific challenge as to the proposed 6.5% increase in charges for 2025/2026. Again, trade union facilities time being highlighted.

3. Recommendation

3.1 Schools Forum maintained schools representatives only (by phase) are asked to consider and approve the proposed De-delegated rates for 2025/2026.

David Baxter
Schools Finance Manager
9th January 2025