

DISTRIBUTION OF PUPIL GROWTH FUNDING FOR 2026/27

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Forum on the distribution to schools of the 'Growth Funding' element of the Schools Block for 2026/27.

Information and Advice

2. For 2026/27 the Department for Education (DfE) has allocated Nottinghamshire £1.160 million (£2.020 million 2025/26) through the growth formula as part of the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
3. The DfE's 'Schools Operational Guide: 2026 to 2027' states that the growth fund can only be used to:
 - support growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need
 - support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulation
 - meet the revenue costs of new schools (these are new schools identified from the latest census data)
 - meet the revenue costs, for schools, of removing or repurposing surplus places
4. Agenda item 3a of the February 2026 Forum meeting detailed the amount of growth funding that NCC has committed to varying pupil numbers for new and growing schools for 2026/27, through the Authority Proforma Tool (APT), is £0.649 million. Nottinghamshire has clawed back £0.218 million from a school that was overfunded for growth in 2025/26. A balance of £0.724 million of the 2026/27 growth funding allocation remains uncommitted.

2026/27 Primary Growth Fund Allocations

5. NCC have historically used the growth funding to ensure that infant class sizes are not breached, and primary schools do not experience financial detriment as a result of Basic Need expansion.
6. Schools Forum has previously agreed to allocate revenue funding to schools that have expanded as a result of basic need by PAN + 25 for the autumn and Spring terms throughout the lifetime of the growth, i.e., from NCY R to 6.

7. Schools Forum has previously agreed to allocate revenue funding to schools that have expanded as a result of basic need by PAN + 15 (1/2 Form of entry) in NCY R, 2, 3 and 5 for the autumn and Spring terms.
8. Schools Forum has previously agreed to revenue fund schools where exceptional or over PAN allocations have taken place, resulting in unavoidable breaches of infant class sizes. The level of funding to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
9. Local Authorities are required to fund the pre-opening costs of new presumption free schools, and as such, NCC allocates up to £200,000 to new free schools to contribute towards revenue costs incurred prior to opening.
10. The number of primary commitments for 2026/27 is nil. This is reflective of the recent decline in the number of year R pupils entering schools and an overall fall in the primary school population.
11. Schools eligible for PGF due to breaches in infant class size will not be known until admissions are finalised in July 2026, although the number of schools is expected to be low.

2026/27 Secondary Growth Fund Allocations

12. For primary to secondary transfers for September 2026, NCC has continued to have a temporary shortage of year 7 places available in some areas. The shortage of places is primarily due to a 'bulge' in pupil numbers reaching secondary school year-groups, along with delays to the delivery of projects to create additional secondary school places.
13. **Appendix A** shows the number of additional places that secondary schools and academies have agreed to admit through 'bulge' year groups for 2026/27 and the funding that has been allocated.
14. Additional pupil numbers will be checked against the October 2026 census to ensure eligibility before payments are administered.
15. As per DfE Guidance, the ESFA will reimburse Local Authorities for any growth payments made to academies for the period April 2027 to August 2027. Therefore, the cost to the growth fund of secondary 'bulge' year groups for 2026/27 is **£0.624 million**
16. The total cost of commitments identified in this report for financial year 2026/27 are **£0.624 million**
17. These commitments will leave an underspend on the pupil growth fund for 2026/27 of £0.099 million which will be held pending any further requests for additional places

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Schools Forum:

1. Notes the content of the report.
2. Continues to monitor the use of this fund throughout 2026-27.

Karen Hughman
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Appendix A

Academic year 2025/26

Chilwell School Summer Term 2026 (30 places as per June 25 paper) - **£80,812**

Academic year 2026/27

Secondary Pupil Growth Fund Allocations Academic Year 2026-27

Appendix B

District	School	PAN	Places offered	Additional places	Total Allocation to school	Allocation Sept 26 to March 27	Allocation April 27 to August 27
Gedling	Carlton Academy	230	260	30	£169,427	£98,832	£70,594
Broxtowe	Chilwell School	180	210	30	£169,427	£98,832	£70,594
Rushcliffe	South Notts Academy	150	180	30	£169,427	£98,832	£70,594
Newark	The Joseph Whitaker School	235	250	15	£84,713	£49,416	£35,297
Rushcliffe	Rushcliffe Spencer Academy	270	360	60	£338,853	£197,664	£141,189
TOTALS				105	£931,846	£543,576	£388,269

* 2026/27 academic year allocation based on KS3 AWPU value

Total Secondary Commitments Financial Year 2026/27 - £624,389