

- Total responses received: 87
- Adjusted total (excluding duplicate): 86

By school type:

- Primary: 70
- Secondary: 11
- Special: 5
- Duplicate: 1 (only one reply counted)

Question 1

If it is not affordable to fund all schools and academies at National Funding Formula levels, how should mitigation be actioned? Please select one of the three models in order of preference. 25-26 budgets with a £2M shortfall.

Model 1 Reduce factors including lump sum, a 0% MFG and no gains cap.

Model 2 Reduce factors including lump sum a -0.5% MFG and no gains cap.

Model 3 Reduce factors including lump sum a 0% MFG with a gains cap.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
1st Choice	14	45	24
2nd Choice	49	18	8
3rd Choice	13	16	42

Not all respondents selected a first, second, or third preference.

Comments

- Yeah, none of them give me the actual money needed to run a school and support children adequately.
- All options reduce budgets and as a school already in deficit this will make the operational and strategic running of the school and therefore progress and support for children even more challenging and potentially unviable.
- Being a very small school the impact of the changes overall are minimal so it's difficult to comment.
- We are already financially struggling as are many other schools. This burden should be spread across as many of the schools as possible.
- While all three scenarios achieve the required £2m reduction, the distributional impact varies significantly. Option 2 provides the most even spread of reductions, which helps to protect individual schools from disproportionate financial shock. The lower maximum loss under Option 2 (£43,638) substantially reduces the risk of schools needing to make immediate staffing or curriculum reductions, compared with the much higher exposure in Options 1 and 3. Maintaining system-wide financial stability should be a priority in the current funding climate. Options that concentrate losses into a smaller number of schools (particularly Option 3) increase the likelihood of deficit budgets, licensed deficits, and formal financial interventions.

Although 0% MFG offers reassurance, it limits flexibility when addressing a significant shortfall. The -0.5% MFG in Option 2 represents a proportionate compromise that balances school protection with financial sustainability.

The introduction of a gains cap in Option 3 restricts schools experiencing growth, which may undermine the ability of those schools to meet additional demand and invest in staffing and resources.

From an equity perspective, spreading the burden across more schools is preferable to imposing large reductions on a small group of schools, particularly where deprivation and SEND pressures already exist.

The recommended approach supports a smoother transition into the 2025–26 funding year and reduces the likelihood of in-year financial recovery plans being required.

- I prefer Model 1 as it distributes the shortfall across a larger number of schools with smaller, more manageable losses, maintaining overall fairness and stability. Model 2 is acceptable as a second choice as it further limits maximum losses, although it affects more schools. Model 3 is my least preferred option due to the disproportionate impact on a smaller number of schools, which risks destabilising provision in those settings.
- Whilst I think it is unfair that any school should lose funding, ultimately I have to look after the interest of my pupils and therefore we will go with the option that sees our budget reduce the least. The whole issue here is that education is underfunded centrally but that is a whole other argument.
- Model 4 on spreadsheet would be first choice but not listed

Are you a maintained school?

Yes – maintained school	No – not a maintained school
38	48

Three academies replied ‘yes’ to this question split was 41 maintained and 45 academies before adjustment.

Question 2

Do you agree to the de-delegation of the following in 2026 to 2027?

- Free schools’ meals eligibility assessment?
- Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners?
- Contingency for crisis communications?
- Trade Union Facilities?
- School Improvement?
- Outdoor Education?

Free schools’ meals eligibility assessment

Yes	No	Not Sure
30	6	1

One maintained school is a special who did not vote for the service

Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners

Yes	No	Not Sure
20	11	6

One maintained school is a special who did not vote for the service

Contingency for crisis communications

Yes	No	Not Sure
26	7	4

One maintained school is a special who did not vote for the service

Trade Union Facilities

Yes	No	Not Sure
27	7	3

One maintained school is a special who did not vote for the service

School Improvement

Yes	No	Not Sure
26	8	3

One maintained school is a special who did not vote for the service

Outdoor Education

Yes	No	Not Sure
25	7	4

Two maintained schools did not vote one is a special

Question 3

Do you agree with transferring 0.5% of the Schools Block into the High Needs Block to help mitigate against the anticipated overspend driven by the continued increase in demand for provision for children with SEND?

Yes	No	Not Sure
34	26	26

Do you have any additional comments you would like to add about this consultation?

- Delegation of school block funding may support additional funds for increasing number of children with additional support needs, though if this is not the case then would revise this viewpoint.
- More money cannot keep coming out of schools budgets. Schools are trying to provide more and more, often with less funding, less staff and less resources.
- I support the principle of improving High Needs funding for SEND provision. However, the proposed 0.5% transfer would disproportionately impact several schools in our area, with losses exceeding £20,000 for some. I would prefer alternative solutions or phased implementation to mitigate these impacts while still addressing SEND needs.
- The initial questions differ for us as a Special School. With respect to Question 3, the proposed approach appears to reallocate existing school resources in a way that may not be appropriate. This initiative should be funded through alternative funding streams rather than reducing allocations to schools. However, if this was the route that had to be taken, this would be the less negative impact on school funds.
- I agree with transferring 0.5% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block as a pragmatic and proportionate response to the continued overspend in SEND provision. While this slightly reduces funding available to mainstream schools, it protects children with additional needs from service disruption. It is important to note that this is a short-term measure, and

longer-term strategies are required to address ongoing demand pressures in the High Needs Block

- I completely understand that money is required for the high needs block, but I do not think it should come from individual school budgets.
- My decisions not to support the proposed transfer to the High Needs Block or the de-delegation for EAL/ethnic minority support are based on the current context of my school and the limited direct impact these services have for us. Mainstream budgets are already under considerable pressure, and further reductions need to be matched with clearer accountability, impact measures and long-term sustainability plans. I fully support improving SEND and EAL outcomes but feel that alternative funding approaches are required.
- Many schools are struggling - constant under-funding of pay increases and increased under-funded employer on-costs. Moving another 0.5% to only very partially offset the on-going High Needs block under-funding would further add to this burden.
- Schools are already financially constrained. The on-going under-funding of pay awards and increased employer on-costs - again not fully funded causes real difficulties in setting balanced budgets. Losing a further 0.5% would further increase the strain without making a significant difference to the High Needs funding issues.
- Again whilst I agree that the SEND block funding needs to be increased, this should not be at the detriment to the other pupils in the school. Funding for the SEND block needs to come from central Government. Also AFN funding received needs to be equal amongst schools - some Family of Schools receive more funding than others which disadvantages the SEND children.
- I don't really understand any of this!
- This seems a big decision without the clarity of overview needed to make a fully informed choice