

DISTRIBUTION OF PUPIL GROWTH FUNDING FOR 2025/26

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Forum on the distribution to schools of the 'Growth Funding' element of the Schools Block for 2025/26.

Information and Advice

2. For 2025/26 the Department for Education (DfE) has allocated Nottinghamshire £2.020 million (£3.616 million 2024/25) through the growth formula as part of the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
3. The DfE's 'Schools Operational Guide: 2025 to 2026' 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 costs of new schools
4. Agenda item 3a of the February 2025 Forum meeting detailed the amount of growth funding that NCC has committed to varying pupil numbers for new and growing schools for 2025/26, through the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) is £1.096 million. Following the pupil number variations, a balance of £0.924 million of the 2025/26 growth funding allocation remained uncommitted.

2025/26 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 2025/26 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 2025, although the number of schools is expected to be low.

2025/26 Secondary Growth Fund Allocations

12. In June 2024 Schools Forum agreed that secondary schools and academies who agree to admit additional pupils over PAN, at the request of the Local Authority should be funded for the additional pupils at the minimum per pupil rate for the year. For 2025/26 this amount is £6,465.
13. For primary to secondary transfers for September 2025, NCC has continued to have a temporary shortage of year 7 places available in many 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.
14. **Appendix B** shows the number of additional places that secondary schools and academies have agreed to admit through 'bulge' year groups for 2025/26 and the funding that has been allocated.
15. As per DfE Guidance, the ESFA will reimburse Local Authorities for any growth payments made to academies for the period April 2026 to August 2026. Therefore, the cost to the growth fund of secondary 'bulge' year groups for 2025/26 is **£1.014 million**
16. The total cost of commitments identified in this report for financial year 2025/26 is **£1.214 million**.
17. These commitments will cause an overspend on the pupil growth fund for 2025/26 of £0.29 million.

2026/27 Funding Allocations

18. Given the overspend for 2025/26, and the expected continuation of the lower levels of growth funding from the DfE, NCC officers would like to review the methodology for allocating growth funding to schools, with a recommendation being brought to a Forum meeting in the Autumn 2025 term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Schools Forum:

1. Notes the content of the report.
2. Continues to monitor the use of this fund throughout 2025-26.

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Appendix A

A Primary Pupil Growth Fund allocations as at June 2025 0

B Presumption Free School – Pre opening Grant

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Thoresby Vale (DAT) Academy | 200,000 |
| | <u>200,000</u> |

C Infant Class Size Breach – 2 terms support – Autumn 2025 & Spring 2026

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Total Initial Forecast Expenditure 2025/26 **200,000**

NB Further ICS breach will not be known until admissions are finalised in July 2025.

Secondary Pupil Growth Fund Allocations Academic Year 2025-26
Appendix B

| District | School | PAN | Places Offered | Additional Places | Total Allocation to school | Allocation Sept 25 to March 26 | Allocation April 26 to August 26 |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|-----|----------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Broxtowe | Alderman White School | 145 | 150 | 5 | 32,325.00 | 18,856.25 | 13,468.75 |
| Gedling | Carlton Academy | 230 | 260 | 30 | 193,950.00 | 113,137.50 | 80,812.50 |
| Broxtowe | Chilwell School | 180 | 210 | 30 | 193,950.00 | 113,137.50 | 80,812.50 |
| Rushcliffe | Rushcliffe Spencer Academy | 270 | 300 | 30 | 193,950.00 | 113,137.50 | 80,812.50 |
| Rushcliffe | South Nottinghamshire Academy | 150 | 180 | 30 | 193,950.00 | 113,137.50 | 80,812.50 |
| Mansfield | The Garibaldi School | 190 | 210 | 20 | 129,300.00 | 75,425.00 | 53,875.00 |
| Ashfield | The Holgate Academy | 240 | 270 | 30 | 193,950.00 | 113,137.50 | 80,812.50 |
| Newark | The Joseph Whitaker School | 235 | 244 | 9 | 58,185.00 | 33,941.25 | 24,243.75 |
| Mansfield | The Manor Academy | 240 | 270 | 30 | 193,950.00 | 113,137.50 | 80,812.50 |
| Rushcliffe | The South Wolds Academy & Sixth Form | 170 | 210 | 40 | 258,600.00 | 150,850.00 | 107,750.00 |
| Newark | The Suthers School | 135 | 150 | 15 | 96,975.00 | 56,568.75 | 40,406.25 |
| TOTALS | | | | 269 | 1,739,085.00 | 1,014,466.25 | 724,618.75 |