

# SCHOOLS FORUM

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**WEDNESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2024 AT 6.00 PM**  
**COMMITTEE ROOM 2, TOWN HALL, JUDD STREET, LONDON WC1H 9JE**

**Enquiries to:** Anoushka Clayton-Walshe, Committee Services  
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**Telephone:** 020 7974 8543 (Text phone prefix 18001)

## **MEMBERS**

**Katy Forsdyke (Chair)**

**Daniel Silverstone (Vice-Chair)**

**Jen Allan, Mark Anthony, Jules Belton, Rob Earrey, John Hayes, Nick Hewlett, Perina Holness, Bob House, Deborah Issacs, Nicholas John, Kateryna Law, Vijita Patel, Jacob Sam and Alex Wilson**

## **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

**Izzy Jones, Alison Lowton and Jemima Wade**

Issued on: Friday, 29 November 2024

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Gender inclusive minutes: Camden seeks to write the minutes of its committees in a way that does not misgender individuals. If you are contributing to the meeting and you wish to let us know what your pronouns are, please contact the Committee Officer named on the front of this agenda. Otherwise, we will use job titles, full names or neutral terminology. We will not assume gender.

**ENDS**

# **SCHOOLS FORUM 4 DECEMBER 2024**

## **AGENDA**

- 1. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP LIST** (Pages  
7 - 8)

To note the Schools Forum membership list and any updates.
  
- 2. APOLOGIES**
  
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**
  
- 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**
  
- 5. MINUTES** (Pages  
9 - 18)

To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2024.
  
- 6. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**
  
- 7. SCHOOL FUNDING 2025/26** (Pages  
19 - 44)

Report of the Director of Education and Inclusion.

At the recent November meeting, forum was presented with the results of the consultation document sent to schools relating to the local funding arrangements for 2025/26. There were no major objections raised from the consultation and forum confirmed its agreement of the funding formula to be used for the distribution of funds to schools for 2025/26.

Following the 30 October 2024 Budget and the most recent 6 November Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) policy document announcement, this report estimates the funding effects of that information on the current school individual NFF budgets and seeks schools forum's agreement on the amount of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) de-delegation for next year.

Due to the understandable delay by the ESFA following the recent change in government the individual schools figures are at this stage only estimated figures using the cash uplifts to the National Funding Formula (NFF) factors provided by the ESFA for 2025/26. These do not currently include a general inflation uplift rate for 2025/26 Schools block as it has not yet been confirmed.

Final actual individual school budgets for 2025/26 will be released to schools pending update of ESFA data (with the recent October 2024 census data) and its application to the local Camden schools' formula using the Authority Planning Tool (APT) which is expected in late December 2024.

The report also summarises forecasts of the 2024/25 High Needs (HN) DSG outturn, future budgets requirements and planned DSG spending as outlined in the earlier High Needs Report to forum and also outlines current and future cost pressures on schools and high needs budgets to be used in budget planning.

This report was completed prior to any further announcements by the ESFA regarding schools national funding formula proposals. Officers will provide an oral update to the forum on any intervening development in schools' funding at the meeting.

## **8. SCHOOL MEALS DELIVERY IN SCHOOLS**

(Pages  
45 - 48)

Report of the Director of Education and Inclusion.

At its meeting of 11 September 2024, an update was presented to the Schools Forum on the procurement of the new school meals contract. The current contract with Cater Link is due to expire on 31st March 2024. A further update is now available.

Following a successful tendering process, tenders were received on 10th September 2024 for a new service that is due to commence on 1st April 2025 for a period of three years, with option for two extensions of one year each, with a total estimated aggregate value of £24m. The new contract will include an option to break after two years (April 2027), which will allow the Council to move to an in-house arrangement, if possible.

The purpose of this briefing is to update Schools Forum on the outcome of the tender, which will then proceed to consideration of award by the Executive Director, Children and Learning following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families in line with the procurement strategy agreed by the Cabinet on 5 June 2024.

**9. WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER**

(Pages 49 -  
56)

Report of the Director of Education and Inclusion.

This report sets out the work plan for the Schools Forum for the remainder of the 2024/25 school year (Appendix 1) and provides an update on actions requested at previous meetings (Appendix 2).

**10. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

To note the remaining meeting dates of the academic year:

- Wednesday, 5 February 2025
- Wednesday, 4 June 2025

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

**AGENDA ENDS**

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday, 5 February 2025 at 6.00 pm in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE.

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| Name   |          | School / non-school  | Member/<br>Substitute since | 4-year period of<br>office expires |
|--|----------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Primary</b>                                   |          |  |                             |                                    |
| Jen Allan  | <b>G</b> | Eleanor Palmer<br>Primary  | March 2021                  | April 2025                         |
| Jules Belton                                     | <b>H</b> | St Mary & St Pancras<br>Primary                                  | July 2023                   | August 2027                        |
| Rob Earrey                                       | <b>H</b> | Fitzjohns Primary  | December 2020               | January 2025                       |
| Katy Forsdyke (Chair)                            | <b>H</b> | Christ Church Primary<br>(Hampstead)                             | December 2020               | January 2025                       |
| John Hayes                                       | <b>H</b> | Gospel Oak Primary   | November 2022               | December 2026                      |
| Nick Hewlett                                     | <b>G</b> | Hawley Primary   | December 2023               | January 2027                       |
| Deborah Isaacs                                   | <b>G</b> | Edith Neville<br>Richard Cobden Primary<br>Primrose Hill Primary | November 2022               | December 2026                      |
| <b>Primary Substitutes</b>                       |          |  |                             |                                    |
| Jemima Wade                                      | <b>H</b> | Argyle Primary   | February 2022               | March 2026                         |
| 1 Vacancy  | <b>G</b> |  |                             |                                    |
| <b>Secondary</b>                                 |          |  |                             |                                    |
| Mark Anthony                                     | <b>H</b> | Maria Fidelis School   | December 2024               | January 2029                       |
| Bob House  | <b>G</b> | Camden School for Girls  | February 2023               | March 2027                         |
| Nicholas John                                    | <b>H</b> | HT Acland Burghley<br>School & EHT H3<br>Federation              | December 2020               | January 2025                       |
| Kateryna Law                                     | <b>H</b> | Camden School for Girls  | December 2024               | January 2029                       |
| Daniel Silverstone (Vice-<br>Chair)              | <b>G</b> | Parliament Hill  | March 2021                  | April 2025                         |
| Jacob Sam  | <b>G</b> | Hampstead School   | June 2024                   | July 2028                          |
| <b>Secondary Substitutes</b>                     |          |  |                             |                                    |
| Izzy Jones                                       | <b>H</b> | William Ellis  | February 2021               | March 2025                         |
| Alison Lowton                                    | <b>G</b> | Haverstock   | March 2021                  | April 2025                         |
| <b>Special &amp; Hospital</b>                    |          |  |                             |                                    |
| Vijita Patel                                     | <b>H</b> | Swiss Cottage School   | December 2020               | January 2025                       |
| 1 Vacancy  | <b>G</b> |  |                             |                                    |
| <b>Special School &amp; Hospital Substitutes</b> |          |  |                             |                                    |
| 1 Vacancy  | <b>H</b> |  |                             |                                    |
| 1 Vacancy  | <b>G</b> |  |                             |                                    |
| <b>Nursery Schools</b>                           |          |  |                             |                                    |
| Perina Holness                                   | <b>H</b> | Thomas Coram Centre  | October 2021                | November 2025                      |
| <b>Pupil Referral Unit</b>                       |          |  |                             |                                    |
| Alex Wilson                                      | <b>H</b> | Heath School   | December 2024               | January 2029                       |
| <b>Academies</b>                                 |          |  |                             |                                    |
| 1 Vacancy  |          |  |                             |                                    |
| <b>Non-School</b>                                |          |  |                             |                                    |
| 1 vacancy  |          | PVI (Early Years)  |                             |                                    |

**G = Governor and H = Head Teacher**

**Meeting Quorum**

That at least 6 members are to be present based on a current membership of 15  
This achieves the minimum 40% as required in the regulations.

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 5

## THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **SCHOOLS FORUM** held on **TUESDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 2024** at 6.00 pm in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

### MEMBERS OF THE FORUM PRESENT

Katy Forsdyke, Christ Church School (Hampstead) (Chair)  
Jules Belton, St Mary & St Pancras Primary  
Alan Chesters, Acland Burghley School  
Rob Earrey, Fitzjohns Primary School  
John Hayes, Gospel Oak Primary School  
Nick Hewlett, Hawley Primary  
Perina Holness, Thomas Coram Centre  
Bob House, Camden School for Girls  
Nicholas John, Acland Burghley School  
Vijita Patel, Swiss Cottage School  
Jacob Sam, Hampstead School  
Daniel Silverstone, Parliament Hill (Vice-Chair)

### MEMBERS OF THE FORUM ABSENT

Deborah Issacs, Edith Neville Primary, Richard Cobden Primary, Primrose Hill Primary  
Jen Allan, Eleanor Palmer Primary School  
Jules Belton, St Mary & St Pancras Primary

### ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Marcus Boyland, Cabinet Member for the Best Start for Children and Families  
Vikram Hansrani, Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion  
Di Osborne, Head of SEND and Inclusion  
Victor Saunders, Schools Budget Financial Advisor  
Nick Smith, Head of Education Commission & School Organisation

**The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Schools Forum and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.**

### MINUTES

#### 1. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP LIST

The Chair noted that there were a number of terms of office expiring in 2025 and head teacher members should consult their respective forums about future nominations.

### RESOLVED -

THAT the membership list be noted.

**2. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

**4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**5. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the minutes of the last meeting held on 5 November 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**6. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no urgent business.

**7. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA FOR 2025/26**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion.

Victor Saunders, Team Leader Schools and Designated Schools Grant (DSG), introduced the report which provided an overview of responses from primary and secondary schools regarding proposals for the local funding formula for 2025/26. The Forum had previously agreed to maintain the current formula, pending any major changes, and since then the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) had confirmed no significant changes to the National Funding Formula (NFF). The consultation period revealed no substantial objections or additional comments from schools. The Forum was now asked to confirm its approval of the proposals presented in September 2024.

## *Schools Forum - Tuesday, 5th November, 2024*

The Chair thanked officers for the report and invited questions and comments from the Forum. The following was discussed:

- Members asked for updates on general budget announcements. In response, it was confirmed that the Autumn Budget allocated £1 billion to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) funding, which formed part of the £2.2 billion to the core schools budgets. The 1.8% increase to school core budgets would need to cover inflation and the teacher pay award for 2025/26. There was still a question as to whether any of the SEND allocation would be used as bailout funding for financially struggling local authorities, which would result in a lower uplift distributed to other local authorities using the funding formula. The details would be confirmed by government between now and December 2024 to allow local authorities to proceed with their budget planning and Forum would be updated at the next meeting.
- A member commented that it would be unfair for local authorities to be penalised and receive a lower SEND funding uplift for being more financially responsible. In response, it was confirmed that the ESFA was aware of Camden's good practice and if the funds were not distributed using the formula, there would be dismay from many similarly financially responsible local authorities.
- It was confirmed that a low response rate to the consultation was expected due to the low impact nature of the proposals for no change and the continuation of a previously agreed approach by schools. Camden had already moved the local funding formula in-line with national averages which the national funding formula now used, therefore the formulas were drifting closer together anyway. Officers said that within the consultation documentation an invite was offered to schools to discuss any queries. It was noted by members that for other consultations which asked more impactful questions, officers should ensure schools were supported to engage and fully understand.
- It had been communicated by government that National Insurance would be funded for schools on top of the £2.2 billion, however there had been no contact yet to confirm this to local authorities.
- In response to a question asking if funding for staff pay awards would be a real terms increase, it was stated that they were likely to be grant based on pupil premium and schools were unlikely to receive the full amount of money to cover the increase in salaries of experienced staff

### **RESOLVED –**

THAT Schools Forum

- a) confirm its acceptance of the formula proposals set out in the consultation report following the positive endorsement from the level and response and those schools that responded;
- b) provide any additional comments on the proposals; and
- c) note any additional Schools funding information.

## **8. CAMDEN LOCAL INCLUSION FUND (CLIF)**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Prevention, Family Help and Safeguarding.

Nick Smith, Head of Education Commissioning and School Organisation, introduced the report which outlined the financial support provided to Early Education and Childcare providers to meet the needs of children with emerging SEND. The report detailed the budgeting model used and included an analysis of the recent increase in demand for these services.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and invited questions and comments from the Forum. The following was discussed:

- In relation to section 2.1, it was confirmed that the contribution from the High Needs Block (HN) Block Designated Schools Grant (DSG) of £500,000 was in addition to the £804,000 funding.
- A member asked which of the HN Block or Early Years (EY) Block would be used if the level of funding exceeded the £1.3 million budget and they asked if there was a cap. In response, it was stated that if money used exceeded either budget there would be a potential impact on both budgets. Officers said that the DfE did not legally distinguish between EY Block or HN Block within the DSG, but Camden could trace its own reserves in what had been spent in different blocks. An overspend on either block had the same net affect. This had not occurred before in Camden, and if the scenario arose, it would involve a discussion between the services on how to react. It was clarified that an overspend would form a deficit and not a reduction in the EY rate.
- In relation to Figure 7, a member stated that funding for Band C did not cover 75% and funding for Band D did not cover 100% of a child's nursery costs, on the assumption that nurseries were expected to pay the London Living Wage (LLW), therefore the report was not factually correct. The member asked for more detail on how nurseries would pay the wages of CLIF staff, because 30 hours was not funded and it was known that CLIF was allocated at least £10 less than the Exceptional Needs Grant (ENG) and Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) funding. Another member stated that the funding for ENG and EHCP also did not cover costs. Members said it was helpful to see the band separation and they would like to see the actual funding amounts per band presented in a future report.
- A member noted there were no illustrative figures in the report which related to banding and there was also no account for the cost of assessments attached to each band. They also noted that the wording in the summary of the report overstated how much the funding met the costs of SEND provision.
- Members requested that a representative from EY attend a future meeting and prepare a more detailed report, which responded to points raised at this meeting.

**Action By - Director of Children's Prevention, Family Help and Safeguarding**

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

**9. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK (HNB): UPDATE ON 2024/25 PROJECTION AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion.

Vikram Hansrani, Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion, and Di Osborne, Head of SEND and Inclusion, introduced and summarised the report which provided an update on the financial position as of September 2024, with a projected deficit of £1.85 million, which had now increased to an overspend of £2.1 million. The overspend was driven by rising pupil numbers, individual tuition for children not attending school and education otherwise than at school (EOTAS) provision. It was noted that reserves were expected to be depleted sooner than anticipated, compared to previous reporting. In addition to the report, it was noted that there had been recent parliamentary debates and two national reports, including one from the National Audit Office (NAO), warning that 43% of local authorities may face deficits by March 2026. Work was ongoing with corporate finance to monitor HN Block spending, particularly in mainstream and independent schools, where costs had significantly risen.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and invited questions and comments from the Forum. The following was discussed:

- A member queried the £5 million allocated to independent and non-maintained placements and asked how many pupils this covered. Officers said that the placements involved approximately 70–80 children, but highlighted Camden's success in reducing residential placements. It was also noted there were a number of placements which were awarded through parental tribunal preferences. The average cost per pupil was £70,000, however some cases exceeded this amount significantly. Officers noted placements typically involved low-incidence, high-cost cases jointly funded by health, social care, and education, and suggested that the High Needs Subgroup explore the cohort further to assess value for money and outcomes. Officers emphasised the need to expand mainstream provision within Camden to reduce the reliance on independent placements.
- A member asked if SEND resource provisions would be integrated within Camden schools, utilising available space more effectively which was increasing due to falling pupil numbers. They also asked if there was a strategy to reduce the number of EHCPs within the local authority. Officers clarified that there was no specific strategy to limit EHCPs, emphasising the council's focus on providing timely support and interventions, whether that was through EHCPs or ENGs. Last year Camden's net increase in EHCPs was six, which was significantly lower than neighbouring authorities with some seeing net increases of over 300. The importance of ensuring local families felt supported was highlighted. Concerns

were also raised by members about the rising costs of ENGs, with funding for EHCPs and ENGs drawing from the same budget, which should necessitate closer monitoring of both.

- A member raised concern over the VAT (value added tax) status of independent special schools, which were not VAT-exempt like non-maintained special schools, but officers clarified that local authorities could reclaim VAT, so there was unlikely to be a direct financial impact on Camden. The member suggested benchmarking the issue with other local authorities, as it was being discussed nationally by special school networks and lobbying groups. Officers further noted that under current rules, parents could send their children to an independent special school without an EHCP if they were prepared to pay the fees themselves and they would not be excluded from VAT.
- A question was raised about whether costs had been modelled for increasing special provisions and how this aligned with falling budgets. Officers explained that while no specific modelling had been carried out, there was recognition of the benefits of keeping children in Camden schools as part of the place planning strategy. Officers also highlighted rising costs in the independent and non-maintained sector, driven by factors such as tribunals and increasing EOTAS package expenses, which were beyond the Council's control.
- In relation to Table 3, officers confirmed that the total of 215 EHCPs only included maintained secondary schools.
- Members asked if the rise in ENGs had reduced the number of EHCPs as intended, or if ENGs had increased disproportionately. Officers explained that without ENGs, many young people would require EHCPs, with the main driver being transitions from EY. Some children moved from CLIF to ENGs, and by the end of Key Stage(KS) 1, they may still require EHCPs, although there were successes where children settled into mainstream education without progressing to EHCPs. Despite this, overall numbers were rising, mirroring national trends. Officers highlighted the significant increase in SEND cases but shared positive outcomes for children supported by ENGs in reception through the EY Inclusion Team.
- Concerns were raised about the increasing number of ENGs, particularly for EYs and KS1 pupils, and whether they resulted in children settling into mainstream education or if support usually continued indefinitely, driving numbers up over time. It was suggested that data showing how many ENGs successfully transition children off additional support would be helpful.
- A member said both ENGs and EHCPs should be regularly reviewed to ensure the child still needed the support. ENGs were highlighted as less burdensome for schools and parents compared to EHCPs, given their simpler application and assessment process.
- Members said the High Needs Subgroup should review the points raised in this discussion in more detail.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

## **10. SCHOOLS FORUM HIGH NEEDS BLOCK SUBGROUP: RECOMMENDED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion.

In response to members raising the error that not all High Needs Block Subgroup members were also Schools Forum members, officers agreed to remove the following line: 'Membership will consist of Schools Forum members'.

### **RESOLVED –**

THAT Schools Forum agree the updated High Needs Block Subgroup terms of reference (Appendix 1), subject to the correction, and for the updated version to be appended to the Schools Forum terms of reference.

## **11. 2024 SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING REPORT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion.

Nick Smith, Head of Education Commissioning and School Organisation, introduced and summarised the report which set out the composite and live data projections for school places and demonstrated the basis for school place planning decision-making in Camden. The report noted a decline in birth rates, with births in Camden remaining lower than expected. While previous reports suggested a possible recovery, the current data indicated that the low point had likely been reached, but the situation may change over the next ten years, depending on future births. Primary schools, secondary schools and different planning areas of the borough faced different contexts. There was a need for caution in looking at the data, as previous predictions about increased demand from additional housing had been overestimated. The School Place Planning Group would involve more stakeholders and work closely with the SEND team.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and invited questions and comments from the Forum. The following was discussed:

- Cllr Boyland emphasised the importance of aligning SEND needs with place planning and suggested that it would be helpful to see figures for both areas mapped out together.
- Cllr Boyland raised concerns over the high level of Camden students entering the independent sector in the transition to secondary school. He suggested that the Communications Team and Camden Learning could attract students back into the mainstream sector with the right messaging, and now would be an opportune time with rising fees due to VAT being introduced on private sector schools in January 2024. A Member asked if the reasons for this trend were known, and it was confirmed there were several factors and there had been a review 18 months ago, however it was hard to pinpoint reasons at a granular level. A member

suggested gathering insights from primary school head teachers about why students leave Camden schools when transitioning.

- A member expressed concern over the financial impact of the projected 28% surplus in secondary school places by 2032, noting that some schools were still relatively full but facing potential enormous losses due to low year group numbers. Action was needed quickly to address this, especially as increasing EHCPs were requiring more money from school budgets which affected the curriculum offer. Officers acknowledged the need for action, explaining that while measures like caps on admission numbers had been taken, long-term solutions may require statutory action by the Council and further consideration of grouping schools together. The Schools Place Planning Group was looking at Camden's position within the broader context of falling rolls in inner London and the potential impact of school closures. A member noted that closing schools to help other schools were difficult but necessary decisions and hoped the Group would focus on schools with very low numbers. Officers said that Camden had already made some tough decisions in previous years, however there were challenges ahead and all options needed to be considered.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

**12. WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion.

Nick Smith, Head of Education Commissioning and School Organisation, introduced and summarised the report which outlined the work programme and action tracker.

As discussed on item 8, members requested that the EY Team prepare a more detailed report to report to a future meeting, which responded to the points raised at this meeting, and that they be present to answer questions.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

**13. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The remaining meeting dates for the 2024-25 academic year were noted.

- Wednesday 4 December 2024
- Wednesday 5 February 2025
- Wednesday 4 June 2025



**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm.

**CHAIR**

**Contact Officer: Anoushka Clayton-Walshe**

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**MINUTES END**

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|  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>  | <b>WARDS:</b> All              |
| <b>REPORT TITLE</b><br>School Funding 2025/26  |                                |
| <b>REPORT OF</b><br>Director of Education and Inclusion - Children and Learning  |                                |
| <b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b><br>Schools Forum  | <b>DATE</b><br>4 December 2024 |
| <p><b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b></p> <p>At the recent November meeting, forum was presented with the results of the consultation document sent to schools relating to the local funding arrangements for 2025/26. There were no major objections raised from the consultation and forum confirmed its agreement of the funding formula to be used for the distribution of funds to schools for 2025/26.</p> <p>Following the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024 Budget and the most recent 6<sup>th</sup> November Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) policy document announcement, this report estimates the funding effects of that information on the current school individual NFF budgets and seeks schools forum’s agreement on the amount of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) de-delegation for next year.</p> <p>Due to the understandable delay by the ESFA following the recent change in government the individual schools figures are at this stage only estimated figures using the cash uplifts to the National Funding Formula (NFF) factors provided by the ESFA for 2025/26. These do not currently include a general inflation uplift rate for 2025/26 Schools block as it has not yet been confirmed.</p> <p>Final actual individual school budgets for 2025/26 will be released to schools pending update of ESFA data (with the recent October 2024 census data) and its application to the local Camden schools’ formula using the Authority Planning Tool (APT) which is expected in late December 2024.</p> <p>The report also summarises forecasts of the 2024/25 High Needs (HN) DSG outturn, future budgets requirements and planned DSG spending as outlined in the earlier High Needs Report to forum and also outlines current and future cost pressures on schools and high needs budgets to be used in budget planning.</p> <p>This report was completed prior to any further announcements by the ESFA regarding schools national funding formula proposals. Officers will provide an oral update to the forum on any intervening development in schools’ funding at the meeting.</p> <p>The following documents were used in the preparation of this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Summary policy document for schools national funding formula 2025 to 2026 – dd 06.11.24</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NFF schools block technical note 2024 to 2025 (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Schools operational guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul> |                                |

- [The notional SEN budget for mainstream schools: operational guide 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [National funding formula for schools and high needs 2024 to 2025 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

**Contact Officer:**

Victor Saunders, Schools Budget Financial Advisor  
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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Schools Forum is asked to:

- (a) note the estimated NFF allocations to individual schools discussed in the report in section 1.1 and set out in Appendix 1. Also, that these are only indicative NFF allocations to support budget planning and are not yet the final school budgets.
- (b) note the level of deductions and reserves to be used to support the funding allocations to schools as set out in paragraphs 1.13
- (c) note the ESFA's continued use of the Central Schools Block (CSSB) replacement of the former top sliced amounts detailed in section 1.18
- (d) approve the de-delegated budgets as set out in section 2.1
- (e) note the current forecast spending plans and funding for the high needs and early years (EY) blocks as set out in sections 4 and 5 respectively
- (f) note the potential effects of the future funding and cost pressures outlined in sections 8 and 9 on schools budgets



Signed by:

Vikram Hansrani  
Director of Education and Inclusion – Children and Learning

Dated: 28 November 2024

## 1. Purpose of the report

As per ESFA requirements - This report sets out the latest information from the ESFA on the funding for the schools DSG block and seeks the forum's approval on the amount of DSG de-delegation.

It also estimates the effect on the latest information regarding NFF factor rates on Camden schools current notional NFF budget allocations in Appendix 1 and asks forum to note provisional spending plans and current issues regarding the high needs and early years DSG blocks.

Finally it sets out the most recent ESFA and government funding announcements and indicated the range of specific and general inflationary pressures facing schools in the medium-term

### Executive summary of the Report

#### Intro

- A. Due to the timing of the 30<sup>th</sup> October Budget by the new government there has been a delay in ESFA funding announcements for 2025/6. However, in advance on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 of the ESFA published an update that confirmed the final NFF structure would not be changing significantly. This was subsequently updated on the 6<sup>th</sup> November to indicate the adjusted NFF factor values for 2025/26 in the [Summary policy document for schools national funding formula 2025/26](#) policy note. This was to help Councils and schools with budget planning.
- B. This set out the structure of the schools NFF formula for 2025 /26 (i.e. the factors that will be used in the NFF formula, adjusted rates and how they will operate). It confirmed that will be no substantial changes to the NFF for 2025/26.
- C. It stated the ESFA aim "to publish notional NFF allocations for schools and all supporting documents on the NFF (including the schools operational guide and NFF technical note) for 2025 /26 as soon as possible following the 30 October 2024 budget announcements. The final dedicated schools grant (DSG) allocations will then be published in December 2024".

#### October Budget

- D. The Chancellors [2024 Autumn Budget and Spending Review](#) on 30 October 2024, indicated the following key items for schools
  - The core schools budget (currently £61.6 billion in 2024/25) will increase by £2.3 billion, £1 bn of which will go towards supporting the special educational needs and disabilities system.
  - The government is also providing £6.7 billion of capital funding in 2025/26 for education in England, including
    - £1.4 billion for the school rebuilding programme,
    - £90 million to renovate and expand the children's home estate and
    - over £2 billion into maintenance for schools.

#### ESFA Guidance

- E. The most recent ESFA guidance on the the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 [Summary policy note for schools and high needs national funding formula 202/25](#) to support schools in budget planning indicated that they plan to issue the detailed school by school NFF budgets for 2025/26 at the end of November 2024. Schools will receive this information as soon as it is available.
- F. The document also confirmed that the only structural changes being made to the NFF for 2025/26 are in relation to the PFI factor (which will not affect all local authorities) and the proposed cash uplift to the national NFF formula factors from rolling current additional schools pay grants into the base NFF for 2025/26.

### **Schools**

- G. The figures provided in this report adjust the current schools NFF budgets in line with these adjustments but still don't include adjustment for a general inflation uplift (which is not expected to be confirmed until late Dec 2024) or the October 2024 census data
- H. Hence based on this information total DSG for schools for 2025/26 is expected to be set at about £132.6m reflecting an approximate 7.4% NFF base uplift to incorporate earlier pay grants.

### **High Needs block**

- I. For the HN DSG blocks there has been no confirmation beyond a minimum 7% uplift in the per head of population element of HN DSG blocks for each Council.
- J. However, the policy document did inform on expected HN notional NFF DSG 2025/26 funding floors. As per Section 4.14 below, the document indicated that the high needs notional NFF DSG base budget will be adjusted for current TPAG, TPECG and CSBG grants to build them into the base (as per the mainstream school block) for 2025/26 going forward.
- Teachers' Pay additional grant (TPAG),
  - Teachers' pension employer contribution grant (TPECG)
  - Core schools budget grant (CSBG)

It then indicates that the "per of head population" element of the NFF for HN DSG block (Approximately 75% for Camden) will be uplifted by a funding floor minimum of at least 7%. For Camden on a budget of £54.3m this can be forecast to result in a £2.85m uplift on the current HN DSG block for 2025/26.

- K. Following funding increases through 2020/21 to 2024/25 current year spending forecasts in high needs services now suggest that they will be exceed the in year 2024/25 budget by £2.1m. A final position on planned HN spending for 2025/26 will be provided to forum in when finalised and by no later than February 2025.

### **Early Years**

- L. The early years funding rates for 2025/26 have not yet been confirmed by the ESFA. However, details will be passed to schools as soon as they are issued. Following the October budget there has been some concerns expressed by the sector providers on the extent to which the budget increases to national insurance will be fully incorporated in early years funding rates by the ESFA. Section 5.6 below indicates the nature of those concerns.

## 2. Primary and Secondary Schools – NFF formula funding

### Introduction – Delay to NFF allocation figures publication

- 2.1 The most recent guidance from the ESFA on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 was a [Summary policy note for schools and high needs national funding formula 2025/26](#). This indicated the plan to issue the detailed school by school NFF budgets for 2025/26 (that will also indicate the aggregate Camden Schools block) by the end of November 2024. Schools will receive this information as soon as it is available.
- 2.2 It confirmed that the only structural changes being made to the NFF for 2025/26 are in relation to the PFI factor (which will not affect all local authorities) and the proposed cash uplift to the national NFF formula factors from rolling current additional schools pay grants into the base NFF for 2025/26. The PFI changes relate to providing pro-rata funding when a PFI contract is coming to an end and setting conditions that local authorities would need to meet to receive above-inflation increases in PFI funding. Camden's local formula should not be affected by this. It also confirmed that current pay grants will be rolled into the base NFF budget for 2025/26
- 2.3 To support Councils budget planning processes the ESFA's document has indicated the proposed cash uplift to the 2025/26 NFF national formula factors (excluding any annual inflationary uplift) expected from rolling current additional schools funding pay grants (see section 1.7 ) into the NFF base budgets for 2025/26 onwards. see Appendix 2
- 2.4 Applying the aggregate percentage of these cash uplifts to current school NFF budgets would result in a general increase of approximately 7.4% to current 2024/25 budget levels. Appendix 2 indicates the cash increases and rates that the ESFA will be using to determine schools individual NFF budgets excluding the yet to be confirmed inflation uplift.
- 2.5 In Appendix 1 Officers have applied these rates to Camden schools 2024/25 notional NFF budgets to give some indication of the 2025/26 NFF budgets for individual school (net the inflation uplift and October 2024 data). This is only an indication based on the information to date for planning purposes and is expected to be updated by the ESFA in late November.
- 2.6 As above – please note that these are only indicative figures based on October 2023 census data and exclusive of any inflationary uplift for 2025/26 (yet to be confirmed). However, in the current transitional climate they represent a starting point for schools to consider the 2025/26 budget in advance of ESFA released figures (which will be forwarded to schools when published)

### Funding Available

- 2.7 The draft provisional 2025/26 NFF Formula funding rates were issued by the ESFA on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 in its [policy note](#) detailed in Appendix 2
- 2.8 The ESFA indicate their aim to publish final NFF allocations for schools and local authorities and all supporting documents on the NFF (including the schools operational guide and NFF technical note) for 2025/26, by the end of November 2024. The final dedicated schools grant (DSG) allocations will then be published in December 2024.

2.9 The ESFA has indicated its intention to roll the following 2024/25 additional schools funding currently allocated by separate grants into the base DSG NFF budgets for 2025/26 going forward.

- Teachers' Pay additional grant (TPAG),
- Teachers' pension employer contribution grant (TPECG)
- Core schools budget grant (CSBG)

2.10 In order to roll these grants into the base budgets for the NFF, the Basic pupil entitlement factor in the NFF will be uplifted by the equivalent cash increases shown in table 1 below which indicate an approximate 7.4% increase in 2025/26. ref Appendix 2

**Table 1: CSBG 2024 to 2025 funding rates and recalculated 'full year equivalent' rates for schools – source ESFA**

| Grant element               | Unit Value | 'Full year equivalent' value uplift | Recalculated 'full year equivalent' unit value total |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Primary basic per-pupil     | £76        | £51                                 | £127   |
| Key stage 3 basic per-pupil | £108       | £71                                 | £179   |
| Key stage 4 basic per-pupil | £122       | £80                                 | £202   |
| Primary FSM6 per-pupil      | £70        | £45                                 | £115   |
| Secondary FSM6 per-pupil    | £100       | £68                                 | £168   |
| Lump sum                    | £2,900     | £1,915                              | £4,815   |

In table 1, the recalculated rate covers the full year equivalent cost for both support staff and teachers. These rates have been added to the 2025 /26 schools NFF factor values.

2.11 Applying this 7.4% uplift of the current £123.47m NFF available for distribution to primary and secondary schools in 2024/25 would indicate an estimated figure of £132.6 for 2025/26. Hence, the estimated movement of £9.13m increase is mainly due to adjustments the NFF factors from rolling current grants into the base NFF budget. It excludes any general inflation uplift or changes in pupil numbers between the years.

2.12 Although the national 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024 Budget book tables indicated an overall increase of 1.8% to the national core schools budget for 2025/26- it is not yet confirmed how this will be applied to the LBC Schools block. The final uplift to the DSG schools block for LB Camden will not be finalised until late November 2024 - when schools will be informed.

2.13 The estimated figure and any deductions is analysed in the following table.

**Table 2: Calculation of funding available for distribution to schools 2025/26**

|  | 2024/25 | Net change from 2024/25               | 2025/26                    |
|--|---------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
|  | £m      | £m                                    | £m                         |
|  |         | % uplift for (TPAG)<br>(TPECG) (CSBG) | excluding Inflation uplift |
| DSG from government (incl Academies)           | £123.47 | £9.14                                 | £132.61                    |
| Less held back for centrally provided services | £0.00   | £0.00                                 | £0.00                      |
| Less Retained ESG included in per pupil rate   | £0.00   | £0.00                                 | £0.00                      |
| Less contribution to 25 hours                  | £0.00   | £0.00                                 | £0.00                      |



|                                    |                |              |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| nursery                            |                |              |                |
| Plus proposed use of reserves      | £0.00          | £0.00        | £0.00          |
| Net DSG available for distribution | <b>£123.47</b> | <b>£9.14</b> | <b>£132.61</b> |

2.14 It is currently estimated that after adjustment to the base NFF, Camden will be allocated at least £132.6m for the schools block DSG as part of the 2025/26 DSG settlement. However, there is likely be further adjustments to the final ESFA allocation following the application of the October 2024 census roll data and and a final annual inflation uplift.

2.15 As indicated there will be further deductions to the above grant allocation by Camden. This is because there is no longer any contribution from schools block to other DSG blocks. Also, the former £0.25m ESG deduction of £15 per pupil from schools for ongoing council duties (following the ESFA's transfer of that funding into the schools block in 2016) is no longer being deducted from schools.

### **Awaiting Updated ESFA NFF notional NFF Budgets 2025/26**

2.16 As mentioned - the ESFA plan to issue the detailed school by school NFF budgets for 2025/26 which will determine the aggregate London Borough of Camden (LBC) DSG Schools block at the end of November 2024. This section is left intentionally blank in the event that this information is published before this report is published and printed for Schools Forum.

2.17 If it is released before Forum meeting then officers will append it or distribute it under separate cover.

### **Central school services block (CSSB)**

2.18 The introduction of the NFF central school services block (CSSB) in 2018/19 replaced the funding of those duties formerly funded by the central top slice in the previous year. This had funded the following services:

- Admissions £0.325m – admissions process and appeals
- Schools forum £0.058m - costs and administration
- Contribution to capital repairs £0.7m – repairs requiring significant capital expenditure – now Historical Commitment.
- Growth £0.3m - to fund agreed bulge classes and planned expansion and reorganisation.

2.19 The central school services block (CSSB) was introduced to fund local authorities for the cost of those central duties formerly top sliced from the schools block and in addition for the statutory duties that held for both maintained schools and academies. Thus the CSSB brought together:

- funding for ongoing central functions, such as admissions, previously top-sliced from the schools block
- residual funding for historic commitments, previously top-sliced from the schools block
- funding previously allocated through the retained duties element of the Education Services Grant (ESG) e.g. Schools Improvement Brokerage Grant

2.20 Funding for growth and falling rolls will continue to be allocated by the ESFA through the schools block in 2025/26 on the basis of ESFA formula (based on the observed differences between the primary and secondary number on roll in each LA within medium

super output areas (MSOAs) between census. Local authorities must also follow the new NFF requirements for falling rolls funding, whereby local authorities can only provide falling rolls funding to schools where school capacity survey (SCAP) data shows that school places will be required in the subsequent three to five years. The restriction that schools must be judged Good or Outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection to be eligible for funding was removed from 2024/25. For more details see [NFF schools block technical note 2024/25](#)

- 2.21 The ESFA policy note confirmed for 2025/26 that the CSSB will continue to fund local authorities for the ongoing responsibilities they deliver for all pupils in maintained schools and academies. It will be calculated using a simple per pupil formula, the structure of which is unchanged from 2024/25. Some 90% of the funding will be distributed through a basic per pupil factor, and 10% of the funding through a deprivation factor based.
- 2.22 Local authorities are protected so that the maximum year-on-year per pupil reduction in ongoing responsibilities is at -2.5% and a cap is set at the highest affordable rate of 2.98%. In 2025/26 for those local authorities that receive it, historic commitments funding will continue to reduce by 20% on 2024/25 allocations, the same rate as in previous years

### Local Funding formula Camden

- 2.23 The local 2025/26 funding allocation available to individual schools will continue to be calculated on the basis that forum is not contributing to Early Years funding or the High Needs block.
- 2.24 As detailed in the June forum report (section 1.2) at the start of the current financial year, the total DSG reserve balance was £22.3m of which £5.1m related to the schools block. Subject to any future adjustments, as planned it is currently expected that there will be a small ongoing movement of -£0.25m on the schools DSG reserve relating to replacement of schools ESG contributions (see section 1.14 above). However, this position may change subject to any potential response in schools reorganisation arising during the year due to any new ESFA or national funding measures in 2025/26.
- 2.25 The final allocation for the local formula for 2025/26 won't be known until the government releases individual schools updated data for deprivation factors such as free school meals (FSM6) and IDACI to take into account the outcome of the recent October 2024 census later in December 2024. Following the recent LB Camden local formula consultation and the continuation of forum's agreement that there should continue to be no DSG reserve top up to fund the schools block in 2025/26 and beyond, it is proposed to continue that the wider DSG reserve be available where necessary to fund any additional MFG (Minimum Funding Guarantee) transition or unexpected growth and reorganisation costs. With current levels of HN and EY DSG reserves it is now less likely for there to be any in year call on the Schools block DSG reserve to cover excess activity costs in these areas. This will give a projected use of reserve and balance for schools as set out in the following table.

**Table 3: historic and planned use of school block DSG reserve**

|         | £million             |
|---------|----------------------|
| Year    | Total use of reserve |
| B/F     | 7.2                  |
| 2013/14 | -1.4                 |
| 2014/15 | -2.5                 |

|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| 2015/16                             | -1.7        |
| 2016/17                             | -2          |
| 2017/18                             | 0.1         |
| 2018/19                             | 0.8         |
| 2019/20                             | 1.1         |
| 2020/21                             | 1.1         |
| 2021/22                             | 1.2         |
| 2022/23                             | 0.5         |
| 2023/24                             | 0.7         |
| <b>Remaining</b>                    | <b>5.1</b>  |
| 2024/25 (estimate) ESG contribution | -0.25       |
| <b>Residual</b>                     | <b>4.85</b> |

#### Formula for distribution to schools

2.26 The local funding formula approved by the forum at its 5<sup>th</sup> November meeting will now be used in the proposed distribution of funding to schools. As this was to make no changes beyond any ESFA statutory requirements and to continue with the nil use of DSG reserves to fund the schools DSG block (in order to ensure that schools block remains completely sustainable from government DSG grant alone) this should not require any further ESFA approval or disapplication.

#### Funding Allocations to Individual Primary / Secondary Schools

##### **Effect of ESFA Delayed publication of NFF Individual Schools Budgets 2025/26**

2.27 The ESFA would normally publish the schools Individual School Budget (ISB) NFF figures for 2025/26 in July 2024 however due to the change of government following the summer general election these figures have not yet been released yet and are expected at the end of November 2024.

2.28 Although the 30<sup>th</sup> October Budget book indicated a 1.8% increase to the “national “ core schools budget, the ESFA has not yet confirmed by notification how this will convert into any uplift for LBC schools block figures for 2025/26.

2.29 Currently based on the most recent ESFA information Camden schools Individual School NFF budgets will be uplifted by approximately 7.4 % to cover the rolling in of the earlier pay grant funding into the NFF base budget (see section 1.9 above). Once determined these Individual Camden Schools NFF budgets will be aggregated to give the “aggregated schools block” for distribution by local formula for 2025/26.

##### **Final schools budgets 2025/26 due to schools by Jan 2025**

2.30 Official 2025/26 notional ISB NFF Funding allocations for primary and secondary schools are due to be published by the ESFA in late November 2024.

2.31 These ISB NFF allocations normally remain as indicative figures and will be revised into final individual school budget allocations once the ESFA have release the approved datasets from the October 2024 schools census. These will then form the aggregated schools block budget to be distributed by the Local Camden Funding formula for 2025/26 using the Authority Planning Tool (APT). Following this - just after January 2025 - the revised final allocations will then be distributed to schools as their final 2025/26 School Budgets.

### 3. De-delegation of Funding

3.1 Prior to 2013 the annual DSG was top sliced in order for the authority to centrally provide the functions outlined below. Changes introduced by the government required funding for these centrally provided services by the authority to be given to schools (delegated) and then taken back (via de-delegation) from their individual budgets. Schools forums have the authority on behalf of all schools to approve which services should be provided centrally by the authority. The forum has previously approved services to be delivered centrally totaling £0.949m in 2024/25. In line with ESFA guidance and the provision requested for the same services in 2025/26 will also be £0.949m. The Schools Forum is **asked to approve** the same de-delegated services for 2025/26 detailed as follows:

- (a) Behaviour support (primary schools only): £0.45m– due to the small size of primary schools, the usage of behaviour support services at individual school level varies from year to year and if funding was delegated to individual schools it is unlikely to match spending need. Funding for secondary schools is not de-delegated and remains within existing funding levels.
- (b) Assessment of applications for free school meals: £0.035m – the current service offers a direct link with benefit applications and therefore offers the best opportunity to maximise take up.
- (c) Reimbursement to schools for staff undertaking formal union roles is currently provided at £0.124m and those schools that suffer a loss of staff time are reimbursed which in effect shares the cost amongst schools. The current provision reflects the current cost.
- (d) Contingency: £0.240m – to cover extra costs of bulge classes and changes in pupil numbers where funding regulations allow extra funding to be given as well as coverage of schools contributions for former schools improvement brokerage grant funding.
- (e) Licences arranged at national level by the government are currently provided at £0.100m.

#### **Future arrangements for de - delegation**

3.2 To give schools greater responsibility for their budgets in the original NFF consultation the ESFA proposed to withdraw current arrangements for de-delegation with the introduction of the hard national funding formula. Responsibility for services that can currently be de-delegated will then rest with individual maintained schools, who will have the individual choice about whether to buy the service from the local authority or an alternative provider. After withdrawal of de-delegation, if local authorities wish to continue to provide these services they will need to do so as a traded service, giving individual schools the choice of buying into the service. Following the postponement in of the hard formula for a further year to include 2025/26 (making 2026/27 the earliest year for the completed national funding formula proposals), the current de delegation process remains in place.

### 4. Academies and Free Schools

4.1 As part of the government's drive to standardise and simplify the funding arrangements for all types of schools, funding for academies and free schools forms part of the funding notification allocated to each local authority. This does not impact on the funding available to Camden maintained schools. The actual transfer of funding to academies and free schools will continue to be managed directly by the government.

4.2 The funding for Camden’s two academies and two free schools is calculated using the same formula as for maintained schools. The funding includes any ESFA estimated growth in pupil numbers from September 2024. This information has been provided to the government and the expectation remains that the academies’ final funding will be adjusted as part of Camden’s final funding prior to distribution.

## 5. High Needs DSG Block

5.1 The High Needs Block (HNB) remains the mechanism through which DSG funding for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) aged 0–25 has been delivered since April 2013. The HNB budget funds all education settings in the maintained and independent sector, Pupil Referral Units, special schools, and resource bases in Camden for individuals aged 0-25 years. It funds services that provide direct support to Camden pupils and educational equipment for children with long-term medical needs and disabilities.

### **2024-2025 provisional forecast of high needs spending**

The HN SEN team updated schools forum on HNB 2024/25 spending forecast at the recent November Forum meeting. The full details of the report are available on page 29 of this [Link](#)

5.2 Whilst recent additional national funding has been very much welcomed it is important to note that the HNB transformation remains crucial to ensure Camden is able to meet the needs of our children and young people with SEND in a way that is sustainable from a financial position, and more importantly that Camden’s local offer for children and young people ensures we are able to improve their outcomes.

5.3 The SEN team’s recent HN projection of £56.4m planned spend for 2024/25 as (shown in table 3 below increased from September 2024 forecast to include a further £1.6m of additional expected expenditure. This is a substantial £5.6m growth in spend 2023/24 outturn spend last year. This growth in expenditure now exceeds the actual annual budget growth of £2m between 2023/24 (£52.3m) and 2024/25 (£54.3m). This overspend will reduce overall DSG reserve by £2.1million in 2024/25 and reverse the pattern of increasing annual HN DSG reserve contributions.

5.4 Analysis of November’s figures below shows that the main growth area has been in the funding to Camden mainstream schools (£1.4m) arising both from growing pupil numbers and funding agreements. This is in line with the recent [BBC News](#) report revealing that nationally “The number of children with EHCPs has surged to a record high of 600,000 in June, a 70% increase since January 2019”. In addition, there was a further increase in the projected spend on individual tuition reflecting increased numbers receiving education other than at school packages (£0.34m).

5.5 Despite the recent and potential increases in national SEN funding (see section 4.14 below) the SEN Team remain cautious of the potential that the longer-term trajectory is heading to an overspend. They warn that there may not be further significant increases in HNB funding allocations for Camden and that it is important to ensure sustainability over time as recommended in their November Report.

**Table 4: High Needs Block Analysis of Spending – as at November 2024**

|  | 2020/21           | 2021/22           | 2022/23           | 2023/24           | 2024/25 projection |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Camden Early Years (incl PVI's)                      | 229,139           | 248,756           | 531,315           | 8,914             | 525,000            |
| Camden mainstream                                    | 7,652,592         | 7,961,996         | 9,898,599         | 13,097,058        | 15,825,030         |
| Camden additionally resourced provision              | 1,540,495         | 1,631,166         | 1,912,684         | 2,612,905         | 2,737,100          |
| Camden special                                       | 9,270,303         | 9,883,194         | 10,434,532        | 11,275,619        | 11,643,490         |
| Camden PRU   | 2,961,165         | 3,059,136         | 3,459,343         | 3,560,916         | 3,662,627          |
| Camden hospital schools                              | 2,850,852         | 3,339,621         | 3,731,216         | 4,027,525         | 4,142,239          |
| <b>total (direct) Camden schools</b>                 | <b>24,504,546</b> | <b>26,123,869</b> | <b>29,967,688</b> | <b>34,582,937</b> | <b>38,535,486</b>  |
| other LA maintained (mainstream & special)           | 2,542,350         | 2,768,445         | 3,230,649         | 3,432,026         | 3,500,000          |
| independent & non-maintained special schools         | 2,889,003         | 3,491,264         | 3,807,974         | 5,130,960         | 5,250,000          |
| independent mainstream schools                       | 214,838           | 315,523           | 265,665           | 354,736           | 370,000            |
| <b>total non Camden schools</b>                      | <b>5,646,190</b>  | <b>6,575,232</b>  | <b>7,304,288</b>  | <b>8,917,722</b>  | <b>9,120,000</b>   |
| Further Education                                    | 2,837,520         | 3,167,165         | 3,307,705         | 3,401,959         | 3,500,000          |
| other support (therapy/individual tuition/equipment) | 655,351           | 789,788           | 994,627           | 1,381,368         | 2,139,455          |
| Transformation support to Camden schools             |                   | 176,255           | 239,457           | 224,025           | 265,870            |
| outreach services                                    | 275,963           | 275,963           | 275,963           | 430,201           | 490,000            |
| central services                                     | 1,625,545         | 1,697,237         | 1,576,975         | 1,924,876         | 2,367,550          |
| <b>Total HNB spend</b>                               | <b>35,545,115</b> | <b>38,805,510</b> | <b>43,666,704</b> | <b>50,863,089</b> | <b>56,418,360</b>  |
| High Needs Block funding received                    | -37,543,927       | -41,721,841       | -47,683,948       | -52,271,590       | -54,321,488        |
| DSG Reserve (- addition/+ withdrawal)                | -1,998,812        | -2,916,331        | -4,017,244        | -1,408,501        | 2,096,872          |
| Contribution to PRU projects from HNB reserves       | 151,754           | 72,506            |                   |                   |                    |
| cumulative HNB reserves balance                      | 2,024,735         | 4,868,561         | 8,885,805         | 10,294,306        | 8,197,434          |

5.6 In mitigation, as reported at November forum the SEN team and forum have set up the High Needs Sub-group (HNSG) which will oversee the expenditure from the High Needs Block (HNB) of and consider requests to utilise funding to improve outcomes for children and young people aged 0 to 25 years with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The HNSG is not a decision-making group; it will make recommendations to Schools Forum where necessary.

5.7 An updated version of the above table along with details of the ongoing work and plans to address the future HNB expenditure for 2025/26 and beyond will be reported in future HN reports to forum under separate cover.

**Potential 2025/26 HNB for Camden’s based on ESFA’s policy document (6th November)**

5.8 The ESFA’s 6<sup>th</sup> November policy document states that “of the £2.3 billion increase in total schools funding for 2025/26, almost £1 billion will be added to the overall high needs budget, bringing the total level of high needs funding in 2025 /26 to £11.9 billion. This increase to high needs funding is over 9% compared to the 2024/25 baseline. Of this total, they are setting aside( £480) million for allocation through a 2025/26 CSBG for special schools and AP, which will combine the high needs elements of the 2024/25 TPAG, TPECG and full-year equivalent of the CSBG”. They also set aside an amount (£145m) for allocations of high needs funding that are not calculated through the high needs NFF. The remainder, a total of £11.3 billion, will be allocated through the high needs NFF.

- 5.9 The operation of the MFG will be the same as in previous years and applies only to each school's place and top-up funding. The local authority must have a disapplication request approved to use a lower percentage.
- 5.10 The structure of the NFF will remain the same and, with the exception of the funding floor and gains limit percentages, the same factor values and weightings will apply as in previous years because the government wants to take more time to consider what changes are needed to the NFF.
- 5.11 In particular, the historic spend factor will remain at the same cash value as in 2024/25, which will be equivalent to an average of 25% of local authorities' 2025/26 allocations.
- 5.12 The high needs NFF includes a funding floor that provides a minimum increase of 7% per head of a local authority's 2 to 18 population. Gains under the formula will be limited to 10% per head.
- 5.13 The policy document says for the HN DSG NFF that the historic spend factor will remain at the same cash value as in 2024 /25 (an equivalent average of 25% of most local authorities' 2025 /26 allocations). For the remaining 75% of the HN block NFF (which is based on per head of a local authority's 2 to 18 population it indicates that the 2025/26 high needs NFF funding floor that provides a minimum increase of 7% per head of a local authority's 2 to 18 population.
- 5.14 For Camden with a current HN DSG allocation of £54.3m, a 7% minimum uplift on 75% of that figure suggests an potential increase of £2.85m for 2025/26. However, this estimate will need to be confirmed by the ESFA in early December.
- 5.15 An updated version of the above table 4 along with details of the ongoing work and plans to address the future HNB expenditure for 2025/26 and beyond will be reported in future HN reports to forum under separate cover.

## **6. Early Years DSG Block – Allocations**

- 6.1 This block provides funding for the 'national free offer' of 15 hours nursery education for all 3- and 4-year-olds since September 2013 and the later expansion of the offer to include 2 year-olds. Since the introduction of the new national funding formula from April 2017 Camden was also required, from September 2017, to provide an additional 15 hours to children of eligible working parents and from last year to 2-year-olds. Providers of the free nursery offer are paid a common hourly rate in line with all other providers calculated using the formula as required by statute.
- 6.2 The EY DSG grant is passed to Camden by the ESFA for direct distribution (of at least 95%) to EY providers at an agreed rate per hour. With any over or under allocation of DSG grant (when finally based on January pupil Numbers) being adjusted in the following years EY DSG allocation there is not expected to be any significant over or under spend in this area.
- 6.3 As LB Camden's EY funding rates from the ESFA are no longer constrained by protection under "loss Cap" arrangements the early years team expects future rates to providers to continue to reflect any increase in the ESFA funding rates for 2025/26. Currently in Feb 2024 Forum approved EY rates to providers for 2024/25 of £7.22 for 3- and 4-year-olds and £12.66 for under 2's as set out in table 5 below

**Table 5 : Hourly Rates to providers for 2024/25**

| <b>Scheme</b>  | <b>Hourly Rate £</b> |
|--|----------------------|
| 3&4 Year Olds  | £7.22                |
| 2Year Olds   | £9.50                |
| under 2's  | £12.66               |
| Maintained Nursery School (Universal 3&4 Year Olds only) | £4.64                |
| Camden Enhanced Offer                                    | £5.30                |

Any revised rates for 2025/26 will be notified under separate cover when any change is advised.

### **Early Years block funding**

- 6.4 The Early Years funding rates for 2025/26 have not yet been released but will be sent to schools as soon as they are published.
- 6.5 Following the October Budget the Early Years Alliance released a statement from the DfE saying that the current funding rates - set to be announced shortly - "take into consideration national living wage and national minimum wage increases across all age groups". But concerns remain that the rates will not be enough to maintain the wage differentials between junior and senior staff. The organisation has not yet been informed of any further support for the sector to combat the increase in costs the national insurance rises are likely to bring
- 6.6 While the Government announced extra funding for some public sectors to combat the rise in employers' national insurance, the majority of the Early years sector is made up of private, voluntary and independent providers.
- 6.7 At a time when the sector is in the midst of an expansion that will ultimately make the government responsible for 80%of the sector's income The Early Years Alliance has stated that" it must either make the sector exempt from the National Insurance changes or commit to fully funding the changes – as well as adequately funding wage increases both now and in the future" if it is to remain sustainable.
- 6.8 The organisation has not yet been informed of any further support for the sector to combat the increase in costs the national insurance rises are likely to bring,
- 6.9 Any further announcements for 2025/26 funding rates for Camden's Early Years funding will be notified by the Early Years team as soon as known

## **7. Pupil Premium**

- 7.1 The Pupil Premium (PP) funding rates for 2025/26 have not yet been released but will be sent to schools as soon as they are published.
- 7.2 Publicly-funded schools in England get extra funding from the government to help them improve the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils. The pupil premium grant is designed to allow schools to help disadvantaged pupils by improving their progress and the exam results they achieve. Schools get pupil premium funding based on the number of pupils they have in January each year from the following groups.
- Free school meals
  - Looked-after and previously looked-after children (PP Plus)
  - Service children



- Academically able pupils

The premium was extended in 2015/16 to cover 3- and 4-year-olds under Early years pupil premium. This funding is not general and must be spent on identified pupils.

7.3 The funding rates for the financial year 2024-25 are as follows:

- Free School Meals –Primary pupils £ 1,480 – secondary pupils £1,050
- Pupils previously looked after by a local authority or other state care £2,570
- Children who are looked after by the local authority £2,570
- Service children £340
- Early years 3- and 4-year-olds £387

7.4 Pupil premium for 2024/25 continues to be largely based on the free school meals (FSM6) data as at January 2024.

## 8. Recent Funding Announcements

### Schools Funding levels

8.1 The October 2024 Budget announced an additional £2.3bn for Education (for schools core budgets ) for 2025/26. Some £1billion of this will be earmarked for Special Education Needs.

8.2 The Budget also confirmed that employers will see their National Insurance contributions rise by 1.2 to 15 per cent from April 2025. Also, the level at which employers pay contributions on each employee's salary would be lowered £9,100 per year to £5,000, as part of a package of tax rises expected to raise £40bn. The news had triggered concern in the education sector about the added costs this would mean for schools that already face financial pressures and a struggle to recruit and retain staff

8.3 The Chancellor has announced that State schools will be fully reimbursed for the rise in National Insurance for employers announced in the Budget. The ESFA has indicated that this is likely to take the form of a separate grant. They have not yet indicated the position for Early Years provider's funding for 2025/26

## 9 Cost increases to be faced by schools in 2025/26

9.1 As indicated in the Budget announcement of an additional £2.3bn to the current core school budget of £61.6 billion after removing the £1billion for special needs budget leaves £1.3 billion for mainstream schools. For these schools this suggests about a 2 % uplift to the core budget for 2025/26. This remains to be advised, but if so then a 2% additional funding will still only continue to “restore per pupil funding to 2010 levels in real terms”.

9.2 Based on current inflation forecasts, average consumer price (CPI) inflation is expected to be 2% in 2025/26(compared to 9.59% as recently as 2022). This means that since 2010 to date Camden schools will have received a cumulative total increase of 26.07% to school block DSG. With all the increases only starting from 2018/19 it is estimated that Camden schools will have suffered by 2024 a net real terms spending pressure from rising inflation alone of approximately -22% (net of the total 26.07% DSG increases between the 7 years above). This is equivalent to nearly £25m based on the current levels of schools block DSG income (as measured on the CPI, the government's preferred measure)

## **Staffing Costs**

### **Teachers Pay Award – from Sept 2025**

- 9.3 At the end of the summer term, the government announced a 5.5% pay award for teachers from 1st September 2024. Along with earlier TPAG and TPEG grants to cover additional teachers pay costs the government introduced the CSBG to “support schools with their overall costs in the 2024/25 financial year, in particular following confirmation of the 2024 teacher pay award”. The ESFA have not yet been able to confirm the extent of any Treasury commitment to cover any additional teacher pay costs above the final Schools block inflation uplift for 2025/26.
- 9.4 However, for all state schools they will be covering the additional 1.2% increase to employers National Insurance ( NI ) costs announced in the October 2024 Budget. The details of this are still to be announced.

### **Support Staff Pay Award – from April 2024**

- 9.5 On 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 LB Camden announced that an agreement was reached with the Local Government Association and Trade Unions for the new pay award for 2024/25 for Local Government Officers and support staff.
- 9.6 The national pay uplift will be awarded as follows:
- All staff up to Level 5 Zone 2 will receive a £1,575 pay increase.
  - Staff at Level 5 Zone 2 and above will receive a pay increase of either £1,575 or 2.5% – whichever is greater. Our calculations show that salaries up to £63,000 will increase by £1,575 and those above £63,000 will receive 2.5%.
- 9.7 The pay award will be backdated to Monday 1 April 2024 and staff will receive the backdated pay in their December 2024 pay packets.
- 9.8 Dependent on the level of salary this ranges from an increase of between 2.5% to 5% for those on the lower salary levels – which covers many staff working in schools. With the current headline inflation and economic climate, it is not clear what level of settlement will be demanded or awarded for 2025/26.
- 9.9 LB Camden’s Human Resources (HR) Department have full details and will send copies of the pay scales to schools.
- 9.10 Additional cost to schools is covered in the government CSBG to which is meant to “support schools with their overall costs in the 2024/25”
- 9.11 Although complete details of future long-term funding for schools beyond 2025/26 have yet been confirmed - if funding fails to increase in real terms, then Camden schools will need to continue plan for a reduction in spending power as well as any increase in costs caused by new pressures.

### **Schools Planning and rolling three-year budgets**

- 9.12 In order that schools can develop adequate financial plans to deal with the ongoing pressures on their funding, the authority will continue to encourage schools to produce rolling three-year budgets. The estimated cost increases that schools will need to provide for are shown in the following table which will be updated and sent to schools separately to support 3-year budget planning. All figures are merely indicative in the current fluid economic climate.

9.13 Inflation in the UK is measured by the Office for National Statistics. Between 1997, and 2020, CPI inflation was an average of 2%. It began to rise in 2021 and reached a peak of 11% in 2022. It has fallen since then, and the Bank of England now (as of Nov 2024) expect it to be down to about 2% by the end of 2026.

**Table 6: Advised / Suggested - Projected cost increases to be funded from schools' budgets** – revisions will be sent to schools as appropriate

| Details                              | 2023-2024 | 2024-2025 | 2025-2026 | 2026-2027 | 2027-2028 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                                      | % Change  | % Change  | % Change  | % Change  | % Change  |
| <b>Expenditure:</b>                  |           |           |           |           |           |
| Teachers Pay From September          | 3.00%     | 4.00%     | 3.00%     | 3.00%     | 3.00%     |
| Teachers Pension On Cost from Sept   | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     |
| Support Staff Pay*                   | 3.00%     | 3.00%     | 3.00%     | 3.00%     | 3.00%     |
| Support Staff Camden Pension On Cost | 0.50%     | 0.50%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.50%     |
| Back funding of Camden Pension       | Estimate  | Estimate  | Estimate  | Estimate  | Estimate  |
| Traded Services (SLA's)              |           | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     |
| Rates                                | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     |
| Energy                               | 100.00%   | 10.00%    | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     |
| Other Expenditure                    | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     |
| Other Grants                         | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     | 0.00%     |
| Other Income                         | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     | 2.00%     |

\*The Chancellor has also yet indicated any mitigation for the October 2024 budget NI changes in the on Nursery providers staffing costs.

## 10. Conclusion

- 10.1 This report has set out the latest information from the ESFA on the funding for the schools DSG block and has sought the forum's approval on the amount of DSG delegation.
- 10.2 The report has also estimated the effect on the latest information regarding NFF factor rates on Camden schools current notional NFF budget allocations in Appendix 1. It also asks forum to note provisional spending plans and current issues regarding the high needs and early years DSG blocks (both of which will be subject to review in future school forum meetings).
- 10.3 The report has also set out the most recent ESFA and government funding announcements and indicated the range of specific and general inflationary pressures facing schools in the medium-term
- 10.4 The final 2025/26 individual schools budgets allocations will be provided to schools and forum following the final ESFA allocation expected in January 2024.

## **11. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services**

- 11.1 The finance reports to schools forum are written by the Finance team and incorporate the views of the Exec Director Corporate services which are included with the report.
- 11.2 The report updates forum on the latest funding position for schools for 2024/25 and 2025/26 following the latest 2024 ESFA guidance and technical updates. It also explains the ESFA statutory requirements for local funding .
- 11.3 The reports advice is made within the current ESFA funding requirements 2025/26 and is in accord with ESFA guidance and requirements as well as earlier Forum approval of the local budget formula.
- 11.4 Forum is advised to note the level of estimated funding in context of the expected spending pressures for 2025/26 and in the current levels of DSG reserves and to consider any appropriate actions going forward to manage this level of DSG reserves.
- 11.5 Subject to noting the above comments, so far as the ESFA regulations are met and the final allocation is within the available funding levels here are no additional finance comments.

## **12. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor**

- 12.1 The report has outlined the estimated schools DSG funding position and regulations for 2025/26 in line with the requirements and guidance of the most recent ESFA Operational Guidance and requirements.
- 12.2 The basic structure of the national funding formula (NFF) has not changed for 2025/26. Local Authorities must make sure all schools receive at least the minimum per-pupil funding levels. The schools block is ring-fenced so the vast majority of the block is passed directly to schools. Schools Forum have limited flexibility over the structure of the formula and decisions on transferring funding between the mainstream schools budget and the high needs budget.

## **13. Environmental Implications**

The proposals in this report have no environmental impacts.

## **14. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Estimated - Notional NFF 2025/26 based on 3 Nov ESFA policy document based on NFF 2024/25

Appendix 2 - Provisional notional NFF factor values 2025/26

**Appendix 1 - Estimated - Notional NFF 2025/26 based on 3 Nov ESFA policy document based on NFF 2024/25 (as republished at October 2023) Uplifted for Dec 2024 information – NB- does not yet include inflation uplift or October 2024 census data.**

| School Name  | Phase     | 2024/25             |  | Notional NFF funding in 2024-25 (full-year equivalent) (£ per pupil) | Uplift NFF for TPAG TPEGG CSBG for 2025/26 (full-year equivalent) (£ per pupil) | Uplift for TPAG TPEGG CSBG for 2025/26 (full-year equivalent) | 2025/26 Estimated   |
|--|-----------|---------------------|--|--|---|---|---|
|  |           | 2023-24 pupil count | Notional NFF funding in 2024-25 (total cash) |  |   |   | Total Notional NFF funding in 2025-26 (full-year equivalent) (total cash) |
|  |           | [d]                 | [e]  |  | 7.40%   | 7.40%   |   |
| Abacus Belsize Primary School                        | Primary   | 156                 | £964,917                                     | £6,185   | £6,643  | £71,404   | £1,036,321  |
| Acland Burghley School                               | Secondary | 921                 | £7,697,649                                   | £8,358   | £8,976  | £569,626  | £8,267,275  |
| Argyle Primary School                                | Primary   | 316                 | £2,273,983                                   | £7,196   | £7,729  | £168,275  | £2,442,258  |
| Brecknock Primary School                             | Primary   | 283                 | £2,046,560                                   | £7,232   | £7,767  | £151,445  | £2,198,005  |
| Brookfield Primary School                            | Primary   | 340                 | £2,047,362                                   | £6,022   | £6,467  | £151,505  | £2,198,867  |
| Christ Church Primary School, Hampstead              | Primary   | 190                 | £1,086,168                                   | £5,717   | £6,140  | £80,376   | £1,166,544  |
| Christ Church School                                 | Primary   | 191                 | £1,336,283                                   | £6,996   | £7,514  | £98,885   | £1,435,168  |
| Christopher Hatton Primary School                    | Primary   | 208                 | £1,437,061                                   | £6,909   | £7,420  | £106,343  | £1,543,404  |
| Edith Neville Primary School                         | Primary   | 179                 | £1,321,123                                   | £7,381   | £7,927  | £97,763   | £1,418,886  |
| Eleanor Palmer Primary School                        | Primary   | 210                 | £1,268,030                                   | £6,038   | £6,485  | £93,834   | £1,361,864  |
| Emmanuel Church of England Primary School            | Primary   | 205                 | £1,239,146                                   | £6,045   | £6,492  | £91,697   | £1,330,843  |
| Fitzjohn's Primary School                            | Primary   | 208                 | £1,250,325                                   | £6,011   | £6,456  | £92,524   | £1,342,849  |
| Fleet Primary School                                 | Primary   | 202                 | £1,383,748                                   | £6,850   | £7,357  | £102,397  | £1,486,145  |
| Gospel Oak Primary School                            | Primary   | 405                 | £2,614,554                                   | £6,456   | £6,933  | £193,477  | £2,808,031  |
| Hampstead Parochial Church of England Primary School | Primary   | 203                 | £1,158,126                                   | £5,705   | £6,127  | £85,701   | £1,243,827  |
| Hampstead School                                     | Secondary | 1,041               | £9,010,555                                   | £8,656   | £9,296  | £666,781  | £9,677,336  |
| Haverstock School                                    | Secondary | 726                 | £7,527,470                                   | £10,368  | £11,136   | £557,033  | £8,084,503  |

| School Name   | Phase     | 2024/25             |  | Notional NFF funding in 2024-25 (full-year equivalent) (£ per pupil) | Uplift NFF for TPAG TPECG CSBG for 2025/26 (full-year equivalent) (£ per pupil) | Uplift for TPAG TPECG CSBG for 2025/26 (full-year equivalent) | 2025/26 Estimated   |  |
|---|-----------|---------------------|--|--|---|---|---|--|
|   |           | 2023-24 pupil count | Notional NFF funding in 2024-25 (total cash) |  |   |   | Total Notional NFF funding in 2025-26 (full-year equivalent) (total cash) |  |
|   |           | [d]                 | [e]  |  | 7.40%   | 7.40%   |   |  |
| Hawley Primary School                                 | Primary   | 198                 | £1,456,255                                   | £7,355   | £7,899  | £107,763  | £1,564,018  |  |
| Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, NW3                 | Primary   | 170                 | £1,203,801                                   | £7,081   | £7,605  | £89,081   | £1,292,882  |  |
| Holy Trinity and Saint Silas CofE Primary School, NW1 | Primary   | 208                 | £1,375,978                                   | £6,615   | £7,105  | £101,822  | £1,477,801  |  |
| Kentish Town Church of England Primary School         | Primary   | 208                 | £1,366,133                                   | £6,568   | £7,054  | £101,094  | £1,467,227  |  |
| Kings Cross <b>Academy</b>                            | Primary   | <b>370</b>          | £2,573,398                                   | £6,955   | £7,470  | £190,431  | £2,763,830  |  |
| Kingsgate Primary School                              | Primary   | 590                 | £4,132,589                                   | £7,004   | £7,523  | £305,812  | £4,438,400  |  |
| La Sainte Union Catholic Secondary School             | Secondary | 581                 | £4,923,503                                   | £8,474   | £9,101  | £364,339  | £5,287,842  |  |
| Maria Fidelis Catholic School FCJ                     | Secondary | 701                 | £6,192,968                                   | £8,834   | £9,488  | £458,280  | £6,651,247  |  |
| Netley Primary School & Centre for Autism             | Primary   | 353                 | £2,543,547                                   | £7,206   | £7,739  | £188,222  | £2,731,769  |  |
| New End Primary School                                | Primary   | 305                 | £1,879,252                                   | £6,161   | £6,617  | £139,065  | £2,018,316  |  |
| Our Lady Roman Catholic Primary School                | Primary   | 276                 | £2,194,855                                   | £7,952   | £8,541  | £162,419  | £2,357,274  |  |
| Parliament Hill School                                | Secondary | 896                 | £7,650,535                                   | £8,539   | £9,170  | £566,140  | £8,216,675  |  |
| Primrose Hill School                                  | Primary   | 392                 | £2,492,261                                   | £6,358   | £6,828  | £184,427  | £2,676,689  |  |
| Regent High School                                    | Secondary | 893                 | £8,648,082                                   | £9,684   | £10,401   | £639,958  | £9,288,040  |  |
| Rhyl Community Primary School                         | Primary   | 354                 | £2,676,380                                   | £7,560   | £8,120  | £198,052  | £2,874,432  |  |
| Richard Cobden Primary School                         | Primary   | 370                 | £2,659,073                                   | £7,187   | £7,718  | £196,771  | £2,855,844  |  |
| Rosary Catholic Primary School                        | Primary   | 265                 | £1,700,928                                   | £6,419   | £6,894  | £125,869  | £1,826,797  |  |
| St Alban's Church of England Primary School           | Primary   | 158                 | £1,175,219                                   | £7,438   | £7,989  | £86,966   | £1,262,185  |  |
| St Dominic's Catholic Primary School                  | Primary   | 121                 | £894,942                                     | £7,396   | £7,944  | £66,226   | £961,168  |  |
| St Eugene de Mazenod Roman Catholic Primary School    | Primary   | 198                 | £1,349,180                                   | £6,814   | £7,318  | £99,839   | £1,449,019  |  |

| School Name   | Phase     | 2024/25             |  | Notional NFF funding in 2024-25 (full-year equivalent) (£ per pupil) | Uplift NFF for TPAG TPECG CSBG for 2025/26 (full-year equivalent) (£ per pupil) | Uplift for TPAG TPECG CSBG for 2025/26 (full-year equivalent) | 2025/26 Estimated   |  |
|---|-----------|---------------------|--|--|---|---|---|--|
|   |           | 2023-24 pupil count | Notional NFF funding in 2024-25 (total cash) |  |   |   | Total Notional NFF funding in 2025-26 (full-year equivalent) (total cash) |  |
|   |           | [d]                 | [e]  |  |   |   |   |  |
| St George the Martyr Church of England Primary School   | Primary   | 201                 | £1,312,482                                   | £6,530   | £7,013  | £97,124   | £1,409,606  |  |
| St Josephs Catholic Primary School                      | Primary   | 175                 | £1,224,524                                   | £6,997   | £7,515  | £90,615   | £1,315,139  |  |
| <b>St Luke's Church of England School</b>               | Primary   | <b>100</b>          | <b>£667,202</b>                              | £6,672   | £7,166  | £49,373   | <b>£716,575</b>   |  |
| St Mary and St Pancras Church of England Primary School | Primary   | 192                 | £1,366,169                                   | £7,115   | £7,642  | £101,097  | <b>£1,467,265</b>   |  |
| St Mary's Kilburn Church of England Primary School      | Primary   | 199                 | £1,393,377                                   | £7,002   | £7,520  | £103,110  | <b>£1,496,487</b>   |  |
| St Patrick's Catholic Primary School                    | Primary   | 142                 | £1,026,388                                   | £7,228   | £7,763  | £75,953   | <b>£1,102,340</b>   |  |
| St Paul's Church of England Primary School              | Primary   | 180                 | £1,150,422                                   | £6,391   | £6,864  | £85,131   | <b>£1,235,553</b>   |  |
| The Camden School for Girls                             | Secondary | 598                 | £4,662,774                                   | £7,797   | £8,374  | £345,045  | <b>£5,007,819</b>   |  |
| <b>The UCL Academy</b>                                  | Secondary | <b>911</b>          | <b>£10,070,640</b>                           | £11,054  | £11,873   | £745,227  | <b>£10,815,867</b>  |  |
| Torriano Primary School                                 | Primary   | 409                 | £2,599,030                                   | £6,355   | £6,825  | £192,328  | <b>£2,791,359</b>   |  |
| West Hampstead Primary School                           | Primary   | 362                 | £2,390,831                                   | £6,605   | £7,093  | £176,921  | <b>£2,567,752</b>   |  |
| William Ellis School                                    | Secondary | 616                 | £5,133,889                                   | £8,334   | £8,951  | £379,908  | <b>£5,513,797</b>   |  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |           | <b>17,676</b>       | <b>£137,749,664</b>                          |  | <b>£379,988</b>   | <b>£10,193,475</b>  | <b>£147,943,139</b>   |  |
| <b>ACADAMIES</b>  |           | <b>(1,537)</b>      | <b>(£14,276,157)</b>                         |  | <b>(£33,151)</b>  | <b>(£1,056,436)</b>   | <b>(£15,332,593)</b>  |  |
| <b>Net of ACADEMIES</b>                                 |           | <b>16,139</b>       | <b>£123,473,506</b>                          |  | <b>£346,837</b>   | <b>£9,137,039</b>   | <b>£132,610,546</b>   |  |

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**Appendix 2 - Provisional notional NFF factor values 2025/26 – uplifted for Additions to baselines from grants TPAG, TPECG and CSBG- source ESFA policy doc – dd November 2024**

|   | <b>2024 to 2025 NFF values</b> | <b>Additions to baselines from grants</b> | <b>CSBG uplift</b> | <b>Provisional 2025 to 2026 NFF values</b> |  | <b>Additions to baselines from grants</b> | <b>CSBG uplift</b> | <b>TOTAL % age uplift</b> |
|---|--------------------------------|---|--------------------|--|--|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Basic per pupil funding</b>                                |                                |   |                    |  |  |   |                    |                           |
| <b>Basic entitlement</b>                                      |                                |   |                    |  |  |   |                    |                           |
| Primary basic entitlement                                     | £3,562                         | £213                                      | £51                | £3,847                                     |  | <b>5.98%</b>                              | <b>1.43%</b>       | <b>7.41%</b>              |
| Key stage 3 basic entitlement                                 | £5,022                         | £300                                      | £71                | £5,422                                     |  | <b>5.97%</b>                              | <b>1.41%</b>       | <b>7.39%</b>              |
| Key stage 4 basic entitlement                                 | £5,661                         | £339                                      | £80                | £6,113                                     |  | <b>5.99%</b>                              | <b>1.41%</b>       | <b>7.40%</b>              |
| <b>Minimum per pupil</b>                                      |                                |   |                    |  |  |   |                    |                           |
| Primary minimum per pupil funding                             | £4,610                         | £257                                      | £62                | £4,955                                     |  | <b>5.57%</b>                              | <b>1.34%</b>       | <b>6.92%</b>              |
| Secondary minimum per pupil funding                           | £5,995                         | £350                                      | £83                | £6,465                                     |  | <b>5.84%</b>                              | <b>1.38%</b>       | <b>7.22%</b>              |
| <b>Additional needs funding</b>                               |                                |   |                    |  |  |   |                    |                           |
| <b>Deprivation</b>  |                                |   |                    |  |  |   |                    |                           |
| Primary free school meals (FSM)                               | £490                           | £0  | £0                 | £495                                       |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |
| Secondary FSM   | £490                           | £0  | £0                 | £495                                       |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |
| Primary free school meals Ever 6 (FSM6)                       | £820                           | £188                                      | £45                | £1,060                                     |  | <b>22.93%</b>                             | <b>5.49%</b>       | <b>28.41%</b>             |
| Secondary FSM6  | £1,200                         | £277                                      | £68                | £1,555                                     |  | <b>23.08%</b>                             | <b>5.67%</b>       | <b>28.75%</b>             |
| Primary income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) A | £680                           | £0  | £0                 | £685                                       |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |
| Primary IDACI B   | £515                           | £0  | £0                 | £520                                       |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |
| Primary IDACI C   | £485                           | £0  | £0                 | £490                                       |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |
| Primary IDACI D   | £445                           | £0  | £0                 | £445                                       |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |

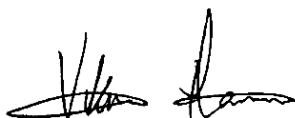


|                    | <b>2024 to 2025 NFF values</b> | <b>Additions to baselines from grants</b> | <b>CSBG uplift</b> | <b>Provisional 2025 to 2026 NFF values</b> |  | <b>Additions to baselines from grants</b> | <b>CSBG uplift</b> | <b>TOTAL % age uplift</b> |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------|--|--|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Primary sparsity   | £57,100                        | £0  | £0                 | £57,400                                    |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |
| Secondary sparsity | £83,000                        | £0  | £0                 | £83,400                                    |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |
| <b>Premises</b>    |                                |   |                    |  |  |   |                    |                           |
| Split sites        | £80,600                        | £0  | £0                 | £81,000                                    |  | <b>0.00%</b>                              | <b>0.00%</b>       | <b>0.00%</b>              |

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|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>   | <b>WARDS:</b> All                            |
| <b>REPORT TITLE</b><br>School Meals Delivery in Schools   |  |
| <b>REPORT OF</b><br>Director of Education and Inclusion   |  |
| <b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b><br>Schools Forum   | <b>DATE</b><br>4 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 |
| <p>At its meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024, an update was presented to the Schools Forum on the procurement of the new school meals contract. The current contract with Cater Link is due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. A further update is now available.</p> <p>Following a successful tendering process, tenders were received on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024 for a new service that is due to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 for a period of three years, with option for two extensions of one year each, with a total estimated aggregate value of £24m. The new contract will include an option to break after two years (April 2027), which will allow the Council to move to an in-house arrangement, if possible.</p> <p>The purpose of this briefing is to update Schools Forum on the outcome of the tender, which will then proceed to consideration of award by the Executive Director, Children and Learning following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families in line with the procurement strategy agreed by the Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b><br/>           Steve Harris, Head of Facilities Management, 5 Pancras Square<br/> <a href="mailto:steve.harris@camden.gov.uk">steve.harris@camden.gov.uk</a> / 020 7974 5651<br/>           Shola Matiluko, Contracts Performance Manager Pancras Square<br/> <a href="mailto:shola.matiluko@camden.gov.uk">shola.matiluko@camden.gov.uk</a> / 020 7974 45185</p> |  |
| <b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>  |  |
| The Forum is asked to note the report.  |  |

Signed by:



Vikram Hansrani, Director of Education and Inclusion

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> December 2024

## **1 Purpose of the report**

- 1.1 Camden Council reported to Schools Forum throughout 2024 concerning the development of the School Meals contract and available options to the Council
- 1.2 This paper updates Schools Forum as to the arrangements for an interim contract award and sets out the Council's procurement position in December 2024

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The school meals service is a delegated service, which is procured and managed by the Council on behalf of schools on the basis of a service level agreement (SLA). The full cost of the service is financed by schools through a combination of charges to parents for paid meals and funding of free meals from their delegated budget. Whilst schools have autonomy on the use of their budgets, the Council is supporting them in securing value for money for their contracted services.
- 2.2 As a result, the Council through its procurement processes allows schools to have access to contracts at competitively tendered price and quality.
- 2.3 The current contract procured jointly with the London Borough of Islington for the initial five-year period was extended for another two years is due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. The current price per meal in primary, secondary, and adult meal is £2.87.
- 2.4 The Council advertised the tender on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 with a closing date of 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Tenders were received, which were evaluated based on 50/50 price / quality ratio.
- 2.5 Bidders were asked to submit the labour element of the meal price based on the current labour rate, which will be uplifted by the new London Living Wage rate that is due to take place with effect from April 2025.

## **3 Tender evaluation**

- 3.1 The evaluation criteria as agreed the Cabinet was based on 50/50 price / quality ratio of which the quality element is broken down as:
  - Mobilisation and quality assurance 6%
  - Food quality and nutrition 15%
  - Sample menus 5%
  - Sustainability 3%
  - Management and staffing, and Equality and Diversity 4%

- Kitchen staffing 2%
- Stakeholder engagement 5%
- Social Value 10%

3.2 The tender process has been completed and a report setting out a recommendation to award a contract to a school meals provider is being considered by the Executive Director Children and Learning following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families

#### **4 Price**

4.1 The successful tenderer's price for both primary and secondary will be within budget.

#### **5 Reasons for recommendation**

5.1 The Council conducted a competitive procurement process in a market with multiple experienced providers to ensure that value for money is achieved. The balance of price and quality (50/50) aims to ensure that high quality service provision is assured, including delivery of social value measures, whilst also giving consideration to price and the financial circumstances of schools to pay for the contract. The pricing schedule included detailed numbers of meals required for each school site, and price has been assessed by comparing price per meal, per pupil for each tenderer.

#### **6 Key milestones**

6.1 The following table below summarises the key tasks and activities.

| <b>Key activity date – indicative</b> | <b>Key tasks</b>  |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| By December 2024                      | Contract award report to be considered by Executive Director, Children and Learning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families, in line with the delegation agreed by Cabinet |
| December 2024                         | Schools Forum – Procurement report  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025            | Contract start date   |

## **7 Legal Implications (comments from the Borough Solicitor)**

- 7.1 Any potential contract award will comply with the Public Contract Regulations (PCR) 2015 and Contract Standing Orders (CSOs). CSOs require that the Executive Director makes the Decision to award.

## **8 Environmental Impacts**

- 8.1 There are none.

## **9. Financial Comments**

- 9.1 The full cost of the service is financed by schools through a combination of charges to parents for paid meals and funding of free meals from their delegated budget. Schools are charged as per the invoiced number of meals by the contractor.
- 9.2 Schools have autonomy on the use of their budgets with the Council having a duty to assist them in securing value for money for their contracted services. As a result, the Council through its procurement processes allows schools to have access to contracts at competitively tendered price and quality.
- 9.3 Schools can be varied into or out of the contract by giving a reasonable notice.

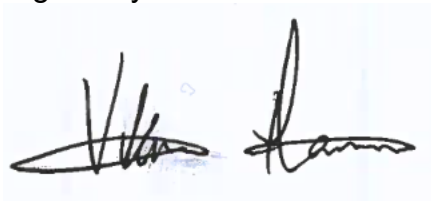
**REPORT  
ENDS**



# Agenda Item 9

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>  | <b>WARDS:</b> All               |
| <b>REPORT TITLE:</b><br>Schools Forum Work Programme and Action Tracker 2024/25  |                                 |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b><br>Director of Education and Inclusion   |                                 |
| <b>FOR SUBMISSION TO:</b><br>Schools Forum   | <b>DATE:</b><br>4 December 2024 |
| <b>SUMMARY OF REPORT:</b><br><br>This report sets out the work plan for the Schools Forum for the remainder of the 2024/25 school year (Appendix 1) and provides an update on actions requested at previous meetings (Appendix 2).<br><br><b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to information:</b><br>No documents that are required to be listed were used in the preparation of this report.<br><br><b>Contact Officer:</b><br>Nick Smith, Head of Education Commissioning and School Organisation<br>5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG<br>Tel: 020 7974 1149<br>Email: <a href="mailto:nicholas.smith@camden.gov.uk">nicholas.smith@camden.gov.uk</a> |                                 |
| <b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b><br><br>The Schools Forum is asked to note the Work Programme for 2024-25 at Appendix 1 and the Action Tracker at Appendix 2.   |                                 |

Signed by:



Vikram Hansrani Director of Education and Inclusion

Date: 4 December 2024

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 A work programme of key reports that officers intend to submit to the Schools Forum during the 2024/25 is set out in Appendix 1. Suggestions and proposals from each meeting can be incorporated into the programme as the year progresses.

1.2 In considering additions to the work programme, the Forum should have regard to its functions, which are set out in its Terms of Reference as follows:-

The authority will consult the Schools Forum on:

(a) Formula changes - any proposed changes to the factors & criteria and the methods, principles and rules that are contained within the Funding Formula and the financial impact of any such changes. Consultation shall take place in sufficient time to allow the views expressed by the forum to be taken into account in the determination of the formula and in the initial determination of schools budget shares before the beginning of the financial year.

(b) Contracts - at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender consult the forum on the terms of any proposed contract for supplies or services being a contract paid or to be paid out of the local authority's schools budget where either:

- the estimated value of the proposed public services contract is not less than the specific threshold which applies to the local authority in pursuance of Regulation 7(1) of the Public Services Contracts Regulations 1993; or
- the estimated value of the proposed public supply contract is not less than the specific threshold which applies to the local authority in pursuance of Regulation 7(2) of the Public Supply Contracts Regulations 1995.

(c) Financial issues - the local authority shall consult the forum annually in respect of the authority's functions relating to the schools budget, in connection with the following:

- Arrangements to be made for
  - the education of pupils with special educational needs;
  - the use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school;
  - early years education;
  - insurance;
  - free school meals.
- Prospective revisions to the local authority's scheme for the financing of schools;
- Administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the local authority;
- Arrangements for the implementation of support to schools in financial difficulty.
- such other matters concerning the funding of schools as the local authority sees

(d) the authority may consult the Forum on such other matters concerning the funding of schools as they see fit, and shall take into account any views expressed by the forum.

1.3 An action tracker of actions arising at meetings is set out in Appendix 2.

**2. Meeting dates in 2024/25 school year**

- Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024
- Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025
- Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**3. Legal comments of the Borough Solicitor**

The Borough Solicitor has considered the report and has no comments to add.

**4. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services**

The Director of Finance has been consulted on the contents of this report and has no comment to make.

**5. Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

**6. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Work Programme  
Appendix 2 – Action Tracker

**ENDS**

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## Appendix 1 – Schools Forum Work Programme 2024/25

### 4 December 2024

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Education Finance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indication of the notional National Funding Formula (NFF) figures to be allocated to the overall schools budget</li> <li>• Initial forecasts of the 2023/24 Early Years and High Needs DSG outturn, future budgets requirements planned DSG spending.</li> </ul> |
| School Food       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update and contract award review</li> </ul>  |

### 5 February 2025

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Education Finance     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note and agree the latest estimates of individual schools and growth budgets</li> <li>• To note and the provisional Early Years funding rates if available</li> <li>• To provide any comment or concerns regarding the anticipated funding levels.</li> <li>• To identify any areas of funding for review in autumn.</li> </ul> |
| Early Years Funding   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide Forum with a report on Early Years Funding including CLIF</li> </ul>  |
| SEND                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the High Needs Sub-group and update of the High Needs Block spending.</li> </ul>   |
| School Place Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on School Place Planning implementation options</li> </ul>  |

### 4 June 2025

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Education Finance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note the outturn for all the blocks of the DSG</li> <li>• To note the current level of funding and the range of current and future funding challenges regarding schools' funding</li> <li>• To note the issues and support around any additional government support</li> <li>• To provide advice to the authority regarding the type of any ongoing support that would assist schools in improving financial planning</li> <li>• To agree the use of any reserve remaining in the Schools and Central Schools Services block.</li> </ul> |
| SEND              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report from the High Needs Subgroup</li> <li>• Funding position and Banding rates</li> </ul>  |

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## Appendix 2 – Schools Forum Action Tracker 2024-25

| Number    | Meeting Date      | Item   | Action   | Action By   | Status   |
|-----------|-------------------|--|--|---|--|
| 24/25-1   | 11 September 2024 | 6 - Minutes  | Officers confirmed they would provide a written response on why the HNB was not required to contribute £500,000 to the Early Years Block.  | Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion               | Complete<br>Further review at February Meeting |
| 24/25-2   | 11 September 2024 | 6 - Minutes  | Members requested a future report to the Forum explaining the Early Years funding mechanisms and for the Head of Early Years to be invited to the meeting.   | Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion               | Complete<br>Further Review at February Meeting |
| 24/25-3   | 11 September 2024 | 10 - High Needs Block:<br>Update on 2024/25 Financial Position | Members requested that the High Needs Subgroup terms of reference be appended to the Schools Forum terms of reference.   | Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion               | Complete                                       |
| 24/25 - 4 | 5 November 2024   | 8 – Camden Local Inclusion Fund                                | Members requested a more detailed report on Early Years Funding, responding to points raised at the meeting, and for an Early Years representative to attend the meeting to be available to ask questions. | Director of Children's Prevention, Family Help and Safeguarding | Added to work programme for February Meeting   |
|           |                   |  |  |   |  |

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