

Central Schools' Services Block Budget 2025/26

Report being considered by: Schools Forum

Date of Meeting: 20th January 2025

Report Author:

Item for: Decision **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set out the budget proposal for services funded from the Central Schools' Services (CSSB) block of the DSG.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To agree to the Central Schools Services Block budgets.
- 2.2 As per the Heads Funding Group, a review to be undertaken on the value for money of services in the Central School Services Block.

Is the Schools' Forum required to make a decision as part of this report or subsequent versions due to be considered later in the meeting cycle?

Yes:

No:

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Equalities Impact:				Commentary
	Positive	No Impact	Negative	
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		

B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	Lisa Potts, Neil Goddard, Melissa Perry			

4. Introduction/Background

- 4.1 The CSSB covers funding allocated to Local Authorities (LAs) to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies in England. All the services funded by this block are statutory and have to be carried out.
- 4.2 The final allocation of funding for the Central Schools Services Block for 2025/26 is £1,067,952, which is a £96k or 9% increase on the previous year.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 The following table shows the budget requirement for the services that fall within the Central Schools Services Block for 2025/26 compared to 2024/25.

	Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Budget Requirement	Increase/Decrease	Change
		£	£	£	%
	Budget Requirement:				
1	School Admissions	211,586	239,336	27,750	13%
2	National Copyright Licences	179,859	184,097	4,238	2%
3	Servicing of Schools Forum	50,781	55,158	4,377	9%
4	Education Welfare	213,420	246,411	32,991	15%
5	Statutory & Regulatory Duties:				
a	Provision of Education Data	147,639	187,008	39,369	27%
b	Finance Support for the Education Service	82,494	88,005	5,511	7%
c	Strategic Planning of the Education Service	70,110	67,450	-2,660	-4%
	Total Budget Requirement	955,889	1,067,464	111,575	11.7%

- 5.2 For 2025/26, staff on council pay grades have been budgeted at 2.5% pay award, which is where the majority of the increased costs have come from. Other increases relate to the cost of the Capita system, with a new module being purchased to manage the fixed penalty notices.
- 5.3 The cost of copyright licence for schools is determined by the relevant national agencies. Details of all the other services included in the Central Schools Services Block (including a breakdown of costs) is given in Appendix A.

5.4 The table below shows the 2025/26 budget required, which will leave a small surplus of £16k to off-set against the prior year deficit.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Budget Requirement	Increase/Decrease	Change
	£	£	£	%
Total Budget Requirement	955,889	1,067,464	111,575	11.7%
Funding:				
Central Schools Services Block DSG	-961,311	-1,067,952	106,641	11.1%
Surplus to fund shortfall on prior year deficit	5,422	488		
Total Funding	-955,889	-1,067,464		
Balance	-0	0		

6. Heads Funding Group Recommendation

6.1 The Heads Funding Group have recommended that for 2026/27 a review is undertaken to establish the value for money.

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix A – Details and Costs of Central Schools' Services

Details and Costs of Central Schools' Services

	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2025/26 £
School Admissions			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Administration of admissions process for maintained schools and academies			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Admissions and Transport Manager	1.00	80%	
Admissions Officers	2.50	80%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			170,940
Employee Expenses & recharge of appeals costs			18,700
Supplies and Services			1,320
Capita One recharge			23,254
Support Service Recharges			25,122
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR ADMISSIONS			239,336
Servicing the Schools Forum			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Setting agendas, minute taking, co-ordination and distribution of papers for Schools Forum and its sub groups			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Service Director Education	1.00	10.00%	
Schools Finance Team	1.92	10.00%	
Schools Forum Clerk			
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			48,980
Room hire, consumables and members expenses			1,610
Support Service Recharges			4,568
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR SERVICING THE SCHOOLS FORUM			55,158

Central Schools' Services Block Budget 2025/26

	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2025/26 £
Education Welfare			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Tracking of children who can be legally removed from the school roll.			
Monitoring of elective home education.			
Issuing and monitoring of child work permits and performance licences.			
Attendance at core group meetings for specific pupils			
Advice on keeping registers			
Progress cases to court where appropriate. Maintain up to date knowledge of legal processes and proceedings so			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Principal Education Welfare and Safeguarding Officer	1.00	40%	
Senior Education Welfare Officer	0.80	90%	
Education Welfare Officers	3.14	40%	
Assistant Education Welfare Officer	1.00	90%	
Administrative Assistant	0.40	90%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			203,171
Employee expenses/car allowances			4,900
Other non staffing costs			15,380
Income from fines			-19,350
Capita One Recharges			10,337
Support Service Recharges			31,973
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR EDUCATION WELFARE			246,411
	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2025/26 £
Provision of Education Data			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Statutory returns to DfE			
Data analysis and reporting e.g. Exam results, performance			
School census administration and reports			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Staffing	2.00	75%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			91,710
Capita One recharge			81,595
Support Service Recharges			13,703
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR PROVISION OF EDUCATION DATA			187,008

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	Number of Posts	% Charged to CSSB	2025/26 £
Finance Support for the Education Service			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
DSG services budget preparation, monitoring, and year end			
Education services budget preparation, monitoring, and year end			
School funding formula and early years funding formula			
Administration of funding allocations to all schools for early years and high needs			
Statutory returns e.g. APT, S251, CFO deployment of DSG			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Chief Mgt Accountant	1.00	5%	
Education Finance Manager	0.92	15%	
Education Senior Accountant	0.61	50%	
Education Accountant	0.50	65%	
Accountant	1.00	50%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			73,160
Support Service Recharges			14,845
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR FINANCE SUPPORT			88,005
Strategic Planning of the Education Service			
<u>Description of Statutory Duties covered</u>			
Strategic planning and management of the Education service as a whole			
<u>Staffing Structure</u>			
Service Director Education	1.00	40%	
Other staffing	1.00	27%	
<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>			
Staff salary costs			67,450
TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE FOR PLANNING OF EDUCATION SERVICE			67,450