



Schools Forum October 2025

This is Issue 14 of the Lancashire Schools Forum eNewsletter' a Post-Forum Edition.

Schools Block Transfer & Minimum Funding Guarantee 2026/27

Following the consultation process undertaken with schools early this term, views were sought on a proposed 0.50% transfer to the High Needs Block from the Schools Block to assist with the growing pressures facing the High Needs Block. This continues to be a local and national concern. The schools forum members voted to support this transfer, which mirrored the views from school consultation responses.

It is intended that to achieve this we will utilise the 2.50% reduction in National Funding Formula (NFF) values, which will ensure the authority is mirroring the NFF. At this stage, it is expected that the full 2.50% reduction will be applied to the basic entitlement and lump sum factors, however if this does not achieve the 0.50% transfer, we will utilise the remaining NFF factors. The LA does however need to emphasise that 2026/27 data will only be available in late December.

The autumn term consultation also sought views on the level of Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to be applied in Lancashire for 2026/27. Consultation responses favoured the proposal to provide the maximum level of protection allowable by the DfE from April 2026 of which the schools forum members voted to support.

Service De-delegations 2026/27

Following the consultation process, the Schools Forum decided that the following services would continue to be de-delegated in 2026/27 in primary and secondary schools:

- Staff costs – Public Duties/Suspensions; (in line with consultation responses, this de-delegation will continue using the same policy as 2025/26)
 - Heritage Learning Service – (Primary Schools Only)
 - Schools Requiring Additional Support

Funding relating to these services will be delegated to schools and academies in the first instance, however, it will then be de-delegated from maintained primary and secondary school budgets so that the services can be provided by the LA. The final net delegated budget available to each primary and secondary school would then exclude these amounts.



These services will be offered as group buy backs to schools in other phases, as appropriate.

Thank You!

178 responses were received in the recent de-delegation and MFG consultation. The Schools Forum would like to pass on a big thank you to all the schools that responded, as these views are crucial in assisting the Forum in making de-delegation decisions.

Reminder - Clawback at March 2026

In July 2025, the Lancashire Schools Forum voted to Implement Clawback to excess balances at March 2026 **at the reduced rate of 8% CFR income.**

The deadline for any clawback exemption requests was 31 October 2025, any requests that are received after the 31 October deadline will not be considered.

The Clawback Policy can be found on the [Schools Forum Website](#).

School Funding Arrangements 2026/27

In recent announcements, the Department for Education (DfE) confirmed the school funding arrangements for 2026/27 will be published in the autumn term and issued an initial [summary policy document for 2026 to 2027](#).

The DfE have confirmed that starting from September 2026, free school meals (FSM) will be extended to all children in households receiving Universal Credit. For 2026 to 2027, the DfE also confirmed that there are no changes to the schools NFF to allocate funding for the expansion of FSM. Instead, the funding needed for the FSM expansion will be provided through a separate grant. Further details on how this grant will be calculated will be published separately in due course.

The DfE have also confirmed that the schools budget support grant (SBSG) and the National Insurance contributions (NICs) grant will also be rolled into the NFF for 2026 to 2027.

Local News

Starting in the autumn, the Schools Financial Service has been offering a series of short webinars, briefing on a wide variety of topics.

The outline for the autumn term is shown below.

- [Dealing with Deficit Forecasts](#): Wednesday 26th November 10:00-10:30am



Please use the link above or that were provided in the Portal Post sent 5th September to book a place. Please note that at this stage, we do not have any information about any future webinars planned.

Forum Membership

The latest membership list can be found [here](#).

School Forum Meetings

The meeting schedule is published on the Schools Forum website and can be found [here](#).

If you wish to attend as an observer, please contact the Schools Forum Officer by email schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk.

Questions?

Remember, if you have any questions, please contact Schools Forum on schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk

