

<b>Report subject</b>	<b>Central Retention and De-delegation Consultation</b>
<b>Meeting date</b>	23 February 2026
<b>Status</b>	Public Report
<b>Executive summary</b>	<p>This report provides proposals for maintained schools only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The central retention of services where the LA retains a statutory duty to undertake activity to support maintained schools only (both mainstream and specialist).</li> <li>• De-delegation of services applicable only to mainstream schools. These are services where schools retain the statutory duties, but better efficiency could be achieved through central delivery by the LA.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>Maintained School members only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree collectively the retention rates per pupil and budgets for LA duties supporting maintained schools as contained in this report.</li> <li>• Agree separately for primary and secondary schools, the de-delegation of funding for school improvement duties as described.</li> </ul>
<b>Reason for recommendations</b>	Maintained School Forum members must be consulted on proposals for the central retention and de-delegated budget shares and agree the level of central budgets.
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## Background

1. The deployment of the DSG is regulated by the DfE through the School Finance Regulations, which are updated annually. The local School's Forum must be consulted on how the grant is used and has a range of decision-making powers.
2. The council is responsible for setting the formula for mainstream schools for reception to year 11 after taking account of the recommendations of the School's Forum which in turn should be based on the views of schools.
3. Maintained schools' representatives on the Schools Forum are asked to agree that some services should be funded from the budget shares of maintained primary and secondary schools and specialist providers. The services and the proposed total amount to be funded are in respect of the following:
  - **Central Retention:** Proposals for the central retention of services where the LA retains a statutory duty to undertake activity to support maintained schools only. These include a range of services such as financial and audit services, asset management and monitoring national curriculum assessments.
  - **De-delegation:** Proposals for de-delegation of services applicable only to mainstream schools. These are services where schools retain the statutory duties, but better efficiency could be achieved through central delivery by the LA.

4. There are currently 11 mainstream maintained schools, and these will need to be accounted with this status for a full year on the APT containing the budget shares sent to the DfE in January. In addition, there are 3 specialist-maintained providers.
5. **Consultation with Maintained Schools Only:** The detail of these budgets was set out in the consultation paper see **Appendix 1** to this report.
6. **Central retention from maintained school budget shares for LA statutory duties:** The amount of retention supports the delivery of statutory functions and duties of the Council and is the only funding source for these duties. Details of maintained school duties with a comparison of those for all schools funded from the central school services block is provided in the consultation paper provided at Appendix 1A of this report. Details of the services provided for each of the service headings paid for from schools' budget shares are contained in **Appendix 2** of this report. The actual costs and hours of service provided under each service heading is difficult to determine. This reflects that in the case of some service areas i.e. financial services; there are no longer dedicated staff teams working only with maintained schools and there are no records of time spent on this activity only.
7. It is proposed that the level of the central retention for 2026-27 is as follows: Mainstream School rate per pupil £31.97 and Specialist Provider rate per place £120.62. This means that the central retention rates derive a budget of £223,000 with the allocation for each service for the 12-month period from April 2026 to March 2027 as set out in the table 2 below.

**Table 1: Proposed Maintained School Central Retention Rates April 2026 - March 2027**

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Mainstream School rate per pupil	24.86	31.89	31.97
Specialist Provider rate per place	105.64	-	120.62

8. Table 2 sets out the planned total spending for the 12 months period from April 2026. Spending is shown under maintained school service headings which align to statutory and regulatory duties of the Local Authority. Details of the impact on individual school budgets/for each maintained school are summarised in Table 3.

**Table 2: LA Budget for Maintained School Statutory Duties April 2026 to March 2027**

Statutory and Regulatory Duties	Central Budget Retained £000's
Education Services	61
Finance and Audit	73
Human Resources	15
Asset Management	53
Monitoring National Curriculum Assessments	21
<b>Total Statutory &amp; Regulatory</b>	<b>223</b>

**Table 3: Proposed Maintained School Central Retentions April 2026 to March to 2027**

Maintained Mainstream	NOR	Central Retention
Burton Church of England Primary School	266	£8,504
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School	427	£13,651
Highcliffe St Mark Primary School	609	£19,470
Mudeford Community Infants' School	175	£5,595
Mudeford Junior School	255	£8,152
Somerford Primary School	168	£5,371
St Edward's RC/C England School, Poole	898	£28,709
St Joseph's Catholic Primary	201	£6,426
St Katharine's Church of England Primary	436	£13,939
St Walburga's Catholic Primary School	419	£13,395
The Priory Church of England Primary	197	£6,298
<b>Total</b>		<b>£129,510</b>
<b>Maintained Specialist*</b>		
Christchurch Learning Centre	48	£5,790
Linwood Special	473	£57,053
Winchelsea Special	254	£30,637
<b>Total</b>		<b>£93,480</b>

<b>Proposed Contribution BCP</b>		<b>£222,990</b>
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9. **De-delegation of School Duties:** De-delegation of services is currently applicable only to mainstream schools. These are services where schools retain the statutory duties, but better efficiency could be achieved through central delivery by the LA. The arrangements for maintained special and AP providers are currently the same as those for academies through traded services, except for school improvement services where de-delegation was implemented for the first time in 2022/23 when the grant from the DfE started to be withdrawn. Schools Forum makes the decision on behalf of all maintained schools by primary and secondary phases separately.
10. In the case of special schools and PRUs, the funding to buy such services will be included in any top-up payments. For this reason, special schools and PRUs will need to agree the charge on an individual basis.
11. New decisions will be required for any service to be de-delegated in 2026/2027. There are no specific proposals for new traded services.
12. **Core School Improvement Duties:** The DfE previously funded the core school improvement duties through specific grant with the amount received by each council proportionate to the number of maintained schools in their area. BCP previously received the minimum allocation of £50,000 with this reducing for 2022/23 and then the grant ending. Following the government decision to end the grant in March 2023, an equivalent amount is the amount required to be funded via de-delegation from maintained schools' budget share. This enables the LA to fund core improvement activities. These include monitoring the performance of maintained schools, brokering school improvement provision and exercising the Council's statutory intervention powers. The core improvement activities are set out in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (the 2006 Act) and in the Schools Causing Concern guidance. Part 4 of the 2006 Act provides councils with statutory powers to warn and intervene in schools causing concern, through issuing a warning notice setting out actions the governing body are to take. Further details are contained in Appendix 4 of the consultation document.

13. The school improvement team also discharge the shared statutory responsibility for SACRE and the agreed RE Syllabus under the 1948 Act. All support for the improvement of RE across all BCP maintained schools is free to access and will be delivered to all maintained schools, which includes free access to a school RE conference.
14. As for 2026/27, it is proposed that de-delegation is done on a per pupil basis in the same way as the central retention to replace the amount of the previous grant attributable to mainstream schools. Specialist providers would need to buy into a traded service individually to replace the balance of the lost grant. Meeting the costs of providing the de-delegated services would equate to the rates per pupil for mainstream schools set out in Table 4. Details of the impact on individual school budgets/for each maintained school are summarised in Table 5.

**Table 4: Proposed Maintained School De-delegation Rates April 2026 - March 2027**

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Mainstream School rate per pupil	4.89	-	6.31

15. **Indicative De-delegation Amounts 2026 – 2027:** The financial impact of the de-delegated proposal for maintained schools is shown in the table below.

**Table 5: Indicative Maintained School Amounts April 2026 – March 2027**

Maintained Mainstream	NOR	Impact
Burton Church of England Primary School	266	£1,678
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School	427	£2,694
Highcliffe St Mark Primary School	609	£3,843
Mudford Community Infants' School	175	£1,104
Mudford Junior School	255	£1,609
Somerford Primary School	168	£1,060
St Edward's RC/C England School, Poole	898	£5,666
St Joseph's Catholic Primary	201	£1,268
St Katharine's Church of England Primary	436	£2,751
St Walburga's Catholic Primary School	419	£2,644
The Priory Church of England Primary	197	£1,243
<b>Total</b>		<b>£25,562</b>
<b>Maintained Specialist*</b>	<b>Places</b>	
Christchurch Learning Centre	48	£1,143
Linwood Special	473	£11,262
Winchelsea Special	254	£6,048
<b>Total</b>		<b>£18,453</b>

<b>Proposed Contribution BCP</b>		<b>£44,015</b>
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\*In respect of special maintained schools and PRUs, De-delegation does not apply and therefore special schools and PRUs will need to agree the charge on an individual basis. Based on a per pupil place rate (same multiplier as the central retention) these amounts are shown in the table below as referred to as SLA amounts. Special Schools, PRUs will be contacted individually to agree this.

16. **Traded Services:** As in the current year, a number of services may be offered to maintained schools only, as provision centrally complements our statutory duties. This includes, for example, being within the council's group banking arrangements. It is also expected that all maintained schools will continue in the central insurance arrangements, although this funding is delegated to schools, until the end of the current contract period at which point

schools individually will need to consider whether to join instead the government scheme. Exceptionally, a school may not be able to join central schemes, it may depend on historic claims history, but in this event the council will support a separate procurement as the LA has a duty to ensure school arrangements are satisfactory. Insurance costs are charged to schools, largely according to pupil numbers.

17. Maintained schools also get access to EVOLVE, which is an online system for managing educational visits, off-site activities, and adventurous learning. EVOLVE streamlines the entire process – from planning and risk assessment to approval, active management and post-visit evaluation. It ensures that every trip meets legal and educational standards while reducing administration.

## **Consultation**

18. **Summary of Consultation Outcome:** A consultation was undertaken with maintained schools between 5 and 16 January 2026 on proposals for the central retention of funding for statutory local authority duties and the de-delegation of funding for services delivered by the Council. A total of 8 responses were received from 14 schools (57%), all from mainstream schools.
19. **Central Retention:** Schools showed broad support for the majority of centrally retained services, including Education Services, Finance & Audit, Asset Management and Monitoring of Net Capacity Assessments. However, there was notable concern regarding HR services, with several schools unsure what is currently provided and some stating they use external HR providers. Schools also requested greater transparency, including a published service catalogue, clear service descriptions, named contacts, and annual reporting on activity and performance. Some questioned the cost of Net Capacity monitoring and raised issues about the relevance of certain services for Voluntary Aided schools.
20. **De-delegation:** Mainstream maintained schools expressed strong support for continuing de-delegation for Core School Improvement functions, with 7 supporting and 1 unsure, and no objections or alternative funding mechanisms suggested. The majority also agreed that using pupil/place numbers remains an appropriate allocation method.
21. The feedback indicates overall support for both central retention and de-delegation arrangements, alongside a clear need for improved clarity and visibility of the services funded through these mechanisms.

## **Financial Implications**

22. The budgets for the schools and central school services blocks are set within the available DSG funding.

## **Legal Implications**

23. The consultation undertaken and the recommendations are compliant with the School Funding Statutory Framework. School budgets must be finalised and notified to maintained schools by 27 February 2026 with the DfE timetable the same for academy budgets.

## **Human resources implications**

24. Implications for staffing levels from mainstream funding changes rests within individual schools.

## **Equality Implications**

25. The DfE undertook an equality impact assessment in determining how DSG funding is to be allocated and the structure of the mainstream funding formulae. The local budgets are aligned with the national scheme.

## Summary of risk assessment

26. School finance regulations also allow local authorities to centrally retain funding from school budget shares. The proposal to charge for services from maintained school budgets is to enable the council to continue to undertake these functions/maintain a central education function in relation to maintained schools. Importantly, the council is obliged to carry out a number of statutory duties and if the proposed retention is not agreed, the Council would:
- Fail to discharge its duties and this would impact the effective operation of education support services in BCP
  - Find it difficult to set a balanced budget without making cuts to other vital services.

## Recommendations for maintained schools only

27. **Central Retention:** The maintained schools members of the Schools Forum (primary, secondary, special, and pupil referral units (PRUs)) should agree the amount the local authority will retain as set out in paragraph 9. If the local authority and Schools Forum are unable to reach a consensus on the amount to be retained by the local authority, the matter can be referred to the Secretary of State.
28. **De-delegation:** Schools Forum Members for primary maintained schools and secondary maintained schools must decide separately for each phase whether the service should be provided centrally as set out in paragraphs 14-16. The decision will apply to all maintained mainstream schools in that phase. Members must decide on fixed contributions for these services so that funding can then be removed from the formula before school budgets are issued.

## Background papers

### List of Appendices

- **Appendix 1A** Consultation Paper: [Central Retention and De-delegation Consultation 2026\\_27 Maintained Schools Only](#)
- **Appendix 1B:** Consultation Responses Summary: [Maintained Schools Central Retention De-delegation Consultation Outcome 2026-27](#)
- **Appendix 2:** Services Provided by BCP Council – Central Budget Retentions
- **Appendix 3:** Conversion to Academy Status- Extract from DfE Guidance
- **Appendix 4:** The Schools Causing Concern guidance
- **Appendix 5:** Funding for Maintained School Education Services (Central Retention & De-delegation extracts from guidance)

**Appendix 1A Consultation Paper:** [Central Retention and De-delegation Consultation 2026\\_27 Maintained Schools Only](#)

**Appendix 1B : Consultation Responses Summary:** [Maintained Schools Central Retention De-delegation Consultation Outcome 2026-27](#)

## Services Provided by BCP Council

### Central Budget Retention

**Education Services** - including appointment of governors, education effectiveness, monitoring and moderation of primary assessments, government data returns, functions under the equality act, legal services advice, handling complaints, academy conversion support.

- **Governors:** Advice and support by e-mail, telephone or in person to all those involved in governance in schools to enable governors to effectively fulfil their roles and responsibilities
- Access to governor/committee member training – free commissioned training for all maintained governors and governing bodies including briefings on major changes in education policy and legislation.
- Free bespoke training for all maintained governors, individual governors, clerks and chairs
- The LA provides support for governing bodies to recruit headteachers and deputies and provides induction and mentoring for new and aspiring leaders in maintained schools.
- Support for school governance, training and recruitment of school governors and offer of performance management of school leadership and SLT is incorporated into this work.
- Support focused on outcomes to assist governing bodies play a proactive role in raising standards as part of an experienced team working collaboratively with professional colleagues in education effectiveness
- Provision of recruitment of LA governor and support for Careers Governors in secondary phase and SEND/AP
- **LA Lead Contact:** [Kerry.Smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.Smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

### Education Effectiveness:

- At least termly visits from an Education Advisor to support education effectiveness, preparation for OFSTED inspection and effective use of pupil premium
- Intensive support for schools when appropriate, which can include brokering of bespoke support
- Head Teacher induction as required
- Head Teacher performance management
- Early Years training and events
- Advice and support with RE curriculum

### Monitoring National Curriculum Assessments

- Monitoring and moderation of primary assessments
- QA of external writing moderation
- **LA Lead Contact:** [Kerry.Smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.Smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

### Legal Services and Complaints Handling Advice

- Employment law, Safeguarding matters arising under inter-agency arrangements including compliance with statutory responsibilities towards children protection, Neighbour disputes, property law, contractual issues and disputes, parental rights and responsibilities, pupil records, exclusions and other disciplinary sanctions, special educational needs and disabilities administration of medicines, Equalities and human rights issues, procurement issues, debt recovery and information compliance.
- Academy Conversion Support
- **LA Lead Contact:** Please contact [Kerry.Smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.Smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk) and/or [tanya.smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:tanya.smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)



## Finance and Audit

- Production of budget schedules and payment of funding allocations and DfE grants, consolidation of annual accounts and quarterly returns.
- Advice, best value and procurement advice
- Scheme of financing maintained schools
- Internal audit including advice, guidance and assistance for control, risk and governance processes, specialists knowledge to assist in or lead fraud and irregularity investigations. Support governors and staff in the effective discharge of their responsibilities and advice in good practice approach
- Government Data Returns
- Banking and treasury activities, financial regulations adaptation for schools (for example delegation of some CFO approvals to school governors).
- **LA Lead Contact:** [Steve.Wade3@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Wade3@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

## Human Resources

- Employee investigations,
- pension administration,
- pay scales and conditions of service,
- TU negotiations for local government employees
- **LA Lead Contact:** [hrservice.delivery@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:hrservice.delivery@bcpcouncil.gov.uk) and [recruitment@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@bcpcouncil.gov.uk) and [payroll.team@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:payroll.team@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

## Asset management

Services and functions provided by BCP in order to discharge the General landlord duties for all maintained schools (Schedule 2, 79a & b (section 542(2)) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) is commissioned by the Education and Skills Service working with BCP Property Services and the Corporate Health and Safety team. The central budget provides a contribution towards the costs of staffing, property professional fees, survey and membership costs. The actual staffing costs alone exceed the nominal central budget retained.

### Arrangements for the management of the school estate include the following:

**Health and Safety:** Statutory H&S services for BCP maintained schools are provided by BCP Corporate Health and Safety team. A summary of the service provided is contained in Appendix 2b attached.

**LA Lead Contact (Health and Safety):** [rebecca.lawry@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.lawry@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

### Hard Facilities Management comprising re-active and planned maintenance functions as follows:

- **Reactive maintenance management:** Access to emergency helpdesk/call out 24 hours/365 days per year, access to urgent works team.
- Access to urgent works/reactive maintenance fund in the capital programme above affordable levels as indicated by school's devolved formula capital allocations.
- Advice and guidance from BCP property professionals including surveyors and structural engineers
- Support/assistance from a Client Project Officer from Education and Skills Service
- **Planned and backlog maintenance – Implement a plan of cyclical maintenance management:** Access to Predictive/Planned Maintenance fund in the capital programme identifying cyclical maintenance works necessary for statutory compliance and planned lifecycle replacement to ensure properties remain safe, compliant and fully operational

- Advice and assurance to achieve statutory compliance for example lighting, heating, ventilation, asbestos, H&S requirements.
- Regular/updated surveys of School Buildings identifying works in priority order.
- **School Estate:** Preparation of returns to the DfE and submission of nominations for funding under School Rebuilding Programmes.
- Submission of Section 77 applications in respect of School Playing Fields as necessary.
- **LA Lead Contact:** [tanya.smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:tanya.smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

### **Statutory H&S services for BCP maintained schools provided by BCP Corporate Health and Safety team**

- Comprehensive advice and support from Health & Safety team in response to H&S enquiries/concerns raised by school (by phone, email or visit to school where necessary)
- periodically undertake full or part audits of school facilities and/or safety management systems at a frequency based on risk
- Provide access to the BCP Council Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare policy
- Provide a model school-based health and safety policy, including, a statement of policy, roles and responsibilities and arrangement sections
- Provide assistance with the reporting of serious accidents / incidents involving employees and non-employees to the Health and Safety Executive under the RIDDOR regulations
- investigation of serious accidents and other incidents, in association with the school's management team (as appropriate)
- Where specific H&S training need has been identified and agreed between school and H&S team, facilitate/provide basic health and safety training for school staff (at a cost to be agreed if applicable). School will be notified of the cost prior to any training being delivered.
- Where necessary, signpost to or refer to relevant BCP teams on matters related to school buildings and premises safety or BCP Fire Safety team on fire safety matters
- Signpost to or contact other specialist advisors within BCP Council where required so that suitable assistance can be given
- Provide and inform schools of their membership of CLEAPSS, which provides H&S information and services regarding the safe delivery of science, design technology and art in schools as stated below:
  - To support governing bodies/schools in their responsibilities to provide effective safe working and learning conditions in the areas of Science, Design & Technology and Art for all staff, pupils and visitors to school.
  - Provide access information to the CLEAPSS website giving access to guidance, risk assessments, updates etc (log on details provided on purchase)
  - CLEAPSS telephone and email helpline (all year round not just term time) for expert subject advice
  - HAZcards and recipe cards containing advice on use of chemicals in lessons
  - Provide CLEAPSS Radiation Protection advice service (Secondary schools only)

All governing bodies/secondary schools have a statutory duty to ensure they have a Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA) affiliated to their school for the purposes of overseeing the safe storage and use of radiation sources. This falls within the Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999.

This service provides an alternative less costly way of complying with these regulations by acting as an identified link with the RPA.

The role of Radiation Protection Officer (RPO) is an approved method for schools to use as an 'official intermediary'. The RPO is in regular contact with the RPA and acts on his/her behalf and under their direction. The Corporate H&S team act as the RPO.

The service includes:

- annual membership to the CLEAPSS LA run RPA scheme
- a site visit every 2-3 years (dependant on historical risk assessment) to carry out monitoring of the school's implementation of the L93 CLEAPSS guidance booklet
- access via the RPO to a named RPA for both proactive and reactive expert advice

### **School responsibilities**

To ensure that effective services can be provided, there is a responsibility for schools to:

- provide BCP Corporate Health and Safety team with a named contact
- seek early advice on complex health and safety issues
- comply with all relevant Health and Safety legislation
- provide access to the Governing Body as necessary
- access the CLEAPSS website where appropriate and use the resources within it.

### **Delivery of Service**

The corporate Health & Safety team comprises Health and Safety professionals and Health and Safety / Regulatory Team Managers. Expertise of staff is maintained and developed through a programme of continuing professional development, other training and liaison with fellow professionals. The team have online access to up-to-date legislation and codes of practice.

### **Consequences if the proposed central retention was not approved**

The proposal to charge for services from maintained school budgets is to enable the council to continue to undertake these functions/maintain a central education function in relation to maintained schools. This operates in much the same way as multi-academy trusts might top-slice budgets of individual academies to pay for central functions. Specifically, the school's budget share in most cases provides a contribution towards staffing costs. Importantly, the council is obliged to carry out a number of statutory duties, for example in relation to financial regulation and asset management and, in the event that the proposed retention is not agreed, the Council would:

- fail to discharge its duties and this would impact the effective operation of education support services in BCP;
- find it difficult to set a balanced budget without making cuts to other vital services

### Conversion to Academy Status Extract from DfE Guidance

2026 to 2027 de-delegation arrangements for schools converting to academy status are as follows:

- conversion date on or before 1 April 2026 – no de-delegation
- conversion date between 2 April 2026 and 1 September 2026 – local authority retains any de-delegated funding until 1 September 2026
- conversion date between 2 September 2026 to 31 March 2027 – local authority retains any de-delegated funding until 31 March 2027

After the dates specified, the academy will receive the full formula allocation and the department will recoup this from the local authority.

The local authority should continue to provide the services to new academies where funding is de-delegated, if they are asked to do so. If the local authority is unable to provide the requested service, the department expects the local authority and the academy to come to an arrangement to pay the funding directly to the academy.

Exceptions to this would be in cases where contractual arrangement to pay services in advance have already been made, and the local authority does not have the ability to continue to provide this service.

Where there has been agreement that a school is entitled to receive an allocation from a de-delegated contingency fund, that agreement should be honoured if the school converts to an academy at any point in the year.

Where a school converts to an academy in the period 2 April 2026 to 1 September 2026, local authorities will have an opportunity to present an evidence-based case to request a recoupment adjustment for the period 2 September 2026 to 31 March 2027.

Local authorities should report any unspent de-delegated funding remaining at year-end to their Schools Forum.

Local authorities can carry funding forward to the following funding period as with any other centrally retained budget and can choose to use it specifically for de-delegated services.

**LA Lead Contact:** [tanya.smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:tanya.smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

**The Schools Causing Concern guidance sets out expectations that councils should:**

- Understand the performance of maintained schools in their area, using data as a starting point to identify any that are underperforming, while working with them to explore ways to support progress.
- Work closely with the relevant Regional School Commissioner (RSC), diocese and other local partners to ensure schools receive the support they need to improve
- Where underperformance has been recognised in a maintained school, proactively work with the relevant RSC, combining local and regional expertise to ensure the right approach, including sending warning notices and using intervention powers where this will improve leadership and standards.
- Encourage good and outstanding maintained schools to take responsibility for their own improvement.
- Support other schools; and enable them to access the support they need to improve.
- **LA Lead Contact:** [Kerry.Smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.Smith@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

**Funding for Maintained School Education Services (Central Retention)**  
**Extract from DfE Guidance**

1. Local authorities can fund some services relating to maintained schools only from maintained school budget shares, with the agreement of maintained school members of the schools forum.
2. The relevant maintained schools members of the schools forum (primary, secondary, special, and PRUs) should agree the amount the local authority will retain.
3. If the local authority and schools forum are unable to reach a consensus on the amount to be retained by the local authority, the matter can be referred to the Secretary of State.
4. Local authorities should set a single rate per 5 to 16-year-old pupil for all mainstream maintained schools, both primary and secondary. In the interests of simplicity, this should be deducted from basic entitlement funding.
5. The department will not allow adjustments to other factors, and the rate will not include early years or post-16 pupils, who are funded through different formulae.
6. Local authorities can choose to establish differential rates for special schools and PRUs if the cost of fulfilling the duty is substantially different for these schools. The rate will be expressed per place rather than per pupil for special schools and PRUs.
7. As with de-delegation, the amount to be held by the local authority will be determined after MFG has been applied. If a school converts to academy status, the department will recoup the amount retained for that school from the local authority's DSG for the remaining months of the financial year that the school is an academy. The academy will be reimbursed in its monthly general annual grant payment from the point of conversion.
8. Unlike for de-delegated services, there will be no phased transfer of funding following conversion so there will be immediate recoupment of this part of the budget. For example, if a school converts on 1 January 2027 (3 months prior to the end of the financial year), we will recoup three-twelfths of the retained amount relating to that school.
9. Local authorities can fund some administrative functions relating to maintained schools from the DSG, with the agreement of either the schools forum or the Secretary of State. For expenditure to be funded from the DSG, it must be defined as part of the schools budget. This definition is set out in the annually made school finance regulations.
10. As an alternative, local authorities may not wish to fund these administrative functions from the DSG, but to fund them from general funds.

## De-delegated Services

### Extract from DfE Guidance

1. De-delegated services are for maintained schools only. Funding for de-delegated services must be allocated through the local funding formula but can be passed back, or de-delegated, for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools with schools forum approval.
2. De-delegation does not apply to special schools, nursery schools, or PRUs. Where de-delegation has been agreed for maintained primary and secondary schools, our presumption is that the local authority will offer the service on a buyback basis to those schools and academies in their area which are not covered by the de-delegation.
3. In the case of special schools and PRUs, the funding to buy such services will be included in any top-up payments. Any decisions made to de-delegate in 2025 to 2026 related to that year only, new decisions will be required for any service to be de-delegated in 2026 to 2027.
4. Schools forum members for primary maintained schools and secondary maintained schools must as set out in The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 decide separately for each phase whether the service should be provided centrally; the decision will apply to all maintained mainstream schools in that phase.
5. They must decide on fixed contributions for these services so that funding can then be removed from the formula before school budgets are issued. There may be different decisions for each phase. The services which may be de-delegated are:
  - contingencies (including schools in financial difficulties and deficits of closing schools)
  - behaviour support services
  - support to underperforming ethnic groups and bilingual learners
  - free school meals eligibility
  - insurance
  - RPA
  - museum and library services
  - staff costs supply cover (for example, long-term sickness, maternity, trade union and public duties)
  - licences and subscriptions; except for the following, which are paid for by DfE:
    - Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI)
    - Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA). Education Recording Agency (ERA)
    - Filmbank Distributors Ltd. (for the PVSL), Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS)
    - Motion Picture Licensing Company (MPLC)
    - Newspaper Licensing Authority (NLA), Performing Rights Society (PRS)
    - Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL), Printed Music Licensing Ltd (PMLL)
6. Local authorities should make a clear statement of how the funding is being taken out of the formula for each de-delegated service. For example:
  - primary insurance £20 per pupil
  - secondary behaviour support services £30 per FSM pupil
7. There should be a clear statement of how contingencies and other resources will be allocated. Academies will continue to receive a share of funding for these services in their delegated budget.
8. Where de-delegation is agreed, middle schools will potentially be subject to 2 different decisions and the unit value for de-delegation can be different for primary and secondary age pupils. For example, if the primary sector agreed to de-delegate a service but the secondary sector did not, middle schools in the local authority would have their formula allocation reduced only for their primary pupils at the agreed primary school rate.