

Schools Forum July 2026

Welcome to Issue 18, a post Forum Edition of the eNewsletter of the Lancashire Schools' Forum.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2025/26

The DSG reserve has reported an overall deficit of £101.60m, this is a £79.17m increase, due to the continuing pressures on the High Needs Block, reflecting pressures in Special Educational Needs. This reflects the national picture across local authorities of insufficient grant resources to meet increasing need. A copy of the full report can be found on the [Schools Forum Website](#).

In February 2026, due to the increasing Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficits forecasted nationally, the government announced the High Needs Stability Grant, which subject to the approval of the Council's SEND reform plan from the Department for Education (DfE), will cover 90% of the DSG deficit at March 2026.

The Council's SEND reform plan was submitted on 19 June 2026 which sets out a clear pathway towards an inclusive system that meets the needs of children and young people and supports the wider vision for SEND reform. DfE will now review the plan and further updates will be provided to Schools Forum.

School Balances 2025/26

Overall, in 2025/26 school balances decreased from £66.925m to £57.73m, an overall reduction of £9.195m, £2.923m of the overall reduction relates to 17 academy conversions during 2025/26.

To summarise, 39 schools (8%) ended the financial year with a deficit closing balance, with 454 schools (92%) ending the financial year with a surplus closing balance. In addition, 37 schools (7.5%) ended the financial year with a balance deemed to be in excess and will be subject to clawback in line with the policy.

Clawback at March 2027

The Schools Forum at their meeting on 3rd July 2026 unanimously voted to Implement Clawback to excess balances at March 2026 at the rate of 8% CFR income. A letter was sent to all maintained schools on 10th July 2026, and the Clawback Policy can also be found on the Schools Forum Website shortly.

Service De-delegations 2027/28

The Forum supported de-delegation proposals being incorporated in the consultation with schools, which will be issued in September 2026 and will include similar proposals to those agreed for 2026/27. A summary of de-delegation proposals for 2027/28 are below:



- **Staff costs – Public Duties/Suspensions**
- **Heritage Learning Service (Museum Service) - Primary Schools Only**

The Schools Requiring Additional Support will continue to support schools without a de-delegation for 2027/28 and will be funded from reserves.

Schools Forum Annual Report 2025/26

The Forum have agreed their Annual Report for publication. This report highlights the key issues involving the Forum during the course of the 2025/26 financial year. A copy of the report will be displayed on the School Forum website shortly.

Schools Forum Updates

Autumn Term Schools Forum Dates

- Early Years Block Working Group 15th September 2026
- Schools Block Working Group 24th September 2026
- High Needs Block Working Group 29th September 2026
 - Lancashire Schools Forum 15th October 2026

The Full Forum schedule will be uploaded to the School Forum website shortly.

Schools Forum Minutes

The draft minutes from the Forum meeting held on 3rd July 2026 will be available on the Schools Forum website shortly.

Schools Forum Membership 2026

As part of the annual review process, the following vacancies have arisen for the Schools Forum from September 2026.

If you are interested in becoming a forum member, please complete the appropriate link below.

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| • Primary Gov [2] | • Academy Secondary Gov [2] |
| • Secondary Head | • Academy Primary Gov |
| • Secondary Gov | • Academy - Alt Prov Head |
| • Academy - Special Gov | • Academy - Alt Prov Gov |

Please contact the schools forum clerk, schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk, if you would like any further information.

Questions?

Remember, if you have any questions about the Schools Forum, please contact the Schools Forum Clerk, Millie Parkinson via schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk.

