



## ***Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children and Young People***

***Tuesday, 3 February 2026 at 1.30 pm***

***Council Chamber - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND***

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).  
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

### ***Items for Decision***

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 6 February 2026 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

**These proceedings are open to the public**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Reeves".

Martin Reeves  
Chief Executive

January 2026

*Committee Officer:*

***Email:***

***committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk***

*Note: Date of next meeting: 24 February 2026*

**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**

## Items for Decision

### 1. Declarations of Interest

See guidance below.

### 2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am three working days before the meeting, ask a question on an item on the agenda.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

### 3. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to present a petition must be submitted no later than 9am ten working days before the meeting.

Requests to speak must be submitted no later than 9am three working days before the meeting.

Requests should be submitted to [committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am on the day of the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

### 4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 7 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on **16 December** to be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### 5. Formal Approval of Schools Funding Formula 2026/27 (Pages 9 - 14)

*Cabinet Member:* Children & Young People

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2026/014

*Contact:* Jane Billington, Strategic Finance Business Partner – Children's Services  
([Jane.Billington@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jane.Billington@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

Report by Director of Children's Services (**CMDCEYP5**).

The final funding formula for schools and academies for 2026/27 needs to be formally approved politically for submission to the DfE for setting mainstream schools' budgets for the 2026/27 financial year.

**The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) Approve the final funding formula for 2026/27 for submission to Department for Education (DfE).**

## **Councillors declaring interests**

### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members' Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

### **Members Code – Other registrable interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships

- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.
- c) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

### **Members Code – Non-registrable interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

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## DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 16 December 2025 commencing at 3.00 pm and finishing at 3:15pm

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Sean Gaul – in the Chair

**Officers:** Caroline Kelly (Head of Joint Commissioning), Jack Ahier (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

*The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### **10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (Agenda No. 1)

There were none

### **11 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** (Agenda No. 2)

The Chair approved the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2025, as an accurate record of the proceedings.

### **12 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS** (Agenda No. 3)

None received

### **13 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS** (Agenda No. 4)

No requests

### **14 CROSS REGIONAL BLOCK CONTRACT** (Agenda No. 5)

The report was presented by Head of Joint Commissioning

The Chair considered a report which he indicated was very positive.

The partnership was formed by Oxfordshire County Council (the council), Buckinghamshire Council, Milton Keynes Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Bedford Borough Council, and Reading Council. Oxfordshire County Council would take the lead in commissioning and procurement activities. The re-tendering process was to be aligned with the conclusion of the current service, which was scheduled to end on 31 July 2027.

The council planned to re-tender the Cross Regional Project (CRP), which would deliver therapeutic residential care and educational services for children aged 11–17 with complex needs and offering 36 placements.

**The Chair resolved to:**

- a) approve the re-tendering of the Cross Regional Project partnership.**
- b) approve the council's plan to expand growth in Oxfordshire by raising the number of block placements from 17 by an additional 8, reaching a maximum total of 25 placements throughout the ten-year contract period (structured as 5+2+1+1+1 years).**

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....

**Divisions Affected - ALL**

## **DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**03 February 2026**

### **Formal Approval of Schools Funding Formula 2026/27**

**Report by Director of Children's Services**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) Approve the final funding formula for 2026/27 for submission to Department for Education (DfE)**

*This follows consultation with the Schools Forum which agreed that OCC will continue to fund schools at the National Funding Formula level.*

## **Executive Summary**

1. The final funding formula for schools and academies for 2026/27 needs to be formally approved politically for submission to the DfE for setting mainstream school budgets for the 2026/27 financial year. Schools have been invited to respond to a consultation regarding the available option. Schools Forum has been consulted in development of the funding formula for 2026/27 as a statutory consultee, and the decision on the final formula is made by the local authority.
2. The basis of the allocation through the National Funding Formula is determined by Central Government.

## **Introduction**

3. The local authority is required to set the funding formula for all pupils of statutory school age for each financial year. This includes all maintained schools and academies (including free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges). It is established after consultation with Schools and Schools Forum about any proposed changes.
4. The local authority is responsible for making the final decisions on the formula and must gain political approval before the final formula for the 2026/27 financial year is approved by the Department for Education (DfE).

## **The National Funding Formula**

5. In 2018/19 the government implemented national funding formulae for the Schools, High Needs and the Central Services Schools Block (CSSB) with local discretion on implementation up to and including for 2026/27.
6. 2018/19 saw the introduction of the national funding formula (NFF) for schools. This reform meant that for the first time, school funding was distributed to Local Authorities according to a formula based on the individual needs and characteristics of every school in the country. Local Authorities continue to be responsible for distributing money between schools.
7. Oxfordshire has consulted with all schools and academies and Schools Forum annually and it was agreed to implement the NFF as closely as possible subject to affordability.
8. The DfE has made some changes to the National Funding Formula for 2026/27, as follows:
  - Rolling the school budget support grant (SBSG) and the National Insurance contributions (NICs) grant from 2025 to 2026 by:
    - adding amounts representing what schools receive through the grants into their baselines.
    - adding the value of the lump sums, basic per pupil rates and free school meals Ever6 (FSM6) parts of the grants onto the respective factors in the NFF.
  - The NICs grant and SBSG funding that was allocated for mainstream schools with special units or resourced provision (SURPs) has not been rolled into the schools NFF for 2026 to 2027, as the funding has been rolled into the local authority's high needs allocation.

Further increases to NFF factor values (on top of the amounts added for the NICs grant and annualised SBSG), as can be afforded following the settlement of the core schools budget for 2026 to 2027.

Transitional requirements, to move at least a further 10% closer to the NFF, do not apply to Oxfordshire as the LA already mirrors the NFF. All Options below are within the 'mirroring' threshold of +/- 2.5% of the national funding formula factors.

The local authority has the freedom to set the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) in the local formula between minus 0.5% and 0.0% per pupil.

## **Outcome of Consultation with Schools and Schools Forum**

9. Consultation with schools was carried out from 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025. The results of the consultation were discussed at the Schools' Forum meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025.
10. Schools were consulted on options for adjusting the national funding formula to provide the target contribution, reducing the £0.660m Growth Fund budget was a preferred option and is affordable due to balances so that has been reduced.

Following that the per pupil factors have been adjusted proportionally to mitigate the remaining budget gap.

### **Oxfordshire Funding Formula**

11. The School Funding Formula for 2026/27 has been modelled to replicate the NFF, in so far as is affordable.
12. In line with timescales in previous years, the DSG settlement was announced on 18 December 2025. The DSG Schools Block allocation is £573.71m and if Oxfordshire were to fund schools on the national formula factor rates there would be a budget gap of £2.9m.
13. At the meeting of Schools Forum on 19 January 2026, Schools' Forum was consulted on a model that delivers the National Funding Formula.
14. Schools Forum endorsed a nil contribution to the Growth Fund, in line with approaches taken in previous years, based on the growth fund balance; 0.0% minimum funding guarantee and adjusted age weighted pupil unit factors, which reduces the funding to schools, whilst still mirroring the NFF as the amended factors are within 2.5% of the national factors. This has been done in order to bridge the funding gap.
15. In addition, Schools and Schools Forum were consulted on a block transfer. Schools Forum endorsed a £0.4m Schools block transfer to the high needs block to continue to fund the Special Schools outreach programme.

The formula factor rates for Oxfordshire are shown in table 1 below.

Table 1 - Schools Funding Formula 2026-27		
Funding Factors - Full National Funding Formula (NFF) with ACA	NFF Primary Unit Value 2026-27	NFF Secondary Unit Value 2026-27
Area Cost Adjustment (ACA) – A multiplier that is applied to basic per pupil, additional needs and formula elements of school led funding for Oxfordshire	1.02312	1.02312
1. Basic per-pupil funding		
Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) - Basic Entitlement	£4,131.69	
Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) - Basic Entitlement KS3		£5,780.70
Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) - Basic Entitlement KS4		£6,516.76
2. Deprivation		
Free School Meal eligibility	£516.68	£516.68
Ever6 FSM	£1,237.98	£1,764.88
Targeted Deprivation – IDACI Band F	£245.55	£352.98
Targeted Deprivation – IDACI Band E	£296.70	£470.64
Targeted Deprivation – IDACI Band D	£465.52	£665.03
Targeted Deprivation – IDACI Band C	£511.56	£726.42
Targeted Deprivation – IDACI Band B	£542.25	£777.57
Targeted Deprivation – IDACI Band A	£716.18	£992.43
3. English as an additional Language (EAL)	£624.10	£1,667.69
4. Pupil Mobility	£1,007.77	£1,447.71
5. Low Prior Attainment	£1,227.74	£1,867.19
6. Lump sum - as NFF (amended for 0.5% transfer below)	£156,230.42	£156,230.42
7. Sparsity	£59,954.83	£87,169.82
8. Split Sites - (ACA not applicable)	As Actual Rates	
11. Rates	As Actual Rates	
13. Exceptional Premises factors	As Actual Rents	
14. Minimum per pupil level (MPPL)	£5,115.00	
- Key Stage 3		£6,388.00
- Key Stage 4		£7,018.00
Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)	0.0%	
Growth Fund Contribution	£0	
DSG Schools Block Funding Total Funding allocated through the Schools Funding Formula as NFF		£m
		£568.04
DSG Schools Block Funding Total Funding allocated through the Schools Funding Formula		£568.04
Proposal if Block Transfer agreed AWPU revised Factor Values: - Primary - Key Stage 3 - Key Stage 4		£
		£4,131.69
		£5,780.70
		£6,516.76
		£m
DSG Schools Block Funding Total Funding allocated through the Schools Funding Formula Balance - Transfer to the High Needs Block Transfer as a percentage of eligible Funding		£573.71
		£568.04
		£0.40
		0.070%

16. The amounts allocated by each factor in the above table were subject to further checks and amendments leading up to the Authority Proforma Tool submission to the DfE by 22nd January 2026.

## Financial Implications

17. The report deals with the funding formula for schools and academies for 2026/27 and there are no further financial or staffing implications discussed in this report. Schools and academies are responsible for managing the deployment of the delegated funding they receive. The political ratification is a requirement of the Schools Funding Formula, and is necessary for their approval of the Authority Proforma Tool.

Comments checked by:

Jane Billington, Strategic Finance Business Partner – Children's Services  
[Jane.billington@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jane.billington@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Legal Implications

18. When implementing the local funding system for the 2026 to 2027 financial year Local Authority is required to have regard to [Schools operational guide: 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#)

Comments checked by:

Leanne Schrouder  
*Locum SEN and Education Solicitor*  
[leanne.schrouder@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:leanne.schrouder@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Staff Implications

19. There are no new or additional staffing implications.

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

20. Where the local authority continues to have discretion in funding decisions made, priority will be given to the needs of vulnerable pupils and the Council's aims of raising attainment, narrowing the attainment gap and safeguarding children.

## Sustainability Implications

21. There are no new or additional sustainability implications.

## Risk Management

22. The key risk is the affordability of the formula within the funding envelope of the grant and that has been considered in the main body of the report.

**Lisa Lyons**  
**Director of Children's Services**

Contact Officer: Jane Billington ([Jane.Billington@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jane.Billington@oxfordshire.gov.uk))  
Strategic Finance Business Partner – Children's Services  
January 2026

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