



Department
for Education

Condition Spend Data Collection (CSDC)

**Data Collection Report
Financial year 2018-19**

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Summary

This report has been produced to provide readers with information about how School Condition Allocations (SCA) funding was spent schools in the 2018 to 2019 financial year.

Who is this publication for?

This report is for:

- local authorities (LAs)
- multi-academy trusts (MATs) and chains
- school leaders, school staff and governing bodies in all maintained schools, academies and free schools
- general public

Main points

- The total value of SCA expenditure¹ reported in the 2018 to 2019 financial year was £516 million (£364 million for LAs and £151 million for MATs). This represents 82% of the total allocation (81% for LAs and 83% for MATs)².
- SCA expenditure¹ in 2018 to 2019 covered 6,526 schools (4,877 for LAs and 1,743 for MATs), which represents around 30% of schools within responding responsible bodies (RBs) (not all schools need condition works).
- As expected, RBs mostly use their SCA to fund condition projects (which accounted for around 59% of total SCA spend)³. They allocate between 4% and 12% of their SCA to each of: block replacements, compliance and health and safety, expansion, and suitability. The rest of the expenditure was still spent on the school estate through accessibility and other projects.
- Block replacements and expansions are by far the most costly projects, as expected - RBs used on average around £236k and £137k of SCA respectively per project.

¹ SCA expenditure includes unspent SCA carried forward for the previous financial year (2017-18)

² For LAs, SCA is non-ring fenced capital grant. MATs can now carry forward up to 100% of their SCA funding, which is why the proportion of SCA spent fell in 2018 to 2019.

³ SCA funding is intended to be used for a multitude of work types, including maintaining and improving buildings, health and safety, compliance, and emergency works, among others

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide information about the uses of School Condition Allocations (SCA) in the 2018 to 2019 financial year. SCA is a capital fund allocated on an annual basis to:

- local authorities (LAs)
- larger multi-academy trusts (MATs), responsible for at least 5 schools and 3,000 pupils
- academy chains that have opted in to receive SCA funding (grouped with MATs throughout this report)

Recipients of SCA are referred to as responsible bodies (RBs) throughout this report. Although, due to separate funding arrangements, the voluntary aided schools sector is not included in this report⁴.

Smaller multi-academy trusts and single academy trusts that do not receive SCA, were instead eligible to apply to the Condition Improvement Fund and do not feature in this report.

The 2018 to 2019 SCA allocated to LAs and MATs totalled £633 million, which was paid out to 326 RBs (150 LAs and 176 MATs). The Condition Spend Data Collection (CSDC) asked for information from all RBs, of which 304 (93%) replied (87% of LAs and 98% of MATs). The CSDC asks for information on how RBs have spent their SCA. It also asked more detailed questions on their estate management practices. This report talks about the use of SCA at a national level, however the types of projects carried out at RB level are given in Annex A. This is not a full picture of all works or repairs that have been delivered at all schools, only those that use SCA funding.

Background

The department allocated over £7.4 billion between financial years 2015 to 2016 and 2019 to 2020 to those responsible for maintaining and improving the school estate, supporting local authorities and academy trusts to maintain their school buildings. This included funding allocated to RBs through the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) and Local Authority Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP) programmes as well as SCA, Healthy Pupils Capital Fund (HPCF) and Devolved Formula Capital (DFC). During this period the department was also rebuilding or refurbishing buildings at over 500 schools through the [Priority School Building Programme](#).

⁴ The governing bodies of voluntary-aided schools receive capital funding through a dedicated pot of funding calculated on the same basis as SCA, but paid out directly at project level and for this reason, has not been included in the Condition Spend Data Collection.

The department continues to deliver various services to support RBs in fulfilling obligations associated with the management of the estate and to increase understanding of this function, including [Good Estate Management for Schools](#). This sets out the fundamental policies and processes that schools need to have in place to manage their estate, and includes advice to assist RBs in delivering the maintenance of facilities and to comply with prevailing legislation.

School Condition Allocations

SCA was first introduced for the 2015 to 2016 financial year. Along with CIF and LCVAP, SCA replaced the department's previous maintenance funding streams (such as the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund (ACMF)) to provide RBs with capital funding. SCA (totalling £633 million in 2018 to 2019) is allocated to bodies directly responsible for the condition of the school estate (RBs), given that they are best placed to identify and address the condition needs of their schools. RBs will be aware of the obligation to plan and prioritise delivery of capital works or major repairs. They are often guided by findings from statutory inspections and any condition surveys undertaken.

SCA is intended for delivery of capital works, typically including major repairs or replacements within or around a school's built assets. It may also support block (building) replacements and extensions. Effective use of SCA should generally tackle poor building condition, substantial energy efficiency improvements, suitability, or health and safety issues.

It is up to RBs to decide how they spend their SCA according to local priorities and their strategic renewal/development plans, and in accordance with the grant conditions for MATs. As a guide, the department has published high-level priorities as:

- keeping buildings safe and in good working order
- tackling building condition issues, including health and safety
- improving energy efficiency of buildings

SCA may also be used to support school expansion projects that simultaneously address the condition of the buildings. For example, basic need funding is generally used to provide new school places, however condition projects can also include some expansion, for example, a building expansion to add pupil places may involve the removal of an external wall that needed major repairs.

Condition Spend Data Collection

The department's aim in gathering this data is to provide:

- high-level information which may usefully assist the public's understanding of the nature of works/major repairs being delivered by RBs, through the use of SCA funding
- an assurance that the funding allocated is being used for the intended purpose

Completion of the CSDC is voluntary for LAs, but mandatory for MATs (as stated in their terms and conditions of SCA grant). The CSDC only gathers data on capital works funded by SCA. It therefore does not give a full picture of all work undertaken to improve school condition. Some RBs have other means of supporting their estate, such as a MAT sponsor.

CSDC did not include works carried out directly by the department, such as the rebuilding or replacement of whole schools or blocks as part of the Priority School Building Programme (PSBP).

This report provides information on SCA expenditure as reported to the department by RBs, so that those with an interest in the condition of school buildings can understand how RBs have used this funding.

Methodology

In summary, the CSDC asks RBs about the types of capital works carried out using SCA, at school and project/element level. In addition, RBs were also asked more detailed questions about their estate management practices. Each RB's accounting officer or director of children's services verified that the information submitted concerned spending as effected in accordance with the prevailing funding agreements. A copy of the questionnaire is contained in Annex B of this report.

All 326 RBs in receipt of SCA were asked to complete a CSDC return. We received responses from 307 (131 LAs and 173 MATs), giving us a 94% response rate (87% for LAs and 98% for MATs).

Appropriate data quality control checks were carried out as part of the overall quality assurance of the dataset and the report. As a result, not all returns were deemed suitable for inclusion, as they contained a large amount of missing data and/or did not allow analysis by work type. Therefore, the effective sample size for the analysis in this report is 293 (a response rate of 90%), covering 82% of total SCA funding.

Following quality assurance, the data were analysed in order to provide the findings and insight contained in this report.

Findings

Annex A contains detailed RB data on spend by type of works completed, as well as a list of schools at which the works were carried out. For commercial reasons, it does not give spend by school.

Total SCA expenditure

RBs reported spending (including unspent SCA carried forward from the previous financial year) £516 million of SCA in 2018 to 2019 (£364 million for LAs and £151 million for MATs). This represents 82% of the £633 million allocated (81% for LAs and 83% for MATs), and enables us to draw some broad conclusions on how it has been spent. In 2018 to 2019, SCA expenditure covered 6,526 schools (4,877 for LAs and 1,743 for MATs⁵), which represents around 30% of schools within responding RBs. This is as expected, as not all schools currently require capital investment or condition works. More schools were covered in 2018 to 2019 than 2017 to 2018, as more RBs are now eligible for SCA funding.

As expected, RBs mostly use their SCA to fund condition projects (around 59%), as shown in Table 1. They also allocate between 4% to 12% of their SCA each to block replacements, compliance and health and safety, expansion, and suitability. However, if you look at LAs and MATs separately (Tables 2 and 3), MATs use proportionally higher amounts for compliance, health and safety and suitability (17% to 18% compared with 4% to 10% for LAs); and proportionally less on block replacements (around 2% compared with around 5% for LAs) and condition projects (around 46% compared with around 65% for LAs). This is reflective of the variation in funding streams available to LAs and MATs, for example, LAs have more flexibility in funding streams to meet their compliance and health and safety needs, which are not necessarily available to MATs, such as council funding.

LAs and MATs both spend around 1% of SCA on accessibility. The other projects that RBs use SCA for include emergency works, energy efficiency projects and costs associated with condition projects, such as professional fees.

Taking into account the changing sample sizes, MATs have spent similar proportions on each work type in each financial year from 2016 to 2017 to 2018 to 2019. LAs spent proportionately less on block replacements in 2018 to 2019 than previously, but given the different samples in all years and the limited number of data points, this may not be a reflection of a permanent change in practices.

⁵ These total to more than 6,526 as some schools are counted under both LAs and MATs when they change status mid-year.

	Block replacement	Condition	Compliance and H&S	Accessibility	Expansion	Suitability	Other	No. RBs
2018-19	4%	59%	12%	1%	7%	8%	8%	293
2017-18	8%	57%	9%	1%	9%	7%	9%	258
2016-17	6%	59%	9%	1%	8%	7%	9%	218

Table 1: Responsible body use of School Condition Allocation by broad work type, value and proportion, between 2016 to 2017 and 2018 to 2019

Source: DfE analysis of Condition Spend Data Collection

	Block replacement	Condition	Compliance and H&S	Accessibility	Expansion	Suitability	Other	No. RBs
2018-19	5%	65%	10%	1%	6%	4%	8%	127
2017-18	9%	59%	9%	1%	10%	4%	8%	141
2016-17	7%	61%	7%	2%	8%	5%	10%	133

Table 2: Local authority use of School Condition Allocation by broad work type, value and proportion, between 2016 to 2017 and 2018 to 2019

Source: DfE analysis of Condition Spend Data Collection

	Block replacement	Condition	Compliance and H&S	Accessibility	Expansion	Suitability	Other	No. RBs
2018-19	2%	46%	17%	1%	8%	18%	9%	166
2017-18	4%	46%	15%	1%	9%	17%	8%	117
2016-17	2%	47%	17%	1%	10%	17%	6%	85

Table 3: Multi Academy Trust use of School Condition Allocation by broad work type, value and proportion, between 2016 to 2017 and 2018 to 2019

Source: DfE analysis of Condition Spend Data Collection

Project level SCA expenditure

In terms of individual projects costs, as expected, block replacements and expansions are by far the most costly projects, using on average around £236k and £137k of SCA respectively per project. There is evidence to suggest that this may vary slightly between LAs and MATs, with LAs and MATs using around £261k and £140k of SCA per block replacement respectively, and around £148k and £119k per expansion project respectively.

After taking into account pupil numbers and gross internal floor area where available, MATs seem to spend more SCA per pupil and per m² on these projects. This is not an assessment of MAT efficiency, as we are only analysing SCA contribution and not whole project costs (as to do this we would need to collect more detailed information about the projects and would need to ensure that all supplementary funding was reported), but it does indicate that there may be some disparity.

The next most costly projects for both LAs and MATs are those that are condition related and, for LAs only, suitability projects. Again, this is as expected due to the nature of the works involved.

Standardised costs

For the first time in 2016 to 2017, we collected information on area so that we can calculate a standardised cost per m² for roofing, extension and new block projects. This has been repeated for 2017 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019. 193 out of 210 (92%) RBs that carried out these projects reported on area, covering 1,044 out of 1,369 (76%) applicable projects.

A range of costs were reported, as expected given the varied nature of these projects. There was no significant difference between the costs faced by MATs and LAs. On average, RBs spent around:

- £145 per m² of SCA on roofing projects
- £295 per m² of SCA on new permanent blocks
- £250 per m² of SCA on block extensions
- £209 per m² of SCA on new temporary blocks.

This provides standardised cost information but is not an assessment of efficiency and this does not reflect the total project costs, as these figures do not include supplementary funding.

Supplementary funding

When delivering capital projects, 44% of RBs reported using other funding streams to supplement SCA (covering 8% of projects). Within the 44%, the extent to which

supplementary funding is used varies greatly, from less than 1% to greater than 95% of total cost, with an average of around 28%. Proportionally more LAs reported use of supplementary funding than MATs (55% of LAs reported supplementary funding compared with 35% of MATs), though LAs used proportionally similar amounts (27% of total cost compared with 25% for MATs). This may reflect the variation in funding streams available to LAs and MATs.

SCA underspend

Some RBs, across both groups, reported that an amount of SCA was to be carried over to the next financial year as they had underspent their SCA in 2018 to 2019. For LAs, this is entirely possible and part of normal practice as SCA is not ring-fenced to a particular period. MATs can carry over up to 100% of their SCA allocation from 1 financial year to the next, as there are instances of works needing to be carried out across more than one financial year.

Reduced spending within a financial year can occur due to complications with planned works, sometimes due to matters beyond the control of the RB, for example:

- we are aware that where a RB is newly formed or acquires older buildings, there may be more long-term work needed to address condition
- good planning may mean that RBs deliver projects over a long period/making use of specific holiday periods, having established this is more effective than delivering works in a very short timescale or within a single financial year
- poor weather can be a factor in slowing works delivery and the closing months of a financial year often include this. All of the spend reported is for work effected but may include part delivery of projects subject to completion early in the next financial year.

As a result, grant conditions for SCA were amended for 2017 to 2018 onwards to make it easier for RBs to save up funding across more than one year, in order to deliver better value for money works, by enabling them to carry forward up to 100% of their SCA to the next financial year. In addition, guidance such as [Good Estate Management for Schools](#) is available for RBs to help them use their SCA effectively.

Estate management practices

Although RBs spend the majority of their SCA on condition, 55% of RBs said that condition was a short-term investment priority, and 45% said it was a long-term priority. However, 72% thought that they wouldn't or would only be able to partially meet their condition priorities. This is an increase of 10 percentage points since the 2017 to 2018 collection.

The most common ways that RBs allocated or prioritised funding were short and long term asset/estate management plans or strategies, condition surveys, and/or on a reactive basis. All responding RBs used condition surveys as one of the tools to allocate and prioritise funding.

Nearly all (99%) RBs said they had short and long-term asset/estate management plans or strategies; and carried out strategic property reviews, and regular and ad hoc condition surveys. A fifth of the asset/estate management plans or strategies are updated on an ad hoc basis, with the rest being updated regularly as appropriate. Most (94%) RBs carry out condition surveys on an ad hoc basis, only around 4% carry them out less than once every 3 years.

83% of MATs and LAs report that they employ staff in strategic property management dedicated to managing the estate and 80% report that this is currently sufficient to meet their needs, on the whole. Although, permanent staff are not expected to be funded from SCA as that must be used for capital expenditure only. This picture is encouraging and may confirm that larger MATs and LAs are more able to access the skills and information they need to manage the estate effectively. Of course, the survey does not offer any information about the quality of practice, and we know that a wide variety does exist. The [Good Estate Management for Schools](#) guidance and tools are, in part, intended to help with this.

Conclusion

SCA funding is a substantial part of the capital used to maintain the condition of schools. Based on the data we obtained from 90% of RBs receiving this funding in 2018 to 2019, it appears SCA is being used for its intended purpose.

RBs have assembled information to inform them of condition and other needs when deciding the allocation of funding to schools. The data indicates that RBs are using appropriate strategies to prioritise spend across their school estate.

Future data collections

The CSDC has been replaced by a new single Capital Spend Survey (CSS) covering both basic need and condition funding streams, which asks about capital spend on a project rather than annual basis. This will reduce burden on respondents and allow better industry standard information to be collected, enabling us to build on the evidence presented in this report and to increase awareness of how government funding issued to maintain the condition of the education estate.

Further information

Other information sources on GOV.UK:

- [Good Estate Management for Schools](#)
- [School resource management](#)
- [School capital funding](#)

Annexes

- [Annex A \(i\): Summary of capital spend data for multi-academy trusts \(MATs\)](#)
- [Annex A \(ii\): Summary of capital spend data for local authorities \(LAs\)](#)
- [Annex B: Generic Data Collection Template/Category Descriptors](#)



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