



Dedicated Schools Grant ‘Safety Valve’ Agreement: Salford

1. This agreement is between the Department for Education and Salford Local City Council, and covers the financial years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.
2. The authority undertakes to reach a positive in-year balance on its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) account by the end of 2022-23 and in each subsequent year. The authority undertakes to control and reduce the cumulative deficit as follows, not including any contribution made by the department through this agreement:

Year	Forecast DSG Deficit Profile at year end £m
2021-22	£22.5m
2022-23	£21.4m
2023-24	£20.1m
2024-25	£19.0m
2025-26	£15.1m

3. The authority agrees to implement the DSG management plan that it has set out. This includes action to:
 - 3.1. Deliver the SEND Thrive model, to increase early intervention, reduce the escalation of children’s needs and make adjustments for children and young people within their existing educational settings;
 - 3.2. Introduce an Ask Salford SEND advice line for SENCOs and SEN staff in educational settings, to support staff to apply the graduated approach and use the SEND Thrive model at the earliest stage;

- 3.3. Develop the LA's Post 16 pathway with dedicated staff to support planning with young people and their families;
 - 3.4. Perform a deep dive on all placements in independent and non-maintained schools to identify children and young people who should, with support and parental confidence, return to local provision at appropriate transition points;
 - 3.5. Introduce SEND Leads to work across clusters of schools and promote a strategic approach to SEND planning and delivery in Salford's schools. The leads should work to ensure collaboration across schools and consistent application of the graduated approach in order to support the appropriate management of demand for EHCPs;
 - 3.6. Review Salford's pathways to EHCP cessation where appropriate for children and young people, supported by dedicated staff to implement a clear pathway out of an EHCP;
 - 3.7. Develop particular services as required to meet children and young people's needs effectively, including the introduction of a SEND/Early Help pathway and the school based Speech and Language Therapy model;
 - 3.8. Continue implementation of the EHCP Hub digital case management system for the full EHCP process to increase efficiency and oversight, as well as parental confidence in the support available;
 - 3.9. Ensure robust decision making processes are in place, including thorough decision making panels, and to ensure collaborative working across the region regarding commissioning and placements.
4. The authority also agrees to ongoing monitoring of its performance in fulfilling this agreement. The authority will:
 - 4.1. Report quarterly (as a minimum) in writing to the Department (Funding Policy Unit) on its progress towards implementing the plan as per the conditions set in paragraphs 2 and 3;
 - 4.2. The monitoring reports should include progress against the conditions of grant and a financial dashboard detailing various metrics relating to demand and cost. DfE will provide a template for this;

- 4.3. Inform the Department (Funding Policy Unit) of any unforeseen difficulties or impacts of carrying out the agreement, or any significant risks to reaching the agreed financial position as soon as they arise;
- 4.4. Meet with the Department at any time when the Department deems it necessary to discuss progress towards the agreement.
5. The Department agrees to pay to the authority an additional **£6.6 million** of DSG before the end of the financial year 2021-22. In subsequent financial years, subject to compliance with the conditions set out in paragraph 3, the Department will pay DSG sums as follows. This funding will be provided in instalments and subject to continued satisfactory progress. Subject to full compliance, Salford should therefore eliminate their cumulative deficit no later than 2025-26.

Year	The Department agrees to pay to the authority an additional £m of DSG by year end
2021-22	£6.60m
2022-23	£4.00m
2023-24	£1.50m
2024-25	£1.50m
2025-26	£1.50m

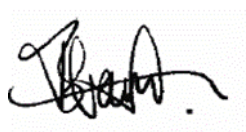
6. The Department has also sent a commission relating to your local authority's capital plans for the creation of new places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those requiring alternative provision (AP). It is critical that you are considering your revenue and capital plans holistically – in developing capital proposals, we fully expect local authorities to have a keen eye on the efficiencies that need to be made and how they can invest wisely to secure financially sustainable high needs systems.
7. As such, capital proposals will need to demonstrate how investment is aligned to, or further develops, the reform plans and savings outlined in this agreement. Proposals will need to focus on projects that can be delivered quickly to improve the local provision offer and meet identified gaps in local provision. The Department will assess and review proposals against set criteria which have been outlined in the commission. Subject to that

assessment, the Department will consider making a capital contribution to these plans in 2022-23 as a top-up to the local authority's High Needs Provision Allocation (HNPCA), which will be announced in Spring. Progress against delivery of those capital plans should then be integrated into your quarterly reporting to the department as part of the monitoring of your agreement.

8. This agreement is subject to review at any time, for example as a result of the following events:
 - 8.1. Higher or lower DSG formula funding levels for the authority in future financial years than those the authority has assumed;
 - 8.2. Significant changes to national SEND policy, for example as a result of the government SEND Review, which impact on elements of the plan;
 - 8.3. Insufficient progress being made towards the authority reaching and sustaining an in-year balance on its DSG account as set out in the plan;
 - 8.4. Whether Salford is awarded additional capital funding support following the capital application process.

The review process will include an assessment of the impact of the change in circumstances.

On behalf of Salford Local Authority, Signed by:



Tom Stannard - LA Chief Executive



Joanne Hardman – Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)



Melissa Caslake – Director of Children's Services

On behalf of the Department for Education, Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TG', written in a cursive style.

Tom Goldman – Deputy Director, Funding Policy Unit

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