



Department
for Education

Condition Spend Data Collection (CSDC)

**Data Collection Report
Financial year 2017-18**

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Contents

Summary	3
Who is this publication for?	3
Main points	3
Introduction	4
Background	4
School Condition Allocations	5
Condition Spend Data Collection	5
Methodology	6
Findings	7
Total SCA expenditure	7
Project level SCA expenditure	9
Standardised costs	9
Supplementary funding	10
SCA Underspend	10
Estate management practices	11
Conclusion	12
Future data collections	13
Further information	14
Annexes	15

Summary

This report provides readers with information about how School Condition Allocations funding was spent. It has been produced to provide readers with information about how School Condition Allocations (SCA) was spent on schools in the 2017-18 financial year.

Who is this publication for?

This report is for:

- Local authorities
- Multi-academy trusts 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 2017-18 financial year, was £547m (£436m for LAs and £110m for MATs). This represents 89% of the total allocation (90% for LAs and 85% for MATs)².
- SCA expenditure¹ in 2017-18 covered 6,394 schools (5,267 for LAs and 1,174 for MATs), which represents around 30% of schools within responding RBs (not all schools need condition works).
- As expected, RBs mostly use their SCA to fund condition projects (which accounted for around 57% of total SCA spend)³. They allocate between 6 and 10 percent of their SCA to each of: block replacements, compliance and H&S, 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 £427k and £151k of SCA respectively per project.

¹ SCA expenditure includes unspent SCA carried forward for the previous financial year (2016-17)

² For LAs, SCA is non-ring fenced capital grant. MATs can now carry forward up to 100% of their SCA funding. A number of RBs carried forward funding to the following financial year, which is why the proportion of SCA spent fell for MATs in 2017-18.

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 2017-18 financial year. SCA is a capital fund allocated on an annual basis to local authorities (LAs), larger multi-academy trusts (MATs)⁴, and Academy chains opted into SCA⁵ to maintain the condition of their school estate. These recipients together are referred to as Responsible Bodies (RBs) in the rest of this report.

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. Similarly, due to separate funding arrangements, the voluntary aided schools sector is not included in this report⁶.

The 2017-18 SCA allocated to LAs and MATs⁷ totalled £615 million, which was paid out to 272 RBs (151 LAs and 121 MATs⁸). The Condition Spend Data Collection (CSDC) asked for information from all RBs, of which 262 (96%) replied (93% of LAs and 100% of MATs). The CSDC asks for information on how RBs have spent their SCA. This year, 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 are given in Annex A. This is not a full picture of all works/repairs that have been delivered at all schools, only those that use SCA funding.

Background

The department has allocated over £7.4 billion between 2015-16 and 2019-20 to those responsible for maintaining and improving the school estate, supporting local authorities and academy trusts to maintain their school buildings. This includes funding allocated to RBs through the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) and Local Authority Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP) programmes as well as SCA and DFC. The department is also rebuilding or refurbishing buildings at over 500 schools through the Priority School Building Programme . Information on the PSBP can be found at [Priority School Building Programme: overview](#).

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; e.g. the department (DfE) published [Good Estate Management for Schools](#), which sets out the fundamental policies and processes that schools need to

⁴ Larger MATs: those responsible for at least 5 schools and 3,000 pupils.

⁵ Chained MATs: smaller MATs that have formed a chain and opted in to receive SCA funding.

⁶ 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.

⁷ SCA is also allocated to Voluntary aided schools, but these are not yet covered by the Condition Spend Data Collection, and so not included in this report.

⁸ Including Academy Chains that have opted in to SCA funding

have in place to manage their estate, and includes advice on maintenance to assist RBs in delivering the maintenance of facilities and to comply with prevailing legislation.

School Condition Allocations

SCA was first introduced for the 2015-16 financial year. Along with CIF and LCVAP, SCA replaced the department's previous maintenance funding streams (e.g. the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund (ACMF)) to provide RBs with capital funding. SCA (totaling £615m in 2017-18) 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 in general should tackle poor building condition, substantial energy efficiency/improvement, 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, i.e. 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 an estate; e.g. via a MAT sponsor.

CSDC did not include works carried out directly by the department, e.g. 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, this year 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 RBs (272) in receipt of SCA were asked to complete a CSDC return. We received responses from 262 (141 LAs and 121 MATs), giving us a 96% response rate (93% for LAs and 100% 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 258 (i.e. a response rate of 95%), covering 88% 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 spending⁹ in total £547m of SCA in 2017-18 (£436m for LAs and £110m for MATs). This represents 89% of the £615m allocated (90% for LAs and 85% for MATs), and enables us to draw some broad conclusions on how it has been spent. In 2017-18, SCA expenditure covered 6,394 schools (5,267 for LAs and 1174 for MATs¹⁰), 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 2017-18 than 2016-17, as more RBs are now eligible for SCA funding.

As expected, RBs mostly use their SCA to fund condition projects (around 57%), as shown in Table 1. They also allocate between 6 and 10 percent of their SCA each to block replacements, compliance and H&S, expansion, and suitability. However, if you look at LAs and MATs separately (Tables 2 and 3), MATs use proportionally higher amounts for compliance and H&S, and suitability (15-17% compared with 4-9% for LAs); and proportionally less on block replacements (around 4% compared with around 9% for LAs) and condition projects (around 46% compared with around 59% 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 H&S needs, which are not necessarily available to MATs (e.g. 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 each financial year from 2014-15 to 2017-18. LAs spent proportionately less on block replacements in 2016-17 and 2017-18 than previously, but given the different samples in all years and the fact there are only three data points, this may not be a reflection of a permanent change in practices.

⁹ SCA expenditure includes unspent SCA carried forward for the previous financial year (2016-17)

¹⁰ These total to more than 6,203 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
2017-18	8%	57%	9%	1%	9%	7%	9%	258
2016-17	6%	59%	9%	1%	8%	7%	9%	218
2015-16	10%	61%	7%	1%	6%	9%	5%	163

Table 1: Responsible Body use of School Condition Allocation by broad work type, value and proportion, 2015-16 – 2017-18

Source: ESFA analysis of Condition Spend Data Collection

	Block replacement	Condition	Compliance and H&S	Accessibility	Expansion	Suitability	Other	No. RBs
2017-18	9%	59%	9%	1%	10%	4%	8%	141
2016-17	7%	61%	7%	2%	8%	5%	10%	133
2015-16	12%	63%	6%	1%	6%	7%	4%	108

Table 2: Local Authority use of School Condition Allocation by broad work type, value and proportion, 2015-16 – 2017-18

Source: ESFA analysis of Condition Spend Data Collection

	Block replacement	Condition	Compliance and H&S	Accessibility	Expansion	Suitability	Other	No. RBs
2017-18	4%	46%	15%	1%	9%	17%	8%	117
2016-17	2%	47%	17%	1%	10%	17%	6%	85
2015-16	2%	50%	12%	1%	9%	18%	9%	55
2014-15 ¹	5%	51%	12%	1%	7%	16%	8%	18

Table 3: Multi Academy Trust use of School Condition Allocation by broad work type, value and proportion, 2014-15 – 2017-18

Source: ESFA analysis of Condition Spend Data Collection

1. Relates to ACMF, not SCA. ACMF was replaced by SCA from April 2015

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 £427k and £151k 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 £440k and £331k of SCA per block replacement respectively, and around £167k and £110k 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 costs¹¹, 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 2016-17, 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 2017-18. The response rate was good given that this was the second time respondents were asked to report on area - 159 out of 256 (62%) RBs that carried out these projects reported on area, covering 909 out of 1973 (46%) 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:

- £112 per m² of SCA on roofing projects,
- £407 per m² of SCA on new permanent blocks
- £454 per m² of SCA on block extensions, and
- £298 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.

¹¹ To assess whole project costs, we would also need to know the amount of other funding used as well as more project details than are collected through CSDC. We are not confident that all other supplementary funding has been reported for all projects. Therefore, we have not attempted to assess total project costs in this report.

Supplementary funding

When delivering capital projects, 42% of RBs reported using other funding streams to supplement SCA (covering 11% of projects). Within the 42%, the extent to which supplementary funding is used varies greatly, from less than 1% to 88% of total cost, with an average of around 20%. Proportionally more LAs reported use of supplementary funding than MATs (51% of LAs reported supplementary funding compared with 27% of MATs); and LAs used proportionally higher amounts (22% of total cost compared with 18% for MATs). This again 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 (i.e. they had underspent their SCA in 2017-18). 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 a RB; examples of which are given below.

- From our Property Data Survey and other records we have from surveyors inspecting parts of an estate, 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 2017-18 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. From the 2017-18 financial year, MATs and academy chains in receipt of SCA can carry forward up to 100% of their SCA into the following financial year. In addition, the department has updated its guidance for RBs to help them use

their SCA effectively. This includes new Good Estate Management for Schools¹² guidance and updated advice from Essential School Maintenance¹³.

Estate management practices

Although RBs spend the majority of their SCA on condition, half of RBs said that condition was a short-term investment priority, and half said it was a long-term priority. That said, 62% thought that they wouldn't or would only be able to partially meet their condition priorities.

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 (98%) 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 adhoc basis, with the rest being updated regularly as appropriate. Most (87%) RBs carry out condition surveys on an ad hoc basis, only around 5% carry them out less than once every 3 years.

More often than not, MATs and LAs employ staff in strategic property management dedicated to managing the estate; and they report that this is currently sufficient to meet their needs, on the whole. (Note: Permanent staff are not expected to be funded from SCA that must be used for capital expenditure.)

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 exist¹⁴. The Good Estate Management Guide for Schools¹⁵ guidance and tools are, in part, intended to help with this.

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/essential-school-maintenance-a-guide-for-schools>

¹⁴ <https://www.nao.org.uk/report/capital-funding-for-schools/>

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools>

Conclusion

SCA funding is a substantial part of the capital used to maintain the condition of schools. Based on the data we obtained from 96% of RBs receiving this funding in 2017-18, 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 is being repeated in 2019, in relation to SCA spend undertaken during 2018-19. This will enable 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.

It is planned that in future there will be a new single Capital Spend Survey 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. We hope to introduce the new single data collection in 2020.

Further information

Other information sources on GOV.UK:

- [Good Estate Management for Schools](#)
- [Schools financial health and efficiency](#)
- [Capital funding for multi-academy trusts \(MATs\)](#)
- [School capital funding allocations: 2015 to 2018](#)

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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