



Dedicated Schools Grant ‘Safety Valve’ Agreement: Bracknell Forest

1. This agreement is between the Department for Education and Bracknell Forest Borough Council, and covers the financial years from 2023-24 to 2029-30.
2. The authority undertakes to reach a positive in-year balance on its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) account by the end of 2029-30 and in each subsequent year. The authority undertakes to control and reduce the cumulative deficit as follows:

Year	Maximum Forecast DSG Deficit Profile at Year End ¹ £m
2023-24	£24.1m
2024-25	£30.2m
2025-26	£34.4m
2026-27	£37.2m
2027-28	£38.6m
2028-29	£38.8m
2029-30	£16.0m

3. The authority agrees to implement the action plan that it has set out. This includes action to:

3.1 Strengthen early intervention services and work with schools to build an inclusive culture, so that more children and young people’s needs are met within mainstream education;

3.2 Expand local provision through building a new autism free school and SEMH free school alongside expanding existing specialist resource provisions (SRPs), utilising them as centres of excellence which will provide outreach services across the local authority;

¹ This profile includes contributions that the council will make from its own resources to reduce the DSG deficit.

- 3.3 Pioneer the use of technology in establishing an efficient service to support children and young people who are unable to attend school due to medical needs;
- 3.4 Review the process for commissioning and managing independent sector placements;
- 3.5 Improve the way high need services work with local health services.
4. The authority also agrees to ongoing monitoring of its performance in fulfilling this agreement. The authority will:
- 4.1 Report tri-annually (as a minimum) in writing to the Department (Funding Policy Unit) on its progress towards implementing the plan as per the conditions set out 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 **£6.40 million** of DSG before the end of the financial year 2023-24. In subsequent financial years, subject to compliance with the conditions set out in paragraph 3, the Department will pay DSG sums as below. This funding will be provided in instalments and subject to continued satisfactory progress. Subject to full compliance, Bracknell Forest Borough Council should therefore eliminate their cumulative deficit no later than 2029-30.

Year	The Department agrees to pay to the authority an additional £m of DSG by year end
2023-24	£6.40m
2024-25	£1.37m
2025-26	£1.37m
2026-27	£1.37m
2027-28	£1.37m
2028-29	£1.37m
2029-30	£2.75m

6. This agreement is subject to review at any time, for example as a result of the following events:

6.1 Higher or lower DSG formula funding levels for the authority in future financial years than those the authority has assumed;

6.2 Significant changes to national SEND policy, for example as a result of the government SEND Improvement Plan, which impact on elements of the plan;

6.3 Insufficient progress being made towards the authority reaching and sustaining an in-year balance on its DSG account as set out in the plan;

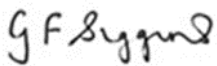
6.4 Whether Bracknell Forest Borough Council is awarded additional capital funding support following the capital application process.

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

On behalf of Bracknell Forest Council, signed by:



Susan Halliwell, Chief Executive (08/03/2024)



Grainne Siggins, Director of Children's Services (08/03/2024)



Stuart McKellar, Director of Finance and S151 Officer (08/03/2024)

On behalf of the Department for Education, signed by:



Tom Goldman – Deputy Director, Funding Policy Unit