



Dedicated Schools Grant ‘Safety Valve’ Agreement: Devon

1. This agreement is between the Department for Education and Devon County Council, and covers the financial years from 2023-24 to 2031-32.
2. The authority undertakes to reach a positive in-year balance on its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) account by the end of 2026-27 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	£153.4m
2024-25	£155.9m
2025-26	£160.9m
2026-27	£153.1m
2027-28	£144.9m
2028-29	£136.3m
2029-30	£127.3m
2030-31	£118.0m
2031-32	£95.0m

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

3.1 Focus on improving early intervention through strengthened universal and targeted support;

3.2 Develop shared pathways into adulthood across the local system, supporting young people (14-25yrs) to access appropriate education and training and ensure a planned transition into employment, independent living, or identified next setep in adult life;

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

- 3.3 Ensure appropriate local provision is available as far as practicable to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND across Devon, including sufficient special school places, the establishment of Specialist Resource Provision and improved use of Alternative Provision;
 - 3.4 Improve processes and use of data to make informed decisions about how the council spends money to support children and young people with SEND in a timely way;
 - 3.5 Work with partners to improve the inclusive capacity of Devon's mainstream schools and settings by ensuring high quality Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP) is available consistently as part of a robust graduated approach. This work will be supported by four Locality SEND Advisory Teachers;
 - 3.6 Work with partners to improve the way services in Devon, including health services and schools, work together to provide seamless cross-service support for children and families.
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 £38.00 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, Devon County Council should therefore eliminate their cumulative deficit no later than 2031-32.

Year	The Department agrees to pay to the authority an additional £m of DSG by year end
2023-24	£38.00m
2024-25	£6.33m
2025-26	£6.33m
2026-27	£6.33m
2027-28	£6.33m
2028-29	£6.33m
2029-30	£6.33m
2030-31	£6.33m
2031-32	£12.69m

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 Devon County 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 Devon County Council, signed by:



Donna Manson, Chief Executive (11/03/2024)



Stuart Collins, Director of Children's Services (11/03/2024)



Angie Sinclair, Director of Finance & Public Value and S151 Officer (11/03/2024)

On behalf of the Department for Education, signed by:



Tom Goldman – Deputy Director, Funding Policy Unit