

DfE updates and changes – July to September 2023

Special educational needs in England: January 2023 **National Statistics**

1. Information from the school census on pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and SEN provision in schools [Link](#) published 22/06/23

2. Wiltshire's position: The published information is taken from the school census, completed by both state funded and independent schools. The census data indicates that nationally, the proportion of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) has increased from 4% to 4.3%. In Wiltshire, the increase has been from 4.3% to 4.6%. The number of pupils in receipt of SEN Support has increased nationally from 12.6% to 13%. In Wiltshire, the increase has been from 13% to 14.7%. The most frequent SEND need nationally for pupils with an EHCP is ASD and for those in receipt of SEN Support it is speech, language and communication needs. This is reflected in the Wiltshire data for these pupil groups.

Home-to-school travel

3. Local authorities' responsibilities when making home-to-school travel arrangements for children of compulsory school age. Change made: The statutory guidance has been updated to help local authorities perform their functions in relation to home to school travel for children of compulsory school age [Link](#) updated 29/06/23

4. Wiltshire's position: The update was a very light touch and as such there are no significant updates to introduce. Officers will review these in the coming weeks before drafting new home to school travel policies for mainstream and SEND pupils and gaining cabinet member approval where necessary.

Local authority school places scorecards 2022 **Official Statistics**

5. The scorecards display a snapshot of the progress local authorities are making in delivering good-quality school places [Link](#) published 29/06/23

6. Wiltshire's position: The Scorecard presents data supplied by the Council as part of the annual School Capacity data collection (SCAP). This shows that the Council had 18.1% of primary school places unfilled in 2021/22, with 18% of secondary places also unfilled. By 2024/25 this is forecast to increase to 18.7% at primary level but reduce to 13.7% at secondary level.

The scorecard also reports that Wiltshire achieved higher than the national average for the number of children offered one of their preferences, or their top preference, when making school applications at both primary and secondary level.

The scorecard also reports on the accuracy of pupil forecasts that have been provided in previous years. The Wiltshire forecasts were a 2.2% overestimation at primary level and a 1.1% overestimation at secondary level.

All state secondary schools now have a life-saving defibrillator **Press Release**

7. 5,435 defibrillators have been delivered to 3,066 secondary schools in England [Link](#) published 30/06/23

8. Wiltshire's position: In line with this press release, all Wiltshire Secondary Schools have received these.

Serious youth violence research programme [Research and analysis](#)

9. Reports which explore how systems of support may protect young people from, or expose them to, involvement in serious youth violence [Link](#) published 29/06/23

10. Wiltshire's position: Local activity in this area is lead through the Serious Violence Duty and development of a focused deterrence model (FD) which is the recommended approach by Youth Endowment foundation. A Home Office bid is being prepared by the Youth Justice Service and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for submission this month.

Attainment in maths and writing SATS increases compared to 2022 [Press Release](#)

11. Key Stage 2 results show an improvement in the majority of subjects as pupils continue to catch up from the pandemic [Link](#) published 11/07/23

12. Wiltshire's position: Key Stage 2 Attainment in mathematics in Wiltshire is below National in 2023 and is a priority area of focus for 2023-2024.

Length of school week [Guidance](#)

13. Non-statutory guidance and case studies for schools in England wanting to increase the length of their school week, including those delivering below the minimum 32.5 hours, Change made: 'Minimum expectation on length of the school week: information note' has been replaced by 'Length of the school week: non-statutory guidance' and 'Length of the school week: case studies' [Link](#)
Updated 17/07/23

14. Wiltshire's position: The non-statutory guidance has been communicated to schools, a number have chosen to review their school week in light of the minimum 32.5 hours, have consulted their communities and made changes accordingly.

New plan to deliver high quality PE and sport for all pupils [Press Release](#) [Press Release](#)

15. Government confirms two-year plan to boost quality and equal access to PE and sport [Link](#) published 19/07/23

16. Wiltshire's position: This information and communication has been cascaded to schools through our regular newsletters.

Record funding for schools in England [Press Release](#)

17. Schools in England to receive highest ever funding rates in 2024-25 [Link](#) published 17/07/23

18. Wiltshire's position: The Department for Education (DfE) have increased the overall quantum of funding through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the 2024-25 financial year for all schools. The DSG is separate to local authority funding – being a grant which is broken down into four constituent elements.

- Schools Block - funds mainstream schools
- High Needs Block - funds special schools, Resource Bases and SEN Teams
- Central Services Block - funds statutory services such as Admissions, Place Planning
- Early Years Block - funds Nursery and Early years places

Each of the blocks is subject to a different formula to calculate the funding for the ensuing year, apart from the Early years Block which is adjusted based upon the 'take-up' of places by parents.

The table below sets out the increase in funding for each of the Blocks, (based upon consistent pupil numbers and factors for comparator purposes.)

| | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | Increase | % |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Schools Block | 355,982,301 | 366,935,033 | 10,952,732 | 3.08% |
| High Needs Block | 67,017,114 | 72,967,232 | 5,950,118 | 8.88% |
| Central Services Block | 2,600,176 | 2,653,884 | 53,708 | 2.07% |
| TOTAL | 425,599,591 | 442,556,149 | 16,956,558 | 3.98% |

The increase in the Schools Block incorporates the Mainstream Schools Additional grant awarded as a separate grant in the 2023-24 year.

The increase in funding is welcomed by schools and the Council, however there are cost pressures being faced by schools which more than offset the increase in funding and include

- Teachers pay award of 6.5% (3% of this award is being centrally funded by the DfE)
- Unfunded Support Staff pay award of approx. £2,600 per FTE, (£1,925 plus on-costs)
- Contractual inflation of 9% (July 2023)
- Food Inflation of 17.4% (June 2023)

Impact for One-Form Entry Primary School

The net impact of the increased funding for 2024-25 does not present a positive picture and leaves schools with an underlying cost pressure. A generic small (one-form entry) primary school can be used to demonstrate the position.

| | Cost Base | % Unfunded | Cost Pressure |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|----------------|
| Teachers Pay Award | £500,000 | 3.5% | £17,500 |
| Support Staff Pay Award | £2,600 | 9 FTE's | £23,400 |
| Non-Pay Costs | £200,000 | 9% | £18,000 |
| Approx cost pressure | | | £58,900 |
| Income Uplift | £1,070,000 | 3.08% | £32,956 |
| Gap | | | £25,944 |

School Reserves

Maintained schools are required to submit three-year budget plans to the Council. The budget plans set out the level of reserves being held by schools. The projected cumulative reserves of schools are set to fall from **£6m to £2.5m in two years' time** and falling to a cumulative deficit in three-years' time.

Officers will continue to work with maintained school leaders on their strategic financial plans to mitigate this position, on an individual school basis however it is important to raise awareness of the cost pressures being faced by schools.

Families first for children (FFC pathfinder programme **Policy Paper)**

19. Information about the FFC pathfinder and family networks pilot (FNP) that will work with local authorities to deliver children's social care reform [Link](#) published 26/07/23

20. Wiltshire's position: We continue to be involved in the development of the new reforms, Dorset being a pathfinder from the South West, with our Corporate Director and DCS being the regional ADCS chair will ensure we have close links with the progress and learning.

Improving multi-agency information sharing **Policy Paper**

21. Change made: Updated information about the delivery of the Operation Encompass scheme. The correction slip details the amends [Link](#) updated 10/08/23

22. Wiltshire's position: We are pleased the pursuit of a unique ID for every child is gathering momentum to help unlock barriers to effective and safe information sharing. Through our integrated Liquid Logic case management solution we have made great strides in ensuring practitioners and managers have access to information they need to perform their duties. Our mature level of information sharing informs strategic decision making and scrutiny via, for example, our Performance & Outcomes Board, and includes multi-agency activity such as through our successful Supporting Families Programme. We are currently reviewing the example innovations provided in the report to identify any further opportunities in this area.

School land: decisions about disposals **Transparency Data**

23. Change made: Added 22 schools to the list of approved applications for the disposal of school land. Added 1 school to list of applications not approved for disposal [Link](#) updated 11/08/23

24. Wiltshire's position: No Wiltshire schools were added to list of approved/not approved applications for the disposal of school land.

Parental responsibility measures attendance census **Guidance**

25. How local authorities should collect and submit data for the annual attendance measures census, change made Updated with dates for 2023 census and a link to the guidance [Link](#) update 15/08/23

26. Wiltshire's position: As in previous years, the Education Welfare Service and the Performance & Insights team will collate and submit data to DfE on the parental responsibility measures for attendance used in Wiltshire to improve attendance in schools. The DfE will publish the full England data set in December 2023, and the subsequent regular attendance report to the children's select committee will include data on penalty notices, attendance case management, parenting orders, parenting contracts and education supervision orders

Government praises students as grading systems return to normal [Press Release](#)

27. Grades this summer are expected to be lower than last year due to the way they were assessed [Link](#) published 17/08/23

28. Wiltshire's position: Wiltshire Council has congratulated students for their dedication and hard work as secondary schools and colleges open early for results day

There is a dedicated results day page on the Work Wiltshire website at <https://workwiltshire.co.uk/results-day/> with details of the support and advice available. For those thinking about starting an apprenticeship after A Levels, information and registration details can be found <https://workwiltshire.co.uk/home/apprenticeships/>.