

De-delegation for statutory services provided to maintained schools only

Briefing Note for Schools Forum representatives of maintained schools

15 January 2026

At the meeting of the Schools Forum held on 10 December 2025, votes on de-delegation for statutory services for maintained schools was deferred until the next meeting in January, as noted in the minutes:

5.9 The local authority-maintained schools felt that they could not vote at this meeting on the de-delegation as they had not had time to consult with their colleagues. The vote on this part of the agenda was therefore deferred until the January 2026 meeting. TD agreed to circulate a bullet point summary of the key issues to assist in consultation.

Summary of the key issues:

- All the items are for statutory services, the local authority (LA) by law has to provide them for all maintained schools. They therefore cannot be traded, as the LA would have to provide them whether or not a school opted to buy-in.
- For some services, there are:
 - statutory elements that have to be provided to all schools including academies (funded by the Central School Services Block and which were agreed at the December 2025 forum);
 - statutory elements that have to be provided to maintained schools only (the subject of this vote); and
 - non statutory support that can be traded.
- Finance and HR are two examples of such services.
- Statutory elements of services are often the less visible aspects, as they involve maintaining systems, providing information on behalf of schools to government, etc.
- The amount de-delegated for each school is determined by setting an amount per pupil, so the amount paid is in proportion to the size of the school.
- As more maintained schools have converted to become academies, the amount de-delegated has therefore decreased as there are fewer pupils in maintained schools. The local authority has only a limited ability to reduce costs as the number of maintained schools decreases, as the time taken to perform the duties generally does not reduce in proportion to the reduction in schools.
- However, in order to protect maintained schools from disproportionate increases in de-delegation costs, the local authority has limited any increases in the amount per pupil to broadly inflationary increases (the above inflation increase in the amount per pupil in 2025/26 followed four years of zero increases). The proposed increase per pupil in 2026/27 is 2% for statutory School Assurance Services and a small reduction for other

statutory services, following a review of costs for monitoring national curriculum assessments.

- For academies, the services relating to these de-delegated amounts would instead form part of the top-slice for central Trust services.