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## Schools forum

Schools forum is a forum used by LA to consult on:

- Any proposed changes to the school funding formula including the financial effect of any such change
- The terms of a proposed contract for supplies and services where the estimated value of the proposed public services contract is not less than the specific threshold which applies to the LA
- The LAs function relating to the schools budget in connection with education of pupils with special educational needs, early years education, use of pupil referral units, education of children otherwise than at school, insurance, free school meals, allocation of central government grants and scheme for the financing of schools.

Schools forums generally have a consultative role. However, there are situations in which they have decision making powers. The overarching areas on which schools forums make decisions on local authority proposals are:

- De-delegation from mainstream maintained schools budgets (separate approval will be required by the primary and secondary phase members of schools forum), for prescribed services to be provided centrally
- To create a fund for significant pupil growth in order to support the local authority's duty for place planning (basic need), including pre-opening and diseconomy of scale costs, and agree the criteria for maintained schools and academies to access this fund
- To create a fund for falling rolls for good or outstanding schools if the schools' surplus capacity is likely to be needed within the next three years to meet rising pupil numbers and agree the criteria for maintained schools and academies to access this fund
- Agreeing other centrally retained budgets, including for local authority statutory responsibilities (where these relate to maintained schools only, voting is by the primary, secondary, special and PRU members of schools forum)
- Funding for central early years expenditure, which may include funding for checking eligibility of pupils for an early years place, the early years pupil premium and/or free school meals
- Authorising a reduction in the schools budget in order to fund a deficit arising in central expenditure, or from de-delegated services, which is to be carried forward from a previous funding period. Local authorities require schools forum approval in order to move up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks
- In each of these cases, the local authority can appeal to the Secretary of State if the schools forum rejects its proposal.

### Schools forum committee reports

School forum committee reports are located on the Ealing Council website on [Ealing schools forum](#). Ealing's schools forum meets 4 times a year, usually in January, April, June and November.

Please see the following link for more information about schools forum and their powers

[DfE guidance on schools forum best practice \(GOV.UK\)](#)

#### Related content

[Scheme for financing schools](#)

[Cyber security in schools](#)

#### Related services

[School finance 2025/26](#)

#### Was this page useful?

- [Yes](#)
- [Neutral](#)
- [No](#)

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