



Education Partners

11 December 2024

Dear colleagues,

As you'll be aware, the Welsh Government's 2025-26 Draft Budget was published yesterday and the Local Government Settlement today. You will have also seen a Written Statement issued by the Cabinet Secretary for Education last week regarding additional in-year funding for Education.

I wanted to write to you with some further details following these publications.

The education sector is set to benefit from **£225.5m** in funding, with schools, colleges and other settings receiving funding to help meet the needs of learners across Wales. The funding will be made up of **£114m** additional funding for 2024-25 and **£111.5m** allocated in the 2025-26 Draft Budget.

The additional funding for 2024-25 includes the following for the school sector:

- **£20m** to support schools and settings through the School Standards element of Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG) to improve standards. This will be issued via the LAEG in the coming weeks and will provide allocations specifically for schools, EOTAS and non-maintained settings.
- **£10m** for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision across Wales to meet the needs of children and young people with ALN. This will also be issued via the LAEG in the coming weeks and will boost current ALN funding in the Reform element of the grant.
- **£5m** for additional ALNCO support in schools, which was announced in September. This will be issued via the LAEG in the coming weeks and will provide an allocation for schools and PRUs.
- **£31m** of capital funding through the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme, to be used for school repairs and maintenance as well as Hwb. Capital maintenance grant award letters will be issued in the new year.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

- **£18m** to support the 5.5% increase to teacher's pay. This funding has already been awarded to local authorities via the LAEG.

To support our priorities into 2025-26, we have provisionally allocated £111.5m of additional funding through the Draft Budget for schools and tertiary education. This includes the following in relation to the school sector:

- An additional **£7m** is allocated to support school attendance to enable a package of interventions aimed at tackling disaffection, engaging families and supporting learners to attend education. This includes £6m to boost funding to local authorities via the LAEG, to increase the number of Family Engagement Officers (FEOs), provide funding for Community Focussed Schools (CFS) and to support additional enrichment and engagement activities. A further £1m will be allocated to expand the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) in line with our Programme for Government commitment with the programme now worth £5.8m next year. This underlines the commitment to increase attendance levels to at least where they were before the pandemic.
- Literacy and numeracy are the building blocks of learning and we are investing an additional **£10m** to support learning and attainment in these areas. This will provide essential funding for national support programmes to enhance teaching in literacy and numeracy, including phonics support, together with specific and targeted interventions to support learners struggling with literacy and numeracy. This recognises the importance of consistent and high-quality professional learning and support to raise standards for every child. It will also include funding of initiatives aimed at increasing the range and quality of information available nationally on learners' attainment. From this package of additional support, £2.5m will be allocated to local authorities through the LAEG to increase their capacity to support schools locally and to embed approaches delivered through the national programmes.
- An extra **£14.3m** will support delivery of ALN, including £10m via the Reform strand of the LAEG, £2m for national consistency and upskilling of the workforce through national professional learning, and £2.3m to support learners in independent specialist post-16 placements.
- A boost in funding for school standards to help manage the financial pressures experienced by schools with an extra **£7.8m** through the School Standards strand of the LAEG.
- The extra **£28m** capital in our educational estate through the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme will support standards by providing an environment that encourages higher attendance and attainment and supporting communities across Wales.

This is all in addition to the proposed increase of **£253m (4.3%)** to the Local Government settlement in 2025-26, which recognises the powerful points that local authority partners and our schools have made around pressures to deliver upon the statutory responsibility for ALN and wider education provision.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our incredible education workforce and wider education partners for all their hard work and all that they achieve day in, day out, to support learners across Wales.

I'd also like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year and look forward to our continued work together in 2025.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Georgina Haarhoff', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Georgina Haarhoff
Interim Director of Education
Welsh Government