



Schools Forum

Report title: Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25 Early Years Block

Report 3 of 4

Date: 18 January 2024

Key decision: No

Item no: 7

Outline and recommendations

The focus of this report is the Early Years (EY) Block.

The report provides detail on funding arrangements to support the extension of the EY Offer.

Schools Forum is asked to note the report.

Agree the funding formula for 2024/25 as set out in this report.

- Three-and-four-year-old funding.
- Two-year-old funding – Deprivation, Working Parent and under-two-year-old offer.

It is intended that the formula continues to match the current format previously agreed with schools forum as far as possible. With regards to two-year-old funding, the hourly rate to providers has been set at £9.22, which is the current rate being paid following the additional supplementary funding effective from Sept 2023.

There is however a requirement to consult with providers following schools forum agreement, noting however, that the final decision rests with the LA.

Note funding remains indicative and as such there is a requirement to establish suitable contingency.

Note the added responsibilities with regards to Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF).

Note that the 5% central hold back is now extended across all elements of the offer with the expectation that this will reduce going forward. A verbal update on the EY strategy will be provided at this meeting by the Head of EY – followed by a more detailed paper in Summer, to forum.

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Timeline of engagement and decision-making

- Late December 2023 announcement of the funding formula from DFE.
- 18th January 2024 – consideration and agreement of hourly rates by schools forum – expectation that Forum has sufficient membership of providers.
- Consultation with providers to inform of proposed hourly rates.
- School advised of funding late February (part of wider funding settlement), all other providers **MUST** have their hourly rates confirmed by end of March 2024 at latest.

1.1 Purpose of Report

- 1.2. This report provides detailed context of the various **EY ENTITLEMENTS** for 2024/24 and associated DSG as announced in the December 2023 and the DSG 2024/25 EY Block.
- 1.3. Report 1, on this Agenda confirmed the overall funding for the DSG. This showed an increase of £15.38m (*Table 1*). As stated in the main report, the EY Block remains provisional until the final data cleanse associated with January 2024 and January 2025. As such it remains important that sufficient contingency/allowance is factored in, as funding is based on the two counts as stated, however, allocation is based on termly counts of summer (12 weeks), autumn (12 weeks) and spring (14 weeks).

Table 1

EY Block	
	£m
2024/25	40.23
2023/24	24.84
Net Increase	15.38

- 1.4. Table 2 below provides a more detailed breakdown – which notes £4.3m increase in funding (on a like for like part time equivalent numbers) representing an 18% increase in funding. The table also notes additional funding of £11m to support new responsibilities/extension of the EY Entitlement Offer. Paragraphs following this table will explore further details with regards to each funding and EY offer.

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Table 2

	2023/24	2024/25	Difference	Part Time Pupil Numbers	Increase in Funding
	Hourly Rate				
	£	£	£		£m
3 & 4 Year Old - Current Offer					
Indicative funding allocation for universal entitlement for three-and-four-olds (£s)	6.33	7.24	0.91	4,197.25	£2.177
Indicative funding allocation for additional 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of three-and-four-olds (£s)	6.33	7.24	0.91	1,744.22	£0.905
Disability Access Funding				156.00	£0.018
Indicative funding allocation for EY pupil premium for three-and-four-olds (£s)				259.14	£0.009
Indicative supplementary funding allocation for maintained nursery schools (£s)	4.48	5.47	0.99	158.00	£0.089
two-year-old - Current Offer					
Indicative funding allocation for two-year-old disadvantaged entitlement (£s)	7.52	10.64	3.12	650.39	£1.157
Total Increase in Funding Current Offer					£4.354
two-year-old - New					
Indicative funding allocation for two-year-old working parent entitlement (£s)	0	10.64	10.64	1,065.21	£6.460
Indicative funding allocation for under twos entitlement (£s)	0	14.52	14.52	539.69	£4.467
Indicative funding allocation for EY pupil premium for two-year-olds (£s)				148.37	£0.058
Indicative funding allocation for EY pupil premium for under twos (£s)				7.42	£0.003
Funding allocation for disability access fund for two-year-olds (£s)				31.00	£0.028
Funding allocation for disability access fund for under twos (£s)				12.00	£0.011
Total Increase in Funding for Extended Offer					£11.026
Total Movement in Funding (PROVISIONAL ALLOCATION)					£15.381

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2. Funding rates

- 2.1 The EY national funding formulae (EYNFF) are used to determine the hourly funding rates to fund individual local authorities for the EY entitlements.
- 2.2. With the introduction of the new working parent entitlements for 2024 to 2025, DfE will be providing each local authority with **3 separate hourly funding rates** as follows:
- an hourly funding rate for 9-months-olds up to 2-years for the new working parent entitlement (**from 1 September 2024**) @ **£14.52 (this is new funding)**. It is not clear why the allocation given is based on 38 weeks when the scheme doesn't start till September 2024).
 - an hourly funding rate for two-year-olds which will be the same for both the disadvantaged and the working parent entitlements (from 1 April 2024) @ **£10.64 (£7.52 increase of £3.12, but please note this covers Teachers pay award and Employers Contributions to the Teachers' Pensions Scheme from April 2024)**.
 - an hourly funding rate for 3 and 4-year-olds for the universal and additional hours entitlements @ **£7.24 (£6.33 2023/24 increase of 91p, but please note this covers teachers' pay award and Employers Contributions to the Teachers' Pension scheme from April 2024)**.
- 2.3. Schools Forum should note:
- that local authorities' hourly funding rate for three-and-four-year-olds in 2024/ 2025 includes funding for teachers' pay and pensions. In 2023/2024 DfE mainstreamed the funding previously distributed through the teachers' pay grant (TPG) and the teachers' pension employer contribution grant (TPECG).
 - In 2024/2025, DfE have also mainstreamed the funding being provided in respect of the **September 2023 teachers' pay award**, as well as the additional funding to support providers with the **costs of employer contributions to the teachers' pension scheme which are due to increase from April 2024**. Schools Forum will note that in 2023/24, the Quality Factor was introduced to provide targeted funding for providers with Teaching Staff.
 - The two-year-old hourly rate has been **pegged at the current £9.22** (effective from September 2023, this incorporates deprivation at present and may be an area for review in the future.
 - Local authorities will continue to be funded for EY provision through the EY block in the DSG. There will continue to be a mid-year adjustment to the EY block of the DSG, based on data from the EY, school, and alternative provision censuses.
 - Local Authorities receive funding based on the January counts, however, allocate funding based on ACTUAL's per the 3 termly counts:
 - Summer (12 weeks)
 - Autumn (12 Weeks)
 - Spring (14 weeks)
 - It therefore remains crucial that:
 - Contingency is factored into any local formula to manage any drift between monies receivable and paid to providers.
 - Equally where the funding is managed centrally e.g. SENIF, there is regard that the budget is provisional and subject to change if indeed the final pupil numbers vary from the indicative.
 - The 5% LA holdback has now been extended to two-year-old funding. Our understanding is this will provide a short-term additional level of funding to support the embedding of the national policy changes after which the percentage is expected to be reduced to 3%. Clearly there is risk with this budget as it is a derivative of pupil numbers. The head of EY will provide a verbal update on the EY offer at this meeting with a more detailed fuller report in Summer.

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- 2.4. As Schools Forum will note, there are significant changes taking place across the EY offer, post implementation, there will be a need to review the various elements and ensure harmonisation and consideration holistically.

3. New for 2024/25

- 3.1 Over summer 2023 the DfE consulted on proposals to ensure the funding system supports the delivery of the new working parent entitlements for children aged nine months up to and including two years old from 2024, which were announced at the Spring Budget in March 2023.
- 3.2. The government's response to the consultation was published on 29 November 2023 and the operational guide for 2024 to 2025 incorporates significant changes necessary to implement the proposals set out in that response.
- 3.3. The main changes to the guidance are:
- introduction of a new national funding formula (NFF) covering both the existing two-year-old entitlement for disadvantaged children and new working parent entitlements to be introduced in 2024 to 2025 for two-year-olds and children aged nine months up to two years.
 - new methodology for funding allocations for the new working parent entitlements for two-year-old children and children aged nine months up to two years old for 2024 to 2025.
 - extending the 95% pass-through requirement to the disadvantaged two-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements.
 - extending local funding rules to the disadvantaged two-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements.
 - a requirement for local authorities to have a disadvantaged two-year-old rate that is at least equal to their rate for two-year-old children of working parents.
 - new deprivation supplement arrangements for the disadvantaged two-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements.
 - confirming the expectation that local authorities have special educational needs inclusion funds (SENIFs) for all children with special educational needs (SEN) eligible for or taking up the new and existing entitlements, regardless of the number of hours taken.
 - extending eligibility for EYPP and DAF to eligible children aged two years old and under accessing the entitlements from 2024 to 2025, and increases to the value of both funding streams.
 - extending the facility to apply for a disapplication from the **95% pass through rule** to the disadvantaged two-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements, and changes to the criteria against which a disapplication will be considered.

4. Three-and-four-year-old offer

- 4.1. The three-and-four-year-old offer covers the current entitlement as;
- the universal 15 hours entitlement for all three-and-four-year-olds.

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- the additional 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of three-and-four-year-olds.

4.2. Since its introduction in April 2017, the three-and-four-year-old formula has set the hourly funding rates that each local authority is paid to deliver the universal and additional entitlements for 3 and 4-year-olds. There is no change to the existing three-and-four-year-old formula, other than an annual update to some of the underlying data.

4.3. Table 3 below shows the 2023/24 funding and Table 4 shows the 2024/25. Schools Forum is asked to agree the 2024/25 allocation based on the current method. To note that following agreement, a general consultation is required with all providers.

Table 3 – Table to show the 2023/24 method and funding split

	2023/24						
	Hourly Rate Receivable	PTE -15 hours		PTE additional hours			Total
	6.33	4,197.25	£15,144,098	1,744.22	£6,293,321	100%	£21,437,419
Hourly Rate	5.40	4,197.25	£12,919,136	1,744.22	£5,368,710	85%	£18,287,846
SENIF	0.17	4,197.25	£406,713	1,744.22	£169,015	3%	£575,728
Targeted - Deprivation	0.23	4,197.25	£550,260	1,744.22	£228,667	4%	£778,927
Targeted - Quality Factor	0.11	4,197.25	£263,167	1,744.22	£109,363	2%	£372,530
Contingency	0.11	4,197.25	£263,167	1,744.22	£109,363	2%	£372,530
5% holdback	0.31	4,197.25	£741,654	1,744.22	£308,204	5%	£1,049,858

Table 4 Above shows the 2024/25 two-year-old deprivation funding allocation based on 2023/24 method.

	2024/25 Current Entitlement							Movement	
	Hourly Rate Receivable	PTE -15 hours		PTE additional hours			Total	Hourly rate	Total
	7.24	4,197.25	£17,321,211	1,744.22	£7,198,047	100%	£24,519,258	£0.13	£3,081,839
Hourly Rate	6.18	4,197.25	£14,776,389	1,744.22	£6,140,514	85%	£20,916,903	£0.78	£2,629,057
SENIF	0.19	4,197.25	£465,182	1,744.22	£193,312	3%	£658,495	£0.02	£82,767
Targeted - Deprivation	0.26	4,197.25	£629,365	1,744.22	£261,540	4%	£890,905	£0.03	£111,978
Targeted - Quality Factor	0.13	4,197.25	£301,000	1,744.22	£125,084	2%	£426,085	£0.02	£53,555
Contingency	0.13	4,197.25	£301,000	1,744.22	£125,084	2%	£426,085	£0.02	£53,555
5% holdback	0.35	4,197.25	£848,274	1,744.22	£352,511	5%	£1,200,785	£0.04	£150,927

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5. Two-year-old disadvantage element

- 5.1. The two-year-old “disadvantage element” is effectively the current offer as providers will be aware of. Table 5 shows the current allocation and table 6 shows the 2024/25 proposed allocation. This is effective from 1st April 2024.

Table 5

	2023/24			
	Hourly Rate Receivable	PTE -15 hours	Total	%
	£		£	
	£7.52	650.39	£2,787,832	100%
SENIF	£0.57	650.39	£211,312	7.6%
Contingency	£0.16	650.39	£63,023	2.2%
Deprivation targeted	£0.00	0.00	£0	0.0%
5% holdback	£0.00	0.00	£0	0.0%
Hourly Rate	£6.79	650.39	£2,513,497	90.3%

Table 6

	2024/25 Based on current offer for two-year-olds				Movement	
	Hourly Rate Receivable	PTE - 15 hours	Total	%	Hourly Rate	Total
	£		£			
	£10.64	650.39	£3,944,485	100%	£3.12	£1,156,653
SENIF	£0.73	650.39	£270,627	6.9%	£0.16	£59,315
Contingency	£0.16	650.39	£59,316	1.5%	£0.00	£-3,707
Targeted Deprivation	£0.00	650.39	£0	0.0%	£0.00	£0
5% holdback	£0.53	650.39	£196,483	5.0%	£0.53	£196,483
Hourly Rate (includes deprivation)	£9.22	650.39	£3,418,060	86.7%	£1.75	£904,563

- 5.2. Schools Forum is asked to agree the application of the new hourly rate as outlined above. Schools’ forum to further note the following key points:

- The revised funding rate RECEIVABLE of £10.64 which is the National Funding

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Formula Rate for Lewisham.

- Three points to note,
 - Whilst Targeted deprivation is a NEW element for 2024/25, to ensure that the targeted hourly rate remains at the current 2023/24 academic level of £9.22, the deprivation element is incorporated within this rate, i.e. no separate funding for deprivation. Following the full embedding of the EY offer, this will be revisited.
 - Requirement that the hourly rate must be at least that set for the new two-year-old offer.
 - New 95% rule enabling a 5% LA hold back.

6. Two-year-old Working Parent Entitlement

- 6.1. The 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of two-year-old children (new entitlement from 1 April 2024).
- 6.2. Table 7 below provides a breakdown of the £10.64 hourly rate based on the current disadvantage entitlement offer method. Schools' forum is asked to note and agree the method and split of the hourly rate. This is expected to mirror the two-year-old DISADVANTAGE offer and must have the same minimum hourly rate (i.e. £9.22)

Table 7 - Proposed split of the two-year-old Working Parent Entitlement

NEW OFFER	Indicative funding allocation for two-year-old working parent entitlement			
	Hourly Rate Receivable	PTE -15 hours	Total	%
	£		£	
	£10.64	1,065.21	£6,460,286	100%
SENIF	£0.73	1,065.21	£443,234	6.9%
Contingency	£0.16	1,065.21	£97,147	1.5%
Deprivation targetted	£0.00	1,065.21	£0	0.0%
5% holdback	£0.53	1,065.21	£321,800	5.0%
Hourly Rate (incl Deprivation)	£9.22	1,065.21	£5,598,105	86.7%

7. EY offer for under twos entitlement.

- 7.1. This is NEW from September 2024 and is the funding for nine-months-olds-up to two-years for the new working parent entitlement. Table 8 below shows an indicative funding position based on an hourly rate of £14.52 applied over 539.69 PTE (per DfE calculations). Schools forum is asked to agree the allocation split of the hourly rate based on table 8 below.
- 7.2. Schools Forum should note that the DfE states that:
- That the under-two offer will come into place from **SEPTEMBER 2024**,
 - The funding provided in the DSG settlement appears to be for 38 weeks. Therefore, it is not

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possible for the full level of this funding to be receivable in 2024/25

Hourly rate for under 2s entitlement (£ / hr)	Estimated number for under 2s entitlement (part-time equivalent)	Indicative funding allocation for under 2s entitlement (£s)
[K]	[L]	[M]
		= [K] * [L] * 15 * 38
14.52	539.69	4,466,691.00

- Furthermore, an emergency meeting was held by the DfE, where some Local Authorities had raised concerns that if the total funding is allocated as seven months, the way providers are paid (i.e. termly count but on the basis that seven months represents 26 weeks, whilst five months represents 12 weeks, there is likely to be a transfer of financial pressure in the first year 2024/25). Following on from this meeting the DfE has emailed to say the points are noted and a decision will be made “early in 2024”.
- Depending on if the outcome is known before Schools Forum meeting or not, it may be necessary to hold an extraordinary meeting of the forum, in the event the funding split requires revision. **School Forum is asked to note this financial risk and potential for an extra-ordinary forum meeting.**

Table 8 Indicative funding for under 2s entitlement

NEW OFFER	Indicative funding allocation for under 2s entitlement (£s)			
	Hourly Rate Receivable	PTE -15 hours	Total	%
	£		£	
	£14.52	539.69	£4,466,690	100%
SENIF	£1.10	539.69	£338,566	7.6%
Contingency	£0.31	539.69	£96,509	2.2%
Deprivation targetted	£0.73	539.69	£223,335	5.0%
5% holdback	£0.73	539.69	£223,335	5.0%
Hourly Rate	£11.65	539.69	£3,584,946	80.3%

8. Summary of funding proposed

- 8.1. Table 9 and 10 below provides a summarised version for school forum. For ease of reference the columns are colour co-ordinated to the detailed tables shown above for each entitlement. Table 9 shows the summarised information by “hourly rates” and demonstrates the 95% passthrough rate. Table 10 provides the summarised position however in totality of funding. Please note the funding remains indicative based on pupil numbers per count date. As stated previously in this report, the way funding is received and allocated does provide challenges for which it is necessary that a contingency is maintained.
- 8.2. Table 10 also confirms the total for the SENIF funding which is now an indicative £1.679m. This does however come with greater expectations from the DfE, Schools forum should remain mindful that Lewisham’s starting position for the SENIF is relatively low compared to other LA’s:
- confirms the expectation that local authorities have special educational needs inclusion funds (SENIFs) for all children with special educational needs (SEN)

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eligible for or taking up the new and existing entitlements, regardless of the number of hours taken.

- **95% passthrough** – for 2024/25, the passthrough remains at 95% and is extended to two-year-old funding as well. The DfE has indicated that this is likely to reduce to 97% going forward, however has not stated when. It is anticipated that the additional funding would support the implementation of the roll out.
- **Deprivation Factor** – at present it is proposed that for 2024/25 the current method of allocating funding for deprivation (which is target 21% highest IDACI), continues to be applied where deprivation remains a targeted factor, and that this is reviewed in more detail for 2025/26.

8.3. **Schools Forum to agree the continuation of the deprivation target method to 21% IDACI.**

Table 9 - Summary of EY Offer

	Indicative funding allocation for universal entitlement for three-and-four-olds (£s)	Indicative funding allocation for additional 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of three-and-four-olds (£s)	Indicative funding allocation for two-year-old disadvantaged entitlement (£s)	Indicative funding allocation for two-year-old working parent entitlement	Indicative funding allocation for under 2s entitlement (£s)
Received	7.24	7.24	£10.64	£10.64	£14.52
Applied:					
Hourly Rate	6.18	6.18	£9.22	£9.22	£12.58
SENIF	0.19	0.19	£0.73	£0.73	£1.00
Targeted - Deprivation	0.26	0.26	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Targeted - Quality Factor	0.13	0.13	0	0	0
Contingency	0.13	0.13	£0.16	£0.16	£0.22
5% holdback	0.35	0.35	£0.53	£0.53	£0.72
Pupil Numbers	4,197.25	1,744.22	650.39	1,065.21	540
Total Funding	£17,321,211	£7,198,047	£3,944,485	£6,460,286	£4,466,690
Passthrough Rate	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%

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Table 10 Summary of EY Entitlement (Hourly Rate)

Total Funding for Hourly Rates	Indicative funding allocation for universal entitlement for three-and-four-olds (£s)	Indicative funding allocation for additional 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of three-and-four-olds (£s)	Indicative funding allocation for two-year-old disadvantaged entitlement (£s)	Indicative funding allocation for two-year-old working parent entitlement	Indicative funding allocation for under 2s entitlement (£s)	Total Hourly Rate Funding
Hourly Rate	£14,776,389	£6,140,514	£3,418,060	£5,598,105	£3,870,572	£33,551,548
SENIF	£465,182	£193,312	£270,627	£443,234	£306,455	£1,678,811
Targeted - Deprivation	£629,365	£261,540	£0	£0	£0	£890,905
Targeted - Quality Factor	£301,000	£125,084	£0	£0	£0	£426,085
Contingency	£301,000	£125,084	£59,316	£97,147	£67,168	£649,716
5% holdback	£848,274	£352,511	£196,483	£321,800	£222,495	£1,941,563
Total	£17,321,211	£7,198,047	£3,944,485	£6,460,286	£4,466,690	£39,390,720

9. Other Funding within the EY Block (Disability Access Funding, Pupil Premium and Nursery Maintained Schools Supplementary Funding)

- 9.1. In addition to the EY Block entitlement offers covered so far, the EY block also provides funding to support other aspects of targeted funding. Table 11 shows the indicative funding for each element.
- 9.2. As with the entire EY block, the figures remain provisional subject to the finalisation of the EY Census in 2024 January and 2025 January.

**Table 11
Summary of EY Entitlement (total indicative funding)**

	Indicative funding allocation for EY pupil premium for three-and-four-olds (£s)	Indicative funding allocation for EY pupil premium for two-year-olds (£s)	Indicative funding allocation for EY pupil premium for under 2s (£s)	Funding allocation for disability access fund for three-and-four-olds (£s)	Funding allocation for disability access fund for two-year-olds (£s)	Funding allocation for disability access fund for under 2s (£s)	Indicative supplementary funding allocation for maintained nursery schools (£s)	Total Additional Funding
	£100,443	£57,509	£2,876	£141,960	£28,210	£10,920	£492,629	£834,547
Pupil Premium	£100,443	£57,509	£2,876					£160,828
DAF				£141,960	£28,210	£10,920		£181,090
NMS							£492,629	£492,629
Hourly Rate Equivalent	£0.68	£0.68	£0.68	£1.60	£1.60	£1.60	£5.47	
Pupil Numbers	259.14	148.37	7.42	156.00	31.00	12.00	158.00	

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10. Financial implications

- 10.1 There are no direct implications to the Council arising from this report per se, some areas are very new and will require a post implementation review in 2025/26 to establish the appropriateness of the funding allocated.
- 10.2 The report is mainly confirming detail of the EY Block across the key offers:
- the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of children from nine months to two years old (new entitlement from 1 September 2024).
 - the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of two-year-old children (new entitlement from 1 April 2024).
 - the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds.
 - the universal 15 hours entitlement for all three-and-four-year-olds.
 - the additional 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of three-and-four-year-olds.
- 10.3 The report also confirms indicative funding for wider targeted funding streams within the EY Block of:
- Disability Access Funding (DAF)
 - EY Pupil Premium
 - Nursery Maintained Schools Funding
- 10.4. In all cases the funding remains provisional and carries an element of risk, for which it remains critical that supporting contingency is made available. The recommendations to Schools Forum incorporate some level of contingency based on the current EY entitlement offer.
- 10.5. 2024/25 sees the introduction of the following extensions as announced in the spring 2023 budget. The report notes additional risk relating to the under two-year-old offer for 2024/25 - which the DfE is aware of and for which further guidance is awaited around:
- the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of children from nine months to two years old (new entitlement from 1 September 2024).
 - the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of two-year-old children (new entitlement from 1 April 2024).
- 10.6. Following this meeting of the forum, there will be a requirement to undertake a consultation with stakeholders and ensure that all providers are aware of their funding rates for 2024/25 by the 31st March 2024.

11. Legal implications

- 11.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. The report is for information only and provides detail of the DSG funding settlement as advised by the DfE.

12. Equalities implications

- 12.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. The report is providing an update of the funding settlement to ensure that funding is distributed in line with statutory requirements. There is an expectation that DfE has undertaken any appropriate equalities impact assessment (EIA) when establishing the funding allocations for each LA. As stated in this report, there is significant change taking place across the whole EY

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entitlement, which is being phased in. EIA will be incorporated into delivery of the programme, to ensure no unintended consequences.

13. Climate change and environmental implications

13.1 There are climate change and environmental implications of this report.

14. Crime and disorder implications

14.1 There are no crime and disorder implications of this report.

15. Health and wellbeing implications

15.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications.

16. Report authors and contact

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