

Dorset Schools' Forum

Date of Meeting:	27 March 2026												
Report Title:	Pupil Growth Allocations 2025-2026 & 2026-2027 Academic Years (Payable in Financial Year 2026-2027)												
Executive Director:	Paul Dempsey, Executive Director for People - Children												
Corporate Director:	Jen Furnell, Director for Education and Learning												
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Presenting Officer:	Ed Denham, School Place Sufficiency Manager – Children's Services												
Report Status:	Public												
Reason for Submission to Schools' Forum:	For APPROVAL/ INFORMATION /CONSULTATION* (select one option) Under Forum power/responsibility: 1(b)(i) significant pre-16 pupil growth to support the LA's duty for basic need place planning, including pre-opening and diseconomy of scale costs, and agreeing the qualifying criteria for schools to access the fund												
Recommendation(s):	a) The following Allocations to be made to these schools in the 2026-2027 Financial Year: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>School</th><th>Amount</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Appendix A – Wimborne First (A)</td><td>£ 42,482</td></tr> <tr> <td>Appendix B – Beaminster St Mary (A)</td><td>£ 39,776</td></tr> <tr> <td>Appendix C – Ferndown First (A)</td><td>£ 117,525</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>£ 199,783</td></tr> </tbody> </table> This is a total of £199,783 for financial year 2026-2027. The Pupil Growth allocation from the DSG is £360,000. This would leave a balance of £160,217	School	Amount	Appendix A – Wimborne First (A)	£ 42,482	Appendix B – Beaminster St Mary (A)	£ 39,776	Appendix C – Ferndown First (A)	£ 117,525			Total	£ 199,783
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Reason for Recommendation(s):	To enable the Local Authority to deliver its statutory duty to secure sufficient school places.
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Schools' Forum members are reminded of their responsibility to make a declaration of interest in any agenda item in which they have an interest, to the Chair or the Clerk, preferably in advance of the meeting.

1. Executive Summary

The provision of Pupil Growth allows the Local Authority and schools to work together to ensure the provision of sufficient school places, a statutory duty.

Proposed Funding 2026-2027:

- 1.1 Wimborne First – This is to cover ongoing support for a bulge year that will be moving into Year 4 in Sept 2026. There are currently only 2 places in Year 3 across Wimborne Town thus we wish to retain the bulge cohort into Year 4. Value of £42,482 for the period April 26-Mar 27.
- 1.2 Beaminster St Mary Primary – This is to cover the additional class funding for the academic year 25-26 – funded between April 26 to Aug 26 (6 places). In addition, there is the cost to retain additional capacity in Year 5 & Year 6 for Sept 26-Mar 27 – (9 places). The other three neighbouring schools are full in their current combined Year4/5 classes – thus there is need to retain this surplus capacity in Beaminster. Total £39,776 for 2026-2027 financial year (Year 5 / 6 cohort).
- 1.3 Ferndown First School – The LA needs to continue to support the bulge class in current Year 2 and then into Year 3 in Sept 26. In addition, we need to commission 26 new places in the reception cohort for Sept 2026. Total value is £117,525 between April 26 – Mar 27. Currently FFS, Parley, St Mary's West Moors and Oakhurst are all projected to be full in Sept 2026 - only leaving spaces at Three-Legged Cross and Hampreston. Without the additional capacity there would have been significant numbers of Dorset children without a school place.

2. Financial Implications

This is a total of £199,783 for financial year 2026-2027. The Pupil Growth allocation from the DSG is £360,000. This would leave a balance of £160,217

3. Well-being and Health implications

Pupil Growth, while ensuring the LA is able to perform its duty to provide schools places, also ensures the following:

- 3.1 That there are local school places for each child which ensures good interaction between families and the wider school community
- 3.2 Walking to school initiatives are able to thrive with places being made available for local families.

4. Climate Implications

The Local Authority has looked at balancing the competing demands and needs of:

- 4.1 Local school places for local children
- 4.2 Limiting journeys for children accessing school places at significant distance from the home
- 4.3 Ensuring existing capacity is used appropriately and efficiently

5. Other implications

None Identified

6. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:
Current Risk: Low
Residual Risk: Low

7. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The Pupil Growth Policy supports the Admissions Duty of the Local Authority. The Admissions Duty and the policies that unpin that duty have their own EQIA which is available on request.

8. Appendices

Appendix A: Wimborne First – March 2026

Appendix B: Beaminster St Mary Primary – March 2026

Appendix C: Ferndown First – March 2026

9. Background Papers

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.