



**Confederation
of School Trusts**

Methodology Paper

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The Confederation of School Trusts (CST) is the national organisation and sector body representing 90% of the national trusts and one in five academy schools. This places CST in a strong position to consider the issue of school funding from the viewpoint of the system's leaders in self-governing organisations. CST is completely apolitical. We represent our members to advance education in the public interest.

1. Introduction

The Funding for Schools in England website is a strategic resource for CST members and all state-funded schools. It aims to do two things:

1. Provide an authoritative source of information for school leaders to support strategic financial planning; and
2. Give indicative funding allocations for 2019-20 using National Funding Formula (NFF) allocations.

The site provides information from data compiled by the Department for Education – it deliberately makes no comment or judgement on the data provided.

According to the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS), total school spending per pupil fell by 8% in real terms between 2009-10 and 2017-18 but will be held constant in real terms up to 2019-20. However, this will still leave spending per pupil more than 60% higher in real terms than in 2000-01.

Deciding on a baseline year always presents challenges because school funding goes up and down at particular points in time. We have decided to use 2017-18 because:

- We want to show the most recent three-year trajectory as this is likely to be most helpful to leaders as a strategic planning tool;
- We know that national spending per pupil fell by 8% in real terms between 2009-10 and 2017-18, but we want leaders to be able to see the three-year trajectory beyond this in order to make strategic decisions; and
- We want to show NFF allocations in 2019-20 so that school leaders have the information about the real-terms impact of NFF and can compare this with local allocations.

The site does not show cost pressures on schools. School leaders are best placed to know the cost pressures on their budgets, driven by national policy decisions and local factors.

CST will keep this website updated using published data from the DfE so that leaders have immediate access to an authoritative information source to aide their financial planning.

2. What is included in the total baseline funding?

A school's baseline funding is the total core funding the school received through the schools block and minimum funding guarantee in 2017-18 (or schools block share and minimum funding guarantee 2017/18 if an academy) on the basis of the local authority formula. This does not include funding from separate grants such as the pupil premium grant, funding for nursery provision, sixth form grant, high needs top-up funding etc."

3. The case for strategic investment in education

CST believes that schools should be funded in a sufficient, equitable and sustainable way. The future of our society and our economy depends on the knowledge, skills and qualities of our children and young people.

We are making the evidence-based case for strategic investment in education through the Comprehensive Spending Review in the following five ways:

1. **The National Funding Formula:** set out a timeline for passing legislation to implement the National Funding Formula so that all schools are funded equitably and make funding available to manage the transition to the new formula.
2. **Investment in per-pupil funding:** consolidate the teacher pay and pensions grants into the Schools Block of the NFF, increase the quantum at least to match spending per pupil in 2015/16 and commit to keep per-pupil funding in line with inflation and cost-pressures.
3. **Special needs funding:** increase the quantum of the high needs block – and ring-fence the high needs funding allocation for schools.
4. **Post-16 education:** increase the rate of post-16 funding.
5. **Capacity building:** secure funding for strategic investment to build MAT capacity to grow the right school trusts in the right places and incentivise spin-out trusts. No school left behind.