

Education, Inclusion & Provision Department

Revenue Budget as at 31 May 2025

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	8,792	1,305	1,314	(9)	248
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	29	(29)	(204)
Agency - in addition to establishment	43	24	24	0	6
Premises	15	1	0	1	3
Supplies & Services	3,012	300	309	(9)	(54)
Independent School Fees	10,155	3,004	3,004	0	0
Schools Contingency	400	2	2	0	0
Transport	43	3	6	(3)	(20)
Schools Transport	2,771	158	259	(101)	(907)
Early Years Payments including Pupil Premium	15,615	1,954	1,954	0	0
Commissioned Services	2,249	196	194	2	9
Inter Authority Special Needs	1,419	166	166	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	115	0	1	(1)	(66)
Capital Finance	4,604	712	712	0	1
Total Expenditure	49,233	7,825	7,974	(149)	(984)
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-337	-126	-129	3	20
Government Grant Income	-6,534	-1,549	-1,549	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-30,161	-5,027	-5,027	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-446	-94	-59	(35)	(211)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,773	-298	-298	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-538	-12	-2	(10)	(59)
Government Grant Income	-491	-142	-142	0	0
Total Income	-40,280	-7,248	-7,206	(42)	(250)
Net Operational Expenditure	8,953	577	768	(191)	(1,234)
Recharges					
Premises Support	405	68	68	0	0
Transport Support	773	146	147	(1)	(5)
Central Support	1,947	324	324	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,142	538	539	(1)	(5)
Net Departmental Expenditure	12,095	1,115	1,307	(192)	(1,239)

Financial Position

Net departmental expenditure is £0.192m over budget at the end of May, based on available information. The forecast outturn for 2025/26 is currently an overspend against budget of £1.239m. The main variances are school transport and Inter Authority Income.

Employee Expenditure

Employee expenditure, including agency staff, is forecast to be £0.050m under budget at year end. There are a number of vacant positions across the department some of which are filled by agency staff, estimated to be £0.204m for the year.

The employee overspend is due to efficiency savings of £0.300m for

Schools Transport

Schools Transport is the main budgetary demand pressure for Education, Inclusion and Provision. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils with transport. This is split into two main areas of SEN pupils attending In Borough and out of Borough Schools.

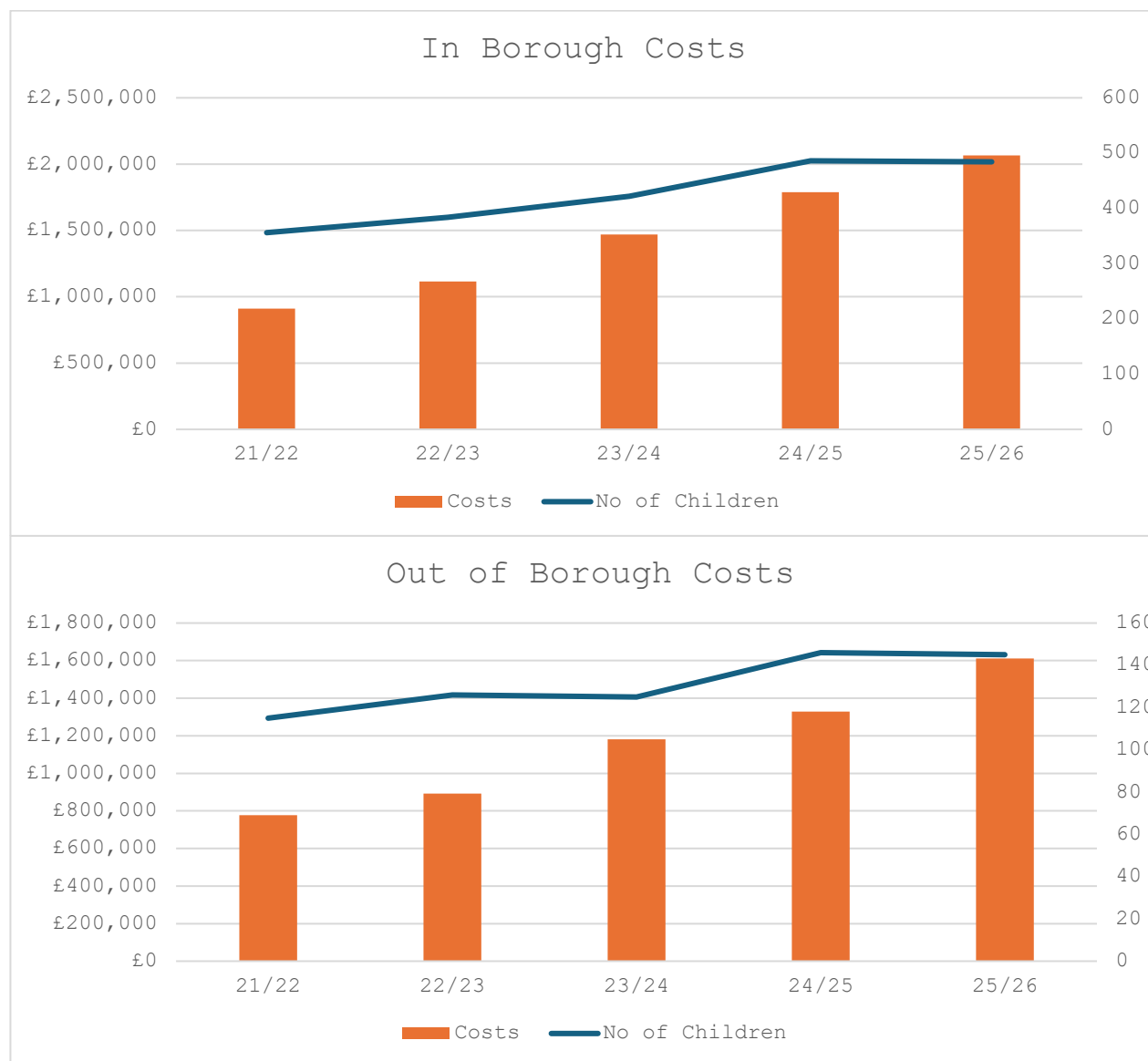
The table below illustrates the split between the two areas, and how each areas spend compares to the budget.

2025-26 as at May-25					
Area	Number of Users	Budget £000	Projected Spend £000	Variance £000	Average Cost per User
In Borough	484	1857	2066	(209)	£3,743.62
Out of Borough	145	1214	1612	(398)	£9,263.98
Total	629	3071	3678	(607)	

Note the above table excludes efficiency savings of £0.300m approved for the 2025/26 budget. A Home to School transport consultation has been undertaken with stakeholders and partners with regard to implementing a new Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The consultation has been completed and the results have been analysed and recommendations put to Executive Board for possible policy changes from the beginning of the new academic year. However, it is too early to say if the savings can be achieved.

The current records show 629 service users, the majority of which attend schools within the Borough. The Out of Borough overspend has decreased compared to the previous year's overspend of £0.799m due to £0.712m added to the budget in 2025/26 for growth. The demand for the School Transport service is increasing in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough. The graphs below show the number of SEN children using this service, it is anticipated that these figures will increase, based on historic information. The demand for the School Transport service continues to increase in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough.

The graphs below show the trend in the number of SEN children using this service and the associated costs.



It is worth noting that this situation is not unique to Halton and is a burden across all Councils nationwide.

Grants to Voluntary Organisations

Grants to Voluntary Organisations is forecast to be over budget by £0.066m at year end. This is due to the Positive Behaviour Service. The department pays a contribution to this service each year, however, the cost is significantly higher than the budget.

Income

Inter Authority income is projected to underachieve its target by £0.211m. This is due to an underachievement of income within the Integrated Youth Support Services & Commissioning Division for a shared service. The income target has remained the same despite the number of participating authorities reducing since quarter 1 last year. The income target exceeds the budget for missing from home and care.

Approved 2025/26 Savings

Please see Appendix A for full details.

Capital Projects as at 31 May 2025

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	31 May Actual Spend £000	31 July Forecast Spend £000	30 Sept Forecast Spend £000	30 Nov Forecast Spend £000	31 Jan Forecast Spend £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000
Capital Repairs	550.0	882.1	6	30	675	688	700	754.0
Asbestos Management	10.0	10.0	0	1	3	5	6	10.0
Schools Access Initiative	30.0	37.7	0	0	15	20	25	30.0
AMP Data	25.0	25.0	4	10	23	23	24	25.0
Small Capital Works	0.0	173.0	5	9	50	65	80	173.0
SCA unallocated	448.0	129.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Basic Need Projects	600.8	600.8	0	0	0	0	0	100.0
SEND capital allocation	1,781.0	1,871.2	73	78	171	400	575	1,022.0
SEND capital unallocation	0.0	1,775.5	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Childcare Expansion	314.8	314.8	18	18	18	18	18	314.8
Total Education, Inclusion & Provision	3,759.6	5,819.4	106.5	146.4	955.0	1,219.0	1,428.0	2,428.8

Comments on the above figures

The majority of the Capital Repair work has been procured and will be completed over the summer holidays.

Property Services are updating asbestos management surveys throughout the year and carrying out remedial works where necessary.

The Schools Access Initiative 2025/26 application process has been completed with some of the works due to be carried out over the summer holidays.

CAD Plan updates are on an ad hoc basis following capital works and condition surveys are commissioned on a 5 year cycle.

Small Capital Works are ad hoc on emergency, health and safety issues.

Basic Needs Projects is currently unallocated and the balance of £0.501m is to be re-profiled to 2026/27.

SEND Capital Allocation, Ashley School expansion is in planning stage and work expected to start in the autumn and completed in summer 2026.

Childcare Expansion discussions are ongoing for allocating the funding to early years providers.

EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND PROVISION DEPARTMENT

Review of Agreed Savings

APPENDIX A

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Home to School Transport		Home to School Transport – undertake consultation with stakeholders and partners with regard to implementing a new Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.	0	300	<div>u</div>	The consultation with stakeholders and partners has taken place. The results have been analysed and recommendations put to Executive Board for possible policy changes from the beginning of the new academic year.
Total EIP Department			0	300		