

Education, Inclusion & Provision Department

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	8,818	4,068	3,929	139	279
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	101	(101)	(204)
Agency - in addition to establishment	66	72	72	0	6
Premises	15	7	1	6	2
Supplies & Services	3,059	1,416	1,438	(22)	(44)
Independent School Fees	10,155	5,915	5,915	0	0
Schools Contingency	400	126	126	0	0
Transport	43	11	23	(12)	(20)
Schools Transport	2,774	747	1,115	(368)	(737)
Early Years Payments including Pupil Premium	15,615	7,085	7,085	0	0
Commissioned Services	2,193	851	847	4	9
Inter Authority Special Needs	1,402	954	954	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	115	0	17	(17)	(67)
Capital Finance	4,604	2,135	2,135	0	1
Total Expenditure	49,259	23,387	23,758	(371)	(775)
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-296	-184	-228	44	30
Government Grant Income	-6,545	-3,502	-3,534	32	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-30,153	-15,077	-15,077	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-446	-165	-59	(106)	(211)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,764	-836	-836	0	(5)
Schools SLA Income	-565	-281	-237	(44)	(60)
Transfer From Reserves	-498	-142	-142	0	0
Total Income	-40,267	-20,187	-20,113	(74)	(246)
Net Operational Expenditure	8,992	3,200	3,645	(445)	(1,021)
Recharges					
Premises Support	405	203	203	0	0
Transport Support	773	489	489	0	(5)
Central Support	1,947	973	973	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,142	1,665	1,665	0	(5)
Net Departmental Expenditure	12,134	4,865	5,310	(445)	(1,026)

Financial Position

Net departmental expenditure is £0.445m over budget at the end of September, based on available information. The forecast outturn for 2025/26 is currently an overspend against budget of £1.026m. The main variances are school transport, Inter Authority Income and schools SLA income.

Employee Expenditure

Employee expenditure, including agency staff, is forecast to be £0.081m 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.

Schools Transport

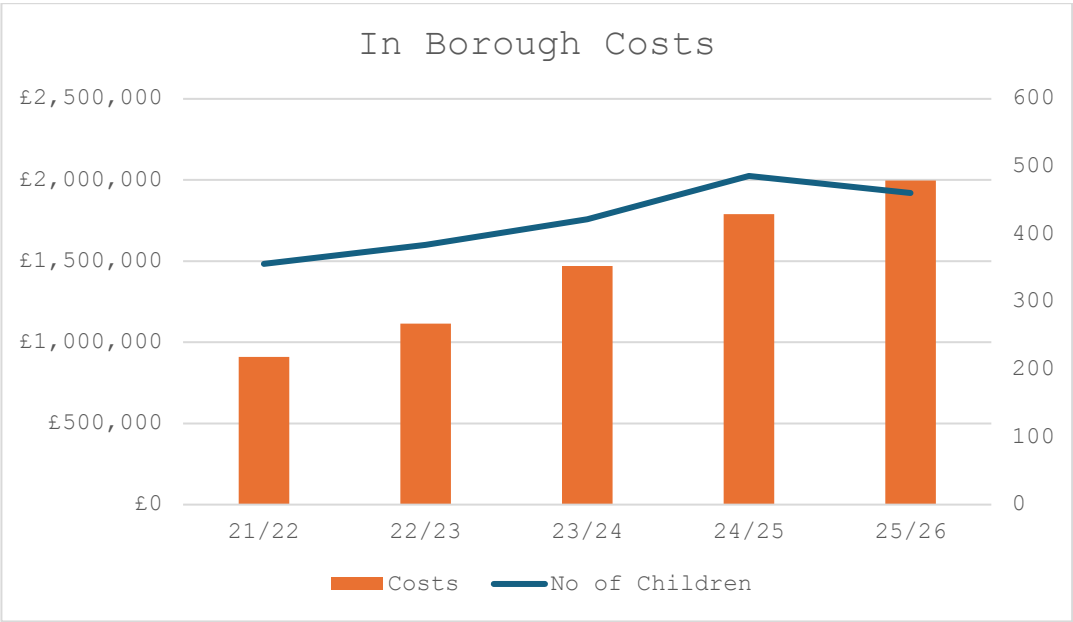
Schools Transport is the main budgetary demand pressure for Education, Inclusion and Provision. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils with transport. This is split into two main areas of SEN pupils attending In Borough and out of Borough Schools.

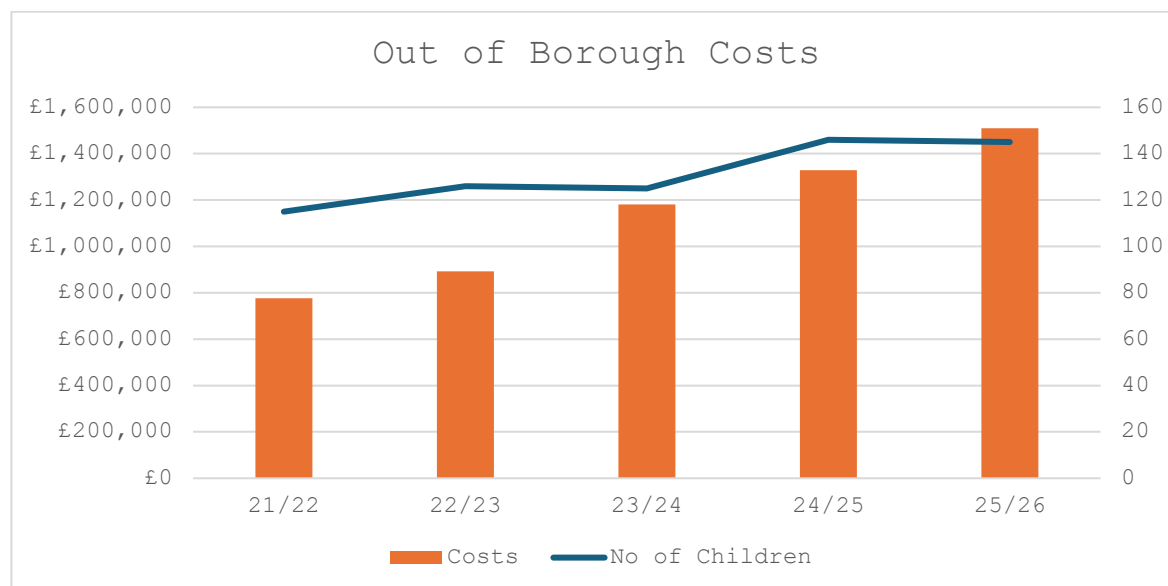
The table below illustrates the split between the two areas, and how each areas spend compares to the budget.

2025-26 as at Sep-25					
Area	Number of Users	Budget £000	Projected Spend £000	Variance £000	Average Cost per User
In Borough	461	1857	1997	(140)	£3,930.40
Out of Borough	145	1214	1510	(296)	£9,263.98
Total	606	3071	3508	(437)	

The current records show 606 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 appears to have stabilised for the moment at least. The graphs below show the number of SEN children using this service. It is too early to say whether the levelling off will continue or merely represents a blip, with demand increasing in future years in line with the historical and national trends.

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.

The overspend position is also due to efficiency savings of £0.300m for Home to School Transport to undertake a 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. The consultation has been completed, and the results have been analysed and recommendations will be put forward for review. However, it is too early to say if the savings can be achieved.

Grants to Voluntary Organisations

Grants to Voluntary Organisations is forecast to be over budget by £0.067m 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 30 September 2025

Scheme Detail	205/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 Sept 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	Allocation remaining £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation £000
Childrens Directorate								
Capital Repairs	882.1	882.1	700	700	700	754.0	128.1	0.0
Asbestos Management	10.0	10.0	0.5	0.5	6	10.0	0.0	0.0
Schools Access Initiative	37.7	37.7	13	13	30	41.0	-3.3	0.0
Basic Need Projects	600.8	600.8	0	0	0	100.0	500.8	0.0
Small Capital Works	173.0	173.0	90	90	105	170.0	3.0	0.0
SEND capital allocation	1,871.2	1,871.2	148	148	675	1,275.0	596.2	45.0
SEND capital unallocated	1,775.5	1,775.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,775.5	0.0
SCA unallocated	129.3	129.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	129.3	0.0
Family Hubs & Start for Life	63.0	63.0	4.5	35.0	48.0	63	0.0	0.0
Childcare Expansion	314.8	314.8	18	18	18	314.8	0.0	0.0
AMP Data	25.0	25.0	23	23	24	25.0	0.0	0.0
Childrens Directorate Total	5,882.4	5,882.4	997.0	1,027.5	1,606.0	2,752.8	3,129.6	45.0

Comments on the above figures

The majority of the Capital Repair work has been procured and has been 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 and works carried out over the summer holidays.

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.

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.

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	u	The consultation with stakeholders and partners has taken place. The results have been analysed and recommendations put to Executive Board for possible policy changes.
Total EIP Department			0	300		