

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15th January 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director – Children’s Services

PORTFOLIO: Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Schools Capital Programme – 2026/27

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the capital funding received by the Council from central government to support capital works and programmes within schools for the 2026/27 financial year.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) The position regarding schools capital funding from the Department for Education for 2026/27 is noted;**
- 2) The proposals to be funded from the School Condition Capital Allocation are approved;**
- 3) The capital allocations are put forward for inclusion in the Budget report to full Council.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Department for Education has not yet announced the School Condition Allocation (SCA) Capital Grant for 2026/27, but given the timescales for some of the proposed capital projects, there is a requirement to present this report. The allocation stated in this report is based on the 2025/26 allocation which was £1,076,826. The LA are currently unsure if the Department for Education will adopt the same methodology as last year, therefore for the purpose of planning the 2026/27 capital programme, the 2025/26 allocation figure has been used.
- 3.2 In the event of the 2026/27 allocation being reduced, or in the event that a school converts to academy status which impacts on funding received by the Council, the amount of funding available for elements of the capital programme will be reduced accordingly. Similarly if the allocation is an increase on previous years, then where feasible, the intent would be to increase the scope of works undertaken for individual projects and/or progress projects that are in reserve.
- 3.3 Detailed in the table below is the indicative funding available to support capital projects across the school estate in Halton:

GOVERNMENT FUNDING	
School Condition Allocation – Funding provided by the DfE for Local Authority maintained schools i.e. community and voluntary controlled schools (INDICATIVE FIGURE BASED ON 2025/26)	£1,076,826
Allocated to fund condition and suitability projects at Local Authority maintained schools.	

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The School Condition Allocation programme of works will allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the school environment in community and voluntary controlled mainstream and special school provision through capital projects.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In March 2025 the Department for Education announced that the 2025/26 School Condition Allocation for Halton was £1,076,826. The 2026/27 allocation has not yet been announced. As in previous years (approved by the Executive Board), for the purpose of planning the capital programme for 2026/27, the 2025/26 allocation figure has been used. In the event that the allocation is reduced or should further schools convert to academy status, which will also reduce the amount of funding the Local Authority receives, the amount of funding available for elements of the capital programme will be reduced accordingly. Similarly if the allocation is an increase on previous years, then where feasible, the intent would be to increase the scope of works undertaken for individual projects and/or progress capital projects that are in reserve.
- 5.2 The table below details how the School Condition Allocation grant will be utilised.

Description	Estimated costs	Description
Asset Management - Computer Aided Design (CAD) Plans and Condition surveys	£25,000	CAD plans of school buildings are updated where improvement works/changes to accommodation have been carried out. The condition surveys are carried out on a 5 yearly cycle as a rolling programme and are essential for identifying condition issues and planning for future capital repair programmes.
Asbestos Management	£10,000	Annual update of asbestos surveys and undertaking of resulting remedial works.

Description	Estimated costs	Description
Accessibility projects	£30,000	Funding that schools can apply for to resolve accessibility issues within school buildings/around the school site.
Contingency	£91,826	Used for emergency and health and safety works that arise during the year.
Capital Repairs	£920,000	A rolling programme of capital works undertaken at community and voluntary controlled schools, determined by the Local Authority, based upon a priority of need in discussion with schools and colleagues in Halton Borough Council Property Services.
Total	£1,076,826	

For any works undertaken within the Capital Repairs Programme, schools are normally required to make a contribution from their own Devolved Formula Capital allocation.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

None

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

None

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

The School Condition Allocation Capital Programme will address condition and suitability issues within school buildings and will continue to help improve the learning environment for children and young people.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

None

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

The Capital Repairs Programme will contribute to Halton's Carbon Management Programme by helping to produce more energy efficient buildings.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 It is current practice for schools to contribute towards the cost of the Capital Repairs Programme. Consultation with schools on their contribution to any proposed works will take place following full Council's consideration of the budget report in March 2026. If schools cannot or are not willing to contribute, any proposed projects will not be carried out in 2026/27 and will be deferred for future years.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 The Accessibility funding element from the School Condition Allocation (detailed in the table in 5.2 above) provides capital funding to improve the accessibility of mainstream and special schools for pupils with disabilities and the wider community. Consideration to access issues is given in all building projects.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Capital Repairs Programme will contribute to Halton's Carbon Management Programme by helping to produce more energy efficient buildings.

10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

- 10.1 The Council is required to demonstrate appropriate identification of need against spend from the School Condition Allocation Grant
- 10.2 The works will help to provide schools with a suitable learning environment and manage the condition of the educational buildings the LA is responsible for.

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 11.1 None

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

- 12.1 It is intended that all School Condition works will be completed by March 2027

13.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
SCA and DFC final allocation 2025-26 Department for Education 20/05/25 (which will be superseded by the 2026/27 document when received from the DfE).	Children's Services Directorate	Martin West