**Access Group (HCSS) Budget Modelling Software 2023**   **(March 2023 VERSION 1)**

**Additional Guidance Notes for Schools**

These guidance notes provide a little more information on how to set up and use the Bradford customised version of the Access Group (HCSS) Budget Modelling Software.

**This guidance sets out some important manual adjustments that are required in setting up your scenarios for 2023. These adjustments are in line with the adjustments that were required for the 2022 software.**

**Primary schools** should read sections **A**, **B**, **C**, **E and F** below

**Secondary schools** should read sections **A**, **B**, **E and F** below

**Nursery schools** should read sections **A**, **C**, **E and F** below

**Special schools** and **PRUs** should read sections **A**, **D**, **E and F** below

**We also advise all schools to read the more** [**general budget guidance**](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=236)**, and primary and secondary schools to read the** [**S251 funding guidance**](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=229)**, alongside these technical notes.**

Please contact a member of the Access Group Helpdesk with any technical queries that are not resolved by these guidance notes **0845 340 4546.**

Schools should contact a member of School Funding Team with more general budget or formula funding related queries, as follows:

* Primary & secondary mainstream formula and grant funding, including Growth and Falling Rolls Funding – Jonty Holden, [jonty.holden@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:jonty.holden@bradford.gov.uk).
* Early years entitlement funding – Dawn Haigh, [dawn.haigh@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.haigh@bradford.gov.uk).
* High needs funding – Dawn Haigh, [dawn.haigh@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.haigh@bradford.gov.uk).

**A. All Schools**

1. Once the 2023/24 financial year is ‘live’, the 2023/24 financial year will be the default view when you log in to the Software. The list of scenarios initially will be blank. You can either begin a new scenario or transfer an existing scenario from 2022/23.

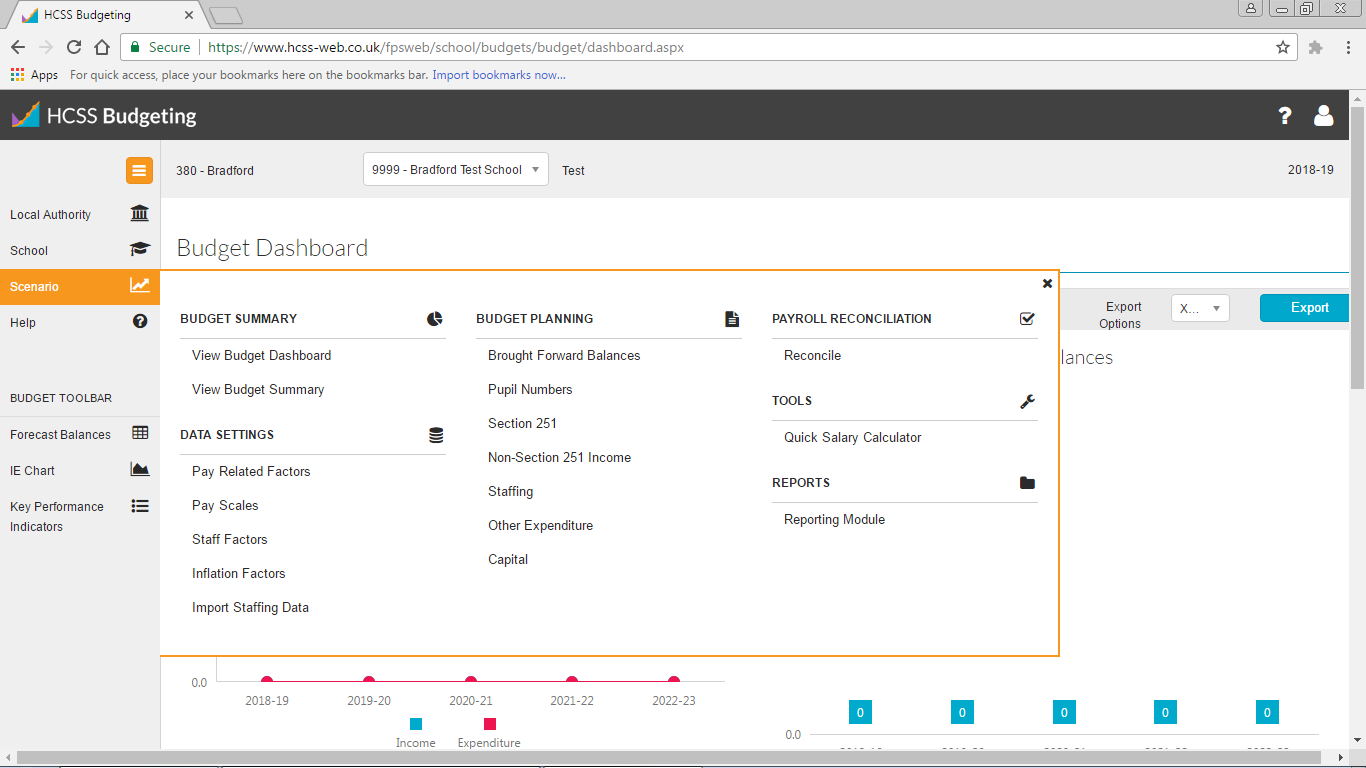
You can create a blank scenario by clicking on the blue **‘+’**

To ‘transfer’ a scenario from 2022/23 click on ‘**Upgrade Scenario**’. You will be able to select a scenario from the drop-down list. Click on ‘**Submit**’ and you should see a pop-up message confirming the upgrade has been successful. Repeat this step for each scenario you wish to transfer.

You can choose from various actions under the Actions heading, at the right of each scenario line. To edit the scenario name, for example, you would choose Edit and then rename the scenario.

All transferred scenarios will still exist in the (closed) 2022/23 year. To change the financial year back to 2022/23, choose 2022-23 (CLOSED) from the top right drop-down menu.

1. To load your chosen scenario, click on the scenario name in blue text. When your scenario has loaded, you will be presented with a ‘Budget Dashboard’ screen. This displays a series of graphs, which depict the data within the scenario. This can be printed by right clicking on the screen and choosing Print.
2. To access the data within your scenario, click on the **Scenario** heading on the left hand side. You will be presented with this screen:



The majority of the work you will undertake will be within the **Budget Planning** menu.

You can view a summary CFR report by selecting **View Budget Summary** from the Budget Summary menu.

You can navigate to different areas by clicking on the **Scenario** heading from any screen within your scenario.

**B. Primary and Secondary Schools**

1. Navigate to the **Pupil Numbers** page from the Scenario > Budget Planning heading menu, as illustrated above.

The October 2022 Census pupil numbers will be displayed (excluding 2, 3&4-year-old early years entitlement numbers; so for maintained nursery schools the Pupil Numbers page will be blank; it will also be blank for special schools and for PRUs).

Pupil numbers for future years are partially pre-populated. **You need to manually input your estimate of Reception (primary) and Year 7 (secondary) numbers in each future year.** You may also wish to review pupil number estimates for future years in other year groups; amend by overtyping. You should ensure that pupil numbers for all year groups (reception to year 6 primary; year 7 to year 11 secondary) in all 5 years are populated. Sense check the pupil numbers totals shown at the bottom of the page.

Click the ‘update’ button at the bottom right of the page. This will save changes and also update the S251 funding page.

**You must not change your October 2022 numbers** from those that have been pre-populated. This will change your 2023/24 Section 251 funding. As your 2023/24 Section 251 core formula funding is now set and will not change, your software would be calculating a level of funding in 2023/24 that is not accurate and this will be a reason why your software does not match your Section 251 Budget statement.

**Schools with Resourced Provisions:** a reminder that the adjustment to pupil numbers / AWPU funding, that was needed prior to 2018 to remove those pupils funded on a place-led basis, is still no longer necessary. You should not reduce your pupil numbers for this reason.

1. See section C below for guidance on altering **early years 2, 3&4-year-old nursery numbers**. You may wish to add your 3&4-year-old numbers into the Pupil Numbers page. However, this is not necessary and will not have an impact on the funding calculations (Early Years Single Funding Formula allocations are calculated instead within the Section 251 page).

Year 12 and Year 13 numbers for secondary schools in the Pupil Numbers page also do not link to any funding calculations.

1. Navigate to the **Section 251** page using the Scenario heading menu.

Your I01, I02 and I03 funding will be displayed by factor. **The pre-populated figures in the 2023/24 column should match the figures shown on your 2023/24 Section 251 Budget statement published on 24 February by factor. This is one of the initial checks that you should carry out.**

As well as checking the figures on screen, there is a report within the ‘reports module’, which allows you to export the S251 page into Excel. Schools may find it easier to check the Section 251 page using this report.

Within the Software, you can drill down into each factor by choosing ‘Edit’ or ‘Show Factors’ from the drop-down box under Actions at the right hand side of the page:

* *Clicking ‘Edit’ allows you to change the funding value, which is recommended for manually adding I01 SEND Funding Floor and I03 EHCP top up element funding.*
* *Clicking ‘Show Factors’ will allow you to view the data behind the funding calculations. If you forecast, for example, that your Ever 6 FSM% will change in future years, you could adjust the % here. However, if you do this, please be careful to ensure that changes are realistic, especially increases, as, if these changes do not materialise in future October Censuses, you could be overestimating your funding. Schools are generally advised not to amend any of the data behind the primary and secondary formula funding calculations and certainly not to amend to increase funding allocations in future years.*

Please note the 2 factors that appear on the S251 Budget statements, and that have lines in the Section 251 funding page in the Software, but are not pre-populated. These are:

* I01 SEND Funding Floor.
* I03 EHCP top up funding (both for mainstream EHCPs and for Resourced Provisions).

For these factors, their respective lines in the Section 251 funding page will be 0. Schools will need to add funding manually, either within the Section 251 funding page (through ‘edit’) or by adding this funding using the ‘non-section 251’ income route. Schools should continue to be aware that these 2 funding streams change on a monthly basis for the movement of EHCPs. As such, schools may find it easier to use the ‘non-section 251’ income route, as this is a little bit more flexible.

No school should have a figure in the I01 ‘Transitional Ceiling’ line, as this factor is not in use in 2023/24.

As in previous years, the Software **does not pre-populate** from the S251 Budget statements **Pupil Premium Grant** (I05) and **Post-16 ESFA Bursary** funding (I02). These 2 funding streams cannot be entered into the Section 251 funding page. These allocations should be entered manually in the relevant **Non-Section 251 Income** pages. Schools should also enter their allocations via the new **Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG)** in this way. The Schools Supplementary Grant, which was allocated in 2022/23, has now ceased (as the funding has been transferred into core formula funding), and so schools must not continue to add this grant stream separately into their I01 funding forecasts.

**Secondary schools with Resourced Provisions that have funded post 16 places, as in previous years, will need to manually move** in the Software the element of place-led funding for post 16 places from I01 to I02 so that the CFR totals match the Section 251 Budget statements. Post 16 places are worth £6,000. So the place-led funding (no. of places x £6,000) should be removed from I01 funding (enter a negative) and added to I02 funding (enter a positive) in the relevant I01 and I02 Non-Section 251 Income pages.

1. You are reminded that you need to **manually enter into the Software as expenditure your school’s contributions to de-delegated items**. You should enter the figures as shown in the CFR Funding Breakdown of your S251 Budget statement for 2023/24. To enter these figures:
   1. Navigate to the **Other Expenditure** page using the Scenario heading menu.
   2. You can then either click on the blue ‘**+**’ button to add the item as a new budget line, or amend the figure brought into 2023/24 from your 2022/23 scenario
   3. Choose the relevant CFR code by clicking in the Section box and choosing from the drop-down menu.
   4. Enter a relevant description along with the expenditure values and any further information helpful to you in your budget setting. *Once you enter a figure for 2023/24, the figures for 2024/25 – 2027/28 will be automatically generated based on 3% inflation in each year. You can overtype these figures to match 2023/24 (assuming no inflation), or keep the inflated figures, should you wish.*
   5. Click on the blue ‘Save’ button at the bottom right of the page.
2. Once you have completed these initial adjustments and inputs, please **check** your totals of formula funding and de-delegated funds expenditure in the **CFR Report** for 2023/24. You can navigate to your CFR report by clicking the Scenario heading menu and choosing **Reporting Module** from the Reports submenu. Click on the CFR report under the Bradford Reports tab and click on the blue ‘Print to Excel’ button; you should then be asked to open or save the report in Excel.

If you have simply sought to replicate your Section 251 Budget statement, and have not deliberately and knowingly made any changes e.g. to use different estimates for I05 Pupil Premium Grant, adjusted I01 Early Years Single Funding Formula entitlement numbers, adjusted I02 Post-16 funding, amended I03 EHCP top up element funding or I01 SEND Funding Floor, and have not added any additional grant funding e.g. Mainstream Schools Additional Grant or Early Years Pupil Premium under I01, then the funding totals by CFR code for 2023/24 in the CFR Report in your software should match the totals shown on your 2023/24 Section 251 Budget Statement that was published on 24 February.

There will be a difference between the Software and the final March Section 251 Statements for primary schools and maintained nursery schools, where schools have asked us to adjust their estimates of 2, 3&4-year-old early years entitlement numbers following the publication of the 1st Draft Indicative EYSFF allocations – please see paragraph C for how to manage these.

There may also be some small differences that are due to rounding in the Software. If this is this case, please make small manual adjustments as necessary in the relevant **Non Section 251 Income** pages.

1. Once you are clear about your ‘starting’ funding position you should make **adjustments for known changes**, such as for the latest values of I03 EHCP top up funding or for I01 SEND Floor funding, for your latest estimates of EYSFF numbers or for the confirmation of Post 16 I02 funding.

You should also then manually input **additional funding / grant allocations** that you expect to receive and that were not included in the 2023/24 Section 251 Budget statements. These should be entered in the relevant Non-Section 251 Income pages (most commonly under I01, I05 and I18). Please see the [S251 guidance notes](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=229) on BSO for further information on what is not included in the Section 251 Budget statements. You should also take note of the risks and changes to funding and grants for 2023/24 and beyond that are highlighted in these guidance notes.

We recommend, in particular, that schools **calculate their own estimate of I05 Pupil Premium Grant for 2023/24** using their pupil data from Get Information About Pupils website (GIAPs, which has replaced ‘Key to Success’), alongside their October 2022 Census returns. Schools should not simply rely on the accuracy of the estimate that was used for the S251 Budget statements. This is because the S251 estimate was calculated simply using the previous year’s Ever 6 FSM % data. Please ensure that your scenario includes an estimate of Pupil Premium Grant funding in every year, based on the information you have available at the moment. Please note however, that the continuation of the Pupil Premium Grant, or the continuation of this as a separate grant, is one of the uncertainties of the national funding system going forward.

Primary and secondary schools are reminded that the former Teacher Pay and Teacher Pensions Grants (in respect of Reception to Year 11 pupils) continue to be already allocated via core formula funding. The Early Years element of these Grants has been newly transferred into the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF), at April 2023. Schools therefore, must ensure that any separate allocations in respect of these grants for Early Years pupils, and for Reception to Year 11 pupils, that may have been included in previous I01 funding forecasts in budget scenarios that have been brought into 2023/24, are removed. To not do so will double count this funding.

Primary and secondary schools should add manually their estimated allocations from the new **Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG)**. It is expected that this Grant will cease as a separate grant from April 2024, but that the funding will continue via core formula funding (merged into the National Funding Formula). We suggest for now however, that schools continue the MSAG funding across each of the 5 years of their current forecast as a separate non-Section 251 income line, rather than try to bring this into the S251 funding page in some way from 2024/25. In keeping this allocation separate schools should however, adjust the cash value of this grant for any significant forecasted changes in pupil numbers (especially reductions in pupil numbers).

All schools are reminded that the Software contains the facility to separate I18 funding into I18A, I18B, I18C and I18D. This additional coding is also shown on the CFR Report. As such, schools should ensure that they have correctly coded I18 additional grants to these respective sub-codes.

**C. Funding for Early Years Entitlement Provision (EYSFF) – Maintained Nursery Schools & Classes in Primary Schools**

1. **The Software has been pre-populated to include the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) totals and estimated numbers for early years entitlement delivery in 2023/24 that were shown in the 1st Draft Indicative EYSFF Budgets published on 24 February.**

Schools can see the data behind the EYSFF funding calculations via ‘Show Factors’ on the EYSFF line of the Section 251 Funding page.

The pre-population of 2-year-old EYSFF funding, as in previous years, is treated simply; pre-populated only with an annual cash amount.

Where schools have asked for estimates of 3&4-year-old numbers to be adjusted for 2023/24, following the publication of the 1st Draft Indicative Budgets, although these changes will be reflected in the Confirmed Indicative Budgets (CIBs) published mid-March, **they are not reflected in the Software**. Schools that have adjusted their estimates will need to manually adjust their scenarios to match the CIBs using the process described below. Any adjustments to the cash values of 2-year-old allocations resulting from numbers changes will also not be reflected in the Software and will need to be adjusted manually.

The headcounts pre-populated in the ‘Show Factors’ page for 3&4 year olds are split between the universal and extended entitlements. For both the universal and extended entitlements, 1 headcount = 15 hours. In this way, the Software replicates how the EYSFF allocations are displayed within the EYSFF breakdown in the Section 251 Budget files and also how the ready reckoner works.

Schools are advised always to sense check their software estimates with the ready reckoner that is provided on BSO - do you get the same funding result when you use the same estimates of numbers and is this funding in line with what you would expect / manually calculate / currently receive? There is opportunity for error when making amendments. A simple sense check of the EYSFF funding totals in the Software against the ready reckoner will help ensure that significant errors are avoided.

Schools should not amend the number of hours (15) or the weeks per term (12,14,12) that are pre-populated in the ‘Show Factors’ page in any of the years.

Please note that the sustainability lump sum for maintained nursery schools is not dynamic i.e. it does not re-calculate for changes in entitlement numbers. Maintained nursery schools should watch for this, and should use the ready reckoner to forecast the impact of numbers changes on this value in 2023/24. This is not normally a significant issue, unless estimated numbers in 2023/24 and in future years are significantly different from 1st Draft Indicative Budget estimates. However, we remind maintained nursery schools that the status of their higher level of protected funding after 2024/25 is not currently certain. The Software is currently pre-populated however, assuming that this higher level of funding (protected setting base rates, protected deprivation rates, sustainability lump sum) continues in all 5 years of the forecast period.

Maintained nursery schools, and primary schools with nursery classes, are reminded that the early years element of the former Teacher Pay and Teacher Pensions Grants has been newly transferred into the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF), at April 2023. **Schools therefore, must ensure that any separate allocations in respect of these grants for early years entitlement pupils, that may have been included in previous I01 funding forecasts in budget scenarios that have been brought into 2023/24, are removed**. To not do so will double count this funding.

1. A school’s early years entitlement funding will be adjusted during 2023/24 to take account of the differences between estimated and actual numbers of funded hours counted in the termly censuses in May 2023, October 2023 and January 2024. You can alter EYSFF funding in the Software throughout the year if you wish (once you know the actual numbers of eligible children in the termly censuses for example) by using the process described in step 13 below.
2. By default, the Software assumes the same termly hours and the same level of basic funding as 2023/24 for the 4 remaining years of the 5 year forecast. You can alter EYSFF funding estimates for future years using the process described in the next step.

Our general advice is that schools **should not amend their pre-populated EYSFF hourly rates of funding in future years at this stage**. We will continue to talk directly with maintained nursery schools about future funding. There is a significant amount of uncertainty about April 2024 onwards. However, we suggest that primary schools with nursery classes assume at this time a cash flat rates position going forward.

1. Navigate to the **Section 251** page by clicking on the **Scenario** heading on the left hand side. Scroll down to the Early Years Funding section and you will see your total EYSFF in a separate line. Nursery schools will also see the sustainability factor as a lump sum shown separately.
   1. Scroll down and choose ‘Show Factors’ from the Actions drop down box at the right hand side of the **EYSFF Funding** factor line.
   2. Overtype the headcount numbers by term to reflect either your actuals or your revised estimates in the relevant columns and rows. To do this, choose ‘Edit’ from the Actions drop down box at the right hand side of each row and then overtype the termly headcount figure as necessary. Click the Save button for each row once you have made changes. Once you have entered all adjustments, click to close the screen. The Software will then recalculate the EYSFF funding total for 3 and 4 year olds in the Section 251 page. You should sense check the totals for each year.
   3. Overtype the cash value of 2-year-old funding as necessary using the same edit process.
   4. For monitoring and recording changes in EYSFF funding during 2023/24, in all cases, we advise schools to use the ready reckoner to re-calculate estimates of funding allocations during 2023/24 and to sense check the results. The EYSFF ready reckoner will be published late March and will be available on [BSO here](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=1904).
   5. As an alternative to the process described in a. b. and c. above, it is possible for a school to leave the Section 251 Page alone and simply add the funding adjustments shown in the ready reckoner into their I01 funding by entering a value in the **Non-Section 251 Income** page. To enter the funding values:
      1. Navigate to the **Non-Section 251 Income** page by clicking on the **Scenario** heading on the left hand side
      2. Click on the blue ‘**+**’ at the top of the page.
      3. Choose I01 from the Section dropdown list and enter a relevant description along with the necessary funding adjustment and any further information.
   6. For forecasting early years funding for future years, again, schools can adjust the termly headcounts by drilling down in the Section 251 page as described above, or by using the ready reckoner to calculate an estimated adjustment and manually entering this in to the Non-Section 251 Income I01 page in future years.
2. **Maintained nursery schools**, before making any changes, should check that the formula funding totals in their CFR Report for 2023/24 match the total of EYSFF for 2, 3 and 4 year olds shown in their 1st Draft Indicative EYSFF Budgets, published on 18 February. You can navigate to your CFR report by clicking the Scenario heading menu and choosing **Reporting Module** from the Reports submenu. Click on the CFR report under the Bradford Reports tab and click on the blue ‘Print to Excel’ button; you should then be asked to open or save the report in Excel. As a reminder, where a nursery school has requested adjustments to estimated numbers for their Confirmed Indicative EYSFF Budgets, these adjustments will not be included and the numbers and 2-year-old cash allocations in the Software will need to be manually adjusted to match.

**D. Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units**

1. As in previous years, the S251 funding page in the Software for special schools and PRUs is blank. This is because of the timing of publication of the first High Needs Monthly Funding Statements for 2023/24. You should initially construct your budget in the Software with reference to the [High Needs Monthly Funding Statements](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=3225) that are published on Bradford Schools Online on a monthly basis. A summary statement showing the 2023/24 Delegated Budget Shares for stand-alone High Needs providers was added to the [High Needs Funding Statements page](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=3225) on 24 February and the first Monthly Adjustment Statement will be available mid-April. A ready reckoner for 2023/24 will also shortly be made available for schools to use to estimate their funding allocations throughout the year (available via the link above).
2. As in previous years, you will need to manually enter into the Software your estimated budget information using the **Non-Section 251 Income** page. To enter the funding values:
   1. Navigate to the **Non-Section 251 Income** page by clicking on the **Scenario** heading on the left hand side
   2. Click on the blue ‘**+**’ at the top of the page.
   3. Choose the relevant CFR code from the **Section** dropdown list:
      1. I01 funding = Place funding for pre-16 pupils
      2. I02 funding = Place funding for post-16 pupils
      3. I03 funding = Plus elements of funding for all pupils
      4. I05 funding = Estimated Pupil Premium funding
   4. Enter a relevant description along with the funding values and any further information.
3. Once you have initially entered your first draft of funding for 2023/24 you should sense check that the Place-Plus totals shown in your CFR Report in your software scenario are as you would expect. You can navigate to your CFR report by clicking the Scenario heading menu and choosing **Reporting Module** from the Reports submenu. Click on the CFR report under the Bradford Reports tab and click on the blue ‘Print to Excel’ button; you should then be asked to open or save the report in Excel.
4. The ‘**Top-Up’ element** **(I03)** especially will continue to change during 2023/24 according to the population of pupils recorded on the roll of the school at the 10th of each month. You can / should therefore, adjust your budget on a monthly basis in the Software to reflect any subsequent changes in I03 funding. You should also check for changes to any of the other funding elements that these statements may identify*.* The High Needs Funding Statements will be updated and published on [this page](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=3225) on BSO.

Special schools and PRUs should specifically note for 2023/24 that they must continue to manually add into their scenarios additional I01 funding, which will be allocated by the Authority in respect of the former Teacher Pay and Teacher Pensions Grants. These allocations will be shown on the monthly master advances schedules. It is reasonable at this time to assume that these grant funding streams will continue on a cash-flat basis across the 5 years of the current forecast.

Special schools and PRUs must also newly manually add into their 2023/24 scenarios the separate additional I01 funding, which will be allocated by the Authority in respect of the additional place-led monies (the “3.4% increase per place” monies) that are required by the DfE to be passed through as a result of the December 2022 High Needs Block settlement announcement. These allocations will be shown on the monthly master advances schedules. It is reasonable at this time to assume that this new additional funding stream will continue on a cash-flat basis across the 5 years of the current forecast.

1. **For Future Years**: The Software assumes ‘by default’ no change in top-up or place-element funding values in future years (place-element funding remains at £10,000 and top-up values remain cash flat on 2023/24). By ‘default’, we mean that the inflation factor on income in the Non-Section 251 income page is set at 0%, so whatever figure a special school / PRU manually enters into the 2023/24 column will repeat at the same value across the 5 years, without uplift.

We do anticipate that top-up values will be uplifted after 2023/24. However, we also anticipate that the DfE will not continue to increase our High Needs Block funding from April 2024 at the same rate as has occurred in recent years and that we will need to exercise close ‘control’ of top-up funding cost growth. Uplifts in top-up funding values going forward therefore, from April 2024, are likely to be much smaller than seen recently. We are also currently unclear whether / how the DfE’s national reviews of SEND and EHCP systems and funding will affect place-element and top-up funding after 2023/24. For now, it is reasonable for special schools / PRUs to budget and forecast on the basis of the current system, but special schools / PRUs must then assess the implications of the reviews when these are known and must re-budget, if necessary, for 2024/25 onwards.

With caution in mind, we would not advise special schools and PRUs to vary in future years from the current £10,000 I01 place-element value. Although the Software does not automatically increase top-up funding annually by default, it is reasonable for special schools / PRUs to assume that I03 top-up income, on a like for like basis, may increase per pupil, perhaps prudently at this time, between 0.5% and 1.0% a year, from April 2024. Special schools / PRUs can make this adjustment, if they wish, by altering the inflation factor in their software. When adding / estimating total I03 funding as a lump sum value however, special schools and PRUs obviously must factor in changes in pupil and place numbers (checking that the total values of I03 funding in future years are adjusted for known significant changes up or down in the number of pupils on roll). A very cautious approach would be for special schools and PRUs to work on the same factor values across all 5 years i.e. to not uplift funding rates at all from 2023/24. You will be able to use the ready reckoner (click [here](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=3225) to access this on BSO) to estimate adjusted funding for 2023/24, as well as for future years on the 2023/24 basis. However, as salaries expenditure is expected to continue to increase annually, on a cash flat income approach, your scenarios will likely show growth of in year over-spending.

**E. Primary & Secondary S251 Formula Funding – Additional Information on Estimates / Assumptions I01, I02. I03 and I05 funding**

1. **I01 funding within the Section 251 Page**
2. The Software is set up assuming that the primary and secondary mainstream core funding formula will continue to be constructed over the next 5 years as it has been in 2023/24, using the DfE’s National Funding Formula (NFF) as is currently applied and as was published in July 2022.

Schools are advised not to alter the data behind their Section 251 formula funding calculations e.g. FSM% and EAL% and certainly not to alter this for the purpose of increasing formula allocations in future years, as these increases may not be secure.

1. **The values of all core NFF pupil-led factors are estimated to increase by 1.50% annually from April 2024.** So very simply, before the mandatory minimum per pupil funding protection and Minimum Funding Guarantee kick in, if pupil numbers and data are continued as in 2023/24, then the total cash value of a school’s basic NFF allocation in the Software is estimated to increase by 1.50% a year in each of the next 4 years.

1. The **Minimum Per Pupil levels (MFLs)** in the Software are:
   1. £4,405 for the primary phase at April 2023. This minimum is increased by an estimated 0.50% annually from April 2024.
   2. £5,715 for the secondary phase at April 2023. This minimum is increased by an estimated 0.50% annually from April 2023.

The Minimum Per Pupil Funding factor is dynamic within the Software (it changes for adjustments in estimates of pupil numbers). This factor is calculated prior to the Minimum Funding Guarantee.

1. The **Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)** is estimated at positive 0.50% in each of the next 4 years. This is a dynamic formula, which will take account of changes in pupil number estimates. It is calculated after the Minimum Per Pupil Funding factor. So, very simply, the Software estimates that a school’s total NFF allocation, including any minimum per pupil protection (MFL) as well as any MFG value that was allocated in the previous year, will increase annually by a minimum of 0.50% per pupil, based the DfE’s current MFG methodology.
2. **Early Years Single Funding Formula** – all individual school funding rates are retained cash flat at 2023/24 values across 2023-2028.
3. **High Needs Place Element Funding** – this is retained cash flat at the current £6,000 / £10,000 values across the full 2023-2028 period.
4. Funding for **expanding schools** and for **bulge classes,** as well as for **safeguarded salaries** and **split sites**, is pre-populated to match S251 Budget statements for 2023/24 only. Applicable schools need to review whether this funding will continue from April 2024 and manually adjust funding, either by drilling down in the Section 251 page or by adding a new budget line in the Non Section 251 Income page, where it is appropriate to do so.
5. The value of funding for the **BSF affordability gap (PFI funding)** is pre-populated from the 2023/24 value across all 5 years. We would expect this to increase in line with inflation. However, this will not have an impact on the net budget of the secondary school and therefore, for simplicity, we suggest that this is kept at the 2023/24 value. This funding is not physically allocated to schools. BSF schools should either remove this from their I01 funding for budgeting purposes, or (preferred) add a corresponding value of expenditure into E28b.
6. **SEND Floor Funding** is not pre-populated. Schools will need to add funding manually, either within the Section 251 funding page (through ‘edit’) or by adding this funding using the ‘non-section 251’ income route. Schools are reminded that our amended Floor mechanism is in place for a further year in 2023/24, pending review for April 2024, including review in the context of the DfE’s national SEND and EHCP reviews. Our Floor may change (or may not continue, where the DfE restricts these sorts of SEND funding protection arrangements) after 2023/24. Schools should continue to be aware that the SEND Floor funding stream will change on a monthly basis during 2023/24 for the movement of EHCPs. As such, schools may find it easier to use the ‘non-section 251’ income route, as this is a little bit more flexible.
7. **Schools are reminded that:**

* The Schools Supplementary Grant has now ceased (has been transferred into core formula funding).
* The former Teacher Pay and Teacher Pensions Grants (in respect of Reception to Year 11 pupils) continue to be already allocated via core formula funding.
* The Early Years element of the Teacher Pay and Pensions Grants been newly transferred into the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF), at April 2023.

Schools therefore, must ensure that any separate allocations in respect of these grants, that may have been included in previous I01 funding forecasts in budget scenarios that have been brought into 2023/24, are removed. To not do so will double count this funding.

1. **I02 Post-16 ESFA funding within the Section 251 Page**
2. I02 **ESFA Main Programme funding** for 2023/24 is pre-populated to match the estimate in your Section 251 Budget statement that was published on 24 February.
3. As in previous years, the estimated **ESFA Post-16 Bursary** funding shown in Section 251 Budget statements is not pre-populated and you will need to enter this funding manually into the Non-Section 251 Income page of the Software.
4. The total funding shown in the CFR breakdown in your Section 251 Budget statement does include the post 16 element of the **High Needs Place** funding. However, as in previous years, this is not pre-populated in the Software under I02, it is in I01, and so you will need to move this funding manually into I02 funding in the Non-Section 251 Income page. A corresponding adjustment to remove this funding from I01 is needed.
5. The ESFA has now notified the Authority of final allocations for the 2023/24 academic year. Adjustments to funding, for the differences between the estimates used in the initial budgets and the ESFA’s confirmed figures, will be shown in the Advances Schedule published in April. Schools will need to manually adjust their allocations in the Software following this confirmation.
6. The Software assumes the continuation of Post-16 funding in future years at the same cash value as 2023/24. The Software does not automatically re-calculate I02 allocations where schools change their post 16 pupil numbers in the Pupil Numbers page. This leaves schools to make their own estimates of funding, using their own predictions of student numbers, funded growth and retention rates.
7. **I03 funding (SEND EHCP Top-Up Funding) within the Section 251 Page**
8. The I03 line in the S251 funding page is available but will be 0 for all schools. Schools need to add their **I03 EHCP top-up funding manually**, either within the S251 page (through ‘edit’) or by adding this funding using the I03 ‘non-section 251’ funding route.

Schools will get a clear view of their new values of I03 EHCP top-up funding for their mainstream EHCP pupils, as well as any values of I01 SEND Floor funding, from the April 2023 high needs statements when these are published mid-April. Ready reckoners will shortly be available on BSO, which schools can use in advance of these statements to estimate both I03 EHCP top-up funding and I01 SEND Floor funding. These ready reckoners should then be used during the year to estimate the impact of EHCP changes on both I01 and I03 funding.

1. As in previous years, **I03 top-up funding to be allocated to school-led resourced provisions within mainstream schools is not pre-populated in the Software** and should be added manually using the ‘non-section 251 funding’ route. Schools should use the ready reckoner (click [here](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=3225) to access this on BSO) to estimate their full year funding under the EHCP Banded Model. Please also see the advice given in paragraph 19 on estimating future year place element and top-up funding.
2. I03 funding figures will change on a monthly basis, from April, to reflect the movement of pupils on roll with EHCPs, both in mainstream and resourced provisions. Schools can estimate their own I03 funding by taking into account any known leavers or starters throughout the financial year. Schools should therefore, adjust their budgets on a monthly basis in the Software to reflect any changes in I03 funding. Schools should also check for changes to any of the other high needs funding elements. The [High Needs Funding Statements](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=3225) and the main [Advances Schedules](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=312), which show these funding adjustments, will be updated and published on BSO.
3. **I05 Pupil Premium Grant**
4. As in previous years, **schools need to manually input their estimated I05 Pupil Premium Grant allocations into the Non-Section 251 Income page.**
5. The value of Pupil Premium Grant funding in future years, where this grant continues and on current methodology, will be mostly influenced by a) the number of children on roll in the October Censuses who have registered for free school meals at any stage in the last 6 years and b) the value of funding per pupil, which will be set by the Government. It is reasonable for schools to estimate at this stage the continuation of this grant in future years using the same unit values as in 2023/24 i.e. cash flat. Please note however, that the continuation of Pupil Premium Grant, or the continuation of this funding as a separate grant, is one of the uncertainties of the national system going forward.
6. Schools can also enter into their scenarios expected allocations fo**r children who are Looked After.** This will continue be paid in 2023/24 retrospectively on a termly basis as is current practice.
7. The [S251 guidance notes](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=229) give further information on Pupil Premium Grant funding.
8. **I01 Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (new in 2023/24)**
9. Primary and secondary schools should add manually into the Non-Section 251 Income page their estimated allocations from the new Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG), under I01. We have published on Bradford Schools Online, alongside the Budget statements, an estimate of MSAG allocations for maintained primary and secondary schools for 2023/24, to help budget planning. Grant allocations will be confirmed by the DfE later in the spring term.
10. It is expected that this MSAG will cease as a separate grant from April 2024, but that the funding will continue via core formula funding (merged into the National Funding Formula). We suggest for now however, that schools continue the MSAG funding across each of the 5 years of their current forecast as a separate non-Section 251 income line, rather than try to bring this into the S251 funding page in some way from 2024/25. In keeping this allocation separate, schools should however, adjust the cash value of this grant for any significant forecasted changes in pupil numbers (especially reductions in pupil numbers).

**F. Teacher and Support Staff Pay Cost Assumptions**

1. **The Software has been set up on the default pay scales and other inflation assumptions listed below. The pay awards, for both teachers and support staff, are estimated at this time**. Schools are advised to fully read the Authority’s budget setting guidance notes for the warnings given about expenditure pressures, uncertainties and actions to take during and after budget setting for 2023/24. Schools must regularly check the status of key decisions and must regularly review the impact of these on planned spending.

Schools will be aware that they can amend the inflation and pay related factors assumptions, and the values of pay scales, in their software. Schools should seek further guidance from the Access Group helpdesk if they are unclear about how to do this. School Funding Team will ask for the Software to be updated to take account of significant changes and confirmations that apply to all schools where required during the year – primarily for the confirmed NJC (support staff) pay award at April 2023, and the September 2023 national teacher pay award.

The table below shows the default ‘Pay Related Factors’ that will be pre-populated within the 2023 Software \*. The table in your software should exactly match this. **Please double check this.**



\* please be aware that, in the initial release, the SMP and SSP figures for 2023/24 are retained at 2022/23 values. These will shortly be updated via a ‘national’ update to the Software. You can manually adjust the values in your software prior to this national update to match the table above.

* **Teacher Pay E01:** In our [budget guidance](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/secure/CMSPage.aspx?mid=236), published on 24 February, we explained that the DfE has provided its recommendations on the September 2023 teachers’ pay award to the STRB (these were published on 21 February) and that schools should carefully consider what the DfE says in its [recommendations report](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evidence-to-the-strb-2023-pay-award-for-teachers-and-leaders) and should take the time to closely assess (and scenario model) financial impact.

The DfE has put forward a recommendation for an overall 3.5% pay award at September 2023. This is a differentiated award however (it does not mean all scale points increase by 3.5%), with the recommendation that Main Pay Scale Point 1 (MPS1) increases to £30,000 (which would represent a 7.1% increase), the remaining points on the MPS increase in a tapered way, and all other teacher pay scale points and allowances increase by 3.0%.

Whilst the DfE puts forward now a recommendation for an overall 3.5% pay award at September 2023, the DfE states that changing financial conditions (especially where energy costs reduce) might allow for school budgets to accommodate a higher pay award. This factor produces an additional element of uncertainty about the award’s budget impact, which schools must remain aware of and must carefully consider. The DfE is quite clear in its STRB report however, that no further funding is available to support the cost of the final award, meaning that schools will be required to fully absorb this cost from their already announced delegated funding, even where this award is higher than 3.5%. This means that reductions in energy costs that may come during 2023 will likely be re-directed to facilitate the cost of a higher teachers’ pay award, rather than delivering material savings for schools to ‘bank’. Schools should approach their 2023/24 budgeting on this basis (we would suggest that schools do not bring into their 2023/24 budgets an expectation that energy savings will help their budget ‘bottom line’ position).

Until further information becomes available, the 2023 updated Software retains the same pay scale estimates for teachers that have been used in the current 2022 version and that were updated for the September 2022 pay award. On this basis, we estimate that all scale points and allowances, with the exception of the Main Pay Scale, will increase by 3.0% at September 2023. For the Main Pay Scale, we estimate that the DfE will take the final step to the minimum £30,000 MPS1 salary at September 2023, meaning that Main Pay Scale Points will increase between 7.1% and 3.0% at September 2023. We then estimate that all scale points and allowances, including Main Pay Scale, will increase by 3.0% at September 2024, and then by 3.0% each September thereafter. If individual schools decide to vary from the Authority’s estimate, before further information becomes available, this must only be done to increase the estimated pay uplift, not to decrease it, from the Authority’s estimated position.

The teacher pay award for September 2023 will be finally determined by the DfE in the summer term, following consideration of the recommendations of the STRB that are scheduled to be published in May. We expect to adjust the Software (via ‘mandatory’ update) at the point the pay award for September 2023 is confirmed. This is likely to be towards the end of the summer term / summer holidays. The confirmation of the teacher pay award may quite significantly adjust salaries costs and therefore, may have an impact on overall school budgets, due both to the level of the overall pay award as well as to the differentiation of this award between different teacher scales and allowances. Schools must watch out for notifications of the updates to the Software and must review the impact that the confirmation of the teachers’ pay award has on their salaries costs and on their overall budget positions.

Schools are reminded that the ‘Leading Practitioners’ pay-scale has been added into the Software. The AST and Excellent Teacher scales are now redundant, but have not been deleted as we are not clear about the extent to which schools may still use these.

Schools are reminded on a specific point, that in Bradford, teachers move from scale point 5 directly to point 6b, bypassing scale point 6. The automatic incremental rise within the Software will not account for this. Please read the guidance notes on the[HCSS page](https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/CMSPage.aspx?mid=199) on BSO on how to edit those contracts showing as scale point 6 instead of scale point 6b. If you have specific questions on terms and conditions or specific teacher contracts within your school please contact your HR officer.

* **Teacher Pension Scheme Employer’s Contribution E01:** the Software by default continues to calculate the employer’s contribution to teacher pensions at 23.68% across all 5 years. The employer’s contribution to teacher pensions however, is set for review at April 2024. Any change in this contribution will affect 2024/25 budgets. We have not brought any assumptions about this into our estimates at this time, however. This is a major element of budgeting uncertainty. Commentators do expect that the employer’s contribution will (significantly) increase at April 2024. A critical aspect then, if this does happen, is whether new funding will be allocated to schools to support the cost, on top of the 1.50% increase in formula funding that we are estimating. Schools will remember that, following the last review at September 2019, the DfE established the Teacher Pensions Grant. However, whilst this provides precedent, this does not mean that the same will happen at April 2024. But at this time, unfortunately, we do not know the outcomes of the review or the DfE’s response to this.
* **Support Staff Pay E03 – E07:** Schools are reminded that they were required in the 2019 Software to manually adjust E03 – E07 contracts brought forward from existing scenarios to transfer these onto the new NJC pay scale at April 2019. The Software includes a pay-scale entitled ‘New NJC scale April 2019’ and most schools will now use this for all relevant staff. The Software does continue to contain the pre-April 2019 scale, which is entitled ‘NJC’, as some schools may be continuing to use this in their scenario modelling (such as in previous scenarios that might be brought forward into 2023/24). All new E03 – E07 staff and contracts however, should be placed onto the ‘new NJC scale April 2019’.

As explained in our budget guidance, on 23 February 2023, the National Employers [announced their pay offer](https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/council-employees-pay-offer-announced-4) for support staff / officers (the NJC pay scales award) for April 2023. The Employers’ offer is similar to the final pay award that was agreed for April 2022: £1,925 on all scale points (up to scale point 43 of the NJC scale), with a 3.88% uplift on all points above the NJC scale (point 43). This equates to a range of uplifts, between 9.42% at the bottom of the scale up to 3.88% at the top of (and above) the scale. We do not yet have any indication of the timescales for the completion of the pay bargaining process, and it is quite possible, following this process, for the final agreed pay award to be different from the Employers’ offer (though we would not expect that the final award would be reduced on the offer). So, as confirmed by the Employers’ offer, the shape of, and overall uplift applied by, the final agreed NJC pay award for April 2023, will be significant for school budgets, and this is an aspect that requires close assessment.

Using the current ‘knowns’, the 2023 Software is initially set up on the basis of the Employers’ offer for the April 2023 pay award, as published on 23 February. The Software then estimates that all scale points will increase by 3.0% at April 2024 and each April thereafter.

Individual schools can decide to vary from the Authority’s estimate in constructing their initial budgets. Where they do this, prior to further information becoming available, we would expect that this is only done to increase the estimated pay uplift, not to decrease it, from the Authority’s estimated position.

As a result of the additional day of annual leave allowance that was agreed as part of the April 2022 pay award, the Term Time Only multiplication factors have changed for April 2023. A copy of the new factors is provided at the end of this guidance.

* **Bradford Council’s employer’s contribution to the Local Government (West Yorkshire) Pension Scheme for NJC scale officers and support staff** – the current contribution is 17.1%. We have adjusted the contribution for the latest valuation results that have been received from the actuary, as follows: 16.80% 2023/24; 16.50% 2024/25; 16.20% 2025/26 onwards. This contribution is still subject to regular actuarial review, and the 2024/25 and 2025/26 figures may change from those quoted above (both up and down, including following the implication of the outcomes of the McCloud judgement).
* **Inflation on expenditure** – the Software continues to assume that prices for goods and services will increase by 3.00% annually at April each year. The default annual inflation factor for E01 to E07 expenditure added via the ‘other expenditure’ route, rather than via the more detailed salaries calculation, is also set at 3.00%.

**G. Additional Notes**

1. Please note that School Funding Team is able to access the data for Bradford schools directly online but will only do so if this is requested by the school and with the school’s permission. Only School Funding Team has access rights within the Local Authority. Routine checks of the Software at individual school level are not carried out by SFT. SFT will only access the scenarios for an individual school where the school has requested and authorised SFT to do so.

**H. Contact Details**

1. Schools should contact **Access Group Customer Support** for guidance with technical issues or general user advice, such as how to enter staffing adjustments into the Software. **Please call directly on 0845 340 4546.**
2. Schools should contact a member of School Funding Team with any more general budget or formula funding related queries (using the contact details given at the start of this guidance).

**Appendix 1 – Bradford Support Staffing: Term Time Only Factors**

Please see the document embedded below.

