

DE/2026-047 – Freedom of Information Request

Request:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I request detailed information on per-pupil funding allocations within Northern Ireland schools under the Common Funding Formula.

1. Base funding (all pupils)

Please provide the current Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) rates, including:

- Per-pupil funding amounts for:
 - Nursery
 - Primary
 - Post-primary

2. Additional funding categories (per pupil)

Please provide the exact per-pupil funding amounts, eligibility criteria, and duration for all additional funding streams, including but not limited to:

- Newcomer pupils
- Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME) / deprivation funding
- English as an Additional Language (if separate from newcomer classification)
- Any other supplementary funding categories currently in use

For each category, please include:

- £ amount per pupil
- How long funding is allocated
- Whether funding varies by age group (nursery, primary, post-primary)

3. Newcomer pupil funding (specific detail)

For newcomer pupils specifically:

- Exact £ amount per pupil

- Duration of eligibility and funding
- Criteria for classification and removal
- Whether funding differs by educational stage

4. Total funding comparison

Please provide a comparative breakdown of total average funding per pupil (base + additional funding where applicable) for:

- A standard pupil (no additional needs)
- A newcomer pupil
- A pupil eligible for FSME
- A pupil with SEN

If available, provide this as a table or worked example.

5. Total annual spend

- Total annual funding allocated for each category (newcomer, SEN, FSME, etc.)
- Number of pupils in each category
- For each year from 2018–2025

6. Ringfencing and restrictions

For each funding category listed above:

- Whether the funding is ringfenced
- If not:
 - What restrictions exist on its use
 - Whether schools are required to demonstrate how funds are spent

7. Accountability and reporting

- Are schools required to report spending for each funding category?
- Are there audits, inspections, or reviews of how funds are used?
- Provide any reporting templates, guidance, or audit frameworks used

8. Funding formula and changes

- The methodology used to calculate each funding stream
- Any changes to these formulas since 2018

9. Internal reviews and evaluations

Please provide copies of any:

- Internal reports
- Audits
- Evaluations

relating to the effectiveness, allocation, or oversight of:

- Newcomer funding
- SEN funding
- Deprivation/FSME funding

since 2018

Department Response:

Thank you for your request for information relating to per-pupil funding allocations under the Common Funding Formula (CFF). The request was received on 23 March 2026.

Under the legislation the Department is not required to provide information that is already available in a form accessible by the public. The information you requested is available on the Department's website and I have attached the relevant links in an itemised format, as per your request, in the attached Annex. If you do not have access to the Internet at home, you may be able to use facilities at your local public library, or you can request a paper copy by contacting me.

The Department's Document Retention and Disposal schedule precludes the provision of information for the full period requested. In accordance with this policy, where you have requested financial information before the 2019-20 financial year, this is not held by the Department and has not been provided.