

Independent Special Schools

Working Group

Appendix 2

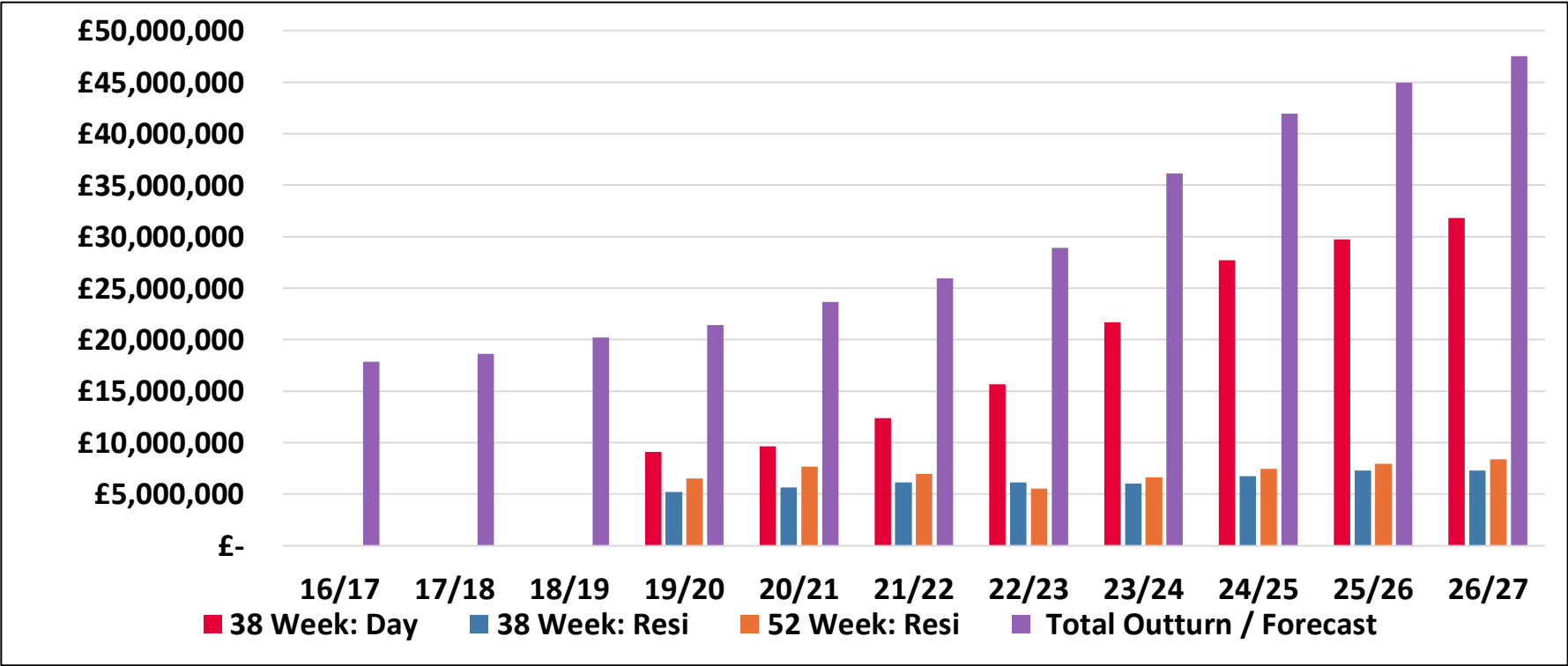
Independent School Cost 2016-17 to 2026/27

100%

In 2016/17 the cost of Independent Schools to the High Needs Block was **£18m**. Since then the cost of placing children and young people in Independent Schools has increased to **£36m** in 2023/24. An increase of **100%**.

166%

Fast forward to 2026/27, based on current trends the cost of independent school places is forecast to reach **£47.5m**. A **166%** increase over an 11 year period



Independent School: Volume of Places

The steep increase in cost is attributable to both volume of places and continued increases in price paid for placements. The trend in placement volume is set out below.

103%

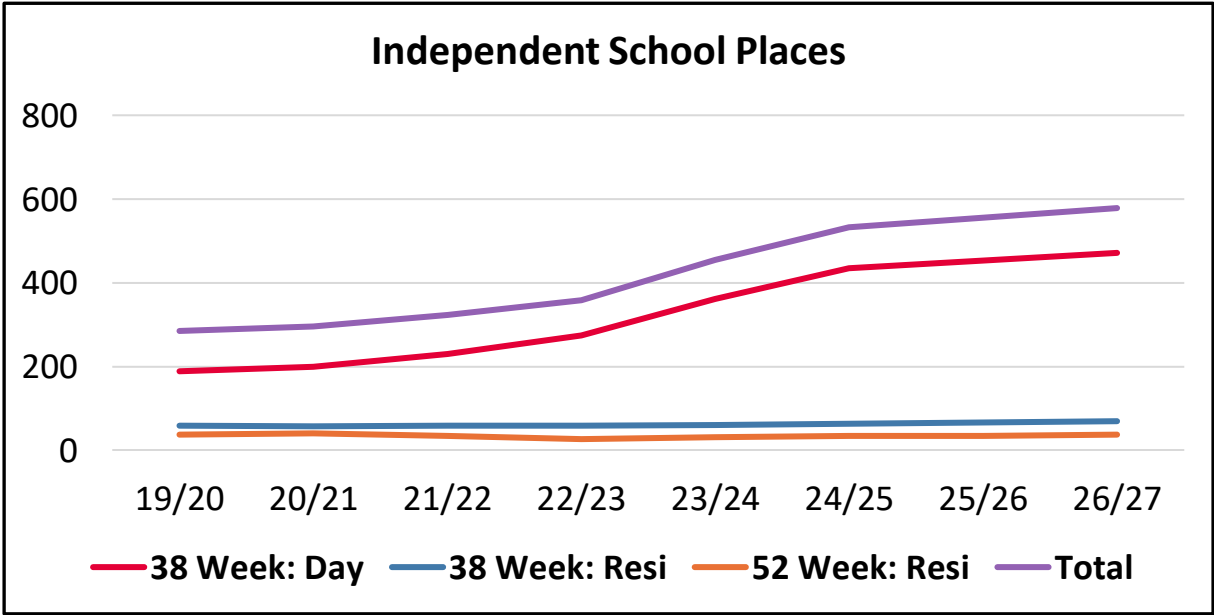
Looking forward to 2026/27 , based on current trends the volume of independent school places is forecast to reach **578**. A **103%** increase over an 8 year period.

?

Is there any opportunity to influence the volume of placements required from 2024/25?

124
places to 2026/27

Year	38 Week: Day	38 Week: Resi	52 Week: Resi	Total	Cumulative increase
2019/20	189	58	38	285	
2020/21	199	57	40	296	+11
2021/22	230	59	35	324	+39
2022/23	274	59	26	359	+74
2023/24	362	61	31	454	+169
2024/25	435	64	34	533	+248
2025/26	453	67	35	555	+270
2026/27	471	70	37	578	+293



Independent School: Price

The trend in price by placement type is set out below.

40%

38 Week Day placements are forecast to increase by 40% between 2019/20 and 2026/27

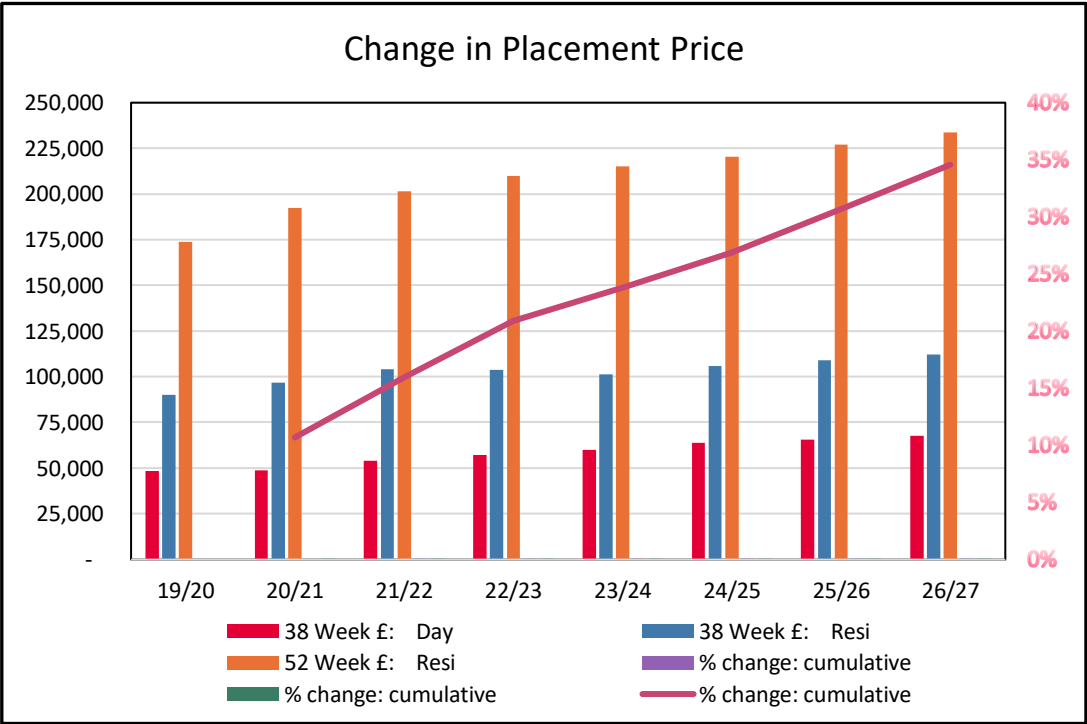
25%

38 Week Residential placements are forecast to increase by 25% between 2019/20 and 2026/27

35%

52 Week Residential placements are forecast to increase by 35% between 2019/20 and 2026/27

Year	Placement Type		
	38 Week £: Day	38 Week £: Residential	52 Week £: Residential
2019/20	48,269	90,008	173,684
2020/21	48,666	96,677	192,237
2021/22	53,850	104,170	201,339
2022/23	56,993	103,613	209,920
2023/24	59,827	101,108	214,992
2024/25	63,690	105,751	220,330
2025/26	65,600	108,923	226,940
2026/27	67,568	112,191	233,748



Creating Capacity

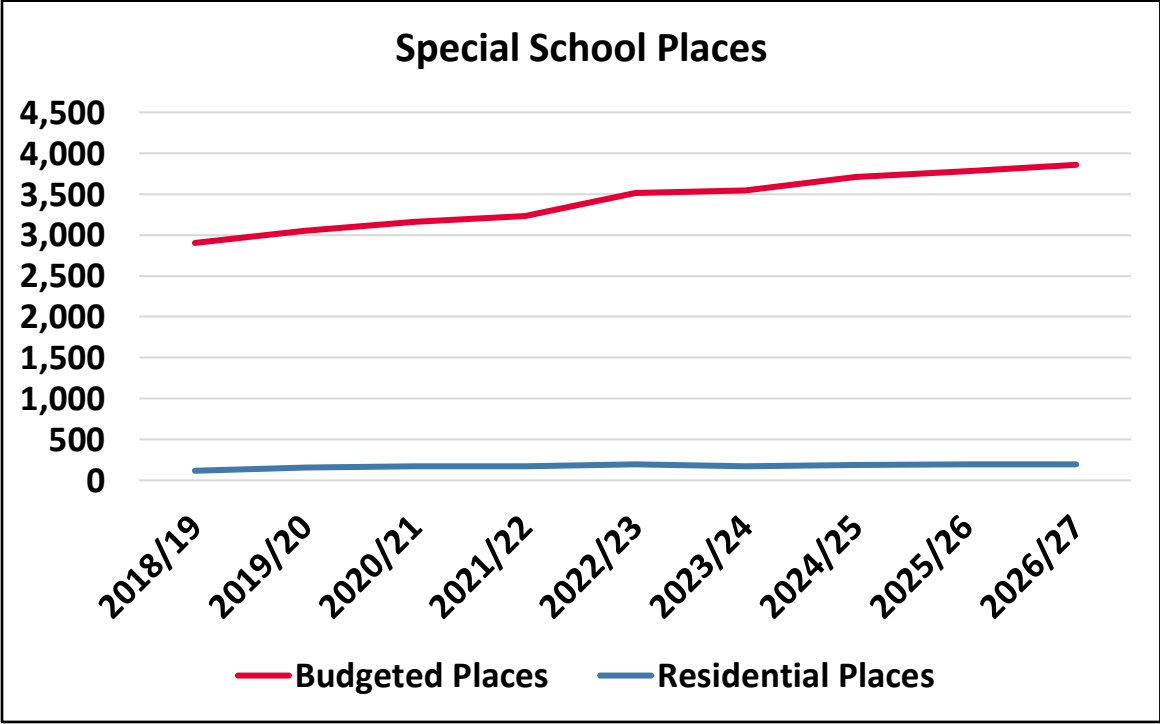


Special School Places

From 2018/19 through to 2026/27 the forecast volume of funded places for in special schools will increase by: **33%** equivalent to 953 places.

Furthermore, the volume of residential places funded in Special Schools will increase by: **70%** equivalent to 81 places.

Year	Budgeted Places	Cumulative increase	%	Residential Places	Cumulative increase	%
2018/19	2,906			115	-	-
2019/20	3,053	147	5%	150	35	30%
2020/21	3,164	258	9%	171	56	49%
2021/22	3,236	330	11%	171	56	49%
2022/23	3,518	612	21%	190	75	65%
2023/24	3,550	644	22%	171	56	49%
2024/25	3,708	802	28%	181	66	57%
2025/26	3,785	879	30%	189	74	64%
2026/27	3,859	953	33%	196	81	70%



Capital Investment

ECC and Schools Forum have made significant investment in creating capacity in special Schools across the County.

234
places

and Enhanced Provisions

48
places

Special Schools

School	Provision
Southview, Braintree	24 places including 10 residential places
Lexden Springs, Colchester	80 places including 30 residential places
Oakview: Epping	24 places
Glenwood, Castle Point	20 residential places
Kingswode Hoe, Colchester	12 places
Langham Oaks, Colchester	8 places
Ramsden Hall, Chelmsford	8 places
Harlow Fields, Harlow	58 places
Total	234

Enhanced Provision

School	Provision
Alderton Junior School (West)	8
Great Easton Primary School (West)	8
Moulsham Junior School (Mid)	8
Potter Street Primary School (West)	8
White Bridge Primary School (West)	8
White Hall Primary School (NE)	8
Total	48

As part of the investment in Special Schools is an increase of

60

residential places.

Capital Investment

In addition to the ECC and Schools Forum funded investment a further 4 Free / Academy schools are being built creating

273
places

including

15
places

residential places.

School	Provision	Residential places	Completed
Chatten Free School, Braintree	75 places	-	Open
Hawthorns, Chelmsford	70 places	-	Fully open 2026/27
Sir Geoff Hurst School, Chelmsford	64 places	15	Fully open 2026/27
Greenwell Academy, Harlow	64 places	-	Fully open 2026/27
Total	273	15	

Cash Saving to Cost Avoidance

Original expectations as set out in the Schools Forum Paper in July 2015 were significant cost savings...

- At present £19m a year is spent supporting the placement of children in independent schools on day, 38 week and 52 week provision. The average cost of a 38 week day placement in the independent sector is £43,680 per annum compared to £35,000 in the maintained sector for higher need children and therefore higher banded financially – a saving of £8,680 per place.
- The average cost of a 38 week boarding placement in the independent sector is £68,489 compared to £40,000 in the maintained sector – a saving of £28,489 per place. With 80 of 110 new weekly boarding places in Essex largely replacing the weekly boarding places currently used in the independent sector, the saving to the independent schools' budget would be in the order of £2.28m per annum
- Of 234 the additional day places proposed, about half (120) would contribute to the target of reducing 38 week day places in the independent sector so this would bring a further saving of about £1.04m. In total the saving to the DSG independent schools' budget would therefore be about £ £3.32m.
- However, the other 114 new day places and 30 new boarding places (assuming they are provided in Essex) would have an additional cost to the HNB of around £5.19m, so overall the net cost to the DSG of this programme is £1.87m per annum (that is, £5.19m for 'new' places to meet growth, less the saving of £3.32m achieved by educating pupils in Essex special schools or enhanced provision rather than independent schools). In effect the reduction in the use of independent school placements subsidises the cost to the DSG of more provision in the county to meet the increased demand from demographic growth and an increased diagnosis of need. The extra revenue cost of 'doing nothing' is an extra £7.03m

In Summary

234 places were to be created with 120 places **reducing** 38 week day places and 80 places **reducing** the 38 week residential places creating a **saving of £3.32m.**

Recap on volume

Independent Schools **+169** places since 2018/19

Special Schools **+644** places since 2018/19

Demand is outstripping the availability of places at a net cost per place of:

38 Week Day: £16,800

38 Week Residential: £42,500

Where is capacity needed?

The main pressures on the independent special school budget are due to 38-week day placements for children and young people with autism or social, emotional and mental health needs. At Complex Case Forum we see a regular flow of children and young people with autism and associated anxiety with mainstream ability; there is currently no specific provision in Essex for this cohort and, in particular, for girls. The two new SEMH special free schools being built by the DfE (Greenwell in Harlow and Sir Geoff Hurst) will give us much needed SEMH capacity with provision for girls for the first time. Our biggest pressures in terms of tribunals and being unable to meet parental preference due to physical capacity of Essex special schools is for autism with severe learning difficulties. There is an under-development independent market for this cohort though that may change and we will need solutions.

All four quadrants have rising numbers of independent placement but NE is disproportionate in comparison to South – this merits further analysis.

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