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Education & Skills
Funding Agency

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1. Information: high needs benchmarking tool updated

The [updated high needs benchmarking tool](#) includes the latest data for 2017 to 2018, including the January 2017 census and the 2017 to 2018 Section 251 budget data. It also includes the provisional 2018 to 2019 high needs national funding formula allocations.

We've extended the options for comparisons, now allowing for up to three comparators, comparisons with the average of statistical neighbours and region, and comparisons across 2016 to 2017 and 2017 to 2018 data. We've also included a table showing the benchmarking data for all local authorities.

We'll continue to develop the tool in response to user feedback. More information about local authorities' high needs review and planning role is available in the [high needs funding operational guide 2017 to 2018](#).

2. Information: school financial benchmarking tool - new release

The Department for Education has issued a new release of the [schools financial benchmarking service](#) that enables schools to compare their income and expenditure with other schools in England.

This release includes 2015 to 2016 academy and trust data and includes:

- new functions to allow schools and academies to compare their staffing structures with similar schools
- a new “your charts” section which will allow users to design their own printable, custom reports

We would welcome any feedback, which you can provide using the feedback link embedded in the benchmarking tool.

3. Information: visit the Schools Commercial Team at the NASBM Conference

Come and visit the Schools Commercial Team at our stand at the National Association of School Business Management (NASBM) Conference on 16 to 17 November 2017 in Birmingham.

If you want to find out more about the support and opportunities that are available for those responsible for buying in schools, join the session we will be holding on Friday, 17 November.

We look forward to meeting you.

4. Information: how you support post-16 students who require financial help to participate in education

The Student Bursary Support Service have contacted institutions to take part in a survey about [how institutions support post-16 students](#) who require financial help to participate in education. We would like to let institutions know that the survey period has been extended and will now close on 30 November 2017.

The survey asks specific questions about how you use your 16 to 19 Discretionary Bursary. Your responses will help the department to understand if the fund is supporting disadvantaged students effectively with the financial costs associated with continuing in education post-16.

The survey requests your UKPRN so data can be matched between your geographical location and known areas of disadvantage in the country.

5. Information: peer support for children and young people’s mental health programme

DfE is working with the Anna Freud Centre to supporting schools and colleges in developing a peer mentoring programme which focusses on the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

The Peer Support for Children and Young People’s Mental Health Programme will involve over 100 schools and colleges across Ipswich, Oldham, Bradford, Derby and Hastings. If you’re situated in one of these regions and are interested in taking part in the programme then please complete the [expression of interest form](#) by 5pm on Friday, 17 November.

There is no charge for workshops or materials and schools/colleges will be paid £3,500 to take part in the programme, which will be paid in 3 instalments across the year. For more information please refer to the [Anna Freud Centre website](#) or email schoolsprogramme@annafeud.org.

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