

DRAFT

LEWISHAM SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27th June 2024

Membership (Quorum = 40% i.e. 7) ✓ = present x =absent a = apologies
s = substitute

		Attendance				
Primary School Headteachers		19/ 10	14/ 12	18/ 01	27/ 06	Date of Appointment
Manda George	Torridon Primary	✓	✓	✓	✓	Jan 2022
Sharon Lynch	St William of York	✓	✓	✓	✓	Jan 2022
Julie Loffstadt	Kilmorie	a	✓	✓	x	Jan 2022
David Lucas	Trinity	✓	x	✓	✓	Feb 2024
Maxine Osbaldeston	Launcelot	a	✓	✓	✓	Feb 2024
Daniel Meyer	St. Bartholomews				✓	Feb 2024
Nursery School Headteacher						
Cathryn Arnold-Kinsey	Clyde Nursery	✓	✓	✓	✓	Jan 2022
Secondary School Headteachers						
Michael Sullivan	Forest Hill	a	a	✓	✓	Oct 2022
Special School Headteacher						
Katie Denton	Greenvale			✓	✓	Jan 2024
Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher						
Heather Johnston	Abbey Manor	✓	✓	✓	✓	Jan 2023
Primary School Governors						
Peter Fidel	Eliot Bank and Gordonbrock Federation	✓	✓	✓	✓	June 2021
Secondary & Special School Governors						
Academies						
Niall Hand	ACADEMY				✓	June 2024
Ann Butcher	Childeric	x	✓	x	x	June 2021

14-19 Consortium Rep						
Jamie Stevenson	Lewisham College	a	✓	a	x	Oct 2023
Early Years – PVI						
Melanie Simpson	The Village Montessori	x	✓	✓	✓	Jan 2023
Diocesan Authorities						
Yvonne Epale	Education Commission – Catholic Diocese of Southwark	✓	x	✓	✓	June 2024
Sarah Ambrose	Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (Church of England)				✓	June 2024
SUBSTITUTE						
14-19 Consortium						
Jayne Morgan	Lewisham College			s	s	

Observers/Others in attendance		
Strategic Business Partner	Mala Dadlani	
LB Lewisham - Finance	Lurenco Reynolds-Moxam	
LB Lewisham – Head of Lewisham Learning	Anthony Doudle	
LB Lewisham – Head of Early Years	Nikki Sealy	
LB Lewisham - SEND	Clare Gurbutt	
NEU	James Kerr	
Clerk	Janita Aubun	

1. Apologies and Acceptance of Apologies/ Welcome new members/Member Resignations

Apologies of Absence for Angela Scattergood and Reinhild Onuoha

Forum welcomed: -

- Sarah Ambrose (newly elected Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (CE) representative),
- Niall Hand (recast as Academy representative) and Yvonne Epale, (Education Commission-Catholic Diocese of Southwark), re-elected.

Completion of Term

Farewell and thank you given to Peter Fidel, (Primary Governor) and Ann Butcher, (Academies), both terms of office finish June 2024.

Retirement - Sharon Lynch (Primary Head Representative)

Resignation:- Julie Loffstadt (Primary Representative)

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting – 18th January 2024

Minutes were agreed as accurate and a true representation.

4. Matters Arising

Cost of living crisis – to lobby at national level. Agreed to remain on the agenda for review until we receive more clarity on next year's funding allocation and pay review, post parliamentary election.

Mandatory training for all headteachers – to be arranged in Autumn.

However notional SEN briefings have been arranged for 2nd & 9th July. 11 – 12.30 and 2 – 3.30pm respectively. Headteachers can attend either. Additionally, an in person, larger training session arranged for 16th October – venue to be confirmed.

5. Schools Forum Workplan 2024/25

- Forum were provided with a workplan for 2024/25 financial year.
- Recognised that there will be standing items i.e. Early Years policy changes, Funding updates and High Needs block as well as (DBV), delivering better value.
- Forum also noted the dates of the meetings 2024/25.

No objections or comments were raised.

Agreed: -

- The Workplan was approved.

6. Proposed De-delegation for Lewisham Learning (School Improvement) 2024/25.

Recommendation:-

- Additional £40k requested by schools forum to fund the TRIIE project
- Paper to come back to Forum in the autumn term to consider 2025/26 funding arrangements for Lewisham Learning

Vice Chair raised a question around spending and collective buying power, and asked for any examples of where this has happened or worked effectively. Discussions will need to be had with the academies to design cost effective packages.

Discussions about future thinking and forward planning in terms of multi academy trusts and looking at pupil numbers where fewer schools are potentially paying in to Lewisham Learning. To look at options going forward and costings, including potential SLAs. Also to include Early Years and Special Schools.

Agreed:-

- 7 members (primary & secondary sector eligible only), voted in agreement to support the Lewisham Learning partnership by funding an additional £40K for 2024/25 to deliver the TRIIE project and to maintain the current level of de-delegated funding. There were no abstentions. Vote carried.
- Further report to come back to Forum in either October or December to consider the 2025/26 funding arrangements and include the considerations as stated above by vice chair.

7. Update on Early Years

Slides were shared with Forum which summarised the work the team have been doing following the expansion of the early years entitlements and introduction of the national wraparound childcare programme. Also summarised the associated funding the authority will receive e.g. Wraparound Childcare Programme Costs 2023-2026, Capital Funding etc.

Forum informed that the 1st milestone has been implemented i.e. the 2-year-old working family's entitlement for the beginning of April 2024. Team have successfully recruited 3 new officers to the service to work on this development programme and delivery plan.

E/Y Team are also preparing for the implementation of the Under 2's offer for start of September 2024. Offers currently stands @ 15 hours; from September 2025 will move to a 30 hour offer.

- Forum noted the contents of the presentation and the Head of Early Years was thanked for her hard work in developing the programme.

8. Verbal Update on High Needs Block

Slides presented and Forum were informed of the following:-

- Slower growth in the number of EHCPs since 2023 – LA more robust in decision making.
- 68.7% EHCPs are in Lewisham schools (an increase). This is above the KPI.
- Compliance rate is still an issue across all partnerships.
- All new resource bases in primary schools are now live – Launcelot is the last to be rolled out. Are looking to create a small secondary school resource base to include ASD.
- Improved proportion of SLD pupils going to local FE colleges this September.

DBV (Delivering Better Value)

- Forum were made aware that the grant award letter was received late from the DfE, i.e. in May 2024. There is therefore added pressure.
- Work streams have been put forward and the bulk of the work will commence September 2024 to be delivered during 2024/25 academic year.

Notional SEN Budget/ SEN Support Funding for our settings

Officers mentioned a disparity between colleagues who knew the purpose of the notional SEN and the value of it. Consequently, two online sessions will be held with Headteachers on Notional SEN funding. 2nd July and 9th July. Followed by an in person, larger session, on 16th October.

Additional Funding for Schools with more than 5% of learners with EHCP

Aim is to encourage more inclusive practice, and this remains a pilot for 2024/25.

Schools forum to note that it has been agreed with HNSG that the 0.5% (max) contribution from Schools Block will be used as the maximum payable as part of this initiative.

Forum to note that the 2023/24 method included pupil in Resource Base -DfE has advised this is not correct and is in effect double funding.

Forum was asked to consider on which basis the allocation should be made.

Proposed that October census be used following discussions with working group. Using a termly census instead, could create a level of instability in schools and the budget would have to be recast every term. Termly casting would mean varying funding amounts each term.

Forum members discussed the matter –it was agreed a further meeting of the high needs working group would be held ensuring that head of SEN was present and also representative from EY (schools and LA).

Outcome to be advised at the next meeting.

Agreed:-

- Decision cannot be made based on the current options. Pilot may need to be re-shaped.
- High Needs Sub Group to reconvene urgently. Early Years sector to be invited to this meeting. Head of the data team to be invited also, as well as Nikki Sealy (Head of Early Years).

9. DSG 2023/24 Outturn (including Schools Balances Position) and DSG 2024/25 Funding Update

Report was presented to Forum to provide a final position for 2023/24 including the overall position

The report also provided an update on the 2024/25 DSG.

Recommendation:-

Schools Forum was asked to note the contents of this report with particular focus on:

- the continuing pressure on the DSG – High Needs Block
- surplus balance position for schools – 2023/24 surpluses have reduced from 2022/23 and the deficits have increased.
- Schools with extreme levels of surplus, the use of these needs to be carefully managed. Schools should work towards 5% in reserves and 2 – 3% in year contingency.
- Provisional Schools Block position- noting a further report to forum once we have confirmation of the 2023/24 EY pupil validation and associated finances.
- Recognising the ongoing pressure on the High Needs Block.
- Provisional EY block:- will require updating post validation of the 2023/24 pupil data . Revision still awaited with regards the under 2 year old offer which at present carries a level of risk.

- Schools In Financial Difficulty (schools supported with one off funding) - all 20 schools have to undertake a SRMA visit; some already have. SRMA visits are not restricted to schools in deficit. (preventative support)

Agreed:-

- Schools Forum noted the contents of the report.
- In relation to the Early Years block, a paper is to be brought to Forum once the final E/Y position is known.

10. Any Other Business

PFI Factor

Forum informed that the DfE have asked Lewisham for further details of the sinking fund. (This is a debt financing model). Grant Thornton originally revisited our submission. Officers have a meeting with the DfE tomorrow in regards to this. Forum made aware that this meeting may influence the PFI Factor and is a potential risk to the funding we receive.

Thank you

Chair thanked Sharon Lynch for all of her contribution to Forum and wished a very happy retirement on behalf of members.

Chair further extended her thanks for all their hard work to Schools Forum -

- Peter Fidel, (Primary Governor) and Ann Butcher, (Academies), both terms of office finish June 2024.
- Julie Loffstadt (Primary Representative) Resignation

Future Meetings

24 October 2024

12 December 2024

16 January 2025 (provisional date)

All Schools Forum meetings will continue to be held between 16:30-18:30 and remain virtual, unless advised otherwise.

Sub Group meetings

<u>High Needs Sub Group</u>
10 October 2024
28 November 2024
9 January 2025

Schools Forum Action Summary

Item	Action to be taken	Officer(s) responsible	Outcome/Current position
<p>Matters Arising – Schools Forum 14 December 2023, Schools Forum 18 January 2024 & Schools Forum 27 June 2024</p> <p>Matters Arising - Schools Forum 14 December 2023, Schools Forum 18 January 2024 & Schools Forum 27 June 2024</p>	<p>Cost of living crisis - to lobby at National Level. Letter to be drafted for forum approval, making representation to the DfE/Secretary of State regarding the 2024/25 funding allocation error.</p> <p>Mandatory training for ALL headteachers</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Mala Dadlani</p>	<p>Position remains for review.</p> <p>Pending – to be arranged Autumn term.</p>
<p>6 – Proposed De-delegation for Lewisham Learning (School Improvement) 2024/25 – Schools Forum 27 June 2024</p>	<p>Discuss with Schools Forum the support provided to schools through Lewisham Learning.</p>	<p>Anthony Doudle</p>	<p>Paper to come back to Forum October/December 2024 to consider 2025/26 funding arrangements.</p>
<p>6 – Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25 – Schools Forum 14 December 2023, Schools Forum 18 January 2024.</p> <p>8 – Verbal Update on High Needs Block – Schools Forum 27 June 2024</p>	<p>Notional SEN Training</p>	<p>Mala Dadlani</p>	<p>July sessions completed. Further in person session arranged for 16th October 2024</p>
<p>8 – Verbal Update on High Needs Block – Schools Forum 27 June 2024</p>	<p>Additional Funding for Schools in Deficit.</p>	<p>HNSG, including Catherine Kinsey, Nikki Sealy & Head of Data Team</p>	<p>High Needs Sub Group (HNSG) to reconvene urgently.</p>
<p>9 - DSG 2023/24 Outturn (including Schools Balances Position) and DSG 2024/25 Funding</p>	<p>Provisional Early Years Block position</p>	<p>Mala Dadlani</p>	<p>Report is to be brought to Forum once the final 2023/24 E/Y position is known.</p>

Update – Schools Forum 27 June 2024			
8 – Revision of Membership of Schools Forum. Schools Forum 18 January 2024	<p>Appropriate representatives to go back to their voting sectors and nominate.</p> <p>To inform Primary Heads consultative lead and liaise with Lead officer on any Governor Vacancies.</p>	<p>As appropriate</p> <p>Clerk – Janita Aubun</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>