

LEWISHAM SCHOOLS FORUM



Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26th September 2013

Membership (Quorum = 40% i.e. 8)

✓ = present

✗ = absent

		Attendance
Primary School Headteachers		
Irene Cleaver	Athelney	✓
Steve Davies	Coopers Lane	✓
Liz Booth	Dalmain	✓
Paul Moriarty	Good Shepherd	Apologies
Helen Johnston	Launcelot	Apologies
Michael Roach	John Ball	✓
Nursery School Headteacher		
Nikki Oldhams	Chelwood	Apologies
Secondary School Headteachers		
Anne Potter	Addey & Stanhope	✓
Bob Ellis	Conisborough College	Apologies
Dave Sheppard	Prendergast Federation	✓
Carolyn Unsted (Chair)	Sydenham	✓
Special School Headteacher		
Lynne Haines	Greenvale	✓
Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher		
Liz Jones	Abbey Manor	Apologies
Primary & Special School Governors		
Keith D'Wan	Athelney	✓
Erica Pienaar	John Ball	✓
Mark Simons	Coopers Lane	✗
Secondary & Secondary Special School Governors		
Simon Nundy	Trinity	✗
VACANT	Secondary School	
VACANT	Special School	
Academies		
Declan Jones	Haberdashers' Aske's	✓
14-19 Consortium Rep		
Dympna Lennon	Addey & Stanhope	✗
Early Years Rep		
Cathryn Kinsey		✗
Diocesan Authorities		
Rev Richard Peers	Southwark of Diocesan Board of Education	✗
Stephen Bryan	Archdiocese of Southwark Schools Commission	Apologies

Also Present	
Kim Knappett	Teacher Unions (ALT)
Frankie Sulke	Executive Director
Alan Docksey	Head of Resources
Sue Tipler	Head of Standards and Achievement
Keith Martin	Service Manager – Children With Complex Needs
Dave Richards	CYP Group Finance Manager
James Beaty	Clerk
Diane Parkhouse	HR Advisory Manager
Brian Collymore	HR Advisor

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Steve Davies, Paul Moriarty, Bob Ellis, Liz Jones and Stephen Bryan.

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 17th June 2013

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

2. Matters Arising

Targeted Capital Bid - allocation amended for two projects at John Ball & Holbeach primaries. The consultation process at Holbeach is now underway. Expected delivery date of September 2015.

3. Election of the Vice Chair and Forum Membership

Erica Pienaar nominated as Vice Chair by Michael Roach and seconded by Carolyn Unsted. There were no other nominations and Erica Pienaar was elected.

The following representatives were put forward at the meeting:

Early Years - Cathryn Kinsey at Clyde

Primary Schools – Lisa Pearson at Torridon Infants

16-19 Representative (replacing 14-19) – representative still required - the DfE lists the FE Sector and SEN/LDD providers as eligible.

Secondary School Governor – work is ongoing to secure a suitable representative.

4. Absence Report

Diane Parkhouse and Brian Collymore from Lewisham HR provided the forum with a full set of absence data for schools currently on Lewisham payroll, covering the period of 01/08/12 - 31/07/2013. These reports may be produced on a termly basis in the future.

- The data showed that the average days lost to absence within Lewisham schools falls in line with the national average of days lost among all UK workforces (7.7 days per employee).
- Approximately a third of all school absences are reported with no reasons disclosed – possibly due to system issues with categorisation. Guidance forthcoming.
- It was also noted that there is still some ambiguity amongst school staff regarding what entitlements they have. Formal guidance and advice may be required.

5. Occupational Health

The Occupational Health budget has been cut year on year. A proposal to extend our current contract until November 2014 has been submitted to the Executive Director of Resources & Regeneration. This extension will bring Lewisham's contract expiry in line with other local authorities.

- The notion of a shared service between authorities has been proposed, although it was noted that difficulties may arise due to the current level of disparity between the services different authorities provide.
- Information on possible providers for the future will be circulated upon request.

6. Budget Monitoring

Forum noted that the DSG has increased to just over £250.4m from the previously reported position of £249.7m – a rise of approximately £0.750m.

- It was agreed by the Schools Forum that this increase should be allocated to the Early Years block.

Schools balances have gone up significantly since the last meeting – currently at £15.7m – an increase of £2m. Dave Richards has visited five schools with excesses. Plans to reduce these balances have been drawn up. There are four more schools that will be visited shortly.

Three schools with deficits were noted:

Trinity – deficit increased at the end of the year – plan to reduce this has been finalised.

Sedgehill – a revised budget plan has been created following a review with school staff.

Edmund Waller – currently under review.

Clarification on SEN & ASD provision needs to be provided to head teachers (both primary and secondary).

7. Budget Report

Report presented by Dave Richards to update Forum on the setting of next years budget and to agree the approach to completing the draft individual school budget return required by the DFE.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- The funding rates for the 14/15 Individual Schools Budget are to be provisionally set at the levels of the funding rates for 13/14.
- The lump sum for both primary and secondary schools will remain at the same level.

- That an application be made to the DFE to allow estimated pupil numbers to be used for expanding schools.
- Officers bring proposals to the December meeting on savings to the early years block and the central budgets, within the DSG.
- The Schools Forum sub-group should present proposals to the December meeting on how to save £500k from the High Needs block next year, and £2m in the following year.

8. Debtors Policy

The level of debt within schools that submitted returns sits at an average of £567 per school, this would indicate the level of debt across all schools in the borough to be approximately £30k.

A facility to top-up school meals/journey money on pay-point cards was proposed, as this would provide parents with a discrete and convenient way to manage their debt.

The implications of giving all KS1 children a free meal was raised as a point of discussion for the next meeting in December.

- The draft policy was reviewed and agreed by the forum, and will now be circulated to all schools.

9. Efficiency Review

In the recently published Department for Education review on efficiency, it was highlighted that schools spending a greater percentage of funding on teaching staff had a higher level of achievement. This trend was replicated within Lewisham, however the correlation was not as marked.

- It was agreed that this information would be sent out with the local benchmarking reports.
- A benchmarking club is to be set up to consist of School Admin Officers and Local Authority Officers with the purpose to collect examples of good practice amongst schools on value for money projects and to share these with all schools.

10. Any Other Business

A consultation has been launched on trade union facilities. Schools Forum view required the consultation ends before the next meeting. Questions to be circulated and fed back to Frankie Sulke.

Meeting closed 6.30pm

Date of next meeting 12 December 2013