

LEWISHAM SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6th December 2018

Membership (Quorum = 40% i.e. 9) ✓ = present * =absent a = apologies
s = substitute

		Attendance				
		17/01	15/03	21/06	4/10	6/12
Primary School Headteachers						
Paul Moriarty	Good Shepherd	✓	✓	✓	a	✓
Manda George	Torridon Primary					✓
Sharon Lynch	St William of York	a	✓	a	✓	✓
Keith Barr	Kender	✓	✓	a	✓	✓
Matthew Ringham	Our Lady & St Philip Neri					✓
Nursery School Headteacher						
Cathryn Kinsey	Clyde Nursery				✓	✓
Secondary School Headteachers						
Jan Shapiro	Addey & Stanhope	✓	a	*	a	a
David Sheppard	Leathersellers Federation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mark Phillips	Deptford Green	*	✓	*	✓	*
Clare Cassidy	Sedgehill	✓	✓	✓	a	✓
Special School Headteacher						
Lynne Haines	Greenvale	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher						
Heather Johnston	Abbey Manor	✓	✓	*	✓	✓
Primary School Governors						
Rosamund Clarke	Perrymount	✓	✓	a	✓	✓
Keith D'wan	King Alfred Federation	a	a	*	*	*
Secondary & Special School Governors						
Samantha Davies	Conisborough					✓
Ruth Elliott	Watergate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Academies						
Dr Tesca Bennett	Haberdashers' Knights Academy				✓	*
14-19 Consortium Rep						

Adam Fahey	Lewisham Southwark College				x	x
Early Years - PVI						
Dawn Nasser	Rose House Montessori	✓	✓	a	a	✓
Diocesan Authorities						
Sara Sanbrook-Davies	Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	✓	✓	✓	a	✓
Yvonne Epale	Substitute – Education Commission – Catholic Diocese of Southwark	✓	✓	✓	a	✓

Also Present	
Sara Williams	Executive Director for CYP
Selwyn Thompson	Head of Financial Services
Mala Dadlani	Interim Group Finance Manager
Hayden Judd	Principal Accountant - Schools
Ann Wallace	LB Lewisham
Ruth Griffiths	LB Lewisham
Angela Scattergood	AD Education Services
Claudia Smith	LB Lewisham
Martin Cunningham	LB Lewisham
Matthew Henaughan	LB Lewisham
Janita Aubun	Clerk

1. Apologies and Acceptance of Apologies

Apologies received from Jan Shapiro. Apology accepted.

Introductions given for:-

Mala Dadlani – new interim Group Finance Manager, Angela Scattergood – Assistant Director of Education Services, Manda George and Matthew Ringham – new Primary Headteacher representatives, Samantha Davies – Secondary Governor representative. Forum were also informed of re-elections for Paul Moriarty, Sharon Lynch and Keith Barr.

Chair reminded members that there remains an outstanding vacancy for the Academies Representative and Forum are asked to let us know of any possible candidates. Forum were also made aware that there is one Secondary Governor Representative vacancy and also one Primary Governor Representative whose term of office expires in December.

Angela Scattergood, Assistant Director Education Services, was also welcomed to Forum.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held 04 October 2018

Schools Forum Action Summary

Forum 4 October 2018, Item 5 – Scheme of Delegation

Additional note - Forum were informed that the redundancy charges for 2017/18 have been made but none of the current year charges have been processed as yet.

Officers made an apology to Forum for the delay in this.

Forum 4 October 2018, Item 6 – Finance Team Support.

An Interim Accountant mainly working on social care finance has been appointed. Interim to support Schools has just been appointed to provide additional support to Schools Finance.

Forum requested a written update on the finance structure and officers advised forum that we are not in a position to provide this yet as a consultation process is to be formally undertaken with core HR. Officers are requested to provide an update for circulation in schools mailing and a written update for Forum later in March 2019. Officers confirmed that a division-wide re-organisation for CYP, schools finance and social care finance, is planned to go live in April 2019 for permanent roles.

Forum 4 October 2108, Item 7 – Schools Balances Analysis

Schools with large carry forwards have been written to by finance giving the approach that they should be taking to manage these reserves.

Forum were made aware that as previously agreed, balance from the growth fund has been redistributed to schools and that schools will see these amounts in their November transaction reports.

4. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

5. Dedicated Schools Grant Monitoring Report 2018/19

Forum were presented with a report to update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) projected outturn for 2018/19.

2018/19 DSG

Net allocation is £259.061M, which takes into account reductions to reflect funds allocated by the DfE/Education Skills and Funding Agency. Forum were informed

that compared to most Local Authorities who are overspending, Lewisham are in a relatively good position this year.

- Schools Block

Projected spend for the Growth Fund is £800K; this would result in a potential in year underspend of £300K. Note, however that in 2019/20, a new method for allocating growth funding to Local Authorities will come into place and this is likely to result in a reduction.

- Central Schools Block

This budget is expected to spend on target for 2018/19. Forum were advised that from 2020/21, the government is likely to impose a level of reduced budget, but this exact level is not yet determined.

- High Needs Block

Total budget is £43.799M for 2018/19. Lewisham are expecting the High Needs Block to largely be on target but Forum are asked to note that most London Councils are currently overspending in this area. Our High Needs Block will remain to be closely monitored.

- Early Years Block

We are currently meeting the DfE minimum 95% passthrough rate.

Some concern was noted on the application of the Early Years Block as funding is currently provisional and will be adjusted for the January count. Payment to providers is based on three termly counts, there appears no provision to manage any variations. This poses a risk on the Early Years Block which will continue to be closely monitored.

Grant Funding to Support Teachers Pay Increase

The Teachers Pay Increase has now been received as a grant. These allocations were published in November and the amounts have been journalled to mainstream, maintained schools. Towards the latter part of November, the DfE published revised allocation figures. Forum were made aware that officers are only effecting corrections that increase a school's allocation and these will be journalled to schools in December.

It is proposed that the High Needs providers' allocation lump sum, be split in line with the place numbers used by the DfE as shown below:-

	Places	Allocation
Brent Knoll	154	£12,028
New Woodlands	112	£8,748

Greenvale	130	£10,153
Watergate	108	£8,435
Abbey Manor	165	£12,887
Drumbeat	167	£13,043
Total	836	£65,294

Decision:

Forum agreed the following:-

- To note the projected outturn position for 2018/19 and continue to receive revised updates as appropriate.
- To split the High Needs provider allocation of the Teacher Pay Grant in line with the place numbers used by the Department for Education to calculate the allocation. Individual School Allocations for Special Schools are set out in section 4 of the report and in line with the DfE guidance.

6. Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Report 2019/20

Report to Forum to seek agreement to the principles on which the Dedicated Schools Grant (Schools Block) is to be allocated for 2019/20.

Budget Setting

Forum were advised that the DSG budget setting process needs to be completed to the DfE by 19 January 2019. Timelines are tight as the Local Authority is expecting to receive the schools funding settlement circa 20th December. The DSG will need to be looked at in its totality as there are aspects to be agreed in principle to bring to the 17th January forum and an affordability analysis needs to be undertaken.

Note, we will be assuming the same National Funding Formula principles as previously adopted when setting the budget for 2019/20.

Notes:-

PFI factor – discussion around there being a general expectation from the DfE that this will increase in line with inflation. Any uplift to the PFI factor will be in line with the agreed local formula.

NNDR – this is funded to the Local Authority on a historic baseline and if the rates bill ends up higher than what we receive from the DfE, then there will be a pressure on the MFG.

Growth fund - nationally has increased but London has lost.

Teachers Pensions Contributions

Forum were informed that employers' contributions to the Teachers' Pension Scheme are set to rise from 16.48% to 23% in 2019/20. Local Authorities have been assured by the government that this increase is to be fully funded. Forum were also made aware that until we see the final guidance from the DfE, it will be difficult to comment on the levels of increase as this will vary from school to school. Schools should however have already been budgeting for some increase.

Split Site Minimum Funding Guarantee Disapplication

Subject to Forum's approval, an application is to be made to the Secretary of State for this disapplication. This is due to the protection not being appropriate in the instance where this year one of our schools has moved from being a 2 site school to 1 and the continuing MFG would be erroneously funding the school as a split site. Forum were informed that if approved, this would exclude the sum of £45k from the MFG calculation.

De-delegation of Funds

The proposal for 2019/20 delegation is in line with the current de-delegation levels. It is proposed that de-delegation continues at current levels and supports as follows:-

- Schools Contingency – to support costs that should not be reasonably incurred by a governing body.
- Administration of Free School Meals
- Trade union and non-sickness supply scheme (Maternity Fund)
- School Improvement – to support the work of the Lewisham Learning Partnership.

Decision:

Forum agreed the following:-

2.1

- To note the requirement on all Local Authorities to submit their Local Schools Funding to the Department for Education by the 19th January 2019.
- To note the funding settlement and associated schools' data will be made available to Local Authorities late December, thus providing an extremely short timescale for undertaking associated work including enabling approval from Schools Forum (meeting date 17th January 2019)
- To note minor increases in the per pupil funding for Primary Schools, £17.63 and Secondary Schools, £45.99.
- To note the update with regards Teacher Pay Contributions 2019/20

2.2 (voting for all schools)

- Continuation of the application of the National Funding Formula principles to determine the 2019/20 Schools Budget Share.
- PFI factor – It is anticipated that the DFE will uplift the PFI factor by inflation. It is proposed, uplift to apply.
- To receive options at the next Forum for 2019/20 to consider impact if funding were applied to support the pressures in the demand-led High Needs Block. This would be at a maximum of 0.5% (£1m) for 2019/20 only. A report elsewhere on the agenda discusses the High Needs Block pressures arising from this demand-led statutory duty.
- Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) to be the balancing item within the overall affordability of the Schools Block Funding. At the time of writing, there are potential pressures arising from the Final Non Domestic Rates (NDR) and Growth Fund which need to be taken into consideration before a final MFG position can be determined.
- Agree to the application for a MFG disapplication to allow the withdrawal of split site funding to a school that now operates on one site.

2.3 (voting for Maintained Schools only)

Forum agreed the following, with one abstention:-

- Continuation of de-delegated budgets in line with current levels. This would cover schools' contingency, administration of Free Schools Meals, Trade Union Non-sickness cover (maternity scheme) and school improvement.

7. High Needs Sub Group – Annual Report

Forum were presented with a report to consider the medium term financial strategy for the High Needs block and the changes to Alternative Provision.

Current Financial Position

High Needs Block spend is expected to be broadly on target for 2018/19 (this recognises a £2M contribution from the Central Schools Block). Initial estimate for 2019/20 suggests an overspend of potentially £2M after factoring in an increase in funding of £1M. The main reasons are around the changes in legislation affecting SEND support, where there are a number of factors including the 0-25 age range and earlier preventative support.

Schools Forum are requested to support the reconvening of the High Needs Working Group in December 2018, to consider in more detail, the potential funding pressure over the next few years and to discuss options for mitigating the overspend position.

There may be a potential need for Schools Forum to consider the transfer of up to £1m from the Schools Block to the High Needs. It is therefore useful for the working group to have an opportunity to discuss technical detail regarding the stated concerns.

Forum were informed of a number of critical points, which included the following:-

- The National Funding Formula for the High Needs Block has a Transitional Protection (Transitional Relief) of £5M. Note at this stage this is a risk.
- The DfE having introduced new measures to address LA overspends exceeding 1% and this entails the LA and its Schools Forum jointly producing a deficit recovery plan for submission. This needs to be discussed at the working group.
- Regulations that permit the transfer of up to 0.5% from Schools Block to High Needs Block with the agreement of Schools Forum. (In Lewisham's case this will be £1M).

Alternative Provision

Lewisham commissions the Lambeth primary alternative provision called Parallel Learning Trust who we have been working with for the past 2 years, to provide said provision places for our children and to make arrangements for transport. We have 10 places primary phase @ £9K each for revolving door intervention, via LA referral and schools pay voluntarily towards the placement cost from the AWPU.

Forum did however raise the question of why the cost of in-borough alternative provision is more than double the cost of provision out of borough.

Primary Phase Alternative Provision Transition Plan 2018-19

The above transitional arrangement will be up to September 2019, where thereafter a permanent solution with Parallel Learning Trust will be in place where they will expand their provision into Lewisham and at a site which will accommodate primary pupils. This is to accommodate up to 25 places @ £19K per place. Officers confirmed that this did not impinge on any capital funding and if necessary the ESFA will support this.

New Woodlands

New Woodlands School is in its second year of the transition plan and continues to operate as a special school for KS1-3 and as a PRU for KS1 and 2. The New Woodlands Advisory Board is in the process of drafting a report on the future of the Outreach Service which will be presented to Schools Forum for approval in the spring term.

Abbey Manor College

The 2018/19 increase for Abbey Manor brings the PRU in line with all London LA PRUs and our statistical neighbours:-

- Core: £10K per pupil for 160 places
- Top Up: £14K per pupil for 160 places
- To fund the college on the fully funded basis during 2018/19

Allocation to be reviewed annually and reviewed at the December SEND working group with recommendations to the January 2019 Schools Forum.

Abbey Manor Assessment Hub

Forum were made aware that the LA have agreed to implement an assessment hub which will create a simple pathway for intervention placements or longer-term placements for children and young people referred to Abbey Manor College, who are at risk of exclusion and those who are hard to place in mainstream education. This hub will support in year admissions and Fair Access Panel processes and will involve Headteachers, the Service Manager Access, Inclusion & Participation, as well as the Executive Headteacher Abbey Manor College to ensure equality of ownership over accepting children into their school.

The Local Authority has agreed to fund the assessment placements for 20 places on a revolving door basis at a core cost of £10K per place in 2018/19.

Work Plan of the High Needs Sub-Group (HNSG)

The HNSG have drawn up a list of priorities for the coming year and these they will be seeking Forum agreement for as part of this report recommendations:-

- To consider how the financial pressures of the high needs block should be addressed.
- To review the LA place planning numbers.

Forum were informed that the task group has not always been very well attended and there is currently a secondary Headteacher vacancy. A suggestion was made that there should be nursery school and early years representation on the HNSG as well.

Following discussion with forum members, the Executive Head at the Leathersellers Federation, has volunteered to fill the vacant secondary head position. Forum members were made aware that the proposed date for the next High Needs Sub Group meeting is 18 December.

Decision:

Forum agreed the following:-

- To thank the members of the task group for their work during the year.

With regards to the membership of the working group:-

- Confirm the membership of the task group (check that all representatives wish to remain on the working group)
 - Ask the secondary representatives to appoint a new representative to fill vacancy.
 - Consider if additional primary representative would be beneficial for the group.
 - Note that in due course the Working group will need to cover Early Years support at which point it would be appropriate to reformat the group for that topic of discussion and include appropriate representation.
 - The next meeting of the working group to take place mid /late December
 - To note the increase in demand for the SEND Service and the consequential financial pressures on the High Needs Block with effect from 2019/20 onwards.
- To task the Schools Forum High Needs sub group with:-
- Reviewing the ongoing forecast and trend analysis work.
 - Considering the overall funding pressure on the High Needs Block and develop proposals for consideration by Schools Forum
 - Noting the funding levels of Abbey Manor College and the new primary alternative provision.

8. Any Other Business

Members were reminded of the next two forum meeting dates:-

17 January 2019
21 March 2019

No other business was raised.

Meeting closed 17:45pm

SCHOOLS FORUM ACTION SUMMARY

ITEM	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	OFFICER (S) RESPONSIBLE	OUTCOME/ CURRENT POSITION
Forum 4 October 2018, Item 6 – Finance Team Support	Finance team capacity issues - update	Selwyn Thompson	For schools forum March 2019
Forum 04 October 2018, Item 5 – Scheme of Delegation	Officers to continue to work with appropriate schools.	Sara Williams	Ongoing
Forum 6 December 2018, Item 7 – HNSG – Annual Report, New Woodlands	The New Woodlands Advisory Board is in the process of drafting a report on the future of the Outreach Service.	Ruth Griffiths	Report to be presented to Forum for approval in March 2019.