

Schools Forum Decision Sheet

Thursday, 18 January 2024
4.30 pm – 6.30pm, Virtual - Microsoft Teams

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Item	Pages
1. Decisions of Schools Forum Meeting 18 January 2024 Summary of key decisions made.	1

Report Reference	Page Reference	Report Title	Purpose of Document	Recommendation	Schools Forum Decision
Item 1		Apologies and Acceptance of Apologies.	To include any apologies of absence, any new member appointments.	Apologies from Jamie Stevenson (14-19 Consortium) - substitute representative Jayne Morgan. Welcome new elected member Katie Denton (Special - Hedteacher).	Apologies accepted and new member appointment noted.
Item 2		Declaration of Interests		None	None
Item 3		Minutes of the Meeting 14 December 2023	To agree on minutes of previous meeting	Questions or comments from the last meeting.	Forum minutes agreed as accurate.
Item 4	page 1 - 8	Matters Arising			Noted training for heads still to be arranged, agreed that options for attendance will be over 3 terms to give heads options for attendance.
Item 5		Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25 - Funding Settlement	First of four reports. The purpose of this report was to provide schools forum with details of the overall DSG funding settlement for 2024/25, and any updates on other grants.	Schools Forum were advised that on face value the DSG for 2024/25 will have an increase of £27M GROSS, when compared directly with the funding in the 2023/24 DSG allocations. Also in relation to other grants, the Teachers Pension Grant 2024/25 is expected to mirror that of the Teachers Pay Additional Grant. Teachers Pay Additional Grant (TPAG) 2024/25 remains a separate grant but to be rolled into core budget 2025/26. Pupil Premium 2024/25 - 2% increase for primary schools and 1% increase for secondary. 2% increase for LAC PP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools Forum was asked to note this report, which sets the financial context for the remaining sub reports, (Schools, Central Services to Schools, High Needs and Early Years), which are part of this agenda. 	Forum noted the report.
Item 6	page 9 - 16	Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25 - Schools Block Submission of the Authority Pro-forma Tool (APT)	This is the second of four reports. The purpose of this report was to consider options for finalising the APT submission to the DfE on the 22nd January 2024. This report also requires Schools Forum to consider and agree the levels of de-delegation for 2024/25.	Options for finalising the APT submission to the DfE ON 22nd January 2024. Option 1: Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) uplift is applied at the 0.5% maximum for 2024/25. Option 2: MFG at 0.0% (lowest MFG allowable) and officer recommendation. To further agree the transfer of the remaining circa £0.6m to the high needs block (which is within the 0.5% that is allowed to be transferred). De-delegation: Forum advised that officers miscalculated the amount in terms of academisation. It should be noted that normally the agreed value is divided by the relevant data (e.g. pupil numbers), to determine the unit rates. Because of 6 schools converting, this will not be viable. Instead, the 2023/24 unit rate has been adjusted for inflation (where agreed with Schools Forum), to determine a new de-delegation level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools forum is asked to approve the de-delegation levels as per this new methodology. Schools Forum is asked to support Lewisham Learning from the contingency - report to forum in Summer 2024. 	1 voted in agreement for option 1 i.e. MFG @ 0.5%. 10 voted in agreement for option 2 i.e. 0% MFG from 2024/25 with forum approving the transfer of the remaining circa £0.6m on the high needs block (which is within the 0.5% that is allowed to be transferred) - majority vote carried. 6 voted in favour of de-delegation as in table 4 of the report. Zero opposed. 6 voted in favour to support Lewisham Learning from contingency for 2024/25-subject to a report to forum in the Summer, report is expected to provide details of measures taken by LA and support required. There were 2 abstentions.
Item 7	page 17 -22	Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25 - Early Years Block	This is the third of four reports. This report details the funding associated with the delivery of the Early Years Agenda, which is currently being extended in line with DfE policy changes. The report was supplemented by a verbal update from the Head of Early Years as to the implementation and support of the national policy.	Schools forum was asked to agree the funding formula for 2024/25 as set out in the report:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 & 4 year old funding. 2 year old funding - deprivation, working parent and under 2 year old offer. Forum to agree that following the full implementation of the Early Years strategy, to agree the holistic view of the service and present to Forum in due course. Forum asked to note the report - note funding remains indicative and as such there is a requirement to establish suitable contingency. Note the added responsibilities with regards to Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding (SENF). Note that 5% central hold back is now extended across all elements of the offer, with the expectation that this will reduce going forward. Note that the Head of Early Years will follow up by a more detailed updated strategy paper in the Summer.	10 voted in agreement to allocate the hourly rate as per the table, which is the majority vote. No oppositions nor abstentions. 9 agreed to the holistic view of the service once the national policy is implemented vote carried. Forum also noted the rest of the report.
Item 8	page 23 -25	Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25 - High Needs Block	This is the fourth of four reports and focused on the High Needs Block. The report provided detail around the funding but also supporting data on SEN needs. The report was supplemented by a presentation which focused on feedback from the High Needs Working group, including the DBV submission.	Forum is asked to note the content of this report that focuses on:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall funding position for 2024/25 which shows a modest increase in funding of circa £2.4m (from £76.8m to £79.2m) - this represents an increase of approximately 3%. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the pressure on the High Needs Block being on average circa £4m to £5m - however that has been against a backdrop of significant higher levels of High Needs Funding. The settlement for 2024/25, is therefore likely to add further pressure to the HNB. Lewisham council continuing to progress with its local mitigation plan placement and sufficiency plan, which is now potentially also being supplemented by the Delivering Better Value (DBV), DfE initiative, should the recently submitted grant application be successful. considering this report alongside the agreement of the 2nd report which discusses the submission of the APT tool and the potential transfer of max 0.5% to the High Needs Block. Information: Forum advised of new Resource Base at Launcelot Primary School. On going shortage of the same at Secondary Schools in Lewisham. Lewisham continues to face pressure on its High Needs Block.	Forum noted the contents of the report.
Item 9		Revision of Membership of Schools Forum	Purpose of this report was to note the change in membership arising from the recasting following the academisation of six schools.	Action for Schools Forum:- 1. Note that as a consequence of six schools academising, there is a significant shift in balance of pupils supported by maintained schools to academy schools. 2. The report confirms the new membership, effective for the financial year 2024/25. 3. Schools Forum to agree the revised membership and accordingly invite the relevant School representative groups to confirm representatives to fulfil the Schools Forum membership in accordance. Discussion that all of the representatives who represent academies, need to step down with immediate effect. Academy representation group to nominate the 5 new members as per the revised Forum membership. With academies there is no split between governors/board representatives and headteachers. There are 2 natural vacancies in the Primary Sector through expiration of term of office January 2024 i.e. David Lucas & Maxine Osbaldeston.	Forum noted the report. Agreed: Appropriate representatives to go back to their voting sectors and nominate. Clerk to inform Primary Heads consultative lead and liaise with Lead officer on any Governor Vacancies. Director of Education to contact Academies
Item 10		Any other Business	SBM briefing next Tuesday 23rd January. Headteachers Briefing Thursday 25th Headteachers (time tbc).		