

Schools Forum - Decision Sheet

Meeting Date

14/12/23

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 Pat Barber (Governor - Secondary) and Michael Sullivan (Headteacher - Secondary).	Apologies accepted & noted.
Item 2		Declaration of Interests		None	
Item 3		Election of Vice Chair	Nominations and vote.	1 nomination received.	1 nomination received from Niall Hand (Secondary Head). There were no objections; Niall Hand, elected to forum Vice Chair with immediate effect. Chair thanked Niall for his participation.
Item 4	page 1 - 8	Minutes of the Meeting 19 October 2023	To agree on minutes of previous meeting	Questions or comments from the last meeting.	Forum minutes agreed as accurate.
Item 5		Matters Arising		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter to be drafted to the Secretary of State regarding 2024/25 DfE funding allocation error. PFI factor Consultation - outcome. Training for new Head teachers - postponed till New Year. Revision of Schools Forum Constitution and update for movements in pupil numbers and also academisation. 	To postpone letter draft to Secretary of State and put this on hold for the time being. Position to be reviewed/ reassessed following year-end. PFI factor Consultation - outcome - thank you to Niall Hand for co-ordinating and leading on this work. Schools forum constitution - membership to be recast for January 2024 forum.
Item 6	page 9 - 16	Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25	Report to discuss a mandate for developing the 2024/25 Schools funding formula. A standard report to forum to manage in principle, agreements once the settlement is announced (expected circa 20th December 2023). Also information regarding notional SEN.	<p>I. Continuation with the National Funding Formula in the deployment of the Schools Block.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including changes previously advised and appropriate implementation - in particular relating to split sites. Note that the exceptional factor usage for St Michaels and Bonus Pastor is pending – submission has been made to the DfE. Note request for exceptional factors has been submitted to DfE in respect of Playing Field management and Service Charge costs. ii. Agree any growth funding, be included on the APT tool, to determine amount in the Growth Fund Budget to fund incremental support for bulge class and potentially any unplanned in-year growth/bulges. Any unused funds, to be held in the Growth Fund. iii. De-delegation to be in line with the current basis plus inflation (where appropriate). Consider two options for MFG: • Option one- MFG set at max 0.5% (estimate), with any residue to support pressures in HNB. • Option two- 0.5% transfer from Schools Block, followed by MFG set at affordability. • Option three- depending on the financial settlement, it may be necessary to provide a hybrid model of options one and two. V. Review of the PFI factor:- • Conclusion of the consultation. <p>Continuation of financial risk associated with High Needs (demand led), Early Year (EY) (numbers accessing free entitlement), pressure on schools arising from economic challenges and national policy. Schools' forum also asked to note and agree to receive further updates as more information is made available at the January meeting and the Summer meeting.</p>	Schools Forum noted all recommendations. Members also noted the financial settlement is unlikely to be known until around 20th December 2023. For this reason, there could potentially be a delay to the reports dispatch process. Notional SEN - officers to bring a list of each school to January meeting, for information. 2 possible models of APT to be developed for forum consideration.
Item 7	page 17 -22	Application of the Quality Factor of Early Years Funding Block 2023/24	Report to discuss and agree the method on how to distribute the quality factor. This was largely a repeat of the report presented at forum in October, updated for additional option requested by the nursery schools representative.	Following Schools Forum on 19th October it was highlighted that maintained nursery schools employ a greater number of qualified teachers than nursery classes in primary schools or PVI's due to requirements that apply to schools and because all pupils attending will be under statutory school age. The three options presented did not take this into consideration, therefore a 4th option has been added for consideration and decision. Calculation is to divide the total funding £372,000 by the number of qualified teachers i.e. 123. This would mean the allocation per qualified teacher working in nursery provision would be £3,024.39.	11 voted in agreement for option 4 which is a majority vote carried.
Item 8	page 23 -25	Additional Funding for Schools in Deficit	Report to discuss the potential criteria on which to allocate funding to support maintained schools in financial difficulty (2023 to 2024).	Forum is asked to note the content of this report that focuses on:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for supporting schools that are currently in a deficit budget, in line with the grant conditions supporting this funding. To note this is one off funding which must be allocated to schools by the 31st March where they meet the criteria. Allocation of funding must remain within the overall funding provided by the DfE. 	Forum noted report - Agreed to have a final outcomes report to forum with headlines. Head of Lewisham Learning to lead on this process with appropriate schools approached to draft short business case. Trade off between having a over complex allocation method, recognising this is one off funding. funding should not be used to build reserves.
Item 9		High Needs Block	Verbal update including presentation to Forum regarding the grant submission to the DfE for potential £1M to support actions anticipated to support the reduction of cost to the HNB.	Verbal update - slides to be shared following the meeting.	Forum noted the following:- Grant application to be submitted by 21.12.23. Verification and Quality Assurance by Newton - end Dec 23/ early Jan 24. DfE SEND Advisor and Vulnerable Children's Unit Representatives as well as CIPFA reviewing grant application and evidence- continues verification process. Outcome of grant application communicated - March 2024. Delivery of the DBV Implementation Programme commenced fully at the start of the academic year (September 2024), with clear milestones set for monitoring purposes. Summary position to be brought to the January forum.
Item 10		Any other Business	None.	None.	

Agreed by Manda George

Chair of Schools Forum