

DRAFT

LEWISHAM SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10th December 2020

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

		Attendance				
Primary School Headteachers		16/01	09/07	15/10	10/12	Date of Appointment
Paul Moriarty	Good Shepherd	a	✓	✕	a	Dec 2018
Manda George	Torridon Primary	✓	✓	✓	a	Dec 2018
Sharon Lynch	St William of York	✓	✓	✓	✓	Dec 2018
Keith Barr	Kender	✓	✓	✓	✓	Dec 2018
Matthew Ringham	Our Lady & St Philip Neri	✓	✓	✓	✓	Dec 2018
Nursery School Headteacher						
Nikki Oldhams	Chelwood Nursery			✓	✓	Oct 2020
Secondary School Headteachers						
Naill Hand	Prendergast Ladywell	✓	✓	✓	✓	July 2019
VACANT						
Mark Phillips	Deptford Green	✓	✓	✓	a	Jan 2020
VACANT						
Special School Headteacher						
Lynne Haines	Greenvale	✓	✓	✓	✓	Oct 2018

Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher						
Heather Johnston	Abbey Manor	✓	✓	✓	✓	Dec 2020
Primary School Governors						
Rosamund Clarke	Perrymount	✓	✓	✓	✓	Dec 2018
VACANT						
Secondary & Special School Governors						
Pat Barber	Bonus Pastor	✓	✓	✓	a	Dec 2018
VACANT						
VACANT						
Academies						
Dr Tesca Bennett	Haberdashers' Knights Academy	✓	✘	✓	a	Oct 2018
VACANT						
14-19 Consortium Rep						
Asfa Sohail	Lewisham Southwark College	✓	✓	✓	✓	Mar 2019
Early Years – PVI						
VACANT						
Diocesan Authorities						
Sara Sanbrook-Davies	Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	✓	✓	✓	a	Dec 2019
Yvonne Epale	Education Commission – Catholic Diocese of Southwark	✓	a	✓	a	Feb 2018

Lynne Haines	Forum Chair	a	✓	✓	✓	Oct 2017
Keith Barr	Forum Vice-Chair	✓	✓	✓	✓	Oct 2017

Also Present/Observers	Role
Kathy Freeman	Executive Director – Corporate Resources
Angela Scattergood	Director - CYP
Mala Dadlani	Group Finance Manager
Lurengo Reynolds-Moxam	Principal Accountant
Victoria Redgrave	LB Lewisham
Martin Cunningham	Leathersellers Federation
Tony Marnham	Leathersellers Federation
Dimitrios Kontozisis	Clyde Nursery
Kim Knappett	NEU
Grainne Cuffe	NewShopper
Janita Aubun	Clerk

1. Apologies and Acceptance of Apologies

Apologies from Yvonne Epale, Manda George, Paul Moriarty, Pat Barber and Dr Tesca Bennett. All accepted.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Minutes of the Meeting – 15 October 2020

Attendance list – correct Head of Clyde Nursery to Head of Chelwood.
Correct list of those ‘also present’ (page 3) and to add an extra column with their respective roles/name of organisation.

4. Matters Arising

None

5. DSG Funding Report 2021-22

The purpose of this report was to agree the principle and approach for the 2021/22 schools funding – Authority Proforma Tool (APT) submission to the DfE.

Executive Director Corporate Services for Lewisham was introduced to forum. The Executive Director explained the council's financial position and gave details of a paper which went to Mayor & Cabinet on 9th December 2020 that included proposals of our medium and long term strategy in making council wide savings. Forum were also advised of the pertaining consultation timelines, depending on the nature of the service.

Funding settlement due just before Christmas; submission to the DfE due 21st January 2021. January 19th Forum will be to agree the budget (APT tool), which is to be submitted to the DfE.

Officers will be working on various models which will be for discussion at January Schools Forum, in order to make a decision on this day.

Schools forum agreed the following:-

- Continuation with the National Funding Formula in the deployment of the Schools Block.
- Agree to any growth funding to be included on the APT tool, with a minimal amount in the Growth Fund Budget to fund incremental support for bulge class and potentially any unplanned in-year growth/bulges.
- De-delegation to remain and be in line with the current basis plus inflation(where appropriate).
- De-delegation – to receive a detailed report at January Forum, for consideration on functions previously supported by the Education Services Grant.
- A two year finance support package from schools contingency where 2021/22 will be the second year of this funding.
- Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) – to at this stage consider two options for MFG, which support the HNB:-
 - (1) MFG set at max 2% uplift (estimate), with any residue to support pressures in HNB.
 - (2) 0.5% transfer from Schools Block to, followed by MFG set at affordability

The 3rd option would be to fully allocate funding to schools, which would result in issues for the HNB.

- To note the continuation of financial risk associated with High Needs (demand led) and Early Years Funding (lack of clarity arising from COVID-related estimations in payment terms and funding receivable).
- To note and agree to receive further updates as more information is made available at the January meeting and the summer meeting.
- Note possible delay to the reports dispatch process on the Local Schools Funding Formula to the DfE in January.

6. High Needs Block Update

Discussion surrounding High Needs overspend which although not as high as many other Local Authorities, we will have to undertake a formal recovery plan with the government. Officers explained that alongside the pressure on the High Needs Block, there is also pressure on associated costs of transport. Overall there has been significant increases in both the number of EHCP and price. Nearly half the pressure on the number of plans since 2016/17 has arisen from post 16 placements.

Forum will recall that the statutory regulations that came into being extended the age coverage from 5 to 19 to 0, 25.

There are many reasons which could be contributing to this increase, including the economic climate meaning that more people are choosing to stay in education. Other factors could include greater awareness. Either way, this is statutory function and must be supported.

Forum will be aware that pressure has been forecast for some years and several updates to Schools Forum. Whilst the DfE has supported HNB with additional resources, the pace of increase (cost and volume) is outstripping the additional finances.

Mitigation plan aimed for end of academic year. i.e. July 2021.

Schools forum were given two options to consider:-

- (1) APT using full funding
- (2) Impact of transfer of 0.5%

Schools did raise their concern about providing financial support to High Needs at a detriment to school budgets, recognising that the council are under financial strain.

It was also noted that like any school is not permitted to overspend, the same applies LA. Depending on the size of the forecast deficit urgent action would be required to work within the budgetary constraints, whilst delivering on the statutory needs.

- Forum agreed to consider a potential transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2021/22. Detailed report for presentation at January Forum.

Under the regulations, a consultation with all schools is required.

- Forum agreed that Lewisham undertakes this brief consultation with schools in January to be considered alongside the holistic DSG funding issue.

Early Years Funding

Schools forum were informed that we are still awaiting the Provisional Early Years Settlement and that there is an expectation that providers are funded on numbers had COVID not been in place.

- Schools Forum noted the potential risk.

7. Membership/Constitution

Forum presented with a paper showing the existing constitution and the proposed. Members were informed of the need to reconstitute to reflect the pupil numbers at the October 2020 census as a weighted average and because of the transfer of Sedgehill to an Academy.

Proposed Primary representatives increase from 5 to 7 and Secondary representatives reduce from 4 to 2. Overall forum membership remains at 23.

Forum agreed the following:-

- New constitution
- Vice-Chair to discuss membership representation and vacancies with primary school heads.
- Clerk to chase on the governor election vacancies.

Dates of Appointment

Officers drew attention to a number of member expiration dates all at Dec 2021 and how this is to be managed at the respective Leadership Consultatives, to avoid mass exit. This could de-stabilise Schools Forum if not managed seamlessly.

Also reminder that any appointments must be via election.

8. Verbal Updates

New requirements reminder - Staff salary over £100k/Benchmarking

Forum were informed of the need for mainstream school staff earning in excess of £100K to be identified on your school's website alongside the benchmarking data which the DfE have provided. It is required to be published in bands of £10K and needs to be implemented from 1st January 2021. Yesterday's e:bulletin from schools finance, will give more information with a link to the benchmarking data.

The introduction of changes to financial reporting were introduced by the DfE to suggestedly align reporting with Academies.

"Term Time Only" - review

Forum were advised that Lewisham is currently in discussion with various partners including trade unions. Until the matter is concluded there remains a risk which may or may not have financial implications for schools. Schools Forum were asked to continue to note this risk and to agree to receive regular updates over the next series of meetings. Potentially a representative from Lewisham Human Resources team will present a paper to forum in January with any updates.

- agreed

Covid Claim Update

Discussion around the Autumn covid claim which is a residue of the Summer claim; no claim for the autumn period. Deadline for this submission is 22nd December. Government ministerial headlines suggests new extra funding will be introduced to cover levels of sickness in the workforce (circa 20%) and with school surplus balances not exceeding 4%. **This is yet to be confirmed however.** Officers have undertaken a survey of Lewisham maintained schools with roughly 80% return - excess of £300,000 COVID related spend

in the 3 main areas. Approximately £2m spend in additional other areas e.g. loss of income, supply cover costs etc. as well as teaching and admin days lost.

Forum decided a representation to government regarding autumn term covid expenditure and ensuing financial pressure, is required. Remaining 20% schools to be encouraged to return survey by Forum and a draft statement for January Forum is required.

Vice chair to lead on developing the draft with support from forum volunteers. The proposed letter is to be presented to schools forum at their meeting in January

9. Any Other Business

Future meetings

19th January 2021

All Schools Forum meetings will be held between 16.30 and 18.30

Sub Group meetings

High Needs Sub Group
14 th January 2021 – officers advised that Teams calendar invites will now be sent for the whole academic year.

Mentioned that Mark Philips (Headteacher – Deptford Green) and Martin Cunningham (Leathersellers Federation) have volunteered to join HNSG.

SCHOOLS FORUM ACTION SUMMARY

ITEM	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	OFFICER (S) RESPONSIBLE	OUTCOME/ CURRENT POSITION
Forum 10 Dec 2020, Item 5. DSG Funding Report 2021-22	De-delegation – to receive a detailed report for consideration on functions previously supported by the Education Services Grant.	Mala Dadlani	For January 2021 forum.
Forum 10 Dec 2020, Item 6. High Needs Block Update	To receive a detailed paper on the potential transfer of 0.5% from the schools block to the high needs block for 2021-22.	Mala Dadlani	For January 2021 forum.

Forum 10 Dec 2020, Item 6. High Needs Block Update	Consultation with all schools is required.	Mala Dadlani	Upon schools resuming in January 2021
Forum 10 Dec 2020, Item 8. Verbal Updates - "Term Time Only" - review	To present a paper to forum with any updates.	Lewisham HR	January 2021 forum.
Covid Claim Update	Draft statement required for representation to government.	Mala Dadlani	For January 2021 forum.