

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Held on Wednesday 11 April 2016 at Chace Community School

Schools Members:

Governors: Ms I Cranfield (Primary) Chair, Mr Clark (Primary), Mrs J Ellerby (Primary), Mrs J Leach (Special), Mrs L Sless (Primary), *Mr T McGee (Secondary), Mr G Stubberfield (Secondary)*

Headteachers: *Ms H Ballantine (Primary)*, Mr P De Rosa (Special), *Ms M Hurst (Pupil Referral Unit)*, Mr B Goddard (Secondary), Ms H Knightley (Primary), *Mr M Lavelle (Secondary)*, Ms A Nicou (Primary), Ms H Thomas (Primary), Ms L Whitaker (Primary),

Academies: Ms L Dawes, *Vacancy*

Non-Schools Members:

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<i>Cllr D Levy</i>
16 - 19 Partnership	Mr K Hintz
Teachers' Committee	<i>Mr S McNamara</i> substituted by Mr T Cuffaro
Head of Behaviour Support	Mr J Carrick
Early Years Provider	Ms C Gopoulos
Education Professional	Ms E Stickler

Observers:

Cabinet Member	Cllr A Orhan
School Business Manager	Ms A Homer
Education Funding Agency	<i>Mr O Jenkins</i>

Also attending:

Chief Education Officer	Ms J Tosh
Head of Finance Business Partner	Mrs J Fitzgerald
Assistant Finance Business Partner	Mrs L McNamara
Resources Development Manager	Mrs S Brown
Observer	Ms S Watson

* Italics denote absence

1. MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

a) **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Levy, Mr McGee, Ms Ballantine, Ms Hurst and Mr Lavelle.

Noted the absence of Mr Stubberfield.

b) **Membership**

Reported:

- (i) Ms Gaudencio had resigned as primary representative on Schools Forum and Ms Whitaker had taken over the vacated position.

The Forum noted Ms Whitaker had previously acted as substitute for Ms Gaudencio at meetings, but now formally welcomed Ms Whitaker to the Schools Forum.

- (ii) The pupil numbers from the January PLASC had been assessed to inform the membership composition of the Forum. Following the conversion of Southgate School to an academy, there was a need to change the composition and membership.

Noted:

A. The changes to PLASC meant:

- the secondary representation needed to be reduced from four to three members;
- the academy representation needed to be increased from two to three members;

- B. Currently, the secondary representation included Mr Lavelle and Mr Stubberfield, both of whom were from Southgate School. With the change in status of Southgate School, both Mr Lavelle and Mr Stubberfield would have to resign as secondary representatives but could remain on the Forum as academy representatives. This was because there was currently a vacancy for an academy representative and also the need to increase the number of academy members to reflect the changes in pupil numbers.

It was commented that Mr Lavelle had expressed that he no longer wanted to be a representative on the Schools Forum.

- C. With the resignation of Mr Lavelle and Mr Stubberfield as secondary representatives, there was a vacancy for a secondary representative. The Forum was asked if they had a preference as to whether this vacancy should be filled by a Headteacher or Governor.

It was questioned why there was a choice. It was stated that, as only three secondary representatives were required, the terms of reference did not stipulate if a particular type of member took precedence over another.

There was a view that the vacancy should be filled by a Headteacher. It was observed that there were currently more Headteachers than Governors on the Forum, so perhaps a Governor should be considered to cover the vacancy. This was because of the number of members required to represent primary schools.

It was commented that, in the uncertain economic climate, the national changes around funding and proposals for schools to become academies, it was important to consider a Headteacher for the vacancy.

Resolved:

- A. To confirm with Mr Lavelle and Mr Stubberfield whether they wanted to continue to remain on the Schools Forum as academy representatives.
- B. If Mr Lavelle and Mr Stubberfield decided not to continue as academy representatives, then nomination would be sought from one of the other academies;
- C. To seek a nomination from the Secondary Headteachers' Conference for the secondary representative vacancy.

ACTION: Mrs Brown

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were given the opportunity of declaring an interest relating to any items on the agenda. No declarations were made.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- (a) Schools Forum meeting held on 2 March 2016

Received and agreed the minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum held on 2 March 2016, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book.

- (b) Matters arising from these minutes

Noted the matters arising from the minutes would be covered by the items on the agenda.

Clerk's note: Ms Dawes and Mr Kurt arrived at this point.

4. ITEM FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION

- a) Schools National Funding Formula: Draft Response

Received a draft response to the DfE consultation documents on the Schools National Funding Formula and the High Needs National Funding Formula, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book.

Reported the DfE had published two consultation documents on the implementation of the National Funding Formulae (NFF) for the Schools and High Needs blocks. The DfE had

described these as being 'the first stage' in the process and were seeking views on general principles and indicators which should be used to allocate funding. However, the documents provided no information on the financial impact of any of the proposals. The DfE had stated that they would have a second consultation process later in the year.

Noted:

- (i) The documents indicated that the introduction of the NFF would be carried out within existing resources. If this were the case, with no information rates and weightings to be applied, London Councils had carried out an analysis of the potential funding changes in the Schools Block received by individual London local authorities. The analysis indicated that, if the proposals were to be implemented, London would be a net loser and the loss for Enfield could be in the region of minus 1.9% of the Schools Block budget. It was stated that this was an overall loss and would not be evenly spread across schools, so at school level there could be considerable volatility.

If the analysis by London Council was proved accurate, then the reduction in funding for schools would be over and above the real term reduction of between 7 and 10%, because of the pay awards and National Insurance increases schools had to meet.

- (ii) There was insufficient information available for the High Needs Block to form any view of the impact on London, other than a statement in the consultation document that 'local authorities will need to manage with less'.
- (iii) The transitional arrangements for schools were to be managed by applying a minimum funding guarantee.
- (iv) The proposals indicated some role for local authorities and the Schools Forum for the next two years.
- (v) With the proposed changes, there was a concern that in the future there would be no local accountability or flexibility to inform the use of resources to meet local needs and priorities.
- (vi) It was commented that a single formula could be managed but it was unclear how the data used would address the needs of all pupils. The current Government proposals for academisation seemed to remove local accountability further, owing to the removal of the requirement for parent governors. These proposals did not support some of the principles for the SEND reforms for co-production and working with parents. The current DfE publications did not indicate a joined-up approach across Government departments.
- (vii) It was questioned what difference a response from the Forum would make to the final proposals implemented by the Government. It was suggested that, rather than consider the response to each individual question, the Forum consider developing a response that could be used as a public document and shared widely. It was stated that the DfE would have to log and consider every response and it was important for the Forum and also individual members to respond to the two consultation documents.

The Forum's view was that there was a need for as many responses as possible to be submitted.

- (viii) It was observed that it was important to consider the target audience for any document to be shared. It was important to share information on the Forum's view with schools, parents and members of the local communities but any document that was shared needed to be clear and concise.

It was suggested that there should be two separate documents: one that was a detailed response from the Local Authority and Schools Forum which encompassed in full the effect on Enfield and another brief and succinct document, which could be shared with key organisations and if required could be provided to parents. The second document could be used by individuals to assist them in responding to the two consultations.

(ix) The Forum was advised that there was a period of purdah now owing to the Mayoral elections and also the EU Referendum. This limited the Local Authority's ability to engage with Members, MPs, the press, etc.

(x) It was commented that the resources for special schools should be provided to the Local Authority and then allocated by the Local Authority to individual special schools.

It was important that the funding arrangements supported and met the needs of Enfield's most vulnerable pupils.

(xi) It was proposed that schools should receive the AWPU for specialist units and to reflect this change that the basic cost of a place commissioned by the Local Authority for the specialist provision reduces from £10k to £6k.

(xii) The document included 'Invest to save' proposals. It was commented that Enfield was already working hard to do this.

(xiii) It was questioned if there was an update on the review of central services. It was stated that the review was being linked with the work already being carried out on Early Help and on the Council savings individual services were required to meet. Information was being collected on each service. The arrangements and documentation being used had been shared with the Education Resources Group.

It was commented if further savings were required to be made for 2017/18, then it was important for an update on the review to be provided as soon as possible and so enable discussions to be carried out early in the Autumn term.

Resolved to:

- Finalise a full joint response from the Local Authority and Schools Forum;
- Draft a document with shorter headline response to each question and circulate to Chairs of Governors, schools and other key partners and stakeholders;
- Provide an update on the review of central services.

Action: Mrs Brown

b) Post-16 High Needs Funding – Briefing Paper

Received a report providing an update on Post-16 High Needs funding, a copy of which is in the Minute Book.

Reported following the brief update provided at the last meeting, officers had considered a range of actions which could be implemented to attempt to control the overall financial pressure created on the High Needs block by the Post-16 placements. The Forum was asked to consider and comment on actions being proposed.

Noted:

- (i) These proposals aimed to ensure that there was clarity regarding educational outcomes and the cost which would be met by the Local Authority for Post-16 students in colleges. It was commented some colleges did not have clear pathways for their High Needs students and hence additional funding was being sought for long-term placements.
- (ii) It was commented that there appeared to be a wide cost differential between some of the colleges. It was stated that some colleges provided specialist programmes for students, for example Capel Manor and Oaklands offered specialist horticultural courses for these vulnerable students. Furthermore, the cost information did not show the level of need for each student and some colleges were dealing students with very complex high needs.
- (iii) The North London Strategic Alliance, a partnership between six local authorities, had developed acceptable margins regarding hourly rates charged for professional support. These rates would be used to seek clarity around payments with providers. The partnership also enabled an opportunity to monitor and assure continued quality of provision.

- (iv) The Post-16 study programmes developed for High Needs learners is capped at 600 hours per year, in line with the support currently provided by the EFA.
- (v) It was commented that the duration period for funding provided should be dependent upon the course pursued and the outcomes to be achieved. In some instances, the college placement had become a form of care and there was a need to have clarity about the aspiration and outcome in the EHCP for students.
- (vi) It was observed that the EHCP should be reviewed annually to ensure that the Plan was still required to address the needs and outcomes for the young person. It was stated that this was done but it was the individual college's responsibility to do this. Colleges had found setting up the multi-disciplinary meeting to be challenging and time-consuming to organise.

It was commented that colleges could not fund students for the same qualification more than once. Previously, colleges may have funded students doing additional units, but now the focus for colleges was on students learning to become independent, as well as introducing internships. These changes in focus had to be managed carefully as part of the annual review process. This included managing the parents' assumption that the college placement would replicate the school provision.

The Forum noted and supported the range of actions detailed in the report.

5. WORKPLAN

Any additional items arising from the meeting would be added to the workplan.

ACTION: Mrs Brown

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business

7. FUTURE MEETINGS

(a) NOTE: since the meeting and publication of the consultation documents, the next meeting would be held on 6 July 2016 at Chace Community School.

(b) Dates of future meetings were as follows:

- 13 October 2016
- 8 December 2016
- 18 January 2017
- 01 March 2017
- 19 April 2017 - tbc
- 05 July 2017`

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

No items were considered to be confidential.