

## **MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING**

**Held on Wednesday 7 March 2018 at Chace Community School**

### **Schools Members:**

Governors: Ms Ellerby (Primary), Ms H Kacouris (Primary), *Mrs J Leach (Special)*, Mrs L Sless (Primary), *Mr T McGee (Secondary)*, Ms V West (Primary)

Headteachers: Ms H Thomas (Primary) (Chair), *Ms H Ballantine (Primary)*, Mr D Bruton (Secondary), Vacancy (Pupil Referral Unit), *Ms H Knightley (Primary)* substituted by Ms K Jaeggi, Ms K Baptiste (Primary), Ms G Weir (Special), *Ms M O'Keefe / Ms T Day (Secondary)*

Academies: *Ms L Dawes (All through)*, Ms A Nicou (Primary), *Mr A Sadgrove (All through)*

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### **Non-Schools Members:**

|  |                    |
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| Early Years Provider                                 | Ms A Palmer        |
| 16 - 19 Partnership                                  | <i>Mr K Hintz</i>  |
| Teachers' Committee                                  | <i>Mr J Jacobs</i> |
| Head of Standards, Schs, Curriculum, & Children Ser. | Ms C Seery         |
| Education Professional                               | Ms J Fear          |
| Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee             | Vacancy            |

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### **Observers:**

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

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### **Also attending:**

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Assistant Director, Education    | Mr J Carrick   |
| Heads of Budget Challenge        | Mr N Goddard   |
| Finance Manager                  | Mrs L McNamara |
| Resources Development Manager    | Mrs S Brown    |
| Progression and Pathways Manager | Mr A Johnson   |
| SEND Project Manager             | Ms S McLean    |

\* Italics denote absence

## **1. MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **a) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Ballantine, Ms Dawes, Ms Knightley, Mrs Leach, Mr McGee, Mr Sadgrove, Mr Hintz and Mr Jacobs.

**Noted** Ms Jaeggi was substituting for Ms Knightley for this meeting.

### **b) Membership**

**Noted:**

#### **(i) Vacancy for Headteacher at Pupil Referral Unit**

A new Headteacher had not yet been appointed for the Pupil Referral Unit and, as soon as a Headteacher was appointed, they would be asked to take up the vacant position on the Forum.

#### **(ii) Composition of the Schools Forum**

**Reported** that pupil numbers from the January Census had been assessed and these indicated a change required in the composition of the Forum to reflect the conversion of maintained schools to academies.

The result of the assessment was as follows:

- A reduction in maintained primary representatives from 9 to 7 and an increase of academy representatives from 3 to 5. It was recommended that these changes take effect when two of the maintained schools represented on the Forum convert to academies and these members could then continue to remain on the Forum as academy representatives;

- Although, a special school had converted to an academy, it had been recommended that composition of the Forum did not need to change to include a position for the Special Academy. This was because the Special Academy was part of the Enfield Learning Trust and this Trust already had a member represented on the Forum. In addition, special schools were also represented on the Forum.

It was commented that the Special Academy should be represented separately and not covered by the position taken by the Enfield Learning Trust because the academy would bring specific knowledge on specialist provision. It was stated specialist provision was already representative on the Forum, but further guidance would be sought from the DfE.

**Resolved** to seek guidance on membership requirements for special schools and academies.

**Action: Mrs Brown**

**POST MEETING NOTE:** The DfE have confirmed if there is a representative for special schools and academies, there was no need to have another representative.

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Clerk's note: Mr Bruton and Ms O'Keefe arrived at this point.**

## **3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**Received** and agreed the minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum held 17 January 2018, a copy of which is in the minute book.

## **4. ITEM FOR DISCUSSION & INFORMATION**

### **a) High Needs Strategy – Update**

Mr A Johnson and Ms S McLean attended to present part of this item.

**Received** a report with an update on developing the high needs strategic plan; a copy is included in the Minute Book.

**Reported** this was the second report on progress on the development of the SEND strategic plan. The report provided an update on the three strands being considered for the strategic plan. The information being reported on the three strands included: the outcomes from the review of the Additionally Resourced Provision and Nurture Groups; Post 16 provision and management of out borough places.

**Noted:**

#### **(i) Post 16 Provision**

Mr Johnson and Ms McLean gave a brief presentation on this item.

The Forum were informed that:

- the cost of placing Post 16 and Post school students was charged to the Dedicated Schools Grant. The demand for the number of students that would require support was unpredictable and for planning purposes an increase of 10% had been forecasted for budgeting purposes for the coming year. It was difficult to confirm if this forecast was accurate because it was not possible to gauge the number of Post 19 would decide to return to education. As part of the review, officers had been working with local colleges to develop a framework for assessing support required; this included reducing programme to reflect actual hours taught. However, there were some students that had to be placed in out-borough

provision either because it was a specialist provision or chosen by the young person and their parents. In these cases, there was very little influence on price other than ensuring the provision reflected the Education, Health and Care Plan.

In response to a question on the impact of prioritising essential outcomes for funding purposes and desirable only, it was confirmed that decisions on the support to be provided were based on the young person being able to meet the outcomes as detailed in the EHCP and what was actually being delivered by the institute in achieving this;

**Clerk's note: Ms Ellerby arrived at this point.**

- the other aspect of the work being done was to review the pathways for older students and consider alternatives that would support them in preparing for employment and / or coping independently as citizens.

A Steering Group of key partners and stakeholders has been set up. Currently, work was being done with colleges helping them to consider reviewing their curriculums so that courses included delivering supported internships as part of the three-year study programme.

West Lea school had been commissioned to deliver supported internships across Enfield for young people aged 16 – 24 years. This started in September 2017 and to-date 23 students were accessing a supported internship, and already some of these students had been successful in securing paid employment. The employers were expected to pay the same rate as any other member of staff doing the same job. The number of students to be supported by West Lea was due to increase to 30-40 next year. The work with West Lea had found that the average cost reduced considerably as 4 days a week were spent with the employer and one day undertaking the study aspects of the programme.

Staff in special schools, colleges and sixth forms had accessed the supported employment training delivered by the British Association of Supported Employment. The aim of the training was for these staff to promote employment with the school/setting, parents and the young people, ensuring that young people are given access to quality work experience and that a vocational profile is completed, preparing them for a supported internship and potential paid employment.

The key aspect in developing this area was employer engagement ensuring that there were enough internships to meet demand.

Following the update on internship, there was a discussion about the internship programme.

It was confirmed that the programme was in its infancy and had only started in September 2017. Initially job coaches provide more intense support which tapers off as the young person becomes more familiar with their job and the expectations of them. As the end of the internship, if the young person is offered paid employment continued support and monitoring would be provided by the Council's Equals Employment Service if the young person was eligible for Adult Social Care. If the young person was not eligible for Adult Social Care then the West Lea Job Coaches would continue to provide this support. In some instances, the support would be minimal as a couple of phone calls a year to make sure that they are coping with their job.

The development of supported internship programme for pupils with SEND was an aspect of the DSG high needs strategic plan and it would address the findings from the local area inspection of the SEND provision relating to Post school learners.

**Clerk's note: Ms McLean left and Mr Carrick arrived at this point.**

- (ii) The outcomes from the review of the ARP were included in the report.

In response to the ensuing discussion, it was stated that:

- the School Improvement Adviser would assess the curriculum provision for pupils accessing the ARPs. This assessment would be based on the annual self - assessment carried out by each school hosting an ARP;
- the current training programme provided by the School Standards Service was being developed to support improvement in practice and knowledge, as well as a facilitating a Network forum for staff in ARPs;
- the regulations required formal consultations when considering placing pupils with SEND, but consideration would be given as to how the administrative burden could be reduced for schools;
- expanding specials schools and creating more places would ensure pupils assessed for more specialist provision were able to take up a place in a timely way.

- (iii) The outcomes from the review of the Nurture Groups were included in the report

In response to the ensuing discussion, it was stated that:

- the Nurture groups were only provided for primary schools and each group had 10 places for pupils at the school. This model had been in place for several years and funding had not allowed for the model to be developed or expanded to other schools;
- The Forum expressed concerns that a substantial amount of money was allocated to a few schools when non-funded schools were providing their own nurture or mental health support. It was suggested that the funding for nurture groups be reviewed.
- the Forum's view that the Nurture groups should be available for all schools to access either by hosting or referral were noted and officers were asked to consider how the current model could be developed to enable other schools to access the provision.

**Resolved** that:

- The Forum noted the report;
- Review the current model for the Nurture Groups.

**Action: Mrs Brown**

**b) High Needs Places for 2018/19 – Update**

**Received** a report with a summary of the high needs places to be commissioned for 2018/19; a copy is included in the Minute Book.

**Noted**

- (i) Work was continuing to develop local provision and reduce the need to place pupils in out-borough. The Forum had already been advised of the supported internship and with the move of the PRU to their new site, West Lea school had been commissioned to provide SEMH provision at the Swan Centre. Currently, there were 16 pupils placed at the Swan and with plans for this to increase by a further four places. If the provision had not been developed, then these students would have had to be placed in out- borough independent provision. Officers were aware the Swan Centre had capacity to accommodate more places and commented when information on pupil projections became clearer and if required work would continue to extend the use of the Swan Centre.
- (ii) The Authority was working on negotiating a central speech and language contract with Health for 2019/20. These negotiations were being impeded because of the

previous cuts to this budget agreed with the Schools Forum and trying to address the significant increase in demand with less resources.

- (iii) Other developments, as detailed in the report, would yield some additional places next year, but the bulk of the places would be seen when the major developments, such as the new SEMH school and Minchenden came to fruition.

The Forum noted the report and the planned places for the coming financial year.

**c) Schools Budget 2017/18: Monitoring**

**Received** a report the latest forecast for the Schools Budget; a copy is included in the Minute Book.

**Reported** the commitments against the Schools Budget had been reviewed. This had resulted in a change in the projections for the Schools block because of rate adjustments for schools converting to academies and the High Needs block to reflect an increase in costs for placements. At this point, it was assumed the Early Years block would be contained within existing resources. However, the Forum would be informed if this position changes following the confirmation of the final data from the January Pupil Census.

**Noted** the current projected DSG overspend amounted to £3.5m.

The Forum noted the report and the projected DSG overspend.

**d) Schools Budget: Update 2018-19**

**Received** a report providing the known information on the School Budget for 2018/19, a copy is included in the Minute Book.

**Reported** the change from the previous meeting was the use of actual and estimates for the rateable values. This had led to a pressure on the Schools block, but it was anticipated this pressure would be alleviated when the current known schools converted to academies.

**Noted:**

- (i) The Individual Schools Budgets (ISB) had been distributed the previous week. The Forum were advised that the local practice was to provide schools with estimated budgets for Years 2 & 3. The planned move to the National Funding Formula (NFF) had made projecting years 2 & 3 difficult. For the budget notifications, the projections for Year 2 used current unit rates and the NFF rates for Year 3; with no minimum funding guarantee for either year.
- (ii) It was commented that the ISB was based on pupil numbers and there was a need to consider and discuss how schools experiencing a drop-in pupil numbers would be supported. It was confirmed that a meeting had been arranged on 26 March to discuss this issue with schools.
- (iii) It was suggested that the services identified for de-delegation be reviewed earlier in the financial year.
- (iv) A member raised a concern regarding the date on which the count for exception needs was carried out. She felt, due to the increase in demand and pressure on SEN Services to progress the assessed plans for her schools, some assessed plans had not been included in the count for above average incident calculation to inform the allocation of additional £6ks for pupils with EHCP requiring support greater than £6k. The loss of this funding would have a significant impact on her school's budget because the school was loser under the NFF.

This was followed up by comments on the length of time taken to approve plans for three and four-year olds and the need for support for two years.

It was stated that the SEN Services were working hard to assess new requests for Plans and convert Statements to Plans. The current data showed that the Service had a very small number (less than 10%) left to convert.

In response to a comment that the savings released from the supported internship should be redirected to support schools, it was commented that the Authority had to follow a process and this required demand to be met appropriately and at the same time for the deficit to be addressed. The pressures facing Enfield were not unique and other local authorities were raising the same financial difficulties.

- (v) The Forum raised their concern about the funding pressure on the Schools Budget, especially the high needs block. The extension of supporting children and young people from birth to 25 without additional funding was reducing the amount available for schools. A member remarked that the Fair Funding lobby was continuing to seek fairer funding for schools and was focussing its campaign on seeking more funding for high needs and to support the campaign there was a need for some case studies from schools the impact the impact this was having for their schools.

**Resolved** to note and agree, for 2018/19, the final proposals for allocating the Schools Budget within the Schools, Early Years and High Needs block.

## 5. WORKPLAN

The Chair advised the Forum that the next meeting was planned as a single item agenda. At a previous meeting, the Forum had requested an in-depth discussion on how schools in financial difficulties could be supported. It was suggested that the next meeting be used for this purpose.

**Noted** the previous discussion related to maintained schools and it was questioned if academies would be able to attend this meeting. It was stated that the Forum was an open meeting and if there were any restrictions on attendance, then the Forum needed to consider and then agree these. The Forum raised no restrictions to attendance.

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

**Action: Mrs Brown**

## 6. FUTURE MEETINGS

- a) The date of the next meeting was set as Wednesday 9 May 2018 at 17:30 at Chace Community School.
- b) Dates for future meetings:

| Dates                     | Time          | Venue |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------|
| 11 July 2018              | 17:30 - 19:30 |       |
| 03 October 2018           | 17:30 - 19:30 |       |
| 12 December 2018          | 17:30 - 19:30 |       |
| 16 January 2019           | 17:30 - 19:30 |       |
| 06 March 2019             | 17:30 - 19:30 |       |
| 15 May 2018 (Provisional) | 17:30 - 19:30 |       |

## 7. CONFIDENTIALITY

No items were considered confidential.

The meeting closed at 19:15.