

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Held on Wednesday, 9 March 2022 at 17:30 on Microsoft Teams

Governors:

Ms Adelaide Amoaf
Mr T Hellings
*Ms C Davies **
*Mr J Donnelly**

Headteachers

Ms T Day
*Ms J Gumbrell**
Ms K Baptiste
Ms C Fay
Ms N Husband
Mr D Smart
Ms G Taylor

Academies:

Ms H Thomas (Chair)
Ms S Ellingham
Mr M Lewis
*Ms A Nicou**
Ms Z Thompson
*Ms K Turnpenney **

Mr K Hintz
*Ms A Palmer**
Mr T Cuffaro
Mr A Johnson
Ms J Fear
Cllr S Erbil *
*Cllr M Uddin**
*Ms S Mahesh**

Schools' Members

Primary
Primary
Special
Secondary

Secondary
Secondary
Primary
Pupil Referral Unit
Primary
Primary
Special

Non-School Members

16-19 Partnership
Early Years Provider
Teachers' Committee
Education Professional
Head of Admissions
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member
School Business Manager

* Indicates Absence

Also present:

Mr P Nathan, Director of Education
Mrs L McNamara, Finance Manager
Mrs S Brown, Education Resources Manager
Rachel Walker, Head of ASA
Ms Suzy Francis, Head of EPS
Ms Mervin Cato, Head of Secondary Behaviour Service
Catherine Goodwin, Head of ASA
Julia Hide, Head Early Years and Social Inclusion
Mr Rik Boxer, Consultant
Mrs P Swain, Clerk

Clerk's notes

Mr Johnson and Ms Thompson joined the meeting 5.37pm
Ms Ellingham joined the meeting 5.37pm
Mr Boxer joined the meeting at 6.12pm and left at 7.20pm
Mr Ellerby-Jones left the meeting at 6.40pm
Mr Hintz left the meeting at 7.08pm
Ms Walker, Ms Adelaide, Ms Baptiste and Ms Thompson left the meeting at 7.30pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Donnelly, Mr Ellis, Ms Nicou, Ms Turnpenney, Ms Gumbrell, Cllr Uddin and Cllr Erbil.

In the absence of Mr Ellis, members formally recorded thanks to his contribution and support to the Forum. The Forum welcomed Adelaide Amoaf who was taking over from Mr Ellis.

The Chair confirmed that a formal invitation would be extended to Mr Stephen Way to join the Forum as an academy representative at the next meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members were invited to identify any personal or prejudicial interest relevant to items on the agenda.

No declarations were received.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

RECEIVED the minutes of the Schools Forum meeting held on 19 January 2021.

NOTED that:

- (a) The Minutes were a correct record of the meeting
- (b) There were no matters arising from the Minutes which were not addressed in items on the Agenda

4. ITEMS FOR PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

High Needs Presentations

(a) Attendance Support Unit, Home Tuition and Hospital Tuition Report 2020 - 2021

This item was presented by Ms Catherine Goodwin

RECEIVED and reported that West Lea School was commissioned to provide the Homes and Hospitals outreach service until 31 March 2023. The provision comprised of:

- Attendance Support Unit (ASU) – The ASU was currently based at the St Mary's site and offered placement for young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues, impacting on their ability to attend school. Recently some young people who were out of school were also attending as part of a multi-agency approach.
- Home Tuition – Provided tuition for children unable to attend school due to complex reasons, including illness and recovery from surgery. Tuition was usually at home.
- Hospital Tuition – Offered learning whilst young people were receiving in-patient treatment. The School Room was usually based on Rainbow Ward at North Middlesex Hospital, staffed by a teacher with visits and external support from West Lea staff.

NOTED that some of the referrals received from schools did not meet the criteria for admission to the ASU but advice was offered on other support pathways. Whilst most ASU placement were for short periods of time with a successful return to school, there were occasions when a return to the home school was not possible and ASU staff worked with the home school to support the student for a longer period of time, gain qualifications and identified post 16 progression pathways for year 11 students, also working closely with the Careers Service. Care studies undertaken of ASU students and detailed in the report.

In response to questions, the Director of Education informed the Forum that in the recent Attendance Review the DfE had commented favourably the work being undertaken and the innovative approach to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) in Enfield.

(b) Nurture Groups

This item was presented by Ms Julia Hide

RECEIVED and reported that Nurture groups were founded on evidence-based practices and offered a short-term, inclusive, focused intervention for children with attachment difficulties.

Following the review of Nurture Groups, currently there were 16 commissioned part time groups, and the aim was to increase the number of groups. It had been agreed that an additional outreach service be developed to support schools without a nurture group. Plans were underway to develop a lighter-touch, timed, structured, needs and outcomes-based intervention that schools could adopt with the support from the EY SEND Team. The model being planned provided intervention with dedicated support and training for this intervention. Schools staff would be invited to join relevant the training sessions.

NOTED that pupils supported were those identified as having attachment difficulties. The groups formed part of the school trauma informed practice. Attendance was for a maximum of four terms. The EY SEND Team supported and carried out annual audits to ensure the groups supported pupils and remained successful in delivering good nurture group practice. It was stated that the data from the latest audit was collected when schools and families had been affected by COVID. Despite the negative effect of the pandemic there was good progress relative to needs, although progress data had been stronger in previous years.

In response to questions on the number of children who had attended a Nurture Group and whether the cost was partially or fully met by the host school. The Forum was advised during COVID 140 children went through a Nurture Group and that the host schools received some funding from the High Needs block details of which were included in the reports to be presented later during the meeting.

A further question was raised on how schools could express an interest in hosting a Nurture Group. The Forum were informed that an event was being planned to which schools would be invited to attend and register their interest.

(c) Enfield Advisory Service for Autism (EASA)

This item was presented by Dr Rachel Walker

RECEIVED a report covering the period from February 2021 to January 2022. The Forum were advised of significant changes during period including the expansion of the service from September 2021. From February to August 2021, the EASA Team worked in partnership with the Autism Education Trust and developed a new EASA Vision and Strategy to align closely with the national Autism Strategy and incorporate evidence that informed Good Autism Practice. The website was refreshed during Autumn 2021 and included clear signposting of the offer with easy to use referral and request forms for parents and educational settings.

NOTED the Parent Support offer was published on the EASA website and flyers were sent to parents, Enfield schools and nurseries and professionals and partners. A 67% (170 last year to 285) rise from in parental referrals. With the expanded EASA team, the aim was to be a one-stop-shop for parents with a single point for accessing support. The service was available for schools to access by submitting a referral via the website and this year 74 (77%) schools accessing EASA's services which was consistent with the previous year. The training offer was available for all schools to access with non-Enfield schools being charged.

EASA used the Autism Education Trust Standards to audit educational settings and assist them to develop their practices and improve with EASA supporting the settings to write an action plan. This year, 13 schools were supported to work through the AET standards and create action plans. A system was being developed to monitor the impact of implementing the AET Standards and Action Plans and be reviewed with each setting every 6 months.

Forum members commented that it was good to see parents being so well supported by the EASA.

(d) Enfield Primary Behaviour Support Service (SWERRL)

This item was presented by Mr Ellerby-Jones

RECEIVED and reported the SWERRL Team was a multi-disciplinary team offering specialist social, emotional and mental health perspectives to support Enfield's primary schools. This included responding to direct referrals from schools, in order to offer preventative intervention to minimise permanent exclusion and its detrimental impact for pupils. The Team was a key contributor to the Enfield Trauma Informed Practice in Schools initiative, and the Council's strategic ambitions to become a trauma-informed Borough. Work was 'therapeutically-informed', but focused on practical, 'on the ground' approaches that better enable school's to provide the supportive relationships that are critically needed to offer ongoing 'healing' experiences for vulnerable pupils.

NOTED:

- A. During the academic year 2020-21, there were no primary permanent exclusion. This was below the national average. In total, the number of individual referrals was 69 with 64 in 2019-20 and 95 2018-19. The lower referral rate reflected the impact of COVID and partial school-lockdown during this period. It was noted approximately 50% of referrals were pupils from black or mixed ethnicity and boys continued to constitute the vast majority of requests. Also, due to the pandemic, requests for other type of school based support was lower.
- B. The Forum commented the report was excellent, very interesting and well summarized. The Forum asked was there any specific work being undertaken in investigating why there was a disproportionate number of black children and specifically boys needing behaviour support. Members were informed that the service was aware of this and through the services offered encouraging schools to be more aware by incorporating trauma informed practice and other strategies into their behaviour policies and management.
- C. In response to a question on how pupils presenting to a number of services were tracked, the Forum was informed that pupils with EHCPs were tracked and monitored for trends. The recent AP review was wide ranging and officers were looking at transition in more depth and intending to develop and improve the case management system. The Principal Educational Psychologist and Head of SEN were working on setting up in a partnership with schools to discuss case work and studies.

(e) Secondary Behaviour Support Service

This item was presented by Mr Mervyn Cato

RECEIVED and reported the Secondary Behaviour Support Service was made up of three teams: Outreach, Alternative Provision, REACH and NEXUS.

Enfield's secondary permanent exclusion rates were below the national average for the second year. A total of 177 referrals were made for Outreach support, which was the highest total received in several years. Alternative Provision saw a 100% retention rate. 93% of Year 11 learners achieved an English qualification and 86% achieved a Maths qualification in either GCSE or functional skills. Out of the 22 referrals made to REACH, 15 learners had returned to their home schools, four learners had been placed on a managed move and three had moved out of the borough. All secondary schools had accessed at least one service with 5,312 young people having participated in mentoring programmes or workshops in Enfield secondary schools run by both NEXUS and partners. The NEXUS project Family Liaison Officer had supported 60 families using solution focused therapy.

NOTED in response to questions why the exclusion rate was higher for black African and Caribbean students and the change from primary to secondary, it was stated that there had been some improvement due to the work of the NEXUS team. To continue to improve, it required schools to further engage by attending training, and then embedding and implementing the strategies into the school.

It was commented by Forum members that this was a team with some fantastic results being achieved through the variety of projects and programmes that had been presented.

(f) Orchardside School

This item was presented by Ms Celeste Fay

RECEIVED and reported Orchardside School was a secondary Pupil Referral Unit. At present, as well as permanent exclusion, there were three other referral routes, and these were:

- At Risk Panel: it started in April 2021. Students attending were dual registered for the first six weeks, at the review point it was decided whether the student could be reintegrated back to the home school.
- Turnaround: again a 6-week programme for year 7 and 8 students at risk of exclusion.
- Assessment Centre: a new initiative to provide an assess and transition support for complex in year admissions before they start at their named mainstream school.

NOTED in response to questions that:

- (i) The curriculum mirrored mainstream schools; the delivery was designed to provide learning experiences that were best to meet the needs of students.
- (ii) The School had started to collect destination data for when Yr11 left. It was found NEETS were low; however, the dropout rate through the year was high. The PRU was working on building closer links with colleges to support Yr11 and this was being supported by the DfE Specialist Taskforce. The work with the Taskforce had started in September 2022. A report was planned to be compiled in collaboration with the DfE at the end of the first year.

The Forum thanked everyone for their comprehensive reports and presentations.

5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) Special School and Pupil Referral Unit Place Funding Review

This item was presented by Rik Boxer, Independent Consultant

RECEIVED an update and final outcomes from the special school and pupil referral unit place funding review.

NOTED following the previous update presented to the Forum, modelling had been undertaken based on the profile of pupil needs at each school, assumptions about the adult/pupil ratio required for different levels of needs, analysis of current actual costs and moderated using financial benchmarking data for similar schools. The models had been discussed with the headteachers of the special schools and pupil referral unit. Following the discussions, the model was finalised and now being presented to the Forum.

The Forum was advised the arrangements for Salmon's Brook, new secondary social emotional and mental health school were yet to be confirmed using the new methodology, so details of place funding was not included in the information presented.

The Forum was asked to note and support the recommendations.

RESOLVED that the new arrangements for Special Schools and the Pupil Referral Unit come into effect from September 2022. A review of funding arrangements would be undertaken on a three-year cycle and presented at future Schools Forum meetings.

(b) DSG Budget 2021/22

This item was presented by Mrs McNamara.

RECEIVED a report with the latest DSG budget projections for 2021/22.

NOTED the latest projection was showing a small decrease in the overspend from £13.6m to £13.3m. The change was due to delays in some of the planned developments for expanding in borough specialist provision and early intervention.

RESOLVED to note the update and the projected DSG cumulative deficit position for 31

March 2022.

(c) DSG Budget 2022/23

This item was presented by Mrs McNamara

RECEIVED a report providing an update on the planned DSG budget for 2022/23.

NOTED

- (i) At the last meeting, the Forum agreed for a disapplication request to amend the protection arrangements for the Wren Academy to be submitted. The Forum was advised that the ESFA confirmed that the Secretary of State partially agreed the amendment with 50% reduction for 2022/23 and the remainder in the following year. The amendment for 2023/24 would require another disapplication request.
- (ii) The budget notifications to individual schools had been circulated.
- (iii) The DfE had confirmed that the Business Rates would be paid centrally by the ESFA and not by individual schools from April 2022.
- (iv) The current in-year budget deficit based on the information presented in this report was £0.82m. However, the final position may change once the updates from this meeting have been incorporated into the planned budget.

RESOLVED to note and support the latest proposals for allocating the DSG for 2022/23 within the Schools, Early Years and High Needs blocks.

(d) High Needs Place Funding

This item was presented by Sangeeta Brown

RECEIVED and reported the high needs places and provision to be commissioned for 2022/23. The Forum was advised the arrangements detailed in the report built upon the developments and the strategies outlined at the last meeting to manage the increasing demand.

NOTED

- (i) The outreach service provided by some of the special schools was subject of a review during 2022/23 with the current provision potentially being decommissioned at the end of the academic year.
- (ii) The services to be commissioned included:
 - Home and Hospital service, which included the ASU would continue to be commissioned from West Lea school. The total cost would be £309k for the year.
 - Advisory Service for Autism: The expanded service will continue to be commissioned from Russet House. The total cost would be £641k for the year.

The Forum was advised that the Service was currently reporting an underspend of £84k and it was proposed that £50k of this underspend be recouped because it was deemed not to be an appropriate use of the underspend.

 - Enfield Communication Advisory Support Service: This service was now fully operational and provided early intervention in schools and other education settings. The total cost would be £480k for the year.
 - Enfield Trauma Informed Practice in Schools was now being delivered and it would continue to be commissioned. The total cost would be £92k for the year
- (iii) Nurture Groups would continue to be funded on a part time basis with outreach support from the EY SEND Team.
- (iv) The new methodology for mainstream schools was still being tested so the change from the current arrangements had been delayed.

(v) There was an increase in the use of independent provision for placing pupils. This was mainly located in independent schools in Enfield and due to the continuing demand for support. The Borough had seen a significant increase in number of pupils eligible for free school meals and it was uncertain if the rising demand for support was linked to this increase because of the historic close correlation between free school meals and SEND.

RESOLVED to note the places and provision to be commissioned and support the recoupment of the underspend of £50k from the Advisory Service for Autism.

(e) IFRS 16 Leases

This item was presented by Sangeeta Brown

RECEIVED and reported currently maintained schools and academies were able to procure operating leases, whilst finance leases required the Secretary of State's approval . The implementation of IFRS 16 will end the distinction between operating and finance leases and in effect, all leases will be classified as finance leases so all leases would require approval. The DfE had identified some common areas of spend by schools and seeking exemptions for requiring approval. The final regulations with this clause were yet to be published. As soon as they were published, the Scheme for Finance would be updated and circulated.

RESOLVED to note the update. .

6. WORKPLAN

RECEIVED and resolved to update Workplan from this meeting.

7. FUTURE MEETINGS

(a) The date of the next meeting of the Forum will be 11 May 2022.

It was likely that this would be a face to face meeting, venue to be confirmed.

(b) NOTED dates of future meetings as detailed:

Date	Time	Venue
06/07/2022	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC
05/10/2022	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC
07/12/2022	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

No items discussed within the agenda were to be treated as confidential.