

# MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Held on Wednesday, 6 July 2022 at 17:30 on Microsoft Teams

## Governors:

Ms Adelaide Amofo  
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 S Way\**

Mr K Hintz  
Ms A Palmer  
Mr T Cuffaro was substituted by Mr K Kilkenney  
Mr A Johnson  
Ms J Fear  
*Cllr M Greer \**  
*Cllr A Abdullahi\**  
Vacancy

## Also present:

Mr P Nathan, Director of Education  
Mrs L McNamara, Finance Manager  
Mrs S Brown, Education Resources Manager

## Clerk's notes

Mr Smart left the meeting at 5.35pm and joined again at 5.50pm and then left at 6.27pm  
Ms Thompson joined the meeting at 5.51pm  
Ms Taylor left the meeting at 6.37pm

Mr Nathan chaired the meeting until the Schools Forum had elected a Chair elected for the municipal year 2022/23.

## 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

(a) Apologies for absence were received from Mr Donnelly, Ms Gumbrell, Ms Baptiste, Ms Husband Ms Ellingham, Ms Turnpenney, Mr Way, Cllr Abdullahi and Cllr Greer.

(b) Noted:

(i) Mr Stephen Way had joined the Forum as an academy representative;

(ii) Cllr Margaret Greer had joined the Forum as Chair of Oversight and Scrutiny;

(iii) Cllr Abdul Abdullahi, Cabinet Member, had joined the Forum as an observer,

(iv) Nominations were being sought for a school business manager to join the Forum as an observer

## 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*

- (v) Following an assessment of the January Pupil Census, it was confirmed that no changes were required to the composition of the Forum to reflect the current pupil numbers.

## 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. **ITEM FOR DECISION**

**RESOLVED** that;

1. Ms Thomas was elected Chair of Schools Forum for the municipal year (2022/23).

**NOTED** that Ms Thomas's microphone had broken so was unable to chair the meeting. Therefore, Mr Nathan sought nominations for the Vice Chair.

2. Ms Nicou was elected Vice Chair of Schools Forum for the municipal year (2022/23).

Ms Nicou chaired the meeting from this point.

## 4. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**RECEIVED** the minutes of the Schools Forum meeting held on 9 March 2022.

**NOTED** that:

- (a) The Minutes were a correct record of the meeting

- (b) Matters arising from the Minutes:

Meeting Attendance: Noted Mr Cato's first name should have been spelled Mervyn and not Mervin.

## 5. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION**

### **(a) Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Outturn Report 2021/22**

This item was presented by Ms McNamara

**RECEIVED** the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget Outturn Report 2021/22.

**REPORTED** that the report detailed the final position of the DSG for the year ending 31 March 2022. The cumulative deficit balance brought forward into 2021/22 was £8.05m before a negative adjustment by the ESFA of the Early Years funding.

The DSG budget was monitored on a monthly basis and variances were presented to the Forum. The final position was an overall deficit of £12.62m. An adjustment was anticipated during 2022/23 to reflect an increase in the numbers taking up of nursery entitlement.

**NOTED**

- (i) The change from the Quarter 3 monitoring report presented to the Forum was a decrease in the anticipated expenditure for pupils placed in out borough provision, but this was offset by an increase in spend in the latter part of the year to support pupils with Education Health Care Plans in mainstream schools and Post 16. The final position was lower than projected as at Quarter 3.
- (ii) In response to a **question**, it was stated that £8.05m was the deficit amount reported as at year-end. This did not include the adjustment post year end by the ESFA to recoup funding from the Early Years block for the lower take up of the nursery provision.

The Forum noted the accumulative deficit position as at 31 March 2022.

**(b) School Balances 2021/22**

This item was presented by Mrs Brown

**RECEIVED** a report detailing the balances held by maintained schools at 2021/22 year-end.

**REPORTED** the total balances held by schools as at 31 March 2022 was **-£387k** (including community facilities). The balances held by secondary increased by £1.36m, primary decreased by £1.366m and special schools by £0.151m.

The report also detailed net movement of balances between 2020/21 and 2021/22 for the three sectors and other data analysis.

**NOTED**

(i) The balances held by:

- Primary schools had been decreasing since 2018/19 when the first phase of the national funding changes were introduced and also at the same time there was a decline in primary pupil numbers. The main concern was the percentage range of balances held by schools in deficits and those reporting a surplus widening.
- Secondary schools indicated an improved position with the percentage range of balances held by schools in deficits and those reporting a surplus narrowing.
- Special schools balances in total had decreased from the amount reported in 2020/21, but the percentage range of balances held by schools had widened

(ii) In total five schools reported balances above the thresholds of £100k and 5%. The request for retaining the surplus balances above the thresholds were assessed and a recommendation to recycle balances was presented to the Education Resources Group and this was supported by the Education Resources Group.

**RESOLVED** to note and accept the Authority's recommendation not to recycle surplus balances above the thresholds from schools.

(iii) The number of schools reporting a deficit had reduced from thirteen to eleven. The total amount of deficit had reduced from £7.72m to £5.83m, a net reduction of £1.89m with six schools continuing to report an in-year deficit.

(iv) The three year budget plans for 2022/23 returned by schools forecasted twelve schools reporting a deficit by the year-end. The Forum was informed of the forecasts for schools in deficits as detailed in their three year budget plans:

- four schools projected to be in a balanced position within three years,
- two schools projected their deficit decreasing, but would not achieve a balanced position within three years
- five schools projected their deficit increasing.

It was stated the Authority would continue to work with all schools in deficit and support them to move to an in-year balanced position.

(v) There were a number of other schools reporting a deficit either in year two or three of their three year budget plan.

In response to a question, it was advised that information on how many schools were reporting a deficit in years two or three was not available for this meeting but could be provided to Forum members. The position reported could be partly due to the assumptions used in relation to cost pressures to inform income and expenditure. It was requested that schools should be provided with guidance on the assumptions to use.

(vi) An ESFA's School Management Resource Advisor (SMRA) was engaged to carry out financial reviews at seven schools in deficit and also asked to produce a local Integrated

Curriculum Financial Planning (ICFP) tool for all schools to use. The aim was for the tool to support schools with financial planning and present a financial report from the tool with the Schools Financial Value Statement to their Governing Body and then submit to the Authority. Once developed, Schools were invited to attend training on how to use it.

(vii) The draft 2022/23 training programme presented to the Forum was devised following feedback from the 2021/22 training sessions, a survey of all schools and audit findings.

**RESOLVED** to note the update and confirm the support of the Schools Forum maintained schools representatives for the report generated by the ICFP tool to be submitted by schools with their SFVS Checklist and Related Party Transaction returns .

(viii) Analysis of mainstream pupil numbers showed that pupil numbers were declining. The Forum was informed the decline experienced by primary would begin to impact secondary schools partly from September 2022 and more significantly from September 2023. This change was reflected in a report recently published on the National Census 2021.

It was requested that information on the in-year position on pupil numbers shared with the Place Planning and Admissions Board be shared with all schools. It was stated that all schools should have this information from the Cluster meetings held prior to the Place Planning and Admissions Board but could be recirculated.

**RESOLVED** to:

- circulate the information presented to the Place Planning and Admissions Board on the in-year position on pupil numbers;

**ACTION: MR BEST**

- present the report on the National Census at the next meeting of the Forum

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

**(c) DfE Consultation: Implementing the Direct National Funding Formula**

This item was presented by Mrs Brown.

**RECEIVED** a paper with a brief overview and initial thoughts of proposals detailed in a DfE consultation on Implementing the Direct National Funding Formula for 2024/25.

**NOTED:**

(i) **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

A. Block Transfers

**REPORTED** the document detailed proposals for continuing with the 0.5% transfer from the Schools to the High Needs block. The proposals included potential requirements and the level of local flexibility to enable a block transfer.

The Forum was informed currently 0.5% was transferred from Schools to High Needs block to support schools with high number of pupils with EHCPs. For 2023/24, the Education Resources Group was asked, and they confirmed their support to continue to transfer 0.5% and for same methodology be used to allocate money transferred.

**RESOLVED** to include, in the 2023/24 local funding consultation document, the continuation of the 0.5% transfer from the Schools to the High Needs block.

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

B. Notional SEND

**REPORTED** the document proposed using some of the proxy factors that informed the national funding formula to calculate a notional amount to support pupils with SEND within an individual school's delegated budget.

The Forum was informed the notional SEND amount did not provide additional money but was a rough indicator of the proportion of the delegated budget that supported pupils with SEND. Locally, the emphasis has and continued to be for schools to determine how the delegated budget was allocated to support educational needs of the pupils at their school.

(ii) Growth and Falling Roll Funding

**REPORTED** the document outlined expectations for schools, academies and other partners to support LAs to fulfil their statutory duties to deliver sufficient school places in their local area. The document detailed the following proposals:

Growth and Falling Roll Fund:

- Two approaches for allocating growth and falling roll funds with preference being highlighted for the approach which provided local flexibility to determine and allocate funding.
- Removing the criteria that falling rolls funding could only be provided to schools with a “Good” or “Outstanding” Ofsted judgment.

The Forum was informed:

- Enabling local flexibilities was a positive way forward but to fully understand the proposals further information on the regulatory criteria and restrictions was required;
- Removing “Good” or “Outstanding” Ofsted judgement from the falling roll criteria was a positive move forward.
- Re-baselining 2023/24 spend on growth could disadvantage some areas that may experience a change. Also, how the allocation will interact between growth and falling rolls and whether this would provide sufficient funding.

Popular Growth:

ESFA currently funded popular academies with significant forecast growth to reflect their increased costs and now proposing to extend access of this fund to maintained schools.

The Forum raised concerns over the concept of popular growth when other schools in the area were facing falling rolls. It was also questioned how this fitted in with proposals for growth and falling roll fund and expectation that academies and schools would work with the LA to ensure sufficiency duties were being managed and met.

(iii) Premises Funding

**REPORTED** there were some central premises costs that were funded on historical costs. It was being proposed that these would be brought into the national funding framework and include:

Split Sites:

It was proposed to introduce a national formula based on distance and eligibility. The issues were that:

- Threshold for distance was set at 500 metres (0.3 miles) by road;
- proposed maximum funding available would be around £75,000, with £25,000 allocated through eligibility and an additional £50,000 on the distance threshold.

**REPORTED** the current split site funding was £55k for primary and £164k for secondary.

The Forum raised their concerns about distance and how funding would be allocated. All schools on split site incurred additional infrastructure costs irrespective of distance such as provision of IT, administration and site management. Therefore, it was inappropriate to apply a distance measure that could be seen as punitive for schools that were impacted

by the proposed measure.

The proposals sought LAs to engage with all schools and academies on split sites between now and October 2022 to collect data on split sites.

Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG):

The proposals consider merging the MFG with the funding floor and having a single protection measure. The protection arrangements would now be extended to include split sites and amalgamated schools.

Future Funding Arrangements

If implemented as proposed will result ESFA managing and calculating delegated funding and LAs passporting to maintained schools with no further local flexibility.

(iv) De-delegation

**REPORTED** the proposal was to continue to enable LAs to de-delegate funding to provide central services to maintained schools.

**RESOLVED** to share draft response with Forum members.

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

**6. DE-DELEGATION OF CENTRAL SERVICES**

This item was presented by Mrs Brown.

**RECEIVED** a report detailing the services and funding de-delegated for 2022/23 and services available for de-delegation for 2023/24.

**NOTED** secondary headteachers had started to review and assess services offered by other providers. This may result in a change in services agreed for de-delegation in the Autumn term.

**RESOLVED** to note the update.

**7. ENFIELD'S OUTREACH PROVISION PROPOSAL**

This item was presented by Mrs Brown.

**RECEIVED** a report outlining outreach provision and associated funding that special schools will be asked to deliver during the academic year 2022-23.

**REPORTED** the interim outreach offer in place would enable a thorough review to be carried out of the longer term outreach provision required to address the priorities in the SEND strategy and meet the needs of pupils with SEND in mainstream settings.

**RESOLVED** to note and agree for the proposal for interim outreach provision whilst the longer offer was being reviewed and then developed.

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**REPORTED** the DfE published two early years consultation documents on 4 July, the first on staff : child ratios when caring for 2-year-olds in group-based settings and the second on amendments to how the Early Years National Funding Formula is calculated. The deadline for responses was 16 September 2022.

**NOTED** the concerns raised by Forum members regarding the proposals to change the staff : child ratios.

**RESOLVED** to arrange a meeting with Christiana Kromidias, Ms Thompson and Ms Palmer .

**ACTION: MRS BROWN**

**9. WORKPLAN**

**RECEIVED and resolved** to update Workplan from this meeting.

## 10. **FUTURE MEETINGS**

(a) The date of the next meeting of the Forum will be 5 October 2022 to be held virtually on MS Teams.

(b) NOTED dates of future meetings as detailed:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
07/12/2022	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC
18/01/2023	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC
08/03/2023	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC
05/07/2023	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC
04/10/2023	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC
06/12/2023	5:30 - 7:30 PM	TBC

## 11. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

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