

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Held on Wednesday, 5 October 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
Mr S Way
*Vacancy**

Schools' Members

Primary
Primary
Special
Secondary

Secondary
Secondary
Primary
Pupil Referral Unit
Primary
Primary
Special

Academy
Academy
Academy
Academy
Academy
Academy
Academy

Non-School Members

Mr K Hintz
Ms A Palmer
Mr T Cuffaro
Mr A Johnson
Ms J Fear
*Cllr M Greer **
Cllr A Abdullahi
Ms L Culora

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
Ms S Modasia
Ms K Prior

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

- (a) Apologies for absence were received from Ms Baptiste, Mr Smart, Ms Ellingham, Ms Nicou, and Cllr Greer.
- (b) Noted:
 - (i) The absence of Ms Davis
 - (ii) Ms Culora and Ms Bignell had joined the Forum and would jointly share the school business manager position;
 - (iii) Ms Turnpenney had retired. Nominations were being sought to fill the consequent

vacancy for an academy representative. In addition, a request for nominations will be raised at the next primary headteachers meeting.

Ms Culora was welcomed to the Schools Forum.

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 9 March 2022.

NOTED that:

- (a) The Minutes were a correct record of the meeting
- (b) Matters arising from the Minutes: There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. ITEMS FOR PRESENTATION

(a) General 2021 Census – Summary of key findings

This item was presented by Ms Prior

RECEIVED a presentation on the initial release of the 2021 General Population Census.

REPORTED the response rate was 95%, which was good return for a census. The information being presented was the borough level position and information relating to smaller geographical areas and population characteristic data would be published later this year.

NOTED

The analysis from the Census had highlighted that overall population numbers had declined at a greater level than expected. The current population was estimated to be 330k, this was a 5.6% growth since the 2011 General Census. The change equated to an increase of approximately 17, 500 in ten years, which was less than the London average. The decline may have been due to restrictions in movement during the pandemic and also leaving the EU. It was envisaged the population would increase over the next year or two. Enfield's population was 6th highest compared to other London authorities and 29th highest nationally.

Of Enfield total population, the Census data showed:

- 52.3% of residents were female,
- Higher than average proportion of residents were under 20
- Lower than average proportion of young adults.
- Over 65s were comparable to the London average but lower than the national average.
- There was an increase in all other age groups.
- There was a considerable reduction in under 5s when compared to 2011. It was noted Enfield's general fertility rate had fallen from 81.7 per 1,000 to 58 per 1,000. In addition, total fertility rate that measures the average number of live children that a group of women would bear if they experienced age specific fertility rates of the calendar year in question throughout their childbearing lifespan had dropped from 2.4 in 2011 to 1.65 in 2021.

In response to a question on when a detailed report providing characteristic data would be published, it was stated that that Office of National Statistics had indicated that this information would be available in December.

Agreed a copy of the presentation would be shared with the Forum members.

ACTION: MRS BROWN

Ms Prior was thanked for attending the Forum and presenting the initial data from the Census.

5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION

(a) Outreach Offer for Mainstream Schools – Update

This item was presented by Ms Modasia.

RECEIVED a report detailing the current services on offer for supporting children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools, together with a summary of a gap analysis in the offer.

REPORTED that special schools were now delivering the interim outreach offer previously presented to the Forum. The assessment of the current outreach services on offer now included a rigorous monitoring process with named officers being responsible for managing the outreach services being delivered by special schools.

The current outreach services on offer were mapped and then assessed against the SEND strategy, feedback obtained from SENCOs at coffee mornings to identify gaps in provision. One area identified as requiring further development was support for neuro-diversity needs as well as some others as outlined in the report.

The aim was to use the current offer and gap analysis to develop a longer term outreach offer being made available to mainstream schools from September 2023.

NOTED the work being done in identifying outreach services required to support pupils in mainstream schools.

The Forum supported the suggestion for a working group that included Schools Forum representatives to assess and comment on the development of the longer term outreach offer.

RESOLVED Ms Thomas, Ms Thompson, Ms Husband and Ms Taylor would join the working group.

ACTION: MS MODASIA and MRS BROWN

(b) Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23

This item was presented by Ms McNamara

RECEIVED a monitoring report detailing the year-end forecast for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget Outturn Report 2022/23.

REPORTED the deficit brought forward was £12.6m. The budget forecast as at July 2022 projected the deficit increasing to £13.7m. An increase of £1.1m in the deficit.

NOTED areas contributing towards the increase in the deficit included opening an unplanned bulge class, implementing the new place funding rates for special schools and an increase in funding provided for the home and hospital service to reflect the expanded service.

Outborough/independent placement were currently forecasting an underspend.

The Forum noted the current forecast and accumulative deficit position as at July 2022.

(c) School Funding Consultation Document

This item was presented by Ms Brown

RECEIVED an extract with proposals for the local funding consultation document.

REPORTED at the last meeting, the Forum had confirmed their support to consult on transferring 0.5% from the Schools to High Needs block to support schools with high number of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans.

NOTED the proposal sought the transfer to be allocated in the same way as previous years.

RESOLVED to support the publication of the consultation document.

ACTION: MRS BROWN

(d) Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24 – Update

This item was presented by Mrs McNamara

RECEIVED a report detailed the indicative Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2023/24 based on an initial funding announcement made in July 2022 that used October 2021 Pupil Census data. The final allocation using October 2022 Pupil Census data would become available mid-December. The use of the latest dataset will result in some changes in the final allocations.

REPORTED the indicative allocation indicated an increase for the Schools and high Needs block of just under £11m (2.8%) with the Schools block increasing by £6.7m (2.29%), High Needs block by £4.296m (6.3%) and Central Services block seeing a decrease of **-£0.042m**. Information for the early years block had not been announced.

NOTED the indicative Schools block allocation and the following information was used to develop an illustrative model to inform individual school allocations:

- Use of the national funding formula unit rates,
- Allowed for any adjustments for the PFI shortfall,
- Academy growth.
- Minimum funding guarantee (MFG) set at 0%,
- Assumed Schools Forum agreement for a disapplication request to remove MFG protection for Wren Academy be submitted,
- Inclusion of the 0.5% transfer to the High Needs block for schools with high number of pupils with EHCPs.

The resulting model indicated by applying these parameter an increase in per pupil funding of between 0 – 2.9% for individual schools and an overall funding gap of £0.5m. It was noted if the funding gap remained upon receipt of the Budget Settlement, it would have to be addressed.

In response to questions, it was stated:

- Options to address the £0.5m funding gap included following a similar methodology as this year and adjust the per pupil unit rate, reduce the 0.5% transfer or a mixture of both. The final decision on how the gap would be managed could be deferred to the next meeting when the outcome of the consultation on 0.5% transfer was known.
- Last year, the Forum agreed a disapplication request be submitted to remove the MFG protection for Wren Academy. The ESFA had agreed to only half the protection being removed for this year (2022/23). To remove the balance, the Forum's agreement was being sought to submit another disapplication request to the ESFA.

RESOLVED to:

- Discuss how the funding gap would be bridged to the next meeting
- Submitting a disapplication request to remove Wren Academy's MFG protection.

ACTION: MRS MCNAMARA

(e) 2021/22 Annual School Audit Report

This item was presented by Mrs Brown.

RECEIVED a paper outlining common findings from audits carried out during 2021/22.

REPORTED the Council's procedures required an annual report be presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee (FGPC) that outlines key findings from school audits carried out during the previous year. The FGPC considered the paper being presented to the

Schools Forum and requested that it be circulated to all schools for headteachers and Chair of Governors to consider the findings in relation to the processes in their schools.

As in previous years and in light of the FGPC request, the Forum was being asked to consider and provide comment.

NOTED: the main findings were:

- an increase in negative opinion when compared to the previous year, which might have been due to carrying out desktop audits during the pandemic;
- not following required procurement processes in relation to related party transactions and contracts.
- time submission of pre-employment checks.

It was commented the findings raised concerns in relation to risks. In response to a subsequent question on how findings were followed up and addressed, it was stated that the degree of risk for each finding varied from school to school. However, there was a clear process in place to ensure findings were addressed. This included further follow ups by the audit service and appropriate training being made available for schools. If findings were still not addressed, then they were escalated involving the Director of Education.

It was observed when academies were audited, it was rigorous process, which outlined all the management points from serious to others not so. So, the circulation of this annual audit report should inform schools and governing bodies into the habit of knowing why they're being audited and that processes have to be common across all schools and what has to be done.

6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

REPORTED Ms McNamara would be retiring and leaving the Council in mid-December.

The Forum thanked Ms McNamara for all her hard work to support the Forum. It was noted Ms McNamara's departure would leave a gap, which will be difficult to fill.

7. **WORKPLAN**

RECEIVED and resolved to update Workplan from this meeting.

8. **FUTURE MEETINGS**

(a) The date of next meeting agreed to be held on 7 December 2022 virtually on MS Teams.

(b) NOTED dates of future meetings as detailed:

Date	Time	Venue
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

9. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

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