

Leeds Schools Forum

**Microsoft Teams Meeting
Thursday 17 November 2022 at 16:30**

Membership (<i>Apologies in Italics</i>)	
GOVERNORS	HEADTEACHERS
Primary (6 seats)	Primary (6 seats)
<i>David Kagai</i> <i>St Nicholas</i>	John Hutchinson St Theresa's
<i>John Garvani</i> <i>Broadgate</i>	Peter Harris Farsley Farfield
Jatinder Ubhi Swarcliffe	Julie Harkness Carr Manor Community School
<i>Victoria McWalker</i> <i>St Margaret's Horsforth</i>	<i>Emma Wraight</i> <i>Fieldhead Carr</i>
<i>Stratis Koutsoukos</i> <i>St Nicholas</i>	Rebecca White Sharp Lane
	One vacancy
Secondary (1 seat)	Secondary (1 seat)
David Webster Pudsey Grammar	<i>Delia Martin</i> <i>Benton Park</i>
Special (1 seat)	Special (1 seat)
Russell Trigg East SILC, John Jamieson	Diane Reynard East SILC
Non School	Academies – Mainstream (11 seats)
Angela Hynes PVI Providers	<i>David Gurney</i> <i>Cockburn School</i>
<i>Helen Gratton</i> <i>PVI Providers</i>	<i>Neil Miley</i> <i>Dixons Academy</i>
<i>Nick Tones</i> <i>Schools JCC</i>	John Thorne St Mary's Academy Menston
Christopher Thornton 16-19 Providers	Joe Barton Woodkirk Academy
<i>Dan Cohen</i> <i>Jewish Faith Schools</i>	<i>Rob Dixon</i> <i>Cockburn School</i>
Peter McQuillen-Strong Catholic Diocese	Gavin Hosford Green Meadow
	<i>Rachel Colbourn</i> <i>Bramhope Primary</i>
	Sarah Talbot East Ardsley
	Maria Williams Brigshaw High
	<i>Kate Burton</i> <i>Alder Tree Primary</i>
	Simon Princep Abbey Grange CofE
Officers	
Tim Pouncey, Chief Officer Strategy & Resources	Academy – Special School (1 seat)
Louise Hornsey, Head of Service, Finance	Mary Ruggles Springwell Leeds North
<i>Shaheen Myers, Deputy Director Learning</i>	
Lucie McAulay, Head of Service, Finance	Academy – Alternative Provision (1 seat)
Val Waite, Head of Learning Inclusion	
Owen Callum	
Elizabeth Jackson, Finance	
<i>Rebecca McCormack, Vulnerable Learners Lead</i>	
Richard des Forges, Legal Services	

Item	Title	Actions
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1.0	Welcome and Apologies	
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted and introductions made.	
2.0	Schools Forum Membership	
2.1	Helen Gration, and Andrew Neal have resigned, and the resultant vacancies will be advertised. There continues to be two vacancies: one Primary Head and one alternative academy.	
3.0	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
	The minutes were agreed.	
4.0	Matters Arising	
4.1	<i>Page Three Item 4.2.3 – supplementary funding:</i> A report will be taken to the January meeting. Officers and special school Heads will be meeting in December to discuss the supplementary grant. A meeting has also taken place with Wellspring colleagues and a commitment was made to meet on a regular basis.	TP
4.2	<i>Page Six, Item 7.3.6 – growth fund:</i> There are 1.5k spare reception places across the city. At the Executive Board next week permission will be sought to publish a statutory notice to close a primary school where there are a significant number of surplus places. In the area concerned 26% of all primary places are vacant which has implications for all the schools in the area. A deputation was delivered at full Council around the closure of the school. Part of the solution is to encourage other schools in the area to look at their pans. The authority will also be looking at this across all the various primary planning areas. It is a difficult issue to address eg birth rates are cyclical and migration rates in and out of the city are hard to predict. Action: provide information re the pinch point areas across the city.	TP
4.3	<i>Page Seven, Item 9.1 – Schools in Financial Difficulty Panel:</i> Awaiting final sign off for the clawback of surplus funds. Details will be circulated when they are available.	
5.0	School Funding Proposals 2023/24	
5.1	The report provides a background on the national funding formula and describes the flexibility available to the local authority to set the local funding formula.	
5.2	Schools were consulted on three proposals: a) <i>A 0.5% transfer between from the schools block to the high needs block in 2023/24 estimated to be £3.26m.</i> 79% of schools who responded were in favour of the 0.5% transfer. b) <i>Two options for funding formula for 2023/24, taking into account the proposed transfer out of the schools block of approx. £3.26m.</i> i. <i>Option 1: A cap on gains of 2.18%. All other factors are in line with the national funding formula, including the minimum funding guarantee of 0.5%.</i> ii. <i>Option 2: A reduced minimum funding guarantee of 0% and an increased cap on gains of 2.22%. All other factors are in line with the national funding formula.</i>	

	<p>65% voted for option two.</p> <p>c) <i>A contribution in 2023/24 by maintained schools to be applied as a per pupil amount of £2.50 estimated to be a total of £150k.</i></p> <p>90% were in favour.</p>	
5.3	Of the 267 schools consulted only 63 responses were received.	
5.4	A further report will be brought to the January meeting to confirm the final schools funding allocations for 23-24. The ESFA has not confirmed the date when the national funding formula will be implemented.	
5.5	The Chancellor's Autumn Statement contains a couple of references to schools:	
5.5.1	Real term increases in per pupil funding will be made available and the core schools' budget nationally will receive an additional £2.3bn in 2023-24 and a further £2.3bn in 2024/25. Adjustments will be made for the removal of the employer costs for the health and social care levy. By 2024-25 schools will receive £1k more per pupil than in 2021/22. This restores per pupil funding levels to the 2010 levels.	
5.6	<u>Transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block</u>	
5.6.1	The proposal is to transfer 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, estimated to be approximately £3.26m.	
5.6.2	The background information was contained within the consultation documents. It highlighted pressures on the High Needs Block due to demographic growth and complexity of need. The latest projection is an underspend of £1.3m this year which represents 1.8% of the total High Needs Block budget. It is important to note that if that transfer had not been done last year there would have been a projected overspend of £1.82m. The forecast going forward is expected to be £700k more than funding available in 2023/24 and the deficit will increase to £5.4m in 2025. The provisional funding has increased to £7.9m compared to 2023/23. There remains a cap on gains for Leeds. Without the cap Leeds would have received an additional £1.86m.	
5.6.3	The provisional increase in the Schools Block allocation for 2023/24 is £12.97m, an increase of 2%.	
5.6.4	Of the 63 responses on this proposal 79% were in favour. Some responses are submitted by federations and academy trusts on behalf of several schools. The votes are counted individually by schools.	
5.6.5	Comments received expressed concern around the ongoing impact of the cap on funding and that the transfer is necessary because of this. Some did not support the transfer as it was felt that the pressure on mainstreams schools was too great.	
5.6.6	At this stage it is not known whether the underspend is a true reflection due to the backlogs in the SENSAP service. The next DSG monitoring report will be brought back to the February 2023 meeting.	
5.6.7	There is a steady rise year on year of requests for Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP). Within the plans 50% get changed into specialist places. In terms of FFI requests this year	

	<p>£26m was transferred to mainstream schools. SILC funding increased from £13.5m last year to £14.6m this year. Currently Leeds has over 5.1k EHCPs and there are many more yet to be processed. In 2027 there are likely to be in the region of 7k EHCPs in the local authority. The money coming from the Schools Block is passported back to schools but in a targeted way for those children with the greatest need. This year another 160 places have been created in specialist provision and a new free school is coming online. In the interim the new school will provide 60 places which will increase to 200 over time.</p>	
5.6.8	<p><i>Green Paper:</i> In conversations with the DfE the potential issue coming out is looking at specific needs and identifying a criterion of funding that sits along those needs. This will be a national formula and could possibly have a massive impact on high need spend. The DfE will produce an implementation plan by the end of 2022.</p>	
5.6.9	<p>If the transfer did not take place several actions would need to take place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the FFI unit cost with the possibility of a reducing the cost for those children without EHCPs • Look at the £6k blocks that currently go into schools. Leeds puts additional funding in when 50% of the £6k has been spent; many local authorities choose to wait until all the allocation has been spent. 	
5.6.10	<p>In 2021-22 the increase to the £6 block for children with additional need was £1.793m; for 2022-23 the projection is £3.634m.</p>	
5.6.11	<p>Running a modest high needs deficit will result in the authority having to write a deficit action plan detailing what is being done to rectify the situation. The plan must be submitted to the DfE for scrutiny. In some cases, the DfE and ESFA have moved into local authorities to help reduce the deficit. Of the 137 local authorities across the country 87 are in deficit. The DfE is interested in the model used in Leeds to manage and reduce the need for EHCPs. It is important to note that this is not about denying EHCPs but about being proactive by putting in support before an EHCP is needed.</p>	
5.6.12	<p>Schools Forum voted 83% in favour of the transfer.</p>	
5.7	<p><u>Schools Funding Formula</u></p>	
5.7.1	<p>If the transfer to the High Needs Block is fully implemented it is not possible to move to the national funding formula as there would not be enough funds remaining.</p>	
5.7.2	<p>The funding allocation will be confirmed by the ESFA in December. The funding increase built into the budget is based on the indicative allocation given over the summer.</p>	
5.7.3	<p>Of the 63 responses received, 35% voted for option one and 65% for option two. Option one is significantly better for 28 schools at an average of £5k. One school would receive £45k. Option two benefits 167 schools with an average of £850 and the largest at £3.6k.</p>	
5.7.4	<p>Schools affected by the cap are likely to have gained more through the weighting for the deprivation factor in the formula.</p>	
5.7.5	<p>It is the authority's responsibility for proposing the funding formula and consulting with Schools Forum. Ultimately though it is a local authority decision.</p>	

5.7.6	The growth funding allocation has not been confirmed yet. An update on the impact of that will be brought to the January meeting. Treatment of the PFI funding formula remains the same as previous years.											
5.7.7	Although Schools Forum are not required to formally vote it is noted that 57.1% are in favour of option two.											
5.7.8	Concerns were raised that of 297 schools only 63 responded. Schools are encouraged to engage with the consultation and briefing sessions are arranged, to which all Headteachers are invited. It was also mentioned at the recent Headteachers forum. It was suggested that some Heads feel they will leave the decision to those who know more about it.											
5.8	<u>Contribution towards severance costs for maintained schools</u>											
5.8.1	This proposal affects mainstream schools only and assists with severance costs. Thirty-four responses were received and 90% voted in favour.											
5.8.2	The total budget is £328k which includes a £150k contribution from schools. Spend throughout the years are as follows: <table border="0"> <tr> <td>2021-22</td> <td>£182k</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020-21</td> <td>£231k</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019-20</td> <td>£293k</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018-19</td> <td>£345k</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017-18</td> <td>£951k</td> </tr> </table>	2021-22	£182k	2020-21	£231k	2019-20	£293k	2018-19	£345k	2017-18	£951k	
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5.8.3	Notwithstanding the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, it is anticipated there will be a grater call on this budget going forward. If there are not enough funds to cover spend it will be a pressure against the local authority's General Fund budget. If this was the case it is likely that a review of the contribution would take place for the following year.											
5.8.4	It is understood that schools who chose an independent HR provider know that this funding is available. There is a set of criteria that schools and HR providers must comply with to qualify for this funding.											
5.8.5	The Forum voted unanimously in favour of this proposal.											
6.0	Any Other Business											
6.1	<u>Equality Monitoring</u> An Elected Member has raised an issue around equality monitoring of the Forum. Forum members were asked if they would complete an equality monitoring form. Completion of the form is discretionary. Action: circulate equality form for completion.	TP/All										
10.0	Meeting Dates for 22-23 and Forward Plan											
	The next meeting will take place via MS Teams on Tuesday 17 January 2023 at 1630-1830											