

Leeds Schools Forum Meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting
 Thursday 22nd February 2024 at 16:30

Membership (Apologies in Italics)	
GOVERNORS	HEADTEACHERS
Primary (6 seats)	Primary (6 seats)
David Kagai St Nicholas	Peter Harris (Chair) Farsley Farfield
John Garvani Broadgate	Julie Harkness Carr Manor Community School
Victoria McWalker St Margaret’s Horsforth	Emma Wraighte Fieldhead Carr
Stratis Koutsoukos St Nicholas	Rebecca White Sharp Lane
Bradley Taylor Kirkstall Valley	<i>Kate Cameron</i> Calverley C/E
Vacant	<i>Jane Astrid Devane</i> Shire Oak C/E
Secondary (1 seat)	Secondary (1 seat)
David Webster Pudsey Grammar	<i>Delia Martin</i> <i>Substitute Helen Williams</i> <i>Benton Park</i>
Special (1 seat)	Special (1 seat)
<i>Russell Trigg</i> <i>East SILC, John Jamieson</i>	Louise Quinn East SILC
Non School	Academies – Mainstream (11 seats)
<i>Christina Smith</i> <i>PVI Providers</i>	David Gurney Cockburn School
Vacancy	Katherine Somers Dixons Academy
Nick Tones Schools JCC	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>	Rob Dixon Cockburn School
Peter McQuillen-Strong Catholic Diocese	Rachel Colbourn Bramhope Primary
	Sarah Talbot East Ardsley
	Kate Burton Alder Tree Primary
	Simon Princep Abbey Grange CofE
	Ailsa Hoyland Bruntcliffe Academy
	Vacant
Officers	
Tim Pouncey, Chief Officer Strategy & Resources	Academy – Special School (1 seat)
Louise Hornsey, Head of Service, Finance	Vacant
Chris Sutton, Admissions and Family Information Lead	
Lucie McAulay, Head of Service, Finance	Academy – Alternative Provision (1 seat)
Shirley Maidens, Finance	Vacancy
Dan Barton Deputy Director, Learning	Academy – Special Provision (1 seat)
	Mary Ruggles

	Title	Actions
1	Welcome and Apologies	
	Chair welcomed all and acknowledged apologies	
2	Schools Forum Membership	

2.1	<p>Vacancies remain for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x Primary Governor 1 x Alternative Academy vacancy 1 x SILC Governor 1 x Non-school representatives 	
3	Minutes of Previous meeting	
3.1	Agreed as accurate.	
4	Matters Arising	
4.1	<p>ACTION LM agreed to speak to LCC HR team to seek further guidance on the impact of shared parental leave. LM spoke to HR who informed LM of the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared parental leave is a statutory entitlement and any prevention of a school employee returning to work before a school closure period would be classed as discrimination. • Trade Unions are proactively supporting the statutory entitlement and employers should be careful about calling it a loophole. • HR are due to agree a new maternity and family leave policy and Trade Unions are keen for the policy to highlight the option for staff to return to work before school closure, however LCC are staying neutral about when leave is taken, so are not agreeing at this point. • HR have said that this is not a common occurrence at this moment and are keen for schools to have enough information through training and the new policy. • HR are also happy to discuss with Head teachers if they have any queries. 	
4.2	<p>Question was asked about whether there would be any implications for the maternity budget. LM advised that within the current criteria that was agreed within the schools Forum, this change does not fall into this; however, we may need to consider revisions to the future criteria and agree this with the Schools Forum.</p>	
4.3	<p>Question was asked about the £19K for support staff training and wanted to know what this is used for. Dave Clark advised that this is used for a contract with Trinity University to provide support staff training and that approximately 14 staff have been through this training.</p> <p>ACTION DC will provide more information on this to PH including a breakdown. DB provided a verbal update – in past years there has been a contract with Trinity, to provide training for support staff. This contract ended and LCC created a different model to provide training, however the staff member delivering the training left their post, so we now have a different offer which is available to all schools and now offered to all TA's and will be evaluated at the end of the year to determine if it is to continue, taking into consideration any feedback. Comment was made that the offer is not known to some schools, DB has agreed to take this back.</p> <p>ACTION DB will ask the Traded Team to look into the offer and ensure that is offered to all and is circulated.</p>	DB
5	Schools in Financial Difficulty: Terms of reference	
5.1	LM referenced the paper, that has been circulated with the agenda, which is to provide further clarity of the roles and remits of the panel in making recommendations on the clawback of excess balances, and school bids against the contingency fund.	
5.2	LM asked for other participants to join the panel, only members representing maintained schools can join the panel, if any other maintained members of the Schools Forum would like to be involved then to contact LM for more information.	

<p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p> <p>5.6</p>	<p>ACTION to contact LM at Lucie.mcaulay@leeds.gov.uk for further information and to be involved in the panel.</p> <p>ACTION SIFD and Surplus Balances are the same panel, if anyone has any suggestions for a new name for the panel, please let LM know.</p> <p>LM was thanked for the report as it provides clarity around the panel.</p> <p>Question was asked around how other LA's compare to Leeds, LM advised that she is not aware of any other LAs that have similar TOR's.</p> <p>A forum member noted - having more representatives from academies results in a smaller pool of people you can choose from.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>DSG Monitoring Report</p>	
<p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p> <p>6.6</p> <p>6.7</p> <p>6.8</p>	<p>LM presented the DSG Monitoring report and it details the projected DSG budget position at the end of January 2024.</p> <p>Projecting an in year overspend of £3.08M equates to 0.59% of total DSG funding, this takes into account the: brought forward surplus of just over £7M. This will result in a year end projected surplus of £3.98M</p> <p>Highlights are:</p> <p>Schools block</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected underspend of £417K, due to saving of £409K against the Growth Fund • De-delegated budget projecting an underspend of £508K with £300K against the contingency fund <p>Early Years Block</p> <p>LM advised that there is some uncertainty as the January 2024 census data is not available yet. Final funding figures will be available in July 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In year projected underspend of £938K • There was an increase in Early Years funding rates from September 2023, for which we received a supplementary grant. <p>High Needs Block</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At period 10 there is a projected an overspend of £4.47M after the transfer of £3.3M from the Schools Block • The main pressures relate to the SEN top ups to institutions, mainstream additional blocks, and the Out of Area (OOA) and residential placements. <p>Question was asked about what the £114K Invest to Save was spent on. SM advised that there is a post set up for a SEND EY coordinator and a consultant has been covering that post, though the consultant has now left. DB further advised that the post was created to support the EY team to signpost where there was a need at the Early Help stage. SM clarified that there is still a post budgeted for in 2024/25 at £97K, however the post is currently vacant.</p> <p>ACTION DB will find out whether the post is currently being advertised.</p> <p>Central Services Block</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor underspend of a projected £35K <p>Reserves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table at 6.1 highlights the reserve position. 	<p>DB</p>

<p>6.9</p> <p>6.10</p> <p>6.11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projections indicate that there will be a surplus balance of £3.98M at the end of 2023/24. • De delegated reserves would have a surplus £708K, if there is surplus against the de delegated budget, there would be a proposal to repay this back to the maintained schools that contributed. <p>LM advised that School Forum are asked to note the recommendations within this report.</p> <p>Question was asked about the overspend on OOA and residential placements, this has fluctuated and has now gone back up, is there a reason for this? DB clarified that there is an increase in demand and not enough capacity internally, therefore resulting in, commissioning OOA placements. You can only add to provisions once or twice before you need to start looking at other buildings which explains the dip and rise.</p> <p>Further question was asked about whether any assumptions have been made around de delegated carry forward of £708K, LM & SM advised that no figures have been assumed as conversations are still ongoing. If there is significant surplus, then it could be refunded to schools.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>High Needs Budget</p>	
<p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p> <p>7.5</p> <p>7.6</p>	<p>This report details the High Needs budget for 2024/25 and was approved by full council yesterday. High needs funding is estimated to be £127.65m in 2024/25.</p> <p>Highlights in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Base line was issued in December, and we are not expecting anymore. • A Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) of 0.5% has been set for special schools, in line with the MFG set for mainstream schools. • Leeds is still subject to Gains Limit factor, previously Cap on Gains so funding allocation for 2024/25 will be £2.9m less • Table at 2.14 details high needs income expenditure. <p>We continue to predict pressures on the high needs block.</p> <p>Question was asked about point, 2.4 inclusion rate of £732 & £734, it was confirmed by SM that these are the correct figures for special school settings as they are on a different rate to mainstream schools.</p> <p>Question was asked about the unit rates staying the same. SM advised that it is not recommend to increase mainstream schools at present. £696 is the current rate</p> <p>DB further advised that we don't receive enough money to increase to meet the costs of the provisions and the demand we have. SM also advised that the DfE said we can't change the £6k blocks. Comment was made by a forum member that not being able to increase the £6K and not having the unit rate increased it will cause pressures.</p> <p>DB advised that the Notional funding of £6k has been frozen, since then inflationary pressures have increased, and we must submit a balanced budget. TP said the total resource in the High Needs Block has gone up by £10.6m and it is because we have transferred in from school's block. Year on year the budget for commissioned and C&F provided services have gone down by around £1.1m and we have put that into the budget to passport to settings.</p>	

<p>7.7</p> <p>7.8</p> <p>7.9</p> <p>7.10</p>	<p>DB advised that we need to look at the best ways to present the budgets and should highlight to central government that high needs is a pressure.</p> <p>Question was asked, is there any proposal to address the additional blocks as we are not meeting national guidance. SM said have done some work but need to consult. This should go to minority schools, but Leeds gives to majority, there would need to be a consultation on this with schools.</p> <p>Update was requested on the timescale of 2.7 and the additional places. DB advised that this is currently being looked at and the LA are trying to identify spaces in buildings, or rent a space for 16years plus, we have a significant capital budget we can use. Some of our primary schools have space, so could we utilise this, we are looking at all these options. There is an acknowledgement that we know we need to build more provision.</p> <p>Question was asked that in 23/24 there was a balanced budget, did we identify savings? LM advised that no, we didn't and is reflected in the budget. Forum member confirmed that there have already been conversations around extra places with DB and GS and advised that the SILC principles will assist with these talks, and it is proving to be really positive.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Early Years Funding</p>	
<p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>8.4</p> <p>8.5</p> <p>8.6</p>	<p>Chris Sutton presented the Early Years Block paper that comes to school forum every year for the proposed funding formula and rates for the funded Early Years entitlement. Schools' forum approval is sought for the use of the centrally retained portion of the funding.</p> <p>Key points for consideration:</p> <p>Extended entitlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3- and 4-year-olds universal offer and the additional hour entitlements. • From this April there is an entitlement for eligible working parents of 2-year-olds • From September 2024 there is a new working parent entitlement for 9m – 2-year-olds. <p>Consultation with registered childcare providers in Leeds on the proposed funding formula took place between 8th January and 4th February 2024.</p> <p>The majority of the respondents were positive about the changes, some of comments made were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The difference of the funding rates between the 3 & 4-year-olds and the 2 years and below rates, • There is also concern from providers as they feel the sector is underfunded. • Providers expressed that providers were grateful to the LA that they were not intending to retain the 5% they are permitted to do as per the DfE guidance. <p>Point 2.2 of the report highlights the 3 & 4-year-olds rate is increasing by 28p per hour per eligible child. The LA is proposing to retain an additional 2p per hour for the centrally retained services, maintaining the same rate for their provision supplement, and increasing the SENDIF supplement for the first time in several years by 4p.</p> <p>Point 3.4 of the report highlights that the base rate is staying the same at £7.78 In previous years the LA has not centrally retained any of the 2-year-old funding, The team have worked hard to introduce supplements for the 2-year-olds.</p>	

8.7	They way the funding for 2-year-olds is now proposed, retaining the £7.78 now enables access to the additional funding for those children that can reach the deprivation and SENDIF supplement.
8.8	For the under 2-year-olds the team have harmonised the supplements with the 2-year-olds and take up will continue to be reviewed.
8.9	Comment was made that from the consultation, some providers want to go towards the lower end as the rate is higher and is that concern a real one? CS advised that for the paper they wanted to be honest and include comments, however, this is not a concern from the majority of the providers.
8.10	Question was asked about how we compare to other LAs, SM advised that the DfE have a complicated way of the calculations and do not provide data, but previously most LAs in our region, retain the 5%, Leeds don't retain the full 5%.
8.11	Question was asked about the decision for Leeds to retain less, CS advised that in previous years there has been a push to incorporate as much as possible into the base rate, CS advised that there are additional factors this year that have been considered.
8.12	Centrally retained. The report highlights the consequences if the lines are not approved, many of the functions performed by the service are statutory.
8.13	Table 5.6 The table contains 13 lines that need to be considered, highlights are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENDIF has doubled this is due to how we administer the process and the increase in work that we need to do. We need the additional resource to meet the requirements to make payments on time. • Northpoint, this service is not being commissioned anymore. • Additional of £761k of expenditure as per the last 3 lines on the table at 8.16. DB explained that Learning improvement service is traded however it no longer has enough subscribers as schools can no longer afford it, so this money will underwrite this service,
8.14	Question was asked if the Learning Improvement would be extended to schools providing for 2-year-olds, DB advised that, yes if they provide for EY.
8.15	Question was asked about the Safeguarding team and why do we have 50k that we didn't have before. CS advised that without this, settings would have to find this money for safeguarding advice, potentially at a higher cost and this could result in us as a LA losing those connections to settings. This is not a new post, but the funding is there to provide benefits to settings who otherwise would be unable to afford this service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 6 and 7 the Deprivation supplement is staying the same for 3 and 4-year-olds and an introduction of the supplement for 2 and under 2-year-olds. There is significant demand for SENDIF and enable us to offer more support.
8.16	VOTING Forum members are asked to note the funding proposals and approve items 1 to 13 identified in table 5.6. Voting undertaken by all members in attendance.

Results of Early Years Funding Proposals 2024/25

	2023/24	2024/25	
Special Educational Needs Inclusion Team (SENIT)	£478,000	£495,000	14 for 0 against
Commissioned Service - Portage	£140,000	£173,000	14 for 0 against
Sensory Services	£166,000	£172,000	14 for 0 against
Education Psychology	£73,000	£76,000	14 for 0 against
Early Support and Inclusion (SENDIF)	£31,000	£72,000	14 for 0 against
Family Information Service	£114,000	£298,000	14 for 0 against
Family Services	£520,000	£538,000	14 for 0 against
Sufficiency	£42,000	£43,000	14 for 0 against
Commissioned Services - Northpoint Wellbeing (Leeds Counselling)	£60,000	£0	14 for 0 against
Learning Improvement (Original)	£208,000	£215,000	14 for 0 against
Learning Improvement (New)	£0	£435,000	14 for 0 against
Safeguarding Team	£0	£50,000	14 for 0 against
Contingency	£0	£276,000	14 for 0 against
Total	£1,832,000	£2,843,000	

8.17

All lines agreed.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 None
ACTION SIFD 27th February if anyone would like to join, let Peter know.
 LM will liaise with Liz Honeyman to let her know LQ would like to attend. **ALL**

10 Forward Plan

10.1 The dates for upcoming Forums are yet to be agreed. The next meeting will be in June

11 Meeting Dates for 2023-24 and Forward Plan

11.1 Once dates are confirmed invites will be sent

DRAFT