

LEEDS SCHOOL FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on
Thursday, 10th October, 2019, Times Not Specified at Merrion House, Meeting Suite rooms 3
and 4, second floor

MEMBERSHIP (Apologies marked with an *)

Dave Kagai, A. Primary Governors - St Nicholas Primary
Sara Nix, A. Primary Governors - Rawdon Littlemoor Primary
John Garvani (LSF), A. Primary Governors - Broadgate Primary School
Jim Ebbs, A. Primary Governors - Woodlesford Primary
John Hutchinson, B. Primary Heads - St Theresa's Catholic Primary
Claire Harrison, B. Primary Heads - Wetherby Deighton Gates Primary
Barbara Trayer, B. Secondary Governors - Allerton Grange Secondary
Helen Stott, B. Primary Heads - Allerton C of E Primary
Peter Harris, B. Primary Heads - Farsley Farfield Primary
Julie Harkness, B. Primary Heads - Carr Manor Community school - Primary Phase
Jo Smithson, B. Primary Heads - Greenhill Primary
David Webster, C. Secondary Governors - Pudsey Grangefield
Delia Martin, D. Secondary Heads - Benton Park
Lucie Lakin, D. Secondary Heads - Wetherby High
David Gurney, E. Academy Reps - Cockburn School
Adam Ryder, E. Academy Reps - The Morley Academy
John Thorne, E. Academy Reps - Co-operative Academy Priesthorpe
Emma Lester, E. Academy Reps - Woodkirk Academy
Ian Goddard, E. Academy Reps - Ebor Gardens/Victoria Primary Ac
Siobhan Roberts, E. Academy Reps - Cockburn John Charles Academy
Joe Barton, E. Academy Reps - Woodkirk Academy
Anna Mackenzie, E. Academy Reps - Richmond Hill Academy
Scott Jacques, F. Academy (Special) - Springwell Leeds East Academy
Ben Mallinson, G. Academy (AP) - The Stephen Longfellow Academy
Diane Reynard, I. Special School Principal - East / NW SILC - SILC Principals
Patrick Murphy, J. Non School - Schools JCC
* Angela Cox, J. Non School - Leeds Catholic Diocese
Dan Cohen, J. Jewish Faith Schools

Item		Action
1	APOLOGIES	
	Angela Cox, Dan Cohen, John Garvani, Danny Carr, Jim Ebbs, Ben Mallinson, Scott Jacques, Siobhan Roberts, John Hutchinson	
2	INTRODUCTIONS	
	The Chair welcomed everyone and in particular new members: Dave Kagai, Sue Tuck, Barbara Trayer, Danny Carr, Louise Turner, Dan Cohen, Vicky Hallas-Fawcett and David Webster	
3	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	
	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.	
4	MATTERS ARISING	
	<p><i>Item 4.1, Early Years Block:</i> The action plan has not been brought to the meeting due to a recent Peer Review of Early Years and the affect this would have on the plan. The Review report has now been received and circulated to Schools Forum members and there are clear outcomes and actions which will be reflected in the action plan. It will be brought to a future meeting Action: comments on the Peer Review report to be submitted to Phil Mellen.</p> <p><i>Item 4.2 – High Needs Block:</i> covered later in the meeting.</p> <p>Item 4.4 – Schools Forum Update: financial difficulty fund to be picked up later.</p> <p><i>Item 7.4 - Disapplication request:</i> The DfE would like both parties to agree on a settlement. If this is not possible then a disapplication request will be made. All the primary places at Springwell have been filled but there are some secondary places vacant. These will be prioritised in the half termly meetings.</p>	

	<p><i>Item 8 – Proposed Update of Schools Forum Terms of Reference:</i> With no additional comments received the updated terms of reference have been adopted as the final version.</p> <p><i>Item 8.1 – Proposed Training Sessions for Governors:</i> The proposed training sessions planned for 3 October was cancelled due to low take up. It is likely that the session will now take place immediately before Schools Forum on 14 November.</p>	
5	<p>DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2019/20 - BUDGET MONITORING MONTH 5</p>	
	<p>Schools Forum noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the projected overspend on the General DSG of £5,261k. After adding it to the surplus on General DSG brought forward from 2018/19 it will make the current projected cumulative deficit £4,164k. The projected de-delegated surplus balances standing at £249k. • the proposed de-delegated reserves repayment to schools. <p>One of the key responsibilities as a group is managing the overall funding into the local authority. It comes in different blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Block – apart from a small proportion most of this funding goes out to schools. The remainder is for the dedicated schools grant and the growth fund. • High Needs Block funding is additional support for children with special needs. The Council is responsible for a lot of decisions around this but Schools Forum makes the decision. • Early Years Block is used to pay out to providers for nursery provision. • Central Block covers a number of central overheads. <p>The DSG budget has a forecasted overspend of £5.2+m; £7.2m of which comes from the High Needs Block as a result of increased expenditure on SEN top-ups and outside placements. Allowing for the surplus balance brought forward from 2018/19 the projected year end position for 2019/20 is a deficit £4.2m.</p> <p>Schools Block There is an overall projected underspend of £872k. There are variances around the amount of the grant and the amount paid out mainly because of academisation that has occurred since the budget was set.</p>	

The main variance on the growth fund explains why there has been a move to an underspend. We are allocated the fund through the DSG and in 2019/20 £5m+ was split in to two: implicit funding given to new and growing schools and explicit funding whereby we estimate what will be paid out to schools during the year. The underspend of £1.067m will contribute to the overspend on the High Needs Block.

Some schools have agreed to take on additional pupils without extra funding. One of issues with growth funding is the bulge is moving into secondary schools and this is more complex. The current growth fund and principles are more suited to growth in primary schools and as a result the principles and current policy will be reviewed to see if it is still fit for purpose. **Action:** A revised policy to be brought back to the January 2020 meeting. Take steps to ensure that schools are aware there is a growth fund to help them.

Early Years Block

Overall projected underspend of just under £1m. It's difficult to project because the funding is based on the January census of pupil data and we will not know what position we will be in, in January 2020. As a result there is a lot of guess work on numbers. The rate we pay providers has increased year on year and this has reduced the overall underspend.

SEN Inclusion Fund – The latest estimate of just under £400k is now projecting an overspend.

Early Years Pupil Premium (section 3.1) should read £138k spend to date not £1,338k

High Needs Block

There are two key areas causing the overall overspend of £7.2m:

- External Residential Placements with an overspend forecast of £2.3m and
- SEN top ups forecast of 5.2m

The reason for the additional pressures is that since the budget was set there has been a year on year increase in children eligible for support over and above the original budget assumptions.

The biggest area of overspend is on top ups in mainstream schools with an overspend of £2.6m, despite an increase of £940k in the budget.

The Secretary of State has made announcements re overall national funding and for schools also. We would usually have received by now the local funding allocation for schools and the High Need Block is for 2020/21. Nationally the Government has allocated an extra £700m to the High Needs Block. Based on the latest projections for the HNB it is likely that even with the maximum increase in funding for the HNB the increase won't be enough to cover all of our projected increase in costs next year.

It is therefore anticipated that a request will be made to Schools Forum for a transfer of up to 0.5% (approx. £2.5m) from the schools block. Schools Forum will be consulted with about transferring funding from the Schools Block.

6	SCHOOL FUNDING UPDATE 2020/21	
	<p>Leeds is still awaiting details of the allocation. Schools Forum will be updated as soon as we receive the information.</p> <p>Schools Block: Funding is allocated to local authorities based on the national funding formula. Local authorities have some discretion to allocate funds differently. Some funds can be transferred from the schools block to HNB and schools are likely to be consulted about this in October/November.</p> <p>Cap on gains: There is no cap this year but the local authority can set a cap in the formula if need to.</p> <p>The DfE is currently consulting on the implementation of the minimum funding levels in 2020/21. Consultation closes on 22 October. The local authority will be submitting a response. Further details are available on the DfE website.</p>	
7	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	There was no other business.	
8	MEETING DATES FOR 2019/20 AND FORWARD PLAN	
	Noted.	
9	SCHOOLS IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES FUNDING - GUIDANCE FOR MAINTAINED SCHOOLS	
	<p>Guidance has been drafted to make sure all schools are aware of the fund, how it can be accessed and what the deadline is for application. Schools above a certain deficit level have to submit an action plan which is signed off by the local authority. At present the level stands at £10k.</p> <p>Each application to the fund is assessed on its merits and a decision taken by the Schools Panel. An advertisement will be going out to fill the current vacancies on the Panel.</p> <p>Action: Put on the Governors meeting agenda so that they are aware of the fund.</p> <p>Themes to be picked out from previous applications to give an indication of the type of thing schools are asking help for.</p>	
10	CLOSE	
	The meeting closed at 18:15.	