

Leeds Schools Forum

Second floor meeting suite, rooms three & four

Thursday 13th February 2020 at 16:30

Membership (Apologies in Italics)	
GOVERNORS	HEADTEACHERS
Primary (5 seats)	Primary (6 seats)
Sara Nix Rawdon Littlemoor Jim Ebbs Woodlesford Sue Tuck Ireland Wood David Kagai St Nicholas John Garvani Broadgate	John Hutchinson St Theresa's Catholic Primary <i>Helen Stott</i> <i>Allerton C of E Primary</i> Peter Harris Farsley Farfield Primary Julie Harkness Carr Manor Community School Jo Smithson Greenhill Primary Vacancy
Secondary (2 seats)	Secondary (3 seats)
<i>Barbara Trayer</i> <i>Allerton Grange</i> David Webster Pudsey Grangefield	Delia Martin Benton Park Lucie Lakin Wetherby High Vacancy
Special (1 seat)	Special (1 seat)
Vacancy	Diane Reynard East SILC
Non School	Academies – Mainstream (9 seats)
Vicky Hallas-Fawcett PVI Providers Vacancy PVI Providers Patrick Murphy Schools JCC Louise Turner 16-19 Providers Angela Cox OBE Catholic Diocese Dan Cohen Jewish Faith Schools	<i>David Gurney</i> <i>Cockburn School</i> <i>Danny Carr</i> <i>Dixons Academy</i> <i>Adam Ryder</i> <i>Bruntcliffe Academy</i> John Thorne Co-op Academy Priesthorpe Emma Lester Woodkirk Academy Ian Goddard Ebor Gardens/Victoria Primary Siobhan Roberts Cockburn John Charles <i>Joe Barton</i> <i>Woodkirk Academy</i> Anna McKenzie Richmond Hill
Local Authority Reps:	Academy – Special School (1 seat)
	Vacancy
Sal Tariq, OBE, Director	
Tim Pouncey, Chief Officer Strategy & Resources	Academy – Alternative Provision
Phil Mellen, Deputy Director Learning	Vacancy
Louise Hornsey, Head of Service, Finance	
Simon Criddle, Head of Service, Finance	
<i>Val Waite, Head of Learning Inclusion</i>	
Minutes:	
Lesley Gregory, PA	

Item	Title	Actions
1	<p>Apologies Dave Gurney, Helen Stott, Barbara Trayer, Joe Barton, Danny Carr, Val Waite, Sal Tariq, Adam Ryder</p>	
2	<p>Introductions The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of last meeting The minutes were agreed.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1 <i>Item 4: Disapplication request: no further update to report. We are still awaiting a response from the ESFA.</i></p> <p>4.2 <i>Item 4: High Needs Budget Consultation: the Council has responded to the call for evidence but we are still awaiting communication from the Government.</i></p> <p>4.3 <i>Item 5.3: Carbon Reduction Officer: Information about the Clean Air Leeds team was circulated. The team is very keen to aid schools put together submissions for SALIX funding</i></p> <p>4.4 <i>Item 5.5.3: Admissions - A verbal update was given to the Forum and will be followed up with an options paper at the June Forum.</i></p> <p>4.5 <i>Item 8.1: Contingency and support for schools in financial difficulty - to be re-worded as follows: The schools urgent improvement fund of £50k will be there for schools to bid into. The School Contingency Fund is retained centrally for maintained schools but only for a limited range of circumstances:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Exceptional unforeseen costs which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet (including some costs relating to Managed Staff Reductions);</i> <i>b. Schools in financial difficulties;</i> <i>c. Additional costs relating to new, reorganised or closing schools; and</i> <i>d. Establishing a schools urgent improvement fund that schools can apply to if they require additional support from local authority services for urgent school improvement priorities.</i> <p>4.6 <i>Item 8.8: Behaviour Support Service - more detail to be added to the item and reworded as follows: The budget allocated for this service partially funds the 11 Inclusion Support workers who are part of the SENIT team. Referrals for support are made to the SENIT team. The support team go out to schools and provide specific targeted support for schools who have significant concerns around a learner. Funding for the service has already been delegated to schools, so there is no funding available in the high needs block for behaviour support. If de-delegation was not supported, a charge would need to be made to schools that use the service.</i></p>	

4.7	<p><i>Item 8.9: Leeds for Learning Website</i> – Upon investigation it has been established that services prefer to have a generic e-mail address instead of individual contact details. This enables everyone within a team to be able to respond to queries/requests rather than an individual who may be absent from work. A reminder has been issued to teams to monitor these e-mail inboxes regularly so that a response can be given in a more timely fashion.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p>	<p>Early Years Action Plan</p> <p>It was noted that the title of item one should read '<i>All children make the best start to learning...</i>' not '<i>...best start to school..</i>'</p> <p>This is one of the obsessions in the 3As action plan and a high priority in the city. We are conscious that the take up of the 2 year old offer is low at only 67%. We are looking at practice in other cities particularly Newcastle where take up is 100% and has been for the last three years. As is to be expected outcomes in Newcastle are far stronger than ours. It is essential that we have the provision in the right place in the city and as a result we are talking to providers and primary heads with no provision, to ascertain if this is something they would consider. We will also be working with private providers in the city to support and incentivise them so that we can provide a joined up approach across the city.</p> <p>30 hours offer for 3-4 year olds: It was confirmed that there is also a drive to fulfil this offer and the local authority is looking to work with schools to ensure take up is maximised. Data clearly shows that the outcomes in this area are significant both for the children and their parents.</p> <p>A lot of information, advice and training has been put in to social care and health visitors to support parents to take up their early learning entitlement and how to engage with early learning. The App '50 things to do before you're 5' does not seem to be as widely known amongst PVI nursery providers as it could be.</p> <p>Action: Vicky Hallas-Fawcett and Phil Mellen to get together to discuss how the local authority and PVI providers can work together to promote the benefits of early learning and the opportunities that are available.</p> <p>The Early Years Plan is regularly monitored and feeds into the Early Years Steering Group, the Children and Families leadership team, relevant councillors and both the 3As Steering Group and Board.</p>	<p>VF-H/ PM</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p>Early Years Funding 2020-21 2020/21 Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) rates for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.</p> <p>The DfE has allocated an extra 8p per child for 2 and 3 & 4 year olds. For 2 year olds the local authority is seeking to pass the 8p in its entirety to providers. Proposals have been circulated to providers but as yet there is limited feedback. It is a requirement that schools forum be consulted on changes to the funding formulae by 28 February. After considering the feedback from providers the final decision will be made by the local authority.</p> <p>There are two proposals: Proposal A: the projected increase in the number of hours funded by the DfE would increase the centrally retained funding by £157k despite the per pupil retention remaining at £0.18 per pupil per hour.</p>	

	<p>Proposal B: (reduced central retention to £0.17) would provide a £60k increase on the central retention budget but the additional cost identified in the Early Years Action Plan would mean a reduced contingency of less than £17k.</p> <p>6.3 Schools Forum is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comment on the funding proposals for the Early Years Funding formula, offering support to either proposal A or proposal B. 2. Approve items 1 to 12 of the centrally retained funding identified in 4.6 of the report. <p>6.4 The contingency element of the funding was explained: It is a DfE requirement that families eligible for funding have to re-apply every three months. If for some reason the family forgets to apply and fall out of eligibility the contingency fund is used to cover the bill they will receive until their re-eligibility is confirmed.</p> <p>6.5 Family Services: It was not felt that Family Outreach Workers (FOW) were available in all areas of the city. FOWs are employed through children’s centres, schools and clusters in some areas and support families in the community. They are provided with a list of families who do not take up early learning services they are eligible for and will go out and speak to them. Schools nurseries are promoted alongside all other childcare settings by the FOWs.</p> <p>Action: Conversation to be had with Early Years staff around any gaps in the city and how FOWs can ensure city wide coverage and promotion of all settings.</p> <p>Action: remove the word ‘all’ from the following sentence ‘..... advice and support to <i>all</i> childcare providers...</p> <p>Action: a geographical spread of FOWs would be helpful and it was agreed to bring this back to a future Forum.</p> <p>6.6 Deprivation: examples of pay-outs for deprivation are listed in the report.</p> <p>6.7 SEND Inclusion Fund is overspent (£240k deficit) following an increase in demand. It is hoped that this can be countered by raising the rate per child by 5p on 2020-21.</p> <p>6.8 <u>Recommendations</u> Schools Forum agreed that proposal B is its preferred option.</p> <p>Schools Forum noted as follows on the Centrally retained funding:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td>SENIT</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Portage</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Sensory Services</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Education Psychology</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Early Support & Inclusion</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Family Information Service</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Family Services</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Sufficiency</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Northpoint Wellbeing Counselling</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Learning Improvement</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>EY Action plan</td><td>agreed</td></tr> <tr><td>Contingency -</td><td>agreed</td></tr> </table>	SENIT	agreed	Portage	agreed	Sensory Services	agreed	Education Psychology	agreed	Early Support & Inclusion	agreed	Family Information Service	agreed	Family Services	agreed	Sufficiency	agreed	Northpoint Wellbeing Counselling	agreed	Learning Improvement	agreed	EY Action plan	agreed	Contingency -	agreed	<p>PM</p> <p>RMc</p> <p>TP/PM</p>
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7.	DSG Budget Monitoring 2019-20	
7.1	Overall the budget is projecting an overspend of £5.4m to date. There are some variations in that particularly around the High Needs Block. Schools Forum was reminded that it had already agreed a £1.5m transfer from the schools block as well as an increase in the FFI rate from £600 to £650 per unit. A year end deficit of £4.3m is projected. Funding for high needs in 2020-21 will be increased by nearly £13m on 2019-20 to an expected £79.8m.	
7.2	<p><u>Schools block</u></p> <p>The block is showing no real change to what was previously reported with an underspend on the growth fund of £1.161k. It is worth noting the underspend on the de-delegated budget of £278k and that a payment was made back to schools as requested due to the underspend in 2018-19.</p>	
7.3	<p><u>Early Years Block</u></p>	
7.3.1	The underspend of £900k on the 2019-20 budget was noted. This is a big reduction and is partly due to the increased rate of 5p to providers even though the amount of funding received by the authority has not changed. In terms of 3-4 year olds we paid less than was budgeted for and less than the Government gave to the authority. For 2 year olds more was paid out than was projected for. There was also an overspend on the SEN inclusion fund and small variants in other areas. In terms of the High Needs Block, Early Years FFI has seen a significant increase of over £600k.	
7.3.2	The underspend this year and also in the previous year of £2.9m was effectively used to help the High Needs Block and reduce the call on the schools block. However this is not a sustainable position to be in.	
7.4	<p><u>High Needs Block</u></p>	
7.4.1	Table 4.1 in the report sets out the latest position in terms of outside and external residential placements with an overspend projected of over £3m, an increase from the previous report of £600k. The other big variation is on top up payments. We were previously projecting additional costs around NW SILC's academisation which has now slipped into 2020/21.	
7.4.2	Outside placements has seen a further increase in year.	
7.4.3	The commissioned services budget was showing as only half spent at period 10 however payment from the budget is reliant on when invoices are received from providers. It is fully expected that the budget will be spent at the end of period 12.	
7.5	<p><u>Central Schools Services Block</u></p>	
7.5.1	No real significant variations on the Block. It is projected to carry forward a deficit of £4.3m on the general DSG and a surplus of £400k on de-delegation. It was noted that the DSG had gone from a surplus of £1.1m to a deficit of £3.9m.	
7.5.2	The Government is now changing regulations around deficits. Previously local authorities had to produce an action plan if they had a 1% deficit. Now there is a requirement for authorities to produce action plans if there is a significant change of position. Leeds is likely to fall into this category.	

7.5.3	Schools Forum was thanked for its support in getting through the complex problems surrounding this and as a result helped the Authority come up with some good solutions.	
7.5.4	<p>External Provision: The Council does have plans to expand its own provision however some parents prefer to use provision outside the Leeds area. The spend illustrated in the report is for the education element of external placements only and does not include any residential costs. There is also a health and a care element to consider. The Authority receives a bill far more in excess of the £5.9m projection and has to fund any transport costs associated with the placements.</p> <p>Work is going on to refresh the SEND strategy.</p> <p>As a rough guide, through Educational, Health and Care Plans, the Authority has to provide an extra 200 places for the next four to five years. A new free school presumption will provide eight places for the most complex pupils.</p> <p>We now need to work on options looking at what actions to take in order to bring spend in line with resources. However before we do that we need to know what the three year funding settlement will be</p>	
7.6	<p>Schools Forum noted the recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the projected overspend on General DSG of £5,420k which will be added to the surplus on General DSG brought forward from 2018/19. This will make the current projected cumulative deficit £4,323k, with projected de-delegated surplus balances standing at £403k. • the high needs budget for 2020/21. 	
8.	<p>Update on DfE Consultations</p> <p>8.1 The DfE consulted on the introduction of a risk projection arrangement for maintained schools. Schools currently get their insurance from the local authorities whilst academies get their insurance from the Government. This new arrangement will be in place from April. The Council's insurance team is putting together a briefing highlighting some of the differences between the two options. This will be sent to maintained schools.</p> <p>8.2 Transparency arrangements consultation: still pending the outcome from the DfE. It is hoped to have an update for the June Forum.</p>	
9.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Nothing to report</p>	
10.	<p>MEETING DATES FOR 2020-21 AND FORWARD PLAN</p> <p>All meetings will take place in Merrion House and will commence at 1630 until 1830</p> <p>Thursday 25 June 2020 Thursday 8 October Thursday 19 November Tuesday 19 January 2021 Thursday 25 February</p>	