

Leeds Schools Forum

Microsoft Teams Meeting
 Tuesday 16th January 2024 at 16:30

Membership (Apologies in Italics)	
GOVERNORS	HEADTEACHERS
Primary (6 seats)	Primary (6 seats)
<i>David Kagai</i> <i>St Nicholas</i>	Peter Harris (Chair) <i>Farsley Farfield</i>
<i>John Garvani</i> <i>Broadgate</i>	Julie Harkness <i>Carr Manor Community School</i>
<i>Victoria McWalker</i> <i>St Margaret's Horsforth</i>	<i>Emma Wraighte</i> <i>Fieldhead Carr</i>
<i>Stratis Koutsoukos</i> <i>St Nicholas</i>	Rebecca White <i>Sharp Lane</i>
<i>Bradley Taylor</i> <i>Kirkstall Valley</i>	Kate Cameron <i>Calverley C/E</i>
<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Vacant</i>
Secondary (1 seat)	Secondary (1 seat)
<i>David Webster</i> <i>Pudsey Grammar</i>	<i>Delia Martin</i> <i>Benton Park</i>
Special (1 seat)	Special (1 seat)
Russell Trigg <i>East SILC, John Jamieson</i>	Louise Quinn <i>East SILC</i>
Non School	Academies – Mainstream (11 seats)
Vacancy <i>PVI Providers</i>	David Gurney <i>Cockburn School</i>
Vacancy <i>PVI Providers</i>	<i>Katherine Somers</i> <i>Dixons Academy</i>
Nick Tones <i>Schools JCC</i>	<i>John Thorne</i> <i>St Mary's Academy Menston</i>
<i>Christopher Thornton</i> <i>16-19 Providers</i>	Joe Barton <i>Woodkirk Academy</i>
<i>Dan Cohen</i> <i>Jewish Faith Schools</i>	Rob Dixon <i>Cockburn School</i>
<i>Peter McQuillen-Strong</i> <i>Catholic Diocese</i>	<i>Gavin Hosford</i> <i>Green Meadow</i>
	<i>Rachel Colbourn</i> <i>Bramhope Primary</i>
	<i>Sarah Talbot</i> <i>East Ardsley</i>
	Kate Burton <i>Alder Tree Primary</i>
	<i>Simon Princep</i> <i>Abbey Grange CofE</i>
	<i>Ailsa Hoyland</i> <i>Bruntcliffe Academy</i>
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)
<i>Val Waite, Chief Officer Learning Inclusion</i>	Vacancy
Dan Barton Deputy Director, Learning	Academy – Special Provision (1 seat)
Shirley Maidens, Finance	Mary Ruggles

Item	Title	Actions
1.0	Welcome and Apologies	
1.1		
2.0	Schools Forum Membership	
2.1	Vacancies remain for: 1 x Primary Governor 1 x PVI Nursery Provider vacancy 1 x Alternative Academy vacancy 1 x Primary Headteacher vacancy 1 x SILC Governor 1 x Non-school representatives	
2.1.2	Primary Head Teacher appointed – Kate Cameron, Calverley C of E. SILC Head Teacher appointed – Louise Quinn, East SILC. Governor representatives has been advertised In the Governors Bulletin, awaiting interest. PVI is being advertised in the next FEEE newsletter.	
3.0	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
3.1	The minutes were agreed.	
4.0	Matters Arising	
4.1	<i>8.1 Question was asked when will the AIP budget for this financial year be received? It was also raised and reiterated that they need to see the budgets. ACTION Tim will go back and find out why AIP have not been given their budgets yet.</i> RM had meeting with AIPs and now, the budgets have been circulated and resolved.	
4.1.2	<i>8.2 PH asked CS if any decisions have been made within Children and Families directorate regarding bids to the Schools in Financial Difficulty fund. ACTION CS will write to the schools next week advising on the bids.</i> This action has been completed, CS wrote to schools prior to leaving.	
4.1.3	<i>8.5 CS advised that another meeting of SIFD panel is happening next week. So far, only 1 bid from a school experiencing in financial difficulty has been received.</i> This SIFD panel was cancelled due to the receipt of only one bid. A SIFD panel is scheduled for February.	
4.1.4	With regards to the clawback of excess surplus balances TP advised that one of criticism’s received from schools concerned the lack of communication from LCC regarding the surplus balances and the time it took to inform schools. It was also noted that all schools subject to clawback are submitting an appeal, and it was anticipated that the balances clawed back would contribute towards the de delegated contingency budget.	
4.1.5	TP further advised that there is not an appeals process, however we did allow a school to appeal last year. TP informed the forum that he was not involved in this further process last year and that the school was successful.	
4.1.6	The schools subject to clawback have provided TP with further details outlining why they should not be subject to clawback. We have not yet implemented the clawbacks pending further discussions with these schools.	
4.1.7	Further discussion was raised regarding clawback of excess surplus balance and several comments were made by the forum:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be a mechanism for claw back of surplus balance, so that everyone knows what the process involves. • We should continue to refuse appeals; however, we should set up a panel to try and have a better understanding to be able to relook at the process. • Schools should know what their surplus balances should be, and the balances should be used on the children that need it now. • There has been more than one school that has had difficulty in recruiting school business managers, which is why some head teachers may not have known they had surplus balances. • This is a historical process that has gone on for a long period and that schools should have been aware. <p>4.1.8 It was mentioned that some academies are not subject the clawback, so there seems to be a disparity. This was discussed and it was confirmed that academies are not allowed to go into deficit and the EFSA are classing anything over 20% as excessive. ACTION After all the discussions it was agreed that the clawback process should continue to go ahead.</p> <p>4.1.9 It was also noted that The Leeds Scheme needs to be a clear term of reference with clarity. ACTION TP to have a look at the Leeds Scheme to make sure it is up to date and to have a review of The Leeds Scheme over the next few months. To be ready for the June School Forum. ACTION TP will look at the guidance and how it should be incorporated into the terms of reference. We need to bring back a refreshed note regarding Schools in Financial Difficulty in February and then the Forum can see how the terms of reference might guide us.</p>	<p>TP</p> <p>TP</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>School Funding Arrangements 2024/25</p>	
<p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.2.1</p> <p>5.2.2</p> <p>5.2.3</p>	<p>LM presented the report and advised that since publication of this paper/report the LA has been made aware of new advice on the Growth Fund.</p> <p>Schools block The report presented included details on the Growth Fund, Falling Rolls Fund and the schools funding formula:</p> <p><u>Schools Funding Formula</u></p> <p>The final Schools Block Funding for 2024/25 has been confirmed by the EFSA as £707m, this is an increase of £22m from 2023/24.</p> <p>The funding formula has been updated to take into account the views of the Schools Forum and the final funding allocation from the EFSA. The revised formula retains the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) at 0.5% and replicates the National Funding Formula. The cap on gains has been set at 1.26%. Subject to the proposed Growth Fund of £430k, £703.03M would remain to be allocated to mainstream schools through the Funding Formula.</p> <p>The final decision on the formula will be taken by the Director of Children and Families in accordance with the council’s decision-making framework.</p>	

5.2.4	Final funding statements will be sent out to schools before the end of February. Academies will receive funding statements directly from the EFSA.
5.3	<u>Growth Fund</u>
5.3.1	The funding allocation is based on the previous two October censuses.
	For 2024/25 the Leeds total allocation for growth from the EFSA has been reduced and is £3,731K for 2024/25. It was £4,990K in 2023/24.
5.3.2	Schools Forum are asked to approve the criteria listed in the report, for allocating funding from the Growth Fund.
5.3.3	<p>Note for the Forum that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implicit means new and growing schools – where there is new free school, we must put it through the APT. 2. Explicit means schools that exist with growth requirements, SF must agree the criteria and value of the explicit growth fund.
5.3.4	In recent years the growth fund allocation has been sufficient to cover the growth requirements and any surplus growth fund has then gone contributed to the funding formula to be allocated to all schools. However it was noted that this is lagged funding and so it could be that in future the growth fund allocation may not be sufficient to meet need at which point SF would consider other options to fund growth.
5.3.5	<p>The report proposed to retain the Growth Funding criteria prior to the new guidance from the EFSA. This was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Schools would be eligible for growth funding where a permanent expansion has occurred following an increase in the Published Admission Number (PAN), to meet basic need. Growth funding will be paid until the permanent change in PAN is accommodated in every year group. • Secondary schools in Leeds will be eligible for growth funding where a permanent expansion has occurred following an increase in the Published Admission Number (PAN), to meet basic need. Growth funding will be paid in the first year only that the permanent change in PAN is established.
5.3.6	The new guidance states that both primary and secondary schools will now be eligible for growth funding where a permanent expansion has occurred to meet basic need. Growth funding will be paid until the permanent expansion is accommodated in every year group.
5.3.7	The guidance was published in October 2023 and updated on 19 th December 2023 in respect of the growth fund.
5.3.8	Discussion was held around what the growth fund going forward as schools cannot be funded for growth retrospectively. It was noted that any change to the proposals would reduce the contribution to the formula funding and the cap on gains would reduce from the 1.26% assumed in the report.
5.3.9	It was put to the SF that the growth allocations from the EFSA should benefit the growth schools now and this would be in the spirit of the guidance.

5.3.10	It was noted that any change to the proposals assumed in the report would change the figures included in the appendix, also noted was the pending ESFA deadline for the APT submission (Monday 22/1/24).
5.3.11	It was mentioned in the discussion that Bradford SF were made aware of the changes in the guidance at their meeting in October 2023.
5.3.12	<p>HW sent a plea to the Forum to take a decision to benefit all schools in financial need. Comments were made in the discussion by forum members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any school that supports the increase in PAN, did this knowingly at that point in time, and should have considered this and the funding conditions at the time. • National Funding Formula guidance was issued in October 2023 and specifically relates to school getting growth fund year on year. • LM advised that the LA are looking to update the criteria for 24/25, we need to know at what point this starts. £1.5m would allow for schools who have already accommodated. Should SF agree to fund existing growth schools or new growth from 24/25 budget? • Growth Fund criteria is section 1.32 in the report, £250 per pupil for additional resources and there are no plans to change this.
5.3.13	<p>It was estimated that a change to the existing growth criteria to fund all growth schools would cost £1m, but that the growth fund allocation could meet this.</p> <p>School Forum were asked to vote on the following 2 options.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Option 1 - Implement the policy to support secondary schools with new growth from April 2024. 5 have voted in favour - carried. 2. Option 2 – Implement the policy to support secondary schools with both new and existing growth requirements from April 2024. 4 have voted in favour.
5.4	<u>Falling Rolls Fund</u>
5.4.1	For the first time in 2024/25 funding can be allocated to local authorities based on both growth and falling rolls.
5.4.2	Leeds has not received any falling rolls fund as neither the local authority nor schools within meet the strict funding criteria, therefore we will not be implementing it. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.
5.5	<u>Central School Services Block</u>
5.5.1	<p>The Central School Services Block (CSSB) is to fund local authorities for the statutory duties they hold for both maintained schools and academies. The CSSB brings together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding for statutory duties • funding for ongoing central functions, such as admissions • funding for historical commitments

5.5.2	For 2024/25, this allocation has been set at £5.125m for Leeds. This is an increase of £19k compared to 2023/24. Within this, there has been a reduction of 20% on the historic commitment element in line with previous DfE statements to reduce funding on this element.																													
5.5.3	Schools Forum was requested to approve £5.125m centrally for statutory duties, centrally employed teachers' pension costs, ongoing central functions, historic commitments, and to note the increase in the charge for the single national licence (which is still subject to ESFA confirmation).																													
5.6	<p>9 responses 100% agreement for Statutory responsibilities</p> <p><u>High Needs Block</u></p>																													
5.6.1	Subsequent to the indicative high needs funding allocation presented to SF in November, confirmation of the final funding allocation has now been received. This is aligned to the indicative funding reported. The high needs budget report will be presented at February's SF.																													
6.0	De-Delegation of Services 2024/25																													
6.1	LM presented the De-Delegation of Services 2024/25 report to the Schools Forum members. The report includes the outcome of the recent consultation with all maintained primary and secondary schools on the de-delegation of funding in 2024/25. Most of the schools who replied to the consultation were in favour of the de delegated funds, so the report proposes the continued de-delegation of these council services.																													
6.1.2	41 Schools responded to the consultation.																													
6.1.3	In total the 2024/25 consultation proposed de-delegated funding of £5.66m. This is an increase of £135k compared to 2023/24 proposals which totalled £5.53m																													
6.1.4	To mitigate further pressures on school budgets it was anticipated that the excess surplus balance clawed back from schools will contribute to the de delegated contingency budget thereby reducing the amount to be de delegated from schools.																													
6.1.5	It is estimated that £500k will be added to the contingency budget from the claw-back of excess surplus balances, ensuring the overall budget remains at £749,306 in 2024/25, the same level as in 2023/24.																													
6.1.6	Question was asked about the SILC excess balances, and would these be subject to claw back? It was answered that at present we don't claw back from SILC schools, however in the future we could, SILC Schools do not contribute, so any surplus would stay within the High Needs Block.																													
6.1.7	<table border="1" data-bbox="225 1709 1217 2060"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Service area</th> <th colspan="4">Schools in support of de-delegation continuing</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Primary</th> <th>Secondary / Through School</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>School contingency fund</td> <td>33</td> <td>4</td> <td>37</td> <td>90%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maternity and other cover</td> <td>36</td> <td>5</td> <td>41</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Suspended staff cover</td> <td>33</td> <td>3</td> <td>36</td> <td>88%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trades union facilities</td> <td>35</td> <td>4</td> <td>39</td> <td>95%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Service area	Schools in support of de-delegation continuing				Primary	Secondary / Through School	Total	Percentage	School contingency fund	33	4	37	90%	Maternity and other cover	36	5	41	100%	Suspended staff cover	33	3	36	88%	Trades union facilities	35	4	39	95%
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Trades union facilities	35	4	39	95%																										

School library services (primary only)	34	-	34	94% (of Primary schools)
Free school meals eligibility	35	4	39	95%
Behaviour support services	33	3	36	88%
Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners	34	2	36	88%
School Improvement	31	3	34	85%

6.2 School Contingency Fund

6.2.1 The School Contingency Fund is retained centrally for maintained schools but only for a limited range of circumstances. If not de-delegated the schools would have to fund these risks themselves. It is proposed that the funding would be de-delegated as an amount per pupil of £4.16.

6.2.3 Question was asked about the likely outcomes of paying schools from this budget in 2024/25. SM responded that so far, we have paid out around £60k 2024/25 and we are currently looking to be underspent.

6.2.4 **90%** of responses from schools were in favour of this.
School Forum voted **4 in favour**
1 abstention

6.3 Maternity/parental and other cover

6.3.1 The total budget proposed for 2024/25 is £2.704m which is a £104k (4.0%) increase compared to 2023/24. The increase in the total de-delegated funding is due to the additional costs of maternity leave payments.

6.3.2 Discussion was held around how this fund would be used going forward as more parents are choosing to share parental leave and how this can affect school budgets.

6.3.3 **ACTION** LM agreed to speak to LCC HR team to seek further guidance on the impact of shared parental leave.

6.3.4 Question was asked about whether the SILC schools are supported with this. SM explained that SILC schools are asked if they want to contribute to this fund.

6.3.5 **100%** of responses from schools were in favour of this.
School Forum voted **4 in favour**
1 abstention

6.4 Suspended staff cover

6.4.1 This budget provides support for schools where employees are suspended. The total budget proposed for 2024/25 is £100k, which is a £25k decrease from 2023/24 and is based on recent trends. This equates to a rate of £1.67 per pupil.

LM

6.4.2	It was clarified to the forum that HR have advised that this fund is not used towards redundancy payments as there is no evidence that schools do this. Previously 7 schools received it over 2 financial years, only 1 school has received in 2 separate years.
6.4.3	<p>88% of responses from schools were in favour of this.</p> <p>School Forum voted 4 in favour 1 abstention</p>
6.5	Trade Union facilities
6.5.1	The Trade Union Facilities budget covers the cost of providing convenor salaries, physical facilities, and other associated costs. Where convenors work within a school, this budget provides the school with funds to cover the cost of release to undertake city-wide Trade Union duties. The total budget proposed for 2023/24 is £370k. This budget is the same as the 2023/24 proposals. The amount per pupil has increased to £6.17 from £6.14 in 2023/24.
6.5.2	1.10.3 within the report details what will happen if de-delegation does not continue. The future access to local trade union representatives to support staff at all levels of seniority within schools is at stake. By retaining this budget centrally, schools benefit from collective bargaining; professional representation in policymaking; representation of employees in grievance, performance, absence, and disciplinary processes; support in employment tribunals; reduced litigation risk by working with employers; advice on TUPE; support with school governance structures and support with Ofsted outcomes.
6.5.3	<p>95% of responses from schools were in favour of this.</p> <p>School Forum voted 4 in favour 1 abstention</p>
6.6	School library service (primary schools only)
6.6.1	The School Library Service (SLS) provides a range of resources to underpin the curriculum, inspire creativity and raise attainment for primary-aged pupils. The proposal is that the funding would be de-delegated for primary schools as an amount per pupil of £7.17. Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of £333k. If this is not de-delegated schools would have to fund this from their school budget.
6.6.2	<p>94% of responses from Primary schools were in favour of this.</p> <p>School Forum voted 3 in favour 1 abstention</p>
6.7	Free school meals eligibility
6.7.1	This budget supports the administration cost of carrying out free school meal eligibility assessments and is provided by the council's Welfare & Benefits Service. Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of £171,600. The individual rates per pupil have increased; for 2023/24 the rates were £1.67 per pupil and £3.89 per pupil in receipt of FSM in the past six years. If de-delegation does not continue, then each school would need to make their own arrangements to administer its own free school meals service.

6.7.2	<p>95% of responses from schools were in favour of this.</p> <p>School Forum voted 4 in favour 1 abstention</p>
6.7.3	<p>LM advised the Forum that she has asked for some clarity around this service in response to a comment received during the consultation with schools, regarding the work schools must do for FSM as being high. This comment has been detailed in the report.</p>
6.8	<p>Behaviour support services</p>
6.8.1	<p>This budget is for the Inclusion Support Team which provides support to schools for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs. The team provide advice to settings and, where appropriate, may provide assessments, recommendations, and training to build capacity and support needs. It is proposed that this funding would be de-delegated at £1.05 per pupil plus £3.24 per pupil in receipt of FSM in the past six years. This reflects the additional need at schools with higher measures of deprivation. Based on forecast pupil data this would provide central de-delegated funding of £112,300 for 2024/25, which is an increase of £4,300 from 2023/24. If de-delegation does not continue, then there would be no centrally retained budget for behaviour support and the alternative would be for the service to operate under a traded basis.</p>
6.8.2	<p>88% of responses from schools were in favour of this.</p> <p>School Forum voted 3 in favour 1 Against 1 abstention</p>
6.9	<p>Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners.</p>
6.9.1	<p>This budget makes provision for staff who build capacity within schools to improve the educational outcomes for new arrivals (NA), black and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils as well as those for whom English is an additional language (EAL), The total budget proposed for 2023/24 is £290,000, which is the same as 2023/24. It is proposed that funding will be de-delegated at a rate of £1.39 per FSM pupil and £32.92 per English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupil for primary schools and £1.48 per FSM pupil and £186.57 per EAL pupil for secondary schools.</p>
6.9.2	<p>It was noted that the LA recognise these as key priority areas for the city and is committed to reviewing these services and associated budgets in the new year. The directorate will be looking for input into this review from those schools who pay the higher proportions into this budget and plan to set up a working group to facilitate this.</p>
6.9.3	<p>It was mentioned by a forum member that some schools did not vote this year as they felt they were not listened to last year. Dave Clark advised that there is an EAL consultant to look again at how this fund is used. There are 4/5 team members who will be working on this.</p>
6.9.4	<p>There was agreement from other members that this is a high amount and that they are getting some value from their contribution. DC said that it would be looked at to ensure that they are getting value for money.</p>
6.9.5	<p>88% of responses from schools were in favour of this.</p> <p>School Forum voted 2 in favour</p>

	1 Against 2 abstentions	
6.10	School Improvement	
6.10.1	<p>The Local Authority previously received a School Improvement and Brokerage Grant (SIBG) to enable it to undertake its statutory and core support, monitoring and intervention duties to maintained schools. The grant was removed in 2023/24 and Schools Forum approved the de-delegation of £799k which represented the equivalent full grant that the Local Authority would no longer receive towards the provision of school improvement services. The budget proposed for 2024/25 is £831k. It is proposed that the funding would be de-delegated as an amount per pupil of £13.86 per pupil; this is an increase of £0.61 per pupil from 2023/24. Without de-delegation there will be a very significant reduction, and potential removal, of the Learning Improvement services to all maintained schools.</p> <p>1.15.1 of the report details the resources that the fund is used for.</p>	
6.10.2	Question was asked about whether SILC schools would receive Head Teacher support. Dave Clark clarified that the LA would support SILC schools outside of this fund, however it remains an option for SILC schools to pay into the fund and all SILC schools do.	
6.10.3	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. ACTION DC will provide more information on this to PH including a breakdown.	DC
6.10.4	<p>85% of responses from schools were in favour of this.</p> <p>School Forum voted 3 in favour 1 Against 1 abstention</p>	
6.11	The final section of the report includes general comments that arose from the consultation to schools.	
6.11.1	<p>Question was asked about what the implications would be if Schools Forum do not approve to de delegate, and to do this in January does not leave enough time to manage the process of redundancy.</p> <p>LM outlined the reasons behind the time of the de-delegation consultation and decision. If a service is not agreed to be de-delegated, then the local authority would consider other trading models to fund the services.</p>	
9.0	Any Other Business	
	None	
10.0	Meeting Dates for 2023-24 and Forward Plan	
	The next meeting will take place via MS Teams on Thursday 22nd February 2024 at 1630-1830.	
	Close	