

SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 11 January 2022 **at 1.00 pm via Zoom**

Members Present: Sue Hammond – Headteacher, Whitmore High School (CHAIR)
Louise Browning – Headteacher, Norbury School (VICE CHAIR)
Patrick O'Dwyer – Divisional Director Education Services
Sue Maguire – Headteacher, Hatch End High School
Steven Deanus – Headteacher, Roxeth Primary School
Chris Briggs – Headteacher, St Joseph's Primary School
Councillor Christine Robson – Portfolio Holder Young People & Schools
Lee Helyer – Headteacher, Kingsley High School
Sash Hamidi – Executive Headteacher, The Pegasus Partnership Trust
David O'Farrell – Headteacher, St Bernadette's Primary School
Simon Arnell – Headteacher, Avanti House School
Rashid Benserghin – Headteacher, Roxbourne Primary School
Sarbdip Noonan – Principal, Stanmore College

Officers in Attendance: Jo Frost – Finance Business Partner

SH opened the meeting.

1 Apologies and Order of the Agenda

Apologies were received and accepted from:

Nick Waldron – Headteacher, Pinner Park Primary School
PK Maselino – Headteacher, The Helix Education Centre
Geraldine Higgins – Headteacher, Sacred Heart Language College

The order of the agenda was agreed.

2 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 were agreed.

3 Matters Arising

Action carried forward from meeting 16 November 2022.

Is it possible to track a cohort of students from mainstream secondary provision and the cost of the EHCP compared with cost of college provision. Request extended to include primary to secondary.

ACTION JF

4 DSG Budget Setting 2022-23

JF introduced the report which set out the 2022-23 final DSG settlement and provisional school Budgets

JF discussed the overall DSG allocation including the pupil numbers from the October 2021 census. SH queried the number of pupils joining a Harrow school from out of borough after the October 2021 census.

ACTION POD

Schools Forum noted the 2022-23 DSG allocation at Table 1.

DOF raised concern about the differential in funding between primary and secondary units of funding. It needs to be recognised that more investment in early years education is beneficial to secondary schools.

SMag explained that making provision for a secondary curriculum is costly as cannot plan for multiples of 30.

DOF queried if there was an option to realign this distribution of funding.

SH explained that even before the NFF was introduced in Harrow there was always a funding differential between primary, KS3 and KS4.

MB queried whether the PUF/SUF for other London LAs could be distribution

ACTION JF

PG queried how many LAs were using the NFF. JF explained that the DfE stated in its recent consultation that around 50% of LAs were mirroring the NFF.

Schools Forum discussed the proposed use of the growth fund. LH queried whether any of it could be used for special school provision. JF clarified that this was only available for mainstream growth.

SaH and MB expressed concerns for schools with vacancies and whether any funding could be used to support schools. SH explained that this has never been implemented as schools are reluctant to divert funding to fund vacant places because if you allocate funding to falling rolls then you reduce funding available for actual pupils in school places.

The growth fund was agreed.

Schools Forum :

- Noted overall funding formula and distributed funding at Appendix A
- Noted indicative formula derived 2022-23 budgets at school level at Appendix B and changes between years at Appendix C
- Noted the final MFG from paragraph 22

Schools Forum supported the proposed technical adjustment and noted was subject to approval by the DfE.

Schools Forum discussed the Trade Union Facilities Time de-delegation proposal.

SH expressed concern that an agreement had not been reached with the academies sector and stated that historically only maintained schools had funded facilities time and that this could potentially continue to happen in future years.

SMag referred to the consultations held in the autumn term stated that she did not believe that academies understood their obligations and the importance of responding or reaching an agreement. SD and PG both agreed that the response rate was low as colleagues may not have understood the obligations.

There was query about whether the consultation could be repeated

SH suggested that maintained schools continue to vote on de-delegation of £2.61 per pupil subject to:

- Consultation with academies is repeated
- Academy colleagues continuing to buy into the pooled arrangement – academy reps to work with colleagues to reach an agreement

SH also requested that the model be reviewed for number of members in HT unions and reassurance that annual paperwork is supplied by unions to demonstrate the work they are doing and justify the claims on the facilities time funding.

It was agreed that SH and LB would work with POD on this

ACTION SH/LB/POD

Schools Forum maintained mainstream members voted on the proposal to de-delegate £2.61 per pupil. All members voted in agreement with the proposal.

Schools Forum noted the High Needs Block funding at Table 8.

SH expressed concern that the EHCP funding has not been inflated when it is supposed to be funding staff costs. JF explained that the matrix was reviewed a couple of years ago – it was never supposed to be inflationary and there is currently no mechanism for applying inflation.

SH expressed concern that ARMs funding has not been reviewed for many years. JF clarified that a review of ARMs funding is currently underway.

SH stated that there had been a 15% reduction in funding because of lack of funding for inflation.

JF explained that there is cycle of review of each funding streams which started with EHCP funding in mainstream schools, then special schools and currently ARMs. SH asked for a timeline for the review cycle.

ACTION POD

LH stated that mainstream schools at least have received mainstream school funding increases in the last few years unlike special schools and to increase funding from the HNB to mainstream schools would reduce funding available for specialist provision.

Schools Forum noted

- The Early Years funding at Table 9
- Other sources of funding available in 2022-23 as set out from paragraph 56.

5 Any Other Business

None

The meeting closed at 2:35pm