

Minutes of the Meeting of the Islington Schools Forum, held at the Laycock Centre, Laycock Street, Islington N1 1TH on Thursday 17 January 2019 at 2pm.

PRESENT

Forum Members

Barrie O'Shea (BO'S)	Headteacher, Duncombe Primary School (Chair)
Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy (AM-L)	Headteacher, Newington Green Primary School
Lisa Horton (LH)	Headteacher, Hargrave Park Primary School
Fiona Godfrey (FG)	Headteacher, Kate Greenaway Nursery School
Andrew Bosi (AB)	Governor, Rotherfield Primary School
Vicky Linsley (VL)	Headteacher, St Mary Magdalene Academy
Cllr Rakhia Ismail (RI)	Islington Council – non-Executive Member
Paul Lasok (PL)	Secondary Governor, St Aloysius
Cassie Moss (CM)	Headteacher, Yerbury Primary
Matt Little	Vice-principal, City of London Academy Highbury Grove
Nigel Smith	Headteacher, New River College
Tanya Watson	Headteacher, William Tyndale Primary (Academy)

Other Attendees

Tim Partington (TP)	Head of Children's Services, Finance
Debbie Stevenson (DS)	Schools Funding Manager
Mark Taylor (MT)	Director of Learning and Schools
Jane Wright (JW)	Manager Schools and EY Governance and Clerk

	Agenda item	Decision
1.	<p>B O'S welcomed three new members of the Forum: Paul Lasok, Secondary Governor (St Aloysius), Cassie Moss, Primary Head teacher (Yerbury) and Matt Little, Secondary Academy (City of London Academy Highbury Grove). The fourth new member, Francis McDonald-Gonzalez, Secondary Special School Head teacher (Richard Cloudesley), had sent his apologies.</p> <p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE The following apologies were accepted: Jo Dibb, Anita Grant, Francis McDonald-Gonzalez, Maggie Elliott, David Barry.</p>	All Forum Members
2.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2018</p> <p>a. Accuracy - AGREED AS ACCURATE</p> <p>b. Matters Arising</p> <p>i. (Item 1 p.542) Following a discussion about the timing of meetings, it was AGREED to continue holding the meetings 2-4pm, but this would be reviewed in January 2020.</p>	DS

	<p>ii. (Item 7, page 546) – DS will be producing a report on the impact of mobility on schools and circulating this to the Schools Forum.</p>	
3.	<p>SCHOOLS FORUM COMPOSITION</p> <p>The clerk (JW) reported to a short paper.</p> <p>JW highlighted that four of the six vacancies had been filled, with a primary head teacher and secondary head teacher vacancy remaining unfilled.</p> <p>JW also pointed out that the terms of office of six current members were due to end by the end of March 2019.</p> <p>The clerk had looked in to the facility for extending terms of office. The DfE's, <i>Schools Forum: Operational and good practice guide</i>, September 2018, indicated that schools and academies members do not need to have identical terms and length of term of office was at the discretion of the local authority. Terms of office do need to be stipulated at the time of appointment.</p> <p>B O'S pointed out the importance of varying terms of office to ensure continuity and maintaining a good level of knowledge and understanding of the business conducted. MT agreed but added it was also useful to have new representatives for the purposes of fairness and transparency . DS reminded the Forum that members can stand again for a new term of office.</p> <p>RI commented that she had been told by a couple of schools that they had not received the invitation to nominate themselves and/or had possibly sent in nominations but not heard back. JW clarified that all relevant head teachers had been emailed inviting nominations.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <p>i. That current members whose terms of office were due to end before end March would be invited to continue for a year until March 2020</p> <p>ii. That the matter would be taken to the Heads' Briefing on 30 January to explain about the extensions and invite primary and secondary heads to nominate themselves for the two vacancies. Heads to be given information about current members of the Forum ('touchstone' people) and encouraged to talk to them if they wanted to learn more – also to be assured that a thorough induction will be provided.</p> <p>iii. That JW would contact RI to find out which schools had not received the info/whose nominations not seen and let MT know ahead of the Heads' briefing. JW to contact Isabelle Jourdan to ensure five minutes on agenda to discuss this on 30 January.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>BO'S</p> <p>Clerk</p>
4.	<p>2019-20 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) FUNDING ALLOCATIONS</p> <p>DS outlined the presented paper.</p> <p>DS had presented indicative figures at the 29 November 2018 meeting. Islington received its actual allocations on 17 December 2018. Final adjustments are still due for Early Years and High Needs blocks.</p> <p>Schools Block – a significant reduction of £1.3m.</p>	

<p>The number of primary pupils has fallen by 193 compared to 2018/19, resulting in £800K reduction in funding. Offsetting that is a small increase in secondary pupils (33) and the one-off cash payment of £1.2m explained at the last Forum (miscalculation of allocation by DfE).</p> <p>Growth funding has reduced by £400K as it is now based on a formula rather than the previous flat historic amount.</p> <p>The reduction in premises funding of £358K was anticipated – much of it as Mount Carmel had moved out of receiving Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme; £291k. The rest is due to reduction in NNDR (Business Rates) – these are funded on a lagged basis so increased costs expected in 2019/20 will only be received as income in Islington in 2020/21.</p> <p>Central School Services Block</p> <p>Based on pupil numbers, this block is also down by £27K. The historic commitments strand remains at £824K but the DfE expects to reduce from 2021/22.</p> <p>High Needs – most pressure is still on this block, despite an additional £433K as part of the extra £250m national funding announced on 17 December 2018 (for 2018/19 and 2019/20).</p> <p>In relation to funding of Special Free Schools (see paragraph 4.3), Islington has currently only received £4K out of £10K per place while the full £10K has been recouped from the funding allocations. The expectation is that the LA will receive the shortfall (£780K) in March 2019, but this is to be confirmed.</p> <p>Also expected in March is the import/export adjustment in relation to children from out of borough accessing Islington special schools and vice-versa.</p> <p>Early Years – funding so far based on January 2018 Census. The ESFA will adjust the Early Years Block funding based on the spring census; 17th January, in June. (To note only: Funding for the summer term 2019 will be based on January 2019 Census, funding for autumn and spring terms 2020 will be based on January 2020 Census. A final retrospective funding adjustment will be received in June 2020).</p> <p>The allocations notified in December are reflective of the 2019-20 hourly rates which sees a reduction for the 3 and 4 year olds. These new rates represent the end of the transition period of protection.</p> <p>The maintained nursery supplement for the three nursery schools is slightly increased by £11.8K and will be split equally between the three schools.</p> <p>Disability Access Fund (DAF) – small reduction based on January 2018 census although final allocations will be announced in June. The suggestion was made that head teachers could be further encouraged to claim back from the LA if any of their 3 and 4 year olds were on Disability Living Allowance (DLA). Heads would need to record on their January 2019 census and provide evidence of the DLA letter to Tim Keating in the Finance Team in order for the schools to receive the £615 per child. AGREED – to mention this at Head teachers' Briefing on 30 January.</p>	<p>B O'S/DS</p> <p>DS</p>
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	<p>CM requested that in future it would be helpful to have percentage changes, on the overall funding allocations, as well as amounts on information produced about this funding. AGREED</p> <p>A M-J raised the issue of why there was growth funding when there are vacancies in some schools. DS referred the Forum back to the report at the last meeting on Places Planning. There are not necessarily the right number of places in the right place and at the right time – place planning is professional guess work looking at trends.</p> <p>Following a question from FG, DS confirmed that the net drop in funding for EY of £35K was down to the reduced hourly rate.</p> <p>NOTED</p>	
5.	<p>2019-20 CENTRAL RETENTION</p> <p>TP presented the paper which included further breakdowns/commentary on allocations of DSG.</p> <p>Schools Forum was asked to agree central retention under the Central Schools Services Block and central retention under the Early Years Block. Central retention under the Schools Block for growth and falling rolls was covered under Item 6 on the agenda.</p> <p>In 2018/19 the Central School Services Block will reduce by £26K and the Early Years Block by £35K.</p> <p>The High Needs Block is still under pressure, there has been a 20% increase in Islington, since 2014, in the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) while the eligible child population has only increased by 1%. Schools Forum was advised to identify an estimated additional £600K to support the High Needs Block.</p> <p>Funds available to help identify £600K were outlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional increase in HN block (£132K) • The rest of the funding due at the LA to cover the costs of places in special free schools (Element 2 funding, referred to in Item 4 - £700K) • Pre-agreed transfers from the CSSB agreed by Schools Forum in January 2018: Mother Tongue Supplementary Schools (MTSS); Summerversity and Cardfields (up to £177K in total): Cardfields is generating more income and no longer needs DSG funding; the MTSS had been advised two years ago that the funding would be ending – B O'S had visited them for discussions; • Unallocated CSSB funding (£103K). <p>Set against these sums were provisional extra demands on the funding – reduction in CSSB as now formula-funded (£26K) and reversal of one-off transfer from the Schools Block (£190K) to support central contribution to BSF costs following closure of Mount Carmel.</p> <p>While overall identified resources total £896K, the £700k element 2 funding has not been confirmed by the ESFA and, Schools Forum were asked to note</p>	

additional funding to New River College increased numbers have not been matched by increases in budget..

The 29 November 2018 Forum had agreed to recommendations for changes to School Funding (Item 7) and to Growth and Falling Rolls funding (Item 8).

There was lengthy discussion about the **Early Years Block proposals**.

It was proposed to use £33K for extra Funding for Central Services to support and enhance provision for children with SEND, including:

- Uplift in contracts with Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) – max increase 5%
- Establishing pilot peer support programme for providers in relation to children with severe and complex needs
- Contribution to improvement of data collection and analysis.

It was proposed to maintain 3.7% allowed for growth contingency.

It was proposed to increase the SEN Inclusion Fund from £545K to £1,081K:

- £125K to make the increase in the hourly rate for additional staff working with children with SEND permanent to bring it in line with school staff – (from £12 to £14.95 per hour) this was discussed by EY subgroup in December 2018.
- £411K for 125 EYPR places for 3 and 4 year olds (we have successfully accessed this funding in past two years through the disapplication process – this is a technical adjustment discussed by EY subgroup to better safeguard the funding as it will no longer be subject to disapplication (also discussed by subgroup in December 2018).

A M-J expressed the view that the proposal to use £33K to support ‘...enhanced provision including...’ was a bit vague (para 5.2). She queried whether there could be overlap with Health Funding and if there would need to be clear QA measures in relation to CAHMS/SLT to ensure Value for Money.

TP commented that the budget for this type of support had been frozen for the last few years.

A M-J and TW expressed their reservation about the proposals in relation to the £33K. Not the £33K itself but the proposals for spending them. FG was also not sure these were the right 3 things to focus on.

A M-J advised the meeting that Sue Hamer was doing an SEND review given the reduction in resources. It was agreed the outcomes of that review would be useful.

In answer to a query about why 3.7% was proposed for growth contingency, it was clarified that this was in line with DfE best practice. This is set aside for:

- growth in summer in the summer term, as DSG funding allocations were based on the January census when numbers are lower
- a contingency for any retrospective negative funding adjustments from the ESFA in relation to prior years that cannot be passed on to settings, as occurred in 2016/17.

- In addition, this funding is used as transitional protection as the new funding arrangements in relation to 3 and 4 year olds bed in, also in line with DfE best practice.

B O'S queried if the contingency funding was temporary or permanent – DS replied that it depends on the January 2019 Census – the national and local funding arrangements for 3 and 4 years are still relatively new but should start to stabilise ***In relation to proposals for CSSB set out in Appendix A***

Cut £29k DSG contribution to Cardfields

Cut £123k DSG contribution Mother Tongue Supplementary Schools

Cut £25k DSG contribution to Summerservity

Use of the unallocated balance of £77k to meet the ongoing pressures in high needs

AGREED

In relation to proposals for the Early Years Block (which had been agreed by email by the EY subgroup)

Maintain central retention at 5%. This gives an additional £33k but Schools Forum would like more detailed proposals on how it will be used.

AGREED TO THE £33K BUT THE SCHOOLS FORUM NEEDS FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSALS – to ask Penny Kenway to attend the next meeting in March to clarify the proposals.

Ensure the growth contingency budget is maintained at 3.7% (an increase of £30k) – **SCHOOLS FORUM WOULD LIKE FURTHER DETAILS ON HOW THIS FUNDING IS USED IN MARCH BEFORE COMMITTING TO THE INCREASE OF £30k**

Increase the SEN Inclusion Fund by £536k made up of:

- £125k increase to mainstream the increase in the hourly rate for additional staffing at key transition points that was implemented in 2018/19, but funded from a one-off underspend in 2018/19
- £411k movement into the SEN Inclusion Fund of funding for 125 EYPR places for 3 & 4 year olds that we have successfully disappplied for in previous years.

AGREED SUBJECT TO FURTHER DETAILS ON THE ADDITIONAL £125k IN MARCH.

In relation to DSG Allocations 2019/20 as set out in Appendix B, these were AGREED (subject to clarifications sought on Appendix A).

It was clarified that De-delegation decisions had already been taken by the Schools Forum at the November 2018 meeting.

The extra support to New River College was **NOTED**

<p>6.</p>	<p>2019-20 SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA</p> <p>DS spoke to the report. Schools Forum had agreed in November 2018 to the principles and changes to the formula as set out in the paper.</p> <p>The meeting noted the pupil number movements. The numbers had been adjusted to allow for growing schools (60 places at Whitehall Park Primary). The use of the mobility factor (in local formula not in National Funding Formula [NFF] of £90.</p> <p>Allocations for funding of NNDR (business rates) set at actual cost 2018-19 and inflated by 10% in anticipation of continuing rate rises. We will not have actual charges 2019/20 in time for budget setting.</p> <p>Amounts to relevant schools for PFI up by 3%.</p> <p>There is an affordability gap of £398K – DSG Schools Block Allocation insufficient to allow NFF unit rates to be matched in local formula. Therefore, it was necessary to apply a negative minimum funding guarantee (MFG) of - 1% to ensure the formula remains within the funding allocations.</p> <p>Continuing to top slice the Schools Block to cover Growth and Falling Rolls as discussed at Schools Forum in November 2018.</p> <p>The £1.2 million one-off cash payment (for DfE miscalculation) will help with the issue of affordability of using NFF units in our local formula. £321K not allocated from this sum will be carried forward to 2020-21 and will be used to phase in reduction in lump sum, as previously agreed by Forum.</p> <p>Subject to the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review, further discussions will be held with the DfE regarding the additional funds allocated as a one-off cash payment.</p> <p>DS explained that Schools Forum/Schools need to look at the columns on Annex A 'Pre NNDR ADJS' (in white, not grey) to see the impact of the formula. To note: average funding for primary pupil £5.5K, for secondary £7.5K.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS – Agree 2019/20 formula factors and values as shown in 3.3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree final values retained for Growth and Falling Rolls (£721K and £330K) - Note final 2019-20 budget allocations shown in Annex A <p>AGREED</p> <p>NOTED</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>2019-20 EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA</p> <p>The meeting noted the outcome of the consultation on the EYFF and the recommendations that had been agreed by the Early Years Sub group- which had largely been discussed under Item 5 above.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with the SEN Inclusion Fund at the level stated in the consultation; £1,081k • To proceed with the disapplication process to the DfE – discussed in Item 5 on the agenda • 3 & 4 yr old EYNFF - To use the deprivation and flexibility factor within the EYSFF • 3 & 4 yr old EYNFF - To continue to use EYPP as the measure of deprivation • 2 yr old EYNFF - To continue to use the quality factor for the settings listed • 2 yr old EYNFF - To continue to use the small setting factor for childminders • 2 yr old EYNFF - To protect the 2 year old hourly rate for 2019-20 • To continue six weekly payments to PVI providers • To update on the SEND Review and its findings • Continue to review the EYPR process and funding in the coming year <p>NOTED</p>	
8.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND AOB</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Thursday 21 March, 2-4pm, Laycock Centre</p> <p>There being no AOB, the meeting closed at 4pm</p>	