

MINUTES OF SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING
Wednesday 10 February 2016
Committee Room 3, Waltham Forest Town Hall
5:30 – 7:00pm

ATTENDEES	CONSTITUENT
Shona Ramsay	Chair of Schools Forum and Secondary Headteacher Representative
Debbie Callender-O'Neill	Clerk to Schools Forum debbie.callender-oneill@walthamforest.gov.uk 020 8496 3669
Maintained Primary Headteacher Representatives (4)	
Jane Harris	Edinburgh Primary
Kate Jennings	Mission Grove School
Lindsey Lampard	Chingford CofE Primary
Maureen Okoye (Vice-Chair)	Davies Lane Primary School
Nursery School Representative (1)	
Sandra Campbell	Church Hill Nursery School and Children's Centre
Maintained Primary Governor Representatives (3)	
Thomas Goodall	Edinburgh Primary
Maintained Secondary Headteacher Representatives (3)	
Lynnette Parvez	Kelmscott School
Special School and Special Academies Representative (1)	
Ian Hogg for Gary Pocock	Hornbeam Academy
Primary Academies and Primary Free School Representatives (3)	
Lynne Harrowell	Larkwood Primary Academy
Anne Powell	Riverley Primary Academy
Non-School Representatives (4)	
Sarah Kendrick	Redwood Pre-School – Early Years Provider
Steve White	Trade Unions (NUT)
Penny Wycherley	Waltham Forest College representing the 16-19 Providers Sector
LBWF Officers	

Elisha Brett	Early Years Consultant
Elizabeth Freer	Education Business Consultant (PVI)
Eve McLoughlin	Head of Education Support
Rishi Peetamsingh	Group Accountant – Schools
Duncan Pike	Strategic Finance Advisor – Families
Observers	
Graham Jackson	Willowfield Humanities College

Minutes

1. Welcome all and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Chair also explained paper copies of the reports are available from the Clerk.

Clerk received the following apologies:

- Linzi Roberts-Egan – Deputy Chief Executive for Families Directorate
- Rosalind Turner – Interim Director of School Standards
- Cllr Mark Rusling – Portfolio Lead for Children and Young People
- Greta Akpeneye – Thorpe Hall Primary – **Primary Governor Representative**
- John Hernandez – Norlington School for Boys – **Secondary Headteacher Representative**
- Ian Moyes – Heathcote School – **Secondary Governor Representative**
- Gary Pocock – Hornbeam Academy – **Special School Representative**
- Moira Bishop – **Diocese of Brentwood Representative – Non-School Member**
- Mark Morrall – Chingford Foundation/Rushcroft – **Secondary Academy Representative**
- Julian Lee – Hawkswood Group – **PRU Representative**

2. Declaration of interest

There were none

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 11 November 2015 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed for accuracy.

There were no amendments to the minutes therefore Chair signed off as a true record of the meeting.

3.1 Matters Arising

Secondary Academy Representative

The Secondary Academy vacancy was discussed at the Secondary Headteacher Group meeting earlier today. A nominee from Connaught School for Girls has put themselves forward and this will be confirmed at the June meeting.

Update on Local Funding Formula for 2016-17

This report updates Schools Forum on the proposed allocation of funding for 2016-17.

After the report was distributed at the January Schools Forum, the Local Authority was alerted by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) they had made some errors on the Authority Pro Forma Tool (APT), therefore the Local Funding Formula had to be recalculated.

The appendices listed are drawn from the final version and match the individual budget statements sent to schools.

No questions or comments were raised

DECISION

Schools Forum noted:

- 2.1 The AWPU for primary schools is raised by **£31.50** (previously £10.50) to **£3,482.00** (previously £3,450.50).
- 2.2 The minimum funding guarantee remains set at MINUS 1.5% (set by the government) and that this is funded by gains being capped at **1.25%** (previously **2.24%**).
- 2.3 Appendix A provides a revised comparison between overall funding for 2015-16 and 2016-17.
- 2.4 Appendix B1 and B2 set out the revised LFF for primary and secondary schools respectively.
- 2.5 Appendix C shows the revised pupil characteristics per school.
- 2.6 Appendix D provides a revised comparison of funding from factors 2015-16 and 2016-17.

<http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schoolsforum> **Agenda item 3.1**

4. Verbal Update on the National Funding Formula and Schools Block Review Group

Rishi Peetamsingh attended a finance meeting at the London Councils offices regarding the reduction in funding of the National Funding Formula (NFF).

School funding campaign group, f40 developed a formula model which suggested a 10% loss of funding. In another model it was suggested a 5% loss of funding. A consultation is expected to be launched shortly to determine the national funding formula that works.

Comment:

The NUT calculated their estimate which resulted in an 11% loss of funding. This could become a serious situation which could result in more redundancies. The union is working with Local Authority to review the staff turnover. The NUT would be happy to work with Headteachers and governors to maintain staff personnel.

The Schools Block Review Group shall be meeting on Monday 22 February at 5:15pm to discuss the local formula for 2017-18 (should we continue to have local discretion) and any update on the national consultation. London Councils will be running workshops. An emergency meeting of Schools Forum may be called so that the LA can make a joint response with Schools Forum on the proposals.

5. Early Years Funding Block: Provision for the free education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds for 2016-17 and Feedback from consultation – For Discussion and Decision

The report outlines the following financial information in relation to the provision of free education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds:

- Total funding available for allocation to providers in 2016-17.
- Final indicative budget shares for providers in 2016-17.
- Proposed method for collecting pupil data and making payments to providers in 2016-17.

Table 1 outlines the hourly rates per pupil for 2015-16. This was agreed by Cabinet in March 2015. The PVI base rate funding is £3.90 per hour including 15p premises supplement. It should state on the table that this excludes childminders, they will receive the £3.75 base rate.

Table 2 sets out the breakdown of Early Years funding for 2, 3 and 4 year olds for 2016-17. The Control Total should read **£16.958 million**, not £16.948 million as stated in the report.

Section 5 explains the predicted budget shares for 2016-17 and how the numbers were calculated. Paragraphs 5.1.1 to 5.1.3 recommend adjustments to improve the efficiency of the process for predicting the number of children.

Paragraph 5.3 which data set we will use when a school has both an Edubase and Ofsted EY number. The Early Years Ofsted data will only be used where the age range of the school does not include 3 year olds.

Following discussions in the Task and Finish group and the report to Schools Forum in January, paragraphs 5.4.1 to 5.4.4 outlines the calculation of the funding formula.

Appendix A outlines the final indicative hour rate for 2016-17.

Questions/comments

Question (Primary Head Rep 1) was raised and referred to the figures on Appendix C and whether these were an under/overspend with regards to the figure of approx. £2.8 million.

Response: Appendix C outlines the indicative budgets for a cumulative £5.7million underspend from year prior to 2015-16, (of which the majority was trajectory funding received to develop and increase take up of FEEE places for 2 year olds) that would be spent over a 4 year period.

Question (Primary Head Rep 2): In future years would it mean there won't be an underspend? **Response:** It is unclear at this point whether there will be an underspend from additional income, as the final budget allocations for 2015-16 are determined by the numbers of children recorded in the Jan 2015 census and Jan 2016 Census. Once this analysis is done by the EFA this will determine whether we get an additional budget allocation, because the numbers of children have increased or a budget reduction because the numbers of children have reduced. This final budget adjustment will not be made until 2015-16 and could result in an underspend for 2015-16. What we must also take into consideration is that some of the underspend is currently used to subsidise the hourly FEEE rate for 2 year old children as the EFA fund the LA at £5.28 per hour but we pay providers at £6.00. This will not be sustainable in the long term and will have to be reviewed for the 2017-18 EYSFF.

Question (Primary Head Rep 1) In terms of the central retained funding is that the response from the consultation?

Response: The services that will be delivered via funding centrally retained by the LA have been devised based on the two consultations that were carried out with providers, and discussions at the Early Years Task and Finish group. The overwhelming majority of providers agreed with the proposals in the consultation. Approx. 1/3rd of all providers responded and there was a good spread of responses across the Maintained and PVI sector.

Question (Primary Head Rep 1) Question: I don't recall there being any question on any of the consultations about whether providers wanted to be paid at a higher rate to purchase services themselves?

Response: This question was asked as part of the consultation undertaken in Nov 15. I don't have the exact data to hand but I believe around 40% of providers said they would rather have more money to procure services themselves, so we have added a 4% increase to the base rate, to facilitate this. The majority of providers, approx. 60% said they would rather support services were funded via the centrally retained funding and coordinated by

the LA. The responses to both questions were from a combination of both Schools and PVI sector providers.

Question(Primary Head Rep 1): Who will be conducting the contract monitoring? What is the impact on the settings, what is the impact on the children and their progress? **Response:** The LA will carry out contract monitoring on all services commissioned by them. Appendix C sets out the broad focus and priority areas for the use of centrally retained funding. The details are currently being worked through. Support advice and training will be provided via a combination of LA staff and commissioned partners who have the relevant experience, knowledge and skills. There are a number of performance indicators that evidence the impact and improvement in Early Years such as the increase in Good and Outstanding Ofsted inspection outcomes, particularly in the PVI sector, up from just over 40% to over 80% currently. The LA are amongst the top performing LA's nationally with regards to closing the gap between FSM children and others and the EYPP data is also above average. This suggests that something about the current model is working.

Question(Primary Head Rep 1)Can we be assured for next year that we would receive feedback on the impact? **Response:** Of course, we are happy to provide feedback.

Question(Primary Head Rep 3): In terms of the central retained funding to support settings, are they are receiving funding twice due to those schools receiving a 'good' Ofsted rating? How do we support PVI settings where budgets are tight and yet still being asked to support them? **Response:** Providers who have an RI or inadequate Ofsted inspection outcome do not receive a quality supplement payment, they do however receive time limited intensive support, funded via the centrally retained budget, to improve the quality of provision and hopefully their Ofsted inspection outcome so that are eligible for a quality payment. Feedback from a number of providers who have received this support was that they valued this support more than the quality payment, as they would not have had the means to pay for this support themselves if they had needed to. We have no control as a LA over where PVI settings are opened as Ofsted are the regulatory body and will register an Early Years provider as long as they meet their quality standard for the areas that they regulate. The LA carry out additional checks in areas where Ofsted are not the regulator (e.g planning permission) before issuing an contract. If a provider meets all of these requirements the LA has a statutory duty to pay them to provide FEEE places. This can create over supply and a very competitive market in some areas.

Question (Primary Head Rep 3): Are providers who receive a quality payment for being outstanding required to support other settings as a condition of receiving this funding?

Response: There is no requirement from the LA for providers who are outstanding to support others although this is encouraged.

Question(Primary Head Rep 3): Why does it cost more to run an outstanding setting?

Response: Generally higher qualified staff, or operating at ratios higher than the statutory requirement for example, cost more. All schools have to have qualified teachers, but there is no requirement in PVIs, the manager only needs to have a NVQL3. Therefore, we find that PVI's who employ qualified teachers or staff with higher qualifications, for example an EYP, incur more costs. The LA will be conducting a unit costing exercise in 2016-17 to establish the true cost of providing a Free Early Education Place in a RI, Good and Outstanding setting, both for schools and PVIs. This exercise will establish whether higher unit costs result in a higher quality provision. There does not have to be a quality element with the EYSFF. A question was asked in the consultation as to whether providers wanted to keep the quality element and whether it should remain as it was for 2015-16, and the majority responded that it should be kept the same.

LA Comment: In the last Schools Forum report, there was a comparison exercise that was completed which showed that Waltham Forest is still amongst the LA's that topslice the least, despite the fact that we subsidise the hourly rate for 2 year old FEEE places at a rate of 72p per hour

Comment (Primary Head Rep 4): I think we need to acknowledge that the PVI sector need to be supported, as the children that attend these settings will ultimately come to our schools and we will benefit from these children being better prepared for school. We also need to recognise that if we are going to affect change we need to engage in the process. The PVI sector engaged and turned up in numbers to the Early Years Task & Finish Group, schools did not. We need to ensure that we engage earlier and organise ourselves better in future.

Comment (Primary Head 5): Together 4 Children recommend sector lead improvement.

LA Comment: We don't insist on, but do encourage sector led improvement and working together. Early Years Network Meetings were set up across the 4 Children Areas. They were poorly attended, particularly by schools. We will be looking at alternative ways to engage all sectors to drive sector led improvement in 2016-17 to use the expertise and disseminate good practice. This will include looking at commissioning Early Years partners to deliver support via the centrally retained budget. We will also look at whether the Early Years Task & Finish Group continue to meet throughout 2016-17 or whether this is replaced with an Early Years Challenge group, in line with the secondary and primary challenge groups.

Comment (Primary Head Rep 1): It would be helpful to know who the respondents were and whether it was from those rated as 'good' or whether it was mostly PVI settings.

Response: This can be found in Appendix E.

Votes:

For: 10

Against: 2

Abstention: 1

DECISION

Schools Forum agreed:

2.1.1 that the Final indicative hourly rates and budget shares for 2016-17 as set out in Appendix A and B and the process for predicting budget shares as set out in section 5 should form the basis of monthly allocations to all Early Years providers in 2016-17.

2.1.2 with the proposed procedure for the collection of data and adjustment to budget shares in 2016-17 as set out in section 6.

2.1.3 to maintain the funding rate for 2 year olds at £6.00 per hour for 2016-17. This will be subsidised in 2016-17 from a top up from the Early Years underspend and reviewed in 2017-18 when details of the new Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) are available.

2.1.4 to the funding rates for 3 and 4 year olds as set out in Table 5 for 2016-17 and the control total for 2016-17 as set out in Table 2.

2.1.5 the provisional 2016-17 centrally retained funding and 2014-15 carry forward underspend budgets as set out Appendix C.

Schools Forum noted:

2.1.6 The feedback from final consultation as set out in Appendix E.

2.1.7 that final outturn figures for 2015-16 are not available currently for 2,3 & 4 year old funding, but that any overspend will be funded from the 2014-15 underspend (Appendix C).

6. Growth Fund for 2016-17 and amendments to Growth Fund criteria – For information and decision

The report outlines several amendments to the criteria. Appendix C outlines the final Growth Fund allocation for 2016-17.

The existing Growth Fund criteria are retained, but with the following amendments:

- A new cap on the support for ‘Good and Outstanding Schools with falling rolls’ be set at **£100,000**.
- Changes to the wording on methodology of providing support for schools that are permanently expanding.
- Changes to the wording on permanent expansions and bulge classes to clarify that these apply where the LA has planned them.

No further questions or comments were raised.

Schools members, academies members and PVI representatives may vote on Recommendations 2.1.1 to 2.1.2

Votes:

For: 13

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

DECISION

Schools Forum agreed:

2.1.1 The Final Growth Fund Allocation for 2016-17 as set out in Appendix C.

2.1.2 The existing Growth Fund criteria are retained, but with the following amendments:

- A new cap on the support for ‘Good and Outstanding Schools with falling rolls’ be set at **£100,000**.
- Changes to the wording on methodology of providing support for schools that are permanently expanding.
- Changes to the wording on permanent expansions and bulge classes to clarify that these apply where the LA has planned them.

7 Schools Forum Dates 2016-17

The final meeting for the current academic year has been agreed to take place on **Wednesday 8th June 2016**. Schools Forum was asked to agree the proposed dates for the next academic year 2016-17:

Date	Forward Plan – To be confirmed
8 June 2016	
14 September 2016	
9 November 2016	
11 January 2017	
8 February 2017	<i>(Spring Half-term will be from 13 to 17 February 2017)</i>
8 March 2017	Reserved for any outstanding items prior to March 2017 Cabinet <i>(Cabinet date for March 2017 to be confirmed)</i>

An emergency meeting may be called due to the changes of the National Funding Formula. The meeting times shall remain the same, i.e. 5:30pm (light refreshments from 5pm)
The venue is likely to be held in Committee Room 3, but this will be confirmed in due course

DECISION

Schools Forum agreed:

The proposed dates for the academic year 2016-17

The Clerk will send calendar appointments in due course

8 Any Other Business

Steve White (NUT) attended a campaign event in the House of Commons last week regarding the school reform funding cuts. From that campaign Headteachers and governors would be contacted to work together with unions to support the campaign.

Task and Finish Group Meetings

The next Schools Block Review Group meeting shall be taking place on Monday 22 February at 5:15pm in the Town Hall.

The next Early Years Task and Finish Group has not been set up as there were discussions to set up an Early Years Challenge to review the engagement with Early Years partners.

The Inclusion Group (High Needs Block) shall be taking place on 16 March at 3.30-5:30pm at William Morris School

9 Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed the next meeting shall be taking place on **Wednesday 8th June 2016** at 5:30pm (light refreshments from 5pm). A room to be advised in due course, but will be held in Waltham Forest Town Hall.

The meeting ended at **6:35pm**