

**Hammersmith & Fulham
Schools Forum – 12 October 2021
Minutes of the meeting**

NOTE: This meeting was held remotely

Present

Voting members	Non-voting members
<p>Primary School Heads Karen Cunningham, St John XXIII Catholic Primary School Joe Brown, Old Oak Primary School Claire Fletcher, St Paul's CE Primary Sam Naismith (Flora Gardens Primary)</p> <p>Academies and Free Schools Gary Kynaston, Hammersmith Academy (Chair) Daniel Upfield, Ark Swift Academy Seamus Oates (Executive Director, Bridge AP Academy)</p> <p>Non-Schools Members Jane Gleasure (Little People, Early Years PVI)</p>	<p>Observers Chantelle Thomas-Payne, School Business Manager Alex Parker, Business Manager Aidan Smith, Governor Mark Hopper Joanne Dawson, National Finance Director for Ormiston Academies Trust</p>

Officers

Jacqui McShannon, Director of Children's Services
 Tony Burton, Head of Finance (Children's Services and Education)
 Jan Parnell, Director of Education
 Mandy Lawson, Assistant Director, Education and Disabilities
 Jill Lecznar, Head of Finance (Corporate)
 Valerie Irolla, Principal Accountant
 Daryle Mathurin, Strategic Lead Education, Assets and Operations
 David Abbott, Head of Governance

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND MINUTES

Apologies were received from Kathleen Williams.

The Chair welcomed new members and observers to the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

2. MAINTAINED SPECIAL SCHOOL AND RESOURCED PROVISION STRATEGY

Daryle Mathurin (Strategic Lead Education, Assets and Operations) presented the report that summarised the short-term strategy in lieu of the outcome of the SEN sufficiency review for H&F Special Schools and additionally resourced provision in H&F for the 2022/23 financial year.

Members supported the vision, strategy and identified commissioning and development priorities.

3. HIGH NEEDS ACADEMIES PLACEMENT STRATEGY & COMMISSIONING PROCESS

Daryle Mathurin (Strategic Lead Education, Assets and Operations) presented the report which summarised the 2022/23 High Needs Placement Strategy and Commissioning Process, including the number of high needs places commissioned at establishment level for academies for the 2022/23 academic year.

Seamus Oates (Bridge AP Academy) noted that paragraph 32 stated officers anticipated a 'neutral impact' but there would be a reduction in places commissioned from this year, and there had already been significant place reductions in previous years. He said there was a need for places at academies – not just for AP but also EHCP learners – and could not agree to the current proposals as presented in the report.

Joanne Dawson (Ormiston Academies Trust) also had concerns about the impact on pupil numbers which posed a fundamental risk to income and sustainability. The Trust was getting an external review of the income situation.

Daryle Mathurin said officers were committed to work with colleagues to come to a shared agreement. Further meetings were scheduled for later that week.

Claire Fletcher (St Paul's CE Primary) asked how schools would be selected. Daryle Mathurin said there would be an open conversation with schools around need. All schools would be included.

Joe Brown (Old Oak Primary School) noted the new provision in K&C and asked if that meant more spaces available for children in the borough. Daryle Mathurin said officers were looking at provision in neighbouring boroughs and where possible will jointly plan.

The Chair noted there was still work to be done with The Bridge on base funding and appropriate levels of top-up funding.

4. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK UPDATE

Jan Parnell (Director of Education) presented the report that provided an update on the High Needs Block programmes of work and performance

against the Safety Valve agreement at Q2. She noted that work was ongoing with SENCOs looking at new models. There was also a SEND workstream with colleagues in the primary sector.

RESOLVED

Schools Forum noted the current position of the High Needs Block and forthcoming transformation programmes.

5. PROVISIONAL 2022-23 SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA

Tony Burton (Head of Finance, Children's Services and Education) presented the report that detailed the decisions required for the 2022/23 budget setting process for the provisional Schools Block allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant, following the receipt of provisional funding allocations in Summer 2021 and the Authority Proforma Tool in August 2021. There would be a Schools Block funding increase of 1.74%. Officers had modelled two options (section 2 of the report) but the models would be updated in December with the new census information.

The Chair thanked officers for their financial modelling work. He also noted that despite small headline increases in funding, the education sector was still in a shrinking budgetary climate with inflationary pressures.

Schools Forum noted the report.

6. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT MONITORING Q2 2021-22

Tony Burton (Head of Finance, Children's Services and Education) presented the report that provided an update on the 2021/22 quarter 2 budget monitoring position after updates to the allocation received in July 2020 from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Tony Burton noted that the High Needs Block was forecast to overspend by £0.8m versus the funding allocation in 2021/22, which represented a significant improvement when compared with recent years.

Schools Forum noted the report.

7. UPDATED SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS

Jill Lecznar, (Head of Finance, Corporate) presented the scheme for financing schools with proposed changes.

Schools forum noted the updated scheme for financing schools.

8. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME (FOR INFORMATION)

The draft work programme was noted.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

Meeting started: 2.00 pm
Meeting ended: 3.40 pm

Chair

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