

Hammersmith & Fulham
Schools Forum – 18 January 2022
Minutes of the meeting

NOTE: This meeting was held remotely

Present

Voting members	Non-voting members
Primary School Heads Karen Cunningham, St John XXIII Catholic Primary School Joe Brown, Old Oak Primary School Claire Fletcher, St Paul's CE Primary Michele Barrett, Randolph Beresford / Vanessa Nursery Wendy Aldridge, Sullivan Primary Kathleen Williams, Holy Cross Primary Academies and Free Schools Seamus Oates (Executive Director, Bridge AP Academy) Non-Schools Members Jane Gleasure (Little People, Early Years PVI)	Observers Chantelle Thomas-Payne, School Business Manager Alex Parker, Business Manager Aidan Smith, Governor Mark Hopper

Officers

Jacqui McShannon (Director of Children's Services)
Jan Parnell (Director of Education)
Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education)
Caroline Baxter (Strategic Finance Manager)
Urmilla Dattani (Accountant)
Honor Green (Principal Accountant)
Valerie Irolla (Principal Accountant)
Jill Lecznar (Head of Finance Corporate)
Daryle Mathurin (Strategic Lead Education, Assets and Ops)
Ozioma Onwochei (Principal Accountant)
Satwinder Saraon (Head of SEND Development)
Adele Patriciello (Senior Accountant)
Phil Tomsett (Head of Early Years)
David Abbott (Head of Governance)

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES, AND MINUTES

Apologies

Apologies were received from Gary Kynaston, Sam Naismith, and Daniel Upfield.

Minutes of the previous meeting

Correction to apologies: Apologies were received from Kathleen Williams and Michele Barrett.

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

2. FINAL SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA PROPOSALS 2022-23

Tony Burton (Head of Finance for Children's Services and Education) presented the report which provided a briefing on the final Schools Block allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2022/23, following the receipt of final funding allocations and Authority Proforma Tool in December 2021.

Tony Burton highlighted section 2 of the report which gave details of the Schools Supplementary Grant announced in December 2021. The grant was an additional allocation of £3.2m for 22/23 on top of the core budget share of £111m. The grant applied to mainstream schools from reception to year 11. However, officers also expect additional funding for early years and post-16, likely based on head count. Appendix 5 of the report showed the estimated supplementary funding for 2022/23 based on the October 2021 census. The figures were subject to confirmation by Education and Skills Funding Agency in the Spring Term.

Tony Burton then ran through each of the recommendations – and noted that the references to '2021/22' in recommendations 1, 2, and 3 should be amended to '2022/23'.

Claire Fletcher (Chair) asked if the recommendations satisfied the Department for Education requirements around the High Needs Block. Tony Burton said officers had have received agreement or 'no comment / no dissent' on the recommendations concerning the High Needs Block transfer, the falling rolls fund, de-delegation, and the education function.

Karen Cunningham asked what the extra funding allocated to schools was based on. Tony Burton said it was based on three elements (detailed in 2.6 of the report):

- a basic per-pupil rate (with different rates for primary, key stage 3 and key stage 4)
- a lump sum paid to all schools, regardless of pupil numbers
- a per-pupil rate for pupils who are recorded as having been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years, with different rates for primary and secondary pupils.

The amended recommendations were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED

1. That the APT for the January 2022 recommended model be submitted to the ESFA for 2022/23 school budget shares, with revised NFF rates for local factors in appendix 1, an MFG value of 1.5% per pupil and a local LAC factor allocation £27,170 (Model 3 is recommended model).
2. Schools Forum agreed a proposal to continue to transfer 0.5% of the total Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2022/23. This equates to £0.556m based on the final allocation.
3. Schools Forum agreed a proposal to top-slice the 2022/23 Schools Block to the value of £0.200m or 0.18% of the total for the Falling Rolls protection fund in 2022/23.
4. That maintained school representatives at Schools Forum agreed to the proposed de-delegated budgets proposed for 2022/23 in Table 3 totalling £655,900.
5. That maintained school representatives at Schools Forum agreed to the proposed Education Functions budgets proposed for 2022/23 in Table 4 totalling £258,200.

3. EARLY YEARS BUDGET 2022-23

Jill Lecznar (Head of Finance Corporate) presented the report which updated the forum on the Initial Allocation of Early Years Block funding for 2022/23 based on January 2020 census numbers and explained the impact on the participation model for all providers.

Jill Lecznar noted that a review of the current spend on early years indicated a potential underspend of £300k due to unallocated contingency and lower than expected uptake on the Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund.

There was also a £917k brought-forward surplus from 2020/21 following the retrospective funding adjustment for the 2020/21 financial year. It was proposed that the surplus be used to offset the High Needs Block deficit and support the transformation programme for children with Special Educational Needs.

Satwinder Saraon (Head of SEND Development) said officers wanted a joint conversation with schools at upcoming workshops about how best to meet needs and develop school readiness. Jane Gleasure asked that maintained and PVI (private voluntary and independent nurseries) settings join together for the workshops. Officers said dates for the workstream on special needs would be presented shortly.

Jill Lecznar highlighted table 2, a breakdown of the initial Early Years funding allocations. She noted that the total allocation from the Department for Education was based on a January 2021 headcount. Due to Covid restrictions those numbers were very low compared to what was expected for 2022/23. To give a more accurate picture, officers based the budget on the January 2020 headcount. The figures would be adjusted throughout the year and the final figures would be agreed in July 2023.

Jane Gleasure asked if part of the consultation would include discussing intervention and inclusion officers. Posts had been lost in recent years and hadn't been replaced. Jill Lecznar said it could be covered in the central spend discussion. Satwinder Saraon added that officers recognised a gap had been left and it was an area the team wanted to address. The workshop on specialist services would help identify gaps in practice, knowledge and skills.

The recommendations were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED

1. Schools Forum noted the draft 2022/23 Early Year budget for consultation including an increase to the base rate from £6.26 to £6.39 (2.1%) and proposed hourly rates for deprivation detailed in Appendix 1 subject to consultation.
2. Detailed work will be done with the Maintained Nursery Schools to set up Service Level Agreements in order to commission work to provide training, build networks and disseminate best practice to the early years sector. This will also include work to ensure their ongoing financial sustainability.
3. Proposed timescale for Budget Consultation to Maintained Nursery Schools, Primary Schools with Nurseries, PVI providers and Childminders and the approval of final budget for Early Years Block is set out in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Budget Consultation Timescales

Date	Description
Week beginning 24 Jan 2022	Circulation of consultation
Friday 11 Feb 2022	Final date for responses
Tuesday, 8 Mar 2022	Schools Forum papers issued
Tuesday 15th March 2022	Schools Forum
By 31st March 2022	Providers notified of approved budget

4. Schools Forum to note offset of 2020/21 closing Early Years surplus to offset High Needs brought forward deficit.

4. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME (FOR INFORMATION)

The draft work programme was noted.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

Meeting started: 2.00 pm
Meeting ended: 3.00 pm

Chair

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