

**Hammersmith & Fulham  
Schools Forum – 15 June 2021  
Minutes of the meeting**

*NOTE: This meeting was held remotely*

**Present**

<b>Voting members</b>	<b>Non-voting members</b>
<p><b>Primary School Heads</b>            Karen Cunningham, St John XXIII Catholic Primary School            Michele Barrett, Randolph Beresford and Vanessa Nursery            Kathleen Williams, Holy Cross Primary            Joe Brown, Old Oak Primary School            Claire Fletcher, St Paul's CE Primary</p> <p><b>Academies and Free Schools</b>            Gary Kynaston, Hammersmith Academy (Chair)            Daniel Upfield, Ark Swift Academy</p>	<p><b>Schools Representatives</b>            Tim Scott, Fulham College            Ziah Raphael, Head of School at TBAP</p> <p><b>Observers</b>            Chantelle Thomas-Payne, St John's Walham Green School (School Business Manager)            Alex Parker, Business Manager            Mark Hopper</p>

**Officers**

Jacqui McShannon, Director of Children's Services  
 Tony Burton, Head of Finance (Children's Services and Education)  
 Jan Parnell, Director of Education  
 Jill Lecznar, Head of Finance (Corporate)  
 Phil Tomsett, Head of Early Years  
 Keith Tysoe, Strategic Lead Education, School Improvement and Inclusion  
 Daryle Mathurin, Strategic Lead Education, Assets and Operations  
 David Abbott, Head of Governance

**1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES & MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**Welcome and introduction**

The Chair, Gary Kynaston from Hammersmith Academy, welcomed everyone to the meeting and led a round of introductions.

**Updates on actions in the minutes**

Tony Burton, Head of Finance (Children's Services and Education), noted that officers were working on a solution to automate remittances. With the Early Years team in-house they were in a better position to do that. He said he would arrange a meeting with Jane and Early Years providers to take it forward.

## **ACTION: Tony Burton**

On providing estimates – Tony Burton said officers can try to provide more clarity around what funding is likely to be, but it was driven by estimated activity each term.

The Chair asked for an update on the falling rolls working group. Jan Parnell, Director of Education, said the working group had convened and made recommendations for Schools Forum. Officers would be meeting with Clare Fletcher and Kathleen Williams on the medium- and longer-term strategy for falling rolls. Officers wanted Heads to co-produce the strategy.

### **RESOLVED**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 March 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **2. EARLY YEARS FUNDING UPDATE 2021/22**

Jill Lecznar, Head of Finance (Corporate), presented the report which gave an update on the 2020-21 Early Years provisional outturn and the latest information from the ESFA/DfE on the changes to the 2021-22 Early Years funding regime. She noted officers in Early Years and Business Intelligence were working hard to submit the Early Years census in July. She added that it wouldn't be possible to say what the final 21/22 budget would be until November.

Members asked how the surplus would be used and if there was any money to be allocated now. Jill Lecznar said once we know the final submissions for summer term then allocations could be calculated in late July, ready for the September / October meeting.

## **3. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT OUTTURN 2020/21**

Tony Burton, Head of Finance (Children's Services and Education), presented the report which confirmed the 2020/21 Outturn for the Dedicated Schools Grant and balances held at 31 March 2021. He highlighted favourable variances in the Schools Block and Early Years Block.

In the Schools Block the paper recommended provision be made for:

- Additional support to maintained primaries to support transition to lower rolls.
- Short term budget support for two schools in financial difficulty
- Funding to be returned to all maintained primary schools in proportion to their 2020/21 contributions to the contingency fund for schools in financial difficulty.

The Chair asked what the timescales were for paying out the £265k identified in the paper. Tony Burton said the paper was looking for agreement pay that now.

Tony Burton noted the sub-group consisted of Michele Barrett, Clare Fletcher, Kathleen Williams, and Joe Brown – with input from Dave Collins. The sub-group would report to the next meeting in October.

**ACTION: Tony Burton / Sub-group**

Tony Burton noted that the High Needs Block had seen significant improvement from 19/20 and the trajectory was positive. Funding increased in 21/22 and while officers wouldn't know the 22/23 allocation until the end of term, they expected a favourable increase which would help balance the in-year position.

The Chair asked about the timescales for the safety historic deficit funding. Tony Burton said the Government had agreed £20m in total. The first £6m came in March, then a further £4m would be paid this year subject to showing a balanced trajectory over the medium-term. The remaining £10m was profiled to be paid over the 22/23 to 25/26 financial years. This would be monitored at Schools Forum over the medium-term.

The Chair asked what mitigations had to be put in place to ensure the funding continued. Officers noted this was covered in the following report. Jan Parnell, Director of Education, explained that the goal was to maintain a good service while trying to avoid escalation to expensive out of borough provision. In response to a question on demand, officers noted that EHCP growth was allowed for within the medium-term plan.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the following provisions are made from the retained de-delegated balance of £0.755m with authority to agree payments to schools delegated to the subgroup of the Schools Forum established in March 2021. The subgroup will review and agree appropriate and proportionate support to schools.
  - a. £0.382m – Provision for additional support to maintained primaries to support their transition to lower rolls. Potential payments not to exceed those presented to Schools Forum in March 2021 and subject to due diligence with respect to the appropriate and proportionate support by the appointed subgroup. Officers will support the conclusion of this process ASAP in the current term.
  - b. £0.100m – Provision for short term budget support for two schools in financial difficulty and subject to an agreed medium-term sustainable budget plan.
  - c. £0.265m – Provision for funding to be returned to all maintained primary schools in proportion to their 2020/21 contributions to the contingency fund for schools in financial difficulty.

#### **4. SEND TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

Keith Tysoe, Strategic Lead Education, School Improvement and Inclusion, presented the update on SEND transformation. He noted that since becoming a sovereign service in 2018, considerable work has been undertaken in partnership with young people, parents, carers and schools:

- The feedback to date has shaped the SEND Transformation Programme (High Needs Block programme) and the development of a draft SEND Strategy which will be consulted on in the Autumn term
- There has been ongoing investment into SEND services including the creation of a Language Advisory Service to ensure children and young people receive access to services at the right time.
- There has been continuing investment in the ASD Outreach offer through centralised coordination and investment in additional resources for children with ASD

Members asked if the borough would be moving to a banding model for EHCPs. Daryle Mathurin, Strategic Lead Education, Assets and Operations, said banding would be considered as part of the sufficiency work.

Members asked how the new strategy would address the financial position. There were concerns from Heads on the gap between funding and real costs of provision. Keith Tysoe said officers were aware of the issue. A sufficiency review was being undertaken and the goal was to create a robust local offer with provision at a lower level to avoid the need for EHCPs.

The Chair asked officers to discuss the strategy with primary and secondary Heads to talk them through it and show the difference it will make. Officers said they would be co-producing the strategy with Heads.

**ACTION: Keith Tysoe / Daryle Mathurin**

#### **5. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The draft work programme was noted.

#### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **Remittances**

Tim Scott noted that remittances from Hampshire don't include the same advice that was provided when they came from H&F and it caused issues. Tony Burton said most payments should come from the H&F team – there was a monthly schedule with information emailed to all schools.

Michele Barrett asked if it was possible for the schools finance team and SEND finance team to work together more closely. There had been issues with SEND funding. Tony Burton said officers were looking at how to pull together schools and SEND finance. Additional resource had been added to

the SEND team in the last few months to improve things. The Chair suggested surveying schools to see where issues were – potential issues for primary and secondary Heads meetings.

**ACTION: Tony Burton**

Meeting started: 2.00 pm  
Meeting ended: 3.11 pm

Chair .....

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