

HARINGEY SCHOOLS FORUM MINUTES

8 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 16:00 HRS AT HEP:Inderwick Road, Crouch End N8 9JF

School Members		
Headteachers		
Special (1)	(A) Martin Doyle (Riverside)	
Nursery Schools (1)	Sian McDermott (Rowland Hill)	
Primary (7)	(A) Mary Gardiner (West Green)	(A) Julie D'Abreu (Devonshire Hill Nursery & Primary)
	(A) Stephen McNicholas (St John Vianney)	Paul Murphy (Lancasterian)
	Ian Scotchbrook (South Haringay)	(A) Linda Sarr (Risley Avenue)
	Bola Soneye-Thomas (Rokesly Junior School)	
Secondary (2)	Jo Davey (Fortismere)	Vacancy
Primary Academy (1)	(A) Luke Renwick (Brook House) long term substitute for Simon Knowles (LDBS Academies Trust)	
Secondary Academies (3)	(A) Michael McKenzie (Alexandra Park)	(A) Angela Wallace (Woodside High)
	Vacancy	
Alternative Provision (1)	(A) Gerry Robinson (Executive Headteacher HLP)	
Governors		
Special (1)	Phil Di Leo (The Vale)	
Nursery School (1)	Melian Mansfield (Pembury)	
Primary Maintained (7)	John Keever (Seven Sisters)	Dan Salem (Muswell Hill Primary)
	Andrew Willett (Willow Primary)	
	Helen Froggatt (St Aidan's Primary)	(A) Jenny Thomas (Lordship Lane)
	Caroline Schloss (Alexandra Primary)	
Secondary Maintained (3)	Laurence Penn (Highgate Wood)	Vacancy
	(A) Sylvia Dobie (Park View)	
Primary Academy (1)	Vacancy	
Secondary Academies (3)	(A) Andrea Henry (Greig City Academy)	Vacancy
	Vacancy	
Alternative Provision (1)	Laura Butterfield (HLP) [Vice Chair]	
Non-School Members		
Non-Executive Councillor	Cllr Ibrahim Ali	
Trade Union Representative	(A) Sean Fox substitute member for Paul Renny	
Professional Association Representative	(A) Ed Harlow	
Faith Schools	(A) Geraldine Gallagher	
14-19 Partnership	(A) Kurt Hintz	
Early Years Providers	Susan Tudor-Hart	
Independent member	Will Wawn [Chair]	

Observers	
None	
Cabinet Member for CYPS	
Cllr Zena Brabazon	
Also Attending	
Director of Children's Services	Ann Graham
Assistant Director, Schools & Learning	Jane Edwards
Assistant Director, Commissioning & Programmes	Caroline Brain
Assistant Director, Early Help, Prevention & SEND	Jackie Difolco
Head of Service, Integrated SEND	(A)Mary Jarrett
Head of Schools Finance	Neil Sinclair
Senior Finance Manager - Schools	Patricia Harvey
Principal advisor for Early Years	Nick Hewlett
Head of CYP Commissioning	(A)Kevin Taggart
Chief Executive HEP	James Page
Lead for Governor Services (HEP)	(A)Anne Etchells
Clerk (HEP)	Corinne David

(A) Absent

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME/ INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided well wishes.

2. APOLOGIES, SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS

Apologise for absence were received and noted from:

- Stephen McNicholas (St John Vianney)
- Martin Doyle (Riverside)
- Julie D'Abreu (Devonshire Hill Nursery & Primary)
- Mary Gardiner (West Green)
- Linda Sarr (Risley Avenue)
- Michael McKenzie (Alexandra Park)
- Gerry Robinson (Executive Headteacher HLP)
- Sylvia Dobie (Secondary Governor)
- Anne Etchells

Apologise for lateness were received from:

- Paul Murphy (Lancasterian)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 11 January 2024

4.1 The minutes of the School's Forum meeting held on 11 January 2024 were **AGREED** and **RATIFIED** as a correct record.

4.2 Matters arising

2.2.1 Item 4.2.1 Vacancies on the School's Forum membership
Ongoing actions for members continued to explore avenues to recruit to vacant positions.

2.2.2 Item 7.8 LA to share the EWO SEF and Action Plan with members
Jane Edwards informed the Forum that the Education Welfare Service had drafted an action plan, however there had been a 3 to 4 week delay due to the recent SEND inspection.

ACTION The SEF and AP to be shared with the Forum by the Easter Breck.

- 2.2.3 Item 8.8a The LA to provide comments on consultation themes.
This action has been completed; the data is currently being internally validated before wider circulation.
- 2.2.4 Item 8.8b) Chair and LA to draft a communication with schools detailing the reasons why Model 1 was used.
Action completed.
- 2.2.5 Item 9.3 LA to review alternative applications for the unused growth fund, with options received at the January 2025 meeting, with effect from the financial year April 2025 / 26.
Action to be completed within the schools' block work group for review and recommendation to Schools Forum for decision

5. **FORUM MEMBERSHIP**

To review the membership of the Schools Forum, noting any changes since the previous meeting.

- New member: Caroline Schloss – Alexandra Primary School Governor.

6. **UPDATE FROM WORKING PARTIES**

To receive an update from the working parties not covered within the agenda.

6.1 To receive the minutes from the Early Years working party.

The Block held two meetings. The first to review and discuss the base rate and underspend. The second meeting was to discuss and review the transfer of £180k transfer from the EY block to the high needs block as part of the Safety Valve programme. Noted that Early years was the main discussion item for the meeting. See Item 7 and 8.

6.2 To receive the minutes from the High Needs working party

Minutes will be brought to the March 2024 meeting for review and consideration.

6.3 Update from the School's Block working party.

No updates. The block is due to meet next in September 2024.

7. **EARLY YEARS BLOCK UPDATE REPORT ON 23/24**

7.1 See item 8.

8. **EARLY YEARS BLOCK DSG FUNDING STRATEGY UPDATE 24/25 (INC DECISION ON EYFSF FUNDING RATES) AND STRATEGY FOR ALLOCATION OF UNDERSPEND 22/23.**

8.1 Nick Hewlett and Patricia Harvey took members through the 2023/24 EYFS funding and the Early Years Funding Budget Allocation 2023-24.

8.2 The Early Years block indicative allocations for 2024/25 reports an increase of 50% (£10.7m) due to additional funding for 2-year-olds. This funding is earmarked for formula purposes (95% pass through rate) and must be allocated to settings and early years provision. The LA is allowed to retain £1.49m (5%) for administration/central purposes from 2024/25 allocations.

8.3 The 2024/25 allocations published are indicative and the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) will update these based upon:

- July 2024 based on January 2024 PTE census numbers.
- July 2025 based on five-twelfths of the January 2024 PTE census numbers (to cover the April 2024 to August 2024 period), and seven-twelfths of the January 2025 PTE census numbers (to cover the September 2024 to March 2025 period).

8.4 The funding is based upon actual take-up, therefore the final allocations for each of funding streams will be based on (five-twelfths January 2024 PTE census numbers) + (seven-twelfths January 2025 PTE census numbers).

- 8.5 The proposal was to retain 5% of the funding for all provision levels is retained centrally to meet support costs and early years provision.
- 8.6 As part of the Safety Valve programme, the proposal to transfer funding from the Early Years Block to the High Needs Block over a period of time. For 2024-2025, £180,000 will be transferred. Further work is required to outline how future funding targets will be met.
- 8.7 *Q: What would the impact be if the centrally retained portion was different from 5%?*
 A: Most other LAs for EYFS have increased the centrally retained proportion due to the impact of the new offer. Haringey LA has historically retained 5%; the percentage is reviewed every year. However, if this was reduced, then projects and support the LA provide will have to be reduced or cut. Noted that budget amounts are currently indicative. Potentially there may be options to reduce the centrally retained allocation in the future. The impact on reducing the centrally retain amount will result in an increase in the base rate. Currently the block has to balance the budget with the transfer of the £180k to the Safety Valve Programme; make the saving and retaining the quality of provision.
- 8.8 *Q: If the amount received from central government has increased, then the 5% retained centrally would also increase?*
 A: This is true, however the centrally retained aspect is not just about admin/ officer costs, but also about supporting projects that have seen an increase in nursery place uptake which in turn supports the uplift in budget. The LA wants to passport back as much money as possible into the system and support projects that increases pupil number. The LA is using the centrally retained funds to support the EY strategy and associated projects. The 5% will be reviewed in the future.
- 8.9 The Council will continue to look at best value for money and what is best for the children. However, if the centrally retained portion was reduced then there would be limits on what the support provided by the LA.

ACTION The LA to analyse the use of the 5% centrally retained budget for EYs reviewing what the money has been used for.

- 8.10 *Q: The transfer of £180k to the Safety Valve Programme, when was this agreed?*
 A: This was part of the overall agreement as part of the 5 year Safety Valve Programme across 18 projects which was endorsed by the Schools Forum in late 2022. One of the 18 projects will be supporting young children with SEND and emerging needs within Early Years settings, through a graduated response and early intervention. Historically, a discretionary decision was made to transfer £750k from the High Needs Block annually to the Early Years Block to support young children with SEND. However, there is already an allocation of funding within the EYB for children with SEND. In addition, this is not comparable with many other LA's who do not transfer funding from their HNB to their EYB. The passporting back of the money taken from the High Needs Block to the Early Years block is comparable with the work undertaken in 2022 to no longer fund early help provision from the HNBI. It was noted that there are younger children coming through with more complex needs and that the original proposals to achieve the level of savings required are fit or purpose and require review. The Early Years Project led by Nick Hewlett will be revising proposals to achieve future savings required from 2025-2026. Members of the EYB noted that they are not represented on the SV Early Years Project Group, however it has been confirmed that there is delegated representation from one of the Nursery Schools on this project group. An invitation for representation from the EYB group to join the SV Early Years Project Group was extended.

8.11 The Early Years block delegates noted that they were informed of the £180k transfer requirement in January 2024; which provided a significantly reduced timetable to review, plan and discuss available options. Members have expressed their discontent regarding the communication and the process. Officers noted that through the Safety Valve Programme there would be a saving of £124k through a graduated response and reduction of EHCP. Noted that the number of EHCPs hasn't reduced as there are more complex children coming through mainstream avenues. The Programme will be reviewing how projects best support children with SEND needs with EYFS settings. There has to be care with issuing statements for children under 2; the balancing act of ensuring children have access to the support child.

8.12 *Q: How has the block achieved the figure of £6.01 for the base rate?*

A: The block looked at all the presented options in detail. The transfer of £180k also had to be taken into consideration. This options passports the highest based funding out to all settings. Discussions determined that the base rate allocation should be fairer, with a more even spread across the whole borough with a reduced deprivation factor. The deprivation factor is only paid out when required and retained centrally. The main purpose was to allocate as much money to settings as possible.

8.13 The Chair proposed a vote on the recommendations as set out in the paper.

8.13.1 Recommendation 1): To note the latest Early Years Block update for 2023/24.
Members noted recommendation 1.

8.13.2 Recommendation 2): To note the Early Years Block latest published allocations for 2024/25 and approve rates for budget setting 2024/25
Members noted recommendation 2.

8.13.3 Recommendation 3): **The recommendation from the EY working group was APPROVED that option 2C for the 3 and 4 year old free entitlement was adopted:**

- Base Rate: £6.01 per hour
- Deprivation Rate: £0.30 per hour for those pupils eligible for EY Pupil Premium
- Hourly Rate: £6.31 per hour

8.13.4 Recommendation 4): The recommendation of the EYs working group that the hourly rate paid for the delivery of the 2 year old disadvantaged entitlement is £9.28 per hour was **APPROVED**.

8.13.5 Recommendation 5): The recommendation of the EYs Working Group that the hourly rate paid for the delivery of the 2 year old working families entitlement is £9.28 per hour was **APPROVED**

8.13.6 Recommendation 6): The recommendation of the EYs Working Group that the hourly rate paid for the delivery of the under 2's entitlement is £12.55 per hour was **APPROVED**

8.13.7 Recommendation 7): **School Forum AGREED projects from 2022/23 early years ringfenced underspend.**

8.13.8 Recommendation 8): **School Forum to approve the SEN Inclusion fund.**

8.13.9 Recommendation 9): **School Forum approved the Early Years Centrally funded services.**

- 8.14 The Chair recommended that a member of the EY working party also be part of the Safety Valve EYs project group working.

ACTION A member of the EY working party to also join the Safety Valve EYs project group working

9. CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK UPDATE 23/24 & BUDGET PROFILE FOR 24/25

- 9.1 Jane Edwards and Patricia Harvey took the forum through the Central School Services Block update. The CSSB continues to have two elements of funding:

- a) **Ongoing responsibilities**, which funds all local authorities (LA) for central functions to deliver central functions to all pupils in maintained schools and academies and have been reduced by 2.5% each year.
- b) **Historic commitments**, which funds LAs for commitments made prior to 2013/14 and reduced by 20%. Noted that there are no historical commitments.

- 9.2 Commissioned services of £438k are with Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) within the existing contract which ends on 31st August 2024. In order to allow sufficient time for recommissioning processes to go through due governance procedures approval is being sought to approve up to a 7-month contract extension

- 9.3 The paper set out the previous year's allocations and latest 2024/25 planned expenditure taking into account the 2.9% budget reduction. The Total CSSB allocation 2024/25 £2.630m was noted broken down as follows:

- a) Education Services Grant (ESG) £530k *including commissioned services £25k.*
- b) Schools Standards – *commissioned service £273k*
- c) Looked After Children Placements - £514k
- d) Early Help £337k
- e) Servicing of School Forum – *commissioned service £10k*
- f) Admissions - £288k
- g) Governor Support – *commissioned services £130k*
- h) Support Costs - £185k
- i) Copyrights Licences – * estimated £203k

10. UPDATE ON DSG

- 10.1 No verbal updates were received.

11. UPDATE ON SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME

- 11.1 Jackie Difolco provided the Forum with a verbal update verbal update. The following was noted:

- a) Project A1. There has been an impact report from health that demonstrates that through a graduated response, children who were rated red and amber have been downgraded to amber or green. Savings will be forthcoming from the shifting in focus of services.
- b) Project A2. The service has been working with a group of 13 ASD families since September. Six children are continuing in main stream, two children are in special school settings and five families continue to engage with the service. There has been less placement breck downs.
- c) Bandings and top up. Cabinet approved the decision regarding the banding descriptors. Through the moderation process more children within main stream settings were placed in higher bands. The service is reviewing the funding envelop to ensure equitable distribution. Noted that special schools had a minimum funding guarantee of 3%. Forum will receive a further paper at the March meeting relating to funding allocation.

- d) On Tuesday Cabinet approved the capital project to increase Haringey SEND provision by 118 places at the following schools:
- Alexandra Primary School (10 SEMH places)
 - Earlsmead Primary School (15 ASC places)
 - The Brook (15 SLD places)
 - Riverside (15 Complex Need places)
 - Park View (34 SEMH places)
 - Fortismere (34 ASC places)

11.2 Members discussed the impact of the Safety Valve Programme on schools' budget, in particular those schools already in a deficit position. The LA noted that they were working with schools at risk of or in a deficit position.

12. MEETING DATES FOR 2023-2024/ WORK PLAN

12.1 The meeting dates for the remaining school year were noted as:

- Thursday 14 March 2024 at 4PM. Face to Face.
- Thursday 4 July 2024 at 4PM. Face to Face.

13. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

13.1 No AOB was received.

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 6pm.

SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT FOR 14 March 2024 MEETING

ITEM	ACTION	FOLLOW UP
2.2.1	Ongoing actions for members continued to explore avenues to recruit to vacant positions.	All
2.2.2	The SEF and AP to be shared with the Forum by the Easter Breck.	JE
8.9	The LA to analyse the use of the 5% centrally retained budget for EYs reviewing what the money has been used for.	LA Officers
8.14	A member of the EY working party to also join the Safety Valve EYs project group working	EYs Working Party