

HARINGEY SCHOOLS FORUM MINUTES

11 JANUARY 2023 AT 16:00 HRS AT HEP:Inderwick Road, Crouch End N8 9JF

School Members		
Headteachers		
Special (1)	Martin Doyle (Riverside)	
Nursery Schools (1)	Sian McDermott (Rowland Hill)	
Primary (7)	Mary Gardiner (West Green)	Julie D'Abreu (Devonshire Hill Nursery & Primary)
	Stephen McNicholas (St John Vianney)	Paul Murphy (Lancasterian)
	Ian Scotchbrook (South Haringay)	Linda Sarr (Risley Avenue)
	Bola Soneye-Thomas (Rokesly Junior School)	
Secondary (2)	Jo Davey (Fortismere)	Vacancy
Primary Academy (1)	Luke Renwick (Brook House) long term substitute for Simon Knowles (LDBS Academies Trust)	
Secondary Academies (3)	Michael McKenzie (Alexandra Park)	(A) Angela Wallace (Woodside High)
	Vacancy	
Alternative Provision (1)	Gerry Robinson (Executive Headteacher HLP)	
Governors		
Special (1)	(A)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)
	Vacancy	
Secondary Maintained (3)	Laurence Penn (Highgate Wood)	Vacancy
	Sylvia Dobie (Park View)	
Primary Academy (1)	Vacancy	
Secondary Academies (3)	Andrea Henry (Greig City Academy)	Vacancy
	Vacancy	
Alternative Provision (1)	(A)Laura Butterfield (HLP) [Vice Chair]	
Non-School Members		
Non-Executive Councillor	Cllr Ibrahim Ali	
Trade Union Representative	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	(A)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	(A)Nick Hewlett
Head of CYP Commissioning	(A)Kevin Taggart
Chief Executive HEP	James Page
Lead for Governor Services (HEP)	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

2.1 Apologies were received and noted from:

- Angela Wallace (Headteacher: Woodside High)
- Andrew Willett (Governor: The Willow)
- Phil Di Leo (Governor: The Vale)
- Laura Butterfield (Governor: HLP)
- Mary Jarrett (Head of Service, Integrated SEND)
- Caroline Brain (Assistant Director, Commissioning & Programmes)
- Kevin Taggart (Head of CYP Commissioning)
- Ed Harlow (NEU Union)

Substitute Members

- Sean Fox (Unison): substitute member for Paul Renny (Unison trade union)
- Luke Renwick (Brook House) long term substitute for Simon Knowles (LDBS Academies Trust)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 No declarations of interest were made. Noted that the Unison are funded by the council and not through the DSG.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 7 DECEMBER 2023

4.1 The minutes of the School's Forum meeting held on 7 December 2023 were **AGREED** and **RATIFIED** as a correct record.

4.2 Matters arising

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

4.2.2 Item 4.2.2 Early Years

A paper on the Early Years funding update and use of any underspend will be received at the February Schools Forum meeting.

- 4.2.3 Item 4.2.4 Early Years Working Party
Paul Murphy had extended the invitation to join the EY Working Party to all Haringey Headteachers. The Headteacher from Belmont Infants agreed to join the EYWG. Action completed.

5. FORUM MEMBERSHIP

No changes were noted since the previous meeting.

6. UPDATE FROM WORKING PARTIES

- 6.1 To receive the minutes from the Early Years working party.
There had not been any meetings since the last Schools Forum meeting. Meetings had been scheduled for the forthcoming weeks.
- 6.2 To receive the minutes from the High Needs working party.
The working party had commissioned a review of work the party, models/examples of how High Needs Working Parties worked in the landscape of Safety Valve Programme, from other LA's had been received and discussed. Updates will be provided at forthcoming meetings.
- 6.3 School's Block Working Party.
See item 8 for outcome of the work from the working party.

7. EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE UPDATE

- 7.1 Jane Edwards took the Forum through the paper 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'. The report provided an update on the EWO service since the last presentation to Schools' Forum in October 2023 and sought approval for the allocation of the additional CSSB funding of £122k to support the work of the Education Welfare Service for April 2024 to March 2025.
- 7.2 The Service had engaged in a DfE deep dive on 17 October 2023. This involved the completion of a comprehensive self-assessment prior to the visit. The visit included interviews with the Interim EWS lead, Early Help, SEND and Virtual School colleagues as well as a discussion regarding the local authority's strategic approach to improving attendance. The outcome of the deep dive will result in an action plan that will be shared with the DfE and schools. Noted that the LA is now very clear about the service direction, standards and expectations.
- 7.3 The Service Lead position had been advertised, with interviews undertaken; however, the recruitment panel was unable to appoint from any of the candidates. Following a re-evaluation of the JD, the position has been re-advertised. As a result of new vacancies in the team, due to staff movement, the service is in the process of arranging interim EWO cover for affected schools and arranging the recruitment process for the substantive posts. One to one conversations are taking place with schools that have unfulfilled traded hours.
- 7.4 Jane Edwards shared the current draft core offer for the EWO service with members Appendix B. Noted that the LA had a clear role with supporting schools with their in statutory duties. Further noted that some of the historical traded offer was now within the core offer. If the service did not receive the proposed £122k, then the core offer would have to be re-evaluated.
- 7.3 *Q: What qualifications are required for the principle EWO position?*
A: It is not about the qualification but rather about the person's experience and skill set. The service is looking for someone who can make multiagency connections.
- 7.4 *Q: What steps have been taken to fill current vacant positions within the team?*
A: Interviews have taken place over Christmas and during this week. The service is trying to permanently recruit to vacant positions. The LA understands that there is

currently inconsistencies with the service received by schools, however officers are trying to improve the service.

7.5 Q: *How are special schools accounted for within the service core offer?*

A: The LA will look at matters on a case-by-case basis for special schools. Noted that there are variables within each cohort that will affect attendance.

7.6 Q: *How will attendance hubs form part of the Haringey's attendance strategy?*

A: This is very new announcement from the DfE, with many unknowns, and on the LA's on the agenda to talk to the DfE advisor about this. It is hoped that the hubs will allow good practice to be embedded in every school.

7.7 Q: *Will there be a communication strategy with parents and local community groups to ensure trips for statutory school aged children are not planned for term time?*

A: A communication strategy is very high on the agenda for the service.

7.8 Q: *Are there any trends/key features with schools that have low or high attendance?*

A: No, as there are numerous reasons for children absences; particularly since the end of the pandemic. All schools have been RAG rated since Covid; which has resulted in targeted conversations. The information will be sharing with the schools. The ethnic group highest amount of persistence absence is within the Irish Traveller and Roma Gypsy communities. It is well documented through research that with good attendance at school, school and life outcomes increase.

ACTION LA to share the SEF and AP with members.

7.9 The Chair recommended the proposal, for the allocation of the additional CSSB funding of £122k to support the work of the Education Welfare Service.

SCHOOL FORUM AGREED the additional CSSB funding of £122k to support the work of the Education Welfare Service.

8. **SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING FORMULA for 2024-25**

8.1 Patricia Harvey provided an overview of the 2024/25 consultation responses and published school allocations. Noted that Haringey had a decline in pupil numbers within the funding for 2024/25 of -384 (1.2%) pupils (primary 256 and secondary 128). However, due to the government 'rolling into the DSG' the Mainstream School Additional Grant (MSAG) £7.112m from 2023/24, the published 2024/25 allocation reports an increase of 2.9%, where in fact it is a loss to the local authority in funding to schools of £0.796m (MSAG £7.112m - £6.316m). School budgets as directed within the 2024/25 National Funding Formula (NFF) will be protected within the 2024/25 formula due to the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) on a per pupil basis of +0.5% set on affordability.

	Published Allocation 2024/25 (£'000s)	% Change from 2023/24
School Block	225,783	2.9%
Central schools Service Block	2,630	-2.9%
High Needs Block	58,115	2.3%
Early Years Block	31,400	48%
Recoupment (estimated)	-83,889	-1.2%
Total DSG	234,167	

8.2 The paper sought approval of top slicing from the school block, to be transferred to the high needs block of £1.129m (0.5% of school block). This is in support of year 2 of the Safety Valve program and SEND children within the borough. Also, from school block £0.122m transfer to Central Schools Services block (CSSB) in support

of the Education Welfare services and historical £0.060m transfer to Early Years block in support of split site funding within a mainstream nursery provision.

8.3 The final settlement was announced on 19 December 2023 at £225.783m and the NFF funding requirements applied to the APT the adoption of model 1 (NFF) is the only option available based upon affordability. Noted that the total going to schools is less as the MSAG was incorporated within the funding formula.

8.4 Model 2 was trying to be strategic within the context of falling roles, however, when Model 2 was applied within the parameters of the funding envelope and NFF formula rates; the model was unaffordable and would require to have a minimum funding guarantee of -3.8%, which would require a disapplication from the DfE. It is unlikely that the DfE would agree to this.

8.5 The delegations for trade union have been at the flat rate of £165k for the last 5 years. Union membership has increased since Covid; the LA have agreed to an additional NEU rep.

8.6 *Q: How are the pupil numbers for 2-year-old entitlement calculated?*

A: The figures used are estimated. The funding will be prorated, with an adjustment once the actual figures are submitted. Noted that the EYFS funding papers will be received at the February SF meeting.

8.7 *Q: The figures reported in Table D for Special Free School places, correct?*

A: This forms part of the recoupment. There will be a check and balances and will be reported back in the next Section 251 report scheduled to come to the Forum in March.

8.8 Members raised concerns about how the formula and outcomes may inadvertently 'pit' primary and secondary schools against each other. Members emphasised that they wanted each school to receive their fair share of funding. Members pressed Officers on the communication strategies regard the use and reasons for the application of Model 1.

ACTION

a) The LA to provide comments on consultation themes.

b) Chair and LA to draft a communication with schools detailing the reasons why Model 1 was used.

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

8.9.1 **Recommendation 1)**: To note the latest DSG published allocations for 2024/25
Members noted recommendation 1.

8.9.2 **Recommendation 2)**: To note the results of the 2024-25 Haringey primary and secondary schools DSG funding formula consultation.
Members noted recommendation 2.

8.9.3 **Recommendation 3a)**: To note Model 1 is the only option available given the funding settlement and regulations.
Members noted the recommendation. Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the adoption of model 1.
The Chair abstained from the vote.

8.9.4 **Recommendation 3b)**: To note the transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block (HNB) as agreed in the October 2023 Schools Forum. At the October meeting and subsequent consultation with schools this was estimated at £1.140m and with the DSG 2024/25 published allocation this equates to

£1.129m. *Noted that at the October 2023 SF meeting the transfer was estimated at £1.140m; this has decreased to £1.129m with the published DSG allocation.*

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED recommendation 3b.

8.9.5 **Recommendation 3c):** to agree the Growth Fund to be set at £300k.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED recommendation 3c.

8.9.6 **Recommendation 3d):** to agree the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) is set between 0.46% and 0.5% dependent on the block transfers agreed and any necessary consent from the DfE with regards to disapplication requests and APT data validation by ESFA.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED recommendation 3d.

8.9.7 **Recommendation 3e):** To agree the block transfer of £0.122m from the Schools Block to the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) for Education Welfare Services dependent on any necessary consent from the DfE and APT data validation by ESFA.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED recommendation 3e.

8.9.8 **Recommendation 3f):** to agree the block transfer from the Schools block to the Early Years block of £0.060m to fund a Haringey Nursery school which is on a split site, dependent on any necessary consent from the DfE. Melian Mansfield reiterated her interest in this item (see item 3.1) and withdrew from the vote.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED recommendation 3f.

8.9.9 **Recommendation 3g):** To agree the de-delegation of £0.210m for Trade Union Representation (for maintained schools only).

All Primary Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED recommendation 3g.

All Secondary Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED recommendation 3g.

8.9.10 **Recommendation 3h):** To note St Aidan's Primary school census error of one pupil, pre MFG cost £5,860.82 to be supported from Growth Fund due to ESFA census error. Why supported from growth fund – to be kept outside of the formula.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED recommendation 3h.

8.9.11 **Recommendation 4):** To note a disapplication request has been submitted to request from High Needs Block £412k (3.4%) to be retained for 2024/25 same as 2023/24 linked to special school top-ups and re-banding exercise.

Members noted recommendation 4.

9. UPDATE ON USE OF THE GROWTH FUND 2023-24

9.1 Jane Edwards provided an overview of the Growth Fund potential liabilities for 2024-25 and for the Forum to decide on the distribution of unused growth fund in 2023-24. This year an unspent Growth Fund of £149,295 can be carried forward to the 2024-25 financial year. Alternatively, Schools Forum can decide to distribute the remaining funds to all schools in this financial year or to allocate it for another purpose. It is recommended that the unused element of the growth fund to 2023-24 of £149,295 is allocated back to schools in the March 2024 payment to schools.

9.2 Michael McKenzie informed the forum that the In-Year Fair Access Panel meets every month to support children back into education. With falling rolls, the money may not be needed to support bulge class; but there could be an opportunity to look at how some of that money could support the work of secondary schools. Possibility of reviewing the use of the funding in a different way.

9.3 The Chair suggested another further possible proposal to review how the growth fund could support schools that have a significant increase in the number of pupils from October to January CENSUS.

AGREED a) Members agreed the allocation back to schools of £149,295 unused growth fund in 2023-24 as detailed in Appendix A

ACTION LA to review alternative applications for the unused growth fund, with options received at the January 2025 meeting, with effect from April 2025.

10. MEETING DATES FOR 2023-2024

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

- Thursday 8 February 2024 at 4PM. Face to face
- Thursday 14 March 2024 at 4PM. Online [*Post meeting note Chair actions determined for the meeting to be face to face*]
- Thursday 4 July 2024 at 4PM. Face to Face

10.1 The meeting on 14 March was noted as an additional meeting, due to the quantity of papers to be received and determined by the Forum.

10.2 The working plan for the remainder of the school year was noted.

10.3 The Chair informed members that the work load of the forum had shifted to the spring term. There appeared to be less need to hold a December meeting. The Chair recommended that for 2024/25 scheduled the December meeting was moved to March.

AGREED To move the December meeting to March, with the option to hold a December meeting if required.

11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

11.1 No AOB was received.

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 6:15pm.

SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT FOR 8 February 2024 MEETING

ITEM	ACTION	FOLLOW UP
4.2.1	Ongoing actions for members continued to explore avenues to recruit to vacant positions on the Forum.	All
7.8	LA to share the EWO SEF and AP with members	JE
8.8	a) The LA to provide comments on consultation themes. b) Chair and LA to draft a communication with schools detailing the reasons why Model 1 was used.	PH WW & PH
9.3	LA to review alternative applications for the unused growth fund, with options received at the January 2025 meeting, with effect from April 2025.	JE