

Haringey Schools Forum Agenda

16 JULY 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)	Julie D’Abreu (Devonshire Hill Nursery & Primary)
	(A)Stephen McNicholas (St John Vianney)	Paul Murphy (Lancasterian)
	(A)Ian Scotchbrook (South Harringay)	(A)Linda Sarr (Risley Avenue)
	Bola Soneye-Thomas (Rokesly Junior School)	
Secondary (2)	(A)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)	Gerry Robinson (Executive Headteacher HLP)	
Governors		
Special (1)	Phil Di Leo (The Vale)	
Nursery School (1)	Melian Mansfield (Pembury)	
Primary Maintained (7)	Vacancy	Dan Salem (Chestnuts Primary)
	(A)Andrew Willett (Willow Primary)	
	Helen Froggatt (St Aidan’s Primary)	(A)Jenny Thomas (Lordship Lane)
	Caroline Schloss (Alexandra Primary)	
Secondary Maintained (3)	(A)Laurence Penn (Highgate Wood)	Vacancy
	Sylvia Dobie (Park View)	
Primary Academy (1)	Vacancy	
Secondary Academies (3)	(A)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	(A)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	
(A)Cllr Zena Brabazon	
Also Attending	
Director of Children's Services	(A)Ann Graham
Assistant Director, Schools & Learning	Jane Edwards
Assistant Director, Commissioning & Programmes	(A)Caroline Brain
Assistant Director, Early Help, Prevention & SEND	(A)Jackie Difolco
Head of Service, Integrated SEND	Mary Jarrett
Head of Schools Finance	Neil Sinclair
Senior Finance Manager - Schools	Patricia Harvey
Principal advisor for Early Years	Nick Hewlett
Senior Manager at Mazars	Vanessa Bateman
Chief Executive HEP	(A)James Page
Lead for Governor Services (HEP)	(A)Anne Etchells
Clerk (HEP)	Corinne David

(A) Absent

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members and officers for attending.

2. APOLOGIES, SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS

- 2.1 Apologies for absence and substitute members were received and noted from:

- Mary Gardiner (West Green)
- Stephen McNicholas (St John Vianney)
- Ian Scotchbrook (South Haringay)
- Linda Sarr (Risley Avenue)
- Jo Davey (Fortismere)
- Michael McKenzie (Alexandra Park)
- Angela Wallace (Woodside High)
- Andrew Willett (Willow Primary)
- Laurence Penn (Highgate Wood)
- Laura Butterfield (HLP)
- Martin Doyle (Riverside)
- Ann Graham (Director of Children's Service)
- Caroline Brain (Assistant Director, Commissioning & Programmes)
- Jackie Difolco (Assistant Director, Early Help, Prevention & SEND)
- Anne Etchells Lead for Governor Services (HEP)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest were made in respect of any of the agenda items.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2024

- 4.1 **The minutes of the Schools Forum meeting held on 14 March 2024 were AGREED and RATIFIED as a correct record.** There were no matters of accuracy noted.

4.2 Matters arising

- 4.2.1 Item 4.1 Clerk to re: issue the updated minutes from 8 February 2024 to the forum membership.
Action completed.

- 4.2.2 Item 4.2.1 Ongoing actions for members continued to explore avenues to recruit to vacant positions.
Ongoing action.
- 4.2.3 Item 4.2.2 Jane Edwards to share this with the Forum after Easter break.
The SEF was shared as part of this meeting pack. Noted that the Action Plan was being updated by the new Head of service and will be shared once ready.
- 4.2.4 Item 4.2.3 The LA to analyse the use of the 5% centrally retained budget for EYs reviewing what the money has been used for. To be received at the October meeting.
See item 11 for the report.
- 4.2.5 Item 4.2.4 A member of the EY working party to also join the Safety Valve EYs project group
Action completed.
- 4.2.6 Item 5.1 Chair to liaise with HEP and write to John Keever providing thanks on behalf of Schools Forum.
Action completed.
- 4.2.7 Item 7.17 Share the outcome of the EHCP banding moderation work with members.
Action completed.

5. FORUM MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 5.1 The Forum noted receipt of the paper titled "Schools Forum Membership and Terms of Reference". Due to the size and disruption of the pupil population the report recommended retaining the number and proportion of School Forum places as per 2023/24; with no change to the Terms of Reference. The Chair sought agreement from the Forum to adopt the current Terms of Reference and the Forum membership for 2024/25

AGREED Forum Members approved the adoption of the allocation of Schools Forum places for 2024/25; the same as those used for 2023/24. Forum Members approved the Terms of Reference for 2024/25; the same as those used for 2023/24.

The Clerk took over as Chair for item 6.

6. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR

The Clerk sought nominations for the position of Chair for 2024/25. Forum Members nominated Will Wawn. No other nominations were made. Will Wawn confirmed that he was willing to stand as Chair for a further term of office.

All Forum Members voted in favour of re-electing Will Wawn for a further term of office as Chair of Haringey's Schools Forum.

Will Wawn took over as Chair.

7. ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIR

The Chair informed the Forum that Laura Butterfield would be standing down from Schools Forum for personal reasons and was unable to attend this meeting.

The Chair, on behalf of Schools Forum, provided thanks and well wishes to Laura Butterfield for her work and dedication to Governance and the Schools Forum over the past 20 years.

ACTION a) Chair to invite Laura Butterfield to the next meeting on 17 October 2024 to allow personal thanks to be provided.

b) Election of Vice -Chair to be undertaken at the next meeting.

8. UPDATE FROM WORKING PARTIES

8.1 Early Years Working Party Update.

Within the working party there had been discussion regarding the funding of children that stay within an Early Years setting after turning 5 years old and how settings that aren't attached to a primary schools can access the necessary funding. Noted that those cases refer to children with complex needs with EHCPs, where all professional agree that it is in the best interests of the child to stay in their current setting; however, settings couldn't draw down the early place funding. Further noted that this was in reference to a very small cohort of children.

- 8.1.1 Officers noted that required funds would be covered by the Early Years block or within the contingency; however, there was a requirement to have clear criteria for the release of funding. The Chair proposed that School's Forum delegates responsibility of agreeing the specific cases details within the Early Years for this financial year.

Schools Forum AGREED to delegate responsibility to the Early Years Working Party for agreeing the specific financial cases details of children staying within EYFS settings (other than nursery attached to primary schools) beyond their 5th birthday.

- 8.1.2 A member enquired about how the information on SEND funding was circulated/presented to EYs and primary schools as some settings were finding it challenging to clearly differentiate as it was not on a pupil level. Officers noted that SEND pupil level funding data would be circulate to schools before the summer holiday. Officers further noted that the SEND finance team would be strengthen over the summer holiday to support such work.

- 8.1.3 A member noted that within the EYs sector families have to reregister every 3 months; if they are late, the money doesn't get to the settings. Noted that this has been raised with the DfE.

- 8.1.4 The Chair sought an update (verbal) at the next Schools Forum meeting on the items 8.1.1 through to 8.1.3

- 8.2 High Needs Working Party Update.
No updates were received.

- 8.3 Dedicated School Block Working Party Update.
No meetings have taken place since the last meeting. Patricia Harvey noted that schools funding is moving towards a national funding formula.

9. EAL INTEGRATION FOR YEAR 11 NEW ARRIVALS AND OUTREACH SUPPORT (GROWTH FUND)

- 9.1 Jane Edwards provided the Forum with a synopsis of the proposal; noting that the paper had been circulated prior to the meeting. There has been a higher number of in-year applications from families with Year 11 pupils arriving from overseas, particularly in the spring term. Secondary schools have limitations on the outcomes they can deliver for pupils arriving very late in the academic year.

- 9.2 A working group of LA Officers and secondary Headteachers was formed to review the current processes and pathways for Year 11 EAL learners. Detailed discussions were held about how to best safeguard this cohort of pupils. The working group proposal was for an EAL Year 11 Resource Provision to be based in a Haringey school, as a school environment would be in the best interest of this cohort of pupils.

Park View had submitted an expression of interest. Details of the proposed provision, including outreach support, and costs were provided within the paper.

9.3 Q: *What would happen if a family did not want their child to attend the provision?*

A: The majority of in-year Year 11 school applications are placed through the In Year Fair AccessPanel. Parents may express a preference but for a number of reasons their child may not be able to have a place at a preferred school. Parents continue to have a right of appeal for a school place in line with legislation.

9.4 The Chair informed the Forum that the secondary Headteachers' had submitted their email support of the proposal in leu of being able to physically attend the meeting; due to prior commitments. The Chair sought a vote on the recommendations as detailed within the report.

Schools Forum UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the allocation of £150,303 of Growth Fund to Park View for the establishment of a Haringey Integration Programme for Year 11 EAL new arrivals.

9.5 Member enquired about the remaining unspent Growth Fund for 2024/25. Noted that there had been previous discussions at school forum to support schools that experienced a significant uplift in pupil numbers between October and Jan. The Chair recommended a paper on any proposals to use the remaining unspent Growth Fund to be received at the next meeting; as demands on the fund should be known at that point.

ACTION Proposal to use unallocated Growth Fund to be received at the October meeting. Carlo Kodsi

10. OUTCOME OF INTERNAL AUDIT

10.1 Vanessa Bateman provided the Forum with a synopsis of the paper; noting that it had been circulated prior to the meeting. There was a general trend of improved assurance; a summary of outcomes for 2023/24 was noted as:

- Nine out of twelve schools completed received 'Adequate' or above assurance rating.
- Three schools received 'Limited' Assurance.
- No schools received a 'nil' rating.
- One school received an improved Assurance from the last audit.
- Three schools demonstrated a reduction in assurance from the last audit, these schools received a limited assurance, as noted above follow ups will be completed in July and recommendations will be tracked to completion.; and
- The number of Priority 1 recommendations has increased from last year, one to three for 2023/24 only three schools have been assigned 'Limited' assurance which is a slight improvement.

10.2 The common themes arising from the audit work were noted as:

- IR35 checks were not completed by schools prior to an invoice being processed for a self-employed individual.
- Asset Registers were not approved by the Governing Body within the previous year.
- Official purchase orders were not raised through the financial management system or appropriately approved in line with the Scheme of Delegation prior to the order being requested/funds committed.
- Procurement: There was a lack of evidence of agreement at relevant committees; rolling over of contracts and lack of procurement evidence.

10.3 The priority of the recommendations had shifted from priority 1 to increasing assurances. The following was noted:

- Priority 1 recommendations: 3
- Priority 2 recommendations: 32

- Priority 3 recommendations: 62

- 10.4 Work to plan for 2024/25 has been complied with the first schools booked for audit during October 2024. Sessions will be provided to SBMs and Headteachers to help preparations for the audits. Training for Governors is offered on Audit and Risk, via the HEP, and programmed in for the year.
- 10.5 Members raised concerns over the variable quality of the auditors and the subsequent reports received. Members enquired about the process to query/challenge the scores outcome of the reports provided by Mazars. Noted that the Head of Audit would become involved in any disagreement. Jane Edwards noted that she received a copy of every report and felt the overall direction was positive.
- 10.6 Member requested the check list provided to Mazars from Haringey was issued to schools to allow them to understand what the auditors were reviewing. Members also sought the criteria for each assurance category, so schools could understand how to achieve the top assurance.

ACTION Haringey Audit to circulate the checklist and assurance criteria to schools.

11. EARLY YEARS CENTRALLY RETAINED FUNDING

- 11.1 Nick Hewlett provided the Forum with a synopsis of the paper; noting that it had been circulated prior to the meeting. The paper detailed how the EYs centrally retained funding was spent. Noted that a plan would be required to address the potential deficit position that may arise from the reduction from 5% to 3% (Government direction) in the centrally retained amounts for the local authority in the future: potential a reduction of £500k. Further noted if there were less children accessing provision, there would be less funds to top slice. Noted that all figures were indicative with potential for change in the figures.

12. DEDICATED SCHOOL GRANT (DSG) 2023/24 OUTTURN AND 2024/25 DSG BUDGET ALLOCATION

- 12.1 Patricia Harvey provided the Forum with a synopsis of the paper; noting that it had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- 12.2 The provisional outturn for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2023/24 shows that the overall deficit of the DSG grant reports £9.36m having reduced from £11.55m the previous year. The total £135.906m of the schools' block was passported to schools using the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) and variations agreed by the Schools Forum. The High Needs Block budget allocation was £55.574m and the overspend in year was £2.922m. Haringey received £4.070m from the DfE as part of the safety valve programme which has been applied to High Needs block cumulative deficit, resulting in a closing deficit at 31st March 2024 of £10.718m. The Early Years indicative budget was £21.217m and the in-year indicative outturn was an underspend of £0.848m due to 2, 3- and 4-year-old allocations, and final adjustment in July via DfE clawback which will reduce this based upon spring census return.
- 12.3 For 2023/24 35 schools ended with a combined surplus of £6.101m, and 29 schools ended with a combined deficit of £6.213m. Noted that the council has never clawed back uncommitted revenue balances; which previously stood at 8% for primary schools and 5% for secondary schools.
- 12.4 The Forum noted the recommendations detailed within the paper

13. PLACE PLANNING UPDATE

- 13.1 Jane Edwards provided the Forum with a synopsis of the presentation; noting that it had been circulated prior to the meeting. School rolls within Haringey have been falling over the past several years due to large reductions in reception cohorts

working their way through the school system: currently there is a 14% surplus capacity within Haringey's primary sector. This is a similar picture for London and other metropolitan areas. There has been a significant drop in rolls for catholic primary schools. The lower cohorts' numbers have now entered the secondary sector for 2024 Year 7 intake. Officers are working proactively with primary and secondary schools to reduce the over surplus place position to ensure schools are sustainable.

- 13.2 A member enquired if officers could review options to save schools money through aggregated procurement agreements for example in the purchase goods that all schools need like paper, photocopying machines, books etc.

ACTION Chair and Neil Sinclair to liaise with commissioning regarding what could be possible with aggregated procurement agreements for schools to buy into.

14. SCHOOLS IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY

- 14.1 Patricia Harvey provided the Forum with a synopsis of the paper; noting that it had been circulated prior to the meeting. For the financial year 2023-24, movement was:

- 12 schools increased their borrowing in year.
- 1 school had a new loan during 2023-24.
- 6 schools with planned repayment plans extending more than three years.

- 14.2 Schools with deficits are recorded on the Council's risk register and discussed as part of the Schools Improvement Management Group (SIMG) meeting to ensure that there is an appropriate level of support being given to school by the council. The average deficit has increased from £100k in 2018-19 to £185k in 2023-24. Noted that all loans sit with the LA as a liability.

- 14.3 The council has supported schools in financial difficulty with dedicated central finance support, providing cashflow advances and assisting with redundancy costs of restructures relating to permanent staff savings via the Restructure and Scrutiny Panel. This will continue 2024/25. Noted that there are up to 30 schools in Haringey now in a deficit position.

- 14.4 The local authority section 151 officer must provide assurance to the DfE on School Financial Value Standard returns (SFVS returns) and report any school that has not provided assurance on the school financial management each financial year. These will feed into the schools and internal audits processes.

- 14.5 Members raised concerns with the current capacity within the Haringey schools HR team to support further schools with restructures and other HR matters.

15. RESTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL

- 15.1 Jane Edwards provided the Forum with a synopsis of the paper; noting that it had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Panel convenes once a month in term time to consider any restructuring proposals from Haringey schools. The Panel provides challenge and advice to schools to ensure that schools have considered all possible alternatives and it is a fair process. Applications have included a range of options however the proposals considered by Panel have often not been 'deep enough' for long term strategic financial management.

- 15.2 Eighteen applications were reviewed with five applications revised and resubmitted. The total cost of redundancy payments was £262,345. Further restructures already agreed in this academic year will require redundancy payments to be paid in the 24/25 financial year. Resubmitted applications were due to inaccurate or incomplete financial and / or HR information.

16. SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME UPDATE

- 16.1 Mary Jarrett provided the Forum with a synopsis of the paper; noting that it had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members noted the following updates on the capital programme
- Alexandra Primary: For Primary SEMH with 10 places, a separate cohort meeting is set for profiling and matching, with surveys by contractors planned.
 - Earlsmead Primary: Design work is in progress for Primary ASC with 15 places. Additional meetings are planned around cohort organisation and sensory room development. Expected to open in September 2024.
 - The Brook: For Primary ASC and learning disability with 10 places, project timelines are being established for temporary and modular buildings, planned to open in January 2025.
 - The secondary ASC site, with 34 places, is confirmed as Fortismere School.
 - Riverside:
 - For Secondary and Post-16 ASC and learning disability with 15 places which opened in September 2023
- 16.2 After a successful multi-professional workshop, the SEMH Graduated Response and Pathway are being finalised. They are scheduled to be launched in September of this year.
- 16.3 Work on the new EHCP threshold levels and funding has been delivered.

17. SCHEME OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS & STANDING ORDERS FOR SCHOOLS SEPTEMBER 2024]

- 17.1 The Scheme of Financial Regulations & Standing Orders for Schools September 2024 was noted by members.

Schools Forum endorsed the regulations and standings orders and for the document to be circulated to school on 3 September 2024

18. PROPOSED MEETING DATES FOR 2024-2025

- 18.1 The proposed meeting dates for Schools Forum for 2024/25 were noted as:
- Thursday 17 October 2024 at 4pm
 - Thursday 5 December 2024 at 4pm
 - Thursday 9 January 2025 at 4pm
 - Thursday 6 February 2025 at 4pm
 - Thursday 13 March 2025 at 4pm
 - Thursday 3 July 2024 at 4pm
- 18.2 The Chair noted that the minimum number of meetings required were 5. Noted that there may not be a requirement to hold the December meeting. A final determination on this will be made at the October meeting.
- 18.3 Members noted receipt of the 2024/25 Schools Forum work plan.

19 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

- 19.1 No AOB items were received.

The Chair closed the meeting at 6:10pm

SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT FOR 17 OCTOBER 2024 MEETING

ITEM	ACTION	FOLLOW UP
4.2.2	<u>Vacancies on the School's Forum membership</u> a) All members to continue recruitment through all avenues to appoint to vacant positions. b) Will Wawn to follow up with Secondary Academies to try and recruit to vacancies. c) For each block that had vacancies, elections to take place to select members to the Forum. d) HEP to continue to email all Governors regarding Governor vacancies on Schools Forum. Governor Forum members to make request for members at relevant Chairs and Governor meetings.	All WW All HEP
7	<u>Vice Chair Election</u> a) Chair to invite Laura Butterfield to the next meeting on 17 October 2024 to allow personal thanks to be provided. b) Election of Vice -Chair to be undertaken at the next meeting.	WW All
8.1.4	<u>Early Years Working block</u> Verbal report/update on items 8.1.1 to 8.1.3 at the next Schools Forum meeting	NH
9.5	<u>Growth Fund</u> Proposal to use unallocated Growth Fund to be received at the next Schools forum meeting	JE
10.6	<u>Haringey Schools Audit</u> Haringey Audit to circulate the checklist and assurance criteria to schools.	Haringey schools Audit
13.2	Chair and Neil Sinclair to liaise with commissioning regarding what could be possible with aggregated procurement agreements for schools to buy into.	WW& NS