



Schools Forum Minutes 25 February 2015

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Brent Schools Forum

**Minutes of the Schools Forum held on
Wednesday 25 February 2015 at The Village School**

Attended by Members of the Forum:

Governors:

Martin Beard (MB)
Sue Knowler (SK)
Richard Martyn (RM)
Cllr Lesley Jones (LJ)
Helga Gladbaum(HG)
Umesh Raichada(UR)
Herman Martyn (HM)

Head Teachers:

Rose Ashton (RA)
Terry Molloy (TM) - Chair
Sylvie Libson (SL)
Lesley Benson (LB)
Andy Prindiville (AP)
Kay Charles (KC)

PRU:

Terry Hoad (TH)

PVI Sector:

Paul Russell (PR)

Trade Unions:

Lesley Gouldbourne (LG)

14-19 Partnership:

Pam Bairstow (PB)

Observer:

Lead Member (C&YP):

Officers:

Gail Tolley (GT)
Sara Williams (SW)
Minesh Patel (MP)
Norwena Thomas (NT)
Devbai Patel (DP)
Sue Gates (SG)

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	The Forum commenced at 6.10pm.	
1.0	<u>Apologies</u> Gill Bal Mike Heiser Matthew Lantos Titilola McDowell Cllr Ruth Moher Sabina Netty–Retrospectively Cllr Ketan Sheth	
1.2	<u>Absences</u> Rabbi Yitzchak Freeman	
2.0	Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2015 and Matters Arising	
2.1	<u>Accuracy</u>	
2.1.1	There were no corrections to be made to the minutes which were therefore approved as an accurate record.	
2.2	Matters Arising	
2.2.1	<u>Write to Schools Forum Members who have missed three or more Schools Forums consecutively</u> – SW said she has had a response from the two members. PB was substituting Marc Jordan for 14-19 Partnership and Cllr Ketan Sheth said he was going to be arriving late but did not attend.	
2.2.2	<u>Benchmarking of End to End process and cost per pupil in processing admissions application</u> – This will be brought to the June/September Forum.	SW / C. Coffey
2.2.3	<u>Update on VAT as to why the VA schools are not exempted from paying VAT on the governors’ liability of capital funding and Academies are exempted</u> – SW said that LA has formally written to DfE making representation for VA schools. The letter was signed by Chair and SW.	SW/ MP
2.2.4	<u>School Meals budget – officers to find out from other authorities if their schools have funding issue for meals that have to pureed and for kosher meals</u> – LA has formally written to DfE.	SW
2.2.5	<u>Follow up with Legal on when the settlement agreement policy</u>	

- will be available to schools – This has been written and sent to Legal for checking. LB asked if it will be available on Schools Extranet before the year end. NT said that it would be available in the next couple of weeks and be applicable from 2015-16. NT
- 2.2.6 Update on cost implications to send SEN pupils out-borough – This will be brought to June 15 Forum. SW / C. Coffey
- 2.2.7 Review of CIN and CWD Funding – This was on the agenda for this Forum.
- 2.2.8 Consult academy heads for nominations to represent at Schools Forum – This was no longer necessary as ML would be leaving after June 15. There will be movement required within the current membership. DP
- 2.2.9 Check if sixth form pupil number were included in the last membership calculations – this is still outstanding to be confirmed at the next Forum. NT
- 2.2.10 Seek nominations to fill PVI and Nursery Governor vacancies – DP has tried by emailing the nursery heads to forward the request to their governors but no nominations were received. It was suggested bringing it up at the Chair of Governors meeting and at Early Years conference on 27 February 2015. DP has asked SG to find a PVI representative. DP
- 2.2.11 Respond to council on the proposed cuts to services – SW confirmed that a response from schools forum has been made. It was requested that a copy of the response was provided to schools forum members. SW
- 3.0 Update on the funding allocation and place take up for under 5's supported nursery places.**
- 3.1 SG presented this report. GT clarified that there was a mismatch between the title of the report and agenda but the item number was correct. For this service, funded places are allocated by panel members. Children with Disability (CWD) places are 15 hours a week but term-time only and Children in Need (CIN) places are 15 hours per week all year around. Decisions are made by the panel's multi agency practitioners. There are challenges in filling CIN places but the CWD places are rising and continue to do so.
- 3.2 The Early Years sub-group met on 7 January 2015 and changed CWD places to make it clearer. There was an error in the report - Annexes 1 indicated places allocated and Appendix 5 should state £20,172 is for full time place not 15 hours place. The total is correct.

- 3.3 SW said the report is being brought to Schools Forum as part of transparency on the use of DSG and not for a specific recommendation on funding.
- 3.4 LB said that she has repeatedly brought up the issue of funding CWD, as these should be funded from the High Needs block rather than Early Years. It's currently funded from Early Years. The High Needs block now covers 0-25 year olds.
- 3.5 TM said it depends on whether it is a fact or opinion and LB said to her it is a fact. TM asked officers to respond. NT said that this has been raised at both SEN and Early Years Sub Groups but no resolution had been reached.
- 3.6 SK said that it was necessary to know historically why Children with Disabilities (CWD) and Children in Needs (CIN) funding was taken from High Needs block.
- 3.7 The last criteria in point 1.2 indicates that the eligibility criteria for entitlement to a supported nursery place is that the family has no recourse to public funds. It was questioned if this was a criterion on its own or in conjunction with one of the others. SG confirmed that this was a criterion on its own. It's something that should be identified by the setting.
- 3.8 LB said that there is additional discrepancy of funding in that only two nursery schools are allocated this funding and have places. Children in PVI are not getting the same funding. It has been agreed by the panel to provide additional SEN funding to PVI providers but they are still not funded. PR confirmed that this was correct and said that 15 hours of funding does not cover SEN children's needs. He added that funding for children with additional needs needs to be allocated to PVI's. Although it is expected that children with specialist needs should attend the designated units, it is very difficult for the providers to move them afterwards. Parents do not inform the providers of their specialist needs before they start. The CAF could identify children's needs but these are completed at settings. If these were completed earlier, children would be sent to the suitable setting from the start.
- 3.9 LB said that special schools have 1:1. KC said special schools have moved away from 1:1 and are moving towards the Kingston formula, 1:7 ratio but never at 1:1.
- 3.10 LB said that CIN places have not been filled and this is a poor use of resources. There needs to be flexibility between moving funding between CWD and CIN. It needs to be referred back to the sub-group for approval to be able to do this.

4.0 Implementation of the Early Years Pupil Premium

- 4.1 SG presented this report. From April 2015 3 & 4 year old disadvantaged children who are accessing nursery grant will benefit from the Pupil Premium Grant.
- 4.2 A request for a full-time post was made – to be funded from the Early Years block. The post-holder would provide training to PVI providers, would carry out eligibility checks, liaise with providers & parents, and promote PPG to ensure that PVI children benefit. It was confirmed that PPG funding cannot be used to fund the post. SL opposed the request for a fulltime person. SW said that Early Years PPG is different from mainstream PPG and is complicated and has landed on LA's. Applications come from parents and systems are not set up to pay small providers. LB thought full-time resource was excessive. TM said that in Brent, schools require more than one post between the 12 secondary schools. SK referred to Appendix 1 and said a lot of things are already checked for free school meals, and asked if it wouldn't be efficient to have the same sort of eligibility checks for 3 & 4 year olds as for those above 4 year old. It would be easier to incorporate into the current services.
- 4.3 GT said that as a Strategic Director and from her experience in other boroughs, that she did not think this was over resourced for the heavily bureaucratic process.
- 4.4 TM asked what the risk was if the post was not funded. SW said that Brent will not be making the full use of the grant and it will have to be returned. LG said if money is to be lost can it not be compromised that the post is funded for six months and then reviewed.
- 4.5 SK suggested that the post was created to work with the existing team so that the work can be integrated once the post ends.
- 4.6 It was suggested that the post was fixed for one year. RM suggested that the budget was set for a year but could be reviewed after six months. If the post was to continue, the funding would be available for the remaining six months.
- 4.7 It was confirmed that the post was to be funded from the Early Years block and not from deprivation factor funding.
- 4.8 The following recommendations were approved:
- (i) Approve the commencement of the process to implement



the EYPP in Brent in April 2015;

- (ii) Endorse Brent's recommendations to providers for use of the EYPP to best support disadvantaged children;
- (iii) Note Brent's plans for training and support to providers;
- (iv) Note that a full review will be carried out at the beginning of 2016 to assess the effectiveness of the initial roll-out and the findings brought back to the Schools Forum with proposals for any further amendments or adaptations;
- (v) Approve funding for additional FTE post on fixed term basis to administer the EYPP. A budget was agreed for a year but to be reviewed after six months. It was requested that a report be brought back to the Schools Forum in September 2015, with a review of the impact of the post.

SG

5.0 Schools Budget 2015-16

- 5.1 NT presented this report. The schools block of funding was brought to the last Forum. It has since been submitted to DfE and a change was requested which affects two all-through schools.
- 5.2 High Needs budget is being brought to the Schools Forum for consultation. There is no change from previous years, except for an increase in Band 6 at special schools which was previously approved. Woodfield School is now an academy and will receive its base funding directly from the EfA. There is no change to ARP units. Pupil Referral Units are now allocated with £10k base funding, an increase of £2k. However the top-up has decreased by the same amount, therefore this is only a movement between base-funding and the top-up with no impact/increase in the PRUs budget.
- 5.3 SEN protection ends this year but targeted high needs funding continues and the same two schools as last year continue to benefit. Early Years funding is indicative for Spring 2015, and this will be updated in March when the final data will available.
- 5.4 AP asked if PPG indicative budget was made available and NT said it was possible to calculate this.
- 5.5 TH said that PRUs have been affected badly from the structural change and the allocation is not sufficient. There is need for teachers' assessments and classes without scope to do so with the current funding. They will run into serious problems, and it is very difficult to set a realistic budget. SW said that at the next



Schools Forum, officers are aiming to bring a report on AP funding and PRUs can be part of that report. AP agreed that PRUs are at capacity at the moment. SL said that there are very few spaces at KS1 for excluded pupils and asked where do 5 year olds go when they have been excluded. She asked that this provision be included in the report.

SW/Janet
Lewis

5.6 SK asked that the presentation of the reports be changed - rather than numbers e.g. A1, A2, if a title of the report could be displayed.

DP

5.7 LB asked when the final Early Years budget would be available. NT said we are still waiting for Spring data to calculate Spring final and IDACI allocation. LB thought this was taking too long as the data was submitted in January. DP said that the data has to be cleansed before submitting to DfE and this final approval on data is not received until the middle of March.

5.8 Schools Forum was formally consulted on the following:

- a) the Special Schools, ARPs and PRUs budgets;
- b) the SEN statemented funding and targeted funding;
- c) the Early Years budgets (indicative, subject to Spring : actual hours of take-up and updated IDACI data).

6.0 Update on the DSG Deficit Recovery Plan

6.1 MP presented this report. This report provided an update on the DSG deficit recovery plan. The repayment of the deficit is ahead of the plan and will be repaid by March 2015. This has been achieved despite meeting the cost of redundancies and clearing a deficit of £1.9m of a school that converted to academy. There is now a robust plan in place for schools in deficit to avoid them being funded from DSG should a school convert to academy while in deficit. Currently there are six schools in deficit and five have an agreed deficit recovery plan. One was requested to resubmit and this has also been received. The forecasted surplus on DSG at the end of 2014-15 is £3m.

6.2 The following points were noted:

- a) Forecast outturn on the DSG for 2014-15
- b) Agree payment of the final instalment of the deficit in accordance with the deficit recovery plan.

7.0 AOB

7.1 None.



7.2 The Forum ended at 7.40pm.

ACTION LOG

Item No.	Action	Complete by	Owner
1	Update on VAT – If a response has been received to the LA's letter on why the VA schools are not exempted from paying VAT on the governors' liability of capital funding and Academies are exempted.	Jun 15	SW/ NT
2	Update on additional School Meals funding for pureed and kosher meals.	Jun 15	SW
3	Update on settlement agreement policy for schools – is this now available on Schools Extranet?	Jun 15	NT
4	Update on Schools Forum membership.	Jun 15	DP
5	Check if sixth form pupil number were included in the last membership calculations.	Jun 15	NT/ DP
6	Provide a copy of the response to Council on the proposed cuts to services	Feb 15	SW
7	Update on cost implications to send SEN pupils out-borough.	Jun 15	SW/ C.Coffey
8	Benchmarking of End to End process and cost per pupil in processing admissions application.	Sept 15	SW
9	Review of Alternative Provisions funding	Jun 15	J. Lewis
10	Review of impact of funding a full-time post to manage Early Years Pupil Premium Grant.	Sep 15	SG

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