

Brent Schools Forum

**Minutes of the Schools Forum held on
Wednesday 26 February 2014 at Queens Park Community School**

Attended by Members of the Forum:**Governors**

Mike Heiser - Chair (MH)
Martin Beard (MB)
Titilola McDowell (TMcD)
Alan Carter (AC)
Herman Martyn (HM)
Janice Alexander (JA)
Cllr Helga Gladbaum (Cllr HG)

Head Teachers

Sylvie Libson – Vice Chair (SL)
Lesley Benson (LB)
Matthew Lantos (ML)
Rose Ashton (RA)
Andy Prindiville (AP) – left during item 6
Kay Johnson (KJ)
Rabbi Yitzchak Freeman (YF)

PRU

Terry Hoad (TH)

PVI Sector

Paul Russell (PR)

Trade Unions

Lesley Gouldbourne (LG)

14-19 Partnership**Others**

Lead Member (C&F) Cllr Michael Pavey (Cllr MP) – Up to Item 4

Officers

Sara Williams (SW)
Ravinder Jassar (RJ)
Norwena Thomas (NT)
Devbai Patel (DP)
Carmen Coffey (CC) - up to item 4
Paula Buckley (PB) – up to item 4
Sara Kulay (SK) – up to item 5
Sue Gates (SG)
Nina Patel (NP)

**Circulation to all
present plus:**

Terry Molloy, Sue Knowler, Maxine Henderson, Maggie Barth,
Gill Bal and Cllr Lesley Jones

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	MH opened the Schools Forum at 6.05pm and thanked Queens Park Community School for hosting it.	
1.0	<u>Apologies</u>	
1.1	Gill Bal Cllr Lesley Jones Terry Molloy Maggie Barth Sue Knowler Cllr MP and AP apologised at the start of the meeting as they had to leave early	
2.0.	Minutes of the meeting held on 15 th January 2014 and Matters Arising	
2.1	<u>Accuracy</u>	
2.1.1	There were no corrections to the previous minutes. The minutes were therefore agreed as accurate record.	
2.2	Matters Arising	
2.2.1	Actions Item 1 – Circulate a note with DfE’s Clarification on voting rights to Schools Forum members. This is being presented as agenda item 7 at this Forum	
2.2.2	Actions Item 2 – update on Universal Free School meals to KS1 pupils is presented under agenda item 4.	
2.2.3	Action Item 3 – An indicative budget for PVI’s was calculated for 2014/15 and was sent to PR, LB and SL.	
2.2.4	Action Item 4 – SEN Funding Update was covered under the ‘Consultation on Schools Budget 2014/15’ at January 2014 Forum except for the review of funding for the Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARP) which is brought to this Forum under agenda item 3. AP said his school is struggling to get the outturn on SEN funding for 2013/14. CC said she will look into this because as far as she was aware all the schedules for 2013/14 were submitted. If for some reason St Gregory School’s was not issued she would ensure that it was sent out straight away.	



- 2.2.5 Action Item 5 – Review of Early Intervention team is presented under agenda item 6. LB asked if the 3% base rate that was not increased as previously agreed could now be afforded and if so if it could it be paid to schools and PVI's. SG said this was to be calculated. MH asked for this to be resolved as soon as possible. NT/DP
- 2.2.6 Action item 6 – How LA identifies pupils between academy and maintained schools when they apply for Free Schools Meals. This was addressed under agenda item 4.
- 2.2.7 Action item 7 – Benchmarking of end to end processes and cost per pupil in processing admissions application. PB reported that this was proving difficult to obtain. The questionnaire was sent out to other authorities and only one response was received. She said she would shorten the questionnaire and re-request. The feed back would be brought to the Schools Forum once the responses were received. PB
- 2.2.8 Action Item 7 – Budget Review of Alternative Education Service – this item was presented under agenda item 5.
- 2.2.9 Action item 8 – The Schools Forum membership was recalculated and presented under agenda item 7.
- 2.2.10 Action Items 10, 11 and 12 are to be brought to the Schools Forums in June and September.
- 2.2.11 Item 5 - Consultation on Schools Budget. DP reported that the Schools Block of funding model was submitted to DfE for approval as required. There was a request to add primary pupils at Wembley High School which were not included on the dataset supplied in December 2013. This adjustment required MFG exclusion which was requested and approved. In addition any changes to pupil number required a ministerial approval which was also granted. The only change from the indicative budgets on this was to Wembley High School. This adjustment would be made and the final schools block of funding would be sent out to all schools by 28th February as required. The funding under the High Needs Block remains indicative. This is subject to DfE's approval under the High Needs Return which was submitted in December 2013. This confirmation was expected to be announced in the week beginning 3rd March after which the final budgets for the Special Schools and the ARP units will be confirmed. The Early Years funding also remains indicative as the IDACI and the final Spring term data is awaited. This is expected to be finalised in the third week of March.



3.0 Review of the Funding Formula for Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARP's)

- 3.1 CC presented this report. The report reviewed the funding for the ARP's within the mainstream settings. The ARP formula was set in 2009 and the intention had been that this would be subject to review in 2 years, which had not happened. After speaking to the Headteachers responsible for the units it was apparent that most schools are cross subsidising ARP units from their own schools budgets. She said even with the increased funding, it was still a good value for money compared with out of borough provision. CC reminded everyone that the budgets included within Appendix 3b were indicative at this stage until a confirmation from DfE was received.
- 3.2 CC referred to Paragraph 3 where the increase in salary was shown. She said this has been discussed in great length at SEN Sub Group and she was asked to make some changes which have been incorporated in the indicative budget model attached as Appendix 3b. YF asked how £179 was precisely arrived at for essential cover. CC said she recalled that it was a notional figure. YF asked what impact this increase has on DSG. This was shown in Appendix 3b which is £360k.
- 3.3 KJ said that the cost of TA's is over 52 weeks but they are appointed for 39 weeks so this loss has to be built within the formula.
- 3.4 MH concluded the items saying that the silence seemed to indicate a decision was consensus. Therefore the following recommendations were approved to increase the provision for salaries, etc as follows:
- Teachers' salaries from £59,513 to £64,512, an increase of 8.4%.
 - Speech and Language Therapists' salary from £46,035 to £49,902, an increase of 8.4%.
 - Teaching Assistants' salary from £25,619 to £25,875, an increase of 1%.
 - Create a Highly Specialist TA's/NNEB post at an annual salary of £29,577.
 - Additional lump sum allocation towards Cover/Recruitment/ Training at £179 per pupil.

4.0 Free School Meals – Changes from September 2014

- 4.1 PB presented this report explaining that there are two strands to the report. The first strand arises from the October's Schools Forum where Members requested further information on the charges to academies for the administration of FSM in 2014-15. The second strand arises from the introduction to provide free school meals to all Key Stage 1 (KS1) children in state-funded schools.
- 4.2 The report highlights the plans to address the impact on schools if KS1 parents do not apply for free school meals in particular the pupil premium. The LA is currently redesigning the claim form showing the benefits to children if parents apply. There will also be leaflets designed to raise awareness.
- 4.3 PB referred to the letter from the Secretary of State to all schools announcing capital allocations. It is evident that the funding will fall short of covering all needs. An audit is currently being undertaken to identify the requirements.
- 4.4 The meals will be paid at a flat rate of £2.30p per meal taken by the newly eligible infant pupils. An indicative amount will be paid for the Autumn and Spring term and adjusted using the actual census data which is to be confirmed.
- 4.5 SL asked when the audit is likely to complete and when the final decision on capital allocations will be made. It was confirmed that the audit is still in progress. RA said her school was audited that morning.
- 4.6 SL asked if it was possible to create one form for admissions and free school meals. CC said that it was their intension to do so and are working on that.
- 4.7 SL asked if the capital allocations will be tiered to which SW confirmed it as it would be. SN said her school has been audited and it was made clear that it would be based on needs and on the basis of number of pupils fed. SL felt that the surveyor that carried out the audit at her school seemed very proficient. ML said it will be challenging to proceed with implementing the change as there only a small capital allowance for academies. It is allocated with the annual maintenance capital.
- 4.8 The LA must apply same mechanism for VA schools as for the LCVAP funding, which is a maintenance capital allocation to VA schools, regardless of needs unless the schools collectively agree otherwise. YF has made officers aware of his concerns that a proper process needs to be followed to address capacity as some



schools like his that do not have sufficient space to even provide sandwiches.

4.9 MH asked what rejected means in the table 4.3. PB clarified that these are the parents that apply but do not qualify for free school meals. It was confirmed that the rate being charged to academies was £1.06 per pupil using October 2013 census which is the same rate applied to maintained schools.

4.10 The following were noted:

- the changes to the FSM provision for Key Stage 1 children from September 2014.
- the charges outlined in paragraph 3.3 of the report to academies for the 2014-15 year for the administration of FSM on their behalf by the local authority.

5.0 Budget Review of Alternative Education Services

5.1 SK presented this report reminding Members of the last paper brought to the Schools Forum in June 2013. She provided some background on the significant changes being introduced through the new Brent Inclusion and Alternative Education Service which focuses on delivery of alternative education attendance and behavior services.

5.2 This report gives an overview of the new Inclusion and Alternative Education Service. Under the new service model, the Key Stage 3 and 4 PRUs have been brought together to improve efficiency and service provision. The old Brent Education Tuition Service (BETs) is being re-modeled as the Brent Health Needs Education Service (HNES) focusing more distinctly on pupils with short-term health needs. This has already freed up a significant amount of resources and supported the establishment of a new multi-agency Inclusion Support Team. The PRUs (which include HNES as this is still a registered PRU) now have a single management committee which is beneficial in terms of joint working, with a number of Headteacher representatives.

5.3 There will be an overall savings to the DSG of £188k per annum, with the overall annual costs of the PRUs (including HNES) reducing by one third from £3.4m to £2.3m predominantly due to staffing reductions in the former BETS service. This is giving more scope to support preventative work and consider new financial proposals e.g. funding to support fair access placements for formerly excluded pupils and investment in devolved budgets..



- 5.4 It was confirmed that the three financial proposals set out in the paper were not either/or options. SW said that all redundancy costs have been contained within the existing service budget for 2013/14, meaning that there is no longer term costs to either the Council's General Fund or the DSG
- 5.5 AP asked what if the academies decline to pay back the AWPU (on a pro-rata basis) when they permanently exclude a child. SK confirmed that they cannot decline to do this.
- 5.6 It was asked on what basis the sum of £200k had been allocated to commission KS 1 / KS 2 placements. SK said this figures was based on full year costs for up to 6 pupils, as previous patterns suggested that the level of permanent exclusions among this age group was small. The Inclusion Support Team can also provide wrap around care to prevent exclusions among young pupils. If any of this funding is not used it will go back into DSG for reallocation to other priorities.
- 5.7 LB made a reference to paragraph 2.3 of the report and said she was disappointed that an opportunity was missed not to focus on early years support and include all the children from age 0 – 18 within the remit of the service. SK said that the Inclusion Support Team could work with all age groups and that the new Anna Freud Centre provision includes a play therapist to support work with younger children. LB asked if this will be clearly laid out in the service offer and SK confirmed that it would be.
- 5.8 ML said that he currently has at least one primary exclusion and asked what provision there will be for alternative provision. SK said we have budgeted to provide support for up to 6 pupils at KS 1 / KS 2, with scope to use this resource flexibly LG said that Trade Unions had raised concerns about the lack of focus on KS 1 / KS 2 support at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and felt that the sum allocated will not be enough to meet demand.
- 5.9 AP suggested the £100k set aside for the devolved schools commissioning budget could be added to the £200k for KS 1 / KS 2, with the funding devolved to a school-led partnership (the BSP) to target appropriately. SK said that was a very positive suggestion and something they could build into the new model.
- 5.10 SN asked if there be a charge for the services provided by the Inclusion and Alternative Education Service. SK replied saying that the services are fully funded either by the DSG or the General Fund but there would be eligibility criteria and the opportunity to purchase additionality.
- 5.11 Cllr HG asked SK how the options would be taken forward. SK

replied that they are three distinct proposals. The first proposal is a straight forward one covering a sum to support children who are being reintegrated to schools under the Fair Access Policy. The second proposal is about clawing back AWPU funding from schools that exclude pupils. The third option is about setting up a devolved budget of £100k, with a suggestion that this could be managed by a sub group of the Brent Schools Partnership.

- 5.12 KJ asked if NHS support has been identified for the new service as some children have medical needs as the NHS sometimes challenges schools employing in-house staff to provide medical support because of supervision issues. This point was noted and will be looked at by officers. KJ said it would be beneficial to look at this early in the commissioning and delivery of the service.
- 5.13 LG asked if the proposals to use the devolved budget would come back to the Schools Forum for approval. SK said no; the partnership sub-group would sign off the expenditure from the £300k.
- 5.14 MH said that the general response was favorable. Therefore all three following options were approved:
Option One – Support of Fair Access placements
Option Two – Financial claw back for permanently excluded pupils
Option Three – Devolved Schools Commissioning Budget of £300k to focus on early years/primary school support.

6.0 Review of Early Intervention Team

- 6.1 SG presented the report. The report was brought to the Schools Forum to obtain its view of the service since the implementation of the changes. SG went through each key area as structured in the report. Some key points highlighted were that the service was last reviewed in 2011 when the budget was halved. Even though the budget was reduced the cases were not reduced and therefore this has led to an increase in the EIPs input in the direct delivery of services as well as involving some practitioners. Appendix C provides details and statistics of the service currently covered.
- 6.2 There were some criticisms identified around the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) pathway in the Ofsted inspection and to address these, an independent audit was commissioned. Appendix B identifies the key recommendations from February 2012 audit and the final audit in July 2013. One of the recommendations to improve the service was to introduce a referral form and this reduced from 18 pages.
- 6.3 Cllr HG said she was surprised that there is no mention of Children's Centers. MH asked officers to note this comment on



Children's Centers and to take it on board. The general view was that all members were happy with the report and MH asked to continue the use of the current Headteachers on the sub-group.

6.4 The following recommendation was approved:

Continued use of the group of Headteachers to help shape the role of the EIT to enable the Forum to regularly review the DSG contribution.

7.0 Schools Forum Membership and Voting Rights

7.1 NT presented the report.

Membership – NT referred to the DfE's Operational Guidance and confirmed that Brent's Schools Forum meets this guidance. She referred to Table 1.8 with an analysis of current membership. The maintained schools membership is correctly represented but in the academy the membership changes between primary and secondary. This was due to Kensal Rise conversion and Gladstone Park due to convert early in the new financial year. It was confirmed that there was a fair representation between the recoupment and non-recoupment academies (NRA) as there is one NRA representative for the borough's two NRA's. One Special School is also due to convert and it was therefore recommended that between the two current representatives one should be replaced with a representative from an academy special school. JA was happy to resign and offer her position to the Academy Special School.

7.2 Sub Groups – The current members of all sub-groups were contacted to seek their view on the way forward with three sub-groups i.e. Early Years, SEN and the Schools Block of funding. With regards to the Early Years sub-group the members felt that this should continue as it is the only place where the information is exchanged between maintained nursery schools and PVI's. The SEN Sub Group was also in agreement to continue as it addresses complex issues which cannot all be discussed in detail at Schools Forum. The Schools Sub Group has however served its purpose to address the imbalance on Primary : Secondary ratio and the high level of MFG. It was recommended that this continued for another year with dates diarised and cancel nearer the time if there are no issues to address. It was agreed to re-name the Schools Sub-Group the Schools Funding Formula Sub-Group.

7.3 Voting Rights – NT referred to Appendix C where it identifies which members have a right to vote under which matters. Non school members can only vote for other Schools Forum Business except that the PVI representatives can vote under the Funding Reforms



- and Early Years Single Funding Formula.
- 7.4 The difference between the recoupment and non recoupment academies was clarified. The non recoupment academies block of funding is not included in the Council's DSG allocation. This is paid directly by EFA. The recoupment academies schools block of funding is included in the DfE's funding model. The EFA then recoups the academies share of schools block funding from DSG and pays directly to academies. The non recoupment academies are those opened earlier.
- 7.5 TH asked why PRUs do not have any voting rights like the secondary schools. NT confirmed that this is because they do not have an option for de-delegation.
- 7.6 UR asked why there continue to be vacancies for Schools Forum members. DP said she has tried to fill these but have not had any nominations for the secondary and nursery governors. She is still waiting to hear from Brent Schools Partnership to provide her with a primary Headteacher nomination. UR asked if the members were in agreement for him to ask his school's Headteacher to which MH DP said it should be left with Brent Schools Partnership to find a representative. DP agreed to send reminders out again.
- 7.7 MH asked LG if her question on voting rights has been answered. She replied saying 'happy to know the difference from not being able to vote at all to being able to vote under other Schools Forum business'.
- 7.8 Cllr HG expressed her wish to join the Early Years Sub Group and the Forum agreed this.
- 8.0 Distribution of Balance of the Education Action Zone**
- 8.1 SW said that this item would be brought to the next forum. SW/NT
- 9.0 Any Other Business**
- 9.1 LG said she sent out a letter to all Schools Forum members and asked if they could reconsider the decision taken on de-delegation of the Trade Union activity. MH said it should have been raised as a matters arising along with other items. MH suggested that the TUs follow this up with SW as an ongoing negotiation and if need to be could come back to the Schools Forum in June as a formal agenda item.
- 9.2 The Forum ended at 8.10pm.

Action Log

No	Action	Completion Date	Owner
2013/14 Action Points			
1	Benchmarking of End to End process and cost per pupil in processing admissions application	June 2014	PB
2	Update on Schools Forum membership vacancies	June 2014	DP
3	Update on the 3% increase to EYSFF 2013/14 base rate.	June 2014	NT/DP
2014/15 Action Points			
4	Distribution of Balance of the Education Action Zone balance	June 2014	SW/NT
5	Consultation of Scheme for Delegation - Approval of required amendments to the Scheme	September 2014	NT
6	Low Carbon Schools Programme Update Report	September 2014	Emily Ashton
7	Provide details of what service is covered by DSG allocation at GBOEC	September 2014	Angela Chiswell