



MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM
Wednesday 15 January 2020 at 6.00 pm

Present:

Governors	Martin Beard Geraldine Chadwick
Head Teachers	Martine Clark (Vice-Chair in the Chair) Gill Bal Lesley Benson Russell Davey Vivien Dean Michelle Ginty Raphael Moss Andy Prindiville
Lead Member	Councillor Agha
Guest	Farzana Aldridge (BSP)
Trade Union	Jenny Cooper
16-19 Provider Representative	Mark Stacey
Officers	Dena Aly Olufunke Adediran Brian Grady Kunwar Khan Andrew Ward

1. Apologies for Absence and Membership

Governors	Mike Heiser (Chair) Narinder Nathan Titilola McDowell
Head Teachers	Jayne Jardine Melissa Loosemore Gerard McKenna
Early Years PVI	Paul Russell

Kunwar Khan (Governance Officer, Brent Council) informed the Schools Forum that the Council recently concluded the nomination process for the vacant positions. Since then there had been two resignations - Sylvie Libson (one of the Early Years

PVI Representatives) and Helga Gladbaum (a Primary Governor), which meant that the Forum now had the following vacancies in total:

- 1 Nursery Governor
- 1 Primary Governor
- 1 Academy (Primary) Head Teacher
- 1 Maintained (Secondary) Head Teacher
- 1 Early Years PVI Representative

Kunwar Khan indicated that these vacancies would be advertised via Headteachers Bulletin and Governors Bulletins to all schools.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Deputations (if Any)

None.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 December 2019 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. Actions arising

The Forum examined the Action arising from the minutes

In reviewing the action points, it was noted that:

Action 52: The consultation on schools funding had taken place, and would be reported on at this meeting. This action was now concluded.

Action 54: To review the change in the split of terms for NEG payments. This had been followed up separately. This action was now concluded.

Action 55: To consider feedback from forum members that some parents were waiting until a child was three years old to start their early years education journey; to discuss the challenges of high maintenance costs for early years providers in meeting the demands of delivering the 30-hours free childcare offer; and to provide more information about the Nursery Education Grant (NEG) would be considered at the next Early Years Sub Group. Andrew Ward (Head of Finance, Children & Young People, Brent Council) stated that the date for the Early Years Group meeting had not yet been arranged, but would be timetabled between January and February Schools Forum.

Action 56: To review the split-site funding to confirm how allocation met the stipulated Brent criteria. Dena Aly (Senior Finance Analyst, Children & Young People, Brent Council) confirmed that the checks had been undertaken and would be evidenced in a future Schools Forum report.

(Action 56: Dena Aly)

Action 57 - A member of the Forum referred to the suggestion made at the last meeting that there should be a cap on split site funding due to economies of scale. Andrew Ward stated that the methodology would be brought in a future paper and that any change would not require consultation with all schools but would be subject to a Schools Forum vote. A member of the Forum responded that they would like to see the financial impact of any proposed change. Andrew Ward to revisit and if appropriate, to bring an update to the January Schools Forum. This action was being looked at in conjunction with Action No 56 and was anticipated to be covered in June 2020.

(Action 57: Dena Aly)

6. Update - Raising the Achievement of Boys of Black Caribbean Heritage in Brent Schools

Brian Grady, Operational Director, Safeguarding, Partnerships and Strategy Children and Young People, Brent Council and Farzana Aldridge (BSP Strategic Director) provided an update from the Brent Schools Partnership (BSP) on the actions taken and progress made since the last update report to the Forum on the 12 June 2019 in respect of the Schools Forum funded “Raising the Achievement of boys of Black Caribbean Heritage in Brent Schools” programme. The detailed report, circulated with the agenda papers, contained context, background, progress, actions and an overview for the Schools Forum’s perusal.

During the discussion, the Forum noted the following key points:

- There was much to be celebrated particularly how Brent schools took part in the scheme and the improvement in validated Key Stage 2.
- There were still some challenges. The focus shifted as to how current progress level under the scheme be sustained so that the work that was undertaken thus far could be embedded in 2020-22.
- Concerning any linkage between rates of exclusion and the work undertaken, the Forum heard boys of Black Caribbean Heritage were over represented in the Brent exclusion rates. Targeted local authority work was being undertaken to reduce this disproportionality.
- Brian Grady thanked the Schools Forum and Brent Schools Partnership for their shared commitment with Brent schools to this priority. He added that the overall work throughout the process would also be reported to Brent Cabinet.
- A new portal was launched in spring with a lifespan of two years, beyond that there was a plan to go to the Mayor of London for funding with a view that it could be of value to others in London however, development and update would require funding.
- There was discussion with Forum members on the connectivity of the commissioned programme with the development of Brent family hubs.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Schools Forum notes the report, and in particular notes the improved attainment in 2019 for British boys of Black Caribbean heritage at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
2. Members of the Forum were requested to seek, as appropriate, any further information from the Strategic Director of the BSP.
3. Members of the Forum were requested to support the option set out in paragraph 4.3.5 to secure the continuation of the BCA Champion role in Brent schools for a further two years. It was likely that this would be achieved through schools own budgets. In relation to this an update to be provided as part of the next six monthly update. **(Action 58: Brian Grady/Farzana Aldridge)**

7. Update - Strengthening Leadership Development and Succession Planning in Brent schools Programme

Brian Grady, Operational Director, Safeguarding, Partnerships and Strategy Children and Young People, Brent Council and Farzana Aldridge (BSP Strategic Director) provided an update from the Brent Schools Partnership (BSP) on the actions taken and progress made since the last update report on the 12 June 2019 in respect of the Schools Forum funded “Leadership Development and Succession Planning in Brent Schools” programme. The detailed report, circulated with the agenda papers, contained context, background, progress, actions, feedback and an overview for the Schools Forum’s perusal. In relation to the development of the Leadership Charter, the initial scoping of this strand had been completed with a range of actions to be taken forward during year 2 of the programme.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The evaluation feedback from the programme had been positive.
- The programme provided confidence in shared learning, improved retention and was opening up leadership roles.
- Ethical leadership was a particularly valued element of the programme.
- In response to a query, it was clarified that this programme had been available to all Brent schools. All Brent schools were also welcome to sign up to the forthcoming BSP conference, which would focus on leadership. A member requested to review how the non-BSP schools were first informed about the programme, as it seemed that some chose not to join the programme. The Forum heard that there were two standard information sessions for all Brent schools as well as an extra session for Jewish schools who could not attend earlier due to religious holidays.
- A suggestion was made to offer this successful programme to other relevant local authorities outside Brent for a fee in future.

The Chair thanked Farzana Aldridge for her work and leadership in delivering the programme.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Schools Forum notes the report.
2. Members of the Forum were requested to seek, as appropriate, any further information from the Strategic Director of the BSP.

8. Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Monitoring 2019/20

Andrew Ward, Head of Finance – CYP, Brent Council, introduced the report with an update on the forecast financial position. The position was reported against the budget set in consultation with Schools Forum and submitted to the Department for Education on the Section 251 budget return.

The budget was analysed by funding block in appendix 1 of the report and the budget monitoring for Dedicated Schools Grant and Sixth Form Funding was detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, along with other key details set out in the paper.

During the discussion, the following key points were noted:

- The DSG reserves were expected to be eliminated and there would be a deficit by the end of the financial year like many other London boroughs.
- Out of borough placements, on average, cost £23, 500.
- Post 16 provision was a significant growth area.
- High Needs Block – the balance would exceed the income.
- Early Years funding was based on the January census.
- Schools Block was detailed in paragraphs 6.2 and 6.4
- Central Block was covered in paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2.
- Early Years Block was covered in paragraphs 8.1 and 8.2.
- A member raised a concern about somewhat a static situation where growth was rising and the funding dwindling. Schools Forum needed to have a clear pathway and an action plan to deal with such an important challenge.

RESOLVED that:

The Schools Forum notes the report.

9. **Dedicated Schools Grant Schools Budget 2020/21**

Andrew Ward, Head of Finance – CYP, Brent Council, introduced the report setting out the proposed DSG Schools Budget for consultation and decision by Schools Forum ahead of the Council budget being set and approved by full Council.

Andrew Ward informed members of the Forum that the schools block allocations had been amended to reflect a correction in pupil numbers in one school. The revised table was circulated during the meeting.

During the discussion, the following key points were highlighted:

- Following the consultation, a few amendments had been made.
- London received the lowest percentage increase compared to any region.
- Table 1 of the report highlighted the change and DSG Block funding.
- Table 2 of the report set out the de-delegated items.
- Appendices A, B, C and D of the report also outlined the DSG Schools Budget, Central Spend Comparison with Statistical Neighbours, Funding Factor Rates and School Level Allocations respectively.

RESOLVED that:

1. Maintained school members of the Schools Forum were requested to approve the proposed de-delegation arrangements set out within this report. **(CARRIED)**
2. Schools Forum was asked to approve the transfer of £1 million (0.46%) from the Schools Block to support the High Needs Block. The regulations permit up to 0.5% of the Schools Block to be transferred with Forum approval. **(CARRIED)**
3. Schools Forum was asked to recommend the budget for the DSG blocks, including the mainstream funding formula, to the Council. **(CARRIED)**

10. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 19.35

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