

# The KIRKLEES SCHOOLS FORUM PUBLIC (Schools Funding Consultative Group) meeting held online on **Friday 20 June 2025** at 10.00am, Cathedral House, Huddersfield

Present:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Category of Membership:</b>
	<b>Nursery School Head</b>
Diana Wilson, Helen Pearson, Katie Pearson	<b>Primary School Head</b>
Andrew Fell	<b>High School Head</b>
	<b>Special School Head</b>
	<b>Special Academy Head</b>
Darren Christian (Chair), Laura Willimott, Dave Wadsworth, Ian Rimmer	<b>Academy Head</b>
	<b>Alternative Provision</b>
Vicky Morris	<b>Non-school Member</b>
	<b>School Governor</b>
Liz Kilner (Minute Clerk), David Baxter, Emma Brayford	<b>Officers in Support</b>
Cllr Jane Rylah	<b>Observers</b>
Caroline Booth (Employee Healthcare) - part	<b>Others</b>

Apologies:

- Debbie Kelly – Primary Academies
- Rebecca Smith – Alternative Provision
- Andi Gilroy-Sinclair – Nursery School
- Hazel Danson – Kirklees NEU
- Tom Brailsford – Executive Director – Children & Families
- Paul Brook – Academy
- Jo-Anne Sanders - Service Director - Learning and Early Support
- John Bartlett - Head of Finance
- Martin Wilby - Head of Education, Places and Access
- Mathew Pinder - Kirklees Governors

## Kirklees Schools Forum - 20 June 2025

### 1 **Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were completed.

Apologies were received as follows.

- Debbie Kelly – Primary Academies
- Rebecca Smith – Alternative Provision
- Andi Gilroy-Sinclair – Nursery School
- Hazel Danson – Kirklees NEU
- Tom Brailsford – Executive Director – Children & Families
- Paul Brook – Academy
- Jo-Anne Sanders - Service Director - Learning and Early Support
- John Bartlett - Head of Finance
- Martin Wilby - Head of Education, Places and Access
- Mathew Pinder - Kirklees Governors

### 2 **Minutes of the Schools Forum Briefing held on 10 January 2025**

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the last meeting.

### 3 **Matters arising from the meeting held on 10 January 2025**

There were no matters arising.

### 4 **Kirklees Education & Learning Partnership Board (standing item)**

It was confirmed that there has not been a KELPB meeting since the last Schools Forum meeting on 2 May 2025.

### 5 **High Needs Block (standing item)**

The High Needs Place Termly report 20 June 2025 had been circulated before the meeting.

Emma Brayford updated the meeting.

#### a) High Needs Block Update

- There has been no further update on the AP free school, but the LA are hoping to receive an update soon.
- There has been notification of a Statutory Override Settlement announcement (relating to off balance sheet council underfunding – shown as a debt in the Balance Sheet but not reported).

#### b) High Needs Place Report review

- **Kirklees Special School costs per pupil on roll were reviewed.**
- **Exiting ARPs (excluding sensory provisions) cost per pupil on roll were reviewed.**

**Q. There is a large difference in the cost per pupil on roll between the different provisions (Windmill Primary vs Royds Hall Secondary)?**

A. The high cost at Windmill is related to capacity issues.

- **Existing ARPs Sensory Provision cost per pupil on roll were reviewed.**

**Q. The cost of provision is significantly different? Are provisions significantly different?**

A. Different specialisations impacts on cost per place. Specialisations include Vision Impairment, Hearing Impairment and Physical Impairment. Outreach work undertaken also has a significant impact on cost per place. There is a significant amount of outreach work done.

**ACTION:** To help understanding of significant differences in cost per place per pupil could additional notes of explanation be included in the notes column of the tables. This should include impacts on costs of outreach work undertaken.

- **New Phase 1 ARPs (established September 2023) review of cost per pupil on roll.**

It was noted that provision physical environment limits should be considered in agreement of future provision.

**Q. Are differences in cost per pupil as a result of needs of the children or school staffing structures?**

A. An update will be provided at a future Schools Forum meeting.

**Q. Could we consider a budget allocation by type per place per pupil for future agreements?**

A. An update can be offered in terms of the methodology behind the per pupil price allocation.

**ACTION:** An update on drivers of cost per place per pupil to be brought to a future schools forum meeting considering needs of pupils vs staffing structures.

- **Outreach Referral numbers**

It was noted that the volume of referrals does help to explain the differences in cost per pupil per place.

- **Alternative Provision commissioned by Kirklees Council review of cost per pupil on roll**

**Q. Why are there no students on roll for Employability Solutions Alternative Provision?**

A. This can be checked. We have two contracts for this setting. The numbers are higher than expected for one thread. We need to review the duration children spend in the setting, as some may have moved from one setting to another without this being reflected in the reported numbers.

**Q. Academy 21 is under capacity?**

A. This provision is on a pay as you go basis.

**Q. Where will be the additional 14 places that have been commissioned for 2025 be located?**

A. This information will be circulated.

**Q. When do we expect re contracting of places?**

A. In the main, places will be next up for tender in 18 months time. This will differ for Day 6 provision. A lot of work is currently being done to review capacity. There is a dependency on the AP Free school.

The need for an ARP for SEMH (KS 4 particularly) was noted.

**ACTION:** The number of students on roll for Employability Solutions Alternative Provision to be checked.

**ACTION:** The location of the additional 14 places commissioned for 2025 to be circulated to all.

The Chair noted thanks for the very clear report presented,

**6 DSG Close down 2024/25**

The 2024/2025 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Outturn 20 June 2025 had been circulated before the meeting

David Baxter took members through the report.

Schools Forum are asked to note the following:

- The overall deficit outturn of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2024/2025 of £63.9 million.
- The total net surplus balance on individual maintained school accounts of £10.9 million.

**Q. Given the £20.2m overspend, do we expect the Woodley and Joseph Norton expansions to save costs?**

A. There will be a reduction in out of area place costs. There is a view of expected cost savings, but this has not been shared with Schools Forum.

**Q. How do we manage the ongoing year on year adverse movements in the deficit position?**

A. This is a serious concern for the LA.

**Q. In review of school excess balances, could we ensure clarity in the comparison of % of costs spent on staffing?**

A. Yes we will ensure this is done.

**Q. Who do the LA owe for the £63m deficit balance?**

A. In effect this is a Public Works Board loan.

**Q. Will the deficit position of £63m jeopardise the Safety Valve agreement?**

A. We hope not. The LA has been removed from enhanced monitoring.

The Chair noted that there is a concern from Schools Forum that the LA are still on track in relation to the Safety Valve deficit reduction plan.

**ACTION:** Schools Forum to be updated on the expected cost reduction resulting from the expansion of special schools.

## **7 Annual Schools Forum membership report**

The Annual Schools Forum membership review 20 June 2025 had been circulated before the meeting.

Emma Brayford updated the meeting.

- The review of membership has considered the retirement of the Vice Chair.
- The recommendation from the review is that the vacant position for a maintained primary representative should be replaced by an academy representative, ideally from the primary phase.

**Q. Can we request a representative from a Primary academy first?**

A. Yes we can.

**Q. Should representation from geographical areas be considered?**

A. Geographical areas could be considered.

**Q. How will we reflect the impacts of future academisations?**

A. The review is at a point in time and the review next year will reflect academisations that have taken place.

**Q. Are we considering the vacant position for Early Years PVI settings?**

A. Yes this has been considered.

**RESOLVED:** That the vacant position for a maintained primary representative should be replaced by an academy representative, ideally from the primary phase.

## **8 Any other business**

### a) SEN Inspection

The Chair noted that the LA SEN inspection was currently ongoing. There will be inspection feedback and briefing later today. Feedback from schools in relation to visits has been very positive.

## **9 Confirm minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed above.

## **10 Dates & time of next meeting**

A schedule of meeting dates for the next academic year has not yet been circulated.

## **Kirklees Schools Forum - 20 June 2025**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.