

THE KIRKLEES SCHOOLS FORUM

meeting held on Friday 10th July 2015

9:30am at the Tolson Museum

Present:

	Nursery School Heads (1)
Michelle Lee [Chair], Diana Wilson	Primary School Heads (6)
Gary Johnson	Middle School Heads (1)
Ian Ellam	High School Heads (2)
	Special School Heads (1)
Mike Cook	Academy Heads (2)
	Pupil Referral Units (1)
	Kirklees Governors (1)
Gillian Collins (ATL), Hazel Danson (NUT), Sarah Ellis (Pre-school Learning Alliance)	Non-school members (5)
Angela Farmer (Senior Finance Officer) David Gearing (Financial Delegation Manager); [Minute Clerk] Liz Singleton (Deputy Assistant Director, Learning)	Officers in Support
	Observers

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Lynn Hill (Primary school heads), Martin Ridge (Pupil Referral Units), Nicky Rogers (Special school heads), Simon Sloan (Primary school heads), David Smith (Director of Resources), Jo Bailey-Taylor (NASUWT) and Loz Wilson (High school heads).

2. Minutes of the Schools Forum Public meeting held on 27th March

The minutes were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising from the Schools Forum meeting 27th March

No matters were raised.

4. Terms of Reference

For information, following previous discussions, an updated version of Kirklees Schools Forum's constitution and terms of reference document was included amongst today's agenda papers. The document needs to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects any changes to Forum regulations and any changed local circumstances.

5. 2014-15 DSG budget closedown and rollover proposals

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2014-15 account showed an under-spend of £8.26m at year-end closedown. For the majority of this amount there were proposals to roll the money forward to be used for various purposes in the current financial year. The budget headings not covered by these proposals more or less balance off – total overspends of £466k are largely offset by £440k of underspends – and this net balance of £26k can be written off against Schools Contingency.

The table below summarises the position reached on each of the rollover proposals as of today: -

Schools Forum recommendations on 2014-15 DSG rollover proposals

Budget Heading	Amount	Notes	Recommendation
Alternative Provisions Pupil Premium	£89,000	Ring-fenced Pupil Premium grant amount means no option but to roll forward and allocate to support those children placed in Alternative Provisions. Methodology to do so is being discussed.	Rollover of full sum agreed
KS4 Pupil Placements	£65,200	Surplus on last year's Pupil Placements account. The system has changed from Sept 14 and continues to evolve and the consequential financial effects of this are not yet clear so a decision on the proposal at this stage is perhaps too early.	Money to remain uncommitted. Further information needed before a recommendation can be made.
FE High Needs	£189,100	New top-up funding system for post-16 SEN students has still to be agreed. Planned expansion of post-16 in the Special sector means there are more pressures to address	Rollover agreed but Forum requested a separate report about the issues here
Independent School Fees	£166,500	Volatile area of the budget with significant unit costs. Current pattern of the ISF placements suggests a £385k problem in 2015-16 so rollover would mitigate that.	Rollover of full sum agreed
Resources for SEN Statements	£123,400	Expenditure vs this budget has been reduced due to schools becoming responsible for (up to) the first £6k of additional spend on each High Needs child. But, Forum has previously been briefed about escalating pressures within the overall High Needs funding block.	Rollover of full sum agreed (to supplement SEN Contingency funds)
PPP2 annuity	£100,300	This is provision for the gap between the facilities management contractor's costs and the contribution fees paid by the three special schools involved. Much of the under-spend could be taken up by the outcome of a pending cost benchmark exercise. Pressure could also surface when Lydgate School moves into a vacant PPP1 site.	Rollover of funds agreed. Forum requests to be informed of the benchmark outcome when known and the additional Lydgate costs when they become known.
2 year-old funding for 15 hours + Early Years trajectory funding	£2,352,300 £1,390,000	The balances here are largely as a result of a generous approach to grant funding received by the LA. There are some pressures going forward – from a rising number of children accessing provision, from the need to address SEN amongst the two year-old cohort and, looking further ahead, the doubling of the free nursery entitlement to 30 hours per week the year after next.	No decision made. Awaiting a further report from the Early Learning Service. Indicative commitment given by the Service to use funds rolled forward to provide substitute Pupil Premium funds to those schools which had some Reception children missing from the January 2015 Free Meals census return (one-off cost of £243k)
PVI Sector Formula Funding	£97,000	Funding for the 15 hrs per week free nursery entitlement delivered by the private, voluntary and independent sector. Increasing numbers are accessing PVI provision to the detriment of some school nurseries	Rollover of full sum agreed –needed to address increased PVI sector demand.

Sickness absence insurance	£404,100	Custom and practice with the sickness insurance year-end position has been to spread it back over the membership of schools of the year in question. Forum has previously agreed that a contingency of £100k can be retained, but a sum of £150k was proposed for 2015-16 given the unknown effects of the change in the schemes to pay-out on days of absence rather than relief used.	Retention of contingent provision to stay at £100,000. The remaining £304,100 to be returned to participating schools.
School Contingency	£3,308,600	£456k of the total represents unused balances in the Pupil Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund accounts. £2.34m is the brought-forward reserve being held to support exceptional school reorganisation and restructuring costs and to help with various hot spots where demand for school places is running ahead of supply. This has been supplemented during 2014-15 by nearly £0.5m of school business rates revaluations and refunds. The proposal contained a list of the school developments that are in the pipeline which will need substantial financial support over the coming months, the highest costs of which will be funding to support three new primary school provisions as they grow to a complete number of year groups.	£456,200 PGF/FRF is to be returned across all local schools and academies. The £26,000 net balance gap will be charged against 2015-16 Contingency. The remaining £2,826,400 to be rolled forward to address school reorganisation and pupil demand pressures.
Total	£8,285,500		

6. Universal Infant Free School Meals 2015/16

The next instalment of Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) Grant has been received by the local authority in respect of its maintained schools with KS1 provision. Relevant schools (and academies) have previously received grant funding for the period September 2014 to March 2015 based upon an assumed 87% meal take-up rate from the cohort of children not previously entitled to a free meal. The new grant payment is now based upon a simple average of the actual numbers of children from that cohort declared within the October 2014 and the January 2015 pupil census returns as accessing a free meal. There are (potentially) four elements to the new grant payment: -

- i) Adjustment to the 1/9/14 to 31/3/15 allocation to replace the 87% take-up assumption with the average actual take-up rate
- ii) An allocation for the Summer Term 2015 based upon the average actual take-up rate
- iii) Provisional allocation for the period 1/9/15 to 31/3/16 based upon the same average take-up rate. This allocation will be revised this time next year by using the new average of take-up as recorded on the October 2015 and January 2016 census returns.
- iv) For those schools having 150 pupils or fewer on their overall roll, an additional amount of £2,300 of small schools transitional support funding is allocated.

The meeting was provided with a full breakdown of the new UIFSM grant allocations which total £5.04m for maintained schools. A further £0.6m will be allocated directly to local academies by the Education Funding Agency. An example of how the calculation works was also detailed. The grant amounts will be credited to maintained schools shortly. The Catering Service will need to recover this funding from schools as it is effectively paying them for supplying the new free meals (instead of the parents paying).

It was pointed out that the original 87% take-up target was equivalent to 11,325 children. The average actual take-up for the two school terms was higher at 12,242 children. The difference will be due to a combination of rising numbers within KS1 and a greater than 87% take-up in the majority of schools.

7. Early Years Pupil Premium

Kirklees has received a new Early Years Pupil Premium allocation in 2015-16 of £477,000. This is to be allocated to support disadvantaged children attending school nurseries and private, voluntary and independent settings. A lot of work has been put into devising appropriate mechanisms to distribute this new funding with a particular emphasis placed upon eligibility checking to ensure the right children are being identified. The new premium is set at a rate of 53p per hour accessed of the free 15 hours nursery entitlement and this is funding provided in addition to the deprivation element already within the main Early Years Single Funding Formula allocation. If an eligible child accesses the full 15 hours across the whole of the financial year, the EYPP payment would be (£0.53 x 15 hours x 38 weeks =) £302, the maximum level of support for any one child.

As with the other Pupil Premium allocations, Ofsted will assess how schools and settings have used the EYPP funding and its impact under their 'leadership and management' judgement. The Dept for Education will also be conducting studies to assess the impact of the EYPP and to gather early evidence of this.

To help schools and settings with the task of getting parents to register their entitlement, the local authority has sent out an explanatory flow-chart to describe the processes and a template letter to parents to be used to encourage their registration. All the data is now being pulled together by the Customer and Exchequer Service. EYPP payments for the Summer term 2015 will be released to PVI settings later this month and to schools over the Summer.

8. Schools Forum online

A verbal report was given on the updating of the Kirklees Council website pages for Kirklees Schools Forum. It was confirmed that the revised page can be found at: -

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/parentsCarers/schools/schoolsForum.aspx>

As previously suggested, a request has also been made of IT Services to set up a dedicated e-mail address for the Forum, schools.forum@kirklees.gov.uk .

Meeting dates, agenda papers and agreed minutes for Schools Forum briefing meetings are circulated by the representatives as requested. Copies of the Schools Forum Public Meeting papers are available, via a direct link on the Forum page through to the Council meetings section of the website at: -

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CLD=158&Year=0>

9. Living Wage update

The Council took a decision on 11th March 2015 to adopt the Living Wage from the beginning of financial year 2015-16. It will be the July payroll run before the salary changes are put into effect but the payment will be back-dated to 1st April 2015. The adoption of the Living Wage means the deletion of all spinal column points below Pt11 from the Single Status staff pay scale.

The impact of the Living Wage upon the majority of those schools affected is relatively minor. However, there are a handful of schools which have chosen to directly employ their cleaners who will experience a more significant cost increase. For lunchtime supervisory staff there will be no overall effect upon their salary, just a rebalance of the two elements of their pay to increase their base rate to Pt11 but reduce their additional market rate supplement equivalently. The Council is to provide additional funds to the Catering and Cleaning Services in order that they do not need to pass on the effect of the Living Wage to their customers in 2015-16.

There was general welcome for the Council's decision to implement the Living Wage but some concerns expressed in respect of possible knock-on effects for salary differentials. The implications for low-paid staff employed by local academies were also raised.

10. Any other business

10.1 Vote of thanks to outgoing Forum members

Today marks the end of the term of office of Simon Sloan who has represented the maintained primary school sector for the last few years. Forum wishes to record its thanks to Simon for his contribution during this time.

Dates and times of next meetings [start times to be confirmed]

Friday 23rd October 2015
Friday 11th December 2015
Friday 11th March 2016
Friday 24th June 2016