

Decisions of the Schools Forum

Meeting 25 November 2021

	Name	Representing
	Luke Bridges (LB)	Headteacher - Primary Maintained schools
	Ian Kingham (IK)	Deputy Head – Special Schools
	Robin Archibald (RA)	Headteacher - Primary Academies
	Jo Kelly (JK)	Headteacher – PRUs
	Marc Lewis (ML)	Sub for Gavin Smith (HT, Secondary Academies)
	Annette Long (AL)	Early Years – Maintained Nursery Schools
	Gilbert Knight (GK)	Governor - Special Schools
	Matthew Stevens (MS)	Headteacher - Secondary Academies
	Sarah Sands (SS)	Headteacher - Primary Maintained schools
	Chaya Posen (CP)	Headteacher - Primary Maintained schools
	Simon Horne (SH)	Headteacher - Secondary Maintained schools
	Harvey Freeman (HF)	Governor - Primary Maintained schools
	Ziz Chater (ZC)	Headteacher - Primary Maintained schools
	Sian Morris	Headteacher - Primary Academies
Trade Union:	Keith Nason KN)	Trade Unions (Barnet NEU)
Councillor:	David Longstaff (Cllr DL)	
LA/BELS Officers:	Ian Harrison (IH)	Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning, BELS
	Helen Phelan (HP)	Director of SEND and Inclusion
	Gareth Evans (GE)	Finance Manager (Schools)
	Sabrina Burrell (SB)	Senior Business Support Officer, BELS (Minute Taker)
Observer:	Zeenat Syed	Trade Unions (Barnet NEU)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies given by Lucy Rodgers, Lucy Harrison, Alexander Banks and Sarah Vipond.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of previous meeting 8th July 2021

The meeting of the previous meeting could not be agreed at the meeting held in October as this meeting was not quorate.

The Minutes from the 8th July meeting were agreed

AL asked what the recent announcements on early years funding meant for Barnet's maintained nursery schools. IH said the information had just been received and the finance team would analyse it. Details would be included in the report on the 22-23 budget to the next meeting of the Schools Forum and in the Annual Report on School Funding at the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee in January. Officers would discuss with the maintained nursery schools ahead of that.

There were no other matters arising.

The notes of the previous inquorate meeting on 7th October were noted.

4. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Membership update

IH gave a membership update and apologised for the late circulation of the paper but explained that this was because the deadline for nominations had closed 3 days before and it was important to agree membership changes at this meeting so that vacancies could be filled now and new members can attend the next meeting.

IH explained that it was proposed to retain the current membership numbers for all categories other than for primary and secondary schools. In order to minimise the number of vacancies and to retain/appoint all the people who have volunteered to be on the Schools Forum, it was proposed to:

- a) Increase the primary and secondary places from 19 to 20 and the total number of places from 26 to 27.
- b) Allocate 11 places to maintained primary and secondary schools and 9 to primary and secondary Academies
- c) Agree not to prescribe the number of primary and secondary representatives by phase, provided that:
 - There is at least one from each phase for both groups; and
 - The overall balance between phases is more or less pro-rata to pupil numbers (within 5%); and
 - There is at least one primary governor and one secondary governor (across maintained school and Academy reps); and
 - There is at least one Academy governor and at least one maintained school governor.

It was noted that, based on current numbers of pupils (May 2021 census), the above proposals would enable all those listed in section 6 of the report to continue as members whilst allowing all those listed in section 7 to become new members of the Schools Forum.

Members agreed to:

- (i) Approve the above proposal for membership.
- (ii) Note that this will mean the continued membership of those listed in 6 above and the appointment from the next meeting of those listed in 7.

- (iii) Agree that the composition of the Forum be kept under review in the light of changes to the balance of provision and numbers of pupils in different types and phases of school.

5. MATTERS ARISING

None

6. SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS UPDATE

GE presented the paper which set out proposed updates to the scheme of financing schools, which were in line with government directives. Nothing material has changed other than minor amendments to wording.

The Schools Forum approved the changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools as described in the report.

7. 2022-23 NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

GE presented the paper on the national funding formula and the expected DSG funding for Barnet.

The report was noted.

8. 2022-23 CENTRAL SCHOOLS SERVICES BLOCK

GE presented the paper. The central schools services block is split into two parts, historic commitments and ongoing responsibilities. The commitments are reduced by approximately 20% every year which this table shows, and for the ongoing responsibilities the Forum needs to agree the funding for the individual lines.

The Schools Forum agreed the figures in the report for ongoing responsibilities in principle and noted that the final figure will be presented to the Forum in January 2022. The Schools Forum also noted the figure for historical commitments of £0.237 million.

9. 2022-23 DE-DELEGATION

GE stated we have proposed to keep almost all the rates the same as last year, therefore no increase in rates and so the contribution from maintained Primary and Secondary schools will remain the same per pupil for those items. There is one exception which is in the school contingency where it is proposed to increase the rate charged to schools. The contingency fund is held for circumstances where there are unforeseen extra charges to a school's budget. This is also the same fund that pays for redundancies for maintained schools that meet the eligibility criteria. £260,000 had been set aside for this, but this year payments have exceeded this as claims have been made for £360,000. As a result an extra £200,000 is requested for delegation, bringing the total contingency figure to £460,000 for this 2022-23. The paper shows the increase in the rate. If the whole budget is not spent, this figure can be reduced the following year with unspent provision credited back to schools.

Representatives of maintained Primary Schools voted on each proposal and each was agreed with 6 votes for and none against.

The Representative of maintained Secondary Schools voted on each proposal affected secondary schools and each was agreed with 1 vote for and none against.

The proposals were therefore approved by the Schools Forum.

10. 2022-23 FORMER ESG SERVICES

GE highlighted the proposal to continue to fund the services formerly funded by the Education Services Grant. We have requested this for three years now, and it is a continuation of what we have done before. The amount requested is the same as last year, which is £700,000. The rate may change based on final pupil data that will be available in December. An update will be given in January if the rate does change, but the Schools Forum were requested to approve the proposal based on the indicative rates as shown.

The Schools Forum agreed to approve the proposal to charge the cost of services formerly funded from the ESG to the budgets of maintained schools, maintaining the level of £700,000, in 2022-23.

11. 2022-23 SPLIT SITES & GROWTH FACTORS

GE explained that the paper shows the amounts for schools with split sites and the amounts that schools get for expansions commissioned by the local authority and for taking on bulge classes or extra classes. The figures have been increased in line with the government minimum funding thresholds.

The Schools Forum agreed the existing split-site criteria for 2022-23 and approved the existing Growth Fund criteria for 2022-23.

12. 2022-23 MINIMUM FUNDING GUARANTEE & DISAPPLICATIONS

GE explained that in previous years the council has gone for the maximum MFG allowed and it is proposing to apply the same 2% maximum minimum funding guarantee that we can to schools. It was also noted that in previous years, we have applied to the DfE for dis-applications of the MFG for a handful of expanding all-through schools but this is no longer relevant as they have now filled all year groups.

The Schools Forum noted the MFG range for 2022-23

13. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL PLACES PLAN - CONSULTATION

IH stated that consultation has now begun on the draft Special Educational Place Plan (the consultation document) and this will continue until 17th December. Meetings are being organised for various stakeholders. The draft plan states sets out the growth in places required because of the big increase in Education, Health and Care Plans

(EHCPs) over the last few years - over 20% in the last two years, which has meant a big increase in the need for specialist provision in special schools and Additional Resource Provisions attached to mainstream schools (ARPs).

The plan sets out what we proposed in our 2019 special places plan and all the things we have done to fulfil that, together with some additional things we have had to do in the last 12 months because of the continuing big expansion, including expanding ARPs and creating a new ARP at Broadfields Primary school. The draft plan then looks forward to the next three years, projecting the number of extra specialist places required because of the continuing growth in EHCPs. This is set out by type of need and by phase. The plan shows there is a need for an additional 238 extra places in special schools and ARPs.

The draft plan sets out proposals for a mixture of further expansions to special schools and ARPs, including two extra ARPS, one for primary, one for secondary and the creation of a new special school annex for up to 71 pupils. The intention is to open that from next September. We are now expecting the Windmill Academy to open in 2024.

HP added that a complete picture of the needs of children coming through is difficult as many children have really complex needs, so they often have autism along with quite considerable additional learning needs and associated behavioural needs as well.

IH added that the proposals had been developed in discussion with schools and the Parent-Carer Forum

It was noted that the expansion over the next three years of 238 places, is almost a 30% increase in the number of places in special schools and ARPs, and that includes a virtually new school in terms of the special school extension of 71 places, followed by the Windmill Special School a year or two after that, with 91 places.

Members of the Forum were invited to submit individual responses to the consultation by 17th December.

The Schools Forum noted the draft Special Educational Places Plan (the consultation document) and noted that members may submit individual responses.

14. SCHOOLS FORUM JANUARY 22 DRAFT AGENDA

IH made a proposal that training be given at the start of the next meeting, given the number of new members now being appointed or who have recently jointed the Forum.

This and the draft agenda were agreed

15. AOB

None

16. APPENDIX 1 - BARNET SEN SPECIAL PLACES PLAN CONSULTATION 2021

The meeting finished at 17:00