

## Schools Forum

**Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 9 March 2022 at 4.00 pm**  
**Digital Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

### Schools Forum Members Present:

Mr M. Vlahakis	Primary Head Teacher, Cadmus Family of schools
Mrs C. Draper	Primary Head Teacher, Short Heath Federation
Mrs J. Garratt	Primary Head Teacher, Walsall Wood
Mr S. Davies	Primary Head Teacher, Christ Church CE (C) JMI School
Mrs N. Boys	Primary Academy Head Teacher, Lodge Farm
Mrs L. Foster	Primary Governor, Short Heath Federation
Mr M. Fox	Primary Governor, Kings Hill Primary
Mrs E. Phillips	Academy Special School, Phoenix Academy
Mr C. Bury	Principal, The Ladders School, Alternative Provision
Mr T. Hopkins	PVI Representative
Ms M. Turley	Nursery Head Teacher, Ogley Hay Nursery

### Officers Present:

Mrs S. Rowe – Executive Director of Children's Services  
Mrs S. Kelly – Director of Access and Inclusion  
Ms J. Nash – Interim Head of SEND  
Mr R. Thomas – Head of Access  
Mr R. Walley – Technical Accounting, Treasury Management & Education Finance Manager  
Mr L. Haynes – Deputy Head of Finance - Corporate  
Mr C. Goodall – Principal Democratic Services Officer

### Observer Present:

Councillor C. Towe	Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills
Sharon Guy	Observer, National Education Union
Mrs Kate Bargh	North Star Federation
Mr. A. Orlick	Observer, C of E Diocese

		Action
<b>1.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Welcome</b>  The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and explaining and rules of procedure and legal context in which the meeting was being held. He also directed members of the public viewing the meeting to the papers, which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information System (CMIS) webpage.	

	Members confirmed they could both see and hear the proceedings.	
<b>2.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Apologies</b>  Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Baker, Mrs Keenan, Mr Seager and Mrs Fraser.	
<b>3.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Minutes – 18 January 2022</b>  <b>Resolved:</b>  That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2022, a copy having been previously circulated to each Member of Schools Forum, be approved and signed as a true record.	Noted
<b>4.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Matters Arising from the Minutes of 18 January 2022</b>  The meeting reviewed and noted the actions.	Noted
<b>5.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Late Item/s (urgent) to be introduced by the Chair</b>  There were no late or urgent items.	Noted
<b>6.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)</b>  The Schools Forum noted that there were no items for consideration in the private session.	Noted
<b>7.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Update on the SEND and EHCP Performance – enclosed</b>  The Forum considered SEND and EHCP performance.  Ms Nash gave a presentation (annexed). She highlighted timelines, the backlog and areas for development.  A discussion took place on concerns regarding the quality assessment of documents and the role of the Local Area Improvement Board in overseeing and challenging plans.  <b>Resolved</b>  That: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the report be noted;</li> <li>2. Mrs Foster to report issues with quality assessments to Ms Nash;</li> <li>3. Local Area Improvement Board Members to be invited to provide feedback on EHCP monitoring at a future meeting.</li> </ol>	As listed

<p><b>8.</b> <b>09.03.22</b></p>	<p><b>Special Provision Work and Action Plan</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked the authors of the report.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p><b>9.</b> <b>09.03.22</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed High Needs Funding Formula</b></p> <p>The Forum considered the proposed High Needs Funding Formula.</p> <p>In response to a question Mr Haynes, Deputy Head of Finance, confirmed that the proposed rates for pay and pension funding for Alternative Provision Free Schools were currently based on projected place numbers but this would be reconciled in due course.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Schools Forum note the work undertaken by officers and the working group to successfully implement the new bandings for all EHCP's and their commitment to further moderate the documents.</li> <li>2. That the Schools Forum recommend the proposed local high needs funding formula to Cabinet, to seek approval and agreement to implement the proposed model from 1 April 2022.</li> </ol>	<p>Reported to Cabinet</p>
<p><b>10.</b> <b>09.03.22</b></p>	<p><b>High Needs Funding Working Group</b></p> <p>The Chair briefly introduced the item.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the report of the High Needs Funding Working Group be noted.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p><b>11.</b> <b>09.03.22</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed Early Years Funding Formula for two, three and four year olds</b></p> <p>The Forum considered the proposed early years funding formula.</p> <p>The Technical Accounting, Treasury Management &amp; Education Finance Manager provided responses to a number of questions that had been submitted in advance. He stated that the Council recognised the funding challenges of providers so passed on 95% of funding that was received directly to them. He reported the hourly payment rises and noted that there</p>	

	<p>were 8 maintained nurseries. At the request of Forum Members it was agreed to forward detailed answers to these questions via email.</p> <p>Members discussed challenges with funding in the sector that affected its financial sustainability.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Schools Forum note the work undertaken by officers;</li> <li>2. the Early Years Funding Formula that is proposed for 2022/23 be agreed and forwarded for Cabinet for approval.</li> </ol>	Reported to Cabinet
<p><b>12.</b></p> <p><b>09.03.22</b></p>	<p><b>School Improvement Grant (SIG) and Local Authority School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering (LAMB) Grant Changes</b></p> <p>The meeting considered changes to SIG and LAMB grants.</p> <p>The Chair introduced the item explaining that the grants previously available were being removed. This affected support from the Council for schools that needed support when experiencing challenges. He suggested that the Forum worked with the Council to find a solution to fund the money that was being lost from schools budgets. He noted that the cost per school to fund this was £1700-2500.</p> <p>The Director of Access and Inclusion explained that the Department for Education had removed Council funding for schools causing concern. She reported that there was funding available for the summer term but welcomed a solution where schools could delegate a grant to the Council to fund this important work.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. a further report on this issue be received at the June 2022 meeting;</li> <li>2. the Primary Heads Group consider the issue at its next meeting;</li> <li>3. A special meeting be arranged in April to discuss LAMB grant changes.</li> </ol>	As listed
<p><b>13.</b></p> <p><b>09.03.22</b></p>	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>None</p>	Noted
<p><b>14.</b></p> <p><b>09.03.22</b></p>	<p><b>Forward Plan</b></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Forward Plan be noted.</li> </ol>	Noted

<b>15.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Late Items</b>  There were no late items for consideration.	Noted
<b>16.</b> <b>09.03.22</b>	<b>Date and Time of future meetings</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 June 2022 at 4.00 pm</li> </ul>	

The meeting terminated at 4.57 pm.

Signed .....

Date: .....