

## Schools Forum

**Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 at 4.00 p.m. at Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall**

**Present:-** Dr. A. Bruton (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs. C. Draper  
Mrs. M. Sheehy  
Ms. T. Coles  
Mr. S. Davies  
Mr. G. Crowther  
Mrs. C. Fraser  
Mrs. W. Smith  
Mrs. B.E. Westwood  
Mrs. G. Healy  
Mr. J. Bonhomme  
Ms. M. Yates  
Mr. F. Hodgkinson  
Mr. M. Ison  
Councillor Cassidy

**In Attendance:-** Mr. D. Haley - Executive Director, Children's Services, Walsall MBC  
Mr. L. Cross - Deputy Headteacher, Elmwood School  
Mr. M. Morris - Group Manager SEND, Children's Services, Walsall MBC  
Mrs. K. Mann - Admissions and Pupil Place Planning Team, Children's Services, Walsall MBC  
Mr. L. Haynes - Education Finance, Walsall MBC  
Ms. D. Morris - Education Finance, Walsall MBC  
Mr. C. Karadia - Money Home Job, Walsall MBC  
Mr. P. Morrison - Money Home Job, Walsall MBC  
Ms. Hart - Early Years School Ready Lead Advisor, Walsall MBC

### **Dr. A. Bruton in the Chair**

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1. 10.3.15</b>	<b>Apologies</b>  Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Dame M. Brennan, Ms. H. Harnisch, Messrs. K. Whittlestone, M. Allman, S. Pritchard-Jones and J. Dwyer.	

<p><b>2.</b> <b>10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes - 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2015</b></p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the amendment of Paragraph 3 delete "Mrs. Coles" and insert "Ms. Coles".</p>
<p><b>3.</b> <b>10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Matters arising from the minutes</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p>	
<p><b>4.</b> <b>10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Late items to be introduced by the Chairman</b></p> <p>There were no late items for introduction by the Chairman.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b> <b>10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)</b></p> <p>There were no items for consideration in the private session.</p>	

<p><b>6.</b> <b>10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Feedback on Admissions Service</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>Mrs. Mann expanded on the contents of the report which outlined the duties of the Admissions and Pupil Based Planning Team.</p> <p>In response to points raised, Mrs. Mann stated that there was a statutory requirement to publish the Information for Parents booklet by 12<sup>th</sup> September. It could be published prior to that but work on the document could not commence until after 15<sup>th</sup> April. It was appreciated that grammar schools operated on a different basis and suggested that interim guidance could be published on the Council's website.</p> <p>Mrs. Mann confirmed that there were 4.5 FTE in post but there were also vacancies on the Team.</p> <p>Mrs. Mann stated that consultation on term dates took part with other Local Authorities, including West Midlands Authorities when agreement would be reached on half term dates and representations were invited from Primary and Secondary Forum on the dates selected. The information was published on the website and responses invited over a two week period.</p> <p>Mrs. Mann confirmed that forecasts on pupil planning took place on an annual basis and data could be provided to individual schools if this was requested. She undertook to provide a timeline on the process to the next meeting of the Forum.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the information contained in the annexed report be noted.</p>	<p>K. Mann to report to next meeting</p>
<p><b>7.</b> <b>10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>SEN update (Standing Item)</b></p> <p><b>Update on High Needs Review</b></p> <p>The update on high needs review, including feedback from the Education Funding Agency on the request for additional places was presented to</p>	

	<p>the meeting. Mr. Morris, Group Manager of SEND and Mr. L. Cross, Deputy Head of Elmwood, seconded to the review, addressed the Forum.</p> <p>Mr. Morris confirmed that informal consultation ended in December, 2014. Cabinet approved the options to go forward for statutory consultation which commenced on 23<sup>rd</sup> February and would end on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2015. All schools would have received the statutory proposal prior to 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2015. To date, requests for copies of the proposal had been received from parents and school staff and comments and feedback from schools and parents were being submitted.</p> <p>A formal meeting would take place on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 at the Phoenix School to inform parents of the impact of the proposals on that school. At the completion of the formal consultation, a report would be submitted to Cabinet in April, 2015.</p> <p>Further informal consultation would take place on Additional Resourced Provision (ARP) for children with autism and expressions of interest were being invited from schools interested in providing the service. The inclusion strategy to address the achievement gap for children with SEN in Walsall would be launched on 17<sup>th</sup> April at the Education Development Centre.</p> <p>Mr. Cross indicated that two additional primary ARP's were being considered; he referred to the importance of maintaining social interaction within peer groups where the young people lived. It was essential that the expression of interest was submitted by Primary Heads and Governors to ensure an inclusive environment.</p> <p>The proposed areas were Brownhills, Darlaston and Pheasey Park.</p> <p>Mr. Haley suggested that nursery ARP's be included in the 0 - 5 strategy so that the inclusion strategy would include a strand to support mental and social behaviour of very young children and consideration could be given to some form of enhanced provision; this could not be funded from pupil places planning for over 5's. The whole focus of early intervention would help to mitigate against</p>	
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	<p>and support families in behaviour management.</p> <p>Some Head Teachers had expressed concern that an ARP attached to their school could have implications on their SATS results and questioned whether any action could be taken to enable pupils to remain on role.</p> <p>Mr. Cross stated that information on a virtual outreach post had been forwarded to Primary, Nursery and Special School Members setting out a framework for outreach. This could bridge the gap in aligning provision for school to school support. The virtual outreach post would address the immediate situation for young children.</p> <p>With regard to feedback from the Education Funding Agency on the request for additional spaces, Ms. Morris reported that the EFA considered that there was insufficient evidence for additional places. It was too late to provide additional evidence for 2015/16 and the regional officer had indicated that this response had been given to the majority of Local Authorities who had submitted requests.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the information be noted.</p>	<p>Lynda Poole - an update be provided at the next meeting.</p>
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<p><b>8. 10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Free School Meals Service - Presentation on current work and options to increase take up</b></p> <p>A presentation was circulated at the meeting and Mr. Karadia, Money Home Job, went through the presentation. A list of eligible pupils was sent to schools on a weekly basis and a full list provided at half term and the end of term. Information in relation to this was available on "Walsall Link".</p> <p>Mr. Davies informed the Forum that a company from Birmingham had been selling software packages to schools to enable them to obtain a list of pupils eligible for free school meals and access pupil premium. Mr. Karadia indicated that this service had always been available by the Council to schools.</p> <p>Mrs. Draper reported that a message had been sent to all schools about the service provided by the company and none of the schools were aware of the service provided by the Council.</p> <p>Mr. Haley undertook to take up this matter and respond to Schools Forum as this was a de-delegated service which meant that schools were now paying twice.</p> <p>Councillor Cassidy indicated that Children's Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel could investigate this.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the presentation be noted.</p>	<p>Lynda Poole to report to next meeting</p>
<p><b>9. 10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Update on Universal Infant Free School Meals Funding</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>Schools Forum was informed that the underspend had arisen as the costs for schemes had been lower than originally indicated.</p> <p>Mr. Haley asked why previously unsuccessful schools should be given a higher priority if they did not meet the criteria and also why schools that had</p>	

	<p>been denied assistance due to lack of funding should be required to submit another bid and asked whether any school would have been successful had there been sufficient funding. Mrs. Poole undertook to investigate this matter and it was,</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That Schools Forum delegate authority to the Chair and Vice-Chair to determine the schools that should receive funding in accordance with the criteria set out at Paragraph 4.2 with the deletion of criteria number 2 and that the decision be circulated to Members of Schools Forum in due course.</p>	<p>Lynda Poole to investigate</p> <p>Lynda Poole/Lloyd Haynes to arrange</p>
<p><b>10. 10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed Early Years Funding Formula Review</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That the contents of the report and attachments be noted and that approval be given to a review of the Early Years Single Funding Formula model take place and that the following be appointed as Members of the Review Working Group:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Mrs. W. Smith, Nursery Head Teacher Mrs. B.E. Westwood, Infant Academy Head Teacher Ms. T. Coles, Primary Head Teacher 1 PVI representative</p>	<p>Dawn Morris to arrange</p>
<p><b>11. 10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Update on Surplus (including 2 year old capital expenditure update)</b></p> <p>A report was submitted.</p> <p>Ms. Hart, the Early Years School Ready Lead Advisor, expanded on the contents of the report and outlined proposals coming forward to improve the outcomes for early years pupils over a three year period. Analysis of attainment against a good level of development would be assessed at the end of reception with the main areas being maths, literacy, communication and language.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p>	

	That Schools Forum note the position set out in the update report submitted and information be provided with regard to a Business Plan on the use of funding to improve the outcomes for early years children.	Lynda Poole/Ms. Hart to provide report to next meeting
<b>12. 10.3.15</b>	<b>Dates for future meetings</b>  A report was submitted.  <b>Resolved</b>  That no changes be made to the schedule of meetings agreed on 13 <sup>th</sup> January, 2015, as set out in Appendix 1.	No further action at this time
<b>13. 10.3.15</b>	<b>Forward Plan</b>  The Forward Plan was submitted.  <b>Resolved</b>  That the forward plan of decisions be noted.	
<b>14. 10.3.15</b>	<b>Late items to be introduced by the Chair</b>  There were no late items for consideration	
<b>15. 10.3.15</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>  There was no correspondence submitted.	
<b>16. 10.3.15</b>	<b>Date and time of next meeting</b>  It was <b>NOTED</b> that the next meeting of Schools Forum would be held on Tuesday, 7 <sup>th</sup> July, 2015 at 4.00 p.m. at Blakenall Village Centre, Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall.	



<p><b>17.</b> <b>10.3.15</b></p>	<p><b>Item for information</b></p> <p>Mrs. Yates informed Schools Forum that Walsall Governors Association now had a website for all Governors to sign into and a Governors Conference would be held on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 at Walsall College. A free subscription to the National Association of Governors for all schools who attend the Conference would be available. Mrs. Yates asked Members present to encourage their Governors to attend the Conference on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2015.</p>	<p>All Members to alert Governors</p>
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The meeting terminated at 5.50 p.m.