



## SCHOOLS FORUM

**Tuesday, 7 December 2021 at 4.00 pm**

Meeting to be held via: **Microsoft Teams**

<b>MEMBERSHIP:</b>	Mr M. Vlahakis	Primary Head Teacher, Cadmus Family of schools
	Mrs C. Draper	Primary Head Teacher, Short Heath Federation
	Mrs M. Sheehy	Primary Head Teacher, Millfield Primary School
	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
	Mr M. Moody	Primary Academy Representative, Goldsmiths and Rivers Academies
	Mrs S. Bowen	Secondary Maintained Head Teacher, St. Thomas More Catholic School
	Mr A. Seager	Secondary Academy Head Teacher, Bloxwich Academy
	Mrs H. Keenan	Secondary Academy Head Teacher, Brownhills Academy
	Mr W. Downie	Secondary Academy Head Teacher, Streetly Academy
	Mrs L. Foster	Primary Governor, Short Heath Federation
	Mr M. Fox	Primary Governor, Kings Hill Primary
	Mr I. Baker	Secondary Academy Governor, Grace Academy
	Mrs C. Fraser	Special School Head Teacher, Castle Business and Enterprise College
	Mrs E. Phillips	Academy Special School, Phoenix Academy
	Mr C. Bury	Principal, The Ladders School, Alternative Provision
	Ms J. Barr	Special School Governor
	Ms M. Turley	Nursery Head Teacher, Ogley Hay Nursery
	Mr T. Hopkins	PVI Representative
	Mr S. Pritchard-Jones	Pupil Referral Unit representative
	Vacancy	16-19 School Forum Representative
<b>OBSERVERS:</b>	Councillor C. Towe	Cabinet Portfolio holder for Education and Skills
	Mr A. Orlik	Observer, C of E Diocese
	Ms S. Guy	Observer, National Education Union

**Quorum – 8 members**

## A G E N D A

1.	Welcome and explanation of rules of procedure for virtual meeting	
2.	Apologies	
3.	Minutes – 12 October 2021 – <b>enclosed</b>	
4.	Matters arising from the Minutes: To consider any matters arising from the minutes which do not occur elsewhere on the agenda.	
5.	Late items (urgent) to be introduced by the Chair.	
6.	Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended): To agree that the public be excluded from the private session during consideration of the agenda items indicated for the reasons shown on the agenda.	
7.	SEND Improvement Programme Update – <b>enclosed</b>	
8.	EHCP Timeliness and Performance – <b>enclosed</b>	
9.	Correspondence – to receive any other items of correspondence that might be of interest or have an effect on the Forum:  1. Letter of 11 November 2021 to Minister for Schools Standards from Chair of Walsall Association of Secondary Head teachers – <b>enclosed</b>  2. Letter of 16 November 2021 to Minister of Schools Standards from Walsall Council – <b>enclosed</b>	
10.	Forward Plan – <b>enclosed</b>	
11.	Late items (if any)	
12.	Dates of future meetings:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 January 2022 at 4.00 pm</li> <li>• 9 March 2022 at 4.00 pm (Due to a clash with another meeting, it is proposed that this is changed from 8 March to 9 March 2022)</li> <li>• 21 June 2022 at 4.00 pm</li> </ul>	

## **Schools Forum**

### **Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 12 October 2021 at 4.00 pm Digital Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

*Held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulation 2020; and conducted according to the Council's Standing Orders for Remote Meetings and those set out in the Council's Constitution.*

#### **Schools Forum Members Present:**

Mr M. Vlahakis (Chair)	–	Primary Head Teacher
Mr A. Seager (Vice-Chair)	–	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Mr C. Bury	–	Alternative Provision School Principal
Mr S. Davies	–	Primary Head Teacher
Mr B. Downie	–	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Mrs C. Draper	–	Primary Head Teacher
Ms L. Foster	–	Primary Governor
Mrs J. Garrett	–	Primary Head Teacher
Mr T. Hopkins	–	PVI Representative
Mrs H. Keenan	–	Secondary Academy Head Teacher
Mr M. Moody	–	Primary Academy Representative
Mrs E. Phillips	–	Academy Special School
Ms M. Sheehy	–	Primary Head Teacher
Mrs M. Turley	–	Nursery Head Teacher
Councillor C. Towe	–	Portfolio Holder, Education and Skills (Observer)
Ms S. Guy	–	National Education Union (Observer)
Mr A. Orlik	–	C of E Diocese (Observer)

#### **Officers Present:**

Mrs S. Kelly – Director of Access & Inclusion  
Mr L. Haynes – Deputy Head of Finance – Corporate  
Ms D. Morris – School & Early Years Finance Manager  
Mr N. Perks – Quality Assurance Team Manager  
Ms T. Pyatt – Head of Inclusion  
Mr R. Thomas – Head of Access  
Mr R. Walley – Technical Accounting, Treasury Management & Education Finance Manager  
Dr P. Fantom – Democratic Services Officer

		Action
<b>1. 12.10.21</b>	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and explaining the 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.</p> <p>Members confirmed they could both see and hear the proceedings.</p>	
<b>2. 12.10.21</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Mr I. Baker, Mrs S. Bowen, Mrs N. Boys, Mrs C. Fraser, Mr S. Pritchard-Jones, Mrs S. Rowe and Mr A. Webley.</p>	
<b>3. 12.10.21</b>	<p><b>Minutes – 21 September 2021</b></p> <p>The Schools Forum received the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 (see annexed).</p> <p>The Chair put the recommendation to the vote and it was:</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021, a copy having been previously circulated to each Member of Schools Forum, be approved and signed as a true record.</p>	To note
<b>4. 12.10.21</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes of 21 September 2021</b></p> <p>The Chair noted that there were some action points arising from the SEND improvement update and the EHCP timeliness and performance update and, as Mr Webley had submitted apologies for this meeting that these be carried over for the next meeting of the Forum.</p>	AW for next meeting
<b>5. 12.10.21</b>	<p><b>Late Item/s (urgent) to be introduced by the Chair</b></p> <p>There were no late items.</p>	
<b>6. 12.10.21</b>	<p><b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)</b></p> <p>The Schools Forum noted that there were no items for consideration in the private session.</p>	

<p><b>7. 12.10.21</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed for Mainstream Schools Local Funding Formula 2022/23</b></p> <p>The report on the proposed for mainstream schools local funding formula for 2022/23 was submitted (see annexed).</p> <p>The Technical Accounting, Treasury Management &amp; Education Finance Manager, Mr R. Walley, presented the report. He explained that the funding formula was for 2022/23 only and that specific data was to be published in December 2021, which would be used to determine the final budgets of individual schools.</p> <p>The Forum was referred to section 3 of the report in relation to the national funding formula and Walsall's approach, which was to implement incrementally over time rather than at once.</p> <p>Mr Walley noted the DfE's consultation and the move towards a nationally determined school-level allocation that eliminated local authority interventions in the formula. A working group had been established, meeting initially in July 2021, and with four options being presented to further meetings in September 2021. The four options were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No change to current funding formula factors – but incorporating an allowance for inflation.</li> <li>2. Adopt the National Funding Formula (NFF) in full.</li> <li>3. Further incremental move toward the NFF with reduction in current lump sum rate and that funding invested in low prior attainment, and then a reduction in the free schools meals rates and investment of that funding in the creation of an Ever6 free school meal factors at the NFF rate, and also the addition of a mobility factor.</li> <li>4. Further incremental move toward the NFF with reduction in current lump sum rate and that funding invested in to low prior attainment, and then a lower reduction in the free schools meals rates and investment of that funding in the creation of an Ever6 free school meals factors at 50% of the NFF rate, and also the addition of the mobility factor.</li> </ol> <p>Discussion and questions from Forum members followed:</p> <p>The four options had been presented to the September meeting of WASH, with it being noted that some secondary schools did not benefit from the full implementation of the NFF. A closed ballot had been undertaken and the responses received favoured option 2, with a movement to the NFF as soon as was practicable.</p>	
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	<p>In terms of the position of the primary schools, concerns were expressed as to the outcome of the consultation – which had been about the move towards the NFF – was not known, although there was an expectation that this would formalise greater movement toward the NFF from 2023/34. However, the majority of local authorities and schools were still to adopt the NFF. The overall view was to support the option where there were no changes to funding, by staying with option 1 for this year. This was on the understanding that the outcome of the consultation was still awaited and the likely impact on schools would then need to be assessed.</p> <p>In view of the academies working from September to August and the mainstream schools from April to March, the Chair enquired when the changes were to happen and whether some schools would be disadvantaged by this.</p> <p>The Deputy Head of Finance – Corporate, Mr L. Haynes, explained the process by which information was received from and responses made to the DfE. In April, the DfE provide the funding from the school's block for the maintained schools for April 2022 to March 2023, as based on the local funding formula. For academies, whilst the process had a similar starting point, individual allocations were made to each institution for September 2022 to August 2023 directly by the ESFA, informed by the local funding formula, but the Local Authority was not involved in those conversations.</p> <p>The Chair was aware that 42% of local authorities had adopted the NFF and asked whether more up to date information was available. Mr Haynes stated that this was not yet publically available.</p> <p>During discussion, Forum members noted the different views being expressed, with the DfE and ESFA encouraging the movement towards full adoption of the NFF. In view of 90% of Walsall's secondary schools being academies, careful thought should be given on the direction of travel, with the possibility that more local authorities would adopt the NFF in 2022/23.</p> <p>The Clerk put the recommendations to the vote by way of a roll call of all elected members with voting rights.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Schools Forum supports Option 1 – No change to current funding formula factors – but incorporating an allowance for inflation, as set out in the report;</li> </ol>	
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	<p>2. Note that, once the final Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for 2022/23 had been issued in December 2021, a further report would be presented to Schools Forum at their meeting in January 2022;</p> <p>3. Note that the recommendations from the report would be reported to the Cabinet to seek its approval.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b> <b>12.10.21</b></p>	<p><b>Review of Maintained School Balances 2020/21</b></p> <p>The report summarising the balances held by maintained schools as at 31 March 2021, and as reported to the DfE under consistent financial reporting regulations, was submitted (see annexed).</p> <p>Queries were raised by the Chair regarding surpluses as a percentage of income to schools. He also asked whether there had been any movement to align maintained schools with academies.</p> <p>Mr Haynes noted that academies individually or when part of an academy trust set their own surplus policies and determined their balance control mechanisms. Hence, there could be a variance between the different academies in relation to their approaches to surpluses, which made this difficult for the Local Authority to mirror. He noted that whilst the long-term trend had been for a reduction in reserves, during the last year there had been a slight increase due to uncertainties arising from the pandemic. However, having tracked back to 2013/14 no review of the Local Authority's current balance control mechanism was deemed necessary at this point.</p> <p>In response to a question on the reporting being done by federations, and uncertainties in terms of the amount of funding to be expected, Mr Haynes referred to the DfE guidance in respect of reporting individual balances. The review of the balance control mechanism in 2013/14 to the current 8% ensured that there was a sufficient balance between schools being able to maintain a cushion of financial reserves which could be used to manage risk where needed, whilst at the same time utilising funding received for the benefit of children currently at the school. The Director of Access &amp; Inclusion, Mrs S. Kelly, pointed out that the current balance control mechanism allowed for the flexibility when there were challenges and schools needed support.</p> <p>Mrs Draper added that whilst nurseries appeared to have healthy balances, account needed to be taken of the potential loss of the maintained nursery lump sum of up to £170K per</p>	

	<p>year, and hence the nurseries were using their surplus balances to prepare for this.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	To note
<p><b>9.</b> <b>12.10.21</b></p>	<p><b>Maintained Schools De-delegation 2022/23</b></p> <p>Ms S. Guy declared an interest as she represented teachers unions and therefore left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>The report providing maintained schools with the opportunity to decide whether to de-delegate funding for relevant services back to the Local Authority for the 2022/23 financial year was submitted (see annexed).</p> <p>Mr Haynes noted that Mrs Bowen was the representative of the maintained secondary schools. In terms of the guidance, only maintained primary and secondary school representatives of the Forum were allowed to vote on this matter. In her absence, her views had been forwarded and were relayed to the meeting.</p> <p>Each recommendation was put to the representatives of the primary maintained schools. Each representative voted separately by way of a roll call.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Schools Forum note the insurance options available under the DfE's Risk Protection Arrangement, and the work undertaken by the Local Authority to be able to offer a comparative insurance package;</li> <li>2. That the maintained secondary school members approve de-delegation of the free school meals eligibility service (estimated at £17.33 per free school meal eligible pupil);</li> <li>3. That the maintained secondary school members approve de-delegation of insurance services (estimated at £20.00 per pupil);</li> <li>4. That the maintained secondary school members approve de-delegation of staff costs – teaching union and public duties (estimated at £4.99 per pupil);</li> <li>5. That the maintained secondary school members do not approve de-delegation of specialist inclusion support service (estimated at 12.00 per pupil);</li> </ol>	



	<p>6. That the maintained primary school members approve de-delegation of the free school meals eligibility service (estimated at £17.33 per free school meal eligible pupil);</p> <p>7. That the maintained primary school members approve de-delegation of insurance services (estimated at £20.00 per pupil);</p> <p>8. That the maintained primary school members approve de-delegation of staff costs – teaching union and public duties (estimated at £4.99 per pupil);</p> <p>9. That the maintained primary school members do not approve de-delegation of specialist inclusion support service (estimated at 12.00 per pupil);</p> <p>10. That the maintained primary school and maintained secondary school members note that library services, maternity support and contingency were not being offered under de-delegation and they would have to purchase individually any service they required.</p> <p>Ms Guy returned to the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b> <b>12.10.21</b></p>	<p><b>Review of Dedicated Schools Grant: Update on 2021/22 Forecast Position</b></p> <p>The report on the DSG forecast outturn position for 2021/22 was submitted (see annexed).</p> <p>Mr Haynes presented the report and highlighted the salient points therein. He drew members' attention to and expanded upon the three tables included within the report. He noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table 1: That an unallocated balance of £0.694M was being held to manage any in-year pressures on the DSG in 2021/22.</li> <li>• Table 2: The forecast position for the high needs block was an overspend of £1.069M, which could be funded by the unallocated £0.694M plus a contribution from reserves of £0.760M, leaving an unallocated balance of £0.385M to carry forward.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair noted the biggest pressure appeared in relation to Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) and mainstream schools, and enquired whether this would continue in future. Mr Haynes referred to the reports made to Schools Forum and to the Cabinet in March 2021, following the review of the high needs funding formula. Special schools had</p>	

	<p>implemented the new funding formula immediately, whereas for mainstream schools implementation was made from the date of each child's annual review and it was this time delay and transition that was causing some of the pressures. However, working with the SEN team, the progression of annual reviews and from old to new rates was being tracked.</p> <p>Mrs Draper noted that part of the overspend was attributable to the backlog in processing overdue EHCPs and annual reviews. New EHCP applications meant that the pressure would continue to increase. Mr Haynes pointed out that there had been a national allocation increase in next year's high needs block, with an increase for Walsall being anticipated, and this could be used to help manage some of the pressures.</p> <p>The Head of Inclusion, Ms T. Pyatt, referred to the steps being taken to clear the EHCP backlog. Nationally, there had been an increase in the number of applications and in Walsall a specialist provision review group had been set up to investigate the increase and assist in delivering provision in the Borough via modelling and working with colleagues in schools to reach workable recommendations.</p> <p>The Chair asked whether some children were to be reintegrated into mainstream schools and, therefore, was preparation necessary for this. In response, Ms Pyatt stated that the number of places at Shepwell had increased this year when compared to previous years, and as a medical pupil referral unit, it was funded differently from other school settings. Mr Haynes pointed out that decisions concerning high needs funding were made by the Local Authority. Accordingly, any questions relating to the funding blocks, such as any impact on the schools block, could be addressed in relation to the overall position of the DSG.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Schools Forum note the updated position, as set out in the report;</li> <li>2. That the Schools Forum note that this position would continue to be reported regularly.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>11. 12.10.21</b></p>	<p><b>Local Government Pension Scheme Current Service Pension Costs: Introduction of an annual reconciliation Process</b></p> <p>The Forum received a report on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), which had introduced a reconciliation process for current service pension costs at the</p>	

	<p>end of each financial year, effective from 2020/21. It was pointed out that this change brought the risk of additional charges being introduced for schools, and the report provided the Forum with information in this respect (see annexed).</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	To note
12. 12.10.21	<p><b>SEND Improvement Programme Update</b></p> <p>This item of business was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the School's Forum.</p>	AW to report to next meeting
13. 12.10.21	<p><b>EHCP Timeliness and Performance Update</b></p> <p>This item of business was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the School's Forum.</p>	AW to report to next meeting
14. 12.10.21	<p><b>Forward Plan</b></p> <p>A copy of the Forward Plan was submitted (see annexed).</p> <p>It was noted that the item: Strategic Education and Inclusion Board – Update on Impact of Board was to be deferred for consideration at a future meeting of the Schools Forum.</p> <p>It was also noted that the item: Proposed for Mainstream Schools Local Funding Formula 2022/23 (if required), which was to have been placed on the agenda for the DECEMBER 2021 meeting, was to be deleted from the Forward Plan.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p>That the Forward Plan be noted.</p>	To note
15. 12.10.21	<p><b>Late Items</b></p> <p>There were no late items for consideration.</p>	
16. 12.10.21	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>There were no items of correspondence.</p>	
	<p><b>Date and Time of next meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting of Schools Forum is scheduled for Tuesday, 7 December 2021, commencing at 4.00 pm.</p>	

The meeting terminated at 5.04 pm.

Signed .....

Date: .....

# WSoA Review and Stocktake November 2021



**Walsall** Council

Page 10 of 34 **PROUD** OF OUR **PAST** OUR **PRESENT** AND FOR OUR **FUTURE**

# About Re-Inspection

Following the SEND Inspection in February 2019, Walsall was directed to implement a Written Statement of Action (WSoA).

So far there have been 117 Local Areas inspected, of these, 60 (51.3%) have been instructed to implement a WSoA.

All Local Areas that are instructed to develop a Written Statement of Action will undergo a re-inspection. This is usually within two years, however due to the pandemic, there have been some delays in the programme.

Earlier on in the year, we began prepping for a SEN Assurance visit which would have had a focus on our response for parents of SEND during the Covid-19 pandemic, and this is not now likely to happen. In re-inspections, the focus is on the Areas of Concern that were raised in the outcome of the inspection.

This document outlines a summary of our achievements against each Area of Concern and what still needs to be done – at the moment, this is high level and over the coming weeks and months, the workstream leads will be working together to build on this picture and ensure that we have evidence prepared and available for the re-inspection.

Although it is not set in stone, SEND re-inspections are broadly done in the order of the original SEND inspections. There are 19 Local Areas that are awaiting re-inspection who were originally inspected before Walsall. We do not know exactly when we will be re-inspected, but there it is likely to be early 2022.

## **Evidencing our progress and outcomes**

This document has been pulled together to support our journey in being able to evidence what we have achieved and the outcomes and difference it has made to children, young people and families. The headings in this document are taken from a template provided by Walsall's DfE Advisor Pat Tate which is the recommended format for outlining progress and which used to write the update report.

This is a working document which will continue to be updated as we prepare for the re-inspection.

# WSoA Stocktake

Following previous attempts to document progress against the Written Statement of Action and identify impacts and outcomes, there was some concern that it was proving difficult to provide evidence of where activities had taken place. This issue was discussed in detail at the September LAIB.

As a result, a 'stocktake' has been undertaken of the actions in the Written Statement of Action to determine an accurate picture of where we are. This involved methodically looking at each individual action and it's previous RAG rating to determine whether the RAG rating was correct. This has resulted in some movement, where some actions that were previously being marked as 'Completed and Embedded' changed to 'Completed' or even still 'In Progress' and some completed actions being changed to 'In Progress' where it was deemed that there was not sufficient evidence to justify the previous status. Similarly, some actions that were shown to still be outstanding have now been marked as 'Complete' or 'Complete and Embedded'.

The stocktake identified a number of issues, including the overly ambitious timescales of some of the original actions as well as a number of duplications across areas of concern. As all of the original timescales have now passed, all outstanding actions are 'Beyond Milestone', however, as progress is being made in all areas, going forward these actions will be shown as 'In Progress'. All outstanding actions will be reported monthly to the board in terms of ongoing progress.

What is clear from the stocktake is that while the vast majority of actions – 81% or 149 out of 184 – are completed and that there is evidence of that completion in the form of documentation. There are currently 35 actions outstanding and these are summarised within their focus areas on slides 6 and 7.

Not Started	Beyond Milestone	Delayed	Paused - Covid Exception	In Progress	Complete	Complete and Embedded	Closed	
0	0	0	0	35	65	75	9	Current Action RAG Ratings - Following Stocktake
Not Started	Beyond Milestone	Delayed	Paused - Covid Exception	In Progress	Complete	Complete and Embedded	Closed	
0	24	4	5	2	76	66	7	Previous Period Action RAG Ratings

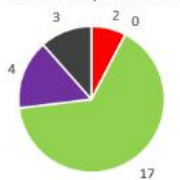
What is less clear in some cases is the **evidence of impact** for children, young people, parents and carers. We are therefore requesting that all partners thoroughly review the areas of concern that they have completed actions within and provide any evidence of impact which is not already included and which may not have previously been shared with the LAIB or via Workstream Leads.

# WSoA Stocktake – following stocktake

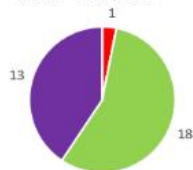
Key  
Closed, Completed and Embedded,  
Completed, In Progress, Paused, Delayed,  
Beyond Milestone

## Previous Position

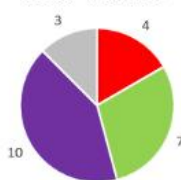
AOC1 - Co-production



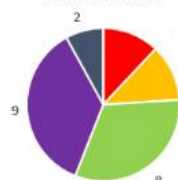
AOC2 - EHC Plans



AOC3 - Outcomes



AOC4 - Autism



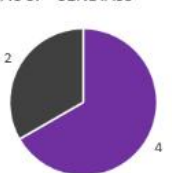
AOC5 - Exclusions



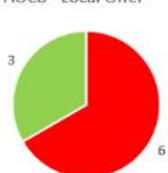
AOC6 - CME



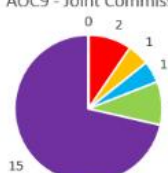
AOC7 - SENDIASS



AOC8 - Local Offer



AOC9 - Joint Commissioning



AOC10 - Governance

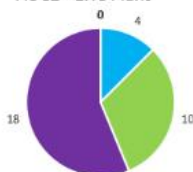


## Following Stocktake

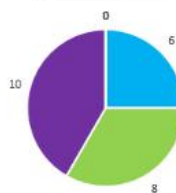
AOC1 - Co-production



AOC2 - EHC Plans



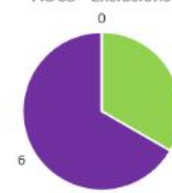
AOC3 - Outcomes



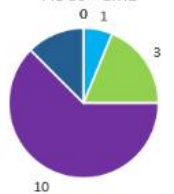
AOC4 - Autism



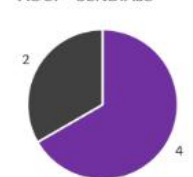
AOC5 - Exclusions



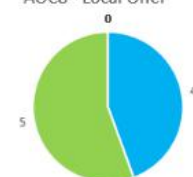
AOC6 - CME



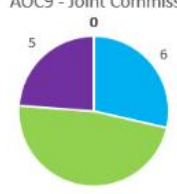
AOC7 - SENDIASS



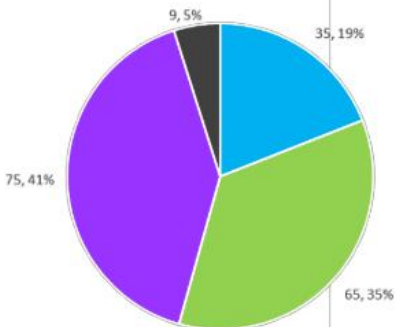
AOC8 - Local Offer



AOC9 - Joint Commissioning



AOC10 - Governance





# WSoA Stocktake – Additionality

As the stocktake was underway, what became clear was that as well as the actions within the statement of action itself, there was also a significant amount of additional activity which has taken place which was not included in the original action plan. Where relevant, this has been woven through and added into the 'key components of change' within the relevant areas of concern.

It is important that we continue to ensure that all additional activity is captured as part of our inspection preparation, so partners are requested to ensure that any additional activity that may not have already been picked up is included going forwards.

Additional activity identified includes:

- Covid support including risk assessments for children with an EHCP and monitoring of keeping in touch.
- Support for education staff throughout Covid including the Headspace programme
- Introduction of the SEMH and Behaviour Frameworks (see AOC5)
- Significant amounts of training opportunities (a training summary is currently being produced)
- The development of the Shadow Board
- Recruitment of Emotional and Literacy support workers to work with parents and children who are EHE
- Holiday Home and Food Scheme (HAF)
- Health review and merger (which was not planned at the point the WSoA was submitted)

# WSoA Stocktake – Outstanding actions

Area of Concern	Focus Area	Update on outstanding actions
AOC1 – Co-production and Engagement	2. Network of locality based SEND ambassadors available to support all parents/carers of vulnerable children and young people.	Outstanding action relates to locality working. Some work around this has been undertaken, but it is too soon for this to have been completed. Locality work has been developed across children's services and the partnership - this is an in depth and ongoing piece of work which is the introduction of a new way of working and service delivery. Original timescales were too ambitious for mirroring this with parents and carers as the ways of working professionally needed to be established and embedded. As locality working continues to embed we are now starting to have the conversations with parents and carers about how this locality model can be rolled out to how we work with them.
	4. Young people and parents/carers feel listened to and supported through the EHCP assessment and review process	Annual survey is in place, but regular feedback mechanism needs to be established.
AOC2 – EHC Assessment Process	10. Annual Reviews are completed in a timely way and in line with the SEND Code of Practice	Annual review backlog continues to be worked through.
	13. Single health record.	This is part of a wider piece of work which is ongoing across health – it is a multi-year project
	14. One central CAMHS email address for EHCP advice to ensure management oversight of the quantity and quality of advice.	A central email address exists. The outstanding action is in relation to the level of quality assurance being undertaken by CAMHS in relation to the advices provided.
AOC3 – Improving Outcomes	17. Children and young people with specific literacy difficulties/dyslexia have their needs identified in a timely way and receive appropriate support. (4 actions)	Some of this work is part of the SEND specialist provision review. Some of it is believed to have been completed, but evidence is being sought.
	19. The quality and accessibility of Post 16 provision enables learners to achieve level two and three qualifications.	The final action in relation to this is about raising attainment – it is not currently possible to assess outcomes due to the pause in assessments.
	20. SENCOs accurately report SEND information on the school census.	It is understood that work has been done with SENCOs in relation to data accuracy but evidence is being sought.

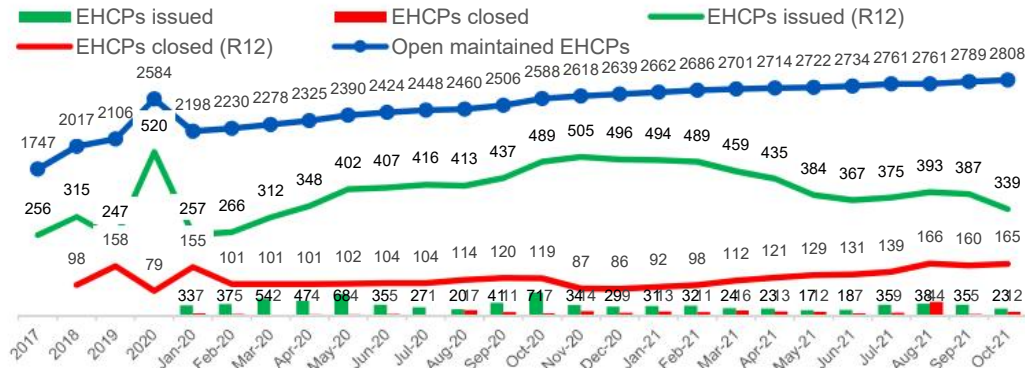
# WSoA Stocktake – Outstanding actions

**Key**  
 Closed, Completed and Embedded,  
 Completed, In Progress, Paused, Delayed,  
 Beyond Milestone

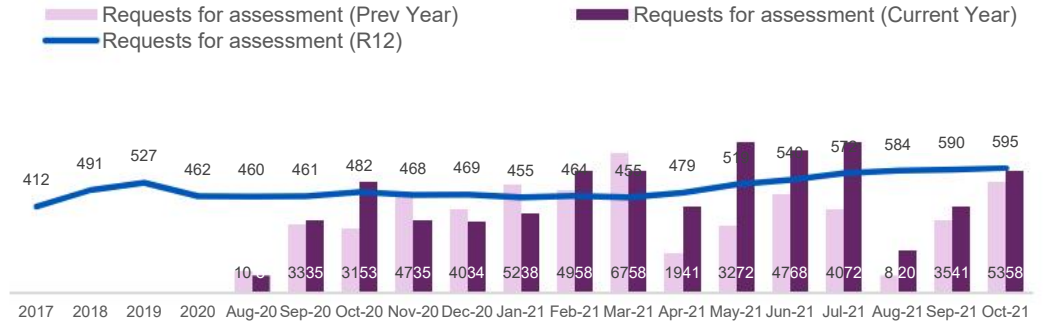
Area of Concern	Focus Area	Update on outstanding actions
AOC4 - Autism	22. Autism outreach services available to parents, carers and children and young people (3 actions)	There is a pilot currently underway in relation to this work.
	23. Appropriate educational provision is available in Walsall for children and young people with Autism.(3 actions)	This action is part of the SEND Specialist Provision review which is ongoing
	25. The work of the Autism Working Group has impact across Walsall. (4 actions)	Autism working group development was paused due to Covid – now picking up pace again.
AOC6 - CME	29. A significant reduction in the number of Children Missing Education, across Walsall.	Most actions in this area have been completed. There is one outstanding action in relation to implementing QA processes.
AOC8 – Local Offer	33. Local Offer fit for purpose in line with the Code of Practice.	Outstanding action relates to ensuring that providers can update their information on the directory.
	34. An effective transition protocol for children and young people 14+ years (3 actions)	Work is ongoing on developing the transition protocol and toolkit – update due to a future board.
AOC 9 – Joint Commissioning	35. A Walsall wide joint commissioning agreement is in place. (2 actions)	Outstanding actions relate to formally signing off the MOU and evidencing the use of data to inform commissioning intentions
	36. Improved transition experience for children and young people aged 17 into adulthood. (3 actions)	Actions relate to ensuring transition protocols are in place via health pathways. Some of this work has been completed and evidence is being sought.
	38. Change to Healthcare Trust electronic records increases information sharing.	This is a long term, ongoing project. An update is being sought from the Project Lead.
AOC10 - Governance	43. Leadership oversight is strong and ensures compliance with the Code of Practice.	Outstanding action in relation to CPD for Board Members.
	44. Respective partners governance and accountability arrangements for SEND (0-25) are embedded and ensure strategic ownership and oversight	Agreed Walsall Learning Alliance model to be implemented and embedded, alongside LAIB until Walsall is deemed to be making sufficient progress against the areas for concern outlined in the statement of action.

# EHCP Timeliness Dashboard

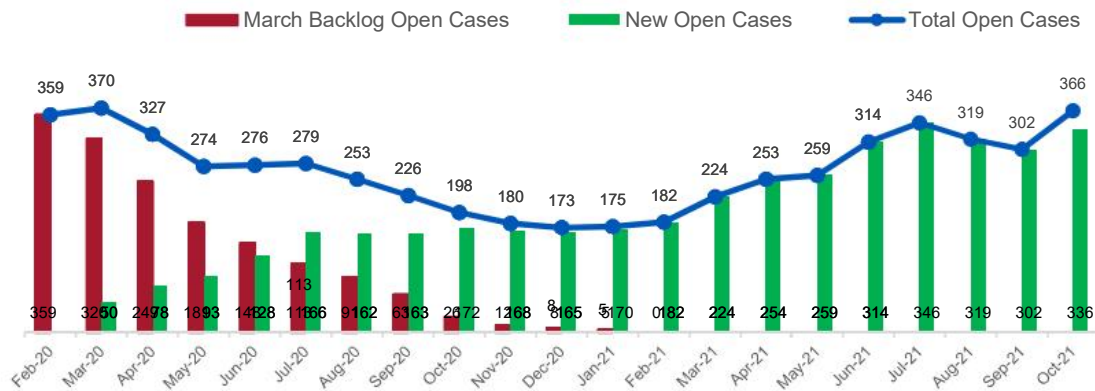
## EHC Plans



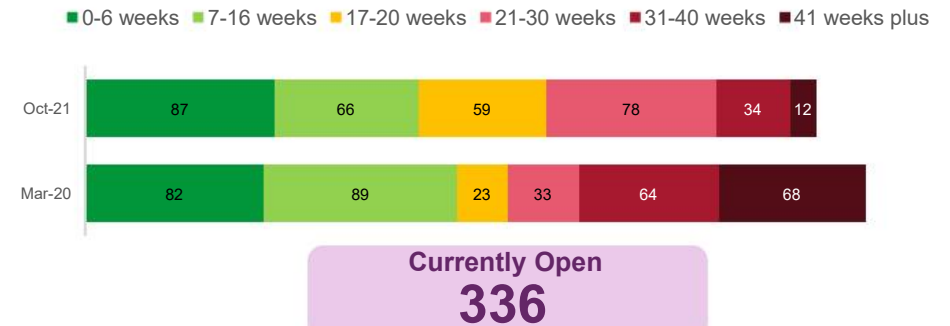
## Requests for EHC Assessment



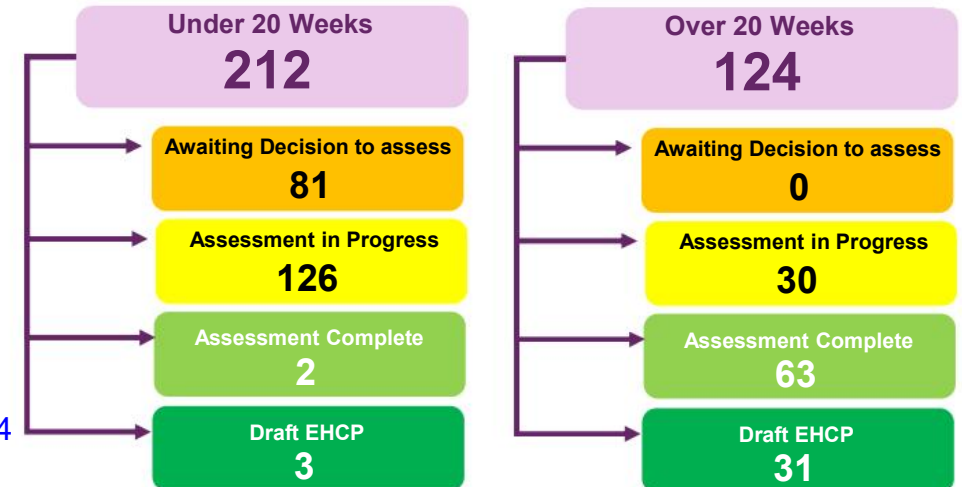
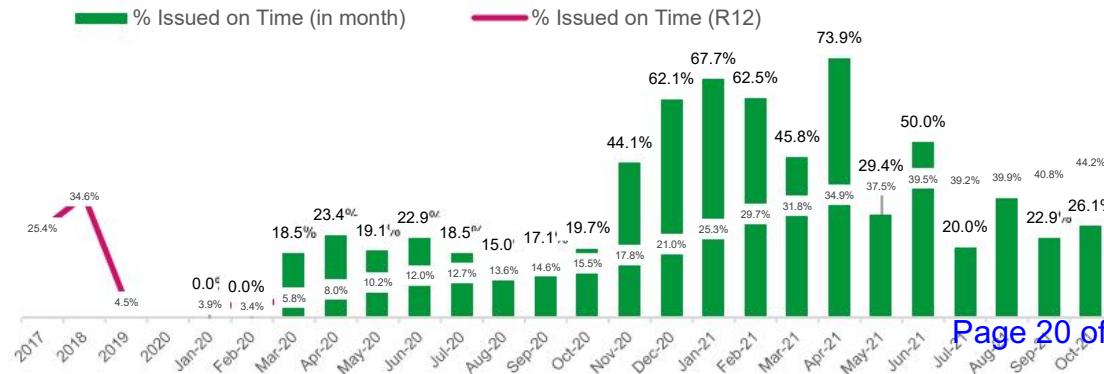
## Open EHC Assessments at Month End



## EHC Assessment Pipeline

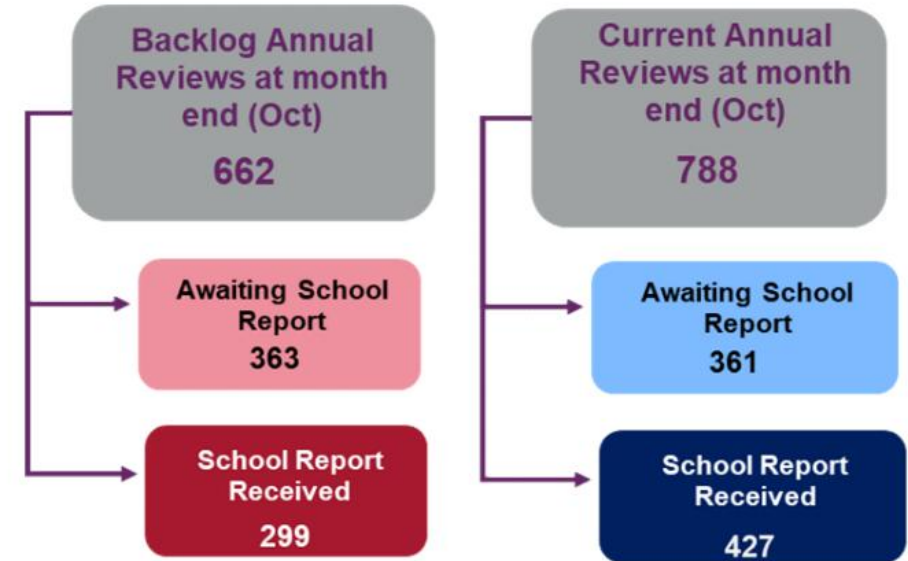
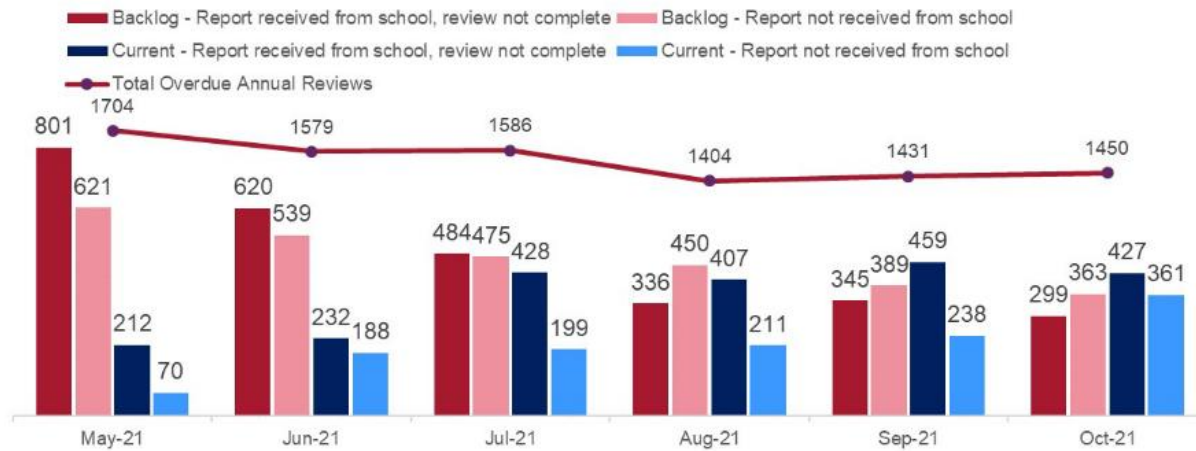


## Timeliness of EHC Assessments

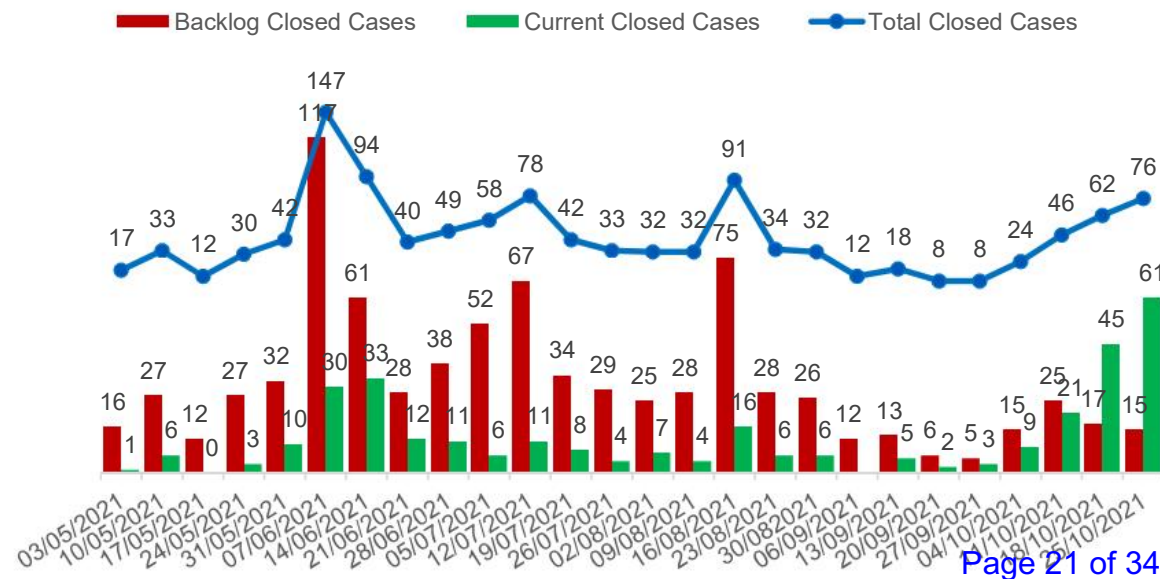


## Annual Reviews Dashboard

### Open Annual Reviews at Month End

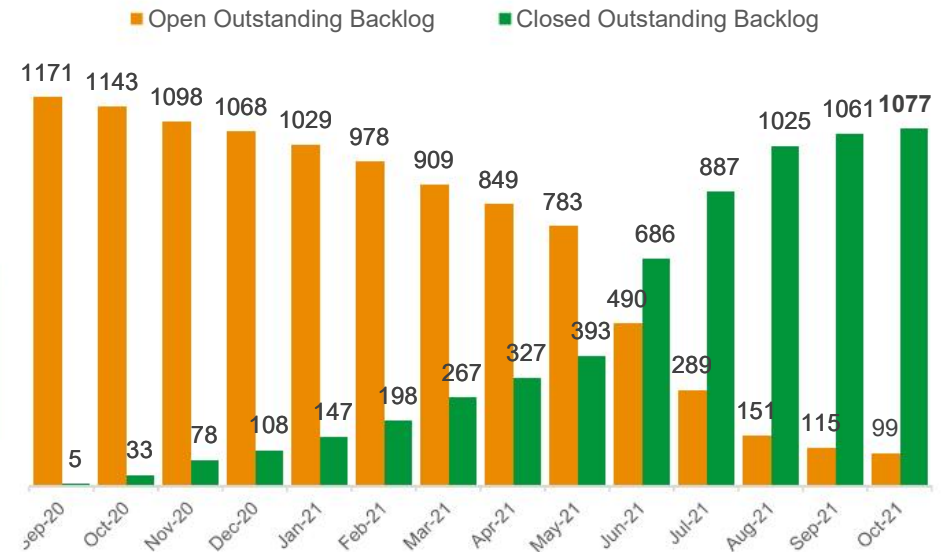


### Closed Annual Reviews each Week



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### Outstanding Backlog at Month End (based on report received date between 1st Sept 2020 and 30th April 2021)





Billy Downie  
Chair of Walsall Association of Secondary Headteachers  
The Streetly Academy  
Queslett Road East  
Sutton Coldfield  
Birmingham  
B74 2EX

November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021

[b.downie@thestreetlyacademy.co.uk](mailto:b.downie@thestreetlyacademy.co.uk)

0121 353 2709

Office of Robin Walker MP  
Minister of State (Minister for School Standards)  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Walker,

In line with the Governments commitment to 'Fair school funding for all' the DfE consultation document (dated July 2021) which has the target of completing the National Funding Formula reforms, and to avoid an abrupt depletion of funds within the primary sector, most local authorities have chosen to move their primary/secondary ratio towards the national average.

In 2020-21, the primary / secondary ratio nationally across all local authorities was 1:1.298, a slight increase from the 2019-20 formulae where it was 1:1.297.

Our statistical secondary neighbours all enjoy higher funding than us; moving significantly beyond Walsall's 1:1.24 ratio, with half of them (alongside our physical neighbour, Wolverhampton) adopting a 1:1.32 ratio or above.

You will see from the table below, that each neighbouring LA has made a transitional move towards the adoption of the NFF, Walsall MBC remains the only LA that has made no attempt at all to do this. This therefore remains at odds with the commitment made for fair funding for all pupils, by Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP

Local Authority	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Walsall MBC	1.25	1.24	1.24	1.24
Wolverhampton CC	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.36
Dudley MBC	1.22	1.33	1.32	1.33

Sandwell MBC	1.23	1.23	1.23	1.25 plus 1.27 in 21-22
Birmingham CC	1.30	1.31	1.33	1.32
Coventry CC	1.31	1.32	1.31	1.32
Stoke on Trent	1.27	1.29	1.29	1.29

Secondary Headteachers in the Walsall Borough have been campaigning to receive a fairer funding ratio for many years. We are fighting to improve academic and social outcomes for our students: raising aspirations in one of the most deprived areas in the country. Simultaneously, in an attempt to balance budgets, we have to make redundancies; we are not able to replace teachers and support staff who leave; we have to inflict larger class sizes on dwindling numbers of staff; we have to reduce the breadth and scope of our curricula; we have to expurgate our resources budget to a minimum and we have to stop carrying out essential building works.

Our local authority representatives tell us that they understand we are underfunded, yet no-one acts to stem the unacceptable drain on our human and physical resources.

Following much debate, a working group was established in July 21 to review the local funding formula, NFF factors and include other potential review areas. The options considered were as follows:

### **Modelled Option 1**

Reduction of Lump Sum by £25k, with funding re-allocated via an increase to Low Prior Attainment rates in such a way as to ensure the distribution of released funding was kept within phase.

A reduction in the Local FSM factor rates to mirror the NFF FSM rates. The funding released re-allocated by the introduction of Ever 6 FSM as a funding factoring, again mirroring the full NFF Ever 6 rates.

Implement the use of the Mobility factor, not currently used in the Local funding formula.

### **Modelled Option 2**

As in Option1 - Reduction of Lump Sum by £25k, with funding re-allocated via an increase to Low Prior Attainment rates in such a way as to ensure the distribution of released funding was kept within phase.

The introduction of Ever FSM as a funding factor at 50% of the NFF Ever 6 rate, achieved by a circa 34% reduction in the Local FSM factor rate with released funding redistributed through Ever FSM.

Implement the use of the Mobility factor, not currently used in the Local funding formula.

### **Modelled Option 3**

Reduction of Lump Sum by £25k, with released funding used to apply LPA rates equal to 95% of the NFF LPA rate. This option does not keep the released funding within phase and sees funding moving from primary to secondary.

As Option 2 Ever FSM as a funding factor is introduced at 50% of the NFF Ever 6 rate, achieved by a circa 34% reduction in the Local FSM factor rate with released funding redistributed through Ever FSM.

Implement the use of the Mobility factor, not currently used in the Local funding formula.

A summary of modelled options was provided by LA officers to group members in September 21. The figures calculate a remodelled 2021-22 funding formula using the same data, on a school-by-school basis, as submitted to the DfE in the 2021-22 APT.

The table overleaf shows the impact of each of the 3 modelled options, compared to the current formula and full adoption of the NFF.

	Local Walsall Formula	Replicate National Funding Formula	Modelled Option 1	Modelled Option 2	Modelled Option 3
<b>Movement of Funding</b>	Nil	£1.1million move from primary to secondary	£0.832k move from primary to secondary	£0.560k move from primary to secondary.	£1.1million from primary to secondary
<b>Ratio</b>	1.248	1.29	1.267	1.261	1.275
<b>Max Primary Funding Loss</b>		<b>£41,764</b>	<b>£37,439</b>	<b>£22,780</b>	<b>£32,129</b>
<b>Max Primary Funding Gain</b>		£13,366	£21,157	£23,356	£2,760
<b>Max Secondary Funding Loss</b>		<b>£42,836</b>	<b>£6,885</b>	<b>£5,653</b>	<b>£5,653</b>
<b>Max Secondary Funding Gain</b>		£186,673	£97,373	£63,133	£111,625

As you can see from the modelling shown above, no primary school would lose funding of more than £41,764, regardless of the option chosen. Additionally, it can also be seen that this would be a stepped change towards the NFF, thus protecting the funding levels within the Primary sector.



Furthermore, a number of schools would see no change in funding regardless of the option used. This is due to the impact of either the application of the minimum funding guarantee, which in all models was set the minimum permitted 0.5%, or the impact of the Minimum per pupil funding guarantee.

The modelled options were presented back to the working group members in Sept 21 and were subsequently rejected with the current model being taken forward, yet again for 2022-23. We have explained that if the local authority does not act soon, the primary sector will suffer a devastating, instantaneous depletion of funds with the introduction of the NFF but there seems to be a recalcitrant belief that doing nothing is an acceptable tactic.

The inability to change or even influence the primary/secondary ratio is detrimentally affecting the funding of all secondary schools in one of the most deprived areas in the country in terms of resourcing; recruitment and retention.

We believe that the current outcome is not in the spirit of the DfE guidance and the undersigned Walsall secondary headteachers unfortunately feel that they have been left with no alternative but to abstain from the 2022-23 ratio vote to make clear our exasperation with the way the working group (with a Primary sector-based focus) has been used to continue to ignore National DfE guidance on 'Fair school funding' and the consequential financial outcomes. We ask that the voting system be made more equitable: for example, by implementing a weighted vote, accounting for pupil ratios in each sector. We would welcome a discussion on the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Billy Downie (on behalf of the Walsall Association of Secondary Headteachers)

<b>School</b>	<b>Headteacher/Principal</b>
Aldridge School – A Science College	Ian Bryant
Barr Beacon School	Lynsey Draycott
Bloxwich Academy	Andy Seager
Blue Coat Church of England Academy	David Smith
Brownhills Ormiston Academy	Helen Keenan
Grace Academy Darlaston	Julie Anstey
Joseph Leckie Academy	James Ludlow
Ormiston Shelfield Community Academy	Stuart Turnbull
Pool Hayes Academy	Tom McDowall

Queen Mary's Grammar School	Richard Langston
Queen Mary's High School	Dr Alison Bruton
Shire Oak Academy	Annabelle Stoddart
St Francis of Assisi Catholic College	Luke Salkeld
St Thomas More Catholic School, Willenhall	Siobhan Bowen
The Streetly Academy	Billy Downie
Walsall Academy	Simon Rogers
Walsall Studio School	Darren Perry
The Ladder School	Chris Bury
New Leaf (AP)	Stuart Evans
Shepwell Centre (AP)	Stephen Pritchard-Jones

Office of Robin Walker MP  
Minister of State (Minister for School Standards)  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

BY EMAIL ONLY

Our Ref: WLFF22/23  
Date: 16 November 2021  
Ask for: Lloyd Haynes  
Direct Line: 01922 652340

Dear Mr Walker,

### **Walsall Council Mainstream Schools Local Funding Formula 2022/23**

I am aware that you may have recently received a letter on behalf of the Walsall Association of Secondary Headteachers setting out their concerns in relation to the direction of the schools local funding formula used within Walsall. We, therefore, wanted to also write to you on behalf of the Walsall Council to ensure that you are informed of the full position in relation to this matter.

In summary since the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF) in April 2018 we have worked directly with schools, by way of an ongoing working group of Schools Forum members (made up of members from both primary and secondary schools from across the maintained and academy sector), to understand the potential impact of the NFF on Walsall schools, and to seek to move toward that in a managed way by ensuring that any potentially significant changes that may otherwise have been seen within a short time period are mitigated as much as possible and that schools have appropriate time to plan for any longer term impact.

This direction of travel has so far proved successful with, over the period from April 2018 to date, no schools seeing a reduction in funding on a per pupil basis (other than where there have been underlying changes in pupil characteristics), and a significant movement of the local funding formula rates toward those set out within the NFF – the result of which with regard to the local funding formula used in Walsall during 2021/22 is summarised below:

<b>Factor / Area</b>	<b>2021/22 Walsall Local Funding Formula Comparison to the NFF</b>
Basic Entitlement (Age Weighted Pupil Unit)	Within +/- 7% of the NFF rates across all stages
Deprivation	Within 1% of the NFF rates in totality across all deprivation factors (however there is a different split of rates used within individual factors in this area compared to the NFF, with IDACI values more closely aligned to the NFF and FSM rates currently further away)
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Circa 25% below NFF rates
Low Prior Attainment (LPA)	Circa 75% below NFF rates
Lump Sum	Circa 50% above NFF rates
Mobility	Not currently used in Walsall formula (although potential values if implemented are very low c.£60k across all Walsall schools)

This clearly shows that whilst there has been closer alignment of some factors, the ongoing allocation in the local formula to a higher Lump Sum value is in the main being funded through a lower allocation in EAL, LPA and Mobility when compared to the NFF.

With there being more primary schools within Walsall than secondary schools this does have the impact of therefore allocating a higher ratio of funding overall to primary schools in Walsall than that which would be seen under a hard NFF allocation.

With this in mind the approach to the 2022/23 local formula, again using a working group of Schools Forum which included members from both primary and secondary schools from across the maintained and academy sector (and indeed included the Chair of Walsall Association of Secondary Headteachers as part of the group), looked at a variety of models which could start reduce the Lump Sum allocation and invest the funding that was released in to Mobility, EAL and LPA.

However the working group were aware that at the same time as reviewing these options the DfE was undertaking a consultation with regard to the future direction for completing the NFF reforms, including an approach and timing for that which proposed ever greater alignment between local formulas and the NFF over a period of time.

As such, when the outcome of the local funding formula modelling and options in relation to 2022/23 were formally presented by the working group to Schools Forum at their meeting in October 2021 the majority of Schools Forum members supported the retention of the current local formula for 2022/23, which whilst awaiting the outcome of the DfE consultation would result in all schools (both primary and secondary) seeing an increase in per pupil funding (before any underlying changes in pupil characteristics). Rather than the other modelled options which would either result in some schools potentially seeing a reduction in funding or a majority of schools seeing a lower increase in funding compared to retaining the current local formula.

Schools Forum also agreed that the working group would be reconvened at the earliest opportunity during the 2022/23 financial year to start the process, informed by the outcome of the current DfE consultation, of reviewing options and direction of travel for the 2023/24 year.

Whilst we therefore recognise that the outcome recommended by Schools Forum was not one that was universally supported by all members, it has followed an open and transparent process involving appropriate representatives from across the mainstream school sector, and the make-up of Schools Forum members (as required by guidance) is clearly based on the proportionate representation at each sector and phase of school based on the total number of pupils registered with each, and as such is clearly democratic and equitable.

Furthermore the content of this letter hopefully shows that significant movement toward the NFF has already been made to date and that the council and Schools Forum have a clear vision and direction of travel, based on DfE guidance, to ensure further alignment as required going forward.

As a final point I do note that the letter from Walsall Association of Secondary Headteachers made reference to the primary to secondary funding ratio used in Walsall compared to neighbouring authorities.

It should be noted that this was also a point that was discussed in detail as part of the working group meetings, and whilst we do agree (as set out earlier in this letter) that the primary to secondary ratio used in the local formula in Walsall is different to that which would be seen under a hard NFF, we would not necessarily agree that a comparison to the ratios used in other authorities is meaningful or useful as the starting position in terms of funding per pupil allocated to each authority is not necessarily the same – for instance of the 6 neighbouring authorities mentioned in the letter from Walsall Association of

Secondary Headteachers, Walsall's 'Secondary Schools Unit of Funding' allocated under the NFF is higher than 3 of those. Meaning that even if the 'primary to secondary' ratio used in Walsall is then lower than the ratio seen in those authorities it may still be that the actual allocation of funding per secondary child is still higher in Walsall, and indeed the potential impact of utilising the local formulas in place in those neighbouring authorities was discussed at the working group meetings to support this important point.

I do hope that this letter has therefore been useful in setting out Walsall Council's position in regard to the letter received by Walsall Association of Secondary Headteachers, however should you have any queries in relation to this matter please do contact me on the details set out in this letter.

Yours Sincerely,



Sally Rowe  
Executive Director Children's Services  
Walsall Council



Councillor Towe  
Portfolio Holder Education and Skills  
Walsall Council

CC: Billy Downie – Chair of Walsall Association of Secondary Headteachers

CC: Max Vlahakis – Chair of Walsall Schools Forum

CC: Andrew Warren - Regional Schools Commissioner, West Midlands

CC: Helen Paterson – CEO Walsall Council

# WALSALL

## SCHOOLS FORUM

### FORWARD PLAN OF DECISIONS

The forward plan sets out decisions which the Schools Forum intend to take over the following 4 months. Preparation of the forward plan helps the Schools Forum to programme its work. The purpose of the forward plan is to give plenty of notice and an opportunity for consultation on the issues to be discussed. The plan is updated in the middle of each month with the period of the plan being rolled forward by one month and republished. The plan is available for public inspection at the First Stop Shop, Civic Centre, Darwall Street, Walsall. Copies of the plan can be obtained from Democratic Services, Walsall MBC, Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall, WS1 1TW. The forward plan can also be accessed from the Council's website at [www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk).

Please note that the decision dates are indicative and are subject to change. Please contact the above addressee if you wish to check the date for a particular item.

The Schools Forum agenda and reports are available for inspection by the public 7 days prior to the meeting of the Forum. The papers can be seen at First Stop Shop at the Civic Centre, Walsall. The papers are also available on the Council's website referred to above shortly before the meeting. Background papers are listed on each report submitted to the Schools Forum and members of the public are entitled to see these documents unless they are confidential. The report also contains the name and telephone number of a contact officer. These details can also be found in the forward plan.

Meetings of the Schools Forum are open to the public and take place at a venue within Walsall. Occasionally there are items included on the agenda which are confidential and for those items the public will be asked to leave the meeting.

[www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk)



**FORWARD PLAN OF DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN  
BY SCHOOLS FORUM  
FROM SEPTEMBER 2021**

<b>DECISION TO BE CONSIDERED</b>	<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS AND CONTACT OFFICER</b>	<b>DATE ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED</b>
SEND Improvement Programme	SEND Team Manager	Standing Item for each meeting
EHCP Performance Framework / Timelines	SEND Team Manager	Standing Item for each meeting
Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2021/22	Democratic Services Officer	September 2021
School Music Service	Walsall Music Education Hub & Service. Walsall Arena & Arts Centre (Forests Arts Centre)	September, 2021
Update on Local Government Pension Scheme Charges (if required)	Finance Manager	October, 2021
SEND Improvement Programme (Standing Item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	October, 2021
EHCP Performance Framework / Timelines (Standing Item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	October, 2021
Proposed for Mainstream Schools Local Funding Formula 2022/23	Finance Manager	October, 2021
Maintained Schools Delegation	Finance Manager	October, 2021



Review of Maintained Schools Balances 2020/21	Finance Manager	October, 2021
Review of Dedicated Schools Grant – update on 2021/22 Forecast Position	Finance Manager	October, 2021
Strategic Education and Inclusion Board Update on Impact of Board	Chair of Walsall Strategic Education Inclusion Board and School Governance Manager	October, 2021
SEND Improvement Programme (Standing Item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	December, 2021
EHCP Performance Framework / Timelines (Standing Item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	December, 2021
SEND Improvement Programme (Standing Item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	January, 2022
EHCP Performance Framework / Timelines (Standing item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	January, 2022
Mainstream Funding Formula 2022/23	Finance Manager	January, 2022
Central Expenditure Budgets 2022/23	Finance Manager	January, 2022
SEND Improvement Programme (Standing item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	March, 2022
EHCP Performance Framework/Timelines (Standing item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	March, 2022
High Needs Funding Formula 2022/23 (if required_	Finance Manager	March, 2022

Proposed Early Years Funding Formula for Two, Three and Four Year Olds (if required)	Finance Manager	March, 2022
De-delegation	Director of Access & Inclusion	March, 2022
SEND Improvement Programme (Standing item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	June, 2022
EHCP Performance Framework / Timelines (Standing item for each meeting)	SEND Team Manager	June, 2022
Schools Forum Annual Report	Democratic Services Officer	June, 2022
Dates & Venue for 2022/23 meetings	Democratic Services Officer	June, 2022