

LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH

SCHOOLS FORUM

Draft minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum held at Hitherfield Primary School, Leigham Vale, Streatham, London SW16 2JQ on Tuesday 26th March 2019 at 18:00pm – 20.00pm

School Forum Members:

| <u>Schools:</u> | Present, Apologies, Absent | <u>Governors:</u> | Present, Apologies, Absent |
|--|---|---|---|
| Chris Ashley–Jones (CAJ) Hitherfield | Present | Roger Bowdery (RB) BTG | Present |
| Nick Butler (NB) St. Gabriel's College | Present | Ray Smith (RS) Pre-School Alliance | Present |
| Primary School - Vacant | | Maksud Gangat (MG) Orchard Primary | Apologies |
| Glenda King (GK) Ethelred | Present | Matthew Green (MGr) Richard Atkins Primary | Present |
| David Boyle (DB) Dunraven School | Present | Charles Asher (CA) GHF | Present |
| Mark Jordan (MJ) (PCA) | Apologies | Michael Holland (MH) Sunnyhill Primary | Present |
| Humaira Saleem (HS) Iqra | Present | Carena Hall (CH) Immanuel & St Andrews CE Primary | Present |
| Chris Toye (CT) Wyvern Federation | Present | Sarah Crisp (SC) The Michael Tippett School | Apologies |
| Jayne Mitchell (JM) St. Andrew's Primary | Present | | |
| Kate Atkins (KA) Great North Wood Education Trust | Present | | |

| <u>Officers:</u> | Present, Apologies, Absent | <u>Observers:</u> | Present, Apologies, Absent |
|--|---|--|---|
| Cathy Twist (CTw) Director - ELS | Present | Sarah Tomlinson (ST) NUT/NEU | Absent |
| Kathryn Shaw (KS) School Quality Improvement Lead | Present | Christine Golding (CG) GMB Union | Present |
| Bunmi Idowu (BI) Early Years | Present | Vinay Gupta (VG) St. Gabriel's College | Present |
| Tim Gibson (TG) Interim Assistant Director Children's Services Finance | Present | Clr Jenny Brathwaite | Absent |
| Dominique Franklin-Johnson (DFJ) Finance Group Manager Susan Woodland– is covering. | Absent | | |
| Annie Hudson (AH) Strategic Director | Apologies | | |

MINUTES

1. Welcome & Apologies

CAJ welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted from: Annie Hudson; Sarah Crisp, Mark Jordan and Maksud Gangat.

2. Membership and Register of Interests and Declaration of Business Interests

CAJ informed SF members that the Membership List in the pack was the new model that had been previously agreed at the SF meeting.

CAJ informed that he had advertised the Primary School vacancy at the Lambeth School Forum Briefing Seminar which took place on the 19th March 2019.

Those SF members who had not as yet completed the Declaration of Business Interests were asked to do so.

3. **Minutes from the Schools Forum meeting held on 15th January 2019 and matters arising**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed off by the Chair.

Matters arising

- Page 3 Item 3 – AY sent information that £3m is spend on the 19-25 EHCPs.
- Page 3 Item 3 – The LA Co-ordinator sent out an email to schools regarding the Consultation and asking for recommendations. No suggestions were received, but schools were made aware.
- Page 3 Item 3 – Forward Plan – This is on the Agenda for the meeting today.
- Page 4 Item 5 – TG has begun drafting a letter to the DfE which will be sent out soon and which can be shared with SF members.
- Page 6 Item 6 – This is on the Agenda for the meeting today.
- Page 7 Item 7 – AY will send the information out.
- Page 9 AOB – The Lambeth School Forum Briefing Seminar took place on the 19th March.

4. **Early Years Funding Paper**

Susan Woodland has started modelling allocations for 3-4year olds. It was proposed to keep most aspects of the Funding Formula the same. The quality factor will stay the same.

Statutory guidance around Nursery Schools is being followed and Lambeth wants to keep the nursery schools viable. A lump sum will be used to compensate for the hourly rate. The EY January census has still not been received.

Lambeth is looking to bring nursery schools in line with the providers for the funding for 2years. The maintained nursery schools base rate is £8.35p/hr compared to providers funded on £6.03p/hr. This would leave an overall reduction of £165,685, which would be mitigated with a lump sum being added to the schools budgets.

KS informed that the PVI representatives were there at the EY meeting where the case was presented and they were in agreement as no objections were raised.

Q. How sustainable is it? Is it reviewed annually?

A. It will be reviewed annually.

Q. Where does the lump sum come from?

A. The Government. Some money comes in direct, and some is from the 3-4 year old Participation Fund which is used to top it up. There is a Hard Federation across 5 nursery schools.

Q. Is the model sustainable?

A. It depends on what the government decides to do with nursery schools. Indications are that it was done to give value, although it is dependent on government policy, but it has been worked on for 2 years. Now it is a single hard federation with shared facilities and cost cutting to make it more sustainable.

Q. Will the funding stay the same?

A. The funding will be kept the same. The rates are required to be notified to the DfE and Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) cannot have a different hourly rate to the other providers.

The Nursery Schools are in a position to make quick changes due to them being in a federation.

6.1 Recommendations – there were initially no objections raised from the sub-group. The PVI hourly rate has not changed and the sub-group were in agreement. The PVI representative, however, subsequently raised a concern about the additional funding that would be allocated to the MNS.

Members voted on all 7 recommendations and that recommendation No 5 will be reviewed again in greater depth in the EY sub-group. SF members voted and **agreed** unanimously on all 7 recommendations, subject to the proviso that recommendation no.5 (lump sum allocations to MNS) be reviewed annually.

5. **Review of Lambeth Funding Formula (comparison to National Funding Formula)**

When the National Funding Formula was brought in by the DfE, it was originally introduced as a soft national funding formula which was then expected to move to a “hard” national formula fund after 2 years. This has now been extended and thus the local Lambeth Formula will need to continue to be used to allocate funding to schools for the foreseeable future.

Appendix 1 shows the factors in the national funding formula and the values that are attached to these. The area cost adjustment is dependent on where the local authority is in the country and is based on living wages, cost of property etc. In Lambeth only the FSM6 deprivation factor is used and also Lambeth has a larger lump sum than that used in the NFF.

The changes in funding allocations over the past two years have meant that the schools' funding allocations have moved further away from the national funding formula baselines that are used by the DfE.

Appendix 2 shows how much each school would get if we were to try to replicate the NFF as much as possible and using the MFG as the balancing item rather than AWPU as was the case in the existing formula. One impact of a change towards the NFF is a change in primary: secondary funding ratio although this is negated by the Minimum Funding Guarantee.

Deprivation and MFG needs to be analysed further as well as the impact that changes to the funding formula would have on individual schools funding allocations. It was thus suggested that representatives from the Schools Forum set up a working group to look at the options and bring back feedback to the SF and if changes are proposed then a further consultation will go out to all schools later on.

The MFG works year on year whereas the DfE have used a baseline that is based upon the 2017/18 allocation. It would be useful to see what drives the changes and to see the impact.

The following members agreed to be part of the working group: Tim Gibson (TG), Nick Butler (NB), Kate Atkins (KA) and Shirley Drane. **ACTION: TG/NB/KA**

6. Feedback about High Needs Changes

A letter was sent out to all schools regarding the proposal of reducing the disproportionate SEND fund. £1.58m has been allocated to schools that have more than the mean of EHCPs. Currently, however, the HNB is projected to overspend by £4.5m and will not have the reserves in future, therefore the overspend needs to be reduced.

There are a number of reasons for the overspend as detailed in the paper (bottom of page 1). There are a range of cuts to other intervention services, so parents are keen to seek assessment for their children and better diagnosis and therefore the costs are heavy.

One of the proposals for reducing the overspend is the restructure of the SEN team at the end of April. The Vanguard school will be built by 2020 and will offer more SEN places in borough.

It was suggested that the £1.58m be divided into three amounts. £580K would be kept in the disproportionate SEN fund and would be allocated based on a 3.5% threshold for those schools with the highest proportion of EHCPs. £500K would be reallocated to the top up budget for EHCPs. £500K would be set aside as an Inclusion Fund. A panel will allocate money for short term funding that schools may bid for to meet need early and without applying too quickly for an EHCP.

Eight responses were received to the consultation, which are summarised in the appendix. The key factors raised were that schools may not be able to be as inclusive as previously and they requested a phased move. The responses to the early intervention Inclusion Fund were positive.

By using a threshold of 3.5% more schools benefit than if a threshold of 3% were used; SF members were asked to make a decision to consider accepting the proposal.

Q. How will SENCOs on the Inclusion Fund panel be appointed?

A. There are 10 clusters in the borough and one SENCo from each cluster would be nominated. There is a good SENCo network.

Q. Is there an agreed way to allocate funding?

A. There will be clear criteria. The EY Inclusion Fund worked well and money is allocated quickly.

Q. Is Lambeth ready to set up a panel?

A. Yes, as there is a well-informed group of SENCos and they would manage it.

Q. Is the problem of insufficient funding being masked?

A. The Government is saying that the LA will have to meet the costs of EHCPs. The Disproportionate Fund is not statutory. The LA can choose to support the schools that have a disproportionate number of EHCPs.

A discussion arose around the SEND support.

Q. Why did Lambeth choose to have a disproportionate SEND fund in the past?

A. Some schools had far more children with statements/EHCPs than others and this money was to recognise that and help them.

Q. What would be the case if the half a million was not spent on the overspend?

A. This will be ring fenced and would thus roll forward the overspend to the following year.

Q. What will the Inclusion Fund be spent on? How much of the EY's inclusion fund was spent in the 1st year?

A. £175K was spent in the 1st year and this has increased to £350K. There is a slow but steady uptake amongst PVI's. An audit was sent out to PVI's to find out what can be done for them to use the fund. Inclusion fund is spent on early intervention activities and urgently needed support.

Q. Are the selection criteria provided?

A. Yes and evidence is needed. The application process will be made accessible.

SF members voted and **agreed** unanimously to split the £1.58m of funding into the three amounts described.

SF members voted and **agreed** to use a threshold of 3%.

7. Forward Plan

The following were items for the Forward Plan:

- Feedback from the working group.
- Update on the DSG spent.
- Review of the Lambeth Scheme – directed adjustments need to be made.
- Information papers on commissioning arrangements.
- Information papers on implementation of Lambeth Special School banding model.
- GMB – Support Staff holiday pay.

8. Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be on:

Tuesday 25th June 2019 6-8pm @ Hitherfield

Tuesday 15th October 2019 6-8pm @ Hitherfield

CAJ kindly offered his school for the SF venue for the above dates.

9. AOB

The GMB are attending schools and hosting meetings regarding the Support Staff holiday pay claim. In Southwark the GMB were successful. Claire Cobbold has been approached by the GMB. A payroll meeting has been set up to view the calculations that Lambeth use.

CTw and TG will look into it. **ACTION: CTw/TG**

There being no further business to discuss, the Chair closed the meeting at 7.20pm.

Signed: 

Date: 10/09/19

Chris Ashley-Jones

Chair of the School Forum