

<p style="text-align: center;">THE SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS FORUM MINUTES OF THE MEETING Thursday 9th July 2020</p>
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1. **Attendance and Apologies:** - See Annex A - The Chair welcomed Trevor Cunningham the Maintained Community School governor representative.
2. **Quorum:** The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate - Note that the meeting was conducted via Zoom meeting technology.
3. **Declaration of Interests**
Members were asked to declare any pecuniary or other interests they might have that were greater than the interests of other members of the Schools Forum in any matter on the agenda for discussion. None were declared.
4. **Minutes of the Meeting of 14^h May 2020**
 - 4.1 These were agreed for accuracy
 - 4.2 Matters Arising
 - a) DSG Outturn 2019-20 - Approval by External Audit - was currently being reviewed with data being sought and provided from schools
 - b) Mechanism for Allocating £1.4m to assist schools with falling rolls - proposals by the LA will be put to the relevant group and will come back to the October Schools Forum
 - c) SILS and Virtual Schools Reviews - delayed due to COVID-19 will start autumn 2020
 - d) Letter to SOS regarding COVID19 costs incurred by schools - overtaken by further guidance being issued by the DfE
5. **Dedicated Schools Grant- 2020-21 Budget Monitor**
 - 7.1 This report, previously circulated, set out as at the 30th June 2020, the latest in-year budget monitoring for the 2020-21 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and provided an update to members on the latest school finance announcements.
 - 7.2 The LA reported that with regard to the saving in the High Needs Block for the transition from the old EHCP's bandings to the new banding structure most work had been completed prior to the Covid-19 situation and so the majority of the savings are still achievable,
 - 7.3 An example was giving by the Schools Forum of funding being cut for an individual case in 2020-21, the LA explained that each case had been looked at involving schools' SENCOs and in some instances, because of the width of the various bands that was available in 2019-20, shifting to more responsive to need banding in 2020-21 some pupils were over funded and this has now been addressed.
 - 7.4 Details were given of the DfE COVID-19 Catch Up funding, however, the previous Year 7 Catch Up Funding has now ceased with more funding for Alternative provision. The Consistent Financial Reporting return from the LA is now required by the 11th September 2020.

The report was noted.

6. Maintained School Balances and Budget Control Mechanism 2019-20

- 6.1 This report, previously circulated, updated the Schools Forum with more detail of the Local Authority maintained schools balances as at 31st March 2020, in particular those that were in excess of the authority's Budget Control Mechanism threshold for identifying "excess" surplus balances.
- 6.2 It was noted that, as at 31 March 2020, under the current balance control mechanism for schools there are 36 schools who are deemed to have surplus balances and the cumulative total of those balances that are deemed surplus is £9.3m.
- 6.3 The Schools Forum were concerned that the analysis presented of ten schools showed that one school had not replied to the LA and one was declaring that they had not spent £300k of Pupil Premium funding.
- 6.4 The Schools Forum recommended that the LA should obtain detail of the progress schools are making in spending the excess balances as part of the quarterly returns maintained schools are required to make to the LA. In addition the Schools Forum would like to see the historical trail of those schools with excess balances, the % that balance is of overall income and also their academic performance over that period. Progress.

7. High Needs Block - 2020-21 - Consultation on Resource Base Funding

- 7.1 This report, previously circulated, looked at the outcome of the Local Authority's consultation on funding of the autism resource bases and how the proposed savings should be delivered.
- 7.2 The Schools Forum looked at the two models proposed by the LA namely:
 - a) Model 3 = 25% of the pupils are funded on the top up rate of £11,930 while 75% are funded at £14,430 with a saving of £45k, all new pupils will be funded at the lower rate.
 - and
 - b) Model 4 = 50% of the pupils are funded on the top up rate of £11,930 while 50% are funded at £14,430 with a saving of £90k, all new pupils will be funded at the lower rate.
- 7.3 The Schools Forum noted that the Headteachers of the schools with these bases had written to the Director setting out that the existing funding already meant that the school has to subsidise the provision from funding from other parts of the school. However, with the level of overspend in the High Needs Block requires it to be addressed.
- 7.4 The LA said that they had consulted other LAs in London and the new rate they had chosen was an average of what they are currently providing and that in some instances the needs of the children would be better met in a special school and the new Spa Camberwell will assist with this.
- 7.5 The Schools Forum asked whether a more children's needs sensitive model could be developed but acknowledged that this moved away from the principle of formula

funding and the LA believed it would be difficult to go devise a formula that would go down to that level and still be a formula.

- 7.6 It was then stated that this was not the only funding the schools got, they received the general formula funding relating to the pupils on roll, plus a place element and then to top up funding through the formula.
- 7.7 The High Needs Block is the responsibility of the LA and it appeared to the Schools Forum that Model 3 provided some savings and minimised the impact of the transition on those schools with those resource bases.

8. Impact of COVID-19 on Early years Funding 2020-21

- 8.1 This report, previously circulated to members, set out how early years settings will be funded for the Summer Term 2020 following the DfE's cancellation, due to COVID-19, of the summer term census
- 8.2 It was noted that these settings are funded from the Early Years Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant under the responsibility of the Local Authority. Following discussion the Schools Forum supported the LA recommendations that:

a) Maintained schools and Academies will be funded for the summer term 2020 by using the higher of summer 2019 or spring term 2020 numbers.

b) Private, Voluntary and independent (PVI) settings will be funded for the summer term by using the higher of summer 2019 or spring term 2020 numbers, however, if the settings numbers are higher on the 3 July 2020, they will be able to apply to be funded for the difference, i.e. the higher number.

c) Childminders will be funded on the basis of the spring term 2020 numbers, however, if the settings numbers are higher on the 3 July 2020, they will be able to apply to be funded for the difference, i.e. the higher number

9. Scheme for Financing Schools - deferred by the Local Authority

Noted

10 Dates of Future Meetings

1st October 2020 , 10th December 2020, 14th January 2021,
11th March 2021, 13th May 2021, 8th July 2021

These were noted with the likelihood of meetings being conducted by video conferencing with a start time of 2pm.

The meeting closed at 15.15

Annex A
SCHOOLS FORUM ATTENDANCE SHEET
9th July 2020

VOTING MEMBERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PRESENT
Janice Babb	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Susannah Bellingham	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Pia Longman	Primary School Headteacher	Yes
Vacant	Primary School Headteacher	
T Cunningham	Primary School Governor	Yes
Vacant	Primary School Governor	
Rebecca Sherwood	Nursery School Headteacher	Yes
Teresa Neary	Special School Headteacher	Apologies
Nicola Howard	Early Years – Private/Voluntary and Independent Settings	Yes
Steve Morrison	Academy	Yes
Vacant	Academy (Primary)	
Mike Antoniou	Academy	Yes
Simon Eccles	Special School Academy	Yes
Yomi Adewoye	Pupil Referral Units	Apologies
Sister Anne-Marie Niblock	Secondary School Headteacher	Yes
Vacant	FE SEN	Awaiting nomination
Catherine May	Diocesan Boards	Yes
Betty Joseph	Trade Unions	Yes

Senior Officers in Attendance

Nina Dohel	Yes
Tim Jones	Yes
Dave Richards	Yes
Yvonne Ely	Yes
Terry Segarty	Yes
David Cross	Clerk