

SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Schools Forum held on Wednesday, 16 January 2019 at 4.30pm in the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Present

Jackie Collins	Head Teacher	Primary Phase
Dave Jones	Head Teacher	Primary Phase
David Jeapes (Chair)	Head Teacher	Secondary Phase
Ian Hunkin	Head Teacher	Special Phase
Kate Keller	Academy	Primary Phase
Karen Stocks	Academy	Primary Phase
Sue Wilson	Academy	Primary Phase
Steven Labeledz	Academy	Secondary Phase
Stewart Vaughan	Academy	Secondary Phase
Jason Crouch	Governor	Primary Phase
Kara Jewell	Representative	Early Years
Judith Smyth	Councillor	Labour Party
Lynne Stagg	Councillor	Liberal Democrat Party

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Alison Beane, Simon Barrable (Mike Gaston deputised for him), Nys Hardingham, Sonia Nicholson and Councillor Claire Udy.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

3. Membership Changes.

Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager gave the following update on membership:

- There is one primary maintained school governor vacancy.
- There are two secondary academy vacancies.
- Steven Labeledz had agreed to continue his tenure as a secondary academy representative.

4. Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting held on 28 November 2018.

DECISION: The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2018 were confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising.

Item 47

The proposed response to the DfE's consultation on the implementation of new arrangements for reporting deficits of the dedicated schools grant was amended to reflect the forum's views and submitted.

5. Early Years SEND funding review.

Anthony Harper, Early Years and Childcare Manager introduced the report and Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director of Children, Families and Education added that the closure of Willows Nursery School does not mean the ending of the provision of this service. The provision will move to a new expanded site where the numbers will remain the same but the balance will change. He added that this change is in line with the model followed by most local authorities and will provide a better choice for parents.

In response to questions, they explained that:

- There will be an overall increase in the numbers of specialist school age places and fewer specialist nursery age places. This proposal will increase capacity within the mainstream sector so that parents may choose to send their children to mainstream schools with appropriate support. Where specialist nursery provision is considered the right offer, this will still be available.
- They are confident that there is sufficient capacity for Cliffdale Primary Academy to continue to provide outstanding provision.
- The mainstream early years and childcare sector is largely rated as good and outstanding.
- Mainstream sector providers will receive the funding to ensure they are able to access the right resources and tools required to support these children.

Kara Jewel noted that as a provider, she could not currently draw on high needs funding. She had spoken to several mainstream providers and they were in favour of the proposals. The changes would mean that parents would have a choice of provision and how they access their early education entitlements (including the 30 hour offer).

The Chair noted that the proposed changes seemed a sensible step forward and was pleased that the mainstream providers in favour of that. Cliffdale had an outstanding Ofsted rating and these changes would mean a better use of resources.

Councillor Suzy Horton, Cabinet Member for Education commented that she had visited Cliffdale and was reassured that pupils with very complex needs would receive the same level of provision. She was also confident that some parents would benefit from the choice of how to access their funding entitlement.

DECISION

The Schools Forum endorsed the following changes to funding and support for early years children with SEND (which are fully outlined in section 5):

1. **Commission places for early year's children with complex SEND through a specialist provision at Cliffdale Primary Academy (subject to the conclusion of the current consultation on the closure of Willows Nursery School).**
 2. **Establish a single funding stream for mainstream early years providers which has 2 elements:**
 - **A flexible 'complex needs' funding stream (*EY Inclusion Fund - Enhanced*) where funding will follow the child to the setting of their parent's choice. This element will be funded through the DSG High-Needs Block, using the funding released from the proposed closure of Willows Nursery School.**
 - **A refocussed Early Years Inclusion Fund (*EY Inclusion Fund - Core*) which supports children with 'low and emerging' needs, in line with Statutory Guidance. This is already funded from the Early Years Block.**
 3. **Subject to consultation with the current service providers, refocus the allocation of funding to early years outreach on a resource which can consistently deliver practical support and role modelling to settings across the spectrum of needs. A SEND outreach officer role will be managed either through the Early Years Area SENCO team or Portage Plus.**
 4. **Review existing training and development opportunities for mainstream early year's providers to ensure they meet the needs of children and the settings they access.**
- 6. Schools funding arrangements 2019-20.**

The Chair informed the forum that in order to hear the Schools Forum views, Councillor Suzy Horton had deferred making a decision on recommendation F regarding the element 3 top-up rates for Special Schools, Inclusion Centres, Alternative Provision settings and for Children with Education, Health & Care Plans in mainstream schools as set out in appendix 5 of the report

She had also attended the Head Teacher meeting that morning to hear their views.

Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager introduced the report.

During the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

At the Heads meeting one teacher had suggested that special schools should not benefit from the additional government funding. However, had not been endorsed by the other Heads present.

The forum recognised the financial pressures that all schools had faced and stated that the additional funding should therefore be shared between all schools. It was also noted that it is important to improve special school provision in the city and reduce reliance on city provision which is very expensive.

DECISIONS

The Schools Forum:

Approved the determination of the 2019-20 schools budget (including the individual schools budgets) shown at Appendix 1, together with the supporting explanations contained within this report and specifically agree the following budget lines:

- i. Admissions;**
 - ii. Schools Forum;**
 - b. Approved the amount of the growth fund for 2019-20 at £754,400**
 - c. Endorsed the proposed changes to the mainstream schools revenue funding formula as set out in section 6.**
 - d. Endorsed the school revenue funding pro-forma at Appendix 6 for submission to the ESFA on the 21 January 2019.**
 - e. Endorsed the 2019-20 Special school, Inclusion Centre and Alternative Provision places as set out in Appendix 4.**
 - f. Endorsed the 2019-20 Element 3 Top-up rates for Special Schools, Inclusion Centres, Alternative Provision settings and for Children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in mainstream schools as set out in Appendix 5.**
 - g. Endorsed the proposal that any carry-forward balances from 2018-19 be used to assist with the continued introduction of the funding reform changes and fund any potential financial pressures arising during 2019-20.**
 - h. Endorsed the local funding arrangements in respect of the 2, 3 and 4 year old early years provision for 2019-20 as set out in section 8 and Appendix 3.**
- 7. Any other business.**
No other business was raised.

The meeting concluded at 5.35pm.

David Jeapes
Chair