

Minutes of the Schools Forum

**9 March 2020 at 2.30pm
at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Members Present: D Irish (Chair);
N Toplass (Vice Chair);
M Arnull, L Gillam, G Linford,
B Patel and S Ramsay.**

**Apologies: J Bailey, A Burns, P Shone, J Smallman, J Gill
and C Ward**

Officers Present: R Kerr, S Lilley and A Timmins.

12/20 Agenda Item 1 - Apologies

As above.

13/20 Agenda Item 2 - Declaration of Interest

**14/20 Agenda Item 3 – To confirm the minutes of the meeting held
on 27th January 2020**

Resolved that the minutes for Schools Forum held on 27 January 2020 be confirmed as a correct record subject to addition to last paragraph on page 9 in respect to International new arrivals, Members asked Why Year 11 pupils were not automatically being placed in secondary schools as they were in Year 6 where the same issue of pupils not being able to access the tests was present.

15/20 Agenda Item 4 – Schools Revenue Funding 2020/21

Schools Forum received a report in respect to funding allocations for the Dedicated Schools Grant and the final school budget information for 2020/21.

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The report enabled school governing bodies and academy boards to start their financial planning for 2020/21 and make suitable structural and educational adjustments to meet the need of young people within the constraints of their resource allocation.

The school funding model had been approved by the Department for Education after lengthy discussions following the submission and subsequent withdrawal of a disapplication request in relation to acceptance of St Michael's school contribution to the PFI scheme be recognised as a PFI Factor in the national funding formula.

In respect to the PFI scheme for St. Michaels schools, Officers would be exploring this matter with other authorities to see if they have had a similar case recognised

The information had been released to schools on 27 February 2020 and maintained schools would be required to submit a financial plan by 15 May each year.

Members asked if teacher pay rise funding was included in the budget and were advised that for 2020/21 this funding would be paid separately, however in future DfE were planning for it to-be integrated within School Block Funding.

Schools Forum was asked to note the Dedicated Schools Grant allocations for 2020/21 and the content of the final school budgets 2020/21.

16/20

Agenda Item 5 – Risk protection arrangement to maintained schools – Sandwell response

Following the government response to the consultation which was received by Schools Forum in January 2020, Schools Forum was updated in respect to the Council's stance and proposed way forward regarding the Risk Protection Arrangements scheme for maintained schools.

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The Department for Education had approved the extension of the Risk Protection Arrangement covering Academies to permit local authority schools to join from April 2020.

Sandwell MBC including its schools were in a long-term agreement for its insurance cover which expires on 30 September 2021 at the earliest, as such Sandwell MBC would not at present, be entering into any arrangements to allow schools to participate in the Risk Protection Arrangements scheme.

Members asked if PFI insurance was taken into account within the scheme or was separate cover required. It was confirmed that clarity around this and other issues was needed and a further report would be brought to a future meeting.

Resolved:-

- (1) that Schools Forum noted the content of the report;
- (2) that it be acknowledged that all Sandwell maintained schools were currently insured and tied into a long-term agreement which expired on 30 September 2021 at the earliest.

17/20

Agenda Item 6 – Pupil Number Growth and Additional Needs funding

Schools Forum was asked to consider the schools meeting the criteria for pupil number growth funding and the additional needs funding and approve the total funding for each school as set out below:-

School	Description	Numbers/£
Burnt Tree Primary	Change in pupil numbers	42, (Funding already received for 30)
	Pupil Number Growth Funding if approved	£10,700
Based on the Pupil number growth criteria the school would be entitled to £10,700 based on 12 pupils receiving 50% of primary *AWPU rate of £3,0571 for the period September 2019 to March 2020.		

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The Priory Primary School	Change in pupil numbers	36 (Funding already received for 30)
	Pupil Number Growth Funding if approved	£5,350
<p>Based on the Pupil number growth criteria the school would be entitled to £5,350 based on 6 pupils receiving 50% of primary *AWPU rate of £3,057 for the period September 2019 to March 2020.</p>		
Sacred Heart Primary School	Change in pupil numbers	40 (Funding already received for 30)
	Additional funding if approved	£8,916
<p>Based on the pupil number growth criteria the school would be entitled to £8,916 based on 10 pupils receiving 50% of the primary*AWPU rate of £3,057 September 2019 to March 2020</p>		
Holly Lodge High School	Change in pupil numbers	35 (Funding already received for 20)
	Additional funding if approved	£18,817
<p>Based on the pupil number growth criteria the school would be entitled to £18,817 based on 15 pupils receiving 50% of the secondary *AWPU rate of £4,301 September 2019 to March 2020</p>		
St Michaels's CE High School	Change in pupil numbers	45 (Funding already received for 30)
	Additional funding if approved	£18,817
<p>Based on the pupil number growth criteria the school would be entitled to £18,817 based on 15 pupils receiving 50% of the secondary *AWPU rate of £4,301 September 2019 to March 2020</p>		

*Age weighted pupil unit

Members asked for clarification on the rationale behind the criteria for the extra funding and outlined an inequality in respect of schools taking

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on extra pupils. It was also asked that further information on other funding streams as they were concerned about the numbers of pupils they were having to accept through the Hard to Place Panel.

Members were advised that the criteria was based on place planning and the criteria for Significant Pupil number increases had been approved by Schools Forum, however further discussions would be taking place to consider new criteria for funding at a future meeting.

The following table presents details of those schools entitled to Additional Needs funding:-

School	IDACI Funding (£)	EAL Funding (£)	Total (£)
Phoenix Collegiate	20,122	5,726	25,848
Perryfields High	24,207	27,914	52,121
Ormiston Forge	10,810	16,462	27,272
Burnt Tree	7,060	0	7,060
Priory Primary	6,147	5,922	12,069
Sacred Heart	2,058	0	2,058
Holly Lodge	8,852	10,857	19,709
St Michael's	6,566	6,416	12,982
Grand Total	85,822	73,297	159,119

A vote was held on each of the proposals and the outcomes were as follows:-

Pupil Number Growth			
School	For	Against	Abstain
Burnt Tree Primary	7	0	0
The Priory Primary	7	0	0
Sacred Heart Primary	7	0	0
Holly Lodge High School	7	0	0
St. Michaels CE High School	7	0	0
Additional Needs Funding			

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Phoenix Collegiate	7	0	0
Perryfields High	7	0	0
Ormiston Forge	7	0	0
Burnt Tree	7	0	0
Priory Primary	7	0	0
Sacred Heart	7	0	0
Holly Lodge	7	0	0
St Michael's	7	0	0

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Pupil Number Growth funding be approved for the following schools as set out in the table, Burnt Tree Primary School, The Priory Primary School, Sacred Heart Primary School, Holly Lodge High School and St Michael's CE High School.
- (2) that the Additional Needs funding be approved for the following schools as set out in the table, Phoenix Collegiate, Perryfields High, Ormiston Forge, Burnt Tree, Priory Primary, Sacred Heart, Holly Lodge, St Michael's.
- (3) that the Pupil number growth criteria be reviewed, with an initial discussion at the next meeting which may then require a sub-committee to be set up to look at the issue in further detail.

18/20

Agenda Item 7 – Fair Funding Scheme updates

Schools Forum was advised that the local authority would be consulting with schools in respect of updates to be made to the Scheme for the Financing of Schools.

School leaders and governing bodies should note proposed changes and the impact on management of school finances and budgets.

Schools Forum received a Fair Funding report in March 2019 which had been superseded by the proposed Scheme for the Financing of Schools, which required a consultation with schools.

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Updates had been made to reflect current policy positions and changes in legislation and a copy was attached to the meeting documents for perusal.

A review of the Local Authority's practice would be undertaken in light of the recent Annie Lennard case. This would be brought back to Schools Forum as required.

Schools would be updated on the scheme and given a month to respond to the consultation and a final report would be brought back to School Forum.

Resolved that Schools Forum noted the contents of the report.

19/20

Agenda Item 8 – Department for Education/Education and Skills Funding Agency updates

Schools Forum was updated in respect of notices received from the Department for Education and the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

The Department of Education had announced the pupil premium rates for 2020/21. The pupil premium grant per pupil rates were as follows:-

Disadvantaged Pupils	Rate (£)
Primary FSM Ever 6	1,345
Secondary FSM Ever 6	955
Looked After Children & Post LAC	2,345
Service Child	310

The Education and Skills Funding Agency had advised local authorities in respect of changes in the allocation of pupil premium for non-maintained special schools. Funding would be allocated directly, to these schools, in line with other specific grants that were paid directly.

The Department for Education was conducting research to understand the needs and challenges that schools face when

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buying common goods such as stationery and sports equipment. Schools could complete the schools buying survey which takes around 10 minutes to complete and the deadline for responses was Friday 6 March.

The Department of Education were looking for volunteers to help inform their user research on the notion of a potential publicly available measure of schools' financial health and were interested to find out if this was a helpful tool and how schools might use it. Schools interested in taking part in research interviews should contact the DfE User Researcher.

Resolved that Schools Forum noted the contents of the report.

20/20

Agenda Item 9 – Any other Business

- An application for funding under the Schools in Financial difficulties criteria had been received from a secondary school. A meeting would be arranged of the sub-committee to consider the matter, however as the next meeting of Schools Forum was not until June, members would be contacted by e mail to seek approval for the sub-committee's recommendation.

Members asked if a maintained school that was in the stages of converting to academy status was still eligible for funding under schools in financial difficulty and it was confirmed that the Local Authority would still request funding at that point.

- A question had been raised by the Deputy Head Teacher – Innovation and Development, Westminster School as follows:-

A document presented at Schools Forum on 27th January 2020 indicated that Westminster School was oversubscribed by 12 places, however the school was currently undersubscribed. Clarification on this matter was sought.

Officer's confirmed by e mail that the over occupancy was based on the number of places commissioned in 2019/20 which was 201. Over the course of the year the school was over by 5 places because their average occupancy was 206, this was funded in year. The highlighted table showed the date picked up from the funding delegation that the school

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received periodically. More information was needed for the discrepancy in the table indicated. The 250 recognised as the maximum places for the expansion, which was an additional 40 places in the EVOLVE strategy. As an aside the BSF cost of running the vacated Whiteheath premises had been agreed to be funded centrally via a reimbursement to the school on a reducing balance until the school was up to capacity in post 16.

A query was raised in respect to the process used for pupil placement planning for SEN. It was asked that this be considered by the Director Education and the process outlined at the next meeting.

(Meeting ended at 3.36 pm)

Contact Officer: Shane Parkes Democratic Services Unit 0121 569 3190
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