

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 8 December 2016

PRESENT:

Ken Childs (Chair)	Special Schools Governor
Peter Lague (Vice Chair)	Trade Union Representative
Councillor Chris McHugh	Elected Member Representative
Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
Steve Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteachers
Denise Henry	Nursery Sector Representative
Mustafaa Malik	Primary Headteachers
Andrew Ramanandi	Primary Headteachers
Michelle Richards	Special School Headteachers
Steve Williamson	Pupil Referral Unit Representative

IN ATTENDANCE:

Alan Foster	Corporate Resources
Frank McDermott	Corporate Resources
Carole Smith	Corporate Resources
Jeanne Pratt	Care Wellbeing and Learning
Steve Horne	Care Wellbeing and Learning
Rosalyn Patterson	Corporate Services and Governance

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from; Matt Younger, Ethel Mills, Sarah Diggle, Jim Thomson, Martin Flowers, Chris Richardson, Elaine Pickering and Alan Symons.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

3 FUNDING FOR PERMANENTLY EXCLUDED PUPILS

The Forum received a report on the continuing increase in permanent exclusions. It was noted that currently when a pupil is permanently excluded funding is clawed back from the excluding school. However, this still leaves a short fall of approximately £15,000 per pupil that it costs to meet the educational need of the permanently excluded pupil.

It was reported that the PRU is funded from the High Needs Block for 48 FTE permanently excluded pupils, however this number has continually been exceeded

since 2014/15. It was therefore proposed that if there is funding available once the mainstream schools funding has been calculated that any unallocated funding estimated at £150,000, be transferred to the High Needs Block to support the increased number of secondary permanent exclusions. The point was made that at present this is a estimated sum which may exist once the mainstream school budgets have been calculated .

It was questioned why there has been an increase in the number of permanent exclusions. It was confirmed that work is ongoing to look at the position of statistical neighbours and what provision they have, work is also underway with Headteachers to identify any patterns. It was also clarified that nationally permanent exclusions are rising, although Gateshead is higher than the national average.

It was noted that since September there has been 21 permanent exclusions, nine are pending permanent exclusion and there an additional seven potential exclusions.

It was acknowledged that this is a complex issue with no simple answer, it was also recognised that the small percentage of successful reintegration back into mainstream school suggests that permanent exclusions have been appropriate. The point was made that there are very few permanent exclusions that progress to Independent Review Panels which shows that they are undertaken in an appropriate manner.

It was suggested that work needs to be carried out to see if there are any commonalities in primary school behaviour which could help identify pupils earlier who are going down a similar route. It was confirmed that analysis work is underway on a number of pupils excluded last year around what services were involved and what interventions were in place to see whether there are any gaps, however this has not shown any conclusive patterns as yet. It was acknowledged that there is a lot of disparity in terms of early identification and support at primary schools and there are links to permanent exclusions through geographical elements, social deprivation and Pupil Premium. It was recognised that there is a definite need to understand better the increase in permanent exclusions as well as good practice, however there is a need now to deal with the number of pupils who are expensive to educate.

The point was made that all schools are suffering from tighter budgets and last year there was an underspend in the High Needs. It was confirmed that currently the position is that there is an overspend in the High Needs Block.

The Forum was advised that there has been no additional funding since 2010/11 and there is a need for all schools to look at this issue together and continue to work collectively as these pupils are all Gateshead children. It was pointed out that there is a statutory responsibility to educate these children and the cost to the public purse of not dealing with these pupils could be even higher.

It was confirmed that once a pupil is on roll at the PRU they are not counted in the Schools Block and the High Needs Block is currently just a lump sum. The point was made that there is a political agenda forcing structural change and eventually it will be necessary to look at different structures in order to plan long term. It was

acknowledged that long term planning is difficult due to the number of continuing changes and it is expected that this would be a one off incidence.

It was suggested that the proposal presented to Forum last year, around in-year additional premium of approximately £4,000 above claw back of funding when a pupil is permanently excluded, should be looked at further. It was noted that this would be included in the overall review of permanent exclusions. Support was also shown for an alternative provision school to help avoid permanent exclusions and the possibility of £150,000 being ring fenced for that purpose was suggested. However, it was clarified that this would not fit within the Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations.

The Forum voted on the proposal contained in the report and also an additional proposal for a 50/50 split between the High Needs Block and the Schools Block.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the movement of any unallocated Schools Block DSG funding to the High Needs Block of the DSG to support the higher costs of providing education to permanently excluded pupils.

4 MAINSTREAM FUNDING FORMULA AND AUTHORITY PROFORMA TOOL

The Forum received a report on the work of the Mainstream Schools sub group on the draft Authority Proforma Tool (APT).

It was reported that the sub group looked at a number of areas;

- Estimated funding
- IDACI bandings and funding
- Deprivation funding comparisons
- Key Stage 3 values
- Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Rates estimated costs

In terms of estimated funding it is anticipated that there will be additional pupils in mainstream schools because of demographic and new housing builds. Therefore there is a possibility of an additional £1.5million, after allocations for the additional children this could leave £150,000 available to reallocate to the High Needs Block for permanently excluded pupil support.

It was questioned whether there is double funding through the deprivation factor and Pupil Premium. It was confirmed that this is two separate grants, the deprivation factor is mandatory and the Pupil Premium is outside the remit of the DSG and the Schools Forum. In addition, the use of the 11% deprivation funding does not need to be explained whereas Pupil Premium is linked to the child and schools must prove how it has been used to support those pupils.

It was noted that if there is a change in the formula the APT will be brought back to January's meeting and an email exchange to all schools on 19 January as the APT needs to be submitted on 20 January 2017.

- RESOLVED - (i) That the Schools Forum noted the estimated additional Schools Block DSG of £1.5M.
- (ii) That the Schools Forum approved the following:-
- Proposed changes to the IDACI funding rates (which may need further adjustment when the APT and funding are received)
 - Approximately 11% of funding to be targeted at Deprivation
 - The increases to PFI and Rates costs
 - The draft APT

5 MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH SUPPORT WORKER

The Schools Forum received an update report on the work of the Mental and Emotional Health Support Worker which was funded by the Forum.

It was noted that the Support Worker has been very successful in getting pupils away from home tuition and into the Centre. The Forum was thanked for the funding.

- RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum noted the reported and agreed that a further progress report will be brought back to Forum later in the academic year.

6 DE-DELEGATION - FAP EP AND IN SCHOOL SUPPORT

A report was presented to the Schools Forum around the de-delegation of primary funding to support the Primary Behaviour Support Team and the educational psychologist to work to the Fair Access process.

It was reported that current referrals have increased, therefore work to raise the profile of the Primary Behaviour Support Team has been successful.

It was acknowledged that staff accessing the training have benefited from the money that has been de-delegated.

- RESOLVED - That the Forum agreed to the de-delegation of funds to continue with the Primary Fair Access Educational Psychologist and the Primary Behaviour Support Team.

7 DE-DELEGATION - EMTAS

- RESOLVED - That this item be deferred until January's meeting.

8 DE-DELEGATION - TRADE UNION FACILITY TIME AND MATERNITY CREDITS

The Forum received a report on the de-delegation of Trade Union Facility Time and Maternity Credits.

It was emphasised that if funding was not bought back there would be a significant impact on schools because Trade Union representatives would be out of school for nine days per year for training.

It was clarified that as there were no mainstream secondary representatives in attendance the Forum would only consider the primary maintained sector and the secondary sector would consider it at the next meeting.

RESOLVED - That the de-delegation was agreed for the primary sector. The Secondary sector views would be sought and brought back to January's Schools Forum.

**Peter Largue declared a pecuniary interest and left the room during discussion of this item.*

9 EARLY YEARS FORMULA UPDATE

The Forum received an update report on the work of the Early Years National Funding Formula sub group. At its meeting on 7 November the sub group agreed the draft terms of reference to ensure an understanding of what the group is there to do. During the meeting the sub group agreed to;

- Create a draft funding model using 95% of the base rate funding
- The formula to have a single base rate for all settings which will allocate 90% of the funding available to settings
- The remaining 10% funding to be allocated to deprivation and distribute via the Acorn score of each setting

At its meeting on 28 November the group requested further modelling;

- 90% allocated via basic entitlement and 10% deprivation
- 95% allocated via basic entitlement and 5% deprivation
- Capping gains to create an inclusion fund

It was noted that under September's operational guidance additional factors can be included, for example; English as an additional language and quality.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the draft Terms of Reference and the progress that the Group has made.

10 EDUCATION SERVICES GRANT TRANSFER

A report was presented on the transfer of the retained duties element of the Education Services Grant (ESG) into the DSG from April 2017. It was noted that under regulations the Schools Forum needs to approve the funds being held

centrally.

It was confirmed that the retained duties funding relates to; school admissions, asset management, education welfare and statutory and regulatory duties. It was noted that local authorities also have duties to maintained schools only which will no longer be funded through the ESG from September 2017.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the central retention of funding allocated for retained duties.

11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The date and time of the next meeting is Thursday 12 January 2017 at 10.00am