

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 17 March 2022

PRESENT:	Peter Lague (Chair)	Trade Union Representative
	Jacqui Ridley	Primary Governors
	Andrew Fowler	Secondary Academies
	Alison Hall	Primary Maintained Schools
	Denise Kilner	Nursery Sector Representative
	David Brophy	Secondary Academy Governors
	Martin Flowers	Special Academy Headteachers
	Domenic Volpe	Maintained Secondary Headteachers
	Christina Jones	Pupil Referral Unit
	Councillor Sheila Gallagher	Elected Member
IN ATTENDANCE:	Carole Smith	Gateshead Council
	Anthony Ward	Gateshead Council
	Rosalyn Patterson	Gateshead Council

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Diggle, Steve Haigh, Paul Harris, Michelle Richards and Julie Goodfellow.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

3 SPECIAL SCHOOLS BUDGET

The Forum received a report on the proposal to increase special school top up unit of funding by 5% and the additional funding to special schools and the PRU for the increase in NI contributions and teachers pay and pension grants.

It was proposed that the funding for special school be increased by uplifting the unit of funding by 5%. For pay and pension grant allocations funding of £660 will be allocated to special schools and PRU for either the number on roll or commissioned places, whichever is higher. It was proposed that the mainstream methodology be used for the increase in national insurance contributions.

A query was raised around there being no allocation for children in alternative provision with regards to teachers pay and pension funding. It was confirmed that this will still be funded, based on higher commissioned places, but that it would be from elsewhere in the High Needs Block. It was confirmed that the authority does not get individual allocation for alternative provision.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Schools Forum approved the 5% increase in the special school unit of funding for special school top ups.
 - (ii) That the Schools Forum approved the allocation methodology for the former teachers pay and pension grants funding.
 - (iii) That the Schools Forum approved the allocation methodology for the funding for the increase in NI.

4 MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS HIGH NEEDS TOP UPS

The Forum received a report on the proposed mainstream schools top up rates from April 2022.

It was proposed that the mainstream top up rates be increased in line with the hourly costs of a level 2 Teaching Assistant of £16.28 per hour, representing an average increase of 12.41%.

- RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the mainstream top up increases for 2022/23.

5 MAINSTREAM SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES FUNDING

A report was presented to the Forum which proposed a new process for schools to apply for additional High Needs Block funding if they require support above the level of mainstream school allocation, notional SEND and top up funding.

It was noted that this proposal has been developed with primary Headteachers. It was noted that inclusive school's budgets have been put under pressure because of the level of support they have had to provide.

It was questioned how schools would be judged on whether they have a high proportion of EHCPs. It was confirmed that the average percentage of EHCPs across the local authority would be looked at and decisions made on an individual school basis. In development of the process it was felt that a more formulaic approach was not appropriate. Forum was also advised that this would include numbers on SEN Support as well as EHCPs.

It was noted that schools would be asked to apply by February half term.

- RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum approved the procedure in appendix 1 of the report and noted that outcomes of any applications would be brought to Schools Forum to note.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair advised that this was Steve Horne's last meeting before he retired. The Forum wished to record its thanks to Steve for all his work and wished him well in his

retirement.

7 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 12 May 2022 at 2.00pm.