

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 22 September 2022

PRESENT:	Sarah Diggle (Vice Chair)	Secondary Maintained Governors
	Jacqui Ridley	Primary Governors
	Brendan Robson	Secondary Faith Academies
	Alison Hall	Primary Maintained Schools
	Paul Harris	Primary Maintained Schools
	Denise Kilner	Nursery Sector Representative
	Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
	Steve Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteachers
	Ethel Mills	PVI Sector Representative
	Michelle Richards	Special School Headteachers
	Christina Jones	Pupil Referral Unit
	Councillor Sheila Gallagher	Elected Member

IN ATTENDANCE:	Carole Smith	Gateshead Council
	Suzanne Dunn	Gateshead Council
	Rachel Pizzey	Gateshead Council
	Rosalyn Patterson	Gateshead Council

APOLOGIES:

Peter Largue, Andrew Fowler and Mustafaa Malik

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Fowler, Mustafaa Malik and Cllr Gary Haley.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

3 SCHOOL FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Forum received a report on the funding announcements made by the DfE at the end of July.

It was reported that although mainstream allocation will increase this will include teachers pay and pension grants, therefore taking into account potential increases in those the increased funding will not cover. MFG for mainstream will be the lowest ever at 0% - +0.5%.

The Gateshead APT has not been received and further reports will be brought to the Forum after the actual allocation is known in December.

It was noted that for the High Needs Block there is a 5.2% increase in funding and MFG will be at least 3% to ensure additional funding for the increase in national insurance and other cost pressures has been passed on to special schools. It was questioned whether this included alternative provision. It was agreed that further clarity on this would be sought.

It was noted that further updates would be provided on the national tutoring programme next year.

RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum noted the information in the report.

4 HARPUR TRUST V BRAZEL - TERM TIME ONLY NON-TEACHING STAFF

A report was presented on the guidance on the employment of term time only employees and the judgement from the Supreme Court in July which supported the earlier decision.

It was noted that is no individual estimates for Gateshead schools as yet, an outcome on this calculation will be shared when there is further information. It was confirmed that Human Resources are currently working with legal teams to look at who is to be included.

RESOLVED - That the Forum noted the content of the report and the judgement made by the Supreme Court.

5 EMOTIONALLY BASED SCHOOL AVOIDANCE LEARNING MENTORS

The Forum received a report on the work of the Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Learning Mentors during 2021/22.

During the year there were 78 referrals made, 30 of which were for EBSA Learning Mentors. Over the year there were 59 active cases, 21 cases were closed as the young person returned to school, 8 pupils did not engage and 15 cases were carried forward to 2022/23.

It was noted that the mixed success was due to long-term staff absences on the team however going forward workers are now more skilled at identifying the need early.

The Schools Forum was asked to consider de-delegation for maintained mainstream schools for an EBSA Learning Mentor for 2023/24.

It was questioned whether this is a service for secondary schools only. It was clarified that the team works across both primary and secondary schools, however the vast number of referrals comes from secondary schools.

It was also questioned as to whether the long-term staff absence has been resolved. It was confirmed that one staff member left and one is working 30 hours per week, therefore if the Forum agreed to the funding the service would look to recruit to the empty post.

The Forum was concerned that it would be early to agree de-delegation given that schools did not yet know their budgets. It was explained that this was coming to Schools Forum early to enable recruitment to take place as soon as possible.

The point was made that this is an extremely stretched service which is worth keeping hold of if there was more capacity.

It was also pointed out that this would not just be for de-delegation but academies support would also be needed.

It was suggested that further awareness raising of what the service offers should be carried out with Headteachers.

It was proposed that further information be circulated for Forum members to share when consulting their respective sectors and a virtual decision be made before the next meeting.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That feedback from all schools be sought around de-delegation or payment towards the cost for a ESBA Learning Mentor.
 - (ii) That responses be submitted by 12 October 2022.

6 EARLY YEARS CONSULTATION

The Forum received the Council's response to the Early Years Consultation. It was noted that a sub-group would be required in order to carry out a formula review to allocate funding fairly.

Volunteers for the sub-group were requested from each sector, with at least two representatives from the Schools Forum. Volunteers from the Forum were Ethel Mills, Denise Kilner, Paul Harris and Alison Hall.

- RESOLVED - That the Schools Forum noted the information in the report.

7 FEEDBACK FROM MAINTAINED SCHOOLS ON FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY DE-DELEGATION

Feedback from maintained primary schools was that a further discussion was needed once further information is known but that it would be vital to support this.

It was agreed that this would be added to the agenda for the next Primary Heads meeting and the last Schools Forum report would be provided to that meeting for discussion.

- RESOLVED - That the issue be discussed at the Primary Headteachers meeting.

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DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 10 November 2022 at 2pm.