

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 6 December 2018

PRESENT

Ken Childs (Special Schools Governor) (Chair)

Chris Toon	Gateshead College
Denise Kilner	Nursery Sector Representative
Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
Steve Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteachers
Peter Lague	Trade Union Representative
Mustafaa Malik	Primary Headteachers
Michelle Richards	Special School Headteachers
Domenic Volpe	Maintained Secondary Headteachers
Allan Symons	Primary Governors
Clive Wisby	Primary Headteachers
Linda Alder	Lord Lawson Academy

IN ATTENDANCE

Claire Reid	Gateshead Council
Carole Smith	Gateshead Council

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Chris McHugh
Sarah Diggle, Elaine Pickering and Andrew Ramanandi

36 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on the 27 September 2018 be approved as correct record subject to it being noted that Elaine Pickering had submitted her apologies.

37 DE-DELEGATION EMTAS 2019 /20

The Forum were asked to consider a report on the update on the work delivered by EMTAS since September 2017 in order that they can consider de-delegation for the financial year 2019-20.

The Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) offer a range of services to Gateshead schools and settings to develop their capacity to support the educational achievement of all ethnic minority and Traveller pupils.

The service consists of a staff worker (FTE 0.5) who supports educational outcomes for pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Equality and Diversity staff member (FTE0.2) who supports wider issues including community cohesion, monitoring and responding to reported hate crimes. 3 EAL specialist teachers (FTE 2.0) and 2 bilingual/EAL specialist teachers (FTE 2.0).

Primary maintained mainstream schools have access to the Core Service:

- Assessment of language skills for pupils with EAL
- Advice, guidance and support for pupils with EAL or from GRT communities
- Support for the school EAL lead
- Guidance for whole school EAL audit and development
- Access to whole school training
- Access to advice and training on anti-racism, faith cultural and community cohesion and integration

Academies and special schools can buy into these services and primary schools can access additional support through an SLA.

Mainstream maintained primary schools with more than 20% EAL pupils continue to access weekly visits from EMTAS specialist, alongside the EAL lead they agree on how best to support the school in meeting the needs of their pupils.

The role of EMTAS has evolved over the last year, whilst individual pupils continue to be supported as and when appropriate, many more schools and settings are accessing support and guidance at a whole school level.

- 8 schools have made referrals for 15 individual pupils
- 16 training sessions have been delivered to Teaching Assistants, Teachers and whole staff in 12 settings
- The EAL audit continues to be updated and used to identify development needs, and a new early-years audit tool had been developed and used with 2 settings
- There are currently 75 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils in Gateshead who are known to EMTAS and the worker supports pupils in 6 primary schools as well as providing regular site visits
- The drop-in session for secondary age pupils who are home educated is held fortnightly at Dryden Centre and is regularly attended by 5 students
- Three secondary schools and academies have an SLA with EMTAS for weekly visits and two additional secondary settings are accessing the service this academic year. Students performed well in their Heritage exams in the summer; 12 students sat GCSEs in 5 languages and achieved 4A*, 4 A and 4 B grades
- 6 EAL lead training sessions were delivered over the year, through numbers attending were low. Staff continue to find it difficult to attend meetings held at the end of, or during the school day
- Information and resources are regularly uploaded onto the EGHub which all Headteachers and EAL leads have access to

Staff attend the multi-agency Hate Crime meetings and the Fair Access and Pupil Placement Panel meetings.

EMTAS also continue to deliver training and guidance to staff and students at Durham, Northumbria and Newcastle universities and placements for SCITT students.

It is proposed that for EMTAS to continue to provide these services to the schools,

children and young people in Gateshead, funding be de-delegated. The methodology of de-delegation was reviewed for 2018/19 following feedback from primary Headteachers. It is proposed that the same methodology is used for 2019/20.

- RESOLVED - (i) that the work undertaken by EMTAS be noted
(ii) that the de-delegation of funding for EMTAS at the rates of £3.00 for every maintained mainstream primary pupil and £245.00 for each primary maintained EAL pupil were approved

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DE-DELEGATION PRIMARY BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT AND FAIR ACCESS

The Schools Forum received a report to provide an update on existing services (FAP, EP and Primary Behaviour Support) that is currently fund through de-delegation. So that maintained primary schools can consider further de-delegation for the 2019/20 financial year.

Revenue funding arrangements for schools have changed following the school funding review which started in 2013/14. It is permissible for LA's to hold budgets centrally for the provision of some services to schools. This funding was previously centrally held has been delegated to schools on a per pupil basis.

There are, however, some areas that schools have the option for de-delegation.

These are:-

- Contingencies, (including support for schools in financial difficulties, new/closing/amalgamating schools, closing school deficits)
- Behaviour Support Services
- Support for minority ethnic minority pupils or underachieving groups
- Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility
- Insurance
- Library and museum services
- Licences/subscriptions
- Staff costs – supply cover (long term sickness, maternity, trade union and public duties)

For each of these area, it would be for the Schools Forum members in the relevant phase (primary or secondary) to decide whether that service should be retained centrally for maintained schools.

The Primary Behaviour Support Team work with primary schools, mainly, but not exclusively on early intervention in the area of behaviour. At the request of Headteachers in September 2018 a Rapid Response Service was developed to meet the needs of children in 'crisis'. The team consists of 5 Special Needs teachers assistants and 2 teachers. 4 of the teaching 5 of the teaching assistants are on permanent contracts and 1 is on a year fixed term contract. The team work principally with primary aged children in their schools setting offering direct interventions and support with children alongside consultancy for primary

Headteachers and teaching staff. This work includes assessment of pupils' needs, strategies, whole class modelling, small group and individual support and training for staff where this is identified as a need. Referrals to the team continue to rise, in the academic year 2017/18 the team worked with 90 children, which is an increase on the 81 from the previous academic year.

During the 2017/18 academic year 70% of primary schools received input from the team, which is an increase from 67% of schools the previous year.

Staff provide transition support in the summer term for Y6 children to aid in their successful transition to secondary school, all of which to date have made successful transitions into secondary school.

Staff also work alongside the primary Fair Access process in both the referring and receiving schools, supporting managed moves which have enabled moves to be successful.

The teaching assistant who was agreed on a 1-year fixed term contract has a skill set in mental health. She has brought a therapeutic dimension of support into the team.

Every local authority is required to have in place a Fair Access Protocol (Schools Admission Code 2012 article 3.9) developed in partnership and agreed with the majority of its schools, in which all schools (including Academies) must participate since it is binding on all schools.

In 2014 the Schools Forum agreed to de-delegate funds for an Educational Psychologist to work to the primary Fair Access Panel.

In 2017/18 academic year there were 155 referrals to the primary Fair Access Panel which is a steady increase from the 143 referrals made in 2016/17, the 102 children referred in 2015/16 and the 60 children referred in 2014/15.

Over the past two years there has been a steady increase in the need for EP assessment for the children placed by the panel.

Schools forum is asked to approve the de-delegation of funding for 2019/20. Proposed de-delegation values are

- Fair Access Educational Psychologist £5.00 per pupil (Primary only)
- Primary Behaviour Support (5TA's) £4.00 per pupil (Primary only)
- Primary Behaviour Support (5TA's) £26.00 per low prior attainment pupil (Primary only)

RESOLVED - That the de-delegation of funds to continue with the Primary Fair Access Educational Psychologist and the Primary Behaviour Support Team special needs assistants were approved.

A member of the Board declared a prejudicial interest in this item due to the Trade Union Activities he undertakes.

The Forum were asked to consider options to consider for de-delegation so that maintained schools by phases (primary and secondary schools) can consult with their sector on the options.

De-delegation is the process by which Schools Forum can agree for the LA to centrally hold funding for specific purposes.

Revenue funding arrangements for schools changed following the school funding review which commenced in 2013/14. It is now not permissible for LA's to hold budgets centrally for the provision of some services to schools. This previously centrally held funding has been delegated to schools on a per pupil basis.

However there are some areas that schools have the option for de-delegation.

These are:-

- a) Contingencies, (including support for schools in financial difficulties, new/closing/amalgamating schools, closing school deficits and growing schools)
- b) Behaviour Support Services
- c) Support for minority ethnic minority pupils or underachieving groups
- d) Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility
- e) Insurance
- f) Library and museum services
- g) Licences/subscriptions
- h) Staff costs – supply cover (long term sickness, maternity, trade union and public duties)

For each of these areas, it is for the Schools Forum members in the relevant phase (primary or secondary) to decide whether that service should be retained centrally.

The decision will apply to all maintained schools in that phase and will mean that the funding for these services will be removed from the formula before school budgets are issued. There can be different decisions for each phase.

Academies, special schools, the behaviour support service and nursery schools can buy back into these services if they wish to.

Under the current Maternity Credits scheme, schools can claim from the 7th to the 18th week for maternity or adoption leave at a specified daily rate depending on the staff role.

The TUFT credits facilitate the recognised trade union reps undertaking the following duties on behalf of all schools and individual members as required:

- Attendance at LA meetings and briefings re policy decisions
- Attending school-based meetings to resolve staffing issues, facilitate return to

work interviews, capability meetings and disciplinary meetings

It is proposed that for the January submission of the APT the level of de-delegation is maintained for TUFT and maternity credits at the below rates:

- Maternity Credits £8.00 per pupil
- Trade Union Facility Time £4.00 per pupil

RESOLVED: That the schools forum approve the de-delegation at the proposed rates set out.

40 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT - QUARTER 2 MONITORING

The Forum received a report to inform them of the latest monitoring position for Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) at the end of the quarter 2 2018/19.

The DSG is made up of four funding blocks

- The Early Years Block for 2, 3 and 4 year old funding
- The Mainstream Schools Block which includes some centrally held and de-delegated funding
- High Needs Block which includes special schools, alternative provision and top-ups to maintained schools and academies
- Central Services Schools block which include central functions carried out on behalf of schools, for example, licences, schools' admissions, pension costs.

Schools Forum receives details of DSG revenue monitoring throughout the financial year with the format presented based on the expenditure heading of section 251.

The budget is £99.001m, with a projected outturn of £100.480m which will result in a projected overspend of £1.479m.

Action planning is in place within the Council to attempt to reduce spending on the High Needs Block in the current year. However, it is expected that DSG reserves will be required to meet the final overspend which will require approval from Schools Forum.

At 31 March 2018, DSG reserves totalled £1.156m. The DSG funding settlement update received in July 2018 (to account for the January census for Early Years 17/18 funding) provide for a further £0.644, thus increasing reserves to £1.8m. If the overspend for 2018/19 remains at the current level and reserves are used, the reserve balance will reduce to £0.321m to carry forward into 2019/20, subject to any further decisions made at Schools Forum.

RESOLVED - (i) that the current position be noted
(ii) that the use of DSG reserves to fund the projected overspend in 2018/19 be approved in principle

41 GROWTH FUNDING AND SCHOOLS BLOCK TOP SLICE

The Schools Forum were provided with an update on the estimated Growth Funding

that Gateshead will receive and to approve the proposal to top-slice the Schools Block (SB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to support the High Needs Block (HNB) of the DSG.

As part of the transition to a national funding formula (NFF) the Department for Education (DfE) has changed the methodology for calculating the growth funding factor. Previously this was just part of the overall SB funding allocation and it was a local decision on how much to allocate towards the growth fund and how to distribute this fund to schools. It will still be a local decision on how to distribute growth funding to schools.

The initial estimate provided by the DfE for growth funding for 2019/20 was £35,000 as this was the amount detailed in the 2018/19 authority proforma tool (APT). With the introduction of the new growth funding methodology the DfE has provided local authorities (LAs) with a tool to estimate the amount of growth funding they will receive. The calculation is based on pupil number movements at middle super output area (MSOA) level, and only increases in pupil numbers are used to calculate the estimated funding.

Primary pupil growth has been estimated at 117 pupils and secondary pupil growth at 285. The increase in secondary pupil numbers is inflated by the movement of pupils from Thomas Hepburn to other Gateshead secondary schools.

The estimated amount of growth funding is £398,008. Currently Gateshead has only 2 primary schools eligible for growth funding with an estimated allocation of £35,000 each. This will leave a surplus of growth funding of £328,008.

As the growth funding is outside the primary and secondary units of funding, if the estimated growth funding is allocated through the mainstream formula it has the potential to distort mainstream funding and Gateshead's transition toward the NFF.

With the October pupil numbers an estimate of the SB of the DSG has been undertaken. The estimated SB for 2019/20 including the additional growth funding above requirements is £110,186,670 which is an increase of £1,277,892m. A 0.5% top slice of the SB DSG is estimated at £550,933 which is just £222,925 more than the unrequired growth funding.

It is proposed that the Schools Forum notes the estimated growth fund allocation from the DfE and notes the estimated demands for growth funding, and approves the 0.5% top slice of the SB of the DSG. If Schools Forum approves the top slice then all schools will be consulted on the top-slice proposal.

RESOLVED -

- (i) that the schools forum note the estimated growth fund allocations from the DfE
- (ii) (ii) that the schools forum approved the top-slice of the SB to support the HNB for 2019/20

The Forum received a report to provide an update on the work of the Special Schools Funding Review (SSFR) group this financial year. This is a sub-group of schools forum with the specific purpose to review the special schools funding formula. This report builds on the report submitted to the forum in February 2018.

The group comprises of all special head teachers and heads of school with the input and technical support from a range of officers from Corporate Finance, Education Gateshead, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Service and other officers as required.

The current special school's formula is based on work that was undertaken approximately 10 years ago and had a phased introduction over 3 years from 2009/10. The pupil based elements were based on the relative needs of children over 5 specialities with 4 levels of need in each specialism. The group developed a range of descriptors that described the "typical" pupil in each speciality for each level of need. The original formula has been tweaked several times to conform with changes in funding regulations, school developments and pressures.

For the 2018/19 formula the special categories were reduced from 5 to 3 deleting the categories of Sensory Physical and Medical and Communication and Interaction, leaving Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), Cognition and Learning (C&L) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The group worked on reviewing the banding descriptors which details the needs and behaviours of pupils within each specialism and each banding. These were re-written, reviewed and agreed by the group.

The next task was to review the staffing requirements of each banding level to determine the levels of relative needs of each pupil. This information is then used to calculate the relative needs of each of the bands. The model that was chosen and agreed by all the special heads is described as the "least worst" option for all schools.

The Forum were asked to note and approve the new banding values as set out in the report for 2019/20 special school funding. The Forum were asked to note that further work will be carried out on nursery age weighted pupil unit allocation and the allocation of fixed costs for each school.

RESOLVED - That the new banding values for use in calculating the 2019/20 special school budgets was approved.

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DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 10 January 2019 at 10am at the Dryden Centre.