

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 12 December 2019

PRESENT

Ken Childs (Special Schools Governor) (Chair)

Sarah Diggle	Primary Governors
Martin Flowers	Special Academy Headteachers
Julie Goodfellow	Primary Academy Headteachers
Steve Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteachers
Christine Ingle	Diocese Representatives
Andrew Ramanandi	Primary Headteachers
Domenic Volpe	Maintained Secondary Headteachers
Christina Jones	Pupil Referral Unit

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Sheila Gallagher and Councillor Gary Haley, Matt Waterfield, Denise Kilner, Peter Largue, Mustafaa Malik, Ethel Mills, Elaine Pickering and Allan Symons

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mustafaa Malik, Peter Largue, Allan Symons, Michelle Richards, Ethel Mills, Cllr Sheila Gallagher, Matt Waterfield, Denise Kilner and Elaine Pickering.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

3 DE-DELEGATION EMTAS

The Forum received a report on the work delivered by the EMTAS.

It was reported that from there has been an increase in Ethnic Minority and Gypsy Roma and Traveller children attending Gateshead schools, this has increased from 10.91% to 12.1%. The January census shows that 7.76% of pupils are identified as having English as an additional language (EAL), this is an increase from 6.98%.

Staffing levels have remained the same, however there is now one HLTA supporting the educational outcomes for pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

There are now 12 primary schools accessing the service, this has increased from 10. 21 training sessions have been held over the year and 25 schools have made referrals. It was noted that student attainment is excellent.

EMTAS staff continue to be involved in multi-agency meetings, for example the Fair

Access Panel and Pupil Placement Panel.

Following previous feedback the methodology of funding was looked at. It is now linked to EAL numbers, an increase from £430 per pupil in 2018/19 to £515 for 2019/20 and the proposal is to increase to £535 for 2020/21. Therefore the de-delegation of funding for EMTAS increases the per pupil cost to £3.15 and £260 for each primary maintained mainstream EAL pupil.

It was questioned whether there has been a difference to the demands on the service. It was confirmed that there has been a change as staff are now used on a consultation basis more, this has changed the relationship between schools and EMTAS.

It was noted that the service has been positively received by Headteachers over the last year.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Forum noted the work undertaken by EMTAS to support the educational achievement of all ethnic minority and Traveller pupils in Gateshead schools.
- (ii) That Forum approved the de-delegation of funding for EMTAS at the rates of £3.15 for every maintained mainstream primary pupil and £260 for each primary maintained mainstream EAL pupil.

4 DE-DELEGATION PRIMARY BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT AND FAP

Forum received a report around the de-delegation of primary funding to support the existing Primary Behaviour Support Team.

It was noted that during 2018/19 74% of the young people worked with remained in mainstream primary school. In terms of the FAP Educational Psychologist take up was slow initially therefore a range of training programmes were put in place on relevant areas requested by primary Headteachers.

Forum advised that the Behaviour Support service has been well received in schools and by parents and that an essential part of FAP is access to Educational Psychologist time. It was felt that the EP gives an extra level of support which is needed in order to keep as many young people in mainstream education.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Forum agreed to the de-delegation of funds to continue with the Primary Fair Access Educational Psychologist and the Primary Behaviour Support Team special needs assistants.

5 DE-DELEGATION EMOTIONALLY BASED SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

A report was presented to the Forum on the increasing numbers of young people unable to access education due to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). It has come to light that there is an increasing number of pupils, in particular in the higher end of primary school, who are school refusers. Work has been ongoing to establish the reasons behind this increase.

A paper on EBSA has been published by West Sussex and it was found that elective home education is one of the reasons. Although it is apparent that there is usually not just one reason why a young person will refuse to attend school.

The report sets out the various reasons for avoidance and that there is a need to address these issues at a tiered level and think about support and intervention. In particular, transition is an issue.

It was noted that through the Education Inclusion Panel there is a focus on home tuition, however this does not support the transition back into school.

It was reported that the service was successful in getting £33,000 to purchase avatars to allow the child to link into the classroom. This will be delivered by two learning mentors, one paid from the High Needs Block and one paid for by schools and academies.

The point was made that this funding should fully come from the High Needs Block and not de-delegated. It was noted however that the High Needs Block is already over spent and that the local authority is proposing to meet schools halfway.

The Forum generally supported the proposal but felt that all schools needed to be engaged with before a decision could be made. It was questioned whether there would be difficulty in employing the learning mentors as it would be for one year only. It was acknowledged that it may be tough to recruit, however the complexity of the role has been recognised in the pay grade.

It was agreed that all schools would be consulted on the proposal in the report (option one) prior to the next meeting on 9 January 2020.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Schools Forum consult with all schools for KS2, KS3 and KS4 to buy back the service prior to the next meeting.

6 DE-DELEGATION TRADE UNION FACILITY TIME AND MATERNITY CREDITS

A report was presented on the de-delegation of Trade Union Facility Time and Maternity Credits.

It was noted that funding has not changed for primary and secondary maintained sector, with maternity credits at £8 per pupil and Trade Union facility time at £4 per

pupil.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Schools Forum agree to the de-delegation of Trade Union time and Maternity Credits.

7 DSG REVENUE MONITORING QUARTER 3 2019-20

Forum received the projected outturn position of DSG for 2019/20 quarter two.

The budget is £101.761m, with a projected outturn of £102.431m, which is an overspend of £670,000.

The balance of DSG reserves is £816,000, this will reduce to £288,000 if the reserves fund the overspend.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Forum noted the content of the report.

8 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK FUNDING PRESSURES

A report was presented on the pressures on the DSG High Needs Block (HNB) and the proposal to top-slice 0.5% from the Schools Block to the HNB for 2020/21.

It was noted that since 2014 HNB spending has increased by 20% to an estimated £24.6m in 2019.20. Last year there was an overspend of £1.8m, this was due to a number of factors including; an increase in EHCP's, an increase in the number of children in special schools, increase in spending on alternative provision. In addition, there has been no increase in pupil funding. DSG reserves have also fallen because approximately £300,000 have been used this year.

The HNB funding is expected to increase by £2.241m for 2020/21, however there still remains significant cost pressures.

If the top slice was removed there would be a £1.359m overspend, creating additional pressure and still £500,000 shortfall.

It was noted that if there was a HNB overspend a deficit recovery plan would have to be undertaken.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Forum noted the content of the report and agreed to a top-slice of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the HNB for 2020/21.

9 MAINSTREAM SCHOOL FUNDING CONSULTATION OUTCOME

A report was presented on the results from the Mainstream Schools Funding Consultation.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Forum noted the consultation responses and comments.
- (ii) That the Forum approved the proposed formula as detailed in appendix 2.

10 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 9 January 2020 at 2pm in the Dryden Centre.