

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING

Thursday, 7 November 2024

PRESENT:	Peter Largue (Chair)	Trade Union Representative
	Sarah Diggle	Secondary Maintained Governors
	Mark Barrett	Maintained Secondary Headteachers
	Councillor Sheila Gallagher	Elected Member
	Steven Haigh	Secondary Academy Headteacher
	Jill Hutton	Maintained Nursery School
	Rebecca Matthews	Alternative Provision Academy
	Mustafaa Malik	Primary Headteachers
	Jacqui Ridley	Maintained Primary Governors
	Julie Vincent	Special Academies

IN ATTENDANCE:	Terence Appleby	Gateshead Council
	Philip Cole	Gateshead Council
	Suzanne Dunn	Gateshead Council
	Kelly Flavin	Gateshead Council
	Councillor Gary Haley	Gateshead Council
	Kate Lowes	Gateshead Council
	Carole Smith	Gateshead Council

7 APOLOGIES

Apologises for absence received from Julie Goodfellow and Michelle Richards.

8 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 September were agreed as a correct record.

9 EARLY YEARS INCLUSION FUND CONSULTATION

The Forum received a report on the outcome of the Early Years Inclusion Fund consultation to use the EYIF to establish 2 early years assessment hubs, with the remainder of the fund to be distributed to settings.

Over 140 consultations sent out on 20 September 2024 with only seven being returned by the deadline. A list of the results was presented in appendix 1.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Schools Forum approved the use of EYIF to set up two early years assessment hubs, £47,188 for the financial year 2024/25 and

- £168,791 for the financial year 2025/26.
- ii. That the School Forum approved the retention of £8,500 for 2024/25 to allocate to providers that identify needs of new children moving into the area throughout the year, assessed by Areas SENCO.
 - iii. That the Schools Forum approved the allocation of the remaining EYIF £484,550 fund using the ACORN score multiplied by the summer term actual hours and the Autumn term interim hours for all entitlements.

10 EARLY YEARS BUDGET GRANT

The School Forum received a report on the outcome of the consultation on the proposed allocation of the Early Years Budget Grant.

The EYBG was announced in July 2024 followed by the allocations and operational guidance published on the 17 September 2024.

The EYBG funding was made available to Local Authorities with school based early years provision as school-based providers are more likely to incur specific costs related to teacher pay. A proportion of the grant will be directed towards maintained nursery schools.

Allocations to LA's were based on the value of the previous Teachers Pay Grant that was rolled in to early years funding for 2024/25. Unlike previous years the DfE have left the allocation methodology to local authority discretion.

RESOLVED:

- i. The School Forum notes the consultation document, results and comments in the appendix.
- ii. The School Forum approved the allocation of funding to nursery classes in school-based providers that have teachers that are paid on teacher's terms and conditions, and that settings are staffed on a teacher ratio of no more than 1:26
- iii. The School Forum approves the allocations are based on Spring 2024 hours.
- iv. The School Forum approves the maintained nursery element of the EYGB be allocated to Bensham Grove Nursery school as Gateshead only maintained nursery school.

11 GROWTH FUND PROCEDURE

The School Forum received a report for the proposed updates on the Gateshead's Growth Fund Procedure.

The reasons for the proposed updates for the Growth Fund Procedure for 2024:

- To enable funding to follow the child for children moving from closing primary

schools

- To provide funding to schools taking pupils via the fair access process (FAP) for both primary and secondary pupils where there is no funding available from a preceding school. The Department for Education (DfE) have been asked for guidance on this point to ensure that this is allowable, a response has not yet been received from the DfE.

The main updates to note are:

- The deletion of the reference to reception and year seven pupils
- The addition of children moving into schools via the fair access process (FAP) to be eligible for growth funding
- The addition of a section of closing school
- Updates to the values for lead in costs and maximum values to be claimed for growth
- Deletion of the sentence that growth funding for pupils from closing schools will be at the average per pupil finding of the school
- The inclusion of data from the admissions team to be used to calculate growth funding
- The update of dates and funding rates in the examples

There was a discussion within the forum to clarify if this would be a one-off payment of if the money follows the child through school. The forum was informed that this would be a one-off payment as the following year the child becomes part of the schools funding system.

A further query was raised if this payment applies to children who are retrospectively placed through FAP. Currently, finance are not aware this happens but will take this query away to speak to the education team to resolve and bring the answer back to the Forum.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the School Forum approves the updates to the Growth Fund Procedure.
- ii. Update to be provided when a response from the DfE has been received.

12 DSG MONITORING - QUARTER 2

The Forum received a report on Quarter 2's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) projected outturn position for 2024/25.

The Council's budget for 2024/25 is £123.352m with a projected final outturn for the year of £125.750m an overspend of £2.398m. The High Needs Block is projected to overspend by £2.448m an increase of £0.271m, this is due to:

- +£1,290k Top ups
- +£312k Support for Inclusion

- +£542k Alternative Provisions Services

The balance of the DSG reserves on 31 March 2024 was £2.719m factoring in the in-year overspend of £2.398m and the Early Years clawback for 2023/24 of £0.131m, it is forecast the balance will decrease to £0.190m on 31 March 2025.

The projections include the teachers pay away of 5.5% from September, however, it does not yet factor in any Local Government pay award for 2024/25, this has now been confirmed as £1,290 per FTE. This will put further pressure on the budget and reserve position. All areas of spend are under review.

RESOLVED:

- i. The School Forum notes the report.

13 SCHOOL FUNDING UPDATE

The School Forum received a verbal update on School Funding.

- Late November – The DfE aims to publish schools, high needs and central school services blocks allocations for schools and local authorities and all supporting documents on the national funding formulas (NFF), (including the schools operational guide and NFF technical note) for 2025 to 2026
- December – Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations will be published
- 22 January – APT submission
- February – all maintained to be notified of their school budget shares
- Current teachers pay and pension grants, and the mainstream core schools budget grant will be mainstreamed into the schools block of the DSG.
- AP and special schools will have a single core schools budget grant (CSBG) replacing the teachers pay and pension grants and the current CSBG for special and AP.
- The DfE anticipate further funding for the increase in NI contributions, and this will be provided by a grant outside of the NFF -further details to follow during 2025/26
- Full 12 months of the 2024 teachers pay award will be mainstreamed into the DSG
- Pupil premium will increase for 2025/26
- Other “core elements” of funding will increase for 2025/26
- Provisional mainstream schools NFF factor values have been published – Gateshead closely follows the NFF factor values – we will not know until we get the DSG allocations and the APT if all of the 25/26 NFF factor values are affordable
- The DfE have provided a breakdown of where the additional grants and the CSBG have been mainstreamed into the NFF factor values
- Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for mainstream school will be between -0.5% and 0%
- Up to 0.5% of the schools block can be top sliced
- Overall HNB funding is increasing by 9% - some of this funding will be for the special and AP CSBG – methodology to be published before the end of 2024.
- The HNB NFF will remain the same
- The HNB will increase by at least 7% per 2 to 18 year old head of population – gains will be limited to 10% per head
- Special schools MFG will continue to apply (excluding NMSS & independent

- schools) and will be set at 0%, and applies only to schools place and top up funding.
- Centrally employed teachers elements of teachers pay and pension grants and CSBG will be rolled into CSSB for 2025/26.
 - Some additional funding in the CSSB for copyright licences
 - Maximum reduction in funding for ongoing responsibilities (the majority of funding calculated on pupil numbers) will be protected on a per pupil amount of -2.5%, the cap on increases will be set at 2.98%
 - CSSB historic commitment funding will decrease by a further 20% - this will most probably be a funding pressure for Gateshead,

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 12 December at 2pm via Microsoft Teams

Chair.....