

# HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10 November 2022 at 1pm via Teams

## Voting members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ATTENDANCE	TERM ENDS
<b>Maintained Nursery (1)</b>			
Shabana Aslam	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	APOLOGIES	Sep 2026
<b>Maintained Primary - Schools (4)</b>			
Rachel Anderson	Dr Triplett's School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Kris O'Sullivan	Deanesfield Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Mel Penney	Glebe Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2027
Carly Rissen	Colham Manor	PRESENT	Sep 2024
<b>Maintained Primary - Governors (4)</b>			
John Buckingham	Glebe Primary School	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
Jim Edgecombe (CHAIR)	Whiteheath Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Tony Eginton	Minet Nursery & Infant School & Hillside Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
<b>Maintained Secondary (1)</b>			
Dan Cowling	Oak Wood School	APOLOGIES	Sep 2026
<b>Maintained Special (1)</b>			
Jenny Rigby	Meadow High School	PRESENT	Sep 2027
<b>Academies (9)</b>			
John Garner	Ruislip High School	PRESENT	Sep 2026
Tracey Hemming	Middlesex Learning Partnership	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
Nicola Kelly	Charville	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
Helen Manwaring	Swakeleys School	PRESENT	Sep 2022
Catherine Mosdell	Frays Academy Trust	APOLOGIES	Sep 2023
David Patterson	Queensmead School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Sandra Voisey	Laurel Lane Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
(2 vacancies)			
<b>Special Academies (1)</b>			
Sudhi Pathak	Eden Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2026
<b>Alternative provision (1)</b>			
Laurie Cornwell	The Skills Hub	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
<b>Private Voluntary &amp; Independent Early Years Providers (2)</b>			
Elaine Caffary	4 Street Nursery	PRESENT	Sep 2024
(vacant)			
<b>14-19 Partnership (1)</b>			
(vacant)			

## Other attendees (non-voting)

<b>Independent Non-Maintained Special School</b>			
Debbie Gilder	Pield Heath School		NOT REQUIRED
<b>Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Schools)</b>			
Eleesa Dowding	Harmondsworth		NOT REQUIRED
Kate Needs	Lady Bankes		
<b>Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Governor)</b>			
Jo Palmer	Hillside Infant School and Hillside Junior School		NOT REQUIRED
Graham Wells	Colham Manor Primary School		NOT REQUIRED
<b>Local Authority Officers</b>			
Kate Boulter	Clerk		PRESENT
Paul Gledhill	LA Finance		PRESENT
Vikram Hansrani	Executive Director, Education & SEND		PRESENT
Coral Miller	LA Finance		PRESENT
Lynda Poole	LA SEND		PRESENT
Philip Ryan	Early Years		PRESENT
<b>Observers</b>			
Patrick Grant	DfE		PRESENT

		<b>ACTION</b>
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES &amp; INTRODUCTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apologies were accepted and recorded in the attendance list (above). The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.</li> <li>The Forum noted that an observer from the DfE was present.</li> <li>Before proceeding to business, the Chair reported that Helen Manwaring's term of office had expired in September 2022 and the nomination/election process for Academy Representatives had not been completed yet. The Forum <b>AGREED</b> that Helen would be a voting member for the purposes of this meeting.</li> </ul>	
2.	<p><b>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2022 were <b>AGREED</b> as a correct record of the meeting.</p>	
4.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p><b>(a) SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING ARRANGEMENTS</b></p> <p>The Chair observed that recent meetings had been difficult because some reports requested by Forum had not been provided. Preparation for this meeting had been better, however there were a number of items which would have to be considered at the next meeting (listed under agenda item 9) because reports had not been provided for this meeting.</p> <p><b>(b) TRAINING FOR SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERS</b></p> <p>Training had been on the agenda for several meetings awaiting confirmation of dates from the LA Finance team. There were members who had been on Forum for over a year who had not received any formal training, and new members would be joining in the coming months. Finance officers had previously agreed to provide two sessions: one in autumn 2022 and the other in spring 2023, both ideally face to face. The new LA Finance Lead, CM, reported that due to workload it would not be possible for her to deliver training until next year. CM had identified two possible dates for training: March and May 2023. The Chair observed that March was too long to wait and CM agreed to look for alternative dates to deliver the training sooner.</p> <p><b>(c) SCHOOL PROVISION FOR CHILDREN FROM ASYLUM SEEKER FAMILIES</b></p> <p>There had been no progress since the last meeting. The DfE's position was that contingency should be built into the DSG to cover additional costs such as this, however this was unrealistic for Hillingdon given the DSG deficit position. VH would escalate the issues again and write to the Home Office and DfE before the next meeting.</p>	<p>CM</p> <p>VH</p>
5.	<p><b>MEMBERSHIP UPDATE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jenny Rigby was welcomed as the new Special Maintained School Representative, Mel Penney as a new Primary Maintained Representative, and Kate Needs as a Shadow Maintained Primary Representative.</li> <li>The Forum and sub-group meeting dates to the end of the 2022/23 financial year had been circulated with the agenda, together with current sub-group membership.</li> <li>The nominations for Academy Representatives had not been sent out yet due to changes in LA staffing. LA to confirm to KB who to send the documents to.</li> <li>The LA continued to seek a suitable candidate for the 14-19 representative and a second PVI representative.</li> </ul>	<p>VH/KB</p> <p>PR/VH</p>
6.	<p><b>FEEDBACK FROM SUB-GROUPS</b></p> <p>The following minutes were noted and PH provided an overview of the matters discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Early Intervention Group on 4 October 2022</b> – the group had looked at case studies and a draft of a 'cribsheet' document which officers were producing for providers to simplify the types of funding available.</li> <li><b>DSG/EY Group 4 October 2022</b> – the group discussed the considerable concern amongst PVIs at the proposal to increase PVI funding by just 1% in 2023/24: many PVIs were struggling and businesses may not be sustainable. The group had also discussed</li> </ul>	

issues arising out of the Council's decision to close three Early Years Centres and the impact this could have on vulnerable families. In an update to Forum, it was reported that, following a legal challenge, Cabinet would be reviewing its decision.

- **High Needs Funding Group 11 October 2022** – a number of items due to be considered at this meeting had been deferred as reports were not available. The group had received oral updates on the Capital Plan and Phase Transfer.
- A meeting of the **DSG Delivery Group** had taken place on 22 September 2022 but no minutes were available. VH observed that the meeting had been held the day before the Quarter 2 submission was due which had been very tight. More time would be built in for the Quarter 3 submission. VH advised that confirmation had been received from the DfE that Quarter 2 funding had been approved.

7. **ITEMS FOR DECISION**

**(a) CONSULTATION ON DE-DELEGATIONS FOR 2023/24**

The Forum considered a report which sought the Forum's approval of de-delegated Trade Union duties staff supply cover costs for primary and secondary schools, de-delegated Teachers Pension Administration for primary and secondary schools, and a new de-delegated service for school improvement activities.

Trade Union Duties & Teachers Pension Administration

The Forum commented that:

- In previous years Forum had received a draft consultation paper in the autumn to approve before consultation with schools took place. The decisions on whether to de-delegate were then taken by those Forum members who were eligible to vote, taking into consideration the consultation responses.
- This year, no consultation paper had been provided to Forum, and the report presented at this meeting sought the Forum's approval of the de-delegations without consultation with schools having taken place.
- The Forum noted that it had the authority to vote on the matter without consulting schools, but its preference was to operate democratically and seek the opinions of schools before make decisions that affected them.
- In response to a question from the Chair as to whether consultation with schools could take place and the de-delegation question be put to the next meeting of Forum, CM advised that there was not enough time to do this in the budget-setting process.
- The Chair reported that he had been asking officers for some months to provide consultation reports for Forum. The reports changed little year on year, and previous years' reports could have been used with any required update to figures. It was unsatisfactory that there was now insufficient time to consult with schools, and the operation of the Forum had been compromised by the failure of the LA to produce requested reports in time.
- In view of the time limitation which precluded any opportunity to consult with schools, it was proposed and **AGREED** by Forum to decide the de-delegation matter today, exceptionally, without consultation with schools.
- The secondary maintained representative was not present but had known the item was on the agenda. On the basis that the de-delegations had been approved the previous year and the secondary maintained representative had not indicated any objections, the Forum **AGREED** (1) to de-delegate Trade Union duties staff supply cover costs for secondary schools and (2) to de-delegate Teachers Pension Administration for secondary schools.
- It having been put to a vote to primary maintained representatives, the Forum **AGREED** (1) to de-delegate Trade Union duties staff supply cover costs for primary schools and (2) to de-delegate Teachers Pension Administration for primary schools.

School Improvement

The Forum commented that:

- The report did not contain any figures for the school improvement de-delegation and Forum could not consider this without further information.
- This was a contentious area and the Forum would wish to consult with schools before

	<p>making any decision on de-delegation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This was another area for which a report had been requested earlier in the budget-setting cycle, but had been provided too late to allow consultation with schools. Consideration of this item was <b>DEFERRED</b> to the next meeting at which officers would provide a report detailing costs.</li> </ul> <p>The Forum reiterated that time needed to be allowed for consultation with schools.</p>	<p><b>CM/VH</b></p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>INFORMATION ITEMS</b></p>	
	<p><b>(a) GOVERNMENT FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR 2023/24</b></p> <p>The Forum considered a report which provided an outline of emerging DSG funding levels for 2023/24, and updates on changes to the School Block with the implementation of the hard National Funding Formula and indication of increases in the High Needs Block. The details on allocations were yet to be confirmed and the figures provided were indicative.</p> <p>The Forum commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It would be helpful to have another column in Appendix A to show what the current costs were, for comparison.</li> <li>It was noted that the Forum had previously discussed issues around high mobility figures for some secondary schools, and officers were asked to look into this again.</li> <li>The report contained technical financial information. Forum members needed training to understand these matters and the implications.</li> <li>In response to a suggestion from officers that a sub-group of Forum be created to consider such financial matters, the Forum observed that a sub-group should not be needed if training was provided to all members.</li> <li>The Forum <b>NOTED</b> (1) the indicative 2023/24 funding levels; and (2) that the transition to a hard NFF would begin in 2023-24 and the proposed restrictions relating to the DSG School Block.</li> <li>The Forum observed that the report stated “the LA would consult with Schools Forum on items in the local formula, particularly Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) and formula factors”. The Forum would wish to consult with schools on these matters before making a decision.</li> </ul> <p><b>(b) DSG BUDGET MONITORING MONTH 6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Forum considered a report from CM which stated the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) monitoring position was an in-year overspend of £5,862K at Month 6, compared to the revised budgeted deficit of £5,286K. The overspend was due to ongoing pressures in the cost of High Needs placements, where due to a lack of capacity in Borough, the number of independent placements had increased since the budget was set. When the £23,328K deficit brought forward from 2021/22 was taken into account, along with the second payment of Safety Valve funding and LA contribution, the cumulative deficit carry forward to 2023/24 was £21,440K.</li> <li>The Forum considered another report produced by PH which provided extracts from reports to Cabinet on the DSG position. The reports, for the Cabinet meetings on 13 October 2022 and 10 November 2022, stated the same figures for the Months 5 and 6 position: an in-year overspend of £6,029K, and cumulative deficit carry forward to 2023/24 of £21,801k.</li> <li>The Forum considered it unlikely that the Months 5 and 6 positions would be unchanged, as the Cabinet report suggested, and expressed concern that the figures being reported to two meetings on the same day (Schools Forum and Cabinet, 10 November 2022) were different. The inconsistencies caused the Forum to doubt the reliability of the figures being reported regarding the DSG position.</li> <li>If the figures reported to Cabinet were correct, the deficit was continuing to increase. If a deficit remained at the end of the Safety Valve Agreement, the difference would have to be paid by the Council. It was essential that accurate figures were reported so Forum could monitor the position, and that any decisions or recommendation it was required to make were based on accurate figures.</li> <li>The Forum observed that there were outstanding payments to schools which could</li> </ul>	<p><b>CM</b></p> <p><b>CM</b></p>

	<p>total a considerable sum, and it was important that these were properly reflected in the figures reported to Forum and Cabinet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers advised that the changeover of staff meant that the report had not been written by the current Finance Lead and assured the Forum that accurate figures would be provided for the next meeting.</li> <li>• The Forum commented that, given the questions raised over the reliability of recent reports, it was essential that a correct Month 7 position was reported to the December meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>(c) SEND PUPIL PLACE PLANNING</b> This was deferred.</p> <p><b>(d) SEND PAYMENTS – STAFFING UPDATE</b> Schools had expressed concerns regarding lack of communication from the SEND team and the lag in receipt of funding. School budgets were stretched and it was not always possible for a school to ‘borrow’ from other areas of the budget while awaiting correct payments. VH advised that he had met with members of the Primary Forum and was aware of the concerns. Dedicated resource was being put in to ensure payments were made and were correct. Schools should start to see an improvement in communications. It was noted that there were 18 SEND officers covering Early Years to 25.</p>	<b>CM</b>
9.	<p><b>AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</b> To note the next meeting would receive reports on the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DSG Safety Valve Q3 Update</li> <li>• Consultation on the School Funding Formula for 2023/24</li> <li>• Consultation on the 0.5% High Needs Block Transfer</li> <li>• School Budget Surpluses and Deficits</li> </ul>	
10.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> None.</p>	

The meeting closed at 2.45pm