

HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16 May 2023 at 1pm via Teams

Voting members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ATTENDANCE	TERM ENDS
Maintained Nursery (1)			
Shabana Aslam (SA)	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	PRESENT	Sep 2026
Maintained Primary - Schools (4)			
Rachel Anderson (RA)	Dr Triplett's School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Kris O'Sullivan (KO)	Deanesfield Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Mel Penney (MP)	Glebe Primary School	APOLOGIES	Sep 2027
Carly Rissen (CR)	Colham Manor	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Maintained Primary - Governors (4)			
John Buckingham (JB)	Glebe Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Jim Edgecombe (JE)	Whiteheath Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Tony Eginton (CHAIR) (TE)	Minet Infant & Nursery School & Hillside Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Phil Haigh (VICE-CHAIR) (PH)	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Maintained Secondary (1)			
Dan Cowling (DC)	Oak Wood School	APOLOGIES	Sep 2026
Maintained Special (1)			
Jenny Rigby (JR)	Meadow High School	PRESENT	Sep 2027
Academies (9)			
John Garner (JGa)	Ruislip High School	PRESENT	Sep 2026
Tracey Hemming (TH)	Middlesex Learning Partnership	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
Nicola Kelly (NK)	Charville	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
Helen Manwaring (HM)	Swakeleys School	PRESENT	Sep 2027
Catherine Mosdell (CaM)	Frays Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2023
David Patterson (DP)	Queensmead School	APOLOGIES	Sep 2023
Sandra Voisey (SV)	Laurel Lane Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Liam McGillicuddy (LM)	Bishopshalt School	NEW MEMBER	Sep 2027
Harshindar Buttar (HB)	Lake Farm Academy	NEW MEMBER	Sep 2027
Special Academies (1)			
Sudhi Pathak (SP)	Eden Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2026
Alternative provision (1)			
Paul Chambers (PC)	The Skills Hub	APOLOGIES	Sep 2027
Private Voluntary & Independent Early Years Providers (2)			
Elaine Caffary (EC)	4 Street Nursery	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
(vacant)			
14-19 Partnership (1)			
Wayne Edwards (WE)	Heathrow UTC	APOLOGIES	Sep 2027

Other attendees (non-voting)

Independent Non-Maintained Special School			
Debbie Gilder (DG)	Pield Heath School		APOLOGIES
Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Schools)			
Eleesa Dowding (ED)	Harmondsworth		APOLOGIES
Kate Needs (KN)	Lady Bankes		PRESENT
Shadow Representative (Maintained Special Schools)			
John Goddard (JGo)	Hedgewood School		APOLOGIES

Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Governor)		
Jo Palmer (JP)	Hillside Infant School and Hillside Junior School	PRESENT
Graham Wells (GW)	Colham Manor Primary School	APOLOGIES
Officers		
Coral Miller (CoM)	LA Finance	PRESENT
Paula Gledhill (PG)	LA Finance	PRESENT
Daniel Kennedy (DK)	Corporate Director of Central Services, LBH	PRESENT
Carole Lewis (CL)	LA	PRESENT
Nav Minhas (NM)	LA	PRESENT
Michael Hawkins (MH)	LA	PRESENT
Philip Ryan (PR)	LA Early Years	PRESENT
Clerk		
Fiona Chandramohan (FC)	Independent Clerk	PRESENT

		ACTION
1.	<p>ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR</p> <p>DK welcomed attendees to the meeting.</p> <p>ELECTION OF CHAIR DK reported that 1 nomination, Tony Eginton, had been received for the role of Chair. It was noted that this role is for a period of 2 years. Members AGREED the election of Tony Eginton as Chair.</p> <p>ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR No nominations had been received for the role of Vice-Chair prior to the meeting. PH was nominated by TE and members AGREED the election of Phil Haigh as Vice-Chair for a period of 2 years.</p> <p>TE thanked JE, the outgoing Chair, for all his contributions leading the Schools Forum over the past 5 years.</p>	
2.	<p>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</p> <p>DK reported that 3 nominations had been received for the 3 vacancies for Academy Representatives. This means that no election process needs to take place and the three nominees were duly elected for a period of 4 years from the September anniversary date of appointment. Members noted that their term of office would therefore end in September 2027.</p> <p>The new representatives elected are:</p> <p>Liam McGillicuddy representing Bishopshalt School Harshindar Buttar representing Lake Farm Academy Helen Manwaring representing Swakeleys School</p> <p>DK agreed to inform Liam McGillicuddy and Harshindar Buttar of their appointment. Helen Manwaring was present at the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were accepted and recorded in the attendance list (above). The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.</p>	DK
3.	<p>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>None.</p>	

4.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>On the attendance list page 1 the school represented by Tony Eginton was changed to Minet Infant & Nursery School. Under officers attending name was changed from Paul to Paula Gledhill. Subject to these changes the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2023 were AGREED as a correct record of the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>(a) TRAINING FOR SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERS This item is on the agenda for discussion under Item 8(d).</p> <p>(b) SCHOOL PROVISION FOR ASYLUM SEEKER CHILDREN – FINANCING FOR SCHOOLS DK reported that he is waiting for a date from the Home Office when this matter can be discussed together with the schools that are being significantly affected. Forum members asked whether there was anything more that could be done. DK reported that he is working with other London Councils on the London Asylum Dispersal Plan to hold the Home Office to account in ensuring that the placing of asylum-seeking families is more equitable across the capital. It was noted that there needs to be a fair level of funding for schools taking in asylum seeker children to cover EAL and SEND support, uniform, and travel costs.</p> <p>DK suggested that a letter from Schools Forum highlighting these needs could be sent to the LA and this could be included in the discussions with the Home Office</p> <p>PH reported that financial and educational pressure is concentrated in a small number of schools within Hillingdon. Families are housed in hotels near Heathrow and children then are placed at the nearest school. When a class has a significant proportion of children with EAL/trauma with no extra support the other pupils also suffer.</p> <p>PH raised the issue of the sibling rule for school admissions. He reported that he was aware of cases of families removing children from a school as they were unable to obtain a place for a sibling. The effect of this was to dilute the local population of pupils within schools. The Forum noted that some schools had special arrangements and DK confirmed that local adjustments can be made if schools contact the LA.</p> <p>JR spoke about the high level of therapy support needed for this cohort of pupils many of whom have experienced significant trauma. The Forum noted that the current provision within Hillingdon is not working for either the asylum seeker children or the other pupils. The Forum suggested that the LA consider a different approach with a centralised location which could provide an initial placement for 6-12 weeks with therapeutic and language input before pupils are then moved into a school.</p> <p>It was agreed that DK would provide an update at the next meeting.</p>	<p>TE</p> <p>DK</p>
6.	<p>SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP & CONSTITUTION</p> <p>(a) MEMBERSHIP UPDATE It was noted that the Academy Representative vacancies have now been filled (see Item 2) Philip Ryan reported that he has approached a possible candidate for the PVI vacancy.</p> <p>DK reported that 2 Forum members, CaM and TH would be stepping down at the end of the summer term and elections would therefore be held for these positions in September.</p>	

7.	<p>FEEDBACK FROM SUB-GROUPS & WORKING GROUPS An overview was provided of the following sub-group meeting:</p> <p>(a) HIGH NEEDS FUNDING GROUP – 2 MAY 2023 The minutes were noted. PH highlighted the main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LA had still not informed schools of the issues around top-up funding. Some schools were still unaware of this problem. • Funding for one-to-one support is not sufficient to cover staff employment costs. The High-Needs Sub-Committee to investigate. • There have been some delays to special school expansion plans, however, it is hoped that this will not delay opening dates. • The group has requested information from the LA on the future capacity needs for SEND schools in Hillingdon. <p>The High Needs Funding Group will meet next on 15 June 2023.</p>	<p>PG</p> <p>PH/DM</p> <p>DK/NM</p>
8.	<p>ITEMS FOR DECISION</p>	
	<p>(a) SCHOOLS BLOCK DISTRIBUTION OF 0.5% TRANSFER</p> <p>The Forum expressed disappointment that the LA were providing an oral report for this item. CoM reported that the 0.5% transfer had been taken from all schools apart from 13 which have minimum funding guarantees in place. The figures for each school were calculated using Option 2 as previously agreed by the Forum.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were unsure about the fairness across the schools as some schools appeared to have been charged more than 0.5%. • They would like to see the workings of how the transfer was calculated for each school. <p>CoM agreed to share the proforma with Forum members, prior to the charges being finalised.</p> <p>(b) HIGH NEEDS BUDGET 2023/24</p> <p>PG reported that no work has been carried out on this yet. See Item 9.</p> <p>(c) SCHOOL BLOCK MOBILITY BUDGET 2023/24</p> <p>PG reported that this amounted to £266K which is 0.21% of the total School Block Budget. Funding has gone to 36 primary schools and 9 secondary schools but data on percentages against each school was not available.</p> <p>The Forum noted that the movement of pupils had always caused issues with this budget.</p> <p>The Forum asked whether the full mainstream block funding paper had been shared with members. It was noted that this had come out in January 2023 and CoM agreed to circulate the report to Forum members.</p> <p>(d) REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION AND DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING PLAN FOR SCHOOLS FORUM</p> <p>The Forum noted the report prepared by DK and the DfE guidance circulated.</p>	<p>CoM</p> <p>CoM</p>

	<p>DK proposed that the members complete a self-assessment of the Forum using the DfE self-assessment tool from which recommendations can be brought back for discussion and preparation of a training and development plan for members</p> <p>The Forum noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A need for finance training for members to equip them for their role. It was agreed that Andy Evans would provide training before the end of the term. • The need for regular and refresher training on finance/legal aspects. <p>CoM reported that the DfE run an online course for new finance staff that may be useful for Forum members and agreed to share the details.</p> <p>A small working party comprising DK, TE, PH, JE and CaM agreed to meet to look at this and report back to the Forum.</p>	<p>AE</p> <p>CoM</p> <p>DK, TE, PH, JE, CaM</p>
9.	INFORMATION ITEMS	
	<p>(a) DSG BUDGET MONITORING MONTH 12 – UPDATE</p> <p>The Forum expressed concern that this was being presented as an oral report. PG explained that the LA accounts have not yet been closed so an Outturn Report for 2022/23 is not yet available. It was agreed that this report will go to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Forum discussed the need to align the timing of future meetings with the availability of information. PH and TE agreed to look at this in order to put together a broad plan for the next academic year.</p> <p>(b) SCHOOL BUDGET SURPLUSES AND DEFICITS 2021/22 - UPDATE</p> <p>No report was received for this item. Forum members were disappointed that figures have still not been received despite the Forum requesting them since September 2022. Having these figures is important for Forum members to be able to track how things change from one year to the next.</p> <p>DK reported that the Finance Team have been under pressure and have not managed to produce the report for this meeting, but he was confident that the information would be available for the next meeting. PG reported that maintained schools 21/22 balances were shared in May/June 2022, but academy balances have not yet been shared.</p> <p>It was agreed that PG would re-circulate the 2021/22 figures for maintained schools and share the 2021/22 balances for academies and 2022/23 figures for maintained schools.</p> <p>(c) PUPIL PLACE PLANNING – UPDATE</p> <p>DK reported that the LA are working on a refresh of pupil place planning using information from birth rates, housing developments etc. This work will also look at the forecast need for SEND places. DK confirmed that the plan would look forward 4/5 years maximum as beyond that the data would be unreliable.</p> <p>DK agreed to bring an update on this work to the next meeting.</p> <p>(d) SEND TOP-UP PAYMENTS – UPDATE</p> <p>DK asked that any schools with questions over unpaid top-up payments should write to the LA.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant arrears have still not been addressed by the LA both from the past year and historical arrears. Schools have shared information with the LA to assist with sorting this out but there are concerns that information has gone missing and that communication is poor between the SEND and Finance teams. 	<p>PG</p> <p>TE, PH</p> <p>PG</p> <p>DK</p>

- One school has arrears of £400K and governors are unable to submit a budget for 2023/24 as they are not confident that these arrears will be paid.
- Schools are concerned that this situation will arise in future years.
- Schools have needed to bear more costs this year (see Item 5b) and are concerned about whether funding issues are linked to LA capacity issues or the Safety Valve Agreement.

DK reported that Julie Kelly has spoken to schools and has agreed actions. The council is aware of this issue and is working at pace to systematically sort it out. The LA is aware that the flow of information between the casework system and finance system has been poor. IT system changes are being made to improve this and moving forward the systems and processes between SEND and Finance will be much stronger.

DK reported that he hoped that arrears would all be paid by the end of the summer term.

PH asked whether arrears payments could be made separately from current payments as this would help schools with tracking their budgets.

PG agreed to prepare statements for individual schools so they will be aware of the breakdown of their funding.

PG

(e) SAFETY VALVE AGREEMENT – UPDATE

DK reported that the Qtr4 submission deadline is today, and this would be shared with the Forum including a RAG rated summary shortly. This could then be reviewed and discussed at the next Schools Forum meeting.

**DK
Agenda
next
meeting**

DK reported that one of the pressures has been the inflationary rise of construction costs and this is a nationwide problem.

The Forum queried the receipt of £3.6M from the DfE and asked whether this was extra money. CoM reported that it was not extra funding but was due to reprofiling within the Safety Valve Agreement.

Schools Forum highlighted the fact that previously they had been involved in reviewing and inputting into the Safety Valve Agreement quarterly submission process. The Forum noted that as part of the agreement a local group were to regularly review the papers. The Forum asked if the small group of members could continue to meet with the LA to look at the Safety Valve papers pre submission going forward.

It was AGREED that pre submission meetings for the Safety Valve Agreement between Forum members and the LA would be set up going forward.

**TE,
CoM
DK**

The Forum noted that the submission paperwork has not been circulated yet for the February 2023 submission and asked that it be shared with members.

CoM

(f) and (g) DfE 3.4% INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR ALL MAINTAINED SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND 3% MINIMUM FUNDING GUARANTEE FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

CoM reported that this has not yet been allocated out as there have been some difficulties with the calculations. CoM informed the Forum that the calculations would be submitted to the DfE for checking prior to allocation.

CoM reported that Special Maintained and Academy Schools would have a 6.4% increase for top up and place funding. Alternative Provisions will only receive 3.4%. The 6.4% will be paid in two instalments.

