



HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA

**Friday 6 February 2026 at 1pm
Online – Via Teams**

Item		Approx Timings	Lead	Paper/Verbal
1	Welcome, apologies & opening comments	5 mins	Chair	Verbal
2	Minutes & actions from previous meeting 15.01.2026	5 mins	Chair	Paper
3	Membership Update & Vice-Chair Nominations	5 mins	Chair	Verbal
4. Item for Decision				
4a.	Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty	30 mins	AP/LH	Paper
5. AOB				

Schools Forum Agreed Actions 15.01.26.

Item	Action	Responsibility
3	Any member interested in becoming Vice-Chair to submit an expression of interest to BS/AP via the Schools Forum email.	All SF Members
3	Academy members were asked to promote SF to colleagues to fill the 4 vacancies.	Academy Members
3	Members were asked to discuss 14-19 partnership vacancy with colleagues.	All SF Members
4a	GB to provide a detailed breakdown of the outcomes for the children and impact The Skills Hub has with assurances on how the money is being spent.	GB
4b	LH to contact the NEU rep and ask for further level of information regarding the work that has been carried out. This information will be shared, and a decision can be made at the next meeting.	LH
6b	KK agreed to send a detailed written confirmation of the projected year-end figures for SENIF will be.	KK
6b	PR to send out the consultation for early years funding, to be concluded by 28 th February.	PR
7	Pamela Hawtree is to lead a working party of individuals from the maintained sector to go through this document and update it. LH requested anyone interested in joining the group to contact her	Maintained sector members
8	Any SF member who wishes to host the meeting on 24 th March are to email HB.	All SF Members

Voting Members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ROLE	Attendance	TERM ENDS
Maintained Nursery (1)				
Shabana Aslam	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2026
Maintained Primary (6)				
Becky Broadhurst	Hayes Park School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029
Vicky Jarvis	Field End Infant School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029
Carly Rissen	Colham Manor	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2028
John Buckingham	Glebe School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Tony Eginton	Minet Infant & Nursery Schools and Hillside Junior School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Maintained Secondary (1)				
Cathy Mosdell	Harlington School		Attended	
Maintained Special (1)				
Pearl Greenwald	Hedgewood School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2027
Academy Primary (4)				
Harshindar Buttar	The Park Federation	Principal of Lake Farm Park Academy	Attended	Sep 2027
Nicola Edwards	William Byrd School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2028
Nicola Kelly	Charville Academy	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029
Roseline Wilkinson	Charville Academy	Governor	Attended	Sep 2029
Academy Secondary (8)				
John Garner	Ruislip High School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2026
Roger Leighton	Partnership Learning Trust	CEO	Attended	Sep 2029
Liam McGillicuddy	Bishopshalt School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2027
Ben Spinks (CHAIR)	Middlesex Learning Partnership	CEO	Attended	Sep 2028
Vacancy x 4				
Special Academies (1)				
Sudhi Pathak	Eden Academy Trust	COO	Attended	Sep 2026
Alternative Provision (1)				
Laurie Cornwall	The Skills Hub	Deputy CEO	Attended	Sep 2027
Private, Voluntary & Independent Early Years Providers (2)				
Elaine Caffary	4 Street Nursery	Nursery Manager	Attended	Sep 2028
Naazish Haq	Little Companions	Manager/Owner	Apologies	Sep 2027
14-19 Partnership (1)				
Vacancy				
Diocesan Representative (1)				
Nicola Dallibar St Andrews C of E Primary	St Andrews CofE Primary School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029

Other attendees (non-voting)

NAME	REPRESENTING	ROLE
Nicky Bulpett	Ruislip Gardens	Headteacher
Louise Crook*	Coteford Infant School	Headteacher
Graham Cunningham*	Meadow High	Headteacher
Jo Palmer	Minet Junior School	Governor
Officers		
Gary Binstead	LA Head of Education & SEND Commissioning	
Helen Boundy	LA (Clerk)	
Luisa Hansen	LA Head of Children's Finance	
Pamela Hawtree	Lead Finance Business Partner	
Kamaljit Kaur	Lead Finance Business Partner	

Dominika Michalik	LA Assistant Director of SEND & Inclusion	
Steve Muldoon	Corporate Director of Finance	
Cllr Susan O'Brien	Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education	
Abi Preston	LA Director of Education & SEND	
Philip Ryan	LA Portage and Families' Information Service - Service Manager	



**HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM
MINUTES**
Thursday 15th January 2026 at 1pm
Online – Via Teams

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Abi Preston	LA Director of Education & SEND	
Philip Ryan	LA Portage and Families' Information Service - Service Manager	

Item	
1.	<p>Welcome, apologies & opening comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BS welcomed everyone to the meeting especially the new members. Apologies for absence have been received from Naazish Haq.
2.	<p>Minutes & actions from previous meeting 07.10.2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most actions on agenda from previous meeting have been completed, any outstanding items are included on this meeting's agenda. Details of actions are outlined on table at end of agenda. Minutes of last SF meeting held on 07.10.2025 were AGREED as a true and accurate account.
3.	<p>Membership Update & Vice-Chair Nominations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New SF members were warmly welcomed to the meeting. Representing the primary maintained sector are Vicky Jarvis, HT at Field End Infant School and Becky Broadbent HT at Hayes Park School. Cathy Mosdell, CoG at Harlington School has joined representing the secondary maintained sector. Cathy has previously been a member of SF. Dan Cowling has stepped down from Schools Forum hence why Cathy Mosdell is now the representative for the secondary maintained sector. Dan's resignation has created the vacancy for Vice-Chair. The role is not too onerous, individual would be expected to attend a pre-meet prior to each SF. BS invited all members to consider submitting an expression of interest for this role. Ideally the role would be filled by a representative from a maintained school to maintain the balance of representation of Academies and maintained sector. BS or AP would be happy to discuss the role informally with anyone potentially interested. <p>Action: Any member interested in becoming Vice-Chair to submit an expression of interest to BS/AP via the Schools Forum email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having amended and increased the number of members from the Academy sector, there are currently 4 vacancies – academy members were asked to promote these roles to colleagues. A vacancy remains for a member for the 14-19 partnership, please discuss with any colleagues in this sector. <p>Action: Academy members were asked to promote SF to colleagues to fill the 4 vacancies.</p> <p>Action: Members were asked to discuss 14-19 partnership vacancy with colleagues.</p>
4.	Items for Consultation
a)	<p>The Skills Hub Charging Rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GB shared a detailed paper that outlined the review has taken place in regard to the commissioning of places at The Skills Hub (Alternative Provision). LA will no longer make upfront block bookings for permanently excluded (PEX) places, reducing commissioned places to 55 for 26/27 to be more in line with current needs but ensuring this maintains the viability of the Skills Hub whilst they complete their transformation work. Additional services PST/Interim and post 16 will be stop being commissioned on a place plus top-up arrangement and will be commissioned on a block basis, with an SLA in place. Due to the low numbers of primary aged pupils who have been excluded, The Skills Hub are to stop this provision. An average of just over one pupil have been accessing this over the year (made of several children in part time places). The number of places for the secondary sector will also be reduced but have increased the top up value as this has been static. PST places reduced from 20 to 10 places; these are all on part-time places. Funding has reduced overtime in 23/24 funding was £2.4m on a block arrangement. In 26/27 value of £1.7m in line with the places that are needed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently working with The Skills Hub to agree the SLA ensuring the service and quality is maintained. • SF member queried the costs that are associated with each place and requested forum is provided with a detailed breakdown of the outcomes for the children and impact The Skills Hub has, in order to provide assurances on how the money is being spent. <p>Action: GB to provide a detailed breakdown of the outcomes for the children and impact The Skills Hub has with assurances on how the money is being spent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC clarified that the commissioned services that primary schools previously directly requested and pay for, for children at risk of exclusion are no longer available. However, this service is still available for secondary schools. • GB clarified that all children who are currently being supported at The Skills Hub will continue to be, any changes made to commissioning has no impact for existing children. • GB confirmed that the reduction in places matches the trend for PEX and if there were any spike in numbers, discussions would be had locally to accommodate them. • AP confirmed that the funding that is reclaimed from schools for excluded children is redirected towards funding for tuition and The Skills Hub.
b)	<p>Distribution of Trade Union Funds held by LA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £41K currently sitting in LA account that has accumulated over the years for trade unions when it used to be an HR function. NEC have submitted an invoice for £38K for the cost of one of their workers on a 0.4FTE contract. No details have been supplied for the work that has been carried out. • LH confirmed that no other union has made a claim. • SF members felt that further information regarding which schools are they supporting and what work has been done before agreeing to pay the invoice. Also felt that at the last meeting when forum voted against de-delegation an invoice for the value of the fund has now been submitted. <p>Action: LH to contact the NEU rep and ask for further level of information regarding the work that has been carried out. This information will be shared, and a decision can be made at the next meeting.</p>
5. Items for Information	
a)	<p>Summary of DSG Funding Allocations 2026/2027</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LH highlighted some of the details of the paper that was shared for information. • It appears schools have received a 2.8% increase, though this is not really the case when you take into account the two grants - the National Insurance contributions and the schools budget support grant that have been rolled into it, it is more like a 0.1% increase for schools on their budget. • Central services Schools Block (CSSB) allocation has decreased by £20k, primarily due to historical funding decreased by £70k, offset by an increase in pupil funding of £50k. Pupil numbers across the LA have decreased by just under 1100, although the funding rate has increased. • The LA is disappointed about this funding as significantly more was expected especially in Schools Block and High Needs.
b)	<p>2026/2027 Early Years budget and proposed hourly rates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR highlighted some of the details of the paper that was shared for information. • Received more money than we initially expected, higher % of increases have been given than we had modelled for. This has resulted in a having a larger overall fund to work with. • Two items have been shared for consultation; both options have been discussed by the early years subgroup. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Decision to be made in terms of the funding rate for two-year-olds • In terms of two-year old funding, they can be eligible for free provision if they are from a low-income household or the family are receiving working parent entitlement. LA is concerned that the low-income families are missing out on access to this provision as working parents are more attractive to childcare providers as they receive their free hours but are then able to purchase more. Look to incentivise providers by paying them more to take the low-income household children. By taking a slice of the deprivation supplement which is part of the hourly rate, just 1% off that has been able to fund this and offer a further uplift of £2.38/hr. 2) Decision to be made in terms of funding rate for three or four year olds. • Currently settings get a base rate for this group with some additional funding for deprivation and SEN. The SEN supplement is ineffective and often doesn't reach the right children.

	<p>Intention is to eliminate the supplement and redirect to SEN inclusion funding (SENIF) eventually. The funding was reduced by 25% last year. The proposal set out 3 options- A no change, B, reduce by 15% and C- reduce by 25%. The sub-group though agreeing the principles behind the proposed changes preferred option A, no change and defer any changes for a year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item for decision by forum: The LA can retain a portion of the early years block for services performing a statutory function, therefore in line with this, a request of 3% is being made. EC endorsed giving the 3% as the support provided is invaluable across the schools and the PVI sector. • CR as Chair of the sub-group outlined that the SENIF funding hasn't been available all year following the review so we can't see how well it is used. Currently a £700K underspend – forum would like to understand what is happening to this fund, clearly want to have this money spent on the children and not swallowed back into the safety valve. By recommending option A, when we review it again, we will have had more time and data to look at which settings are and aren't accessing it. EC had some suggestions as to how we can increase the take up. AP confirmed that SENIF money comes from Early Years block funding and there is no risk of it going into safety valve. KK explained that there was an overspend last year and the underspend currently, but it is expected that the whole fund will be spent. KK agreed to send a detailed written confirmation of the projected year-end figures. <p>Action: KK agreed to send a detailed written confirmation of the projected year-end figures for SENIF will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultation has to go out because our providers are waiting to find out what their budgets are. They can't plan for their year without their budget. <p>Action: PR to send out the consultation for early years funding.</p> <p>Proposal: Schools Forum members were invited to vote on whether to approve the LA retaining 3% from the Early Years block for statutory services.</p> <p>Decision: Schools Forum unanimously agreed for the LA to retain 3% of the Early Years block funding for statutory services.</p>
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6. Items for Decision

	<p>2026/2027 Schools Block budget & Funding formula</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LH highlighted details in the allocation paper of the schools block which is made up of the 2 grants the NI contributions and the schools budget support grant. • We are in line with the NFF and have been for a number of years. KK has completed the APT workings and most of the factors are at mid-range to higher within that funding. LH highlighted that there is a zero allocation towards the growth fund. • Numbers have been modelled based on 1% block transfer, (which SF rejected but are awaiting the outcome of the disapplication). The numbers are provisional because if this is rejected by the Secretary of State the numbers will be reworked. • The APT will be submitted next week and a paper is prepared for council to approve at cabinet on 19th February. • The fall in roll is significant for 26/27; there are 1087 less pupils which will have a significant impact on schools – some are more adversely affected than others. • KK confirmed that the factors in both 25/26 and 26/27 are the same, so we are comparing like for like. • The finalised budget will be shared for the March Schools Forum meeting. <p>Proposal: Schools Forum members were invited to vote on the provisional budget and whether they were in agreement with the NFF factors (appendix A) and that zero allocation has been made to the growth fund.</p> <p>Decision: Schools Forum unanimously agreed to the provisional budget with the NFF factors and that zero allocation has been made to the growth fund.</p>
b)	<p>2026/2027 Central Schools block budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LH outlined that the unit funding has increased by £2.36 but due to the drop in pupil numbers (1087) the impact despite receiving an increase of £50K for ongoing responsibilities, the historical amount has decreased by £70K with the net change is overall £20K increase • The allocation for this year is £2.4m. Pupil funding is £2.2m, with historical commitments just over £200K. Papers show the breakdown of how that funding will be spent, which totals £2.4m.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All in line with expenditure and clear break down and in line with legislation. • BS requested clarification on the historical commitments which included ongoing redundancy costs in 2013-2014. KK confirmed that these are correct and it relates to contributions to pension for those that took early retirement. • It was noted that considerable work has taken place to be more transparent with forum about how the CSSB is allocated and spent in this paper to ensure members have all of the information. <p>Proposal: Schools Forum members were invited to vote on the 2026/2-27 whether they were in agreement with the Central Schools block budget.</p> <p>Decision: Schools Forum unanimously agreed to the Central Schools block budget.</p>
7	<p>AOB</p> <p>Outline process for agreeing next year's Scheme of Delegation for Financing Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BS noted that the scheme does not apply to Academies, so this is an item for the Maintained sector members. • Some wording was changed in section 4.5 and 4.9 in regard to schools setting deficit budgets or those that have historic deficits. Previously mentioned that there are now in deficit, therefore, needs a scheme for financing schools that set out how this is managed. • LH had amended some wording and also shared a link to the SRMA a free resource to go through an independent financial review. • LH reiterated the LA are keen to build a collaborative working relationship with schools. • TE highlighted some issues throughout the scheme of delegation with out-of-date references and inaccuracies. Suggested that the whole document needs to be reviewed not just individual sections amended. <p>Action: Pamela Hawtree is to lead a working party of individuals from the maintained sector to go through this document and update it thoroughly for FY 2026/27. LH requested anyone interested in joining the group to contact her.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LH noted that the Licence Deficit paper went to Cabinet in December and it was approved. The cabinet has now written to schools that have a deficit and Pamela is leading on supporting everyone with their recovery plans. • LH also noted the concern about the timing of this paper and has spoken to Democratic Services; in future this paper will go to Cabinet in June/July so it is better in line with budget setting timescales. • Members noted that letter that was sent to the 15 schools in deficit did not have a collaborative tone and gave no acknowledgement to the amount of money the school has paid back. It did not feel in any way collaborative. Also noted there was a hanging sentence about what might happen if schools couldn't turn it around. Feel that the communication from the LA could be significantly better. Also queried what capacity does the finance team now have to sufficiently support schools in the way proposed. • LH apologised for the tone of the letter, but with Pamela Hawtree having joined the team there is additional capacity and she will be working directly with schools in deficit and has already met with one of them. • GB reiterated LH's point that the teams are working hard to foster the positive relationships and working in partnership with schools. If anybody is disappointed or has any comments about any communication, they receive from any of us across the council please do feed this back to the leadership team. • BS felt as the document is going to receive a complete review, for next year, it was important to get FY 2025/26's agreed. Rather than work through the bullets and text which had been added point by point, which would take some time, he suggested maintained representatives voted either to agree everything which had been inserted at 4.5 and 4.9, or to amend the document so that 4.9 finished after the sentence which set out who at LBH would approve a licensed deficit, removing the list of conditions and the following paragraphs.. <p>Proposal: Maintained school Schools Forum members were invited to vote on which amendments to accept whether to accept all the insertions at 4.5 and 4.9, or to remove the content.</p> <p>Decision: Maintained Schools Forum members unanimously agreed to remove the content after the sentence setting out who approved the deficit in section 4.9, and to accept the other amendments as presented.</p> <p>Update on Free Special School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GB provided an update to forum on the new free school that the DfE had approved several years ago. Government have now announced that LAs have a choice to either take a capital

	<p>funding settlement proceed with the new build. It is for an all-through 180 place school. The LA has until the end of February to respond to the DfE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once a decision has been made regarding this, it will be shared.
8	<p>Next meeting will be held on Tuesday 24th March @ 1pm In person – Location TBC.</p> <p>Action: Any SF member who wishes to host the meeting on 24th March are to email HB.</p>

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 HILLINGDON <small>LONDON</small>	London Borough of Hillingdon Schools Forum 6 February 2026
Title	Falling Rolls – School in Financial difficulty 2026-27
Agenda Item	
Report by	Kamaljit Kaur – Lead Finance Business Partner Kkaur2@hillingdon.gov.uk Luisa Hansen – Head of Finance – Children and SEND Lhansen@hillingdon.gov.uk
Appendices	Appendix A
Recommendation	Schools Forum is asked to approve the Council's de-delegation budget for redundancies for 2026/27

1. Recommendation

Schools Forum to agree a central pot for redundancies for maintained schools.

2. Contingency fund for Schools in financial difficulty

In exceptional circumstances, school redundancy costs can be funded centrally, which then requires identifying resources from the wider DSG to cover the expenditure.

Financial pressures on schools continue to increase and require urgent attention. The local authority is permitted to hold a central budget within the schools' budget to meet redundancy costs through a top slice of maintained school budgets, but only where this is approved by the relevant maintained school representatives on the Schools Forum.

The number of Hillingdon schools facing financial challenges in 2025/26 has risen, with 38% (compared to 24% in 2024/25) forecasting an in-year deficit. Furthermore, 40% (up from 16% in 2024/25) expect to use more than half of their reserves to achieve a balanced budget in 2025/26. Furthermore, a significant proportion of schools are facing drops in their income due to falling rolls, with some schools seeing up to a 15% decrease in pupils. As schools are predominantly funded on pupil numbers, this means there are a number of schools who will need to restructure their staffing structures in order to align with the income they have. See Appendix B for information on the fall in pupil numbers by school, the budget positions and income. Restructures will lead to redundancy costs, which will put considerable pressure on maintained schools budgets.

Given this increasing pressure, it is proposed that funds are de-delegated to a central fund to support schools experiencing financial difficulties due to redundancy costs.

In 2026/27, there are 48 maintained schools including 2 secondary schools and the total number of pupils are 17,315 (15,091 primary, 2,224 secondary).

Options for De-Delegation

	Funding Pot	Cost per Pupil
Option 1	433,000	25.01
Option 2	500,000	28.88
Option 3	750,000	43.32

The following options can be considered for a centralised pot for funding schools' redundancies:

Option 1: To create a contingency fund of £433k, which will lead to a cost of £25.01 per pupil.

Option 2: To create a contingency fund of £500k will cost £28.88 per pupil.

Option 3: To create a contingency fund of £750k will cost £43.32 per pupil.

All funds will be held in a separate cost centre and any unused funds will be carried forward to future years.

It is proposed a panel could be created of maintained school leaders to review applications for the contingency fund for 2026-27 and decide how to award the funding to relevant schools. This would apply only to schools who have redundancy costs in 2026-27.