

# HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 23 September 2020 at 2pm via videoconferencing

## Voting members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ATTENDANCE	TERM ENDS
<b>Maintained Nursery (1)</b>			
Ludmila Morris	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	APOLOGIES	Sep 2024
<b>Maintained Primary - Schools (4)</b>			
Rachel Anderson	Dr Triplett's School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Duncan Greig	Breakspear Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2021
Kris O'Sullivan	Deanesfield Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
(vacant)			
<b>Maintained Primary - Governors (4)</b>			
John Buckingham	Glebe Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Jim Edgecombe (CHAIR)	Whiteheath Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Tony Eginton	Minet Nursery & Infant School and Hillside Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
<b>Maintained Secondary (1)</b>			
Liz Horrigan	Harlington School	PRESENT	Sep 2021
<b>Maintained Special (1)</b>			
John Goddard	Hedgewood School	PRESENT	Sep 2022
<b>Academies (9)</b>			
Aftab Ahmed	Guru Nanak Sikh Academy	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Tracey Hemming	Middlesex Learning Partnership	PRESENT	Sep 2020
Robert Jones	Haydon School	PRESENT	Sep 2020
Helen Manwaring	Swakeleys School	ABSENT	Sep 2022
Catherine Mosdell	Frays Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Peter Ryerson	Guru Nanak Sikh Academy	APOLOGIES	Sep 2020
David Patterson	Queensmead School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Sandra Voisey	Laurel Lane Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
(vacant)			
<b>Special Academies (1)</b>			
Sudhi Pathak	Eden Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2021
<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	APOLOGIES	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		PRESENT
<b>Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Schools)</b>			
Rachel Blake	Whiteheath Infant School		NOT REQUIRED
<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
Steve Denbeigh	LA Finance		PRESENT
Vikram Hansrani	Assistant Director, SEND & Inclusion		PRESENT
Dan Kennedy	Director		PRESENT
Sarah Phillips	Place Planning		PRESENT
Graham Young	Lead Finance Business Partner - School		PRESENT

		ACTION
1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION &amp; APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, which was being held by videoconferencing. Apologies were accepted and recorded in the attendance list (above). The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.</p>	
2.	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2020</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2020 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2020</b></p> <p><u>Minutes 4 and 6 – SEN Sufficiency Plan update</u></p> <p>The Forum was provided with the Hillingdon SEND Capital Provision update report which had been considered by the SEND Sufficiency Strategy Group. The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since autumn 2019, the SEND team had cleared a backlog of several years’ EHCPs adding to an increase of 17.5% in one year (2,691 plans) which was considerably higher than the 8.7% annual rise nationally.</li> <li>• Currently 3.8% of Hillingdon pupils had EHCPs which was in line with Greater London. In previous years, Hillingdon had a higher percentage of pupils with EHCPs.</li> <li>• The Borough’s seven special schools were all full and over-subscribed.</li> <li>• There had been a large increase in pupils with AHD and SEMH which had led to an increase in use of independent specialist provision due to lack of local provision, and a consequent increase in spend due to the challenge in finding placements.</li> <li>• There were fewer secondary than primary SRP places. More secondary places were needed for pupils progressing from KS2.</li> <li>• Internal planning processes needed to be timely to give Hillingdon residents the best chance of accessing local spaces in special schools.</li> <li>• The SEN Sufficiency Strategy Group was looking at how to develop specialist provision within the Borough’s existing estate.</li> <li>• Specialist provision for Early Years settings was another focus and there would be a further report on this to the October Schools Forum.</li> </ul> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The data in the report appendices contained some inaccuracies. VH would revisit this to correct anomalies.</li> <li>• Paragraph 4.4 of the report referred to “more details below under SEND CYP post 16” which was not provided.</li> <li>• The report mentioned a rise in the use of interim home tuition for pupils with EHCPs which was supposed to be short-term but was continuing for longer because of unavailability of suitable provision. The Forum observed that home tutoring hid a shortage of places and requested that the High Needs Sub-Group be provided with regular reports on the number of pupils with EHCPs being tutored at home.</li> </ul> <p><u>Minute 4 – Business training for EY providers</u></p> <p>At its last meeting the Forum had agreed that EY budget be used to fund business training for EY providers to assist with sustainability. Since then, the DfE had advised that it would be procuring services to offer support to EY providers to maximise two year old take-up and improve provider sustainability. Further details were awaited. The Forum <b>AGREED</b> to use the DfE scheme if suitable.</p> <p><u>Minute 5b – Secondary growth contingency</u></p> <p>At its last meeting the Forum had considered a business case from Swakeleys School requesting growth contingency funding from September 2020 for an increase in Year 7 pupils.</p> <p>A revision to the Growth Contingency Policy would be required to enable the Forum to agree Swakeley’s request for funding, and if the Policy were changed, other schools which had voluntarily chosen to expand could request contingency funding on the same basis. The</p>	<p>VH</p> <p>VH/PH</p> <p>GY</p>

	Forum <b>AGREED</b> that Swakeleys should be advised that the Forum was minded to reject the school's request, and a final decision would be made at the next meeting.	
4.	<p><b>MEMBERSHIP UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several members' term of office was coming to an end. The relevant groups had been contacted and asked to confirm their nominations. New terms of office were shown in the attendance list (above).</li> <li>• Four Academy Representatives' term of office was ending and academies had been asked to nominate by 5 October 2020.</li> <li>• There remained vacancies for one Maintained Primary representative, a PVI representative and a 14-19 partnership representative, pending confirmation of nominations.</li> </ul>	<b>GY/KB</b>
5.	<p><b>FEEDBACK FROM SUB-GROUPS</b></p> <p>There had been no sub-group meetings since the last Schools Forum.</p>	
6.	<p><b>ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION</b></p> <p><b>(a) ST MARTIN'S DISECONOMIES</b></p> <p>At its last meeting, the Forum has asked officers to continue to negotiate a reasonable diseconomies request with St Martin's. The Forum considered a report which advised that a revised request of £443K diseconomies funding for 2019/20 had been submitted by the school.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The revised amount was still above a level that the Forum considered reasonable.</li> <li>• Usually diseconomies funding reduced year on year. St Martin's 2019/20 request was higher than the £393K requested in 2018/19.</li> <li>• Payments of £210K had already been made to the school for 2019/20.</li> <li>• A Forum member who worked for the same MAT as St Martin's, and declared an interest for that reason, acknowledged that the amount requested was a lot of money but advised that the school had done as much as it could to reduce the budget for 2019/20, and that St Martin's budget for 2020/21 had a much lower diseconomies request.</li> </ul> <p>Having been put to a vote, the Forum <b>AGREED</b> to refuse to pay the £443K diseconomies funding requested by St Martin's and noted that the school had already received payments totalling £210K for 2019/20.</p> <p><b>(b) SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED REVISIONS</b></p> <p>The Forum considered a report which set out proposed revisions to the Scheme for Financing Schools. Having been put to a vote from members representing maintained schools, the Forum <b>AGREED</b> that the revisions be included in the document to be circulated to schools for consultation</p>	
7.	<p><b>INFORMATION ITEMS</b></p> <p><b>(a) EARLY YEARS FREE ENTITLEMENT FUNDING AUTUMN TERM 2020</b></p> <p>The Forum <b>NOTED</b> a report which set out the government's plans for funding early years childcare settings in 2020/21. Covid-19 had impacted the number of children accessing provision, and LAs were expected to continue to fund providers that were open at broadly the levels they would have expected to see in the autumn term 2020 had there been no Covid. Funding would be based on funded hours in either autumn 2019 or autumn 2020, whichever was higher, unless there had been a reduction in places in 2020 linked to a change in demand for places not linked to Covid. Providers which had been advised to close, or left with no option but to close, due to public health reasons would continue to be funded. Funding would not be provided to providers which were closed, without public health reason, from the start of the autumn term.</p> <p><b>(b) DSG BUDGET MONITORING MONTH 4 2020/21</b></p> <p>The Forum considered the Month 4 budget monitoring report 2020/21:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) monitoring position had an in-year overspend of £9,101K at Month 4, an increase of £1,926K on the budgeted deficit of £7,175K and an adverse movement of £768K on the Month 2 position.</li> </ul>	

- The overspend was due to ongoing pressures in the cost of High Needs placements, where significant growth continued. Recently published SEN2 data indicated that growth in EHCPs in the past academic year was significantly higher (17.5% versus 8.7% nationally) than the estimated in-year growth. When the £15,002K deficit brought forward from 2019/20 was taken into account, the cumulative deficit to carry forward to 2021/22 was £24,103K.
- The LA and Forum had agreed a DSG Recovery Plan the previous year and this was expected to continue with an update of progress against strategies and identification of any new ones to reduce the deficit. The DfE would visit LAs reporting large DSG deficits.
- The Schools Block was forecasting a £69K underspend due to growth contingency allocation having been withheld for one school due to insufficient projected pupil growth in September 2020
- The Central Services Block was forecasting a £33K overspend due to additional cost of maternity cover.
- Five maintained schools had set a deficit budget for 2020/21 which would be considered at the next meeting of Cabinet. The LA finance team was working closely with these schools to set recovery plans. The cumulative total of the five schools' deficit was £3.8million, with the majority of this relating to one school.
- Schools which had occurred exceptional additional costs due to Covid could apply for additional funding within criteria specified by government. These applications were still being processed and the ESFA had confirmed there would be another window for applications relating to the summer term. Schools were expected to meet September costs from their existing resources.
- The government had confirmed that £650million universal catch-up premium funding would be paid directly to schools. Special schools would receive £240 per pupil and mainstream schools £80 per pupil. The LA had not received the funding yet.

The Forum commented that:

- Cabinet was required to approved a licensed deficit for schools which could not set a balanced budget, however, if a school was to fail financially the impact would be on the DSG.
- It was unclear how some of the schools which required a licensed deficit would recover their position. One of the schools was reducing its PAN to single form entry. The Forum requested that regular reports on the schools' recovery plans be provided to the DSG/EY Sub-Group.

#### **(c) DSG 2021/22 FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Forum **NOTED** a report which set out the impact on Hillingdon schools' funding of the Schools Revenue Funding 2021 to 2022 Operational Guidance published at the end of July 2020. The following points were highlighted:

- The National Funding Formula would not be implemented in 2021/22.
- The majority of local authorities would receive significant increases in funding in 2021/22.
- Funding would be based on pupil numbers in the October 2020 census.
- Every LA should receive 2% increase in per pupil funding.
- The Minimum Funding Guarantee would be protected.
- Schools Forum could agree a block transfer up to 0.5% of the Schools Block, or higher with the approval of the Secretary of State. Based on the current 2020/21 year end forecast, a transfer in excess of 1.8% would be needed to set a balanced High Needs budget for 2021/22.
- The Central Services block funding for historic commitments would decrease by a further 20% resulting in a forecast overall reduction of £91K.

The Forum **AGREED** that the DSG/EY Sub-Group would be asked to consider action to be taken in light of the additional funding being announced, the intention to move towards a hard National Funding Formula, and the on-going pressures in High Needs, including whether to:

- Undertake a review of the funding factors and consult with schools on any proposed

	<p>changes to the factors to align them closer to the National Funding Formula.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Central School Services Block, given the expected £91k reduction in funding.</li> </ul> <p><b>(d) FUNDING TRANSFER FROM THE SCHOOLS BLOCK TO THE HIGH NEEDS BLOCK</b>  The Forum considered a report on a proposal to transfer funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block and <b>AGREED</b> to consult with schools on the proposal.</p>	
8.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>  None.</p>	
9.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>  Wednesday 21 October 2020 at 2pm.</p>	

The meeting closed at 3.15pm.