

Meeting title: Nottinghamshire Schools Forum
Date and time: 12th November 2020, 2pm to 4pm
Location: Virtual – Windows Teams

Membership

'A' denotes absence

	Mr A Rossington	Maintained Primary Head Teacher
A	Mr B Waldram	Maintained Primary Head Teacher
A	Mrs H Atkins	Maintained Primary Head Teacher - (Vice Chair)
A	Ms L Toom	Maintained Primary Head Teacher
	Ms L Corner-Brown	Maintained Primary Head Teacher
	Mr D Phillips	Maintained Secondary Head Teacher
	Mr A Seymour	Academy Representative
	Ms A Hall	Academy Representative
	Dr P Smith	Academy Representative
	Mrs H Angus	Academy Representative
	Mr J MacDonald	Academy Representative - (Chair)
	Mr N Holmes	Academy Representative
	Mr M Rooney	Special School Head Teacher
A	Ms P Corfield	Academy Special School Head Teacher
	Mr C Barnard	Governor Maintained Primary
	Ms F Jones	Governor Maintained Primary
	Ms L Gapski	PVI - Early Years Group Member
	Mrs K Richards	PVI - Early Years Group Member
A	Ms L Knott	14-19 Partnership Representative
	Mr Nigel Frith	Church of England Representative
	Mr J Jefferies	Trades Union Representative
	Ms L Maddison	Trades Union Representative

In attendance:

Mr C Pettigrew	Corporate Director Children Families & Cultural Services
Mr K Palframan	Group Manager Finance Strategy and Compliance
Mrs M Clay	Service Director Education, Learning and Skills
Mr L Jones	Service Director Children Families & Cultural Services
Mrs I Kakoullis	Group Manager Children and Families
Mr M Needham	Finance Business Partner, Children and Families Finance
Mr S Hawkins	Senior Pupil Place Planning Practitioner
Mrs S Summerscales	Senior Finance Business Partner, Children & Families Finance
Mrs T Gardner (Clerk)	Assistant Accountant, Children and Families Finance

1.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>James Macdonald welcomed all members to the forums virtual meeting on Microsoft Teams.</p>	
	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from Ben Waldram, Helen Atkins, Pauline Corfield, Amanda Williams, and Louise Knott.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes – 17th September 2020</p> <p><u>Minster School – application of the minimum per pupil methodology</u> Letter to ESFA regards the schools MPP methodology is required. Letter will come from the Local Authority and Schools Forum – carry forward action to next meeting.</p> <p><u>3c review of Schools Forum Membership</u> Update on vacancies – members were advised that the adverts has gone out with a closing date of 20th November, and that we now have 3 vacancies for governors as Amanda Williams has resigned. Due to Carlo Cuomo resignation we have a vacancy for a Catholic Diocese representative, Marion Clay to contact James McGeachie to ask for a representative.</p> <p><u>3d Trade Union Facilities Financial Year 2020-21</u> Early years representatives requested if and how they could contribute towards the trade union buy in. Marion Clay believed it was only for schools and academies and that a discussion would be required with HR and trade unions. Not yet answered, advised this was unlikely but would seek guidance – carried forward to next meeting</p> <p><u>3f DSG Budget Monitoring</u> In the last meeting members were advise that Nottinghamshire had been identified in the top 10 for effectiveness – need to send out reports to forum members</p> <p><u>Any Other Business</u> Letter to thank Carlo Cuomo was in hand – will update members at the next meeting</p> <p>A request for details of which academies had contributed to the trade union buy in will be chased</p> <p>Query regards changing the School Forum name to include Early Years – members were advised that it had been queried with the ESFA and members would be updated with the response at the next meeting</p> <p>Minutes approved as accurate and correct</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <p>SS/TG</p> <p>MC</p> <p>AW/MC TG</p> <p>MC</p> <p>MC</p> <p>AW/TG</p> <p>TG</p>
3.	<p>3a – Falling Rolls Fund Working Group</p> <p>Steve Hawkins presented the paper and talked through the models that had been worked through over the summer following the 1st working group meeting.</p> <p>The recommendations of the report were agreed by the working group members for recommendation to all forum members.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>That the Schools Forum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Notes the content of the report and agrees that a falling rolls fund should not be created for 2021/22. <p>Report was noted – no members were against or abstained – all members agreed</p>	

	<p>2. Receives an update on the need for a falling rolls fund in Autumn 2022.</p> <p>This will be placed on the agenda for autumn 2022 to be re-visited</p>	
	<p>3b. DSG Financial Monitoring Report Period 7 2020/21</p> <p>Mark Needham presented the paper and explained that there was a lot of changes in the early years funding, partly due to Covid. The usual split in funding has been changed, more of the LA's allocation will be based on January 2020 data. The payments for providers for autumn has also changed for this year we have agreed to pay on either autumn 2019 or autumn 2020 hours, whichever is highest, causing us to overspend.</p> <p>There is still uncertainty on the impact of next year's funding more so if numbers are low in January and then grew as post COVID confidence grows. Uncertainty on the possible impact of January / Spring 21 payments as there is currently no guidance on what data we will be using to allocate funds.</p> <p>Matt Rooney asked for clarification on the therapy budget that special schools will not be receiving. Marion Clay advised that the £500,000 was never permanently allocated to special schools it was a notional amount to investigate and explore opportunities through partnership this was possible due to the increase in funding through the High Needs Block. We would need to seek further information from Laurence Jones.</p> <p>Matt Rooney urged the authority to put pressure on health budgets to help with pupils with health complications, Karen Richards added that this would relate to early years pupils too.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION/S</p> <p>That the Schools Forum</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the content of the report. <p>Report noted</p>	<p>LJ</p>
	<p>3c. 2021-22 Schools and Early Years Funding Formula</p> <p>Fiona Jones declared interest as a co-opted governor to the school mentioned in the report. Sue Summerscales presented the paper.</p> <p>The members were given the following overview about the NFF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDACI updated with the latest 2019 data • Funding floor per pupil (MFG) set at 2% • Teacher pay and Pension Grant has been rolled into budgets – the basic entitlement and MPP has been increased to reflect this and the grants are included in the settings 20-21 baseline. • Individual unit values have increased, the biggest increase has been the sparsity unit value for primary £26,000 in 20-21 increased to £45,000 <p>Laura Gapski asked, could the sparsity factor be explained for those in the early years sector?</p> <p>Initial workings on the APT, taking into account the adjustment to The Minster's MPP and an increase in rates, formula looks affordable but as last year's consultation there needs to be a warning on the affordability of the formula based on October 20 data.</p> <p>The team is looking into an issue highlighted by Lincolnshire County Council, they have seen a 30% increase in pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) between October 2019 and October 2020 which will impact on the funding received by the LA's and the affordability of the formula.</p>	

The increase of eligible pupils for FSM in Nottinghamshire between the two censuses (October 2019 & October 2020) is around 26%, compared to the increase the previous year between October 2018 and October 2019 of 16%

Sue Summerscales explained that the calculated unit value for primary and secondary pupils that will be received for funding year 2021-22 by the local authority has already been set on October 2019 pupil characteristics, it will only change for actual pupil numbers based on the October 2020 census.

Fiona Jones asked if Lincolnshire have raised this issue with the ESFA. We confirmed they had and the response from the ESFA was that they have been monitoring the development of COVID-19 and its implications on FSM eligibility and cost pressures closely. They continuing to monitor the situation as they collect pupil characteristics as part of the regular census data collection cycle. At present, the ESFA have not planned a standardised approach for how this should be addressed in local formulae, given the situation will significantly vary between different local authorities and schools. For 2021-22, there are no further changes to local flexibility over distribution of funding and expect local authorities to use this flexibility to manage pressures. They will let us know if anything changes as a result of them monitoring the situation.

Sparsity criteria was discussed and the two levels that need to be met to be eligible. Maximum average number of pupils per year group, 21.4 for primary and 120 for secondary and minimum average distance to second nearest compatible school, 2 miles for primary and 3 miles for secondary. The average miles are calculated by measuring each pupils home address to the second nearest compatible school as the crow flies, where the second school could be different for every pupil depending on their home address.

A primary school has approached the local authority as they miss out on the sparsity funding. They meet the average number of pupils' criteria, but do not meet the distance criteria while it is measured as the crow flies. If the distance was measured on road distance they would qualify.

Guidance states that a local authority can request an exceptional change to how the distance is measured and could use road distance, but it would be down to the local authority to get and establish this information. We have tried to get this from the ESFA as we have been advised they are looking to change it to road distance in the hard formula but have not been able to obtain the information required. Our investigation shows that there are 9 other schools that are closer to the 2 mile criteria that miss out on the sparsity funding and to check all schools that meet the average number of pupil's criteria would require 676 searches to see which is the second nearest school then the same again to measure the road distance. Local authorities are not funded for any exceptional changes, any changes would have to be covered by the formula and fixed allocation received. Therefore, our approach would be not to make an exceptional change to sparsity at the current time.

Karen Richards, is there a reason why underperforming minority groups mention ethnicity? Would 'minority groups' not suffice? Sue Summerscales advised this was the heading as per the operational guidance

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Schools Forum: -

1. Offers it views on the options for addressing an affordability gap

Section 8 of the consultation to be re-written based around affordability with an explanation for introducing a gains cap and lowering the MFG protection. MFG must be at least 0.5%.

Once re-written consultation document to be re-looked at on behalf of all forum members by Anne Hall, James Macdonald and Fiona Jones before going live.

2. Offers it views on the LA approach to the sparsity criteria

Anne Hall agreed with the approach the LA wish to take, James Macdonald second the approach and asked if all members agreed. – All members agreed

3. Agrees with the LA submitting a disapplication request for Minster School MPP calculation

All members agreed.

4. Consider and agree the proposals to be included in the 2020-21 schools funding consultation.

Proposals agreed with the change as mentioned for point 1 – consultation to be relooked at on behalf of all forum members by Anne Hall, James Macdonald and Fiona Jones before going live.

5. Consider and agree the proposed timetable for the schools funding consultation.

James Macdonald asked as we are rewriting part of the consultation will the proposed timetable be achievable? Sue Summerscales advised yes, we need to decide whether we do a 2 weeks as last year or a 3 week consultation.

Anne Hall suggested leaving it at 2 weeks, James Macdonald agreed and asked all members to ensure they highlight it to the sector they represent.

All members agreed with the proposed timetable.

With regards the early years consultation due to the current uncertainty we are not sure what to consult on currently. After a meeting with the early years representatives it was agreed we would hold off on the consultation to see if we receive more information around the hourly rate for 2021-22. Potentially providers could have a lower hourly rate for 2021-22.

Irene Kakoullis re-iterated the uncertainty we face for next year and advised that other authorities are in the same position.

Karen Richards clarified that the additional 10p received in the hourly rate for the past two years was not a top up but re allocation of the underspend in the early years block and providers were warned it was temporary.

Sue Summerscales suggested not to include the additional 10p for 2021-22, however if an underspend starts to materialise within the early years block then we would look to distribute this.

Laura Gapski, the trend in FSM eligibility will demonstrate to members the challenges the early years sector will face when our rate reduces by 10p next year without additional Government support, the sector will need full support from school forum in this respect.

Joe Jefferies, as a representative for the trade unions he wanted to stress the importance of this fund, that it covers all unions and the value for money. He hopes forum members will support this and urges academies to buy into the scheme. He stressed that no trade union receives monies from this scheme it goes back into schools and academies that have opted in, to release a member.

James Macdonald would recommend local representatives and the benefits that it brings, agrees that academies should be encouraged to buy into the scheme but it's also a political issue.

4. Any Other Business

Fiona Jones asked about Manner Sutton who currently have no pupils on roll.

Marion Clay notified members that Nottinghamshire County Council would be consulting to close the school, though it's not closed yet. Teachers are still being paid, and that the school is working in partnership with Kirklington.

	Sue Summerscales added that we had never found ourselves in this position before, regards completing the APT and the school's allocation Toni Gardner has sent a query to the ESFA to request guidance and that the per pupil amount for 2021-22 that will be received by the Local Authority does include the pupil characteristics and lump sum of this school.	SS/TG									
5.	Confidentiality No item marked confidential										
6.	Date and time of next meeting <table border="1" data-bbox="145 524 1031 629"> <tr> <td>Thursday 10 December 2020</td> <td>2-4pm</td> <td>Virtual – Microsoft Teams</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 25 February 2021</td> <td>2-4pm</td> <td>Virtual – Microsoft Teams</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 17 June 2021</td> <td>2-4pm</td> <td>TBC</td> </tr> </table>	Thursday 10 December 2020	2-4pm	Virtual – Microsoft Teams	Thursday 25 February 2021	2-4pm	Virtual – Microsoft Teams	Thursday 17 June 2021	2-4pm	TBC	
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