

## CABINET MEMBER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

**Venue:** Town Hall,  
Moorgate Street,  
Rotherham.

**Date:** Tuesday, 24th February 2009

**Time:** 10.30 a.m.

### A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th January, 2009 (copy herewith) (Pages 1 - 2)
4. Proposed Changes on various School Organisation Matters (Martin Harrop, Principal Officer, Forward Planning) (report herewith) (Pages 3 - 5)
5. School Admissions (New Regulations) and Membership of the Local Admissions Forum (Martin Harrop, Principal Officer Forward Planning) (report herewith) (Pages 6 - 14)
6. Annual Determination - The Local Authority (Post-Compulsory Education Awards) Regulations 2000 (Alison Leone/Angela Milton, Principal Officer, Student Support) (report herewith) (Pages 15 - 16)
7. Update on Transition of Higher Education Student Finance Delivery (Alison Leone/Angela Milton, Principal Officer, Student Support) (report herewith) (Pages 17 - 21)
8. Health, Welfare and Safety Panel - Visits of Inspection to Schools (report attached) (Pages 22 - 28)
9. Date and Time of Next Meeting  
**Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2009 at 10.30 a.m.**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING**  
**Tuesday, 6th January, 2009**

Present:- Councillor Rushforth (in the Chair); Councillor Havenhand.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Falvey.

**33. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9TH DECEMBER, 2008**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2008 be received as a correct record.

**34. KEY STAGE 1 ASSESSMENT RESULTS: SUMMER 2008**

Consideration was given to the contents of a report submitted which set out the performance of Rotherham pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, in 2008.

All schools must conduct a form of statutory assessment at the end of each Key Stage (at age 5, 7, 11, 14 and 16). At the end of Key Stage 1 (age 7) children undertake a formal assessment, informed by Statutory Assessment Tasks (SATs) which, from 2005, have been reported as teacher assessment.

Historically, pupils enter Key Stage 1 with average scores below the national averages in all assessment scales as reported through the Foundation Stage profile. The weakest element has continued to be in Communication Language and Literacy, most particularly in "Linking Sounds and Letters" and Writing. Pupils' capability in mathematics has shown an ongoing weakness in the "Calculation" strand. These outcomes present a low base for pupils as they move into KS1.

The report set out:-

- Overall results for Key Stage 1
- Summary of KS1 Performance
- Actions Taken
- Priorities for Improvement
- Development Activities

A discussion ensued on the following issues:-

- National trends/context
- The importance that reading provides for children and effective strategies
- Pupil tracking systems within Rotherham schools
- Foundation stage learning and impact on Key Stage I outcomes
- Statistical information and emerging factors

- Language/communication skills
- Barriers/areas of greatest need
- Comparisons with statistical neighbours
- Current teaching practices
- Funding issues
- Family Learning/Imagination Library/Literacy Project
- Need for variable programmes
- Role of Partner Agencies
- 20% cohort Study

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That the concerns related to the Key Stage 1 profile and the declines, when compared to the national trend, be noted.

(3) That the drive to encourage all schools to continue to improve their results, and strive to reflect outcomes at least in line with national averages, be encouraged.

(4) That the drive to improve standards, particularly in Reading, throughout this key stage, together with the attainment of boys and other vulnerable and underachieving groups, be endorsed.

(5) That the report be submitted to the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

**35. RAISING EXPECTATIONS - ENABLING SYSTEM TO DELIVER TRANSFER OF 16-18 FUNDING FROM THE LSC TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

This item was deferred to the next meeting, when further information would be available from Government Office.

**36. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning take place on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 at 10.30 a.m.

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member and Advisers</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> February, 2009</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Proposed changes on various School Organisation Matters.</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>CYPS</b>

**5. Summary:**

To report on the proposed changes recently notified by the DCSF in respect of various school organisation matters.

**6. Recommendations:**

That the report is received and the changes noted.

**7. Proposals and Details:** The DCSF is proposing the following changes:

- 1) - draft amendments to school organisation, governance, middle schools, federations and information as to provision of education regulations; and
- 2) - draft decision maker's guidance for both sixth form presumptions (i.e. presumption to approve proposals in particular circumstances) and establishing new National Challenge Trust Schools.

**1) Changes to Regulations**

The amendments to various regulations are, in the main, minor/technical amendments (e.g. changes to timescales) which will have no major significance. The main change (already signalled within the recent consultation on admissions changes) is the amendment to remove the need to publish statutory proposals for certain increases in a school's PAN (Published Admission Number). It is now intended that **any changes** to the number of pupils to be admitted should be consulted on as part of the annual admissions determination arrangements.

**2) i) Sixth Form Presumptions**

There will be changes to the Decision Maker's Guidance for Expanding a school or adding a Sixth Form. This is the guidance which decision makers for statutory proposals (local authorities or the Schools Adjudicator) must follow.

The amended guidance reaffirms the strong presumption that proposals from 'presumption schools' (high performing schools)\* should be approved, **but it stresses the need for the presumption school to collaborate with partners in drawing up plans**. This guidance recognises that there can be tension between the wishes of an individual school and the need to build and sustain effective patterns of 14-19 organisation across a local area in order to deliver the new 14-19 entitlement.

(\* the strong presumption to approve proposals relates to the following:

- the school is a high performing specialist school that has opted for a vocational specialism; or
- the school, whether specialist or not, meets the DCSF criteria for 'high performing' and does not require capital support.

For the first category shown above, capital funding would be available from the 16-19 Capital Fund).

**ii) New National Challenge Trust Schools**

There will be an addition of a presumption to approve proposals to establish a new maintained school.

This will apply in the following circumstances:

To support the National Challenge, a possible structural solution for local authorities (in the case of a school at risk of missing the floor target) is to close the existing school and open a new National Challenge Trust School. This would be a Foundation School with a foundation composed of agreed Trust partners, including a strong education partner, which will appoint a majority of governors to the new school. There will be a **strong presumption to approve** such proposals.

A new National Challenge Trust school will have clear and specific plans for raising attainment which have been agreed with the DCSF.

**8. Finance:**

None in receiving this report

**9. Risks and Uncertainties:**

None in receiving this report.

**10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:**

None in receiving this report.

**11. Background Papers and Consultation:**

Full details can be viewed on: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolorg/news.cfm?ID=71>

**Contact Name :** *Martin Harrop, PO Forward Planning, 2415, e-mail : martin.harrop@rotherham.gov.uk*

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>24th February, 2009</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>School Admissions (New Regulations) and Membership of the Local Admissions Forum</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>CYPS (All wards)</b>

**5. Summary:**

There are a number of new regulations which cover school admissions and the salient points are shown at Appendix 1. Changes will be required to the membership of the Local Admissions Forum (LAF).

**6. Recommendations:**

- i) the changes, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, are noted**
- ii) consideration is given to the membership of the LAF in line with the requirements of the School Admissions (Local Authority Reports and Admission Forums)(England) Regulations 2008.**

**7. Proposals and Details: Appendix 1** lists the new regulations and the points that need to be picked up in terms of changes to procedure, dates etc relating to the school admissions processes.

The main changes to note are:

- (i) Admissions consultation now includes parents and ‘others who appear to have an interest’.
- (ii) Consultation can be undertaken every 3 years (rather than annually) where there are no proposed changes to the arrangements.
- (iii) Co-ordination of admission arrangements will, from 10/11, fully cover Primary and Secondary applications (including late and in-year applications) and all applications will be made to the home authority.
- (iv) The LA rather than the LAF will produce the main annual report on school admissions matters.
- (v) Appeals panels can consider the lawfulness of admission arrangements and can uphold an infant class size appeal if an unlawful admissions policy prevented a place being offered to the appellant.
- (vi) New regulations amend the membership of the LAF.

**It is point 6) above which requires particular consideration.**

The current membership of the LAF is shown at **Appendix 2**. This was agreed by the Authority in line with the provisions contained within the Education (Admissions Forums)(England) Regulations 2002 as amended by the Education (Admissions Forums) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, which allowed for a core membership made up as follows:

<b>MEMBERS NOMINATED BY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>
Local authority – any representative of the authority	1 to 5
Schools – community and voluntary controlled	1 to 3
Schools – foundation	1 to 3
Schools – voluntary aided	1 to 3
Church of England Diocesan Board representatives	1 to 3
Roman Catholic Diocese representatives	1 to 3
Parent Governor representatives	1 to 3
Representatives of the local community	up to 3
Academies	1 per Academy
City Technology Colleges	1 per City Technology College

The outcome of the DCSF's recent consultation on admissions matters was that:

'There was general agreement by consultation respondents to our proposals to make Forums small advisory groups representing those with an interest in school admissions in the local area. There were concerns that local authority schools are too heavily represented. The most common consultation response was that Forums function differently in different areas and so need to reflect the local context, be less prescriptive and more flexible in operation. We have therefore revised the membership of Admission Forums, through the revised School Admissions Code and Regulations, to set a maximum number of 20 and replace the current prescriptive and complex membership with a make-up that reflects the local area.'

The actual make up of the membership should now be derived from Section 8 of the new regulations which states:

### **Membership of a forum**

8.—(1) A forum must comprise no more than 20 members, appointed by the authority in accordance with this regulation and regulation 9, and must include—

(a) at least one representative of each of the following schools which are in the relevant area—

- (i) community schools,
- (ii) voluntary controlled schools,
- (iii) voluntary aided schools,
- (iv) foundation schools,
- (v) Academies, and
- (vi) city technology colleges and city colleges for the technology of the arts;

(b) one representative from each body or person representing the religion or religious denomination of any foundation or voluntary schools or Academies in the relevant area which are designated as having a religious character by an order under section 69(3) or section 124B(9);

(c) at least one parent member ; and

(d) at least one person who appears to the members appointed under sub-paragraphs (a) to (c) to represent the interests of any section of the community in the relevant area, and who is not eligible for appointment as a member under any of those sub-paragraphs.

(2) Members falling within paragraph (1a) must be either the head teacher or a governor (other than a governor who is appointed to the governing body by the authority and is a member of the authority) and must be appointed following a nomination by the governing body of a maintained school within the relevant area.

(3) Members falling within paragraph (1b) must be appointed following a nomination by the relevant body or person prescribed in relation to the religion or religious denomination in regulation 12(7) of the Admission Arrangements Regulations.

(4) Members falling within paragraph (1c) must be resident in the relevant area, and the parent of a child who—

- (a) has attained the age of two and is receiving primary education, or
- (b) is of compulsory school age at the time of their appointment.

(5) Members falling within paragraph (1d) must be appointed following a recommendation by the members appointed under paragraph (1a) to (1c).

(6) For the purposes of Parts 2 and 3 of these Regulations “authority” means the local education authority for the area for which the forum has been (or is to be) established, or in the case of a joint forum, the local education authorities for the areas for which the forum has been (or is to be) established.’

The above means that there will be a minimum of 6 (7 if the Authority opens an academy) with a maximum of 20 members.

There is no automatic place for either Local Authority members or members of the community, although appointments could be made via paragraph 1(d) by those members falling within paragraphs 1(a) to (c). Bearing in mind the commitment already shown by the, in most cases, long standing members of the current LAF and also the lack of volunteers that there has been when vacancies have arisen, it is suggested that the model shown at **Appendix 3** could be adopted and this would allow for the potential reappointment of all of the current members.

**8. Finance:** No specific financial consequences.

**9. Risks and Uncertainties:** The changed regulations provide uncertainty for current members of the LAF. The suggested make up of the new membership could allow for reappointments and mitigate against the risks of losing some expertise that has been built up over the years.

**10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:** Local Admissions Forums work towards ensuring fairness and equality within the school admissions processes.

**11. Background Papers and Consultation:** All relevant regulations are listed in Appendix 1 and can be accessed via the internet at:

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/stat.htm>

**Contact Name :**

Martin Harrop, PO Forward Planning,  
CYPS, School Organisation and Asset Planning  
ext 2415

e-mail: [martin.harrop@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:martin.harrop@rotherham.gov.uk)

**School Admissions (and Appeals) – New Regulations.**

**Appendix 1**

Following recent consultation, the DCSF has now agreed changes and released new regulations as follows:

- The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements)(England) Regulations 2008
- The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements)(England) Regulations 2008
- The School Admissions (Local Authority Reports and Admission Forums)(England) Regulations 2008
- The Education (Admissions Appeals Arrangements)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2008
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008

The first listed came into force on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and the others will come into force on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

The main points to note in the regulations can be summarised as follows:

**The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements)(England) Regs 2008**

- a number of previous regulations are revoked (see Schedule 1)
- consultation requirements now include 'relevant parents' and 'such other persons in the relevant area or the additional radial area who appear to the admission authority to have an interest in the proposed admission arrangements.'
- where any proposed admission arrangements include an admission number which exceeds the previous number by 27 or more, the admission authority must also consult any Trade Union representing staff at the school who may be affected by the proposed increase.
- only need to consult every 3 years where there are no proposed changes to the previously agreed arrangements
- consultation must last for at least 8 weeks and be held between the period 1<sup>st</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> March.
- must publish, in a newspaper, information about where a copy of the proposed admission arrangements may be obtained and detail of the person to whom comments may be sent.
- any determined arrangements should be communicated to everyone who responded to the consultation.
- the determination notice published in a local newspaper must include a statement about parents' rights of objection to the Adjudicator.

**The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements)(England) Regs 2008**

- the 2007 regulations are revoked.
- qualifying schemes cover Primary and Secondary and should include (for 10/11) all applications, including those made outside of the normal admissions round and also all in-year transfers. (All applications to be made to the home authority).
- schemes must specify that any notification of acceptance of a school place must be received by the authority within 2 weeks after the date of the offer.
- there are specified dates for the return of common application forms, which are 31<sup>st</sup> October (secondary) and 15<sup>th</sup> January (primary).

**The School Admissions (Local Authority Reports and Admission Forums)(England) Regs 2008**

- the 2002 and the 2007 (amendment) regulations are revoked.
- the Local Authority Report will cover much the same ground as the current (recently produced) LAF report (see regs for full list).
- the report must be made no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> June each year.
- Forums must comprise of no more than 20 members. Membership differs from the current membership set up by Rotherham based on the previous regs and, therefore, the authority will have to look at this afresh (see Part 3 of the regs) – no specific representation for the LA.
- the Forum to consider if it wishes to produce a report for the purposes of Section 85A (1A) of the Act.

**The Education (Admissions Appeals Arrangements)(England) Regs 2008**

- these regs amend the 2002 regulations.
- the new regs allow panels to consider whether admission arrangements are lawful and a new regulation 6 provides that a panel may uphold an infant class size appeal if a child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been lawful.
- a new Schedule 2 to the 2002 regs allows children, as well as their parents, to appeal against a decision refusing a place in a school sixth-form.

**The School Information (England) Regs 2008**

- the 2002 regs and subsequent amendment regs are revoked.
- a composite prospectus (or 2 as in Rotherham) must be published by 12<sup>th</sup> September (i.e. should be on the website and available, on request, from the central office and any school).
- composite prospectus must include information on Academies, city technology colleges etc.

**LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM**

**Appendix 2**

**Current membership:**

**Rotherham LEA (3)**

Councillor Amy Rushforth  
(1<sup>st</sup> Term of Office from May, 2007)

Councillor Jacquie Falvey  
(1<sup>st</sup> Term of Office from May 2007)

Councillor Colin Barron  
(1<sup>st</sup> Term of Office from June, 2005)

**Church of England (3)**

Mr. B. N. Sampson  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Term of Office from 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2002)

Heather Morris

Mrs. G. Atkin  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Term of Office from 10<sup>th</sup> July 2002 )

**Diocese of Hallam, RC (3)**

Clare Thorp (PA) – 0114/2562246  
(Frank McDermott and P. Storey retired)

Mrs. H. McLaughlin (St. Mary's RC School)  
(1<sup>st</sup> Term of Office late 2006)

Father Anthony Hayne  
(1<sup>st</sup> Term of Office from 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2007)

**SCHOOLS**

**Community & Controlled (3)**

Mrs. I. G. Hartley - (**Vice-Chairman**)  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Term of Office from 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2002)

**Two vacancies**

**Voluntary Aided (3)**

Mr. G. Lancashire  
(1<sup>st</sup> Term of Office from 10<sup>th</sup> July 2003)

**Two vacancies**

**COMMUNITY REPS**

Mrs. P. Powell  
Mr. P. Robins (added 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2007)  
1 Vacancy created by F Hedge retirement 2008

**Parent Governor Rep (1)**

Mr. Mick Hall

**Others invited to attend:-** Early Years Development Officer (S. Henschley) and Mr. M. A. Khan  
(Bev Booker, Welcome Centre to also attend if there is a specific item on the agenda).

**POTENTIAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE LAF**

<b>Community Schools</b>	<b>2 members (1 Primary and 1 Secondary) Mrs. I Hartley (Wath Comp) – existing member Vacancy (Primary) – Mr T. Kelsey (Bramley S’side Inf ) recent nomination.</b>
<b>Voluntary Controlled</b>	<b>1 member Vacancy – would require a nomination from Wentworth or Kilnhurst CE schools.</b>
<b>Voluntary Aided</b>	<b>3 members Mrs G. Atkin (St. Albans) – existing member Mrs. H. McLaughlin (St. Mary’s) – existing member Father Hayne (St. Mary’s) – existing member</b>
<b>Academy</b>	<b>1 member (To be appointed if an Academy is approved)</b>
<b>Dioceses</b>	<b>2 members 1 Diocese of Hallam (Ms. C. Thorpe?) – existing 1 Sheffield Diocese (Mrs. H. Morris?) - existing</b>
<b>Parent</b>	<b>1 member Mr. M. Hall – existing member</b>

The above would provide 10 members, which leaves scope for a further 10 members at the most (maximum of 20 members).

The additional membership would be appointed as ‘community representatives’.

It is suggested that as there are 5 members representing the dioceses/voluntary aided schools(i.e 3 +2) then there should be 3 Local Authority members appointed, which would provide 2 community schools + 3 members = 5. (The LA determines the admissions policy for community schools).

This would then leave a further 7 additional places.

The following current members could be considered:

**Mr. B. Sampson  
Mr. G. Lancashire  
Mrs. P. Powell  
Mr. P. Robins  
Mrs. S. Henchley  
Mr. M. A. Khan**

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Lifelong Learning</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>24th February 2009</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Annual Determination- The Local Authority (Post-Compulsory Education Awards) Regulations 2000</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Children and Young People's Services</b>

**5. Summary**

Under the Local Authority (Post-Compulsory Education Awards) Regulations 2000, LAs are required to make an annual determination on exercising powers to make financial awards to new HE and FE students.

**6. Recommendations**

**It is recommended that the Cabinet Member determines not to take up the power in any circumstances and not make provision for considering applications for awards to new FE and HE students, and to 16-19 year olds who are still attending school.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

The Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 removed the power for LEAs to make discretionary awards to FE (and HE) students under the 1962 Education Act. Previous to this, the LA had run a scheme of financial support to FE, sixth form and some HE students who would otherwise have not been eligible for funding. Section 129 of The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 conferred a revised power on LEAs, should they wish to use it, to make awards to new FE (and HE) students, and to 16-19 year olds who are still attending school

In parallel with the removal of the power to make discretionary awards, funding was withdrawn from the Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) from 1999-2000. From that date, the LEA determined not to make any new awards. New funding was available to students from a new Standards Fund in the form of Learner Support Funds. Also, since September 2004, the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) has been available to FE learners.

**Authorities are however still required to make an annual determination for each financial year in regard to the revised power conferred in 1998. They have 3 main choices under the regulations:**

- i) to determine not to take up the power in any circumstances and not make any provision for considering applications;
- ii) to decide to exercise the power only in respect of certain groups or categories of student; or
- iii) to decide to exercise the power generally and consider applications from all students - still in accordance with its policies on eligibility.

## **8. Finance**

There are no funds allocated under the SSA to make financial awards to HE and FE students.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

None.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

None.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

DfEE letter 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1999 'The Local Education Authority (Post Compulsory Education awards) Regulation 1999.

Statutory Instrument 2000 No 2057 -The Local Education Authority (Post-Compulsory Education Awards) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2000.

### **Contact Name:**

Alison Leone/Angela Milton, Principal Officer, Student Support ext 2653

[Alison.leone@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Alison.leone@rotherham.gov.uk)

[Angela.milton@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Angela.milton@rotherham.gov.uk)

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Lifelong Learning</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> February 2009</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Update on Transition of Higher Education Student Finance Delivery</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Children and Young People's Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

In November 2007, a report to the Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member outlined plans for the Government's transformation and centralisation of the Student Finance Service in England.

In April 2011, all higher education financial support cases being administered by the Local Authority will be transferred to Student Finance England and the Local Authority will cease all Higher Education Student Support Functions.

The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet Member of the transition arrangements made by the service since the last report and the implications of these for members of staff and service delivery.

### **6. Recommendations**

- **That implications for local service delivery during the transition period is noted.**
- **That the report informs future service, budget and workforce planning.**
- **That the report is referred to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

### **The Service**

Rotherham MBC currently receives and processes over 3500 applications for Higher Education Student Finance each year, in accordance with the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, the Education (Student Support) Regulations and the functions transferred by the Secretary of State to Local Authorities in England.

The Student Support Service has a team of 5 FTE permanent staff. It provides an advice and guidance service and performs assessments of eligibility and financial entitlement to higher education student loans and grants. Payment and recovery functions are undertaken by the Student Loans Company in Glasgow.

The Student Support service also runs an LSC-funded scheme of financial support for Rotherham sixth form students called the Access or Learner Support Fund. The Fund is targeted at learners who are economically or socially disadvantaged and helps with course-related costs such as, travel, field trips and equipment. An additional role is to provide local advice and guidance forum for schools and colleges on the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). The EMA is a national government scheme aimed at encouraging learners from lower income households to remain in education post-16 by making weekly payments to individuals of up to £30.

### **Centralisation**

Local Authorities will continue to handle applications for support from students who began their courses before the 2009/10 academic year, until they complete their course or until March 2011, whichever is the sooner.

Meanwhile the Student Loans Company will process applications for all **new** higher education students in England and Wales who begin new courses in September 2009 and beyond. The new service will be branded Student Finance England (or Student Finance Wales) and will encourage students to use on-line information, advice and application facilities. There will also be telephone advice lines. The new service is due to be operational from February 2009.

### **Transition Planning**

In March 2007, the Student Support Service submitted an initial transition plan and has subsequently sent regular updates to the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). This plan demonstrates how the Authority will fulfil its statutory duties and maintain service levels during the transition period. Consideration has been given to retention of experienced staff, maintenance of service levels in the light of reduced funding and the possible loss of key personnel.

## **Implications for the Student Support team in Rotherham and Local Service Delivery**

### **(i) Case Load**

- In 2009/10 we expect to receive approximately 2500 applications from continuing students.
- In 2010/11 we expect a further decrease in the number of applicants to approx 1500.
- From April 2011 the SLC will become responsible for **all** applicants, new and returning and all local functions will cease.

### **(ii) Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)**

The existing information, advice and guidance (IAG) service provided by Rotherham will be replaced by on-line information and a telephone advice line provided nationally by the SLC. The SLC has appointed Regional Consultants to develop IAG materials and engage with partner organisations including schools and universities.

Locally, IAG should also be provided by the new Connexions service provider as part of the Quality Standards for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). In Rotherham, 3 newly appointed graduates to the Aim Higher programme will also provide advice and guidance to schools on the HE finance application process. The SLC intends that students should not be prevented from applying for support by a lack of access to advice and guidance.

### **(iii) Staffing**

From April 2009, staffing levels will be reduced by 1.5 FTE posts to reflect the reduction in case load and government funding. The proposed transitional staffing structure was presented to staff in November 2008 with HR and Trade Union representatives present. A period of consultation followed during which no feedback was received. A Redundancy Notice has been issued to one member of staff (1FTE) whose contract is due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. A further employee (0.5FTE) has requested early retirement with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. This will be considered by Members in due course.

We expect to be able to retain sufficient staffing levels to carry out the LA's statutory duties until March 2011. However, if there is an unexpected loss of skilled staff which puts at risk our ability to carry out these duties, a reciprocal contingency arrangement has been made with three neighbouring authorities (Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield). Subject to need and capacity, each of the South Yorkshire Authorities may be able to offer help with part of another authority's caseload. Staff would remain in the employment of their home authority with payment made by the 'borrowing' authority for staff time and expenses.

## **8. Finance**

Reductions in Local Authority funding for Student Support began in April 2008. The funding adjustments are being administered through the Formula Grant system. The Formula Grant is unencumbered and DIUS has indicated that each local authority needs to determine the appropriate resource to allocate to their student finance function to deliver an efficient service to customers which meets a minimum service standard outlined in DIUS guidance documents.

There will be a continuing reduction to the student support staffing budget for the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years. It is likely that funding from other areas will be used to support student support staff costs and the staff who remain may be asked to undertake additional tasks relevant to the area of funding.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

- Loss of local customer service to residents of Rotherham Borough, especially Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).
- Loss of personalised local service to vulnerable customers such as students with disabilities who are currently dealt with by named senior staff.
- Redeployment/redundancy of student support service team.
- Local skill shortages in Student Finance as current team members seek alternative employment during the transition period.
- Performance and stability of current national on-line computer system, 'PROTOCOL'.
- Future location of further education finance scheme within the Authority.
- Loss of Rotherham's local partnership role in the co-ordination of EMA advice and guidance.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The Student Support team contributes to the aims of lifelong learning within the Rotherham Learning and Achieving priorities. A centralised system may compromise the quality of service offered to students and contribute to lower participation in higher education, particularly among under represented and vulnerable groups.

Loss of Student Support staff may compromise the quality of advice and guidance provided to both school pupils, and the local schools and FE providers who work to increase FE participation in the Borough.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

- Improving the Student Finance Service, DfES Report, January 2006.
- Letter to Directors of Children's Services, M F Hipkins Director Student Finance DfES, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2006.
- Written Statement, Higher Education Student Finance, Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Ruth Kelly), 31<sup>st</sup> January 2006.
- Written Statement, Higher Education Student Finance Delivery in England, Minister for Lifelong Learning and Further and Higher Education (Bill Rammell), 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2006.
- Learner Support Programme: Discretionary Funding Guidance and Requirements 2008/09, LSC, July 2008.
- Local Authority Transition Planning and Guidance, DfES, January 2007
- Local Authority Transition Planning & Guidance Part Two, DIUS, December 2008
- Rotherham Student Finance Transition Plan, March 2007 and Six Month Reviews April 2008 and January 2009, Alison Leone/Angela Milton

- Student Finance: update on Transition Planning, Letter to Directors of Children's Services from John Jones, Head of Student Finance Local Authority Transition Project DfES, May 2007.
- Funding Adjustments in Respect of Changes in the Administration of Student Finance, letter to Directors of Children's Services from M F Hipkins, Director of Student Finance Strategy DfES, 31st May 2007.
- HE Student Support Reforms, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills (John Denham MP), 5<sup>th</sup> July 2007.
- Changes to Student Support Arrangements – Q&A for Local Authorities, Higher Education Directorate DIUS, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2007.
- Education Maintenance Allowance Guidance for providers 2008/09. LSC, June 2008.
- Briefing on The New Student Finance Service, Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills, July 2008

**Contact Name :**

**Alison Leone/Angela Milton**  
**Principal Officer, Student Support**  
**Extension 2653**  
**[alison.leone@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:alison.leone@rotherham.gov.uk)**  
**[angela.milton@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:angela.milton@rotherham.gov.uk)**

<b>Date of Visits : 12 December 2008</b>		<b><u>PARTY "A"</u></b>
<b><u>Present:</u></b>		
<b>Councillors:</b>	R. Russell, J Nightingale, G Whelbourn (PM)	
<b>Union representatives:</b>	S. Brookes (NASUWT), C. Booth (GMB), C. Maleham (UNISON), R. Asquith (UNISON)	
<b>Officers:</b>	P. Eastell (Principal Health and Safety Officer)	
<b>Morning</b>		
<b>Broom Valley Junior and Infant School</b>		
Vision panels on doors throughout need posters removing.	To be removed	
Two first-aid boxes at doorways require secure fixing to walls.	Caretaker to fix	
Signage required for toilets required on doors.	To be ordered	
Flooring in boys toilet to repair.	To be ordered now completed	
Hand dryer in boy's toilet to repair.	To be ordered	
Many doors were wedged open; these should have automatic door closers fitted.	All wedges to be removed from doors, staff to be notified that this must not happen	
Skirting in main reception needs minor repairs.	completed by caretaker	
Kitchen – walk in fridge requires covers on sharp edges on shelving. Leaking boiler requires repair/replacing.	work ordered by school	
<b>Aston Springwood Junior and Infant School</b>		
Signage required for door on boys toilet.	ordered to be fitted by caretaker	
Staff room should be kept locked to prevent access to children (keypad on door).	all staff informed that door should be kept closed	
Some push taps have no delay to water supply in toilets.	order raised to adjust timing	

<p>First-aid box near coat hanging area should be re-positioned to prevent potential door opening on children's heads. These should also be secured to access to children.</p> <p>Old timber requires removing adjacent to the rear car park</p>	<p>door to be changed to open from top instead of bottom so it cannot open on children's heads and raised so children cannot access.</p> <p>Caretaker has removed it</p>
<b>Todwick Junior and Infant School</b>	Not visited due to time constraints.
<b>Afternoon</b>	
<b>Wath Victoria Junior and Infant School</b>	
<p>Posters to remove on door vision panels throughout.</p> <p>Plant room door should be kept locked unless being accessed by staff.</p> <p>Various items of electrical equipment require up to date PAT testing.</p> <p>Caretaker's storeroom had various unlabelled containers with unidentified substances in, along with bleach tablets.</p> <p>Toilet area with no access door also has no cubicle doors. In this same area were chemicals stored at height but require removing.</p> <p>Store rooms and cupboards in classrooms and corridors were full and access is not restricted to young children by either key or a simple catch.</p>	<p>Now removed</p> <p>Locked key now on reception</p> <p>Ordered</p> <p>All containers labelled and bleach tablets removed</p> <p>Chemicals removed to locked store, quote requested for cubicle doors</p> <p>Store rooms to have catches fitted work now ordered</p>
<b>Swinton Fitzwilliam Junior and Infant School</b>	Not visited due to time constraints.

<p><b>Date: 12 December 2008</b> <span style="float: right;"><b><u>PARTY "B"</u></b></span></p>	
<p><b><u>Present:</u></b>  <b>Councillors:</b> J. Swift (a.m.), P. Wootton (p.m.)  <b>Union representatives:</b> Ken Moore (AMICUS), Jill Adams (NUT), Malcolm Eyre(GMB), Paul Waterworth (UNISON), John Clay (ATL)  <b>Officers:</b> N. Perry (Senior Health and Safety Officer)</p>	
<p><b>Morning</b></p>	
<p><b>Ravenfield Primary School</b></p> <p>Bushes in playground require pruning as they could scratch pupils</p> <p>Loose grating in playground</p> <p>Build up of rubbish/boxes outside of school</p> <p>Access ramp to rear of school – build up of moss presenting slipping hazard</p> <p>Wooden fence to rear of school requires maintenance</p> <p>Various fluorescent light diffusers missing around school – require replacing</p> <p>Paint peeling from several ceiling panels</p> <p>Leaking water pipe in Room 13 requires repair</p> <p>Emergency exit signage missing in school hall area – requires urgent action</p> <p>‘Burco’ water boiler in kitchen – being used from trolley unsecured</p> <p>Staff present at time raised concerns regarding blower type heating and presence of asbestos – requested further testing and reassurance meeting with staff</p>	<p>This will be addressed as part of the Grounds Maintenance Contract</p> <p>Caretaker to fit correct sized grate cover</p> <p>Now removed</p> <p>Caretaker to clean surface of ramp</p> <p>Fencing to be removed</p> <p>School arranging for diffusers to be fitted</p> <p>Caretaker to remove flaking paint and seal exposed areas</p> <p>Caretaker to arrange This is in hand – Andy Adams (Surveyors) dealing with this through Dobson Roofing</p> <p>These were removed as part of the asbestos clean up. School to arrange for replacement asap</p> <p>This has been fixed to a more secure stand following recent leak which occurred Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December</p> <p>carried out December 18<sup>th</sup> PM</p>

team following asbestos incident earlier in year.	
<b>Maltby Hilltop School</b>	
Various ceiling panels around school need to be re-seated in their frames	Caretaker to arrange
Toilet sign needs to be removed from re-designated room	Caretaker to arrange
Potential for moving/handling issues in kitchen – staff using over large pans	Catering Section to investigate

<b>Afternoon</b>	
<b>Anston Hillcrest School</b>	
Site manager's office unlocked and potentially accessible by pupils – used to store cleaning chemicals/materials including a quantity of bleach. Several unmarked bottles containing unidentified substances.	Caretaker to ensure the room is kept locked at all times. Cleaning materials to be removed from unmarked bottles.
Water dispenser requires to be checked by installer (Yorkshire Water)	School to contact Yorkshire Water for maintenance to be carried out
Fluorescent light diffusers missing in library area near Y5 classroom – require replacing	School to raise order for diffusers to be fitted where required
Disabled toilet used to store chairs – these should be removed and the area kept clear	Chairs to be removed
Toilets near ICT suite have no means of ventilation	The school is due for a re-wire and this work will be requested at that time

## Health, Welfare and Safety Panel Visits

### Health and Safety section overview

Emergency and Safety Team

The following is a brief sample overview of some of the incidents that have occurred since the last Health, Welfare and Safety Panel meeting and are intended to be used to keep the Panel up to date with incidents within Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

All the incidents / issues below have been previously reported in weekly briefings.

**21 October 2008.** An officer from the Emergency and Safety Team attended Thurcroft Junior School after receiving a phone call after an incident in which a pupil was injured.

At the end of a PE lesson, two pupils were putting away equipment in a built in store comprising two entrances, each having a roller shutter door. One of the pupils pushed the roller shutter door up quite forcibly, and the main housing which conceals the roller shutter door came away from its wall fixings and fell and struck the pupil on the cheek and above the ear.

The injured pupil was checked over by a first aider and then taken home. He returned to school the following day and had bruising but was otherwise okay.

On investigation of the roller shutter door wall fixings, they were deemed inadequate. The school was advised that a competent person using adequate fixings must do the refitting of the roller shutter door. The adjacent roller shutter door was also inspected and although it looked secure, it was advised that it should remain in the up and open position or locked shut until it has been checked further and reinforced.

**26 November 2008.** An Emergency and Safety team officer attended Maltby Craggs Junior School following notification of a RIDDOR reportable incident. A fight between two pupils had resulted in one being taken out of the classroom. The other individual followed outside and the situation heated up again. As a teacher tried to restrain the boy, he twisted awkwardly and the teacher fell on him while conducting the team-teach (approved) restrain method. The boy suffered a fractured lower leg (splinter type), believed to have happened during the twisting / falling motion.

The Emergency and Safety team officer visited the location where the incident occurred and found it to be satisfactory. They then discussed the incident with the teacher involved and the head teacher. The teacher, who is of a slight build had been upset by the incident, had confirmed that she had operated the team-teach method accordingly and was fully trained.

The school has a policy in place for this. It was confirmed that the pupil had been back in school and he was remorseful of the incident. The officer is satisfied that this was a genuine accident, where procedures were followed correctly and has completed the report accordingly.

## Health, Welfare and Safety Panel Visits

**18 December 2008.** An Emergency and Safety Team officer attended Thorpe Hesley Junior School after a phone call was received regarding a serious incident involving several young children and a contractor's fallen ladder.

The report was received just before 4.00pm although the incident had occurred at approximately 12.35pm. The officer met with the Deputy Head to go through the details. Contractors, who had already left, were repairing damaged roof after burglars had attempted to steal lead from the roof. The contractors were accessing the roof using aluminium ladders that were positioned in the playground.

At lunchtime, the contractors left the ladders (which were not tied off) and went for their dinners. At the same time, the children were queuing for their dinners. It is reported that there was a gust of wind and the ladders slid from their position and fell down onto the children. One child suffered a 1-2" cut to their head which required gluing at the hospital, another suffered a dislocated shoulder (this is an ongoing problem for the individual and is thought to have been caused through jolting) which required no hospital treatment, five other children suffered minor scrapes as the ladder contacted shoulders, legs and feet. Fortunately the children were back at school the following day except one who was absent with an unrelated illness.

This incident occurred due to simple controls not being put in place even though they were identified by the contractors generic risk assessment. Even tied off, these ladders should not have been left. The Managing Director of the contracting company has informed the Emergency and Safety Team that the individual who they see as responsible has been suspended pending further investigations. This was an emergency repair organised by the school but the work still needs controlling and the risk assessment / method of work needs to be discussed to ensure that the controls are adequate.

A report will be sent through to the contractors and the school identifying actions that should be undertaken in future to prevent reoccurrence.

### **The following is an overview of other issues that have occurred since the last Health, Welfare and Safety Panel Meeting.**

**13 November 2008** An officer from the Emergency and Safety Team along with a representative from Children and Young Peoples Service attended a meeting at Winterhill School for Heads of Design and Technology from across the Borough.

## Health, Welfare and Safety Panel Visits

The meeting discussed teacher and technician competence in terms of recognised standards and refreshers. General advice was also given regarding machinery safety, COSHH and safety management systems. The group agreed to establish a policy so that a consistent approach and standard could be set.

**5 December 2008** An Emergency and Safety Team officer visited St Bernard's Catholic School after a request for assistance in the correct positioning of two metal working machines. A brief report was submitted giving advice of the safety requirements.

**17 December 2008** The Emergency and Safety Team attended Clifton Comprehensive School to offer advice on Display Screen Equipment assessments.