

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM
FRIDAY 23 JUNE 2023**

In Attendance:

Steve Rhodes – Winterhill (Academy) (in the Chair)
Deborah Ball - Treeton Primary (Primary Academy)
Lianne Camaish, Aspire
Guiseppe DiLasio – Wales (Academy)
Chris Eccles – Oakwood (Academy)
Lynsey Hadfield – Executive Head, Arnold Nursery (Observer)
Nathan Heath – Assistant Director of Education, CYPS
David Horrigan – Maltby Learning Trust (Primary Academy)
Louise Keith – Principal Officer, CYPS
Amy Leech - HR Business Partner, CYPS
Angela McComb – Primary Maintained Governor
Kirsty Peart - Sitwell Infant (Maintained)
Alan Richards – Secondary Governor
Steve Scott – Happy Kids (PVI Nursery)
Melanie Smith – RNN Group
Sarah Whitney - Head of Service Access to Education
Nathan Williams – Roughwood Primary (Primary Academy)
Mark Windle – Badsley Primary (Primary Maintained)

Apologies were received from:

Kelly Crompton, CYPS, RMBC
Councillor Victoria Cusworth – Cabinet Member for CYPS
Phil Davis - Secondary Academy Head - Wingfield Academy
Julie Day, Head of SEND, CYPS
Neil Hardwick – Head of Finance, CYPS
Andy Krabbendam – CEO JMAT (Academy)
Colin Price – NEU Representative
Karen Smith – Nexus MAT (Special Academy)
Phil Wilkinson - Secondary Academy Representative
Sharon Stones – Head of Arnold Nursery and Children's Centre
Nevine Towers – Diocese of Sheffield
Pam Ward – Head of Service, Education, CYPS

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to today's meeting and introductions were made.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were made.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes from the previous meeting held on 28 April 2023.

Agreed: That the minutes be approved.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

5. MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUTION OF THE ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS FORUM (STANDING ITEM)

No changes to the membership and constitution of the Rotherham Schools Forum were proposed.

6. 2022/23 OUTTURN AND 2023/24 FUNDING

Consideration was given to the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) – 2022/23 Outturn and 2023/24 Funding report, presented by Louise Keith, Principal Finance Officer (Schools Finance).

She highlighted that the DSG central reserve deficit balance brought forward to 2022/23 was £12.84m. The planned underspend of £533k as budgeted in the management plan was achieved and transferred to DSG central reserves.

Rotherham's planned Safety Valve funding was increased from £3m to £6m at the end of 2022/23. The reprofiling of the safety valve funding, alongside an underspend on the High Needs Block of £724k and underspends on falling rolls and growth funding had reduced the DSG Central Reserve deficit to £5.9m. Rotherham would continue to receive safety valve funding at £2m for the next 3 years.

For 2023-2024 the Schools Supplementary Grant had been rolled into the Dedicated Schools Grant DSG providing an increase in DSG National Funding Formula (NFF). This had been reflected in the new NFF values for basic entitlement, FSM5 and the lump sum.

Of the total 2022/23 surplus balances, a handful of schools held balances above the thresholds set out in the Scheme for Financing Schools and these were being reviewed.

Of the 2 schools that were previously identified to be in deficit, 1 had now entered a surplus balance position and 1 had converted to an academy.

It was clarified that the Schools Supplementary Grant was included on top of the DSG funding.

Agreed:

1. *That Schools Forum members note the information contained within this report.*
2. *That Schools Forum members note that the centrally retained early years balance is subject to change as this will be dependent on the early years adjustment for the Spring 2023 census count. Within the figures, an anticipated increase of £31.5k has been accounted for.*

7. SEND SUFFICIENCY PHASE 4 (REPORTS AS PRESENTED TO CABINET ON 19TH JUNE 2023)

Consideration was given to the reports which Nathan Heath, Assistant Director: Education and Inclusion introduced. He explained that the agenda pack contained the two reports that were presented to Cabinet on Monday 19 June 2023.

The reports sought formal approval to release Cabinet and revenue funding to increase the number of SEND places available in Rotherham. He explained the original ask was for 100 places but approval for 140 places would provide additional assurance including the ability to consider growth.

Significant support had been received from the Department for Education.

The interest from schools in hosting a resource base provision met the initial requirement for SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 with the additional interest shown providing additional capacity to support future phases of SEND Sufficiency particularly in relation to additional SEMH places.

The updated Rotherham School's Accessibility Strategy identified all schools' statutory responsibilities to support their pupils and the support available to schools from the Council in relation to their own Accessibility planning.

An allocation of £375k for the next 4 years for both mainstream and special schools was approved by Council in October 2022 as part of SEND Sufficiency phase 4. The application process was not complicated, and applications were expected when it opened in July 2023. The second phase of this was for special schools.

It was explained that one of the challenges were there were a number of schools that were not set up for the needs of their current cohorts. It was expected that in the first round there would be some immediate bids for adaptations to existing school buildings that had come offline to bring them back into use.

Agreed:

1. *That Schools Forum members note the information contained within these reports.*

8. SAFETY VALVE UPDATE

Consideration was given to the update from Nathan Heath, Assistant Director: Education and Inclusion. It was explained that Rotherham remained on course and on track in all areas of the Safety Valve agreement. Members of the Forum may be aware from the wider context that a number of Local Authorities were challenged to align to the parameters however Rotherham was in a strong position.

There was capacity within all SEND schools.

The second round of pay increments for support staff would have a direct impact on the cost base but this was being considered along with capital project trajectories in wider discussions with the DfE.

Agreed: That the updated be noted.

9. TEACHERS NJC PAY AWARD AND APTC PAY AWARD (DEFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING)

Consideration was given to the Teachers NJC and APTC Pay awards update, introduced by Amy leech, HR Business Partner, CYPS. She explained that the report set out what was being offered for support staff, which equated to a 9.42% pay award at SCP2 and a 3.88% pay award at SCP43.

Teachers and leaders had been offered an average pay rise of 4.5% in 2023-2024 and the Government had announced it would provide further funding for the pay awards.

All of the pay awards had not been agreed by the Unions and the pay award details would not be confirmed until March / April time.

It was noted that some schools were including those projections within their provisions.

It was agreed that an overview of the step funding would be provided at the next meeting.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum:

1. Noted the update.
2. Agreed that an overview of the step funding be provided at the next meeting.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no urgent business items to consider.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed: That the next meeting of the Schools' Forum take place on Friday, 22 September 2023 at 8.30 a.m. at Rockingham Professional Development Centre.