

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM
FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2023**

In Attendance:

Steve Rhodes – Winterhill (Academy) (in the Chair)
Deborah Ball - Treeton Primary (Primary Academy)
Guiseppe DiLasio – Wales (Academy)
Chris Eccles – Oakwood (Academy)
Lynsey Hadfield – Executive Head, Arnold Nursery (Observer)
Neil Hardwick – Head of Finance, CYPS
David Horrigan – Maltby Learning Trust (Primary Academy)
Louise Keith – Principal Finance Officer, CYPS
Lisa McCall – Wales (Academy)
Angela McComb – Primary Maintained Governor
Lee Morritt - Aspire
Vera Njegic - Principal Finance Officer, CYPS
Kirsty Peart - Sitwell Infant (Maintained)
Colin Price – NEU Representative
Mark Ryan – RNN Group
Karen Smith – Nexus MAT (Special Academy)
Sharon Stones – Head of Arnold Nursery and Children’s Centre
Sarah Whitby - 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
Amy Leech - HR Business Partner, CYPS
Alan Richards – Secondary Governor
Steve Scott – Happy Kids (PVI Nursery)
Nevine Towers – Diocese of Sheffield
Pam Ward – Head of Service, Education, CYPS

12. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were made.

14. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes from the previous meeting held on 23rd June 2023.

Agreed: That the minutes be approved.

15. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

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

Consideration was given to the membership and constitution of the Rotherham Schools Forum as at September 2023 and the suggested changes for approval.

Agreed: (1) That Lee Morritt, the new Head of Aspire replace Lianne Camaish as the PRU Head Representative.

(2) That Mark Ryan of RNN Group replace Melanie Smith as the 16-19 Provider representative.

(3) That the resignation be received from Phil Wilkinson of ACET (Secondary Academy Representative).

17. EARLY YEARS UPLIFT IN RATES

Consideration was given to the report on Early Years Uplift in Rates which Neil Hardwick, Head of Finance, CYPS introduced. He explained that a number of early education / childcare changes had been proposed in the Governments' March budget as detailed in Minute No.110 of the meeting of the Schools Forum held on 28th April, 2023.

The report provided details on the proposed implementation dates for the early education / childcare changes noting that an implementation date relating to changes to wraparound care had not yet been confirmed.

Information was provided on the proposed indicative Autumn 2023 uplift of hourly rates to providers which considers the increase for the DfE supplementary rate, and passporting the supplementary increase to providers through the normal payment routes, in full accordance with DfE guidance.

The Early Years and Childcare Service are currently carrying out the annual childcare sufficiency assessment and this year's analysis would include projected impact of the increased entitlements.

The proposed increase in early education funding rates for 2 and 3-4 year olds from September 2023 was highlighted as a key issue, however it was noted that information relating to the formal implementation of the changes was still awaited.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum members note the information contained within this report.

18. TEACHERS PAY ADDITIONAL GRANT (TPAG)

Consideration was given to the report which Louise Keith, Principal Officer, CYPS introduced. It was explained that in July 2023 the Department for Education (DfE) announced further funding for schools through the teachers pay additional grant (TPAG) in 2023/24 to meet the costs of the 2023/24 pay award.

Indicative allocations have been published and these were referenced in Appendix 1 of the report.

Local Authority's (LA's) would receive payment for mainstream maintained schools in October 2023 to cover the period September 2023 to March 2024 and 100% of these funds would be passed directly to schools.

Academies would receive their funding direct from DfE in November to cover the period September 2023 to March 2024.

In 2024-25 TPAG would continue to be paid as a separate grant. Local Authority maintained mainstream schools would receive one payment on a date yet to be confirmed to cover the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

Mainstream academies would also receive an additional allocation of TPAG to cover April to August 2025 as their funding cycle follows the academic year and would cover the period before the grant was moved to academies core budget allocations.

LA's would receive 2 payments for special and AP schools in 2023 to 2024. The first payment would be made to LA's in October based on place numbers and a second payment would be made in March 2024 using updated place numbers. These allocations would be passed on in their entirety to the special school or provision.

The DfE are in the process of developing a teachers pay additional grant (TPAG) for early years, details of which they expect to communicate in the autumn.

Additional funding for 16-19 students would not be through a separate TPAG, but would be through an uplift in mainstream 16-19 funding for the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

It was noted that the LA was not aware of any pay award uplifts to APT&C staff. No agreement has been reached on this matter and further guidance was expected to follow.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum members receive the report and note

the information contained within this report.

19. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY IN 2023 TO 2024

Consideration was given to the report which Louise Keith, Principal Officer, CYPS introduced.

Reference was made to the guidance note from the Department for Education which provided details on additional funding that was being made available to support schools in financial difficulty in 2023 to 2024.

The additional funding would be used to expand the department's existing support route available to academies and help local authorities to expand the support provided to their maintained schools.

Further details on arrangements for allocation and distribution of funding to local authorities would be provided in due course.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum members receive the report and note the update provided.

20. EDUCATION SAFEGUARDING ROLE UPDATE

Consideration was given to the update from Neil Hardwick, Head of Finance, CYPS. It was explained that discussions have been taking place about the new Education Safeguarding role and its associated funding. Conversations are now progressing, and information would be disseminated in the near future on what the offer would look like. Information on the next steps would also be communicated.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum members note the update provided.

21. SAFETY VALVE UPDATE

Consideration was given to the update from Neil Hardwick, Head of Finance, CYPS. He explained that the 2nd quarter update for this financial year had been submitted to the Safety Valve Team and an update on the current financial position was provided.

It was noted that there had been some mitigating risks to the current reported position linked to the cost of living and inflation pressures, however, Rotherham remained in a strong position to meet its commitments.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum members note the update provided.

22. HIGH NEEDS SUB-GROUP UPDATE

Consideration was given to the update from Neil Hardwick, Head of Finance, CYPS. He explained that support would be offered to Pam Ward to re-establish meetings of the High Needs Sub Group. Outcomes from those meetings would be fed back to future School Forum meetings.

All previous Members of the Sub Group would receive an invite to attend future scheduled meetings and new representatives would also be welcomed.

A new Chair would need to be identified for the Sub Group.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum members note that the High Needs Sub Group would be re-established and outcomes from the High Needs Sub Group meetings would be fed back to future Schools Forum meetings.

23. RAAC (REINFORCED AUTOCLAVED AERATED CONCRETE) USE IN SCHOOLS UPDATE

Consideration was given to the update from Neil Hardwick, Head of Finance, CYPS. He explained that a review of all schools in the borough had been undertaken to check if RAAC had been used. It was confirmed that Rotherham are not aware of any RAAC being present in any of their school buildings.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum members note the update provided.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair invited Forum Members to share any other items for business.

(a) Staffing Update

Neil Hardwick, Head of Finance, CYPS confirmed the following staffing changes:

- 1) Nathan Heath had left the position of Assistant Director of Education. Pam Ward would be covering the school's element of the role and Aileen Chambers would be covering the education support services element. Cover arrangements would continue until a permanent appointment to the Assistant Director of Education could be made.
- 2) Julie Day, Head of Inclusion had left Rotherham MBC and Tracey Jubb was the Interim Head of Inclusion. Caryanne Sykes would be the new permanent Head of Inclusion from the 2nd October.

Agreed: That the Schools Forum members note the update provided.

(b) Future Agenda Items

The Chair sought views from School Forum members about bringing forward agenda items for more detailed discussion. It was noted that information regarding Exclusion data, PRU numbers and High Needs Sub Group feedback had all been previously presented to the Forum and Forum members agreed this had been useful.

It was agreed that the Clerk for the meeting would send out an agenda item request to all School Forum members one week prior to the agenda setting meeting. Any items put forward by Forum members would then be discussed and agreed with the Chair at the agenda setting meeting.

It was agreed it would be useful to create a Forward Plan of agenda items for the next 12 months.

Agreed: (1) That the Clerk to the Schools Forum issue a request for agenda items to all School Forum members one week prior to the agenda setting meeting and notify the Chair of any items put forward at the agenda setting meeting.

(2) Establish a Forward Plan of agenda items for the next 12 months.

25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting of the Schools' Forum take place on Friday, 17th November, 2023 at 8.30 a.m. at Rockingham Professional Development Centre.