

**ROTHERHAM SCHOOLS' FORUM  
FRIDAY 13 JANUARY 2023**

**In Attendance:-**

Steve Rhodes – Winterhill (Academy) (in the Chair)  
 Deborah Ball - Treeton Primary (Primary Academy)  
 Lianne Camaish, Aspire  
 Aileen Chambers, Head of Early Years and Childcare, CYPS  
 Julie Day, Head of SEND, CYPS  
 Dr. Spira Deb (PVI Nursery)  
 Guiseppe DiLasio – Wales (Academy)  
 Chris Eccles – Oakwood (Academy)  
 Lynsey Hadfield – Executive Head, Arnold Nursery (Observer)  
 Neil Hardwick – Head of Finance, CYPS  
 Nathan Heath – Assistant Director of Education, CYPS  
 David Horrigan – Maltby Academy Trust (Primary Academy)  
 Angela McComb – Primary Maintained Governor  
 Vera Njelic - Principal Finance Officer, RMBC  
 Kirsty Peart - Sitwell Infant (Maintained)  
 Colin Price – NEU Representative  
 Alan Richards – Secondary Governor  
 Steve Scott – Happy Kids (PVI Nursery)  
 Melanie Smith – RNN Group (16-19)  
 Karen Smith – Nexus MAT (Special Academy)  
 Sharon Stones – Head of Arnold Nursery and Children’s Centre  
 Nevine Towers – Diocese of Sheffield  
 Pam Ward – Head of Service, Education, CYPS  
 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 Davies, Principal, Wingfield Academy  
 Andy Krabbendam – CEO JMAT (Academy)  
 David Naisibitt, CEO, Inspire Trust  
 Colin Price, NEU

**88. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

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

**89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest reported.

**90. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Consideration was given to the minutes from the previous meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2022.

Agreed:- That the minutes be approved.

**91. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

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

Consideration was given to the membership and constitution of the Schools Forum and the suggested changes for approval.

Agreed:- That Dr. Spira. Deb, inclusion as a Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector Nursery Representative, be approved for a period of four years.

**93. 2023/2024 EARLY YEARS FUNDING FORMULA**

Consideration was given to the report presented by Aileen Chambers and Neil Hardwick which detailed the statutory guidance in place for the allocation of early education funding; the current position and proposals for the 2023/24 allocation.

The Department for Education (DfE) had consulted on changes to the National Funding Formula for 2023/24. The outcome of the consultation was published on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and included some changes to the National Funding Formula.

Local Authorities were, therefore, required to allocate the funding to early education providers based on a local funding formula made up of a single base rate and a mandatory deprivation supplement (for 3/4 year old early education). Local Authorities could retain 5% of the 3/4 year old early years funding allocation to fund central services.

Local Authorities were also required to consult providers on annual changes to their local formula, including the Schools Forum, on changes to local early years funding formulas, including agreeing central spend by 28th February, 2023 whilst noting the final decision rested with the Local Authority.

Details were shared on the options available, single funding formulae, benefits and risks for consideration and agreement and were detailed as:-

**Option 1:-**

Retain the current local funding formula in 2023/24 as set out in detail as part of the report with the TPPG added to the base rate to be distributed to all providers.

**Option 2:-**

Change the current Single Funding Formula to include a supplement to passport the TPPG element to schools with a proposal to introduce a Quality Supplement for schools/providers who employ a QTS to directly deliver their Foundation 1 class.

The DfE have allocated an amount of 13p /hour for all 3/4 year olds taking up a place at January, 2022 census to passport the appropriate amount of TPPG into the budget.

The equivalent amount of TPPG received by schools in 2022/23 ranged from 13p to 36p/h with the average rate being 20p/hour. Maintaining the average rate of 20p/hour for the schools who would be eligible to receive TPPG would enable the base rate to be enhanced by 18p/hour for all providers.

The appendix attached to the report detailed the extracts from the DfE Early Years Funding Operational Guidance 2023/24 which outlined expectations.

Historically schools have received TPPG based on the total number of 2,3 and 4 year olds on roll at January census. The TPPG element mainstreamed into the Early Years Block had been calculated based on all 3 and 4 year olds accessing early education across the school and PVI sector at January census.

It was highly likely that an extra-ordinary meeting of the Schools Forum may be required in March, 2023 for a formal decision following consultation.

Discussion ensued on the implications for the PVI sector in the context of pressures and how Option 1 could place some nurseries in jeopardy. In addition the sector were experiencing difficulty in sustaining and recruiting relevant staff.

Alternatively the view was some schools believed they would lose out under Option 2 and seventeen schools had indicated they were not employing qualified teachers for three and four year olds, which was a concern in terms of the quality of provision.

The pros and cons of each option were commented on and a number of questions had been raised prior to the meeting where it was noted that the rationale for Option 1 would increase the base rate.

Where schools under both options were receiving less funding this was because the equivalent amount that the schools were receiving previously in TPPG were higher than the proposed current increases (27p for Option 1 or 18p for Option 2).

Forum Members were advised they were not being asked to vote on the options before them , but to indicate a preference as part of the consultation process.

Agreed:- That Option 1 be recommended for approval for consultation:-

- That the local funding formula be maintained with the TPPG additional element added to the base rate and distributed across all provider types.

#### **94. 2023/2024 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT SCHOOL BLOCK FUNDING FORMULA**

Consideration was given to the report presented by Vera Njelic, Principal Officer (Schools Finance), which provided an update as to the 2023/2024 Dedicated Schools Grant funding for Rotherham.

On 16th December 2022, the Department for Education issued the indicative DSG allocations for the 2023/2024 financial year (detailed within the report).

In terms of the Schools Block the final allocation was mainly based on funding rates of £4,915.14 for primary children (£4,658.05 in 2022/2023) and £6,426.61 for secondary children (£6,138.15 in 2022/2023) as at the October 2022 pupil census counts plus actual amounts for premises related costs and historic pupil growth.

The October 2022 census count showed that there were a total number of pupils across the borough of 40,023; this was an increase of 147 (+18 in primary & +129 in secondary) pupils from the October, 2021 census count.

Details were provided on overall school block funding allocation which had increased from £218.36m in 2022/2023 to £230.617m in 2023/2024.

In accordance with Minute 83 of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2022, the request to transfer 1.5% from the school block to the high needs block was submitted to the Secretary of State. If this request did not gain approval 0.5% would only be transferred.

A further report providing details of the rates applied to the individual formula funding rates would be presented the next meeting in April 2023. The rates applied would continue to be in line with the previous decisions reached in respect of the gradual transition to the national

funding formula

Details on the Central Services Schools Block and rates for pupil premium in 2023 to 2024 were announced on 16th December 2022 were referred to as detailed in the report submitted.

Further in the 2023 to 2024 financial year, mainstream schools would be allocated additional funding through the mainstream schools additional grant (MSAG) 2023 to 2024. This was in addition to schools' allocations through the schools national funding formula.

The grant would be allocated based on various elements and rates using data from the October 2022 census and school level allocations and the conditions of grant would be published in May 2023

Agreed:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

#### **95. SAFETY VALVE**

Consideration was given to an update from Nathan Heath, Assistant Director for Education, on the High Needs Safety Valve Quarter 3 arrangements aligned to the Local Authority's trajectory.

With the Government's announcement about additional funding it could be that in future years the arrangements move off plan. Once the position was clear a further update would be provided in detail to the High Needs Sub-Group and to the Schools Forum in due course.

Agreed:- That the update be received and the contents noted.

#### **96. ROTHERHAM'S NOTIONAL SEN ADDITIONAL FUNDING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA - MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES (DEFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING)**

Further to Minute No. 84 of the previous meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 consideration was given to the report presented by Neil Hardwick, Head of Schools Finance, which highlighted the process schools should follow when requesting additional funding.

In response to queries about the percentage splits, the mismatch between notional SEN budget and actual costs of SEN support and how this linked to exclusions, it was noted that Rotherham's schools' notional SEN budget was calculated and passported out from a separate fund as:-

- a small part of the basic entitlement funding; **5%**.
- a larger part of deprivation funding, reflecting the higher prevalence of lower-level SEN amongst disadvantaged pupils **50%**, and
- the majority or whole of the low prior attainment factor funding, as this is the best proxy we currently have for pupils with low-cost,

high-incidence SEN **100%**.

It was shown as a single figure and denoted the element of a school budget share which was notionally intended to support both existing SEN pupils with Low Cost / High Incidence SEN, and the first £6,000 of support for high-cost pupils.

It is important to note that the notional SEN budget was not intended to provide £6,000 for every pupil with SEN, as most such pupils' support would cost less than that. Nor was the notional SEN budget intended to provide a specific amount per pupil for those with lower additional support costs, even though the Local Authority may make reasonable assumptions about what those costs might be for the purpose of ensuring that their schools' notional SEN budget calculation was realistic.

To assist schools with the calculation, the service have notionally assumed that approximately:-

- 25% of the notional SEN will be used to support low cost / high incidence SEN
- 75% of the notional SEN budget will be used to support the first £6,000 of high cost pupils.

It was then estimated that 75% of the notional figure should meet the 'high cost' pupil numbers, at a rate of £6,000 per pupil.

In some cases, however, a mismatch between the notional SEN budget and actual costs of SEN support may be because the school had a disproportionate number of 'high cost' pupils with SEN in relation to its size.

In this instance the Local Authority could provide targeted funding from its High Needs budget to schools in such exceptional circumstances. This would be where the 'high cost' pupils were higher than the number outlined in the notional assumptions.

Forum Members acknowledged the struggles some schools were facing with pupils with high needs and the risks of potential exclusions and it was suggested that these issues be considered in more detail at the High Needs Sub-Group.

It was also noted that the long awaited Green Paper was in response to the widespread recognition that the system was failing to deliver for children, young people and their families and that a national SEND delivery plan would be published setting out the Government's response to the consultation and how the proposals would be implemented.

Forum Members heard about the significant increase in permanent exclusions including across the primary sector which was intrinsically linked to the high demand for SEMH support.

The Forum agreed to re-look at this issue in April and asked for this to be included as an agenda item.

**Agreed:-** (1) That how Notional SEN budgets are calculated, when it might be appropriate to seek additional resources and how, be received and noted.

(2) That this issue be included as an item on the agenda for the April, 2023 meeting to facilitate further information.

**97. ADDITIONAL CAPITAL FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS TO IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN SCHOOLS IN 2022-2023**

Consideration was given to an update by Neil Hardwick, Head of Schools Finance, on the additional capital funding for schools to improve energy efficiency in 2022-23 and how eligible schools and sixth-form colleges would receive an allocation from an additional £447 million in capital funding in 2022-23 for capital improvements to buildings and facilities, prioritising works to improve energy efficiency. This was part of an additional £500 million in capital funding for schools and further education institutions in England.

The funding would be made available to institutions already eligible for Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) allocations in the financial year 2022-23. This included eligible maintained nursery, primary, secondary, and special schools, academies and free schools, pupil referral units, non-maintained special schools, sixth form colleges and specialist post-16 institutions with eligible students. Schools could decide how best to invest the capital funding on energy efficiency measures.

**Agreed:-** That the information be received and noted.

**98. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

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

(a) Early Education Funding Proposals

That further to Minute No. 93 of this meeting consideration be given to an extraordinary virtual meeting of the Schools Forum to agree the recommended option in March, 2023. Details will be confirmed.

**99. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Agreed:-** That the next meeting of the Schools' Forum take place on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 at 8.30 a.m. at Rockingham Professional Development Centre.