

SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT FORUM
MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON:
WEDNESDAY 19 MAY 2021 @ 9:15AM

ATTENDING:

<u>Maintained Primary School Representatives</u>	
Julie Rodwell	Park End Primary School
Beverley Hewitt Best	Newham Bridge Primary School
Adam Cooper	Abingdon Primary School
<u>Maintained School Governor Representative</u>	
Jo Smith	Governor
<u>Maintained Special School Representative</u>	
Janis French	Priory Woods School
<u>PRU Representative</u>	
Helen Steele (Vice-Chair)	Caldicotes Primary Academy
Sarah Lymer	Linthorpe Community Primary School
Emma Watson	The Avenue Primary School
Amy Young	Captain Cook Primary School
Kate Barkley	Viewley Hill Primary
<u>Secondary Academy Representatives</u>	
Andrea Crawshaw (Chair)	Acklam Grange School
Mary Brindle	Macmillan Academy
Andy Rodgers	Unity City Academy
Anita Jeffries	Archibald
David Dawes	Kings Academy
<u>PVI Representatives</u>	
Afzal Kushi	PVI Sector
<u>16-19 Representative</u>	
Jenny Cairns	Middlesbrough College
<u>Local Authority Officers</u>	
Rob Brown	Director of Education, Prevention & Partnership
Dianne Nielsen	Senior Accounting Officer – MBC
Karen Smith	Head of Achievement
Trevor Dunn	Head of Access to Education
Sheila Marley	School Readiness Team Manager - MBC
Judi Libbey	Head of Resources
Gary Maddison	Strategic School Planning Manager
Steven Dawson	Clerk
<u>Observers</u>	
Brendan Fox	
Maxine Bates	Breckon Hill Primary School
Louise Davies	Linthorpe Primary
Michael Laidler	Acklam Grange School
Andrea Cattermole	Whinney Banks Primary School
Sandy Thorpe	Whinney Banks Primary School
Jackie Lowe	Viewley Hill

	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/ANY ITEMS FOR AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sue Butcher - Executive Director of Children Services • A Kershaw • M Brant-Smith • James Howlett <p>There were no items notified for discussion as Any Other Business</p>
<p>2</p> <p>2.1</p> <p>2.2</p>	<p><u>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING/MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2021 were circulated prior to the meeting. The following amendment was agreed before the minutes were accepted as a true record of proceedings:</p> <p>Item 7.1 – Amend the second sentence so that it reads "The schools had lost an element of funding for the first two weeks following children moving to another nursery setting, during the recent lockdown."</p> <p>RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2021, as amended be approved for signature by the Chair.</p>
<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p><u>DECISION/ACTION LOG</u></p> <p><u>Item 5 – Post 16 consultation</u></p> <p>Consultation had taken place with the Post 16 providers with a consistent agreement in place across the Tees Valley. That was currently being implemented. A representative explained that they had not had sight of the agreement with that to be forwarded following the meeting. ACTION</p> <p><u>Item 7.2 – Pupil Premium Funding</u></p> <p>Mr R Brown provided an update on Pupil Premium funding and the changes to the methodology was a national issue. Based on the changes, it would affect 478 children and young people in Middlesbrough. In effect, schools would be receiving an additional element of funding to cover catch up and at the same time would be losing an element of Pupil Premium funding. The local authority was looking to mitigate the impact as best as it could with lobbying continuing to take place with the government in relation to the changes.</p> <p>David Dawes joined the meeting</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p><u>TERMS OF REFERENCE/CONSTITUTION</u></p> <p>The Clerk explained that it was the annual update to the terms of reference and that it would be brought back to the next meeting to highlight any membership changes. It was noted that there had been some changes to the membership as well as substitutes. There were some representatives that had not provided any details of their substitute as yet.</p>

4.2	A change had been included previously in relation to remote meetings, with that being a permanent change to the Schools Forum Regulations which would mean that remote meetings could take place indefinitely if required.
4.3	A discussion took place regarding future meetings and if there was a preference for meetings to continue and take place virtually or for those to return to face to face meetings when it was safe to do so. It was highlighted that the virtual meetings had worked well although there had been some frustrations, particularly with technology.
4.4	A representative questioned if there was the potential of a blended approach with some attending face to face and others attending remotely. It was agreed that the next meeting would take place with representatives having the option to attend face to face, providing it was safe to do so and others attending remotely.
4.5	A representative discussed the earlier start time of meetings and that had appeared to work well with an agreement to continue with the earlier start time.
4.6	With regards to the next academic year, representatives were advised that Andrea Crawshaw who Chaired Schools Management Forum, would be retiring at the end of the academic year and stepping down from her position as a representative and as Chair. It would mean that a new Chair would need to be appointed as well as a new Secondary Academy Representative. It was proposed that Michael Laidler from Acklam Grange School be appointed as the Secondary Academy Representative with effect from 1 September 2021.
4.7	With regards to the position of Chair that was something that could be agreed at the current meeting or for that to take place at the next meeting. If that was deferred to the next meeting, Helen Steele, the current Vice Chair could cover the position of Chair for an interim period. For anyone that was interested, there was the opportunity to discuss the position with the current Chair or the Clerk outside of the meeting. It was agreed that the appointment of Chair would be deferred to the next meeting which would allow the opportunity for someone that was interested to have a discussion with the current Chair. Although the current Chair would be retiring, she would be still involved in education and there would be the opportunity for a handover period.
4.8	Mr R Brown thanked the Chair and for her work over the years, not only for her commitment to Schools Management Forum but for the wider impact she had in education across Middlesbrough.
5.	<u>DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) 2020/21 OUTTURN</u>
5.1	A copy of a report was circulated prior to the meeting which outlined the provisional DSG outturn for the 2020/21 financial year. The local authority was currently finalising the end of year of year position. The final draft DSG outturn for 2020-21 was an overspend of £508,764.52. The total variance

	for the High Needs Block was an in-year overspend of £827,127.02. That was due to the ongoing pressures of demand and support needs of children.
5.2	In 2020-21 there had been a support services savings of £342,000. Some of that was due to Covid-19. It included savings through Early Years Specialist Support Service, additional admin costs and savings through SEN Support. The cumulative overspend to date was £3,902,166.
5.3	Mrs J Libby provided an overview of Early Years spending with an overspend of £74,266.26. The budget for 3 and 4 year old funding in mainstream schools and Private Voluntary Independent (PVI) settings was overspent by £148,625. Of that £455,995 related to prior years which was something that would need to be looked at. There was a payment for 2019-20 of £125,740 received in July 2020. That mean to the 3 and 4 year old in year position had an underspend of £181.600. In addition, the budget for 2 year old funding for 2020/21 was underspent by £188,930 which was based on payments paid.
5.4	The cumulative position for Early Years was an underspend of £396,023.95 and would be carried forward for Early Years purposes. However, forum was advised that the figure was provisional as the local authority had not received the final allocation for 2020-21. That would usually be received by July with that now not expected until November 2021. Any balances that were remaining would be used to balance the future Early Years funding formula.
5.5	Due to the pandemic and the take up of early years funding, the Department for Education (DfE) had based 2020-21 funding on the January 2020 census for April to December 2020 and the January 2021 census for January to March 2021. Eligible local authorities could also receive top-up funding for the spring term in their Early Years DSG funding allocation for the 2020-2021 financial year.
5.6	The DfE aimed to fund any claims based on a mid-point attendance level. That would be a combination of Spring 2021 census and the summer count. Local authorities would receive notification of their final 2020-21 allocation adjustments in September 2021 with those published in November 2021
5.7	The funding would be paid based on the census for each term for 2021-22 and would continue to be paid, based on those terms. It was uncertain as yet, if that process would continue beyond the current financial year.
5.8	There was an underspend in the Central Schools Services Block of £48,289. That was due to overheads being fixed to £64,200 resulting in an underspend. In addition, there was an underspend on Admissions and Education Admin as well as a small overspend on the Speech & Language contract. The underspend would be carried forward into the 2021-22 financial year.
5.9	It was highlighted din the Schools Block that there was an underspend in the Growth Fund of £195,806.89. It was agreed in the January meeting to roll the balance forward to create the 2021-22 Growth Fund.

<p>5.10</p> <p>5.11</p> <p>5.12</p> <p>5.13</p>	<p>With regards to De-delegation and Trade Union facility time for 2019-20 it had been highlighted previously that there had been an underspend of £27,835.47. For, 2020-21 Union Facility Time had also underspent by £28,872.67. All schools who bought in to the 2019-20 and 2020-21 Union Facility Time had now received a refund.</p> <p>A summary was provided of the funding that was available for reallocation with an overspend of £508,764.52 as of 31 March 2021 with a total DSG overspend of £3,291,132.04.</p> <p>There had been discussions previously about the deficit and it was acknowledged that it was high. However, there were other local authorities where the deficit was significant higher in relation to the underfunding in High Needs. The local authority would have to develop a Recovery Plan which would be reported at future meetings.</p> <p>Schools Forum was asked to note the current position in the draft DSG and note the carry forward of the School Block, High Needs, Early Years and Central School Service Block balances.</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p>	<p>DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON SCHOOLS IN MIDDLESBROUGH</p> <p>Mr G Maddison attended the meeting to provide an update on the demographic change in Middlesbrough and the potential impact that could have on schools. There had been a discussion previously about funding potentially being available to support schools that were experiencing the biggest impact from that.</p> <p>In recent years, there had been an issue with falling pupil numbers for secondary schools with that changing in the previous two to three years. The local authority was now asking secondary schools to take in additional children.</p> <p>The main issue at the present time related to primary schools due to a falling birth rate which was impacting on the number of children joining in Reception. For schools who had not been as successful as others, those were beginning to see an impact in fewer children joining the schools. The intakes were approximately 8% lower than previously and that was being felt by schools, with the impact on budgets. Schools had been asking about what plans and protection was in place. The difficulty, was that pupil numbers were expected to continue and fall and there was at least another five years expected from falling birth rates. That would have an impact on schools longer term and would impact on budgets.</p> <p>There had been a number of queries from schools asking what support was available and if there was a facility that could be set aside for a falling schools roll fund.</p> <p>Although that was something that the local authority could consider, when looking at the guidance on what that could be used for, it was not believed</p>

	<p>that it was to be used to cover falling pupils numbers on roll. It was available where there was a risk that pupil numbers would be reduced for a short term period before the school would again see growth. It would be where classes may have to be closed, but there was the understanding that they would be required in the future. The falling school roll fund would cover the shortfall before pupil numbers increased again and ensured that the school continued to have capacity to teach the children.</p> <p>6.6 The local authority had considered using that once before with the specifics being around housing clearances in an area. It would have seen a significant number of houses demolished in an area which would impact on the schools with children being dispersed before new housing was rebuilt. That was the type of situation that the falling roll fund would cover until the numbers of children increased and budgets increased. In the end, the local authority had not had to use that fund as the housing clearance did not take place. It was something that could be kept under review and if schools were at risk as a result of losing places, it could be something that was looked at an appropriate time.</p> <p>6.7 Mr R Brown explained that part of focus of the issue would be for Schools Management Forum and another aspect would be to be discussed with schools in a different forum. It was suggested that a discussion took place with schools outside of Forum and that it would be beneficial to come back to Forum if looking at a Falling school roll fund.</p> <p>Mr G Maddison left the meeting</p>
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p>	<p>NOTICE PERIODS</p> <p>Mrs K Smith discussed an agreement that was going out to schools and in particular for the PVI settings that related to a three week notice period for families. A precedence was set in relation to the notice period for children leaving settings. The suggestion was to have a three week notice period for parents that were looking to change settings. It would allow for consistency and equality around children potentially leaving a setting and joining another. The offer of the three weeks' notice period would be included in the contracts.</p> <p>A representative questioned the reason for the three week notice period. Mrs Smith explained that the timescales were in line other local authorities. Where parents were choosing to move to another setting, it would mean that by giving notice, it would allow schools the opportunity to look at the impact with staffing and capacity. It was something that could be built into the contracts when parents first signed up.</p> <p>The local authority had contracts in place with the PVI settings for taking funded children. It had been out to consultation in the previous year and was ongoing through legal.</p> <p>There had been a number of conversations take place regarding the short notice between PVI settings and schools. What the local authority was saying was to get the transition right so the details of the child would move with them.</p>

	At the same time it would ensure that there was time for the setting to ensure that the correct staffing was in place.
7.5	Settings would work to ensure that their staff to pupil ratios were right then not receive as many children as they were expecting. The main reasons were around those practicalities and was something that had been discussed with PVLs for period of time. The precedence was that the majority of other local authorities had a three week notice period.
7.6	A representative discussed the proposal and assumed that it was predominantly around Early Years provision and families accessing pre-school support and those were the reasons for the three week notice period. The representative questioned whether that was something that could be enforced as it was the parents' choice where they took their child. It was highlighted that would be included within the contract. A representative explained that they were struggling to see how that would impact on schools settings as schools could not change staffing in that time. A question was raised on how that worked in other local authorities. It was highlighted that it was to bring consistency to the pre-school agenda and have the same expectations in schools and PVLs. It was about shared expectations and parental choice, whilst ensuring that settings were not being disadvantaged.
7.7	A representative questioned if the local authority was recommending that a contract be implemented for all children access Early Years provision. The local authority was not advocating a contract as that was already in place. In absence of a contract it was suggested to include a three week notice period to inform any setting.
7.8	There were concerns raised that the notice period would not be enforceable for schools and that it part of transition arrangements and it was parental choice. If offering a place for 2-year-old provision, schools would be asking PVLs to forwarded any information when the child was moving.
7.9	A representative discussed the proposal and agreed that on paper it looked a good idea. However, the issue would be on how that work in practice and what a setting would do if the child just left a setting. There could be occasions where that happened. As part of the practice, parents would be encouraged to offer a three week notice period.
7.10	A representative discussed the three week notice period and that would not sit well with some groups of children such as asylum seekers. It was also noted that representatives could not see many families doing this. It was reiterated that it was something that was in place within other local authorities and was working. It was agreed to look at examples on how that had worked in other local authorities in practice.
8.	<u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u>
	There were no items discussed as Any Other Business.

<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p> <p>9.3</p> <p>9.4</p>	<p><u>MEETING DATES 2021-22</u></p> <p>The following meeting dates had been suggested for the next academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 13 October 2021 at 9.15am • Wednesday 24 November 2021 at 9.15 am • Wednesday 12 January 2022 at 9.15am • Wednesday 2 March 2022 at 9.15am • Wednesday 18 May 2022 at 9.15 am <p>It was agreed earlier in the that a blended approach would be taken so that some could attend face to face and other virtually. It was agreed that future meetings would take place through Microsoft Teams as opposed to Cisco We-Ex.</p> <p>Mr R Brown reiterated his appreciation of the Chair and that on behalf of all schools across Middlesbrough she would be missed. He thanked Mrs Crawshaw for all of her involvement over the years and wished her all the best for the future</p> <p>RESOLVED that the meeting dates outlined above were approved.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><u>ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the post 16 agreement to be forwarded to representatives. • Terms of Reference to be brought back to the next meeting to highlight any membership changes. • Appointment of Chair to be included as an Agenda Item for the next meeting
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u></p> <p>The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 13 October 2021 at 9.15am.</p> <p>The Chair recorded her thanks to everyone for their attendance.</p> <p>Meeting Closed: 10:05 am</p> <p>Approved on _____ (date)</p> <p>Signature (Chair) _____</p> <p>Name _____</p>