

## SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT FORUM

### MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON, WEDNESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2020 @ 8:15AM

#### ATTENDING:

Andrea Crawshaw	Chair / Acklam Grange School
Judi Libbey	Head of Resources and SEN – MBC
Dianne Nielsen	Senior Accountant – MBC
Sara Davidson	Head of Achievement and Inclusion
Rob Brown	Director of Prevention and Partnerships – MBC
Beverley Hewitt-Best	Newham Bridge Primary School
Mary Brindle	Macmillan Academy
Helen Steele	Caldicotes Academy
Julia Rodwell	Park End
Kevin Duffy	Diocese of Middlesbrough
Joanne Smith	Breckon Hill
Jackie Walsh	Green Lane Primary School
Adam Cooper	Abingdon Primary
Sarah Lymer	Linthorpe Primary School
Anita Jeffries	Archibald
Beverley Hewitt Best	Newham Bridge
Janis French	Priory Woods
Emma Watson	The Avenue
Leanne Chilton	RTMAT
Judi Libbey	Head of Resources and SEN MBC
Andy Rogers	
Jennifer Cairns	Senior Families
Barrie Cooper	Councillor/Executive member for Children's Services
Nathan Bulley	
Polly Wright	Commissioning Team
Helen Dalby	
Helen Bone	
Tracey Houston	
Sean Peterson	
Robbie Faulds	NEU
Simon Kennedy	NUSWT
Jackie Lowe	

<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>Apologies for Absence / Any Items for AOB</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afzal Kushi -PVI</li> <li>• William Guthrie- PVI</li> <li>• Amy Young – Captain Cook</li> </ul>
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2.	<p><b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting / Matters Arising</u></b></p> <p>Members wished to make the following amendment to the minutes of the meeting of 8th July 2020.</p> <p>Attendance - Add Mrs A Jeffries, Headteacher of Archibald Primary School.</p>
3.	<p><b><u>Decision / Action Log</u></b></p> <p><u>Constitution</u></p> <p>Further to the minutes members were informed that Mrs Janis French had been appointed as a School Management Representative.</p> <p>It was agreed that all items within the decision/action log had been completed.</p>
4.	<p><b><u>APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR/VICE CHAIR</u></b></p> <p>Members considered the appointment of Chair of the School Management Forum and after discussion it was:-</p> <p>RESOLVED that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Ms A Crawshaw be re-appointed as Chair of the Management Forum for a period of one year (Autumn 2021).</li> <li>(ii) The appointment of Vice Chair be considered as an agenda item at the next meeting of the School Management Forum.</li> </ul>
5.	<p><b><u>UNION FACILITY TIME</u></b></p> <p>Union representatives for NASUWT Simon Kennedy/ NEU Robbie Faulds <u>NEU- Robbie Faulds</u></p> <p>Members considered the NEU paper circulated.</p> <p>During the last 12 months the NEU has significantly underspent against their facility time allocation. A total of approx. 16-20 days has been used against an allocation of 160 days for the year.</p> <p>NEU representatives have claimed facility time for a range of work including sickness absence review meetings, capability meetings, requests for flexible working and attending various consultations</p> <p>This underspend does not reflect a reduced requirement for facility time. The last twelve months has seen a number of new representatives take up roles who have been gradually introduced to deal with casework starting at the more routine work – as their experience builds, they will gradually take on more complex casework.</p>

While these representatives have been building experience, the NEU Regional Office has been providing a high level of support – this has included a Regional Official being designated to pick up substantial levels of casework which would ordinarily be done by representatives, membership queries being diverted to the advice line and other Regional staff doing work on new/changed policy consultations etc.

It is expected that by the 2020-21 school year the NEU representatives will have completed all the relevant training, have built up their experience and will take on the full range of trade union duties which would normally be expected of lay representatives. This will lead to a marked increase in their facility time usage where it is likely that will use all or most of the NEU allocation, which we would like to see remain the same as was agreed for the 2019-20 school year.

Questions raised:-

***How many schools and NEU members are there in Middlesbrough accessing their facility time allocation? And going forward could this information be included in future reports.***

There are currently 1000+ members NEU members. Discussion followed in which mindful of need for confidentiality, members requested that generalised information on nature of work, number of members and the numbers and types of schools accessing facility time be included in future report.

The Chair thanked Mr Faulds. Mr Faulds left the Meeting.

NASUWT –Simon Kennedy

Members considered the Report circulated which, as previously requested, included details and context of the schools and members in Middlesbrough accessing facility time and Mr Kennedy spoke on how the information demonstrated good value for money.

Historically a pot of money is set aside in the de-delegation budget for union facility time and a request is being made that this contribution towards union facility time continues.

At the last meeting SMF had approved the proposal that Middlesbrough adopts the Darlington Model based on a supply rate of £180 (rather than the M6 hourly rate used previously) from September 2020 and Mr Kennedy wished to highlight the adverse financial implications of this if it was brought in from the 1 September 2020 as budgets had already been set based on the decision made this time last year for the financial year 19/20 moving to 20/21.

*(Mr Kennedy left the meeting)*

	<p>Discussion followed in which it was confirmed that the cost to schools would be £2.74 per pupil. After discussion Members considered the following options</p> <p>Option 1 - That the daily rate be paid for union facility time from September 2020</p> <p>Option 2 - That the daily rate be paid for union facility time from April 2021</p> <p>Following a formal vote it was</p> <p>RESOLVED that option 2 was the preferred option ie the daily rate be paid for union facility time from April 2021.</p>
6.	<p><b><u>DSG HIGH NEEDS RECOVERY PLAN - JUDI LIBBEY, HEAD OF RESOURCES, SEN AND VL, MBC</u></b></p> <p>Members considered the report circulated which provided an overview of the financial position and highlighted risks and pressures.</p> <p><u>SEN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The High Needs Budget has been under significant pressure for several years. The current deficit stands at £3,075,040</li> <li>• The 19/20 outturn was £1,191,860. This is because of demand on Alternative Provision (exclusions), hospital teaching, a change in the DfE SSF maintained element 2 funding, special school placements and a high number of Education Health and Care Plans issued that required additional resources.</li> <li>• The targets in the Budget Recovery Plan were not achieved overall in 19/20 financial year. However, there were some areas of improvement that led to some in-year savings.</li> </ul> <p>In the last year there had been a need for 31 places which the LA did not have and thanks to schools an additional 31 places had been created within the LA:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acklam Grange School-3 places for young people with ASD in a resource base</li> <li>• Hemlington Hall-8 places for learning needs and ASD a KS1 and KS2</li> <li>• RTMAT- 4 places nurture group Y7 for children with significant Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs</li> <li>• Priory Woods-8 places for children with Severe and Profound Learning Disability</li> <li>• Abbey Hill-8 special school places for secondary children with ASD, based on the Hollis site in Middlesbrough</li> </ul> <p>The cost of this provision this year has been an additional £670k which looks expensive, however without this provision added, it is likely the LA would have needed to seek out of area and independent places for 31</p>

children and young people and costs would have been considerably higher(a total of £725k savings made).

Members' attention was drawn to the table, within the report, demonstrating that the total budget for SEN Below is the total 20/21 budget for SEN was £21,065,800.

### Inclusion

From September, a new inclusion model has been introduced and a restructure has taken place to create a new integrated inclusion, assessment and review team. This brings together inclusion officers with SEN officers to work collaboratively with schools to increase early identification and intervention for young people at risk of exclusion.

The model includes collaborative planning with schools, Educational Psychology, Headstart, Inclusion and SEN Officers to identify areas of development in the context of individual schools. This is a radical development to identify students that need support in the earliest stages, when needs are emerging in the hope to prevent Alternative Provision and support becoming a last resort at the point of exclusion, but rather part of a graduated response that meets needs of young people and prevents escalation of needs and issues. The total costs for the inclusion element of provision is £4,219,100.

### Risks and Pressures

- Outwood has opened an Alternative Provision so a reduction is expected
- COVID may have an impact prevalent on need
- Free School Provision is planned in Redcar (RTMAT have won the contract)

RESOLVED that a report on the impact of this be presented at the next School Management Forum to ensure pressures from this are not impacting adversely.

It is still the case that the need for expensive placements in independent provision, i.e. alternative education and independent specialist provision is driven by the following:

- Exclusions and intervention becoming necessary due to higher prevalence of Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs that our young people now present with
- The number of pupils/young people with more complex needs is continuing to grow with 1200+ currently in need of an EHC, which places increasing pressure on local provision
- There have been many initiatives to induce efficiency savings in back office and statutory functions, however the challenge continues is to

	<p>implement an intelligence led plan to reshape local provision to meet the demands that are becoming ever more apparent. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Inclusion Strategy-a critical factor in identification of need and offering early intervention, as well as ensuring those children who can achieve in mainstream provision get that opportunity</li> <li>○ Development of local provision-increasing capacity for resource bases, the addition of the SEMH free school for SEMH, improving Post-16 pathways and opportunities as well as supporting local specialist provision to manage the increasing complexity at the specialist end of our provision</li> <li>○ Ensuring that the system works effectively and the Middlesbrough Offer meets the needs of the majority of learners with SEN or at risk of exclusion</li> <li>○ Robust scrutiny and monitoring of High Needs budgets within the local authority and the use of budgets out in settings</li> <li>○ Increased transparency of how settings are using high needs funding and that they are supported to get the best value for money, while recognising the increasing pressures of rising costs and static budgets through other funding settlements</li> </ul> <p>A member raised an issue regarding High Needs Funding Post 16 which had been set aside and was informed that a moderation exercise had been carried out in July 2020 to estimate costs and included in the matrix. The estimate costs had come in more or less the figure that had been set aside.</p> <p>Another point raised was that the single point of contact for inclusion goes straight onto an answer phone, which can be frustrating. Apologies were given for this and members were assured that this would be fed back to the office.</p> <p><i>(Judi Libbey left the meeting)</i></p>
7.	<p><b><u>EARLY YEAR FLEXIBILITY – SHEILA MARLEY/LINDSAY THOMPSON</u></b></p> <p>Members considered the report circulated.</p> <p><b>Department for Education guidance:</b>  Funding supplements are amounts of funding paid to providers in addition to the base rate to reflect local needs or policy objectives. These only apply to 3 and 4 year old funding. Middlesbrough Council pay the following supplementary payments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deprivation (mandatory)</li> <li>• Flexibility (discretionary)</li> </ul> <p>The terms and conditions of the DSG Early Years grant stipulates that the total planned value of funding supplements must not be more than 10% of the total value of planned formulae to providers. Due to the increase in take-up of the additional 15 hours, the actual funding paid to providers has exceeded the 10% threshold. Therefore the supplementary payments have</p>

to be reduced to bring this in line within the terms and conditions of the grant and the grant funding available.

In order for Middlesbrough Council to keep within the threshold, the flexibility payment has to be reduced from 85p per hour to 81p per hour. This will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

**Criteria:**

Previously flexibility was paid on the universal 15 hours nursery education grant. Flexibility funding is paid where a child attends a setting for more than 3 hours in any one day during the week. If this criteria is met then the full entitlement taken at the setting is classed as flexible and payment is made based on the full entitlement. Since the introduction of 30 hours childcare from September 2018, flexibility has been paid for this full entitlement.

**Middlesbrough data:**

Flexibility payments made to setting/schools for the summer and autumn term 2019-20, please note spring term data is not yet available:

<b>Term</b>	<b>School £</b>	<b>PVI £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
Summer 19	32,436	186,524	218,960
Autumn 19	41,120	123,417	164,537
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73,556</b>	<b>309,941</b>	<b>383,497</b>
Split	19%	81%	100%

Members' attention was drawn to the table within demonstrating the split between schools and PVI. Although spring data was now available members were informed that this would not change the 19%/81% split. This information had been requested by PVI representatives at the last meeting of the SMF.

Discussion followed in which it was acknowledged that no other local Authorities made these payments to schools and the early year flexibility funding from the Middlesbrough LA did make a difference to the provision in schools.

**8. LIQUID LOGIC –TREVOR DUNN**

Paper Describing The Requested Contribution Towards The Annual Cost Of Liquidlogic Children's System (LCS) Software

**Members considered the paper circulated previously** which set out details of the contribution that the Local Authority is seeking from schools towards the annual cost of Liquidlogic Children's System software which supports all aspects of social work with children and allows case management and record keeping for children in need, looked after children, adoption and child protection cases.

The stored data is used in the preparation of court files and papers, as well as to support day to day work with children and to help keep them safe. Social workers and other professionals are able to provide schools with up to date information on vulnerable children to support planning and decision making.

Social workers can provide schools with chronological information and background, regardless of how many school moves the child may have taken part in.

Information provided by schools is stored within the system and is available to social workers who may take over a case, removing the need for the school to provide information multiple times and ensuring the information is stored securely.

Having one central and definitive store of (sensitive) data ensures that information provided by any stakeholders, including schools, can be accessed by all professionals at the right time, supporting improved decision making which benefits the child, family and school.

The Safeguarding and Compliance Officer can rapidly access a child's data and information if a school expresses a concern about the welfare or safety of the child.

The annual cost of operating the LCS system for Children's Service is £71,317.49 and the LA is requesting a contribution from schools of 45% of the total annual cost of LCS, which amounts to £32,093.

Historically this contribution comes out of the de-delegation budget and academy schools have the option to buy in or not.

Discussion followed in which the following questions were raised.

***Do schools have access to the LCS system?***

No – currently only Social Workers have access however schools do benefit as the information can be requested from the social workers.

***Would it be a reasonable request that Schools be given access so that schools can work with parents quickly?***

Mr Dunn acknowledged that it was a reasonable request but not one he could immediately answer and agreed to explore this matter further and feedback to members accordingly.

***What would happen if the SMF refused to contribute the £32k requested?***

If the funds were not forthcoming then the system would have to be trimmed down with fewer licences purchased.

***Why, if it is so fundamental to the work Social Care do is this not coming out of the Social Care budget?***

Historically this has come out of de-delegation budget and Social Care is asking for continued support during this difficult time.

***Is the decision to contribute down to maintained schools only?***

Yes - But academies will be asked to contribute too

***What happens if academies decide not to buy in?***

This would create an imbalance which would in turn create difficulties as the provision only works if all contribute causing a barrier to progress.

***Comment - Diocesan schools within NPCAT will see this as a normal running cost of Social Care? There is no doubt the database is important but schools do not pay for databases of other important service providers that may equally benefit schools. These are simply the services running costs and the fact the payment have been paid in the past isn't really justification for them to continue?***

***What would be the cost to schools?***

Based on the £32k contribution requested there would be a cost of £1.47 per pupil.

***How much of this has already been recouped?*** £22,250 has already been recouped this financial year

RESOLVED that

- (i) Contributions towards the annual cost of liquidlogic children's system (LCS) software be explored further.
- (ii) Social Care be informed that contributions towards the annual cost of liquidlogic children's system (LCS) software cannot be guaranteed at this point.

**8. CHILDRENS SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICE**

Polly Wright – MBC  
Alison Smithies – Service Manager SaLT  
Lyndsey Jones – CCG  
Beth Roberts

Members' attention was drawn to the Children's Speech and Language Service Report. The Report was for Service delivered 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31 December 2019 and it was explained that delivery of the report had been delayed due to COVID lockdown.

The South Tees Children & Young Persons Speech and Language Therapy Service has been jointly commissioned from April 2019. Where previously South Tees CCG, Middlesbrough Local Authority and Redcar & Cleveland Local Authority each commissioned a part of the service, following the SEND Local Area Inspection for Middlesbrough in March 2017 where the

lack of joint commissioning was criticised, work commenced on a joint commissioning strategy for children's speech and language therapy.

This significant process, beginning in September 2017, culminated in the successful joint commissioning of an enhanced service delivering speech and language therapy to the children, young people and their families of the South Tees area. South Tees CCG took the role of lead commissioner.

The Key performance Indicators (KPIs), and progress towards them, were shared with members: -

- ***Urgent referrals acknowledged within 2 working days***
- ***Routine referrals acknowledged within 5 working days***
- ***Appointment letter sent out within 6 weeks of receipt of referral***
- ***First appointment completed within 12 weeks of receipt of referral***
- ***First treatment offered within 18 weeks of receipt of referral***
  
- ***SALT service will report on Outcome Measures - The service will facilitate a patient experience exercise; all patients accessing the service will be encouraged to participate in the exercise to share their experience.***

Content and resources had been developed further during COVID lockdown and feedback from parents and professional had overall had been overwhelmingly positive. Members were encouraged to look at the format of the feedback forms which had been appended to the report.

- ***SALT service will report on Training Plan to be offered to families, referrers and range of educational settings.***

Some training had been offered and work, which included developing webinars, was ongoing to make this more accessible for a wider audience. Members attention was drawn to the examples of targeted training arranged and a sample of the Training which had been offered to date

Course participants have previously reported a high level of satisfaction and feel the training is relevant to their role working with pre-school children. Although given a lot of information, participants described the day as, "useful", "informative" and "easy to follow". Participants report that they feel more confident within the area of communication when working in their setting and had new ideas to try. The day was described as being "really well organized" and delivered by "very dedicated and passionate staff". The aim is to provide a training day where staff can access a range of topics rather than several sessions at different times. This will reduce the amount of time settings release staff and will reduce any costs for backfill for staff attending the course.

	<p>One member asked whether this training could be made accessible to NQTs and heard that this could be a possibility and would be looked at further.</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b><u>ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING</u></b></p> <p>4. Appointment of Vice Chair be considered at the next meeting of the School Management Forum</p> <p>6. DSG High Needs Funding - a report on the impact of Outward opening an Alternative Provision be presented at the next School Management Forum to ensure pressures from this are not impacting adversely</p> <p>7. (i) Contributions towards the annual cost of liquidlogic children's system (LCS) software be explored further (7.)  (ii) Social Care be informed that contributions towards the annual cost of liquidlogic children's system (LCS) software cannot be guaranteed at this point.</p>
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING:</u></b></p> <p>Date – Wednesday, 18 November 2020  Venue – Web Ex Meeting  Start Time – 09.15am</p>