

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Schools' Forum held at Beaumanor Hall
on Monday 24 September at 2.00 pm**

Present

Nick Goforth	Secondary Academies Headteacher
Kath Kelly	Secondary Academies Headteacher
Callum Orr	Secondary Academies Headteacher
Chris Parkinson	Secondary Academies Headteacher
Chris Swan	Secondary Academies Governor
Suzanne Uprichard	Secondary Academies Governor / PRU
Jane McKay	Primary Academy Headteacher
Jean Lewis	Primary Academy Governor
David Thomas	Primary Academy Governor
Karen Allen	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Martin Turnham	Primary Maintained Headteacher
Ros Hopkins	Special Maintained Headteacher
Graham Bett	DNCC Representative

In attendance

Ivan Ould, Lead Member, Children and Family Services
 Jane Moore, Assistant Director, Education and Early Help
 David Atterbury, Head of Service, Education Sufficiency
 Alison Bradley, Head of Service, Education Quality and Inclusion
 Jenny Lawrence, Finance Business Partner, Corporate Resources

		Action
1.	<p>Election of Chair and Vice-Chair</p> <p>Karen Allen was elected Chair of the Schools' Forum for the 2018/19 academic year.</p> <p>Nick Goforth was elected Vice-Chair of the Schools' Forum for the 2018/19 academic year.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies for Absence/Substitutions</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Bill Nash, Clive Wright, Dave Hedley and Catherine Drury.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20 June 2018 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u> Jenny Lawrence confirmed that HR had provided information to schools</p>	

	<p>via briefings on the pay award.</p> <p>Jenny stated that the announcement on the teachers' pay grant is unclear at present as to what it means for individual schools and whether it will fully meet costs.</p> <p>Kath Kelly commented that the grant is for 18 months and stops mid-year. Jenny stated that DfE have not confirmed any funding arrangements past March 2020.</p>	
4.	<p>2018/19 Schools Budget Update</p> <p>Jenny introduced the report which presents the performance of the 2018/19 Schools as recorded at Period 4 (July).</p> <p>Jenny commented that the high needs pressures continue as demand for places increase. New ASD provision has opened during the last two years and work on developing further provision for ASD and SEMH is taking place. Jenny added that nationally there was a growing concern about the level of funding and paragraph 6 sets out the position in other local authorities. Paragraph 7 in the report sets out the factors that have contributed to the high needs overspend. Jenny highlighted the table which refers to the increase in the number of pupils attending 16+ FE provision. This increase is due to the extension of the age range from 2-19 to 0-25 under SEND reform that was never fully funded.</p> <p>Jenny stated that there is a growing number of children who have medical needs preventing school attendance and therefore continues to put further pressure onto the Specialist Teaching Service.</p> <p>Nick Goforth asked whether the Wigston and Hinckley provisions were accommodating pupils previously in higher cost provision or preventing a need for higher cost provision. Jane Moore stated that some pupils were from independent provision and some pupils were waiting for a plan whilst in mainstream school.</p> <p>Graham Bett asked what plan B was. Jane stated that where there were no back up plans and the cost could fall onto the local authority but to work together on how we think we are going to meet the cost.</p> <p>Schools' Forum noted the Schools' budget position as at 31 July 2018 and the reasons for that position.</p>	
5.	<p>2019/20 School Funding</p> <p>Jenny introduced the report which sets out the funding arrangements for 2019/20.</p> <p>Jenny stated that the proposals for 2019/20 were now published and the structure for the National Funding Formula was unchanged. Jenny outlined the key points as noted in the report.</p> <p>The local authority took advantage of the loop hole in the 2018/19 arrangements with regard to the minimum per pupil funding for key stage</p>	

	<p>3 pupils at the same rate as key stage 4. Jenny stated that as expected the DfE had closed this loophole. The DfE set the minimum per pupil funding rates for 2019/20 as outlined in the report. This data would be looked at over the next few weeks to establish what it means for schools.</p> <p>Jenny stated that premises funding remains on historic spend. Premises costs for 2018/19 fell below that for 2017/18 and funding was diverted to schools' growth but that costs could increase moving into 2019/20.</p> <p>In relation to funding pupil growth the DfE will change the allocation to a formula based again on historic data in 2019/20 and a calculator will be available in autumn to local authorities to estimate the level of funding to be received. The current growth policy will remain as it is until such time further information is available from the DfE and a reassessment of housing growth is undertaken.</p> <p>Jenny stated that funding protection for the final age range changes into Leicestershire schools still remains an area of concern and would not be reflected in the DfE's growth allocation for 2019/20.</p> <p>Martin Turnham referred to paragraph 11 and asked if there were any plans to top slice school funding order to create a growth fund. Jenny stated that there were no plans to in 2019/20 but it remains a possibility for the future.</p> <p>Kath Kelly referred to the increase in the pay award for the lower band associate staff and how that will close the gap. Kath added that the calculation of maintaining the differential and the impact on the school's budget is unmanageable. Kath asked Jenny if anything further had been announced on this. Jenny commented that the pressures are not being recognised and work will be starting to help schools with their financial planning going forward. Jenny added that this work may be delayed as additional capacity was required, recruitment to an additional post has failed to attract suitable candidates. Jenny added that information had started to be collected from special schools and conversations with LEEP will be held in the autumn regarding academy representation.</p> <p>Schools Forum noted the report and the 2019/20 funding arrangements.</p>	
6.	<p>Children with Medical Needs</p> <p>Alison Bradley presented the paper to seek support from Schools' Forum in recovering the average per pupil funding for alternative provision currently commissioned by the CMN team for Children with Medical Needs.</p> <p>Alison explained that this will be a part of a wider review of Education Inclusion Services to develop support structures to increase the opportunities for children to remain in the school environment whilst reducing the need for high cost long term external provision.</p> <p>The paper analyses the key risk to schools in introducing the arrangements from 1 January 2019 to recover the average per pupil</p>	

	<p>funding.</p> <p>Chris Swan asked if the lack of capacity within the CAMHS Team could be looked at when reviewing the service and for schools to be directed to the CME Team. Alison stated that the possibility of wellbeing practitioners working in different behaviour partnership sectors is to be considered.</p> <p>Ros Hopkins stated that pupils will certainly be out of education because of health care needs which has a massive impact on special schools because funding for school nurses has been withdrawn by the NHS. Ros asked if there was a connection to these two issues. Jane stated that the cost of educating pupils outside the county as part of significant medical needs is far more than the £16 being recouped. It was noted that there are children out of school for a period of time e.g. broken leg and 51% of children are absent with anxiety.</p> <p>Jane stated that alternative education would still continue but would like to provide a holistic package with schools to get pupils back into mainstream school.</p> <p>Martin Turnham asked if all primary school children in catchment area whether they go or not to the school are liable to this. Jane stated that the charge was only in respect of children on the school roll.</p> <p>Jane stated that the challenge is that conversations need to be had as some schools use the service far more than others and it would be helpful for Schools' Forum to support this.</p> <p>Karen Allen stated that schools are being hit twice in terms of children with medical needs (some disparity) and the cost to schools for a small group of children with high needs that are not recognised but are recognised by the local authority. Jane understood this and completely supports schools on this.</p> <p>Schools' Forum noted the current position for CMN provision as set out in the report.</p> <p>Schools' Forum gave approval 'in principle' to recover costs from all schools of high needs placements for children with medical needs with effect from 1 January 2019.</p>	
7.	<p>SEND Sufficiency</p> <p>Jane gave a presentation to the meeting on SEND Sufficiency and Provision. Jane stated that the number of EHCP's had risen by 33% over the last 5 years and in particular the number of post-16 EHCPs. Jane added that one of the priorities is to improve the quality and sufficiency of SEND education provision and services by supporting mainstream schools and settings to develop their SEND provision and develop local specialist services to ensure sufficiency of places in high quality specialist provision across a continuum.</p> <p>Jane stated that the 'High Needs Block' has been under financial</p>	

pressure in recent years and moved from an underspend of £2.8m to a projected overspend of £3.4m for 2018/19. Previously overspends have been met by using DSG reserves but reserves have now been fully expended.

The difference in cost per pupil differs significantly across types of provision. Currently in Leicestershire 7.9% of pupils are in independent special schools and this contributes significantly to the overspend of the high needs budget. However there will always be a need for some sort of independent .

Jane outlined the current provision in Leicestershire. The special schools are oversubscribed and the FE colleges are working with the local authority to develop their curriculum to meet the needs of SEND learners. This term SEND efficiency and provision will be considered with potentially expanding where it is currently working well and to build new provision in Leicestershire where need can be evidenced. The local authority is also proposing to develop SEMH provision across both primary and secondary, communication and interaction provision across both primary and secondary, FE Specialist Provision and a new area special school. The first round of provision was planned to be in place in September 2019 and with further developments in following years.

Jane stated that a letter was sent out to a variety of recipients including schools about the proposals and a further letter would be sent in early October asking for expressions of interest to develop new provision.

Jean Lewis asked how the local authority was proposing to decide the specialities or the possibilities for delivery in the new unit. Jane stated that expressions for SEMH expressions and exploring additional capacity in special schools would be matched to pupil need and numbers. Jean stated there would be transport issues if provision was not locality based.

Martin Turnham asked if the local authority was approaching all stakeholders in Leicestershire. Jane replied that Chief Executives of MATs, heads/principals, chairs of governors and behaviour partnerships would be approached.

Nick Goforth asked about start-up costs and if there is money to build a provision or refurbish. Jane stated that there was funding for both. Ros Hopkins stated that this is a really positive step forward.

Chris Swan asked if this goes far enough to reduce the number of high cost places. Jane stated that the pupil numbers and needs are the driver for change in provision and is an increase in places over and above 485 but numbers of high cost places need to reduce in order to deliver reduced costs.

Callum asked what Bedfordshire's strategy was as their numbers are 1.1% in independent special schools. Jane stated that Leicestershire do not have a mixed locally economy; other local authorities have local provision and others are higher excluding and do not manage children as Leicestershire do.

	<p>Graham Betts stated that he welcomed this strategic thinking and fully supported this going forward.</p> <p>Karen Allen asked about the pupils at the short stay school in terms of exclusion. Jane stated there would be no secondary short-stay school as this was where the strong links with the behaviour partnerships work well.</p> <p>Jane stated that the success of this will be who comes forward and equally how the local authority is going to develop it.</p>	
8.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>	
9.	<p>Date of Next Meetings</p> <p>Monday 26 November 2018, 2.00 – 4.00 pm at Beaumanor Hall</p> <p>Proposed Dates to be agreed:</p> <p>Tuesday 12 February 2019 Monday 10 June 2019</p>	