

# Schools' Forum



City of  
**Stoke-on-Trent**

**Date:** Friday 19 October 2018  
**Time:** 8:30 to 11:00am  
**Venue:** Watermill Special School  
**Chair:** Jonathon May  
**Minutes:** Emily Evans

## Attendees:

Jonathon May (**Chair for Schools' Forum**)  
 Emma Gater (**Vice Chair for School's Forum**)  
 Lisa Hughes (**Special Schools Representatives**)  
 Juliet Levingstone (**Nursery School Representative**)  
 Bianca Johnson (**PVI Representative**)  
 Sarah Thursfield, Derek Gray (**Primary Maintained Representatives**)  
 Jonathan Baddeley, Ian Beardmore, Lisa Sarikaya, Stephanie Moran (**Primary Academy Representatives**)  
 Nick Lowry, Mark Rayner, Gareth Jones, Dilesh Parmar (**Secondary Academy Representatives**)  
 Mark Kent (**16-19 Partnership Representative**)  
 Harold Gurden, (**Union Representative**)  
 Jen Lomas, Andrew Brindley (**Local Authority Representatives**)  
 Councillor Janine Bridges – Cabinet Member for Education and Economy (**Cabinet Member**)  
 Emily Evans (**LA officer – minutes**)

## Apologies:

Louise Rees (**Local Authority Representative**)  
 Jon Lovatt (**Primary Governor**)

## MINUTES

	Item	Lead	When
1	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>  Apologies were received from Jon Lovatt and Louise Rees.		
2	<b>Minutes from the last meeting</b>  Amendments to the minutes were sent to A Brindley prior to the meeting.  Issues with the local authority's recruitment external webpage were raised. J Lomas to speak to L Rees for an update and to feedback at the next forum.  David Sidaway and Nick Edmonds will be attending the next Headteachers' Breakfast Briefing on 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2018. This briefing will be open to all schools to attend.  J Lomas read out the following joint local authority statement on the 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to High Needs Block in	<b>AB</b>  <b>JL/LR</b>	<b>Completed</b>  <b>15.01.2019</b>

2019/20. The joint local authority statement was written by J Lomas, L Rees, David Sidaway and Nick Edmonds, and approved by Cllr Bridges, Cllr Brown and Cllr James.

*The Local Authority will not ask schools Forum to approve a 0.5% transfer from schools block to HN block in 2019/2020.*

*The Local Authority recognises that requests to transfer funding will have an impact on schools.*

*However the Local Authority recognises that in not requesting the 0.5 % for 2019/20 that additional pressures will be placed on the High needs block.*

*The Local Authority wishes to make clear that there is a collective responsibility within Stoke on Trent in addressing the pressures within the High needs block and through the action plan and that continued growth would make the plan unsustainable. The LA acknowledges the hard work of many colleagues in forming and working to the HN plan but is concerned that the need to work together on this has not been evident across all sectors and schools.*

*The LA authority will focus on impact through fortnightly meetings on milestones.*

*These milestones will include:*

- ) Ensuring that the rate of growth in EHC plans and the number of plans is in line with our statistical neighbours.*
- ) Ensure that the majority of pupils needing specialist provision will be educated within the city*
- ) Ensure that through graduated response, reasonable adjustment and accessibility plans, that the majority of pupils with an identified SEND need and EHCP are educated within mainstream schools.*
- ) Ensure that secondary ASD resource bases are opened within north and south of the city.*
- ) Reduce by half the number of permanent exclusions in secondary schools and academies.*

*Specified targets will be added to the HN plan and milestones identified.*

*If we are unable to achieve the identified milestones in partnership with our colleagues in education the LA will request in 2020/2021 that 1% of the schools block is transferred to the HN block.*

A concern was raised that the statement regarding the 0.5% had not been received before the meeting. J Lomas explained that a decision not to take the 0.5% had only been made the previous day. J Lomas felt that it was important that the forum had the decision at the meeting so that it was known in the context of the funding formula discussion. The information could therefore not be sent before Schools' Forum. J May reiterated that the decision had been made on the previous day and that he had just been informed on the

way to the meeting.

J Baddeley commented that he was pleased to hear that the 0.5% would not be taken this year. However, he felt the target to reduce permanent exclusions by half was unachievable for the City. J Lomas responded that the Learning Pathways Board wanted to reduce the number of permanent exclusions by looking at managed moves.

N Lowry challenged the councils position on issuing the right to issue the statement. N Lowry stated that he felt reducing the number of permanent exclusions in secondary schools was an unachievable target. It ignored the local context, the lack of funding and the lack of support from other agencies. N Lowry felt that Schools' Forum should be able to decline. N Lowry stated that he did not agree with the statement and requested for a motion to do a vote.

D Parmar asked whether it would be possible to get secondary heads around a table to discuss this, rather than the information being cascaded down to them.

J Lomas responded that it was a collective responsibility of schools and the local authority. Serious implications could occur should the local authority continue to borrow money. J Lomas reiterated that the local authority's financial position would be made clear at the Headteachers' Breakfast Briefing.

G Jones questioned whether statistical figures from neighbouring authorities had been looked at. G Jones added that the local authority have got to be realistic with their targets and measure these on statistical figures as opposed to a number. J Lomas responded that it was the intention of the Learning Pathways Board to reduce permanent exclusions. J Lomas advised that the numbers were used against 10 neighbouring authorities, Hull in particular, was the one used as a statistical neighbour.

Cllr Bridges said that calculating by a percentage would not be appropriate. Cllr Bridges advised that she was aware of the issues in providing support to schools i.e. CAMHS.

D Gray shared that he had an issue with the last statement and added that permanent exclusions are a 'last resort' for schools when they have exhausted everything else.

I Beardmore said that the local authority needed to be aware that taking funding out of the block would affect the 'most vulnerable'.

M Rayner felt that the last sentence in the statement could be read as a 'threat'. He then went on to question why the '1%' was added to the statement rather than saying 'there will be another request'. It was felt that 50% for permanent exclusions was a crude target and felt that there could be consequences as a result.

J Baddeley felt that the phrasing of the statement could have been



<p>worded differently. Schools had already reduced permanent exclusions. Schools' Forum has a desire to see exclusions reduce, however there are times when this is not an option.</p> <p>E Gater requested a picture of where the exclusions were across the City. J Lomas responded that the local authority has comparative data and that she discuss this at the Headteachers' Breakfast Briefing.</p> <p>J Baddeley felt that there needed to be a link to deprivation as the attainment for his school was adversely affected by the number of vulnerable pupils he took.</p> <p>M Rayner shared that his school have had two managed moves that would have been permanently excluded. M Rayner requested if data can be collected from last year to show how permanent exclusions there would have been, but because of the work in secondaries they were not.</p> <p>K Dixon shared that Learning Pathways Board recognised the concerns and are trying to utilise the managed moves and respite moves.</p> <p>J Lomas said respite moves were available for secondaries, where a child would spend 4-6 weeks at another school. J Lomas said that this would not be something that would be considered for primary schools at this moment and that would need careful tracking to ensure that pupil attendance was reflected accurately.</p> <p>G Jones said there needs to be a clear strategy and a link up around social services and other agencies to support schools. Gang violence is not getting easier. E Gater shared that behaviour in schools had been horrific since September and staff were unable to cope.</p>	<p><b>JL</b></p>	<p><b>15.01.2019</b></p>
<p>J May requested that forum needed to see what the target looked like and what it would look like next year alongside its statistical neighbours. J May said if the local authority were to look at the re-wording of the last sentence in the statement, then there could be a way forward. J Lomas accepted that looking at benchmarking against other authorities would be useful however the reality was that there had been over 150 secondary exclusions in the past three years and the Local Authority was bearing the brunt of education costs of the pupils with over 1 million overspend in the AP budget. There was therefore a financial imperative to reduce the budget. In addition the Local authority have funded additional places in PRU provision and fund the Learning Pathways team.</p>	<p><b>JL/LR</b></p>	<p><b>15.01.2019</b></p>
<p>J Lomas said that she was happy to look at re-wording the statement and suggested the following 'Reduce the number of perm exclusion in secondary and primaries in line with planned work with the Learning Pathways Board'. J Lomas stated that she would ensure objections are made clear in the minutes.</p> <p>Members of the forum said that they agreed with the other targets</p>	<p><b>JL/ALL</b></p>	<p><b>On-going</b></p>

	<p>within the statement.</p> <p>J Lomas advised that the HN plan will be reviewed on a fortnightly basis between David Sidaway, Nick Edmonds, J Lomas and L Rees. J Lomas said that she was happy to share the HN plan but that forum members needed to ensure that they refer to the 'up to date version'. The plan will also be discussed at HN working group, to assess which plans which ones are on track and which ones are not.</p>		
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Local Schools Funding Formula 2019-20</b></p> <p>A Brindley presented a report on the local schools funding formula for 2019/20. The purpose of the report was to consider to re-aligning the local schools funding formula 2019/20 with the national funding formula and to consider the introduction of a new formula factor to provide a minimum pupil level per school, which would be in accordance with the schools funding formula operational guidance 2019/20.</p> <p>In July 2018 the DfE issued 'Schools' revenue funding 2019 to 2020 Operational guide July 2018' which was a guide to help local authorities and their schools' forums to plan the local implementation of the funding system for 2019-20. Within the document announcements included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Following significant progress across the system in moving towards the national funding formula, in its first year, the DfE have confirmed that local authorities will continue to determine local formulas in 2020-21.</li> <li>) The minimum per pupil funding levels have increased to £3,500 from £3,300 for all primary schools and £4,800 from £4,600 for all secondary schools that have pupils in year 10 and 11.</li> <li>) The primary low prior attainment factor is also being reduced to £1,022 from £1,050 to balance the increase in the cohort.</li> <li>) The introduction of a new funding floor factor to enable local authorities to mirror the increase of 1% per pupil against the 2017-18 baselines.</li> <li>) The minimum funding guarantee (MFG) for schools will continue and local authorities continue to have the flexibility to set a local MFG between minus 1.5% and plus 0.5% per pupil.</li> </ul> <p>A sub group of the Schools' Forum (the Schools Formula Working Group) were tasked with reviewing the schools funding formula for 2019-20. The group met on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018. Following detailed discussion the recommendation of the group was to consult on the following set of principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Continue to move towards the NFF values for schools. The group felt it was prudent to continue to move towards a local formula that reflected the key changes within the national</li> </ul>		

	<p>funding formula for schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) The primary: secondary ratio remains at 1:1.29 in an accordance with the NFF.</li> <li>) The MFG is again set at minus 1.5%.</li> <li>) Any adjustments in funding again would be made against the deprivation factor Free School Meals 6 (FSM6), in the first instance.</li> <li>) In line with the NFF the introduction of a new formula factor to provide a minimum per pupil level for all primary schools of £3,500 and secondary schools of £4,800. The minimum pupil level will be calculated on the basis of a school's total funding.</li> </ul> <p>A Brindley then went on to discuss appendix A, which broke down the school funding. A Brindley advised that because the local authority is not taking the 0.5%, there will be an estimated 2.2million going in to the Schools' Block based on static pupil numbers (Oct 17 census).</p> <p>The change in funding to three schools was queried. It was noted any schools that converted to an academy in-year, their business rates value went down by 80% and this was the case with the three schools.</p> <p>S Thursfield expressed her concern that when you add in pupil premium funds there were significant differences on what each pupil receives on average. S Thursfield went on to discuss IDACI postcodes and felt that assumptions were being made on where families reside and did not feel it was a true reflection on current circumstances. A Brindley responded that the local authority was following national funding formula values. J Lomas added that pupil premium could not be factored in. It was requested that S Thursfield was invited to the next sub group for Schools' Forum.</p> <p>An email has been sent to all schools to consult on the agreed principles and for their feedback. J Lomas added that it was the responsibility of the school to respond to A Brindley.</p> <p>A vote was held for the principles for the schools funding formula for 2019-20. The majority voted in favour of the funding formula changes and there were 2 impartial.</p>		
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Central School Services Block 2019-20</b></p> <p>At the last meeting there was a request for a breakdown on the Central Schools' Block.</p> <p>In 2019-20, ongoing responsibilities will continue to be funded in broadly the same way as previously with updated baselines in line with the 2018-19 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations.</p> <p>Funding for historic commitments will be allocated at the same level as in 2018-19. The Department for Education's (DfE) expectation remains that expenditure from DSG will reduce over time as contracts and other commitments reach their end points and they</p>		



	<p>will continue to monitor this expenditure year-on-year. The DfE will seek explanations of expenditure recorded on section 251 returns where this is not reducing as expected.</p> <p>Where local authorities hold duties in relation to all schools (as set out in schedule 2, parts 1 to 5 of the School and Early Years Finance Regulations 2017), all schools must be treated on an equivalent basis.</p> <p>A Brindley presented a table to Schools' Forum which provided details of the illustrative local authority level allocations for 2019-20 and for comparative purposes the actual 2018-19 allocations based on July 2018 information.</p> <p>Schools' Forum has to approve the value of the commitments on a yearly basis. The details of expenditure will be discussed in detail at the next Schools' Forum. It was requested that a breakdown of the costs associated with Servicing the Schools Forum will be shared at the next meeting.</p>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>15.01.2019</b>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Early Years Inclusion Fund (Verbal Update)</b></p> <p>L Sarikaya shared that the working group met and discussed the Early Years Inclusion fund budget. Within the fund there was £100k, with £35k for low level needs and £65k for complex needs.</p> <p>The recommendation is that the £100k stays in the fund, but would not be used separately and would be there for any child that arrives in an early years setting regardless of whether school or PVI with additional needs. The money would be given on a term basis, with a two term payment maximum. Criteria is in place for eligibility, and this is mirrored against the Primary Schools' criteria.</p>		
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>Schools received a letter from admissions regarding in-year applications. I Beardmore questioned whether this was coincidental as the letter was sent after census, and said that schools were being asked to take on additional children that they would not receive funding for 2 years. It was also raised that the letter quoted the PAN needed to be increased by 5% on the letter.</p> <p>J Lomas responded that the timing of the letter being sent out was not planned post census J Lomas apologised for the mistake made on the 5% and would amend the letter and send out a revised copy with 10%.</p> <p>G Jones added that there was a broader conversation to be had with the ESFA on the funding and requested whether funding could be done on an individual basis.</p> <p>J Levingstone commented that there were a number of nursery children that were now applying for places in reception. There have been delays in children getting a place in reception, which meant a break in their education. J Levingstone questioned why children</p>	<b>JL/LR</b>	<b>ASAP</b>

