

Schools Forum Meeting Minutes – DRAFT - held on the 17th March 2016 at The Avenue

Present

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| Peter Kayes | Governor, Redlands - CHAIR |
| Charles Clare | Headteacher, Geoffrey Fields Junior |
| Lisa Bedlow | Headteacher, Caversham and Newbridge nurseries |
| Cathy Doberska | Headteacher, New Christchurch |
| Isabelle Sandy | School Business Manager, Kendrick |
| Mark Hester | Cranbury College |
| Justine McMinn | Headteacher, EP Collier |
| Viv Angus | Headteacher, Reading Girls School |
| John Cosgrove | Headteacher, Christ the King (RC) School |
| Sue Bourne | Headteacher, The Avenue |
| Joan Boyd | NUT |
| Ashley Robson | Headteacher, Reading School |
| Phil Davies | Prospect School |
| Dorothy Company | Highdown |
| Julie Kempster | Riverside Day Nursery |

Guest

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| Madeleine Cosgrove | Headteacher, The Ridgeway |
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RBC

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| Russell Dyer | Finance |
| Steven Davies | Finance |
| John Wood | SEND Transformation Manager |
| Theresa Shortland | Early Years & Play Service Manager |

Apologies

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| Chris Stevens | SEN |
| Yvonne Jackson | Headteacher, Wilson School |
| Mandy Hilton | Headteacher, Cranbury College |
| Rachel Cave | Highdown |

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- Welcome
- Apologies noted

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14th January 2016

- Minutes of 14th January 2016 approved by Forum

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/ SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)

Matters Arising

- In reference to the action outlined in item 5 to follow up on the discussion; this action is still outstanding

- In reference to the meeting on 10th December 2016 and Schools Forum approval for funding at Cranbury College; there is a shortfall of approximately £7,000.00. SD advises that the de-delegation will be decreased and maintained should be free of charge; this situation will not re-occur next year; Schools Forum have agreed to fund the shortfall

Membership

- Schools Forum membership - currently 4 vacancies
- Primary Academy have 2 positions not represented.
- Marianne Best has left the post and Mandy Wilton is the new Headteacher
- Fiona Veitch is not principal at the Thames Valley School and it is Gary Simm.

4. 2015/16 DSG BUDGET MONITORING, 16/17 DSG AND FUNDING CONSULTATIONS

Presented by: Russell Dyer

Report Update

- This report is outlined in 3 stages
- Last time Budget Monitoring was forecasting a small underspend
- High Needs Block as advised has a current pressure on the block of around £2m and since December 2015 there has been no indication that this amount has increased
- Issue around potential Academy converters; the risk to the DSG and then there would have to fund the deficit
- In terms of the 16-17 budget; there was a few outstanding business with early years block which has been finalised today
- Headroom has been utilised; deficit has been bought forward
- Maintained budgets back by 20th May 2016
- Recently issued papers - identifying what the future years outlined
- Identified a summary of appendix 2 which is technical detail and is set out in the main body of the report
- 7.4 identifies the new national formula (4 main elements)
- Geographic cost factor outlined
- Schools Forum has a strong preference for the labour market index which recognises the high cost in the south of England
- 17-18; 18-19 financial year will be a shadow national funding
- Pupil Premium will be protected until 19/20 financial year; from then on it will go directly to the school
- MFG continue at 1.5 % and have a national cap
- Creating an 'invest to save'
- There is separate High Needs Block information which basically says that the LA will retain this
- Next step will be to look at the consultation and see if a response is needed
- Chair acknowledges the report is for noting for Schools Forum

5. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK UPDATE (VERBAL UPDATE)

Presented by: John Wood

- JW advises this is his 2nd week in post
- JW has met with the working group and has met with some of the schools in this time
- Will produce a model of what work has already been carried out and by whom
- Working on better integration of SEN and disability
- Robust plan for June 2016 is the target
- Adults Children Social Care Committee on the 12th May 2016; the working group and JW would have reconvened by then
- Look at the government's arrangements
- JM notes that she was at a meeting yesterday that it was highlighted that there are a number of medical needs coming out of High Needs Block; JW advises that this is already being looked into
- JW will continue to attend Schools Formula

6. EARLY YEARS SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA

Presented by: Theresa Shortland

Part One

- 2 year old funding; seeking to carry this forward to develop new funding for 2 year olds and the proposal is to carry funding forward for 2 year olds
- Also doing work to support children with SEN that are 2 year olds
- Information - sufficiency programme that needs to be bought forward

Part Two

- Deloittes undertook work around the cost of child care in the country
- This consultation out at the moment in schools
- The proposal for 30 hours per week to be covered with income earners up to 100K. This proposal is will be introduced September 2017
- There needs to be a sufficiency analysis and interest has already been shown and there will be a high take up on the offer;
- The take up of 2 year olds was 68% now 62%
- Fund children who assessed for portage and those with needs
- Seeking to carry forward with some of the 2 year old funding; at the moment the government is not looking at taking this forward

Framework

- Is clearly different from previous government
- TS recommends the work starts for this in April 2016
- Table outlines the proposal and these are best estimates at the moment

The Review

- Shows the breakdown of the representatives
- Have met a number of times
- Initially looked at current formula and how it was broken down
- Currently 24 child care minders

- Looked through the base unit rate and asked if the element funding is still required; the unit costs were good and felt the needs of the providers was being met
- As a group it was agreed the base rate would stay the same
- The issue with funding is that there is 1 block of money
- One of the principles is to pass as much money as possible to the providers; direct staff costs around workforce, training and qualifications
- Provider will have to have a SENCO
- All settings have to sign up to an agreement of which a census is required to feedback on all the children

Central retention - a consultation went out to schools and PVI's

- 141 child minders
- 30 PVIs, NC & NS 13, CM 2 - total of 45
- Do you agree that we should include an uplift for staffing costs for the PVIs? Response at 91% - conclusive yes and this has been included in review costs
- Do you think we should continue with the Deprivation supplement? (most settings don't know who the children are); Early years Pupil Premium and there is a low take up in the Reading area (only 7%) - compared data on both groups to see if these are the same children but the data was not accurate so there will need to be work done on this; response 89%
- If yes, what percentage should we allocate? the money in the base unit works around the higher the base money in the base unit; the group felt that there should be a strong message sent to those providers receiving this; DFE are suggesting the Early Years Pupil Premium - if these children are the same then it should have less impact on the providers
- Do you think the funding for children aged 0-5 with additional needs and SEN should come from the Early Years Block or the High Needs block? 82 % High Needs Block;
- Do you think we should amalgamate these funds and create one panel to allocate funding to Early Years Settings and foundation stage Children? 80% would prefer this
- £105,000.00 to improve outcomes for Early Years concentrating around communications. This contract was recommissioned year after year but was starting to have less impact. As a group thought whether this funding would benefit the settings by increasing intakes and SENCO for the Early Years;
- Do you think we should fund all rising 3's in all settings in Reading and centrally retain the funds to do this? For a while Reading's take up was low; introduce funding rising 3's in maintained sectors. 51% vs 49% split.
- Of those that said 'yes' - asked if maintained or additionally PVIs; the base rate would be significantly affected if both groups were funded

Outcome

- Appendix 4 - what the early years block is going to look like for the next year
- A decision does need to be made around the recommendations for the formula

- Currently from portage and assessment comes from High Needs; Early Years is approximate 1.6% High Needs block; there is no additional funding being requested than what is already being funded
- What is the impact on the current budget on the High Needs Block?
- Forum agreed the recommendations

7. EARLY YEARS FULL TIME PLACES FUNDING REPORT

Presented by: Madeleine Cosgrove

- Received 17 'impact of funding' reports but since writing the report there has been additional 10
- The panel is made up of 5 members - representatives from Early Years settings
- A block of funding for those children settings would benefit additional time in nursery - additional needs or SEN children
- Children on CP, CIN or LAC children
- Failure to thrive Children and this could be around medical needs or disability of parents
- Reports returned are similar as all are doing their own form of assessments - a lot around language development; 52% are in receipt of deprivation funding
- Settings are only eligible if they are good or outstanding settings
- When they submit application they give evidence from all other agencies that are involved with their setting
- Lots of positive feedback
- Health and wellbeing - greater independence and confidence in children; it has been noted that those that stay for lunch developing personable relationships
- Parents spoke positively about their child's progress
- If there is not enough evidence submitted i.e. there hasn't been a medical report - this will be requested
- The idea of having the representatives from the settings was to avoid admin costs
- Of the 51 children - 29 qualify under different categories
- Being able to access these settings does give a quick acceleration
- Chair commented that the report is for noting by Schools Forum

8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (STANDING ITEM)

- Reminder if an item needs to come to forum to contact RD, PK or SD

9. PROPOSED DATES/TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Next Schools Forum meeting is scheduled for 5.00pm on the 12th May 2016 at The Avenue

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- No other business noted