

CITY OF YORK SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the Schools Forum held on Tuesday 7th July 2015 at 1.00pm

Attendance list:

Members:

Tracey Ralph	Maintained Primary Headteacher and Chair
Trevor Burton	Maintained Secondary Headteacher
Brian Crosby	Academies Representative
Cath Hindmarch	Special School Representative (deputising for George Gilmore)
Caroline Hancy	Maintained Primary Headteacher
Tricia Head	Pupil Referral Unit Representative
Andy Herbert	Maintained Primary Headteacher
Lorna Savage	Maintained Secondary Headteacher
Bill Scriven	Maintained Secondary Headteacher (VA school)
Karen Tatham	Maintained Primary Headteacher

Observers / Advisors:

Cllr Jenny Brooks	Elected Member for Children and Young People
Richard Hartle	Head of Finance, City of York Council
Jess Haslam	Head of Disability and Special Educational Needs
Jon Stonehouse	Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills
Salli Radford	Coordinator and Clerk

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, with consent, from Alison Birkinshaw – Further Education Representative, Nicola Fox – Maintained Nursery Representative, George Gilmore – Special School Representative and Ken McArthur – Early Years Sector Representative. Maxine Squire – Assistant Director, Education and Skills, was unable to attend the meeting.

David O'Brien – Governor Representative and Richard Ludlow – Academy Representative, were absent from the meeting.

3. Minutes of the York Education Partnership meeting of 13th April 2015

Previously distributed.

The minutes of the meeting of 13th April 2015 were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

With reference to item 5, Roles and Responsibilities of the Schools Forum, it was noted that the term of office for primary representatives was three years.

With reference to item 10, Interim Commissioning Plan, Richard Hartle advised that a proper and transparent procurement process was in progress.

With reference to item 11, New Schools Financial Software, Richard advised that the LA was working with the software provider to finalise outstanding issues. It was noted that bank reconciliation, uploading budgets and monitoring reports were being prioritised. Schools would be regularly updated on progress.

With reference to item 8, Review of 2015/16 Funding Formula Values, Jon Stonehouse advised that he had met with Cllr Brooks to discuss the picking-up of this issue by the new administration. It was noted that Cllr Brooks would attend Schools Forum meetings in future and was keen to lobby on behalf of York schools and to speak to MPs about funding.

Jon sought the view of the Forum on the LA considering a review of the Funding Formula as this had not been progressed due to the pending national review. Jon advised that, though this was on the central government agenda for 2017, a chair of governors had requested reconsideration of the formula at local level.

In response to a question regarding the certainty of the 2017 review date, Richard Hartle advised that the review timeframe had slipped in recent years. It was noted that any national review implemented in 2017 would prevent any local review from implementing any significant funding redistributions due to protections.

The Forum discussed the proposal, noting that pay increases, pension and National Insurance contributions would impact significantly on all settings over the next few years.

In response to a question regarding the driver behind the proposal and whether this was due to budget pressures on an individual setting or to seek to address perceived unfair distribution of funds, Jon advised that both were factors, with funding allocations and levels being cited as issues. It was noted that a single request was not a representative view across governing bodies. Richard advised that York's primary school per-pupil funding was now the lowest nationally, but with higher amounts allocated through the targeted factors such as Low Prior Attainment and Deprivation. This could suggest that some rebalancing may be required, particularly now that further targeted funding was being allocated via the Pupil Premium.

Bill Scriven and Cllr Brooks joined the meeting at 1.15pm.

The Forum discussed the issue further, with Richard outlining the consultation period and notification deadlines for the DfE. It was noted that modelling would need to be undertaken during the summer if formula revisions were to be implemented from April 2016.

The Forum agreed not to review the formula for 2016/17 but to keep the position under review. The Forum would consider a local review if it looked likely that the national review was going to be delayed beyond 2017.

The Chair welcomed the Executive Member for Education, making introductions around the table.

In response to a question regarding the additional AWPU referred to in the minutes of the previous meeting, Richard advised that the Forum had previously agreed to allocate any additional resources that might become available to the primary and

secondary AWPU factors. However, other factors would not be reduced by this mechanism in advance of a proper review. In response to a question regarding a future change to the local formula, Richard advised that this was most likely to result in an increase in AWPU values funded by possible reductions in some of the other more targeted funding factors. Any decision to change the formula could only be made by Elected Members, following consultation with the Schools Forum and all schools in the city.

The action plan was updated to reflect progress.

5. Adjustment to membership of the Schools Forum

The revised membership was noted.

6. Special School Place Funding 2016/17

Previously distributed. Jess Haslam presented the update, advising that the information included funding for mainstream settings, special schools and post-16 provision. It was noted that the Children and Families Act included changes to SEND provision, with funding element banding thresholds being based on needs and it being a duty of schools to allocate provision under the oversight of the LA.

Jess outlined the diagnosis model used to allocate funding, with additional funding generally being allocated according to need.

It was noted that funding Element 1 and Element 2 were related to place funding, with Element 3 representing a top-up based on individual needs.

Jess presented threshold documents used to clarify good practice and illustrate level of needs, being designed to support conversations with families. It was noted that SENCOs in mainstream settings highly valued the banding thresholds. The specific support needs areas were noted, with these being in line with codes of practice.

The Forum considered the recommendations, in particular the request that principles for the model of funding be approved. It was noted that the proposed system would be shadowed alongside the current system to test suitability. It was further noted that resources were not being cut but that transparency around allocation of funding was the aim. A working party including Applefields and Hob Moor Oaks representatives was involved in the development, with schools testing and moderating the models. It was noted that the next step would be to test a funding model which attached funding to points within a framework.

In response to a question regarding funding and supported hours, Jess advised that Education and Health Care Plans included a move from funded hours to a banding model. It was noted that a number of plans would include specified hours of support, with Jess to speak to the relevant team. It was noted that headteachers at the special schools were supportive of this approach.

In response to a question regarding funding for special schools for Early Years, subsequent phases and the journey into mainstream placements, Jess advised that this work had already been undertaken and implemented, with a more transparent process in place.

It was noted that Annex 1 would be further updated.

Jess advised that she had written to NYCC and East Riding to request adoption of the thresholds.

In response to a question regarding banding and the information to be provided to the Forum, Jess advised that examples had been provided with descriptors of needs within Annex 2. It was noted that this represented an overview and was not fully detailed information.

In response to a question regarding the Forum's interrogation of Element 3 and the future identification and understanding of tiers of need, Jess advised that details could be shared on levels of need in different areas. Jess advised that special school Element 3 detail could be circulated and it was noted that the next piece of work was to allocate funding to each aspect, with this information to be brought to a future meeting.

In response to a question regarding the £4,000 funding allocation for Element 1, Jess advised that this was notionally a delegated SEN budget, being in line with the lower limits of a basic national allocation.

The Forum agreed that Jess should progress with the modelling and provide a detailed report to members for consideration at a future meeting.

Jess Haslam left the meeting at 1.38pm.

7. SEN High Needs Funding comparisons

Previously distributed. Richard Hartle presented the report, which had been requested at the previous meeting. It was noted that there were three aspects of funding provided to mainstream schools to address high needs, with these being outlined in paragraph five of the paper. Richard advised that the LMS funding allocation included a number of factors, with the first £6,000 of SEN support needs being included in the main school funding formula.

In response to a question regarding the differential between primary and secondary basic AWPU and deprivation factors, Richard advised that historically York had used a local formula to determine these. The Forum discussed this issue, noting that by using deprivation and low prior attainment in the formula it may provide double funding to some settings in some cases. In response to a question of whether poor results were being rewarded by additional funding, Richard advised that this was not the case as the factor used pupils' prior attainment at the start of primary and secondary phases..

The Forum discussed the various aspects of the formula, with Richard advising that the current position be noted and commented on.

The Forum discussed the historical data available and commented that outdated salary information may be being used in the calculations, whilst recognising that it may not be possible to address this in the short term as this would require funding to be redirected from the main school funding formula

Further discussion followed, with the Forum agreeing that it needed to be provided with relevant information to ensure that funding mechanisms were understood and requesting that element 3 funding should be reviewed alongside any review of the main school funding formula.

The Forum thanked Richard for the update.

8. SEN / Inclusion Review

Previously distributed. Jon Stonehouse presented the update, advising that the review was considering inclusion in its entirety to ensure best outcomes within an inclusive community. It was noted that outcomes were better in mainstream environments, with the review paper outlining these initial observations. The Forum noted the Terms of Reference for the review and that an initial meeting had taken place with further meetings to follow.

Tricia Head advised that inclusion review meetings had narrowed their agenda to cover behaviour and SEMH, with needs often being multiple and broad in scope. It was noted that headteachers were keen to revise practice across the city and to challenge processes. The Forum discussed the review update, noting the place planning detail.

Jon advised of the need to maintain a broad approach to the review, which would seek to enable full involvement from stakeholders.

It was noted that the review group would report to the York Learning Partnership (YLP) and Schools Forum, with membership comprising Liz Goodman (Sheffield Challenge Partner), LA officers, the chair of the Schools Forum, the secondary headteachers group chair and one of the two primary headteachers sharing the role of group chair.

The Forum noted that membership could be changed as necessary and noted that the YLP included a broad membership representing the clusters. It was noted that the phase chairs would ensure that all headteachers remained involved in the review.

9. Inclusion review pilot projects

Previously distributed. Tricia Head presented the information, tabling further papers and background information.

Tricia advised that referrals across the city had been tracked for two years in order to identify steps between a pupil's mainstream school and Danesgate. It was noted that KS1 outreach was being delivered at Tang Hall Primary School, with the majority of referrals originating in the west of the city or Clifton. Tricia advised that a host setting and some staffing capacity to address these needs could be addressed through joint support from the West Cluster, Danesgate and the Schools Forum.

Tricia outlined the two proposed pilots:

- KS1 – West Kestrel as outlined above
- KS3/4 – Y9 focus as a “fracture point” for many students

The Forum noted the key elements of the pilot, which would provide pupils with time in their mainstream school and support from Danesgate. Tricia highlighted the need for stability within staffing and quality of teaching. It was noted that cohort case studies would be used to identify provision gaps. Tricia asked for the view of Forum members prior to the proposal being taken to the West Cluster.

In response to a question regarding the under spend against the 2014/15 budget, Richard Hartle advised that budget had been freed-up by a review of the School Improvement Service and that a small surplus from the DSG carry-forward could also be used to fund the pilots. Tricia advised that a shortfall was shown in the budget plan.

In response to a question regarding Nurture provision and referrals to Kestrel, Tricia advised that this was available across KS1 and to pupils moving from Nursery to

Reception or from Reception to Y1. It was noted that KS1 Kestrel provision focussed on behaviour modification, though only one year of data was available so analysis was not yet rigorous. It was noted that referrals from schools with a very small number of pupils with SEN could often be moved back into mainstream provision.

The Forum discussed the proposed pilots, with Tricia advising that the aim was to seek to identify gaps in Danesgate provision including Kestrel. It was noted that provision in schools was aimed at retaining pupils in their mainstream setting.

In response to a question regarding the impact of the two Nurture classes at Carr Infant School and Clifton Green Primary School, Tricia advised that this could be investigated and reported back.

Tricia tabled information on trends within the Danesgate roll, with 159 places currently commissioned. It was noted that tight records had been kept from 2012/13 to 2014/15 and that peaks and troughs were emerging, with variation across the three years being very slight.

Tricia tabled information on cohort trends, advising on different needs and an overall year-on-year increase in EOTAS. It was noted that referrals to the ERP were stable and those to the PRU had reduced as more pupils were kept in schools, with a further reduction possible.

Tricia tabled current data comparisons against historical data, advising that the 159 funded places reflected the current position and was therefore an accurate forecast.

Tricia advised of changes within the community with deprivation and mental health pressures reflecting wider needs within the city.

In response to a question regarding EOTAS referrals in primary settings, Tricia advised that these were generally from Y4 or Y5 rather than KS1. Tricia advised that she would be arranging training for staff on anxiety in young people and that this would help identify and address these issues early. Jon Stonehouse advised that access to support would also be “triaged” through Primary Mental Health Workers.

Tricia tabled summaries for 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16, advising that this data was taken to the Behaviour and Attendance Panel on a monthly basis. It was noted that this showed total places across the PRU, EOTAS, ERP and Kestrel. The Forum noted the criteria for engagement with each aspect of provision.

It was noted that Tricia had identified Y9 as a focus for work to retain pupils in mainstream settings, with shared KS3 and full-time KS4 attendance in school an aspiration.

In response to a question regarding the number of pupils to be included in the pilots, Tricia advised that there would be six places in each, with six places currently available in each phase of outreach provision each day. It was noted that these places would be accessed by pupils across the city and that pupils would return to mainstream settings. Tricia advised that the pilot would be a partnership venture with the aim of building a sustainable model that did not defer responsibility to schools.

Jon stated that the pilot was not an LA initiative but was linked to the wider inclusion review work being undertaken. It was noted that review work would also consider wider community support including the role of the Children’s Centres and integration with public health services as this completed its move within the remit of the LA.

Cllr Brooks advised that early intervention and the commitment of resources to enabling this work was a city-wide priority.

The Forum considered the proposal and allocation of the 2014/15 under spend of £48,000 to support this work during 2015/16.

In response to a question regarding the value represented by committing £48,000 to support 12 pupils, Tricia advised that Kestrel delivered support at a cost of £15,000 per year per pupil. It was noted that an intention of the pilot was to model funding options. It was noted that secondary school did not provide funding for primary support and that the primary academy settings did not contribute but were pay to access services on an hourly basis.

In response to a question regarding the status of the DSG under spend, Richard advised that this would be carried forward into 2016/17, having been identified at the end of 2014/15. It was noted that this could be reviewed at the next meeting.

The Chair advised that the School Improvement Commissioning Group (SICG) had carried forward an under spend despite bids from schools being turned down; asking whether this funding should now be committed. Jon advised that this funding belonged to schools, with the Forum noting that this funding was drawn from the AWPU allocated to pupils currently in the system. The Forum discussed this issue.

It was noted that £19,000 of PRU funding was being used to support pupils from outside the city and that secondary schools shared costs equally for their support, with this equating to £8,000 per place plus a £4,000 top-up from the school. It was further noted that EOTAS funding was topped-up by the LA due to the complex needs involved. It was noted that primary-level funding totalling £59,000 resulted in a relatively low per-pupil cost.

Tricia advised that £17,000 was being requested from the School Forum to help funding the KS1 pilot. It was noted that the positioning of a pilot in the west of the city was aimed at reducing transport costs and issues and would double Kestrel 1 capacity, therefore making delivery more cost-effective.

In response to a question regarding the inclusion of Y9 in the west pilot, Tricia provided examples of student experience at Y9 and the importance of supporting this stage during any redistribution of capacity within the city.

Tricia outlined the support planned within the pilot. It was noted that Danesgate provision would remain and be freed-up as referrals from the west would be managed by the pilots in the first case. Tricia advised that she was designing the curriculum for the pilot.

Jon advised that the pilot be reviewed at the end of the year and that roll-out or other future options could then be considered.

The Forum unanimously voted to support the pilots. It was agreed that the Forum would underwrite the pilots up to a maximum level of £17,000 and £31,500 respectively for the 2015/16 academic year, subject to the other funding contributions being made in full. The funding allocation is a one-off commitment from the DSG underspend carried forward from 2014/15, and sustainable funding would need to be identified if the pilots were to be extended into future years.

Tricia agreed to circulate information on all Danesgate placement home schools at the request of the Forum.

10. School budget de-delegations 2016/17

Previously distributed. Richard Hartle provided early notice of the de-delegations, requesting thoughts on any reviews that were required following the 2015/16 de-delegation process as decisions would need to be made at the next meeting.

In addition to the behaviour support outreach and traveller support service impact analysis already planned, it was suggested that de-delegation of funding for the Teachers' Panel be clarified. Richard advised that the funding of £53,000 currently provided 22 days of time.

Further discussion followed, with the meeting noting that members of the Teachers' Panel undertook work supporting school staff and contributed to policy development. It was noted that the de-delegated sum approved by the Forum had reduced over recent years but had been agreed to the end of the 2015/16 academic year. It was suggested that members of the panel be invited to a future meeting of the forum to provide a report outlining their work, the benefits it brings to schools and to make the case for continuation of the de-delegation.

The Forum requested that further information be provided to the next meeting on the impact of the behaviour support outreach service and the traveller support service, and the work of the teachers' panel.

11. Schools Forum forward plan - update

Previously distributed. The updated plan was noted.

12. Any Other Business

Brian Crosby advised that funding had been allocated to the two Teaching School Alliances (TSAs) though the funding allocations exceeded the threshold permitted by procurement regulations.

Jon Stonehouse advised that Maxine Squire was working to resolve this situation and that transparency would be appreciated by all involved. The Chair advised that the YLP would monitor impact and outcomes of the work of the TSAs.

13. Date and time of the next and future meetings

29th September 2015
14th December 2015

All meetings will begin at 1.00pm.

The meeting closed at 3.20pm.

Tracey Ralph
Chair

Date

ACTION PLAN FROM THE MEETING

Minute reference	Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale	Status
1 5 13/4/15	Review of membership to ensure compliance with regulations	Membership changes to reflect recent academy conversions	Salli Radford	7/7/15 and as an ongoing review	In progress, with alterations made summer term 2015 to ensure continued compliance
2 5 13/4/15	Clarify terms of office of Schools Forum members	Ensure that all stakeholder groups understand terms of office, that appointment processes are transparent and that succession planning is enabled	Chair of Primary Heads Forum and Secondary Heads Group	7/7/15	Primary headteacher terms of office confirmed. Secondary terms of office TBC 9/15
3 6 13/4/15	Information regarding SEN provision, including funding detail, is brought to the next meeting	Clarify funding mechanisms for SEN support across the city	Richard Hartle / Jess Haslam	7/7/15	Taken under agenda item 7 7/7/15
4 10 7/7/15	Information on de-delegated behaviour support outreach service, traveller support service and use of Teachers' Panel time to be provided	The Forum is better able to understand how de-delegated funds are used prior to making decisions for 2016/17	Richard Hartle	29/9/15	To be taken under agenda item 8