

<p><b>Minutes (draft)</b></p> <p><b>Meeting of the Oxfordshire Schools Forum</b></p> <p><b>4 February 2021</b></p> <p><b>10 am – 12.15 pm</b> <b>Virtual meeting via Teams</b></p>
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**Present:**

Maintained Primary School Headteacher Rep	Maureen Thompson <b>MT</b>		
Maintained Primary School Governor Reps	Kerrie Blaker <b>KB</b> Geoff Sutton <b>GS</b> Brenda Williams <b>BW</b>		
Academy Primary School Governor Rep	Tom James <b>TJ</b>		
Maintained Secondary School Headteacher Rep	Chris Hart <b>CH</b>		
Academy Secondary Rep	Lisa Hughes <b>LH</b>		
Academy Secondary School Governor Rep	Carole Thomson <b>CT</b> (Chair) Michael Dennison <b>MD</b>		
Early Years/PVI Rep (substitute)	Sarah Steel <b>SS</b>		
Special School Headteacher Rep	Lorraine Wilson <b>LW</b>		
Special School Governor Rep	Jeanne Lapsley <b>JL</b>		
Alternative Provision Rep	Nicola Partridge <b>NP</b>		
COTO rep	Donald McEwan <b>DM</b>		
Cabinet Member Education & Cultural Services OCC	Clr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale <b>LLG</b>		
Oxfordshire County Council Officers	Sarah Fogden <b>SFo</b> , OCC Finance Partner Hayley Good <b>HG</b> , Deputy Director, Children's Services (Education) Robin Phillips <b>RP</b> , Schools Finance ( <i>Item 4 only</i> ) Margaret Whitaker <b>MW</b> , Senior Financial Adviser (Schools)		
Clerk	Kit Howells <b>KH</b>		
	Action      When		
1.	<p><b>Apologies, Welcome, Introductions</b> CT welcomed Forum Members. <b>Apologies</b> were received from: Catharine Darnton <b>CD</b> (Vice Chair)</p> <p><b>Declarations of Interests - None.</b> There was no <b>Notice of Urgent Business.</b></p>		
1.1	<p><b>Membership of Forum's Committees</b> Membership is due for review and Forum members were asked to provide comments to KH (Clerk) for collation and CT review.</p>		
2.	<p><b>Minutes of Meeting held on 12 January 2021</b> Subject to amendment to Item 3.2, 2<sup>nd</sup> para to read: "... and NP represents AP on one of the County Transformation Project's Task &amp; Finish Groups, and HG will also involve her on the SEND Continuum Group and Finance Group, and she will be consulted on AP recommissioning work....." the Minutes of 12 January 2021 meeting were <b>agreed.</b></p>	<b>HG</b>	



	<p>Officers drew attention to the DfE’s change of ‘count date’ in relation to Pupil Premium /FSM funding (from January to October) to bring this in line with other funding; Forum registered its serious concerns about this substantial loss of substantial funding for schools, which will cause severe problems in schools, and which has not been widely publicised, even to the LA. <b>LLG</b> has written to the Secretary of State and Minister to emphasise OCC’s dissatisfaction about the loss of funding and lack of notice. It was agreed Forum would also register its serious concern about another withdrawal of funding at a time of scarce resources and extra costs and other pressures being experienced by schools due to COVID.</p> <p>Forum members agreed to also encourage Headteachers to protest about this to their local MPs. <b>HG</b> will ensure the issue is highlighted in <i>Schools News</i> and to the different sector groups so that they can be encouraged to register concern with Government.</p>	<p><b>CT to write to Sec of State (done)</b></p> <p><b>Forum members</b></p> <p><b>HG</b></p>	
4.2	<p><b>Early Years Funding 2021-22, including EY centrally-retained funding detailed breakdown of expenditure (For comment and decision)</b></p> <p>Forum noted the proposed funding arrangements for early years for 2021-22. The structure of Oxfordshire’s local formula reflects the 2021-22 requirements of the Early Years Entitlements Operational Guide 2021-22, which states that Schools Forums must be consulted on changes to local early years funding formulas, including agreeing central spend by 28 February 2021. The final decision rests with the LA.</p> <p>School Forum reviewed the Early Years Funding Formula for 3 and 4-year olds for 2021-22, the funding rate for two-year olds and the provisional published Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) figures for Early Years Pupil Premium, Disability Access Fund and Maintained Nursery Schools Supplementary Funding.</p> <p>The main change from the 2020-21 financial year relates to Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) Supplementary Funding. This has been used to protect at 2016-17 funding rates for the universal 15-hour entitlement. However, for 2021-22, part of the supplementary funding allocations is published as indicative, and part as “conditional”. The allocations for April 2021 to August 2021 are indicative and will be updated on the same basis as the universal entitlements, and that is the only adjustment that will be made to these figures. However, the MNS supplementary funding allocations for September 2021 to March 2022 are “conditional”: they may be subject to change and the LA has been instructed to treat them as unconfirmed. The indicative allocations and the conditional allocations have been published as separate figures.</p> <p>Given the Government’s recent outspoken support for</p>		

	<p>improvement to EY funding, Forum is dismayed by this wording, which implies change in funding Maintained Nursery Schools in the near future but does not provide any indication of what that will be and at what notice. Forum <b>agreed</b> to write formally to express dissatisfaction and request information about future intentions.</p> <p>Forum was pleased to note OCC's proposal to pass on the EYNFF hourly funding rate increases in full to providers, for 3 and 4-year olds by 6p from £4.47 to £4.53 ph and for 2-year olds by 8p from £5.60 to £5.68 ph. Forum <b>agreed</b> the contingency amount held is sensible and that, if not fully utilised, it should be used to fund EY as in previous years. Forum welcomed the much needed grants given to financially vulnerable EY providers as a short term safety net to help sustainability.</p> <p>Forum noted that, following removal of the Education Services Grant, the EY DSG funding for LAs for central EY functions was set at a maximum of 5%. Forum <b>agreed</b> this centrally retained funding and that it is currently being sensibly spent.</p>	<p><b>CT for letter to Sec of State (done)</b></p>	
<p>4.3</p>	<p><b>Special Schools Funding 2021-22 (For comment and decision)</b></p> <p>The work on the High Needs Review continues. OCC Cabinet has agreed an in-year uplift for Special Schools until September 2021, consistent with mainstream schools. The special school formula is part of OCC's SEND Transformation Project Finance Workstream, which will propose changes to funding for September 2021 with a full funding review implemented for September 2022. The LA will therefore continue the current formula funding for 2021-22 until September 2021, pending recommendations from the Workstream.</p> <p>Forum reviewed, and <b>confirmed its support</b> for, the proposed Funding arrangements for special schools for 2021-22, noting that Cabinet has agreed the proposals and that this is separate from the in-year top-up recently allocated to Special Schools.</p> <p>Forum expressed concern that no additional funds to support pay increases had been provided to the residential special school for any additional residential staff, and Officers will follow up.</p>	<p><b>SFo</b></p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Schools Forum Budget – Use of Balances (For comment)</b></p> <p>Forum discussed potential for use of the balances, and <b>agreed</b> best constructive use for the benefit of all schools in all sectors would be to cover the increased cost of their Union Facilities contributions (due to the election in Oxfordshire of the NASUWT Presidency), with any balances remaining to roll forward to use for any necessary review and Consultation research work. The charge was already agreed for de-delegation for maintained schools, but an easy transactional mechanism can be implemented to ensure</p>	<p><b>MW</b></p>	

	schools are charged a reduced amount.		
6.	<p><b>Update on current and future arrangements in LA Education (Standing Item) (For information)</b></p> <p><b>HG</b> briefed Forum on the key issues within Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A significant number of EY providers are at serious risk of not being able to maintain their provision and have welcomed the LA's grant to support their sustainability. There will be a serious sufficiency issue post pandemic if providers are not supported.</li> <li>-Proposals to bring together the three currently separate EY Teams in OCC is put on hold until at least September, due to the pandemic and awaiting the outcome of the Transformation Project work.</li> <li>-Ofsted has confirmed it will carry out a formal monitoring inspection on 25 February to look at the areas for action arising from the previous SEND inspection. A positive outcome is expected.</li> <li>-The regular briefings for Heads &amp; Chairs continue with high attendance.</li> <li>-'Keeping in touch' meetings with CEOs of MATs have been well received and there is evidence of improved relationships with secondary academies.</li> <li>-Tenders for a new provider for education back office computer systems have been reviewed and a new provider agreed, and a carefully planned implementation programme will take place during the next 18-24 months. The first live module will be for SEND, which is being introduced to internal teams currently and will go live for schools next year. Schools will have good notice and will be involved where their systems are affected. Updates will be provided at the regular briefing sessions for Heads and Chairs.</li> <li>-Discussions are taking place with Democratic Services in relation to the potential upcoming local elections in May, including use of public spaces, including schools, especially as many are currently used for COVID testing and vaccination.</li> </ul> <p>Forum members raised concerns should schools be closed due to use as polling stations when children have already had too much time out of school and <b>agreed</b> to raise Forum's concerns about this with the Secretary of State (the LA having already raised this issue regularly at its DfE meetings).</p>		CT for letter to Sec of State (done)
7.	<p><b>Date of next meeting: 17 June 2021: 1000-1300 (virtual)</b></p> <p>(Agreed that there is currently no requirement to hold another meeting before mid June).</p>		

Meeting closed 1230

Minutes/KH/13.2.21

Information:

Dates of Schools Forum meetings 2020-21: 17 June

Forum Committee dates: Schools & High Needs Committee: 24 March 2021 at 10 am  
Services & Contracts Committee: 13 May 2021 at 1.30 pm