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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS FUNDING FORUM CEME, Room 235 21 October 2021 (8.00 - 9.35 am)

Present:

Representative Groups

LA Maintained

Head Teachers: David Denchfield
Kirsten Cooper
David Unwin-Bailey
Chris Speller
Hayley McClenaghan
Terry Hudson

Governors:

Academy Representatives:

Secondary: Keith Williams
David Turrell
Denise Broom

**Non-School
Representatives:** Emma Reynolds

Trade Unions:

87 CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS OR OBSERVERS

Apologies were received for the absence of Emma Allen (Terry Hudson substituting), Kate Ridley-Moy, Dave Waters and Georgina Delmonte (David Denchfield substituting).

88 TO AGREE THE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

89 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

90 **EARLY YEARS FUNDING 2021-22**

The Forum received a detailed proposal of an increase in the funding rates for Early Years providers using unspent balances brought forward.

The Schools Funding Forum **agreed unanimously** the following, as recommended by the Early Years Provider Reference Group (EYPRG):

- that the basic hourly rate for 3 & 4 year olds be increased for the current financial year from £5.02 to £5.09, backdated to 1 April 2021.
- that the hourly rate for inclusion funding be increased for the current financial year from £4.90 to £5.09, backdated to 1 April 2021
- that the budget for the Early Years Inclusion Fund be increased from £300,000 to £400,000 to meet the cost of higher take up
- that a contingency of £200,000 be retained
- that the use of any underspend in the Early Years Block was discussed with the Early Years Provider Reference Group before any proposals are brought to the Schools Funding Forum and before any decisions are made on its use.

91 **HIGH NEEDS FUNDING REVIEW**

The report before the Forum provided a summary of the options considered at the first meeting of the High Needs Task and Finish Group and proposed a package of increases in High Needs funding for schools. These covered the hourly rate paid in support of Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs), the inclusion supplement (headroom), the potential backdating of funding for EHCPs and funding for ARPs.

The ongoing work of the Task and Finish Group would determine the precise details of funding changes, but the package should result in an overall increase of £2.5m in line with the Local Authority's proposals.

The backdating of EHCPs was the area requiring most work. The Forum acknowledged that this was an issue for Year 7 pupils as well as for Reception pupils.

The report explained that local authorities were able to transfer up to 0.5% of the Schools Block to other funding blocks with the agreement of Schools Forums. The proposed increases in High Needs funding could not be implemented without a transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block. This would reduce the increase in net cost to the High Needs Block from £2.5m to £1.5m

The Schools Funding Forum **agreed unanimously**:

- ☐ to note the areas examined by the Task and Finish Group
- ☐ that the consultation with schools on 2022-23 funding include the option of a transfer of Dedicated School Grant from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

92 **SCHOOL FUNDING 2022-23**

The Forum received a report that summarised the announcement of indicative DSG Schools Block funding for the financial year 2022-23 and provided options on a transfer of funding to the High Needs Block, meeting the cost of pupil growth and falling rolls and allocating the funding to schools.

Two funding options were presented to the Forum, one with no transfer of funds between the DSG Schools Block and High Needs Block and one with a transfer of 0.5%

The Schools Funding Forum considered the options presented and **agreed unanimously**:

- ☐ that the funding of pupil growth and falling rolls should continue at the current level
- ☐ that schools should be consulted on the single issue of a proposed transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

93 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

94 **ST URSULA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL FUNDING 2022-23**

The Forum considered a report that outlined the funding position for recently amalgamated schools and proposed the submission of a request to the DfE for the 'disapplication' of part of the protected lump sum funding for St Ursula's Catholic Primary School.

The Schools Funding Forum **agreed unanimously** to the submission of a request to the DfE to 'dis-apply' part of the protected lump sum funding for St Ursula's Catholic Primary School

95 **NEXT MEETINGS**

The Forum noted that the next meeting would be held on 2 December 2021 at 8.00am. The meeting will take place at CEME.

96 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business raised.

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