

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HAVERING SCHOOLS FUNDING  
FORUM**

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at CEME.  
(8.00 – 9.50 am)**

**Present:**

**Representative Groups**

**LA Maintained School Representatives:**

**Primary:** Kirsten Cooper (Chair) (KC)  
Georgina Delmonte (GD)  
Hayley McClenaghan (HMcC)  
Chris Speller (CS)  
David Unwin-Bailey (DUB)

**Academy Representatives:**

**Primary:** Chris Hobson (CH)

**Secondary** Neil Frost (NF)  
Nick Giles (NG)  
David Turrell (Vice Chair) (DT)

**Special Schools** Emma Allen (maintained) (EA)  
Andy Smith (Academy)\* (AS)

**Non-School Representatives:**

**Early Years PVI Sector:** Emma Reynolds (ER)

**Trade Unions:** John McGill (JM) (Teaching staff union representative)  
Peter Liddle (Support staff union representation) (PL)

**Non Members in attendance:**

Angela Adams (AA)	Clerk, HGS
Marcus Bennet (MB)	Head of SEND
Trevor Cook (TC)*	Assistant Director of Education
Katherine Heffernan (KH)	Head of Finance (Business Partnering)
Hany Moussa (HM)	Principal Education Finance Officer
Jacqueline Tracey (JT)	Senior Inspector (Schools Causing Concern)

\*for part of the meeting

## **1. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW MEMBERS, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS OR OBSERVERS**

All were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies for absence had been received from Tony Machin. Scott McGuinness had also sent his apologies for the meeting but it was noted that Nick Giles was attending in his place. It was also noted that George Blake, representing the NEU trade union, had joined the forum replacing John Delaney following his retirement.

## **2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR AND SCHOOL FORUM CONSTITUTION**

Forum members discussed the election of the Chair and Vice Chair. Forum members unanimously agreed to elect Kirsten Cooper as Chair and Dave Turrell as Vice Chair for a year or until the first meeting of the Funding Forum in the autumn term 2025.

Forum constitution: The number of representatives needed for each school sector would be reviewed to ensure numbers were in line with pupil numbers in the sectors. There were also a number of secondary head vacancies to be filled. The number of vacancies needed to be filled would be confirmed and followed up.

**ACTION: HM / KH**

## **3. TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th JUNE 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024 were received and agreed.

## **4. MATTERS ARISING**

The following were matters arising from the previous minutes that were not included elsewhere on the agenda.

4.1. Year-end balance (minute 4 refers): The revised figures had been circulated as required.

4.2. High needs (minute 8 refers): Forum members noted that the Task and Finish group had been set up and meetings had been arranged.

## **5. EARLY YEARS FUNDING**

**Forum members were asked to:**

- 1) Note the details of the funding adjustment for 2023-24 and the funding arrangements for 2024-25.**
- 2) To agree the funding methodology for distributing the new EYBG for applicable Early Years providers.**

The DfE had adjusted the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) block in line with the census. The final 2023-24 Early Years Block allocation, released in July 2024 and September 2024, showed an increase of £270,808 so the carry forward at the end of the year would not be impacted.

It was noted that working parents could claim 30 hours of funded childcare for their children starting from 9 months old from September 2025. Currently, they can claim for 15 hours. The funding rate for children aged 9 months to 2 years will be £11.05 per hour. However, it was highlighted that this funding is based on 38 weeks of provision per year, as required by the Early Years Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This aligns with the expectation for local authorities to fund providers.

Providers have the flexibility to either deliver childcare for the minimum 38 weeks or stretch the funding over a longer period, such as 52 weeks, to meet the needs of parents. However, they must ensure that the hourly rate covers operational costs across the chosen delivery model.

For children with complex needs, the funding will increase to £17 per hour for the 38 funded weeks during the 2024-25 financial year, and the revised arrangements for SENIF has taken effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

It was requested that it was included in the papers that the funding was paid based on 38 weeks of the year.

Providers have the flexibility to either deliver childcare for the minimum 38 weeks or stretch the funding over a longer period, such as 52 weeks, to meet the needs of parents. However, they must ensure that the hourly rate covers operational costs across the chosen delivery model.

It was noted that it was down to the provider to ensure that they stretched out their funding to cover 52 weeks of the year. This was in line with schools funding.

The high needs budget was finite but ER stated she was out of pocket. DUB advised that the schools were in the same position in that they had to pay holiday pay cover costs for 52 weeks of the year.

For children eligible for the working entitlement, funding was paid for 30 hours over 38 weeks, any costs over and above the 30 hours and 38 weeks, were payable by the parents as this will be a private arrangement, and above the funded entitlement that the LA receives from the DfE.

Everyone had to account for how they spent their funding. It was noted that the figures in the table included in the paper was accurate for 38 weeks, in line with the DfE's expectations for funding.

- Expansion of child care: From September 2026 all schools would need to offer wraparound care from 8am until 6pm. This needed to be provided in house or through an external provider. The wrap around care would need to cover EYFS children but not Nursery children.
- Early Years Budget Grant (EYBG): The DfE were providing additional funding for 2024 -25 to support affected early years providers in managing the costs associated with the recent teacher pay award. The allocation based on the January 2023 census for Havering was £138,784, but this would be reviewed after the January 2024 census and funding may increase. The EYBG would be paid on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and would cover the period from 1<sup>st</sup> September through to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. This funding would be paid to maintained

schools with a Nursery.

There were 2 options for the allocation and distribution of this funding; Option 1: allocate funding was a flat rate based on head count -£174, 22, or Option 2: to base allocation of the funding on the hours claimed- 61p an hour.

**Forum members discussed the options and agreed to allocate the EYBG using option 2, allocate based on the hours claimed.**

**Forum members also noted the details of the funding adjustment for 2023-24 and the funding arrangements for 2024-25.**

*Andy Smith joined the meeting at this point, 08:23*

## **6. SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING**

**Forum members were asked to:**

- 1 Note the update on schools funding for 2025-26**
- 2. Agree to apply the national funding formula rates to schools data when calculating schools' funding**
- 3. For LA maintained primary school representatives; to consider whether to continue with the de-delegation of funding for the following services:**
  - (i) Insurance**
  - (ii) Free school meals eligibility checking**
  - (iii) Maternity leave insurance**
  - (iv) EAL service**
  - (v) Behaviour support service**
- 4. For LA maintained primary and special school representatives; to consider the de-delegation of funding for the following:**
  - (i) Statutory and regulatory duties**
  - (ii) Core school improvement activities**

The information for De-delegation would be available in November as there had been no allocations to date from the DfE who were waiting for the Autumn budget statement. There had been no indication of any changes and there had not been any changes in distribution advised.

From the schools block 0.5% would be allocated to high needs to fund top ups. The second top slice would be allocated to growth and falling rolls funding. Some schools were growing while others had falling rolls. There was a funding formula in place for funding bulge classes.

For fallings rolls there were 2 forms of calculation used for calculating the funding. However it was noted that this needed to be standardised, the revision to standardise the funding was to fund the difference between 28 pupils and the number in the class.

The fund for growth and falling rolls for 2024 -25 was £2.455m, this included £146k top sliced form the Schools Block. It was proposed that the funding was

distributed using the national funding formula. This would be consulted on once the final figures were received from the DfE.

It was noted that £1.2m from the Dedicated Schools grant would be allocated to high needs to help offset some of the deficit.

### **The transfer for High Needs was agreed by funding forum members**

£300K would be transferred to falling rolls / growth funding.

It was noted that the Head teachers appreciated the budget decisions being made so they could agree their budgets.

It was further noted that Academy growth was part of the previous year's funding as they worked on a different accounting year – September to August.

It was agreed it was the right thing to do standardise the Growth and Falling Rolls formula, as schools were still impacted by falling rolls and growth. Schools relied on the funding and it was good to make the allocation consistent. This mitigates Head teachers being impacted by planning decisions for the greater good.

HMcC questioned if this had been removed the previous year. In response it was noted that the funding had always been there but it had previously been allocated differently, now they wanted to standardise the formula. Allocation of funding for falling rolls was also no longer just paid to schools that were good or outstanding, all schools with falling rolls were entitled to funding.

### **Forum members agreed to transfer £300K to falling rolls and growth funding for 2024 -25.**

*Trevor Cook joined the meeting at this point, 08.39*

### De-Delegation- Maintained schools

The services that funding was de-delegated for primary maintained schools had not changed and the following was noted:

- School improvement – There would be a reduction in costs as the service had changed the way they delivered their support. They now used internal staff for support instead of external consultants.
- Union and maternity costs had increased in line with inflation.
- Maternity leave- this supported maternity cover for teachers and support staff in primary maintained schools. It was forecast that this would be overspent. An increase by £4 per pupil was needed to cover these costs. Maintained Primary School representatives did not agree the increase and undertook to take this back to their clusters for further discussion.

### **ACTION: Maintained Primary Head teachers.**

- English as an Additional Language- it was questioned if schools needed this service.

- School to School support - Maintained Primary Head teachers agreed that they were happy to continue to pay for this service but they wanted a breakdown to show the impact.

**ACTION: HM**

Voting would take place on 28<sup>th</sup> November for the De-delegation and Maintained Primary Head teachers were asked to seek feedback from their clusters before the next funding forum meeting.

**ACTION: Maintained Primary Head teachers.**

Representatives from the different teams would be happy to attend cluster meetings to share further information about their services.

TC questioned if they would ask their clusters to vote on each De-delegation or they could just obtain feedback from the schools. It was agreed to discuss at clusters but an email would be sent to each school for votes which needed to be responded to.

The Chair stated that they did listen to peoples points of view. Cluster groups would be asked for their feedback on how to vote and it needed to be ensured that schools voted. It was noted that some schools felt they did not get the full benefit of the de-delegated services.

MB advised that SEMH was a small part of the wider provision.

JD asked if union facility time could be reviewed as the level paid was lower than the national average. Could it be established what the average across the country was. In response it was noted that this only covered local authority Primary schools. This de-delegation was voted for and it had increased in line with other increments. It was noted that the schools did not get a break down of how union facility time funding was spent. It was further noted that this funding was just for the maintained primary schools supported by the unions. Rates had varied over the years. It was noted that they had tried to get Academy schools to buy into this too. HM undertook to do some research on average rates for facility time across the country.

**ACTION: HM**

Trade union facility time was paid for 50% of a representative's time, 50% of their FTE must be spent in class, so a maximum of 0.5 should be claimed.

## **7. HIGH NEEDS FUNDING**

**Forum members were asked to:**

- 1) Note the year forecast of expenditure for financial year 2024-25**
- 2) Note the thresholds for the EHCP and SEN Support from the Notional SEN budget**
- 3) Note the progress made by the High Needs Task and Finish Group and the requirement for a report to be tabled for Cabinet consideration and approval**

Forum members noted that the estimated spend for high needs for 2024 -25 would be £60.9m. The projected in year deficit for 2024 -25 was £19.8m and once this was added to the deficit carry forward from the previous year, high needs would be in deficit by £35.1m, which would be carried forward to 2025 -26.

It was noted that Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) had increased by 18%. The funding being offered was unsustainable and was putting schools in jeopardy with regards to support. It was proposed to take to Cabinet the increase of funding to £30k per pupil in an SEN unit and uplift the basic rate from £17 an hour to £19 an hour. This would then increase the projected deficit to £37m if approved. The gap could not be closed and reducing the amount paid to schools would only increase their deficit.

DUB asked if they were feeding back to the DfE that the formula was not correct. It was noted that they were underfunded for SEN and there were issues about provision. There were children in mainstream school who should be in other provisions. More families were asking for EHCPs even though they did not need them. This also impacted on other services such as doctors and social care. However there were a high number of pupils in the Borough with complex needs.

MB advised that there had been a paper drawn up to establish what was wrong with the system and a 5 year plan would follow which had yet to be adopted. There was an in balance of rights. The proposed new system expanded the age range but there would be no extra funding. Pupils with an EHCP got the support that had been identified that they needed but it needed to be ensured that the Non- EHCP pupils did not lose out due to the funding gap.

DUB stated that another model of work needed to be found, the current 1:1 system could not be sustained. The schools needed to adapt and if the costs could be reduced schools could then put back into Non- EHCP pupils.

#### **Forum members noted the report.**

CS advised that they had not received the top up funding reports since May 2024. HM undertook to follow this up.

**ACTION: HM**

#### **Forum members agreed for the SEN unit funding for Primary and Secondary Schools to increase from £22K to £30K.**

#### **Forum members agreed to increase across the board from September 2024 the mainstream schools top up funding from £17 an hour to £19 an hour.**

The increase in the deficit for this block was a concern but there were issues over funding and the hours paid to cover staff costs. Recruitment and retention was also low. Schools needed to know the hours to be awarded under an EHCP so they could plan staffing to ensure the support was in place as needed. This would be followed up at the task and finish group who would be meeting after the funding forum.

MH advised he could forecast the funding for the schools but mobility impacted on the funding for SEN and EHCP pupils.

CH stated that EHCPs were processed in 20 weeks in Havering, they did well when compared to other local authorities but all needed to work together to provide the best for the pupils. The Government also needed to look at the guidance.

## **8. CENTRAL SCHOOLS SERVICES BLOCK (CSSB)**

**Forum members were asked to:**

- 1) Note the projected allocation of CSSB for 2025-26**
- 2) Consider the request to retain funding for central statutory services**

Forum members noted the projected allocation for CSSB for 2025-26 as £1,760,277. It was noted that the historical commitments that were paid from CSSB were reducing year on year, other commitments to this funding were statutory.

Although Health and safety was statutory this service was used by schools under individual service level agreements and it was not included in the CSSB. Health and safety was not part of the services that was part of the ESG transfer to DSG that took place in 2017/18.

CS advised that as a faith school, health and safety was overseen by the Diocese. HM advised that any de-delegation that was not applicable to a school would receive a refund. The local scheme in place reflected national guidance but there was a lack of transparency with regards to the service and service level agreements (SLA). Schools would want further breakdowns and it was noted that these would be shared once guidance was received.

Adding health and safety to the CSSB could be considered. Some schools were trying to move away from using Havering health and safety but they were advised they could not because it was statutory requirement. Maintained schools are Havering staff and were accountable to and the responsibility of the Chief Executive. Health and safety provided support with audits and accident reporting but mixed messages were received from this section.

TC advised that he was meeting with the Head of Health and Safety the following week as clarity was needed with regards to this service and the SLA. Other teams provided a clearly laid out SLA for schools.

The options for adding Health and Safety to the de- delegation would be reviewed.

**ACTION: HM / KH**

**Forum members noted the projected allocation of CSSB for 2025-26 and agreed the request to retain funding for central statutory services**

## 9. SCHEME OF FINANCING SCHOOLS, APPRENTICESHIP UPLIFT, GRANTS AND SURVEY

Forum members were asked to:

- 1) Note the grants for UIFSM, GLA UFSM, CSBG, TPECG and TPAG
- 2) Applicable members to agree the apprenticeship uplift for apprentices in schools

Forum members noted that it was proposed to increase the apprenticeship hourly rate so that it was in line with the minimum wage. All apprentices would be paid £11.44 an hour. The cost of this across the schools would be £40k and schools had been notified.

In response to a question about apprentices joining the pension scheme, it was noted that they were not in employment long enough to be in the pension scheme as their contract was less than 2 years. Apprentices usually chose to opt out of the pension scheme and if they did participate and left they would receive their contributions back if they had been in the scheme for 2 years or less. It was stated that they should be encouraged to join the pension scheme but it was not known if they were encouraged to stay in the scheme, it was an opt out scheme. It was also noted that it was more expensive to have an apprentice than a Teaching Assistant as they cost £19k for 4 days a week.

Apprenticeships were part of corporate policy and maintained schools were council employees.

TC undertook to share colleagues' concerns with corporate HR.

**ACTION: TC**

The figures would be reviewed next year to establish the impact of the increase. It was noted that some schools had raised complaints about this.

**Applicable forum members voted on the apprenticeship uplift for apprentices in schools. All applicable members abstained from the voting. So the increase was not agreed.**

**Forum members noted the grants for UIFSM, GLA UFSM, CSBG, TPECG and TPAG.**

## 10. NEXT MEETINGS

Forum members noted the dates of the upcoming meetings for the next academic year.

Thursday 28th November 2023 (room 235)  
Thursday 16th January 2025 (room 233)  
Thursday 13th February 2025 (room 233)  
Thursday 12th June 2025 (room 235)

Meetings to start at 8.00 a.m. at CEME room 233 or 235.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of any other business raised.

Meeting closed at 9:50 am

DRAFT