

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

**Thursday 23rd October 2025 at CEME
(8.00am – 9.55am)**

Present:

LA Maintained School Representatives:

Primary	Kirsten Cooper (<i>Chair</i>) Georgina Delmonte Hayley McClenaghan Ryan Kinnear Mike Ross (also representing the Diocese of Brentwood) Chris Speller (also representing the Diocese of Chelmsford)
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Special	Emma Allen (EA)
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Governor	Les James (LJ)
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Academy Representatives:

Primary	Chris Hobson (CH)
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Secondary	David Turrell (<i>Vice Chair</i>) (also representing Post 16) Paul Larnar (also representing Post 16)
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Special	Vicky Mummery
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AP Academy	Mandeep Kaur
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Non-School Representatives:

Early Years PVI Sector:	Becky McGowan*
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Trade Unions:	John McGill (JM) (Teaching staff union representative) Julia Newman (JN) (Support staff union representative) George Blake (GB) (Teaching staff union representative)
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Observers:

	Russell Abrahall (NAHT) Observer
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Non-Members in attendance:

Angela Adams	Clerk, HGS
Marcus Bennett	Head of SEND
Kavan Cheema	Strategic Business Partner
Trevor Cook (TC)	Assistant Director of Education
Katherine Heffernan (KH)	Head of Finance (Business Partnering)
Hany Moussa (HM)*	Principal Education Finance Officer
Jacqueline Treacy (JT)	Senior Inspector for schools casing concern (HSiS)

*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 were received from the following Forum Members:

Emma Reynolds – Early Years PVI sector (Becky McGowan in attendance as representative)
David Unwin Bailey Primary sector (Ryan Kinnear in attendance as representative)
Neil Frost- Secondary Academy
Scott McGuinness- Secondary Academy
June MacDonald – Olive Academy

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Funding forum members noted that a Chair and Vice chair needed to be appointed for the academic year, until the first meeting of the autumn term 2026. Forum members discussed the appointment of members to the roles and the following was unanimously agreed.

To reappoint Kirsten Cooper as Chair and David Turrell as Vice Chair until the first meeting in the autumn term 2026.

3. TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12th JUNE 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th June 2025 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. Membership (minute 1 refers): P Larner had been contacted with regards to his membership of the funding forum and he was in attendance.
- 4.2. De-Delegation (minute 4 refers): Forum members noted that the carry forward was still held and would be discussed in more detail under De-delegation on the agenda.
- 4.3. Working party (minute 6 refers): KH advised that the working party was in the process of being established to support schools with their budgets.

5. SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING

Forum members were asked to:

1. **Note the update on schools funding for 2026-27**
2. **Agree to apply the national funding formula rates to schools data in calculating schools' funding**
3. **Agree the School Block 0.5% transfer to High Needs and to consider a disapplication request be submitted to the DfE for any transfer above 0.5%**
4. **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) Trade Union Facility Time
 - (vi) Contingency to support schools in financial difficulty
5. 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

Forum members were asked to note the 2026-27 funding update, agree use of National Funding Formula (NFF) rates, confirm the 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to High Needs, and consider de-delegation arrangements for maintained schools.

The DfE had not yet confirmed allocations for 2026–27, but the expectation was continued use of the NFF. Havering already used the NFF, so scope for change was limited.

B McGowan joined the meeting at this point, 8:24am

- Schools Block Transfer

The current 0.5% transfer to High Needs remained insufficient, but Forum members did not support increasing it. Any increase would add pressure on school budgets. This position would be shared with clusters. Model examples and top-up rates would be reviewed.

- Growth and falling rolls.

Some areas were expecting growth while others faced declines. No changes were proposed to the falling rolls fund.

Members discussed whether to continue de-delegation for various services. Points noted included:

- Free school meals checking: LGfL offered this at no cost.
- EAL: usage varied; some schools preferred a traded approach. HSIS to explore inclusion in its package (action: JT/TC).
- Trade Union Facility Time: further work was ongoing, with concerns about consistency, funding, and academy participation. Updated membership data would inform next steps.
- Contingency funding: views differed on whether top-sliced funding should be redistributed or used for support. Rising numbers of financially challenged schools were noted.

Members requested a clearer breakdown of statutory and regulatory duties funded through de-delegation

ACTION: HM/KH

Clusters were asked to review proposals on core school improvement funding (action: all maintained representatives).

The demographic in Havering was changing and schools became better at supporting pupils with EAL the more they had on their roll, schools also received funding for EAL.

H Moussa joined the meeting at this point, 8:43am

Funding forum members then voted on the following

- 1) They agreed to apply the national funding formula rates to schools' data in calculating schools' funding.**
- 2) They agreed the School Block 0.5% transfer to High Needs.**
- 3) They did not agree with the proposal to transfer more than 0.5% to High Needs.**

6. HIGH NEEDS FUNDING

Forum members were asked to note the report.

Forum members noted the report.

A forecast overspend of £28.5m was highlighted, linked to historic low funding levels and rising needs. The High Needs Working Group would explore the pressures further.

Forum members noted the report.

7. CENTRAL SCHOOLS SERVICES BLOCK (CSSB)

Forum members were asked to:

Note the projected allocation of CSSB for 2026-27

Consider the request to retain funding for central statutory services.

Members noted the projected 2026–27 allocation of £1.95m.

Funding would continue to support core statutory services and existing commitments.

Members agreed to retain the current distribution.

Forum members noted the projected allocation of CSSB for 2026-27

Forum members voted and all agreed to continue with the distribution for CSSB.

8. EARLY YEARS FUNDING UPDATE

Forum members were asked to note the report which was for information only.

Forum members noted the report.

The estimated carry forward was £1m following a DfE adjustment.

Termly census arrangements now applied across all providers.

£628k was distributed to providers at 32p per hour.

Next-year planning would follow a revised timetable, with an additional EYPRG meeting in January ahead of consultation. The pass-through rate would rise to 97%.

Forum members noted the report.

9. SCHOOLS MONITORING

At year-end 2024–25, 15 schools were in deficit (total £0.5m). Only four expected improvement; a further 14 schools risked deficit within three years.

A group would be formed to strengthen support and guidance. Minutes would be shared.

The Forum acknowledged the pressures on school leaders and LA staff.

ACTION: TC

10. NEXT MEETINGS

Thursday 27th November 2025

Thursday 15 January 2026

Thursday 12 February 2026

Thursday 11th June 2026

Meetings to start at 8.00am at CEME either in room 233 or 235.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no additional business items.

The Chair thanked Forum members for their contributions.

Meeting closed at 9.55am.