

# AGENDA

**Meeting:** Schools Forum  
**Place:** Online Meeting  
**Date:** Thursday 10 June 2021  
**Time:** 1.30 pm

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Lisa Pullin, Tel 01225 713015 or email [committee@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:committee@wiltshire.gov.uk) of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN.

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<b>Membership:</b>	<b>Representing:</b>
Neil Baker	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative
Aileen Bates	WGA - Special School Governor Representative
Andy Bridewell	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative
Rebecca Carson	PHF - Primary Academy Representative
Michele Chilcott	WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
Sam Churchill	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative
Jon Hamp	Special School Academy Representative
John Hawkins	Teaching Association Representative
Cllr Ross Henning	Observer - Local Youth Network
Mel Jacob	WGA - Primary School Governor Representative
Georgina Keily-Theobald	WASSH - Maintained Special School
Nikki Barnett/Denise Lloyd	Observer - Post 16, Wiltshire College
Lisa Percy	WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
John Proctor	Early Years Representative (PVI)
Giles Pugh	Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education
Nigel Roper	WASSH - Maintained Secondary Representative
Graham Shore	PHF - Primary Academy Representative
Trudy Srawley	Observer - Wiltshire Parent Carer Council
Ian Tucker	Co-Chair of WASSH - Secondary Academy Representative
David Whewell	WGA - Secondary School Governor representative
Catriona Williamson	PHF - Maintained Primary Representative

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## PART I

Items to be considered whilst the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies and Changes of Membership**

To note any apologies and changes to the membership of the Forum.

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 7 - 22*)

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021 (copy attached).

3 **Chair's Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Chair.

4 **Declaration of Interests**

To note any declarations of interests.

5 **Public Participation**

*Schools Forum welcomes contributions from members of the public. During the ongoing Covid-19 situation the Forum is operating revised procedures and the public are able participate in meetings online after registering with the officer named on this agenda, and in accordance with the deadlines below. A maximum of 15 minutes will be allocated to public participation at the start of each meeting.*

[Guidance on how to participate in this meeting online](#)

Statements

Members of the public who wish to submit a statement in relation to an item on this agenda should submit this electronically to the officer named on this agenda **no later than 5pm on Tuesday 8 June 2021 (1 clear working day before the meeting)**. Statements should take no longer than 3 minutes to be read aloud.

Questions

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions electronically to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than **5pm on Thursday 3 June 2021** to allow a response to be formulated. Questions are limited to a maximum of 2 per person or organisation.

Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice.

6 **Updates from Working Groups** (*Pages 23 - 40*)

The Forum will be asked to note the minutes/updates from the following meetings:

- Joint meeting of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group – 27 May 2021
- Early Years Reference Group – 27 April 2021 and 19 May 2021

7 **Dedicated Schools Budget - Budget Monitoring Outturn for 2020/21** (*Pages 41 - 48*)

The report of Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) seeks to present the final outturn budget monitoring information against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2020/21 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

8 **Update from the High Needs Block Working Group** (*Pages 49 - 52*)

The minutes of the meeting of the High Needs Block Working Group held on 6 May 2021 are attached. The Forum will also receive an update on behalf of the Working Group and there will be a spotlight on the dyslexia friendly school project.

9 **Impact of Changes to Pupil Premium Calculations - f40 Survey** (*Pages 53 - 56*)

The report of Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) seeks to provide Schools Forum with an update on the implications of the change to the Department for Education's date for calculating Pupil Premium for schools.

10 **DfE Consultation - School Improvement Brokerage and Monitoring Grant** (*Pages 57 - 68*)

The report of Louise Lewis (Head of School Effectiveness) seeks to share with Schools Forum the DfE's consultation around School Improvement brokerage and monitoring grant.

11 **Future of Schools Forum Meetings - Remote Meetings Format** (*Pages 69 - 72*)

The report of Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) seeks to present the permanent legislative changes around the format of Schools Forum meetings and the responses to the consultation following these changes in legislation.

12 **Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings**

To confirm the dates of future meetings, as follows, all to start at 1.30pm:

7 October 2021  
9 December 2021  
20 January 2022  
17 March 2022.

13

**Urgent Items**

To consider any other items of business, which the Chair agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

**PART II**

Item(s) during consideration of which it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

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### Schools Forum

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#### **MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2021 AT ONLINE MEETING.**

##### **Present:**

Neil Baker (Chairman), Aileen Bates, Andy Bridewell, Rebecca Carson, Michele Chilcott, Sam Churchill, John Hawkins, Cllr Ross Henning, Mel Jacob, Lisa Percy (Vice-Chair), John Proctor, Giles Pugh, Graham Shore, Trudy Srawley, Ian Tucker, David Whewell, Catriona Williamson and Lynn Yendle

##### **Also Present:**

Jane Davies (Portfolio Holder, Education and SEND), Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager), Libby Johnstone (Democratic Governance Manager), Cate Mullen (Head of Inclusion & SEND), Lisa Pullin (Democratic Services Officer), Bea Seggari (Schools Support Accountant), Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) and Lucy Townsend (Director of Children’s Services) for part of meeting

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#### **12 Apologies and Changes of Membership**

Apologies were received from Georgina Keily-Theobald (Maintained Special School Representant/Co-Chair of WASSH), Nigel Roper (WASSH - Maintained Secondary Representative), Helean Hughes (Director – Education & Skills), and Cllr Laura Mayes (Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Skills).

##### **Membership changes**

Mark Cawley Early Years/PVI representative has resigned from Schools Forum as he has now sold his nursery business and also resigned from his position on the Early Years Reference Group. Officers would liaise with the Early Years Reference Group to find a replacement representative.

#### **13 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2021 were approved.

##### **Resolved:**

**That the Chairman approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of Schools forum held on 21 January 2021.**

#### **14 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair thanked Mark Cawley for his service and contributions to the Forum.

15 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no interests declared.

16 **Public Participation**

No questions or statements had been received prior to the meeting.

17 **Updates from Working Groups**

The Forum noted the update received by way of the minutes of the meeting of the School Funding and SEN working group held on 1 March 2021.

The Forum noted the update received by way of the minutes of the meeting of the Early Years Reference Group meeting held on 23 February 2021.

There were no questions raised from the notes of these meetings.

**Resolved:**

**That Schools Forum note the minutes of the joint meeting of the School Funding and SEN working group held on 1 March 2021 and the Early Years Reference group meeting held on 23 February 2021.**

18 **Dedicated Schools Budget - Budget Monitoring 2020/21**

Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) referred to the budget monitoring report as at 31 January 2021 that was circulated with the Agenda. Marie highlighted the following:

- There was no significant change in the forecast since the last report up to December 2020;
- The forecast overspend was £9.032 million against the overall dedicated schools' grant budget. The main driver for the forecast variance was the ongoing pressures of the high needs block;
- There was a small underspend forecast for the Early Years budget of £326K. For the spring 2021 term, the Government's expectation was that settings would remain open whilst the schools were closed, and they would only be paid for children attending settings;
- Due to the uncertainty, no variance is forecast on the budgets for the free entitlement for 15- and 30-hours childcare for 2,3 and 4-year-old. There were small underspends, but it was anticipated that the DfE's post financial year adjustment would recover this in the summer;
- COMF grant funding of £1 million had been received by the Local Authority to support, facilitate and aid containment of the virus specifically for early years. The deadline for applications to this funding



is 22<sup>nd</sup> March when payments would be assessed and assuming affordable up to the £1 million would be paid. A report would be presented to the June meeting of the Forum to update on how this grant was spent;

- The forecast underspend on the Schools budget largely related to the school's growth fund which currently shows an underspend of £2.273 million and was helping to offset the overall pressure on the DSG;
- High Needs budgets were projected to overspend by £11.634 million. The major driver of the increased cost was volume. If the current increase in EHCPs continues at this rate, 4056 EHCP's are anticipated for the end of the year which was a 10.2% increase. The number of EHCPs being requested has slowed slightly which could be due to reduced face to face contact with pupils due to the Covid pandemic;
- The DSG deficit reserve brought forward of £11.350 million was reduced by the positive early years block adjustment of £0.539 million. The forecast overspend would take the reserve into a deficit position of £19.843 million which the Local Authority is having to cashflow; and
- The DSG Management Plan was approved by Schools Forum on 19 January and by Full Council on 23 February 2021.

**Resolved:**

**That Schools Forum note the budget monitoring position at the end of January 2021.**

19 **Update on the work of the High Needs Block Recovery Group**

Cate Mullen (Head of Inclusion & SEND) gave an overview on the work of the HNB Recovery Group. There were a number of initiatives as part of the recovery work and with Covid and staffing changes this had meant that some deadlines had had to be amended and with the delays that would in turn mean that some of savings would also be delayed.

*Dyslexia friendly schools* – This initiative was on track although the shape of the work had changed as schools were closed to many pupils through the last year. The main priority was to support schools to meet the needs of their children with dyslexia so that they were able to receive their education in their own schools and not have to go to independent providers.

*Inclusion and school effectiveness project* – Covid had meant that engagement for much of the work had been paused. The Ordinarily Available provision (OAP) work was starting to gain momentum.

*Enhanced Learning Provision and Resource Bases* – an update would be provided later at this meeting.

*SEND Assessment and EHCP* – The work in relation to EHCNA panel process and pathway had commenced in February 2021 as staffing resource for 2 days per week had been allocated which had enabled this to take off.

*Independent Special School Review* – Lisa Fryer had been reviewing the learners placed in Independent Special School provision, why they were placed in those settings and to consider it they were value for money. Lisa was working to identify cost savings to be made and where young people could be brought back into Wiltshire provision at their key points of transition.

*Post 16 Transition* – Resource was being identified for this work to ensure that the right Officers were in place to work with the SEND, Education Teams, Adult Services and partners to ensure smooth transitions were in place. FACT funding was in place to enable the employment of SEND lead workers.

*SEND Alternative Provision Project* – This was positive and now on track. The new approved provider list was well used by schools already.

*Early intervention project* – HELM had been in place since September 2020 with meetings across the Wiltshire Council area. Health, early years and other relevant agencies those who have identified that intervention was required to help with transitions at school. Positive feedback following a HELM review was received.

A secondary school governor representative asked if the RAG ratings of the projects related to quality of progression and if the anticipated savings were being achieved. Cate Mullen suggested that the High Needs Recovery Block plan be circulated with the minutes of the meeting which would give more detailed information on the savings and when they were on course to be delivered. – *Admin note* – *At the time of publishing these draft minutes the refreshed High Needs Block plan was not available to be released and would be shared with Schools Forum members as soon as it was available.*

Cate Mullen (Head of Inclusion & SEND) gave an update on the Resource Base/Enhanced Learning Provision Strategy highlighting the following:

- Wiltshire has 16 RBs and they are designated as either communication and interaction or complex needs bases and there is one RB for those with hearing impairments and one for physical impairments;
- All non-selective secondary schools have an ELP (27 schools) and learners required an EHCP in order to access a place at a RB or ELP;
- How RBs and ELPs are funded based on 2021/22 values;
- The links to the priorities in the SEND and Inclusion Strategy;
- Strand 1 of the work would be unpicking what the provision is intended to do/be, how it is costed and configured and the need it is fulfilling on behalf of the LA. They would also be revisiting and reviewing the Service

Level Agreements for RBs and ELPs. Matt Sambrook was leading on that work and it was hoped to have an outcome by the beginning of the next academic year;

- Strand 2 – would be looking at the operational and pedagogical elements including the quality of the curriculum offer and the quality assurance associated with the work of the RBs and ELPs. A small working group had been set up to work through this, they had met once, and more meetings were planned with the aim to have the plan in place by June 2021; and
- Strand 3 – This was work on an operational level to see how those working in ELPs meet the needs of the learners we are asking them to support. A plan was developed from February half term to arrange support and consultation for ELP practitioners via monthly virtual meetings to build up an enhanced support model and a community of practice between them. enable helps feel supported with their practice.

Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) gave an update on the f40 submission to the Government review on SEND as follows:

- F40 believes that the current SEND system is broken and needs major change and investment in order to meet growing demand and assist the most vulnerable children in our country, many of whom have very complex, challenging needs that require a variety of additional support;
- The suggested steps to be taken are
  - Increase SEND budget by £2.4bn between now and 2023 and fund current deficits
  - Provide clarity and guidance on how notional SEND funding is spent by schools
  - Reduce demand for EHC plans
  - Place greater emphasis on early intervention
  - Introduce expected levels of SEND support in Mainstream schools
  - Strengthen and amend the Code of Practice and Tribunal system
  - Ensure every teacher receives training in SEND and managing challenging behaviour.

A Councillor representative asked if a reduced demand for EHCP's and early intervention was linked with hopefully early intervention taking place so that an EHCP was not needed. Marie Taylor responded that some early intervention work has proved this but that it was difficult to fund early intervention projects from an already overspending HNB which is why the local authority has chosen to fund recovery programmes via FACT funding to help ease this pressure on the high needs block.

- F40 had issued questionnaire responses in January 2021 and received responses from 77 out of 140 local authorities. 69 out of those 77 local

authorities are forecasting a deficit for 2020/21 and most have a rising deficit year on year;

- Wiltshire is statistical neighbours with 11 other authorities and in the lower deficit range of 49 LA's only 2 of this are Wiltshire's statistical neighbours; - there could be some learning from these as they have improved their deficits; and
- Out of the 28 LA's that are in the higher deficit range, 9 (from a total of 11) of those are Wiltshire's statistical neighbours with 4 in a better position and 4 in a worse position. There could be learning from those in a better position.

**Resolved:**

**1. That Schools Forum note the following updates**

- i) High Needs Block Recovery Working Group**
- ii) Resources Bases and Enhanced Learning Provision**
- iii) F40's submission to the Government review on SEND**

**2. That the financial savings highlighted within the High Needs Block Recovery plan be shared with Schools Forum within the minutes of the meeting. See admin note above in relation to this.**

**20 DfE Consultation Update - HNB Funding**

Marie Taylor (Head of Finance – Children and Education) referred to the report which sought to present the DfE consultation on the review of NFF for allocations of high needs funding to local authorities: changes for 2022-23 which was launched on 10 February to run until 24 March 2021. Marie highlighted the following:

- This was a previously unannounced consultation asking 5 questions with a finance focus being issued prior to the SEN review which had been promised for later this year;

*Proposal 1. The current formula has 50% lump sum comprising LA planned spend in 2017/18. The first proposal is to use actual 2017/18 expenditure opposed to 2017/18 budget as a baseline to allocate the historical element. Proposed 2022/23 onwards.*

- This proposal would mean a reduction in funding of £1.2 million for Wiltshire potentially, for one year only. Having a formula that changes just for one year would have a nasty impact on Wiltshire, however 95 local authorities would gain under this proposal, so this was of concern. For Wiltshire the 2017/18 actual spend was less than planned and there was a big jump from 2016 onwards so this proposal was not something that Wiltshire would support. A response for this had been drafted and it

was hoped that schools would use this for their own responses to support the view.

*Proposal 2. Increase the proportion of actual expenditure in 1 above (the historical lump sum) to 60%*

- This proposal would mean a reduction funding, estimated to be in excess of £1.5 million for one year only. The DfE wrote directly to us after this consultation was issued to inform us that they had made a mistake in the 2017/18 figures and had understated our place values by 17 places. Whilst the true value of the decrease was not known, it would still be significant and again Schools Forum members were encouraged to respond to the consultation to state their strong disagreement to this proposal.

*Proposal 3. Alternative to the historic spend factor (Proposed 2023-24 onwards)*

- The DfE have confirmed they would prefer to replace the historic spend factor with alternative factor(s) longer term that better reflect local issues and are able to be kept up to date but that avoid perverse incentives such as numbers of EHCPs. The DfE say that the earliest alternative factors could be introduced is 2023-24 following the SEN Review.
- Officers agree that moving away from an outdated formula and towards a suite of easy to update drivers to reflect the needs of young people and take into account local variables including rurality would be fair, transparent and a positive move for Wiltshire, however it was not accepted that using numbers of EHCPs is inappropriate and believe it should be a major factor in the new formula. This would be quite contentious to feed back to the DfE but in nationally an assessment for an EHCP is how we assess and support the children's needs. A way to avoid EHCPs being a perverse incentive to funding could be including a cap on average national growth of it as a measure.

*Question 4 - Attainment data as a funding driver – views on pandemic impact (Proposed 2022-23 & 2023-24)*

- For 2022-23 there would be no attainment data due to the disruption to tests and exams in 2020 and this was likely to be repeated for 2021. The DfE are proposing that 2016,2017,2018,2019 and 2019 (2019 used twice) is used for both 2022-23 and 2023-24 years. This was discussed at the School Funding Working Group (SFWG) meeting and it was agreed that a consistent approach is preferable, however it was felt that modelling should be carried out across more options as this approach carries a level of risk as the cohort of young people is so small for some it could be disproportionate.

#### *Question 5 - Effective proxies for SEND & AP in the formula*

- For this factor the DfE currently take into account the local population of C&YP, two health & disability measures (bad health\* & DLA) and two deprivation factors (FSM and local area deprivation measure.)
- The DfE welcome views on how proxy factors can be improved, confirming, numbers of EHCPs are not a suitable measure.
- This was again discussed at the SFWG and it was felt that a wide range of factors should be incorporated, and they should absolutely include numbers of EHCPs or numbers of assessments. Wiltshire also wanted to feedback that their rates had not been uplifted for some time.

Marie highlighted the importance of a high number of responses from Wiltshire bearing in mind that 95 other local authorities would benefit from proposal one. It had been agreed at the SFWG meeting that Neil Baker and Lisa Percy would prepare a joint letter and invite all Headteachers to join in with that response.

A Councillor representative asked if the 95 local authorities mentioned were non rural county local authorities and if there were any other factors? Marie Taylor reported that previously when there were “statements” (before EHCPs) Wiltshire did not have as many as perhaps others in other local authorities and we have been playing catch up since then, However those that got there earlier would reap benefits from this proposal as in 2017 some local authorities were spending more than us. Rurality of authority did not come into it – it would be the level of spend in 2017.

The Chair confirmed that he and Lisa Percy (Vice Chair) had prepared a response based on the views of the Wiltshire Officers and as schools are currently very busy with Covid and children returning they had made it as easy as possible for schools to respond to the consultation. This had been shared with WASSH and PHF to ask the to share with schools and request that they send in individual school responses.

It was confirmed that the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council would also prepare a response based on the Officer views and views of Schools Forum.

#### **Resolved that Schools Forum:**

- 1. Note the DfE consultation and proposed Local Authority responses.**
- 2. Promote the completion of the consultation document within their school communities.**

#### **21 Schools Budget Update 2021-22 - All Blocks**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to his report which sought to outline the key changes resulting from implementing the schools funding formula for 2021-22. Grant highlighted the following:

- The DfE published the 2020-21 financial settlement for schools on 17 December 2020. The settlement included details of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and its individual component blocks of funding;
- The 2018-19 year saw the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF). The NFF was initially proposed as a 'soft' formula for the 2018-19 year before becoming a 'hard' formula in 2019-20. Subsequently the DfE confirmed that 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 would also remain as 'soft' years, enabling Schools Forum to make school funding decisions at a local level;
- The Schools Block of funding was set at £317.724 million which is a 'real terms' increase of £10.4m on the 2020-21 funding level;
- There had been an overall increase in the pupil numbers funded within Wiltshire in 2021-22 although this was low with only a growth of 84 pupils;
- For the Wiltshire funding rates for 2021-22 mobility was a new factory to be paid this year at £900 for primary pupils and £1290 for secondary pupils, above a threshold of 6% of pupils being classed as mobile;
- The minimum per pupil funding level had moved over time and for 2021-22 was set at £4,180 primary and £5,415 secondary. These figures also included the Teachers Pay and Pension grants;
- The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for 2021-22 would see all schools receiving an increase of at least 2%. The removal of the cap was a real milestone in ensuring all schools were fully funded using NFF values;
- The total allocated to Wiltshire for growth in the 2021-22 was £1.814 m based upon primary growth numbers of 502.5 and secondary growth numbers of 492.0; and
- Schools Forum had previously agreed to transfer funding from the Schools Block into the High Needs Block as a one-off non-recurrent transfer. A transfer of 0.5% (£1.517m) would take place between the Schools Block and the High Needs Block.

The Salisbury Diocesan representative was pleased to hear that more schools (75 out of 202 primary) would be gaining from the minimum per pupil funding. He thought that this would be more of a gain for primaries with a higher number of pupils and asked if it was correct that smaller schools did not really gain under that methodology. Grant Davis confirmed that this did have a disadvantage effect for small schools in the way that the funding is worked out, in particular as the 'lump sum' was spread over a lower cohort of pupils in smaller schools. However later in the meeting Grant would be sharing details of

the new consultation for small rural schools and that would give an opportunity to look at how small schools should be funded and appropriate ways to do this.

**Resolved:**

**That Schools Forum note the update on the Schools Budget for 2021-22.**

## 22 **School Admission Appeals**

Libby Johnstone (Democratic Governance Manager) referred to the report which sought to inform Schools Forum of the final arrangements in place for the subsidised charging for admission appeals for all schools. Libby highlighted the following:

- The DfE had changed the legislation regarding appeals as all schools had to be treated equally in relation to the charging for admission appeals;
- Following various options considered, and consultation to schools it was concluded that the preferred solution would be to charge schools directly for appeals at a subsidised rate;
- The Council would therefore be introducing charges from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, with costs split between the preparation of the case and the organisation and clerking of the panel;
- Schools could use alternative providers if they wish, but would need to reassure themselves that providers were acting in accordance with the DFE Appeals Code;
- Concerns had been raised that schools may want to admit over their PAN in order to avoid paying for appeals; and
- It had been agreed that a small group of Schools Forum representatives would draft a position statement which could then be circulated to schools and this statement states that the expectation of Schools Forum is that all schools would fund appeals and maintain their PAN to be fair and consistent to all

Schools Forum were asked to approve the proposed position statement. The Chair asked for an annual report to be prepared for Schools Forum to give them details of the numbers and type of appeal hearings so that this could be monitored.

**Resolved:**

1. **That Schools Forum note the update and that the Local Authority will be introducing new charges for Admission Appeals from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.**



2. That Schools Forum agree the proposed position statement and that this be circulated to all schools through Right Choice.
3. That an annual report on School Admission Appeals be prepared for Schools Forum at the October meeting each year.

23 **f40 - Campaign for Fair Funding for Schools Update**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) referred to the report which sought to provide the Forum with an update on the work of the f40 group. The f40 group have recently issued an outline of the work that they are undertaking and the direction of their fairer funding campaign. Grant highlighted the following:

- The f40 group had issued their latest campaign focus, concentrating on the following areas;
  - Fairness
  - Increased Funding
  - SEND
  - Early Years
  - Covid
- The key areas which f40 is asking for were;
  - Changes to the NFF to make it fairer, more easily understood and transparent
  - Additional £5.5bn to be funded between now and 2023
  - Guaranteed three-year funding programme
  - Schools fully recompensed for Covid costs and lost income.

**Resolved that Schools Forum:**

**Note the contents of the report and the f40 update.**

24 **Updates for Schools Forum**

Grant Davis (Schools Strategic Financial Support Manager) gave the following update on Covid funding:

- There would soon be an announcement for Schools via Rightchoice regarding the Covid workforce funding which covers the period following October half term up to Christmas and this would give details of how schools could make claims;
- The DfE had offered funding for exceptional costs relating to Covid between March and July 2020 and all these payments had now been made;

- The payment of the second tranche of the Covid Catch Up Premium payments of £80 per primary pupil and £240 for secondary pupils had just been released;
- There had been announcement of £302 million as a Covid Recovery premium grant for schools. Although the full details were not yet available it was thought that they would be £6k for an average primary and £22k for an average secondary school using disadvantaged pupils as a driver for that. A sum of £200m would also be available for tutoring and £200m for running summer sessions in secondary schools; and
- The f40 group would continue to raise requests for additional Covid costs.
- Schools were reminded that on their website they should refer to the Covid Catch Up Premium and state what the school was using it for.

Grant Davis referred to the report (circulated as Agenda Supplement 2) which gave details of the consultation for changes to the Sparsity Factor for 2022-23. Grant highlighted the following:

- The consultation focused on the proposed changes to begin measuring sparsity distances – which determine whether schools are remote enough to attract sparsity funding – by road journeys, not as the ‘crow flies’, to better reflect the actual distance between schools and to increase the maximum sparsity factor values by £10,000 across all phases in the 2022-23 schools national funding formula (NFF);
- During the DfE’s research, their evidence had suggested that the group of schools which were experiencing the most significant financial challenges are small, remote schools. The DfE recognise the vital role that such schools play in the rural communities they serve and that without them pupils could face long travel distances to school;
- Obviously, Wiltshire is a rural county with many small and rural schools eligible for sparsity funding. The current definition of sparsity is for a primary school with 150 pupils or less and the average distance from each pupil’s home postcode to their next nearest compatible school is 2 miles or greater as the crow flies. For secondary schools this would mean 600 pupils or less and the average distance from each pupil’s home postcode to their nearest compatible school is 3 miles or greater as the crow flies;
- The current maximum funding payable through this factor for eligible schools is £45,000 for primary and £70,000 secondary schools;
- Through the DfE’s analysis, there were currently around 1,200 schools eligible for sparsity funding nationally and the change in calculating sparsity distances would increase this number by around 900 schools;

- In Wiltshire there were currently 73 primary schools and 3 secondary schools that fall into the “small schools” definition for sparsity funding. Of the 73 currently only 29 are eligible under the “crow flies” distance whereas the road distance would mean that 52 schools would become eligible. However, it still left 21 small primary schools ineligible;
- There are three “small” secondary schools of which 2 are currently eligible for sparsity funding and these proposals would mean that the third secondary would also be eligible;
- There were alternative options to sparsity as there was no one perfect solution to support small and rural schools. If the distance threshold was reduced to 1 mile this would mean that only 5 of Wiltshire’s 73 small schools would not be eligible and these 5 were all urban small schools;
- Another way of looking at it could be that the lump sum is graduated in favour of small schools using a sliding scale of thresholds depending on pupil numbers. This could also be used for applying the minimum per pupil funding level on a graduated scale. For small schools, spreading the lump sum over a small number of pupils results in a disproportionate impact upon their overall ‘per pupil’ funding; and
- The Local Authority would share a proposed response for Schools via Rightchoice and all schools would be asked to respond to the consultation.

The Salisbury Diocesan representative thanked Grant for the quick response to the consultation and urged Forum members to complete the consultation which is important for Wiltshire. He welcomed the use of road distance as a measure which would include a further 52 schools for sparsity funding which was a step in the right direction, but this would still leave 21 ineligible. A reduction to a distance of 1 mile would mean that only 5 Wiltshire Schools and 2 Dorset schools would miss out. He also welcomed the suggestion of the graduation of the lump sum .

A Councillor representative who was also a small primary school Governor welcomed the opportunity to respond to the consultation on this issue and would raise this with the Headteacher to ensure a response was submitted.

The Chair asked if the road distance was reduced to one mile meaning more schools were eligible, would the quantum amount received be the same and that more schools would get a share, so the amount reduces? Grant Davis reported that if this proposal was carried forward for 2022-23 the amount received for Wiltshire would be based on this new methodology so the LA would be fully funded and it would be up to Schools Forum to determine how to distribute that funding in the best way.

The Chair reported that the deadline for the consultation was 9 April 2021 and although this was in the Easter holidays, all schools would be urged to submit a response to the consultation to share Wiltshire's views on this issue.

**Resolved:**

- 1. That Schools Forum note the Covid funding update.**
- 2. That Schools Forum note the content of the report relating to the consultation for small rural schools and encourage school colleagues to participate in and respond to the consultation by 9 April 2021.**

25 **Scheme for Financing Local Authority Maintained Schools**

Bea Seggari (Schools Support Accountant) referred to her report which outlined the updated Wiltshire Scheme for Financing Local Authority Maintained Schools and provided Schools Forum members with an update, following the revisions detailed in the DfE's statutory guidance in August 2020. Bea highlighted the following key points in her report:

- That the scheme only applied to maintained schools and its role was to define the financial relationship between the local authority and the schools it funds; and
- Included in the scheme was financial controls, budget share and banking arrangements, surplus and deficit balances, income, charging of a school budget share, taxation, PFI, insurance, provision of services by the local authority, responsibility for repairs and community facilities.

The Chair confirmed that this had been discussed in detail at the School Funding Working Group and he thanked the Officer for producing a clear transparent document.

**Resolved:**

**That Schools Forum note the content of the report and give approval to the updated Wiltshire Scheme for the financing of its maintained Schools.**

26 **Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings**

Schools Forum noted that the future meetings would be held on:

10 June 2021  
7 October 2021  
9 December 2021.

27 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 1.30 - 3.33 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Lisa Pullin, Tel 01225 713015 or email [committee@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:committee@wiltshire.gov.uk) of Democratic Services.

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

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## Schools Forum

### School Funding and SEN Working Group

#### MS TEAMS MEETING

27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

#### Minutes

**Present:** Marie Taylor (Chair), (Finance, local authority ((LA)), Grant Davis (Finance, LA), Neil Baker (Christchurch), John Hawkins (Teacher / Governor rep), Catriona Williamson (Mere), Andy Bridewell (Ludgershall Castle), Lisa Percy (Hardenhuish), Cate Mullen (Head of Inclusion & SEND, LA), Rebecca Carson (Woodford Valley) Sam Churchill (Hilmarton)

**Apologies:** Helean Hughes (Director LA) Georgina Keily-Theobald (Downlands) and from Simon Thomas and Alison Enever who do not have updates for this meeting.

1.	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	
2.	<p><b>Minutes from previous meeting</b></p> <p>The actions from the minutes of the previous meeting were run through and the minutes had been accepted at the March Schools Forum meeting as an accurate and true record.</p> <p>GD confirmed 3 schools had been selected by Deloitte the Council's auditors to be part of a sample - - any bank charges are refundable – GD to contact the schools.</p> <p>GD to request a copy of audit of previous school audit – NB believes some useful HR etc improvements could be shared with all schools. NB happy to speak to HR.</p>	<p>GD</p> <p>GD</p>
3.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Budget Monitoring for the period to 31st March 2021 (MT)</b></p> <p>MT shared her report with the group. The overspend for 20/21 is £7.906m which is a small movement from the last report.</p> <p>Highlights:            Early Years – small variance, EY will have a separate DSG reserve wef 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. COMF rollover &amp; New allocation of £0.6M which is good news</p> <p>School Budgets – the underspend is largely driven by the growth fund and this offsets the DSG overspend position.</p> <p>The HNB overspend is £11.507m – again, based on higher numbers of EHCPS and levels of support requested.</p> <p>The pressures on the HNB continue and the HNB working group will be prioritising demand management, savings projects, commissioning and spend controls.</p>	

	<p>Of major concern remains the impact of this on the DSG deficit reserve balance which is held in the local authority's balance sheet. The reserve balance is now forecast to be £18.717m.</p> <p>This overspend will continue to be cash flowed by the local authority as per the DfE guidance.</p>	
5	<p><b>HNB Recovery Group Update (CM)</b></p> <p>Cate shared the minutes and update on dyslexia friendly schools which is to be the “spotlight” for SF. Ian Abbot to attend Schools Forum meeting.</p> <p>Demand - CM updated that the average monthly requests were 50-65 – for March there were 154 and so there could well be implications on the HNB.</p> <p>Savings plans – it was proposed that due to the increases in demand and impact of COVID - an alternative way of tracking progress be introduced by monitoring price and volume – so ISS project, cost per learner could decrease as our own SS are able to take more complex learners. Tracking volumes and pro-rating back numbers of EHCPs will allow us to understand the wider picture and how various placements link together.</p> <p>Discussed were the costed provision map with links to outcomes for learners – important that notional SEN is available in school budgets to cover costs of SEN support and SENCO etc as well as the expected first £6,000 of every EHCP learners' costs.</p> <p>CM clarified it was important for schools to have evidence for the DfE Ofsted Inspectors when they challenge, and the costed provision map has a useful dual purpose for schools.</p> <p>HNB group to consider next steps but likely to be a pilot of initial EHCP requests and banding uplifts – seems a pragmatic approach with minimal additional workload – joint working on the “form” or submission as this has proven problematic for many other local authorities and onerous for school SENCOS – both to be minimised.</p> <p>LP – ensure schools do not think they have to invest in expensive software CM queried whether NPA / top up rates had been significantly reduced as part of a previous savings plan – MT confirmed not whilst she was in this role - GD to check historical rates &amp; share with the group.</p> <p>NB – the team needs to be praised for challenging requests (best value) CM – need to be careful as the C&amp;F Act has a very low legal threshold to start an assessment – it's very difficult to refuse.</p> <p>National funding remains the largest issue</p> <p>From Lisa Fryer's ISS presentation at March SF – 2 ISS providers had unfavourable Ofsted reports (final page for relevant slide.) the LA contact parents to advise of options – parental preference is often to remain at school – the LA can work with the provider to improve.</p>	GD
6	<p><b>School Improvement Brokering &amp; Monitoring Grant</b></p> <p>MT took the group through the DfE consultation and the LA response. There is a possibility that the funding will reduce – linked to the number of academies and that the LA duties will increase. The service risks are significant dilution of current support. The financial risks are not being able</p>	



	<p>to transfer from the CSSB to the HNB and or, for schools forum to consider alternative funding.</p> <p>JH – good and exceptional support from his school SIA – immensely grateful and would support the LA’s response.</p>	
7	<p><b>F40 and Other Updates</b></p> <p>GD took the group through the report,  Impact of Pupil Premium – change of census date locally and nationally  Not good timing post pandemic and at a time of economic downturn  NB pointed out schools need to be clear that despite funding not being provided for the higher numbers of pupils, that the statutory responsibility to all PP pupils remains. GD to expand paragraph in his report.  GD to share report and concerns with Kate Wilkins (SE)</p>	<p>GD  GD</p>
8	<p><b>Schools Forum Meeting Format</b></p> <p>MT shared report – GD pointed out we could also have additional meetings as required and have done so in the past  JH – agreed Dec / Jan better in person  CW – no travel time and time away from school minimised  NB – blended approach good to be in the room for some, agree principles in Dec reduces the number of variables &amp; set budget in Jan, decision making, reduces time  LP – do need human contact, new membership – MT shared with the group she was running inductions for Dominic Muns (Ed &amp; Skills) and Suzanne Wickham (SEND) (newly elected Cllrs) and both she and Grant would be happy to do this for any new school forum member if this was useful</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Voting required at Schools Forum</p>	<p>All</p>
9	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>There was no aob.</p>	
10	<p><b><i>Date and Time of Next Meeting</i></b></p> <p>Next meeting – date provisionally set at: Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September @ 8.30am  This is planned as a virtual teams meeting.</p> <p>Next Schools Forum meetings are Thursday 10 June and Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 @ 1.30pm. These are planned as a virtual teams’ meetings.</p>	



## **Early Years Reference Group Meeting**

**Tuesday 27 April 2021**

### **1. Welcome and introductions**

Gary Binstead, Jane Boulton, Lucy-Anne Bryant, Rosemary Collard, Emma Cooke, Helen Edwards-Matheou, Jenny Harvey (notes), Sarah Hawkins, Russ Martin, John Proctor, Jane Provis, Marie Taylor, Emily Wood

### **2. Apologies**

Bid Lilywhite, Debbie Muir, Trudy Surman

### **3. Introduction of new members**

Jo Clarke from Rainbow Early Years, Trowbridge and Emma Osmund from Cygnets Pre-School, Westbury and Bratton were introduced and welcomed to the group.

### **4. Minutes of last meeting (23 February 2021)**

The group approved the minutes as a true and accurate record.

### **5. Matters arising**

Item 4 - Business rates for nurseries – JP asked what MT had to report back after challenging the Director of Resources on nursery business rates guidance given. MT queried this as no action was logged in minutes. MT will discuss issue with Director after meeting.

Item 7 – DAF funding. JB confirmed that she hadn't received a phone call to discuss DAF funding, but that the situation had moved on now. LAB confirmed she had checked the school aged children, and needed to follow up with JB as action was required.

Item 9 – Job Centre sector based programme. LAB added an article to the EY Newsletter, and confirmed there are some nurseries who have expressed an interest in taking part in the programme.

**ACTION: MT to liaise with Director of Resources on nursery business rate guidance**  
**LAB to liaise with JB regarding DAF funding and school aged children**

### **6. Impact of COVID on settings (All)**

Overall, group representatives said their settings were doing well, however there were some sustainability issues along with an increase in SEN children. Recruitment of general and specialist qualified staff is an ongoing issue, but even more so with the increase in SEN children and 1:1 support required. SH said her settings were experiencing ISF issues in terms of not hearing back on application progress. CS confirmed that flexibility is being applied as many settings have missed ISF application deadlines, and she will liaise with SH after meeting.

LAB spoke about the sector based programme in collaboration with Job Centre Plus. Job Centre Plus is able to mandate people to attend training, and this programme links up with settings in the area offering participants with a guaranteed interview at the end of the training. It's a good opportunity to open the EY sector up to people with an aim to recruit more staff.

JB mentioned that in planning for September 2021, the biggest impact for District Specialist Centres will be returning children to dual placements. There is also the mammoth task of meeting needs and expectations across the board.

LAB confirmed there have been no virus outbreaks in settings for the last 3 weeks and thanked all early years providers for their hard work.

**ACTION: CS to liaise with SH re: ISF application issues**

### **7. Containing Outbreak Management Fund (COMF)**

MT informed the group that this additional funding was given by central government to break the spread of virus transmission. Wiltshire Council has been granted informal approval to roll forward any COMF underspend from 2020/2021 to 2021/2022. MT has also submitted a further bid for £600k of 2021/2022 monies to add to 20/21 underspend monies in order to extend the current scheme of support into the Summer term and possibly beyond. MT will update the group when she receives a response. The group thanked MT for her efforts in trying to secure additional funding for the sector as it has made a huge difference to date.

**ACTION: MT to update the group when bid response received.**

### **8. HELM (Health and Education Liaison Meetings)**

CS shared a presentation document with the group (copy attached). HELM started in September 2020 with bi-monthly meetings where providers brought a range of cases needing advice from a variety of attending professionals such as DSCs, Inclusion Officers, Advisory Teachers, SALT and EP Service.

After some administration difficulties at the start, there is now a weekly admin meeting to identify priority children for the HELMs. All HELMs are currently held on Microsoft Teams and the group discuss a child and their needs with actions being agreed. All meetings are minuted and sent to all involved parties. There will be a new administrator in post for the next HELM

EO said she had attended 3 HELMs to date and found them very helpful (has been able to access ISF for one child). However, she felt that it was just another layer of admin/procedure to get through. Also, by HELM prioritising children due to go to school, younger children are left struggling and requiring intervention. CS confirmed that HELM isn't blocking spaces for such children and that if a child requires early intervention, then a space will be allocated. JC confirmed she has received good support from her adviser.

JB had previously raised the issue of seeing child cases just to get EHCP agreed. She would like to see more 2 year olds from a Pathways and strategy planning perspective, as the earlier the intervention takes place, the better. She reported that it has been a joy and privilege to see what colleagues in North Wiltshire have been doing.

**ACTION: None**

### **9. Family and Community Learning**

Helen Edwards-Matheou, Training Advisor from Family and Community Learning was introduced to the group. She shared the outline of a proposed online course (copy attached) for EY providers which Family and Community Learning would like feedback on before it is advertised to the sector and parents/guardians. It is based around Early Years Communication and will comprise of 5 sessions – Attention and Listening, Play, Understanding, Interaction and Talking, and Speech Sounds.

Funding criteria will be in place which could lead to the course being free to qualifying participants. The course can be done on 1:1 basis. The course will be advertised on the Wiltshire Council website, newsletter to Children's Centres and schools, Facebook and Twitter.

Other content suggestions from the group included behaviour, expression and understanding, what is good communication and what does it look like.

Helen commented that their research shows that a lot of parents are asking for face to face toddler groups. LAB confirmed that parents definitely wanted face to face groups but this is all currently dependent on ability and capacity in community groups. Helen asked if the group felt there was a need for this course in the children's centres and could a blended model be

offered. RM confirmed that the course would be a duplication of the Five to Thrive sessions, but that was not to say it wouldn't compliment what was already on offer. RM said that it's not something that children's centres would be able to deal with currently from a capacity perspective. Ruth Brookes-Martin would be the best contact who knows where all the toddler groups are set up and she works with specific groups and organisations assisting in group set-up.

JC commented that behaviour should be considered as part of language difficulties/development.

SH suggested that the course would be a good resource for service families, and that garrison welfare officers would be useful contacts.

**ACTION: SH to liaise with Helen Edwards-Matheou regarding garrison welfare officer contacts**

#### **10. AOB**

Schools Forum – EYRG representative vacancy. JP informed the group that Mark Cawley has resigned from EYRG, so there is now a vacancy on Schools Forum alongside JP. It is essential that EY representation is at these meetings. There are approximately 5-6 meetings each year, which are currently held online. Regular attendance is required in order to understand the content of the meeting. JP would like EYRG members to consider joining, and if anyone is interested please contact either JP, LAB or JH before the next EYRG meeting.

EYRG meeting non-attendance - JP raised the issue of regular representative non-attendance at EYRG meetings, and that a procedure was needed. LAB confirmed that due to Covid-19, the group has been meeting on a more frequent basis (approximately fortnightly), so flexibility has been applied. The number of meetings will be reducing in due course and reverting back to 3-4 times each year.

MT shared a 2020/2021 Provisional Outturn report with the group (copy attached to minutes). There is a £229k underspend in the 3 and 4 year olds funding stream which will be going into reserve. There will be a post financial year adjustment by DfE, and there will be a limit to what will be recovered. There is a £162k underspend in the 2 year olds funding stream. JP asked MT if she could assure the group that if the underspend is left to the January adjustment that it will be ringfenced to EY and not transferred to High Needs. MT replied that from a protective point of view, each funding block is brought together and treated as one overall group; this was agreed by Schools Forum. MT will check the legislation on the number of reserves and the guidance which suggests the funding blocks can be separate.

**ACTION: JH to add section in email accompanying minutes about meeting attendance**

**MT to check legislation and guidance on Schools Forum reserves and funding blocks**

#### **11. Next meeting**

LAB informed the group that there is currently a focus on 'Systems of Excellence' within the local authority. Some of the council's senior leaders would like to speak to EYRG representatives to share the scope and focus of this scheme and its benefits.

The next meeting is scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> May at 1pm with the majority of the meeting assigned to discussing Systems of Excellence. Helean Hughes, Director of Education and Skills will be in attendance.

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## Early Years Reference Group Meeting

Wednesday 19 May 2021

### 1. Welcome and introductions

Gary Binstead, Jane Boulton, Lucy-Anne Bryant, Jo Clarke, Rosemary Collard, Emma Cooke, Alison Enever, Jenny Harvey (notes), Sarah Hawkins, Deborah Muir, Cate Mullen, Emma Osmund, John Proctor, Jane Provis, Marie Taylor, Emily Wood

### 2. Apologies

Bid Lilywhite, Russ Martin, Claire Shipley

### 3. Introduction of new members

No new members

### 4. Minutes of last meeting (27 April 2021)

The group approved the minutes as a true and accurate record.

### 5. Matters arising

Item 5 – Business rates for nurseries. MT advised this had not yet been done but will follow up.

Item 5 - DAF funding – LAB advised this had not yet been done but will follow up.

Item 6 – ISF applications - SH met with CS to discuss issues, now resolved.

Item 7 – COMF - MT is still awaiting confirmation from the Corporate Leadership Team, however there is no reason to doubt the commitment.

Item 9 – Garrison welfare officer contacts - SH advised this had not yet been done but will follow up. LAB confirmed RM will also be liaising with Family & Community Learning.

Item 10 – Schools Forum reserves and funding blocks guidance/legislation - MT confirmed she will update JP before the next Schools Forum meeting.

Item 10 – New Schools Forum EY representative – JP, LAB and MT confirmed there had been no volunteers from the group.

Item 10 – Meeting attendance message – JH confirmed this had been done in email accompanying minutes of last meeting.

**ACTION:** MT to liaise with Director of Resources on nursery business rate guidance.  
LAB to liaise with JB regarding DAF funding and school aged children  
MT to update group when bid response received.  
SH to liaise with Helen Edwards-Matheou regarding garrison welfare officer contacts.  
MT to update JP on legislation and guidance on Schools Forum reserves and funding blocks before next Schools Forum meeting.  
All group members to consider their availability to be part of Schools Forum and highlight the early years case alongside JP.

### 6. Finance Update (MT)

MT reported a £695k underspend in the Early Years Block 2020/2021. Three DSG proposals are being put forward to Schools Forum:

- i) Agree the underspend (of which £87.5k relates to COVID grant)

- ii) Agree to the underspend being moved to the overall DSG reserve for 2020/2021 for the final year. Any DfE recovery (amount currently unknown) will come from here.
- iii) From 2021/2022, have a separate EY DSG reserve with the other 3 blocks remaining together

MT also confirmed that the 2020/2021 COMF balance of £1.0M) will be rolled forward to 2021/2022 which will be combined with the 2021/2022 allocation of £0.6M.

MT is proposing that the new COMF allocation is passed to early years providers ensuring continuing covid-19 compliance to Public Health guidance with more flexibility.

DM asked if her provision would be able to claim COMF as they had to close for a week due to a confirmed Covid-19 case. Both LAB and MT confirmed this was allowed.

**ACTION: LAB to forward COMF application form to DM**

### **7. System of Excellence**

Alison Enever, Head of Special School Transformation, and Cate Mullen, Head of SEND and Inclusion introduced themselves to the group and delivered a presentation on System of Excellence (copy of presentation attached)

The group were split into 2 breakout groups for more detailed discussion around the topic.

LAB asked who will the system codesign be with and how will it be taking place. Alison and Cate confirmed that the intention is to work with as many partners as possible such as parents, carers and families. The indicative timescale for this part of the project is September-December 2021.

If anybody would like to be involved in further discussion with the project, please contact either Cate or Alison directly on [cate.mullen@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:cate.mullen@wiltshire.gov.uk) or [alison.enever@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:alison.enever@wiltshire.gov.uk)

**ACTION: None**

### **8. AOB**

Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) - JB is unable to find the latest version 7 in Right Choice.

**ACTION: EC will forward copy of latest version of LOMP to JB**

### **9. Next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 21 September 2021



# System of Excellence

May/June 2021

Alison Enever and Cate Mullen

## Questions for you....

Join at Slido.com

#91795



## Wiltshire System of Excellence

“The things we want to deliver to make sure that that all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Wiltshire have access to a first class education”

‘Centre of excellence’ was used previously but move to ‘System’ to reflect the way in which special schools and mainstream could work together with in-reach and outreach to promote inclusion and improved outcomes

Enabling families, children and young people to access mainstream by preference

A commitment which requires whole-system transformation

# SEND and Inclusion Strategy

Children and young people must be at the centre

“All children and young people with SEND and their families will have a voice that is heard. They will know how to access, and be able to access the joined-up support they need to thrive in their communities, to enjoy life and reach their full potential”

Wiltshire SEND and Inclusion Strategy

Strategy signed off by Wiltshire’s Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2020.

The strategy was co-designed with children and young people and their families

# WASSP feedback



## Breakout Groups Discussion

### Key questions to consider:

1. Do we recognise the description of the Wiltshire System of Excellence?  
*What would you add to this definition and description?*
2. How does what you do fit into a system of excellence?  
*What, in your view are the 'must haves'?*
3. What will the difference be for children, young people and families in Wiltshire?
4. What would success look like?  
*What would be the 'tangibles' of success? How would we know when we reached success?*



## Feedback from breakout sessions



## Next Steps

Ensure a shared vision for system of excellence including benefits and outcomes	April to July 2021
Mapping existing provision and workstreams in progress	April to July 2021
Identify key workstreams and milestones	July / August 2021
Co-design process	September to December 2021
Implementation	January to July 2022
Realisation of Benefits	September 2022 to August 2023

Questions or ideas?

Keep in touch:

[alison.enever@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:alison.enever@wiltshire.gov.uk)

[cate.mullen@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:cate.mullen@wiltshire.gov.uk)





Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum Working Group  
27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Schools Forum  
10th June 2021

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## **DEDICATED SCHOOLS BUDGET – BUDGET MONITORING 2020-21**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To present the final outturn budget monitoring information against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year 2020-21 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

### **Main Considerations**

2. Appendix 1 to this report outlines the budget monitoring summary as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
3. An overspend of £7.906 million is currently projected against the overall schools budget. This is an improved position than previously reported in part due to staff time supporting COVID activity being chargeable to certain COVID grants. The main driver for the adverse variance is the on-going pressures on the high needs block, the reasons for these are known and understood. The detailed budget monitoring report is shown in Appendix 1.

### ***Early Years Budgets (Budget £27.827M, final variance (0.695M))***

4. The pandemic has created much uncertainty around early years and grant guidance around settings has changed following government expectations around opening.
5. Summer Term until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 – the government's expectation was that settings would open to facilitate children of key workers, vulnerable children with a social worker and those children with an education health and care plan. Open settings were paid at 100% with additional incentive payments of £100 per child per week to fund the additional costs of PPE and deep cleaning. Closed settings were paid at 80%. A hardship fund was set up for those closed settings who evidenced financial hardship as a result of COVID19. From 1<sup>st</sup> June, the Government's expectation was that all settings would be open and therefore payments continued to be made at 100% to open settings and 80% to closed settings with lower payments made to open settings to help fund the additional costs of cleaning and PPE.
6. For the Autumn Term, there have been broadly the same number of children in settings as in the previous Autumn however, dual placements are not currently recommended and therefore some settings have above average reduced hours and some increased hours. Clearly the children in settings require funding at the usual rate in order for them to be able to staff appropriately. No additional payments for PPE and cleaning have been made. For providers who may be seeing a temporary dip, support payments are being made at the current hourly rates, representing above average reductions across the sector over the last three years.
7. For the Spring Term, the government's expectation was that settings remained open whilst schools were closed and would only be paid for children attending settings.
8. The local authority has a duty of sufficiency in this sector and is working closely with providers to support through these turbulent times, providing additional financial support whilst following the COVID guidance and remaining within the terms and conditions of the grant funding. Private income losses cannot be supported from this grant.

9. The intention was for any significant underspends to be redistributed to settings under the local discretion guidance however, due to the overall number of children being not dissimilar to previous years and the local discretion payment schemes used to supplement and support settings, the underspend (0.35%) is not enough to redistribute.
10. The early years reference group met on 19<sup>th</sup> May and requested that the early years block variance for future years (i.e. for 21-22 financial year onwards) be separately ringfenced. The national regulations assume that all blocks are separately ringfenced the co-joining some years ago was due to local agreement and so from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, all variances and lagged funding changes will be separately accounted for and reported.
11. The table below shows an extract from Appendix 2, the volume variance analysis;

	<b>Budgeted PTE</b>	<b>Actual PTE</b>	<b>PTE Variance</b>	<b>Budgeted Spend £M</b>	<b>Actual Spend £M</b>	<b>Actual spend Variance £M</b>
3- & 4-year olds	9,938	9,542	(396)	24.358	24.129	(0.229)
2-year olds	774	721	(53)	2.382	2.219	(0.162)

12. The 19-20 adjustment based on the January 2020 census data was an increase of £0.539 million. In addition, the 20-21 allocation increased by £0.943 million. This reflects a higher count of children than the previous year.

### **COMF Grant Funding**

13. A separate COVID grant has been received by the local authority (COMF grant) to support, facilitate and aid containment of the virus. Services were invited to apply for schemes to support this. The Council's corporate leadership team approved an amount of £1.0 million was approved to allocate to providers under certain criteria, namely
- Payment to open or partially open settings - funded and non-funded provision; a one-off grant to support purchase of PPE and increased cleaning costs.
  - To provide additional support in the event of continued staff absence due to pregnancy, extremely clinically vulnerable or COVID sickness in cases where staff cannot be furloughed to aid containment of the virus
  - To fund private losses at the EYE rates where bubbles burst, and closures take place. This includes wraparound childcare.
  - To fund a deep clean prior to the re-opening of a bubble or, whole setting
14. Total funding payments and applications totalled £0.418M in 2020-21. It has been agreed that the unclaimed allocation of £0.582M can be rolled forward to support the sector in the 2021-22 financial year.
15. An additional sum of £0.600m has been approved by CLT for the 2021-22 financial year. This will be made available to support settings to contain the virus.

### **Schools Budgets (Budget £291.677M, variance (£2.838M))**

16. The underspend on schools largely relates to the schools growth fund which is helping to offset the overall pressure on the DSG.

**High Needs Budgets (Budget £53.632M, variance £11.507M)**

17. High needs budgets are projected to overspend by £11.507m. The biggest areas of overspend are named pupil allowances and top ups, independent special school packages, alternative provision.
18. When the level of funding available does not match the local needs, the budget cannot be set at an achievable level and so the location of the overspend is not an indication of individual budget issues but that the whole block under significant pressure.
19. The major driver of the increased cost is volume. Activity (volume) is measured in FTE – full time equivalent pupils. Variance analysis is provided at Appendix 2. It is important to note that the number of EHCPs being requested has slowed slightly however this could be due to reduced face to face contact with pupils due to the COVID pandemic.

	<b>Children with an EHCP in Wiltshire</b>
<i>Number as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018</i>	<i>3,052 (233 - 8.27% increase on previous April)</i>
<i>Number as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019</i>	<i>3,456 (404 - 13.24% increase on previous April)</i>
<i>Number as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020</i>	<i>3,860 (404 - 11.69% increase on previous April)</i>
<b>Number as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021</b>	<b>4,105 (245 – 6.35% increase)</b>

20. At outturn, it is also useful to look at the average unit price variances to indicate where spend per pupil type has increased.
21. The table below shows an extract from Appendix 2, the volume variance analysis showing the movement from budgeted average unit cost;

	Increase in budgeted unit weekly price (average)
Special School Top Ups	+ £487
ELP To Ups	+ £1,228
Resource Base Top Ups	+ £392
Named Pupil allowance	+ £434
Independent Special School Fees	- £99 (reduction)
6 <sup>th</sup> Form / College Top Ups	+ £634
Inter authority	+ £476
Alternative Provision & Direct Payments	+ £3,031

22. As Schools Forum are aware, much work has been done, over recent years to investigate and address the issues. The High Needs Group meets regularly to discuss the recovery actions and more detail on activity and progress is reported regularly in the High Needs update report.

## **DSG Reserve**

23. The reserve brought forward of £11.350 million is increased by the positive early years block adjustment of £0.539 million. The overspend takes the reserve into a deficit position of £18.717 million.

	<b>DSG Reserve £ M</b>
2019-20 Brought Forward	(11.350)
2019-20 Early Years Adjustment	0.539
2020-21 Overspend	(7.906)
2020-21 DSG Reserve Deficit	(18.717)

24. With effect from 2018-19, the department tightened the rules governing deficits in local authorities' overall DSG accounts, under which local authorities must explain plans for bringing DSG account back into balance. The DfE required a report from any local authority that had a DSG deficit of more than 1% as at the end of any financial year.
25. With effect from 2020-21, the department further updated the rules governing deficits and expanded the requirements around deficits to include a DSG management plan workbook. Which was approved at the January Schools Forum and at Full council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021.
26. Officers have a meeting scheduled with the DfE regarding the plan later this month and will report back any useful information, insight or recommendations to both the High needs group and Schools Forum. It is anticipated an updated plan will be brought to the October meeting for information, update and approval.

## **Proposals**

27. Schools Forum is asked to note the final outturn budget monitoring position and the deficit DSG reserve balance.
28. Schools Forum are asked to note the change in accounting treatment around the early years grant for 2021-22.

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Appendix 1 – Schools Budget Forecast Position as at 31st March 2021

a	b	c	d = (c-b)	e = (d/b)	f	d = (c-b)	g
Service Area	Current Annual Budget £m	Period 12 Outturn £m	Period 12 Outturn Variance £m	%	19/20 Outturn Variance	February forecast variance £m	Budget Move-ment from Previous Report
Three to Four Year Olds EY Entitlement Funding	24.358	24.129	-0.229	-0.94%	0.986	-0.197	-0.032
Two Year Olds EY Entitlement Funding	2.382	2.219	(0.162)	-6.81%	0.204	(0.162)	-0.001
Early Years Inclusion Support Fund	0.357	0.316	(0.042)	-11.63%	0.023	(0.054)	0.013
Early Years Pupil Premium & DAF	0.309	0.202	(0.107)	-34.70%	(0.041)	(0.085)	-0.022
Early Years Central Expenditure	0.422	0.266	(0.155)	-36.84%	0.000	(0.094)	-0.062
<b>Early Years Block</b>	<b>27.827</b>	<b>27.132</b>	<b>-0.695</b>	<b>-2.50%</b>	<b>1.172</b>	<b>-0.592</b>	<b>-0.103</b>
Schools Budget Shares Primary & Secondary - Local Authority Schools	107.210	107.210	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Schools Budget Shares Primary & Secondary - Academy Schools	178.904	178.904	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Licences and Subscriptions	0.051	0.051	(0.000)	-0.91%	0.000	(0.014)	0.014
Free School Meals	0.021	0.013	(0.008)	-39.45%	0.000	0.000	-0.008
Staff Supply Cover (Not Sickness)	0.604	0.604	0.000	0.04%	0.013	(0.131)	0.131
Behaviour Support Team	0.622	0.622	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement	0.528	0.452	(0.076)	-14.33%	(0.056)	(0.086)	0.010
<b>De Delegated Total</b>	<b>1.826</b>	<b>1.742</b>	<b>-0.084</b>	<b>-4.61%</b>	<b>-0.043</b>	<b>-0.231</b>	<b>0.147</b>
Growth Fund	3.737	0.983	(2.754)	-73.69%	(0.245)	(2.753)	-0.001
<b>Schools Block</b>	<b>291.677</b>	<b>288.839</b>	<b>-2.838</b>	<b>-0.97%</b>	<b>-0.288</b>	<b>-2.984</b>	<b>0.146</b>
Special School Place Funding	7.560	7.560	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Resource Base (RB) Funding	1.932	1.932	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) Funding	1.908	1.908	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>High Needs Block (all schools)</b>	<b>11.400</b>	<b>11.400</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Named Pupil Allowances (NPA)	5.015	7.698	2.684	53.52%	2.295	2.536	0.148
Special School Top-Up	6.869	9.409	2.540	36.98%	0.893	2.484	0.056
Resourced Base (RB) Top-Up	1.674	2.295	0.621	37.09%	0.246	0.612	0.009
Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) Top-Up	0.933	1.829	0.896	96.11%	(0.402)	0.812	0.085
Secondary Alternative Provision Funding	2.791	2.815	0.025	0.88%	0.124	0.000	0.025
Non Wiltshire Pupils in Wiltshire Schools	0.000	0.011	0.011	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.011
<b>Devolved to Maintained &amp; Top Up Total</b>	<b>17.281</b>	<b>24.058</b>	<b>6.777</b>	<b>39.22%</b>	<b>3.157</b>	<b>6.444</b>	<b>0.333</b>
Wiltshire College Places	2.100	2.100	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Wiltshire Pupils in Non Wiltshire Schools	1.761	2.281	0.520	29.52%	0.199	0.678	-0.158
Post-16 Top-Up	3.620	5.104	1.484	41.00%	0.681	1.550	-0.066
Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schools	10.696	13.254	2.558	23.92%	1.533	2.639	-0.080
SEN Alternative Provision, Direct Payments & Elective Home Education	1.718	2.417	0.699	40.67%	1.834	0.593	0.106
Education Other than at School (EOTAS)	0.413	0.415	0.002	0.55%	(0.028)	(0.020)	0.023
<b>Funding for Places outside Schools</b>	<b>20.308</b>	<b>25.571</b>	<b>5.263</b>	<b>25.92%</b>	<b>4.219</b>	<b>5.439</b>	<b>-0.176</b>
High Needs in Early Years Provision	0.454	0.422	(0.032)	-7.05%	0.000	(0.026)	-0.006
Speech & Language	0.566	0.543	(0.023)	-4.07%	0.006	(0.023)	0.000
0-5 Inclusion & SEND Teams	2.048	1.898	(0.149)	-7.28%	0.000	(0.178)	0.029
Specialist Teacher Advisory Service	1.305	1.123	(0.181)	-13.90%	0.093	(0.195)	0.014
Other Special Education	0.271	0.123	(0.148)	-54.50%	0.033	(0.063)	-0.085
<b>Commissioned &amp; SEN Support Services</b>	<b>4.643</b>	<b>4.110</b>	<b>-0.533</b>	<b>-11.48%</b>	<b>0.132</b>	<b>-0.485</b>	<b>-0.048</b>
<b>High Needs Block</b>	<b>53.632</b>	<b>65.139</b>	<b>11.507</b>	<b>21.46%</b>	<b>7.508</b>	<b>11.398</b>	<b>0.110</b>
Central Licences	0.383	0.382	(0.001)	-0.14%	0.000	0.000	-0.001
Central Provision (Former ESG)	1.026	0.976	(0.050)	-4.83%	0.000	0.000	-0.050
Admissions	0.426	0.464	0.038	9.04%	(0.008)	(0.003)	0.041
Servicing of Schools Forums	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Central Provision within Schools Budget</b>	<b>1.837</b>	<b>1.826</b>	<b>-0.011</b>	<b>-0.60%</b>	<b>-0.008</b>	<b>-0.003</b>	<b>-0.009</b>
Education Services to CLA	0.103	0.046	(0.057)	-55.07%	(0.033)	(0.056)	-0.001
Child Protection in Schools & Early Years	0.056	0.056	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Prudential Borrowing	0.300	0.300	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Historic Commitments</b>	<b>0.459</b>	<b>0.402</b>	<b>-0.057</b>	<b>-12.35%</b>	<b>-0.033</b>	<b>-0.056</b>	<b>-0.001</b>
<b>Central School Services</b>	<b>2.296</b>	<b>2.228</b>	<b>-0.068</b>	<b>-2.95%</b>	<b>-0.041</b>	<b>-0.058</b>	<b>-0.010</b>
<b>Total Schools Budget</b>	<b>375.433</b>	<b>383.338</b>	<b>7.906</b>	<b>2.11%</b>	<b>8.351</b>	<b>7.763</b>	<b>0.142</b>
Pupil Premium (academy & maintained)	15.314	15.314	0.000	0			
6th Form Funding Maintained Schools (LSC Grant)	1.182	1.182	0.000	0			
UI Free School Meal Grant Provisional (academy & maintained)	3.345	3.345	0.000	0			
PE & Sports Revenue Grant (academy & maintained)	3.605	3.605	0.000	0			
Teachers' Pension Grant	0.401	0.401	0.000	0			
Teachers' Pay Grant		0.000	0.000	0			
Army Rebasing Funding	1.476	1.476	0.000	0			
Other Schools Grants							
<b>DfE Revenue Grants for all Wiltshire Schools</b>	<b>25.324</b>	<b>25.324</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0</b>			
<b>TOTAL DfE SCHOOLS FUNDING</b>	<b>400.756</b>	<b>408.662</b>	<b>7.906</b>	<b>1.97%</b>			

Appendix 1 - the service forecasts of expenditure as at 31st December 2020 - this is an estimate of net expenditure on the schools budget

Appendix 2 - the service forecasts of planned activity in FTE (full time equivalent pupils) as at 31st December 2020 - this is a measure of volumes of pupil placements / support arrangements

Appendix 2 - Variance Analysis

h	i	j	k = (j-i)	l = (k/i)	m	n	o	n	o
Volume analysis	Budgeted Activity FTE	Period 12 Outturn Activity FTE	Period 12 Outturn Variance FTE	%	19/20 Outturn Volume	Volume movement from Previous Report	Period 1 Forecast Price	19/20 Outturn Price	Unit
Three/Four Year Olds	9,938	9,542	-396	-4%	9,994	14	£4.20	£4.20	p/hr
Two Year Olds	774	721	-53	-7%	838	0	£5.40	£5.32	p/hr
ISF	0	0	0	0%	591	-	£615	£615	pa
							£0.53	£0.53	p/hr
<b>Early Years Block ACTIVITY DRIVER DATASET</b>	<b>10,712</b>	<b>10,263</b>	<b>-449</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>11,423</b>	<b>14</b>			
Sp Sch Place Funding	1,094	1,094	0	0%	716	338	£6,911	£10,000	pa
RB Funding	460	460	0	0%	273	138	£4,200	£6,000	pa
ELP Funding	594	594	0	0%	326	276	£3,213	£6,000	pa
	<b>2,148</b>	<b>2,148</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1,315</b>	<b>752</b>			
NPA	1,042	1,360	318	31%	1,162	40	£5,661	£5,715	pa
Special School Top-Up	778	911	133	17%	875	4	£10,327	£9,850	pa
RB Top-Up	351	400	49	14%	391	0	£5,736	£5,202	pa
ELP Top-Up	317	405	89	28%	353	7	£4,512	£3,132	pa
	<b>2,487</b>	<b>3,076</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>2,781</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>£7,821</b>	<b>£6,615</b>	pa
Wiltshire College Places	350	350	0	0%	350	-	£6,000	£6,000	pa
Non Wiltshire Schools	177	204	27	15%	201	3	£11,193	£10,716	pa
Post-16 Top-Up	394	485	90	23%	443	12	£10,526	£9,873	pa
Ind & Non-Maint Sp Sch	214	265	51	24%	237	2	£49,988	£49,673	pa
SEN AP, DP & EHE	164	179	15	9%	199	11	£13,501	n/a	pa
	<b>1,300</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>1,080</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>£17,245</b>	<b>£18,863</b>	pa
<b>High Needs Block ACTIVITY DRIVER DATASET</b>	<b>5,935</b>	<b>6,707</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>5,175</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>£9,712</b>		

The total activity FTE is higher than total no of EHCPs as children in SS, ELP & RB may also have top ups SS, ELP & RB places above those agreed with the DfE are costed to top ups

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High needs budget monitoring as at 31st March 2021

Analysis of Price & Volume Variance as at March 2021												
Budgeted Volume FTE	Projected Volume	Volume variance	% change in volume	Budgeted unit rate	Budgeted £	Variance	Projected £	Actual Unit rate	Unit Rate Variance	Variance	% change in rate	Total Variance
<b>Wiltshire School Provision</b>												
Special School Places	1093.83	1093.83	0.00	0.0%	10,000	10,938,330	-	10,938,330	10,000	0	0.0%	-
Special School Top Ups	698.07	911.12	213.05	30.5%	9,840	6,868,950	2,096,366	9,409,224	10,327	487	5.0%	2,540,274
Special School Top Ups Trend Analysis		0.00	0.00					0	0			-
<b>Special Schs Top Ups Total Forecast with Trend Analysis</b>		<b>911.12</b>	<b>213.05</b>			<b>6,868,950</b>		<b>9,409,224</b>				<b>2,540,274</b>
ELP Places	594.00	594.00	0.00	0.0%	6,000	3,564,000	-	3,564,000	6,000	0	0.0%	-
ELP Top Ups	283.99	405.33	121.34	42.7%	3,284	932,620	398,495	1,828,963	4,512	1,228	37.4%	896,343
ELP Top Ups Trend Analysis		0.00	0.00					0	0			-
<b>ELP Top Ups Total Forecast with Trend Analysis</b>		<b>405.33</b>	<b>121.34</b>			<b>932,620</b>		<b>1,828,963</b>				<b>896,343</b>
Resource Base Places	460.00	460.00	0.00	0.0%	6,000	2,760,000	-	2,760,000	6,000	0	0.0%	-
Resource Base Top Ups	313.22	400.02	86.80	27.7%	5,344	1,673,750	463,818	2,294,552	5,736	392	7.3%	620,802
Resource Base Top Ups Trend Analysis		0.00	0.00					0	0			-
<b>RB Top Ups Total Forecast with Trend Analysis</b>		<b>400.02</b>	<b>86.80</b>			<b>1,673,750</b>		<b>2,294,552</b>				<b>620,802</b>
Wiltshire College Places	350.00	350.00	0.00	0.0%	6,000	2,100,000	-	2,100,000	6,000	0	0.0%	-
Named Pupil Allowance - Prim	716.75	1072.37	355.61	49.6%	5,597	4,011,656	1,990,373	6,358,105	5,929	332	5.9%	2,346,449
Named Pupil Allowance - Sec	216.33	287.43	71.10	32.9%	4,636	1,002,914	329,618	1,361,908	4,738	102	2.2%	358,994
NPA Trend Analysis		0.00	0.00					0	0			-
<b>NPA Total Forecast with Trend Analysis</b>		<b>1359.80</b>	<b>426.71</b>			<b>5,014,570</b>		<b>7,720,014</b>		434		<b>2,705,444</b>
<b>Independent / External Provision</b>												
Independent Special School Fees	213.55	265.15	51.60	24.2%	50,087	10,696,047	2,584,481	13,254,241	49,988	-99	-0.2%	2,558,194
Independent Special School Fees Trend Analysis		0.00	0.00					0	0			-
<b>ISS Forecast with Trend Analysis</b>		<b>265.15</b>	<b>51.60</b>			<b>10,696,047</b>		<b>13,254,241</b>				<b>2,558,194</b>
6th Form	365.92	484.88	118.96	32.5%	9,892	3,619,760	1,176,787	5,103,870	10,526	634	6.4%	1,484,110
Inter Authority Recoupment	164.30	203.75	39.45	24.0%	10,717	1,760,790	422,734	2,280,510	11,193	476	4.4%	519,720
Alternative Provision & DP (SEN)	164.10	179.00	14.90	9.1%	10,470	1,718,080	156,050	2,416,747	13,501	3,031	29.0%	698,667
<b>Total Forecast</b>	<b>5634.06</b>	<b>6706.87</b>	<b>1072.81</b>	19.0%		<b>51,646,897</b>	<b>9,618,722</b>	<b>63,670,450</b>				<b>2,404,831</b>
												<b>12,023,553</b>

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## High Needs Block Group Meeting

6<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Present:** Cate Mullen (Chair), Neil Baker, James Passmore, Stuart Hall, Alison Enever, Angela Everett, Lisa Fryer, Lisa Percy, Lyssy Bolton, Marie Taylor

### 1. Actions from Previous Meeting:

Worked through previous minutes and actions and reviewed progress against these with the members of the group.

CM updated on work looking at other authorities who had overcome or turned around a HNB deficit.

High Needs Review and Consultation – responses submitted including by Cabinet Members and supported by Schools Forum. WPCCC had also done valuable work to make the information accessible to parents and carers so they could also contribute.

Annex 3 – still to go back to Schools Forum. MT/CM have met with Legal to review. View that it is likely this will be helpful clarification but may not provide anything additional. **Action:** MT to follow up with Legal

Discussion regarding potential to remind / offer guidance for annual reviews so that health issues are captured in the right section. To follow up with DCO to ensure aligned with approach across BSW. **Action:** CM to flag with DCO.

Discussed potential training need for officers supporting schools and SENCOs to ensure needs of young person captured in correct section during reviews. Joint training would be helpful and to also include education welfare officers. Noted importance of being able to invite clinicians to attend annual review where appropriate. **Action:** AEV to follow up with team.

Discussed national trial regarding SENDIST appeals and benefit of taking case-law into account and feeding into our learning for the future.

### 2. High needs budget plan

CM shared updated plan format which also includes budget dashboard and overview of statutory demand. CM has hidden columns with savings numbers against activity areas for ease of reading but also to highlight discussion around how realistic and meaningful those figures are, and how to assure that savings have been realised through this work. Noted difference between cost avoidance and cashable savings.

MT updated on proposal for alternative approach to evaluating savings which will give overview of budgeted spend vs actual spend and includes reflection of unit price. This will allow us to scrutinise if budget pressures / savings are being driven by demand and/or interventions. Agreement that approach to looking at budget dashboard is the right one and being able to drill down into detail will help to

interrogate data. Greater transparency around funding will help with informed discussions.

Discussion regarding notional SEN, noted that this funding is not to support solely the EHCP cohort but for all pupils with SEN and this can be significantly larger numbers sitting below level of EHCP. Noted that there is also AWPU funding within the school, but that there are broader overheads that the school has to fund. Discussed need for a joint piece of work with schools to ensure good understanding of holistic picture of school finance and use of notional SEN and AWPU. Notional funding may not be being used for those children with more complex needs, but for the broader range of children with needs within the school. Agreement that any conversation with schools would need to be carefully considered and sensitive in order to support inclusion rather than inadvertently discourage it.

Discussion regarding change in census date and loss of funding to schools which is not offset by other sources e.g. COMF. F40 survey on free school meals and nationally £36 million gap being reported.

Suggestion that could link this with discussion around OAP to offer benchmark / good practice, and also with work to generate a blueprint for RB/ELP. Discussed importance of championing what an inclusive school looks like, and communication and engagement with parents and carers. Discussion around provision maps and OFSTED direction of travel into undertaking deep-dive into individual children's experience of schools. Template for sharing use of notional SEN for learners linked to OAP would be helpful and enable transparency for parents/carers. Suggestion that members look at information that Hampshire Council share around notional SEN and what it is.

**Action:** CM to share link from Hampshire's website.

**Action:** CM to e-mail outline of proposal regarding provision maps and share with this group for discussion and consideration of next steps with schools.

To look at role of school effectiveness in this discussion and how the SIA programme might support. Noted that schools would expect to be held to account for expenditure and how this might be supported, including around Governing Board's role to challenge. Good quality questions and linking to outcomes for learners will be key. **Action:** CM to flag with School Effectiveness.

Discussion regarding EHCP data dashboard. SH shared that parents who have spent time at home on home-learning have seen more closely their children's engagement with learning and this may be contributing to increase in applications for EHC assessments in March. **Action:** MT/CM to disaggregate data for EHCP requests to see more detail about age range, referral source and also to explore by area. Also, to add SEN Support numbers to this dashboard.

**Action:** AEv to lead on looking at particular demand in the west working with LB and SG.

ISS Review: LF gave update on review of ISS. SH supported around the importance of post-16 and need for really early conversations to discuss this with families. Need

for an 'offer' to be available to be publicised to our parents/carers. Suggestion to explore case studies of individual learners to see what could have been done differently and also examples of where we got it right to celebrate and learn from that. **Action:** LF to follow up on this.

Noted key cohort of primary age pupils with SEMH need. Query regarding who funds an ISS placement if it is social care driven. Noted that HNB funds the educational part of that placement.

HELM: update on HELM given and next steps to look at feedback and evolve further. Discussed portage goes to school.

### 3. Any Other Business

Contact from DfE regarding DSG management plan – action required to keep up to date and review again in June.

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Wiltshire Council

School & SEN Funding Working Group: 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Schools Forum: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021

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## Impact of Changes to Pupil Premium Calculations – f40 Survey

### Purpose of report

1. To provide members with an update on the implications of the change to the Department for Education's date for calculating Pupil Premium for schools.
2. The f40 group have collated the financial impact from its members to obtain a wider picture of the implications from moving the Pupil Premium census date from January, back to the previous October.
3. This report is presented purely to bring the latest information to members of Schools Forum rather than for consultation.

### Background

4. The Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) is designed to support pupils and learners using the following three drivers for allocating funding;
  - *Free School Meal Ever6* – pupils from a deprivation background
  - *Service Pupil Ever6* – pupils from a service family
  - *Post-Looked After Child* – pupils who have left local authority care through an adoption or guardianship order
5. Since its introduction, the PPG has always been calculated using the January census data. The January data being the most up to date census information available for the ensuing financial year.
6. The Department for Education (DfE) announced that it was moving the census date used to calculate PPG to the October census. This change was introduced in a low-key fashion but explained, when questioned, on the grounds of;
  - *Aligning the census date with mainstream school funding to October*
  - *During Covid, school pupils were not in school during January but were, in October*

### Impact

7. During the Covid pandemic, both locally and nationally there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils eligible for a free school meal (FSM). The knock-on impact of moving the PPG census date from January back to October will result in a lower number of pupils being eligible for PPG funding. In effect this will create a 'lag' or shortfall in PPG funding for schools in 2021-22.
8. Schools will still be required to support their disadvantaged PPG eligible pupils and be held to account for their progress, despite not being fully funded for those pupils.

9. The financial impact for Wiltshire is set out in the table below.

<b>Wiltshire</b>	<b>FSM Pupils October '20</b>	<b>FSM Pupils Jan '21</b>	<b>Growth</b>	<b>% Growth</b>	<b>PPG Rate</b>	<b>Funding Gap</b>
<b>Primary</b>	5,912	6,279	367	6.2%	£1,345	£493,615
<b>Secondary</b>	5,147	5,212	65	1.3%	£935	£62,075
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,059</b>	<b>11,491</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>3.9%</b>		<b>£555,690</b>

10. The f40 group canvassed all of their members to determine the impact upon a wider group of local authorities. All 42 members of the f40 group responded to the questionnaire and the impact is set out in the table below. Full details of the respondents is contained Appendix 1.

<b>F40</b>	<b>FSM Pupils October '20</b>	<b>FSM Pupils Jan '21</b>	<b>Growth</b>	<b>% Growth</b>	<b>PPG Rate</b>	<b>Funding Gap</b>
<b>Primary</b>	280,490	302,965	22,475	8.0%	£1,345	£30,228,875
<b>Secondary</b>	185,351	191,819	6,468	3.5%	£935	£6,176,940
<b>Total</b>	<b>465,841</b>	<b>494,784</b>	<b>28,943</b>	<b>6.2%</b>		<b>£36,405,815</b>

11. The f40 group have confirmed that they appreciate why the DfE wants to streamline the funding to the October census, however they believe it's not practical during the pandemic, when the demand for FSM is greater than usual.

12. F40 are asking the DfE to consider either delaying the change or compensating schools for the funding they will miss out on this year. Without help, schools will obviously have to find the money from elsewhere to support disadvantaged pupils, when funding is already tight, so other aspects of their budgets will suffer.

### Further Survey Work

13. In addition to the campaigning work of the f40 group, the Society of County Treasurers are conducting a survey of DSG deficits across local authorities. This survey forms part of their ongoing pressure for the funding and management of DSG deficits, in light of the significant growth in demand for Education and Health Care Plans. The survey results should be available for our September meeting.

### Proposal

14. Schools Forum is asked to note the content of this report and the f40's ongoing dialogue with the DfE, along with the work of the Society of County Treasurers.

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## Appendix 1

Local Authority	Financial impact of changes to the Pupil Premium calculation								
	FSM R-Y6 - October 2020 census	FSM Y7-Y11 - October 2020 census	FSM R-Y6 - January 2021 census	FSM Y7-Y11 - January 2021 census	Increase in R-Y6	Increase in Y7-Y11	Difference in funding requirements - pupils X £1,345	Difference in funding requirements - pupils X £955	Total additional funding requirements
Bath and North East Somerset	2074	1723	2176	1744	102	21	137,190	20,055	157,245
Buckinghamshire	5468	2146	5904	2272	436	126	586,420	120,330	706,750
Cambridgeshire	9435	5002	10182	5245	747	243	1,004,715	232,065	1,236,780
Central Bedfordshire	2798	1792	3096	1846	298	54	400,810	51,570	452,380
Cheshire East	4076	2713	4304	2795	228	82	306,660	78,310	384,970
Cheshire West and Chester	4895	3367	5206	3493	311	126	418,295	120,330	538,625
Cornwall	7748	4963	8442	5183	694	220	933,430	210,100	1,143,530
Derbyshire	13811	7755	14704	8004	893	249	1,201,085	237,795	1,438,880
Devon	9712	8514	10496	8651	784	137	1,054,480	130,835	1,185,315
Dorset	4212	3597	4509	3666	297	69	399,465	65,895	465,360
East Riding of Yorkshire	4200	2994	4463	3071	263	77	353,735	73,535	427,270
East Sussex	7953	4606	8509	4767	556	161	747,820	153,755	901,575
Gloucestershire	7461	4684	8333	4833	872	149	1,172,840	142,295	1,315,135
Hampshire	16275	9924	17555	10308	1280	384	1,721,600	366,720	2,088,320
Herefordshire	1997	1195	2133	1248	136	53	182,920	50,615	233,535
Kent	23509	15493	26094	16306	2585	813	3,476,825	776,415	4,253,240
Leicestershire	6626	5264	7222	5421	596	157	801,620	149,935	951,555
Lincolnshire	12450	7476	13384	7724	934	248	1,256,230	236,840	1,493,070
North Lincolnshire	3203	2281	3456	2329	253	48	340,285	45,840	386,125
North Yorkshire	5964	4047	6492	4206	528	159	710,160	151,845	862,005
Northamptonshire	9611	6549	10577	6839	966	290	1,299,270	276,950	1,576,220
Northumberland	4889	3241	5288	3340	399	99	536,655	94,545	631,200
Oxfordshire	6903	4266	7501	4437	598	171	804,310	163,305	967,615
Plymouth	5089	3149	5382	3236	293	87	394,085	83,085	477,170
Shropshire	3147	2120	3407	2243	260	123	349,700	117,465	467,165
Solihull	3646	4085	3972	4316	326	231	438,470	220,605	659,075
Somerset	7469	4395	8055	4523	586	128	788,170	122,240	910,410
South Gloucestershire	2755	1875	3012	1866	257	-9	345,665	-8,595	337,070
Staffordshire	10483	7063	11324	7232	841	169	1,131,145	161,395	1,292,540
Stockport	4052	2639	4416	2742	364	103	489,580	98,365	587,945
Suffolk	10619	6728	11198	6983	579	255	778,755	243,525	1,022,280
Swindon	3825	2223	4082	2303	257	80	345,665	76,400	422,065
Torbay	2797	1630	2980	1707	183	77	246,135	73,535	319,670
Trafford	3487	1872	3819	2010	332	138	446,540	131,790	578,330
Wakefield	7320	5604	7820	5740	500	136	672,500	129,880	802,380
Warrington	3607	1967	3799	1993	192	26	258,240	24,830	283,070
Warwickshire	7873	5258	8544	5431	671	173	902,495	165,215	1,067,710
West Sussex	7624	5098	8409	5356	785	258	1,055,825	246,390	1,302,215
Wigan	6420	3961	6776	4074	356	113	478,820	107,915	586,735
Wiltshire	5912	5147	6279	5212	367	65	493,615	62,075	555,690
Worcestershire	7323	5692	7758	5819	435	127	585,075	121,285	706,360
City of York	1772	1253	1907	1305	135	52	181,575	49,660	231,235
<b>Total f40 respondents</b>	<b>280,490</b>	<b>185,351</b>	<b>302,965</b>	<b>191,819</b>	<b>22,475</b>	<b>6,468</b>	<b>30,228,875</b>	<b>6,176,940</b>	<b>36,405,815</b>

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum Working Group  
27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Schools Forum  
10th June 2021

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## **DfE Consultation – School Improvement Brokerage and Monitoring Grant**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To share the DfE's consultation around School Improvement brokerage and monitoring grant.

### **Main Considerations**

2. The DfE issued a consultation on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 regarding the future funding levels and applying new conditions to the grant. The deadline for this consultation was 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021.
3. The questions can be found in Appendix 1.
4. The local authority responded to the survey highlighting the following major points:
  - a. Any additional responsibilities without funding will dilute the ability to support all pupils and schools
  - b. Although numbers of maintained schools have reduced from 153 in 2017-18 to 126 in 20-21, the grant is used to support all schools and therefore reductions should not be made on a straight-line basis.
  - c. A reduction in grant or, an increased in conditions will mean school support will need to be prioritised and current support will be impacted.
5. The £0.531M School improvement brokering and monitoring grant currently received allows the local authority to divert uncommitted central schools services block to support the high needs block. A grant reduction or, increased responsibility or, both may mean this can no longer take place and / or funded support services currently on offer to schools would look different or, cease.
6. Alternatively, voting maintained sector members of schools forum could, in future budgets vote to set an amount to support school improvement under "education functions."

### **Proposals**

7. Schools Forum are asked to note the DfE's consultation, the local authority response and future risks around the funding and provision of School Improvement.

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Department  
for Education

# **Attaching conditions to the Local Authority School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant**

**Government consultation**

**Launch date: 28 April 2021**

**Respond by: 26 May 2021**

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## Introduction

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the impacts to Local Authorities (LAs), schools and pupils of our intention, subject to the outcome of this consultation, to attach conditions to the payment of the Local Authority School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering grant, reflecting the urgent national priority of ensuring the successful and sustained return of all pupils to school and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education.

## Who this is for

- LAs
- Schools and colleges
- Any other interested organisations and individuals

## Issue date

The consultation was issued on 28 April 2021.

## Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the team at:

- [SIMBgrant.consultation@education.gov.uk](mailto:SIMBgrant.consultation@education.gov.uk)

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: [Consultations.Coordinator@education.gov.uk](mailto:Consultations.Coordinator@education.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the [DfE Contact us page](#).

## Additional copies

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from [GOV.UK DfE consultations](#).

## The response

The results of the consultation and the Department's response will be [published on GOV.UK](#) in June 2021.

## About this consultation

In light of the unprecedented challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic on schools and pupils, and the national priority of ensuring that pupils are supported to overcome any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education, we are intending to attach conditions to the Local Authority School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering grant (**‘the grant’**) in order to ensure that it is contributing, all across England, to the delivery of urgent school improvement priorities.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the impacts of our intention to **attach conditions** to the payment of the grant, with the aim of ensuring that the grant is ring-fenced so that it can only be spent on LAs’ School Improvement (SI) functions and that, as part of delivering their SI functions, LAs in receipt of the grant are taking active steps to support the successful and sustained return of all pupils to school and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education.

The proposals in this consultation relate to England only. Policy is devolved in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit [www.education.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations) to submit your response.

## Other ways to respond

If for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may download a word document version of the form and email it or post it.

**By email - [SIMBgrant.consultation@education.gov.uk](mailto:SIMBgrant.consultation@education.gov.uk)**

### By post

SIMB grant consultation  
Department for Education  
Agora Building  
3 Cumberland Place  
Nottingham  
NG1 6HU

## Deadline

The consultation closes on 26 May 2021.

## Background: LA school improvement functions and the School Improvement Monitoring & Brokering grant

Part 4 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) provides LAs with a range of powers to first warn, and then intervene in, maintained schools where they have significant concerns (e.g. relating to performance, governance or pupil safety), for example by appointing an interim executive board or requiring the school to collaborate with another school.

Further to this, the [Schools Causing Concern \(SCC\) guidance](#) states that LAs should act as champions of high standards of education across their schools, and in doing so should:

- Understand the performance of maintained schools in their area, using data as a starting point to identify any that are underperforming, while working with them to explore ways to support progress;
- Work closely with the relevant Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC), dioceses and other local partners to ensure schools receive the support they need to improve;
- Where underperformance has been recognised in a maintained school, proactively work with the relevant RSC, combining local and regional expertise to ensure the right approach, including sending warning notices and using intervention powers where this will improve leadership and standards; and
- Encourage good and outstanding maintained schools to take responsibility for their own improvement; support other schools; and enable other schools to access the support they need to improve.

For clarity and consistency, in this consultation we refer to LAs' combined statutory SI functions under Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and their additional SI expectations in the SCC guidance set out above as "**SI functions**".

Since 2017, the Local Authority School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering grant (**'the grant'**) has been allocated to LAs to support them in fulfilling their SI functions. The grant is currently non-ringfenced (meaning it does not need to be spent on the SI functions for which it is provided).

Given the urgent challenges posed by Covid-19 on schools, and its impact on LAs' SI priorities, it is important that LAs use the grant solely for the purpose of delivering their SI functions as outlined above, and for which the grant is paid, and in doing so take active steps to support the successful and sustained return of all pupils to school and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education.

## Proposal: Attaching conditions to the grant

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges for schools. At various points, national lockdowns have required our educational settings to adapt swiftly to deliver remote learning for the majority of their pupils, whilst restricting attendance to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. From 8 March 2021, attendance of all pupils at school has been mandatory, with schools welcoming the return of all pupils to the classroom and beginning the task of addressing any adverse impacts brought about by the pandemic on their education, recognising that some children will have been more significantly impacted by the disruption to their schooling than others. As part of delivering their SI functions, LAs have a crucial role to play in supporting schools through this period, recognising some schools will find this more challenging than others.

We are clear that the successful return of all pupils to school is a national priority. This not only means ensuring that all children return to the classroom, but that they are supported in this transition and any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education are addressed. Some schools will find this more challenging than others and, as such, this will continue to remain the most pressing SI priority for LAs, and it is where we believe the focus of the activities funded by the grant must now be. In delivering the functions supported by the grant, understanding how their maintained schools are performing, and ensuring these schools receive the support and intervention that they need, LAs are expected to support schools on this path, by taking active steps to support the successful and sustained return of all pupils to school and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education.

It is imperative, therefore, that our resources are targeted as effectively as possible towards this national effort, so that those schools and pupils who require the most support are able to receive it. This means ensuring that the resources provided through the grant are used exclusively for SI purposes and are supporting the Covid-19 recovery effort.

Government has a long-standing commitment to provide funding to LAs on a non-ringfenced basis and remains committed to that principle. However, in view of these exceptional circumstances, we therefore intend, subject to the outcome of this consultation, to **ring-fence** the grant by attaching conditions, with the first being that it can be used only to fund their SI functions, for which the grant is intended. The second would be that, in doing so, LAs take active steps to support the successful and sustained return of all pupils to school and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education. The third would be to enable the Secretary of State to enforce these conditions in the event of non-compliance with these conditions, including, as a last resort, the right to claw back grant or withhold future funding, where it is deemed appropriate on a case-by-case basis.



## How we propose to implement these changes

### Applying the grant conditions

The objective of introducing conditions will be to: (i) ensure the grant is used by LAs for the sole purpose of carrying out their SI functions, as set out above, for which the grant is provided; (ii) place a clear obligation on LAs, that as part of delivering these functions, they take active steps to support the successful and sustained return of all pupils to school and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education; and (iii) enable the Secretary of State to enforce those conditions in the event of non-compliance including, as a last resort, the right to claw back grant or withhold future funding, where it is deemed appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

Our purpose in introducing these conditions is not to change the purpose of the grant. Instead, the purpose of attaching conditions would be to ensure that LAs spend the grant on those SI functions. Taking active steps to supporting the successful and sustained return of all pupils to schools and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education supports these SI functions, given this is likely to be the overriding SI challenge for schools at this time.

Furthermore, we do not intend to introduce new reporting requirements for LAs beyond routine certification of the use of funds (against the conditions) in each LA's annual Chief Financial Officer's return, in line with the existing annual assurance process for other such grants. To supplement this, our routine engagement with LAs as carried out by Regional Schools Commissioners' offices, alongside any relevant published material, will also support the Department's understanding of how the objectives of the grant, and the conditions imposed, are being met. As such, we consider that the imposition of conditions on the grant will not create a 'new burden' for LAs.

Finally, we have considered whether placing these conditions on the grant is likely to have any impact on persons who share any of the particular protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010. Our preliminary analysis suggests that there is little evidence that introducing these conditions of grant would have any disproportionate negative impacts on persons who share a particular protected characteristic compared to others. There could potentially be some negative impacts if this leads to reallocation of resources away from other sources of support to groups who share a particular protected characteristic, such as SEND. However, there may potentially be some positive impacts for disadvantaged pupils (who are disproportionately from ethnic minority backgrounds) if the introduction of conditions leads LAs to reallocate more resources to SI activity, as evidence suggests the education of these pupils has been disproportionately impacted during the pandemic. At this stage, we think any impact is likely to be limited and justifiable in view of our overall objective to ensure grant expenditure is directed exclusively towards SI functions, and in ensuring that LAs in receipt of the grant are taking active steps to support the successful and sustained

return of all pupils to school, and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education.

## Timing

The grant has previously been allocated in two tranches per financial year – in April and October. In FY 2021-22, we will be paying this first tranche in two instalments. The first instalment will be paid by the end of April 2021, and will be distributed to LAs as now, on a **non-ringfenced** basis and **without conditions**. While LAs will remain able to spend this instalment as they wish, the Secretary of State has made clear his expectation that, as part of LAs' SI functions supported by this grant, these funds should be used to support the successful return of pupils to school and the needs of those children who require the most help in recovering from the impact of the pandemic. The second instalment, to be paid by the end of July 2021 at the latest, would, subject to the outcome of this consultation, be paid on a **ring-fenced** basis, **with the conditions of payment attached** (to come into effect from the date of the second payment). An updated grant determination will be issued, with conditions as above.

From October 2021, we intend to reduce the amount of the grant paid to LAs to reflect the reduction in the number of maintained schools since the grant was introduced in 2017. Funding will therefore revert to being based on per school funding levels in 2017 when the grant was established.

A proposed timeline for introducing these changes is provided in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Proposed timeline for implementation**

Date	Proposal
April 2021	Grant instalment paid on a non-ringfenced basis, <b>without conditions</b> .
July 2021	Grant instalment paid on a ringfenced basis, <b>with conditions</b> of payment attached.
October 2021	Grant paid on a ringfenced basis, <b>with conditions</b> of payment attached (covering the period to March 2022) and based on 2017 per school funding levels.

We will keep the performance of the grant and its future beyond March 2022 under continual review.

## Questions

**Question 1:** We intend to attach a condition to the payment of the grant that the grant must be used exclusively to support LAs' SI functions for which the grant is paid.

What would be the impact of making this change for LAs, in particular for schools and pupils, and on LAs' ability to deliver their SI functions? Please provide evidence where possible.

**Question 2:** We intend to attach a condition to the payment of the grant that, in fulfilling their existing SI functions, LAs in receipt of the grant must take active steps to support the successful and sustained return of all pupils to school and in addressing any adverse impacts of the pandemic on their education.

What would be the impact of making this change for LAs, schools and pupils, in particular on LAs' ability to deliver their SI functions? Please provide evidence where possible.

**Question 3:** We intend to attach a condition to the payment of the grant enabling the Secretary of State to take action to enforce the conditions referred to in questions 1 and 2 in the event of non-compliance, including as a last resort, the right to claw back grant or withhold future funding where appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

What would be the impact of making this change for LAs, schools and pupils, in particular on LAs' ability to deliver their SI functions, and how can we help to mitigate any negative impacts? Please provide evidence where possible.

**Question 4:** In exercising their functions, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires Ministers to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, victimisation, harassment and other conduct prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010, and to the need to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics for the purposes of the PSED are: sex; race; disability; religion or belief; sexual orientation; pregnancy or maternity; gender reassignment; and age.

Please let us know, providing evidence where possible, if you believe any of the proposals set out in this consultation will have the potential to have a positive or negative impact on particular groups, in particular those who share protected characteristics, compared to others.



Department  
for Education

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Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum Working Group  
27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Schools Forum  
10th June 2021

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## **Future of Schools Forum Meetings – Remote Meetings Format**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To present the permanent legislative changes around the format of Schools Forum meetings and the responses to the consultation following these changes in legislation.

### **Main Considerations**

2. National regulations govern the composition, constitution and procedures of schools forums. These regulations can be accessed at: [The Schools Forums \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uk-legislation/regulations/2012/1261).
3. Temporary changes to the legislation in place during the COVID19 pandemic have now been made permanent. Schools Forum need to consider how to most effectively conduct meetings moving forward.

### **ESFA arrangements in place during the COVID19 pandemic**

4. Historically, The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 required that schools forums physically meet at least 4 times a year. Clearly this was challenging during the pandemic. It was important that schools forums continued to meet, but the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) recognised the difficulties in doing so physically while adhering to public health guidance on social distancing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
5. The ESFA therefore amended regulations to enable schools forums to meet remotely, while they are unable to meet physically in a room during the outbreak of COVID-19.
6. The government laid The Schools Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 before Parliament on 28 May 2020, which came into force on 18 June 2020.
7. This included (but was not limited to) telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming. These arrangements were in place for the 2020 to 2021 financial year, up to the end of March 2021.

### **Number of Schools Forum Meetings Per Calendar Year**

8. The March 2020 meeting of Schools forum was cancelled due to the pandemic and any still relevant reports were brought to the June meeting. The minimum number of meetings per year is four. It is therefore proposed that future March meetings are to be retained only if urgent or, decision making is required. Meetings would therefore be as follows:

January  
March (optional)  
June

October  
December

### **ESFA permanent arrangements post the COVID19 pandemic**

9. The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2021 amended The Schools Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 to make permanent provisions to enable schools forums meetings to be held remotely.
10. Like the temporary arrangements, this includes (but is not limited to) telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming. Where a schools forum decides to hold a public meeting by remote means only, the forum should provide support or make alternative arrangements so that any interested parties who do not have telephone or online access can attend virtual meetings.

### **Consultation Process**

11. Forum members were asked to complete a MS teams survey indicating their preference for meeting arrangements. The responses are attached as Appendix 1.
12. In addition to this the schools forum schools funding and SEN working group discussed the results and agreed the proposals below

### **Proposals**

1. Schools forum are asked to note the permanent change in statutory arrangements around schools forum meetings.
2. Schools forum are asked to vote on the following proposals:
  - a. Every meeting is held virtually with the exception of the main decision-making meetings which are generally, December to agree formula changes and transfers in principal and January, where the schools budget formula is voted on and finalised.
  - b. That the number of future meetings be reduced to four per annum; January, June, October and December – with the March meeting available as optional should urgent items arise, or decision making be required.

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## Survey Responses - Future of Schools Forum Meetings - April / May 2021

ID	Representing	Do you think Schools Forum meetings should be held remotely on a permanent basis?	Do you think Schools Forum meetings should be held face to face as soon as this is possible in line with Government guidance?	Do you think that Schools Forum meetings should be held remotely for the majority of meetings except for the budget meeting which is held in January of each year to enable members to have "in the ...	Would you be interested in an option to join a hybrid meeting where you would have the choice to attend the Schools Forum meeting in person in a room at County Hall, Trowbridge or join remotely su...	Is there anything else you would like to share to further improve the Schools Forum meetings or suggestions of how they could be conducted going forward.
1	PHF	No	No	No	No	I think there should be a combination approach.
2	WASSH	Yes	No	Yes	No	
3	Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (observer)	No	No	Yes	No	I am happy to go with the flow and to attend face to face or online. Maybe every other meeting could be online if you have a mixed response? Are attendance rates higher online? I'm not sure about the hybrid meeting. As I'm a hearing aid user I sometimes struggle with sound quality and clarity when people dial-in to face to face meetings on conference call. I guess it would depend on the technology used.
4	Local Authority	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Suggest LA staff might be best placed presenting from County Hall and meetings open to the press and the public would avoid needing to record meetings. Environmental benefits re: carbon reduction
5	School governors via the WGA	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
6	Primary Academy	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Car parking is not an issue when attending meetings remotely!
7	Special School Governors	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	It would be helpful if we could be sent paper copies of reports etc as before. It is not always possible to view the report and the forum
8	Wiltshire Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
9	WASSH - academy	Yes	No	Yes	No	Doing these meetings remotely would reduce travel time / costs and saves the use of using a meeting rooms - has an environmental gain
10	Secondary Academies /WASSH	Yes	No	Yes	No	I feel that the remote meeting has improved the efficiency of the meeting as well as reducing the impact in terms of time, the environment and my time out of school.
11	Wiltshire Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
12	Primary Heads	Yes	No	No	Yes	
13	Primary Head's Forum	No	No	Yes	No	
14	Special Academies	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
15	Salisbury Diocese Board of Education	Yes	No	Yes	No	Not at present.
16	Wiltshire Council	No	No	Yes	Yes	If officers were in a public meeting room presenting, the room is open to the public. SF members can join remotely and there is no need to record the meetings or have two demo svs officers supporting so saving time and effort.
17	LA - Schools Funding	No	No	Yes	Yes	I think it is definitely the preference to have members present for the Budget Setting meetings where there is regular voting on funding options but also where different funding options need to be demonstrated to the Forum. A blend of virtual and face-to-face meetings feels most appropriate and will save some of our members significant travel time.
18	Early Years	No	No	Yes	Yes	When meetings are held remotely I would like to see participants on camera. It can be difficult to follow who is speaking and makes it difficult for newcomers to get to know each other
	Teachers	No	No	Blended approach of mix of meetings		blended approach of <b>mix</b> of face-to-face and on-line meetings of School Forum, but <b>more face-to-face, especially</b> - during the autumn and winter when budget-setting takes place. As the Chair of SF said in January: I cannot get the feel of the meeting to make a decision as I cannot see your faces

### Summary of Responses

	No = 6	No = 18	No = 2	No = 7
	Yes = 12	Yes = 0	Yes = 15	Yes = 10
			Blended = 1	No response = 1
	<b>Total = 18</b>	<b>Total = 18</b>	<b>Total = 18</b>	<b>Total = 18</b>
No in % terms	33%	100%	11%	39%
Yes in % terms	67%	0%	83%	56%
Other in % terms			6%	6%

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100%

100%

100%

100%

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**Two groups to consider**

1. Schools Forum itself
2. Schools Forum Finance & SEN Working Group -