

Schools Forum SEN Working Group

26 February 2013, 2pm, Canvey Room, East Wing

Minutes

Present: Becky O'Brien (King's Park Primary School), Gina Shanahan (King's Park Primary School), Debbie Bennett (Hardenhuish Academy), John Hawkins, Karina Kulawik, Chris Whitfield, Julia Cramp, Liz Williams

Apologies: Sarah Findlay-Cobb, Phil Beaumont, Carol Grant

1	<p>Minutes from Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting had been presented to Schools Forum and there were no outstanding matters arising</p>	
2	<p>School Funding Reform – update on budget for 2013-14</p> <p>EW updated the group on budgets for High Needs Pupils in 2013-14. It was expected that budgets would be issued to maintained schools at the end of the week. DB confirmed that the EFA had issued statements of post-16 pupil numbers to academies but that these had not corresponded to the numbers agreed with the LA, EW noted that this had also been the case with post-16 numbers confirmed by the EFA to Special Schools.</p> <p>EW explained that whilst special school academies would move on to the new place plus funding system from April 2013, mainstream academies would not move on to the new system until September. This would mean that the LA would not be paying top ups to academies until September as for the period April to September the resource bases and ELP would still be fully funded through the General Annual Grant.</p> <p>Top up rates for 2013-14 were circulated for information. BO'B commented on the difference in value between top up rates for Complex Needs Centres and other resource bases. KK explained that the funding for complex needs centres had been based on the staffing model originally developed for the centres. It was agreed that a review of all top up rates would need to take place in time for implementation in 2014-15. KK explained that the relative cost of LA provision compared with the independent sector would also need to be taken in to account in any review as there was a danger that top up rates for Wiltshire schools could become more expensive than independent provision.</p> <p>It was agreed that a working group would need to be formed to carry out the review of banding and other funding issues in relation to high needs pupils. KK and EW would be attending WASSH on 7th March to discuss some of the issues particularly relating to ELP provision and funding.</p>	
3	<p>School Funding Reform – DfE review of 13-14 funding arrangements</p> <p>EW circulated the consultation document issued by the DfE: Review of 2013-14 School Funding Arrangements. Section 3 of the document focussed on issues relating to funding for high needs pupils. it was noted that the DfE does not intend to review the level of funding for the</p>	

	<p>base values for specialist and alternative provision. The questions therefore focussed on the notional SEN budgets for schools and post-16 funding.</p> <p>The group considered the questions as follows:</p> <p>Q19 – the difficulties in collecting accurate data from the annual census were discussed and it was agreed that this should be fed back as part of the response.</p> <p>Q20 – it was agreed that Wiltshire would support a move towards the £6,000 threshold for low cost high incidence SEN as this would increase consistency between local authority areas. It was noted that in the SW only 2 authorities had not implemented the recommendation to delegate the first £6,000 for SEN.</p> <p>Q21 – it was agreed that the DfE should play an active role in spreading good practice and model SLAs etc</p> <p>Q22 – in relation to post-16 funding streams the group requested that we note the need to work more closely with Adult Care services for students aged 18 and over. This will be made easier through the development of services for 0-25 year olds in line with the SEND Green Paper.</p>	
4	<p>SEN Pathfinder – Update</p> <p>JC updated the group on the new expectations arising from the extension of the SEND Green Paper Pathfinder programme. The pathfinder programme has now been extended to September 2014. A key development is the Education, Health & Care Plan which is now being tested in Wiltshire. DB and BO'B noted that they were working on new plans with pupils in their schools and gave positive feedback.</p> <p>A further development is the need for LAs to publish a local offer covering Education, Social Care and Health services for children and young people with disabilities, and their families. This would include the need to define what schools would need to provide for the first £6,000 delegated to schools within the funding formula. DB noted that the services that schools could deliver may vary with the size of school with bigger schools possibly able to achieve economies of scale and more varied provision.</p>	
5	<p>AOB</p> <p>JH asked how special schools would be supported if they got in to financial difficulty as a result of the new funding arrangements. EW responded that the LA would be working with schools on a case by case basis once budgets were issued and schools began to identify the impact on their budgets. EW noted the 2% turbulence factor and the extended payment periods that had already been put in place to support schools and reduce the impact of in year pupil movement but recognised that the impact of funding reform would be greater on some schools than others.</p>	
6	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Next Meeting to be held on Monday 10th June, 9am, County Hall</p>	